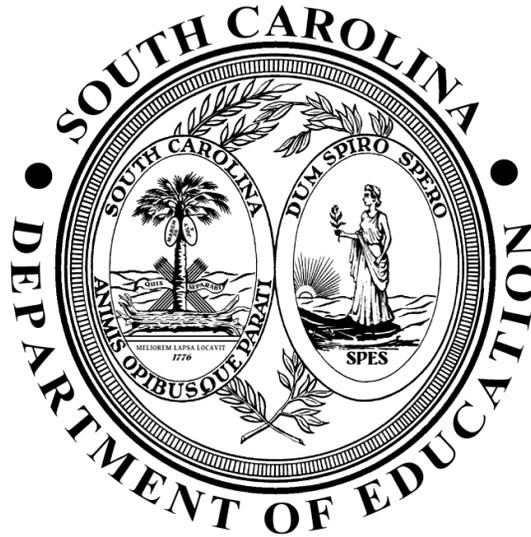


**STATE OF SOUTH CAROLINA  
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION**

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



**Program Report on EEDA Dropout Prevention and  
High Schools That Work**

The Honorable Henry McMaster, Governor  
The Honorable Hugh K. Leatherman, Sr., Chairman, Senate Finance Committee  
The Honorable Harvey S. Peeler, Jr., Chairman, Senate Education Committee  
The Honorable W. Brian White, Chairman, House Ways and Means Committee  
The Honorable Merita A. Allison, Chairman, House Education and Public Works

Pursuant to Proviso 1A.16 of the 2017 Appropriations Act

December 1, 2018

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## **Introduction: Reporting Requirement**

The South Carolina Department of Education (SCDE) provides the following report in compliance with Proviso 1A.16 of the 2016 Appropriations Act.

1A.16. (SDE-EIA: Dropout Prevention and High Schools That Work Programs) The Department of Education must report annually by December first, to the Governor, the Chairman of the Senate Finance Committee, the Chairman of the House Ways and Means Committee, the Chairman of the Senate Education Committee, and the Chairman of the House Education and Public Works Committee on the effectiveness of dropout prevention programs funded by the Education and Economic Development Act and on the High Schools that Work Programs' progress and effectiveness in providing a better prepared workforce and student success in post-secondary education. The department, school districts, and special schools may carry forward unexpended funds from the prior fiscal year into the current fiscal that were allocated for High Schools That Work.

This report contains two parts: a summary of programs under the Education and Economic Development Act of 2005 (EEDA) and a summary of the High Schools that Work (HSTW) program.

### **Part 1: EEDA**

#### *Introduction and Background*

The EEDA requires that districts implement evidence-based programs and strategies that address the needs of students “at risk for being poorly prepared for the next level of study or for dropping out of school.” S.C. Code Ann. § 59-59-150. Additionally, the EEDA stipulates that

school districts must lay the foundation for the clusters of study system in elementary school by providing career awareness activities. In the middle grades, programs must allow students to identify career interests and abilities and align them with clusters of study for the development of individual graduation plans. Finally, high school students must be provided guidance and curricula that will enable them to complete successfully their individual graduation plans, preparing them for a seamless transition to relevant employment, further training, or postsecondary study.

S.C. Code Ann. § 59-59-20(B). Research demonstrates that students who are on-track to graduate on time are at less risk of dropping out. During school year 2017–18, to assist districts in meeting the EEDA requirements and the *Profile of the South Carolina Graduate*, the SCDE awarded over \$4 million in competitive grants. These Preparing College- and Career-Ready Graduates grants went to 24 districts to serve students in approximately 48 elementary, middle, and high schools, as well as students enrolled in Alternative School Programs.

The SCDE awarded funds to the S.C. Department of Employment and Workforce (DEW) to continue the *Jobs for America's Graduates-South Carolina* program at Spartanburg High School.

*Program Summary and Outcomes for School Year 2017–18*

- Over \$4 million was awarded to 24 districts and DEW to serve students who attend one of 48 schools.
  - Over 96 percent of participating schools offer supplemental academic and career development assistance during the summer months.
  - Over 1,555 students began receiving supplemental assistance for the first time during 2017-18 as a result of Preparing College- and Career-Ready Graduates grants.
  - According to the end-of-the-year reports submitted by school representatives, the majority of students served as a result of Preparing College- and Career-Ready Graduates grants were selected because of academic, behavior, or attendance patterns which placed them at risk of academic failure (see Table 1).

