

**SC – SIC Board of Trustees
Quarterly Meeting Minutes
September 11, 2009**

Board Members Present: Dr. Virginia Alston Brown, Wilbur Cave, Ken Clark, Rev. Joseph Darby, Dr. Bruce Field, Georgia Lash, Jeff Nicholson, Carlos Primus, Retha Ross, E' Lane Rutherford, Maria Taylor, Fred Washington

Staff Members Present: Cassie Barber, Claudia Wolverton

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Jeff Nicholson at 10 a.m.

The May 9, 2009 minutes were approved.

New Board members were welcomed and recognized. Maria Taylor introduced Georgia Lash from Greenville and E' Lane Rutherford introduced Rev. Joseph Darby from Charleston. Cassie Barber, the Executive Director, commented that both of the new members come with tremendous experience in school systems, fund raising, SICs, education, and faith-based support of public education. The Chairman and Executive Director expressed appreciation for their membership and willingness to serve on the Board. The Executive Director stated that Jim O'Connor, who would have been the third new member, was recently accepted into a doctoral program in Atlanta and sends his regrets that he cannot serve on the Board. Therefore an opening for a new member exists.

The Executive Director presented engraved gavel to outgoing Chairman Jeff Nicholson and expressed appreciation for his dedication and service. Outgoing Board members, Maria Taylor and Wilbur Cave, who are leaving due to term limits, were recognized with plaques honoring their service. Both will serve on the advisory board.

This year's executive officers were installed: Carlos Primus, Chairman; E' Lane Rutherford, Vice Chair; Virginia Alston Brown, Secretary; and Jeff Nicholson, Immediate Past Chair. Committee chair appointees are Ellen Still, Membership and Development and Sylleste Davis, Awards Committee. Bruce Field continues his service in an ex-officio capacity representing the Dean of the USC College of Education.

Newly elected Chairman Primus welcomed everyone and stated that he looks forward to working with SC SIC in his new office.

Executive Director's Report

Budget and Sustainability:

The state's 2010 EIA allocation for SC SIC is \$149,768, along with \$100,000 from USC. USC kept the rollover that would have covered staff benefits and therefore these benefits now must be paid out of this year's allocation. The budget cut is 30%. With another 4% cut looming, about \$6,000 will be lost from EIA funds.

Nearly \$10,000 in flood damage reparations have been given to SC SIC. A portion of that will be kept as a cushion for budget cuts. Furniture has been purchased to replace damaged items.

There was much discussion regarding our need to receive tax deductible donations. The Executive Director presented two promising proposals: the first from Palmetto Horizon Foundation, a foundation focused on raising money for public entities/public education and the other from USC's Education Foundation. She reported the following information for securing services from Palmetto Horizon:

- o We were approved as an organization for which this foundation would try to obtain donations
- o We must raise the first \$500 and the cost would be \$125 per month, and

- o The foundation will create materials to highlight SC SIC and would solicit funds for us. The College of Education development director says USC will create an online entry for SC SIC so that donations can be made through USC's foundation, cost free.

Members expressed interest and asked for more information since Palmetto is a new fund raising organization with no established track record. The Board agreed that because they will solicit funds on our behalf, we could try them on a trial basis, but wanted questions answered about their process for raising money. The Executive Director said that the Florence-based foundation highlights and targets big businesses. The Executive Director stated that, if the Board chooses to go with Palmetto Horizon, it would need to raise the money internally. A motion was made by Ken Clark and seconded by Ellen Still that we work with both the USC and Palmetto Horizon foundations for our fund raising. The Board agreed unanimously and several members made pledges for contributions for the \$500 start-up money for Palmetto Horizon. E' Lane Rutherford also volunteered to look for seed donations. Members suggested that representatives from Palmetto Horizon come visit us at a Board meeting.

The Executive Director continues to explore a variety of ways to generate money. A representative from the Charlotte-based AstraZeneca pharmaceutical organization is interested in selecting SC SIC to be its next sponsored charity for employee online contributions. The Executive Director has been asked to speak with their upper level management to provide further information about SC SIC.

The Executive Director is also exploring grants. The SC Education Policy Center has applied for a federal grant for a three year study on school climate and has included SC-SIC in the proposal, which would pay a percentage of the staff's salaries. Also, the Executive Director is working with the Riley Institute at Furman University on an RFP for a five year study of consistently under-performing schools. SC SIC could expect approximately \$150,000 per year for the term of the grant. The proposal would involve working with four underperforming schools and developing interventions for them. Two middle and high schools in Richland will be the focus of activities designed to promote and support parent, community and student involvement in the schools. Chairman Primus and the principal at A J Lewis Greenview Elementary will be written into the grant as mentors as a result of their expertise in sustaining the programs that won the Riley Award for the school several years ago.

The Annual SIC District Contact training will be next Wednesday, September 16, 2009. State Education Superintendent Dr. Jim Rex supports school improvement councils and will speak at this meeting.

The Riley Institute at Furman University is also supporting SC SIC's advocacy work by designing and printing a manual for SIC members. The Executive Director has been given a scholarship to attend the Riley Institute's "Diversity Leaders Initiative," which is another positive opportunity for SC SIC.

