



**STATE OF SOUTH CAROLINA**  
**DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION**

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

November 25, 2019

The Honorable Joseph H. Jefferson, Jr.  
Chairman, Education and Cultural Affairs Subcommittee  
Post Office Box 11867  
Columbia, South Carolina 29211

*Via Email*

Dear Representative Jefferson:

***Chief Finance Office***

**1. Please provide position descriptions for all Chief Finance Office personnel and note the number of FTE's by position.**

Please see attached document.

**2. Please list all third-party entities receiving direct state appropriations through the Department of Education.**

Third-party entities receiving direct state appropriations through the SCDE:

- Babynet program - Jasper County Board of DSN;
- South Carolina Student Loan;
- The Richard W Wiley Institute;
- SC Council on Competitiveness;
- SC School Board Association;
- South Carolina Future Minds; and
- Family Connection of South Carolina.

**3. Please provide a travel reimbursement report for in-state and out-of-state travel. Also, please include in this report what percentage of travel is in-state versus out-of-state.**

The annual travel reports can be found on the Comptroller General's website at the below link:

<https://www.cg.sc.gov/financial-reports/travel-reports>.

**FY16 relevant pages are:** iv and 12

**FY17 relevant pages are:** iv and 8

**FY18 relevant pages are:** iv and 13

**FY16 total travel was \$1,065,927**

In-state was 60 percent or \$640,258

Out-of-state was 40 percent or \$425,669

**FY17 total travel was \$1,382,878**

In-state was 68.7 percent or \$950,703

Out-of-state was 31.3 percent or \$432,175

**FY18 total travel was \$1,087,190**

In-state was 65.4 percent or \$711,370

Out-of-state was 34.6 percent or \$375,820

**4. Please provide the methodology used to determine the correlation between total deliverable expenditures and the associated equivalent FTEs.**

Employees are paid from fund codes (ex: 10010000, 30350000, etc.) and the employee salary and fringes within each fund code are assigned to a deliverable based upon their job responsibilities. Taking the total fringe and salary by fund code and deliverable (numerator) a percentage is calculated using the overall total of salary and fringes (denominator). This percentage by fund and deliverable is then applied to the operating expenditures within that fund code. This amount is added to the salary and fringes to get the total deliverable expenditures.

In the case of deliverable #10 Budget-The Budget function is 6.43 percent of 10010000 expenditures and 26.63 percent of 30350000 expenditures. The primary operating cost that was paid differently between the fiscal years was the software maintenance and support. In FY16 and FY18, software maintenance and support was paid from fund code 30350000 (\$460,000 each year) and the Budget Function was 26.63 percent of fund 30350000. However, in FY17 software maintenance and support was paid from fund code 10010000 and the Budget Function is only 6.43 percent of fund 10010000. Therefore, in FY17, there was less operating expenditures allocated to the Budget Function related to software support and maintenance making up the majority of the decline in expenditures in FY17 compared to FY16 and FY18.

November 25, 2019

***Office of Career and Technical Education***

**5. When was the most recent update to State Board of Education regulation referenced in the agency's presentation (meeting packet page 96) on November 4, 2019?**

The most recent update to State Board of Education Regulation 43-236 was May, 26, 2017. Additionally, all State Board of Education Regulations are reviewed annually and updated as necessary.

***Office of Early Learning and Literacy***

**6. Please list the members of the Learning Disorders Task Force.**

Area	Name	Term in years	Year ending	
Primary Elementary Teacher	Mary Dudley (Lexington One) Oak Grove Ele	3	2021	<a href="mailto:mdudley@lexington1.net">mdudley@lexington1.net</a>
Middle School Teacher	Jennifer McGill (Richland One)	5	2023	<a href="mailto:Jennifer.mcgill@richlandone.org">Jennifer.mcgill@richlandone.org</a>
High School Teacher	Elizabeth Hardy (Aiken) N. Augusta High	3	2021	<a href="mailto:ehardy@acpsd.net">ehardy@acpsd.net</a>
SPED Teacher	vacant	5	2023	
Speech Therapist	Elizabeth Young (Charleston)	3	2021	<a href="mailto:elizabeth_young@charleston.k12.sc.us">elizabeth_young@charleston.k12.sc.us</a>
School Psychologist	Phil Young (Aiken)	5	2023	<a href="mailto:PYoung@acpsd.net">PYoung@acpsd.net</a>
Ophthalmologist Association	Dr. Katie Davis	5	2023	<a href="mailto:kldavisod@gmail.com">kldavisod@gmail.com</a>
SPED Parent	Lawson Clary	5	2023	<a href="mailto:lawson@5pointchurch.com">lawson@5pointchurch.com</a>

Dyslexia Association	Julie Wood	3	2021	<a href="mailto:julie.wood@breakwater-associates.com">julie.wood@breakwater-associates.com</a>
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**7. What type of services or resources are provided by the agency to the homeschool community? Please provide information related to the cost associated with providing these services.**

The Department provides oversight and guidance to districts on homeschool regulations and there is little cost to the agency. Local school districts provide approval of homeschool students unless they are members of a homeschool association. Homeschool associations provide districts with student information on students being homeschooled through their association. Students who are approved by the school district must take the state assessments, monitored by the local district, to determine their progress. Districts can deny homeschool approval if the student does not make adequate progress.

