



STATE OF SOUTH CAROLINA
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

MOLLY M. SPEARMAN
STATE SUPERINTENDENT OF EDUCATION

MEMORANDUM

TO: State Board of Education and General Assembly

FROM: Jill Christmus, Ph.D.
Interim Director, Office of Special Education Services

DATE: December 7, 2022

RE: Employability Credential-Report

In response to Section 59-39-100(2)(D): “The department shall monitor the number of diplomas and employability credentials earned by students and shall report to the State Board of Education and the General Assembly biannually by February 15, beginning in 2020.”

South Carolina has roughly 100,000 students with disabilities serviced under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), of which the majority are able to earn a state high school diploma.

Given the varying levels of student achievement, as well as the inability to complete required high school coursework, there is an alternative course of study (Employability Credential) toward graduation for students with disabilities to demonstrate their ability to transition into the work community. The uniform state-recognized Employability Credential is aligned to a career ready course of study for students with disabilities whose Individualized Education Program (IEP) Team determines this course of study is appropriate. 2022 was the first class of graduates earning the Employability Credential.

Because 2022 was the first graduating class of students earning the Employability Credential, the agency did not report biannually on the number of diplomas and Employability Credentials earned by students with disabilities as indicated by Statute (beginning in 2020). Below is a table displaying state-wide numbers of students with disabilities who have graduated with a diploma or Employability Credential from 2019–22.

Table 1. *State-wide Numbers of Students Graduating with Diploma or Employability Credential*

Year	Number of Diplomas	Number of Employability Credentials
2019	3186	0
2020	3249	0
2021	3099	0
2022	*	348

The Office of Research and Data Analysis disseminated 347 Employability Credentials by June 2022. A roster of one additional graduate was submitted in August 2022 as an LEA inadvertently left student off their original roster for an updated total of 348 disseminated Employability Credentials for 2022. *Table 4 Exiting Data is not yet available and should be included in the 2023 report. Table 4 Data is percent of youth with Individualized Education Programs (IEPs) graduating from high school with a regular high school diploma. (20 U.S.C. 1416 (a)(3)(A))