

State Virtual School Survey
SREB Educational Technology Cooperative
2009

South Carolina Virtual School Program

<http://elearning.ed.sc.gov/>

Organization

<i>What is your program's organization type?</i>	Run by a state agency	
<i>To whom is the SVS accountable?</i>	The SCVSP is accountable to the State Board of Education and the South Carolina General Assembly.	
<i>What semester and year did your program first have students?</i>	Fall 2007	
<i>Choose which description best fits your online program:</i>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> fully online, at a distance <input type="checkbox"/> mostly at a distance but with a blended component (defined as having a required face- to- face component on a regular basis) <input type="checkbox"/> classroom based with a significant online component	
<i>What grade levels does your program serve?</i>	Course grade levels: Grades 9-12	Student grade levels: Grades 7-12 (In South Carolina, students may take courses for high school credit beginning in grade 7.)
<i>Does your program offer dual enrollment specifically for college credit?</i>	No	
<i>Do you have a summer school program?</i>	Yes. Summer school has high enrollment for credit recovery courses. Many students are placed on a wait -list until there is open availability.	



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With whom and for what purpose does your state virtual school partner in your state? (e.g., postsecondary education, public television, state IT agency, etc.)

The SCVSP partners with public school districts, private schools, home school associations, and adult education learning centers to provide online courses for the students they serve. We also partner with other offices within the South Carolina State Department of Education to ensure that the courses we offer are aligned with the state academic standards and the instructional materials we use are appropriate. Finally, we partner with the South Carolina ITV and the State Library to access instructional materials online.

Funding and Tuition

What are your program's sources of funding?

- Public FTE funds
- X State appropriation \$3,200,000
- Course fees
- Federal funds
- Private grants

What was the total amount of funding received for 2008-2009?

\$3,200,000

Does your school offer courses for tuition?

No

Courses

The SREB survey has adopted the same definitions used in the *Keeping Pace* survey.

A *unique course* is the equivalent of a half-credit of content delivered in one semester, regardless of the number of sections.

One *course enrollment* is one student taking one semester-length course after a pre-determined drop date; therefore, one student taking two semester length courses or one course over two semesters counts as two course enrollments.

SCVPS courses



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<p><i>What is the number of unique courses in your program with at least one student in 2008-2009?</i></p> <p><i>What % of these courses are licensed or purchased from an outside source?</i></p>	<p>60</p> <p>43%</p>
<p><i>Which best describes the timing of your courses?</i></p>	<p>Courses are self-paced.</p> <p>Courses have set start and end dates; students progress through courses as a cohort.</p> <p>X Both</p>
<p><i>Are your courses primarily_____:</i></p>	<p>Synchronous</p> <p>Asynchronous</p> <p>X Both</p>
<p><i>What is the actual number of course enrollments for each semester?</i></p>	<p>Summer 2008 2,835</p> <p>Fall 2008 4,258</p> <p>Spring 2009 3,205</p> <p>Total 10,298</p>
<p><i>What was your program's approximate change in number of course enrollments from the previous academic year?</i></p> <p><i>If there was an increase, what led to the increase?</i></p>	<p>Increase 80%</p> <p>Economic downfall; additional advertising of program; statewide presentations; professional development training for sponsors and guidance counselors.</p>



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What types of courses does the SVS offer? Please insert the number of each type.

“Credit recovery” courses are courses that are denoted as credit recovery courses in the course catalog or are somehow different (e.g., delivery method, design, etc.) than general education courses.

SCVPS courses

- 1 Advanced Placement
Less than 1% Approx. percentage of course enrollments that are AP
- 13 Credit recovery courses
19% Approx. percentage of course enrollments that are credit recovery
- 32 Core academic courses
- 25 Non-core elective courses
- 0 Dual credit enrollment
- 7 Technical courses
- 3 Other: (AP Exam Reviews and HSAP Preparation for non-credit and SAT Prep for credit)

How many course enrollments did your program have in other types of courses (non-credit) such as ACT test prep?

335

What was your course completion rate in 2008-2009?

68%

Do you have a plan or schedule for upgrading or revising courses?

(The scale represents 1-5 years; please indicate your schedule by changing a number to an x, as 1 2 x 4 5.)

Please provide an explanation of the revision process.

Yes X 2 3 4 5

Before we offer a course, we review it to ensure alignment with the state academic standards and 21st century skills. After that, each course is upgraded and revised as it is taught. Finally, additional revisions occur as the state academic standards are revised.

Students and Related Issues

The SREB survey has adopted the same definitions used in the *Keeping Pace* survey.

