Fiscal Year FY 2026-2027

Agency Budget Plan

FORM A - BUDGET PLAN SUMMARY

OPERATING REQUESTS *(FORM B1)*	**For FY 2026-2027, my agency is (mark "X"):**	
	X	Requesting General Fund Appropriations.
	X	Requesting Federal/Other Authorization.
		Not requesting any changes.

NON-RECURRING REQUESTS *(FORM B2)*	**For FY 2026-2027, my agency is (mark "X"):**	
	X	Requesting Non-Recurring Appropriations.
	X	Requesting Non-Recurring Federal/Other Authorization.
		Not requesting any changes.

CAPITAL REQUESTS *(FORM C)*	**For FY 2026-2027, my agency is (mark "X"):**	
		Requesting funding for Capital Projects.
	X	Not requesting any changes.

PROVISOS *(FORM D)*	**For FY 2026-2027, my agency is (mark "X"):**	
	X	Requesting a new proviso and/or substantive changes to existing provisos.
		Only requesting technical proviso changes (such as date references).
		Not requesting any proviso changes.

Please identify your agency's preferred contacts for this year's budget process.

	Name	*Phone*	*Email*
PRIMARY CONTACT:	Phillip Cease	(803) 734-0183	phcease@ed.sc.gov
SECONDARY CONTACT:	Kendra Hunt	(803) 734-8108	kmhunt@ed.sc.gov

I have reviewed and approved the enclosed FY 2026-2027 Agency Budget Plan, which is complete and accurate to the extent of my knowledge.

	Agency Director	*Board or Commission Chair*
SIGN/DATE:		
TYPE/PRINT NAME:		

This form must be signed by the agency head – not a delegate.

Agency Name:	Department Of Education
Agency Code:	H630
Section:	1

BUDGET REQUESTS			FUNDING					FTES				
Priority	Request Type	Request Title	State	Federal	Earmarked	Restricted	Total	State	Federal	Earmarked	Restricted	Total
1	B1 - Recurring	Education Infrastructure Bank for Rural & Charter Schools	120,000,000	0	0	0	120,000,000	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
2	B1 - Recurring	Teacher Salary Increase	150,000,000	0	0	0	150,000,000	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
3	B2 - Non-Recurring	Teacher Strategic Compensation Pilot Phase 3	0	0	0	5,000,000	5,000,000	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
4	B1 - Recurring	Strategic Teacher Career Ladder Pilot	0	0	0	1,400,000	1,400,000	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
5	B2 - Non-Recurring	School Security Personnel Pilot	347,500	0	0	0	347,500	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
6	B1 - Recurring	Summer Reading Camp: Deepening Literacy Impact with Expanded Summer Reading Camps	15,000,000	0	0	15,000,000	30,000,000	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
7	B2 - Non-Recurring	High-Quality Instructional Materials	0	0	0	50,000,000	50,000,000	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
8	B1 - Recurring	High-Quality Instructional Materials	10,000,000	0	0	10,000,000	20,000,000	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
9	B2 - Non-Recurring	Disconnect to Reconnect	17,628,472	0	0	0	17,628,472	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
10	B1 - Recurring	Educational Scholarship Trust Fund	61,421,250	0	0	0	61,421,250	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
11	B1 - Recurring	Digital Curriculum Supports	8,205,249	0	0	0	8,205,249	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
12	B1 - Recurring	Strengthening Fiscal Oversight & Data Infrastructure	580,000	0	0	0	580,000	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
13	B2 - Non-Recurring	Statewide Education Finance Data Platform	3,200,000	0	0	0	3,200,000	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
14	B2 - Non-Recurring	SAFE K-12 Implementation	1,800,000	0	0	0	1,800,000	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
15	B1 - Recurring	SAFE K-12 Implementation Support	1,720,000	0	0	0	1,720,000	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00

| 16 | B1 - Recurring | Bus Lease Purchase | 40,000,000 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 40,000,000 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 |
| TOTALS | | | 429,902,471 | 0 | 0 | 81,400,000 | 511,302,471 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 |

Agency Name:	Department Of Education		
Agency Code:	H630	Section:	1

FORM B1 – RECURRING OPERATING REQUEST

AGENCY PRIORITY	**1**

Provide the Agency Priority Ranking from the Executive Summary.

TITLE	**Education Infrastructure Bank for Rural & Charter Schools**

Provide a brief, descriptive title for this request.

AMOUNT	**General: $120,000,000** **Federal: $0** **Other: $0** **Total: $120,000,000**

What is the net change in requested appropriations for FY 2026-2027? This amount should correspond to the total for all funding sources on the Executive Summary.

NEW POSITIONS	**0.00**

Please provide the total number of new positions needed for this request.

FACTORS ASSOCIATED WITH THE REQUEST	**Mark "X" for all that apply:**	
		Change in cost of providing current services to existing program audience
		Change in case load/enrollment under existing program guidelines
		Non-mandated change in eligibility/enrollment for existing program
		Non-mandated program change in service levels or areas
	X	Proposed establishment of a new program or initiative
		Loss of federal or other external financial support for existing program
		Exhaustion of fund balances previously used to support program
		IT Technology/Security related
		HR/Personnel Related
		Consulted DTO during development
		Related to a Non-Recurring request – If so, Priority #

STATEWIDE ENTERPRISE STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES	**Mark "X" for primary applicable Statewide Enterprise Strategic Objective:**	
	X	Education, Training, and Human Development
		Healthy and Safe Families
		Maintaining Safety, Integrity, and Security
		Public Infrastructure and Economic Development
		Government and Citizens

ACCOUNTABILITY OF FUNDS	A permanent, sustainable source of funding for public school facility construction and renovation to be administered through a statutorily created Education Infrastructure Bank (EIB). Funds can be used for construction, renovation, modernization, loan refinancing, or repayment of school facilities to include schools and other instructional spaces that directly serve students. Eligible entities will also provide match funds to support their projects. Funds cannot be used for routine maintenance, unimproved real property, centralized district administration facilities, facilities normally identified with interscholastic sports activities, or other non-instructional facilities.

What specific strategy, as outlined in the most recent Strategic Planning and Performance Measurement template of agency's accountability report, does this funding request support? How would this request advance that strategy? How would the use of these funds be evaluated?

RECIPIENTS OF	School districts and charter schools with the greatest need for critical infrastructure improvements. Eligibility criteria may include, but are not limited to, enrollment size, capacity constraints, age and condition of existing academic buildings, life cycle of

FUNDS	existing facilities, local property tax wealth per student, per capita income, poverty, shared services or multi-county projects, or other relevant measures.

JUSTIFICATION OF REQUEST	Since FY 2020, $391 million non-recurring dollars were appropriated to address capital needs of consolidating, "disadvantaged", or "growth" school districts with limited fiscal autonomy, bonding capacity, lower assessed property values, or significantly aged buildings. Additionally, $195 million was made available from the Savannah River Site Settlement and SCDE's ARP-ESSER state allocation funds to support school construction and renovation.
	While approximately 25 eligible school districts have benefited from this unprecedented $586 million infusion of capital support, this support has been piecemeal insofar as it has addressed only a fraction of qualified districts' construction and renovation needs for buildings aged 30 years or greater. Additionally, other eligible districts with significantly aged buildings and/or student growth (as evidenced by SCDE-commissioned Facilities Assessments) have not received any capital funding support.
	South Carolina's charter school sector also continues to grow, this year enrolling nearly 61,000 students according to RFA calculations. This equates to a rate of growth of over 75% since the 2019-20 school year. With no access to local bonding capacity or state facility funding, the funds for charter school facilities by necessity come out of state dollars intended to support students in the classroom.
	Finally, for the last 3 budget cycles, Superintendent Weaver has requested and the General Assembly has funded a total of $60 million for school safety facilities upgrades. Demand for these annual one-time funds continues to far exceed available funding, as Districts prioritize hardening school infrastructure and investing in cost—effective, cutting-edge, and potentially life-saving technologies.
	An Education Infrastructure Bank (EIB) would establish a permanent, comprehensive solution to provide sustainable funding for rural public and public charter school facility construction, renovation, and modernization through a combination of loan and financial assistance programs, to include but not be limited to: • Direct, need-based funding for critical infrastructure projects • Repayment of existing capital project debt; • Low-cost and no-interest revolving loan funds for new construction, renovation and refinancing; • Assistance to districts and schools in accessing private market financing by guaranteeing debt.

Agency Name:	Department Of Education			
Agency Code:	H630	Section:		1

FORM B1 – RECURRING OPERATING REQUEST

AGENCY PRIORITY	2

Provide the Agency Priority Ranking from the Executive Summary.

TITLE	**Teacher Salary Increase**

Provide a brief, descriptive title for this request.

AMOUNT	**General: $150,000,000** **Federal: $0** **Other: $0** **Total: $150,000,000**

What is the net change in requested appropriations for FY 2026-2027? This amount should correspond to the total for all funding sources on the Executive Summary.

NEW POSITIONS	**0.00**

Please provide the total number of new positions needed for this request.

	Mark "X" for all that apply:	
FACTORS ASSOCIATED WITH THE REQUEST	X	Change in cost of providing current services to existing program audience
		Change in case load/enrollment under existing program guidelines
		Non-mandated change in eligibility/enrollment for existing program
		Non-mandated program change in service levels or areas
		Proposed establishment of a new program or initiative
		Loss of federal or other external financial support for existing program
		Exhaustion of fund balances previously used to support program
		IT Technology/Security related
		HR/Personnel Related
		Consulted DTO during development
		Related to a Non-Recurring request – If so, Priority #

	Mark "X" for primary applicable Statewide Enterprise Strategic Objective:	
STATEWIDE ENTERPRISE STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES	X	Education, Training, and Human Development
		Healthy and Safe Families
		Maintaining Safety, Integrity, and Security
		Public Infrastructure and Economic Development
		Government and Citizens

ACCOUNTABILITY OF FUNDS	Continuing to boost teacher pay is foundational to recruit and retain the best and brightest to serve in South Carolina classrooms.

What specific strategy, as outlined in the most recent Strategic Planning and Performance Measurement template of agency's accountability report, does this funding request support? How would this request advance that strategy? How would the use of these funds be evaluated?

RECIPIENTS OF	Funds would be distributed based on current statutes and provisos as well as SCDE operating policies. Rates are currently established in proviso and paid to public school districts based on student enrollment.

FUNDS	

JUSTIFICATION OF REQUEST	The most impactful in-school factor affecting student success is the effectiveness of the classroom teacher. Over the past half-decade, South Carolina has made commendable progress in professionalizing teacher compensation, increasing from $32,000 in FY 2018-19 to $48,500 in FY 2025-26 and aligning it with the Southeastern Average. This additional funding would raise the starting minimum salary for educators from $48,500 to $50,500 and provide the same $2,000 increase across the entire salary schedule. This request is based on calculations provided by the Office of Revenue and Fiscal Affairs.

Agency Name:	Department Of Education			
Agency Code:	H630	Section:		1

FORM B1 – RECURRING OPERATING REQUEST

AGENCY PRIORITY	4

Provide the Agency Priority Ranking from the Executive Summary.

TITLE	**Strategic Teacher Career Ladder Pilot**

Provide a brief, descriptive title for this request.

AMOUNT	**General: $0** **Federal: $0** **Other: $1,400,000** **Total: $1,400,000**

What is the net change in requested appropriations for FY 2026-2027? This amount should correspond to the total for all funding sources on the Executive Summary.

NEW POSITIONS	0.00

Please provide the total number of new positions needed for this request.

