

**Minutes**  
**SIC Board of Trustees Quarterly Meeting**  
**Colonial Life Building, Columbia, SC**  
**August 26, 2011**

Board members present: Carlos Primus, Outgoing Chair; Sylleste Davis, Incoming Chair; E' Lane Rutherford, Outgoing Vice Chair; Michael Guarino, Incoming Vice Chair; Virginia Alston Brown, Secretary; Jeff Nicholson, Outgoing Immediate Past Chair; Gary Alexander; Justin Blum; Ken Clark; Bruce Field; Jason Fulmer; Bob Grant; Bob Hanley; Sandra Lindsay-Brown; Bonnie King; Retha Ross; Joshua Stroman; Ellen Still; Fred Washington, Jr.; Lina Wehbi.

Staff members present: Cassie Barber, SC-SIC Executive Director; Tom Hudson, SC-SIC Associate Director; Claudia Wolverton, SC-SIC Public Information Director; Diane Jumper, SC-SIC Senior Council Specialist; Karen Utter, SC-SIC Council Specialist.

The meeting was called to order at 10:15 AM by Carlos Primus, Outgoing Board Chair, who thanked all for their presence. The agenda was approved.

The April 29, 2011, Board meeting minutes were approved.

New Executive Board officers were installed: Ms. Davis, Chair; Mr. Guarino, Vice Chair; and Dr. Alston Brown, Secretary. Mr. Primus pledged support to the new Board Chair, and he recognized outgoing Board officers presenting each with a plaque. Mr. Primus was presented a gavel by Ms. Davis. Executive Director Barber stated that Mr. Primus, in accordance with Board's bylaws, will continue to serve as Immediate Past Chair and chair of the Board's Bylaws Committee.

As new Chair, Ms. Davis made comments regarding the Board's role as advocates of public education and expressed her appreciation for the Board's investment of time and involvement on the local level. She stressed the important work of SC-SIC and stated that the search for corporate sponsorship for the SC-SIC office is crucial due to the budget situations.

**Executive Director's Report**

Ms. Barber welcomed new members to the Board, Jason Fulmer, LTC(R) Justin Blum, and Joshua Stroman. A written report was submitted to the board. Outlining various items, Ms. Barber announced the hiring of Dr. Lemuel Watson as Dean of the USC College of Education; updated the board on the success of the S.C. Education Policy Fellows Program coordinated for the second year by the SC-SIC office; called the Board's attention to the annual SC-SIC District

Contact Meeting scheduled for September 30; and enumerated various steps the SC-SIC office is undertaking in light of the further reduction (by 15 percent) of its EIA funding for 2011-12.

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

### **Staff Reports**

SC-SIC Associate Director Hudson reported on various training, initiatives, and Board-related matters. Legislative Advocacy Day was discussed, and Mr. Hudson gave a review of its future viability and discussed the possibility of holding three (3) regional advocacy training sessions sponsored solely by SC-SIC. The Board was informed that all vacant Board seats are now filled and all geographic regions are represented in accordance with Board Bylaws. Board committee descriptors were provided to members, as was a roster for committee sign-up. Committee Chairs appointed by the Board Chair for 2011-12 are: Mr. Guarino, Advocacy Committee; Ms. Still, Membership/Development Committee; Dr. Hanley, Awards/Conference Committee; and Mr. Primus, Bylaws Committee.

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

Ms. Wolverton, SC-SIC Public Information Director, discussed redesign of the SC-SIC website and updates to the SC-SIC Member Network database. She invited feedback from the Board members. An SIC "Report to the Parents" upload feature was added to the Member Network in March, through which individual SICs will be able to post electronic copies of their reports. Ms. Wolverton also provided information on SC-SIC's use of various social media outlets.

A copy of the Public Information Director's written report is attached to these minutes

SC-SIC Senior Council Specialist Diane Jumper provided information on SC-SIC's work with the state's Palmetto Priority Schools in 2010-11. She also related success stories from her contacts with local SICs and principals.

