

**MINUTES**  
**State Board of Education Meeting**

**Date**  
**Wednesday, May 9, 2012**

**Time**  
**1:00 p.m.**

**Location**  
**Rutledge Conference Center**  
**1429 Senate Street**  
**Columbia, South Carolina**

*Dennis Thompson, Chair*  
*David Blackmon, PhD, Chair-elect*  
*Mick Zais, PhD*  
*State Superintendent of Education*  
*Secretary and Administrative Officer to the Board*

*SBE Mission: The State Board of Education's mission is to provide a leadership role in helping South Carolina set policy and direction to transform teaching and learning so that students are prepared with the necessary knowledge and skills, including innovation, to compete globally and live a productive life.*

**I. WELCOME/PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

The State Board of Education meeting convened at 1:20 p.m. Chair Thompson called the meeting to order and led the audience in the Pledge of Allegiance.

The following State Board of Education (SBE) members were in attendance: Dennis Thompson, Jr., Chair, Fourteenth Judicial Circuit; David Blackmon, PhD, Chair-elect, Fourth Judicial Circuit; David Longshore, PhD, First Judicial Circuit; Rose Sheheen, Fifth Judicial Circuit; Neil Willis, Seventh Judicial Circuit; Dru James, Eighth Judicial Circuit; Larry Kobrovsky, Ninth Judicial Circuit; Marilyn (Lyn) Norton, EdD, Tenth Judicial Circuit; Barry Bolen, Eleventh Judicial Circuit; Michael Blue, Twelfth Judicial Circuit; (arrived at 1:35 p.m. and left meeting at 2:30 p.m.); Thomas Shortt, EdD, Fifteenth Judicial Circuit; John Rampey, Sixteenth Judicial Circuit; and Mike Brenan, Governor's Appointee.

Absent with apologies were Jim Griffith, Second Judicial Circuit; Bonnie Disney, Third Judicial Circuit; and Danny Varat, PhD, Thirteenth Judicial Circuit. The Sixth Judicial Circuit was not represented as no one has been appointed to replace Josie Gaston, who resigned in December 2011.

The following South Carolina Department of Education (SCDE) staff were in attendance: Mick Zais, PhD, State Superintendent of Education; Scott English, Chief Operating Officer; Charmeka Bosket, Deputy Superintendent for Policy and Research (left meeting at 3:40 p.m.); Jay W. Ragley, Director, Legislative and Public Affairs (arrived at 3:00 p.m.); Shelly Bezanson Kelly, General Counsel and Parliamentarian, Office of General Counsel; Kim Aydlette, Deputy Superintendent, Division of Operations and Support; Mark Bounds, Deputy Superintendent, Division of School Effectiveness; Nancy Busbee, PhD, Deputy Superintendent, Division of Accountability; and Cindy Clark, Recording Secretary.

**II. APPROVAL OF STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION MINUTES FOR STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION MEETING ON APRIL 11, 2012**

Chair Thompson asked if there were any objections to approving the minutes for the SBE Meeting on April 11, 2012, as presented. He called for a vote and the motion carried unanimously.

**III. APPROVAL OF STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION AGENDA FOR MAY 9, 2012**

Chair Thompson asked if there were any objections to approving the agenda for the SBE meeting on May 9, 2012, as presented. He called for a vote and the motion carried unanimously.

**IV. RECOGNITION OF VISITORS, INCLUDING NEWS MEDIA**

Chair Thompson welcomed all visitors. There were no news media present.

**V. STATE SUPERINTENDENT OF EDUCATION REPORT**

State Superintendent of Education Zais reported on his public and legislative appearances in the past month.

On April 16, 2012, Dr. Zais visited schools in Dillon School District Four including East Elementary, Gordon Elementary, and Dillon High School.

On April 17, Dr. Zais attended the Citadel Alumni Barbeque Dinner in Columbia. Dr. Zais added that, as State Superintendent of Education, he serves on the Citadel's Board of Visitors and tries to attend their events as often as possible.

On April 23, Dr. Zais visited with students, teachers, and administrators at three high schools in the Charleston County School District: Burke High School, North Charleston High School, and R. B. Stall High School. These schools have had unsatisfactory or at-risk ratings for the past five years and will appear before the SBE in July 2012.

