



**SC EDUCATION
OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE**

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AGENDA

EIA and Improvement Mechanisms Subcommittee

Monday, November 7, 2016
1:00 p.m.
Room 433, Blatt Building

- I. Welcome and Introductions Dr. Bob Couch
- II. Approval of Minutes of September 19, 2016..... Dr. Bob Couch
- III. Information: Joint Task Force on Computer Science
& Information Technology ReportMelanie Barton
- IV. Information: EIA 2015-16 Reports & 2017-18 Budget Requests
Presentations:
 - Reach Out & Read CarolinasCallee Boulware
Executive Director
 - S²TEM Centers SC Dr. Thomas Peters
Executive Director
SC Coalition for Mathematics & Science
 - Family Connection of SC Amy Holbart
Executive Director
 - Save the Children Anna Hardaway
State Director
US Programs
 - Science P.L.U.S. InstituteAmy St. John
Coordinator
 - SC First Steps to School Readiness Dr. Dan Wuori
Deputy Director &
Martha Strickland
4K State Director
- V. Adjournment

- Neil C. Robinson, Jr.
CHAIR
- Daniel B. Merok
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- April Allen
- Cynthia M. Bennett
- Anne H. Bull
- Bob Couch
- Mike Fair
- Raye Felder
- Barbara B. Hairfield
- Nikki Haley
- R. Wesley Hayes, Jr.
- Dwight A. Loftis
- John W. Matthews, Jr.
- Joseph H. Neal
- Molly Spearman
- John C. Stockwell
- Patti J. Tate
- Ellen Weaver

Subcommittee Members:

Dr. Bob Couch, Chair
April Allen
Cynthia Bennett
Rep. Dwight Loftis
Rep. Joseph Neal
Ellen Weaver

Melanie D. Barton
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

**EIA and Improvement Mechanisms Subcommittee
Minutes of Meeting
September 19, 2016**

Members: Rep. Dwight Loftis, April Allen, Bob Couch, Ellen Weaver

Other EOC Members: Neil Robinson

Staff: Bunnie Ward, Melanie Barton, Kevin Andrews, Dr. Rainey Knight, Dana Yow, Bunnie Ward

Meeting convened at 11:05.

Meeting minutes approved as submitted.

Melanie Barton (Report on Educational Credits for Exceptional Needs Children)

Last year the General Assembly changed the program and established a separate independent board to approve applications for educational credits. Additional changes include increase in maximum amount of credit to from \$10,000 to \$11,000. Also, in order for a school to participate each school had to list and certify their services were for special needs children. As of September 19, 111 schools have been approved.

Current the report includes only data self-reported on the current year's application. There were 100 schools that applied for the program in 2016-17 and these schools reported receiving just over \$10 million. Going forward, the Department of Revenue (DOR) and the board that allocates the funds will be able to report to the EOC and to the General Assembly. Data security is still a concern due to materials submitted by the schools that schools submit as part of their eligibility packets. EOC has worked closely with DOR to notify them of school eligibility as soon as it is approved by EOC.

Rep. Loftis asked what degree of disability a student may have to qualify for a credit. Ms. Barton noted ADHD and similar disabilities are milder forms that can make a child eligible.

Dr. Couch asked if there were additional accountability components for the program. The independent board will determine eligibility of children.

Melanie Barton (K-12 Technology Initiative Report)

By proviso the General Assembly requested that the EOC to develop a format for reporting of technology expenditures. In collaboration with the SC Department of Education, the EOC surveyed school districts in the spring and early summer of 2016 to determine how districts expended the K-12 Technology Initiative Funds in Fiscal Year 2014-15 and in 2015-16. School districts and schools reported the following. In 2014-15 two-thirds of all expenditures were to purchase equipment. In 2015-16 (Table 4), about 62% went to purchase and replace equipment and almost 20% to technology connections. Inside the schools, almost 99% have met the state goal of 1 megabyte per

second of bandwidth either wireless or wired. The big issue is that at least 40% of schools do not have adequate connection when devices are in use. Roughly 1193 schools have 91-100% access to schools.

The percentage of students who are served with one-to-one computing is divided. Approximately 27% of schools say they do not have any students with one-to-one computing access while 28% of schools say they do have one-to-one computing access for 91% or more of the students in the school. There were 335 schools that had no percentage of students with 1:1 availability. Rep. Neal asked staff to identify who the 335 schools. For example, are these schools rural or urban?