FACTORS ASSOCIATED WITH THE REQUEST	**Mark "X" for all that apply:**	
		Change in cost of providing current services to existing program audience
		Change in case load/enrollment under existing program guidelines
		Non-mandated change in eligibility/enrollment for existing program
		Non-mandated program change in service levels or areas
	X	Proposed establishment of a new program or initiative
		Loss of federal or other external financial support for existing program
		Exhaustion of fund balances previously used to support program
		IT Technology/Security related
		HR/Personnel Related
		Consulted DTO during development
		Related to a Non-Recurring request – If so, Priority #

STATEWIDE ENTERPRISE STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES	**Mark "X" for primary applicable Statewide Enterprise Strategic Objective:**	
	X	Education, Training, and Human Development
		Healthy and Safe Families
		Maintaining Safety, Integrity, and Security
		Public Infrastructure and Economic Development
		Government and Citizens

ACCOUNTABILITY OF FUNDS	SCDE Strategy 3 – Recruit and retain the highest quality teachers and administrators. Districts must use 90% of the funds on teacher stipends. Districts must submit an annual report on their use of funds, to include the number of teachers receiving the advanced designations in each category, who received advanced license designations, which designation they received, the performance of educators with an advanced license, and implementation outcomes.

What specific strategy, as outlined in the most recent Strategic Planning and Performance Measurement template of agency's accountability report, does this funding request support? How would this request advance that strategy? How would the use of these funds be evaluated?

RECIPIENTS OF	SCDE to award funds to eligible local districts that are selected via a competitive process and based upon a review of their program application.

FUNDS	

JUSTIFICATION OF REQUEST	The quality and sustainability of South Carolina's teacher workforce has a direct impact on the quality of schools and the future workforce of the state. Teacher compensation, recognition, and evaluation are critical tools for attracting and retaining high-quality educators, fostering professional growth, ensuring accountability, and ultimately enhancing student learning outcomes. South Carolina proposes to follow the examples of North Carolina, Louisiana, and Texas to create a career ladder program that retains excellent teachers and broadens their impact beyond the walls of their classroom. This proposal establishes leadership pathways that compensate and advance the most effective teachers, creating a rewarding environment that retains top teaching talent, stabilizes and improves the teaching workforce, and ultimately benefits students. By creating tiers of certification designations (e.g., Advanced Teacher, Lead Teacher and Mentor Teacher), qualified teachers may earn higher salaries by taking on greater responsibilities, such as leading teams, mentoring less experienced teachers, or teaching a greater number of students to advance their careers while continuing to teach students. If fully funded, 150 teacher leaders could participate in the program, with up to 10 teachers in at least 15 districts. Eligible schools would be prioritized based on academic outcomes and teacher turnover rates. The requested amount is based on calculations provided by the Office of Revenue and Fiscal Affairs. South Carolina has a history of requiring new teacher mentoring and supporting teacher leadership, but the multitude of approaches leads to a diffuse impact. Currently, a South Carolina mentor teacher may earn incentives, including additional compensation and release time, but support for their efforts, stipends, and release time vary widely from district to district. District Mentoring and Induction Coordinators report that recruiting sufficient mentors in the current structure is a struggle. The Teacher Career Ladder pilot will combine formal certification designations, and The quality and sustainability of South Carolina's teacher workforce has a direct impact on the quality of schools and the future workforce of the state. Teacher compensation, recognition, and evaluation are critical tools for attracting and retaining high-quality educators, fostering professional growth, ensuring accountability, and ultimately enhancing student learning outcomes. South Carolina proposes to follow the examples of North Carolina, Louisiana, and Texas to create a career ladder program that retains excellent teachers and broadens their impact beyond the walls of their classroom. This proposal establishes leadership pathways that compensate and advance the most effective teachers, creating a rewarding environment that retains top teaching talent, stabilizes and improves the teaching workforce, and ultimately benefits students. By creating tiers of certification designations (e.g., Advanced Teacher, Lead Teacher and Mentor Teacher), qualified teachers may earn higher salaries by taking on greater responsibilities, such as leading teams, mentoring less experienced teachers, or teaching a greater number of students to advance their careers while continuing to teach students. If fully funded, 150 teacher leaders could participate in the program, with up to 10 teachers in at least 15 districts. Eligible schools would be prioritized based on academic outcomes and teacher turnover rates. The requested amount is based on calculations provided by the Office of Revenue and Fiscal Affairs. South Carolina has a history of requiring new teacher mentoring and supporting teacher leadership, but the multitude of approaches leads to a diffuse impact. Currently, a South Carolina mentor teacher may earn incentives, including additional compensation and release time, but support for their efforts, stipends, and release time vary widely from district to district. District Mentoring and Induction Coordinators report that recruiting sufficient mentors in the current structure is a struggle. The Teacher Career Ladder pilot will combine formal certification designations, and

funding for effective teachers to lead in high needs schools into one stable model for the state. This model will provide clear options for high performing teachers to grow in their careers and be compensated accordingly.

Please thoroughly explain the request to include the justification for funds, potential offsets, matching funds, and method of calculation. Please include any explanation of impact if funds are not received. If new positions have been requested, explain why existing vacancies are not sufficient.

Agency Name:	Department Of Education		
Agency Code:	H630	Section:	1

FORM B1 – RECURRING OPERATING REQUEST

AGENCY PRIORITY	**6**

Provide the Agency Priority Ranking from the Executive Summary.

TITLE	**Summer Reading Camp: Deepening Literacy Impact with Expanded Summer Reading Camps**

Provide a brief, descriptive title for this request.

AMOUNT	**General: $15,000,000** **Federal: $0** **Other: $15,000,000** **Total: $30,000,000**

What is the net change in requested appropriations for FY 2026-2027? This amount should correspond to the total for all funding sources on the Executive Summary.

NEW POSITIONS	**0.00**

Please provide the total number of new positions needed for this request.

FACTORS ASSOCIATED WITH THE REQUEST	**Mark "X" for all that apply:**	
	X	Change in cost of providing current services to existing program audience
	X	Change in case load/enrollment under existing program guidelines
		Non-mandated change in eligibility/enrollment for existing program
		Non-mandated program change in service levels or areas
		Proposed establishment of a new program or initiative
		Loss of federal or other external financial support for existing program
		Exhaustion of fund balances previously used to support program
		IT Technology/Security related
		HR/Personnel Related
		Consulted DTO during development
		Related to a Non-Recurring request – If so, Priority #

STATEWIDE ENTERPRISE STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES	**Mark "X" for primary applicable Statewide Enterprise Strategic Objective:**	
	X	Education, Training, and Human Development
		Healthy and Safe Families
		Maintaining Safety, Integrity, and Security
		Public Infrastructure and Economic Development
		Government and Citizens

The requested funds will be used to support the expanded summer reading camps required under the amended Read to Succeed Act 114 of 2024. This funding will cover the costs associated with providing targeted, evidence-based reading interventions for all eligible first, second, and third-grade students who do not meet grade-level reading proficiency.

With the expansion of summer reading camps, districts will be expected to invite approximately 37,549 students, including an estimated 14,017 first graders, 14,251 second graders, and 9,281 third graders—who are not reading at grade-level proficiency. These student counts reflect the 2024–25 school year. While final numbers for 2025–26 are not yet available, we are using the best available estimates based on current year data and implementation experience. SCDE anticipates a decline in the number of students requiring support in future years, as earlier interventions begin to take effect. That said, this hopeful trend does not diminish the continued importance of offering high-quality summer literacy opportunities, even for students who may not be officially identified or required to attend under the law.

ACCOUNTABILITY OF FUNDS	In accordance with Act 114, districts are required to invite these students; however, only third graders eligible for retention are mandated to attend. The camps will implement evidence-based strategies—such as small-group instruction and phonics-focused programs—to provide targeted support and help students build the foundational skills necessary for future academic success.
	The South Carolina Department of Education will continue to evaluate the impact of summer reading camps each year using state-required assessments. Data from past camps has demonstrated gains in reading proficiency among participating students, supporting statewide efforts to close achievement gaps and raise overall academic performance.
	By ensuring strategic use of these funds, South Carolina reinforces its commitment to early literacy and to building a strong foundation for every learner.

What specific strategy, as outlined in the most recent Strategic Planning and Performance Measurement template of agency's accountability report, does this funding request support? How would this request advance that strategy? How would the use of these funds be evaluated?

RECIPIENTS OF FUNDS	Funds will be distributed to public school districts based on current statutes, provisos, and SCDE operating policies. The allocations will be determined based on the number of students identified as substantially failing to meet grade-level proficiency. The SCDE will oversee the distribution of funds in alignment with its policies to ensure that resources are directed to districts with the greatest need. Policies will also include procedures for monitoring and reporting on the effective use of funds.

What individuals or entities would receive these funds (contractors, vendors, grantees, individual beneficiaries, etc.)? How would these funds be allocated – using an existing formula, through a competitive process, based upon predetermined eligibility criteria?

	Early literacy must remain one of South Carolina's highest long-term academic priorities. Research consistently affirms that foundational reading skills developed in the early grades are key predictors of success across all subject areas, high school graduation, and future career readiness. Ensuring that students achieve reading proficiency by the end of third grade is essential for closing academic achievement gaps and promoting lifelong learning.
	With the passage of the amended Read to Succeed legislation (Act 114 of 2024), the number of students to be served by summer reading camps has expanded significantly. Under the revised criteria, 16% of third-grade students in the 2024–2025 school year were initially eligible for retention based on the Does Not Meet Expectations benchmark. Beginning in 2025–2026, all first-grade students who are not reading proficiently must be invited to attend summer reading camps—a requirement that will extend to second-grade students in the 2026–2027 school year. These changes represent a critical shift in early intervention efforts, underscoring the growing need for expanded resources and targeted literacy support in the early grades.
JUSTIFICATION OF REQUEST	To adequately support these eligible students and ensure they receive the high-quality, evidence-based reading interventions necessary for success, we request an additional funding allocation of $30,000,000.
	This includes the following projections:

$11,185,566 for 14,017 additional first-grade students at $798 per student.

$11,372,298 for 14,251 additional second-grade students at $798 per student

$7,406,238 for 9,281 additional third-grade students at $798 per student

This funding will cover essential components such as instructional staffing, professional development, instructional materials, and other operational costs needed to effectively expand summer reading camps. Expanding early literacy support is a strategic investment in South Carolina's most academically vulnerable students, equipping them with the foundational skills needed to succeed in school and beyond. This effort strengthens early reading, helps close achievement gaps, and ensures more students are prepared for long-term academic success.

Please thoroughly explain the request to include the justification for funds, potential offsets, matching funds, and method of calculation. Please include any explanation of impact if funds are not received. If new positions have been requested, explain why existing vacancies are not sufficient.

Agency Name:	Department Of Education		
Agency Code:	H630	Section:	1

FORM B1 – RECURRING OPERATING REQUEST

AGENCY PRIORITY	**8**

Provide the Agency Priority Ranking from the Executive Summary.

TITLE	**High-Quality Instructional Materials**

Provide a brief, descriptive title for this request.

AMOUNT	**General: $10,000,000** **Federal: $0** **Other: $10,000,000** **Total: $20,000,000**

What is the net change in requested appropriations for FY 2026-2027? This amount should correspond to the total for all funding sources on the Executive Summary.

NEW POSITIONS	**0.00**

Please provide the total number of new positions needed for this request.