A copy of the Senior Council Specialist's written report is attached to these minutes.

Ms. Utter, SC-SIC Council Specialist provided information on the availability of private sector and private foundation grant opportunities. SC-SIC has not yet gotten to the grant proposal development stage but is now brainstorming how to gain grants from private foundations for advocacy/leadership. Principal training, also, is an important aspect to be included in any funding proposal. She provided names of private foundations that could possibly provide funding, and she will provide the Board with a listing of directors of those foundations to determine if there are any SC-SIC Board members who may have contact/personal knowledge of any of them.

A copy of the Council Specialist's written report is attached to these minutes.

## **Board Discussion**

In Board discussion, Chair Davis proposed renaming SC-SIC's annual "Dick and Tunky Riley School Improvement Award" to better reflect the intent of the award. The Chair explained the award's purpose and what it was initiated to recognize and suggested changing the name of the award to the "Dick and Tunky Riley Award for School Improvement Council Excellence." A motion was made and seconded in support of this suggestion, with the Board unanimously voting to approve.

Mr. Hudson apprised the Board of a redistribution of the various point values of components of the Riley Award application for 2011-12. He will communicate more on this information to the Board by email.

The Chair opened discussion on whether SC-SIC should hold an annual conference for 2012, or in lieu of a full conference, host a recognition luncheon solely for Riley Award honorees. Last year, The Children's Trust of South Carolina provided \$2,000 to offset conference expenses for a guest speaker, but that funding source will not be available this year. Mr. Hudson stated that for 2011, conference registration fees brought in \$1,900 and that after all expenditures, the conference realized a net loss of approximately \$800. Given current budgetary constraints and the loss of sponsorship for the current year, he suggested that an awards luncheon might be a more prudent option for 2012. A motion was made and seconded for SC-SIC to host a recognition luncheon for Riley Award honorees in 2012, that SC-SIC staff will develop luncheon plans, and that a determination on resuming a conference for 2013 will be deferred until a later date. The Board had discussion on the future of the conference. Following discussion, the Board voted to approve the motion. The Chair asked the Awards/Conference Committee to meet before the next Board meeting and bring back a recommendation for the recognition luncheon format.

## **SC-SIC Strategic Plan**

The Executive Director discussed the Strategic Plan, the vision and mission, and the plan's three (3) goals. She discussed how the formation of partnerships can assist with funding applications.

In closing, the Chair asked LTC(R) Blum, Mr. Fulmer, and Mr. Stroman to remain for a new Board member training session conducted by Mr. Hudson. She thanked Board members for their attendance and again thanked the new Board members for their commitment to SC-SIC.

The meeting adjourned at 2:15.

Respectfully Submitted,

*Virginia Alston Brown*

Virginia Alston Brown, ED  
SC-SIC Board Secretary

**Cassie Barber, SC-SIC Executive Director****Activities (selected):**

- Participated in interviews for new COE dean, Cheraw native Dr. Lemuel Watson
- Graduated 17 SC Education Policy Fellows in June; two from SC became Global Fellows
- Planned for collaborative annual SIC District Contact – District Parental Liaison meeting September 30 at Richland Two meeting facility
- Presented “Real Value for Real Schools in Real Time” at SCASA’s Summer Leadership Institute with Tom Hudson and Riley Award winning principals
- Participated in School Climate Advisory Council meetings convened through SCDE
- Met with school leaders from Colombia, SA to discuss replication of SICs
- Met with Bill Mathias, dean emeritus, USC College of Criminal Justice to discuss school safety plans
- Met with Megan Irwin from Stand for Children
- Conducted training for new “Success Coaches” at Communities in Schools of the Midlands
- Presented to graduate students at Charleston Southern University
- Spoke at Richland One SIC appreciation event
- Completed four goals trainings with selected Priority Schools; Allendale training will be conducted next month
- Met with faculty from COE and Clemson to discuss potential partnerships
- Discussed potential partnerships with Bud Ferillo, Initiative for SC’s Future
- Attended “How are the Children?” Summit convened by SC Bar Association

