

# 2015–16 ACCREDITATION STANDARDS FOR BOARD OF TRUSTEES, SUPERINTENDENT, AND DISTRICT OPERATIONS

**NOTE:** *For Accreditation purposes, schools and school districts are responsible for determining compliance with the following Accreditation Standards. Schools and school districts are also responsible for being in compliance with all applicable State Board of Education Regulations, and relevant statutes as outlined in the South Carolina Code of Laws.*

## I. PERSONNEL

### A. BOARD MEMBERS

1. It shall be unlawful for a school trustee to receive pay as a teacher of a free public school that is located in the same school district of which such person is a trustee. [§59-19-300]
2. No person who is a member of a board of trustees or the immediate family of a member of the board of trustees of any school district shall be employed by the board as a teacher without the written approval of the board of trustees of the district. [§59-25-10]
3. Within one year of taking office, all persons elected or appointed as members of a school district board of trustees shall complete successfully an orientation program in the powers, duties, and responsibilities of a board member. [§59-19-45]
4. Each school district must comply with all federal and state requirements with respect to recruiting and hiring. Failure by any school district to develop affirmative action plans or otherwise adhere to the provisions of the South Carolina Education Improvement Act of 1984 is cause for intervention by the State Department of Education (SCDE) to take the corrective steps as may be necessary. [§59-1-520]
5. The board of trustees exercises the general powers and duties as prescribed statutory requirements. [§59-19-90]
6. The board of trustees reports termination of certain district employees to State Board of Education (SBE) and State Superintendent. [R43-58.1, §59-19-90]

### B. SUPERINTENDENT

1. Each school district shall employ a superintendent who serves as the executive officer of the board of trustees and the professional leader of the school district. [R43-161, §59-15-10]
2. Administrators serving as district superintendents shall hold a superintendent's certificate. [R43-161, §59-13-20]

### C. ADDITIONAL CENTRAL OFFICE STAFF

1. Area superintendents must hold a superintendent's certificate. [R43-161, §59-13-20]
2. Personnel employed as administrative assistants, supervisors, and consultants having responsibilities for supervising instructional programs and student services must hold a master's degree and be certified in their area of primary responsibility or must earn a minimum of six semester hours annually toward appropriate certification. [R43-205]

D. SECRETARY AND CUSTODIAL SERVICES

1. Secretarial services shall be provided. [R43-209]
2. Custodial services shall be provided. [R43-209]

E. PERSONNEL

1. Before beginning full-time teaching in South Carolina, a teacher education candidate shall undergo a state criminal records check by the South Carolina Law Enforcement Division and a national criminal records check, supported by fingerprints, by the FBI. [§59-25-115]
2. Instructional paraprofessionals who work in Title I schools or a Title I targeted assistance programs, must meet state and federal requirements. [R43-209, 20 U.S.C. § 6301 et seq. (2002)]
3. Effective July 1, 2013, the appropriate middle level certificate will be required for all teaching core content areas in grades 7–8. Since grades 5–6 are included in both elementary and middle certification, school districts have flexibility to determine which certification is most appropriate. [20 U.S.C. §6301, et. seq., R43-62] (*Proviso 1.88 states a teacher certified at the secondary level may teach such courses in grades seven through twelve without having the add on certification for middle level education.*)

F. SUBCONTRACTORS--Child Development

1. School districts may contract with appropriate groups and/or agencies to provide part or all of the program. In such cases, the school district is charged with the responsibility of maintaining compliance with the regulations governing this program. [R43-264.1]

II. CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

- A. Each school district must develop a five-year district strategic plan and each school must develop a five-year school renewal plan. District and schools plans shall coordinate and align improvement initiatives. [§59-20-60, R43-261]
- B. New five-year district and school plans shall be submitted to the SCDE by April 30 and every five years thereafter. The annual update of the district strategic plan must be submitted to the SCDE by April 30 of each year. [§59-20-60, R43-261]
- C. The district strategic plan, school renewal plans, and annual updates must be reviewed and approved by the local board of trustees and coordinate funding from local, state, federal, and private sources. [§59-20-60, R43-261]
- D. The district strategic plan includes the accountability system that directs an annual needs assessment; prioritizes the performance goals; and reports how the district supports schools, students, and families. [§59-20-60]
- E. The Principal Evaluation Program is conducted and includes administration of the evaluation instrument, the evaluation cycle, and the mandatory training requirement for a principal with an unsatisfactory evaluation. Appropriate documentation is maintained by the district to verify the evaluation process. [R43-165.1, §59-24-80]

