



The South Carolina High School Credential: Frequently Asked Questions

Content Area	Question	Answer
Teaching/Curriculum	Will Special Education teachers need to be certified in other areas (e.g., English, Math, Science, Social Studies) in order to teach the employability course of study coursework?	No, Special Education teachers who teach the Essentials of English, Essentials of Math, Essentials of Science, Essentials of Social Studies, and Employability Education credential coursework are not required to be certified in other areas. If the course is listed in the South Carolina High School Course Descriptions and Competencies I-IV manual , a certified special education teacher can teach it without any additional certifications. If the district elects to develop alternate pathways to the credential, the district must seek state approval by applying for an innovative course that would also meet the requirements of the employability course of study. Visit the Office of Federal and State Accountability’s Flexibility webpage to locate the “Innovative Approaches: Locally Designed Subject Area Course Application”. <i>Note: If a teacher is teaching non-elective courses that would yield subject area credits, then the teacher will need to be certified in the area in which they are teaching.</i>
	Can a Special Education teacher teach and issue a credit for the required technology course?	In order to meet the requirements of the technology course, the student will need to complete a general education technology based course taught by an appropriately certified teacher in that area. Accommodations and/or modifications may be considered, if appropriate.
	Can technology based courses taught by a certified general education teacher that does not meet the technology course (e.g., computer science) requirement of the high	The final determination would be the IEP team’s decision. The team should consider 1) is the course technology based and does it include course competencies that align to computer science standards that would be found within a computer science course and would meet the diploma requirement?; 2) does the content of the course provide technology instruction that is aligned

	school diploma count towards the technology requirement of the high school credential?	with the skills needed to attain his/her postsecondary goals?; 3) are there appropriate accommodations and/or modifications that would assist the student in accessing the general curriculum? Furthermore, if the team decides that a technology based course that does not meet the technology (e.g., computer science) requirement of the diploma is most appropriate to meet the technology requirement of the credential, the IEP team, to include the parent/guardian/adult student, needs to be aware and understand that this course will only count as an elective diploma requirement if the student changes from the credential course of study to the diploma course of study.
	Can general education courses be substituted for the Employability Education courses?	The final determination would be the IEP team's decision. The team should review the coursework of the general education course and the coursework of the Employability Education course and make a sound decision based on appropriate considerations. The team should consider 1) will the student receive comparable content that is aligned to the SC College-and Career-Ready Standards in the general education course?; 2) if content is not covered in the comparable class, should it be provided through specialized instruction whether that is provided in the general education classroom or special education classroom?; 3) are there appropriate accommodations and/or modifications that would assist the student in accessing the general curriculum?
	Will curriculum and other materials to support the state credential be provided to districts?	Local curricula decisions are left up to districts, however, the Office of Special Education Services (OSES) in collaboration with the Transition Alliance of South Carolina (TASC) will be providing technical assistance in this area. Be sure to regularly check the credential website for curricular resources and related updates. <i>OSES Disclaimer:</i> While the resources may have been vetted by experts in the field, the South Carolina Department of Education, Office of Special Education Services, in no way requires the use of any of the resources provided, nor their purchase. These resources are for informational purposes only and should not be construed as an endorsement of any views, organization, product, company, or program by the South Carolina Department of Education.
Coursework and Credit	In regards to the state approved SCHSC Coursework , 1) can the	1) Yes. As long as all of the competency goals (with correlated standards) are taught during the course and taught in a way that follows basic pedagogical

