

MEMORANDUM

TO: District Superintendents

FROM: C. Matthew Ferguson, Ed.D., Esq.
Deputy Superintendent and Chief Academic Officer
Division of College, Career, and Military Readiness

DATE: February 18, 2025

RE: School Calendars: Application for Weather-Related State Board Waiver

South Carolina schools experienced an unprecedented combination of extreme weather this school year, and some communities are still recovering from the impact of Hurricane Helene. We recognize that districts have had to make difficult decisions about ensuring student safety and meeting requirements for instructional time.

Districts that have already made up, or have the plan to make up, **three instructional days** and whose **local board has waived three additional days** may apply for a **waiver of up to three more instructional days** from the **State Board of Education**.

To support districts in finalizing plans to meet instructional requirements using eLearning days, make-up days, and weather-related school closure days, the South Carolina Department of Education (SCDE) requests that **all districts that intend to seek a waiver for forgiveness of up to three school days from the State Board of Education** submit a formal request through [this survey](#) by **March 20**.

This deadline will allow the SCDE to bring requests to the **April 1 meeting of the State Board of Education**. Planning resources from previous calendar [guidance](#) are included below as a reference.

Please contact CR Hall, chall@ed.sc.gov with additional questions.

S.C. Code Ann. § [59-1-425](#)(A), requires all districts to establish a school calendar with 190 days. This calendar must include:

1. A minimum of 180 instructional days, covering at least nine months;
2. At least three days designated as make-up days;
3. Three days allocated for collegial development.

Guidance on Make-Up Days and Weather-Related School Closures

S.C. Code Ann. § [59-1-425](#)(B) states that all days missed due to extreme weather or other disruptions must be made up:

- **Make-up Days:** Each district must designate at least three make-up days annually.
- **Extended School Day Option:** A school district may make up **instructional** time by **extending the school day by at least one hour**, provided the district has the plan approved by the SCDE.
- **Local Waivers:** A local school board may grant a waiver for up to three missed days by majority vote, but only after the district has made up at least three full days or the equivalent number of hours. Any waiver applies to all charter schools within the district and students participating in home-school programs approved by the district board.
- **State Board of Education Waiver:** Should a district need to waive more than three additional days, the local board of education may—by majority vote—request the State Board of Education to waive up to three more days for extreme weather or other disruptions.
- **General Assembly Waiver:** For any waiver beyond six days of missed instruction, legislative action by the General Assembly would be required. At this time, no district requires this level of waiver.

A decision tree chart is included below.



SOUTH CAROLINA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

WEATHER-RELATED SCHOOL CLOSURES