Table 1: At-Risk Indicators Used by Grantees

<b>At-Risk Indicator</b>	<b>Percent of schools served that included the indicator in the selection process</b>
Attendance	92%
Behavior/Disciplinary Issues	92%
Academic: Grades	96%
Academic: Course Credit	46%
Academic: Standardized Tests	69%
Academic: Over-aged for Grade	42%
Limited English Proficiency	23%
Lack of Interest or Conflicting Interest	46%
Socioeconomic Environment	54%
Homeless or without a Parent	31%
Abuse: Physical and/or Emotional	23%
Teen Parent	23%

*Desired Outcomes*

Regulations approved by the South Carolina State Board of Education and the General Assembly in 2007 established desired outcomes or performance criteria based on the specific needs of the at-risk population and on the nature and structure of the particular model implemented in a district or school.

Data retrieved from PowerSchool, the state’s uniform student information system, revealed the following outcomes related to the 11,593 students who participated in at-risk student programs during 2017–18 that were financially supported by the EEDA. Each grantee incorporated at least one of the 15 effective strategies that have the most positive impact on the dropout rate as identified by the National Dropout Prevention Center (NDPC), or selected a program from the NDPC’s database of Model Programs, which is based on the evaluation literature of specific prevention, intervention, and recovery programs.

*Key Outcomes*

- Ninety-nine percent (11,488) of the 11,593 students identified in 2016–17 either enrolled in school during 2017–18 or graduated with a South Carolina high school diploma.
- Less than one percent (105) of the 11,488 students identified in 2016–17 was not enrolled in school for 2017–18.
- The average daily attendance of these students was 93.45 percent.
- The average grade was an 82.

Outcomes associated with the implementation of evidence-based, at-risk strategies and models have been consistently positive:

- For the past five years, individual graduation plan conferences have been held and individual graduation plans have been developed for at least 98 percent of all students in grades 8–12 who participated in an at-risk program.
- Each year between 2012–13 and 2017–18, over 90 percent of the students identified as at-risk have either re-enrolled in school the year after they participated in the program or graduated at the end of the academic year in which they participated (see Table 2).
- In 2015–16, South Carolina’s public school enrollment for students in grades 9 through 12 was 223,011. Despite this increase in enrollment of over 2,700 students from 2014–15, the state’s dropout event rate declined from 2.6 percent to 2.3 percent. Over 480 fewer students dropout when compared to the previous year.

Table 2: Percent of At-Risk Students Who Remained in School or Graduated after Participating in an EEDA-Funded and/or Endorsed Program

<b>School Year</b>	<b>Number of Students Enrolled in a Program</b>	<b>Percent Remained in School or Graduated</b>
2012–13	20,582	96.8%
2013–14	16,378	99.0%
2014–15	15,813	99.3%
2015–16	15,117	98.8%
2016–17	12,360	91.0%
2017–18	11,593	99.0%

Based on the data received from the End-of-the-Year Reports submitted by Preparing College- and Career-Ready Graduates grant recipients:

- Approximately 365 high school students scored platinum, gold, silver, or bronze on the statewide career-readiness assessment.
- Eighty-one percent of schools reported a decrease in discipline referrals for participating students between 2016–17 and 2017–18.
- Forty-two percent of schools reported that the truancy rate among participating students decreased by at least 5 percent between 2016–17 and 2017–18.

- Fifty-six percent of schools reported an increase of at least 0.5 of a point in the mean grade point average (GPA) among participating students between the end of 2016–17 and the end of 2017–18.
- Approximately 945 participating high school students passed at least one End-of-Course exam during 2017–18.
- One hundred percent of schools reported that participating students appeared to have a more positive attitude toward school and learning in 2017–18 than they had in 2016–17.
- One hundred percent of the participating students in grades 8–12 met with their school counselors to develop or revise their individual graduation plans during 2017–18.

