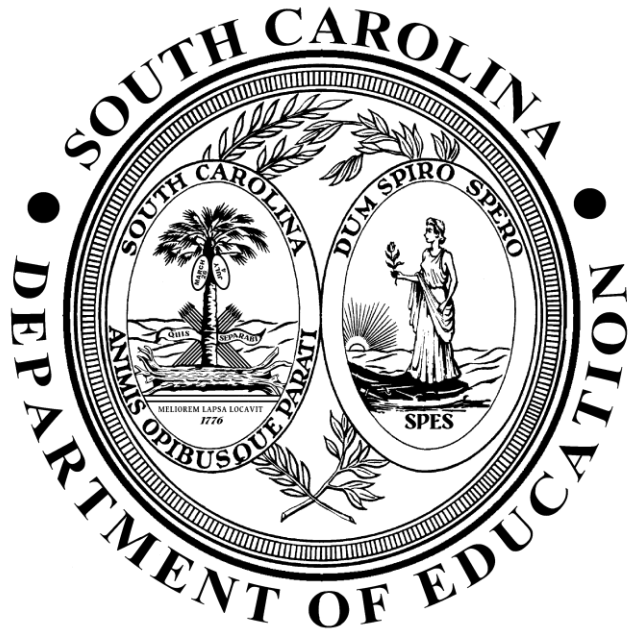


**STATE OF SOUTH CAROLINA  
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION**

**MOLLY M. SPEARMAN**  
*STATE SUPERINTENDENT OF EDUCATION*



## **2017–18 Annual Reading Coach Report**

Provided to the General Assembly

Pursuant to Proviso 1.62 of the 2017–18 Appropriations Act  
and S.C. Code § 59-155-180

January 15, 2018

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## **Reporting Requirement**

In 2014, Act 284 Read to Succeed, was signed into law by Governor Nikki Haley (codified as S.C. Code § 59-155-110 *et seq.*). The legislature designed the law with the intention of increasing the number of students in South Carolina who can proficiently read and comprehend grade-level text, especially in the early grades. Research confirms that students reading below grade level at the end of third grade are six times more likely to leave school without a high school diploma (Murnane, Sawhill, & Snow 2012). To ensure that practicing teachers possess the knowledge and skills necessary to assist all students in becoming proficient readers, § 59-155-180 (C) (1) (2) (3) requires all elementary schools in the state to employ a reading coach (see Appendix A).

According to § 59-155-180, the reading coach shall:

- (a) model effective instructional strategies for teachers by working weekly with students in whole, and small groups, or individually;
- (b) facilitate study groups;
- (c) train teachers in data analysis and using data to differentiate instruction;
- (d) coaching and mentoring colleagues;
- (e) work with teachers to ensure that research-based reading programs are implemented with fidelity;
- (f) work with all teachers (including content area and elective areas) at the school they serve, and help prioritize time for those teachers, activities, and roles that will have the greatest impact on student achievement, namely coaching and mentoring in the classrooms; and
- (g) help lead and support reading leadership teams.

Funding and further guidance for the state’s reading coach program is provided in Provisos 1.62 and 1A.61 of the 2017–18 Appropriations Act (see Appendix B). Under the provisos, districts with schools receiving funding are required to report to the SCDE the name and qualifications of the funded reading/literacy coaches, the schools in which coaches are assigned, and specific amounts and uses of proviso funds.

Using data reported by the school districts, the SCDE is required to report to the General Assembly by January fifteenth of the current fiscal year on the hiring of and assignment of reading/literacy coaches by school. The SCDE must also report the amount of unspent or unallocated funds that will be used for Summer Reading Camps.

## **Hiring and Assignment of Reading Coaches by Schools**

As of November 2017 finance records, for the current 2017–18 school year, 660 reading coaches are assigned to 587 elementary, six primary, and 67 other (intermediate, combination, or middle) schools. Appendix C lists the numbers of coaches by district.