Additionally, high school homeschool students often enroll in courses through the Department's Office of Virtual Education. This provides access to a certified teacher and a viable curriculum. Any costs associated with providing these services would be minimal as they are marginal functions of an associate's job duties at the department.

***Addressing Barriers for Student Achievement***

**8. What steps, if any, has the agency taken to research and address the issue of environmental racism and how it impacts children's educational processes?**

While the Department has not conducted any research to address the impacts of environmental racism on student's educational processes, this could prove to be beneficial in understanding how outside factors, such as environmental pollution, impact the bodies and brains of the young children of our state.

Although no direct research has been conducted, the Department has taken steps towards reducing known environmental hazards. For example, the Department worked to receive a portion of the Volkswagen settlement funds to replace older school buses with those that have improved emissions and more environmentally friendly standards. Additionally, the Department received \$50 million in the 2019–20 Appropriations Bill to be directed towards improving the infrastructure in high poverty districts. The Department has requested an additional \$150 million in the 2020–21 Appropriations Bill to continue to combat these issues as well.

**9. Does the agency have a plan to address the school-to-prison pipeline trend that especially impacts students of color in our public education system? If yes, please provide an overview of the plan.**

The Office of Student Intervention Services (OSIS) has a number of initiatives that directly or indirectly address the school-to-prison pipeline which impacts all students:

- Alternative School Programs—required by state law, district-sponsored programs that provide academic, social, and behavioral supports for students who for behavior or academic reasons are not successful in the traditional setting. Many, though not all, of the students are assigned to alternative school programs are there in lieu of expulsion.
- 21st Century Community Learning Centers—a federally funded competitive grant program designed to provide supplemental academic, social, and behavioral supports for students, particularly those in high poverty areas.
- Preparing College- and Career-Ready Graduates—a state funded competitive grant program designed to provide supplemental academic, social, and behavioral supports for students at risk of dropping out or not being promoted to the next grade level.
- Project AWARE (Advancing Wellness and Resilience in Education)—a federally funded grant designed to increase awareness of mental health issues and access to mental health services in SC. Grant funds are allocated to SC Department of Mental Health to hire mental health clinicians to serve schools in Anderson 2, Florence 1, and Sumter.

OSIS staff provides statewide, regional, and local training on a number of topics, including restorative practices, bullying prevention, and student behavioral threat assessment and management.

**10. Does the agency have a plan to address the student achievement gap between rural and affluent areas? If yes, please provide an overview of the plan.**

The federal government requires the Department to review student performance based on a set of goals that have been identified and set in our state Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) plan. These goals are applicable to all students, both those in rural school districts and those in non-rural school districts and don't vary due to living areas. Rather, the Department is tasked with looking at performance gaps among students of poverty, students with disabilities, students with limited English proficiency, and various ethnic and racial backgrounds that have been historically known to underperform. This allows the Department to capture students in rural environments through this type of analysis.

Essentially, the Department analyzes student performance in all environments, both rural and suburban, by comparing the performance of students in these subgroups to their non-like peers. For example, we are able to identify gaps between students of poverty and students of affluence through the federal requirement of identifying Targeted Support and Improvement (TSI) Schools. TSI schools are those schools with one or more of the aforementioned subgroups are identified due to low

November 25, 2019

performance. Once identified, the Department is required to set aside a portion of our Federal Title 1 Part A funds to support the improvement of these subgroups in the school.

**11. What is the agency's position on the current funding model for education? What issues should be included in any discussions to reform the education funding model? What recommendations, if any, does the agency have for addressing any student educational and resources gaps within the current funding model?**

The current education funding formula is more than 40 years old and the agency supports reform of the model. We support the intent of the current formula to provide equitable funding across the state, the concept of providing additional funding for those students who are more costly to educate, and the intent of adjusting funding based upon an established index. Current funding for education is further complicated by more than 25 categorical funding formulas used to allocate additional funding to districts.

While the intent of the formula is great, many changes in 40 years have diluted that intent. Any discussion of reform has to include equity and address the disparity in local wealth that exists across the state. It should include additional funding for those students in poverty, those students with disabilities, and those other situations that make students more costly to educate. It should also include a more modern look of the positions needed in a school and district to meet the changing needs of our students. Additionally, any established model would need to be fully funded each year and provide both flexibility and accountability for districts.

We are supportive of the work performed by Frank Rainwater and his team at Revenue and Fiscal Affairs (RFA). In addition to the results of his model, we need to ensure mental health professionals are included as a positions funded by the formula. We also need a changed weighting or lower class size ratio for students with disabilities to support the educational shift to more of an inclusion model for these students. Additionally, we would support a mechanism to hold districts accountable for the use of funds and the ability of the state to intervene and redirect the use of funds to provide better services to students in chronically underperforming districts. While the pending RFA formula does address the cost of educating a child in the classroom, there is also a need in rural areas with low tax-values for state assistance with facilities and infrastructure issues.

Sincerely,



Molly M. Spearman  
State Superintendent of Education

MMS/kmn

Enclosure