

**SC-SIC Board of Trustees  
Quarterly Meeting Minutes  
Colonial Life Building, Columbia, SC  
August 24, 2012**

Board Members Present: Ellen Still, Chair; Virginia Alston Brown, Secretary; Sylleste Davis; Gary Alexander; Mark Bounds; Bruce Field; Donna Hooks; Bonnie King; Luanne Kokolis; Amelia McKie; Jeff Nicholson; Retha Ross; Myriam Torres; Fred Washington.

Staff Members Present: Cassie Barber, Executive Director; Tom Hudson, Associate Director; Karen Utter, Council Specialist.

The meeting Called to order at 10:00 AM by outgoing Chair, Sylleste Davis, who thanked all for being attendance.

New elected officers for 2012-13 were installed: Chair: Ellen Still; Vice Chair: Michael Guarino; Secretary: Virginia Alston Brown.

Outgoing Chair Davis passed the gavel to newly elected Chair Still, who welcomed everyone and introduced new Board members: Donna Hooks, principal of Burgess Elementary School in Horry County; Amelia McKie, owner of a consulting firm specializing in lobbying and public relations in Columbia; and Dr. Luanne Kokolis, a district administrator from Rock Hill 3 in York County. Introductions by staff and Board members followed.

Chair Still recognized outgoing Chair Davis and announced that she will continue to serve as Chair of the Awards /Conference Committee.

Outgoing Board members Carlos Primus, along with Dr. Bob Hanley and Dr. Sandra Lindsay-Brown in their absence, were recognized by the Chair and presented with plaques for their service by Associate Director Tom Hudson.

Minutes of the May 18, 2012, meeting were approved.

Executive Director's Report

Executive Barber welcomed all to a new school year. She reported on the Governor's two July budget vetoes pertaining to SC-SIC: \$100,000 of SC-SIC's funding through the University of South Carolina and the additional \$35,000 provided by the Senate to replace a portion of funding lost through across-the-board budget cuts in the several years. The House and Senate overrode the first veto, but the House sustained the second, preventing it from being considered in the Senate. Ms. Barber thanked Associate Director Hudson and Chair Still for their action to gain legislative support during the budget debates.

The Executive Director noted she will continue to search for supplemental funding and urged the Board to join with her to advocate for SC-SIC and ensure the organization's visibility with legislators and the general public.

Ms. Barber also discussed the SC Education Policy Fellowship Program coordinated by SC-SIC, and Mr. Bounds applauded the Executive Director for taking leadership of SC-EPFP, which had been suspended and is now in its third year at SC-SIC.

The Executive Director's full report is attached to these minutes.

### Staff Reports

Associate Director Hudson referenced scheduled and completed trainings, Board membership and committees, along with other items specific to SC-SIC presence at various legislative and budgetary sessions, state conferences, and other items.

Mr. Hudson's full report is attached to these minutes.

Council Specialist Utter solicited input for ideas and articles and discussed the lack of accessibility of the state-mandated School Improvement Plans for SIC members. In discussion that followed, there was a suggestion that a letter be sent to school principals to post School Improvement Plans on their website for increased transparency.

Ms. Utter's full report is attached to these minutes.

Digital and Web Director Claudia Wolverton's report was given by Associate Director Hudson. He mentioned the new web page *Good Reads for SICs* written by Council Specialist Utter. He also reported that there are a few early reports of SIC elections from schools and election results are due to be reported to the SC-SIC Member Network by November 15 to meet the statutory deadline.

Ms. Wolverton's report is attached to these minutes.

### Other Items

In a Board update, Dr. Field disseminated information regarding USC's education film offerings at the Nickelodeon Theater in Columbia. Each film ends with a panel discussion and all showings are on Monday nights. SC-SIC Board member Mr. Bounds appears in the film, *American Teacher*, narrated by Matt Damon, which is focused on the teacher salary issue.

Board committee assignments followed. E'Lane Tipton was appointed as Chair of the Membership/Development Committee by Ms. Still. In accordance with Board Bylaws, Mr. Guarino, as Vice Chair, will chair the Advocacy Committee, and Ms. Davis will chair the Bylaws Committee.

### Board Discussion

Executive Director Barber led discussion of planning for a Board retreat this fall. She noted that with funding of less than a quarter of a million dollars, SC-SIC is striving to provide services for the entire state. She asked the Board to design a detailed plan of action for the direction of the organization, how to publicize the work of the organization and local SICs, and to identify the strategies that this will require. The expertise of Board members and their spheres of influence are needed. Ms. Barber remarked that the Board has moved from passive to active interaction with the legislature. Increasing funding for SC-SIC is critical for its continued efficacy. Ms. Tipton will contact all Board members to request a donation for SC-SIC through the University Foundation.