## **Coach Qualification Requirements**

Schools and districts accepting funding to support a coaching position agree that the reading/literacy coach must not serve as an administrator. If the department finds that school districts are using these funds for administrative costs as defined in statute, they must withhold that district's remaining balance of funds allocated pursuant to the proviso.

Per the proviso, the SCDE provides guidelines for employment of funded literacy/reading coaches a memorandum of agreement with each district. Minimum qualifications are included in this Memorandum of Agreement, as well as the expectation that the coach will not be used as a school administrator. Minimum qualifications, as outlined in Proviso 1.62, state that a licensed or certified teacher is qualified to be employed as a school's funded reading coach if she or he:

1. holds a bachelor's degree or higher and an add-on endorsement for literacy coach or literacy specialist; or
2. holds a bachelor's degree or higher and is actively pursuing the literacy coach or literacy specialist endorsement; or
3. holds a master's degree or higher in reading or a closely-related field.

According to Joyce and Showers (2002), coached teachers use new strategies more appropriately, exhibit greater long-term retention of knowledge and skills, and are more likely to explain new strategies to their students. In addition, when teachers are coached on new knowledge and skills, there is a ninety-five percent transfer to classroom practice. State qualification guidelines are aligned with the International Literacy Association (2010), which recommends that a "Reading Specialist/Literacy Coach" have:

- a valid teaching certificate;
- previous teaching experience;
- a master's degree with a concentration in reading and writing education;
- program experiences that build knowledge, skills, and dispositions related to working with students, supporting or coaching teachers, and leading the school reading program; and
- the equivalent of 21–27 graduate semester hours in reading, language arts, and related courses. The program must include a supervised practicum experience, typically the equivalent of 6 semester hours. The supervised practicum experience should require working with students who struggle with reading.

## **Qualifications**

During the 2017–18 academic year, there are 660 state-funded reading coaches across South Carolina. Tables 1 through 3 show the break-down of coach education levels, years of teaching experience, and years of coaching experience by number and percentage of coaches. Figures are provided to demonstrate change from 2016–17 to 2017–18. Qualifications data for the 2017–18 school year, provided in the following tables and figures, were self-reported from districts on a survey conducted by the SCDE Office of Early Learning and Literacy in December 2017. While there is a discrepancy between the 660 coaches recorded by the SCDE in Appendix C and the

610 coaches reported by districts, the self-reported data shown in Tables 1 through 3 and Figures 1 through 3 are still instructive and demonstrate trends.

### *Education Level*

Almost ninety percent of the reading coaches hired in 2017–18 have an advanced degree at the master’s level or beyond.

Table 1. *Reading Coaches by Education Level, 2016–17 and 2017–18*

<b>Education Level</b>	<b>2016-17</b>		<b>2017-18<sup>a</sup></b>	
	<b>Number</b>	<b>Percentage</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Bachelors	58	8.6	44	7.2
Bachelors +18	13	1.9	14	2.3
Masters	400	59.2	363	59.5
Masters +18	3	0.5	4	0.7
Masters +30	134	19.8	126	20.7
Ed Specialist	36	5.3	36	5.9
Doctorate	21	3.1	17	2.8
No Report	11	1.6	6	0.9
<b>Total Number</b>	<b>676</b>		<b>610</b>	

*Note.* <sup>a</sup>Qualifications data for the 2017–18 school year were self-reported from districts on a December 2017 survey conducted by the SCDE Office of Early Learning and Literacy.

As one can see in Figure 1, there has been little significant change in percentages of state-funded reading coaches by education level from 2016–17 to 2017–18. The majority of state-funded reading coaches in 2016–17 and 2017–18 possess a master’s degree or master’s degree plus thirty hours of coursework.

