



**South Carolina High School Credential
District Policies**

**Monica Tudder, Director of
Department of Exceptional Children**



SOUTH CAROLINA HIGH SCHOOL
CREDENTIAL

DORCHESTER SCHOOL
DISTRICT FOUR

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Introduction and Purpose

South Carolina has roughly 100,000 students with disabilities serviced under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), of which the majority are able to earn a state high school diploma. Given the varying levels of student achievement, as well as the inability to complete required high school coursework, there is a need to provide an alternative option for students with disabilities to demonstrate their ability to transition into the work community. The uniform state-recognized SC High School Credential will be aligned to a newly created course of study for these students with disabilities whose Individualized Education Program (IEP) team determines this course of study is appropriate.

To align with the State's Profile of the South Carolina Graduate, an opportunity that will assist these students in acquiring skills necessary to be successful after high school is critical. The purpose of S.C. Code Ann. Section 59-39-100 and State Board of Education Reg. 43-235 is to provide equitable job-readiness opportunities for these students throughout the state, ensure they have evidence of employability skills, and honor the work they have undertaken in our public schools.

State Board of Education Reg. 43-235, as governed by S.C. Code Ann. Section 59-39-100, promulgates the program components and criteria for a state-recognized SC High School Credential for applicable students with disabilities for whom such a credential is appropriate.

Pursuant to the statutory requirements in S.C. Ann., Section 59-39-100, beginning in the 2018–19 school year, students with disabilities entering grade nine may attain a uniform diploma through one of the recognized personalized pathways; or may attain a uniform SC High School Credential. Nothing restricts any student from obtaining a state high school diploma. Nothing contained in this regulation restricts local school boards of trustees from awarding students with a certificate of attendance for students with disabilities who do not meet the requirements for earning either a state high school diploma or a State South Carolina High School Credential. In addition, nothing contained in this regulation restricts local school boards of trustees from awarding students a local occupational certificate.

Beginning no earlier than the end of the student's eighth grade academic school year, or later if deemed appropriate by the student's IEP team, and updated annually thereafter, the IEP team must determine if the student's expected high school outcome will be to attain a state high school diploma or a state-recognized SC High School Credential. The course of study identified in the IEP must match this determination.

The South Carolina Department of Education (SCDE), as the State Educational Agency (SEA); all Local Educational Agencies (LEAs); all State-Operated Programs (SOPs); and all other public programs providing special education and related services as outlined in the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) must follow and comply with all statutory and regulatory requirements of the IDEA as outlined in 20 U.S.C.

Section 1400 et seq., and the Code of Federal Regulations (C.F.R.), Chapter 34, Part 300. In addition to the statutory and regulatory requirements to which the state adheres, Reg. 43-235 further delineates requirements for attaining a state-recognized South Carolina High School Credential.

This policy defines the requirements for attaining a state-recognized South Carolina High School Credential in Dorchester School District Four.

A. FAPE and IEP requirements

The decision to accept the South Carolina High School Credential does not relieve the LEA or SOP from providing a free appropriate public education (FAPE) to the student until age 21 as defined in Reg. 43-243(III)(B) or until the student receives a regular high school diploma as defined in 34 C.F.R 300.102(a)(3)(iv).

The LEA or SOP must explain and provide annual written notice to the parent, guardian, or adult student that the South Carolina High School Credential is not a state high school diploma. For the purposes of this part, an adult student is defined as a student who has reached the age of majority as outlined in Reg. 43-242(III)(F)(1).

An IEP team's decision to identify the South Carolina High School Credential as the student's expected high school outcome must be based on data to include, but not be limited to, longitudinal information of student grades, standardized achievement assessments, informal and formal transition assessments, adaptive behavior assessments, and work readiness assessments. The decision must be made only after the IEP team considers a continuum of program options that may allow the student to pursue a diploma.

B. Course Requirements

Minimal Course Requirements: The South Carolina High School Credential is designed for students with disabilities for whom the IEP team determined mastery of a career-based educational program that includes academics, independent work experience, daily living skills, and self-determination skill competencies is the most appropriate way to demonstrate his or her skills and provide a FAPE. To attain the South Carolina High School Credential, the student must meet the graduation requirements of one unit of physical education/health (or equivalent) and one unit of technology course; a student must adhere to the local attendance policy; and a student must complete a total of 24 earned units that include the following:

- (a) Course work aligned with the South Carolina College and Career-Ready Standards for:
 - (1) English Language Arts (four units),
 - (2) Mathematics (four units),
 - (3) Science (two units), and
 - (4) Social Studies (two units)

- (b) One unit of physical education/health (or equivalent)

- (c) One unit of a technology course

- (d) Four units of Employability Education; and

- (e) Six electives (including work experience).

The coursework for English Language Arts, Mathematics, Science and Social Studies may be attained by participating in courses instructed by a special educator(s) or by participating in general education course(s) with accommodations and modifications as outlined in a student's IEP.

C. Minimal Required Components

In addition to completing coursework outlined in Section B, to receive a South Carolina High School Credential, a student must:

(a) Complete a career portfolio that includes a multimedia presentation project and contains all of the following:

- Assessment information
- Career goals
- Documentation of work-based learning experiences
- Compilation of personal data

The student will independently develop and present the multimedia presentation which will demonstrate the student's accomplishments. The student must obtain a passing score on the portfolio and presentation rubric(s).

