

Pathways to Flexibility

ESSA Academy

C.R. Hall

March 24-25, 2025



**SOUTH CAROLINA
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION**

Agenda

1 What Is Flexibility?

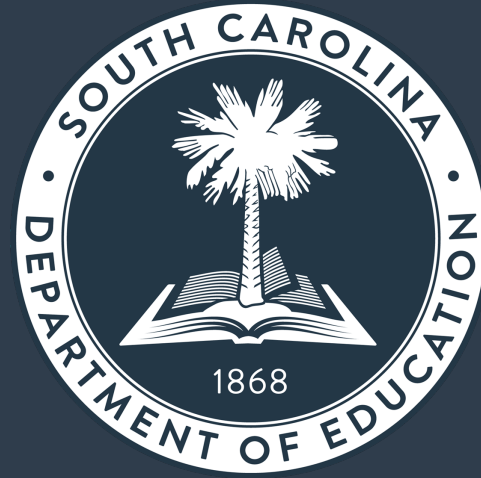
2 Types of Waivers

- Waiver
- School of Innovation

3 Flexibility Plans

- Proficiency-Based System Plan
- Competency-Based Education





Agenda #1

What Is Flexibility?



What Is Flexibility?

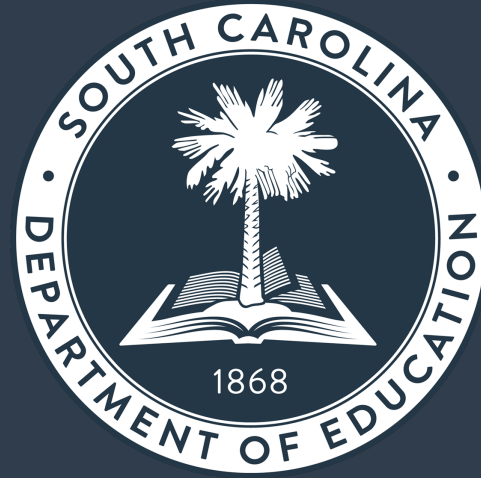


- Flexibility means to bend easily or adapt to new, different, or changing requirements
- Under R. 43-261(C), the SCDE may waive any regulation that would impede the implementation of the District Strategic and School Renewal Plan (DSSR)

Types of Flexibility

- Waivers
- School of Innovation Waiver
- Proficiency-Based System
- Competency-Based Education