On April 27, Dr. Zais attended and spoke to participants at the Empower South Carolina Education Reform Summit, which was hosted by Senator Jim DeMint, Governor Nikki Haley (Governor), Speaker Bobby Harrell, and Dr. Zais. He also moderated two panels at that event. Former Florida Governor Jeb Bush delivered the keynote address. Approximately 325 individuals attended this event including some SBE members. Dr. Zais added that he is grateful for those SBE members' attendance. Also, he personally invited every legislator, every district superintendent, and representatives from education lobby groups to attend. A few legislators attended, and all of the lobby groups sent representatives.

On April 28, Dr. Zais participated in the Citadel's Board of Visitors quarterly meeting. On April 29, he participated in the Governor's cabinet meeting. The focus of the meeting was protecting customer personal information and data security. He added that the SCDE has a strong data security program and team led by Don Cantrell, Chief Information Officer. Also on April 29, Dr. Zais visited with students, teachers, and school leaders at South Kilbourne Elementary School in Richland School District One. Ninety-eight percent of South Kilbourne's students qualify for free and reduced lunch. This school has an absolute rating of "good" and has been nominated by the SCDE for a National Blue Ribbon Award. They are getting remarkable results at South Kilbourne. Dr. Zais commented that this was his one-hundredth school visit since becoming State Superintendent of Education. He said he always learns something when he visits the superintendents, principals, and teachers. One of the things that is realized on every visit is that schools are like people; they are all different. He added that a list of the schools he has visited, updated weekly, is on the SCDE Web site under *Agency, Superintendent, Schools visited by Dr. Zais*. The schools and locations are highlighted with map pins.

On May 1, Dr. Zais enjoyed the annual Teacher of the Year (TOY) Gala. He said a number of sponsors from national organizations attend. All of them have told Dr. Zais that they attend a lot of TOY celebrations across the country but South Carolina's is the best. He commented that Trip Dubard and the *SC Future Minds* team did an outstanding job organizing and soliciting sponsorship for the event. It is a very special event for teachers and educators. This year's recipient is Amy McAllister-Skinner, a high school English teacher in Florence School District Five. On May 2, Dr. Zais participated in a press conference with the Governor and corporate sponsors. The Governor proclaimed May as Teacher Appreciation Month in South Carolina.

On May 7, Dr. Zais visited students, teachers, principals, and school leaders at Ridgeland Middle School in Jasper County, Blackburg High School in North Charleston, and Stall High School in Charleston County School District.. Ridgeland Middle School will appear before the SBE in July. Dr. Zais stated that he will withhold comments on that visit until later. Also on May 7, Dr. Zais visited students, teachers, principals, and the district superintendent at Hilton Head Middle School in Beaufort County.

On May 8, Dr. Zais spoke and participated in the SCDE Employee Appreciation Day event. He noted that May 9 is the actual appreciation day, but because of today's SBE meeting the recognition was held yesterday. He expressed his thanks to all SCDE employees for their hard work and dedication to the children of South Carolina, and particularly to the leadership of Scott English, Chief Operating Officer.

Legislatively, on April 17, Dr. Zais testified before the Senate Finance Committee regarding the SCDE's budget request. Specifically, he asked for an additional \$36 million for special education programs due to our concern that the federal government is going to cut the SCDE's allocation by that amount because we did not maintain the appropriate level of funding for special needs students three years ago.

### **Transforming Education**—Dr. Mick Zais, State Superintendent of Education

Dr. Zais gave a PowerPoint presentation on Transforming Schools in South Carolina. He concluded his presentation by stating that the fact is that education does not need to be reformed; it needs to be transformed. The key to this transformation is not to standardize education but to personalize it and to build achievement on discovering the individual talents of each student—to place students in environments where they will want to learn and can actually discover their true passions. Dr. Zais added that the presentation will be available on the SCDE Web site in the near future.

After the presentation, Tom Shortt commented that the SCDE should serve as a regulatory agency since the local school districts make decisions. Dr. Zais stated that the SCDE does serve in that capacity, and autonomy and accountability go hand-in-hand. If the districts are given autonomy, they are held accountable. He has never seen a school board replaced even though in some districts the problem is the school board. However, replacing the school board is not an option. Replacing the superintendent is also not an option. We can take over the school, we can fire the principal, or we can continue putting more money into the school; however, sometimes replacing the principal is not the problem.

