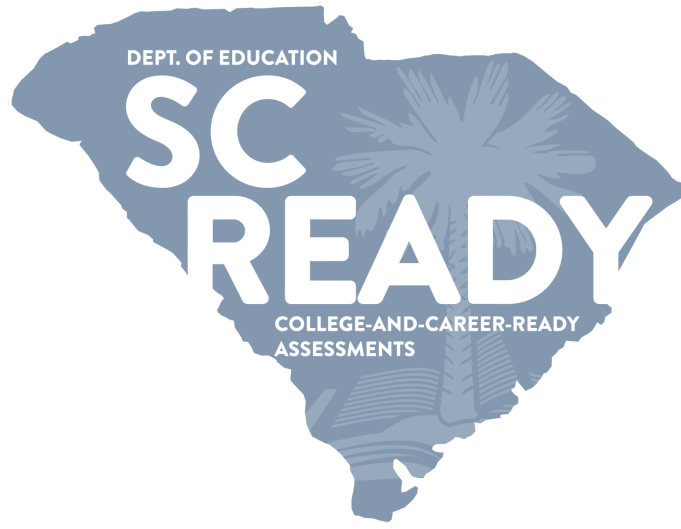




2026 Data Review Report

Statewide Instructional Recommendations

Math Grade 3

Office of Assessment and Standards

October 2026

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Introduction

The [South Carolina Department of Education](#) (SCDE) Office of Assessment and Standards (OAS) extends our deepest gratitude to the hard-working teachers across our state. We are especially thankful to the educators who dedicate their time to participate in our annual assessment meetings. Your collaboration is what makes these reports possible.

What is the Data Review Committee?

As part of our [Development Cycle](#) every year, the SCDE gathers educators from across South Carolina for virtual Data Review Meetings. This group of dedicated educators forms our *Data Review Committee*, a specialized team tasked with examining state-level, item-by-item test data to better understand student ability and identify where students are struggling with specific standards.

From Numbers to Strategies

For this report, the Committee focused on the Spring SC READY Math Grade 3 assessment, which measures the *2025 South Carolina College- and Career-Ready Mathematics Standards (2025 SC CCR Math Standards)*. While every standard is assessed on the SC READY Math Grade 3 assessment, this report selectively highlights key standards where statewide trends point to clear, actionable recommendations for the classroom.

The Committee looks closely at the *quantitative* data, how students across the entire state responded to test items. They use these numbers to produce a *qualitative* analysis. In other words, they look at the data to figure out *why* students are struggling, and then they offer actionable, instructional recommendations on how to improve student achievement on those topics.

A Redesigned Format

Based directly on feedback from teachers across the state, we have redesigned the Data Review Reports to be more useful for your daily practice. The reports are now organized by standards and indicators. Within each section, you will find:

- **Committee Observations:** What the data tells us about student understanding and misconceptions.
- **Instructional Recommendations:** Practical strategies to address learning gaps.

How to Use This Report

The goal of this report is to provide clear suggestions to improve instructional practice and inspire collaborative discussions at your school. Offered in a spirit of helpfulness and collaboration, these recommendations reflect broad, statewide trends. Because every classroom is unique, we recognize that certain identified gaps or suggestions may not align with every individual school or district.

Get Involved and Learn More

The OAS provides numerous resources for districts, schools, and teachers to help clarify the standards, understand how our assessments align with them, and make the most of test data.

Our [Assessment Quick Links for Teachers Page](#) includes the following resources for mathematics educators:

- [Applications for Assessment Committees](#): Apply to Content Review Committees, Data Review Committees, and more.
- [Test Blueprints](#): Broadly outline the test construct in terms of content and rigor.
- [Assessment Specifications for Teachers](#): Guidance on how standards are assessed on SC READY (distinct from how a concept is taught).
- [Data Review Reports](#): Access older reports from various content areas.
- [Item Type Descriptions](#): Breakdown of the item formats students encounter on SC READY.
- [Sample Items](#): Grade- and content-aligned items demonstrating SC READY formats.
- [Online Tools Training \(OTT\)](#): Allows students to practice interacting with sample items in the official testing environment.
- [SC READY Math Reference Sheets](#): Reference sheets for SC READY Math Grades 4-8

Our [Math Standards Page](#) includes:

- [Standards](#): The *2025 South Carolina College- and Career-Ready Mathematics Standards*
- [Instructional Resources](#): Support materials designed to help teachers instruct the *2025 SC CCR Math Standards*.
- [Professional Learning Opportunities](#): District-level professional learning menus and recordings of past webinars.