All districts that received EEDA funds, directly or indirectly, were required to either implement or sustain supplementary evidence-based programs and activities, specifically designed to assist elementary, middle, or high school students in being prepared for the next grade level or graduating on time.

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## **Part 2: High Schools That Work**

### *Program Overview*

High Schools That Work (HSTW) is an effort-based, school improvement initiative. HSTW is founded on the conviction that most students can master rigorous academic and career/technical studies if school leaders and teachers create an environment that motivates students to make the effort to succeed. Run by the Southern Regional Education Board (SREB), the HSTW school improvement design provides a framework of goals, key practices, and key conditions for accelerating learning and setting higher standards.

For Fiscal Year 2017–18, per Proviso 1A.68., (SDE-EIA: Career and Technical Equipment Funding Technology Education), are now together as one revenue code. Therefore, schools and districts are able to use the funds for equipment, Work Based Learning, and SREB’s High Schools That Work initiative when building their local plan as it relates to the proviso. Specifically, Proviso 1A.68. (SDE-EIA: Career and Technical Equipment Funding Technology Education) reads:

Funds appropriated for Modernize Career and Technical Equipment Career and Technology Education will be distributed to school districts and multi-district career centers based on the prior year actual student enrollment for career and technology education courses, with no district or multi-district career center receiving less than \$50,000. Funds may be expended for the purchase of career and technical equipment, the up fitting of facilities and the purchase of consumables, regional career specialists, and such evidence-based initiatives like High Schools that Work and Project Lead the Way. Each district must include in the district plan submitted to the Office of Career and Technology Education information on other career and technical equipment available. The district must include, at a minimum, equipment located at the career center and at the technical college, information on the alignment of equipment to current industry jobs and needs in the state as recommended by career and technical program advisory committees. District plans must include charter schools within the school district offering at least one career and technical education completer program. School districts and career centers may carry forward unexpended funds to be used for the same intended purposes to up fit career and technical facilities and replace career and technical program consumables.

During 2017–18, the SCDE disbursed HSTW funds to the participating school districts. As such, the SREB has established direct communication and technical assistance to the participating schools in South Carolina. The total of participating schools in 2017–18 was 302 including 130 high schools, 136 middle schools, 23 career technical centers, and 13 elementary schools.

### *Training and Development through SREB*

#### **Education and Business Summit**

Seven hundred and eighteen participants attended the 2017 Education and Business Summit. The Summit is designed to provide learning opportunities in Career and Technology Education (CATE), develop best practices for use in the classroom or in administrative roles, create

strategies to prepare South Carolina students for college and career readiness, and prepare participants to develop stronger CATE courses and programs for the success of all students.

### **Making Middle Grades Work**

Making Middle Grades Work (MMGW) engages state, district and school leaders in partnerships with teachers, students, parents and the community to raise student achievement in the middle grades. In 2017–18, 136 middle schools participated in the state network.

### **High Schools That Work**

Schools, districts, and states contract with SREB for targeted school improvement services such as on-site coaching, technical assistance, and professional development. The HSTW State Network in 2017–18 included 130 high schools and 23 career centers in South Carolina.

### **College and Career Readiness Networking Conference**

This professional development focuses on literacy and mathematics tools and strategies. Teams of educators and school leaders explore disciplinary literacy strategies and formative assessment lessons that engage students in math. One hundred and forty-five educators participated in this conference.

### **Project-Based Learning**

Project-Based Learning (PBL) is an instructional framework that supports educators in designing learning experiences for students that emphasize critical thinking, problem solving, collaboration, and inquiry skills. Two training sessions were held in different regions throughout the state. **Twenty** teachers and administrators from **nine** schools, agencies, or districts received PBL professional development, coaching, and support services in 2017–18.

### **Learning Centered Leadership**

Leadership preparation program that develops current or aspiring principals' capacity to serve as effective instructional leaders who understand how to use data to locate and close gaps. Four instructional leaders participated in this workshop.

#### *Key Outcomes*

##### **SC READY ELA and SC READY Math**

A total of 136 middle schools participated in MMGW during the 2017–2018 school year.