(b) Obtain work readiness assessment results that demonstrate the student is ready for competitive employment as evidenced by classroom, career lab and work-based evaluations and participation in the administration of the SC College Readiness Assessment.

D. Work-Based Training and Learning

In addition to completing coursework outlined in Section B, in order to receive a South Carolina High School Credential a student must complete work-based learning/training that totals at least 360 hours, in which:

- (a) Work-based learning/training may be school-based, community-based, and/or paid or unpaid employment;
- (b) Work-based learning/training must be aligned with the student's interests, preferences, and postsecondary goals and individual graduation plan; and
- (c) Paid employment must be at a minimum wage or above and in compliance with the requirements of the Federal Fair Labor Standards Act;

The district has approved the following means of completing the work-based training as part of the South Carolina High School Credential:

- The district will use the South Carolina state-approved definitions of work experience types and the South Carolina state-approved work experience matrix to document work-based learning/training experience.
 - PAES Lab (45 hours);
 - Supervised on-campus job training (35 hours);
 - Supervised off-campus job sampling (40 hours);); and,
 - Independent competitive employment (240 hours).

E. Monitoring Student Progress

This district will use the following mechanisms for monitoring students' progress toward attainment of the South Carolina High School Credential:

- The district will use the South Carolina State Approved SKEMA-SC (Skills Knowledge and Experience Mastery Assessment – South Carolina) at the beginning of 9th grade and then annually.
- The district will use the South Carolina State Approved Student Career Portfolio Essentials to monitor progress and document completion of students' career portfolio.
- IEP teams will convene at least once annually to review the above components.

The district will use the following mechanisms for monitoring proportionate numbers of South Carolina High School Credentials relative to the LEA's students with disabilities student count and graduation rate:

- Annually, the projected high school outcomes for students with disabilities will be reviewed for alignment with IDEA, state, and federal guidelines and the LEA will ensure that each student with a disability is working towards his or her appropriate, individually determined, high school outcome.

If disproportionality is discovered, the LEA will take the following steps to address the issue:

- Reexamine the process for determining students for whom the credential is an appropriate pathway
- Consider the data regarding students who complete the credential relative to students with disabilities student count and graduation rate
- Provide professional development for special education teachers, school psychologists, and LEA decision-makers as to the determination of appropriate pathways for students with disabilities

F. Entering the South Carolina High School Course of Study

The district uses the following procedures to enter a student into the South Carolina High School Course of Study:

For rising 9th grade students:

Action	Position Responsible	Timeline
Progress Monitor	Team Leader	Monthly while receiving special education services, using 8th-grade data (or current year data if the entry is after 8th grade) for high school outcome decisions.
Collect Data	Team Leader	During 8th grade year (or the year prior to entry if after 8th grade).
Review Present Levels	Team Leader	Document in draft IEP updated PLPs prior to submission for review.
Determine Course of Study	Team Leader	Document in draft IEP updated course of study prior to submission for review.
Submit proposed high school outcome to OPEC for review	Team Leader	At least four weeks prior to the annual review date.
Proposed high school outcome will be reviewed to ensure alignment with IDEA, state, and federal guidelines.	Transition Specialist and/or Special Education Director	Within two weeks of receipt of the submission.
Convene an IEP meeting	Team Leader	Following receipt of approved proposed outcome but no later than annual review due date.
Parental Acknowledgment	Team Leader	First obtain at the annual review meeting prior to entry and every year thereafter

*Note: If the annual review is prior to February of the 8th-grade year (or the year prior to change recommendation), the IEP will need to be written to remain active until the end of the year and the Team Leader will need to convene a transition IEP meeting within the last three months of school. All procedures above must be followed for this meeting.

For HS students entering the SC HS Credential course of study any time after the 8th grade year:

Action	Position Responsible	Timeline
Collect Data	Team Lead facilitating the data collection process	Throughout the school year
Convene an IEP meeting	Team Lead	Prior to changing the student's course of study
Review present levels and State eligibility guidance	Team Lead	During the IEP team meeting
Determine Course of Study	IEP team	During the IEP team meeting
Provide parent information and obtain Parental Acknowledgment Document	Team Lead	During the IEP team meeting
Progress monitor	Team Lead	Throughout the student's school year and at least quarterly each year thereafter.

G. Portfolio Transitions

The district uses the following procedures for transitioning portfolios throughout the years of the course of study:

Action	Position Responsible	Timeline
Determine method of storage	Google Docs	Stays with Student Login/Shared with Teacher(s).
Ensure transfer with student records	All students will share the folder with teacher(s) from year to year.	First week of school.
When Students Exit from School they will be given a hard copy binder of their portfolio.	Team Leader	At SOP meeting.

H. Completion of the South Carolina High School Credential

The district uses the following procedures to ensure a student's completion of the South Carolina High School Credential Course of Study:

Action	Position Responsible	Timeline
Completes SKEMA –SC rubric for final certification	Team Lead	By April 1 of final year
Completes Credential requirements	Team Lead	By April 1 of final year
Completion Notice (all documents reviewed for completeness)	Transition Specialist/OPEC Director	By May 1 of final year
Update Summary of Performance	Team Lead	By May 30 of final year
Submit appropriate data to the district for reporting	Team Lead	By June 1 of final year

The district will monitor proportionate numbers of the Employment Credential to high school diplomas and dropout rates through the Grad Rate Committee's On-Time Grade Rate Document.