

# SC-SIC Council News



**"Civic Engagement at Work for Public Education"**

Volume 39, Issue 2, 2019

## Five SICs Named 2019 Riley Award for SIC Excellence Finalists

Five South Carolina School Improvement Councils (SICs) have been named state-wide 2019 award finalists for their accomplishments in parent and civic engagement within their school communities.

The SC School Improvement Council's annual *Dick and Tunky Riley Award for School Improvement Council Excellence* was created in 2002



to recognize the significant contributions

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## 2019 SC-SIC Annual Meeting Scheduled for March 30

The SC School Improvement Council's 2019 Annual Meeting will be held on Saturday, March 30, at the Heyward Career and Technology Center, 3560 Lynhaven Drive, Columbia, SC, 29204.

SIC members from across the state will gather for a day of speakers on topics of interest to local SIC members and to recognize the finalists and winner of the 2019 *Dick and Tunky Riley Award for SIC Excellence*.

The day's agenda will include Dr. Daniella Cook of the University of South Carolina's College of Education speaking on the importance of academic rigor; Ms. Seanna Adcox, Assistant Columbia Bureau Chief for the *Charleston Post and Courier*, on the newspaper's "Minimally Adequate" series regarding education reform in South Carolina; and Mr. Jeff Maxey, the state's 2019 Teacher of the Year, speaking on the teaching profession.

Attendees will also hear presentations from the five finalists for SC-SIC's 2019 *Dick and Tunky Riley Award for SIC Excellence*: Chandler Creek Elementary SIC; Chapin Middle SIC; Flowertown Elementary SIC; Hilton Head Island High SIC; and Hilton Head Island Middle SC.

SC-SIC's 2019 *SIC Advocate of the Year* and the recipient of this year's 2019 *Award of Merit for SIC Report to the Parents Excellence* will also be announced, with the day culminating in the naming of the 2019 *Riley Award for SIC Excellence*.

This will be a great day of sharing and learning, as well as celebrating the significant accomplishments of SICs working to make a lasting impact for their school communities.

The registration fee for the meeting is only \$30.00 in advance (check, money order or P.O., made payable to SC School Improvement Council) and includes lunch and materials. The 2019 Annual Meeting registration form and agenda are available on the SC-SIC website, <http://sic.sc.gov>. Please note that you must print and mail, email or fax the registration form to the SC-SIC office as the form cannot be submitted electronically. Registrations and payment must be made by Friday, March 22.

We look forward to seeing you at the SC-SIC 2019 Annual Meeting on Saturday, March 30, in Columbia!

# Message from the Executive Director

*Tom F. Hudson*



Spring is upon us, and this time of year – after the fall semester – can be an active one for our state’s School Improvement Councils.

In addition to their usual work through monthly planning and meetings, SICs have the opportunity to take part in the SC-SIC Annual Meeting in Columbia (see related article in this issue). This event, scheduled for March 30 this year, provides a time for SIC members to gather from across the state to share and learn, hear from dynamic speakers, and recognize finalists and the winner of the annual *Dick and Tunky Riley Award for SIC Excellence*, as well as to honor the *SIC Advocate of the Year*.

During the Annual Meeting this year, we will also recognize the second annual recipient of the *Award of Merit for SIC Report to the Parents Excellence*. The timing of this award is fitting, as all SICs are required in state statute to produce and distribute their *Report to the Parents* by April 30 each year.

This *Report* is a particularly important piece of an SIC’s work as it is intended to provide members of the school community with key information about their school’s performance goals, how the SIC has supported them, what results have been achieved for the academic year, and other highlights about the school and the SIC’s efforts.

The *SIC Report to the Parents* has a unique place in the lives of schools as it intended to be prepared primarily by the SIC with input from the principal, differing from, say, a school or district annual report. While state statute provides some guidance in terms of the *Report’s* contents, SC-SIC has prepared additional resources and materials on its website, <http://sic.sc.gov>, in terms of an “SIC Report to the Parents Toolkit” offering tips, suggestions, and examples for local SIC use in crafting their *Reports*.