Mike Brenan asked Dr. Zais how the SCDE and the SBE can communicate this to the General Assembly (GA). Mr. Brenan stated that most members of the GA do not “get it.” Dr. Zais responded that it is hard to get the GA to sit still for a briefing. He also stated that he does not know the answer to Mr. Brenan’s question but welcomes suggestions from SBE members. Dr. Zais said he does plan to put more time into the speaking trail, speak to other interest groups, more press appearance trying to sell this message. Mr. Brenan stated that it also may be time for the Governor to get more highly engaged on this issue and that Dr. Zais could have an impact in that regard. Dr. Zais said that he thinks this is a great idea and that Mr. Brenan, as the Governor’s Appointee, could help the SCDE and the SBE work this out.

Neil Willis asked Dr. Zais if he has had the opportunity to share the transformation plan with district superintendents and, if so, what kind of feedback he has received from them. Dr. Zais said that he does talk with the superintendents when he visits schools, but he does not have enough time during these visits to go into any detail about the plan. He uses most of his time to discuss the schools’ report cards, and if they are doing well, he will ask what the school is doing to produce those outstanding results. If the schools are not doing well, he asks more pointed questions concerning how the school handles teacher evaluations and ineffective teachers.

Chair Thompson commented that Dr. Zais’s presentation also pointed out that students are taking over the schools and not allowing any bargaining with teachers. He asked Dr. Zais if he has a plan for turning this situation around. Dr. Zais stated that he absolutely has a plan; one of his top two legislative priorities for this year is the passage of the Teacher Protection Act so that teachers and administrators are not intimidated by the threat of frivolous lawsuits from parents when they take the necessary steps to maintain discipline. But when a teacher or administrator is sued because they broke up a fight, and in the process laid a hand on the child, it is deleterious to the whole notion of effective discipline in the classroom. Dr. Zais stated that this measure has passed the Senate and is now awaiting movement out of the House Judiciary Committee. Jim Harrison is the chairman of that committee. Dr. Zais suggested that if anyone knows Rep. Harrison, they ask him to move it into the House. If we could get this passed this year, it would go a long way in helping administrators and teachers change the culture in some of these schools where the culture is not focused on life success and learning.

Chair Thompson stated that he agrees that it is necessary that schools are transformed if we are going to maintain a competitiveness with the world. We are moving in the right direction; we just need to make sure we find a way to implement what we are presenting. And, with these good ideas, we need to make sure it is understood from the grass roots all the way up, which means we will have to change a lot of the culture in our communities and the legislature as well as the Governor. It is going to take some reprioritizing of funding to ensure the successful education of students in South Carolina.

Dr. David Longshore thanked Dr. Zais for his presentation and commented that it was quite powerful as presented. Regarding Mr. Brennan's comment concerning how we can engage the legislature to help them understand the things that those of us in the field understand, he said he does not know what the answer is, but the ideas must be presented to those in the legislature who are in a position to help us transform education. Dr. Longshore said that, in addition to the legislature, other education agencies (such as the School Boards Association and SCASA and their constituents) have a tremendous influence and will have to be engaged or all of our good ideas will fall by the wayside. He added that whether or not we agree on all issues with these other agencies is not the issue; Dr. Zais needs to go to these organizations and put himself in front of these groups to ask for their cooperation. This is how we will be able to accomplish transformation; we cannot do so in isolation.

Dru James commented that she appreciates the national and international statistics that were covered by Dr. Zais and shares your grave concerns, but not to recognize and advocate for the innovation that is currently going on in South Carolina's public schools deflates his message considerably. Of the 100 schools that Dr. Zais has visited, Mrs. James thinks that it is a minority who are doing none of the items under his transformation model. There is so much more that we can do; she said that later this afternoon, the SBE will hear from an innovation group that met last week. We have heard from superintendents several times in the last year about what they were doing in their districts that represents so many of the things under Dr. Zais's transformation model. Mrs. James thinks the message needs to be balanced. The challenge is ahead and everyone accepts that challenge, but if the strides that have been made thus far are not recognized, then when we discuss education reform we are doing a disservice if we don't recognize the transformation attempts that have occurred up until this point for transforming the system. Mrs. James added that we are all in it together, and there will be pockets of resistance. By working together with the climate that we have currently among all parties, there is a huge opportunity to go forward with a lot of the transformational items presented by Dr. Zais – to a point; there are some items that will continue to be resisted.