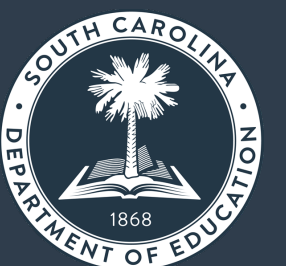
Agenda #2

Types of Waivers



Waivers

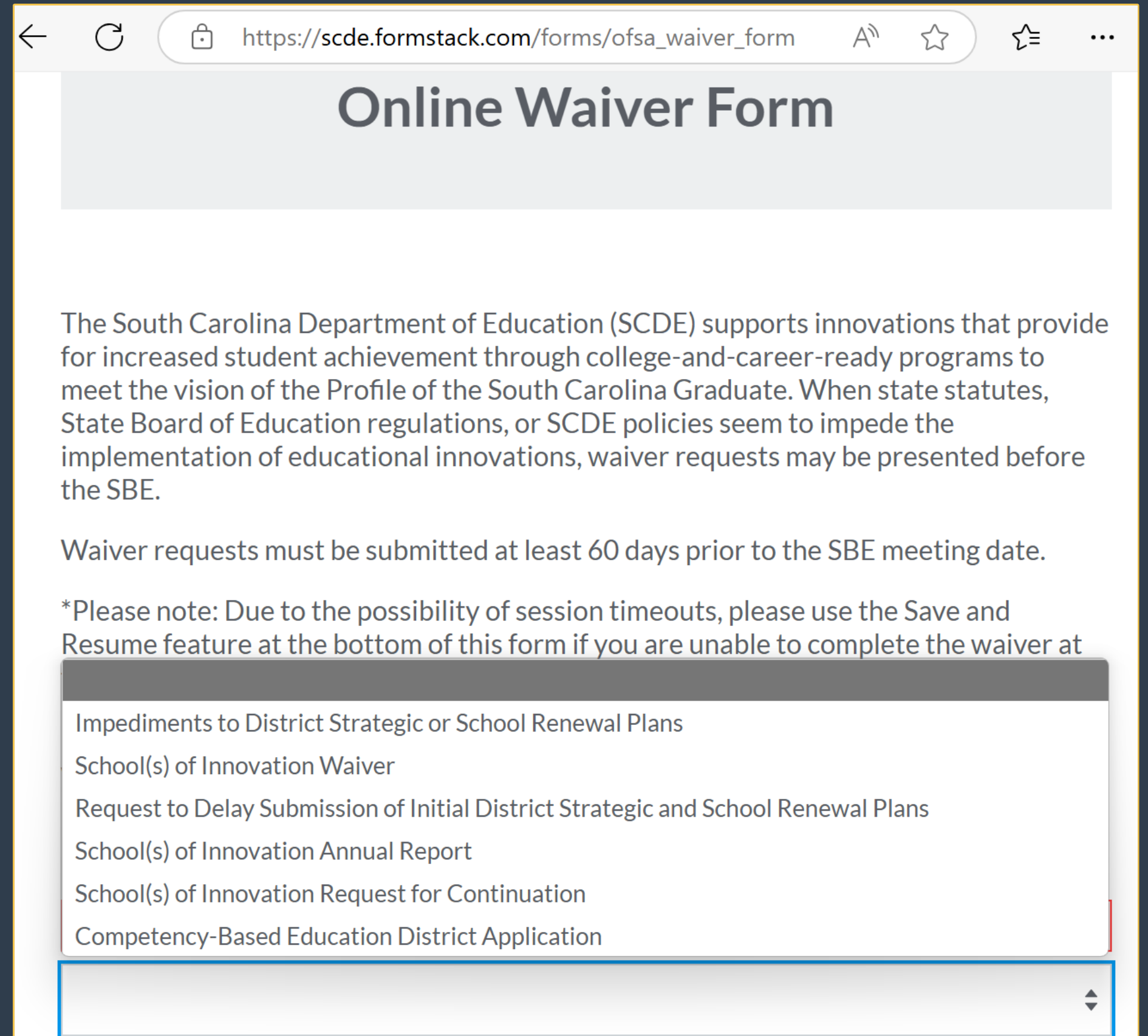
- A waiver can be used on any regulation that impedes the implementation of the DSSR
- Waivers are good for the life of the DSSR cycle
- At the end of the waiver, the district must either reapply for the waiver or have developed a solution, so the waiver is no longer needed
- Waivers that are generally approved:
 - Delay the submission of the Initial DSSR
 - 1500 minutes per week
 - 4 preps
 - Class size



Where Do I Submit a Waiver?

SCDE Website>District & Schools>State

Accountability>Online Form for District Waiver Request



The screenshot shows a web browser window with the URL https://scde.formstack.com/forms/ofsa_waiver_form. The page title is "Online Waiver Form".

The South Carolina Department of Education (SCDE) supports innovations that provide for increased student achievement through college-and-career-ready programs to meet the vision of the Profile of the South Carolina Graduate. When state statutes, State Board of Education regulations, or SCDE policies seem to impede the implementation of educational innovations, waiver requests may be presented before the SBE.

Waiver requests must be submitted at least 60 days prior to the SBE meeting date.

