

SOUTH CAROLINA EDUCATION OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE
Minutes of the Meeting
February 9, 2015

Members in Attendance: Mr. David Whittemore (Chair); Dr. Danny Merck (Vice Chair); Ms. Anne Bull; Dr. Bob Couch; Sen. Mike Fair; Mrs. Margaret Ann Gaffney; Ms. Deb Marks; Sen. John Matthews; Mr. Neil Robinson; Ms. Molly Spearman; and Ms. Patti Tate.

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

Mr. Whittemore called the meeting to order, reminding individuals that the proceedings were broadcast live on ETV. He welcomed two new members to the EOC: Dr. Bob Couch, Director of Career Technical Education for the Lexington Five School District and the education appointee of Speaker Lucas fulfilling the unexpired term of Mr. Alex Martin; and (2) Molly Spearman, the new State Superintendent of Education. Mr. Whittemore asked Superintendent Spearman to address the EOC which she did.

Mr. Whittemore also reminded EOC members that Economic Interest Statements must be completed by March 30.

The first order of business was the approval of the minutes from the December 15, 2014 meeting. The minutes as distributed were approved.

Subcommittee reports were then received.

Academic Standards and Assessments Subcommittee

Dr. Merck reported for the Academic Standards and Assessments Subcommittee. He noted that on January 21 the State Board of Education gave first reading to the new English language arts standards. On February 11, the State Board will take up the new math standards. He expressed his appreciation for the members of the EOC Review Panels that worked with the Department staff and the Writing Panels to amend the standards. As soon as the EOC receives the new draft standards, the Subcommittee will begin work. Dr. Merck clarified questions from Sen. Fair and Sen. Matthews about the review process. He also referred the members to the revised timeline for the review and approval of new standards.

EIA and Improvement Mechanisms Subcommittee

Mrs. Barton reported for the EIA and Improvement Mechanisms Subcommittee. She updated the committee on the Fiscal Year 2015-16 EIA budget recommendations made by the EOC in December and the Governor's budget recommendations that were released in January. She noted that Governor Haley recommended that the base student cost of the Education Finance Act be increased from \$2,120 to \$2,200. Regarding reading, Governor Haley recommended an additional \$6.4 million for reading coaches, \$3.5 million for professional development and \$3.0 million for Summer Reading Camps. She noted the emphasis again on technology and digital instructional materials. When asked about digital devices, she noted that districts are allowed to use their allocation of the \$29 million for technology on devices but no other line item appropriations are funded in either version. Superintended Spearman, Sen. Fair and Mrs. Hairfield discussed the importance of districts and schools having the flexibility of choosing devices and digital instructional materials.

Early Readiness Assessment Subcommittee

Ms. Hairfield presented the recommendations of the subcommittee regarding the 2015 state district and school report cards. The state district and school report cards will publish data but no state rankings. Mrs. Hairfield noted that the profile of the graduate will be the focus of the next accountability system. Mrs. Hairfield made a motion that the EOC endorse the profile of the graduate. Ms. Bull seconded the motion. Ms. Marks asked a question about the inclusion of data on the report card that includes the freshman report, the percentage of students who graduated from the prior school year and are enrolled in a state two or four-year institution the following fall. Sen. Fair clarified that no personally identifiable information will be reported.

Superintendent Spearman raised concerns that the results of the teacher and principal evaluations be included on the report cards. She noted that there will likely be changes in the evaluations and therefore, should not be included in the 2015 report cards. There was consensus to remove the results of the evaluations from the 2015 report cards.

Taking up the subcommittee recommendation as amended to approve the format and data on the 2015 district and state report cards, the motion passed with Ms. Marks requesting that she be recorded as voting no. The next vote was to endorse the Profile of the Graduate which was adopted with Ms. Marks requesting that she be recorded as voting no.

Then, Ms. Hairfield presented the communications and public relations plan for the agency as information only. Finally, the February 1 Report was presented and members asked to provide any changes or additions to Dana Yow of the staff in time for its March 1 accountability report to the General Assembly.

Recommendations and Updates

Ms. Barton provided an overview of the results of the EOC's report on the South Carolinas Child Early Reading Development and Education Program and implementation of the Educational Credit for Exceptional Needs Children Program.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.