Dr. Zais stated that he does not think that he suggested there are no transformative superintendents. He said that there is a district in Anderson where every school in the district is a school of choice. The magnet and charter schools in Charleston are very noteworthy. He added that on Friday, May 11, he will host a visit by Gene Wilhoit, Executive Director of the Council of Chief State School Officers and a former state school officer in Kentucky and Indiana. Dr. Zais and Mr. Wilhoit plan to visit two charter schools and two magnet schools in Charleston, all of which are doing great work in spite of some having high-poverty students. Dr. Zais said that Mr. Wilhoit expressed an interest in visiting South Carolina after he listened to him bragging about these schools. Dr. Zais agreed that there are pockets of resistance, and less of it is in the school districts and more of it is in the lobby groups in Columbia. For example, recently we proposed a measure where schools would not be subject to accreditation visits from the SCDE if they were accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools or, if according to the criteria in our waiver requests, they were ranked "A," "B," or "C." This measure excluded over 90 percent of the schools from accreditation requirements. Dr. Zais stated that the South Carolina Association of School Administrators (SCASA) worked against this, and he does not understand why they would not agree with reducing this regulation and feels that it may be because the measure came from him and the SCDE.

Chair Thompson said he thinks it is a great idea that Dr. Zais and Mr. Wilhoit plan to go to Charleston because the Military Magnets Academy is the 27<sup>th</sup> best school in the United States. Dr. Zais said it is

the top academic magnet school in the nation according to *U.S. News*. The military magnet school's students are all low-income, and they have an impressive 97 percent graduation rate.

Mr. Brenan shared that he attended last week's Innovation Symposium at the South Carolina Chamber of Commerce (SCCC), and he was most impressed by who was at the table. There were over 50 people including Deputy Superintendent Charmeka Bosket, district superintendents, Molly Spearman of SCASA, and the South Carolina School Boards Association. It was important that we were all there willing to have the conversation in spite of some clear differences among the attendees. He said that he and Ms. Spearman do not agree on some issues, but together they are working very hard to do some things that make sense for innovation and transformation. The following day, Mr. Brenan served on a panel with Representative Joe Neal. Representative Neal made the point that we all need to begin to have a different conversation with the GA. Typically, the conversation is concerning a specific issue such as requests for funds or new programs...but that people need to come with a different overall message. Mr. Brenan said that we need to start taking the innovation-transformation message to the GA.

Dr. Longshore commented that Mr. Brenan's point was one he was trying to make earlier in the meeting concerning engaging various educational organizations. He said that SCASA is comprised of district superintendents and other administrators in the state, and Dr. Zais needs to be engaged with those organizations for his transformation message to be successful. Mr. John Rampey stated that he enjoyed Dr. Zais's presentation and that the support of parents can serve as one of the biggest lobbying groups.

Chair Thompson stated that he appreciates the comments of the SBE and thanked Dr. Zais again for his presentation. He added that the SBE will work together with and support Dr. Zais in his efforts to transform education in our schools.

## **VI. PUBLIC COMMENT**

Linda Ensor, Lowcountry 9.12 Project, spoke concerning the recent Education Summit held by former Florida Governor Jeb Bush in San Francisco.