Additionally, SICs are requested to upload a PDF of their *Reports* to the SC-SIC *Member Network* by June 1 each year, so that members of the public from anywhere in South Carolina can view these *Reports* and other SICs can glean ideas on how to improve theirs in the years to come.

So, now is the time for your SIC to be thinking about its annual *SIC Report to the Parents* if you haven’t already done so. The resources to help you are available online – and the SC-SIC office is also ready

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## SC-SIC Board of Trustees

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Your comments and articles are welcome.

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# New Carolina Family Engagement Center Seeks Partner Schools to Help Engage ALL Parents in Their Children's Education



*Equity, Opportunity & Excellence in Education*

The Carolina Family Engagement Center (CFEC), housed in the SC School Improvement Council at the UofSC College of Education, is excited to offer SC schools free intensive training and technical assistance in family engagement over a four-year period beginning in the 2019-20 school year.

A total of 24 K-12 public schools in South Carolina with a poverty index of at least 60% will be selected to receive this comprehensive set of services. Preference will be given to feeder schools in the same district that apply together, but no more than four schools will be chosen from any one district or region of the state.

A CFEC regional family engagement liaison will team up with the principal and stakeholder group at each participat-

ing school over the next four years to help create, implement, and evaluate a school-wide family engagement plan that is tied to existing goals for student achievement and development. During this time, CFEC liaisons will deliver ongoing, targeted training and coaching directly to both school personnel and families to ensure that they have the knowledge, skills, and other resources needed to partner effectively to support student learning.

CFEC isn't seeking to duplicate existing school plans or introduce complicated new models or frameworks. Rather, CFEC liaisons will help schools identify what is working and what isn't; coordinate existing plans to focus on existing school improvement goals; and enhance schools' abilities to use evidence-based frameworks or models already in place, such as the one developed by the National Network of Partnership Schools (NNPS), more effectively.

CFEC recognizes that many schools need assistance in reaching those families who face difficult barriers to engagement. We are especially focused on serving families with low incomes, those who do not speak English as a first language, who come from underserved racial and ethnic minority groups, have children with disabilities and special needs, foster children, or who are currently homeless or migrant workers. CFEC liaisons will draw on the expertise and resources of the UofSC College of Education as well as CFEC's partner organizations to help schools develop culturally responsive outreach strategies for these families. Our goal is to ensure that these families are using the most effective practices to support their children's learning in partnership with their schools.

CFEC services are made possible through a generous grant from the U.S. Department of Education as part of the State-wide Family Engagement Center program created by the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA). The UofSC College of Education and SC-SIC are proud that our state was chosen as one of the first twelve states in the U.S. to receive funding. Let's work together and use this opportunity to make South Carolina a national leader in family engagement that improves educational outcomes for all students.

**If your school would like more information about this important opportunity or would like to schedule an informational interview, please contact CFEC Project Director Karen Utter at [utter@email.sc.edu](mailto:utter@email.sc.edu) or 800-868-2232 by Friday, April 26, 2019.**

*The Carolina Family Engagement Center is funded through a grant from the U.S. Department of Education under ESSA*

# UofSC and Benedict College to Host Summit on Education Improvement

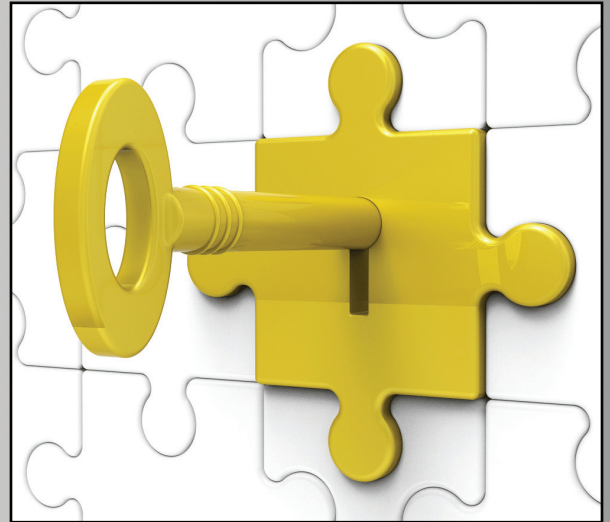
The University of South Carolina College of Education and Benedict College will host a two-day event in Columbia, “Building a State of Opportunity: How to Continue Improving Public Education,” on March 28 and 29.