	Mark "X" for all that apply:	
FACTORS ASSOCIATED WITH THE REQUEST	X	Change in cost of providing current services to existing program audience
		Change in case load/enrollment under existing program guidelines
		Non-mandated change in eligibility/enrollment for existing program
		Non-mandated program change in service levels or areas
		Proposed establishment of a new program or initiative
		Loss of federal or other external financial support for existing program
		Exhaustion of fund balances previously used to support program
		IT Technology/Security related
		HR/Personnel Related
		Consulted DTO during development
		Related to a Non-Recurring request – If so, Priority #

	Mark "X" for primary applicable Statewide Enterprise Strategic Objective:	
STATEWIDE ENTERPRISE STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES	X	Education, Training, and Human Development
		Healthy and Safe Families
		Maintaining Safety, Integrity, and Security
		Public Infrastructure and Economic Development
		Government and Citizens

ACCOUNTABILITY OF FUNDS	High quality instructional materials (HQIM) are essential to help students meet or exceed annual assessments such as SC READY in elementary and middle school as well as End of Course and Career Readiness assessments in high school. They further allow students to learn content aligned with South Carolina's College and Career Readiness Standards and standards-aligned career and technology courses designed to achieve industry certifications.

What specific strategy, as outlined in the most recent Strategic Planning and Performance Measurement template of agency's accountability report, does this funding request support? How would this request advance that strategy? How would the use of these funds be evaluated?

RECIPIENTS OF	The SCDE receives the funds, works with school districts to identify school's needs for state-adopted materials, solicits bids from publishers, purchases the materials from the qualifying publishers, and distributes the materials to the school districts. The

FUNDS	process is mandated and governed by extensive guidance in state law and regulations implemented by the State Board of Education.

JUSTIFICATION OF REQUEST	Academic standards are required to be reviewed and possibly revised every seven years for core academic areas. After this process is completed for South Carolina K-12 subjects, the instructional materials need to be updated and repurchased statewide. Over the past decade, these adoptions have ranged in cost from $172M for ELA to a projected $81M for Social Studies.
	Historically, the Department has waited for these new standards to be adopted before requesting funding, and while the legislature has funded what they can, there may not be available funding for full statewide adoption. This can lead to deciding which grades will get new material, aligned to the new standards, and which grades will continue to use the outdated material, that do not align with the new standards.
	Currently the Social Studies standards are going through the rewriting process, which will be completed in 2026. Once the new standards have been completed the Department anticipates needing at least $81M to ensure that grades K-12 are able to receive HQIM aligned to these new standards.
	As we approach America's 250th birthday, the robust teaching of civics, history, and other social studies disciplines has never been more vital. We must ensure that we pass along the values and ideals that have shaped our state and nation and will sustain them for future generations. South Carolina has a monumental opportunity - through developing and supporting the implementation of new standards and HQIM - to lead the nation in the civic formation of our students.
	Just as a family might set money aside for a large future expense such as a vehicle, downpayment on a home, or college, the Department is asking for a recurring line of funding that may be used for future purchases of high-quality instructional materials. By starting to save this year, the state will decrease the impact these large expenses will have on future state budgets.

Agency Name:	Department Of Education		
Agency Code:	H630	Section:	1

FORM B1 – RECURRING OPERATING REQUEST

AGENCY PRIORITY	10

Provide the Agency Priority Ranking from the Executive Summary.

TITLE	Educational Scholarship Trust Fund

Provide a brief, descriptive title for this request.

AMOUNT	General: $61,421,250 Federal: $0 Other: $0 Total: $61,421,250

What is the net change in requested appropriations for FY 2026-2027? This amount should correspond to the total for all funding sources on the Executive Summary.

NEW POSITIONS	0.00

Please provide the total number of new positions needed for this request.

FACTORS ASSOCIATED WITH THE REQUEST	**Mark "X" for all that apply:**	
	X	Change in cost of providing current services to existing program audience
		Change in case load/enrollment under existing program guidelines
		Non-mandated change in eligibility/enrollment for existing program
		Non-mandated program change in service levels or areas
		Proposed establishment of a new program or initiative
		Loss of federal or other external financial support for existing program
		Exhaustion of fund balances previously used to support program
		IT Technology/Security related
		HR/Personnel Related
		Consulted DTO during development
		Related to a Non-Recurring request – If so, Priority #

STATEWIDE ENTERPRISE STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES	**Mark "X" for primary applicable Statewide Enterprise Strategic Objective:**	
	X	Education, Training, and Human Development
		Healthy and Safe Families
		Maintaining Safety, Integrity, and Security
		Public Infrastructure and Economic Development
		Government and Citizens

ACCOUNTABILITY OF FUNDS	Use of funds will be evaluated via reporting of student outcomes and other program benchmarks to the General Assembly as required by Act 11 of 2025

What specific strategy, as outlined in the most recent Strategic Planning and Performance Measurement template of agency's accountability report, does this funding request support? How would this request advance that strategy? How would the use of these funds be evaluated?

RECIPIENTS OF	Funds will be distributed to the Trustee of the Educational Scholarship Trust Fund, for distribution into account controlled by parents for use on behalf of the educational needs of their scholarship recipient student children, according to the provisions of Act

FUNDS	11 of 2025.

JUSTIFICATION OF REQUEST	In 2023, South Carolina joined a growing number of states across the country in enacting an Education Scholarship Account (ESA) program, known as the South Carolina Education Scholarship Trust Fund, to increase flexible education options for eligible K- 12 students and their families. Last year, the legislature updated the law to expand the program and address legal concerns raised by the South Carolina Supreme Court.

Built on the long-standing precedent of South Carolina's First Steps (4K) and Tuition Grants (Higher Education) programs, Year 2 of the ESA program funded 10,000 accounts at $7,500 per eligible student, whose household income did not exceed 300 percent of the federal poverty guidelines. (In 2024, for example, that was a household income limit of $93,600 for a family of four.) In addition to the 10,000 students participating in the program, the Department has maintained a waiting list of more than 6,000 additional students.

The provisions of Act 11 of 2025 require the General Assembly to fund a minimum of 15,000 students for School Year 2026-27. Additionally, the family income eligibility cap for 2026-27 will increase to 500% of federal poverty guidelines, increasing potential eligibility to nearly 87 percent of the state's student population. Under the law, however, priority will still be given to families where income is does not exceed 300% of poverty level, students who attended public school the previous school year, and children of active duty military parent.

To date, the General Assembly has appropriated $60,000,000 in annually recurring funding for the ESTF program. It has appropriated an additional $35,000,000 in non-recurring funds. We project a remainder of $37,000,000 in the fund to be carried forward for one-time expenditures. In light of current program demand—as evidenced by the existing waiting list—paired with the anticipated increase in demand due to expanded eligibility, the SCDE requests that the General Assembly fully fund a minimum of 20,000 students for School Year 2026-2027. The following formula is based on RFA's calculation of percentage increase in average per pupil funding from state sources:

Option 1: 15,000 students * $7,634 + 5% administration fee = **$23,235,500**

Option 2: 20,000 students * $7,634 + 5% administration fee = **$61,421,250**

Option 3: 25,000 students * $7,634 + 5% administration fee = **$105,392,500**

As a new appropriation, this removes no money from the traditional public education system. Rather, it represents a new educational investment that expands access to South Carolina's growing education ecosystem through this student-centered funding mechanism. |

Agency Name:	Department Of Education		
Agency Code:	H630	Section:	1

FORM B1 – RECURRING OPERATING REQUEST

AGENCY PRIORITY	**11**
	Provide the Agency Priority Ranking from the Executive Summary.

TITLE	**Digital Curriculum Supports**
	Provide a brief, descriptive title for this request.

AMOUNT	**General: $8,205,249** **Federal: $0** **Other: $0** **Total: $8,205,249**
	What is the net change in requested appropriations for FY 2026-2027? This amount should correspond to the total for all funding sources on the Executive Summary.

NEW POSITIONS	**0.00**
	Please provide the total number of new positions needed for this request.

	Mark "X" for all that apply:	
FACTORS ASSOCIATED WITH THE REQUEST	X	Change in cost of providing current services to existing program audience
		Change in case load/enrollment under existing program guidelines
		Non-mandated change in eligibility/enrollment for existing program
		Non-mandated program change in service levels or areas
	X	Proposed establishment of a new program or initiative
		Loss of federal or other external financial support for existing program
	X	Exhaustion of fund balances previously used to support program
		IT Technology/Security related
		HR/Personnel Related
		Consulted DTO during development
		Related to a Non-Recurring request – If so, Priority #

	Mark "X" for primary applicable Statewide Enterprise Strategic Objective:	
STATEWIDE ENTERPRISE STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES	X	Education, Training, and Human Development
		Healthy and Safe Families
		Maintaining Safety, Integrity, and Security
		Public Infrastructure and Economic Development
		Government and Citizens

	This request supports Agency Goal 2: Align state standards, curriculum, assessment, and professional development for maximum learning impact as evidenced by student achievement outcomes. • **Single Sign On** simplifies access to instructional and professional development platforms, reducing barriers for educators and students and increasing engagement with aligned resources. • **Learning Management Systems** provides a centralized environment for delivering curriculum and assessments that are mapped to state standards, enabling consistent instructional practices and data collection across districts. • **Learning Object Repository** ensures that high-quality, standards-aligned instructional materials are easily discoverable and reusable, supporting curriculum coherence and instructional equity statewide.
ACCOUNTABILITY OF FUNDS	The effectiveness of this funding will be evaluated through a combination of **usage metrics**, **impact measures**, and **stakeholder feedback**, including: • **System Utilization**: Tracking login frequency, resource access, and course completion rates across SSO, LMS, and LOR platforms.

- **Standards Alignment**: Auditing content within the LMS and LOR to ensure alignment with state standards and curriculum frameworks.
- **Professional Development Outcomes**: Measuring educator participation in PD modules and correlating with improvements in instructional practice and student achievement.
- **Student Achievement Data**: Analyzing assessment results to identify correlations between system usage and student performance.
- **Stakeholder Feedback**: Gathering input from educators, administrators, and students on usability, relevance, and instructional impact of the platforms.

These evaluation methods will ensure that the investment in digital infrastructure is driving measurable progress toward the agency's strategic goals.

What specific strategy, as outlined in the most recent Strategic Planning and Performance Measurement template of agency's accountability report, does this funding request support? How would this request advance that strategy? How would the use of these funds be evaluated?

RECIPIENTS OF FUNDS	Funds will support external vendors. SCDE will use current funds cover salary realignments for one repurposed FTE to provide program management, technical deployment, training, and district support. The funds will flow to vendors engaged to deliver digital, training materials, and compliance reporting systems. No grants or direct payments will be made to individual districts or beneficiaries. Funds will be distributed through the state's competitive procurement process, in accordance with South Carolina procurement code. SCDE will manage vendor contracts and oversee deliverables, ensuring that tools, services, and support directly strengthen district digital learning systems. Vendors: ClassLink, Schoology, Safari Montage, Instructure Canvas, School Districts as reimbursements for TEAMS, Google and Seesaw. The funds would pay directly from invoices from vendors, or reimbursement for district payments.

What individuals or entities would receive these funds (contractors, vendors, grantees, individual beneficiaries, etc.)? How would these funds be allocated – using an existing formula, through a competitive process, based upon predetermined eligibility criteria?

JUSTIFICATION OF REQUEST	SCDE has engaged in procurement processes to minimize the costs associated with maintaining a digital classroom environment. ClassLink (SSO) allows students to safely use provided resources with limited teacher involvement beyond generating the assignments. The Learning Management System (LMS) organizes the content, supports grading, feedback, and assessment. The Learning Object Repository (LOR) houses content for statewide consumption including digital textbooks, videos and other High Quality Instructional Materials (HQIM). Organizing this at the state level allows all the data to be collected, matched to assessment scores and preliminary evaluation of the effectiveness of the content. ClassLink delivers usage analytics, the LMSs allow personalization and differentiated instruction. The LOR assures every student has access to HQIM.

Please thoroughly explain the request to include the justification for funds, potential offsets, matching funds, and method of calculation. Please include any explanation of impact if funds are not received. If new positions have been requested, explain why existing vacancies are not sufficient.