## **VII. STATE BOARD ITEMS**

### **EP EDUCATION PROFESSIONS**

#### **Committee Report**—Dr. David Longshore, Chair

Dr. David Longshore gave an overview of the action items placed on the consent agenda as follows:

**FOR APPROVAL**

1. **Professional Review Committee (PRC) Recommendation for New Educator Preparation Programs in South Carolina**—Mark Bounds, Deputy Superintendent, Division of School Effectiveness
2. **Recommendation to Appoint a New Member to the Professional Review Committee (PRC)**—Mark Bounds, Deputy Superintendent, Division of School Effectiveness
3. **State Board of Education Teach For America (TFA) Designated Geographic Areas**—Mark Bounds, Deputy Superintendent, Division of School Effectiveness

**FOR INFORMATION**

4. **South Carolina Educator Preparation Unit Fact Sheets**—Mark Bounds, Deputy Superintendent, Division of School Effectiveness, and Damara Hightower-Davis, PhD, Office of Educator Certification, Recruitment, and Preparation, DSE

Dr. Longshore stated that this is a document prepared by the SCDE. It gives a snapshot of the performance of teacher education programs in South Carolina.

5. **The 2011 Title II Higher Education Report**—Mark Bounds, Deputy Superintendent, Division of School Effectiveness, and Don Stowe, PhD, Office of Educator Certification, Recruitment, and Preparation, DSE

For more detailed information concerning the 2011 Title II Higher Education Report, Dr. Longshore stated that it will be posted online for the SBE members' review.

6. **Education Professions Committee Presentation—Teacher Recruitment, Retention, and Alternative Certification**—Mark Bounds, Deputy Superintendent, Division of School Effectiveness

Dr. Longshore stated that Mr. Bounds gave a presentation on the Teacher Recruitment, Retention, and Alternative Certification program to the EP Committee.

**IF INNOVATION AND FINANCE**

**Committee Report**—Dr. David Blackmon, Chair

Dr. David Blackmon gave an overview of the action items placed on the consent agenda as follows:

**FOR APPROVAL**

01. **Request for Approval of Property Disposal—Pickens County School District**—Delisa Clark, Director, Office of School Facilities, Division of Operations and Support.

02. **Request for Approval of Property Disposal—Pickens County School District—**  
Delisa Clark, Director, Office of School Facilities, Division of Operations and Support.
03. **Request for Approval of Property Disposal—Pickens County School District—**  
Delisa Clark, Director, Office of School Facilities, Division of Operations and Support.
04. **Request for Approval of Property Disposal—Marion County School District—**  
Delisa Clark, Director, Office of School Facilities, Division of Operations and Support.

#### FOR INFORMATION

05. **Grantmakers for Education Conference—Pittsburgh—4/23–24**

Dr. Blackmon stated that he is a member of the Byerly Foundation, which is a community foundation based in Hartsville, SC. About half of the work the Foundation does is related to innovation in the local schools. Dr. Blackmon reported on his attendance at the Grantmakers for Education Conference in Pittsburgh on April 23 and 24, 2012. He said that a lot of things the attendees learned and discussed is consistent with Dr. Zais's presentation on transforming education. He stated that some of the highlights included robotics competitions in middle and high schools, using avatars to teach students to speak mainstream English, the ongoing research in using technology for learning, and reconfiguring high school libraries to include television, sound, and small-theater studios, a coffee shop, and a student store.

06. **Report on May 2<sup>nd</sup> Innovation Symposium sponsored by SC Future Minds**

For the new SBE members, Dr. Blackmon reminded the SBE that last January the SBE decided to appoint a steering committee to work on innovation and asked him and Mr. Brenan to serve on that committee. Dr. Blackmon said the committee has been meeting periodically since that time. He reported that he, Mr. Brenan, and Chair Thompson attended the Innovation Symposium on May 2, 2012, hosted by the SCCC. The attendees included educators, politicians, and members of the business community. He stated that several ideas presented at the symposium is consistent with Dr. Zais's presentation on transforming education. One of the presenters commented about how Milwaukee's Alverno College handles teaching, learning, and assessment. Alverno College does not give grades; the students demonstrate competencies in respective content areas. Dr. Blackmon stated that it is a fascinating model of what can be done in public schools. The professionals in the community are trained with the Alverno method and they serve as panelists. This increases the opportunity for success, because if students are not successful with their first examination, they have the opportunity to do it again. They are providing new ways of structuring teaching and learning in the form of charter schools, etc., but unless the design of the instruction is changed we are not changing the system. Teaching, learning, educator preparation, and staff development will continue to be impacted by the digital media, online learning, and other educational technologies. Dr. Blackmon added that he was glad to have had the opportunity to attend the symposium and that its quality was equal to a national conference.

