

**SOUTH CAROLINA EDUCATION OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE**  
**Minutes of the Meeting**  
**October 8, 2012**

Members Present: Mr. Robinson; Mr. Bowers; Mr. Drew; Senator Fair; Senator Hayes; Mrs. Hairfield; Mr. Martin; Dr. Merck; Rep. Neal; Rep. Patrick; Rep. Smith; Mr. Warner; Mr. Whittemore; and Dr. Zais

- I. Welcome and Introductions: Mr. Robinson welcomed members and guests to the meeting. He introduced the newest member of the EOC, Mr. Phillip Bowers, who is the Speaker's business appointee to the EOC, filling the unexpired term of Mr. Terry Brown.
- II. Approval of the Minutes of the August 8, 2012 Meeting - Mr. Drew noted an error in the minutes regarding the number of charter schools operating in the state. Mr. Warner also asked that the minutes be amended regarding the discussion on the ability of the new consortium assessments to reflect concern that the assessments may not be able to assess skills and dispositions. The minutes as amended were approved.
- III. Key Constituencies - Catalytic Leadership Initiative  
The chairman introduced the Catalytic Leadership Initiative, a group of individuals from across the spectrum (education, business, and community leaders) who have as their mission "to improve the quality of life of children of color and children of poverty within the state of South Carolina by creating, facilitating and maintaining catalytic connections and a strategic work plan which transcends political, geographical, organizational and generational boundaries." Specifically the group has targeted for key areas: education; health care; poverty and juvenile justice. The South Carolina Legislative Black Caucus is a partner of the initiative. The chairman then called upon Rep. Neal to introduce his fellow Initiative members who were in attendance.

Speaking for the Catalytic Leadership Initiative, Dr. Ronald Epps, former superintendent of Richland School District One described the collaborations that are working to establishing strategic connections and partnerships that focus on symbiotic interdependence of social programs and identifying strategic initiatives in the four areas to address - education, health, poverty and criminal justice.

Mr. Warner noted that diversity even exists in Greenville County. Dr. Epps responded that all schools have diversity but the same pedagogy of teaching is good for all. Dr. Merck asked about the impact of the Common Core State Standards on graduation rates. Dr. Epps responded that rigor has become more meaningful than ever with professional development being the key.

Rep. Neal followed up by talking about the importance of having community involvement, motivating parents and the community, to address the negative impact of poverty on children. The community has to play a role for positive changes to occur for children.

Rep. Smith asked how the state can get parents, whose children attend failing schools, to become involved. Dr. Epps concurred and noted that the Catalytic Leadership Initiative is now reaching out to the faith-based community to engage parents.

## Subcommittee Reports

The committee then turned to the Subcommittee reports.

### A. Academic Standards and Assessments:

Dr. Merck was recognized. First, regarding the Palmetto Gold and Silver Reward Program, Dr. Merck presented the following subcommittee recommendations along with a rationale for each:

Recommendation 1: The criteria used to evaluate Palmetto Gold and Silver Award winners based on the release of the 2012 state report cards should be amended accordingly. Regarding schools with steady growth, only schools that have a growth rating of Good or better for two consecutive years would receive a Palmetto Silver award. Schools that have a growth index of Average or better for three years would not be eligible for a Palmetto Silver Award.

Recommendation 2: The Accountability Division of the EOC will analyze the results of the 2012 state report cards and propose alternative criteria for the Palmetto Gold and Silver Award Program to the Academic Standards and Assessment Subcommittee for the 2013 state report card release. Significant changes to the Palmetto Gold and Silver criteria should be consistent with the implementation of the new value table and indices for determining growth ratings for the 2013 state report card ratings.

Dr. Zais asked for clarification if the subcommittee had recommended a specific model based on the May report. Mrs. Barton replied that the subcommittee had not endorsed one of the models but would analyze the results of the 2012 state report cards and the change to the growth index to make additional recommendations for \*the subsequent Palmetto Gold and Silver recognitions.

The committee then unanimously adopted both recommendations.

Then, Dr. Merck presented the initial comments of the subcommittee regarding the composition of cyclical review of the accountability system. Mr. Warner noted that the existing accountability system is not adequate and should promote innovation as was recommended by the EOC in the innovation proviso that was vetoed. Rep. Neal concurred that accountability must be broader than the acquisition of knowledge.

### B. EIA and Improvement Mechanisms

Mr. Drew was recognized. He stated that the EIA and Improvement Mechanisms Subcommittee will begin its budget deliberations on October 22.

### C. Public Awareness

Mrs. Hairfield called upon Dana Yow of the EOC staff to review the public awareness campaign for 2012-13 as well as to reflect upon the actions taken last year. Ms. Yow focused on changes to the plan which include: (1) targeting business community; (2)

considering outdoor advertising; (3) expanding social media; (4) conducting a video contest focused on innovation for middle and high school students; (5) updating Family Friendly Standards; and (6) engaging public in cyclical review of the accountability system.

V. EOC Objectives for FY2012-13

The committee then reviewed the draft EOC objectives for 2012-13. Mr. Warner emphasized that the objectives do not adequately address the need to create urgency around improving public education. Mr. Drew noted that the objectives are specific goals that must be accomplished for the year. Mr. Warner pressed the members that the EOC must be bold, dramatic recommendations this year that raise the public awareness that progress and innovation need to occur; otherwise, the EOC is another example of fragmented governance. Mr. Warner suggested that the EOC needs to be the catalyst for transforming public education and can do so with bold recommendations.

Rep. Neal shared Mr. Warner's frustration and the need for innovation and transformation. Innovation must come from everyone – engage communities to move forward. Mr. Drew concurred with the sense of urgency and suggested that the cyclical review and public awareness campaign may be the avenues to raise these issues. Sen. Hayes reflected that the EOC's reputation as being an independent body that provides accurate information and is courageous to report the hard numbers and to report on how South Carolina is doing is vital. Rep. Smith concurred that the EOC's input is important to legislators.

The discussion then turned to governance issues. Dr. Zais noted that more autonomy at the local level is needed and more accountability for student performance. Dr. Zais affirmed that teacher and principal evaluations should hold teachers and principals accountable for student performance. Rep. Neal noted that more than one approach is needed to address failing schools. Engaging parents, communities as well as engaging all resources, not just educational services, are important.

VI. Adjournment

Having no other business, the EOC adjourned.