Figure 1. Comparison of 2016–17 and 2017–18 Percentage of State-Funded Reading Coaches by Education Level

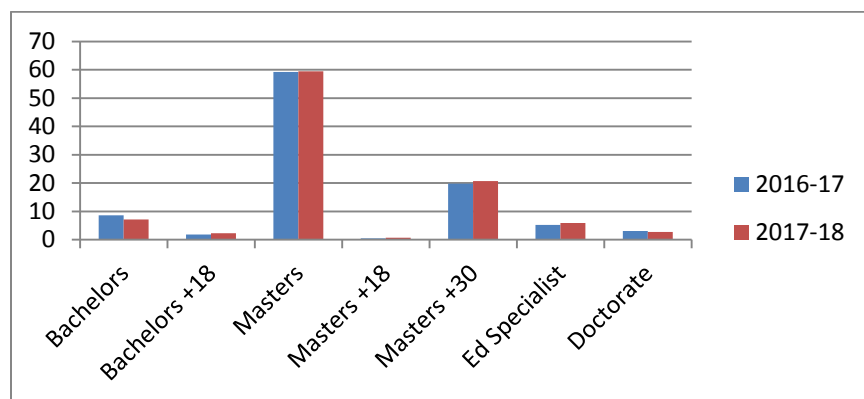


Figure 1. “No report” data have not been included in figure. See proceeding table for more information.

### Teaching Experience

Almost thirty-seven percent of 2017–18 state-funded reading coaches have more than twenty years of teaching experience, and over forty-five percent of coaches have between eleven and twenty years of teaching experience. Only 3.5 percent of 2017–18 reading coaches have five years or fewer years of teaching experience.

Table 2. Reading Coaches by Years of Teaching Experience, 2016–17 and 2017–18

Teaching Experience	2016–17		2017–18 <sup>a</sup>	
	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage
1–5 Years	29	4.3	21	3.5
6–10 Years	134	19.8	85	13.9
11–15 Years	137	20.3	141	23.1
16–20 Years	160	23.7	136	22.3
21–25 Years	87	12.9	102	16.7
26+ Years	124	18.3	123	20.2
No Report	5	0.7	2	0.3
<b>Total Number</b>	<b>676</b>		<b>610</b>	

Note. <sup>a</sup>Qualifications data for the 2017–18 school year were self-reported from districts on a December 2017 survey conducted by the SCDE Office of Early Learning and Literacy.

As shown in Figure 2, data in 2017–18 show a general shift toward reading coaches having more than ten years of teaching experience.

Figure 2. Comparison of 2016-17 and 2017-18 Percentage of State-Funded Reading Coaches by Years of Teaching Experience

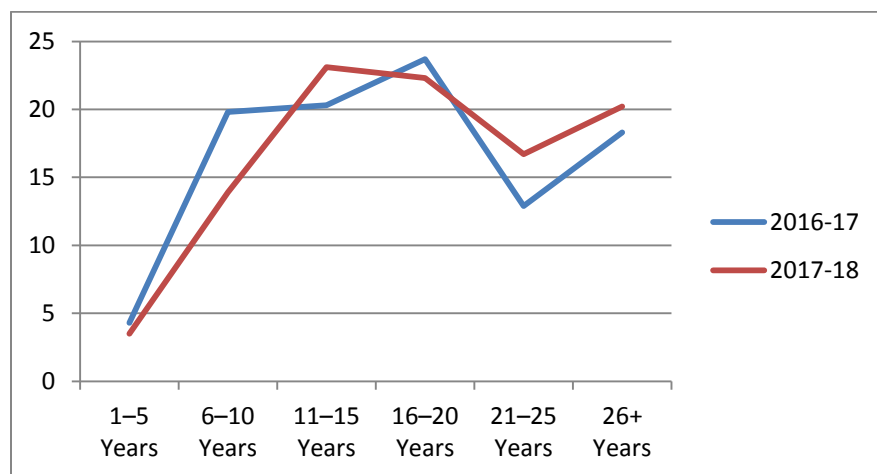


Figure 2. “No report” data have not been included in figure. See proceeding table for more information.

### Coaching Experience

In the 2017–18 school year, over seventy percent of state-funded reading coaches have between one and four years of coaching experience. The percentage of new coaches, shown by the percentage of coaches with zero years coaching experience, has decreased by almost six percentage points.

