

# Council News

SCHOOL EDUCATION UNIVERSITY SOUTH CAROLINA

*Civic Engagement at Work for Public Education*

*Volume 41, Issue 1, 2021*

## Eight Named to Prestigious Education Policy Program

Eight professional and civic leaders from across South Carolina have been selected to participate in the SC Education Policy Fellowship Program (SC-EPFP) for 2021-22.

SC-EPFP is a 10-month intensive professional development program for established and emerging leaders in education and related fields to help equip them in working toward sound education policy and practice in South Carolina. SC-EPFP Fellows participate in a variety of activities to promote leadership, develop professional networks, demystify education policy, and foster greater understanding of the roles of government and the community in education.

Members of the SC-EPFP cohort for 2021-22 are: Amy E. Carter, 2022 South

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## Two Elected to SC-SIC Board of Trustees

Ellen Hamilton of Paxville and Lashonda McFadden of Columbia have joined the SC School Improvement Council (SC-SIC) Board of Trustees, Board Chair Robert Grant has announced.

Ms. McFadden and Ms. Hamilton were elected to full three-year terms on the Board representing the Midlands and Pee Dee regions, respectively.

"Both Ms. Hamilton and Ms. McFadden have demonstrated their commitment to our states' students, and particularly to the vital roles that School Improvement Councils serve in the lives of their school communities," said Mr. Grant. "We are indeed fortunate to have them now serving on the SC-SIC Board of Trustees."



*Ellen Hamilton*

The SC-SIC Board of Trustees is composed of 17 members from all corners of South Carolina and acts in an advisory capacity to the SC School Improvement Council, which serves over 13,000 members of local SICs in the state's 1,100-plus K-12 public schools.

Ms. Hamilton is a career educator who is currently the Family Engagement and Homeless Coordinator for Clarendon School District Two. She previously served the district as a "Parent as Teachers" certified educator, SIC District Contact, and Even Start Family Literacy Coordinator.

A certified early childhood provider, Ms. Hamilton has also served as a teacher for pre-K students with developmental delays

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*Lashonda McFadden*

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## From the Executive Director

*Tom F. Hudson*



You may think that this issue of *Council News* looks a bit different from what you remember – and you'd be correct! Starting with this volume, Year 41 of this publication, we have *Council News* sporting a new look and feel. We hope you like it and find it easier to read than the previous layout. And of course, we'll still bring to you all the news of interest to School Improvement Councils to which you've been accustomed over the years.

I'd like to call attention to several items and we're presenting in this issue. I hope that you all have had the opportunity to hold your mandated annual SIC member elections. Statute sets a deadline of **October 15** for these elections so that you can seat your new Council members and put them to work before too much of the fall semester passes by. But we realize that this fall, like the fall of 2020, has been one of significant challenges for our schools, students, educators, and families. If you've not yet conducted your SIC elections, I encourage you to do so as soon as possible in keeping with the spirit of the October deadline.

An additional deadline is fast approaching, and that's the statutory deadline – **November 15** – for reporting your local SIC's membership composition to the SC-SIC office through the online *SC-SIC Member Network*. While this is typically performed by your Principal or his/her staff designee, we ask our SIC District Contacts and SIC Chairs to double check the *Member Network* to ensure that this has been accomplished. Not only is membership reporting an important accountability tool, but it also provides our office with the information we need to reach out and share vital materials and news with our SIC members across the state.

A third date I'd like you to keep in mind is that of **Friday, December 3**. This is the deadline for local SICs to submit their Level One application for the 2022 *Dick and Tunky Riley Award for School Improvement Council Excellence*. With these applications, we ask SICs to tell us the story of the work they undertook last school year and how it positively impacted their schools, their students, and their school communities. These last two school years have been one of multiple challenges and difficulties, and I've heard firsthand from a number of Principals and district leaders how vital their SICs have been in helping to meet these, overcome them, and in serving as an important conduit to families. So, tell us YOUR story this year, so we can recognize it, honor it, and share it with other Councils across the state. Find information on the *Riley Award for SIC Excellence* and the application process on our [website](#).

Thank you for your commitment to your SIC and school community. It does indeed make a difference.



## SC-SIC Board of Trustees

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Council News is an award-winning publication of the SC School Improvement Council. Circulation 20,000+. Comments and articles are welcome. Contact Claudia Parnell, Editor, at: SC-SIC, UofSC College of Education, Suite 001 820 Main Street, Columbia, SC 29208  
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### About the Cover Photo

*Wardlaw College, home of the University of South Carolina College of Education, was formerly University High School from 1932 to 1966, established jointly by Columbia Public Schools and UofSC.*

## Has Your SIC Reported Its Membership for 2021-22?

All School Improvement Councils are reminded that the statutory deadline for reporting local SIC membership information to the SC-SIC office through the online *SC-SIC Member Network* is **November 15** each year. If your SIC has yet to submit its information for the current school year, please do so as soon as possible.