Mr. Brennan commented that he agrees with Dr. Blackmon's opinion of the meeting and stated that he wanted to publically thank Dr. Gerrita Postlewait, former SBE Chair, for her efforts in this area. He added that he will become the SCCC Chair in November, 2012. As the SCCC Chair, he will focus on the issue of innovation because it is critical to the economic prosperity of our state. He will need the SBE's input and help in communicating this message.

**State Board of Education Budgetary Update Fiscal Year 2011–12**—Dr. David Blackmon, Chair, Innovation and Finance Committee, State Board of Education

Dr. Blackmon updated the SBE on the budget for fiscal year 2011–12. He stated that the SBE has a balance of \$5,881 through the end of April. This does not include expenses associated with today's meeting. The only pending commitment is the volunteer awards, and the SBE will not meet in June, so we are sufficiently situated to cover any type of operational expenses the SBE may have.

Dr. Longshore asked if there is any budgetary information for next year. Dr. Blackmon stated that the House funded our operations budget, and it is the same as it was for the current year. The SBE did make an appeal for restoration of the 2006–07 budget, but we do not know exactly what the new budget will be. However, we know that it will not be less than the current budget amount. Mr. Kobrovsky asked if there are any legal fees that the SBE will need to pay. Dr. Blackmon said that unless it is associated with the teacher certification cases, he is not aware of any commitment to pay legal fees. Mr. Kobrovsky asked about the outstanding purchase order for the hearing officer. Dr. Blackmon said that as far as he is aware, all expenses have been cleared except for that purchase order.

**PL POLICY AND LEGISLATIVE**

**Committee Report**—Dennis Thompson, Jr., Chair

Chair Thompson gave an overview of action items 01 through 04 which were placed on the consent agenda as follows:

**FOR APPROVAL**

01. **Newberry County School District's Waiver Request of 24 S.C. Code Ann. Regs. 43-205 (2011), Administrative and Professional Personnel Qualifications, Duties, and Workloads**—Roy Stehle, Director, Office of Federal and State Accountability, Division of Accountability
02. **McCormick County School District's Waiver Request of the School Start Date Requirement pursuant to S. C. Code Ann. §59-1-425(A) (Supp. 2011)**—Roy Stehle, Director, Office of Federal and State Accountability, Division of Accountability
03. **Dorchester County School District Two's Waiver Request of State Board of Education Regulation 43-261 (2011), District and School Planning**—Roy Stehle, Director, Office of Federal and State Accountability, Division of Accountability
04. **Florence County School District Four's Waiver Request of State Board of Education Regulation 43-261 (2011), District and School Planning**—Roy Stehle, Director, Office of Federal and State Accountability, Division of Accountability
05. **Uniform Grading Policy**—Charmeka Bosket, Deputy Superintendent, Office of Policy and Research

Chair Thompson reported on the statement for the administrative rule for the Uniform Grading Policy and presented the information for the approval of the SBE. The statement reads as follows:

The uniform grading scale is to assign point values for the final grades that students earn for any given course. The final grades students earn should reflect the districts' best understanding of students' mastery of content or completion of the work for the course any student attempts.

The uniform grading policy provides clarity in how the grades students earn will be used to calculate students' GPAs. The uniform grading policy does not affect district grading practices.

Chair Thompson called for the vote. The motion carried.

**FOR INFORMATION**

06. **K–12 School Facilities**—Delisa Clark, Director, Office of School Facilities, Division of Operation and Support

Delisa Clark reported on K–12 school facilities. She said that, in keeping with Dr. Zais's vision that districts have as much opportunity and flexibility as possible to make decisions at the district level, a review of the South Carolina School Facilities Planning and Construction Guide and the South Carolina Minimum Specifications Guide for Relocatable Classrooms were undertaken. The guides are maintained by the South

