

SOUTH CAROLINA EDUCATION OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE

Minutes of the Meeting

August 6, 2018

Members Present: Neil Robinson, Chair; Dr. Bob Couch, Vice-Chair; Anne Bull; Barbara Hairfield; Senator Kevin Johnson; Rep. Dwight Loftis; Dr. David Mathis for State Superintendent of Education; Senator John Matthews; Dr. John Stockwell; Dr. Scott Turner; and Ellen Weaver.

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

Mr. Robinson welcomed members and guests to the meeting. He asked that members keep Sen. Hembree in their thoughts and prayers as he continues to be hospitalized.

Mr. Robinson recognized the newest member of the EOC, Dr. Scott Turner, Superintendent of School Spartanburg District Five Schools. Rep. Rita Allison, chair of the House Education and Public Works Committee, appointed Dr. Turner as her education appointee to the EOC replacing Dr. Danny Merck, whose term expired June 30, 2018. Both Dr. Merck and Dr. Turner are Wofford alumni. Mr. Robinson recognized that Dr. Turner's expertise and experiences as a current superintendent, as a former principal and former classroom teacher will serve the EOC.

Mr. Robinson also recognized Dr. David Mathis, Deputy Superintendent of College and Career Readiness at the South Carolina Department of Education, who was in attendance on behalf of State Superintendent of Education, Molly Spearman.

The minutes of the June 11, 2018 meeting were approved as distributed.

Public Awareness

Mr. Robinson introduced the first item on the agenda, an update on development of the annual public awareness campaign. As explained by Mr. Robinson, the Education Accountability Act, Section 59-18-1700 of the Code of Laws, requires the EOC to conduct an on-going public information campaign that apprises the public of the status of public schools and the importance of high standards for academic performance.

At the December 2017 meeting of the EOC, at the recommendation of the Public Awareness Subcommittee, the EOC directed the staff and external assistance, as needed, to develop parent-friendly materials including a specific website to assist the general public in understanding the report cards that will be issued in November of this year.

The EOC staff attended two national meetings on the issue of how to communicate to the public the intricacies of the report card system. Based upon the advice of other states and experts, it was determined that not only did the public awareness campaign need to include information on the report cards, but it also needed to inform South Carolinians about why education matters and why improving the outcomes for students matters to our students, our state's economy and our communities.

The committee then previewed the website, www.expectmoresc.com, which will be released to the public in November. As explained by Dana Yow of the EOC staff, the name of the website reinforces the EOC's statutory responsibility: to help the general public understand the status of public schools and why education matters to students and communities. Ms. Yow introduced the staff of Period 3 who developed the website: Gene Crawford, Founder, President and Director of Operations; Greg Hilton, who is in charge of Business Development and Strategy; and Laruen Mancke, the designer and illustrator of the site. Mr. Hilton and Mr. Crawford demonstrated the various pages of the website, that taken together, tell a story of why South Carolinians should support schools and why public education is important to the future of children and the economic future of our state.

Dr. Couch asked if there was a link to the *Profile of the South Carolina Graduate*. Mr. Robinson commented on the ease by which to navigate the site. Ms. Weaver suggested that a video of two to three minutes be included on the first page of the website to help users understand the report card content. Dr. Turner noted that parents often have too much assessment data and have difficulty in understanding the data. Under development are tools to assist parents and civic leaders in supporting schools.

eLearning Applications

The committee then took up the one action item, consideration and approval of four district applications to the eLearning pilot program. Mr. Robinson called upon Mrs. Barton to describe the process and the applicants. The General Assembly and Governor directed by Proviso 1A.86. in the Fiscal Year 2018-19 General Appropriation Act that the EOC be responsible for implementing a pilot program to use online or virtual instruction for school make-up days. The proviso further requires the EOC to provide guidelines to selected schools for the pilot no later than August 1, 2018. Mrs. Barton noted that in June the EOC approved guidelines for the eLearning pilot program and approved one school district for participation in the pilot program, Anderson School District 5.

On June 11, the EOC received an application from the Pickens County School District to participate in the pilot. On July 9, the EOC staff mailed and emailed to all school districts the eLearning Pilot Program Guidelines and Application form. While the proviso allowed the EOC to be selective in which districts participate, the process was opened to all

districts. On July 19, the EOC received an application from Anderson 4, which was withdrawn on July 31. On July 24 the EOC received an application from Spartanburg School District 1 and on July 25, an application from the Kershaw County School District. The fourth application from Spartanburg 7, was received on July 31. Mrs. Barton noted that the EOC received inquiries from four school districts, and an application on August 2 from the Berkeley County School District.