Agency Name:	Department Of Education		
Agency Code:	H630	Section:	1

FORM B1 – RECURRING OPERATING REQUEST

AGENCY PRIORITY	**12**

Provide the Agency Priority Ranking from the Executive Summary.

TITLE	**Strengthening Fiscal Oversight & Data Infrastructure**

Provide a brief, descriptive title for this request.

AMOUNT	**General: $580,000** **Federal: $0** **Other: $0** **Total: $580,000**

What is the net change in requested appropriations for FY 2026-2027? This amount should correspond to the total for all funding sources on the Executive Summary.

NEW POSITIONS	**0.00**

Please provide the total number of new positions needed for this request.

FACTORS ASSOCIATED WITH THE REQUEST		**Mark "X" for all that apply:**
		Change in cost of providing current services to existing program audience
		Change in case load/enrollment under existing program guidelines
		Non-mandated change in eligibility/enrollment for existing program
		Non-mandated program change in service levels or areas
	X	Proposed establishment of a new program or initiative
		Loss of federal or other external financial support for existing program
		Exhaustion of fund balances previously used to support program
	X	IT Technology/Security related
	X	HR/Personnel Related
		Consulted DTO during development
	X	Related to a Non-Recurring request – If so, Priority # 13

STATEWIDE ENTERPRISE STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES		**Mark "X" for primary applicable Statewide Enterprise Strategic Objective:**
	X	Education, Training, and Human Development
		Healthy and Safe Families
		Maintaining Safety, Integrity, and Security
		Public Infrastructure and Economic Development
		Government and Citizens

ACCOUNTABILITY OF FUNDS	This request supports Agency Goal 3: Support educators and school leaders in continuous development. Strengthening fiscal practices equips leaders with the stability, tools, and data needed to govern effectively. Funds will expand SCDE's Fiscal Practices team to provide direct technical assistance, mentorship, and a Fiscal Early Warning System while sustaining the statewide education finance data platform. Success will be measured by improved district financial accuracy, earlier identification of fiscal stress, and increased leader participation in mentorship and training programs.

What specific strategy, as outlined in the most recent Strategic Planning and Performance Measurement template of agency's accountability report, does this funding request support? How would this request advance that strategy? How would the use of these funds be evaluated?

	The requested funds would primarily support SCDE personnel and operational needs, not outside contractors or direct beneficiaries. Specifically, funds would be allocated to:

RECIPIENTS OF FUNDS	• Personal Services ($480,000): Four repurposed FTEs at SCDE (2 District Fiscal Support Specialists, 1 Education Finance Data Analyst, 1 Audit & Compliance Coordinator). No new positions are created; instead, funds ensure salaries are aligned with market rates for the advanced skills required. • Operational Support ($100,000): Costs related to statewide district support, including travel for on-site technical assistance, development of fiscal guidance/training materials, collaboration with SCASBO for mentorship programs, and tools to automate monitoring, dashboards, and early warning indicators. Allocation Method: Funds are not distributed by formula or competitive grant. Instead, they directly sustain SCDE's internal Fiscal Practices team and associated operations, which in turn deliver technical assistance, monitoring, training, and data platform support to all districts statewide.

What individuals or entities would receive these funds (contractors, vendors, grantees, individual beneficiaries, etc.)? How would these funds be allocated – using an existing formula, through a competitive process, based upon predetermined eligibility criteria?

JUSTIFICATION OF REQUEST	SCDE requests funds to expand the Fiscal Practices Department to meet statutory duties under SC Code § 59-20-90 and implement the recommendations of the District Accounting Systems and Best Practices (DASBP) Committee established by Proviso 1.104. While a Fiscal Practices Manager has already been hired with existing funds, additional resources are needed to provide proactive district support in the following areas: • Deliver proactive technical assistance to districts with high turnover or elevated risk. • Lead training on the revised Financial Accounting Handbook (Rec 21). • Launch and scale a statewide fiscal mentorship program with SCASBO (Recs 22–24). • Monitor district submissions for consistency, providing feedback and corrective guidance (Rec 19). • Manage a Fiscal Early Warning System (Rec 3) to identify financial distress before escalation. • Sustain and enhance the statewide education finance data platform, including operations, reporting, dashboards, and data integrity. The request covers personnel (repurposed FTEs with market-aligned salaries for advanced fiscal skillsets) and operational support (travel, training, and monitoring tools). No new positions are being created. Without this investment, SCDE will lack the capacity to prevent financial mismanagement, support struggling districts, and ensure accurate, transparent statewide finance data.

Please thoroughly explain the request to include the justification for funds, potential offsets, matching funds, and method of calculation. Please include any explanation of impact if funds are not received. If new positions have been requested, explain why existing vacancies are not sufficient.

Agency Name:	Department Of Education		
Agency Code:	H630	Section:	1

FORM B1 – RECURRING OPERATING REQUEST

AGENCY PRIORITY	**15**
	Provide the Agency Priority Ranking from the Executive Summary.

TITLE	**SAFE K-12 Implementation Support**
	Provide a brief, descriptive title for this request.

AMOUNT	**General: $1,720,000** **Federal: $0** **Other: $0** **Total: $1,720,000**
	What is the net change in requested appropriations for FY 2026-2027? This amount should correspond to the total for all funding sources on the Executive Summary.

NEW POSITIONS	**0.00**
	Please provide the total number of new positions needed for this request.

FACTORS ASSOCIATED WITH THE REQUEST		**Mark "X" for all that apply:**
		Change in cost of providing current services to existing program audience
		Change in case load/enrollment under existing program guidelines
		Non-mandated change in eligibility/enrollment for existing program
		Non-mandated program change in service levels or areas
	X	Proposed establishment of a new program or initiative
		Loss of federal or other external financial support for existing program
		Exhaustion of fund balances previously used to support program
	X	IT Technology/Security related
		HR/Personnel Related
	X	Consulted DTO during development
	X	Related to a Non-Recurring request – If so, Priority # 14

STATEWIDE ENTERPRISE STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES		**Mark "X" for primary applicable Statewide Enterprise Strategic Objective:**
		Education, Training, and Human Development
		Healthy and Safe Families
	X	Maintaining Safety, Integrity, and Security
		Public Infrastructure and Economic Development
		Government and Citizens

ACCOUNTABILITY OF FUNDS	This request supports Agency Goal 1: Develop and implement systems and supports to ensure a safe and a healthy school culture. Strong, reliable cybersecurity infrastructure is essential for districts to protect student and educator data, ensure compliance with state law, and maintain continuity of operations. SAFE K–12 equips districts with the tools, shared services, and governance structures needed to manage cybersecurity effectively. By providing centralized monitoring, real-time threat detection, affordable vendor-backed services, and consistent training, the program builds capacity across all districts—especially those with limited technical resources—so leaders can focus on instructional priorities without being destabilized by cybersecurity risks. The use of funds will be evaluated through measurable outcomes, including: • Number of districts onboarded and actively using SAFE K–12 shared services. • Deployment and performance of the statewide monitoring and compliance platform.

- District compliance with S.C. Code §59-1-490(G).
- Reduction in cybersecurity incidents and faster incident response times.
- Feedback from district leaders on training, tools, and support effectiveness.

What specific strategy, as outlined in the most recent Strategic Planning and Performance Measurement template of agency's accountability report, does this funding request support? How would this request advance that strategy? How would the use of these funds be evaluated?

RECIPIENTS OF FUNDS	Funds will support both SCDE and external vendors. A portion will be allocated to SCDE to cover salary realignments for eight repurposed FTEs who provide program management, technical deployment, training, and district support. The remainder will flow to vendors and contractors engaged to deliver cybersecurity monitoring tools, threat detection applications, training materials, and compliance reporting systems. No grants or direct payments will be made to individual districts or beneficiaries. Funds will be distributed through the state's competitive procurement process, in accordance with South Carolina procurement code. SCDE will manage vendor contracts and oversee deliverables, ensuring that tools, services, and support directly strengthen district cybersecurity capacity under the SAFE K–12 program.

What individuals or entities would receive these funds (contractors, vendors, grantees, individual beneficiaries, etc.)? How would these funds be allocated – using an existing formula, through a competitive process, based upon predetermined eligibility criteria?

JUSTIFICATION OF REQUEST	SCDE requests $1,720,000 in recurring funds to sustain and expand the SAFE K–12 cybersecurity program in FY 2026–27. SAFE K–12 is South Carolina's statewide framework to help districts meet minimum cybersecurity requirements outlined in S.C. Code §59-1-490(G). Built on the Center for Internet Security (CIS) Controls, the program provides a shared services model that lowers costs, reduces risk, and improves compliance for all districts. SAFE K–12 will expand onboarding, scale shared monitoring infrastructure, extend affordable vendor-backed services, and institutionalize statewide governance through audits and continuous improvement cycles. SCDE has already reallocated funds to launch the program in FY25–26, including system design, vendor procurement, and initial district onboarding. The request is based on detailed personnel and operational requirements: - Personal Services ($1,120,000): Eight existing FTEs at SCDE would have salary allocations are being realigned to market rates for advanced cybersecurity skillsets. These positions (Program Director, Service Delivery Manager, 2 Deployment Engineers, 2 Training & Onboarding Coordinators, and 2 Help Desk Specialists) are critical to sustaining SAFE K–12's shared services model. - Operational Support ($600,000): Includes regional training and travel, software coordination and reporting tools, implementation guides and materials, threat detection and risk assessment applications, compliance dashboards, and contracted support for vendor onboarding and performance tracking. Without this investment, districts will face higher costs, inconsistent compliance, and increased vulnerability to cyber threats that could compromise student data and disrupt instruction. Because cybersecurity protections must be continuously maintained and updated, this request creates a recurring need.

Please thoroughly explain the request to include the justification for funds, potential offsets, matching funds, and method of calculation. Please include any explanation of impact if funds are not received. If new positions have been requested, explain why existing vacancies are not sufficient.

Agency Name:	Department Of Education		
Agency Code:	H630	Section:	1

FORM B1 – RECURRING OPERATING REQUEST

AGENCY PRIORITY	**16**

Provide the Agency Priority Ranking from the Executive Summary.

TITLE	**Bus Lease Purchase**

Provide a brief, descriptive title for this request.

AMOUNT	**General: $40,000,000** **Federal: $0** **Other: $0** **Total: $40,000,000**

What is the net change in requested appropriations for FY 2026-2027? This amount should correspond to the total for all funding sources on the Executive Summary.

NEW POSITIONS	**0.00**

Please provide the total number of new positions needed for this request.

FACTORS ASSOCIATED WITH THE REQUEST	**Mark "X" for all that apply:**	
	X	Change in cost of providing current services to existing program audience
		Change in case load/enrollment under existing program guidelines
		Non-mandated change in eligibility/enrollment for existing program
		Non-mandated program change in service levels or areas
		Proposed establishment of a new program or initiative
		Loss of federal or other external financial support for existing program
		Exhaustion of fund balances previously used to support program
		IT Technology/Security related
		HR/Personnel Related
		Consulted DTO during development
		Related to a Non-Recurring request – If so, Priority #

STATEWIDE ENTERPRISE STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES	**Mark "X" for primary applicable Statewide Enterprise Strategic Objective:**	
	X	Education, Training, and Human Development
		Healthy and Safe Families
		Maintaining Safety, Integrity, and Security
		Public Infrastructure and Economic Development
		Government and Citizens

ACCOUNTABILITY OF FUNDS	This funding request directly supports Strategy 1.4: Enhance Student Safety, as outlined in the SCDE's most recent Strategic Planning and Performance Measurement template. By enabling the purchase of approximately 300 new school buses in FY25/26, including 275 replacements and 50 additions for growth, the SCDE will continue to maintain and modernize its fleet, ensuring that students are transported in the most safe, reliable vehicles. This allocation will allow SCDE to: • Maintain the fifteen-year replacement cycle, reducing the risk of mechanical failures and outdated safety standards. • Expand the fleet in high-growth areas, ensuring timely and safe transportation for all students.

