



SOUTH CAROLINA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

SCHOOL DISTRICT MEMORANDA

ed.sc.gov



April 13, 2021

Missed last week's memos?

All SCDE weekly memo communications are archived [here](#). Individual memos can be found on the [School District Memoranda Archive](#).

COVID-19 CASES

COVID-19 Cases Associated with Staff and Students

DHEC began reporting positive COVID-19 cases in K-12 schools on September 4, 2020. Since that time, there have been **16,676** [positive cases among K-12 students and staff](#) who attended school face to face during their infectious period. During that same time period (9/4/2020 to 4/11/2021) DHEC has reported **435,895** [positive cases among all South Carolinians](#).

This means that positive cases among K-12 students and staff who attended school account for **3.8%** of South Carolina's total since K-12 positive case reporting began. Public and private K-12 students and staff make up approximately one fifth of South Carolina's total population.

[COVID-19 Cases Associated with Staff & Students](#) (as of 4/11/2021)

[Recent Disease Activity, by County Report](#) (as of 4/7/2021)

COVID-19 VACCINE

Educator and Support Staff Vaccine Participation Survey

DEADLINE EXTENDED

The South Carolina Department of Education (SCDE) strives to keep policy makers, DHEC, and vaccine providers informed of the progress of COVID-19 vaccinations among educators and support staff. We ask that one person in each district complete this survey no later than **Friday, April 16, 2021**. This information will be collected separately for charter schools in the South Carolina Public Charter School District and the Charter Institute at Erskine.

We realize districts may not have precise figures on vaccinations among staff given the availability of vaccines at non-school based vaccination sites and retail pharmacies but ask

you answer the questions in the survey linked below to the best of your knowledge.

[Educator and Support Staff COVID-19 Vaccine Participation Survey](#)

[Educator and Support Staff Vaccine Participation Survey for Charter Schools](#)

MILITARY HONOR CORDS

AUDIENCE: District Superintendents, Principals, Public Information Officers, School Counselors

CONTACT: events@ed.sc.gov

The red, white, and blue honor cords should be distributed, to the extent possible, to those high school seniors who have chosen to serve our country by enlisting in the U.S. Armed Forces or attending one of our distinguished military service academies.

As part of our annual statewide recognition, we are asking for students to submit names, photos, and enlisted branch of service [through this form](#) as part of an online recognition ceremony that will be aired on **May 27, 2021**. We ask that each student submit this information by **May 10, 2021**, and hope that you can help us make students and parents aware of this recognition opportunity. We appreciate your assistance in helping us recognize those that have chosen to protect our freedom by serving in the armed services.

NOTE: This year's honor cords will be shipped directly to high schools with instructions for distribution. Any questions or concerns should be directed to events@ed.sc.gov.

[Military Honor Cords and Recognition Ceremony - Memo](#) PDF (135 KB)

TESTING

2020-21 Mandatory Third Grade Retention Guidance

AUDIENCE: District Superintendents, District Instructional Leaders, Read to Succeed Coordinators

CONTACT: Quincie Moore, qmoore@ed.sc.gov

Pursuant to [Act 284 of 2014 \(Read to Succeed\)](#), mandatory retention is required at third grade for students who fail to demonstrate reading proficiency on SC READY Reading as indicated by scoring at the equivalent to Not Met 1 on the former Palmetto Assessment of State Standards (PASS). While a student may be exempt from the mandatory retention for good cause, they shall continue to receive instructional support, services, and reading interventions appropriate for their age and reading level.

As a result of school closures in spring 2020 related to COVID-19, the United States Department of Education (USED) granted waivers from mandated assessments; therefore, SC READY was **not administered** during the 2019–20 school year. School districts were asked to follow local school board policy with regard to student retention.

For the 2020–21 school year, the South Carolina Department of Education (SCDE) sought a waiver from federal accountability-related testing requirements. The waiver request was denied by the USED; therefore, SC READY will be administered in spring 2021 and mandatory retention at third grade as required in Act 284 will be in effect.

[2020-21 Mandatory Third Grade Retention Guidance - Memo](#) PDF (179 KB)

VirtualSC EOCEP Grading Process for 2020-21

AUDIENCE: District Superintendents, District Instructional Leaders, Principals

CONTACT: Katina Montgomery, kmontgomery@ed.sc.gov

State Board of Education Regulation 43-262 requires a statewide EOCEP assessment for public school students taking gateway courses in English/language arts, mathematics, science, and social studies. Public school students taking one of these gateway courses with VirtualSC should be offered the appropriate EOCEP assessment by their sponsoring public school following the same testing protocols and flexibility offered to all students within the school or district.

In an effort to ensure uniformity of all students within a district as outlined in the previous agency [memo](#), VirtualSC will provide sponsoring public schools with student grades calculated from coursework only – excluding the EOCEP assessment score. Due to the EOCEP flexibility provided, each district is being allowed to determine how the assessment scores are included in the final grade calculation. Sponsoring public schools should include EOCEP scores in the final grade calculation of VirtualSC students' using the same calculation method used for all students within the district to ensure uniformity. Schools should record the newly calculated final grade on the transcript of all VirtualSC students.

[VirtualSC EOCEP Grading Process for 2020-21 - Memo](#) PDF (134 KB)

