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**SOUTH CAROLINA**  
can go to college

### S.C. Senate Education Chairman Highlights Higher Ed as a High Priority

Recently, South Carolina Senate Education Chairman, Harvey Peeler, outlined his plans and priorities for the upcoming legislative session, focusing specifically on higher education as a “high priority,” in a piece published in the [Spartanburg Herald-Journal](#).

Chairman Peeler discussed the importance of the entire education pipeline and the need to, “...focus on our education system as a whole—from K-12 to higher education—to make sure our students are ready to meet the challenges of today’s world and the modern workforce.”

He also stressed the need for increased affordability and cautioned against rising tuition stating, “Tuition increases have been far outpacing inflation across the board, and if we’re not careful we’re going to price ourselves out of the market for many more families.”

CHE looks forward to working with Chairman Peeler, other policymakers, and our state’s institutions to ensure the continued viability of our institutions and access for students in the years ahead.

Read more on [GoUpstate.com](#)

### Changes to S.C. Income Tax Credit for Tuition

Last year, as part of the [South Carolina Infrastructure and Economic Development Reform Act \(S.C. Act 40 of 2017\)](#), the amount of the income tax credit for tuition was increased at both two- and four-year institutions starting in tax year 2017. Students attending public or independent institutions of higher education in South Carolina are now allowed a refundable individual income tax credit equal to fifty percent of tuition paid, not to exceed \$1,500 during that taxable year.

To increase awareness of the opportunities for students or parents to apply for the tax credit, CHE has posted [links to the tax form on its website](#) and sent a [memorandum](#) to all public institutions asking that they ensure the appropriate staff are notifying qualifying students and promoting resources to help them apply.

The [memorandum](#) is available on [CHE’s website](#) and instructions and the tax form are available on the [S.C. Department of Revenue’s \(DOR\) website](#).

### Art Institute of Charleston Update

Recently, the CHE was notified by representatives of Dream Center Education Holdings, LLC (DCEH) of the company’s intent to cease new enrollments at the Art Institute of Charleston. Students who are currently attending the school are being redirected to online programs or on-ground programs at other DCEH campuses.

To ensure the least disruption to students currently enrolled at the institution, the CHE evaluated programs offered by the Art Institute of Charleston and mapped out similar programs offered by other S.C. public, independent, and licensed institutions, which can be found of the [CHE website](#). CHE sent a [letter](#) with the list of programs to the members of the Advisory Committee on Academic Programs (ACAP) and licensed nonpublic postsecondary institutions encouraging them to be as accommodating as possible, within the bounds of their accreditation, to displaced Art Institute of Charleston students who may be interested in transferring into programs at their institution.

### College Application Month and College Goal Events

Beginning this month, the CHE will begin hosting over 170 [College Application Month](#) events. Now in their tenth year, these events held at high schools throughout the state provide a forum for South Carolina seniors to complete and file applications.

While much of the focus of [College Application Month](#) is geared toward first-generation college students and students who may not otherwise apply to college, we encourage participating high schools to include activities for all students, including freshmen, sophomores, juniors, and seniors who have already applied to college.

[College Goal South Carolina](#) events, which assist students and families in completing the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA), are slated to begin in October.

To learn more about [College Application Month](#) and [College Goal South Carolina](#) and view a schedule of events, visit [SCCANGO’s website](#).

### Changes to Palmetto Fellows Regulations

During the Council of Presidents Scholarship Task Force meetings this past Fall, institutional enrollment representatives requested that students and colleges be notified earlier of those students who qualify to receive the Palmetto Fellows Scholarship. They stated that it would help with recruitment and admissions if students are able to know their award status earlier. Currently, there is an early award period from October to December and a late award period from April to June.

To accommodate the institutions’ request, CHE staff have developed a Palmetto Fellows year-round application process. This new process will allow high school counselors to submit applications year-round during the student’s graduating year, once they meet the eligibility criteria.

The task force also discussed one inconsistency between different scholarship programs. Currently, LIFE and HOPE Scholarship students can take a “gap year” (year off) after high school graduation, but Palmetto Fellows recipients cannot. In response to the request to make this provision apply to Palmetto Fellows, CHE also added language to the regulations to allow for a one-year gap year between high school and college.

These changes require revisions to CHE regulations. Accordingly, a notice of drafting was submitted to Legislative Council in May, draft regulations were approved by the [CHE Access and Equity Committee in June](#) and by the [full Commission on August 2nd](#). Draft regulations will be submitted to the General Assembly later this month, with a public hearing to be scheduled for later this fall. After the full legislative process is complete, it is anticipated the changes will go into effect sometime in the Spring of 2019.

### Legislative Wrap-Up

Recently, the General Assembly concluded the 2018 legislative session and the Governor signed the [Fiscal Year 2018-19 Budget](#). Recurring general fund appropriations for South Carolina’s public colleges and universities increased and institutions received additional funds through this year’s Capital Reserve Fund. The FY 2018-19 Budget also increased funding for all lottery scholarships and the allocation for Need-Based Grants increased by over \$1.6 Million, ensuring that more of the state’s neediest students will have greater access to higher education.

Because some legislative items (budget provisos in particular) can go overlooked, CHE notified public institutions of any new or modified requirements included in this year’s budget via proviso. You can view template of the [letter](#) sent to institutions on the [CHE website](#).

The CHE appreciates the hard work of the General Assembly and its support of higher education this legislative session.

### Upcoming Events

- There will be a Council of Presidents meeting at 2:00 p.m. on August 13, 2018 at the USC Alumni Center, located at 900 Senate Street in Columbia