This summit will focus on education reform in South Carolina by learning what we are doing in the state that works and identifying a plan for going forward.

From 6:00 to 8:00 p.m. on Thursday, March 28, the public is invited to a town hall event moderated by Cynthia Pryor Hardy, focused on the successful opportunities for quality education being implemented in South Carolina classrooms right now. Titled “When Opportunity Knocks,” this community town hall event will be held at Benedict College’s Swinton Campus Center Ballroom, 1616 Oak Street, Columbia. A light dinner will be provided.

The following day, Friday, March 29, from 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m., a discussion and workshop titled “A Call to Action and Next Steps: Now What?” will be held in the Benedict College Kimpson Center, 111 Doctor’s Circle, Columbia. For this event, education policy advocates will guide participants in developing a year-long action plan to guide reform across the state.

The summit’s intended audience will include legislators, teachers, administrators and policy makers, and community organizers. Representatives from UofSC, Benedict College, the SC General Assembly, the SC Education Association, SC for Ed, NAACP, the Quality Education Project Richland One, and other organizations will share what they are doing to build the state’s “Corridor of Opportunity.”



For more information on these events, contact Dr. Jon Hale at the UofSC College of Education, (803) 777-1937, or [jnhale@mailbox.sc.edu](mailto:jnhale@mailbox.sc.edu).

## Quick Questions to Help Improve Communication

It’s been said that two monologues do not make a dialogue. And sometimes, despite our best intentions, we need to take stock of how we – or how we don’t – communicate. In its January 2019 issue of *PRincipal Communicator*, the National School Public Relations Association (NSPRA) offers the following tips for building leaders to sharpen communication skills with their school communities.

At a staff [or SIC] meeting, ask your teachers and support staff [or SIC members] about your school by brainstorming about the following topics:

- At our school, I am especially proud of \_\_\_\_\_
- I wish more parents knew the following about our school \_\_\_\_\_
- I wish the community knew the following about our school \_\_\_\_\_
- The most misunderstood things about our school by parents are \_\_\_\_\_
- Parent communication could improve if teachers would \_\_\_\_\_
- Parent communication would improve if parents would \_\_\_\_\_

Once you gather results, share them and start assessing how you can improve communication. The answers to the first three questions should give you a better idea of information gaps. And the answers about how to improve parent communications should lead to just that.

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# Childhood Hunger and the *Summer Food Service Program*

Do you suspect that one of your children's classmates at school is not getting enough to eat at home? Chances are, you're right. One in six kids in the United States doesn't know where their next meal will come from. Put in perspective, that means that if there are 25 kids in your child's class, four of them could be struggling with hunger.

According to *Feeding America*, the nation's largest domestic hunger-relief organization, kids experiencing food insecurity are less equipped to reach their full potential. Studies show they are more likely to have lower math scores, repeat a grade, and experience developmental impairments in language, motor skills, and behavior areas. They may struggle to concentrate in class and fall behind academically. They may also be more likely to miss school due to illness and suffer from irritability, low self-esteem, or a lack of energy.

It can be challenging to identify a child facing hunger. They may feel ashamed and actively work to keep their suffering hidden from adults who are charged with helping them. Signs include:

- Asking about food every day and not being picky about what they are served
- Losing or gaining weight without a change in activity level
- Hoarding snacks and food
- Bullying others or behaving badly
- Poor attention span, memory, or trouble concentrating
- Hyperactivity or poor impulse control
- Exhibiting aggressive or antisocial behavior

"Children need nutrients so that they can grow, develop and focus on learning instead of thinking about the food they need," says Christina Martinez, Program Manager of Children and Families at *Feeding America*. "Ultimately, they need to be able to concentrate in the classroom, so they can succeed and reach their full potential."

