

EIA Program Report for Fiscal Year 2011-12

Coversheet

EIA-Funded Program Name: School Improvement Council

Current Fiscal Year: 2011-12

Current EIA Appropriation: \$127,303

Name of Person Completing Survey and to whom EOC members may request additional information:

Cassie Barber

Telephone Number:

803- 777-7658

E-mail:

barber2@mailbox.sc.edu

Question 1: History of the program: Please mark the appropriate response (choose one):

This program:

- was an original initiative of the Education Improvement Act of 1984
- was created or implemented as part of the Education Accountability Act of 1998
- has been operational for less than five years
- was funded last fiscal year by general or other funds
- is a new program implemented for the first time in the current fiscal year
- Other – mandated by state law since 1977 Education Finance Act

Question 2: What SC laws, including provisos in the current year’s general appropriation act, govern the implementation of this program? Please complete citations from the SC Code of Laws including, Title, Chapter, and Section numbers.

Code of Laws:

Education Finance Act; Education Improvement Act; Act 135; Education Accountability Act

59-20-10;59-24-50;59-5-150;59-26-20;59-141-10;59-18-1310;

59-18-900;59-18-1500

Proviso(s): (If applicable. Please make references to the 2011-12 General Appropriation Act as ratified. www.XXXXX)

Section 1A (H 63 - Department of Education; EIA); Section 15 (H 45 - University of South Carolina)

Regulation(s):

43-261 relates to shared decision making for SICs in district and school planning

Do guidelines that have been approved by the State Board of Education, the Commission on Higher Education or other governor board exist that govern the implementation of this program?

Yes

x No

Question 3: What are the primary objective(s) or goals of this program? Please distinguish between the long-term mission of the program and the current annual objectives of the program. (The goals or objectives should be in terms that can be quantified, evaluated, and assessed.)

The S.C. General Assembly created School Improvement Councils (SICs) as part of the 1977 Education Finance Act. The original intent behind these Councils was to provide local accountability and involvement in the investment of tax dollars in public education. A variety of additions to state laws and regulations over the last 30 years have increased the status and responsibilities of Council members, which include parents, teachers and high school students (elected by their peers), administrators, and non-parent taxpayers from the local community in each of the state's 1,100-plus K-12 public schools. SICs provide an infrastructure to engage the general public in the governance and support of their local public schools with little or no cost to their home school.

The S.C. School Improvement Council (SC-SIC) provides the member training, technical assistance, statutory accountability, and operational resources vital to the continued success of these local SICs.

In early 2011 the SC School Improvement Council Board of Trustees met to review and revise the organization's strategic plan which was formulated in 2008. The Board and staff, in consultation the Department of Education Leadership and Policy in the College of Education at the University of South Carolina developed a vision to expand the office of SC School Improvement Council to reach beyond the facilitation of local School Improvement Councils to other programs and activities that promote and support overarching purpose of the councils and open the door to additional funding and partnerships.

SC School Improvement Council will function as an umbrella office for the administration of School Improvement Councils and other programs, currently including the SC Education Policy Fellowship Program.

The vision of SC-SIC is "to promote and support civic engagement for quality public education in South Carolina."

The mission of the SC School Improvement Council is to facilitate meaningful parent and community involvement in our state's public schools by providing resources, tools and strategies to local School Improvement Councils and other stakeholder groups.

The SC-SIC Board of Trustees voted to undertake three goals to advance the organization's vision and mission.

- 1) Advance recognition and support of SC-SIC and local SICs at all levels within the statewide education community.

- 2) Develop a more robust infrastructure at the state level supporting the Vision and Mission of SC-SIC and the efforts of local SICs across the state.
- 3) Diversify and grow the funding base for SC-SIC to increase available resources and stabilize support.

The SC-SIC staff and Board of Trustees are committed to the ambitious vision of making civic engagement in public education a reality statewide. However, due to budget reductions faced throughout state government in recent years, SC-SIC has had to focus on its primary responsibilities of availing services to all SICs, to include member training and resources, so that Councils have access to the tools to properly convene, work effectively, and meet their goals. SC-SIC has taken steps to provide accountability mechanisms to compel administrators and school board members to acknowledge their responsibility for complying with the laws requiring them to convene SICs, and with providing training opportunities on the local and district levels so that SIC members receive instruction and insight into their vital roles on their SICs. At the same time, and over the years to come, SC-SIC will raise awareness with all stakeholders that including the public in school governance in a meaningful manner is critical for the success of public education in South Carolina. The complete strategic plan update with current activities noted is attached.

Question 4: In the prior fiscal year, 2010-11, what primary program activities or processes were conducted to facilitate the program's performance in reaching the objective(s) as provided in Question 3? What, if any, change in processes or activities are planned for the current year?

Examples of program processes would be: training provided, recruiting efforts made, technical assistance services, monitoring services, etc.

Answers should be specific to the process undertaken at the state level to support the objectives of the program and should be quantifiable. Please include any professional development services provided.

IF the funds are allocated directly to school districts, please indicate any data collected at the state level to monitor how the funds are expended at the local level?

Four goals provided the umbrella for SC-SIC activities last year:

1. Expand the public's awareness of the role of School Improvement Councils in the improvement and accountability process;
2. Increase access to information, training and assistance to all SIC members statewide;
3. Provide a variety of opportunities for assistance and training to all SICs and especially for the Palmetto Priority Schools;
4. Partner with groups and organizations to contribute to school improvement and accountability by leveraging civic engagement.

1) Efforts to raise the visibility and status of SICs and SC-SIC appear to be succeeding. Local SIC members report increased activity and improved relationships with administrators. On the state level, interest in serving on the SC-SIC Board of Trustees has increased significantly and the quality of those serving on the Board is impressive. Members include parents, civic and business leaders, educators and former educators, a local school board member, a former legislator, and a current and former state Department of Education deputy superintendent.

News media statewide have begun to understand the value of resources made available to local schools through SICs and have increased their coverage of SIC activities on both the state and local levels. The advent of social media has also provided new platforms for communication and public awareness of public education issues in general and SICs in particular. SC-SIC has a presence on Facebook and Twitter and also makes use of Pitch Engine for media releases. No release has received less than 100 "hits" since the program has begun to make use of this free Worldwide Web tool.

SC-SIC also began publicly collecting the "SIC Reports to the Parents" that local Councils are required by law to develop and disseminate each year by requesting each school to upload an electronic copy to the SC-SIC Member Network. Many SICs are electing to distribute their Reports only by electronic means, a practice which is discouraged by this office. We suggest that the "Report to Parents" be posted on the school website, the SIC website, and also that a minimum number of hard copies should be printed for use in promoting the school and to disseminate to those

parents who lack internet access. Compliance with posting the Reports to the SC-SIC Member Network was spotty this year and experience has taught us that it will take about three years before the majority of schools will comply with this request. These Reports are important because they capture the activities and accomplishments of local SICs on behalf of their schools. A major impediment to gathering the information and data contained in these reports is that some districts have instructed their schools not to create these Reports and have replaced them with district level reports. SC-SIC is actively working to educate district personnel that this practice does not meet the standard in the South Carolina Code of Laws and also diminishes the autonomy of individual SICs. This is the only formal measure of local SIC activity provided for by law and SC-SIC is working to ensure that this information is captured and utilized for continued school improvement. This activity has no additional cost for schools or districts other than making a minimum number of copies of the Report.

