

**SC SIC Board of Trustees  
Quarterly Meeting Minutes  
Colonial Life Building, Columbia, South Carolina  
Friday, August 30, 2013**

Board Members Present: Ellen Still, Chair; Michael Guarino, Vice Chair; Virginia Alston Brown, Outgoing Secretary; Amelia McKie, Incoming Secretary; James Blassingame; Bruce Field; Jason Fulmer; Bob Grant; Donna Hooks; Bonnie King; Luanne Kokolis; Jeff Nicholson; Retha Ross; Myriam Torres.

Staff Members Present: Cassie Barber, Executive Director; Tom Hudson, Associate Director; Claudia Wolverton, Digital and Web Director.

Guest: Dr. Lemuel Watson, Dean, USC College of Education.

The meeting was called to order at 10:03 a.m. by Ms. Still, who welcomed all to the meeting. She commended the Board for the turnout as it embarks upon a new school year and new working relationship with the Center for Educational Partnerships (CEP) at the USC College of Education, of which the SC-SIC office is now a part.

Minutes of the Board's June 21, 2013, meeting were presented and approved.

The following re-elected and elected Board officers were duly installed for 2013-14: Ms. Still, Chair; Mr. Guarino, Vice Chair; Ms. McKie, Secretary; and in her absence, Ms. Sylleste Davis as Immediate Past Chair.

Rev. Blassingame, Pastor of Mount Zion Missionary Baptist Church in Sumter, and newly elected Board member from the Midlands, was introduced to the Board members, who in turn introduced themselves individually.

Ms. Still informed the Board that she, in her capacity as Chair, had appointed Ms. Thessa G. Smith of Allendale to serve out an unexpired term on the Board representing the Central Savannah River Area region. Ms. Smith has prior service on the SC-SIC Board of Trustees from 2002-08 and is the current County Administrator for Allendale County.

Outgoing Secretary and Board member Dr. Brown was recognized for her long-time service on the Board and presented with an engraved plaque honoring her contributions. Dr. Brown thanked the Board and stated she enjoyed her years of service. She encouraged the Board to continue the wonderful things it is doing for parents, students and school districts as School Improvement Councils are so needed.

**Executive Director's Report**

Ms. Barber presented highlights from her report outlining key actions and selected activities since the Board's last meeting, and outlined SC-SIC and Center for Educational Partnerships (CEP) funding for 2013-14. CEP funding for the year is \$100,000 more than the prior year's total funding for the five Education Improvement Act (EIA) programs it now contains. SC-SIC will

remain funded at the 2012-13 level. She noted that after conversations with Dr. Watson, SC-SIC Coordinator of Programs and Research (formerly Council Specialist) Karen Utter will be funded on a full-time basis, with her duties split between the SC-SIC office and assisting Dr. Watson with the CEP. Ms. Barber also noted that local SIC compliance in reporting their membership data to SC-SIC as mandated was down approximately 10 percent from last year's 90 percent compliance rate. She contacted district superintendents and reported on local compliance numbers, resulting in improving rates of compliance. The entirety of the Executive Director's report is included in these minutes.

### **Staff Reports**

Mr. Hudson shared highlights of his report, including scheduled local SIC trainings across the state during the fall. Mr. Hudson also referenced his work in preparing for the Annual SIC District Contact Meeting September 13; various meetings and efforts with the College of Education and CEP; as well as work and projects related to legislative funding, SC-SIC communications, Board elections, and other areas. The entirety of his report is included in these minutes.

Ms. Wolverton outlined details of her report, to include information on SC-SIC website content, SC-SIC Member Network reporting statistics and *SIC Report to the Parents* uploads, social media activity on Twitter and Facebook, as well as information on the new electronic *Council News* newsletter and *SIC Clips & Quips* email updates. The entirety of Ms. Wolverton's report is included in these minutes.

In the absence of Ms. Utter, Mr. Hudson called the Board's attention to her report, which is included in these minutes.

Dean Watson shared information regarding the new Center for Educational Partnerships at the College of Education, again noting that the CEP was created to provide additional accountability and cooperation for the five Education Improvement Act (EIA) programs that make up the Center: SC-SIC, Writing Improvement Network, SC Geographic Alliance, Middle Grades Initiative, and the SC Education Policy Center. He noted that these organizations would form the core of the CEP, with other groups, such as SC Economics and New Carolina's TransformSC initiative, serving as affiliates.

