



Richard O'Malley, Ed.D.
Superintendent

May 26, 2022

Mr. Alan Walters, Chairperson
South Carolina Board of Education
1429 Senate Street
Columbia, SC 29201

State Board Members:

In 2013-2014, Florence One Schools embarked on an aggressive early childhood agenda which research has revealed can make a significant change in school readiness for children at risk for school failure. Instead of following traditional models, the district embarked on a two-year research and community awareness campaign in 2011, in conjunction with The School Foundation in Florence. The results of our planning changed our strategic direction and we were able to create a program, which is research-based and will be more effective in meeting the challenge of early childhood education (CDEP) and family well-being (family literacy) which are both initiative encouraged by the South Carolina Department of Education (SDE).

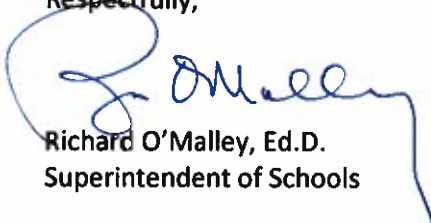
This letter is requesting a waiver of requirements for early childhood centers in Florence One Schools. According to the Office of Accreditation at the SDE, early childhood centers must employ a principal, media specialist and guidance counselor. The Florence One Schools Readiness Action Plan originally referenced in the Florence One Strategic Plan 2014-2019 states that a center manager will direct the early childhood centers. Media specialists and guidance counselors are not required in the plan.

The Florence One early childhood center leadership team includes District Superintendent, Director of School Readiness, center managers, teachers, home visitors and teaching assistants. The support staff includes the school nurse, school psychologist, speech therapist, physical therapist and occupational therapist.

Our research indicates that our hierarchy supports children and families using our early childhood services. Unlike elementary schools, the early childhood centers are also licensed by the Department of Social Services and provide comprehensive services to meet the physical, social, health and cognitive needs of children ages three and four.

We will submit documentation or results to the state board to support our position. Thank you for your consideration of this request.

Respectfully,



Richard O'Malley, Ed.D.
Superintendent of Schools

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