Mrs. Barton highlighted the following from the applications:

1. The Pickens County School District clearly defined the expectations of teachers. In addition, Pickens proposed using a “test” of the eLearning activity prior to the actual eLearning day to ensure that students and parents have access to materials and assignments.
2. The Kershaw County School District has a new superintendent who implemented eLearning in two school districts in Indiana, the state upon which these guidelines were developed. Kershaw also indicated that the district will have a dedicated eLearning curriculum coordinator responsible for the program and for training staff.
3. The applications included multiple learning management systems and multiple types of devices.

Rep. Loftis moved to approve the four applications. Dr. Stockwell seconded the motion.

The Committee discussed whether to expand the pilot program to additional districts. Mr. Robinson asked to amend Rep. Loftis’ motion to limit the number of applications to no more than five which was unanimously agreed to. The committee voted unanimously to approve the amended motion.

The Committee then received updates on the following items:

Accountability Working Group – Dr. Knight of the EOC advised the EOC that the accountability working group would submit its recommendations for strengthening the accountability system for school year 2018-19 in September. Dr. Knight noted that there are three themes emerging: (1) the need for formative assessments in prekindergarten through grade 2 to assist districts in knowing if students are on track to be on grade level in mathematics and reading by the end of third grade; (2) the need to find reporting metrics to determine if students are developing the world class skills and dispositions of the *Profile of the South Carolina Graduate*; and (3)) the need to carefully consider the industry certifications under the college and career ready indicator to ensure a student who is deemed college and career ready has the knowledge and skills needed to enter the workforce making a living wage.

Educational Credit for Exceptional Needs Children (ECENC) Program – According to Mrs. Barton, as of August 6, there have been 109 schools approved to participate in the program in school year, 2018-19. Of these schools, there are ten new schools. Mrs. Barton summarized the requirements for schools to participate in the program. Mrs. Barton noted that the biggest change in the program requirements concerns reporting. The EOC will be required to annually document the impact of this program on student achievement. The report must document how well students performed. The EOC will contract with Revenue and Fiscal Affairs to set up a secure data portal that will collect from the private schools the individual student assessment results for children who received a grant in the prior year. The EOC will use similar reporting as done in the state of Florida to report out where these students scored based on national percentile rankings.

Legislative Session Update 2018-19 – Mrs. Barton summarized the legislative summary in the packet and notified the EOC that the information would be distributed to members of the General Assembly along with a briefing on the Kindergarten Readiness Assessment (KRA) results for school year 2017-18.

Fiscal Year 2018-19 Meeting Schedule – Mr. Robinson directed members to a tentative meeting schedule for the fiscal year with subcommittee and full committee dates noted.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned.

SOUTH CAROLINA EDUCATION OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE

Minutes of the Meeting

August 7, 2018

USC Alumni Center
900 Senate Street Columbia, SC
9:00 a.m.-3:30 p.m.

EOC Members Present: Neil Robinson, Chair; Dr. Bob Couch, Vice-Chair; Anne Bull; Barbara Hairfield; Senator Kevin Johnson; Rep. Dwight Loftis; State Superintendent of Education, Molly Spearman; and Ellen Weaver.

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

The EOC hosted a reading symposium, *reTHINKING Literacy for the 21st Century Learner*. There were approximately 97 individuals who attended the symposium. These individuals represented the following four groups of stakeholders:

1. Policymakers – Members of the General Assembly; members of the EOC and members of the State Board of Education;
2. Educator Preparation Programs, traditional and alternative;
3. District Leadership - Local school board members, district superintendents, and district instructional staff; and
4. School leaders, including principals, literacy coaches, and key instructional support staff.

The goal of the symposium was to address the following questions: What does the research show are effective policies and strategies to improve the teaching and learning of language, reading and literacy? And, what can we in South Carolina do to improve language, reading and literacy in our state?

The national experts who presented were:

- Dr. Lorin Anderson – Professor Emeritus of the University of South Carolina who provided an overview of the past twenty years of educational achievement in South Carolina;
- Dr. Timothy Shanahan of the University of Illinois who documented by research the importance of the amount, content, and quality of instruction that a student receives. In content, he focused on the importance of phonological awareness, phonics, oral reading fluency, vocabulary, reading comprehension, and writing. For quality, the instruction must include systematic phonics instruction, oral reading taught through guided oral reading practice with repetition, and vocabulary instruction where students learn to explore rich definitions of words.

- Dr. Stacey Leftwich of Rowan University focused on the responsibility of educator preparation programs to prepare teachers to teach all students. Dr. Leftwich presented on the practice of using culturally diverse children's literature in the classroom and preparing teacher educators to teacher literacy skills to all children.
- Dr. Marilyn Adams of Brown University summarized research on the importance of students being offered challenging texts and also about the research concerning leveling texts and how misuse of this practice can lead to frustration with reading.

The stakeholders met and formulated recommendations for how to improve teaching and learning of language, reading and literacy. These recommendations will be published in a brief that will be distributed across the state.