The Dean explained that the CEP was not a replacement of the individual programs, but would act as an umbrella program to assist focusing efforts, reporting and accountability. In terms of EIA funding through the Education oversight Committee (EOC), he stated that he has asked the program directors to draft their budgets and funding requests as in previous years which he will compile and submit to the EOC. While the funding for the individual programs remains the same as the previous year, Dr. Watson said that the directors can identify their current needs and submit them to him, so that through a combination of funds allocated to the CEP for FY13-14 and the existing resources of the College of Education, the programs and the CEP can demonstrate impact without additional individual program funding over FY12-13 levels.

Dean Watson stated that he had had meetings with Governor Haley and SC Education Superintendent Mick Zais, as well as the leadership for the TransformSC initiative. He believes the CEP and its programs have cheerleaders on multiple levels, and that in acting collaboratively the CEP programs could have a broader reach and impact. Regarding the TransformSC efforts across the state, Dean Watson explained that the CEP is working with New Carolina to determine how the various CEP programs can best fit in to the work that it is trying to accomplish in the 23 school sites selected in the state.

The Board broke for lunch at 11:30 a.m.

When the Board reconvened, Ms. Still announced her appointment of committee chairs for 2013-14. As Vice Chair, Mr. Guarino will again chair the Advocacy Committee. Ms. Davis will serve again as chair of the Awards/ Conference Committee. Ms. Still stated that Board member E' Lane Tipton has submitted her resignation from the Board, so she will be looking to appoint a new chair for the Membership/Development Committee.

Board member Dr. Torres offered a presentation to the Board on "Latinos in SC: Who Are We?" This presentation outlined the history and impact of Latino immigrants on the state and provided insights on how Board members and others can better understand the needs and contributions of the Latino community in South Carolina.

Under Old Business, the Board considered potential meeting dates for the remainder of the 2013-14 year. The Board voted affirmatively to schedule the following quarterly meeting dates: Friday, November 22, 2013; Friday, February 7, 2014; and Friday, June 13, 2014. The date for the SC-SIC Annual Meeting was set for Saturday, March 22, 2014.

There being no New Business to discuss, the Board adjourned at 2:01 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

*Amelia B. McKie*

Amelia Butler McKie  
SC-SIC Board Secretary

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

**Key Actions:**

- Collaborated with Dean Watson to bring Karen Utter to full-time status; changed her title to Coordinator of Programs and Research to accurately reflect her duties
- Attended Military Child Education Coalition National Training in MD on scholarship
- Recruited SC-Education Policy Fellowship cohort for 2013-14
- Attended inaugural meeting with Dean Watson and directors of programs included in the Center for Educational Partnerships (CEP)
- Joined New Carolina Education Task Force
- Participated on CEP panel during the fall All College meeting of the COE

**Funding:**

- EIA funding for SC-SIC, which is now rolled into the Center for Educational Partnerships under the direction of Dean Watson, remains static at \$127,303.
- The proviso directing the University of South Carolina to allocate \$100,000 to SC-SIC remains in place.
- The current budget is insufficient to bring Karen Utter to full-time status.
- The Dean's office has contributed funding to employ Karen Utter full time; working half-time for SC-SIC and half-time as the coordinator for the CEP through the Dean's office.
- Researching options to replace defunct office copier with network printer.

**Activities (selected):**

- Met with State Board Member Traci Young Cooper
- Scheduled presentation for State Board of Education – September 11
- Met with Moryah Jackson at New Carolina
- Continued work to develop empowerment evaluation for local SICs
- Met with Board member Gary Alexander
- Attended COE/CEP reception at Columbia Museum of Art
- Met with Jim Morris, executive director of SC Economics

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

Scheduled: SIC Basics, Allendale, 09/09/13 (Barber); SIC Basics, Kershaw, 09/19/13 (Hudson); SIC Basics/Leadership & Advocacy, Fairfield, 09/26/13 (Hudson, Barber); SIC Basics, USC Upstate at Sumter, 10/01/13 (Barber); SIC Basics, Williamsburg, 10/01/13 (Hudson); SIC Basics, Calhoun, 10/03/13 (Hudson); SIC Basics, Beaufort, 10/17/13 (Hudson)

**OTHER ITEMS (selected)**

Annual SIC District Contact Meeting: Scheduled for 09/13/13. Developed agenda and currently coordinating training sessions.

