

**Minutes**  
**SC-SIC Board of Trustees Quarterly Meeting**  
**Colonial Life Building, Columbia, SC**  
**November 4, 2011**

Board members present: Michael Guarino, Vice Chair; Carlos Primus, Immediate Past Chair; Virginia Alston Brown, Secretary; Justin Blum; Bruce Field; Jason Fulmer; Bob Grant; Bob Hanley; Bonnie King; E'Lane Rutherford; Ellen Still; Fred Washington; Lena Wehbi.

Staff members present: Cassie Barber, Executive Director; Claudia Wolverton, Public Information Director; Karen Utter, Council Specialist.

The meeting was called to order at 10:15 AM by Vice Chair Guarino in absence of Chair Sylleste Davis, who was ill.

The minutes for the August 26, 2011, Board meeting were approved.

**Executive Director's Report**

Executive Director Barber shared news that new Dean of the College of Education, Dr. Lemuel Watson, is supportive of SC- SIC. Dean Watson has already asked Ms. Barber to serve on a committee convened to engage the College in assisting challenged school districts. She has requested "one time" funds from the College to avoid staff reductions due to budget reductions.

There are 18 members in this year's SC Education Policy Fellows class. Ms. Barber has been working in Allendale, Greenville, Charleston, and Richland districts. She met with school leaders from Colombia, South America, who were impressed with SC-SIC's database system and state level presence for parent and community involvement. SC-SIC will provide testimony at the next meeting of the Education Oversight Committee's EIA Subcommittee. The September 30 SC-SIC District Contact meeting was well attended considering the current recession and Dean Watson was very well-received as the opening speaker. Ms. Barber and Associate Director, Tom Hudson, have trained 73 assistant principals at the invitation of the S.C. Department of Education. They also met with the Board's Awards/Conference Committee Chair, Dr. Hanley, to explore possibilities for the Riley Award ceremony in the spring. There are no changes in the funding for the office. SC-SIC has applied to conduct workshops at SCASA Summer Leadership and the SC School Boards Association conference in February.

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

**Staff Reports**

SC-SIC Associate Director Hudson was absent attending the National School Public Relations Association in North Carolina and will be a conference speaker. His report was given by the Ms. Barber. Several trainings have been scheduled and completed. There have been 30 sessions with

over 900 participants and he is working to schedule trainings in Florence 1, Lexington 1, and Beaufort. Both Mr. Hudson and Ms. Barber have been a guest speakers at Title I trainings in the state. Advocacy Day is still in discussion. The November 18<sup>th</sup> Riley Award deadline was discussed and members were encouraged to urge schools to submit applications for the award. The Executive Director will invite former Governor Dick Riley to attend the Awards Ceremony. Committee rosters were provided for today's work session.

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

Ms. Wolverton, SC-SIC Public Information Director, discussed two new pages on the website. She reports that our search engine ranking is increasing. Membership reports for 568 schools have been received, which is over half of the state's schools. The upload feature now has almost 250 *SIC Reports to the Parents* and compliance in posting these Reports is growing. Ms. Wolverton foresees that in a couple of years compliance with that initiative will increase. Other countries are also reaching out to SC- SIC on Twitter, and SC-SIC's Facebook presence has increased.

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

Ms. Utter, SC-SIC Council Specialist, provided information on research and grant possibilities. She is providing research information to the Executive Director for her presentations and has begun writing overviews of books and articles for SICs that are highlighted on the website. A detailed outline for proposed SC- SIC parent leadership training program has been developed. Ms. Utter is participating in school training, and assisted with the District Contact meeting this year. The Executive Director conveyed appreciation for the attendance of Board members at the District Contact meeting. Those Board members who attended the District Contact meeting expressed that there is a strong correlation between the information being shared at the District Contact meeting and the Riley Award. Evaluations showed that presentations at the District Contact meeting were effective.

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

In other comments, the Executive Director commended Board member, E' Lane Rutherford, who has made significant monetary contributions to the SC SIC.

### **Board Committee Work Session**

Reports of each session are as follows:

The Awards/Conference Committee, chaired by Dr. Hanley, reported ideas for a conference/celebration of education based on brief, but effective videos that address education issues. Potential venues include Brookland Baptist Church Conference Center, Dreher High School, or St. Andrews Middle School. After Board discussion about the pros and cons of holding the ceremony on a Friday or Saturday, a motion was passed to host the expanded

Awards ceremony on Friday, March 23, 2012. Dr. Field and Ms. Barber will be responsible for securing videos and speakers for the day. The Board consensus was to charge \$25 for everyone except the Riley Award Finalists, granting them a maximum of five (5) complimentary attendees per school. The alternate suggested date is March 16, 2012. If an appropriate venue cannot be secured on a Friday, the alternate Saturday dates are March 17 and 24. Both Dr. Field and Mr. Primus volunteered to assist in securing a venue.

