SC-SIC Board of Trustees
Quarterly Meeting
May 11, 2007
SC Association of Counties

Board members present: Nell Stewart, Tom Richardson, Ray Fleming, Jeff Nicholson, Bruce Field, Maria Taylor, Judy Wilson, Patrick Cobb, Thessa Smith, Sylleste Davis, Nancy Hanley, Cindy Smith, Barbara Weston

Board members absent: Wilbur Cave, Tom Hudson, Gregory McCord, Carlos Primus, Bob Staton, Linda Weaver-Griggs

Staff present: Jean Norman, Cassie Barber, Claudia Wolverton

Nell Stewart, chair of the board, called the meeting at 10:10 a.m. Minutes of the December 2006 were approved as amended.

SC-SIC executive director Dr. Jean Norman reported that 52 school districts were represented at the March 10th annual conference with 300 people in attendance. State superintendent of education Dr. Jim Rex attended the conference and provided a synopsis of the plan of action developed by his transition team, which included Dr. Norman. SC-SIC is enjoying a positive relationship with the new state superintendent and new regulations submitted by the department of education to the legislation specifically mention role of SICs in education accountability.

The annual Day at the Capitol in partnership with the SC League of Women Voters and the South Carolina Chapter of the AAUW very successful with many board members and some local SIC members in attendance. Our office arranged for Dr. Rex to address the attendees.

Dr. Norman reviewed the office budget noting that all EIA funds allocated for this fiscal year will be spent. The appropriations bill for the next fiscal year will add $20,000 to the EIA funds to make up for raises mandated by the legislature over the past two years. Staff is reorganizing the office functions now that the Operations Manager has resigned. A part-time person has been hired to oversee the financial functions in the office. Claudia Wolverton has been promoted to Public Information Coordinator and will edit the newsletter and manage both the database and website.

Dr. Norman has announced her retirement effective June 30 of this year. A plan of action for hiring the new executive director has been approved by the college dean and university provost. The position will be posted on the USC website and in The State newspaper. Dr. Norman will chair the hiring committee which will also include Dr. Diane Monrad of the Educational Leadership and Policy Department, Dr. Bruce Field, and Nell Stewart. Screening will begin May 22 and will continue until the position is filled.

Tom Richardson presented a gift to Dr. Norman on behalf of the "old-timers" on the board with thanks for her passion and zeal for public education as she enters retirement. Dr. Norman thanked Mr. Richardson and the entire board and staff for the gift presented to her at the annual conference last March.

SC-SIC Public Information Coordinator Claudia Wolverton presented a snapshot of the new website that will be "live" by the end of the month. State sponsored web hosting by sc.gov is free to state agencies and school districts. The old site will be available for a while with the address for new site posted on it. After staff is sure that all pertinent information has been transferred to the new site, users will be immediately redirected to the new site when the old address is entered.

Some serious problems with the office database were uncovered when Ms. Wolverton took over management of the database. Staff has contracted with a USC incubator company for the design and implementation of a new web interface and database system at a cost of $4,500. The new system will allow staff to prepare SIC membership compliance reports that can be shared with principals, district contacts, superintendents and other interested parties. This new technology will enable the office to promote SIC accountability; something that has not been possible previously. Both the website and the database will be Section 508 compliant for hearing and vision impaired users.

Dr. Norman supplied the board with a summary of the board retreat last February in the weeks prior to this board meeting. At the conclusion of the retreat the board directed staff to wordsmith the potential mission statements that had come out of the discussion. Staff submitted a suggestion for the new organization mission statement and slogan. After considerable discussion the board unanimously agreed on a new mission: *Promote and support civic engagement for quality public education in South Carolina through local school improvement councils.* The board also decided that *Civic engagement in public education* would be the new slogan.

Jeff Nicholson reported for the combined Membership and ad hoc Student Member Committees. The committee recommended the addition of two students, in either their junior or senior years of high school for one year terms as at-large members. The students must be members of their school's SIC and the two students must be from different regions of the state. Staff will facilitate awareness of this new membership category. Local SICs will be required to assume responsibility for transportation and any liability issues and also permission for students to miss classes. The board unanimously approved the committee recommendations.

An additional recommendation from the membership committee was to issue invitations to stakeholder groups i.e. principals, teachers, state department, legislature, etc., to attend board meetings as a guest/speaker to garner feedback on SICs, share insights and ideas, etc. After discussion about whether or not some groups should identify official liaisons to the board or hold ex-officio board positions, the board decided to invite them as guests, rotating various constituencies throughout the years.

The new Advisory Council to the board is growing. Former board members Gail Phillips and Betty Gregory have agreed to join Richard Mock and Bob Zuercher on the Council and current board member Tom Richardson will also join when his term concludes later this year. The board voted to have the executive committee decide who shall be invited to join the Advisory Council. Thessa Smith cast the lone negative vote, believing that candidates for the Advisory Council should be submitted to the entire board for voting. No limit has been placed on the number of Advisory Council members and they have no voting privileges.

Mr. Nicholson noted that nominations for openings on the board are coming in and are due by July 1. Elections for new members and board officers will take place in July with new terms beginning at the August meeting.

Patrick Cobb reported on the joint meeting of the Awards/ad hoc Conference Committee meeting. The timeline for the Riley Award will be very similar to last year's. There will be no change in the application process. Staff will provide training for board members on how to review and score Riley Award applications. Staff will explore the possibility of posting winning applications as examples for new applications online. The committee recommends inviting winners to host display tables at the conference. The committee also recommends keeping last year's conference model featuring a major keynoter and some kind of panel with no breakout sessions in Columbia. Board members would also like to see a legislative update, and invite Superintendent Rex to participate. The awards ceremony will conclude the day as it has for the past several years. All board members are asked to identify grant/funding sources to sponsor the Riley Award and for general conference support.

Cassie Barber led a brief discussion and review of the board bylaws. She will send out some suggested language to amend the bylaws to include the new changes voted on by the board. Ms. Barber also asked the board to consider deleting the provision stating that the executive director will appoint an executive secretary to the board and replace it by adding the office of secretary to be filled by a board member. The board unanimously agreed to this change.

There being no further business, Ms. Stewart adjourned the meeting at 1:39 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Cassie Barber
Executive Secretary to the Board