2) Working through the SC-SIC Member Network database, SC-SIC continued to uphold the expectation of membership accountability for SICs. For 30 years the state office did not have the capacity to monitor compliance with state mandates of the more than 1,100 local SICs. The advent of a new SC-SIC database system in September 2007 allowed the state office to monitor the membership composition of every SIC in the state for the first time in the organization's history. The SC-SIC Member Network not only collects membership records, it also provides reports for review by principals, superintendents, school board members, and the general public, informing them about SIC compliance with the state statute regarding membership composition. This new technology has greatly improved local accountability regarding membership and we anticipate the same accountability regarding the "Report to the Parents" in the near future.

SC-SIC continued development of an online clearinghouse of resources that can be accessed by SIC members statewide to assist them with goal attainment. (See number 3 below for additional information.) The state office also introduced new training opportunities to assist SICs to establish goals based on their school's strategic plan; another focused on leadership skills and a third designed to improve communications with the greater school community.

The SC-SIC website, <http://sic.sc.gov>, is a primary resource for SICs. The site is the home of the SC-SIC Member Network and is an easy, responsive method of keeping SIC members up-to-date on current issues and providing them with the latest resources and technical assistance. The website provides an additional opportunity for accountability; staff posts all training information, including the number of attendees, which is retained and can be reviewed by the public.

SC-SIC's current budget cannot support trainings conducted by its staff in all 83 school districts, yet internal and external evaluations of SC-SIC services reflect a strong need for face time with staff. While SC-SIC has been successful in using technology to share resources and assess accountability, there is no substitute for the positive return on personal relationship building and one-on-one time spent with constituents. In an effort to meet this need and provide SIC members with choices, ALL

trainings conducted by staff are open to any SIC member without regard to their district. Additionally, SIC District Contacts in each school district have the opportunity to be trained in "The Basics" and can be certified to offer this training locally through a train-the-trainer model. These strategies allowed for maximization of the number of SIC members trained statewide. The 2011 SC-SIC Annual Conference featured a speaker from the National Network of Partnership Schools who was very well received. SC-SIC produced and mailed the *Council News* newsletter twice a year, which was also posted online and was supplemented with a periodic emailed update called *SIC Clips & Quips* which was distributed seven times last year via an email listserv and also posted on the SC-SIC website.

3) A one time grant from the SC Department of Education allowed SC-SIC provided on-site training and technical assistance to each of the state's Palmetto Priority Schools (PPS). They received specific guidance on the achievement of benchmarks developed to ensure that each PPS understands the foundation needed to convene and facilitate a productive School Improvement Council. "Basics" SIC training was made available in each school district containing a PPS. Five schools were chosen to receive in-depth goals training assistance. Considerable staff time is devoted to this particular population of schools. A full report on the activities associated with this grant is attached.

4) SC-SIC has worked creatively and collaboratively to provide SIC members statewide with access to training and other resources beyond those offered by this office to assist local SICs in the achievement of their established goals through a new clearinghouse established two years ago via the website. Agencies and organizations are invited to post their available resources with approval of this office for a period of one year, at which time their posting is updated or removed. The clearinghouse is arranged by topic and includes detailed information including contact information, class size limits, fees and other information. At this time postings are limited to government and non-profit entities and most are free.

SC-SIC staff continues to work collaboratively with higher education and all the major state agencies, organizations, non-profits and associations that focus their efforts on public education or other activities providing social supports for children and families. Unfortunately many of the offices and programs at the SC Department of Education that partnered with this office to provide resources for SICs were eliminated in FY 2010-11.

All of the above will be continued in FY 2011-12 along with the addition of some complimentary activities. SC-SIC successfully coordinated the SC Education Policy Fellowship Program and was awarded a new contract for FY 2011-12. This nationally recognized 10-month professional development program initiated by the Institute for Educational Leadership in Washington, DC fosters emerging and established leaders from across the state with a focus on education policy, leadership, and networking. Seventeen Fellows were graduated in 2011 and 18 Fellows have been accepted into the Class of 2012. Two SC Fellows recruited by this office are now in the inaugural class of the Global Education Policy Fellowship Program.

Question 5: In the prior fiscal year, 2010-11, and using the most recent data available, what were the direct products and services (outputs) delivered by this Program?

Examples of program outputs would be: number of teachers attending professional development seminars, number of and passage rates on AP exams, number of students served in the program, improvements in student achievement, retention and graduation.

The SC-SIC strategic plan goals call for myriad strategies and activities to achieve its mission and vision. It is a living, breathing, responsive document that is regularly reviewed and revised due to challenges arising from such outside influences as the economic recession and changes in leadership at the SC Department of Education and within the USC College of Education. SC-SIC also strives to be responsive to the changing needs of schools and districts. The state office continues to provide the primary services to local Councils set forth in statute as it looks for innovative and cost-effective ways to improve and expand service delivery.

Below are details regarding accomplished/ongoing strategies tied to each goal in the strategic plan:

Goal 1: Advance recognition and support of SC-SIC and local SICs at all levels within the statewide education community.

- A) Collaborate with SCDE's Office of School Effectiveness to engage principals and leverage SIC buy-in
 - Principal Induction
- B) Present workshops at state-level conferences
 - SCASA (SLI)
 - SCSBA
 - Parents Anonymous
- C) Coordinate SC Education Policy Fellowship Program (SC-EPFP)
- D) Actively monitor and engage General Assembly
 - Develop/leverage Board inventory
 - Testify before legislative committees as appropriate
 - Encourage development of local SIC advocacy committees
 - Train local SICs and other stakeholders on advocacy issues
- E) Establish web and social media presence to build SC-SIC brand and resources
 - Comprehensive and informative website
 - Use of Facebook and Twitter
 - Use of PitchEngine for media releases
- F) Use various communications to build SC-SIC brand
 - *Council News*
 - *SIC Clips & Quips*
 - "Power of Many"
- G) Continue Riley School Improvement Award process

Goal 2: Develop a more robust infrastructure at the state level supporting the Vision and Mission of SC-SIC and the efforts of local SICs across the state.

- A) Implement train-the-trainer model
 - SC-SIC District Contact Meeting
 - Training materials posted to web
- B) Develop additional training modules
 - SIC Leadership
 - Communicating With the Greater School Community
 - Find Your Parent Voice
 - SIC Goal Setting
- C) Staff and Board development
 - Web design training/certificate
 - Riley Institute DLI
 - New Board member recruitment
 - New Board member orientation
 - Director coordinates SC Education Policy Fellowship Program
- D) Use of various communication tools
 - *Council News*
 - *SIC Clips & Quips*
- E) Increase use of volunteers in office initiatives
 - Attend and report on various legislative meetings
 - Philanthropic community

Goal 3: Diversify and grow the funding base for SC-SIC to increase available resources and stabilize support.