- F. Prior to permanent appointment as a principal for any elementary school, secondary school, or career and technology center, the person must be assessed for instructional leadership and management capabilities by the Leadership Academy of the South Carolina Department of Education. [§59-24-10]
- G. The district complies with all summer school program requirements. [R43-240]
- H. Each district shall provide at least one program for four-year old children and may serve identified three-year old children who have significant readiness deficiencies. [R43-264.1, §59-139-05]
- I. Districts and schools shall construct and implement a developmentally appropriate curriculum model from pre-school through grade 3. [R43-267, §59-29-10]
- J. The school district provides a family literacy program that enhances relationships between parents and children, connects the value of literacy development, promotes connections to school, develops knowledge in parenting and child development, and provides support services in the areas of health, nutrition, transportation, childcare, and other related needs. [R43-265, §59-29-10]
- K. Gifted and talented students are those who are identified in grades one through twelve as demonstrating high performance ability or potential in academic and/or artistic areas and therefore require educational programming beyond that normally provided by the general school programming in order to achieve their potential. To document planning, districts will submit a local gifted and talented programming plan every five years and delineate progress on this plan annually. [R43-220, §59-29-170]
- L. The school district offers Advanced Placement courses in all secondary schools. [R43-258.1, R43-234, §59-29-190]
- M. All secondary schools offer a college preparatory program. [§59-5-65]
- N. The district must maintain a student-teacher ratio of 21:1 or less reading and mathematics in grades 1, 2, and 3 [R43-231, §59-20-40] (*Flexibility Provisos 1.28 and 1A.15 suspends professional staffing ratios for 2015–16 in eligible districts.*)
- O. All students entering the eleventh grade must be administered a WorkKeys assessment. [§59-18-325]

### III. OPERATIONS AND PROCEDURES

#### A. SCHOOL YEAR

1. The statutory school term is one hundred ninety (190) days annually and shall consist of a minimum of one hundred eighty (180) days of instruction. The remaining days are utilized for the preparation for opening of school, staff development, planning, and parent conferences. [§59-1-425]
2. Full days missed because of weather or other unforeseen circumstances must be made up. [§59-1-425, R43-234]
3. The district board of trustees by majority vote may waive the make-up requirement for three or fewer additional missed days provided the school has made up three full days or the equivalent number of hours missed. [59-1-425]

4. Early dismissal days for emergencies must be reported to and approved by the director of the Office of Federal and State Accountability. [R43-234, §59-1-448]
5. Three days must be used for collegial professional development. No more than two days may be used for the preparation of opening of schools and the remaining five days may be used for teacher planning, academic plans, and parent conferences. [§59-1-425]
6. No more than three (3) days of the school year are reduced in instructional time for the purpose of administering end-of-the-semester examinations, end-of-the-year examinations, teacher conferences, or for staff development. The reduced days are not less than three (3) hours in length. [§59-1-425]

B. STAFF DEVELOPMENT

1. Each school district board of trustees shall provide a program of staff development for all educational personnel. [§59-20-60]

C. STUDENTS - GENERAL

1. A parent or guardian whose child is not six years of age on or before the first day of September may elect for their child to not attend kindergarten. The parent or guardian shall sign a written document making the election with the governing body of the school district in which the parent or guardian resides. [§59-65-10]
2. Students are enrolled in accordance with state laws pertaining to age of attendance and qualifications for attendance. [§59-63-20, §59-63-30, §59-63-31]
3. District policies have been developed addressing minimum standards of student conduct and discipline. [R43-279, §59-63-210]
4. Policies include provisions regarding expulsion for no less than one year of a student who brings a firearm to school. [§59-63-235]
5. District policies have been developed pertaining to student participation in interscholastic competition is in accordance with regulatory and statutory requirements. [R43-244.1, §59-63-100]
6. The district schools have implemented a comprehensive health education program in accordance with regulatory and statutory requirements. [R43-231, R43-232, R43-234, R43-238, §59-32-10 et seq.]
7. Each public school of the State must instruct students in the history of black people as a regular part of its history and social studies courses. [§59-29-55]
8. Performance-oriented educational standards are used to improve curriculum and instruction. [§59-18-300]
9. High schools shall offer state-funded PSAT or PLAN tests to each tenth grade student in order to access and identify curricular areas that need to be strengthened and reinforced. [§59-18-340] (*Proviso 1A.19 suspends funding for 2015–16* **FOR PLAN TEST ONLY**)
10. The SBE is directed to provide assessment results annually on individual students and schools in a manner and format that is easily understood by parents and the public. [§59-18-360]

