

MEMORANDUM

TO: District Superintendents
Human Resource Directors
District Web Access Coordinators
District Business Officials

FROM: Kendra M. Hunt, CGFO, CPM
Chief Financial Officer

DATE: March 18, 2025

RE: Procedures for Requirements to Employ Retired Individuals for School Year 2025–26

Pursuant to S.C. Code Ann. § 9-1-1795, beginning in School Year (SY) 2018–19 and annually thereafter, the State Board of Education (SBE) designates areas of critical academic need and critical geographic need for the employment of retired certified teachers who will be exempt from the earnings limitations imposed by S.C. Code Ann. § 9-1-1790.

For SY 2025–26 and for the purpose of employing retired certified teachers who will be exempt from the earnings limitation, the SBE defined critical need areas as follows:

1. Critical need subject areas identified and approved by the SBE on March 4, 2025, for forgiveness of the South Carolina Teacher Loan Program.
2. Critical need geographic areas for the employment of retired teachers include the following:
 - a. schools identified and approved by the SBE on March 4, 2025, for forgiveness of the South Carolina Teacher Loan Program; and
 - b. additional schools in any school district in which at least 67 percent of the schools meet the criteria to qualify as a critical need geographic area for the purpose of teacher loan forgiveness; and
 - c. all career and technical education (CTE) centers statewide.
 - d. all adult education programs

S. C. Code Ann. § 9-1-1795 states the following:

Employment of certain retired teachers without loss of retirement benefits;
procedure by which retired teachers may be employed.

(A) A retired member of the system may return to employment covered by the system without affecting the monthly retirement allowance he is receiving from the system if the retired member is a certified teacher and is employed by a school district to teach in the classroom in his area of certification in a critical academic need area or geographic need area as defined by the State Board of Education.

(B) For the provisions of this section to apply, the Department of Education must review and approve, from the documentation provided by the school district, that no qualified, nonretired member is available for employment in the position, and that the member selected for employment meets the requirements of this section. However, a school district may not consider a member of the system for employment before May thirty-first of each year. After approval is received from the Department of Education, school districts must notify the State Board of Education of the engagement of a retired member as a teacher and the department must notify the State Retirement System of their exemption from the earnings limitation. If the employing district fails to notify the State department of the engagement of a retired member as a teacher, the district shall reimburse the system for all benefits wrongly paid to the retired member.

(C) A school district shall pay to the system the employer contribution for active members prescribed by law with respect to any retired member engaged to perform services for the district, regardless of whether the retired member is a full-time or part-time employee, a temporary or permanent employee. If a district which is obligated to the system pursuant to this subsection fails to pay the amount due, as determined by the system, the amount must be deducted from any funds payable to the district by the State.

(D) Beginning July 1, 2001, any retired certified school teacher or certified employee may be employed in a school or school district which is in a critical geographic need area or has received a ‘below average’ or ‘unsatisfactory’ academic performance rating pursuant to the Education Accountability Act without penalty from the South Carolina Retirement System.

For the salary cap exemption, eligible teachers must hold a valid educator certificate for the 2025–26 school year and teach in their certified subject area. Retired educators must either teach in a critical needs subject area or critical needs geographical area based on the approved SY 2025–26 critical needs list.

Principals and Assistant Principals qualify for the salary cap exemption **only** if they are employed in a school listed on the critical geographical needs list and have maintained their professional certificate in his/her area of certification.

Retiree assurance forms for educators with expired teaching certificates will not be approved until the certification is renewed or extended.

Please remember that by signing the retiree assurance form, the school district is assuring (1) school board hiring practices were followed; (2) a non-retired member, if available, was considered for the position; and (3) the retired educator considered for the position was the best qualified applicant.

Based upon Proviso 1.63 of the current fiscal year, school districts may notify retired educators of employment in writing on or before May 1.

The 2025–26 critical need geographic areas (schools) for the employment of retired teachers may be found on the SCDE [Critical Need Areas](#) webpage. The expanded list of critical need geographic areas (schools) may be found under the section “Retirement Earnings Limitation Exemption for the Employment of Retired Teachers.”

The amount that a retiree can earn upon returning to covered employment is provided in S.C. Code Ann. § 9-1-1790. The \$10,000 earnings limitation applies to individuals who retired after January 1, 2013, and retired before the individual reached the age of 62. If applicable, an individual’s first day in the TERI program is considered the date of retirement.

The \$10,000 earnings limitation **does not** apply if the member has retired before January 1, 2013, or if the member has attained the age of 62 years at retirement.

Retiree Assurance Forms are submitted through the SCDE Web Application Portal. User roles for the Superintendent (Retiree Waiver Superintendent) and the Superintendent’s designee (Retiree Assurance Form Submitter) are created through your district’s Web Access Coordinator (WAC). Roles may also be assigned by submitting an eSupport Request on the SCDE web portal. The title for this role is identified as “Retiree Assurance Form Submitter” in the Access Management Tool (AMT) and the District and Entity Information Management (DEIM) system. Only the superintendent or the superintendent’s designee may sign and submit the retiree assurance forms for verification.

Please assign new or revised user roles by Friday, April 4, 2025. Once user roles are established, you will receive notification that the SY 2025–26 Retiree Assurance Form is available on the web portal and when you can begin completing retiree assurance forms.

March 18, 2025

You must complete a retiree assurance form for each school year that a retired educator returns to employment.

Please email your questions or concerns to retireewaiver@ed.sc.gov.