What specific strategy, as outlined in the most recent Strategic Planning and Performance Measurement template

RECIPIENTS OF FUNDS	Funds are utilized by the Office of Transportation to Lease/Purchase buses that meet state specifications.

JUSTIFICATION OF REQUEST	In 2007, the South Carolina Legislature passed Act 79, mandating a bus replacement cycle that would each year replace approximately one-fifteenth of the fleet with new buses (S.C. Code § 59-67-580(A)). This allocation will allow the SCDE to maintain its fifteen-year bus replacement cycle and continue to maintain and modernize the fleet. With the committed support of the General Assembly over the past seven (7) years, the agency has made substantial progress in upgrading buses to support powertrain diversification, enhance safety, and improve rider comfort. Notably, all Special Needs buses are now equipped with air conditioning and air conditioning has been installed in 91% of General Education buses. Bus Purchases: FY19 – 408 Buses FY20 – 537 Buses (105 Lease) FY21 – 726 Buses (235 VW settlement and 20 EPA EV Grant) FY22 – 314 Buses FY23 – 368 Buses (164 EPA EV Grant) FY24 – 295 Buses FY25 – 197 Buses If the South Carolina Department of Education (SCDE) does not receive the requested funding, it will be unable to maintain its fifteen-year bus replacement schedule or provide additional buses needed in rapidly growing areas. The proposed funding will enable SCDE to purchase approximately 300 new buses in FY25/26—275 to replace aging vehicles and 50 units to support growth.

Agency Name:	Department Of Education		
Agency Code:	H630	Section:	1

FORM B2 – NON-RECURRING OPERATING REQUEST

AGENCY PRIORITY	3

Provide the Agency Priority Ranking from the Executive Summary.

TITLE	Teacher Strategic Compensation Pilot Phase 3

Provide a brief, descriptive title for this request.

AMOUNT	$5,000,000

What is the net change in requested appropriations for FY 2026-2027? This amount should correspond to the total for all funding sources on the Executive Summary.

FACTORS ASSOCIATED WITH THE REQUEST	Mark "X" for all that apply:	
		Change in cost of providing current services to existing program audience
		Change in case load/enrollment under existing program guidelines
		Non-mandated change in eligibility/enrollment for existing program
		Non-mandated program change in service levels or areas
		Proposed establishment of a new program or initiative
		Loss of federal or other external financial support for existing program
	X	Exhaustion of fund balances previously used to support program
		IT Technology/Security related
		Consulted DTO during development
		HR/Personnel Related
		Request for Non-Recurring Appropriations
		Request for Federal/Other Authorization to spend existing funding
		Related to a Recurring request – If so, Priority #

STATEWIDE ENTERPRISE STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES	Mark "X" for primary applicable Statewide Enterprise Strategic Objective:	
	X	Education, Training, and Human Development
		Healthy and Safe Families
		Maintaining Safety, Integrity, and Security
		Public Infrastructure and Economic Development
		Government and Citizens

ACCOUNTABILITY OF FUNDS	Recruit and retain the highest quality teachers and administrators

What specific strategy, as outlined in the most recent Strategic Planning and Performance Measurement template of agency's accountability report, does this funding request support? How would this request advance that strategy? How would the use of these funds be evaluated?

RECIPIENTS OF FUNDS	SDE to award funds to eligible local districts that are part of the current pilot program and based upon an annual review of their program implementation.

What individuals or entities would receive these funds (contractors, vendors, grantees, individual beneficiaries, etc.)? How would these funds be allocated – using an existing formula, through a competitive process, based upon

JUSTIFICATION OF REQUEST	In winter of the 2024-25 school year, 36 schools across 30 districts were selected as grantees for the first year of South Carolina's strategic compensation pilot. This pilot builds upon a successful public-private partnership already occurring in 20+ high needs schools. Selected schools chose from three compensation models: 1. State Collaboration Model: This model uses state-administered summative assessment growth (SC Ready for grades 3-8 and End of Course [EOC] for high school) to determine teacher-level awards. 2. Excellence in Teaching Model (EIT): This model, developed by Meeting Street Schools, uses state-required interim assessment growth (MAP Growth or iReady) to determine teacher-level awards. 3. Blended or School-Designed Model: Some schools chose to blend the two models above, or develop school-specific criteria focused on student growth in Math and ELA. Across all models, teachers in Math and ELA whose students make higher than average growth are eligible for awards, ranging from $500 to $25,000 or more depending on the amount of growth and number of students served. During summer 2025, the SCDE worked with data partner organizations to develop the new models prior to the release of statewide assessment results. Eligible teachers under models utilizing SC Ready and EOC data will receive their award information later in fall 2025. Teachers under the EIT and school-designed models will begin receiving award information in September 2025. All participating schools have indicated interest in participating in the pilot for 2025-26 and beyond. Therefore, we are maintaining plans for these first "pilot sites" to be three-year commitments to be evaluated and studied by the Department (and external evaluators) for successful implementation. This request represents the third year of that three-year process. During the 2024-25 school year, districts initially applied for 118 schools and $21.7 million in award funding. We could foresee this becoming a recurring request based on continued district/charter demand for strategic compensation, the success of the first 2-3 years of the pilots, and an evaluation of state and district capacity to sustain strategic compensation. We do have early evidence from the public-private partnership schools (which includes three charter campuses in Greenville, fourteen schools in Charleston County, three public schools of innovation @ Meeting Street, and Allendale and Williamsburg) and the initial student results from the current year that this initiative has promise. The Charleston-specific campuses remain funded via philanthropy and will continue to serve as a lab of promising innovations (via work started at Meeting Street over the past five years) without needing any state funding.

Please thoroughly explain the request to include the justification for funds, potential offsets, matching funds, and method of calculation. Please include any explanation of impact if funds are not received. If new positions have been requested, explain why existing vacancies are not sufficient.

Agency Name:	Department Of Education		
Agency Code:	H630	Section:	1

FORM B2 – NON-RECURRING OPERATING REQUEST

AGENCY PRIORITY	5

Provide the Agency Priority Ranking from the Executive Summary.

TITLE	School Security Personnel Pilot

Provide a brief, descriptive title for this request.

AMOUNT	$347,500

What is the net change in requested appropriations for FY 2026-2027? This amount should correspond to the total for all funding sources on the Executive Summary.

	Mark "X" for all that apply:	
FACTORS ASSOCIATED WITH THE REQUEST		Change in cost of providing current services to existing program audience
		Change in case load/enrollment under existing program guidelines
		Non-mandated change in eligibility/enrollment for existing program
		Non-mandated program change in service levels or areas
	X	Proposed establishment of a new program or initiative
		Loss of federal or other external financial support for existing program
		Exhaustion of fund balances previously used to support program
		IT Technology/Security related
		Consulted DTO during development
		HR/Personnel Related
	X	Request for Non-Recurring Appropriations
		Request for Federal/Other Authorization to spend existing funding
		Related to a Recurring request – If so, Priority #

	Mark "X" for primary applicable Statewide Enterprise Strategic Objective:	
STATEWIDE ENTERPRISE STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES		Education, Training, and Human Development
		Healthy and Safe Families
	X	Maintaining Safety, Integrity, and Security
		Public Infrastructure and Economic Development
		Government and Citizens

ACCOUNTABILITY OF FUNDS	This request supports SCDE's strategic plan by identifying actionable steps that would make learning environments safer and more physically-secure for students, better enabling each child served reach their full potential. The requested $347,500 will fund a pilot between willing local law enforcement, state partners, and districts/schools seeking to amplify the number of personnel who are trained and equipped to keep students safe during a critical incident. In partnership with the Legislature, the Governor has completed the gargantuan task of ensuring a school resource officer in every existing public school, but as new charter schools open every year and some schools grow rapidly in population, the SCDE recognizes that those schools may feel the need to amplify the efforts of the existing School Resource Officers. The School Safety Personnel (SSP) pilot will allow SCDE to partner with districts and law enforcement entities to develop and implement a training and/or certification protocol that would allow existing district/school employees to be responsive in a security capacity during a critical incident, such as an active shooter on campus. Florida's Guardian Program, developed to complement the state's existing SRO program in the wake of the Parkland tragedy, serves as an initial blueprint for South Carolina's efforts. We recognize that to be workable, this model must be tailored – in close

partnership with state and local law enforcement – to align with our state's existing training protocols.

Use of funds will be evaluated through:

- The finalization of a training protocol that receives law enforcement endorsement.
- Deployment of training to the first cohort of potential SSPs.
- Feedback from administrators in schools with SSPs on the perception or actual evidence (if available) that their presence increased security on campus.

RECIPIENTS OF FUNDS	Funds will primarily support the law enforcement entities who vet the candidates for the SSP roles, the law enforcement entities who provide the training for SSPs, and the SSPs themselves for both a one-time stipend and any supplies needed to carry out their additional duties. Funds for training development and deployment will be paid to selected law enforcement partners by the SCDE's Office of Safe Schools. Any funds reserved for SSP stipends will be distributed to the candidates through directed funds transfers to the districts. Partner schools and district will be identified first by willingness to participate in the pilot and then will be prioritized based on demonstrated need (potential absence of an SRO, student-to-SRO ratio, etc).

What individuals or entities would receive these funds (contractors, vendors, grantees, individual beneficiaries, etc.)? How would these funds be allocated – using an existing formula, through a competitive process, based upon predetermined eligibility criteria?

JUSTIFICATION OF REQUEST	Emerging charter schools that may not have a full-time SRO in their first year of operation face incredible security risks, and schools where the student body far exceeds what an SRO can reasonably cover in an emergency are also at risk. Additionally, we have seen well-publicized tragedies at independent schools in Tennessee and Minnesota who were perhaps not able to afford private security. Although the requested funds would not be allocated in any way to independent schools in South Carolina, training developed through this pilot could potentially be offered through a fee-for-service model to independent schools who wished to participate, thereby ensuring greater safety for all South Carolina children, whatever their chosen learning environment. SCDE requests $347,500 to partner with law enforcement to develop and deliver training, work with traditional and charter districts to select the initial candidates, and run a pilot year of an SSP program. Funding details include the following: - Training development: $35,000 (cost of development of training, printing/delivery of materials, and any contracts that need to be executed to ensure effective program infrastructure) - Estimated cost to train/outfit each SSP: $10,000 x 25 SSPs = $250,000 (the $10,000/SSP figure is reflective of Florida's actual cost/Guardian) - Stipend for SSP for 2026-27 school year: $2,500 = $62,500 As a state, we have taken impressive steps to put every school in the best possible position to protect its students and staff. This is one more practical, proven idea to ensure that South Carolina is deploying every available resource to prioritize the safety of our schools.

requested, explain why existing vacancies are not sufficient.

Agency Name:	Department Of Education		
Agency Code:	H630	Section:	1

FORM B2 – NON-RECURRING OPERATING REQUEST

AGENCY PRIORITY	7

Provide the Agency Priority Ranking from the Executive Summary.

TITLE	High-Quality Instructional Materials

Provide a brief, descriptive title for this request.

AMOUNT	$50,000,000

What is the net change in requested appropriations for FY 2026-2027? This amount should correspond to the total for all funding sources on the Executive Summary.