If they have not already done so, *Member Network* account users – Principals or their designees – will need to update their log-in and password information for the current school year. Directions for this can be found on the *Member Network* site accessible through the SC-SIC website or by contacting SC-SIC Digital and Web Director Claudia Parnell at [cparnell@mailbox.sc.edu](mailto:cparnell@mailbox.sc.edu).



And Principals, if your school is a new or re-organized school for 2021-22 not currently listed in the *SC-SIC Member Network*, please email Ms. Parnell to assist you in getting your SIC established in the database.

The *Member Network* is a user-friendly reporting mechanism which not only documents the members of local SICs as required by state law but is helpful in helping account holders ensure that their SICs are compliant to law regarding their composition. If after entering current SIC member information the *Member Network* provides a message stating that the SIC is not compliant with composition requirements, it also provides information on why the SIC is not compliant and what can be done to remedy the situation.

Reporting your SIC members through the *Member Network* is not only an essential accountability measure but assists the SC-SIC office by providing the data needed to contact local SIC members throughout the year.

So, remember – update your SIC’s current membership info by **November 15!**

## Apply for the 2022 Riley Award for SIC Excellence

Did your School Improvement Council do some outstanding work during the 2020-21 school year? Has it undertaken projects and goals that have made an impact on the life of your school community? Then the SC-SIC *Dick and Tunky Riley Award for School Improvement Council Excellence* might have your name on it in 2022 – but only if you submit your award application by **Friday, December 3!**



The annual *Riley Award* process is designed to identify outstanding SICs across the state (at schools open for at least one year), share the good news about their work, and recognize the many great things SICs are doing for their school communities. Named for former U.S. Education Secretary and SC Governor Dick Riley and his late wife, Tunky, the *Riley Award* reflects the couple’s commitment to education and support of parent/community involvement in South Carolina’s schools.

The deadline for Level One applications for the 2022 *Riley Award* is fast approaching – **5:00 p.m., Friday, December 3, 2021**. The Award’s Level One application, suggestions, and application procedures are all available on the [SC-SIC website](#). Applications may be submitted by U.S. Mail, FedEx/UPS, delivered by hand, or scanned and emailed to the SC-SIC office as directed in the application materials by the deadline above.

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## “SIC Basics” Virtual Training Now Available for Districts

Starting last school year in response to the public health situation, the SC School Improvement Council (SC-SIC) began conducting its “SIC Basics” training sessions virtually rather than through traditional face-to-face offerings at the district level. These sessions are still being scheduled for the 2021-22 year and your SIC/district is encouraged to schedule a training today!

“SIC Basics” is primarily intended for new School Improvement Council members but is also a good refresher for longer-serving members. Participants receive an overview of state legislative mandates regarding SICs, membership requirements, elections/appointments, reporting, and SC-SIC support and resources. They also explore the primary roles and responsibilities of SICs and their members in working collaboratively to identify, set, and achieve goals to assist their local schools.

As local SICs change a portion of their membership each year, it’s a good practice for SIC members to be exposed to training conducted by SC-SIC staff. While normally scheduled on a district-wide basis, individualized training for local SICs may be scheduled on a case-by-case basis. Additionally, three 20-minute video segments on basic SIC responsibilities can be viewed on the [SC-SIC website](#), and can be incorporated as a part of local SIC meetings. SC-SIC’s current training schedule can also be viewed online.

To schedule a virtual “SIC Basics” training session, contact your SIC District Contact or reach out the SC-SIC office at 1-800-868-2232 or [sic@mailbox.sc.edu](mailto:sic@mailbox.sc.edu). We look forward to hearing from you and being with you virtually for “SIC Basics” training!

### Virtual “SIC Basics” Training for Districts



The 2020 coronavirus pandemic has made social distancing essential, thus prohibiting in-person SIC training at the district and school levels. SC-SIC has developed and is now offering “SIC Basics” training for districts in a virtual format.

**Schedule your SIC training today!**



This training is primarily intended for new SIC members but is also an ideal refresher for longer-serving members. The session provides an overview of SIC legislative mandates, history, membership requirements, SC-SIC support and resources, and explains the primary roles and responsibilities of SICs and their members as they work together to identify and set goals to help their local schools.

**To schedule a session or for more information,  
contact the SC School Improvement Council at  
1-800-868-2232  
or  
[SIC@mailbox.sc.edu](mailto:SIC@mailbox.sc.edu)**

## Apply for the 2022 Riley Award

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Also available are the submitted case statements of the previous eight *Riley Award* recipients so that you can get an idea of what these SICs accomplished and shared to garner themselves the distinction that the *Riley Award* provides. These statements may be viewed on the [SC-SIC website](#).

In addition to the opportunity for your SIC to be recognized for outstanding work, the *Riley Award* judging panel (members of the SC-SIC State Board of Trustees) provides useful feedback on all applications reviewed – a great learning tool for SICs.

