



SOUTH CAROLINA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

SCHOOL DISTRICT MEMORANDA

ed.sc.gov



August 29, 2023

Missed last week's memos?

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

CALENDAR & CLOSURE APPLICATION

Calendar and Closure Application for Inclement Weather

AUDIENCE: District Superintendents, Public Information Officers, Web Access Coordinators

CONTACT: Derek Phillips, dphillips@ed.sc.gov

The South Carolina Department of Education (SCDE) would like to remind districts of its obligation to update their operations status on the [District and School Closures](#) webpage. Appropriate district personnel can update their status by visiting the Calendar and Closure Application available within the Web Application Portal. Users needing access to the application should contact their Web Access Coordinator (WAC) at their district office.

DHEC UPDATES

COVID-19 Clarification from SC DHEC

DHEC asked that the most up-to-date information regarding COVID-19 protocols be re-shared with Districts. Please review this information to ensure that accurate guidance is being given to parents.

Many districts are experiencing a surge of COVID-19 cases and this has caused some confusion. Each year, DHEC staff review and publish the School Exclusion List. This list contains many communicable diseases and describes common symptoms related to when a staff or student should be excluded from school and when they may return. In most cases communicable diseases are scattered but occasionally as with flu, COVID-19 and some other illnesses, there can be outbreaks. The definition of an outbreak can vary by illness type, so it is important to reference the Exclusion List and contact the DHEC Regional Epidemiology staff for guidance related to the specific illness when the outbreak threshold is reached. Please make sure that your school nurses, school attendance staff, human resources, and any other staff who may be in a role to communicate with staff, students, or families about whether exclusion is required have access to the Exclusion List. The current

version is dated 8/1/2023. It is available in Spanish and there is an accompanying Parent Guide also.

[School Exclusion List](#)

DISTRICT POLICY

Gavin's Law Implementation Requirements

AUDIENCE: District Superintendents

CONTACT: Laura Bayne, ljbayne@ed.sc.gov

Per the requirements of Gavin's Law, Act 54 of 2023, local school districts shall collaborate with the State Department of Education, the South Carolina Law Enforcement Division, and the Attorney General's office, as appropriate, to implement a policy to educate and notify students of the provisions of Gavin's Law. This includes adequate notice to students, parents or guardians, the public, and school personnel of the change in law.

It is the Department's recommendation that school districts incorporate the requirements of Gavin's Law into the Erin's Law curriculum and give age-appropriate instruction on the dangers and consequences of sexual extortion to satisfy the requirements for student notification. It is also recommended that each district post their policy on their website for full visibility.

[Gavin's Law Implementation Requirements - Memo](#) PDF (114 KB)

EARLY LEARNING AND LITERACY

2022-23 District and School Reading Plans (due October 13)

AUDIENCE: District Superintendents, District Instructional Leaders, School Principals, District Strategic Plan Contacts

CONTACT: Marie Gibbons, mgibbons@ed.sc.gov

The Read to Succeed Act requires that the South Carolina Department of Education (SCDE), with the approval of the State Board of Education (SBE), develop, implement, evaluate, and continuously refine a comprehensive state plan for prekindergarten through grade twelve to improve reading achievement. The South Carolina State Reading Plan has been developed to guide the support of the SCDE for districts and schools. The South Carolina State Reading Plan also provides guidance to district and school plans as they work to support the reading and writing development of their students with research-based, outcomes-oriented strategies. The South Carolina State Reading Plan was approved by the SBE on June 10, 2015.

[2022-23 District and School Reading Plans \(due October 13\) - Memo](#) PDF (173 KB)

[Directions on Completing 2023-24 District and School Reading Plans - Attachment](#) PDF (218 KB)

EVENTS

2023 South Carolina Computer Science & STEM Summit

The 2023 South Carolina Computer Science and STEM Summit is a chance to strengthen and accelerate momentum to expand South Carolina students' access to K-16 computer science education programs. The K-12 computer science education stakeholders, including state decision makers, business & industry, K-12, local CS education leaders, nonprofit and community-based groups, and funders, will come together at the SC CS/STEM Summit. This group will participate in lectures and discussions about the latest computer science efforts and upcoming requirements for the K-16 youth pathways.