	Mark "X" for all that apply:
FACTORS ASSOCIATED WITH THE REQUEST	Change in cost of providing current services to existing program audience
	Change in case load/enrollment under existing program guidelines
	Non-mandated change in eligibility/enrollment for existing program
	Non-mandated program change in service levels or areas
	Proposed establishment of a new program or initiative
	Loss of federal or other external financial support for existing program
	X Exhaustion of fund balances previously used to support program
	IT Technology/Security related
	Consulted DTO during development
	HR/Personnel Related
	X Request for Non-Recurring Appropriations
	Request for Federal/Other Authorization to spend existing funding
	Related to a Recurring request – If so, Priority #

	Mark "X" for primary applicable Statewide Enterprise Strategic Objective:
STATEWIDE ENTERPRISE STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES	**X** Education, Training, and Human Development
	Healthy and Safe Families
	Maintaining Safety, Integrity, and Security
	Public Infrastructure and Economic Development
	Government and Citizens

ACCOUNTABILITY OF FUNDS	High quality instructional materials (HQIM) are essential to help students meet or exceed annual assessments such as SC READY in elementary and middle school as well as End of Course and Career Readiness assessments in high school. They further allow students to learn content aligned with South Carolina's College and Career Readiness Standards and standards-aligned career and technology courses designed to achieve industry certifications.

What specific strategy, as outlined in the most recent Strategic Planning and Performance Measurement template of agency's accountability report, does this funding request support? How would this request advance that strategy? How would the use of these funds be evaluated?

RECIPIENTS OF FUNDS	The SCDE receives the funds, works with school districts to identify school's needs for state-adopted materials, solicits bids from publishers, purchases the materials from the qualifying publishers, and distributes the materials to the school districts. The process is mandated and governed by extensive guidance in state law and regulations implemented by the State Board of Education.

What individuals or entities would receive these funds (contractors, vendors, grantees, individual beneficiaries, etc.)? How would these funds be allocated – using an existing formula, through a competitive process, based upon

JUSTIFICATION OF REQUEST	Funds will be used to purchase Algebra 1 materials, Computer Education materials, one-year materials extension, fund maintenance orders, and pay for freight costs. **Algebra 1 Materials: $1,000,000** Currently, 4,131 students are enrolled in Geometry. Under the new pathway, schools will need to order Algebra 1 materials for these students, which is estimated to cost $1 million. **Computer Education (CE): $3,000,000** Approximately 2,500 students are currently enrolled in Computer Education courses. This cost reflects per school and per student subscription rates for similar enrollment. **Maintenance Orders: $30,000,000** As student enrollment increases in certain districts, or new charter or traditional schools are opened, additional instructional materials are needed. This would also fund consumables (elementary mathematics, cursive writing, and K-5 science and social studies still rely on consumable materials to support foundational learning) and materials that need to be replaced due to loss or wear. **One-year materials extension: $16,000,000** When a contract with a publisher expires, a one-year extension is needed to ensure that materials are still available while standards are being updated.

Please thoroughly explain the request to include the justification for funds, potential offsets, matching funds, and method of calculation. Please include any explanation of impact if funds are not received. If new positions have been requested, explain why existing vacancies are not sufficient.

Agency Name:	Department Of Education		
Agency Code:	H630	Section:	1

FORM B2 – NON-RECURRING OPERATING REQUEST

AGENCY PRIORITY	9

Provide the Agency Priority Ranking from the Executive Summary.

TITLE	Disconnect to Reconnect

Provide a brief, descriptive title for this request.

AMOUNT	$17,628,472

What is the net change in requested appropriations for FY 2026-2027? This amount should correspond to the total for all funding sources on the Executive Summary.

FACTORS ASSOCIATED WITH THE REQUEST	**Mark "X" for all that apply:**	
		Change in cost of providing current services to existing program audience
		Change in case load/enrollment under existing program guidelines
		Non-mandated change in eligibility/enrollment for existing program
		Non-mandated program change in service levels or areas
	X	Proposed establishment of a new program or initiative
		Loss of federal or other external financial support for existing program
		Exhaustion of fund balances previously used to support program
		IT Technology/Security related
		Consulted DTO during development
		HR/Personnel Related
		Request for Non-Recurring Appropriations
		Request for Federal/Other Authorization to spend existing funding
		Related to a Recurring request – If so, Priority #

STATEWIDE ENTERPRISE STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES	**Mark "X" for primary applicable Statewide Enterprise Strategic Objective:**	
	X	Education, Training, and Human Development
		Healthy and Safe Families
		Maintaining Safety, Integrity, and Security
		Public Infrastructure and Economic Development
		Government and Citizens

ACCOUNTABILITY OF FUNDS	This budget request, along with its related proviso request, would ensure that 3rd – 8th grade students are given age-appropriate instruction about the impact smartphones, screens, and social media can have not only on their mental well-being but on their relationships, development, and grades. This aligns with the agency's Free to Focus initiative.

What specific strategy, as outlined in the most recent Strategic Planning and Performance Measurement template of agency's accountability report, does this funding request support? How would this request advance that strategy? How would the use of these funds be evaluated?

RECIPIENTS OF FUNDS	The department will contract with Families Managing Media Inc to purchase the material corresponding to the student's grade for each 3rd -8th grade student attending public and charter schools.

What individuals or entities would receive these funds (contractors, vendors, grantees, individual beneficiaries, etc.)? How would these funds be allocated – using an existing formula, through a competitive process, based upon

JUSTIFICATION OF REQUEST	Every day, many of our children face an invisible obstacle to healthy development: excessive screen use. Overexposure to technology, especially during non-school hours, disrupts normal brain growth, weakens attention, and undermines the social skills children need to thrive. The result is visible in classrooms across South Carolina: chronic absenteeism, poor focus, rising anxiety, and behavioral issues—all symptoms of a deeper disconnection. **Why Now** The evidence is overwhelming: screen overuse is a root driver of the student mental health and absenteeism crises facing schools nationwide. Yet while families and teachers see the impact daily, few have access to clear, science-based guidance for how to help. If we act now, South Carolina can lead the nation in reversing this trend, just as public education campaigns once helped turn the tide against smoking. By educating students (and their parents) early on the brain science of technology use, we can equip them to make healthy choices, improve attention spans, and strengthen relationships that fuel learning. The longer we wait, the more costly the consequences — academically, behaviorally, and financially — as schools struggle to remediate disengagement and lost learning. **The Plan** The South Carolina Department of Education proposes a statewide partnership with ScreenStrong, a nationally-recognized non-profit organization providing research-backed curriculum to help students and families build healthy screen habits. • Year 1: Deliver curriculum to all South Carolina students in grades 3–8. • Years 2–4: Sustain the initiative by serving grade 3 (elementary) and grade 6 (middle school) students annually. This initiative builds on South Carolina's Free to Focus policy, which limits in-school cell phone use, by extending our commitment beyond the classroom. Together, we will work with parents, educators, and community partners to reclaim students' attention, restore genuine connection with peers and families, and strengthen the foundation for academic and behavioral well-being. **Return on Investment** This program is a low-cost, high-impact investment in student success. Research shows that improved attention and emotional regulation directly correlate with better academic performance, fewer behavioral incidents, and lower absenteeism—all of which reduce the need for costly remediation and interventions. For roughly the cost of a workbook per child, we can give every student practical tools for lifelong digital wellness, saving countless hours of lost instructional time and fostering stronger, more connected communities. This request provides: • 123,977 students in grades 3–5 with The Adventures of Super Brain book and coordinating materials • 179,204 students in grades 6–8 with Kids Brains and Screens student materials (285-page, full-color print book, 8.5" × 11") • Additional engagement supplies (stickers, classroom activities, and incentives)

Please thoroughly explain the request to include the justification for funds, potential offsets, matching funds, and method of calculation. Please include any explanation of impact if funds are not received. If new positions have been requested, explain why existing vacancies are not sufficient.

Agency Name:	Department Of Education		
Agency Code:	H630	Section:	1

FORM B2 – NON-RECURRING OPERATING REQUEST

AGENCY PRIORITY	13

Provide the Agency Priority Ranking from the Executive Summary.

TITLE	Statewide Education Finance Data Platform

Provide a brief, descriptive title for this request.

AMOUNT	$3,200,000

What is the net change in requested appropriations for FY 2026-2027? This amount should correspond to the total for all funding sources on the Executive Summary.

FACTORS ASSOCIATED WITH THE REQUEST	Mark "X" for all that apply:	
		Change in cost of providing current services to existing program audience
		Change in case load/enrollment under existing program guidelines
		Non-mandated change in eligibility/enrollment for existing program
		Non-mandated program change in service levels or areas
	X	Proposed establishment of a new program or initiative
		Loss of federal or other external financial support for existing program
		Exhaustion of fund balances previously used to support program
	X	IT Technology/Security related
		Consulted DTO during development
		HR/Personnel Related
	X	Request for Non-Recurring Appropriations
		Request for Federal/Other Authorization to spend existing funding
	X	Related to a Recurring request – If so, Priority # Strengthening Fiscal Oversight & Data Infrastructure

STATEWIDE ENTERPRISE STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES	Mark "X" for primary applicable Statewide Enterprise Strategic Objective:	
	X	Education, Training, and Human Development
		Healthy and Safe Families
		Maintaining Safety, Integrity, and Security
		Public Infrastructure and Economic Development
		Government and Citizens

ACCOUNTABILITY OF FUNDS	This request supports Agency Goal 3: Support educators and school leaders in continuous development. The statewide education finance data platform will streamline reporting, embed error checks, and provide dashboards and early warning indicators, giving leaders the tools to manage resources responsibly and sustainably. SCDE will oversee vendor contracts and implementation to ensure consistency across districts. Success will be measured by reduced reporting errors, timely submissions, full district adoption, and earlier identification of fiscal stress.

What specific strategy, as outlined in the most recent Strategic Planning and Performance Measurement template of agency's accountability report, does this funding request support? How would this request advance that strategy? How would the use of these funds be evaluated?

RECIPIENTS OF FUNDS	Funds would be directed to vendors and contractors engaged to design, develop, and implement the statewide education finance data platform. This includes technology firms providing system integration, dashboard development, training support, and project management. A portion of funds will also be allocated to SCDE to facilitate oversight, vendor management, and project evaluation, ensuring accountability and alignment with statutory requirements. Funds will be allocated through the state's competitive procurement process, ensuring compliance with South Carolina procurement code. Vendors will be selected based on

demonstrated capacity to integrate with diverse district accounting systems, provide robust data security, and deliver user-friendly dashboards and support tools.

What individuals or entities would receive these funds (contractors, vendors, grantees, individual beneficiaries, etc.)? How would these funds be allocated – using an existing formula, through a competitive process, based upon predetermined eligibility criteria?

JUSTIFICATION OF REQUEST	SCDE requests $3.2M in non-recurring funds to implement a statewide education finance data platform required by SC Code § 59-20-90 and the District Accounting Systems and Best Practices (DASBP) Committee's 2025 recommendations. The platform will consolidate 20+ district reports into a single automated submission, embed error checks, integrate audit data, and provide real-time dashboards and early warning indicators. These improvements will reduce reporting burdens, strengthen fiscal oversight, and give policymakers accurate, timely data to guide decisions. SCDE has already offset early costs by reallocating existing FY25–26 funds to begin design, vendor procurement, and stakeholder engagement. The $3.2M request is based on a detailed cost breakdown aligned to project phases: • $1.5M for platform development and integration (system build, pilot, and district system connectivity). • $950K for dashboards and early warning system development. • $500K for district onboarding, training, and helpdesk support. • $250K for project management, vendor oversight, and post-launch evaluation. Without this investment, districts will continue to face fragmented, error-prone reporting processes that create unnecessary burden and delay. SCDE will lack the tools to identify fiscal distress early, risking more costly state interventions and diminished public trust. Policymakers will continue to make funding and oversight decisions without reliable, up-to-date financial data. Ultimately, limited fiscal oversight weakens district leadership capacity and jeopardizes equitable allocation of resources to classrooms.

