



SC EDUCATION OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE

Reporting facts. Measuring change. Promoting progress.

P.O. Box 11867 | 227 Blatt Building

Columbia SC 29211 | WWW.SCEOC.ORG

AGENDA EIA and Improvement Mechanisms Subcommittee Meeting

Monday, November 10, 2025

11:00 A.M.

Room 521, Blatt Building

I. Welcome and IntroductionsApril Allen

II. Approval of Minutes of September 15, 2025April Allen

III. Information: EIA 2024-25 Reports & 2026-27 Budget Requests

Presentations:

• S²TEM Centers SC Dr. Katherine Mulholland
Executive Director (11:15-11:30)

• SC Project Read Dr. Peggy Bodie,
Grant Coordinator &
Dr. Amy Condon
Literacy Coach (11:35-11:50)

▪ SC Council on Economic Education.....Chandler Jordan
Executive Director (11:55-12:10)

• SC Teacher Loan ProgramRay Jones
Product Officer (12:15-12:35)

Lunch..... 12:35-1:45

• Center for Educational Partnerships (SC-SIC)Dr. Cindy Van Buren,
Director,
& Dr. Quantina Haggwood, Executive Director,
School Improvement Council
UofSC (1:45-2:00)

• SC Youth ChalleNGe Academy.....Ronnie L. Scott
Program Director,
Adjutant General's Office (2:05-2:20)

• SC First Steps.....Ann Vandervliet
Executive Director (2:25-2:40)

• H.Y.P.E.Barney Gadson
Executive Director (2:45-3:00)

VI. Adjournment

EIA & Improvement Mechanisms Subcommittee Members:

April Allen, Chair

Melanie Barton

Russell Baxley

Rep. Neal Collins

Jerri McCumbee

Dr. Brian Newsome

April Allen

CHAIR

Brian Newsome

VICE CHAIR

Tammy Achziger

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Sidney Locke

Jerri McCumbee

Melissa Pender

Patty J. Tate

C. Ross Turner, III

Ellen Weaver

Dana Yow
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

SOUTH CAROLINA EDUCATION OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE

EIA & Improvement Mechanisms Subcommittee

Minutes of the Meeting

September 15, 2025

Members Present (in-person or remote): Dr. Brian Newsome, Rep. Neal Collins, Melanie Barton, and Jeri McCumbee

EOC Staff Present: Crystal Garcia, Tenell Felder, Gabrielle Fulton, Amina Asghar, Hope Johnson-Jones, Dr. Rainey Knight, Dr. Matthew Lavery, Dr. Jenny May and Dana Yow

EIA subcommittee member Dr. Brian Newsome opened the meeting and asked for a motion to approve the EIA subcommittee minutes from the December 2, 2024, meeting. Representative Neal Collins motioned to approve the minutes which was seconded by Melanie Barton. After the minutes were approved Dr. Rainey Knight provided an update on the 2025-2026 EIA budget process.

The committee reviewed the EIA schedule and discussed the EOC's legislative authority to recommend changes and review EIA programs. Updates were shared on completed and upcoming reports, with final submissions due by September 26. The committee will receive the comprehensive "yellow sheet" summarizing program funding, balances, and return on investment data by the week of September 21. Hard copies will also be mailed due to printing challenges. Meeting dates were discussed, with proposed options including November 10, November 17 (noted conflict), and December 1 if an additional session is needed. The full committee will meet on December 8. The group will confirm the revised meeting date via email, with a tentative plan for November 20. Presentations and program updates are expected at upcoming meetings.

Next, Sally Cauthen, EOC Consultant, provided an overview of the Teacher Loan Program (TLP). The 2025 Teacher Loan Report builds on last year's findings and recommendations, with improved organization and added context for clarity and transparency. This year's focus shifted from data analysis to exploring why participation in the Teacher Loan Program (TLP) remains low.

The TLP, established in 1984, provides three types of forgivable loans to encourage teaching in critical subject and geographic areas:

- **Type 1:** Traditional undergraduates (the only loan that accrues interest and requires service in designated areas).

- **Type 2:** Career changers (added in 2000).
- **Type 3:** Participants in alternative certification programs such as PACE.

Despite increases in loan caps (now up to \$27,500) and expanded eligibility, participation—especially in Type 1 loans—continues to decline, reaching the lowest levels since at least 2010. Reduced awareness, limited marketing, and fewer high school Teacher Cadet programs (which have not rebounded since COVID-19) are contributing factors.

Feedback from the Teacher Loan Advisory Committee emphasized the need to streamline applications, promote awareness, and strengthen educator retention.

