

February 17, 2015

The Honorable Nikki Haley
Governor
State of South Carolina
1205 Pendleton Street
Columbia, SC 29201

Dear Governor Haley:

The purpose of this letter is to notify the leadership of the Senate and House of the actions taken to date by the Education Oversight Committee (EOC) to implement and comply with Act 200 of 2014 regarding the development of new South Carolina College and Career Readiness Standards in English language arts (ELA) and mathematics standards.

Documentation of Process

On July 10, 2014 the EOC notified the Governor and the General Assembly of an initiation of a cyclical review of the ELA and math standards pursuant to Section 59-18-355(C) of Act 200. The EOC also asked for the nomination of individuals to serve on panels to review the current state-approved standards and any newly developed standards. The EOC followed the legal advice of the Assistant Clerk of the Senate that Act 200 required both a cyclical review of the existing standards and the adoption of new standards beginning in Fiscal Year 2015-16 pursuant to Section 59-18-350(B) of the law.

To review the current standards, the EOC launched an online survey asking South Carolinians to review and make comments on the existing state standards, the Common Core State Standards. The survey was operational from July 11, 2014 until September 30, 2014. The results of the public survey were tabulated and released in a report that is available on our website.

Beginning October 2, 2014 the EOC assembled ELA and Math Academic Standards Review Panels composed of content specialists, classroom teachers, business and community leaders, higher education officials, and parents including individuals with questions or concerns about the current Common Core State Standards. A list of the panel members is attached. The EOC staff contacted the members of the General Assembly, State Board of Education, and EOC members for nominations to the Review Panels. The EOC staff also notified the Chair of the State Board of Education on all activities taken to maintain collaboration and consultation with the Board.

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VICE CHAIR

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John W. Matthews, Jr.

Joseph H. Neal

Neil C. Robinson, Jr.

Molly Spearman

Patti J. Tate

Melanie D. Barton
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

The EOC Review Panels met on five separate occasions in Columbia. The EOC reimbursed these panel members for travel and compensated districts for the cost of substitute teachers. At the second meeting on October 28, the EOC Review Panels were provided draft standards that had been developed by the Writing Panels from the South Carolina Department of Education. The EOC's Review Panels evaluated the draft standards for comprehensiveness, rigor, organization and communication to ensure that the new standards are "college and career ready." The EOC Review Panels presented their findings and recommendations to the Academic Standards and Assessment Subcommittee of the EOC on December 1 and to the full EOC on December 15 in a 254-page document that is also located on our website. The report was provided as information only to guide the further revision of the standards.

The EOC forwarded the report to the members of the State Board of Education, to the South Carolina Department of Education, and to the newly elected Superintendent of Education, Molly Spearman. Beginning January 7, 2015 representatives from the Department of Education Writing Panels and the EOC Review Panels began meeting to further revise the draft standards. Both the ELA and mathematics standards were significantly modified as a result. The State Board received the revised ELA standards on January 21 and gave first reading approval. On February 11, the State Board received the revised math standards and gave first reading approval. On February 12, the Department of Education formally transmitted the new standards to the EOC for its consideration.

While the EOC and the South Carolina Department of Education have included representatives from higher education on the panels who wrote, reviewed and amended the standards, the EOC wants to ensure that the new standards are "college and career ready" so that the students who graduate from our public schools are prepared for coursework and the careers they will ultimately enter. Prior to the EOC's consideration of the standards, all public and private higher education institutions will be contacted to receive their input regarding whether the standards are "college and career ready."

Furthermore, there are federal guidelines on the issue of college and career ready certification of standards. The South Carolina Department of Education has until March 30, 2015 to submit any changes to the ESEA waiver to the United States Department of Education. The ESEA waiver will have to be amended to reflect that South Carolina has developed and adopted its own college and career readiness standards. Pursuant to federal guidelines, a network of higher education institutions that enroll over 50 percent of the four-year students must certify that students who meet the standards will not need remediation to perform post-secondary work. The Department of Education is working with the public institutions of higher education to document endorsement of the standards as being college and career ready.

The Academic Standards and Assessment Subcommittee will meet on March 2 to review the new standards and the full EOC will meet on March 9.

How was this process different?

The process for this cyclical was unique this year for the following reasons:

1. To guarantee that the standards were reviewed by and developed by South Carolinians, the EOC did not use any national experts. In prior standards reviews, the agency had contracted with national content experts to conduct a review of the state's existing standards. And, the EOC's Review Panel included more classroom teachers, parents and business/community leaders than ever before.

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2. The process of reviewing and approving standards typically takes place over an 18 to 24 month period. Due to Act 200's requirement that the standards be implemented in school year 2015-16, both the Writing and Review panels focused on the state's existing standards and the standards developed in other states to assist in the development of the new standards.

3. The joint work by representatives from both the Writing and Review Panels is unprecedented. However, again, due to the time constraints, collaboration between the two bodies was imperative to complete development of the new standards.

4. The EOC has calculated the direct and indirect costs of the review which total approximately \$147,436. This amount far exceeds our prior budgets for cyclical standards review. The costs are higher because the panels met more often and additional staff were devoted to this task.