Please thoroughly explain the request to include the justification for funds, potential offsets, matching funds, and method of calculation. Please include any explanation of impact if funds are not received. If new positions have been requested, explain why existing vacancies are not sufficient.

Agency Name:	Department Of Education		
Agency Code:	H630	Section:	1

FORM B2 – NON-RECURRING OPERATING REQUEST

AGENCY PRIORITY	14

Provide the Agency Priority Ranking from the Executive Summary.

TITLE	SAFE K-12 Implementation

Provide a brief, descriptive title for this request.

AMOUNT	$1,800,000

What is the net change in requested appropriations for FY 2026-2027? This amount should correspond to the total for all funding sources on the Executive Summary.

FACTORS ASSOCIATED WITH THE REQUEST	Mark "X" for all that apply:	
		Change in cost of providing current services to existing program audience
		Change in case load/enrollment under existing program guidelines
		Non-mandated change in eligibility/enrollment for existing program
		Non-mandated program change in service levels or areas
	X	Proposed establishment of a new program or initiative
		Loss of federal or other external financial support for existing program
		Exhaustion of fund balances previously used to support program
	X	IT Technology/Security related
	X	Consulted DTO during development
		HR/Personnel Related
	X	Request for Non-Recurring Appropriations
		Request for Federal/Other Authorization to spend existing funding
	X	Related to a Recurring request – If so, Priority # SAFE K-12 Implementation Support

STATEWIDE ENTERPRISE STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES	Mark "X" for primary applicable Statewide Enterprise Strategic Objective:	
		Education, Training, and Human Development
		Healthy and Safe Families
	X	Maintaining Safety, Integrity, and Security
		Public Infrastructure and Economic Development
		Government and Citizens

| ACCOUNTABILITY OF FUNDS | This request supports Agency Goal 1: Develop and implement systems and supports to ensure a safe and a healthy school culture. Supporting districts in safeguarding operations and student data are fundamental to sustaining trust, continuity of instruction, and compliance with S.C. Code §59-1-490(G).

The requested $1.8M will fund Year 2 deployment of the SAFE K–12 program by providing districts with direct vendor-supported asset discovery, on-site and remote deployment services, and structured training and onboarding. These activities will build district-level capacity to meet CIS IG1 cybersecurity controls, ensure secure network configurations, and strengthen compliance. By reducing the technical burden on local staff and standardizing protections statewide, this investment enables superintendents, boards, and district leaders to focus on their core mission of student learning rather than emergency response to preventable cyber risks.

Use of funds will be evaluated through:

• Number of districts onboarded into SAFE K–12 in FY26–27.
• Completion of asset discovery reports and risk exposure maps across participating districts.
• Successful deployment of endpoint protections, firewall configurations, and other IG1 safeguards.
• Participation rates in regional and virtual training, with feedback from district staff on readiness and support.
• Compliance tracking against CIS IG1 controls and evidence of reduced vulnerabilities over time. |
|---|---|

RECIPIENTS OF FUNDS	Funds will primarily support?vendors and contractors?engaged in delivering district-level cybersecurity services, including asset discovery, network scanning, endpoint protection, and deployment of CIS IG1 safeguards. A portion will also cover vendor-led?training and onboarding?for district staff to ensure consistent, high-quality implementation. All funds will be allocated through the?state's competitive procurement process, in compliance with South Carolina procurement code. SCDE will manage vendor contracts and oversee deliverables to ensure equitable access for districts statewide. Allocation will be based on deployment needs and onboarding schedules, with priority given to districts that have not yet implemented foundational cybersecurity protections.

JUSTIFICATION OF REQUEST	SCDE requests $1,800,000 to roll out SAFE K–12 program, enabling districts to meet minimum cybersecurity requirements in S.C. Code §59-1-490(G) and implement CIS v8 IG1 safeguards. Funds deliver asset discovery, on-site/remote deployment of protections (e.g., endpoint security, network segmentation, secure configurations), and structured training/onboarding so districts—especially those with limited capacity—can secure their environments, reduce risk, and improve statewide compliance. Offsets: The Year 2 work builds on foundational work completed in FY25–26, where SCDE leveraged internal resources to initiate program design, procurement, and early onboarding. Funding details include the following: • Asset Discovery Support – $530,000: Network/device scanning, software inventory, and risk exposure mapping (prerequisite to IG1 implementation). • Deployment Services – $480,000: Contracted engineering for endpoint protection, firewall/segmentation, and secure configurations aligned to IG1. • Training & Onboarding – $90,000: Regional/virtual training, materials, travel, and translation to ensure consistent, high-quality adoption. • Security Monitoring Analytics Service – $450,000: initial vendor-led launch of a 24/7 monitoring pilot for participating districts using audit logs and threat detection tools • Incident Response Plan Development Support – $250,000: Development and facilitation of incident response planning across districts. Districts will face delayed onboarding to essential safeguards—or may not receive these services at all—leading to uneven compliance with §59-1-490(G), higher incident risk (disruption, data exposure, recovery costs), and widening capacity gaps between well-resourced and under-resourced systems, undermining operational stability and public trust.

Agency Name:	Department Of Education		
Agency Code:	H630	Section:	1

FORM D – PROVISO REVISION REQUEST

NUMBER	1.71

Cite the proviso according to the renumbered list (or mark "NEW").

TITLE	Standards-Based Assessments Suspended

Provide the title from the renumbered list or suggest a short title for any new request.

BUDGET PROGRAM	VIII.A.2.

Identify the associated budget program(s) by name and budget section.

RELATED BUDGET REQUEST	N/A

Is this request associated with a budget request you have submitted for FY 2026-2027? If so, cite it here.

REQUESTED ACTION	Amend

Choose from: Add, Delete, Amend, or Codify.

OTHER AGENCIES AFFECTED	N/A

Which other agencies would be affected by the recommended action? How?

SUMMARY & EXPLANATION	South Carolina has finished the creation of professional development for the Computer Science and Digital Literacy Standards. Amending the proviso to allow for Social Studies curriculum development will ensure that the new Social Studies standards lead the nation in rigor and content.

FISCAL IMPACT

N/A

PROPOSED PROVISO TEXT

(SDE: Standards-Based Assessments Suspended) In the current fiscal year, the provisions of Section 59-18-325(C)(3) of the 1976 Code requiring science standards-based assessments of students in grade eight and social studies standards-based assessments of students in grades five and seven are suspended. Of the funds available due to the suspension of these assessments, $500,000 must be used by the Department of Education to fund ~~educator professional development regarding the South Carolina Computer Science and Digital Literacy Standards~~ social studies curriculum and supplemental materials development and purchase. The remainder of the funds shall be used to pay for industry certification/credentials as approved to measure College/Career Readiness for purposes of the state accountability system.

Agency Name:	Department Of Education		
Agency Code:	H630	Section:	1

FORM D – PROVISO REVISION REQUEST

NUMBER	1A.71

Cite the proviso according to the renumbered list (or mark "NEW").

TITLE	CERDEP Foundational Literacy Skill Training

Provide the title from the renumbered list or suggest a short title for any new request.

BUDGET PROGRAM	VIII.B.

Identify the associated budget program(s) by name and budget section.

RELATED BUDGET REQUEST	N/A

Is this request associated with a budget request you have submitted for FY 2026-2027? If so, cite it here.

REQUESTED ACTION	Amend

Choose from: Add, Delete, Amend, or Codify.

OTHER AGENCIES AFFECTED	N/A

Which other agencies would be affected by the recommended action? How?

SUMMARY & EXPLANATION	This amendment clarifies that educators taking the foundational skills training in the proviso will earn these teachers an R2S CERDEP Literacy Teacher Endorsement (one course) - not the full R2S Literacy Teacher Endorsement (four courses).

Summarize the existing proviso. If requesting a new proviso, describe the current state of affairs without it. Explain the need for your requested action. For deletion requests due to recent codification, please identify SC Code section where language now appears.

FISCAL IMPACT	N/A

Provide estimates of any fiscal impacts associated with this proviso, whether for state, federal, or other funds. Explain the method of calculation.

PROPOSED PROVISO TEXT	(SDE-EIA: CERDEP Foundational Literacy Skill Training) (A) ~~Beginning in the 2025-26 Fiscal Year~~ <u>For the current fiscal year,</u> with funds available, the Department of Education will train public school educators and class aides working with children in the South Carolina Early Reading Development and Education program (CERDEP) and staff <u>with</u> the Office of First Steps to School Readiness in foundational literacy skills. Each school district with CERDEP classrooms shall participate in the implementation of this foundational literacy skills training. (B)Selected educators shall participate in foundational literacy skills training provided and paid for by the Department of Education. Successful completion of this training shall satisfy the requirements of the ~~literacy teacher endorsement~~ <u>R2S Child Early Reading Development Education Program (CERDEP) Literacy Teacher Endorsement.</u> Educators who successfully complete the training, as determined by the department, shall receive a monetary stipend. (C)The Department of Education is authorized to carry forward and expend any balance of funds authorized in the prior fiscal year for training for the same purposes in the current fiscal year.

Paste existing text above, then bold and underline insertions and strikethrough deletions. For new proviso requests, enter requested text above.

Agency Name:	Department Of Education		
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FORM D – PROVISO REVISION REQUEST

NUMBER	NEW

Cite the proviso according to the renumbered list (or mark "NEW").

TITLE	Strategic Teacher Career Ladder Pilot Implementation

Provide the title from the renumbered list or suggest a short title for any new request.

BUDGET PROGRAM	All

Identify the associated budget program(s) by name and budget section.

RELATED BUDGET REQUEST	Strategic Teacher Career Ladder Pilot

Is this request associated with a budget request you have submitted for FY 2026-2027? If so, cite it here.

REQUESTED ACTION	Add

Choose from: Add, Delete, Amend, or Codify.

OTHER AGENCIES AFFECTED	N/A

Which other agencies would be affected by the recommended action? How?

SUMMARY & EXPLANATION	This proviso provides guidance for how the Strategic Teacher Career Ladder Pilot is implemented.

	Summarize the existing proviso. If requesting a new proviso, describe the current state of affairs without it. Explain the need for your requested action. For deletion requests due to recent codification, please identify SC Code section where language now appears.
FISCAL IMPACT	The budget request associated with this proviso is $1,400,000.
	Provide estimates of any fiscal impacts associated with this proviso, whether for state, federal, or other funds. Explain the method of calculation.

PROPOSED PROVISO TEXT

1.XXX (SDE: Strategic Teacher Career Ladder Pilot Implementation)

(A)The Department of Education shall develop a pilot implementation plan for a strategic Teacher Career Ladder (TCL) program designed to provide high-performing teachers with opportunities for career advancement through advanced license designations, such as Mentor Teacher, Lead Teacher, and Advanced Teacher. These designations shall be linked to clearly defined additional roles, responsibilities, and compensation. The purpose of the TCL is to increase teacher retention, validate career accomplishments, expand access to highly effective educators, and incentivize placement of high-impact teachers in schools with the greatest need.

(B)The Department shall:

(1) Create an opt-in application process for districts, including a rubric to evaluate and select participants for phased implementation;

(2) Develop criteria and guidance for districts to award advanced license designations and validate consistency and fairness through a qualified third party;

(3) Publish annually a list of "Targeted Career Ladder Program" schools where designated teachers may earn higher stipends;

(4) Include?research and best practices from other states?to inform the design and execution of the pilot.