Table 3. Reading Coaches by Years of Coaching Experience, 2016–17 and 2017–18

Coaching Experience	2016-17		2017-18 <sup>a</sup>	
	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage
0 Years	104	15.4	58	9.5
1 Year	106	15.7	76	12.5
2 Years	266	39.4	77	12.6
3 Years	49	7.2	156	25.6
4 Years	22	3.3	129	21.1
5 Years	21	3.1	21	3.5
6 Years	10	1.5	11	1.8
7–10 Years	57	8.4	39	6.4
11–15 Years	33	4.9	38	6.2
16+ Years	5	0.7	3	0.5
No Report	3	0.4	2	0.3
<b>Total Number</b>	<b>676</b>		<b>610</b>	

Note. <sup>a</sup>Qualifications data for the 2017–18 school year were self-reported from districts on a December 2017 survey conducted by the SCDE Office of Early Learning and Literacy.

As shown in Figure 3, the 2017–18 state-funded reading coaches show more years of coaching experience. While most coaches in 2016–17 had two years coaching experience, in 2017–18, this has shifted to the majority of coaches having at least three or four years coaching experience. As the state’s reading coach cadre continues in its role, it is likely this trend will continue, with coursework for the Read to Succeed Coach endorsement, mentoring by SCDE reading specialists, and other state-provided reading coach professional learning opportunities guiding coach development.

Figure 3. Comparison of 2016-17 and 2017-18 Percentage of State-Funded Reading Coaches by Years of Coaching Experience

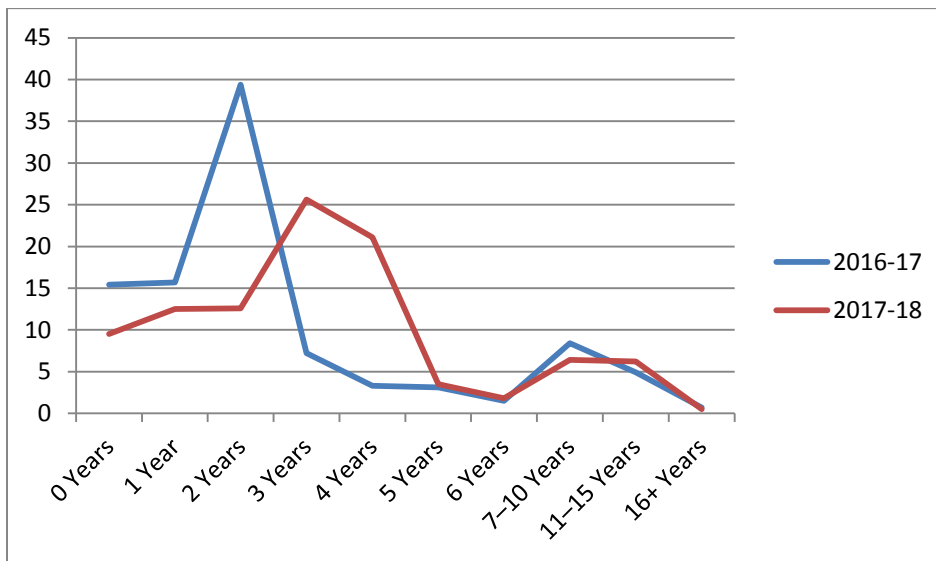


Figure 3. “No report” data have not been included in figure. See proceeding table for more information.

### District Rationale for Hiring

The SCDE requested information from districts about their rationales and procedures for hiring 2015–16 reading coaches. Rationales and procedures varied by district and sometimes varied within districts. The majority of districts reported candidates were interviewed by a team. Several districts gave autonomy to the building-level principal in selecting the coach. Some districts mentioned the effectiveness and expertise of the candidate. Some mentioned that Reading Recovery-certified teachers were given first priority. One district mentioned candidates were scored with a rubric during an observation or video lesson.

### Unspent or Unallocated Funds

For this fiscal year, there are no unallocated funds for use in summer reading camps. In fact, for the first time there were more requests for coach funding than could be accommodated at maximum reimbursement rates. The provisos allow payment of up to \$62,730 for each elementary school in which twenty percent or more of students scored below “meets expectations” on SC READY reading, and \$31,365 to schools with less than twenty percent. As



allowed by Proviso 1.62(K) the SCDE targeted funding to the areas of greatest need based on “numbers of students substantially failing to demonstrate reading proficiency.”

