

What happens after I choose a provider?

You will meet with the provider and agree on goals to set for your student's progress. You will also set up the exact times for your child's tutoring sessions. The provider should also tell you how and when they will get in touch with you to let you know how your child is doing. At this meeting, you should also about how the provider will keep in touch with your child's teacher, and what they will be doing to keep your child healthy and safe during tutoring.

What if there is no space in the program I want?

You may have to place your child in your second or third choice program. Sometimes there is not enough money for every child who is eligible for free tutoring to get it. If this is the case, school districts are supposed to help the students who are doing the worst first. If there is no space left in the free tutoring program in your school district, your child may still be able to get low-cost or free help and tutoring through community programs, a local college or university, or other agencies. Ask your school district for suggestions.

How can a student who does not speak English well get help?

These students are also able to get free tutoring by people who are able to help those who don't speak English well. If none of the tutoring programs have qualified instructors who can help these students, the school district must provide the tutoring itself.

What about students who are in special education classes – can they get supplemental education services?

Yes. Students in special education must be given free tutoring if they are eligible. Again, if none of the tutoring programs are able to take special education students, the school district must do the tutoring itself.

This is not all the information you need to know if your child is having trouble in school and you do not think that he or she is getting needed services. You do not need a lawyer in order to get this free tutoring, but if your child is having serious problems in school, you may want to talk to a lawyer about your individual situation. If you don't have a lawyer, the South Carolina Bar Lawyer Referral Service can give you the name of a lawyer who is willing to meet with you and advise you at a lower rate. For the name of a lawyer in your area, call (800) 868-2284 (statewide) or (803) 799-7100 in Columbia and Lexington counties.

If you have a very low income, your local legal services office may be able to help you. To get in touch with them, call the Legal Assistance Telephone Intake Service for a referral at 744-9430 in Columbia or toll-free, (888) 346-5592 from other places in the state.

This brochure was developed and published by the South Carolina Appleseed Legal Justice Center. Funding was provided by the South Carolina Bar Foundation's Interest on Lawyer Trust Accounts (IOLTA) program.

South Carolina Appleseed Legal Justice Center is dedicated to advocacy for low-income people in South Carolina to effect systemic change by acting in and through the courts, legislature, administrative agencies, community and the media, and helping others do the same through education, training and co-counseling. To find out more about SCALJC, go to www.scjustice.org on the Internet. This brochure and others can also be found online by going to www.scjustice.org and clicking on 'Brochures.'

Copyright retained by South Carolina Appleseed Legal Justice Center. For permission to reproduce this brochure, contact SCALJC at P.O. Box 7187, Columbia, SC 29202. (Printed September 2008)

SOUTH CAROLINA
appleseed
LEGAL JUSTICE CENTER

What South Carolina law says about...



Free Tutoring/ Supplemental Educational Services

A federal law known as No Child Left Behind can help students in schools that have been labeled “in need of improvement.” If a student is doing badly in school or on standardized tests, is from a low-income family, and attends a school that is doing badly under the federal law, he or she may be able to get free tutoring. School districts must give all of these students extra help, and this brochure tells about some of their rights provided under the law.

What are supplemental educational services?

This is extra help in certain subjects such as reading, language arts, or math. This tutoring is free to eligible students in some schools and happens at some other time than during the regular school day. This tutoring is more than just help with homework or an after-school activity program. Even if a student is already in one of these programs, he or she can still get this free tutoring if eligible.

Why do some schools offer this help?

If schools do not meet the goals that the government has set for them, they are put on a “needs improvement” list and must take extra steps to help students. Once a school has been on this list for three years, it must offer free tutoring to its students.

Is every student in every school that “needs improvement” eligible?

No. The school must be a Title I school (this usually means there are a number of low-income students attending) and the student must be eligible for free or reduced-price lunch. This help is available even if you have not applied for free or reduced-price lunch. The school district is required to notify parents

if their student is eligible for supplemental educational services.

How do I know if my child is eligible?

Districts are required to tell parents of eligible students in writing every year and give all of the information parents need to know. If you think your student may be eligible but you have not been notified, check with your school principal or school district office. The State Department of Education also keeps a list of schools that are eligible each year on its website at: www.myscschools.com. Look for the section on Title I.

How can I find out what services are being offered in my school district?

Your school district will give you a list of state-approved tutoring programs to choose from. This list might include private companies, other public schools, churches, non-profits, or even computer instruction companies. The list is also available at: www.myscschools.com, in the section on Title I.

How are the tutoring programs chosen by the state?

Anyone – a company, a school district, or a church – who is going to be tutoring students must have trained people on staff. In order to be approved to offer tutoring services, providers must show the state that they plan to teach students based on proven methods that will work. If the organization has already been in the business of tutoring students, they must show a history of success before they will be put on the list of approved providers.

How do I choose a provider?

You should look at how much training the tutors have. Ask questions about the tutors –

what education do they have? Do they have special training in the subject they will be teaching or training on how to work with students who aren't doing well in school? Look at the track record of the organization. Have students who have been tutored by them gotten better grades or done better on tests after they've been through the program? Will the students work alone, in small groups, or in large groups? You can also ask for help from your school district. They have all the information about the different providers and can help find answers to your questions.

When will the se services be offered?

The extra help can be offered before school, after school, on weekends, or during the summer. The district can tell you generally when the sessions will be.

Where will the tutoring be held?

It depends. It may be at a tutoring center owned by a private company, at the student's school, at another school, in a community center or place of worship. The tutoring might even be on a computer program, so the student could work at a home computer or on a public computer, at a place such as a public library.

Is transportation provided?

Maybe. The school district is not required by law to provide transportation to tutoring. In some cases, either the provider or the school district will provide transportation to tutoring. If you need help getting your child to the tutoring sessions, be sure to ask the providers you are thinking about using if they will provide it, or ask your school district if they will do it.