

SOUTH CAROLINA EDUCATION OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE
Minutes of the Meeting
June 10, 2013

Members Present: Mr. Robinson; Mr. Bowers; Mr. Drew; Senator Hayes; Mr. Martin; Dr. Merck; Rep. Smith; 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 the April 8, 2013 Meeting. The minutes were approved as distributed.
- III. Key Constituencies

First, the chairman recognized Charles Bierbauer, Dean of the College of Mass Communications and Information Studies at the University of South Carolina to recognize the staff and work of Cockey's Reading Express. Dean Bierbauer noted in his time at the University the one program that has had the most meaningful impact on literacy has been Cockey's Reading Express. Dean Bierbauer then called upon Kim Jeffcoat, Executive Director of the South Carolina Center for Children's Books and Literacy to describe the literacy initiatives which include publishing children's literature that is focused on South Carolina or written by authors from South Carolina and distributing over 61,000 books. In collaboration with the School of Public Health at the University of South Carolina, the center is beginning a pilot program in Calhoun County for children ages three through five and their parents. In collaboration with the public schools, faith-based organizations and county library, a full continuum of services will be provided to children and their families including, but not limited to: speech and hearing screenings for children; medical and financial assistance to families; family nights at the public library where children will receive books. Data will be collected on the impact of literacy in the county, including data documenting summer reading loss declines.

Dr. Zais reiterated the importance of children being given the option of choosing their books. Mr. Robinson asked funding for the pilot program. Ms. Jeffcoat explained that Central Carolina Community Foundation is funding the pilot program. Rep. Smith asked a question to clarify who wrote the children's books.

Then the chairman recognized Julissa Germosen, Worldwide Business Development Manager for Microsoft Learning. Ms. Germosen described how Microsoft IT Academy is partnering with North Carolina, Florida and other states to increase the number of students earning certification in Microsoft technology. For example, in North Carolina last year 600 high schools offered the program with 50,000 students receiving the certification. Florida awarded 40,000 certifications. In Virginia, Louisiana and Washington, each stated had 10,000 certifications awarded. Georgia, Alabama and Arkansas had between 2,500 and 3000. Ms. Germosen noted that North Carolina is using the program as a means to leverage industry recruitment. If the program is implemented in South Carolina through a proviso in the state budget, there are currently 2,700 positions today that are seeking individuals with Microsoft skills.

Mr. Robinson asked about the cost of the program. According to Ms. Germosen to offer the program in every high school in the state would cost approximately \$330,000. Mr.

Bowers asked for clarification on how the program is implemented, either as a separate class or within existing courses. Ms. Germosen stated that in most states the program is imbedded across the content areas.

IV. Subcommittee Reports

The committee then turned to the Subcommittee reports.

A. Academic Standards and Assessments:

Dr. Merck reported that the Subcommittee recommends two revisions to the 2012-13 accountability manual regarding the Palmetto Gold and Silver Award program and the Growth rating calculations. He explained that the revisions are due to the impact of the revised Growth value table which was approved by the EOC in October of 2012. Mr. Bowers asked about future changes to the accountability that would focus on improving literacy. Mrs. Barton responded that those issues will be discussed by the EOC at its August retreat. There being no further debate, the changes were approved by the EOC unanimously.

Then Dr. Merck presented the report of the results of the 2012 parent survey. Mr. Bowers asked if the results were representative of the state geographically. The report was adopted.

B. EIA and Improvement Mechanisms

Mr. Drew updated the EOC on the 2013-14 General Appropriation Act. As Mr. Drew noted, overwhelmingly the General Assembly adopted the EOC's funding and proviso recommendations for the Education Improvement Act. Mr. Drew asked Mrs. Barton to update the EOC on the legislature's expansion of the Child Development Education Pilot Program (CDEPP) and implementation of nonprofit scholarship funding organizations.

Senator Hayes commented that the two initiatives, expansion of CDEPP and the reading legislation, are both on the Senate calendar and do reinforce the Senate's desire to improve early literacy.

C. Public Awareness

In the absence of Mrs. Hairfield, Dana Yow of the EOC staff informed the EOC of the Subcommittee's actions including a billboard campaign to increase the public's awareness of the importance of reading; an electronic signage campaign in May to thank teachers during Teacher Appreciation Month; the design of a brochure to be used to engage community partners in literacy; and the release of a joint EOC-SC Department of Education website dedicated to the 2013-14 Family Friendly Standards.

D. Special Reading Subcommittee

Mrs. Barton reported on the work of the subcommittee. She noted that two of its members and Mr. Drew attended a presentation by the Foundation for Excellence in

Education for legislators and guests invited by Rep. Patrick, an EOC member and chair of the K-12 Subcommittee of the House Education and Public Works Committee.

- V. The EOC then went into Executive Session for the purpose of discussing a contractual matter.

The veil having been lifted, the EOC came out of Executive Session. Rep. Smith made a motion to offer a one-year contract to Mrs. Barton to continue serving as Executive Director in Fiscal Year 2013-14 under the same terms, conditions, and compensations as in the prior fiscal year. Sen. Hayes seconded the motion and the motion passed.

- VI. Adjournment
Having no other business, the EOC adjourned.