Interested in Statewide Assessment Data?

[State-level assessment data](#) is published each year on our website. You can explore the [2026 SC READY Test Scores](#) directly through our online interactive tools or download full data files from the right side of the page.

Want to make an impact?

If you are interested in joining an annual assessment committee, we invite you to [apply through our website!](#)

Statewide Trends for Math Grades 3-5

Strengths

Grade 3: Students demonstrated strengths in their understanding of whole numbers. Students were generally successful in representing numbers using place value concepts and various forms of notation. They also showed proficiency in comparing and rounding whole numbers by analyzing the value of digits in different places.

Grade 4: Students demonstrated strengths in data analysis, particularly in their ability to collect and organize data. Students successfully represented data using dot plots and bar graphs and were able to identify key information displayed in these visual representations.

Grade 5: Students demonstrated strengths in geometry concepts, particularly in their understanding of the coordinate plane. Students were successful in plotting and locating points using ordered pairs. Many students could accurately identify key components of the coordinate system, including the origin and coordinates of points.

Areas for Growth

Grade 3: Students would benefit from additional support in developing conceptual understanding of decomposition strategies to solve multiplication problems. Students would also benefit from additional practice applying a variety of addition strategies, including compensation and decomposition.

Grade 4: Students would benefit from additional support in understanding and applying concepts of area and perimeter. While students may recognize these measurements, they need further opportunities to distinguish between the two concepts.

Grade 5: Students would benefit from additional support in data analysis and problem-solving. Specifically, students need opportunities to strengthen their understanding of statistical measures such as range and mode and to interpret what these measures reveal about a data set. Students would also benefit from additional practice solving two-step real-world problems involving data displays.

Committee Observations and Recommendations

After reviewing assessment data, the committee developed the following observations and instructional recommendations to inform classroom instruction for Grade 3. These recommendations are not intended to be a comprehensive review of all indicators, nor does their inclusion in this report imply greater importance than other indicators or content. All indicators should continue to be taught with the depth and rigor outlined in the *2025 SC CCR Mathematics Standards*.

General Observations and Recommendations

- Provide more opportunities for students to use number lines across mathematical concepts.
 - Incorporate number lines regularly when teaching whole numbers, fractions, measurement, and elapsed time to strengthen students' conceptual understanding.
- Strengthen students' ability to write and interpret equations and expressions.
 - Increase opportunities for students to write, interpret, and distinguish between equations and expressions.
- Present numbers in nontraditional orders to build number sense.
 - Students often become accustomed to seeing numbers in standard ascending or descending order. Presenting numbers out of order encourages students to think more deeply about place value relationships.
- Build familiarity with mathematical vocabulary.
 - Students may understand mathematical concepts but struggle when mathematical vocabulary is used.
 - Consider embedding Measurement, Geometry, and Spatial Reasoning (MGSR) tasks into instruction throughout the year to ensure consistent exposure and meaningful application beyond a designated unit.
 - MGSR is rich in academic vocabulary, so ensure explicit teaching of vocabulary within these indicators throughout the year.
- Provide regular opportunities to use the [Online Tools Training \(OTT\)](#).
 - Incorporate the OTT throughout the year so students become comfortable with the digital tools and can focus on the mathematics during testing. For example, when working with **clock technology-enhanced items**, show students that the hour hand moves gradually throughout the hour as the minute hand advances, rather than remaining fixed on a single number.

Data, Probability, and Statistical Reasoning (DPSR)

3.DPSR.1.1

Observation: Students overlooked the graph's scale on a picture graph, leading to incorrect organization.

Instructional Recommendation(s):

- Teach students to circle the scale first when working with a picture graph.