One *course enrollment* is one student taking one semester-length course after a pre-determined drop date; therefore, one student taking two semester length courses or one course over two semesters counts as two course enrollments.



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A *unique student enrollment* is defined as one student taking one or more courses across one or more semesters. For example, one student taking two courses in fall and one in spring is counted as one unique student enrollment.

[See Policies, Procedures and Tools.](#)

How many unique students did you have in one or more for-credit courses in 2008-2009?

7,346

What was the actual number enrolled in 2008-2009

11,289

What reasons are given by students for taking an online course?

Please estimate a percentage of students who took courses for these reasons. (Your answers do not need to total 100 %.)

- 20% Course unavailable in my school
- 15% Schedule conflict
- 24% To graduate on time
- 10% To graduate early
- 12% Credit recovery
- 3% Enrichment
- 8% To make room for an elective
- 2% To just try an online course
- 4% Home school student

Do you have any students taking all their courses through your program?

No. The regulations governing the SCVSP limit the number of courses that a student may take in a year to 3 and in the course of high school to 12. Although we have a waiver process in place, to date, no student has taken all his/her courses with the SCVSP.

Teachers and Professional Development

Who provides the teachers for your SVS?

SVS

How many full-time teachers were employed by your program in 2008-2009?

12

What is the average number of students for which a full-time teacher is responsible?

35-45 students per course for a total of 160-175 students per enrollment session



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<p><i>How many part-time teachers were employed in your program in 2008-2009?</i></p>	<p style="text-align: center;">32</p>
<p><i>What is the average number of students a part-time teacher has in one course section?</i> <i>What is the maximum number?</i></p>	<p style="text-align: center;">35 45</p>
<p><i>How is the number of courses/students a teacher may teach determined?</i></p>	<p>We attempt to limit class size to 35-45 students, so that each teacher teaches no more than 160-175 in an enrollment period. In addition, we try to limit the number of preparations to 3 per teacher per enrollment session.</p>
<p><i>Describe teacher-training process for new teachers.</i></p>	<p>Prospective teachers are invited to a one-day training session where they are introduced to our Student Information System (SIS) and Learning Management System (LMS). Based on their performance at this training, they are or are not interviewed for a position. Once they are hired, teachers are provided with more detailed one-on-one training by our SCVSP Training Coordinator on these systems, as well tools such as Elluminate, SKYPE, OneCall, etc. In addition, each new teacher is assigned to a content team, where the team leader provides ongoing training and supervision.</p>
<p><i>Are any or all online professional development requirements mandated by your state? If yes, please explain.</i></p>	<p>No. <i>Proviso 1.25</i> states that to ensure the effective and efficient use of the funding provided by the General Assembly in Part IA, Section 1 XI.A.1 for school technology in the classroom and Internet access, the State Department of Education shall approve teacher technology competency standards and local school districts must require teachers to demonstrate proficiency in these standards as part of each teacher's Professional Development plan. Evidence that districts are meeting the requirement is a prerequisite to expenditure of a district's technology funds.</p>
<p><i>Briefly describe professional development opportunities provided for online teachers in your SVS.</i></p>	<p>We meet face to face one day per month for the purpose of providing the teachers with professional development opportunities based on the results of a needs-analysis that they complete yearly. In addition, they are encouraged to participate in Webinars and other external PD offerings as our budget will allow. For example, this summer we paid for four of our teachers to take online courses for their AP endorsements.</p>



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<p><i>Briefly describe how teachers are evaluated and list evaluation tools used.</i></p>	<p>Since all SCVS teachers are state employees, it is a requirement to evaluate them using the state Employment Management System. The system requires the development of a yearly planning document with each employee based on his/her position description and that the employee is evaluated at the end of the year on the degree to which he/she has performed the job.</p> <p>See Policies, Procedures and Tools.</p>
<p><i>Does your program have any formal teacher communication requirements? (e.g., teacher-to-student, teacher-to-parent)</i></p> <p><i>If yes, please explain.</i></p>	<p>Yes, all teachers contact student at the beginning of the course and provide phone, e-mail and office hours to students, parents and guidance counselors.</p>
<p><i>How many persons (in addition to teachers) are employed by your SVS?</i></p>	<p>0 Part-time 6 Full-time</p>
<p>Instruction, Accountability, Intellectual Property and Other Issues</p> <p>See Policies, Procedures and Tools.</p>	
<p><i>Do you provide guidance services to students enrolled in SVS courses?</i></p>	<p>Yes. The Student Services Coordinator performs this function.</p>
<p><i>Does your SVS address 21st century skills students will master as part of the instruction?</i></p>	<p>Yes</p>
<p><i>Do you include information literacy skills in instruction</i></p>	<p>Yes</p>
<p><i>Do you provide access to digital library resources?</i></p>	<p>Yes</p>