The SCDE defined need based on the percentage of students that do not meet (DNM) the reading sub-score of the ELA portion of SC READY. Unfortunately, as stated, there was not enough available funding (\$39 million in 2017-18 versus \$42 million in 2016-17) to fund all identified schools. Per provisos 1.62 and 1A.61, for schools where greater than twenty percent of their students do not meet expectations, the SCDE will pay the full \$62,730 allowed by the provisos. For schools with less than twenty percent DNM and DNM +Approaching, the SCDE will fund half, \$31,365. For those districts that have worked hard to have less than twenty percent of their students in DNM but still have a significant number of students in Approaching, the SCDE will provide partial funding at \$41,267.

Some districts declined funding, the state still has several districts with vacant positions, and the SCDE is still waiting on memoranda of agreement from Greenville and Spartanburg School District Seven. Any remaining money would first go to new schools and then will be used to increase the funding for those districts that are partially funded.

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## **Appendix A: Excerpt from § 59-155-180(C)(1)-(3)**

(C)(1) To ensure that practicing professionals possess the knowledge and skills necessary to assist all children and adolescents in becoming proficient readers, multiple pathways are needed for developing this capacity.

(2) A reading/literacy coach shall be employed in each elementary school. Reading coaches shall serve as job-embedded, stable resources for professional development throughout schools in order to generate improvement in reading and literacy instruction and student achievement. Reading coaches shall support and provide initial and ongoing professional development to teachers based on an analysis of student assessment and the provision of differentiated instruction and intensive intervention. The reading coach shall:

(a) model effective instructional strategies for teachers by working weekly with students in whole, and small groups, or individually;

(b) facilitate study groups;

(c) train teachers in data analysis and using data to differentiate instruction;

(d) coaching and mentoring colleagues;

(e) work with teachers to ensure that research-based reading programs are implemented with fidelity;

(f) work with all teachers (including content area and elective areas) at the school they serve, and help prioritize time for those teachers, activities, and roles that will have the greatest impact on student achievement, namely coaching and mentoring in the classrooms; and

(g) help lead and support reading leadership teams.

(3) The reading coach must not be assigned a regular classroom teaching assignment, must not perform administrative functions that deter from the flow of improving reading instruction and reading performance of students and must not devote a significant portion of his or her time to administering or coordinating assessments. By August 1, 2014, the department must publish guidelines that define the minimum qualifications for a reading coach. Beginning in Fiscal Year 2014-2015, reading/literacy coaches are required to earn the add-on certification within six years, except as exempted in items (4) and (5), by completing the necessary courses or professional development as required by the department for the add-on. During the six-year period, to increase the number of qualified reading coaches, the Read to Succeed Office shall identify and secure courses and professional development opportunities to assist educators in becoming reading coaches and in earning the literacy add-on endorsement. In addition, the Read to Succeed Office will establish a process through which a district may be permitted to use state appropriations for reading coaches to obtain in-school services from department-approved consultants or vendors, in the event that the school is not successful in identifying and directly employing a qualified candidate. Districts must provide to the Read to Succeed Office information on the name and qualifications of reading coaches funded by the state appropriations.

**Appendix B: Proviso 1.62 (SDE: Reading/Literacy Coaches) and Proviso 1A.61 (SDE-EIA: Reading/Literacy Coaches), 2017–18 Appropriations Act**

(A) Funds appropriated for Reading/Literacy Coaches must be allocated to school districts by the Department of Education as follows:

(1) for each elementary school in which twenty percent or more of the students scored below “meets expectations” on the reading sub score of the English language arts test in the most recent year for which such data are available, the school district shall be eligible to receive the lesser of up to \$62,730 or the actual cost of salary and benefits for a full-time reading/literacy coach; and  
(2) for each elementary school in which fewer than twenty percent of the students scored as referenced in (A)(1), the school district shall be eligible to receive the lesser of up to \$31,365 or fifty percent of the actual cost of salary and benefits for a full-time reading/literacy coach. A school district must provide local support for state funds provided under this paragraph. School districts may use existing local funds currently used for reading assistance as the local support.

