



FY24-25 Innovation Grant Report

Pursuant to Proviso 1A.56 (SCDE-EIA: Grants Committee)

June 25, 2025

Ellen E. Weaver
State Superintendent of Education

Contents

Proviso 1A.56 (SCDE-EIA: Grants Committee)	2
Committee Members	3
Awards.....	3

Proviso 1A.56 (SCDE-EIA: Grants Committee)

- (A) Of the funds appropriated to the Department of Education for Innovation Grants, the grants committee shall accept applications per the established process for new grantees not to exceed the amount appropriated by the General Assembly.
- (B) The process shall include the application and selection process. The grants committee must be comprised of seven members, three members selected from the education community and four members selected from the business community. The suggested criteria for awarding the grants to schools or school districts or directly purchasing services must include, but are not limited to:
 - (1) identification of key measurable benchmarks to raise student achievement and ensure all students are prepared to graduate college, career and civic ready;
 - (2) innovative strategies to close student achievement gaps in reading and mathematics, with a focus on schools with an academic achievement rating of below average and unsatisfactory;
 - (3) a demonstrated ability to implement the initiative or model as outlined in the application; and
 - (4) a demonstrated ability to be both replicable and scalable with priority given to projects grounded in evidence-based practices that have significantly impacted student achievement outcomes.
- (C) Notice of grant opportunities and applications shall be posted on the department's website by May 30th. Applications for funding must be submitted to the department by June 30th. Notification of grant awards and final grant amounts shall be sent to applicants by July 31st.
- (D) Applicants who commit to a match will be given priority in the selection process. The match may be met by funds or by in-kind donations, such as technology, to be further defined by the grants committee. Public school districts and schools that have high poverty and low achievement will receive priority for grants when their applications are judged to meet the criteria established for the grant program. De-identified student level data shall be submitted, including a definition of program fidelity. The committee shall submit an annual report to the Governor, the Chairman of House Ways and Means and the Chairman of Senate Finance by June 30th.
- (E) Grantees will be required to participate in an external evaluation by selecting an evaluator from a Department approved list as prescribed by the committee in the application. Funding for the evaluation shall be based on a percentage of the grantee's final award.

(F) The grants committee must award at least one grant to an applicant providing an assessment tool that will provide each district with a local inventory dashboard of education software programs used by their students and teachers, and that includes an aggregate dashboard of program usage from across the state, for the department. Additionally, the system must provide a compilation of usage data by educator and student, be able to conduct rapid cycle evaluations to measure the effectiveness of education software programs based on student outcomes, and support evidence-based analysis of education software programs aligned to the required levels of evidence in the Every Student Succeeds Act. Any system procured must meet the state and agency minimum IT security standards as prescribed by the department. The department is authorized to carry forward and expend any balance for funds authorized in the prior fiscal year for Innovation Grants that provide an assessment tool as described herein in the current fiscal year.

Committee Members

Name	Sector	Entity
Dr. Abbey Duggins	Education	SCDE Office of Early Learning and Literacy
Dr. Karen Whitley	Education	Berkeley County School District
Kathy Hipp	Education	Anderson School District 3
Cynthia Bennett	Business	SC Chamber of Commerce
Carl Blackstone	Business	Columbia Chamber of Commerce
Hope Blackley	Business	Attorney
Tom Andrews	Business	Attorney

Awards

The following entities were awarded funding from the Grants Committee:

- Apseed Early Childhood Education, Inc.
- Bamberg County School District
- Barbara Bush Foundation for Family Literacy
- Berkeley County School District
- Betabox Learning
- Charter Institute at Erskine - PearDeck
- Charter Schools USA
- Clemson University
- CoGlo Amigos LLC
- FIRST Robotics Team 343, Metal in Motion

- Greenville Chamber Foundation
- Instructure, Inc.
- Istation (Imagination Station, Inc dba Istation)
- Learning.com
- Lexington Two - STEAMobile
- Liberty STEAM Charter School
- Merlyn Mind, Inc.
- Reading Partners South Carolina
- Resilience Learning, Inc.
- RIZE Prevention
- Save the Children Federation, Inc.
- School District of Pickens County
- Spartanburg School District 1
- United Way of the Midlands
- Waterford Research Institute, LLC