Carolina Public Schools Facilities Committee. Ms. Clark stated that one of Dr. Zais's priorities for the Office of School Facilities (OSF) was to bring the relocatable guide up to date. This was done last fall, and revisions were completed in January 2012. After publication in the *State Register*, the guide was implemented for school district use in April 2012. The review will be complete for the main guide in June 2012. The full school facilities committee is scheduled to meet in October for final review. After publication in the *State Register*, the guide will be implemented June 1, 2012. The current review of both guides are significantly different than the approach taken in the past. The new guides reflect the changes now occurring in the education community. Magnet, virtual, charter, and other schools developed around specialized educational programs are being offered to South Carolina students in greater numbers each year and, in many cases, require facilities as customized and flexible as the programs being offered. The current standard requirements in the guide for a minimum 800 square foot classroom designed for 26 students may not be applicable if the educational program calls for 15 students in the classroom. Likewise, a dedicated book room may not be required if the students are using electronic textbooks. Rather than set one-size-fits-all requirements for all schools, the guides will set minimum requirements for health and life safety by allowing the respective governing boards, teachers, and parents the flexibility to determine the type of facilities that will best meet the needs of their students within the educational program being provided. The OSF will continue to offer information and guidance to the schools in the form of best practices to ensure they have the most up-to-date information available in order to make the most informed decisions about their facilities. Ms. Clark commented that the OSF is excited about the opportunity to partner with the districts to develop and construct learning environments that will enhance innovation and provide flexibility to meet both present and future student needs.

Mr. Kobrovsky commented that there is a controversy in his district regarding the minimum number of students enrolled in order to build an elementary school, and he is trying to determine accurate information. He asked whether there is a regulation that requires a minimum number of students. Ms. Clark responded that there is not a regulation requiring a minimum number of students in an elementary or any school; that is determined by the districts within their policies and guidelines. Mr. Kobrovsky asked if there are any state guidelines requiring a school to be a minimum size. Ms. Clark said the only requirement is that the school has to be the size that best accommodates the program being placed within that facility. Mr. Kobrovsky asked whether a waiver can be requested from the SBE regarding classroom size, and Ms. Clark stated that under the current guidelines a waiver can be requested. Mr. Kobrovsky inquired as to whether there are any guidelines about playground size for elementary schools, and Ms. Clark stated that this is also an item that can be waived. Mr. Kobrovsky thanked Ms. Clark for answering all of his questions.

Rose Sheheen commented she has spoken to many of the survivors of the Cleveland School Fire of 1923 in Camden, SC, where 77 parents and school children died. She stated that the safety of the children is paramount. While we talk about flexibility, she hopes that we never put any child, parent, teacher, or employee at risk. She said she also had the experience of her child being in a classroom when an electrical fire occurred in

the ceiling, and she has always saluted the SCDE for its firmness in making schools and construction adhere to rigorous standards.

Neil Willis asked how the new regulations will affect restrooms inside the kindergarten classrooms. Ms. Clark stated that the current guide says that a classroom has to be a minimum size and that a restroom has to be inside the classroom. There is currently a waiver from the SBE for K–4 spaces to give schools and districts an opportunity to schedule and execute renovations to meet those guidelines. The proposal on the table is to remove those guidelines from the guide and allow school districts the opportunity to decide how they want to structure their classrooms—do they they want to have bathrooms within the individual classrooms, to group them in a wing in order to create a kindergarten community, or whatever meets the needs of the educational program.

Ms. Sheheen asked if the guidelines are being correlated with all early childhood accreditation requirements, and Ms. Clark stated that they are.

Chair Thompson commented that the guidelines address a safety issue, not just space requirements. Ms. Clark responded that this is one of the issues, and designated group areas help ensure children’s safety and interaction within their learning environment.

## **SLA STANDARDS, LEARNING, AND ACCOUNTABILITY**

### **Committee Report—Dru James, Chair**

Mrs. James reported that the SLA Committee had no action items and were presented with three information items as follows:

### **FOR INFORMATION**

- 01. Common Core Standards Update—Catherine Jones, Team Leader, Office of Standards and Curriculum, Office of Policy and Research**

Mrs. James stated that the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) Connections document is posted to the Office of Policy and Research section of the SCDE Web site. Mrs. James added that she will ask Cindy Clark to send the Web link to the SBE members after this meeting.

- 02. Common Core Assessment Update—Liz Jones, Director, Office of Assessment, Division of Accountability**

Mrs. James stated that the SMARTER governing states are recruiting educators from those states to support pilot test item and task development as well as stimulus reviews, and research on automated scoring and item procurement options. She also reported that the SMARTER Balanced eNewsletter was launched and will provide updates on the development of the assessment system. The newsletter is available on the Consortium’s Web site, and the link will also be sent to the SBE members after this meeting.