If I can answer any additional questions on this or any other issue, please contact me.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Melanie Barton".

Melanie Barton

Attachment

EOC Standard Review Panel

1. Ms. Melinda Austin
Literacy Coach, Greenwood School District 50
2. Ms. Sandy Avinger
District Math Coordinator, Orangeburg 5
3. Ms. Debbie Barron
Academic Specialist for 6-12 English Language Arts, Greenville County Schools
4. Ms. Melody Bradley
Parent , Gaffney, SC
5. Ms. Amy Brant
Early Childhood/Elem. Teacher, Pineview Elementary School, Lexington 2 School District
6. Dr. Bill Brown
Early Childhood and Special Education Professor, University of South Carolina
7. Mr. Michael Cates
Realtor, Columbia, SC
8. Mr. Chimin "Jimmy" Chao
Businessman, Lexington, SC
9. Ms. Rebecca Clark
ELA Coordinator, Richland One District Office
10. Mr. David Cobb
IT Professional, York, SC
11. Mr. Christopher Cox
Parent and Businessman, Irmo, SC
12. Ms. Susan Cox
Coordinating Teacher ELA, Spartanburg School District Six
13. Ms. Cathy DeMers
Charleston District Mathematics Coordinator, Charleston County School District
14. Dr. Edwin Dickey
Professor of Mathematics, Department of Education, University of South Carolina
15. Ms. Sandra Goff
J² Mathematics Consulting and Resources LLC, Owner, Spartanburg, SC

16. Ms. Amanda Griggs
1st grade teacher, North Hartsville Elementary, Darlington County School District
17. Dr. Patti Hammel
Executive Director for Student Performance and Federal Programs, Georgetown County School District
18. Dr. Valerie Harrison
Dean, School of Education, Claflin University
19. Dr. Kelly Harrison-Maguire
Associate Professor of Education/Director of Elementary Education, Student Teaching, Converse College
20. Mr. Jack Hatfield
Businessman, Digital Technology, Media & Design Inc., Camden, SC
21. Ms. Mandy Hayes
Program Coordinator for Programs for Exceptional Children, Dillon School District 4
22. Dr. Tommy Hodges
Instruction & Teacher/Elementary Education, USC College of Education
23. Mr. Steven Holcomb
Aircraft Structural Analysis Engineer, Lockheed Martin, Greer, SC
24. Mr. Robert Lloyd
Business Owner, Ladson, SC
25. Ms. Christie McLeod, Parent, Cheraw, SC
26. Ms. Valerie Muller
Academic Specialist 6-12, Mathematics, Greenville County Schools
27. Mr. Tommy Preston
Attorney, Nexsen/Pruet LLC; Founder, Cocky's Reading Express, Univ. of SC
28. Ms. Shannon Raglin
Parent Leader, School Improvement Council & Foundation Board, Summerville, SC
29. Ms. Shakeeka Redfearn
Cheraw Intermediate Special Ed Teacher-Mathematics, Chesterfield County School District
30. Dr. Jerome Reyes
Governors School for Science and Math-Coordinator, P.U.L.S.E. (Partners for Unparalleled Local Scholastic Excellence) Program

31. Mr. Jim Reynolds
Owner, Total Comfort Solutions, West Columbia, SC
32. Dr. George Roy
Asst. Professor, USC, Curriculum and Instruction
33. Ms. Karey Santos
Millbrook Elementary School, Aiken County School District, 4th grade Teacher
34. Stephanie Seay
Cannons Elementary School, Spartanburg 3, Kindergarten Teacher
35. Dr. Susan Shi
Retired University Trustee, Community leader, Chair Emerita, Institute for Child Success
36. Mr. Ben Sinwell
Math teacher, Pendleton High School, Anderson 4
37. Ms. Ellen Sisk
ESOL Teacher, Greenville County School District
38. Ms. Paty Smith
Bethel Elementary School, Clover School District
39. Ms. Crystal Stephens
Director of Curriculum, Barnwell 45 School District
40. Ms. Ann Marie Stieritz
Director, South Carolina Council on Competitiveness
41. Ms. Josie Stratton
IB English Teacher, Wilson High School, Florence School District One
42. Dr. Brian Swords
Director, Tri-County Tech
43. Ms. Suzy Tolson
High School Math Teacher, Nation Ford High School, York 4
44. Mrs. Debra Brown Weber
Learning Disabled Resource (Inclusion) Teacher, Creek Bridge Middle/High School, Marion County School District
45. Ms. Denise Webster
Learning Disabled Resource Teacher, Blythewood Middle School, Richland 2

46. Mr. Frank White
Retired Educator and Parent
47. Dr. Calvin L. Williams
Director, Center of Excellence for Mathematics and Science Education, Clemson University
48. Dr. Connie "CJ" Williams
ELA Curriculum Specialist, Charleston County School District
49. Ms. Jennifer Wise
Middle School Mathematics Teacher, Hand Middle, Richland School District One
50. Ms. Melanie Zobel
Elementary Special Ed & ESOL Teacher, Little Mountain Elementary School, Newberry County Schools