- A) Establish and promote designated giving to SC-SIC
 - USC Foundation
 - Web presence
 - Communications tools
- B) Identify and pursue partnerships to increase funding base
 - SCDE
 - SC-EPFP
 - Riley Institute
 - Children's Trust
 - SC Education Policy Center
 - USC College of Education Grants Office

Question 6: What are the outcomes or results of this program?

Outcome can be both quantitative and qualitative and should address the program's objectives. Please use the most recent data available:

Examples of outcomes would be: results of surveys, student achievement results, increases in participation, reduction in achievement gaps, loans awarded, textbooks purchased, etc.

Just as it can be challenging to quantify the direct effect of family and community engagement on student achievement - yet we clearly know it is critical - it can also be difficult to adequately express the value of the

state office in assuring that School Improvement Councils continue to exist and improve in their function and effectiveness each year. Without the consistent, high-quality training, information, resources, and advocacy provided by the state office, local Councils would soon cease to exist.

A review of the activities of SC-SIC in the Outputs section of this document reveals the level of engagement within the statewide education community in achievement of our vision, mission and goals.

In an effort to provide accountability regarding the activities of this office, all training information including dates, locations and attendance are captured and retained on our website and is always available for public review. Transparency was in effect at SC-SIC prior to the election of Governor Nikki Haley and it is easy for any citizen to view the activities and outcomes of this office with a quick visit to the organization's website. Below are a few statistics from the previous calendar year from the SC-SIC publication "The Power of Many" which is attached:

Total SIC Members Statewide - 14,479
Total Local SICs Statewide - 1,117
Total Individuals Trained in Person - 1,550
Estimated Technical Assistance Contacts (email, on-site, phone) - 8,590
Handbooks Disseminated - 13,000
Newsletters Disseminated - 17,000
Percentage of SICs in Compliance with Membership Statute - 90%
Estimated Volunteer Hours for SIC Meetings - 231,648
Estimated Value of Volunteer Hours (Meeting time only!) - \$3.77 million

In FY 2010-11 SC-SIC secured additional funding to offset budget reductions in the amount of \$35,000 from the SC Department of Education to provide training to the Palmetto Priority Schools and \$5,000 from the SC Education Policy Fellowship Program for facilitation of that program. A small sponsorship of \$2000 from The Children's Trust of South Carolina also allowed the inclusion of a national level speaker at the 2011 SC-SIC Annual Conference with nearly 200 in attendance.

More than 7,000 SIC members and other interested citizens are included on the SC-SIC listserv and they receive appropriate information throughout the year. Examples can be viewed on the SC-SIC website on the "Publications and Downloads" page under *Clips & Quips*.

Question 7: Program Evaluations

What was the date of the last external or internal evaluation of this program?

December 2006

Has an evaluation ever been conducted?

Yes

No

If an evaluation was conducted, what were the results and primary recommendations of the most recent evaluation?

The 22nd annual reporting on the state's Education Improvement Act of 1984, "What is the Penny Buying for South Carolina?," prepared by the Evaluation Section of SCDE's Office of Research, gave solid marks to the SC-SIC for its value to the engagement of local constituencies in the life of their schools and demonstrated efficacy in the provision of services and training to SICs of the increasing number of schools rated as "unsatisfactory" on the S.C. School Reports Cards. The evaluation cited historical survey data from local SIC chairs and school principals on the significant level of usefulness of SC-SIC training, services and other resources to local SIC goals and missions related to continuous school improvement and civic engagement in public education.

The evaluation recommended increased funding for the SC School Improvement Council to expand services and access to resources for districts and local SICs. The report also supported the reopening of regional offices of SC-SIC which were closed due to funding reductions.

Can you provide a URL link, electronic version, or hard copy of this evaluation to the EOC?

Yes

No

If yes, please provide URL link here.

The SC-SIC evaluation is contained in the SCDE report, "What is the Penny Buying in South Carolina?," and can be viewed on the SC-SIC website at <http://sic.sc.gov/publicationsanddownloads/Documents/PENNYBUY2006.pdf>

If no, why not?

Question 8:

While EIA revenues increased in 2010-11 over the prior fiscal year and no mid-year cuts were made to any EIA programs, programs and agencies continue to implement conservative budget practices.

Please describe how the program and/or organization would absorb or offset potential EIA reductions totaling 5%, and 10% in the current fiscal year, Fiscal Year 2011-12?

SC-SIC is seeking external funding through grants, contracts and donations. If SC-SIC experiences even an additional 5% cut in funding during the current fiscal year and none of the efforts to obtain additional funds have succeeded, there will be no choice other than to furlough and/or reduce staff. All adjustments to budget allocations that could be trimmed, eliminated or innovated to accommodate budget reductions have already been exercised.

Question 9:

If no additional EIA revenues were appropriated to this program in Fiscal Year 2012-13 above the current year's appropriation level, how would the objectives, activities and priorities of this program change?

Please be specific to address the impact to students, teachers or schools. Are there regulatory or statutory changes that you would recommend to the legislature that would assist this program/organization in meeting its objectives?

If no additional EIA revenues are allocated to SC-SIC, staff will be cut and services will be reduced. In FY 2010-11 SC-SIC finally received some additional funding to help the office provide services to the Palmetto Priority Schools. SC-SIC was mandated by proviso for a number of years to provide targeted assistance to our most underperforming schools. No additional funding was ever allocated for this purpose until a special contract from the Office of Special Projects at SCDE was signed just last year. That contract allowed us to go beyond "basic" services to much needed in-depth goals training, attendance at local SIC meeting to provide leadership guidance and support and additional resources for principals and chairs. Funding for the Office of Special Projects was slashed for 2011-12 and this contract has not been renewed.

SC-SIC has been committed to providing extra services for our most at-risk schools for over a decade. Last year the proviso mandating these activities was removed. This office still recognizes the needs in these schools and has a strong desire to continue this service. Unfortunately we have ended those targeted services for the current school year and if additional funding is not secured mid-year, additional services will be cut. We have already reduced the size of the SIC handbook, "The Basics," to reduce costs and no newsletters will be printed and mailed this year. No annual conference is planned for this year. The next reduction will come in the number of on-site trainings SC-SIC can deliver. Feedback from schools, districts and individual Council members tells us that face-to-face contact is highly effective and valued. It is unclear how a reduction in on-site services will affect local SIC effectiveness and outcomes. This office is on the cutting edge of most technology and has made excellent use of all that is available. However, there is a limit to how much human contact and relationship building can be replaced by technology and still have the desired result.

If you want to provide supporting documents or evaluation reports, either reference a website below or email the report directly to mbarton@eoc.sc.gov.

Questions 10 and 11 Apply only to programs NOT administered by the South Carolina State Department of Education.

Question 10: Fiscal Year 2012-13

The total amount of EIA funds requested for this program for the next fiscal year will be:

The same as appropriated in the current fiscal year's appropriation

An increase over the current fiscal year's appropriation

A decrease over the current fiscal year's appropriation

If you indicated an increase or decrease in funding for the next fiscal year, what is the total amount requested for this program for the next fiscal year?

