TO: District Superintendents

FROM: Holly Hadden  
Assistant General Counsel, Title IX Coordinator

DATE: May 7, 2020

RE: Title IX Initiative and the District Entity & Information Management System

On February 26, 2020, the U.S. Department of Education’s Office for Civil Rights (OCR) announced a new Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 (Title IX) enforcement initiative to combat sexual assault in K–12 public schools. This initiative will also work to further implement and enforce the Every Student Succeeds Act’s (ESSA) directive that prohibits education agencies from assisting a school employee in obtaining a new job if the agency knows or has probable cause to believe the employee was engaged in sexual misconduct regarding a minor or student. The ESSA directive has exceptions, and all districts are advised to review the law at 20 U.S.C. § 7926.

As part of the initiative, the OCR will conduct compliance reviews, data quality reviews, and propose more data collection. The OCR also aims to increase public awareness and support to address the issue of sexual assault in K–12 schools.

Please ensure your district’s Title IX Coordinator is aware of this initiative. To assist in Title IX communications between districts and the South Carolina Department of Education (SCDE), districts are advised to ensure a Title IX Coordinator is named in the SCDE’s District & Entity Information Management system. As noted in an OCR Dear Colleague letter from April 24, 2015, the “Title IX Coordinator plays an essential role in helping you ensure that every person affected by the operations of your educational institution—including students, their parents or guardians, employees, and applicants for admission and employment—is aware of the legal rights Title IX affords and that your institution and its officials comply with their legal obligations under Title IX.” Questions regarding Title IX, Title IX Coordinators, or this memo can be directed to Holly Hadden at hhadden@ed.sc.gov or 803-734-1807.