

SOUTH CAROLINA EDUCATION OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE

Minutes of the Meeting

December 11, 2017

Members Present: Neil Robinson, Chair; Dr. Danny Merck, Vice-Chair; April Allen; Cynthia Bennett; Dr. Bob Couch; Rep. Raye Felder; Barbara Hairfield; Sen. Greg Hembree; Sen. Kevin Johnson; Rep. Dwight Loftis; Sen. John Matthews; State Superintendent of Education Molly Spearman; Dr. John Stockwell; Patti Tate; and Ellen Weaver.

EOC Staff Present: Dr. Kevin Andrews; Melanie Barton; Hope Johnson-Jones; Dr. Rainey Knight; Bunnie Ward; and Dana Yow.

Mr. Robinson welcomed the members and guests to the meeting.

The minutes of the October 9, 2017 meeting, with one spelling error corrected, were approved.

Mr. Robinson announced that Cynthia Bennett would be resigning from the EOC effective December 31, 2017. On behalf of the EOC, Mr. Robinson expressed his appreciation to Ms. Bennett for her contribution to the EOC and to public education in South Carolina.

Mr. Robinson then recognized Jeff Schilz, Interim President and Executive Director of the SC Commission on Higher Education. Mr. Robinson noted that he asked Mr. Schilz to present to the EOC statistics that had been shared with the Lottery Oversight Committee earlier this fall. Specifically, he asked Mr. Schilz to discuss statistics on college affordability and access. As the state's accountability plan continues to evolve, college readiness is a key component to ensuring that our students succeed in higher education, whether that means a two- or four-year degree or postsecondary industry credential.

Mr. Schilz provided to the EOC members an overview of CHE's public agenda for South Carolina which has as its stated goal that "60% of the adults in South Carolina will obtain a workforce-relevant credential – that is a degree or certificate – by 2025." Mr. Schilz highlighted the need for quality, timely data and the need for early education, public education and higher education to work collaboratively rather than in silos to create a system for South Carolina to achieve the 2025 goal. Mr. Schilz discussed the SCCORE Initiative, one option for expanding access to higher education, especially for work-aged adults. Patterned after a similar program initiated in Georgia in 2001, SCCORE would provide core courses taught by South Carolina institutions in a distance education format. The proposed cost would be \$175 per credit hour, inclusive of books and materials. Mr. Schilz noted that 29,835 individuals in South Carolina in 2016-17 were enrolled in distance duration at an out-of-state NC-SARA (National Council for State Authorization Reciprocity Agreements) institution at an average cost of \$12,383 per year. Expanding online courses by South Carolina institutions would increase access and affordability and likely increase completion at South Carolina colleges and universities.

The members then asked follow-up questions. Sen. Hembree asked for clarification that adult learners, going back to school to begin or complete a degree or credential, would benefit from SCCORE. Superintendent Spearman noted that the Department of Education faced obstacles with getting dual credit courses in all areas of the state and through all technical colleges. Sen. Matthews asked for more information about the future financial stability of higher education in the state. Mr. Schilz explained that our higher education system will be dramatically and negatively impacted by a decline in the supply or number of out-of-state students coming to college in South Carolina due to demographic changes and due to other states' tuition policies. Rep. Loftis asked about the data needs at CHE. Mr. Schilz explained that the agency had data, but the biggest challenge was accessibility of the data to the public. CHE is developing a dashboard and new website to provide data to the public. Dr. Stockwell asked for more information on the supply-side data. Mr. Schilz provided information on three likely scenarios and the future fiscal implication. Under the worst-case scenario, the institutions may face a \$500 million funding gap.

The Committee then received several subcommittee reports:

Academic Standards and Assessment: Dr. Merck explained that Superintendent Spearman proposed six changes to the ESSA state plan already approved by the EOC. Three impacted the 2017-18 school year and three, the 2018-19 school year. The Academic Standards and Assessment Subcommittee met on November 27 and addressed the recommendations that impacted the 2017-18 school year. Recommendations 1 and 3 were approved and are recommended to the full EOC for adoption. Recommendation 1 would expand the definition of career ready to any student who scores a 3 or higher on any Advanced Placement (AP) exam or a 4 or higher on an International Baccalaureate (IB) exam. Recommendation 3 is that a student who earns a C or higher in 6 credit hours of dual credit, including social studies, would be deemed college ready. Recommendation 2 regarding the definition of career ready was deferred. Dr. Couch was asked by the Subcommittee to work with business and industry and career and technology educators to ensure that CTE completers with work-based experience would be an indicator that all students, regardless of geographic location, would be able to meet in the accountability system.