149,768

If you indicated an increase or decrease, please describe the reasons for the increase or decrease. How will the increase or decrease impact the objective of the program?

SC-SIC respectfully and urgently requests a minimum increase in funding with the restoration of the 15% cut enacted for FY 2011-12. This reduction was due to SC-SIC EIA funds being routed through the SC Department of Education. This reduction subjected SC-SIC, which is located within the College of Education at the University of South Carolina, to the across the board cuts instituted at the SCDE, even though SC-SIC is independently administered. At this writing SC-SIC has made a request to the College of Education for assistance in offsetting this latest devastating reduction. If this request is not granted staff will be laid off and direct services to local School Improvement Councils will be reduced.

Decades of research clearly demonstrates that education reforms will come up short if families and communities are not engaged in those reforms and the daily fabric of the lives of our schools and our children. SC School Improvement Council is the ONLY statewide entity advocating and working for these key education stakeholders - alongside the professional education community and elected administrations.

Attention should be given to restoring baseline EIA appropriations of \$149,768 for SC-SIC. We are fortunate in South Carolina to have a legislatively mandated infrastructure for providing crucial parent and community involvement. Without the constant support of this office the more than 1,100 local School Improvement Councils would quickly disappear. New members are elected and appointed to local SICs every year. Building principals and district administrators change.

Legislation is amended and new legislative issues impacting public education arrive on the scene during each session. Given this constant

flux, local SICs require a central entity for ongoing training, resources, information, and accountability to state statute. Local Councils cannot fulfill their legal and moral obligations to their schools and communities without such technical assistance, guidance and oversight. They cannot effectively stand or operate on their own. Only SC-SIC is equipped to provide these services in South Carolina, and as such, it should be valued, funded, and supported to the greatest extent possible. The EOC, in its "Principles of School Funding Systems," voiced its support of such effective partnerships of families, community members and educators to address the pressing needs of our schools.

It is human nature to attend to those activities that are being tested or at least observed and supported. Without the state SC-SIC office to keep the focus on convening and actively using our Councils, many school administrators would simply let them wither on the vine. For a few, the loss of an SIC would be a relief because they prefer to maintain control and keep parent and community involvement at bay. For most, the loss of focus and support of SICs would stem from benign neglect as their attention is demanded elsewhere with no entity to provide support, guidance, advocacy and resources to assist them. As with any infrastructure, it must be adequately supported and maintained. Local SICs are a volunteer army and paid staff is required to nurture, educate, and inspire that army which is so desperately needed by our children and schools. SC-SIC plays a unique and vital role in educating our state's children through its work with local SICs and must be maintained.

While the requested FY 2012-13 appropriation of EIA funds of \$149,768 is not nearly at the level that in an ideal world would fully support the efforts of SC-SIC, we operate in the real world. Economic situations currently dictate funding at a less than ideal level. SC-SIC will continue to provide valuable and valued services to the state's K-12 public schools, and their communities, and to promote and support civic engagement for quality public education in South Carolina. However, with no increase in EIA funding over last year's appropriation, the state SC-SIC office will not be able to provide its vital services at a level which local Councils, schools, parents, students, and indeed South Carolina's taxpayers, expect and deserve.

Question 11: Fiscal Years 2010-11 and 2011-12

Please fill in the attached charts to reflect the budget for this program in the prior fiscal year (2010-11) and the budget for this program in the current fiscal year (2011-12).

If the program was not funded in the prior fiscal year, please fill out information for the current fiscal year only.

| Funding Source | Prior FY Actual | Current FY Estimated |
|-----------------------------|-----------------|----------------------|
| EIA | 149,768 | 127,303 |
| General Fund | | |
| Lottery | | |
| Fees | | |
| Other Sources | 100,000 | 100,000 |
| Grant | 35,000 | 8,000 |
| Contributions, Foundation | 500 | 1,000 |
| Other (Specify) | 2,000 | |
| Carry Forward from Prior Yr | | |
| TOTAL | 287,268 | 236,303 |

Other: Please specify here.

Sponsorship from Children's Trust for Conference Speaker.

| Expenditures | Prior FY Actual | Current FY Estimated |
|----------------------------------------------------|-----------------|----------------------|
| Personal Service | 182,805 | 182,805 |
| Contractual Services | 7927 | 13,149 |
| Supplies and Materials | 17,000 | 10,095 |
| Fixed Charges | 70,036 | 75,515 |
| Travel | 9500 | 8,100 |
| Equipment | 0 | 0 |
| Employer Contributions | 0 | 0 |
| Allocations to Districts/Schools/Agencies/Entities | 0 | 0 |
| Other: Please explain | 0 | 0 |
| Balance Remaining | 0 | 0 |
| TOTAL | 287,268 | 289,664 |
| #FTES | 3 | 3 |

Other: Please explain here.

SC-SIC END-OF-YEAR REPORT FOR PALMETTO PRIORITY SCHOOLS

On-site Visits and SIC Basics Trainings June 30, 2011 (Revised July 19, 2011) Conducted by Diane Jumper

Onsite visits began in August 2010, with 37 Palmetto Priority Schools assigned to me. Initial on-site visits occurred in 36 of the 37 Palmetto Priority Schools served during the early fall. (The 37th principal was unavailable for meeting with me despite numerous contacts.) Discussion with principals and/or their designees occurred about benchmarks achieved last year, anticipated benchmarks to be met during 2010-2011, membership requirements with tips shared for election/appointment of potential SIC members, balanced representation, ex-officio membership, numbers of meetings held per year, bylaws, functions of the council, and training needs. This discussion served as informal training for those principals who were not cognizant of various statute requirements/SIC responsibilities. (Benchmark achievement data for 2009-10 had been sent to principals and copied to district contacts and superintendents in early fall.)

Packets for the principal and for the SIC chair containing copies of the benchmarks, sample calendar with monthly tasks designated, sample agenda, tips for effective meetings, Riley Award Winner sheets detailing project ideas for councils, sample bylaws, tips on crafting the annual Report to the Parents, a family information survey, a coordination sheet indicating how Title I and SIC may be combined into one committee, and a grid for determining SIC membership were left with the principal. These packets, along with questions and concerns, were addressed and discussed with principals (several of whom had additional school personnel available for the meeting).

The Basics/Roles & Responsibilities training was presented at the District Contact meeting and in Allendale, Barnwell 19, Beaufort, Charleston, Clarendon 1, Colleton, Dillon 2, Fairfield, Florence 3, Florence 4, Greenville, Hampton 2, Jasper, Lee, Marion 7, Marlboro, Richland 1, Spartanburg 7, and Williamsburg districts. All Palmetto Priority Schools except Hardeeville Middle/High and Colleton Middle participated in training either within the district or at SC-SIC's Spring Conference.

