

Education and Business Summit

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

South Carolina Department of Education (SCDE)
Office of Career and Technology Education (OCTE)
State Conference: Education and Business Summit (Summit)
Supporting: CATE, CTCTW, HSTW, MMGW, and SCACTE

1. Why does the Summit have to be a four-day event?

The Summit has been structured to accomplish several goals. One of these goals is to offer a significant number of opportunities to educators for certificate renewal, opportunities that include three Educators in Industry courses. However, due to the quality of the programming and following extensive review by the SCDE's Office of Educator Quality, the entire event has been approved as a certificate renewal experience. Actually, hundreds of educators are attending the Summit annually to support renewal of their certificates. These attendees track their attendance each year using their tracking cards and stickers to verify attendance. Our commitment to these educators is that, during the course of those five years, they will have available to them enough opportunities (sessions) to track renewal units of credit to support renewal of their certificates. The four-day event does that for educators

2. Why does the event have to start on Sunday?

There is no simple answer to this question, but this is a topic of interest. We know how much programming we need to offer at the event. (See question #1 above.) We consult with the University of South Carolina Office of Conferences regarding effective conference planning strategies and review national conference planning publications in a effort to provide the most effective and efficient event possible. Many conferences have a Sunday start day for use in beginning the registration process as a time saving and management matter. Additionally, as conference days approach the end of the week, attendance, whether the conference concludes at midday or the end of the day, drops significantly. So, given what we feel we must offer at the event and the fact that attendance decreases as days approach the end of the week, we begin our event on Sunday. One other matter that we have found to be very helpful has to do with our student recognitions on Sunday evenings in the opening general session. Parents of Technology Champions appreciate being able to be with their sons and daughters at the Summit for the recognition. Should we offer this segment of the event any other day, parents would have to miss work, spend money for hotel stays, or travel great distances in one day to attend the Technology Champions recognition.

3. Is there a one-day or partial registration fee for the Summit if I plan to attend only a portion of the event?

No, there is not a partial registration fee or daily rate for the Summit, and this is the case for several reasons. Offering partial registration fees creates a very significant records management problem and adds to the costs associated with our conference consultant as it would with any consulting entity. Perhaps the most important reason we don't offer some sort of graduated fee scale based on the amount of time someone attends the Summit is that the registration fee is already among the lowest nationwide for events of this magnitude offering the variety in programming and credential renewal options associated with the Education and Business Summit. Conference materials provided in the event portfolios, meals, and breaks provided exceed the expense incurred by paying the \$90 dollar registration fee (\$80 dollars if you register by February 1 each year).

4. How is the Education and Business Summit site selected?

The South Carolina Department of Education requires that proposals to host the Summit are secured from a minimum of three sites. There are actually two sites in South Carolina that can provide the space required to host the Summit in its current format and given its current size. Those sites are the Myrtle Beach Conference Center and Greenville's Carolina First Center. We have hosted a much smaller version of the Education and Business Summit at the North Charleston Area Convention Center. However, though we do request a proposal from this site, both size and cost to host the Summit in that location are prohibitive. Therefore, we are left with two legitimate event sites. As you might imagine, the Myrtle Beach site is cost prohibitive.

Additionally, some of our keynote speakers, due to facilities requirements, would not speak at that venue. Another factor has to do with Summit attendees who attend both the SCASA Summer Leadership Conference, typically held the week after the Summit; they probably would not be given permission to attend both events at that location. Some conference planning management guidelines question the appropriateness of expecting attendees to attend back-to-back events in the same location/area. The Myrtle Beach venue, in many cases, cannot offer optimum event dates, has fewer breakout meeting spaces, and is connected to a hotel that provides no additional meeting spaces. So, sites are selected based on event needs, including but not limited to, size of facility, cost of facility, facility features, support facilities available and their costs, event date flexibility and offerings, and overall cost to the attendees and/or their sponsors, school districts, or agencies.

5. Is the Education and Business Summit only for career and technology education (CATE) educators?

No. Programming at the Education and Business Summit, now one of the nation's largest state conferences, certainly does serve CATE educators and the South Carolina Association for Career and Technical Education (SCACTE) divisions. Additionally, the Summit is structured to serve three whole school reform initiatives as a state-level conference. Career and Technology Centers That Work (CTCTW), High Schools That Work (HSTW), and Making Middle Grades Work (MMGW) have very specific key practices that focus on providing strong career and technical educational opportunities to students. Also, the national focus, both from a whole school reform perspective, common core, 21st Century Skills perspective, and a focus within the Perkins legislation emphasizing the need/requirement to integrate academic and career and technical education have led to a multi-dimensional structure at the event. This, in turn, has strengthened the event for attendees, broadening the spectrum of educators who can and should legitimately attend this state conference. All guidance staff, administrators, core academic instructors, CATE instructors, and business partners are among those categories of individuals for whom programming is provided. Postsecondary staff and leadership are also very much included in the scope of possible attendees, and programming exists for those audiences as well.

6. What details are considered in decisions related to catered events at the Education and Business Summit?

As you might imagine, predicting the actual number of individuals who will participate in each catered activity is interesting, and we indicate those predicted counts to the TD Convention Center through a banquet event order (BEO) system. Additionally, we do look at menus and responses from attendees from the previous year's event. Also, we discuss BEO activity and decision-making with other conference planners. Actually, from information obtained from a couple of national conferences that typically lean more toward box meals, the Summit is definitely a step above what you would find at any state or national event. Based on attendee responses, our investigation, and the expertise provided through the Office of Conferences at the University of South Carolina, there is little more that we can or should do related to catering at the Summit. We do want to provide all catered activities in a timely manner and will always continue to work on rapid service of quality food and beverages.

7. How are SCACTE Division Days Determined?

SCACTE state leadership is represented each year on the Summit Planning Committee. Individuals representing SCACTE provide or assist in providing the Office of Career and Technology Education (OCTE) with both the SCACTE Divisions day assignments and the mini-agendas for each of the SCACTE Division Day sessions. The OCTE has no preference in assigning days to SCACTE Division meetings, but the OCTE is interested in having the SCACTE Division Days spread across the Summit dates. Doing so is very important, as it is necessary to have enough additional programming to meet the needs of attendees not involved in SCACTE Division activities.

8. Can I replace/substitute my registration with another person's name if circumstances prohibit my attending the Summit once I have registered?

Yes. Have the new attendee fax a completed registration form with all appropriate information along with a note/memo telling us who he or she will be replacing. The new registration form and note/memo should be faxed to 803-777-3035.

9. Is on-site registration an option?

Yes, we do provide on-site registration as an option for Summit attendees. Of course, this is not the preferred method of registering, but we understand that situations arise that dictate on-site registration needs. As a reminder, there is an additional \$10.00 fee added to the \$90.00 registration fee should you choose on-site registration, making the on-site registration cost \$100.00.

10. Is it possible to get a refund once I have registered and paid my Summit registration fee?

Sorry, there are no refund options once your registration fee has been paid. Please see question #8 above for information related to an option that you may want to consider.