

SC – SIC Board of Trustees
Quarterly Meeting Minutes
April 29, 2011
Colonial Life Building, Columbia, SC

Board Members Present: Carlos Primus, Chair; Virginia Alston Brown, Secretary; Gary Alexander; Bob Grant; Michael Guarino; Sandra Lindsay-Brown; Ellen Still; Lina Wehbi.

Staff Members Present: Cassie Barber, Executive Director; Tom Hudson, Associate Director; Claudia Wolverton, Public Information Director; Diane Jumper, Senior Council Specialist; Karen Utter, Council Specialist.

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Primus at 10:00 AM.

A vote on the meeting minutes from November 5, 2010, was dispensed with due to the lack of quorum. Those minutes will be recirculated to the full Board for a vote by email as permitted by the Board's bylaws.

Executive Director's Report

Executive Director Cassie Barber provided a brief overview of legislative activity to date related to SC-SIC.

She also offered observations on the success of the SC Education Policy Fellowship Program, currently hosted by SC-SIC, including SC-EPFP's recent trip to Washington, DC, for the national Education Policy Fellowship Program conference. This trip also provided SC-EPFP the opportunity to meet with various members of the South Carolina delegation. Ms. Barber thanked Board member Mark Bounds, deputy superintendent with the SC Department of Education, for assistance in providing meeting venues and staff assistance for SC-EPFP.

Ms. Barber also discussed SC-SIC's continued work to pursue additional grant and funding opportunities for its operations, which may be assisted by the fact that SC-SIC has gained additional status and respect across the state.

She also commended Board member Bob Grant for his presentation at the SC-SIC Annual Conference, and Board member Sandra Lindsay-Brown for her presentation at the prior year's conference which led to her appointment to the Board.

A copy of the Executive Director's report is attached to these minutes.

Staff Reports

Associate Director Tom F. Hudson reported on SC-SIC initiatives, training and Board-related matters. A copy of his report is attached to these minutes.

Mr. Hudson commented on the two regional advocacy trainings (Columbia, Greenville) held in January in conjunction with the SC League of Women Voters and the SC Chapter of the American Association of University Women, as well as the Legislative Advocacy Day held February 23 in Columbia by SC-SIC, SCLWV, SC-AAUW, and the United Methodist Women. Board member Michael Guarino attended both the Greenville training and the Legislative Advocacy Day and made comments about the effectiveness and the impact of the trainings. Input was solicited from Board members for the best way to offer advocacy trainings.

Mr. Hudson also reported that a call for nominations for election for Board members will be issued in May. Balloting will be done in June and officers will be elected once the Board has been chosen.

At this time, the Membership/Development Committee recommended that Chairman Primus appoint Mr. Jason S. Fulmer, a former SC Teacher of the Year and staff member of the SC Center for Educator Recruitment, Retention and Advancement at Winthrop University, to fill the remaining year of the unexpired Board term of Ms. Georgia Lash. Mr. Primus appointed Mr. Fulmer.

Claudia Wolverton, SC-SIC Public Information Director, reported on communications and technology issues. Her full report is included with these minutes.

SC-SIC Senior Council Specialist Diane Jumper presented a report on her work with the state's Palmetto Priority Schools. This report is attached to these minutes.

General Board Discussion

Board members present discussed various approaches to holding the SC-SIC Annual Conference, including holding the Annual Conference in its present format in the spring; hold training sessions on SIC Advocacy and SIC Basics concurrently with the Annual Conference; presenting Advanced Advocacy trainings at regional training sessions; holding the Annual Conference in the fall to provide local SIC members with training earlier.

Also discussed was the feasibility of holding two annual events – a fall leadership conference focusing on Basics and Advocacy training – and a spring event focusing on presentation of the Riley School Improvement Award and SIC Advocate of the Year Award.

Other discussion centered on setting conference dates that do not conflict with prominent community events and providing additional presentations of interest to local SICs. Also discussed was the possibility that any conference registration be done online and that advance payment accompany registrations.

In discussion of the Riley Award, it was suggested that a monetary award of \$1,000 also be tied to the award, with funds coming from a contributor/sponsor. Board members also discussed changing the name of the award by adding a superlative – such as the Dick and Tunky Riley Award for School Improvement Council Excellence.

Board suggestions regarding the conference and award will be forwarded to the Awards/Conference Committee for review.

Strategic Plan Discussion

The Executive Director thanked those who attended the Board's February strategic planning session. From the planning session, revised vision, mission and goal statements were developed. These are included with these minutes.

Various comments and observations were made regarding the goals, including increased recognition and support of SC-SIC across the state, possible realignment of the SC-SIC office and initiatives to capitalize on this support and the identification of additional funding opportunities.

Due to the lack of a quorum, these statements will be voted upon by the Board at a later date by email as permitted by the Board's bylaws.

Funding Research

SC-SIC Council Specialist Karen Utter provided a preliminary report on her research into additional grant and funding opportunities for SC-SIC. This report is included with these minutes.

