

MEMORANDUM

TO: District Superintendents
District Personnel Administrators

FROM: Mary Hipp
Director, Office of Educator Services

Kimberly Mack,
Director, Office of Leadership Effectiveness

DATE: March 17, 2026

RE: Educator Contracts for the 2026-27 School Year

As school districts initiate the teacher contracting process for the 2026-27 School Year, we wish to remind you of the pertinent South Carolina laws regulating this process. This memorandum specifically addresses the critical deadlines for notifications regarding teacher employment.

1. Pursuant to [S.C. Code Ann. § 59-25-410](#), as amended by the Educator Assistance Act of 2025, districts must give written notice to all currently employed teachers regarding the status of their employment for the upcoming school year before May 1 (i.e., **no later than April 30**). Failure to provide this written notice on or before April 30 will necessitate the issuance of a contract for that teacher. The written notification of employment must include a projected minimum salary schedule for the upcoming school year. No later than 14 calendar days before students are scheduled to return to school for the new school year, the district (i.e., the superintendent, principal, or supervisor) must notify teachers of their tentative assignment. As amended, this statute includes additional requirements for districts concerning the reassignment of teachers to another school location after the initial assignment notification.
2. Pursuant to [S.C. Code Ann. § 59-25-420](#), teachers who have been offered reemployment by the district must notify the district's board of trustees in writing of their acceptance of the contract before May 11 (i.e., **no later than May 10**). *Regardless of whether employment is offered to the teacher on February 1 or April 30, the teacher has until at least May 10 to give written notice to the district*

regarding a decision.

3. Pursuant to the General Appropriation Act for Fiscal Year 2025–26, S.C. Act 69, [Proviso 1.63](#) (SDE: Retired Educators Employment), school districts may notify retired educators of employment in writing on or before May 1 of the current fiscal year. School districts employing retired educators must provide documentation to the South Carolina Department of Education of compliance with the earnings limitation exemptions established in S.C. Code Ann. § 9-1-1795.

All districts must abide by these statutory requirements, which delineate timelines for both districts and educators. The statutes provide districts and employees with a fair and uniform framework, establish a statewide standard, and mitigate potential stressors teachers may encounter when moving between districts.

If you have any questions concerning educator contracts, please contact Mary Hipp, Director of the Office of Educator Services, mhipp@ed.sc.gov, or Kimberly Mack, Director of the Office of Leadership Effectiveness, kemack@ed.sc.gov.

Thank you for your continued commitment to public education in South Carolina.