Second visits were scheduled and held during January/February to determine progress to date in all 37 Palmetto Priority Schools. Several SICs were reactivating from "ground zero." I was particularly pleased to see Creek Bridge High's new principal invite the community to participate in School Improvement Council, with outstanding participation that led to a list of anticipated improvements for the school and community. (The previous principal maintained for years that he could not get his community and parents to participate, and the SIC was virtually non-existent. By simply allowing parental/community involvement, the new principal garnered valuable support for the school.) Most other councils continued to progress and appeared actively engaged, as per the visits with the principals/chairs. Technical assistance through emails, phone calls and letters continued, with 623 contacts documented. (This is lower than actual numbers; I know that I missed documenting some phone conversations and emails.)

Goal-setting training was scheduled for the five schools that volunteered to take their councils to the next level, and I visited actual SIC meetings to determine readiness for this training. Allendale-Fairfax High's meeting was a pleasant surprise as I watched a very active council participate in decision-making and share good suggestions with the principal there, particularly with respect to budget cuts and how they will affect the district. Whale Branch Elementary's meeting was not as organized as I

would have wished, but to have the SIC meeting regularly is a positive that we have encouraged for years. Until the current Whale Branch principal, previous administrators had not made parental/community engagement a priority. Eau Claire's meeting included a large group of engaged parents and community and was a celebration of accomplishments to date. Sanders Middle School has always been a pleasure to work with because of a dedicated and competent principal who has promoted SIC principles and efforts. Lee Central Middle was the big disappointment, with only 2 members originally showing up for the meeting until administrators went out to round up faculty and parent volunteers to sit in on the meeting. The principal there does not seem as supportive of efforts as do many other principals, with an assistant principal assigned the oversight of the SIC there.

Reminder letters concerning achievement of benchmarks were sent to all PPS principals in late January and again in May with one or more follow-up phone calls in June to all principals to remind them of the June 15 deadline for documentation. After June 15, benchmark achievement was reviewed, with results to be shared with principals, district contacts, and superintendents.

Submitted to date by the 37 schools/SICs is this documentation:

35 schools/SICs now have bylaws on file (6 need minor revision);

33 schools/SICs submitted both fall and spring samples of minutes, with an additional 2 submitting only fall minutes and 1 submitting only spring minutes, leaving 1 who submitted nothing;

35 schools/SICs updated their membership in our database, indicating statutory compliance regarding elected/appointed membership;

32 schools/SICs submitted their Report to the Parents and an additional school sent their report card with its cover letter;

32 schools/SICs submitted their Fall 2011 Report Card Narrative.

Principal leadership continues to be a vital factor for effective functioning of the council, and we were fortunate to see a number of the PPS principals committed to parental involvement and community engagement.

Synopsis of Goals Training Sessions

Lee Central Middle School – Lee County Schools
Tuesday, March 1, 2011

SIC Members Present:

Dietra Johnson, Principal
Patricia Frierson, Teacher
Cheryl Roycroft, Teacher
Lawanna Wilson, Parent
Deitra Johnson, Principal
Mary Randall, Assistant Principal
Geneva Pearson, Parent Guest
Cheryl Simms, Guidance Counselor Guest

SC-SIC Staff Present:

Cassie Barber
Tom Hudson
Karen Utter

Training was scheduled for 3:00 PM until 5:00PM. Staff expressed concern to Principal Johnson regarding this time frame due to concerns that parents and community would be unable to attend, but we were assured this is the usual meeting time for the SIC.

When staff arrived the room for the meeting was not set up. By the time the equipment and supplies arrived and the SIC members were called in via the school intercom, the start time was delayed by half an hour. Staff attempted to move the training forward quickly and effectively to make up for the lost time but the principal was called out of the room repeatedly and vital information she was asked to provide prior to the training was missing. This necessitated an additional break while the assistant principal searched for the needed material.

The SIC identified three overarching goals for the next school year:

- Increase parent involvement (the only goal identified for the current year)
- Improve student engagement in learning
- Advocacy for public education in general and teachers in particular

Staff guided the SIC in applying the resources identified during the session to three goals and introduced them to additional resources available through the SC-SIC along with strategies for locating assistance locally. The SIC was directed to review and prioritize the specific items identified for improvement and group them under the three goals along with resources for education and action. Staff also offered to return for additional training with the SIC if desired.

SC-SIC staff are concerned that the principal did not appear to place much importance on the meeting as evidenced by her lack of preparation and participation in the meeting. The SIC did not seem cohesive and no community members were present. The members present who were identified as parents appeared to be staff members who also happen to be parents of students and two of them were neither elected nor appointed members of the SIC. This shows a lack of inclusion and parent and community input on this council. It is clear this SIC needs additional professional support and

guidance if it is going to make meaningful contributions to the school and additional support is needed from the principal.

**W.G. Sanders Middle School – Richland One School District
Monday, March 7, 2011**

SIC Members Present:

Andrenna Smith, Principal
Jacquelyn Stewart, Parent (Chair)
Racquel Dobbs, Parent
Herasheia Dozier, Teacher
Margaret Harper, Community member
Mary Brooks, Teacher (Guest)
Sanders, Deborah, Community member (Guest)
Ramona Mack, Teacher (Guest)
Laquisha Pinkney (Guest)

SC-SIC Staff Present:

Cassie Barber
Tom Hudson
Karen Utter

Training was scheduled for 4:30 PM to 6:30 PM. The SIC provided the equipment and materials requested, and also set out a catered dinner for SIC and Staff. The start of the meeting time was delayed as the SIC preferred to sit and eat first rather than have a working dinner. Once the meeting was underway, however, SIC members were engaged in the work of the training and Staff were able to complete the training within the allotted timeframe.

Coming into this training, the SIC had identified a general goal of increasing parent and community involvement in the school with a specific focus on developing additional school/community partnerships. It demonstrated significant strides in this area, describing partnerships it had developed with non-profit community groups such as The 100 Black Men of Columbia as well as neighborhood businesses such as Food Lion.

Staff encouraged the SIC to build on its successes and guided the SIC in identifying additional specific goals under the general overarching goal of increased parent and community involvement, including (1) outreach to disengaged parents using improved and innovated techniques, and (2) improving “customer service” at the school’s main reception desk by having it serve as a clearinghouse for parent information.

In addition to assisting the SIC in forwarding its central goal for the current year, Staff guided the SIC in identifying several additional overarching goals under which the SIC may want to address one or more of the specific items of concern or opportunities for growth that they had identified earlier in the training. These broad goals included (1) advancing the use of technology at the school; (2) promoting more actively engaged learning techniques in the classroom; (3) improvements to the physical school facility/parking lot/grounds; and (4) advocacy for public education in general and school needs in particular.

SC-SIC staff directed the SIC to review and prioritize their specific concerns and opportunities and to group them under the broad goals identified along with resources for education and action. Staff introduced the SIC to additional resources available through the SC-SIC along with strategies for locating assistance locally. Staff also offered to return for additional training with the SIC if desired.