*Please note: Due to the possibility of session timeouts, please use the Save and Resume feature at the bottom of this form if you are unable to complete the waiver at

The form contains a list of waiver categories:

- Impediments to District Strategic or School Renewal Plans
- School(s) of Innovation Waiver
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- Competency-Based Education District Application



School of Innovation Waiver

- **§ 59-19-350** speaks to the statutes for a School of Innovation
 - Identify each state statute, regulation, and local district policy from which the school is requesting exemption
 - The local school board must approve with two-thirds vote
 - The district superintendent must submit the request to the SBE for approval
- Schools **cannot exempt**:
 - Federal and state laws and constitutional provisions regarding discrimination
 - Health, safety, civil rights, and disability rights that are applied to other public schools
 - Minimum student attendance requirements
 - State assessments
 - Certification for core academic areas



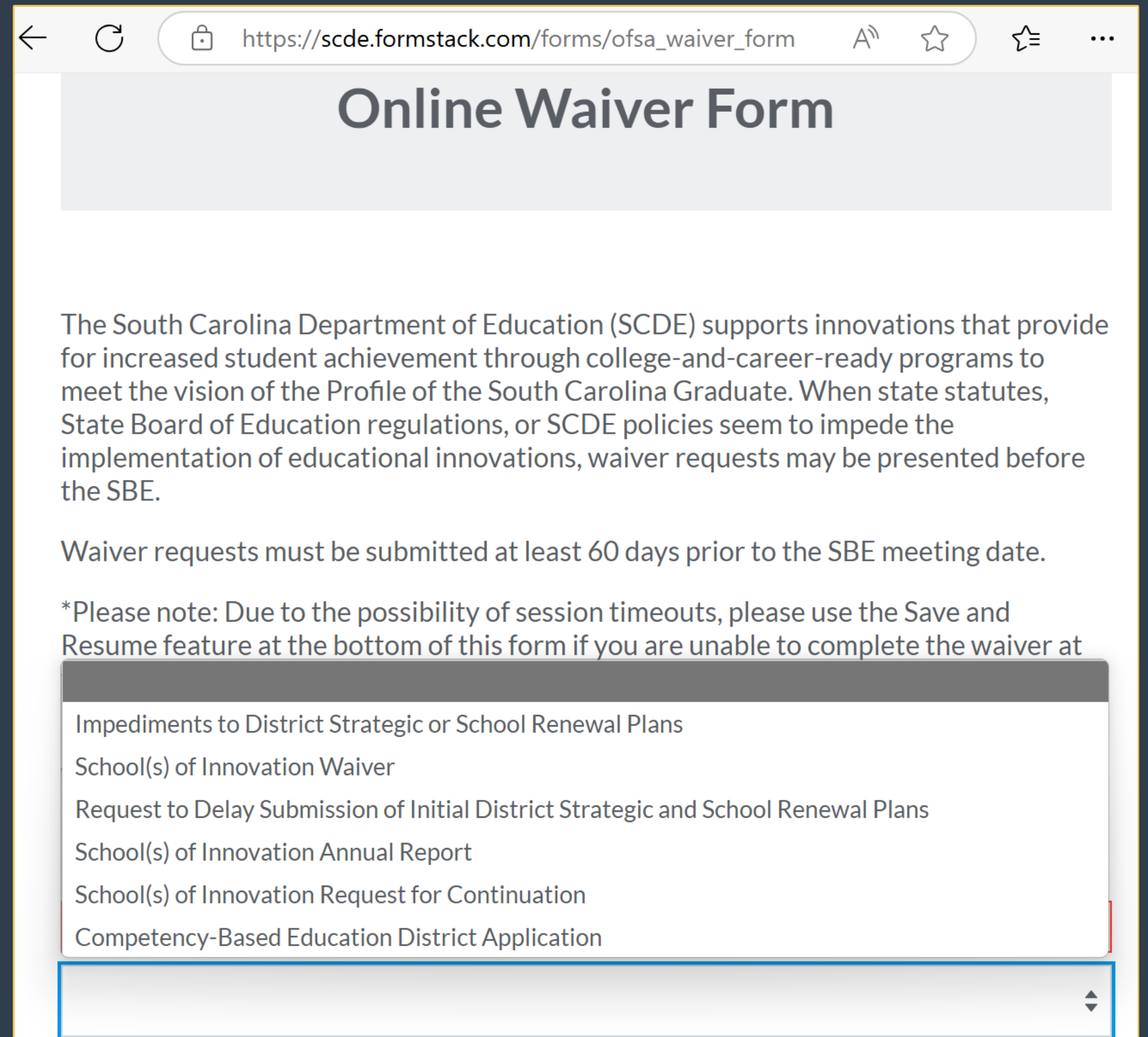
School of Innovation Waiver

- The School of Innovation Waiver must include:
 - Identify each state statute, regulation, and local district policy from which the school is requesting exemption
 - Identify how the flexibility will support academic achievement for students and the Profile of the SC Graduate.
 - Documentation of a public local board meeting and approval
 - Disclose the financial model to be used
- During the Waiver years, by July 1:
 - Demonstrate compliance with the financial model
 - Report the academic achievement of its students



Where Do I Submit a School of Innovation Waiver?

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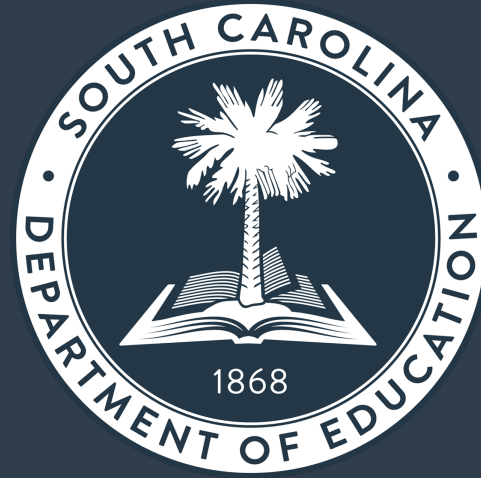
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Agenda #3

Flexibility Plans



Proficiency-Based System

- R. 43-234(II)(C) states that districts can seek a Proficiency-Based System (PBS)
- Schools may offer credit through a PBS
- Types of credit
 - Initial
 - Credit Recovery
 - Credit Through Prior Knowledge
- Information to include in the PBS
 - What goals in the DSSR precipitated the decision for a PBS?
 - What evidence will you use to demonstrate you met those goals?
 - How will the district determine proficiency?
 - Describe how the district is ensuring compulsory attendance laws will be met.



Proficiency-Based System

- Are the following areas within the district offering a PBS?
 - Adult education
 - Alternative school
 - Credit recovery program
 - Initial credit program
 - Mastery-based exam
 - Any other program where you are altering the requirements for offering high school credit.