	<p>competency goals be taught in a different order other than how the goals are arranged in the coursework? 2) can a district add competency goals? 3) can a district remove competency goals and/or replace with comparable competency goals?</p>	<p>activities that will lead to student learning. Submission of the innovative course application is not required.</p> <p>2) Yes. As long as the addition does not interfere or take the place of the competency goals (with correlated standards) expected to be taught by the teacher and met by the student. Submission of the innovative course application is not required.</p> <p>3) Yes. However, the district will need seek state approval by taking appropriate steps to apply for an innovative course. The course will need to be state approved prior to the course being offered as a course that will meet the requirements of the employability course of study. Visit the Office of Federal and State Accountability’s Flexibility webpage to locate the “Innovative Approaches: Locally Designed Subject Area Course Application”.</p>
	<p>Will statewide course codes be made available for state credential courses?</p>	<p>Yes. See the South Carolina High School Credential Course Codes and 9GR memo – March 30, 2018 and the South Carolina High School Credential Course Codes Clarification memo – August 1, 2018. Additionally, reference the Activity Coding System for the current school year.</p>
	<p>If a student takes a general education course but fails to pass the course, could this course still count towards the units required for the credential?</p>	<p>The Office of Special Education Services is currently developing support for local school districts for making decisions for students transferring from a South Carolina high school diploma to the credential, and transfers from out of state. This guidance is forthcoming.</p>
	<p>Will students working towards the credential be required to participate in the End-of-Course Examination Program (EOCEP)?</p>	<p>Every student, including those with disabilities, must participate in the EOCEP for the high school federal accountability tests unless they participate in alternate assessment (ALT). For federal accountability purposes, Algebra I, Biology I, and English I EOCEPs must be taken by the student’s third year in high school.</p> <p>The EOCEPs are not tied to one specific credential course. All four Essentials of English courses are aligned to the English SC College-and Career-Ready Standards, the first three Essentials of Math courses are aligned to Algebra I SC College-and Career-Ready Standards, and the Essentials of Science I (Biology) is aligned to the Biology standards. However, the coursework does not have the same breadth and depth of learning as the diploma credit bearing courses (e.g., Algebra I, Biology, English I).</p>

		<p>It is up to the IEP team as to when the specific child would be ready to take the EOC in each subject area, but they must take it by their third year of high school. A designated person from the IEP team will need to coordinate with the PowerSchool contact in order to ensure the appropriate EOC course code is assigned (see the second memo below). <i>Basically, in the semester that a student's IEP team has deemed the student is ready to take the EOC, they will potentially be "enrolled" in two courses in the same subject - the essentials course for that subject as well as the "testing course" that triggers the EOC.</i></p> <p>For more information, see memos below related to EOCs: EOCEP for Federal Accountability Guidance-July 1, 2016 End of Course Examination Program (EOCEP) Clarification-August 24, 2016 EOCEP and Course Grades, Effective 2017-18-January 27, 2017</p>
	<p>Will the Essentials of English, Essentials of Math, Essentials of Science, Essentials of Social Studies, and Employability Education count as credits?</p>	<p>Yes. Every course developed for the employability course of study is counted as a credit and must be coded as an elective in PowerSchool. The Credit Type column, for purposes of creating courses in PowerSchool, would be HS,X (see Tech Notes); the Subject Area column is not state specific and districts can elect to put what they would like at the local level. These courses will show on the student's transcript as a credit earned.</p> <p>If the student, per the IEP team, is working towards the employability course of study to obtain the South Carolina High School Credential (non-diploma), the student will need to be excluded from class rank.</p>
<p>Work Experience</p>	<p>Is it a requirement that work experience hours include a certain number of paid hours?</p>	<p>No. It is not required that students complete paid work experience as part of the work experience requirement. However, it is strongly encouraged that students be given the opportunity to participate in paid work experience that is related to their postsecondary goals, if possible. See below for more information.</p> <p>SCHSC: A Guide to Work Experiences Research on Paid Work Experience Predictors for Improving Post-school Outcomes for Students with Disabilities</p>
	<p>Can time spent in the general education setting count towards the</p>	<p>It depends on the student, postsecondary goals, and the schedule of the student. In short, if the student is taking a diploma credit bearing course (e.g.,</p>

