

# **SOUTH CAROLINA EDUCATION OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE**

## **Full Committee Meeting**

Minutes of the Meeting

October 10, 2022

**Members Present (in-person or remote):** Dr. Russell Booker; Sen. Ross Turner; Dr. Bob Couch; Barbara Hairfield; Dr. Patti Tate; Dr. Brian Newsome; Rep. Terry Alexander; Dr. Bob Couch; Ellen Weaver; Sen. Kevin Johnson; Rep. Neal Collins (remote); and Scott Turner (remote)

**EOC Staff Present:** Matthew Ferguson; Dana Yow; Dr. Matt Lavery; Dr. Jenny May; Hope Johnson-Jones; Dr. Rainey Knight; Gabrielle Fulton; and Amber Adgeron

**Guest(s) Present:** Zachary Levine, TeachSC; Katie Crews, TeachSC; Melissa Stowasser, Tanisha Seraphin, Ellen Kaufman, Ashley Creson

Ms. Hairfield (serving in her capacity as Vice Chair due to Mr. Robinson's absence) called the meeting to order and welcomed members. Rep. Alexander called a motion to approve the meeting minutes from the August 7-8 EOC Retreat. Dr. Newsome seconded the motion, and the minutes were unanimously approved. Next, Ms. Hairfield introduced Mr. Levine and Ms. Crews from TeachSC.

Mr. Levine thanked EOC members and Mr. Ferguson for having TeachSC before presenting an introduction to TeachSC. TeachSC is a nonprofit built on public/private partnerships, initiated through collaboration between the South Carolina Department of Education and TEACH, the coinciding national nonprofit. TeachSC's partners include Education Preparation Programs (EPPs), Local Education Agencies (LEAs), and various other stakeholder groups, such as community organizations and business partners. TEACH was formed in 2015 as an independent, national nonprofit. Currently, TEACH is being implemented in six states: Colorado, Texas, Missouri, North Carolina, Connecticut, and South Carolina. TEACH's model focuses on increasing the number of new teachers at the lowest cost.

TeachSC launched this year, in the spring. Because the program is new to South Carolina, limited data is available on TeachSC's impact in the state. However, in SY21-22, 3,397 applicants applied through TEACH programs in the five other states. Currently, TeachSC is working to lay foundations in South Carolina. Currently, 25 EPP profiles exist on their [website](#), alongside 30 informational pages, three videos, and nine guides addressing key barriers for potential teachers. TeachSC also features a financial aid explorer and two recruitment toolkits for LEAs to use in reaching current non-certified

teachers. TeachSC has 30 EPP partners to date, 32 LEAs, and other partners such as CERRA and Call Me Mister. TeachSC also uses promotional campaigns and digital ads as a key part of their strategy.

TEACH's model consists of three key phases: 1) Inspire and Identify- in this phase, TeachSC works to elevate public perceptions of teaching and generate leads and contact information for potential teacher recruits; 2) Cultivate- this phase may last many months or years, in which time TeachSC addresses key perceptions that serve as barriers to entry; 3) Support- here, TeachSC addresses four common barriers for entry into EPPs.

During the "Inspire and Identify" phase, TeachSC emphasizes use of promotional campaigns, marketing, and digital media to reach key target demographics. During the "Cultivate" phase, TeachSC makes use of inspirational multimedia, with an emphasis on storytelling, connecting prospects with SC educators, and try-out experiences for potential teachers to experience a classroom without the full commitment of an EPP program. During the "Support" phase, TeachSC helps these prospects see actual barriers to entry, such as affordability and application difficulties. TeachSC here makes use of its financial aid explorer, one-on-one counseling, and fee-reimbursement systems to ensure prospective teachers are able to finish the formal steps after deciding on an EPP program.

Mr. Levine shared several examples of promotional materials and social media posts. TeachSC's ultimate goal is to create a "one stop shop for support" for incoming teachers. TeachSC shares these materials with local partners so that they can be customized, localized, and shared to their communities. Mr. Levine opened the floor to questions.

Ms. Hairfield asked if individuals receive TeachSC's resources through higher education or if they are able to visit the website directly. Mr. Levine confirmed that individuals can visit the website directly. Ms. Hairfield asked how it is funded by SC. Mr. Levine stated that they are funded through ARP funds. Ms. Hairfield asked for the number of alternative route teachers. Ms. Crews stated that they are still collecting data for South Carolina, but mentioned that the TeachSC asks individuals about this information in order to provide filtered content. Ms. Hairfield stated that in Charleston, about 500 new teachers are hired a year and that about 47% are alternative route teachers. Mr. Ferguson stated that in his capacity as a former Human Resources representative for a school district, potential teachers would highlight their interest in teaching, but confusion on what route to take to get there. Ms. Crews stated that a benefit of TeachSC is that it takes the burden off LEAs to take on that role and allows them to refocus their efforts into other recruitment areas, such as "grow your own" programs.