Proficiency-Based System

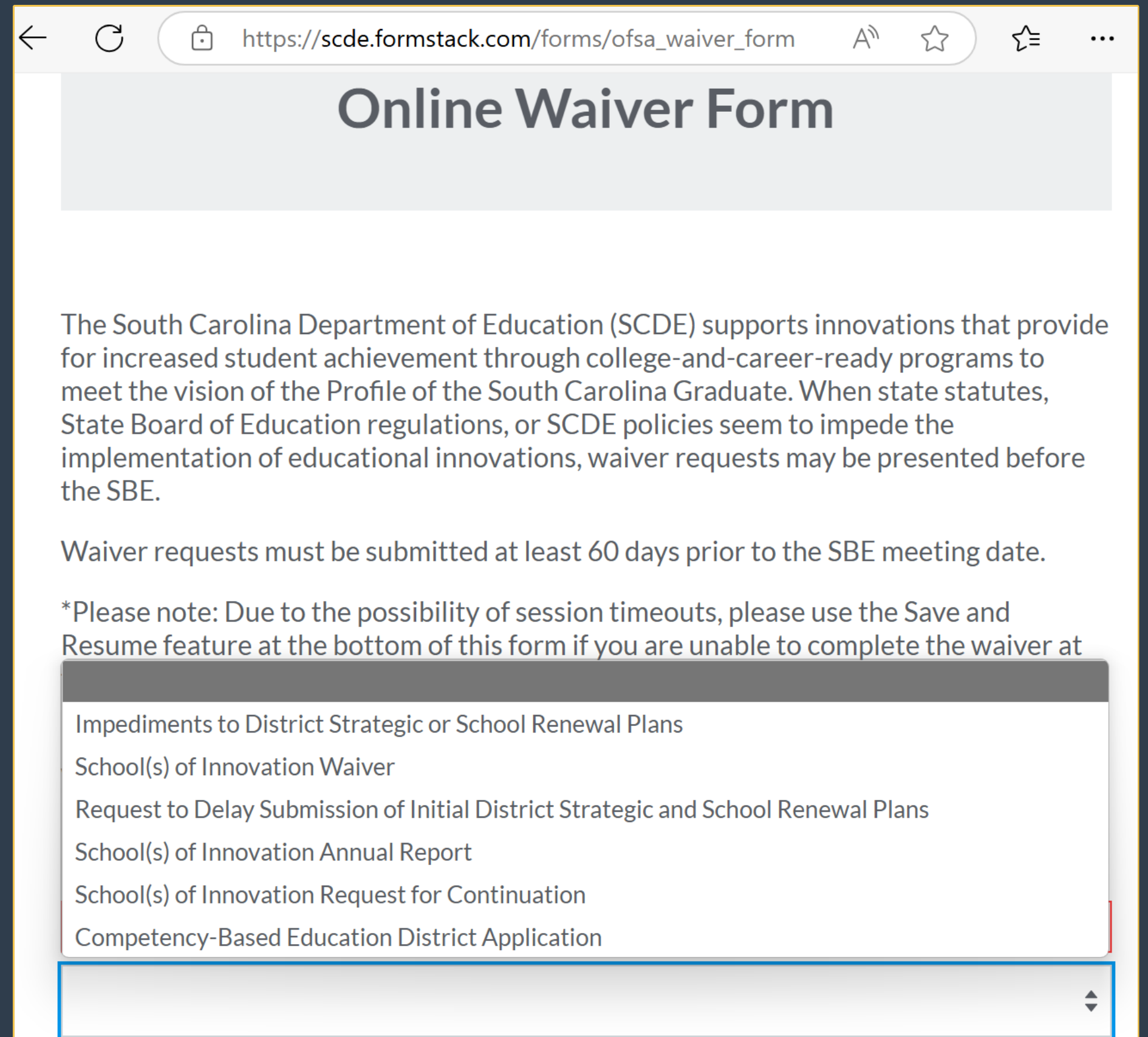
- All PBS material will be submitted via FormStack
- Districts must submit the plan along with the DSSR
 - The Initial PBS Plan or the Evaluation are due April 30th
 - The PBS Plan is good for the life of the DSSR Cycle
 - Once there is an approved plan, the District must complete an evaluation each subsequent year



Where Can I Find the Formstack?

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Possibilities

- Initial Credit
 - Scheduling conflicts
 - Transfer students with courses that are not in the course catalog
- Credit Recovery
 - Recover credit for students who have failed a course between the range of 51-59
- Credit Through Prior Knowledge
 - Credit for taking a mastery test
 - Foreign language, math



Words of Wisdom

- When using a PBS class, a student must enroll in another course after the completion of the PBS class
 - Attendance counts every day
- Determine the district's standard for proficiency
- Think outside the box
 - What is the worst thing we can say?
- Clarity
 - Provide the details
 - Be explicit



What If?

- What if my district has a PBS plan but we need to add more information to it?
 - This can be done through the annual evaluation. When your district rewrites the DSSR, the new PBS will be written to include the new information.
- What if my district's PBS plan does not address credit recovery?
 - This can be addressed through the annual evaluation.
- What if I want to see another district's PBS plan, who can I befriend?
 - Greenville, Lexington 1, Lexington 2, & York 3



Competency-Based Education

Section 59-19-360.

(A) (1) If a district or school is seeking to implement competency-based education, the State Board of Education may exempt the school from state laws, policies, and regulations that hinder the implementation of certain competency-based practices. A district that wishes to obtain an exemption may submit a waiver application to the State Board of Education in a format developed by the State Department of Education. To be considered, a waiver application must:

- a) be approved by the local school district board of trustees;
- b) be aligned to the district strategic plan; and
- c) provide for the implementation of the strategies described in the waiver application for all students in the school, which may be implemented in phases over a period of five or fewer years.



