

MEMORANDUM

TO: District Superintendents
District Instructional Leaders
Principals

FROM: Kristi D. Austin, PhD
Director, Office of Assessment and Standards

DATE: September 22, 2026

RE: Office of Assessment and Standards and the Office of Instructional Supports
Math Professional Learning

The South Carolina Department of Education's (SCDE) Office of Assessment and Standards and the Office of Instructional Supports will offer two free, three-hour professional learning opportunities for fifth grade through eighth grade math teachers.

Decimal Mastery: Using Manipulatives to Build Conceptual Understanding

Get ready to bring decimals to life! In this hands-on session, participants will build their own bead strings and use them to explore decimal operations in a visual, meaningful way. We will bridge concrete tools to abstract thinking by connecting bead strings to open number lines—and even extending the ideas into algebraic expressions. Along the way, you will discover practical, student-friendly strategies for using manipulatives that spark curiosity, deepen understanding, and make math both fun and engaging.

Both sessions will be held on October 27, 2026. The morning session will begin at 8:30 a.m. and end at 11:30 a.m., and the afternoon session will begin at 12:30 p.m. and end at 3:30 p.m. Both face-to-face sessions will be held at the SCDE Agency Building, 849 Learning Lane, West Columbia, SC 29172, in room A111.

Registration must be submitted in advance via the [linked online registration form](#) by October 16, 2026. Space is limited. Confirmation emails for each location will be sent after registration closes.

For questions about these sessions, please contact Dawn Hood at dbhood@ed.sc.gov or Linda Branham at lgbranham@ed.sc.gov.