

MEMORANDUM

TO: Special Education Directors
PowerSchool Administrators
District Instructional Leaders

FROM: Peter Keup
Director, Office of Special Education Services

Wyatt Cothran
Deputy Chief Information Officer

DATE: June 15, 2026

RE: Academic Seminar and Support Lab Courses (Beginning 2026-2027 School Year)

A workgroup consisting of internal and external stakeholders met over the last few months to re-evaluate and develop guidance for the high school Academic Seminar courses for students with disabilities. The workgroup developed clarification on the Academic Seminar courses that incorporates high school English Language Arts (ELA) and math standards and describes functional performance competencies to be used for the courses. In addition, the SCDE is creating new Support Lab courses that allow for greater flexibility for serving students with specially designed instruction and do not require alignment with high school academic standards.

Academic Seminar I-VIII, activity codes 4919-4989, is now aligned to ELA and math standards and competencies in functional areas (behavior, transition, and executive functioning) to support the provision of high-quality instruction to students with disabilities and to meet the Profile of the South Carolina Graduate. These courses are designed for students working towards a South Carolina High School Diploma and will carry college preparatory academic weighting. During the course, students will receive instruction and be assessed on academic and functional skills as identified in the students' IEPs, and the instruction provided will align with the academic standards and/or functional competencies applicable to the individual needs of each student. The courses are flexible to allow for this individualization and also allow for .5 or 1 of course hour credit so that the course can occupy a full or half block.

The new courses, Support Lab I-VIII, activity codes 59L1-59L8, are to be used for the provision of specially designed instruction that is not aligned to the State's high school academic standards. The instruction for the Support Lab courses would be guided solely by the student's IEP and the student's annual IEP goals. These courses receive units of elective credit; however, they have a 0 in the seventh course code position, which means they do not receive college preparatory academic weighting. The Support Lab courses are flexible to allow individualization and also allow for .5 or 1 of course hour credit so that the course can occupy a full or half block.

The Support Lab courses are not recommended for students pursuing a SC High School Diploma. With respect to students pursuing the SC High School Credential, the selection of course type (Academic Seminar or Support Lab) would depend on the individual needs of the student and the nature of the instruction that will be provided to the student. If a student completes a Support Lab course and thereafter switches from pursuing a SC High School Credential to pursuing a SC High School Diploma, the student will receive elective credit for the course, but the course grade will not be factored into the student's GPA.

Another scheduling option for all students, including students with disabilities, is Study Hall (activity code 0899). Study Hall is non-instructional time in a student's schedule and can be used for students with disabilities for completing homework and class assignments, receiving classroom accommodations (e.g., extra time for tests, quizzes, or in class assignments), preparing for future tests, quizzes, and other assessments, or independent student work on organizational or executive functioning skills. Since the time is non-instructional, supervising personnel for Study Hall do not have to be a certified teacher and no academic credit is given (weighted or unweighted).

If a district needs additional course flexibility or other course options to meet the individualized educational needs of its students, the district can utilize a locally designed subject area course.

More information on the Academic Seminar and Support Lab courses can be found in the [SCDE Course Code Database](#) in SC-Satchel and in the [Academic Seminar Course Description](#).

Questions regarding this memo can be addressed to Peter Keup at pekeup@ed.sc.gov.