- The percentage of students scoring Met and Exemplary on the SC READY ELA 2018 assessment exceeded the state average of 42 percent in 35.2 percent of the participating MMGW sites.
- The percentage of students scoring Met and Exemplary on the SC READY Math 2018 assessment exceeded the state average of 45 percent in 28 percent of participating MMGW sites.

Table 3 provides an overview of the percentage of participating MMGW school sites with student scores above the state average at the Exemplary and Meeting level on the 2018 SC READY ELA and SC READY Math assessments in South Carolina.

Table 3. Percentage of Participating Making Middle Grades Work Sites with Students Scoring Above the State Average at the Exemplary and Meeting Level on SC READY ELA and SC READY Math in 2017–18

<b>Assessment/ Subject Area</b>	<b>Scoring Level</b>	<b>Percentage of MMGW Sites Above State Average</b>	<b>Percentage of All Schools Above State Average<sup>1</sup></b>
SC READY ELA	Meeting and Exemplary	35.2	45.2
SC READY ELA	Meeting and Exemplary	28	49.7

<sup>1</sup>Note. Includes all middle schools, both participating and non-participating MMGW sites, in the state.

#### *End of Course Assessments*

Academic data representative of the percentage of End of Course (EOC) tests in Algebra I/Math for the Technologies, English I, Biology I, US History and The Constitution, and all EOC tests in participating HSTW sites, that exceeded, average state performance by assessment are shown in Table 4. Average state performance is defined by the percentage of students scoring 60 percent or higher on each EOC test statewide. A summary of data points can be found below:

- Twenty-nine and two tenths (29.2) percent of participating HSTW sites demonstrated a higher percentage of students scoring 60 percent or higher than the state average on the Algebra I/Math for the Technologies EOC assessment.
- Thirty percent of participating HSTW sites demonstrated a higher percentage of students scoring 60 percent or higher than the state average on the English I EOC assessment.
- Sixty and four tenths (60.4) percent of participating HSTW sites demonstrated a higher percentage of students scoring 60 percent or higher than the state average on the Biology I EOC assessment.
- Fifty and two tenths (50.2) percent of participating HSTW sites demonstrated a higher percentage of students scoring 60 percent or higher than the state average on the US History and Constitution End of Course assessment.

Table 4 provides an overview of the percentage of HSTW Sites with EOC Assessment scores exceeding average state performance in 2017–18.

Table 4. Percentage of Participating HSTW Sites with EOCEP Scores Exceeding Average State Performance in 2017–18

<b>EOC Assessment</b>	<b>Percentage of Students Scoring 60% or Higher Statewide</b>	<b>Participating HSTW Sites Exceeding State Performance</b>	<b><sup>2</sup>Non-Participating HSTW Site Exceeding State Performance</b>
Algebra I/ Math	68	29.2	15
English I	80.7	30	23.0
Biology I	67.5	60.4	22.3
US History and The Constitution	71	50.2	18.5

<sup>2</sup>Note. Includes all high schools, both participating and non-participating HSTW sites, in the state.

### *ACT Benchmarks*

One hundred and thirty high schools participated in HSTW during the 2017–18 school year. The ACT, a college readiness assessment, was given to every South Carolina 11th grader in 2018, with the exception of those eligible for alternate assessments. According to ACT, benchmarks are scores on the ACT subject area tests that represent the level of achievement required for students to have a 50 percent chance of obtaining a B or higher or about a 75 percent chance of obtaining a C or higher in corresponding credit-bearing first-year college courses. Table 5 provides an overview of the percentage of HSTW Sites with Mean Subject Scores At or Above the College Benchmark Level for Each Subject Area ACT Benchmark Assessment in 2017–18.

Table 5. Percentage of Participating HSTW Sites with Mean Subject Scores at or Above the College Benchmark in 2017–18

<b>ACT Benchmark Assessment</b>	<b>Percentage of HSTW Sites With Mean Scores At or Above the College Ready Benchmark</b>	<b><sup>3</sup>Participating of Non HSTW Sites With Mean Scores At or Above the College Ready Benchmark</b>
English	23.8	2.8
Math	2.3	1
Reading	5.3	2
Science	2.3	1.2

<sup>3</sup>Note. Includes all high schools, both participating and non-participating HSTW sites, in the state.

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