College of Education: Met with USC College of Education Dean Lemuel Watson and directors of programs in Center for Educational Partnerships, 08/06/13. Assisted in development of SC-SIC bullet points of short-term goals for collaboration in CEP. Met with Jim Morris, CEO of SC Economics, 08/16/13. Attended COE all-college meeting 08/20/13.

Legislative: Developed talking points for legislators on SC-SIC funding for House and Senate voting on budget veto #12. Attended both sessions and worked lobby on 06/26/13 and 06/27/13.

Communications: Prepared email alerts to SIC members and others on veto #12 of funding for CEP, 06/25/13, 06/26/13, 06/27/13. Prepared media release on election of Rev. James Blassingame and appointment of Thessa Smith to SC-SIC Board (to be issued week of 09/02/13). Prepared two issues of *SIC Clips & Quips*.

Additional: Prepared and submitted annual organizational update for National Network of Partnerships Schools, Johns Hopkins University. Attended 60<sup>th</sup> Annual Seminar of National School Public Relations Association (NSPRA) in San Diego, CA, 07/06/13 to 07/10/13. Participated in two meetings of New Carolina's "TransformSC" communications advisory committee, assisting in crafting effort tagline and development of talking points for key constituencies, 08/06/13 and 08/13/13. Attended CEP reception with community at Columbia Museum of Art, 08/20/13. Will attend SC Chapter of NSPRA Fall mini-conference in Charleston, 09/20/13. Will attend annual joint fall conference of NC and SC chapters of NSPRA in Asheville, NC, 11/06/13 to 11/08/13.

**BOARD-SPECIFIC ITEMS**

Board Elections: Coordinated elections process for Class of 2016 (re-election of Bob Grant, Bonnie King, Retha Ross, Ellen Still; election of Dr. Myriam Torres and Rev. James Blassingame). Coordinated elections process for Board officers for 2013-14 (re-election of Ellen Still as Chair and Michael Guarino as Vice Chair; election of Amelia McKie as Secretary).

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

### **SC-SIC website**

Training dates for SIC training are being scheduled and posted to the website. The latest *Council News* (Volume 34, Issue 2, 2013) and the latest *SIC Clips & Quips* (Volume 6, Issue 2) are posted to the site's Home page. Board member Jason Fulmer is highlighted for being featured in the upcoming book, *American Teacher: Heroes in the Classroom*.

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

Total number of SIC members reported as of 08/20/13: **268** (reporting deadline 11/15/13)  
Total number of SICs in compliance with state mandates as of 08/20/13: **13** (reporting deadline 11/15/13)  
Total number of schools falling under laws governing SICs as of 08/20/13: **1,131** (This figure does not include schools that convene SICs but are not mandated to do so.)  
Digital and Web Director will conduct a brief session on the SC-SIC Member Network at the SIC District Contact meeting 09/13/13.

### **SIC Report to the Parents Uploads**

SC-SIC Member Network users uploaded 422 *Reports to the Parents* in 2010-11, 553 in 2011-12 and, to date, 581 *Reports* for the 2012-13 school year. The deadline for uploading the 2012-13 *Report* to the Member Network was 06/01/13 but SICs are encouraged to continue to upload their *Reports* after the deadline. We predict that more schools will continue to upload their *Reports* via the Member Network as they appear eager to share them and are strongly encouraged to do so by the majority of the school districts. The Digital and Web Director will conduct a brief explanation of how to upload a *Report* during the SIC District Contact meeting 09/13/13.

*Reports* are due to the parents and community by 04/30 annually 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.

### **Social Media**

The SC-SIC Twitter account now has 1,193 followers (up from 1,133 in June 2013). Use of Twitter by SC-SIC provides a communications conduit to education groups and professionals across the country as well as accelerated access to P-20 news, blogs and journal articles and immediate contact with the community. Media personnel, political figures or key education players in South Carolina and beyond 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 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.

SC-SIC's Facebook Page has 513 "likes" (up from 488 in June 2013). 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. We encourage SICs to have their own Facebook pages and /or Twitter accounts to facilitate communication among members and to inform the school community of ongoing projects.

It should be noted that each quarter has shown a gradual increase in Facebook and Twitter followers. Social media has proven to be an essential tool in maintaining the SC-SIC public presence and in facilitating information flow.