**Funding:**

- EIA funding stream reduced by \$22,465 (15%) to \$127,303
- USC funding stream remains at \$100,00
- Conference support from Children’s Trust will not be renewed
- As expected, contract with Palmetto Priority Schools was not renewed
- SC-SIC pursued funding through collaboration on federal grants with SCDE but the agency will not be applying for those funds
- Staff pursuing grant opportunities with foundations
- SC-EPFP stipend increased to \$8,000
- One-time funding proposal submitted to Dean Watson

**Key Actions:**

- Preparing to convene next class of 17 Fellows in September
- SIC District Contact meeting will be held September 30
- District and other trainings scheduled
- Staff evaluating current activities and partnerships for maximum effectiveness and output

## **PROGRAM REPORT TO THE BOARD**

**08/26/11**

**Tom F. Hudson, SC-SIC Associate Director**

### **TRAININGS**

Scheduled: 14 SIC Basics Trainings: Richland 1, Barnwell 19, Laurens 55, Greenville, Beaufort (Hudson); Fairfield, Florence 3, Jasper, Colleton, Marion 1, Williamsburg, Lee, Charleston, Marlboro (Jumper).

Four (4) Other SIC Trainings: Allendale-Fairfax HS – Local SIC Goal Setting (Barber, Hudson); Aiken – SIC Leadership (Hudson); Greenville – SIC Advocacy (Barber); Colleton – SIC Advocacy (Hudson).

Completed: 2010-11 School Year: 56 Training Sessions; 2,149 participants. Sessions included SIC Basics (42); SIC Goal Setting (4) SIC Advocacy (2); Parents Anonymous Conference Workshops (2); Communicating With the Greater School Community (1); SIC Principals/Chairs (1); SC-SIC Conference (1); SC-SIC District Contact Meeting (1); Joint Legislative Advocacy Day (1); SCASA Summer Leadership Institute Workshop (1).

11 of above SIC Basics sessions were conducted by SIC District Contacts under the train-the-trainer model.

### **OTHER ITEMS**

Annual Joint Legislative Advocacy Day: Event under review with partners (League of Women Voters, American Association of University Women). Nearly cancelled for 2011 until partnership with United Methodist Women. UMW will not be focusing on education in 2011-12. Conference call to be scheduled in near future to discuss LAD options, including possible cancellation for 2012.

Regional Advocacy Trainings: Well-attended events in 03/11. Will investigate possibility of holding again as SC-SIC stand-alone offering for three (3) regions.

Media Releases: Releases issued on new Board members Jason Fulmer (05/24/11) and Justin Blum, Joshua Stroman (08/03/11). Still coordinating possibility of “Speaking of Schools” segment on Riley Awards, perhaps to time with initial 11/11 application deadline.

Riley Award: Discussion on Riley Award and Annual Conference later this morning, to include renaming of award and scaling back conference to awards luncheon due to fiscal constraints.

### **BOARD-SPECIFIC ITEMS**

Board Meeting Dates: Listing of 2011-12 dates included in packets. Examine possibility of a Board winter retreat. Establish date for conference/awards luncheon.

Board Elections: All vacant seats currently filled and all geographic regions represented in accordance with Board bylaws.

Board Committees: Committee descriptors included in packets. Committee sign-up sheet for 2011-12 being circulated. Check your selection. Ask that Board members serve on at least one committee.

**Claudia Wolverton, SC-SIC Public Information Director**

### **SC-SIC Website**

The SC-SIC website, *sic.sc.gov*, has been launched on the new MOSS (Microsoft SQL Server) platform. More than a year in the developing, the new site retains its old web address but offers more functionality and enhanced formatting, graphics, links and information. The new MOSS-based content management system allows for more latitude on the user side, but has presented persistent problems running with the Windows 7 operating system. These issues are addressed as they arise. Please visit the new site; feedback is welcomed.

