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Fiscal Year 2014-15 Accountability Report

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AGENCY NAME:	South Carolina Department of Education		
AGENCY CODE:	H63	SECTION:	



Fiscal Year 2014–15 Accountability Report

SUBMISSION FORM

AGENCY MISSION	The mission of the South Carolina Department of Education is to provide the leadership and support so that all public school students graduate prepared for success. This is supported through the vision that all students graduate prepared for success in college, career, and citizenship. By 2018, at least one school in every district will have implemented personalized learning that supports students' meeting the Profile of the South Carolina Graduate.
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Please identify your agency's preferred contacts for this year's accountability report.

	<u>Name</u>	<u>Phone</u>	<u>Email</u>
PRIMARY CONTACT:	Emily Heatwole	734-4066	eeheatwole@ed.sc.gov
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I have reviewed and approved the enclosed FY 2014–15 Accountability Report, which is complete and accurate to the extent of my knowledge.

AGENCY DIRECTOR (SIGN/DATE):	
(TYPE/PRINT NAME):	Molly M. Spearman

BOARD/CMSN CHAIR (SIGN/DATE):	
(TYPE/PRINT NAME):	Traci Young-Cooper, Ed.D

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AGENCY’S DISCUSSION AND ANALYSIS

On January 14, 2015, Molly Spearman was sworn in as the 18th Superintendent of Education. Superintendent Spearman’s deep commitment to public education brings with it renewed excitement and dedication to students, teachers, and parents. The Profile of the South Carolina graduate has been adopted by the Department of Education, the State Board of Education, the Education Oversight Committee, the South Carolina School Administrators Superintendents’ Roundtable, TransformSC, the South Carolina Council on Competitiveness, and the South Carolina Chamber of Commerce and serves as the guiding principle for the agency’s mission to provide the leadership and support so that all public school students graduate prepared for success and vision and that all students graduate prepared for success in college, career, and citizenship.

In just the eight short months Superintendent Spearman has been in office the Department has met many milestone goals. The new state standards in English language arts and math were adopted by the Education Oversight Committee and then unanimously adopted by the State Board of Education. Training and professional development for teachers is ongoing with support and guidance from the Department.

In June, the Department received notification from the US Department of Education that the state’s Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) Waiver had been approved for three years. The Department worked closely with stakeholders to develop the waiver which will allow increased flexibility for districts allowing for personalized learning opportunities for the individual student and increase the availability for schools to implement innovative, research-based innovative instruction practices. (2.1.1, 2.1.2, 2.1.3)
 The Department will provide increased levels of support and guidance that will include professional development opportunities to district personnel in order to ensure effective implementation that results in building the expertise and capacity of educator teams. (2.3.2)

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The Department will be working with the Education Oversight Committee to work to align the state and federal accountability systems under the waiver into one system in order to streamline goals and objectives for teachers and students. (4.2.2) To support this effort, the Department, through the Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO), began work on a Cross State Learning Collaborative with Kentucky. Kentucky has emerged as a leader in PK–16 education with Dr. Terry Holliday as Superintendent. Dr. Holliday hails from South Carolina, and the guidance he and his team have provided through this collaborative has proven extremely valuable thus far.

The new teacher evaluation system which incorporates student learning objectives was rolled out by the Department, and training began with districts statewide this summer and continues through the fall of 2015. The Department will continue to provide assistance to districts and teachers in building Student Learning Objectives into the evaluation process with piloting beginning in 2016–17. (3.1.1, 3.1.2, 3.1.3) Additionally, review of the state teacher certification system began in the spring, and the Department intends to streamline the process in an effort to help districts recruit and retain high quality teachers. (3.2.6) Further, support for teachers will be provided through the use of mentor teachers for induction year and the enhancement of leadership programs and coaching opportunities. (3.3.1)

The Department will continue to provide even more expanded learning through a variety of delivery methods in order to make such opportunities available to all districts and students. VirtualSC will continue to offer virtual coursework to students providing increased access to coursework including, but not limited to, world languages and advanced mathematics. (5.1.1, 5.5) Through 2016, VirtualSC will implement a program to serve expelled high school students and research expansion of gateway courses for middle school students. (5.1.2, 5.1.3) The Department is working with the Department of Commerce, the Department of Employment and Workforce, and the Technical Colleges to better prepare students for current workforce needs in South Carolina. This will be

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accomplished through increased access to dual credit coursework, increasing the number of CATE completers, and achievement of industry certification. (5.2.1, 5.2.2, 5.5.5)

The General Assembly provided the new administration with an extension to perfect the State Reading Plan, which was approved by the State Board of Education in June.

Implementation of Read to Succeed continues to ensure that students experiencing lower literacy and reading achievement will excel. (1.2.3) Individual districts submit district-level reading plans to the state per the legislation and will effectively utilize Reading Coaches as resources in an increased number of elementary and primary schools during the 2015–16 school years. There is an increased focus in early childhood literacy and increased identification of students needing intensive reading interventions through reading programs including the Summer Reading Camps. (5.3.1, 5.3.4)

During Fiscal Year 2014–15, the former Budget and Control Board awarded the state assessment contract for grades 3–8 and grade 11 to ACT. The contract was protested and the procurement was deemed invalid. The Department secured legislative permission to issue the procurement, and it was released in August with the goal of having a new statewide contract issued in October so that teacher preparation and professional development can begin. The testing changes and uncertainty have been overwhelming for teachers and frustrating for students and parents; with a new assessment comes changes, but the Department is dedicated to ensuring as smooth of a transition as possible. Student performance on these exams will show continuous growth and improvement, and as part of the single accountability model, the Department will work with stakeholders to include the EOC to set benchmarks for student achievement that will demonstrate increased college and career readiness. (1.3)

Student achievement is impacted by the quality of the learning environment, which includes not only safety, buildings, facilities, and transportation, but must also include the provision of nutritious food to all students. This summer marked the first time the Department has been the lead agency implementing the USDA Summer Feeding Program.

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Over four million children received meals as a result of this program. The USDA just notified the agency that the site located at MUSC in downtown Charleston received special recognition for its creative efforts to ensure children in the hospital, both as patients and with relatives, received meals. (6.2.2, 6.2.5) The Department will continue to increase the efficiency of the school transportation system through not only the bus replacement cycle but also through support of maintenance facilities and the reduction of route times. (6.1.3, 6.1.4)

In December, the South Carolina Supreme Court issued a ruling in the 22-year-old Abbeville Equity case. Both the House of Representatives and the Senate have formed committees to study the ruling and provide recommendations; Superintendent Spearman serves on the House Ad Hoc Committee. The Department is committed to providing additional supports and assistance to the Trial and Plaintiff districts. All of the goals, objectives, and strategies outlined in this plan will serve all districts and are designed to be inclusive of the Abbeville districts. The Department must serve as a model for districts and provide the necessary educational resources, professional development, and flexibility to fully enable the provision of student-centered and personalized learning that is the hallmark of the Profile of the South Carolina Graduate. All students will increasingly be prepared to graduate college- and career-ready through high quality learning opportunities for students and support from effective educator teams. (7.2.1, 7.2.2, 3.5.1)

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