



The Dick and Tunky Riley Award for School Improvement Council Excellence

2021 Application

A legendary couple in the Palmetto State, former U.S. Secretary of Education and South Carolina Governor Dick Riley and his late wife, Tunky, were honored in 2002 by the SC School Improvement Council Board of Trustees with the creation of this named award. The engraving on the inaugural award states: "In honor and recognition of two people who sparked the flame of education improvement in South Carolina."

The *Dick and Tunky Riley Award for School Improvement Council Excellence* is presented yearly to a School Improvement Council that demonstrates, in the spirit of the Rileys, exemplary leadership and action resulting in improved public education in their community. All SICs in South Carolina that have been convened for at least one year are eligible to apply. SICs that are named as a *Riley Award* winner may not reapply for the award for a period of three (3) years.

Participating in this award process is an opportunity for SICs to celebrate their achievements, share strategies with other councils, ensure their compliance with state law, and provide much deserved recognition for hard-working volunteers.

The award process consists of three levels. In **Level One**, SICs tell the story of their accomplishments in the previous school year through a Case Statement. Level One applications count for a maximum of **100** points. SICs scoring at least **85** points at this level will be entered on the 2021 *SIC Honor Roll* and will receive a Certificate of Achievement. Up to 20 of the *Honor Roll* SICs will be chosen as semi-finalists to compete in **Level Two**. In Level Two, SICs are asked to submit additional documentation showing that their councils are in compliance with state law and SC-SIC guidelines. Level Two submissions are worth a maximum of 45 points. The SICs with the five highest combined point totals from Levels One and Two will move on to the **Winners Level**. An independent panel of judges will evaluate these finalists and choose the *Riley Award* winner. The remaining four (4) finalists will receive *Honorable Mention* awards.

TIMELINE

- **Level One** applications must be *received* in the SC-SIC office by 5:00 p.m. on **Friday, December 4, 2020**.
- SC-SIC will announce *Honor Roll* members and notify semi-finalists for **Level Two** on or before **Wednesday, January 6, 2021**.
- Notebooks from semi-finalists for **Level Two** must be *received* in the SC-SIC office by 5:00 p.m. on **Wednesday, February 10, 2021**.
- The five (5) finalists will be notified on or before **Wednesday, March 10, 2021**.
- The winner of the 2021 *Riley Award* will be announced at an SC-SIC awards event in Columbia in Spring 2021 where *Honor Roll* and *Honorable Mention* SICs will also be recognized.

SC-SIC 2021 RILEY AWARD APPLICATION
LEVEL ONE APPLICATION (Maximum of 100 Points Possible)

No substantive changes have been made to the Level One application from the 2020 application. Instructions have been modified in some instances for greater clarity.

Please submit the following information to the SC-SIC Board of Trustees Awards Committee:

1. Cover Page – 5 Points

- Name and address of school.
- Name of principal with phone number and email address.
- Complete contact information for the SIC Chair to include home/work address, telephone number, and email address.
- Name of school district.
- Award Year (i.e., Application for 2021 *Riley Award*).

TIP: No need to be fancy here. Points will not be deducted for a plain sheet of paper. Points will be deducted if any of the information requested is not included.

2. Case Statement – 65 Points

- The Case Statement is a narrative describing how the SIC identified needs and challenges in the school and then responded to create positive results for the school and its community. The narrative must include: issue(s), action(s) taken, and result(s). The Case Statement should clearly identify when results occurred. Case Statements will be judged primarily on results that occurred during the **2019-20** school year, although actions may have been initiated in prior school year(s). If the activities described in the Case Statement did not begin to produce observable results until the current **2020-21** school year, your application will be deemed ineligible for consideration until the *2022 Riley Award* cycle and returned to your SIC.
- Include sufficient school demographic information to provide context for your SIC's work.
- The Statement must be written collaboratively by the SIC. It does not have to be on letterhead or in letter format. The signature of the current SIC Chair must appear on the last page of this Statement. *(It is not sufficient to type the name of the Chair - an actual signature is required. Photocopied, scanned, or faxed copies of the signature are acceptable).*
- The Statement must not exceed three (3) pages.
- Use 10 point or larger Times New Roman or Arial fonts only.
- Margins may not be less than .5".

TIP: It is expected that most SIC actions will be accomplished in partnership with the school and/or other individuals and organizations. It is important, however, to identify the specific ways that the SIC itself contributed to the collaborative effort. General statements about positive results at your school will not earn points if the judges cannot determine if or how your SIC assisted in achieving those results.

