



STATE OF SOUTH CAROLINA
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

MEMORANDUM

TO: District Superintendents
School Business Officials
Read to Succeed Liaisons
Personnel Administrators

FROM: Dr. Alisha Green
Director, Office of Early Learning and Literacy

Michael Scheele
Accountant/Fiscal Analyst III, Office of Finance

DATE: August 6, 2024

RE: State Funded Reading/Literacy Coach Allocation and Agreement (due September 9)

This memo provides an overview of required documentation for districts utilizing their 2024–25 reading/literacy coach allocation(s).

Requirements for the hiring of reading/literacy coaches have been updated for FY 2024–25 to comply with Act 114, the revised Read to Succeed Act. Districts may still utilize funding to employ school-based reading/literacy coaches that may serve in a primary, elementary, or middle school or a combination of these schools depending on the area of highest need in the district. The district must align the placement of coaches to the district reading plan that is approved by the South Carolina Department of Education (SCDE).

Updates to Reading Coach Qualifications

The current qualifications in the Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) are:

- He or she holds a bachelor's degree or higher and the Read to Succeed Literacy Coach or Read to Succeed Literacy Specialist endorsement.
- He or she holds a bachelor's degree or higher and is actively pursuing the Read to Succeed Literacy Coach or Read to Succeed Literacy Specialist endorsement.

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- He or she holds a bachelor's degree or higher and is actively pursuing a literacy coach endorsement through an alternative program that has been approved by both the district and by the SCDE Office of Early Learning and Literacy.
- He or she holds a master's degree or higher in reading or a closely related field and is actively pursuing the Read to Succeed Literacy Coach or Read to Succeed Literacy Specialist endorsement.

At a minimum, educators serving as a reading/literacy coach should be certified to teach reading to the students being served in the school of placement and hold a literacy endorsement.

Additionally, districts should document the educator's proven effectiveness in reading instruction aligned with the science of reading.

Reading coaches should at least have completed the coursework to earn the R2S teacher endorsement. The coaching endorsement can still be earned through the Year 1/Year 2 cohort work. **The updated legislation also highlights the importance of reading coaches being certified to teach reading in the school they are serving;** in other words, an individual holding a mid-level certificate would not be certified to teach in an elementary school and therefore should not serve as an elementary reading coach. They should have an elementary or early childhood certificate.

Allocation Flexibility

In prior years, districts have requested flexibility for reading coaches to serve students. The current provisos allow select schools to request a waiver to expend their reading/literacy coach funds on interventionists who spend fifty percent or more of their time providing direct support to struggling readers in grades kindergarten through grade five. Schools in which fewer than a third of third grade students scored at the lowest achievement level in SC READY English language arts (ELA) may request a waiver. Districts that are interested in submitting a waiver should consult the attached guidance document, which includes a flowchart for schools deciding whether to use their reading coach as an interventionist. Districts requesting a waiver will complete information in the survey linked below.

Required Documentation, Office of Early Learning and Literacy (OELL)

1. District Memorandum of Agreement (MOA): Districts must complete the attached MOA for all reading/literacy coaches and interventionists funded through Act 114. The MOA will only need to be signed by the district superintendent. Please return the completed signature page of the MOA to Marie Gibbons at mgibbons@ed.sc.gov by Monday, September 9, 2024.
2. Specific Parties Agreement Document: The following survey should be completed on each reading/literacy coach and interventionist funded through Act 114. This survey includes the waiver for districts seeking to use their reading/literacy coach allocation towards an interventionist. It must be submitted by the end of day on Monday, September 9, 2024. [Click here to access the survey](#). Districts with a large number of coaches/state

funded interventionists may also choose to input the necessary data into [this spreadsheet](#) and email the completed form to mgibbons@ed.sc.gov.

3. **Principal Agreement:** After the MOAs are received, the SCDE will email principals a copy of the MOA to aid with planning for the school year and facilitate conversations with the reading/literacy coach. Principals will complete a short Formstack to acknowledge receipt of the MOA.

Required Documentation, Office of Finance

The Office of Finance needs to collect an updated list of individuals receiving this allocation in order to determine funding for your district in 2024–25. In the attached spreadsheet, fill in the information next to the corresponding schools in your district and email the document to Michael Scheele at mscheele@ed.sc.gov by Monday, September 9, 2024. If your school is eligible to use this funding for an interventionist or on supplemental services, please note the correct position on the spreadsheet. Please also provide the salary and fringe separately for each employee.

Reading/literacy coach funding is determined by the number of primary and elementary schools serving students in your district; however, you may utilize funding in a primary, elementary, middle school, or a combination of these schools based on the area of highest need in your district. Reading coaches' expected funding is \$53,540.29 for a 1.0 full time employee (FTE). The district-signed MOA must be submitted, and the eligible Reading Coach/Interventionist must be listed in the SC Educator system with a position code of "87" to have funding released.

Should you have any questions regarding funding, please contact Michael Scheele at 803-734-8145, mscheele@ed.sc.gov. Questions regarding the MOA and waiver should be directed to Marie Gibbons at 803-734-0529, mgibbons@ed.sc.gov.