

TITLE OF POLICY: EMPLOYABILITY CREDENTIAL MONITORING

SECTION: Special Education Services

POLICY NO.: EC-001

EFFECTIVE DATE:

OFFICE OF RESPONSIBILITY: Office of Special Education Services

POLICY:

It is the policy of the South Carolina Department of Education (SCDE) to establish criteria for a uniform, state-recognized Employability Credential; develop and maintain policies, procedures, and guidance documents that include a rubric and guidelines to identify and assess the employability skills of students, based on appropriate standards as it relates to the Employability Credential; and monitor and report such requirements to the State Board of Education and the South Carolina General Assembly biannually.

PURPOSE:

The purpose of this policy is to promulgate the program components and criteria for a state-recognized Employability Credential for applicable students with disabilities for whom such a credential is appropriate. For the purposes of these requirements, the State Board of Education, in collaboration with the SCDE, the South Carolina Department of Vocational Rehabilitation, and South Carolina Department of Employment and Workforce, has implemented State Board of Education Regulation 43-235 (SBE Reg.43-235). The purpose of this regulation is to provide program components and criteria for a state-recognized Employability Credential.

The SCDE uses the following policies and procedures with respect to a rubric, and guidelines; monitoring and enforcement; and reporting and awarding requirements.

PROCEDURES:

A. Rubric and Guidelines

A rubric, guidelines, example documents and forms, and other resources are posted and maintained on the SCDE's website, updated routinely. Routine training and technical assistance are provided to local educational agencies and state-operated programs (LEAs, collectively) with respect to these rubrics and guidelines. For the purposes of this part, the SCDE defines a rubric as a "document that articulates expectations by listing the criteria and describing levels of quality".¹

¹ Andrade, H.G. (2014). *Understanding Rubrics*. Retrieved at https://www.saddleback.edu/uploads/goe/understanding_rubrics_by_heidi_goodrich_andrade.pdf, December 2017.

B. Monitoring

As outlined in 34 C.F.R. Section 300.600 et seq., the State monitors the implementation of educational programs for students with disabilities, as provided by the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). Mechanisms for overseeing attainment of the Employability Credential are in place to the course of study in and awarding of Employability Credentials to ensure that students with disabilities receive a Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE). Through existing data collection and monitoring systems, the state will monitor the rates of completers in both aggregate and demographic disaggregate variables to ensure proportionality.

The State will ensure LEAs meet local requirements through the following mechanisms.

1. Requirement:

- a) The LEAs must develop and maintain policies and procedures related to the state recognized Employability Credential, consistent with the criteria of SBE Reg. 43-235. This must include mechanisms for monitoring students' progress toward attainment of Employability Credentials and mechanisms for monitoring proportionate numbers of Employability Credentials relative to the LEAs students with disabilities child counts and graduation rates.
- b) The SCDE will monitor these requirements through data collections and reviews with respect to the IDEA Part B Section 616 data collection on postsecondary transition services. The SCDE will require LEAs to submit for review LEA policies and procedures for meeting the requirements of both S.C. Ann. Section 59-39-100 and SBE Reg. 43-235.

2. Requirement:

- a) The decision to accept the Employability Credential does not relieve the LEA from providing a FAPE to the student until age 21 as defined in Reg. 43-243(III)(B) or until the student receives a regular high school diploma as defined in 34 C.F.R Section 300.102(a)(3)(iv).
- b) The SCDE will monitor these requirements annually through data collections and reviews with respect to the IDEA Part B Section 618 data collection on special education exiting. In addition, under the general supervision authority granted by the IDEA, the SCDE will monitor these requirements through its on-site monitoring systems.

3. Requirement:

- a) The LEA must explain and provide annual written notice to the parent, guardian, or adult student that the Employability Credential is not a state high school diploma. For the purposes of this part, an adult student is defined as a student who has reached the age of majority as outlined in Reg. 43-243(III)(F)(1).
- b) The SCDE will monitor these requirements by requiring LEAs to provide the annual notice used uniformly by the LEA. The SCDE will provide technical assistance and

provide example notifications for LEAs to use. The SCDE will also monitor these requirements through its on-site monitoring systems.

4. Requirement:

- a) An Individualized Education Program (IEP) team's decision to identify the Employability Credential as the student's expected high school outcome must be based on data to include, but not be limited to, longitudinal information of student grades, standardized achievement assessments, informal and formal transition assessments, adaptive behavior assessments, and work readiness assessments resulting in evidence of skills necessary for independent, competitive employment. The decision must be made only after the IEP team considers a continuum of program options that may allow the student to pursue a state high school diploma.
- b) The SCDE will monitor these requirements through data collections and reviews with respect to the IDEA Part B Section 616 data collection on postsecondary transition services. The SCDE will also monitor these requirements through its on-site monitoring systems.

C. Enforcement

The state retains all rights for enforcement of this regulation and of all other applicable federal and state statutes, regulations, policies, and procedures related to the education of students with disabilities, including but not limited to the IDEA, the Every Student Succeeds Act, as amended, the Education Department General Administrative Regulation, and in 2 C.F.R. Section 200.300.

The SCDE, under its general supervision authority granted by the IDEA, retains the right to require LEAs to complete corrective actions to address any violations of federal or state statutes, regulations, policies or procedures. In addition, the SCDE retains all other administrative authority with respect to additional sanctions as permitted by law.

D. Reporting and Awarding the Employability Credential

The SCDE and LEAs will utilize the same processes and procedures for awarding and reporting the Employability Credential as those for awarding and reporting a standard South Carolina high school diploma.

E. Stakeholder Involvement and Collaboration

The SCDE will continue to involve all relevant stakeholders, including businesses and industries, state agencies, nonprofit organizations, LEAs, colleges and universities, and parents with respect to refinement of policies, procedures, guidelines, documents, and resources so as to best meet the needs of these applicable students as well as the needs of the state.