The Membership/Development Committee reported the idea of informing and educating the corporate world of the purpose of the SC- SIC. The committee, chaired by Ms. Still, made the following recommendations:

- A motion was made and seconded that each Board member make a contribution to SC-SIC;
- All Board members be asked to contact five (5) potential corporate donors;
- A template of a letter to request an audience/meeting so that Board members can speak with donors about the importance of SC- SIC will be developed by Ms. Still and SC-SIC staff;
- SC-SIC staff will be available for meetings with potential corporate donors;
- Each Board member will send a list of names of corporations for contact to Ms. Still by November 14<sup>th</sup>. Suggested “talking points” will be provided for phone calls. Ms. Still commented that the solicitation can also include in-kind contributions.

The Board voted in support of the recommendations made by the Membership/Development Committee.

There being no other business, Vice Chair Guarino thanked the Board for attendance and the meeting adjourned at 1:20 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

*Virginia Alston Brown*

Virginia Alston Brown, Ed.D.  
Secretary, SC-SIC Board of Trustees

## **REPORT TO THE BOARD**

**11/04/11**

**Cassie Barber, SC-SIC Executive Director**

### **Activities (selected):**

- Met with Dean Lemuel Watson to discuss status of SC-SIC and request additional support from COE
- Convened new SC Education Policy Fellows class with 18 in attendance and Dean Watson as keynote speaker; held successful Leadership Retreat in Charleston featuring Mayor Joe Riley
- Trained Title One Parent Advisory Councils for Charleston County
- Completed Goals Training in Allendale
- Submitted final revised report on SC-SIC activities with Palmetto Priority Schools to Dr. Montrie Belton, new Office of School Transformation Director
- Met with education leaders from Columbia, SA
- Held Annual SIC District Contact Meeting; 45 district officials in attendance; Dr. Watson provided opening remarks
- Submitted annual activity report and budget justification to Education Oversight Committee
- Provided Leadership and Advocacy training for Greenville County
- Trained 73 assistant principals through APPLE program at SCDE
- Facilitated focus group on ESEA reauthorization in collaboration with The Children's Trust
- Attended CASA Champion for Children luncheon
- Attended WhatWorksSC awards ceremony
- Joined steering committee for the SC Military Child Education Coalition
- Working with COE faculty to provide services to targeted districts in Corridor of Shame at request of Dean Watson

### **Funding:**

- EIA funding stream reduced by \$22,465 (15%) to \$127,303
- USC funding stream remains at \$100,00
- Requested reinstatement of 15% budget reduction for FY12
- 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 (response pending)

**Key Actions:**

- Providing a variety of trainings in districts, schools and in collaboration with state partners
- Focus on increased presence and activities in COE
- Working with Dean Watson to increase revenue
- Staff will be reduced in December without additional funding
- Testimony to legislative bodies to request budget increase
- Staff evaluating current activities and partnerships for maximum effectiveness and output

## **PROGRAM REPORT TO THE BOARD**

**11/04/11**

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

### **TRAININGS**

Scheduled: Working to schedule Basics trainings in Florence 1, Lexington 1 (Hudson); Leadership & Advocacy in Beaufort (Hudson).

Proposals submitted to SCASA (Summer Leadership Institute, June) and SCSBA (Annual Conference, February) to offer conference workshops on Inclusive Leadership (Barber/Hudson).

Principals' Training, Cherokee County, 11/16/11 (Jumper)

Completed: 2011-12 to date: 30 Training Sessions; 914 participants. Sessions included SIC Basics (21); SIC Leadership & Advocacy (4); SDE Assistant Principal Training (2); Title I Parents Advisory Council (1); SIC Goal Setting (1); SIC Annual District Contact Meeting (1)

Guest speaker, Orangeburg School District 4 Title I Banquet, 10/27/11 (Hudson)

Workshop, "Activate, Educate, Advocate: Tapping Vox Populi," joint SC/NC conference, National School Public Relations Association, 11/03/11, Pinehurst, NC (Hudson)

### **OTHER ITEMS**

Annual Joint Legislative Advocacy Day: Plans still in flux. Some interest on behalf of League of Women Voters and American Association of University Women. SCLWV would like to do more direct advocacy at the State House this year.

Regional Advocacy Trainings: SC-SIC still considering holding again as SC-SIC stand-alone offering for three (3) regions.

Riley Award: Level One application deadline 11/18/11. Submissions will be compiled and sent out to SC-SIC Board members for judging shortly after, with scoring sheets due back end of December.

### **BOARD-SPECIFIC ITEMS**

Board Committees: Committee rosters based on selections made at 08/26/11 Board meeting included in packets.