SMARTER Balanced has developed hardware and operating system specifications for new technology purchases for the districts. These guidelines provide clear information for schools and districts making new instructional technology purchases so that they can proceed with the assurance that these devices will be able to administer the SMARTER Balanced assessments in the 2014–15 school year. The guidelines and FAQ links will be sent to the SBE members after this meeting.

The decision about use of existing computers will be informed by the data received from the Technology Readiness Tool Survey that the districts have had for approximately one month. The first data collection for the survey closes in June 2012. The analysis of the data should be completed by July.

**03. Curriculum Frameworks**— Catherine Jones, Team Leader, Office of Standards and Curriculum, Office of Policy and Research

Mrs. James reported that in light of South Carolina’s adoption of the Common Core State Standards (CCSS), and given the similarities and differences between the current South Carolina Academic Standards and the CCSS, questions have arisen regarding formative assessment, test administration, and how the content of the CCSS should be organized for instructional purposes (the framework). The SCDE is aware of these issues and is in the process of gathering information from various groups and individuals, including the SMARTER Balanced consortium, so that guidance can be provided to districts in order to ensure all students are appropriately taught and therefore prepared to be successful on the assessment measures which will be developed by the consortium.

Mr. Kobrovsky shared a Web address regarding CCSS which is [www.corestandards.org](http://www.corestandards.org) and encouraged the SBE members to visit this Web site. He said it gives a multicultural perspective, but he thinks that each state should decide for themselves which poems are chosen. He found some of the poems very objectionable and not representing American iconic poets, authors, and reading materials listed. He added that it is impossible to have one framework to represent every state in the nation. He added that this is an example of why there were opponents of adopting CCSS.

Dr. Longshore asked if we still have the 15 percent window regarding the CCSS. Mrs. James said that the decision needs to be made by the SCDE. Dr. Longshore added, with all due respect to Mr. Kobrovsky’s comments, that sometimes it is helpful to be aware of other culture’s perceptions. Chair Thompson commented that he sees both sides of the issue, but controversy can enable learning about other perspectives.

<b>VIII. CONSENT AGENDA</b>
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**Education Professions (EP)**

The following items were approved in committee and placed on the Consent Agenda.

01. Professional Review Committee (PRC) Recommendation for New Educator Preparation Programs in South Carolina
02. Recommendation to Appoint a New Member to the Professional Review Committee (PRC)
03. State Board of Education Teach For America (TFA) Designated Geographic Areas

#### **Innovation and Finance (IF)**

The following items were approved in committee and placed on the Consent Agenda.

01. Request for Approval of Property Disposal—Pickens County School District,
02. Request for Approval of Property Disposal—Pickens County School District,
03. Request for Approval of Property Disposal—Pickens County School District,
04. Request for Approval of Property Disposal—Marion County School District,

#### **Policy and Legislative (PL)**

The following items were approved in committee and placed on the Consent Agenda.

01. Newberry County School District's Waiver Request of 24 S.C. Code Ann. Regs. 43-205 (2011), Administrative and Professional Personnel Qualifications, Duties, and Workloads
02. McCormick County School District's Waiver Request of the School Start Date Requirement pursuant to S. C. Code Ann. §59-1-425(A) (Supp. 2011)
03. Dorchester County School District Two's Waiver Request of State Board of Education Regulation 43-261 (2011), District and School Planning
04. Florence County School District Four's Waiver Request of State Board of Education Regulation 43-261 (2011), District and School Planning

Rose Sheheen moved to approve the consent agenda as presented. The motion was seconded by John Rampey. The motion carried.

### **IX. LEGISLATIVE REPORT AND REQUESTS REGARDING REGULATIONS**

Shelly Bezanson Kelly, General Counsel and Parliamentarian, Office of General Counsel

Shelly Kelly gave a brief legislative report and stated that if the SBE has any specific questions to please contact Mr. Ragley or Ms. Bosket.

**X. OTHER BUSINESS**

There was no other business.

**XI. ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business, the SBE adjourned at 3:45 p.m.