3. Membership lists demonstrating SIC composition in compliance with state law - 15 Points

- Applicants must submit TWO separate SIC membership lists: one for the 2019-20 school year and one for the current 2020-21 school year. Each list must reflect SIC membership as it was reported to the *SC-SIC Member Network* as of November 15 of each year.
- Each list must be submitted on the official *Riley Award* membership form for the corresponding school year (attach additional sheets as necessary). The *Riley Award* membership forms can be found in "Part 2" of the *Riley Award* application posted on our website at <https://sic.sc.gov/sic-information/sics-sic-leaders/apply-riley-award>. If you have any difficulty in locating or using these forms, please contact SC-SIC for assistance. Membership lists submitted in any other manner or format (including printouts from the *Member Network*) will be subject to an automatic deduction of three (3) points.

In order to receive full credit:

Each list must demonstrate that as of the November 15 reporting deadline, the SIC met all state law membership requirements:

- at least the minimum of two (2) Elected parent representatives;
- at least the minimum of two (2) Elected teacher representatives;
- for schools serving Grade 9 and above only, at least the minimum of two (2) Elected student representatives;
- half as many Appointed community members as the combined total of Elected members (parent, teacher, and, if applicable, student members) so that the SIC has a ratio of 2/3 Elected to 1/3 Appointed members;
- the Principal and any other Ex-Officio members called for in the SIC's bylaws. (These are not counted in the Elected/Appointed membership ratio.)

TIP: The information your school reports to the SC-SIC Member Network is considered the official public record of your school's SIC membership. The information on your 2020-21 Riley Award membership form will be checked against and must match the information that your SIC has posted on the Member Network for the 2020-21 school year. You can check the information that appears on the Member Network for your school via the "View the SIC Members (Read Only)" function on the SC-SIC Member Network, <https://sic.ed.sc.edu/network/>.

TIP: When designating the member type, (i.e., parent, teacher, student, community, principal, or other), check only the box that matches the capacity in which the individual is serving on the SIC. For example, an individual may be both a parent and a PTA president. If the individual is an SIC member because he/she was elected as a parent representative, you should check only the "Parent" box. If, however, the individual is an SIC member because the bylaws call for the PTA president to be an Ex-Officio member of the SIC, you should check only the "Other" box.

TIP: The method of selection should match state law requirements. For example, the method of selection for parent, teacher, and student representatives (high school) must be Elected; the method of selection for community members must be Appointed.

***TIP for Elementary and Middle Schools Only:** Some elementary and middle schools choose to have student representatives on their SIC even though they are not required to do so by law. Because these student members are voluntary, the SC-SIC Member Network will permit SICs at elementary and middle schools to report the method of selection as either elected or Ex-Officio. If your SIC's report to the Member Network classified student members as Elected, these students must be included when calculating the ratio of total Elected to Appointed members. If your SIC's report to the Member Network classified these students as Ex-Officio, however, they should not be included when calculating your SIC's Elected to Appointed membership ratio. In either case, you should report such students on your Riley Award membership form in exactly the same way as you reported them to the Member Network and calculate your membership ratio accordingly.*

4. Three Letters of Support - 15 Points

- Letters of Support must expand and reflect upon the SIC goals, activities, and results described in the Case Statement and should refer specifically to the work of your SIC.
- One Letter of Support must be from the current Principal for the 2020-21 school year. *If your principal is new to the position this year, you may submit a letter that is co-authored and co-signed by the school's principals from last year and this year.*
- Two (2) additional Letters of Support may be written by anyone the SIC chooses, including, but not limited to: a student, parent, community member, business supporter, district staff, or school board member - so long as they were not members of either the 2019-20 or the current 2020-21 SIC.
- Each Letter of Support must be signed. *(It is not sufficient to type the name of the author - an actual signature is required. Photocopied, scanned, or faxed copies of the signature are acceptable.)*
- Each Letter of Support is worth a maximum of five (5) points.

- Each letter may not exceed one (1) page and should be addressed to the SC-SIC Awards Committee.
- Use 10 point or larger Times New Roman or Arial fonts only, or the letter may be handwritten.

TIP: Be sure that your Letters of Support refer specifically to one or more of the SIC accomplishments identified in your Case Statement. Hearing how much someone likes your school or enjoyed the carnival sponsored by the PTA will not earn points from the judges.

TIP: When selecting individuals to write the two (2) additional Letters of Support, remember that the judges are most interested in hearing from individuals who can back up the results reported in your Case Statement, either because they are personally familiar with your work or because they have benefited directly from the results of your work. The fact that an individual holds a prominent position in the school or community is not as important as the level of knowledge that individual can share about your SIC's contributions to your school. The judges will appreciate it if you indicate the role or title as well as the name of the author of each letter (e.g. Jane Doe, Parent; John Smith, Literacy Coach; Ed Jones, Community Member, etc.).

*TIP: If the name of an individual writing one of the two (2) additional Letters of Support matches a name on the **2019-20 and/or 2020-21 SIC Membership Lists**, the letter will be disqualified and no points will be awarded for that letter. If the name of the writer matches a name on the membership list(s) but they are, in fact, two different people, the letter must provide enough identifying information to establish that fact for the judges.*

TIP: It is not necessary that each Letter of Support address the results of every activity described in your Case Statement. Taken together, however, there should be support in at least one Letter for each of the activities/results your SIC is relying on in your application.

OVERALL LEVEL ONE APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS

- **Applications (including the cover sheet) must not exceed seven (7) pages. (This seven-page maximum does not include the required SIC membership lists, which may be of varying length depending upon the size of your particular SIC.)**
- **Applications (when submitted in hard copy) should be stapled in the upper left-hand corner. Please do not bind, clip, or put applications into a folder for submission.**
- **Use of font sizes, styles, or margins other than those specified in the application requirements above will result in an automatic deduction of five (5) points from the application's overall score.**
- **The original application (or a scanned copy of the original if submitted by email) must be received in the SC-SIC office by 5:00 p.m., Friday, December 4, 2020. Maintain an additional copy of the application for your records; you will need it if your application receives semi-finalist status and competes in Level Two of the award process.**
- **Applications may be submitted by US Mail, FedEx, or UPS; delivered by hand; or scanned and emailed to the SC-SIC office. Applications will not be considered "submitted" unless you receive written/emailed confirmation of receipt from SC-SIC.**

MAIL applications to:

SC-SIC Riley Award
 SC School Improvement Council
 USC College of Education
 Wardlaw Building, Suite 001
 820 Main Street
 Columbia, SC 29208

DELIVER applications to:

SC School Improvement Council
 USC College of Education
 Wardlaw Building, Suite 001
 820 Main Street
 Columbia, SC 29208

EMAIL applications to:

utter@email.sc.edu
 Subject: 2021 Riley Awards

SC-SIC 2021 Riley Award
LEVEL TWO APPLICATION (Maximum of 45 Points Possible)

PLEASE NOTE THE FOLLOWING SUBSTANTIVE CHANGES FROM THE 2020 LEVEL TWO APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS:

- In past years, SICs have been required to submit a minimum of eight (8) sets of minutes for the preceding school year, in part to demonstrate that they have met at least eight times in accordance with SC-SIC guidelines. Recognizing that school closures related to COVID-19 may have disrupted SIC meeting schedules in 2019-20, the minimum number of sets of meeting minutes required for this year's application has been reduced from eight (8) to six (6). Schools that met more frequently than the minimum should submit their minutes from all meetings, and this will be factored into their overall score.
- SC-SIC extended the deadline for SICs to distribute their 2020 *SIC Report to the Parents* from April 30, 2020 to November 1, 2020. The deadline for posting 2020 *Reports* to the *SIC Member Network* was extended from June 1, 2020 to December 1, 2020. *SIC Reports to the Parents* for the 2019-20 school year that were distributed and posted on or before these extended deadlines will be considered timely for the purposes of the 2021 *Riley Award* competition.
- SICs are not required to submit a copy of the narrative section of the school's 2020 *SC School Report Card* with Level Two applications this year. The maximum of five (5) points normally allotted to this category have been eliminated. Thus, the total number of points available for Level Two applications this year is 45 rather than 50.

2021 Riley Award Level Two Instructions:

Applicants receiving at least 85 points in Level One will be named to the *SIC Honor Roll*. Up to 20 *Honor Roll* SICs will be chosen as semi-finalists for the *Riley Award* and will compete in Level Two of the award process. SICs selected to compete as semi-finalists will be notified on or before Wednesday, **January 6, 2021**.

In Level Two, semi-finalists are expected to demonstrate that they have fulfilled additional basic components required by law and SC-SIC guidelines, as detailed in *This is Your SIC - A Handbook for Effectiveness* (available online at <https://sic.sc.gov>). Submit a standard-size, clearly labeled and tabbed three-ring binder containing the following items:

1. A complete copy of the Level One application. (Points awarded in Level One will be carried over.)

TIP: Make sure you include this in your binder. Failure to include the Level One application in its entirety (including the cover page) will result in an automatic deduction of 10 points from your total score.

2. Copy of Current SIC Bylaws - 10 Points

TIP: Submit a copy of the bylaws currently in effect for your SIC showing the month/year the current version was approved and adopted by the SIC.