### **SC-SIC Member Network**

#### SIC Membership Reporting

SIC Membership reporting is off to a good start. 38 schools have completed their member updates and 19 schools were engaged in the process as of August 24, 2011. A total of 593 members were registered in the Member Network database as of that same date. Schools have deadlines of October 15<sup>th</sup> to hold SIC elections and November 15<sup>th</sup> to report their membership data. Upon completion of the reporting period, The Member Network database will contain approximately 15,000 records.

#### *Report to the Parents* Upload Feature

SC-SIC Member Network users have uploaded 225 *Reports* from the 2010-11 school year since the new feature was unveiled last March. We consider this very promising as we began informing SIC District Contacts and members the schools of the new tool just a few weeks before launch and then only via email blast and the SC-SIC website. We anticipate a strong showing for the 2011-12 uploads but expect that it will take one to two years before we reach a response level similar to the number of SICs in compliance with state law which, as of January 31, 2011, stood at 90%. *The Reports* are available for public viewing via the View the SIC Members (Read-Only) link.

The files uploaded by the schools offer public, accessible information about what SICs across the state are accomplishing. We look for this data to be of multiple uses in the future.

### **Social Media**

The SC-SIC Twitter account now has 745 followers and continues to grow. Communications with education groups and professionals across the country provide accelerated access to P-20 breaking news, blogs and journal articles as well as immediate contact with the community.

Many of our Twitter followers are media personnel, political figures or key education players in the state 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 363, up from 334 April, 2011. 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, like Twitter, serves to increase our search engine rankings, again advancing our public profile.

Public Information Director Claudia Wolverton is continuing a social media collaboration with the South Carolina State Library Communications Director and has presented at social media meetings and webinars. Social media is increasingly essential to an organization wishing to maintain a public presence and SC-SIC is committed to pursuing this goal.



**Diane F. Jumper, SC-SIC Senior Council Specialist****2010-11 Year End Report (06/30/11, revised 07/19/11)**

Onsite visits began in August 2010, with 37 Palmetto Priority Schools assigned to me. Initial on-site visits occurred in 36 of the 37 Palmetto Priority Schools served during the early fall. (The 37<sup>th</sup> principal was unavailable for meeting with me despite numerous contacts.) Discussion with principals and/or their designees occurred about benchmarks achieved last year, anticipated benchmarks to be met during 2010-2011, membership requirements with tips shared for election/appointment of potential SIC members, balanced representation, ex-officio membership, numbers of meetings held per year, bylaws, functions of the council, and training needs. This discussion served as informal training for those principals who were not cognizant of various statute requirements/SIC responsibilities. (Benchmark achievement data for 2009-10 had been sent to principals, and copied to district contacts and superintendents in early fall.)

Packets for the principal and for the SIC chair containing copies of the benchmarks, sample calendar with monthly tasks designated, sample agenda, tips for effective meetings, Riley Award Winner sheets detailing project ideas for councils, sample bylaws, tips on crafting the annual Report to the Parents, a family information survey, a coordination sheet indicating how Title I and SIC may be combined into one committee, and a grid for determining SIC membership were left with the principal. These packets, along with questions and concerns, were addressed and discussed with principals (several of whom had additional school personnel available for the meeting).

The Basics/Roles & Responsibilities training was presented at the District Contact meeting and in Allendale, Barnwell 19, Beaufort, Charleston, Clarendon 1, Colleton, Dillon 2, Fairfield, Florence 3, Florence 4, Greenville, Hampton 2, Jasper, Lee, Marion 7, Marlboro, Richland 1, Spartanburg 7, and Williamsburg districts. All Palmetto Priority Schools except Hardeeville Middle/High and Colleton Middle participated in training either within the district or at SC-SIC's Spring Conference.