Ms. Hairfield stated that keeping new teachers is often the most difficult thing as it can be lonely once you exit the EPP and enter the classroom. Support is critical in the first three to five years. Ms. Crews noted that teachers want more individuals to join the profession and that that itself serves as an essential retention tool. Ms. Hairfield stated that she is

happy to see TeachSC's emphasis on test preparation as many potential teachers are lost due to difficulty passing Praxis. Ms. Crews stated that TeachSC has partnered with study.com to provide teacher preparation resources to potential teachers. Ms. Hairfield noted legislation proposed last year that would allow for traditional teachers to have a provisional certification prior and that it would be good for alternative certification teachers to be on that same track.

Mr. Ferguson highlighted that all teacher candidates get a free subscription to study.com through CERRA's partnership. Rep. Alexander noted that there is consideration of legislation to lower Praxis standards, as individuals who don't pass by one point may be a lost teacher opportunity. Ms. Hairfield noted that this particularly impacts teachers of color, who are already in need. Ms. Crews noted her agreement with Ms. Hairfield. Rep. Alexander asked how TeachSC is funded. Ms. Crews highlighted that it is funded through ESSER funds. Sen. Loftis stated that Ms. Crews and Mr. Levine have provided a good overview of TeachSC and asked how many prospective teachers are being recruited while in K12. Ms. Crews stated that TeachSC is still in the data collection process, but that TeachSC does target these students while attempting to reach all individuals who may be interested.

Sen. Loftis stated that students may change their decision to become a teacher based on their experiences in K12. Sen. Loftis asked where TeachSC finds potentially interested teachers. Ms. Crews stated that they can come from LEAs, Teacher Cadet programs, etc. Sen. Loftis stated that there should be data to show success and asked if job satisfaction is taken into account when appealing to potential teachers. Ms. Crews stated that it is taken into account, and that inspiration appeals to the key aspects of teaching aside from just salary. Sen. Loftis stated that teaching has an appeal in that teachers are able to help others. Ms. Crews noted TeachSC's creation of "nomination cards" for teachers to give to their students. TeachSC is successful only due to its EPP partnerships and the collective effort put into recruitment, which provides a much more personalized experience that connects with the potential teacher.

Sen. Loftis stated that the best person to draw someone into the profession is someone who is already in the classroom. Dr. Booker stated his interest in the public/private partnerships that make TeachSC and asked which private partnerships should be particularly focused on. Mr. Levine said businesses can provide sponsorship and that the nonprofit sector provides many important allies. Community organizations are a central part of community outreach.

With no further questions, Ms. Hairfield introduced Melissa Stowasser from the Charleston Regional Youth Apprenticeships at Trident Technical College (CRYA). Ms. Stowasser introduced her colleagues, Ms. Tanisha Seraphin, Ms. Ellen Kaufman, and Ms. Ashley Creson. Ms. Stowasser provided background information on the program,

which makes use of partnerships across the region to provide apprenticeships to students. CRYA seeks to fill critical workforce needs and provide mentors to the next generation of talent. CRYA has many partners, including LEAs, the Charleston Metro Chamber of Commerce, and the numerous companies essential to the apprenticeship program. One of the key benefits for apprentices is the ability to experience a potential career while being paid on the job and without taking on education debt. Trident delivers career and technical training to apprentices, serving as the intermediary between apprentices and companies and providing support to each.

Next, Ms. Seraphin highlighted three key aspects of CRYA's model: its ability to provide job-related education (JRE), on-the-job training (OJT), and a scalable wage to apprentices. Typically, the program operates on a two-year timeframe, though it may be accelerated or extended according to student needs. At completion, students receive a high school diploma, certificate from Trident, 30 credit hours (approximately half of those needed for an Associates degree), credit from the US Department of Labor, and two years' experience that they are able to list on their resume.

Ms. Kaufman provided personal stories of several apprentices, highlighting their successes in numerous realms. Ms. Kaufman emphasized the individual care given to each apprentice, highlighting her personal relationship with each apprentice both during and after the program. CRYA has grown significantly, in 2014-15, CRYA consisted of only one pathway – industrial mechanics – and six companies hiring thirteen apprentices. Now, in SY21-22, CRYA consists of 18 paths in nine different sectors, with over 180 partnering companies and 116 current apprentices. CRYA's sectors are: HVAC, manufacturing, IT, automotive services, engineering services, business, health, hospitality & culinary arts, transportation & logistics, and law enforcement. Ms. Kaufman provided more stories from apprentices and highlighted that if an apprentice leaves, they owe nothing. Additionally, some school districts have now begun to hire youth apprenticeships.

Ms. Creson highlighted SY22-23's current CRYA active pathways (defined as pathways in which an employer is willing and able to hire a youth apprenticeship). CRYA begins accepting applications in February. To date, CRYA has had 535 youth apprentices, 45% of which are students of color and 63% of which are male.