Options for Committee Consideration:

1. Continue the program as is with direction for TLAC to implement improvements.
2. Modify governance to clarify roles among involved agencies.
3. Transition oversight to a single state entity with full authority.
4. Establish a strategic committee to conduct a comprehensive program review.

Potential Enhancements:

- Reevaluate definitions of “critical needs” subjects and areas.
- Align TLP with other educator incentive programs.
- Accelerate loan forgiveness to support retention.
- Remove discouraging application language.
- Develop an online application process.
- Expand eligibility to additional alternative certification programs.
- Strengthen collaboration among SCDE, CHE, and CERRA to rebuild Teacher Cadet participation.

Overall, the report highlights the ongoing need for improved coordination, awareness, and modernization to make the Teacher Loan Program more attractive and effective in addressing South Carolina’s educator shortages.

Ms. Barton noted that 967 applications were received for the traditional teacher loan program, with 820 classified as type one, totaling \$4.5 million in loans. She observed that the revolving loan

fund continues to grow by about \$3 million annually, exceeding the amount loaned out. Barton emphasized the lack of coordination between CERRA's Teacher Fellows Program and the Student Loan Corporation's Teacher Loan Program, calling the system fragmented and difficult for potential applicants to navigate. She also highlighted the declining number of individuals entering education statewide and questioned whether the program is effectively encouraging students to become teachers. Barton suggested that the General Assembly may need to reconsider how these funds are used—potentially reallocating or expanding programs like Teaching Fellows to better support teacher recruitment.

Dr. Newsome suggested creating a one-stop shop to streamline access to teacher recruitment programs and ensure consistent information. Lindsay Yearta, CERRA's Executive Director, agreed there is room for improvement and emphasized the need to better inform students—especially those not selected for fellowships—about other available education pathways. She shared that among cohorts from 2000 to 2021, 4.8% of graduates have satisfied their loan through teaching service, and 66.4% remain employed in South Carolina public schools.

Representative Collins requested an update on last year's proviso. Ray Jones, SC Student Loan Corporation, reported that statements of work have been completed with loan origination and servicing providers, but implementation is slightly delayed due to federal loan changes affecting Graduate PLUS and Parent PLUS loans. The forgivable loan program is planned for the 2026–2027 year. The program will provide half the funds to specific districts and the other half as a refinance option with reduced rates. Eligible loans include most educational loans, while non-educational loans like medical residency or relocation loans are excluded. The application process will be streamlined online to avoid complexity.

Following this, Ms. Yow provided the Executive Director Update, noting that the school report card will be publicly released on Monday, October 13, with a local event in the morning and the full committee meeting in the afternoon to discuss results. She also discussed planning a joint retreat with the State Board of Education, proposing dates that accommodate legislative members. Key topics for the retreat include reviewing the 2030 goal of 75% of students on grade level and clarifying the standards and assessments review process, with the University of Georgia's Assessment Solutions evaluating past assessment processes to provide guidance for committee decisions.

After this update, the meeting was adjourned.

Education Improvement Act (EIA)
EOC EIA Subcommittee Timeline 2025
EIA Subcommittee
(Amended)

Event	Date
EIA Reports due to EOC	September 26
Summary sheets emailed and snail mail to EIA Subcommittee and other relevant stakeholders; Notebooks available for subcommittee members	Week of October 21
EIA Subcommittee Meeting (Testimony only)	November 10
EIA Subcommittee Meeting (Testimony; discussion of recommendations, if time available; draft of EOC staff recommendations)	November 20
EIA Subcommittee Meeting (Draft of EOC staff recommendations; discussion of EIA programs to develop consensus and vote to approve EIA program recommendations to full EOC on Dec 11)	Dec 1
EOC Full Committee	December 8

EIA and EAA Budget and Proviso Requests for FY 2026-27
November 10, 2025

Section 59-6-10 of the Education Accountability Act requires the Education Oversight Committee (EOC) to “review and monitor the implementation and evaluation of the Education Accountability Act and the Education Improvement Act programs and funding” and to “make programmatic and funding recommendations to the General Assembly.” To meet this statutory requirement, the EOC required each EIA-funded program or entity to submit a program and budget report detailing the objectives and outcomes of each program for Fiscal Years 2024-25. Fiscal Year 2025-26 details the projected implementation for funds allotted and Fiscal Year 2026-27 includes any additional requests and goals for EIA funds.

New requests for **Fiscal Year 2024-25** total **\$1,900,000**.

Projections for an estimate for EIA funds for 2026-27 have not been released by the Office of Revenue of Fiscal Affairs. The base for EIA recurring funds for **2025-26** is **\$1,311,066,913**.

Table 1

EIA 2026-27	
EIA Base Appropriation 2025-26 Recurring funds	\$1,311,066,913
EIA Nonrecurring funds (Surplus)	\$87,000,000