- Include skip-counting fluency practice to build students' confidence when organizing data into a scaled picture graph.
- Provide opportunities for students to discuss how to organize and display collected data by asking questions such as, "Which graph(s) would represent the data best?" and "Which scale makes the most sense for the data?"

3.DPSR.2.1

Observation: Some students list every word, number, or detail shown in a problem instead of identifying only the results that could occur. For example, a bag of colored marbles has 2 red marbles, 3 green marbles, and 1 blue marble. The possible outcomes are *only* red, green, and blue, rather than red, red, green, green, green, and blue.

Instructional Recommendation(s):

- Ensure students understand the differences between possibility (what could happen) and probability (how likely it is to happen). The concept of probability is introduced in 4th grade. The committee recognized that the concepts of possibility and probability may be confusing when students are asked to list outcomes.
- Increase opportunities for students to interact with scenarios that require them to identify outcomes. For example:
 - Let students spin spinners and roll fair number cubes.
 - Use school supplies to discuss possible outcomes. Ask, "What could you choose?" to help students identify available options rather than list all items present.
- Make sure students are familiar with the words fair number cube or fair n -sided game piece. On SC READY these terms are used instead of dice or die.

Measurement, Geometry, and Spatial Reasoning (MGSR)

3.MGSR.1.1

Observation: Students were miscounting the squares when determining the area of a rectangle.

Instructional Recommendation(s):

- Provide opportunities for students to use square tiles (including square-shaped food such as crackers) to determine the area of rectangles and squares.
- In addition to using square tiles as a concrete model, encourage students to draw the corresponding square or rectangle to strengthen the connection between concrete and representational thinking.
- Provide opportunities for students to determine area using a pictorial image where the rectangle is not fully filled in.
- Make connections to other strategies and models such as skip counting, grouping, and arrays when appropriate.
- Allow students to create their own squares or rectangles. Then, facilitate discussions on how the shapes and their measurements are similar and different.
- Expose students to grid and dot paper as a possible tool to determine the area.

3.MGSR.1.2

Observation: Students used only two side lengths on the rectangle instead of adding all sides to find the perimeter.

Instructional Recommendation(s):

- Emphasize that the opposite sides of a rectangle are equal, rather than describing it as having two long sides and two short sides.
- Practice labeling all sides of a rectangle.

3.MGSR.1.3

Observation: Students had difficulty recognizing when to use area in a real-world situation.

Instructional Recommendation(s):

- Integrate vocabulary practice with the words area, perimeter, and plane figure.
- Teach students that perimeter is the length and/or distance around a shape.

3.MGSR.2.1

Observation: When coins were organized in ascending (rather than descending) order, students miscalculated the total.

Instructional Recommendation(s):

- Model strategies for students to use when organizing a collection of coins that helps when determining the total amount.
 - Have students share their organizational strategies with the class.
- Implement a “Number of the Day” activity by having students represent the number with coins. Represent the amount in two ways, one of which should be using the fewest number of coins possible.

3.MGSR.2.4

Observation: Students need more practice measuring length when the object is not aligned with zero on the ruler.

Instructional Recommendation(s):

- Ensure physical rulers are in the hands of all students.
- Complete a “Notice and Wonder” discussion about the ruler.
- Require students to identify and discuss the distance between endpoints of an object no matter where the object may be positioned on the ruler.
- Provide opportunities to complete a “Broken Ruler” activity. This can be done with a worksheet, or in a more hands-on way.
 - Print rulers and tear them so they are “broken.” The “broken ruler” could also be a ruler where the numbers have been left off altogether.
 - Ask students to measure objects found in the classroom and record their lengths.
- Have students contribute to a class height chart labeled in inches and centimeters to strengthen their understanding of length and measurement units.

3.MGSR.2.5

Observation: Students did not determine the correct unit of liquid volume.

Instructional Recommendation(s):

- Present uncommon examples of units, for example, gallon-sized water bottles or buckets.

3.MGSR.3.2

Observation: Students may have had trouble understanding the term “pair of parallel lines.”

Instructional Recommendation(s):

- Provide opportunities to define “pair of parallel lines” and “set of parallel lines.”
- Give students experience identifying parallel lines within figures.
- Incorporate physical mnemonics, such as purposeful gestures or movements, to help students internalize key concepts and vocabulary through kinesthetic learning (e.g., “Make parallel lines” or “Make a ray”).