Competency-Based Education

(2) A district must show evidence of the meaningful steps already taken to engage parents and community stakeholders. A district also must include a continued plan to seek parental outreach and consultation using guidelines approved by the State Board of Education when submitting a waiver application for approval by its local board of trustees and the State Board of Education, or the application may not be considered.

(3) A district whose waiver application is approved may request additional exemptions and may request amendments to its current approved waiver on a rolling basis.



Competency-Based Education

Section 59-19-360

(B) Competency-based education is designed to improve educational outcomes for students by advancing their mastery of concepts and skills. A competency-based system in South Carolina must align with the Profile of the South Carolina Graduate and include the following core principles:

1. Learning outcomes must emphasize competencies that include:
 - (a) application and creation of World Class Knowledge; and
 - (b) the development and application of the World Class Skills and Life and Career Characteristics identified in the Profile of the South Carolina Graduate.
2. Competencies with explicit, measurable, and transferable student learning objectives provide transparency and guide students, with customized support from teachers, as the students pursue their own inquiries, understanding, and ownership of learning.
3. A student shall master competencies along a personalized and flexible pathway before he may advance. A student may demonstrate his mastery of competencies through his performance of the competencies, application of the competencies, or both.
4. Assessments must be meaningful and used to personalize learning experiences with a student.
5. A student must receive timely and personalized support based on his individual learning needs.

*Please see more details in [Act 127](#) (2024)



Competency-Based Education

Who can apply?

The CBE waiver is available to any South Carolina District. The CBE waiver does not apply to individual schools. If a school is interested in the CBE waiver, we encourage them to reach out to their district personnel.

To learn more about flexibilities in the state of South Carolina, refer to the South Carolina Education Flexibility Guide and the South Carolina Playbook for Personalized, Competency-based Learning.



What will the process look like if our district applies for a CBE waiver?