The U.S. Department of Agriculture created the *Special Food Service Program for Children* in 1968 to ensure that meals were provided to children when school wasn't in session. In 1975 an offshoot of the program, the *Summer Food Service Program* (SFSP), was established. In most states, the program is administered by the state Department of Education and sponsored by:

- Public or private nonprofit schools
- Units of local, municipal, county, tribal, or state government
- Private nonprofit organizations
- Public or private nonprofit camps
- Public or private nonprofit universities or college

State health and social service departments may administer the program in some areas. According to the SC Department of Education website at <https://ed.sc.gov/districts-schools/nutrition/special-programs/usda-summer-meal-programs/summer-food-service-program/>, there are four ways organizations and individuals can participate in SFSP. As a sponsor, organizations that provide community services and have the capability of managing a food service program can receive training, then establish and manage meal venues. Other organizations that don't provide financial or administrative support can supervise services, while those that can provide kitchens and food service staff may become vendors. Associations and individuals can also support SFSP as volunteers. Operations receive payments from US Department of Agriculture (through their state agencies) for the meals they serve.

Meal sites known as "open sites" operate in low-income areas where at least half of the children aged 18 and younger are eligible for free and reduced-price school meals. Free meals are served to any child at these sites. "Enrolled sites" offer meals to children enrolled in programs at the site where at least half are eligible for free and reduced-price meals; these sites receive payment only for meals served to eligible children. Meals at both types of sites are also available to persons with disabilities, over age 18, who participate in school programs for people who are mentally or physically disabled. At most sites, children receive either one or two meals a day.

SC-SIC believes that adults have a responsibility to the next generation to give them every opportunity to succeed and, in turn, strengthen our communities and our country. For information in English and Spanish on how to participate in the SFSP, visit the U.S. Department of Agriculture website at <https://www.fns.usda.gov/sfsp/sfsp-fact-sheets>. To find Summer Meal sites in your area, visit the SC Department of Education website at <https://ed.sc.gov/districts-schools/nutrition/special-programs/usda-summer-meal-programs/map/>.

Citation: <https://www.feedingamerica.org/hunger-blog/how-to-tell-if-a-child-is>

## 2019 Riley Award Finalists Named

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made to public education by the nearly 14,000 local SIC members who volunteer in the state's 1,100-plus K-12 public schools.

In alphabetical order, this year's *Riley Award* finalists are:

- Chandler Creek Elementary SIC (Greenville County Schools)
- Chapin Middle SIC (School District Five of Lexington and Richland Counties)
- Flowertown Elementary SIC (Dorchester School District Two)
- Hilton Head Island High SIC (Beaufort County School District)
- Hilton Head Island Middle SIC (Beaufort County School District)

“Congratulations to these School Improvement Councils on this recognition of their outstanding efforts on behalf of their schools and students,” said SC-SIC Board of Trustees Chair Dora Leonard. “These SICs are evidence of the meaningful impact that parents, educators, students, and community members can make when they work collaboratively on shared goals.”

The winner of this year's *Riley Award* will be selected from this year's finalists by an independent panel of reviewers and announced during the 2019 SC-SIC Annual Meeting, Saturday, March 30, in Columbia.

The SC-SIC *Riley Award for SIC Excellence* is named in honor of former SC Governor and U.S. Education Secretary Richard Riley and his late wife, Tunkny, and recognizes the couple's longstanding commitment to quality public education.



Dick & Tunkny Riley Award  
for  
School Improvement Council  
Excellence

## From the Executive Director

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to help you with your questions. Simply call the office at 1-800-868-2232, or email us at [sic@mailbox.sc.edu](mailto:sic@mailbox.sc.edu). We'll do all we can to assist you in making your SIC's *Report* informative, appealing, and a contender for next year's *Award of Merit for SIC Report to the Parents Excellence!*

