

April 11, 2016

Mid-Carolina High School  
377 Cy Schumpert Road  
Prosperity, SC 29127

RE: Guidance regarding South Carolina in-state tuition, scholarships, and need based grants for U.S. citizen students with undocumented parents or guardians

To whom it may concern,

We write to request that you post the enclosed flyer in a central place at your school, and that you share the information on this flyer with your administration, teachers, and students.

The flyer describes important guidance from the Commission on Higher Education (CHE) about students' rights to South Carolina in-state tuition, scholarships and grants. The CHE guidance, which was issued on October 1, 2015, pertains to the ability of U.S. citizen students who are dependent on undocumented parents or guardians to receive SC in-state tuition, scholarships, and grants if these students show they are residents of South Carolina.

We believe the flyer provides clarity regarding residency determinations and that, with this information, an increased number of eligible students will have better access to in-state tuition rates and funding that will allow them to attain a post-secondary education. If you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact me by telephone (1-800-591-3656) or by email ([Emily.Martin@splcenter.org](mailto:Emily.Martin@splcenter.org)). Thank you for your time and attention.

Sincerely,



Emily Martin  
Outreach Paralegal

The Southern Poverty Law Center is well-known as an organization that has fought for civil rights and human rights for over 40 years. SPLC is dedicated to fighting bigotry and hatred. SPLC is not affiliated with any government organization or private company. The Immigrant Justice Project is a legal initiative that defends labor rights and civil rights of immigrants in the Southeastern United States.



# Know Your Rights to In-state Tuition, Scholarships, and Grants in South Carolina

If you are a US citizen and your parent or guardian is undocumented, you may still qualify for in-state tuition, scholarships, and need-based grants at South Carolina colleges and universities, under guidance issued by the Commission on Higher Education (CHE).



U.S. citizen students who are dependent on undocumented parents or guardians may be eligible for in-state tuition, scholarships and need-based grants if these students show they are residents of South Carolina (SC). To receive in-state tuition, scholarships, and grants, all students, once admitted, must complete a SC residency certification form and provide documentation verifying their SC residency.

## Here is a list of acceptable documents that can be used as proof of residency:

- Documents reflecting the number of years that the student has resided continuously in SC
- Official high school transcript showing attendance at a SC high school
- A student's valid SC driver's license or identification card
- A student's SC vehicle registration
- Proof that a student filed SC tax returns as a resident for prior years
- Proof that a parent or guardian filed SC tax returns as a resident for prior years

**Schools should NOT deny qualifying U.S. citizen students in-state tuition, scholarships or need-based grants solely because the parent or guardian on whom they depend cannot prove lawful immigration status.**

- Other proof that a parent or guardian is living in SC, including evidence of employment in SC, a lease for a rental property in SC, utility bills, etc.

This list is not exhaustive. Students may also be able to use as proof of residency their voter registration cards, or their parents' medical records or Matricula Consular cards with a SC home address. No single piece of evidence is conclusive.

## Scholarships & Need-Based Grants

To be eligible for scholarships and need-based grants, students must also:

- Meet academic and eligibility requirements, published on the CHE's website ([www.che.sc.gov](http://www.che.sc.gov)).
- Complete the FAFSA (Free Application for Federal Student Aid). A student whose parent or guardian lacks lawful immigration status should enter all **zeros** for the parent/guardian's social security number.

## QUESTIONS? PLEASE CALL US!

We encourage all students to contact their schools for answers to specific questions. Please contact the Southern Poverty Law Center (SPLC) or South Carolina Appleseed Legal Justice Center if you think you are unfairly being denied in-state tuition, scholarships, or need-based grants, and meet the qualifications of the guidance issued by the CHE.

## SOUTHERN POVERTY LAW CENTER

[www.splcenter.org/contact-us](http://www.splcenter.org/contact-us)  
800-591-3656

## SOUTH CAROLINA APPLESEED

[www.scjustice.org/contact-us](http://www.scjustice.org/contact-us)  
803-779-1113