11. Each school district shall see that in every school under their care there shall be taught, as far as practicable, orthography, reading, writing, arithmetic, geography, English grammar and instruction in phonics, the elements of agriculture, the history of the United States and of this State, the principles of the Constitutions of the United States and of this State, morals and good behavior, algebra, physiology and hygiene (especially as to the effects of alcoholic liquors and narcotics upon the human system), English literature, and such other branches as the state board may from time to time direct. [§59-29-10]
12. The caseload for speech/language therapist does not exceed sixty (60). [R43-205]
13. The school district shall develop guidelines and procedures regarding the identification and management of suspected concussions in student athletes per statutory requirements. [§59-63-75]

D. FINANCE

1. The district board of trustees makes its annual fiscal report available to the general public. [§59-20-60]
2. The board of trustees prepares an annual written report accounting for funds expended in each pupil classification. [§59-20-60]

E. RECORD KEEPING

1. Financial resources are to be allocated, expended, and accounted for in accordance with accounting practices specified in the Financial Accounting Handbook, Funding Manual, and the Pupil and Staff Accountability Manual. [R43-172, §59-20-60]
2. Each school district must file a record of all dropouts that specifies for each student the name of the school in which he or she was enrolled and provides the following information: his or her name, grade, race, sex, date of birth, free/reduced meals status, English proficiency status, and migrant status. Each district superintendent must verify the accuracy of the student enrollment, attendance, membership by category, and dropout reports submitted to the State Department of Education's Office of Finance. [R43-172, R43-231, R43-232, R43-234, §59-65-470]
3. The district maintains accurate records related to pupil bus transportation in accordance with the SCDE's transportation manual. [R43-80, §59-67-410]
3. An annual district programmatic report to the parents and constituents of the school district must be developed by the local school board. Each report shall include the goals and objectives of the school district, the strategies implemented to meet the goals and objectives, and an evaluation of the outcomes. An annual school report to the parents and constituents of the school must be developed by the School Improvement Council and shall provide information on the school's progress on meeting the school and district goals and objectives. These reports shall be provided by **November fifteenth** of each year. [§59-20-60]

F. SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT COUNCILS

1. Each district board of trustees shall establish an Improvement Council at each school in the district and this council is to be involved in improvement and innovation efforts at the school. [§59-20-60]

2. The School Improvement Council must actively participate in the development of the school renewal plan and annual updates. [§59-20-60, R43-261]
3. The local school board made provisions to allow any School Improvement Council to file a separate report to the local school board if the School Improvement Council considers it necessary. [§59-20-60]

#### IV. HEALTH, SAFETY, AND SCHOOL FACILITIES

- A. Immunization records are current for each student. Records of vaccinations or immunizations must be maintained by the institution, school, or day care facility to which the child or person has been admitted [§44-29-180]
- B. No person will be initially hired to work in any public or private school, kindergarten, nursery or day care center for infants and children until appropriately evaluated for tuberculosis. [R43-207, §44-29-150, §44-29-160]
- C. A pupil and teacher shall wear an industrial quality eye device while participating in courses necessitating wearing of protective eye devices. [§59-1-390]
- D. Each school shall provide adequate first aid supplies and equipment. [R43-166]
- E. All operating school facilities shall comply with sanitation and health regulations prescribed by the South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control. [R61-42]
- F. All operating school facilities shall comply with safety regulations prescribed by the State Fire Marshal. [§5-25-370, §5-25-390, §5-25-400]
- G. All schools shall conduct fire drills at least once each month. [§59-63-910]
- H. A plan shall be designed to provide for the protection and welfare of students in the event of any disaster which threatens to involve the school community. [R43-166]
- I. Each school shall conduct at least one emergency drill within the **first month** of school. [R43-166, §59-63-910]
- J. All construction, improvement and renovation of public school buildings and property shall comply with the latest applicable standards and specifications set forth and published by SCDE. [§59-23-210]