(B) By accepting these funds, a school district warrants that they will not be used to supplant existing school district expenditures, except for districts that either are currently, or in the prior fiscal year, were paying for reading/literacy coaches with local funds. A district may, however, assign a reading/literacy coach to a primary school rather than to the elementary school to improve the early literacy skills of young children.

(C) Funds appropriated for reading/literacy Coaches are intended to be used to provide elementary schools with reading/literacy coaches who shall serve according to the provisions in Chapter 155 of Title 59.

(D) Schools and districts accepting funding to support a coaching position agree that the reading/literacy coach must not serve as an administrator. If the department finds that school districts are using these funds for administrative costs as defined in statute they must withhold that districts remaining balance of funds allocated pursuant to this proviso.

(E) The Department of Education must publish guidelines that define the minimum qualifications for a reading/literacy coach. These guidelines must deem any licensed/certified teacher qualified if, at a minimum, he or she:

- (1) holds a bachelor’s degree or higher and an add-on endorsement for literacy coach or literacy specialist; or
- (2) holds a bachelor’s degree or higher and is actively pursuing the literacy coach or literacy specialist endorsement; or
- (3) holds a master’s degree or higher in reading or a closely-related field.

Within these guidelines, the Department of Education must assist districts in identifying a reading/literacy coach in the event that the school is not successful in identifying and directly employing a qualified candidate. The provisions of subsection (A), including the local support requirements, shall also apply to any allocations made pursuant to this paragraph.

(F) The Department of Education must develop procedures for monitoring the use of funds appropriated for reading/literacy coaches to ensure they are applied to their intended uses and are

not redirected for other purposes. The Department of Education may receive up to \$100,000 of the funds appropriated for reading/literacy coaches in order to implement this program, provided that this allocation does not exceed the department's actual costs.

(G) Prior to the close of the current fiscal year, any unspent or unallocated funds for reading/literacy coaches shall be used to fund Summer Reading Camps.

(H) The Department of Education shall require:

(1) any school district receiving funding under subsection (A) to identify the name and qualifications of the supported reading/literacy coach; as well as the school in which the coach is assigned; and

(2) any school district receiving funding under subsection ( G) to account for the specific amounts and uses of such funds.

(I) With the data reported by the school districts, the department shall report by January fifteenth of the current fiscal year on the hiring of and assignment of reading/literacy coaches by school. The department shall also report the amount of funds that will be used for Summer Reading Camps.

(J) Funds appropriated for reading/literacy coaches shall be retained and carried forward to be used for the same purpose but may not be flexed.

(K) For Fiscal Year 2017-18, if increased funding for reading/literacy coaches is not sufficient to provide additional reading/literacy coaches at each elementary school then the funding must be targeted to the areas of greatest need based on the number of students substantially failing to demonstrate reading proficiency as indicated on the prior year's state assessment.