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<p><i>Does your SVS have a SIS for management of student records?</i></p> <p><i>If yes, is your SIS linked to the state data system?</i></p> <p><i>If yes, do you use a locally developed system for maintaining student information?</i></p> <p><i>If you use a third-party provider for your SVS then please list.</i></p>	<p>Yes</p> <p>No</p> <p>No</p> <p>Since the beginning of our program, we have used Florida Virtual School's SIS system. We are in the process of purchasing the system from FVS and plan to customize it to fit our program's needs.</p>
<p><i>How does the SVS ensure quality course content and alignment with state academic standards?</i></p>	<p>A Curriculum Coordinator reviews course content and ensures alignment with the state academic standards. An instrument has been developed that is used in completing this task.</p>
<p><i>Who is responsible for insuring this quality of course content?</i></p>	<p>While it is the Curriculum Coordinators responsibility, there is a checks and balances system in place to ensure quality. Each teacher uses the course review instrument; it is checked by the teacher's team leader; and finally, it is reviewed by the Instructional Program Manager.</p>
<p><i>Do you produce an annual accountability report?</i></p>	<p>No. Since the SCVSP is not a school, we are not included in the state's accountability report. Instead, we are a part of each district's report. However, each year, SCVSP is required to report to the South Carolina General Assembly on the program's performance and expenditure of funds. This information is documented in the required external evaluation.</p> <p><u>South Carolina Virtual School Program Report, May 2008 — May 2009</u></p>
<p><i>What metrics are collected to measure the success of the state virtual school?</i></p> <p><i>How often is this information collected?</i></p>	<p>At the end of each enrollment session (December, February, May and August), such metrics as enrollment numbers, success rate, drops, and student and parent surveys are collected.</p>



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<p><i>Does your SVS have a strategic plan or long-term goals?</i></p>	<p>Yes. SCVSP's strategic plan is included in the agency's strategic plan, which has not yet been published for this school year.</p>
<p><i>Do you use external evaluators to measure success of your SVS?</i></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>If, so please name these persons or company.</i></p> <p><i>Do you use external benchmarks (i.e. comparison with other virtual schools)?</i></p> <p><i>If yes, what benchmarks do you use?</i></p>	<p>Yes</p> <p>Dr. Candyce Williams Glaser, Integrity Research & Consulting Ms. Kim Mulkey, Integrity Research & Consulting Covington, GA30014</p> <p>Yes</p> <p>National trends regarding growth in online learning programs (<i>Keeping Pace</i>)</p>
<p><i>Does your SVS have an intellectual property policy?</i></p> <p><i>If yes, please provide any additional explanation and include the link to the URL</i></p>	<p>Yes</p> <p>The SCVSP is a part of the Office of eLearning in the Division of Standards and Learning at the South Carolina Department of Education. Attached is the office's Intellectual Property Policy, which we employ.</p> <p>See Policies, Procedures and Tools.</p>
<p><i>Identify key issues that are facing your SVS.</i></p> <p><i>On a scale of 1 – 5, please note level of importance of these issues.</i></p> <p><i>(Insert an x to replace a number; example: <u>1 2 x 4 5</u>)</i></p>	<p>Demand for courses vs. funding for courses <u>1 2 3 4 X</u></p> <p>Budget reductions <u>1 2 3 4 X</u></p> <p>Funding or per pupil expenditure <u>1 2 3 4 X</u></p> <p>Legislation/policies <u>X 2 3 4 5</u></p> <p>Teacher availability <u>X 2 3 4 5</u></p> <p>Sustainable funding model <u>1 2 3 4 X</u></p> <p>Demand for new delivery models (blended, credit recovery, full-time, etc.) <u>1 X 3 4 5</u></p> <p>Core score comparisons with face-to-face and other virtual programs <u>1 2 X 4 5</u></p>



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Please identify which SREB publications your SVS has adopted.

SCVPS has adopted all of the SREB publications.

Standards for Quality Online Courses

Checklist for Evaluating Online Courses

Cost Guidelines for Evaluating Online Courses

Cost Guidelines for State Virtual Schools

Standards for Quality Online Teaching

Guidelines for Professional Development of Online Teachers

Contact Information

Please provide detailed contact information for your SVS.

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