

Instructional Leaders' Response to the "Strike and Insert" Version of S.300

The members of the Instructional Leaders Division of the South Carolina Association of School Administrators would like to express our appreciation for the leadership of the Senate Education K-12 Subcommittee in recommending the hybrid "strike-and-insert" version of Senate Bill S.300. It is imperative that we increase achievement expectations and performance of students in South Carolina. The alignment of South Carolina's state standards, a coherent statewide system for assessments, and the protection of the privacy of students are all vital to our future success.

After careful review, we offer the following comments for your consideration. Please note our suggestions are indicated in *italics*.

- We support that the State Board of Education in consultation with the Education Oversight Committee will provide for a cyclical review of state standards. *We ask that you consider the first cyclical review for ELA and mathematics in 2018. Due to the original State Department implementation timeline, new assessments, and the various stages of implementation across the state, this additional time is needed for full implementation of the system.*
- We support the use of ACT Aspire for ELA and mathematics assessment in grades 3-8. *We ask for consideration to extend this through grade 10 to better support student success on ACT in grade 11.*
- We support the use of ACT and ACT WorkKeys in grade 11 for all students. *We ask that you consider adding the writing component to ACT and the Talent Assessment to ACT WorkKeys. We ask that students be allowed to take ACT WorkKeys prior to or in grade 11. We request the use of KeyTrain for student preparation for the ACT WorkKeys assessment.*
- We support the use of SC-PASS in grades 4-8 for science and social studies.
- We support the continuation of End of Course exams in Biology and US History and Constitution. *We ask you to consider eliminating Algebra 1 and English 1 End of Course tests due to grades 9 and 10 being assessed by ACT Aspire.*
- We support the discontinuation of the High School Exit Exam (HSAP). We also agree that any student who is 21 years of age or less as of July 1, 2014, who previously failed to receive a high school diploma solely for failing to meet the exit exam requirement be allowed to petition to receive a high school diploma. *We ask you to consider that these petitions be directed to the South Carolina State Department of Education to ensure the integrity of the process. The State Department issues high school diplomas and maintains electronic records.*

- We support and appreciate the delayed use of ratings for school and district state accountability as well as teacher evaluation. *We ask that you consider that public reporting begin with the 2018 assessment data and no use of student data to evaluate teachers be used until at least one year after that date or until such time as that process can be validated by research as “best practice” in teacher evaluation.*
- We support the protection and privacy of individual student data. We agree this protection is needed as large data systems proliferate.

As instructional leaders we share the concerns of all South Carolinians that our students are challenged and prepared for success. We trust that the South Carolina State Department of Education will work with the United States Department of Education to develop a waiver that satisfies federal accountability requirements. Again, we appreciate your efforts in the hybrid version of S.300 to move us forward in our shared vision. Representatives from the instructional leaders will be in attendance at the next subcommittee meeting and available to respond to your questions.

We thank you, in advance, for considering our suggestions.

Instructional Leaders Division

South Carolina Association of School Administrators

February 24, 2014