Ms. Hairfield thanked Ms. Creson, Ms. Kaufman, Ms. Seraphin, and Ms. Stowasser and opened the floor to questions. Dr. Couch asked if recruitment took place in high schools or career centers. Ms. Stowasser stated that recruitment takes place in both and now it is even taking place beginning at the middle school level. Dr. Couch if there were clearly defined pathways with dual credit. Ms. Stowasser emphasized that the program is aligned with standards, so that if a student takes a culinary class somewhere, for example, they

can get credit for it in the program. This puts all students on equal footing- they can start with the school or with CRYA.

Rep. Alexander asked if the apprenticeships are all two-year programs. Ms. Stowasser said that CRYA is designed as a two-year program, with students starting Junior year and finishing by graduation. However, this can be accelerated or extended based on a student's individual needs. Rep. Alexander asked about an existing program where teachers go to these industries and asked if that was CRYA's work. Ms. Stowasser stated that CRYA received a Department of Defense grant where teachers went through their STEM program so that they were able to teach it and received a stipend to do so. Currently, CRYA is looking at possible collaborations with four-year institutions.

Ms. Weaver thanked CRYA and noted that a teacher preparation program in Tennessee has repurposed Department of Labor dollars. Ms. Stowasser noted that Ms. Seraphin, Ms. Kaufman, and herself are all state employees, but that Ms. Creson is not. Her position is funded by Boeing, who gave funds to help CRYA as part of their collaboration with the program. Sen. Loftis asked who began CRYA, was it based in K12 schools or at the technical college level? Ms. Stowasser stated that it began on the business end, with a small company approaching them for talent, then going on to collaborate with K12 schools. Sen. Loftis noted that apprenticeship programs are growing nationally and asked the difference between apprenticeship programs and internship programs. Ms. Stowasser noted that CRYA is a recognized apprenticeship program in which students receive a national certificate and college credits. Sen. Loftis asked if employers report back to CRYA on performance progress. Ms. Stowasser said yes, CRYA has created an app that allows both the program and the business to track student performance on the job, which they are distributing freely to other programs nationally.

Sen. Loftis asked what additional costs may be that aren't associated with employers' wages. Ms. Stowasser noted the price of tuition, books, equipment, etc. all of which are not covered by the employer. CRYA does not ask employers to cover tuition so that all employers have an equal opportunity to nurture future employees. Sen. Loftis asked if employer costs were uniform across all companies, which Ms. Stowasser confirmed, emphasizing that all sizes of companies are able to participate and that some larger companies help to fill gaps. Ms. Hairfield thanked Ms. Stowasser and introduced Mr. Ferguson for a presentation on school accountability.

Mr. Ferguson presented the 2022 assessment results and noted that the School Report Cards are due to be released by the beginning of next week. On SC Ready, 53% of students either met or exceeded grade level proficiency in ELA. South Carolina has now recovered to pre-pandemic levels in ELA in addition to closing the "Does Not Meet" Gap. However, we are still a long way from achieving proficiency for every child. Before COVID, 6 out of 10 students were not meeting ELA standards. Rep. Collins asked about the

definition of pupils in poverty. Mr. Ferguson noted that they are defined as students who are transient, a runaway, in foster care, homeless, or have been Medicaid-eligible or qualified for SNAP or TANF services within the last three years.

Mr. Ferguson stated the real need to focus on math instruction as a state. He noted that he is often asked about the difference in performance between ELA and math. While this can't be answered definitively, this may have to do with the emphasis often placed on ELA, which enabled students to succeed outside of the classroom, as opposed to math. Mr. Ferguson noted the question posed earlier regarding Praxis pass rates, emphasizing that a partial answer to this might be that students are not being adequately prepared in K12.

Sen. Loftis asked if the lack of broadband access could contribute to performance decreases in lower income students. Mr. Ferguson stated that this may have played a part, but last year students were in the school building, so may not have relied on this access as much as during the pandemic. Dr. Booker noted that on the math side, he has often found that parents are less equipped to help students in math as opposed to ELA. Rep. Alexander noted that while we are almost where we were before the pandemic, this is not back to where we should be by the current year. Mr. Ferguson agreed and stated that the pandemic's impacts affected outcomes based on subgroup. Mr. Ferguson highlighted the need for quality teacher placement, posing the following question: Do all students have access to high quality teachers and materials?

Mr. Ferguson then presented the Executive Director update. Mr. Ferguson noted again that the Report Card will be released in the coming week. Additionally, the EIA subcommittee will meet on Monday, October 17<sup>th</sup>. If members have questions in advance, they are welcome to send them to Mr. Ferguson. For the education data dashboard, the EOC is currently in the RFI stage. Mr. Ferguson also welcomed a new EOC staff member, Gabrielle Fulton, who will serve as the EOC's Data Visualization Specialist.

Rep. Alexander thanked Mr. Ferguson for the materials provided at the retreat. With no further comments or questions, the meeting adjourned at 2:53 pm.