

**South Carolina Commission on Higher Education
1333 Main Street, Suite 200
Columbia, SC 29201**

**Access & Equity and Student Services Committee
Minutes of the Meeting
June 27, 2005
1:00 p.m.**

Commission Members Present

Mr. Dan Ravenel, Chair
Dr. Bettie Horne
Ms. Rosemary Byerly
Dr. Mick Zais
Ms. Cindy Mosteller

Guests

Mr. Mike Fox, Vice President
Student Loan Corporation
Ms. Jennifer Jones-Gaddy, Vice President
Student Loan Corporation
Dr. Joanne Anderson, Executive Director
Education Oversight Committee

Staff Present

Dr. Karen Woodfaulk	Ms. Deborah Henning	Ms. Sandra Rhyne
Ms. Camille Brown	Ms. Sherry Hubbard	Ms. Laverne Sanders
Ms. Lorinda Copeland	Ms. Rae McPherson	Ms. Jonnita Smalls
Ms. Arlene Criswell	Dr. Gail Morrison	Ms. Karen Wham
Ms. Angie Enlow	Mr. Frank Myers	Ms. Virginia Winfrey
Mr. Gary Glenn	Ms. Jocelyn Ross	

Dan Ravenel, Chairman, called the meeting to order. The Chairman asked for any corrections to the minutes and for approval. The minutes were approved as submitted.

The members and guests attending the meeting introduced themselves. Dr. Karen Woodfaulk formerly introduced the guests.

Review of the SC Teacher Loan Program

Dr. Woodfaulk raised the question asked at the last meeting about what is considered a critical need or subject area and how the definitions are changing. Dr. Joanne Anderson responded by stating that about 85% of South Carolina schools qualified for forgiveness of the loan. The criteria for eligibility are: 1) school is rated unsatisfactory or below average; 2) school has more than a 20% teacher turnover; and 3) 70% of student enrollment is below poverty in the school districts. The struggle with this is based on EOC's research on student performance. Schools that are underachieving have teachers with little experience, teachers without advance degrees, and a high degree of teacher turnover and so the loan program may attract very new teachers into the most challenging situations. Another possible option is to attract older teachers and mentor teachers who would work with the new teachers.

Dr. Woodfaulk noted from the last meeting that Ms. Cindy Mosteller asked about the reasons why changes were made to the SC Teacher Loan program. Dr. Woodfaulk said at the last meeting the Committee discussed the Teacher Cadet requirement by allowing only Teacher Cadet applicants for the freshmen year.

Dr. Betty Horne expressed concerns that students are now expected to be in the Teacher Cadet program or they are not eligible for the SC Teacher Loan. She stated that some students do not know if they would like to pursue teaching until they get to college or until they are a sophomore and have to declare a major.

Dr. Anderson responded that according to their data, students who came into the Teacher's Loan Program and stayed were those who were in the Teacher Cadet program and that this restriction only applies to freshmen applicants. The Teacher Cadets identified early that they were interested in becoming teachers. She added that Teacher Cadets who enter college tend to stay in teacher education programs and tend to follow through rather than explore different interests.

Ms. Jennifer Jones-Gaddy stated that their greatest concern is that not every school has a Teacher Cadet program. There may be a population of students who are interested in teaching but these students are in an area where there is no Teacher Cadet program. These students, as freshmen, will not be able to participate in the Teacher Loan program.

Dr. Horne asked what problem is trying to be solved by closing the door on those potential students. Dr. Anderson responded that there is a funding shortage and more money was requested from the General Assembly this year but also the ceiling was raised on tuition.

Ms. Jones-Gaddy said typically the state appropriation has been around three million dollars. She clarified that the funds from those who do not teach but repay their loans, go into a revolving fund account that is added to supplement the state appropriation. This year the Teacher Loan Program received a larger appropriation from the General Assembly.

Dr. Anderson stated that while funding has increased, so did the amount that students can borrow. Ms. Cindy Mosteller asked if the EOC was responsible for this increase. Dr. Anderson responded that the recommendation was included in the EOC report and the EOC sent it along with their budget recommendations to the General Assembly. Thanks can only go to the General Assembly.

Dr. Mick Zais stated that while there are over 700 applicants for the Teaching Fellows Program, very few students are actually awarded. Dr. Zais asked if Teacher Fellows recipients were able to receive the S.C. Teachers Loans, because a student can get double pay back. Ms. Jones-Gaddy responded they did not have any statistical information on how many of their Teacher Loan recipients are also Teacher Fellows. Dr. Zais asked if there was a list available of those students who applied for Teaching Fellows. He stated that it would be beneficial if the Teacher Loan Program had contact information for the students who did not receive the Teaching Fellows so that they may notify them of possible eligibility for the Teacher Loan Program.

Mr. Mike Fox expressed his concerns about the students who had already graduated and indicated they were not aware of this money.