	<p>work based learning/training (WBL/T) hours?</p>	<p>Horticulture) in a general education setting in order to receive credit, then time in this class cannot count towards the WBL/T hours. However, if the student is taking a non-diploma credit bearing (credential) course (e.g., Employability Education) and as part of this specially designed instruction per the IEP team, the student attends the general education setting in order to work on skills related to the student’s postsecondary goal, then this time may count towards the WBL/T hours. This must be documented within the IEP and based on student needs.</p> <p>Example: Student is enrolled in Horticulture first period and works in the green house. This time cannot count. Student is enrolled in Employability Education 4th period and works in the green house. Student’s postsecondary goal is to operate a local nursery. This time can count.</p>
	<p>How do you determine how many hours classroom work based activities can count towards the total WBL/T hours requirement?</p>	<p><i>Definitions of Work Experience Types (Table 1)</i> and the <i>Work Experience Matrix</i> found in the SCHSC: A Guide to Work Experiences can be used to make these distinctions. Additionally, it is recommended to consult the district’s special education policies and procedures related to the SCHSC.</p>
	<p>If a student has a job outside of school, can those hours count towards work experience hours?</p>	<p>Only if the placement or on-the-job work experience is coordinated by the LEA and is aligned to the student’s career pathway in the Individual Graduation Plan and the student’s IEP. This would be evidenced by a mutually developed training agreement outlining skills and objectives the student will master through the work experience and a mutually developed industry evaluation aligned to skills in the job and characteristics of the <i>Profile of the South Carolina Graduate</i>.</p> <p>The South Carolina Work-Based Learning Training Agreement/Evaluation Plan that has been developed to meet the requirements of the Career-ready qualifier will meet the requirements of the training agreement and industry evaluation.</p>
	<p>Would Project Search internship hours count towards the work experience requirements?</p>	<p>Yes. As long as the employment is appropriately aligned to postsecondary and career goals. See answer above for more information related to career-ready.</p>

	Can work experience hours be accrued during the employability education courses?	Yes. The Employability Education courses are designed so that years one and two focus on the academic employability skills and the focus of years three and four is on acquiring appropriate job skills. It would be expected that the acquisition of those skills be acquired while receiving on-the-job work experiences.
Eligibility	Are students that repeat the 9 th grade during the 2018-2019 school year eligible for the credential?	No. Statute 59-39-100 states that “this act takes effect with students entering ninth grade beginning with the 2018-2019 school year.” We understand that there are students currently in high school for which the credential would otherwise be applicable, but the language in the legislation does not allow for exceptions. See SCHSC Course Codes and 9GR March 30, 2018 memo . However, nothing prevents districts from awarding a local district certification that is comparable for these students.
	Are students who will be participating in the graduation ceremony prior to 2022 eligible?	
	Can a student that enters the 9 th grade on a diploma track switch to the credential later if it’s deemed more appropriate?	Yes. The course of study and projected outcome decision is made annually by the Individualized Education Program (IEP) team and is based on the student’s Present Levels of Academic Achievement and Functional Performance (PLAAFP). It is recommended that IEP teams make this decision based on the student’s individual needs. To assist with this decision, see the Guidance for IEP Teams: South Carolina High School Credential Course of Study document.
IEP Development Software	Will any credential related items be included in IEP Development Software (e.g., SC Enrich IEP System)?	Yes. These changes (e.g., updates to the postsecondary considerations section of the IEP) are anticipated to be in the system prior to the start of the 18-19 school year. On-going configuration changes will be based on local feedback.
	Will the Summary of Performance requirement be changing with the new credential?	No. As delineated in the SBE Reg. 43-235(A)(4), all LEAs must follow and comply with all statutory and regulatory requirements of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), which means all students must be afforded Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE) until they either graduate with a high school diploma or exit due to exceeding the age of eligibility (34 CFR 300.102 and SBE Reg. 43-243(III)(C)). However, nothing in IDEA prohibits the Local Educational Agency (LEA) from completing a Summary of Performance for a student, if appropriate. In the case of students completing the employability course of study, it may be appropriate to complete an SOP during the last year of the course of study, but the LEA must still take steps to ensure FAPE is ready to be provided the next school year. Even when the student or parent states that he or she does not intend to return to school for the