(5) Allocate funds to participating districts, requiring that at least ninety percent of funds be used for teacher stipends;

(6) Require participating districts to submit annual data detailing designation data, educator performance, and implementation outcomes; and

(7) Submit an annual report to the General Assembly detailing the pilot program recommendations for implementing the program.

| | The Department shall be allocated $1,400,000 to fully develop the TCL Pilot Plan for launch with a limited number of districts in the 2027–28 school year. |

Paste existing text above, then bold and underline insertions and strikethrough deletions. For new proviso requests, enter requested text above.

Agency Name:	Department Of Education		
Agency Code:	H630	Section:	1

FORM D – PROVISO REVISION REQUEST

NUMBER	NEW
	Cite the proviso according to the renumbered list (or mark "NEW").

TITLE	ESTF Parent Satisfaction Survey
	Provide the title from the renumbered list or suggest a short title for any new request.

BUDGET PROGRAM	Sec 1
	Identify the associated budget program(s) by name and budget section.

RELATED BUDGET REQUEST	No
	Is this request associated with a budget request you have submitted for FY 2026-2027? If so, cite it here.

REQUESTED ACTION	Add
	Choose from: Add, Delete, Amend, or Codify.

OTHER AGENCIES AFFECTED	Education Oversight Committee
	Which other agencies would be affected by the recommended action? How?

| SUMMARY & EXPLANATION | Currently, SECTION 59-8-150 (E) 4 requires the Education Oversight Committee to: collaborate with the department to develop and administer an annual parental satisfaction survey for all parents of scholarship students on issues relevant to the ESTF program, to include effectiveness and length of the program participation. Results of this survey must be provided to the General Assembly by December thirty first of each year.

To meet a reporting deadline of 12/31 each year, the survey must be developed and administered to all parents in October. This timeline means that parents are reporting on less than three months of the school year. By moving the date of the parent satisfaction report, the General Assembly can observe a full school year experience reported on the satisfaction survey, thus providing a more complete picture. This amendment was discussed with EOC staff; they are supportive. |
|---|---|

FISCAL IMPACT	No fiscal impact

Provide estimates of any fiscal impacts associated with this proviso, whether for state, federal, or other funds. Explain the method of calculation.

PROPOSED PROVISO TEXT	**For the current fiscal year, the EOC is directed to provide the results of the ESTF Parent Survey by June 30.**

Paste existing text above, then bold and underline insertions and strikethrough deletions. For new proviso requests, enter requested text above.

Agency Name:	Department Of Education		
Agency Code:	H630	Section:	1

FORM D – PROVISO REVISION REQUEST

NUMBER	NEW
	Cite the proviso according to the renumbered list (or mark "NEW").

TITLE	Superintendent Contracts
	Provide the title from the renumbered list or suggest a short title for any new request.

BUDGET PROGRAM	Sec 1
	Identify the associated budget program(s) by name and budget section.

RELATED BUDGET REQUEST	N/A
	Is this request associated with a budget request you have submitted for FY 2026-2027? If so, cite it here.

REQUESTED ACTION	Add
	Choose from: Add, Delete, Amend, or Codify.

OTHER AGENCIES AFFECTED	N/A
	Which other agencies would be affected by the recommended action? How?

SUMMARY & EXPLANATION	Recent articles have documented the increasing number of local superintendents receiving contract buyouts that exceed their annual salary. One article outlined that superintendents in just the Midlands region of the state received more than $1.3M in such payouts over the past few years. The SCDE believes these taxpayer funds would better serve the students for whom they are intended by going to classroom instruction rather than golden parachutes.

Summarize the existing proviso. If requesting a new proviso, describe the current state of affairs without it. Explain the need for your requested action. For deletion requests due to recent codification, please identify SC Code section where language now appears.

FISCAL IMPACT	There would be no additional cost to the state or local districts.

Provide estimates of any fiscal impacts associated with this proviso, whether for state, federal, or other funds. Explain the method of calculation.

PROPOSED PROVISO TEXT	**A local school district board of trustees shall include a term in all district superintendent employment contracts, entered into on or after July 1 of the current fiscal year, specifying that the maximum settlement amount to be paid by the district as part of the mutual dissolution of the contract shall not exceed one year's salary or the remainder of the contract value, whichever is less. Nothing in this section limits a district superintendent's right to file a claim in state or federal court based on an alleged violation of law relevant to that individual's employment.**

Paste existing text above, then bold and underline insertions and strikethrough deletions. For new proviso requests, enter requested text above.

Agency Name:	Department Of Education		
Agency Code:	H630	Section:	1

FORM D – PROVISO REVISION REQUEST

NUMBER	NEW
	Cite the proviso according to the renumbered list (or mark "NEW").

TITLE	Disconnect to Reconnect
	Provide the title from the renumbered list or suggest a short title for any new request.

BUDGET PROGRAM	Sec 1
	Identify the associated budget program(s) by name and budget section.

RELATED BUDGET REQUEST	Priority 9: Disconnect to Reconnect
	Is this request associated with a budget request you have submitted for FY 2026-2027? If so, cite it here.

REQUESTED ACTION	Add
	Choose from: Add, Delete, Amend, or Codify.

OTHER AGENCIES AFFECTED	N/A
	Which other agencies would be affected by the recommended action? How?

SUMMARY & EXPLANATION	Every day, many of our children face an invisible obstacle to healthy development: excessive screen use. Overexposure to technology, especially during non-school hours, disrupts normal brain growth, weakens attention, and undermines the social skills children need to thrive. The result is visible in classrooms across South Carolina: chronic absenteeism, poor focus, rising anxiety, and behavioral issues—all symptoms of a deeper disconnection. **Why Now** The evidence is overwhelming: screen overuse is a root driver of the student mental health and absenteeism crises facing schools nationwide. Yet while families and teachers see the impact daily, few have access to clear, science-based guidance for how to help. If we act now, South Carolina can lead the nation in reversing this trend, just as public education campaigns once helped turn the tide against smoking. By educating students (and their parents) early on the brain science of technology use, we can equip them to make healthy choices, improve attention spans, and strengthen relationships that fuel learning. The longer we wait, the more costly the consequences — academically, behaviorally, and financially — as schools struggle to remediate disengagement and lost learning. **The Plan** The South Carolina Department of Education proposes a statewide partnership with ScreenStrong, a nationally-recognized non-profit organization providing research-backed curriculum to help students and families build healthy screen habits. • Year 1: Deliver curriculum to all South Carolina students in grades 3–8. • Years 2–4: Sustain the initiative by serving grade 3 (elementary) and grade 6 (middle school) students annually. This initiative builds on South Carolina's Free to Focus policy, which limits in-school cell phone use, by extending our commitment beyond the classroom. Together, we will work

with parents, educators, and community partners to reclaim students' attention, restore genuine connection with peers and families, and strengthen the foundation for academic and behavioral well-being.

Summarize the existing proviso. If requesting a new proviso, describe the current state of affairs without it. Explain the need for your requested action. For deletion requests due to recent codification, please identify SC Code section where language now appears.

FISCAL IMPACT	The budget request associated with this proviso is $17,628,472.

Provide estimates of any fiscal impacts associated with this proviso, whether for state, federal, or other funds. Explain the method of calculation.

PROPOSED PROVISO TEXT	**Subject to funding, the department shall contract with Families Managing Media Inc to purchase the material corresponding to the student's grade for each 3rd -8th grade student attending public and charter schools. All public and charter schools shall incorporate the lessons included in the material provided throughout the school year.**

Paste existing text above, then bold and underline insertions and strikethrough deletions. For new proviso requests, enter requested text above.

Agency Name:	Department Of Education		
Agency Code:	H630	Section:	1

FORM E – AGENCY COST SAVINGS AND GENERAL FUND REDUCTION CONTINGENCY PLAN

TITLE	Agency Cost Savings and General Fund Reduction Contingency Plan

AMOUNT	$131,802,865

What is the General Fund 3% reduction amount? This amount should correspond to the reduction spreadsheet prepared by EBO.

ASSOCIATED FTE REDUCTIONS	N/A- The department would reduce operating expenditures as much as possible to avoid a reduction in force.

How many FTEs would be reduced in association with this General Fund reduction?

PROGRAM / ACTIVITY IMPACT	A three percent general fund reduction to the agency would not only impact the Department of Education but would impact every school district in the state. Additionally, any reduction in state funding might affect the Federally mandated required Maintenance of Effort for IDEA. The agency would simply take an across the board 3% cut, taking care to avoid reductions that would have a negative impact on students. SCDE $131,802,865.00

What programs or activities are supported by the General Funds identified?

SUMMARY	A 3% reduction in General Fund Appropriations would have a negative impact on school districts through a reduction in the EFA and EFA Fringe appropriations. Such a reduction could have an additional impact to Federal IDEA funding as the necessary maintenance of effort calculations are based on EFA funding levels. Further, transportation services would be impacted, and such a reduction could cause an interruption in transportation of students as funds for fuel purchase would be impacted. While the agency would certainly work to minimize impacts to transportation and to districts, it is impossible to absorb such a reduction without applying it to the EFA and to transportation appropriations.

AGENCY COST SAVINGS PLANS	Under the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) the US Department of Education allows states to retain three percent of funds for direct student services. This new provision has allowed the agency to utilize existing federal funds to provide these services to students and target them to areas of high need. Additionally, the agency has worked to better blend state and federal funding to maximize services to districts and students, thus requiring less new funding from the state. Further, the agency is working to streamline requirements and obligations of districts in order to ensure that both the agency and districts have the opportunity to spend less funding on overhead and direct more funding to the classroom. While this is not a reduction in current levels of state funding, it does allow the agency to not require additional state support in administrative areas.

Agency Name:	Department Of Education		
Agency Code:	H630	Section:	1

FORM F – REDUCING COST AND BURDEN TO BUSINESSES AND CITIZENS

TITLE	Suspension of College Freshman Reporting Requirements
	Provide a brief, descriptive title for this request.

EXPECTED SAVINGS TO BUSINESSES AND CITIZENS	By suspending the college freshman report, the Department will reduce the burden on local education agencies, in particular school administration and guidance counselors.
	What is the expected savings to South Carolina's businesses and citizens that is generated by this proposal? The savings could be related to time or money.

FACTORS ASSOCIATED WITH THE REQUEST	**Mark "X" for all that apply:**	
		Repeal or revision of regulations.
		Reduction of agency fees or fines to businesses or citizens.
		Greater efficiency in agency services or reduction in compliance burden.
	X	Other

METHOD OF CALCULATION	The Department of Education is working to streamline data collection timelines and processes to reduce burden and increase efficiency of data collection and reporting.
	Describe the method of calculation for determining the expected cost or time savings to businesses or citizens.

REDUCTION OF FEES OR FINES	N/A
	Which fees or fines does the agency intend to reduce? What was the fine or fee revenue for the previous fiscal year? What was the associated program expenditure for the previous fiscal year? What is the enabling authority for the issuance of the fee or fine?

REDUCTION OF REGULATION	Reg	Legal Authority
	43-80	1976 Code Sections 59-8-60, 59-5-100, 59-5-120, and 59-67-520
	43-243	1976 Code Sections 59-21-510, 59-33-10 and 59-33-30
	Which regulations does the agency intend to amend or delete? What is the enabling authority for the regulation?	

	Agency staff is working to identify all local education agency reporting requirements to reduce duplication in reports. By ensuring there is no duplication in the requested data, the Department is reducing the amount of time that local school district employees and educators spend completing requests.
	Reports being examined include but are not limited to the District Strategic and School Renewal Plans, Read to Succeed Reading Plans, Academic Recovery Plans, District ADEPT Plans, and School Turnaround Plans.
SUMMARY	

Provide an explanation of the proposal and its positive results on businesses or citizens. How will the request affect agency operations?