Second visits were scheduled and held during January/February to determine progress to date in all 37 Palmetto Priority Schools. Several SICs were reactivating from "ground zero." I was particularly pleased to see Creek Bridge High's new principal invite the community to participate in School Improvement Council, with outstanding participation that led to a list of anticipated improvements for the school and community. Most other councils continued to progress and appeared actively engaged, as per the visits with the principals/chairs. Technical assistance through emails, phone calls and letters continued, with 623 contacts documented.

(This is lower than actual numbers; I know that I missed documenting some phone conversations and emails.)

Goal-setting training was scheduled for the five schools that volunteered to take their councils to the next level, and I visited actual SIC meetings to determine readiness for this training. At Allendale-Fairfax High I watched a very active council participate in decision-making and share good suggestions with the principal there, particularly with respect to budget cuts and how they will affect the district. Eau Claire's meeting indicated a large group of engaged parents and community and was a celebration of accomplishments to date. Sanders Middle School has always been a pleasure to work with because of a dedicated and competent principal who has promoted SIC principles and efforts.

Reminder letters concerning achievement of benchmarks were sent to all PPS principals in late January and again in May with one or more follow-up phone calls in June to all principals to remind them of the June 15 deadline for documentation. After June 15, benchmark achievement was reviewed, with results to be shared with principals, district contacts, and superintendents.

Submitted to date by the 37 schools/SICs is this documentation:

- 35 schools/SICs now have bylaws on file (6 need minor revision);
- 33 schools/SICs submitted both fall and spring samples of minutes, with an additional 2 submitting only fall minutes and 1 submitting only spring minutes, leaving 1 who submitted nothing;
- 35 schools/SICs updated their membership in our database, indicating statutory compliance regarding elected/appointed membership;
- 32 schools/SICs submitted their Report to the Parents and an additional school sent their report card with its cover letter;
- 32 schools/SICs submitted their Fall 2011 Report Card Narrative.

Principal leadership continues to be a vital factor for effective functioning of the council, and we were fortunate to see a number of the PPS principals committed to parental involvement and community engagement.

**Karen Utter, SC-SIC Council Specialist**

**POTENTIAL FOR NEW GROWTH/SOURCES OF FUNDING**

Research on the effectiveness of School Improvement Councils in improving student outcomes indicate that local SIC members would benefit from training in the following key areas not currently addressed by SC-SIC due to budget limitations.

**Areas of Need**

**Program 1: South Carolina Initiative for Civic Engagement in Education**

- Focused on building capacity of family and community members as decision makers and advocates for their children, their school community and public education.
- Model on Education Policy Fellows and successful family education programs in Kentucky and other states.
- Partner with local organizations in different regions around state to house the program.
- Build a core of family/community leaders across the state.

**Program 2: Principal training focused on Principal's role on local SIC**

- Research indicates that regardless of principal's formal role on a school improvement council, the effectiveness of a local SIC will depend in significant part on the principal's commitment to success of SIC and ability to engage in shared decision making.
- Would include training in consensus decision making, open communication and active listening, negotiation and conflict resolution skills.
- Will first explore possibility of adding SIC component to existing Dept. of Education and other principal training before initiating new SC-SIC training.
- Other ideas on format/content of principal training?

**Potential Funders**

In South Carolina:

- Individuals
  - Darla Moore
  - Other Suggestions?

- Private Foundations in SC with Education Focus
  - The School Foundation (exclusively Florence One)
  - The Self Foundation – Education a Primary Target Area
  - Spartanburg County Foundation (not limited to Spartanburg); has general, special and donor advised funds – has significant assets

Private Foundations Outside South Carolina

- Charles Stewart Mott Foundation
- Kellogg Foundation
- Ford Foundation
- A number of other prospects as well

Next Steps

- Develop generic program proposal
- Seek advice from contacts in field
  - Hayes Mizell, formerly Director, Program for Student Achievement, Edna McConnell Clark Foundation
  - Rhonda Stephens, Grants Office, USC College of Education
  - Others?
- Make initial call to target foundations – letter of inquiry