Questions regarding the application process may be directed to SC-SIC Associate Director Karen Utter at [utter@email.sc.edu](mailto:utter@email.sc.edu) or by calling the SC-SIC office, 1-800-868-2232.

So, apply for the 2022 *Riley Award for SIC Excellence* this year and give your SIC an opportunity to shine!

## ***Eight Named to SC-EPFP***

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Carolina Teacher of the Year, Center for Educator Recruitment, Retention and Advancement (CERRA), Winthrop University; Ashley S. Cohoon, Elementary Assistant Principal, East Point Academy Public Charter School, West Columbia; Sarah S. Gams, 2021 South Carolina Teacher of the Year/Social Emotional Learning Program Director, SC Department of Education; Claressa M. Hinton, Regional Family Engagement Liaison, Carolina Family Engagement Center (CFEC), University of South Carolina College of Education; Kimberly O. Johnson, South Carolina House of Representatives, District 64, Clarendon and Sumter Counties; Stephanie N. Lawrence, Esq., Director of Policy and Legal Services, South Carolina School Boards Association; Cindy S. Riley, Executive Director; Colleton County First Steps; and Dr. Andrea M. Sturkey, Director of Human Resources, Dorchester School District Four.



“This year’s SC-EPFP cohort again represents some of the most dedicated and talented leaders from all corners of our state,” said Scott T. Price, Executive Director for the SC School Boards Association and SC-EPFP Advisory Board Chair. “Together, they will work to develop new perspectives, hone their professional skills, and network with other committed leaders so they can take definitive steps for meaningful education improvement at the state and local levels.”

South Carolina Fellows will meet monthly throughout the academic year for full-day dialogues, exercises, and group projects, in addition to a three-day Washington Policy Seminar in the nation’s capital in March.

SC-EPFP operates under the auspices of the national Education Policy Fellowship Program of the Institute for Educational Leadership (IEL) in Washington, DC, which oversees Fellowship programs in 10 states and the District of Columbia. In South Carolina the program is coordinated by the SC School Improvement Council, located in the Center for Educational Partnerships of the University of South Carolina College of Education.

For additional information on the SC Education Policy Fellowship Program, find it [HERE](#).

## ***Two Elected to SC-SIC Board***

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and English Language Learners.

She holds an Associate degree in Agriculture/Natural Resource Management from Central Carolina Technical College, the BS degree in Family and Consumer Sciences Education from South Carolina State University, and the Master of Education in Early Childhood Education from the University of South Carolina.

Ms. McFadden is a parent and advocate who is currently serving her first term on the Richland School District Two Board of Trustees. She has worked as a Community Advocate for the Palmetto Health Community Improvement Department; a Teen Talk Counselor for several local school districts; a Help Us Grow Successfully (HUGS) Counselor for the SC Department of Health and Environmental Control; a Prenatal Education Coordinator for the Washington County (TN) Health Department; and as a Social Counselor for the State of Tennessee Health Department.

In addition to serving as a member of the Greater Columbia Community Relations Council and in several other local volunteer positions, Ms. McFadden has served as Chair and Vice Chair for the Spring Valley High and Lonnie B. Nelson Elementary School Improvement Councils.

She holds the BA in Political Science with a minor in Business Administration from East Tennessee State University, and is currently pursuing the Master’s degree in Public Administration from the University of South Carolina.



# From the SC Education Oversight Committee: Family-friendly Guides to the Content Standards Available Now

The SC Family-friendly Standards are updated and available for Grades K-12 for English Language Arts, Mathematics, Science, and Social Studies. The guides provide information about what students should be learning at each grade level, along with books and resources to enhance the learning at school. The guides are also available in Spanish. To access these standards in English or in Spanish, visit the EOC website [HERE](#).

**Home**

grades k-5

grades 6-8

grades 9-12

**Family-friendly guides**  
to South Carolina academic standards

Hablas español?

## Know the standards

There are six key reasons why parents should be familiar with South Carolina's academic standards:

1. Standards set clear, high expectations for student achievement. Standards tell what students need to do in order to progress through school on grade level.
2. Standards guide efforts to measure student achievement. Results of tests on grade-level academic standards show if students have learned and teachers have taught for mastery.
3. Standards promote educational equity for all. Instruction in every school in the state is based on the same academic standards.
4. Standards inform parents about the academic expectations for their child. Standards give parents more specific information for helping their child at home.
5. Standards enable parents to participate more actively in parent/teacher conferences. Knowledge of the academic standards helps parents understand more about what their child is learning and what they can do at each grade level.
6. Standards help parents see how the current grade level expectations are related to successive years' expectations.

## Become a member of your child's success team

A good educational system provides many tools that help children learn. Parents and families are a big part of a child's success team because a great deal of learning goes on outside the classroom. The information on this site can help you become familiar with what your child is learning at school and it includes activities to reinforce and support your child's learning, selected book titles for additional reading, and Web site addresses for extended learning.