Numerical Reasoning (NR)

3.NR.1.2

Observation: Students need more support to compose and decompose numbers in a more flexible way.

Instructional Recommendation(s):

- Teach different ways to compose numbers. For example, “Show me a different way to build this number.” Discuss why 6 hundreds and 60 tens are the same thing.
- Provide opportunities where the decomposed number has multiple regroupings. For example- 1 thousand, 11 hundreds, 20 tens, and 9 ones.
- After students have composed a number in a different way, teach students to ensure their value is the same as the original number.
- Practice with ten rods or ten-dollar bills. Have students share how many one units or one-dollar bills would be needed to compose the same value.

3.NR.2.4

Observation: Students struggled to identify mixed numbers and fractions greater than 1 on number lines.

Instructional Recommendation(s):

- Apply the same skip counting routines used with whole numbers, to skip counting by unit fractions. Then, write the fraction as a mixed number and an improper fraction.

- Complete a “human number line” activity:
 - Give each student a card showing a unit fraction with the same denominator (e.g., $\frac{1}{4}$, $\frac{1}{4}$, $\frac{1}{4}$, $\frac{1}{4}$).
 - Have students stand in a line, with each student representing one fractional part of a whole.
 - Ask students to identify where the whole numbers would be located on the number line.
 - Choose a point in the line to “cut” or separate the students into groups.
 - Discuss how many unit fractions are represented and what fraction or mixed number has been created.
 - Have students determine and write both the mixed number and the equivalent improper fraction represented by the group.
 - Repeat with different cut points so students can model and discuss multiple mixed numbers and improper fractions.

3.NR.2.5

Observation: Finding an equivalent fraction on a number line was challenging for some students.

Instructional Recommendation(s):

- This is one of the first instances in which students are expected to find equivalent fractions. Provide pre-partitioned, but unlabeled, fraction bars and number lines to build recognition of equivalent fractions before having students create their own models.

3.NR.2.6

Observation: Students applied whole-number bias when comparing fractions, often mistaking the fraction with the larger denominator as the greater fraction.

Instructional Recommendation(s):

- Use manipulatives when teaching this indicator. Unlike in 4th or 5th grade, where a connection to multiplication is often made, manipulatives must be used to ensure deep conceptual understanding.
- Incorporate “turn-and-talk” activities for students to discuss and compare fractions with peers.

Patterns, Algebra, and Functional Reasoning (PAFR)

3.PAFR.1.1

Observation: Students with a flexible approach to adding multi-digit numbers were more successful with adding and subtracting.

Instructional Recommendation(s):

- Expose students to multiple strategies.

- Build a solid foundation of number sense before transitioning students to the standard algorithm for addition and subtraction.
- Don't shy away from teaching the compensation strategy. Discuss when compensation is a good strategy to use.
- After teaching multiple strategies, students discuss which is most effective for different addition and subtraction problems.

3.PAFR.1.3

Observation: Students struggled with decomposing a factor into a more “friendly” fact.

Instructional Recommendation(s):

- When working with multiplication problems where one of the factors is 7 or 9, use models or arrays to show how to break apart the factor and make it easier to multiply.
 - For example, consider the problem 4×7 . Draw an array with 4 rows and 7 columns. Then decompose the array into two smaller arrays by separating the 7 columns into groups of 2 and 5 columns. Explain how the two smaller arrays represent (4×2) and (4×5) , and use them to show that:

$$4 \times 7 = (4 \times 2) + (4 \times 5)$$

3.PAFR.2.2

Observation: Students needed support identifying the operations in two-step real-world problems.

Instructional Recommendation(s):

- Expose students to a variety of word problem structures.
- Move away from strategies that involve acronyms or only focus on key words. Work on not rushing to solve but applying comprehension strategies.
- Use a version of the Three Reads or Multiple Reads Routine:
 - After each read ask questions like:
 - What is happening? Can we retell it?
 - How can we get started? How do the numbers fit in?
 - What should we do next?
 - Does our answer make sense?
 - With this strategy, look at the question being asked last. Ensure students comprehend the problem before computing.