The event will take place on September 18 and 19 in Myrtle Beach. Click the link below to learn more about the Summit and registration.

[2023 South Carolina Computer Science and STEM Summit](#)

SCHOLARSHIPS

2024 United States Senate Youth Program

AUDIENCE: District Superintendents, Instructional Leaders, School Counselors, High School Principals

CONTACT: Stephen Corsini, spcorsini@ed.sc.gov, Evers Montgomery, etmontgomery@ed.sc.gov

The Hearst Foundation's 62nd Annual United States Senate Youth Program (USSYP) Washington Week event will take place March 2-9, 2024, with current plans for a timely national selection process and an in-person program in Washington, D.C.

Two students from each state will be selected to attend and each student will receive a \$10,000 college scholarship. Students must be currently serving in an elected or appointed position representing their school or constituency for the entire 2023-24 school year, must be U.S. citizens or legal permanent residents at the time of application to the U.S. Senate Youth Program, and must be able to attend the entire 2024 in person or online Washington Week event set for March 2-9, 2024. To review all student eligibility requirements and deadlines please visit our [USSYP website](#).

[2024 United States Senate Youth Program - Memo](#) PDF (118 KB)

STUDENT INTERVENTION SERVICES

Mental Health Courses and Behavior Interventions Training Opportunities

AUDIENCE: District Superintendents, Principals, District Social Workers, School Counselors, School Mental Health Personnel

CONTACT: Aveene Coleman, acoleman@ed.sc.gov

The South Carolina Department of Education's Office of Student Intervention Services is pleased to offer a series of school mental health training courses, and behavior interventions training opportunities. Please review the session descriptions linked below for additional information.

Please share the information linked below with appropriate administrators, educators, and other school staff and encourage them to participate. Each session will be repeated, so please only register to attend one session per topic. There is no cost to attend this series of professional development opportunities; however, registration is required.

[Mental Health Courses and Behavior Interventions Training Opportunities - Memo](#) PDF (152 KB)

STUDENT WRITING CONTEST

"I Have a Dream" 60th Anniversary Student Writing Contest Announcement

AUDIENCE: District Superintendents, Public Information Officers, High School Principals
CONTACT: communications@ed.sc.gov

On the 60th anniversary of the March on Washington, the South Carolina Department of Education is pleased to announce a student writing contest highlighting the monumental importance of Martin Luther King, Jr.'s "I Have a Dream" speech and encouraging students to put their own dreams for the future into words. Click the link below for contest details.

["I Have a Dream" 60th Anniversary Student Writing Contest Announcement](#)

TRANSPORTATION

High Winds and School Buses

AUDIENCE: District Superintendents, District Transportation Directors, Public Information Officers
CONTACT: Mike Bullman, mbullman@ed.sc.gov

With approaching inclement weather, the South Carolina Department of Education would like to share the following reminders about high winds and school buses.

Vehicle size, wind speed, wind direction, road conditions, and visibility must all be taken into consideration when making operational decisions during periods of inclement weather. Ultimately, the decisions must also be made at the local level because what is happening in one area may be completely different from conditions in an area just a short distance away. With that in mind, there are two main areas of concern:

- Operating Buses - When wind forces of 30 MPH or greater strike the side of a school bus, the forces exerted can exceed 500 pounds. Forces of this magnitude can greatly impact steering control and tracking of school buses in motion. This is true for sustained winds of 30 MPH or greater or wind gusts greater than 40 MPH.
- Parked Buses – The overall effect of high winds on parked buses appears to be minimal. While the forces exerted from broadside winds on a school bus are substantial, in most cases, buses parked on a level surface in an open area can withstand wind forces of up to 100 MPH without danger of rollover. If, however, buses are parked on inclines, the amount of wind required to cause rollover is diminished. Buses parked on an incline of approximately 30 degrees are subject to rollover with winds in the 60 MPH range.

[High Winds and School Buses Bulletin](#)

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