Council Specialist Utter will be working on finding the tangible benefits from effective SICs. This data will help legislators understand the benefits of SICs. Funding is needed to carry out the mission of the

SIC and the Board needs to advocate on behalf of the organization. Chair Still stated that the Board retreat should focus on building awareness of SC-SIC for the general public, business, members of the legislature, and school communities.

Ms. Davis updated the Board on the previous retreat in 2010 and the facilities at Santee Cooper's Wampee Conference Center, which she can secure for SC-SIC at a discount. The date of November 2-3, 2012, was set as the joint retreat and Board meeting. The Board retreat will be paid for through donations.

The motion was made and carried to accept the proposed meeting dates, with the exception of November 9, as amended because of the Board retreat.

In other business, Ms. Utter explained the "Listening Tour" proposal for Board members to visit one to three local SICs in their areas and the reporting form to be used after each visit. Board acceptance of this proposal was favorable.

In other comments, members discussed the possibility of regional or distance /video meetings in lieu of a central SIC Annual Meeting in Columbia. The Awards/Conference Committee Chair will arrange a phone conference to discuss the meeting options.

There being no other business, the meeting adjourned at 2:15 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,

**Virginia Alston Brown**

Virginia Alston Brown. Ed.D.  
Secretary

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

**Key Actions:**

- Successfully worked to override Governor Haley's veto of \$100,000 of funding appropriated for SC-SIC; veto of \$35,000 provided through the Senate was sustained
- Continue to liaise with various partners statewide and beyond
- Graduated 16 leaders from SC Education Policy Fellowship Program (SC EPFP)
- SC EPFP Class of 2013 will have a minimum of 16 Fellows
- Provide Council Specialist Karen Utter with two professional development opportunities: USC graduate course on empowerment evaluation and scholarship for SC EPFP
- Scheduled Annual SIC District Contact Meeting for September 28
- Met with Dean Lemuel Watson, Associate Dean Zach Kellehear and Bruce Field to brainstorm future SC-SIC activities within the COE
- Op-ed authored by Sylleste Davis printed in The State

**Funding:**

- FY12 funding: EIA allocation of \$127,303 (same as FY11); \$100,000 permanent proviso through the University of South Carolina
- Staff continues to explore potential grant and other funding

**Activities (selected):**

- Conducted full-day training for Success Coaches at Communities in Schools of the Midlands; offered to conduct similar trainings for CIS in Charleston and Greenville
- Conducted workshop at SCASA's i3 leadership conference in Myrtle Beach
- Conducted workshop at School Transformation Conference sponsored by the SC Department of Education
- Attended statewide STEM Summit
- Reviewing staff job descriptions and adjusting as needed; Claudia Wolverton's title is changed to Digital and Web Director

## **PROGRAM REPORT TO THE BOARD**

**08/24/12**

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

### **TRAININGS**

Scheduled: SIC Basics, Kershaw County School District, 09/11/12 (Hudson); SIC Basics, Fairfield County School District, 09/13/12 (Hudson); SIC Basics, Georgetown County School District, 09/18/12 (Hudson); SIC District Contact Annual Meeting, 09/28/12 (Barber, Hudson, Wolverton, Utter); SIC Basics, Greenville County Schools, 10/04/12 (Hudson).

Completed: SCASA Innovative Ideas Institute, 06/20/12, Myrtle Beach (Barber, Hudson); SDE Transformation Schools Conference, 07/25/12 (Barber); Communities in Schools – Midlands, 08/01/12 (Barber)

### **OTHER ITEMS**

College of Education: Met with Dean Watson, Associate Dean Kellehear, Cassie Barber, and Bruce Field on future avenues/initiatives for SC-SIC within the College.

STEM Conference: With Cassie Barber, attended first South Carolina Summit on STEM Education, 08/07/12, at Lexington School District 1.

SC/NSPRA: Attended 59<sup>th</sup> NSPRA Conference 07/07/12 to 07/12/12 in Chicago. SC/NSPRA will host annual joint conference with NCSPPRA 10/10/12 to 10/12/12 in Myrtle Beach.

Legislative Update: Attended House and Senate sessions dealing with gubernatorial vetoes, specifically #68 – USC Proviso, \$100,000, SC-SIC (Overridden in House, 93-12; overridden in Senate, 28-12) and #69 – Non-recurring appropriation, \$35,000, SC-SIC (Sustained in House, 66-46).

Current Projects: Update of SIC Basics training materials; preparation for SIC District Contact Meeting, to include training component development.

### **BOARD-SPECIFIC ITEMS**

Board Membership: Since last meeting, appointment of Jeff Nicholson to fill unexpired term of Dr. Sandra Lindsay-Brown (news release issued 07/05/12 on this appointment and appointment of Dr. Myriam Torres to fill unexpired term of Lina Wehbi). Newly-elected members Donna Hooks, Dr. Luanne Kokolis and Amelia B. McKie seated 08/24/12 (news release here for their review today; to be issued week of 08/27/12).