Board members in attendance also suggested various local foundations which could be approached for funding.

New Business

Tentative Board meeting dates for the 2011-12 year were presented for consideration. These dates are: Friday, August 26, 2011; Friday, November 4, 2011; Friday, February 3, 2012; and Friday, April 27, 2012. These dates will be circulated to the full Board for approval by an email vote.

With no further business, the meeting adjourned at 2:45 PM

Respectfully Submitted,

Virginia Alston Brown

Virginia Alston Brown, Ed D
Secretary

Cassie Barber, SC-SIC Executive Director

Activities (selected):

- Facilitate SC Education Policy Fellowship Program @ month assisted by Office of School Leadership
- Participate in College of Education and Educational Leadership and Policy department activities and meetings including search for new dean
- Testified to EIA Subcommittee of EOC with Gary
- Participated in FACE (Family and Community Engagement) at SCDE
- Met with Antonio Boyd, vice president of HOPE Worldwide to discuss potential collaboration
- Planning and presentation for Parents Leading the Way Conference
- Attended Chamber of Commerce breakfast; connected with Otis Rawl
- Published major article by Rawl on reality of public education in SC
- Conducted regional advocacy trainings in Columbia and Greenville
- Staff monitoring EOC, State Board and General Assembly
- Serving on School Climate Advisory Committee
- Conducted targeted goals training for three Palmetto Priority Schools
- District level SIC trainings and visits Priority Schools continues
- Attended annual Wilkins Legislative Dinner sponsored by Riley Institute
- Serving on Riley Institute's Community Schools Coalition
- Participated in Courage to Lead seminar
- Counseled state of Connecticut to convene school advisory councils
- Held Legislative Advocacy Day in conjunction with LWV; AAUW and Methodist Women
- Annual SIC Conference and Riley Awards

Funding:

- Anticipate reduction of EIA funding stream by \$22,000
- Reauthorization of contract with Palmetto Priority Schools is not expected
- Staff pursuing alternate means of funding.

Key Actions:

- Board retreat with support from Santee Cooper
- Met with EDLP Department Chair Katherine Chaddock to discuss expansion of office
- Plans to continue coordination of SC EPFP with possible expansion to Global EPFP

Tom F. Hudson, SC-SIC Associate Director

TRAININGS

Scheduled: Communicating With the Greater School Community (May ?), West Ashley MS, Charleston (Hudson)

Completed: 23 Trainings (From 11/05/10 – Basics; Goal Setting; Advocacy; LAD; SIC Conference); 1,043-plus trained

44 Trainings (School Year to Date); 1,796-plus trained

OTHER ITEMS

Regional Advocacy Trainings: Columbia (01/22); Greenville (01/29). Good turnout; evaluations for the most part positive. Will be reviewing participation in any similar efforts next year as trainings were time-intensive to set up. Legislative Advocacy Day (02/23) was a successful event. Will also be reviewing partnership with LWV, AAUW and SCUMW on possibility of future event.

Media Releases: Releases issued on SC-SIC Conference and various awards; previously copied to Board. Will be working with Doug Keel of ETV on interview with Riley Award finalists.

Riley Awards: Discussion on Riley Awards and Annual Conference later this morning.

BOARD-SPECIFIC ITEMS

Board Meeting Dates: Tentative meeting dates for Board discussion this afternoon. Includes tentative dates for Riley Awards process and Annual Conference.

Board Elections: Dates for Board elections process included in tentative dates. Six seats in Class of 2011 up for election/re-election. One open seat in Class of 2012 for appointment. Call for nominations opens 05/06 and runs through 05/31. Balloting 06/06 through 06/27. Election results announced 07/11. Following Board elections, will hold elections for Board officers (Chair, Vice Chair, Secretary). Members interested in serving in those offices can self-nominate or be nominated by others during the elections nomination window. Officer elections will run 07/13 through 07/29.

Claudia Wolverton, SC-SIC Public Information Director

SC-SIC Member Network

Report to the Parents Upload Feature Unveiled and In Use

SC-SIC Member Network users are now able to upload *Reports to the Parents* to the Member Network. The new feature is being advertised on the SC-SIC website's Home page (sic.sc.gov). The reports must be in PDF format and are also available for public viewing via the **View the SIC Members (Read-Only)** link. Public Information Director Claudia Wolverton is advising schools of the new feature and communicating her availability for technical support to those schools that are emailing *Reports* to her. Using the initial launching and usage rate of the Member Network as a benchmark, she anticipates that it will take one to two years before schools regularly upload their *Reports* as opposed to emailing or sending hard copies to the SC-SIC office.

Social Media

The SC-SIC Twitter account now has 680 followers. Communications with education groups and professionals across the country have resulted in accelerated access to P-12 breaking news, blogs and journal articles. Many of our Twitter followers are media personnel, political figures or key education players in South Carolina and often "retweet" and mention @SCSIC (our Twitter "handle") in their tweets, continuing to raise our public profile and advancing a key strategic planning goal.