Staff is developing creative ways to increase the office's capacity to deliver services in spite of funding decreases. SC SIC is initiating a clearinghouse that will be housed on the website to provide local SICs with access to a variety of trainings and other resources. Agencies and nonprofits will be invited to submit their information which will be posted with the Director's approval and updated every July. Ms. Barber also met with Yvonne McBride, Director of SDE's Office of Youth Services to begin a partnership with that office. The two directors agreed that the various programs in Youth Services will post their resources on the SC SIC website and Frank White, who directed the now closed Office of Parental and Community Partnerships, will provide parent involvement trainings for SICs by arrangement of the SC SIC office. It was also agreed that District Parental Involvement Liaisons, who work with Youth Services, would be invited to the Annual District Contact Training. This partnership is very promising and Ms. Barber will explore additional opportunities of this nature with other agency offices and nonprofits.

Mark Bounds has also indicated that he may be able to provide SC SIC with a small stipend to work with some new principals to set up effective SICs.

Evaluation and Underperforming Schools:

SC SIC is working with the EOC and SCDE to develop the criteria for an evaluation of the office mandated by proviso in the General Appropriations Bill to be completed in 2012. The proviso mandating SC SIC to provide targeted assistance to unsatisfactory schools was deleted in 2009 but the evaluation portion remains in the technical assistance proviso, which is focused on underperforming schools. Ms. Barber has asked SCDE to clarify what is expected of SC SIC in this regard.

In May, the Executive Director met with Dr. Rex and Dr. David Rawlinson, director of SCDE's Office of Special Projects. Special Projects is in charge of improving the state's Palmetto Priority Schools, our state's most underperforming schools. The Executive Director reported that Dr. Rex requested that SC SIC work with the schools and especially with the Turnaround Schools (schools in reconstitution status). Ms. Barber is currently in negotiation with the Office of Special Projects to determine what role SC SIC will play in these schools and how the office will be compensated for its work. Ms. Barber reported a brief conversation with Dr. Janice Poda, Dr. Rex's chief of staff. Their preliminary discussion is that SC SIC will continue to provide targeted services with the Palmetto Priority Schools, provide membership compliance reports for all other At-Risk and Below Average Schools, and provide some special services for five pilot schools that have not yet been chosen.

Other Staff Reports:

Claudia Wolverton, Public Information Coordinator, gave an update of the SC SIC website. and She discussed the SIC membership data input site used by the schools. Due to the Freedom of Information Act, there is a read-only section that provides names of local SIC members. November 15th is the compliance deadline. She discussed the new logo and the Power of Many, SC SIC's information and marketing piece available on website and from the office. Globally, web presence surpassed print media, therefore social media for SC SIC are Facebook, Twitter and Pitch Engine. She said these help to interface with other engines. The Executive Director commented that this is the 3rd year for the membership site and the delivery of compliance reports to the superintendents has resulted in more interest in SICs and more councils being in compliance. The Executive Director pointed out the new name badges for board members made by Ms. Wolverton.

Tom Hudson is battling flu and was not present for his report. He has been continuing with radio broadcasts and has attended mediation training. Because Mr. Hudson and Awards and Conference Chair Sylleste Davis were not present, the Executive Director explained the Riley Award process and reported that Ms. Davis asked that we solicit members for the Awards and Conference Committee.

The Chairman gave an overview of each of the three (3) standing committees and appointed Ellen Still to replace E'Lane Rutherford as Chair of the Membership and Development Committee. SC SIC bylaws stipulate that Ms. Rutherford will now chair the Advocacy Committee in her new role as Vice Chair. All the new chairs serve on the Executive committee along with ex-officio members, Bruce Field, the Dean's representative on the Board, and Jeff Nicholson, Immediate Past Chair. The chairman encouraged members to select a committee on which to serve and said that Mr. Hudson will e-mail members for committee sign-up.

Additional Business:

The Executive Director presented board members' terms of service, meeting dates and the list of the SC SIC board members. Meetings are public information. The Annual conference is tentatively planned for March 13, 2010. Proposals were discussed regarding a "no cost" venue to host this year's conference. Members discussed how to keep the price the same as last year's, while increasing the size of the location. Chairman Primus will look for a venue in Richland One, possibly at one of the Turnaround or Priority Schools. Secretary Dick Riley will be asked to attend. The Executive Director suggested that break-out sessions could be conducted by

some of the presenters on our resource page. Ellen Still will contact Bud Ferillo and see if his new film, *State of Denial*, could be one of the focal points. These ideas will be given to the Awards Committee.

Legislative Advocacy Day is in February 23. Ms. Barber is working with Jean Norman from AAUW and Barbara Zia from League of Women Voters on the agenda. One idea presented was to address youth risk behaviors and another was to feature "*State of Denial*."

A suggestion was made from the Board for SC SIC to present at a SC School Boards Association (SCSBA) Conference and establish a presence with that organization. Fred Washington and Ken Clark, a current and former school board member, will coordinate the effort to get SC SIC on the agenda for the meeting by contacting Paul Krohne, executive director of SCSBA. The Executive Director commented that SC SIC attended SCASA and presented this summer.

The Executive Director made final remarks, again welcomed the new members and thanked everyone for their service. The meeting adjourned at 2:15.

Respectfully Submitted,

Virginia Alston Brown, Ed D

Secretary, SC SIC Board