#### **New Council News as HTML Newsletter**

The *Council News* electronic newsletters are posted to the SC-SIC website at <http://sic.sc.gov/publicationsanddownloads/Pages/CouncilNewsandArchives.aspx> in addition to being emailed to all SIC members that share their email address with us. At this time the SC-SIC listserv of members and friends consists of approximately 8,051 email addresses. By the 11/15/13 membership reporting deadline all reported SIC member addresses will have been added to the listserv; the listserv will continually be updated as other SIC members are reported past the deadline.

#### **SIC Clips & Quips**

*SIC Clips & Quips* will continue to be sent out to the SC-SIC listserv as needed. Archived *Clips & Quips* are retained on the SC-SIC website at <http://sic.sc.gov/publicationsanddownloads/Pages/SC-SICClipsandQuips.aspx>.

Karen Utter, Coordinator of Programs and Research

I. **Programs and Research**

**Continued work on development and implementation of SIC Evaluation Initiative**

- Continued to work with Harbison West Elementary SIC chair, individual committee chairs, and full SIC, guiding their work on establishing goals, outcomes/measures and activity planning.
- Traveled to each of the new schools participating in SIC Evaluation Initiative: Fairfield Middle School (Fairfield); Mauldin Elementary School (Greenville); Walhalla Middle School (Oconee); and Wallace Elementary/Middle School (Marlboro). Met with each SIC Chair and principal to gather information and to brief them on the program for the year. I will be attending each SIC's first meeting in September to meet all SIC members and brief them on the program.
- General Orientation for all new participating SICs is scheduled for Saturday morning, September 21 in Columbia. This is for all participating principals and SIC chairs. I have also given the schools the options to invite up to 3 additional SIC members if they like. The program will consist of (1) a training session on the steps of the program and the schedule for the year, (2) a training session on the current research and best practices in family and community engagement generally, and (3) a lunch (I may just bake a couple of lasagnas and homemade desserts for them) and an opportunity to share information.

**Continued work on developing new evaluation/feedback tool for Basics trainings**

- We are close to a final draft of a new Basics training evaluation form. The form was developed collaboratively among the members of the staff, and we have received assistance as well from Dr. Allison Jacques, the Assistant Dean for Assessments at the College of Education. The survey, which will be administered as part of the Basics training session, is designed to measure not only whether participants were satisfied with the training session, but also the extent to which the training has increased participant knowledge in key areas. We anticipate following up with participants later in the school year via Survey Monkey to see whether participants were able to act on what they learned and, if not, what the barriers were.

**Continued developing new training for SICs on effective family and community engagement**

- This training will build on current research concepts published by the Harvard Family Research Project, the National Network of Partnership Schools, and others, and will disseminate new tools such as a compilation we have developed of strategies to reach "hard to reach" parents.

**Contributed new book review for website; content for *SIC Clips & Quips***

- I am finding that as I have an opportunity to spend more time in the field, I am hearing more (just by word of mouth) about interesting and innovative collaborations between schools, families and communities that are happening around the state. I hope that we can find additional ways to increase the flow of information about successful partnerships from the local to the state level, so that we can disseminate it widely.



**II. Funding**  
**Proposal for funding SIC Evaluation Initiative**

- We have received our first invitation from a private foundation to submit a formal proposal to partially fund the SIC Evaluation Initiative. The Scansource Charitable Foundation in Greenville makes charitable gifts to programs that will benefit the communities in which their employees live (in this case, Greenville and surrounding areas). Although a grant from this foundation would be limited to supporting implementation of the program in the upstate, it would certainly be a help and move us in the right direction. We are very grateful to Amanda Farwick, Development Director at the College of Education, for her active efforts to find potential sources of funding for SC-SIC.

**III. Professional Development**

- I am enrolled in a graduate level course this fall in Organizational Psychology with Professor Abe Wandersman, in the USC Department of Psychology. The course will focus on how to successfully integrate innovation into organizations.

**IV. Assignment to USC COE Dean Watson to assist in coordinating launch of Center for Educational Partnerships and COE collaboration with New Carolina**

- I have begun work for Dean Watson in coordinating the creation of the Center for Educational Partnerships (CEP), of which SC-SIC is a core member. I will also be assisting the Dean and the College of Education as it collaborates with New Carolina on “Transform SC”, New Carolina’s initiative to transform education in South Carolina.