SC-SIC's Facebook Page "likes" have increased in number to 334, up from 278 at the end of August, 2010. This is a pleasant surprise as Facebook Insights showed that interest in our page had plateaued prior to that time. Many links to information and articles that are shared on Twitter are also posted here, though less in number due to the "real-time" immediacy and faster pace of Twitter. Facebook Insights show that interest in our Page peaks around times when education issues are discussed in the media, possibly demonstrating that those individuals viewing our page are also more likely to follow public education news, especially as it relates to South Carolina. Facebook, like Twitter, serves to increase our search engine rankings, again advancing our public profile.

SC-SIC Website

We are in the process of migration from Microsoft Content Management System (CMS) to Microsoft Office SharePoint Server 2007 (MOSS). We would like to correct one piece of information that we received prior to beginning the migration: MOSS does not allow embedded video. However, the layout and system is an upgrade from the more static site we currently have.

Claudia is in the process of transferring content to the new system and rebuilding the site. The process has not gone as smoothly as anticipated, due to the necessity of using old software (MS Site Manager) that is not compatible with Windows operating systems beyond Windows XP. We have developed a work-around for the problem, but progress is unfortunately slow and complicated by the fact that Site Manager was designed for uploading files, rather than downloading, and crashes regularly and frequently. The current SC-SIC site will remain up during the migration process and the SC-SIC web address will remain the same. We are looking forward to the launching of the new site and will keep the board informed as to its progress.

Diane F. Jumper, SC-SIC Senior Council Specialist

1. Second on-site visits were made to 33 schools during the Spring, with focus on SIC activities to date and benchmarks achieved. Additionally, I attended three SIC meetings to determine status of Council functionality to date (prior to their Goal Setting Training), and a fourth SIC will be visited on May 11.
2. Letters apprising each Council of its benchmark achievement to date for 2010-11 were mailed to the 37 Palmetto Priority Schools on January 31 (copied to SIC district contacts), with a reminder that remaining benchmarks are due by June 15, 2011. Final reminder letters are prepared and will be mailed out to PPS principals on May 4.
3. I participated in Legislative Advocacy Day, leaving notes for my local legislators (who were unavailable that day), several of whom called me at home to hold lengthy conversations about several proposed legislative bills.
4. I assisted with registration and presented the 2011 SIC Advocate of the Year Award at the SIC Spring State Conference. (Many thanks to you, our Board members, for the most unexpected and very appreciated Award of Excellence presented to me on that occasion!)
5. Numbers of phone calls and emails (360+) have been initiated/responded to for purposes of scheduling, clarifying issues, or resolving concerns to date for 2010-11.



SC-SIC Strategic Plan

2011-2013

VISION – “To promote and support civic engagement for quality public education in South Carolina.”

MISSION – “The SC School Improvement Council facilitates meaningful parental and community involvement in our state’s public schools by providing resources, tools and strategies to local School Improvement Councils and other stakeholder groups.”

In order to achieve this Vision and Mission, SC-SIC has established the following three (3) goals:

- 1) Advance the recognition and support of SC-SIC and local SICs at all levels within the statewide education community.
- 2) Develop a more robust infrastructure at the state level supporting the Vision and Mission of SC-SIC and the efforts of local SICs across the state.
- 3) Diversify and grow the funding base for SC-SIC to increase available resources and stabilize support.

Karen Utter, Council Specialist

I. Private philanthropies spend in the neighborhood of \$4 billion per year to improve K-12 education (often targeted to low-income schools)

II. Recent Trends in Education Grantmaking by Private Foundations

A. Trends show significant alignment (approximately 60%) between foundation funding and the market-based school reforms/American Recovery and Reinvestment Act assurances, such as support for common state academic standards for students and standardized testing, development of longitudinal education data systems, teacher performance pay tied at least in part to student test scores, increase in data-driven teacher professional development, and aggressive restructuring or closing of under-performing schools. Significant donors supporting these categories of initiatives include:

1. Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation
2. Broad Foundation
3. Walton Family Foundation

B. Some foundations directing funding for education reform and/or increasing civic and political participation in government generally to support organizations and programs working to achieve community-identified education reforms

1. Support for “community organizing for education” programs and research on their effectiveness in improving student outcomes. Emphasis on reforms identified by community stakeholders and advocated for at the local/district/state levels.
2. Example: Annenberg Institute for School Reform at Brown University – April 2011 – Launches *Center for Education Organizing*, described as a “national team focused on nurturing grassroots education organizing efforts and building community capacity to influence the direction of public education.” (Funded by grants from Ford Foundation and the Edward W. Hazen Foundation)

III. Places to Start

A. Charles Stewart Mott Foundation

1. Mott’s 1978 three-year start-up grant established what is now SC-SIC.
2. Funded at least one study (older) on effectiveness of Florida school advisory councils)

B. Ford Foundation

C. Kellogg Foundation