Board Committees: Committee descriptors emailed to Board 08/13/12; sign-up sheet going around today. Committee make-up to be shared via email next week; committee chair appointments being made 08/24/12 by Board Chair Ellen Still.

**Claudia Wolverton, SC-SIC Digital and Web Director**

### **SC-SIC Website**

Council Specialist Karen Utter has written 3 book reviews for the “Good Reads for SICs” webpage (<http://sic.sc.gov/publicationsanddownloads/Pages/GoodReadsforSICs.aspx>). The SC Education Policy Fellowship program page has been updated for the coming class and applicants are being encouraged to apply early, while the SIC Training page shows over 1510 individuals trained.

Search rankings continue to rise in Google and other popular web browsers as schools add SIC pages to their websites. Web and Digital Information Director Claudia Wolverton maintains social media pages (Facebook and Twitter) which also contribute to the rise in search rankings. A search on “SIC” now returns a fourth-place Google reference on Internet Explorer (up from sixth place); one year ago search the term “SIC” returned no references to School Improvement Councils on the first or second Google page. Similar results are found using Google Chrome and Mozilla Firefox. The term “SC-SIC” returns top search results, either referencing the Home page or the *SC-SIC Member Network*, on all three major browsers.

Improvements in the design of the website are always ongoing and feedback is welcomed. SC-SIC Digital and Web Director Claudia Wolverton received official certification as a Web Designer earlier this year.

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

At this time, we have 10 schools that have held early elections and reported their SIC membership via the *SC-SIC Member Network*. The deadline for reporting membership data is November 15; all schools show “out of compliance” in the *Member Network* until their data is updated.

The receipt of membership updates and user account applications (which must be renewed each year) will increase at a steady pace between each school’s opening date and the November 15 deadline. Account requests and updates generally have 2 more peak times: after the deadline but before winter break and again after the second semester begins in January.

Compliance reports are run the first business day after November 15 and again on or about January 31. The results of the January 31 compliance reports will be report to the district superintendent after the close of each school year.

SC-SIC Member Network users uploaded 422 *Reports from 2010-2011* and 438 264 *Reports to the Parents* from the 2011-2012 school year. Last reporting showed only 264 *Reports* for the 2011-2012 school year. (The deadline for uploading to the Member Network is June 1, 2012.) Councils and schools appear eager to upload the their *Reports* and are receiving strong

encouragement to do so from most of the SIC District Contacts. We anticipate a large number of 2012-2013 *Report* uploads by June 1, 2013 and more to come after the deadline.

*Reports* are due to the parents and community by April 15 and are available for public viewing via the View the SIC Members (Read-Only) link on the SC-SIC Member Network. (<https://sic.ed.sc.edu/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 882 followers (up from 864 in May). 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 new Twitter followers are also running for office. Media personnel, political figures or key education players in South Carolina often “retweet” or mention @SCSIC (our Twitter “handle”) in their tweets, continuing to raise our public profile and advancing a key strategic planning goal. Among SCSIC are followers are several educators and organizations from other states and countries. Also of great use is the accessibility of breaking news obtainable through Twitter lists of media and SC politicians.

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It should be noted that each quarter has shown a gradual increase in Facebook and Twitter followers. Social media usage among organizations and companies have taken an exponential leap as global events such as the current political climate and worldwide events have demonstrated the capacity to provide 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**

**I. Research and Dissemination**

- Working on articles about SICs and research on importance of family and community engagement for different audiences, e.g. academic journals, Parent magazine, etc. within South Carolina.
- Availability of School Improvement Plans online – Encourage local SICs to request access.
- New Online Resources: Survey Monkey – Harvard Graduate School of Education template for Family and Community Engagement survey and other sources of survey templates; ParentNet Unplugged ([www.parentinvolvementmatters.org](http://www.parentinvolvementmatters.org)).
- Developed materials for Board of Trustees’ Listening Tour – Reached out to District Contact and three schools in Fairfield County.
- Developing resources for evaluating performance of SC-SIC and local SIC programs
  - Harvard Family Research Project OST Evaluation Tool 101
  - Kathy Hoover Dempsey’s measurement scales on parent involvement from Vanderbilt University’s Peabody School of Education.
  - Empowerment Evaluation (see section on professional development)

**II. Funding**

- Submitted letter request to Arkwright Foundation (Spartanburg) for \$1,500 grant to purchase family engagement texts for distribution to requesting SICs.
- Preparing grant proposal for proposed South Carolina Family and Community Leadership Academy.

**III. Professional Development**

- Education Policy Fellowship Program beginning September 2012
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**08/24/12**

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