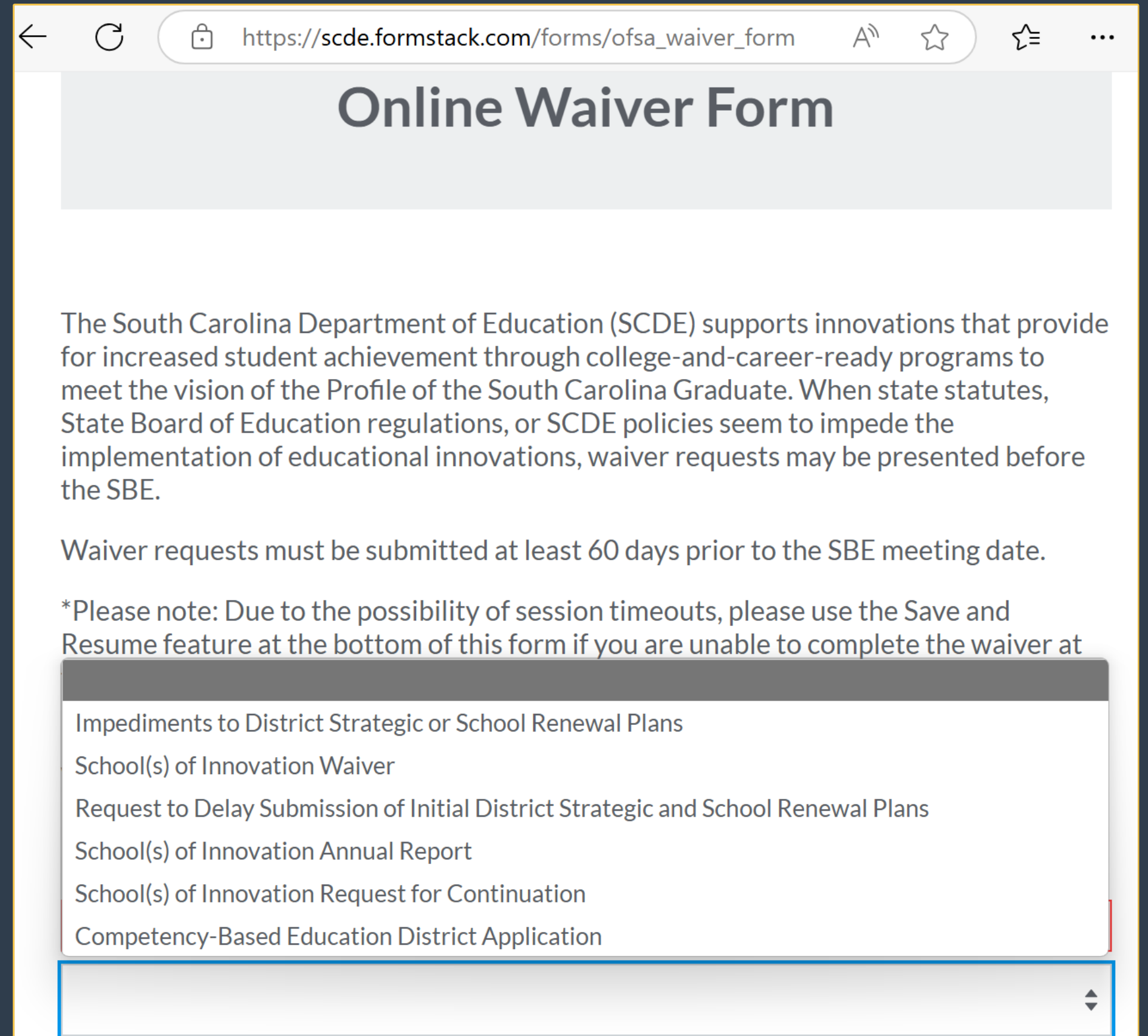
CBE Process Flow
Step One
The CBE District Waiver Application is submitted via Formstack . We recommend submitting your application in the spring as districts prepare for the next school year.
Step Two
The district receives an automatic confirmation email from formstack acknowledging receipt of the application. The Personalized Learning Team Lead or the Team Lead's designee is responsible for monitoring the (insert new name of inbox) inbox and providing the district with a confirmation receipt.
Step Three
<p>The Personalized Learning Team reviews the CBE application for clarity and completeness. If clear, logical, and complete, the application is placed into a SharePoint drive. The drive is shared amongst the following SCDE Offices:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Office of Federal and State Accountability• Office of Career and Technical Education• Personalized Learning Team
Step Four
<p>The intra-agency group, which is comprised of the directors, or directors' designees of the Personalized Learning Team (OAS), Office of Federal and State Accountability, the Office of Career and Technical Education meets as needed (approximately once a week in April and twice a week in May) to collaboratively review the CBE applications.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">▫ If the application is approved by the intra-agency group, move to step five.▫ If the application is not approved by the PBS Review Panel, move to step six.
Step Five
<p>The Personalized Learning Team Lead or the Team Lead's designee will submit the application to the Office of General Counsel's designee for legal guidance.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">▫ If no revisions are required by the General Counsel, move to step eight.▫ If revisions are required by the General Counsel, move to step six.

Step Six
If the application requires revision, the director or designee from the Personalized Learning Team will reach out to the district to serve as a thought partner to the district as clarifications are sought and revisions made.
Step Seven
<p>The revised application is submitted to the intra-agency group to be collaboratively reviewed once more.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">▫ If the application is approved by the intra-agency group, move to step five.▫ If the application is not approved by the intra-agency group, move to step six.
Step Eight
<p>Upon approval by the intra-agency group and General Counsel, the district will receive an approval letter.</p> <p>*The Team Lead, or Team Lead's designee from the Personalized Learning Team is responsible for providing the district with an approval letter and submitting the information to the SBE.</p>



Where Do I Submit a Competency-Based Education Application?

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Questions?





C.R. Hall

- *Team Lead, Office of Federal and State Accountability*



Staffing/Organizational Chart



C.R. Hall
Team Lead



Devetter Bradley
Education Associate



Pat Ciccantelli
Education Associate



Vacant
Education Associate



Vacant
Education Associate



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