**Appendix C: Number of Coaches by District, 2016-17 and 2017–18**

District	2017-18						2016-17
	Elementary Schools	Primary Schools	Intermediate Schools	K-8 Combination Schools	Middle Schools	Total Per District	Total Per District
Abbeville	2	0	0	0	0	2	2
Aiken	18	0	0	1	0	19	21
Allendale	1	0	0	0	0	1	2
Anderson 1	7	0	0	0	0	7	7
Anderson 2	3	0	0	0	0	3	3
Anderson 3	3	0	0	0	0	3	3
Anderson 4	4	0	0	0	0	4	4
Anderson 5	10	0	0	0	0	10	10
Bamberg 1	1	0	0	0	0	1	1
Bamberg 2	1	0	0	0	0	1	1
Barnwell 19	1	0	0	0	0	1	1
Barnwell 29	1	0	0	0	0	1	1
Barnwell 45	1	0	0	0	0	1	2
Beaufort	17	0	0	3	0	20	18
Berkeley	16	0	3	1	2	22	19
Calhoun	0	0	0	0	2	2	2
Charleston	42	0	0	2	0	44	35
Cherokee	11	0	0	0	0	11	12
Chester	5	0	0	1	0	6	5
Chesterfield	6	0	1	0	0	7	7
Clarendon 1	1	0	0	0	0	1	1
Clarendon 2	1	1	0	0	0	2	2
Clarendon 3	1	0	0	0	0	1	1
Colleton	5	0	0	0	0	5	5
Darlington	9	0	0	1	0	10	10
Dillon 3	1	0	0	0	1	2	1
Dillon 4	5	0	0	0	0	5	5
Dorchester 2	15	0	0	0	0	15	15
Dorchester 4	3	0	0	0	0	3	3
Edgefield	4	0	0	0	0	4	3
Fairfield	5	0	0	0	0	5	4
Florence 1	14	0	1	0	0	15	15

District	2017-18						2016-17
	Elementary Schools	Primary Schools	Intermediate Schools	K-8 Combination Schools	Middle Schools	Total Per District	Total Per District
Florence 2	0	0	0	1	0	1	1
Florence 3	4	0	0	0	0	4	5
Florence 4	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Florence 5	1	0	0	0	1	2	2
Georgetown	10	0	0	1	0	11	11
Greenville	53	0	0	1	0	54	51
Greenwood 50	8	0	0	0	0	8	8
Greenwood 51	0	1	0	0	0	1	1
Greenwood 52	1	0	0	0	0	1	1
Hampton 1	4	1	0	0	0	5	5
Hampton 2	1	0	0	0	0	1	1
Horry	29	0	1	1	0	31	27
Jasper	2	0	0	0	0	2	2
Kershaw	10	0	0	0	0	10	10
Lancaster	11	0	0	0	0	11	11
Laurens 55	4	0	0	2	0	6	6
Laurens 56	3	0	0	0	0	3	3
Lee	2	1	0	0	0	3	3
Lexington 1	16	0	0	0	0	16	16
Lexington 2	7	0	0	0	0	7	6
Lexington 3	1	0	0	0	0	1	1
Lexington 4	1	0	1	0	0	2	2
Lexington 5	12	0	0	0	0	12	12
Marion 10	2	0	1	0	0	3	3
Marlboro	0	0	1	4	0	5	5
McCormick	1	0	0	0	0	1	1
Newberry	8	0	0	0	0	8	8
Oconee	10	0	0	0	0	10	10
Orangeburg 3	4	0	0	0	0	4	4
Orangeburg4	3	0	0	0	0	3	3
Orangeburg 5	7	0	0	0	0	7	8

District	2017-18						2016-17
	Elementary Schools	Primary Schools	Intermediate Schools	K-8 Combination Schools	Middle Schools	Total Per District	Total Per District
Pickens	14	0	0	0	0	14	14
Richland 1	29	0	0	0	0	29	29
Richland 2	18	1	1	0	4	24	22
Saluda	1	1	0	0	0	2	3
School for Deaf and Blind	0	0	0	2	0	2	0
SC Public Charter	0	0	0	18	0	18	18
Spartanburg1	4	0	1	1	0	6	6
Spartanburg2	8	0	1	0	0	9	9
Spartanburg3	4	0	0	0	0	4	4
Spartanburg4	1	0	0	0	0	1	1
Spartanburg5	5	0	2	0	0	7	8
Spartanburg6	9	0	0	0	0	9	9
Spartanburg7	8	0	0	0	0	8	7
Sumter	15	0	0	0	0	15	15
Union	5	0	0	0	0	5	5
Williamsburg	3	0	0	1	0	4	5
York 1	5	0	1	0	0	6	6
York 2	4	0	0	0	0	4	4
York 3	16	0	0	1	0	17	17
York 4	9	0	0	0	0	9	9
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>587</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>660</b>	<b>640</b>





## References

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