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

We have introduced a new sub-site (“sub-sites” appear as navigation buttons): *Policy News You Can Use*, which provides access to key public documents pertaining to education-related legislation, budget items, and other materials impacting education in South Carolina. Also new to the site is a page under the *Publications and Downloads* sub-site (pages come under sub-sites) entitled *Good Reads for SICs*, which will feature book reviews, links to articles and studies, and other academic works that will inform and educate our constituency.

The new website’s MOSS platform has provided an opportunity to optimize internet search rankings as new tool-tips are created using keywords such as “SIC,” “SC-SIC,” “SC School Improvement Council,” “EPFP,” and “Education Policy Fellow.” (A tool-tip is the description that comes up as you hover over a graphic or text link.) Search engines crawl these links in addition to the perceptible headers, footers and terms found in website text. Google Analytics will eventually be employed to measure details about site traffic, hits and bounces, at which time more granular information regarding our site rankings and visits.

**SC-SIC Member Network**

SIC Membership Reporting - SIC Membership reporting is nearing the November 15 deadline. 444 schools have completed their member updates and 37 schools were engaged in the process as of October 26, 2011. As of that date we had a total of 6271 active, registered Council members. The October 15<sup>th</sup> deadline for SIC elections has passed; schools have until November 15<sup>th</sup> to report their membership data. Realistically, we expect most schools to finish reporting data by the end of January. Upon completion, the Member Network database will contain approximately 15,000 records.

Report to the Parents Upload Feature - SC-SIC Member Network users have uploaded 259 *Reports* from the 2010-2011 school year since the new feature was unveiled last March. The new tool is gaining traction as many schools and districts contact Public Information Director Claudia Wolverton with questions about the upload process and appear eager to upload even last year’s *Reports*. We anticipate a large number of 2011-12 *Report* uploads but expect that it will take at least two years before we reach an optimum response level. The *Reports* are available for public viewing via the View the SIC Members (Read-Only) link on the SC-SIC Member Network.

The *Report* files uploaded by schools offer public, accessible information about what Councils across South Carolina are doing and accomplishing. We look for this data to be of multiple uses in the future.

**Social Media**

The SC-SIC Twitter account now has 788 followers and gains new followers almost daily. Communication with education groups and professionals across the country provide accelerated access to P-20 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 South Carolina and often “retweet” or mention @SCSIC (our Twitter “handle”) in their tweets, continuing to raise our public profile and advancing a key strategic planning goal. One very interesting fact is that among are followers are several educators and organizations from other countries. Also of great use is the accessibility of breaking news obtainable through Twitter lists of media and SC politicians.

SC-SIC’s Facebook Page “likes” have increased in number to 380, up from 363 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 SC State Library Communications Director Dr. Curtis Rogers and has presented at social media meetings and webinars. Social media usage among organizations and companies have taken an exponential leap as global events such as the Arab Spring have demonstrated the capacity to provide virtually real-time contact and information sharing with the general public, clients and customers. It has become an essential tool in maintaining a public presence and rapid information flow; SC-SIC continues to be committed to pursuing this goal.



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

**Research**

- For September 30 SIC Annual District Contact meeting presentation: developed research (1) mandating *active* participation of SIC's in School Improvement Planning process, (2) establishing that effective family and community engagement is essential ingredient for successful school reform, and (3) on recent thinking as to the characteristics of effective family and community engagement programs.
- Initiated new feature for SC-SIC website ("Publications and Downloads" page) that will provide reviews of books, articles, and other literature on topics of interest to local SICs. Initial review is of Steven Constantino's book, *Engaging All Families*. We were provided a number of free copies of this book from the S.C. Department of Education's Youth Services Division (which was discontinued due to the recent reorganization) and are offering free copies to requesting SICs.
- Expanded research on parent leadership training programs developed by other states (e.g. Kentucky, Connecticut) and state PIRCs and developed detailed draft outline of proposed SC-SIC parent leadership training program.

**Trainings**

- Basics Trainings: Delivered first Basics training with Tom Hudson in Union, after attending and observing Basics trainings for Richland 1, Florence County 3, SIC District Contacts, and Richland 2. Also travelled to Greenville and observed SIC Leadership & Advocacy training.
- District Contacts Meeting, September 30: Delivered portion of presentation with Cassie Barber on "Making the Case for Inclusive Leadership."

**Funding**

- Development of private foundation funding proposals for parent leadership training programs were temporarily placed on hold pending better understanding of the vision of new USC College of Education Dean Watson for SC-SIC role within College. Plans are to move forward with completing a generic proposal and initiating approaches to potential funders during the coming quarter.

- Prepared list of potential individual and corporate SIC supporters (general support) and sponsors (for Riley Award event) for use by Board's Membership/Development Committee in preparing SC-SIC development plan.