

SOUTH CAROLINA EDUCATION OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE
Minutes of the Meeting
April 9, 2012

Members Present: Mr. Robinson, Mrs. Hairfield, Mr. Drew, Senator Fair, Senator Hayes, Mr. Martin, Dr. Merck, Rep. Neal; Rep. J. Roland Smith; Mrs. Taylor; Mr. Warner; Mr. Whittemore and Dr. Zais

- I. Welcome and Introductions: Mr. Robinson welcomed members and guests to the meeting.
- II. Approval of the Minutes of February 13, 2012: The minutes of February 13, 2012 were approved as distributed.

Mr. Robinson called upon Mrs. Barton who informed the members that the South Carolina Geographic Alliance won first prize, the Arthur Robinson Award for Best Printed Map, for the map *Natural Hazards of South Carolina* and honorable mention in the same category for the map *Religious Diversity in South Carolina*. The Cartography and Geographic Information Society sponsored the international competition.

III. Key Constituencies

Presenting before the EOC were the following individuals from Communities In Schools: Jane Riley-Gambrell, Executive Director, the Charleston Area; Terry Linder, Executive Director, the Midlands; and Susie Smith, Executive Director, Greenville. With the mission of Communities In Schools (CIS) being “to surround students with a community of support, empowering them to stay in school and achieve in life, the presenters described the CIS Model of Integrated Student Supports and the future of the program in South Carolina. The individuals focused on the goal of reestablishing a South Carolina State Office that will actively support the capacity of local communities to build strong Communities In Schools organizations and provide statewide leadership through:

- Statewide partnerships and resources
- Marketing and advocacy and productive government relationships
- State network management and development
- Training and technical assistance
- Data collection, management and reporting

Senator Fair, Rep. Neal and Mrs. Taylor asked questions about how the state office would be created and funded and how many counties are currently not being served by CIS.

IV. Subcommittee Reports

The committee then turned to the Subcommittee reports.

- A. Academic Standards and Assessments: Dr. Merck summarized the recommendation of the Subcommittee to amend the growth value table beginning in

school year 2012-13 that is used in the calculation of the growth index. There being no discussion, the motion was approved unanimously.

- B. EIA and Improvement Mechanisms: Mr. Drew summarized the findings and recommendations of the Teacher Loan Report. The three recommendations in the report include: (1) changing the statutory definition of critical geographic need schools from schools with a poverty index of 70% or greater to a poverty index of 80% or greater; (2) the EOC considering including in its budget recommendations for FY2013-14 an increase in EIA appropriation for the program to provide funding for individuals who qualify for the program but are denied the loan due to insufficient funds; and (3) the creation of a policy board of governance or an existing state agency to be the central authority of the program to set goals, allocate funding, etc. There being no discussion, the report was approved unanimously.

Mr. Drew then summarized the key findings of a report summarizing the findings of the 2011 Parent Survey. The report includes two recommendations: (1) a review of the items on the teacher, parent and student survey, especially to look at using the student survey to measure teacher effectiveness; and (2) the EOC would work with schools to increase the number of parents who are African-American or Hispanic who complete and return the survey. Sen. Fair suggested that if the student surveys are amended then questions related to bullying should be included. There being no further discussion, the report was approved unanimously.

Mr. Drew then called upon Mrs. Barton to give an update on the Fiscal Year 2012-13 budget process. Mrs. Barton notified the committee that the bill is currently being considered in the Senate Finance Committee and is likely to be debated in the Senate during the week of May 15.

Mr. Drew then called upon Mr. Warner to discuss the Innovation Initiative motion. Mr. Warner described to the committee the rationale for moving to a system of education that is more personalized and empowers more creativity. He referred to the work of South Carolina ETV with the Criminal Justice Academy. Mr. Warner recommended that the motion pass so that the EOC could pilot innovation incubators that will look at the instruction and assessment of student learning. The motion as recommended by the Subcommittee was: The Education Oversight committee will undertake a project to explore innovative ways to transform the assessment and delivery of public education in South Carolina that will increase student academic achievement.

Mrs. Taylor commented that the proposal would resemble the educational concept, "flipping the classroom" that provides for more individualized instruction and achievement. Sen. Hayes asked Dr. Zais about his opinion. Dr. Zais agreed that master-based learning, more on-line content, and greater facilitation of learning is the future. Mr. Drew reiterated the importance of technology in the pilot projects.

Rep. Neal described one concept that could be included in the pilot. The proposal would eliminate traditional A through F grading and replace it with standards-based mastery so that the assessment would determine if students knew the standards. Mr. Robinson asked that the committee first adopt the motion and then work out the

concept and details at a later date. There being no further discussion, the motion was approved unanimously.

C. Public Awareness: Mrs. Hairfield reported that the subcommittee does not have a report today but will meet in May.

IV. Other Business – Mr. Robinson recognized Mrs. Meka Bosket and Dr. Erica Bissell of the South Carolina Department of Education who gave an overview of the ESEA waiver and the implementation of the new South Carolina English language arts and mathematics standards. EOC members voiced concern that there are 83 different approaches to implementation being used. Dr. Zais stated that the Department of Education will help develop and facilitate district curriculums. Mrs. Taylor also suggested that the agency help facilitate discussion between districts on implementation.

Then Dr. Zais provided data relating per pupil spending in each school district with the poverty index and absolute rating of each school district. Dr. Zais commented that what is wrong with public education in South Carolina is not lack of money. He also stated that over the past fifteen years for every increase in 22 students, seven additional teachers and administrators have been employed. EOC members commented that teacher and administrator turnover are also factors that impact student achievement and per pupil funding.

Mr. Robinson asked if there was any additional information that needed to come before the Committee. Having no other business, the EOC adjourned.