Pierce McNair noted Chairwoman Allison hosted her second student advisory committee last Friday September 16 at Francis Marion University. Students reported teachers did not know how to operate the technology. One district did not have the funds to hire a technology coordinator. They saw diverse set of challenges, including the quality of the devices, access to devices and bandwidth and resources to maintain technology.

Rep. Neal noted there is a need to ensure there is adequate funding to maintain the devices. Ms. Barton suggested a different model where there is a consortium so maintenance costs could be shared among districts. There is an issue with districts' ability to maintain teacher training due to high teacher turnover rates.

Rep. Neal also noted there is still a "digital divide" that should be standardized to make sure every school has adequate access and bandwidth. He noted 66 frequencies were sold via ETV in return for access to bandwidth for rural South Carolina. These children are facing multiple challenges to access (lack of equipment and maintenance at home and school). Rep. Neal noted there needs to some way to level the playing field to change student outcomes and address lack of performance.

Rep. Neal stated those who bought additional bandwidth should be delivering on their promise. Rep. Loftis inquired about what is being done to utilize the 5% that ETV reserved. Melanie Barton suggested it may be time to review use of \$30 million and how to address challenges and shortages to develop new benchmarks. Rep. Neal noted we have addressed Abbeville issues somewhat but it does not help them to not address them separately. Ways and Means plans to take a close look at state expenditures and how the state addresses the critical needs of districts.

Dr. Couch noted it was a challenge in Lexington Richland Five, so he understands the challenges for poorer districts are even greater.

EFA has higher weighted pupil unit (G&T) based on old system. Bas student cost from 2,350 to 2,984. EIA preliminary numbers will increase by approximately \$35 million. Also seeing an increase in southeastern average teacher salary to \$51,966.

Rep. Neal inquired about the issue of teacher shortages and some districts have larger turnover rates due to low salaries. Identification of qualified teachers is even more

pronounced in STEM-related classes at the middle and high school levels. Rep. Neal noted there is a need to change the status of teaching in this country. Rep. Loftis commented that if teachers were more connected and attuned to changes and needs in the workforce there would be more interest and gratification among teachers. Rep. Neal noted higher education and administrators need to communicate the relevance of teachers' work.

Ms. Barton noted that the High School Task Force report should be considered by the EIA subcommittee as the EOC moves forward with budget recommendations, such as industry credentials and vocational equipment. Rep. Loftis noted Greenville developing a career institute and private sector is providing a lot of the equipment so students can train using the equipment they will also use when they are employed.

Rep. Neal recommended that some thought be given to cultural competency for rural communities with minority students. In some cases teachers may need to consider English as a second language due distinct dialects and communication styles. Dr. Couch noted there is a need for a cultural change and high expectations, such as community cultures of high school graduation.

Dr. Leta Tribble with the Greenwood Genetic Center (GCC)

Dr. Tribble introduced Center staff who work with students and teachers. The statewide program is in its seventh year and started as a NIH grant. Its goal is to enhance teachers' and students' understanding of genetics. They provide a mobile lab with all materials to conduct genetic testing. They work with students in grades 7-12. They have visited 39 of 46 counties. The number of students they see each year has continued to increase. After six years they have worked with over 31,000 students. Some of the counties they have not visited are most in need.

GCC has provided professional development for teachers and summer courses for 22 years. Teachers are able to take a three-hour graduate level course for \$150. For students, the mobile science lab is available and there is a Genetic Education Center in Greenwood. Students may also participate in a high school shadowing program. GCC is requesting EIA funding to convert the existing courses to online courses and use the mobile lab for teachers to complete their coursework. They are also hosting an autism spectrum disorder conference with a focus on the genetics behind autism. GCC has been evaluated by internal and external evaluators including pre- and post-survey results by students and teachers. GCC would add a second mobile lab to extend their statewide reach.

Rep. Neal inquired about actual course content for teachers and students. There are 13 lab activities (gene amplification, bio technology skills, genetic disorders, sickle cell, inherited cancers). Students are provided a case study and they perform a series of lab activities. Dr. Tribble stated they can take the material and adapt it to the cognitive/educational level of the students.

Rep. Neal noted concerns about the negative consequences of the use of genetic testing, such as insurance eligibility and employability. Dr. Tribble noted the GINA law that protects individuals against discrimination based on the results of genetic counseling.

Rep. Loftis asked about the middle school courses and curricula. There are eight middle school activities (DNA isolation, chromosomal analysis, genetically modified foods). Currently, they only have one open date for the entire school calendar and there is a wait list.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.