Dr. Bettie Horne said the information about the SC Teacher Loan Program is vague. Dr. Zais suggested that the student loan administrators help advertise the program to the youth who are interested in teaching. Mr. Fox stated that teachers who are out of college

and are now teaching state that they did not know there was any money available. He said the Student Loan Corporation has done a lot to talk to financial aid offices and the education department.

In reference to the Teachers Loan Program, Dr. Woodfaulk asked how sophomores would find out about the program. Ms. Jones-Gaddy responded that many of the students are finding out about the Loan through the Teacher Education department, at the colleges or through high school counselors.

Dr. Woodfaulk asked how new teachers are recruited in the high priority (low performing) areas. Ms. Jones-Gaddy stated that this is a problem the SC Teacher Loan Program has been struggling with for a number of years, and according to their data, teachers are not opposed to teaching in schools with percentages of minorities and low-socioeconomic backgrounds. The biggest deterrent was involved issues such as employment for spouses, housing, social life, etc. Ms. Jones-Gaddy said the Teacher Loan Program was not the only way to address this problem, and that these rural communities must find a way to make themselves more attractive to new teachers. Dr. Horne said bonuses are not given to teachers for teaching children as they are for nurses. As an example, while some districts do pay signing bonuses, such bonuses are not as large as those for nurses.

Dr. Anderson stated there were huge turnovers in low performing school, in comparison to other districts. New teachers teaching in some of these low performance schools but with life changes they end up in other areas. Ms. Cindy Mosteller asked about the problem of understaffing in rural schools. Dr. Anderson responded that the schools rated below average or unsatisfactory have an average teacher turnover of about 33% and average administrator turnover of 40% per year. Ms. Mosteller asked about comparisons in the urban areas. Dr. Anderson said among the schools that are rated satisfactory statewide there is approximately a 20% turnover rate. Ms. Mosteller asked if teachers are leaving the profession and staying in the community or leaving the community and staying in the profession. Dr. Anderson said after teaching experience is acquired there is movement away from the community. Schools with greater advantages are more attractive than schools with greater disadvantages. She noted that it is not like nurses in intensive care who are paid more for handling challenging situations. It is reverse in public education.

Mr. Dan Ravenel asked how the EOC was evaluating South Carolina State and CERRA. Dr. Anderson stated that EOC asked both programs to present their objectives. They do not evaluate what is submitted on the report. Mr. Ravenel said the Committee is interested in the cost per teacher in the recruitment programs and the retention rate and how the state funds are spent.

Dr. Mick Zais noted that there are three or four programs designed to provide service inducements for students to become teachers. He said it seems that some of them are more efficient in producing teachers and the SC Teaching Fellows Program appears to be the most successful.

Dr. Woodfaulk asked if it would be appropriate for the Committee to have external evaluations. She suggested that possibly 10% of their budgets could go towards evaluations. Dr. Anderson stated that under state statute the EOC has the responsibility

to evaluate EIA Programs and CHE could formally request that the EOC make that a higher priority in their Committee. Dr. Anderson stated that it would probably be easier to ask for separate funding instead of taking it out of their budget. Mr. Ravenel said that this could be coordinated and a report made to the legislators. He stated that someone needs to make sure the money is being spent well in order to maximize the effectiveness of the programs. He is concerned about the amount of money being spent.

Ms. Mosteller said the evaluations do not seem complex. Dr. Zais agreed and explained the formula to do this is total budget divided by the number of teachers you produce. Ms. Mosteller asked if there were tax incentives for businesses to go to rural communities. Dr. Anderson responded that to her knowledge no one was looking at this issue now, but it would be discussed in the future.

A draft Scholarship and Grant Report was handed out by Dr. Woodfaulk.

Dr. Horne stated that she would like to look at a graduated GPA for scholarship eligibility. The Committee should also look at a 2.0 as a standard since that is the standard for graduation. Dr. Zais stated that if a 2.0 was the requirement, virtually everyone would maintain the scholarship. Dr. Horne said the Commission could make it harder for students to initially receive the scholarship and then easier for them to maintain the scholarship. Mr. Ravenel added that the Commission should consider whether the scholarships are given to the right kids.

Other Business

Dr. Woodfaulk briefed the Committee on the legislative changes in the Scholarship and Grant Programs.

Mr. Ravenel asked the Committee if a Vice Chair should be elected and the Committee agreed. Ms. Rosemary Byerly nominated Dr. Horne and Ms. Mosteller seconded the motion.

The next meeting is scheduled for September 1st at 8:30 a.m.

Ms. Mosteller recommended that the Committee present scholarship issues and the report to the different legislative caucuses. This would help CHE to obtain a higher profile with the legislature. Mr. Ravenel agreed that this was a good idea, and the Committee will need to obtain a schedule of the caucus meetings.

The meeting was adjourned at 3:00 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Laverne Sanders