3. A copy of all meeting minutes or records of action for the 2019-20 school year – 10 Points

TIP: Include minutes from regular meetings of the full SIC. In accordance with SC-SIC guidelines for the frequency of local SIC meetings (but recognizing the impact of the COVID-19 school closures), it is expected that no fewer than six (6) sets of meeting minutes will be submitted for review. Minutes for committee or cluster meetings do not count toward the required six (6) sets of regular meeting minutes for your SIC. If you wish to include committee or cluster meeting minutes to further illustrate your SIC's work, they may be submitted under the "Additional Materials" tab in your Level Two binder.

4. A copy of the SIC's 2020 Report to the Parents – 10 Points

TIP: This is the report published by the SIC by the extended deadline of November 1, 2020 and posted to the SC-SIC Member Network by December 1, 2020. It should reflect the SIC's activities for the 2019-2020 school year. This Report should not be confused with any type of annual report issued by the school itself.

5. Brief one-page narrative describing the SIC's progress on goals established during the previous school year as well as any new goals established for the current year – 15 points

TIP: This narrative must not be longer than one page, using 10 point or larger Times New Roman or Arial fonts only. Margins may not be less than .5". The narrative should demonstrate to the judges the SIC's continuity of work from the 2019-20 to the 2020-21 school year. It should briefly reflect on the goals and projects identified by the SIC during the previous school year, highlight outcomes/results, and provide information on the SIC's next steps in achieving existing and/or new goals during the current school year. It is suggested that SICs also briefly address the impact, if any, that the COVID-19 pandemic has had on the SIC's priorities for school improvement this year.

ADDITIONAL MATERIALS - Semi-finalists may submit additional evidence to support their application as an exemplary SIC. No additional points will be awarded for such materials, but they may be used by the Awards Committee to assist in assessing the overall quality of the application should it advance to the Winners Level.

Additional materials may include, but are not limited to, items such as newsletters, videos and photos, event programs, newspaper articles, work plans, correspondence, or other items. These materials should add to the judges' understanding of how your SIC accomplished its goals and/or the outcomes or results of the SIC's actions. These materials may also be copied or republished by SC-SIC at some point in the future to assist other SICs in replicating or adapting similar activities for their schools.

Materials need not fit inside the binder but should be clearly labeled so judges know to which school they belong. It is recommended that the SIC include one or more carefully chosen items; there is no need to submit a large amount of supportive material. These items will not be returned.

TIP: Be sure all items submitted relate specifically to your SIC! Make sure the judges can see how each item relates to activities in your Case Statement.

OVERALL LEVEL TWO APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS

- **Submissions should be received in the SC-SIC office no later than 5:00 p.m., Wednesday, February 10, 2021.**
- **Use of font sizes, styles, or margins other than those specified in the application requirements above will result in an automatic deduction of five (5) points from the application's overall score.**
- **Level Two application narratives exceeding the one (1) page maximum specified above will result in an automatic deduction of five (5) points from the application's overall score.**
- **SICs are strongly discouraged from using plastic sheet protectors for any part of the application other than submissions that cannot readily be three-hole punched.**
- **Level Two binders may be submitted by US Mail, FedEx or UPS, or delivered by hand only; they may not be submitted by email. Mail/delivery addresses for Level Two submissions are the same as those listed under the instructions for Level One applications.**

**SC-SIC 2021 *Riley Award*
WINNERS LEVEL**

The five (5) finalists selected by the SC-SIC Board of Trustees Awards Committee for the Winners Level will be notified of their status by Wednesday, **March 10, 2021**.

An independent panel of judges with expertise in school/community activities and who do not currently serve on the SC-SIC Board of Trustees will review both Level One and Two applications from all five (5) finalists and will determine the winner of the *Riley Award*. Applications will be reviewed on their individual overall merits without point values assigned or the independent judges having knowledge of scores they received during Levels One and Two. The four (4) remaining finalists will receive *Honorable Mention* awards.

The recipient of the 2021 *Riley Award* will remain secret until the winner is announced this Spring 2021 in Columbia. Representatives from each of the five (5) finalist SICs will be invited to attend this event at no charge and asked to make a short presentation about their SIC's work.

Questions? Call 1-800-868-2232 or 803-777-7658, or email utter@email.sc.edu. Additional information on the *Dick and Tunky Riley Award for School Improvement Council Excellence* is also available online at <https://sic.sc.gov>.

SC-SIC is not responsible for late, lost, or misdirected mail or deliveries.

Applications not submitted according to these guidelines are subject to a deduction of points or possible disqualification.

All decisions of the award judges are final.