Mr. Robinson asked that Recommendations 1 and 3 which impact the definition of college ready and which were recommended for adoption by the EOC be discussed and voted on first. There being no discussion, the committee voted unanimously to adopt Recommendation 1 and 3.

Dr. Merck then called upon Dr. Couch to provide an update on the work of the special committee. Dr. Couch noted that approximately 50 individuals representing schools, career centers, the South Carolina Department of Education and employers met and discussed for four to five hours how work-based learning could be a part of the career ready definition. The committee had to ensure that: (1) the metric would be applicable statewide, especially in rural areas of the state; (2) employers would assist in defining quality work-based learning experiences as needed by the career pathway; and (3) the

data could be collected and verified. Staff passed out a motion to expand the definition of career-ready to include students who successfully complete a state-approved, work-based learning exit evaluation from an employer. The work-based learning program would be required to have minimum requirements:

- Training agreement which defines a combination of objectives and a minimum of 40 practical experience hours or the highest number of hours required by industry defined competencies in a career pathway;
- Be aligned with state Individual Graduation Plan (IGP) career clusters;
- Include an industry evaluation that is created from the training agreement including the world-class skills from the *Profile of the South Carolina Graduate*; and
- The student must have earned a minimum of one unit in the pathway related to the work-based placement or completed a personal pathway of study.

To ensure consistency in reporting:

- 1) All districts and schools will be required to following the requirements in the SCDE Work-based Learning Guide and all results will be reported and uploaded into PowerSchool.
- 2) The SCDE must deliver regional training for the implementation of this initiative and CDFs and School-to-Work Coordinators will be required to attend.
- 3) A statewide delivery system will occur through the SC Regional Education Centers.
- 4) Educators and business partners will design opportunities for students together through School Advisory Committees.

Dr. Merck made a motion to accept the recommendation of the working group. Ms. Tate seconded the motion. Then there were discussions and amendments. Rep. Loftis made a motion to amend the motion to clarify that the highest number of hours per work-based learning experience as defined by the industry and the career pathway be required. Sen. Hembree seconded the motion. The Committee voted unanimously to adopt the motion as amended.

Then the members amended the definition of career ready accordingly. Rep. Felder moved that the definition of career ready, a student earning a Silver, Gold or Platinum National Career Readiness Certificate on the WorkKeys exam, be amended to add language “or comparable levels on a career readiness assessment.” Rep. Loftis seconded the motion. Rep. Felder explained that the law does not expressly require WorkKeys but a career readiness assessment; therefore, the definition should reflect the law. At the suggestion of Superintendent Spearman, Sen. Hembree moved to further amend the definition of career ready to state that a student is deemed career ready if the student “is a CTE completer and earns a national industry credential or state industry credential as determined by the business community.” Sen. Johnson seconded the motion. Rep. Loftis asked Superintendent Spearman if there would be any problems providing the needed training to educators about the work-based learning experiences.

She responded that the Department would provide the training with existing staff and resources. There being no further reamendments, the committee voted unanimously to accept the changes.

Public Awareness:

Ms. Hairfield gave the report for the Public Awareness Subcommittee. She reported out that Ms. Yow had attended a meeting of the Council of Chief School State Officers (CCSSO) on the design of state report cards. Personnel from other states learned from one another. SC is one of the few states that are internally handling the design of state report cards; most states are contracting out the work because of ADA compliance issues and costs. Ms. Hairfield explained that while the SCDE is designing the state report card, the EOC is charged with assisting and approving the design. The EOC is also working to develop public-friendly materials to assist the general public in understanding the status of schools and the new accountability system.