The SC-SIC staff found this SIC and school principal to be interested and engaged in the training process. The presence of the SC-SIC staff as a facilitator appeared to assist the members present in communicating concerns in a constructive manner. The principal had expressed some reservations prior to the training due to concerns about one of the SIC members who had been highly critical of the school. Following the training Principal Smith stated she believes that SIC member will now be a contributing member of the team because she felt heard and understood during the training and left with a specific job that she was excited about. The overall atmosphere of the meeting was positive throughout, and members expressed this to Staff after the conclusion of the meeting.

**Whale Branch Middle School – Beaufort County School District
Tuesday, March 15, 2011**

SIC Members Present:

Don Doggett, Principal
Shelita Evans, Parent (Co-Chair)
Latoya Scott, Parent (Co-Chair)
Mary Leigh Schimmell, Teacher
Judge Kline, Community member
Barbara Kulisek, Assistant Principal
Stacy Driscoll, Teacher (Guest)

SC-SIC Staff Present:

Cassie Barber
Tom Hudson

Training was scheduled for 5:00 PM to 7:00 PM and began on time. The SIC provided the equipment and materials requested in the school's media center.

Coming into this training, the SIC had identified several general goals: improve black male achievement; improve the school's front entrance; and strengthen student support systems (PBIS). The SIC also had at its disposal six school renewal plan update goals: (1) increase student achievement within five years to exceed state and national levels; (2) ensure best practices and resources in learning, teaching and leadership consistently and equitably across the school system; (3) actively engage community and stakeholders in school; (4) provide resources for appropriate learning environments; (5) ensure a safe and healthy learning environment; (6) develop practices, processes and technologies for open, frequent, transparent and effective communication, both internally and externally. Additionally, the school's principal provided a list of several turnaround plan goals focusing on student achievement in ELA and Math, principal instructional leadership and district instructional support.

The SIC was encouraged by staff to build upon its work in the current school year and guided the SIC in identifying additional specific goals under the general overarching goals above, including (1)

improved outreach and communication with parents and the greater school community, and (2) utilizing community resources to help improve the school's physical environment.

Additionally, staff assisted the SIC in identifying several additional goals under which the SIC may want to address one or more of the specific items of concern or opportunities for growth that they had identified earlier in the training. These broad goals included (1) working to achieve a greater level of parent comfort with technology, and identifying avenues to improve parent access to technology in the home; (2) utilizing various approaches with the media and the community to counteract the generally negative public perception of the school; (3) increasing the quality, frequency and timeliness of communication regarding school events; and (4) taking additional steps to acknowledge and highlight student and staff performance.

SC-SIC staff directed the SIC to review and prioritize their specific concerns and opportunities and to group them under the broad goals identified along with resources for education and action. Staff introduced the SIC to additional resources available through the SC-SIC along with strategies for locating assistance locally. Staff also offered to return for additional training with the SIC if desired.

Staff found this SIC and school's principal to be very interested and engaged in the training, with a high level of buy-in of both the process and the strategies identified. The presence of the SC-SIC staff as a facilitator appeared to assist the members present in communicating concerns in a very thoughtful and constructive manner. The overall atmosphere of the meeting was positive throughout, and members expressed this to staff after the conclusion of the meeting.

Eau Claire High School – Richland School District One Monday, May 23, 2011

SIC Members Present:

Rodney Zimmerman, Principal
Catherine Breland, Parent
Valerie Jacobs, Parent
Karen Samuel, Teacher/Parent Coordinator
Arthur Sass, Teacher
Mike Jacobs, Community Member
Lee Carroll, Community Member (Guest)
Carl George, Community Member (Guest)

SC-SIC Staff Present:

Cassie Barber
Tom Hudson

Training was scheduled for 5:00 PM to 7:00 PM. The SIC had provided for the equipment and materials requested for the session.

Prior to the training, the SIC had identified several goals for the 2010-11 school year: (1) increase student academic performance (HSAP, End of Course, SAT, ACT, Graduation Rate, etc.); (2) maintain a safe and nurturing learning environment; (3) increase parental and community involvement; and (4) build stronger partnerships with outside agencies (colleges and universities, businesses, etc.).

Staff encouraged the SIC to build on its successes and guided the SIC in identifying additional specific goals under the general overarching goals of increased parent and community involvement and building partnerships, including (1) identifying a more comprehensive and targeted strategy of communication with parents and community members about the school; (2) clarifying the roles and purpose of the SIC itself, to include empowerment; and (3) thinking bigger as a school community.

Tying in with these goals, participants expressed concern that the school was, despite recent years of various academic successes and an overall improvement in the school's physical environment, having to "live down its past" in terms of public perception. There was also a deep level of concern about the amount of principal turnover in recent years. The current principal is well-liked and respected but is moving to another school following a brief tenure at Eau Claire. The SIC worried that hard fought gains could be lost under new leadership.

Staff guided the SIC in identifying several additional supporting goals under which the SIC may want to address one or more of the specific items of concern or opportunities for growth that they had identified earlier in the training. These goals included: (1) developing a comprehensive multi-media and PR plan to tell the school's true story and foster greater engagement from parents and the community; (2) working to sustain school leadership engendering stable and sustainable momentum; (3) establishing a better working relationship the school's Alumni Association.

SC-SIC staff directed the SIC to review and prioritize their specific concerns and opportunities and to group them under the broad goals identified along with resources for education and action. Staff introduced the SIC to additional resources available through the SC-SIC along with strategies for locating assistance locally. Staff also offered to return for additional training with the SIC if desired.

Staff found this SIC to be interested and engaged in the training process, and committed to undertaking the goals identified with the new principal (to be selected in the near future). The presence of the SC-SIC staff as a facilitator appeared to assist the members present in communicating concerns in a constructive manner. The overall atmosphere of the meeting was positive throughout, and members expressed this to staff after the conclusion of the meeting.

Allendale-Fairfax High School – Allendale

This high school is struggling to deal with exceptionally high principal turnover. SC-SIC Staff found it difficult to schedule training at this school – even though they had requested it – due to the change in leadership and poor communications between the principal and the SIC chair. Goals training had to be rescheduled due to a misunderstanding at the school level. The training will now be held with the newly-elected SIC and a new principal on Tuesday, September 13 at the request of the current SIC chair, Althea Carter.

SC-SIC Strategic Plan, 2011-13

VISION

To promote and support civic engagement for quality public education in South Carolina.

MISSION

The SC School Improvement Council facilitates meaningful parent and community involvement in our state's public schools by providing resources, tools and strategies to local School Improvement Councils and other stakeholder groups.

GOALS

- 1) Advance recognition and support of SC-SIC and local SICs at all levels within the statewide education community.
- 2) Develop a more robust infrastructure at the state level supporting the Vision and Mission of SC-SIC and the efforts of local SICs across the state.
- 3) Diversify and grow the funding base for SC-SIC to increase available resources and stabilize support.

STRATEGIES

Goal 1: Advance recognition and support of SC-SIC and local SICs at all levels within the statewide education community.

Goal 1 End Result: Additional outside support for SC-SIC and local SICs.

Goal 1 Accomplished Strategies:

- A) Collaborate with SCDE's Office of School Effectiveness to engage principals and leverage SIC buy-in
 - Principal Induction
- B) Present workshops at state-level conferences
 - SCASA (SLI)
 - SCSBA
 - Parents Anonymous
- C) Coordinate SC Education Policy Fellowship Program (SC-EPFP)
- D) Actively monitor and engage General Assembly
 - Develop/leverage Board inventory
 - Testify before legislative committees as appropriate
 - Encourage development of local SIC advocacy committees
 - Train local SICs and other stakeholders on advocacy issues
- E) Establish web and social media presence to build SC-SIC brand and resources

- Comprehensive and informative website
- Use of Facebook and Twitter
- Use of PitchEngine for media releases
- F) Use various communications to build SC-SIC brand
 - *Council News*
 - *SIC Clips & Quips*
 - “Power of Many”
- G) Continue Riley School Improvement Award process

Goal 1 Ongoing Strategies:

- A) Continue and grow collaboration with SCDE in work with principals
 - Principal Induction
- B) Continue state-level workshop presentations
 - Foster existing partnerships for presentations
 - Examine new avenues for presentations
 - Communities in Schools
- C) Continue coordination of SC-EPFP
 - Build capacity to garner additional Fellows
- D) Continue monitoring/engagement of General Assembly
 - Board advocacy
 - Legislative testimony
 - Advocacy training offerings
- E) Web and social media presence
- F) Communications tools
- G) Riley Award process

Goal 1 Envisioned Strategies:

- A) Establish parent/community policy program (akin to SC-EPFP) to identify and equip emerging leaders for education advocacy
 - SC Initiative for Civic Engagement in Education (SC-ICEE)
- B) Establish a nationwide organization of school advisory councils to identify trends and share best practices
 - National Consortium of School Advisory Councils (NCSAC)
- C) Brand SC-SIC as “go-to” organization for issues regarding parent and community participation and advocacy in education
- D) Increase recognition of Riley Award
 - Name revamp
 - Financial sponsorship

Goal 2: Develop a more robust infrastructure at the state level supporting the Vision and Mission of SC-SIC and the efforts of local SICs across the state.

Goal 2 End Result: Additional means for SC-SIC to support itself and local SICs.

Goal 2 Accomplished Strategies:

- A) Implement train-the-trainer model
 - District Contact Meeting
 - Training materials posted to web
- B) Develop additional training modules
 - SIC Leadership
 - Communicating With the Greater School Community
 - Find Your Parent Voice
 - SIC Goal Setting
- C) Staff and Board development
 - Web design training
 - Riley Institute DLI
 - New Board member recruitment
 - New Board member orientation
- D) Use of various communication tools
 - *Council News*
 - *SIC Clips & Quips*
- E) Increase use of volunteers in office initiatives
 - Attend and report on various legislative meetings

Goal 2 Ongoing Strategies:

- A) Train-the-trainer model
 - DC Meeting
 - Materials posting to web
- B) Implement new training offerings
- C) Staff and Board development
 - SC-EPFP participation
 - Board member recruitment
 - New Board member orientation
- D) Communications tools
- E) Volunteer usage

Goal 2 Envisioned Strategies:

- A) Determine and allocate staffing needs to provide optimum services
 - Trainers
 - Legislative monitoring
 - Grants and research
- B) Provide additional parent/community focused training to fill gaps created through loss of services from other entities
 - Parent participation
 - Civic engagement
- C) Enhance programmatic offerings

- SC Initiative for Civic Engagement in Education (SC-ICEE)
 - National Consortium of School Advisory Councils (NCSAC)
- D) Invigorate efforts of Board to tap prospective Board members
- Business community
 - Philanthropic community

Goal 3: Diversify and grow the funding base for SC-SIC to increase available resources and stabilize support.

Goal 3 End Result: Sustain and grow SC-SIC operations.

Goal 3 Accomplished Strategies:

- A) Establish and promote designated giving to SC-SIC
- USC Foundation
 - Web presence
 - Communications tools
- B) Identify and pursue partnerships to increase funding base
- SCDE
 - SC-EPFP
 - Riley Institute
 - Children’s Trust
 - SC Education Policy Center
 - USC College of Education Grants Office

Goal 3 Ongoing Strategies:

- A) Designated giving to SC-SIC
- USC Foundation
 - Web presence
 - Communications tools
- B) Develop partnerships to increase funding base
- SC-EPFP
 - Riley Institute
 - SC Education Policy Center
 - USC College of Education Grants Office
 - Clemson University
 - Research and pursue additional grant opportunities

Goal 3 Envisioned Strategies:

- A) Research and prepare targeted grant proposals
- SC Initiative for Civic Engagement in Education (SC-ICEE)
 - National Consortium of School Advisory Councils (NCSAC)
 - Parent/Community participation activities

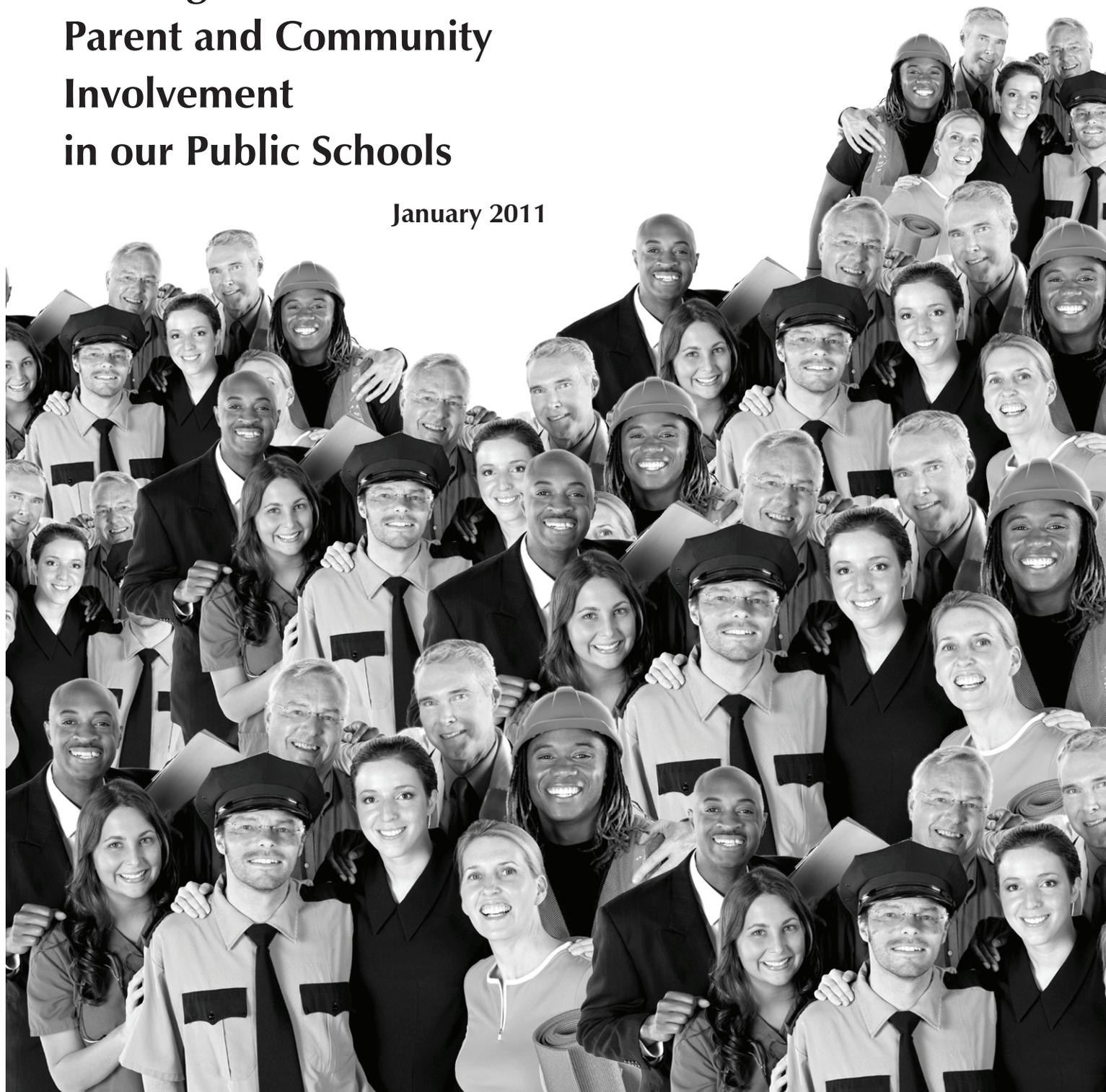
- Principal leadership
- B) Pursue additional support from USC College of Education
- C) More actively advocate for General Fund appropriations
 - EOC
 - SCDE
 - General Assembly
- D) Invigorate efforts of Board members and Board Membership/Development Committee in attaining additional funds
 - Donations
 - Award/event sponsorships
 - Programmatic underwriting

“The Power of Many”



Leading SICs in
Parent and Community
Involvement
in our Public Schools

January 2011





“The Power of Many”

Leading School Improvement Councils in Parent and Community Involvement in our Public Schools

Total SIC Members Statewide * **14,479**

Local SIC membership consists of elected parents, teachers and students, appointed community members, business partners and other volunteers, and school administrators as mandated by state law.

Total SICs Statewide **1,117**

Includes all K-12 public schools, as well as some technical centers, charter schools, early childhood centers, and other non-traditional facilities.

Total Individuals/SIC Members Trained, 2009-10 **1,550**

*Ongoing training required due to roll-off of half of each SIC's elected membership annually, as well as changes in district and building-level administration. Reflects **56** SC-SIC sponsored state, regional and district trainings, as well as locally-directed trainings through a “train the trainer” model.*

SC-SIC Technical Assistance Contacts, 2009-10 **8,590**

Represents estimated cumulative SC-SIC staff total of telephone and written contacts, on-site visits, and other direct communications pertaining to technical and policy issues of local SIC members, school and district personnel, and members of the general public.

Additional SC-SIC Provided Resources

Publications: *In 2009-10, updated and distributed over **13,000** copies of SC-SIC Handbook, “The Basics,” and circulated nearly **17,000** copies of SC-SIC newsletter, “Council News,” to SIC members, local and state-level educators, and other individuals.*

Website: *User-friendly site (sic.sc.gov) contains a host of information, links and other resources, as well as easy access to SIC training schedules and related materials, including a unique resources “clearing house” featuring links to trainings and materials offered by outside partnership agencies.*

SC-SIC Member Network: *Innovative online membership database to provide accountability and facilitate effective communication efforts on the state, district and local levels. Currently, **90%** of schools are in compliance with state mandates regarding the elected, appointed and ex-officio members of their SICs.**

Approximated Annual Local SIC Volunteer Hours **231,648**

Estimated Yearly Value of SIC Volunteer Hours **\$3.77 million**

*Reflects two (2) hours per month, eight (8) months per year of **meeting and planning time only** for local SIC members. Estimate does not reflect additional volunteer time devoted to SIC programs, subcommittees and other initiatives. Approximated value calculated from hourly 2008 South Carolina volunteer rate of \$16.26 per hour (www.independentsector.org/volunteer_time).*

SC-SIC 2010-11 Budget (State Allocated Funds) **\$249,768**

*Base budget composed of EIA funding (60%) and USC proviso (40%). Includes salary and benefits for three full-time and one part-time position, operational expenses and materials. Cost of SC-SIC services provided annually currently amounts to **\$224** per school - a **15-fold return on investment**. For 2010-11, additional non-recurring funds totaling \$40,000 from several sources were received by SC-SIC for specialized contractual services.*

* As of 01/31/2011. Data from SC-SIC Member Network, an online database designed for direct local school membership input and reporting. SIC membership data for all state K-12 public schools is due by November 15th annually in accordance with state law. This data may be updated throughout the school year and is fully accessible online to the general public at sic.ed.sc.edu/network/.



“SC-SIC and the local SICs it serves provides the biggest bang for the education buck that I’ve seen in my experience in public life.”

–Ken Clark, former S.C. Legislator and School Board Member, Swansea



“I cannot imagine having to tackle some of the challenges we face without the insight and help of my School Improvement Council. Our SIC truly embodies a total team approach – much needed not just here at my school, but in all schools.”

–Gregory A. McCord, Principal, Orangeburg-Wilkinson High School



“The S.C. School Improvement Council serves our public schools well, developing and nurturing direct involvement of parents and communities in the life and success of their schools. That’s why we created SICs over 30 years ago, and it’s exactly why the work of SC-SIC is even more important today.”

–Dick Riley, Former S.C. Governor and U.S. Education Secretary, Greenville



“As a businessman and former SIC member, I can think of no better investment in the future of South Carolina’s schools than SC-SIC and our local SICs. Where else, for such a limited expenditure of state funds, can we leverage the active participation of so many eager to further the success of our students?”

–Bob Zuercher, General Manager, Blackmoor Golf Course, Murrells Inlet



“Our SIC takes its responsibilities seriously as it works to support our school and children. With the help of our school community and the vital services of the S.C. School Improvement Council, we can and do make a positive difference each and every day.”

–Katherine Smith, Parent & SIC Chair, North Augusta Elementary School



South Carolina's School Improvement Councils - Put yourself in the picture.



“Schools would need to increase spending by more than \$1,000 per pupil to gain the same impact on student achievement as a well-designed family engagement program.”

- Houtenville, A.J. & Conway, K.S. (2008). The Journal of Human Resources, 43(2), 437-453.

School Improvement Councils

are composed of parents, teachers, students, and community members providing direct frontline input and guidance for their schools. Locally elected and appointed SIC members work alongside school administrators to serve their schools and communities to facilitate volunteer resources, parental and community involvement, and programmatic review essential to their schools' success. The S.C. School Improvement Council (SC-SIC) was established more than three decades ago to provide the member training, technical assistance, statutory accountability, and other operational resources vital to the continued success of the community-based School Improvement Councils in each of South Carolina's 1,100-plus K-12 public schools.



“Civic Engagement in Public Education”

sic.sc.gov
800-868-2232