



STATE OF SOUTH CAROLINA
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

MEMORANDUM

TO: District Superintendents
District Instructional Leaders
District Accountability Coordinators
District Test Coordinators

FROM: Matthew Ferguson
Deputy Superintendent & Chief Academic Officer
Division of College, Career, and Military Readiness

DATE: January 9, 2024

RE: SC READY Science Waiver and 2023-2024 Accountability

The South Carolina Department of Education (SCDE) has successfully obtained a waiver from certain Every Student Succeeds Act requirements related to its science assessment for the upcoming school year. This waiver pertains to the following sections:

1. **Assessment Information (Section 1111(b)(2)(B)(ii)):** The usual requirement to provide detailed information about students' standards attainment and grade-level performance is waived.
2. **Individual Student Reports (Section 1111(b)(2)(B)(x)):** The obligation to produce comprehensive reports for parents, teachers, and school leaders on each student's academic needs soon after assessments is waived.
3. **Itemized Score Analyses (Section 1111(b)(2)(B)(xii)):** The requirement to deliver detailed score analyses for districts and schools is waived.
4. **State Report Cards on Science Achievement (Section 1111(h)(1)(C)(ii)):** The mandate to include science achievement data in State report cards is waived.
5. **District Report Cards on Science Achievement (Section 1111(h)(2)(C)(i)):** The need for districts to collect and report comparative science achievement data is waived.

This waiver is in place to facilitate the census field testing of new science standards in South Carolina. As part of the waiver conditions, the SCDE is amending the accountability metric for the 2023-2024 school year, particularly for the "prepared-for-success" measure.

Key Accountability Metric Amendments for 2024:

- The SCDE proposes reallocating the weight of the Elementary and Middle School "prepared for success" metric to the "achievement and growth" metrics.
- To motivate schools to meet the 95% participation rate in science assessments, schools that fail to reach this threshold will face a 5-point deduction in their overall index score.

For detailed information, please refer to the attached "SC Science Field Test Waiver Letter."