Both the Public Awareness and ASA subcommittees submitted the following recommendation to the full EOC:

- (1) The EOC will continue to work closely with SCDE staff and the State Board of Education to ensure the development and the continuous improvement of the report card data portal, to be published in November 2018.
- (2) To meet the statutory requirement, the subcommittees recommend that the EOC Public Awareness Subcommittee, staff and external assistance, as needed, establish a “parent-friendly” report card and all associated materials. The EOC staff will work with SCDE staff to ensure the data elements are available and accessible. The parent-friendly materials will be available on the comprehensive SC School Report Card website, which will be a separate URL (i.e., www.scschoolreportcard.org), but will be linked to both the EOC and SCDE sites.
- (3) The EOC will also work to identify existing stakeholder groups that can help further guide the development of the design and structure of the report card portal as well as help develop a theory of action on the reporting of schools.
- (4) The EOC staff, working with the Public Awareness Subcommittee, the SCDE, and the State Board of Education, will develop a design and construction phase along with a timeline for implementation for creation of the new state report card. Using public input, the EOC will be tasked with providing direction on the design and structure of the report cards and the portal they reside on while the SCDE is tasked with ensuring compliance with ESSA and ADA and the creation of the portal itself.

Superintendent Spearman asked for clarification on the recommendations. The motion was approved unanimously.

Ms. Hairfield then updated the committee on the progress of Martin's Math Club and a new initiative with Dawn Staley's Educate My Sole initiative.

Last year, 4,000 tickets were disbursed through the Martin's Math Club program, 317 teachers statewide participated, and 14,880 tickets statewide were requested. Based on the success of last year's program, there is now a dedicated Martin's Math Club section at every home game. Students and teachers are recognized at the game as well. There have been two home games this season so far.

Earlier this year, the EOC was approached by USC Athletics about partnering with the National Champion Lady Gamecocks and Coach Dawn Staley's Educate My Sole Initiative.

Educate My Sole is a performance-based program already occurring in South Carolina Title 1 Schools during the 2017-18 school year, for the entire school year:

- Annie Burnside Elementary (Richland One)
- Hyatt Park Elementary (Richland One)
- Batesburg-Leesville Elementary (Lexington 3)
- Allendale Elementary and Fairfax Elementary (Allendale)
- Chestnut Oaks Middle School (Sumter)
- Cayce Elementary (Lexington 2)

Afterschool Programs in the following schools:

- Jonesville Elementary (Union)
- Bamberg Elementary (Bamberg 1)
- Manning Junior High (Clarendon 2)
- Liberty Hill Academy (Charleston)

The program focuses on attendance, behavior, and reading. Participating schools compete within the school. Each homeroom competes against other homerooms within their same grade level. Winning classes are all given tickets to a Lady Gamecocks Home Game. Transportation is provided, and the winning students are presented with new shoes at the game. All students in each participating school gets a voucher for the game.

EIA and Improvement Mechanisms: Dr. Couch reported on behalf of the subcommittee. By law the EOC is required to make budget recommendations to the Governor and General Assembly regarding the Education Accountability Acct and the EIA. The subcommittee met throughout the fall reviewing and hearing public comment on the

budget requests. There were EIA requested increases that totaled \$88.6 million. The penny will only generate an additional \$39.8 million so funding had to be prioritized. The recommendations can be summarized as follows:

EAA

Technical Assistance \$11.0 million increase

Currently, the General Assembly appropriates \$12.8 million to serve the most Underperforming 5% of schools. While SCDE requested a \$22 million increase to support the bottom 10% of schools identified as Underperforming or Unsatisfactory in 2018, the committee looked at the implementation of the technical assistance services (diagnostic reviews, development of school improvement plans, hiring and training of transformation coaches, etc.) and determined that the best-case scenario was that the provision of support would take at least 18 months. The subcommittee also recommended that charter schools not be eligible for the technical assistance and that the ability of districts and schools to reallocate existing resources to these Unsatisfactory schools also be considered. The bottom 10% of schools will likely include schools in districts with extensive local per pupil revenues.

Student Engagement Survey \$750,000

Technology upgrades to PowerSchool \$1.6 million

Student Learning System \$1.4 million

The committee discussed the funding for technical assistance. Sen. Matthews requested clarification regarding the number of schools and the technical assistance strategy planned by the Department of Education. Members discussed the challenges of hiring 120 transformation coaches due to current challenge with teacher recruitment and retention. Mrs. Barton noted that the 120 schools being identified in the bottom 10 percent was an estimate at this time. The number of schools that are identified as Unsatisfactory will not be finalized until November 2018.