		next school year, the IEP team must provide the student with notice that he or she is eligible to continue receiving services through age 20 and develop an IEP for the student (p. 151, SC Special Education Process Guide).
Transfers	Is there a mechanism to transfer credential documentation between districts?	Districts should use the Student Record Transfer (SRT) functionality within the IEP Development Software (e.g., SC Enrich IEP System). At this time, it is recommended to regularly upload relevant documents to the student’s File page so that those will be included with other documents during the SRT process.
	How do we ensure that the courses a student has completed in a prior district are comparable to the courses that our district is offering?	<p>OSSES is currently developing support for local school districts for making decisions for students transferring from the South Carolina high school diploma to the credential, and for out of state transfers. This guidance is forthcoming.</p> <p>Students on the employability course of study transferring from one South Carolina district to another will have comparable credits based on the SCHSC Coursework provided by the state.</p>
Other	Can the SKEMA-SC be used to meet the work readiness assessment requirement?	<p>No. The SKEMA-SC was developed to adhere to statute 59-39-100 (May 2017) which states that “The State Board of Education, in conjunction with the department, shall develop a rubric and guidelines to identify and assess the employability skills of the students, based on appropriate standards established.”</p> <p>SKEMA-SC assesses general employability skills needed for competitive employment, whereas the work readiness assessment requirement was intended to be aligned with the student’s postsecondary goals.</p> <p>The work readiness assessment results that would meet this regulatory requirement, if appropriate, could be the standardized state career readiness assessment (e.g., Ready to Work or R2W), or something comparable, with a minimum score of Bronze or higher. All students must take the R2W assessment. For students who do not score a bronze or higher, it may be appropriate to use a different assessment to meet this requirement, for the credential, such as an assessment that results in a recognized credential that aligns with the student’s postsecondary goals, additional assessments do not</p>

		<p>count for accountability purposes but can be used to meet this portion of the credential requirements. Guidance will be forthcoming.</p> <p>The SKEMA-SC, can be used as a pre-test, benchmarking tool, and posttest. It should be utilized as a final certification at the end of the course of study to demonstrate that the student has obtained mastery level for required and critical skills/behaviors needed to be competitively employed. Additionally, throughout the student’s course of study, this assessment can be regularly administered in order to assist in determining present levels, to include identifying transition strengths and needs, that will result in writing measurable, skill-based annual goals; and monitor the student’s progress.</p>
	<p>Can the district offer a local award that requires above and beyond the requirements set forth in the SBE Regulation 43-235? Can the district offer a local award that requires less than the requirements set forth in the SBE Regulation 43-235?</p>	<p>Yes. However, if the district elects to add requirements beyond or less than the regulatory requirements, districts must have policies/procedure in place for awarding the state credential and the local award. Therefore, if the student met regulatory requirements for the credential, then the student would receive the state credential. If the student met the district requirements for the local award, then the student would receive the local award and if applicable, the state credential as well.</p>
	<p>For general education reporting, will students receiving the SCHSC be counted in the graduation rate or be counted as a dropout?</p>	<p>This answer can best be explained by reviewing each of the reporting obligations separately.</p> <p>1. Dropout-Federal Report (All Students) Per the Policies and Procedures for the Collection of School Dropout Data, the State Board of Education defines dropout as a student who leaves school for any reason, other than death, prior to graduation or completion of a course of study and without transferring to another school or institution that has a course of study that leads to a diploma. Given this definition, students completing the SCHSC will not count as a dropout. There is a detailed table located on page 3 of the manual.</p> <p>2. Dropout-Federal Report (Students with IEPs) <i>Office of Special Education Services Data Reporting-Indicator 2</i> Students receiving the SCHSC will not be counted as a dropout. Students that receive a state high school credential following the completion of a course of study are not considered dropouts. Please review page 3 of the Policies and Procedures for the Collection of School Dropout Data for additional</p>

information. The South Carolina State Board of Education defines a dropout as any student who leaves school for any reason, other than death, prior to graduation or completion of a course of study and without transferring to another school or institution that has a course of study that leads to a diploma. The Office of Student Intervention Services collects the data on dropout rates for students with and without disabilities using this definition through a state-wide data collection system, PowerSchool. Basically, OSES will use the data collected out of PowerSchool (e.g., the data collected to fulfill the state reporting obligations mentioned in #1) to report Indicator 2.

3. Graduation Rate-Federal and State Reports

Office of Special Education Services Data Reporting-Indicator 1

SCDE, Office of Special Education Services-Results Driven Accountability (RDA) Determinations (IDEA Part B RDA Determinations)

Students receiving the SCHSC **will not** be counted in the graduation rate, because the SCHSC is not a “regular” diploma. Under 34 C.F.R.

§200.19(b)(1)(iv), a "regular high school diploma" means the standard high school diploma awarded to students in a State that is fully aligned with the State's academic content standards and does not include a GED credential, certificate of attendance, or any alternative award. The term "regular high school diploma" also includes a "higher diploma" that is awarded to students who complete requirements above and beyond what is required for a regular diploma. These 9GR students will count in the denominator (all 9GR cohort students) of the calculation but not the numerator (students who receive a regular high school diploma).