Strengthening the Teaching Profession

- Increase the state minimum teacher salary to establish \$32,000 as the minimum starting pay for a teacher with no years of experience - \$8.7 million
- Teaching Fellows Program to expand number of students receiving the scholarship from 200 to 215 - \$360,000
- Working Conditions Survey to determine why teachers are leaving the classroom - \$250,000

Improving Student-Outcomes

- SC Public Charter School District for growth only in enrollment \$13.1 million along with a recommendation that the funds be disaggregated by authorizer

- \$485,000 for a pilot program at the Youth Learning Institute at Clemson targeted middle schools
- STEM \$250,00 to expand initiative in the Upcountry and Coastal Pee Dee
- Arts Commission -- \$500,000 to expand ABC sites and technology in the arts throughout the state
- Industry Credentials – Annualization of \$3.0 million for exams
- Technology – balanced with any remaining EIA funds going to schools and districts to improve technology infrastructure

Superintendent Spearman expressed her concern that the Subcommittee had only recommended \$11 million of the \$22 million requested. As explained, given the diagnostic reviews and hiring that would occur after the November 2018 release of the report cards, the subcommittee concluded that \$22 million which included direct funds to schools would not be expended within the last half of the school year but would require at least eighteen months of implementation. Members also asked about the budget issues surrounding teacher recruitment and retention. The EOC adopted the budget recommendations, which will be forwarded to the Governor and General Assembly.

The last action item was the Innovation Report Pursuant to Proviso 1A.43. The subcommittee recommended adoption of the report. As explained by Dr. Couch, the General Assembly asked the EOC to recommend a plan to develop and implement a strategic grants process for reviewing, awarding, and monitoring innovative education strategies in schools and districts. The report provides the following assistance to the General Assembly:

- Documentation of prior innovation efforts in SC;
- Examples from other states who have implemented such programs;
- Recommendations for how to move forward to create a South Carolina Education Innovation Fund, which would be a nonprofit foundation. The goal would be to invest state and private funds into strategies to improve student outcomes.

The recommendation would be that the General Assembly establishes the priority areas for grant funding in the annual budget. The projects would have to be both replicable and scalable. In addition, the Fund would study and implement an online platform to provide students in every classroom with an expanded array of course options. The Committee adopted the report.

Formative Assessment - Mr. Robinson called upon Mrs. Barton to explain the district waiver requests. Mrs. Barton explained that state law requires, the State Board of Education to create a statewide adoption list of formative assessments for grades one through nine that are aligned with the state content standards in English language arts and mathematics according to standards adopted jointly by the Education Oversight Committee (EOC) and the South Carolina Department of Education. The process for selecting formative assessments was approved by the EOC on April 10, 2017. The criteria were amended to allow districts to participate in an experimental study of alternative

formative assessments. Any districts seeking to participate in such a study must seek approval of the State Board of Education and the EOC.

The SC Department of Education has approved two formative assessments, TE21, Inc. and i-Ready, to offer such designs. Four school districts want to expend their state appropriation for formative assessments to participate in these studies:

TE21, Inc	Greenville and Richland 1
i-Ready	Anderson 2 and Spartanburg 5

The EOC staff recommended that the EOC approve the four district waivers. There being no further questions, the EOC unanimously approved the district waivers.

Then, Mr. Robinson informed the EOC that every two years the EOC elects a chairman and vice-chairman. Per law, no one can serve more than two two-year terms. Dr. Merck has completed his second two-year term. The chairman appointed a subcommittee to make recommendations to the full EOC. Sen. Hembree chaired the subcommittee which consisted of Rep. Loftis and Dr. Couch. Sen. Hembree said that the subcommittee recommended that Mr. Neil Robinson be elected for a second two-year term and nominated Dr. Couch to serve as vice-chair with Dr. Couch abstaining. There being no further nominations, the nominations were closed and by acclamation Mr. Robinson was elected chairman for another two-year term and Dr. Couch as vice-chair of the EOC.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned.