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Education and Cultural Subcommittee

July 13, 2016

Archived Video Available

- I. Pursuant to House Legislative Oversight Committee Rule 6.8, South Carolina ETV was allowed access for streaming the meeting. You may access an archived video of this meeting by visiting the South Carolina General Assembly's website (<http://www.scstatehouse.gov>) and clicking on *Committee Postings and Reports*, then under *House Standing Committees* click on *Legislative Oversight*. Then, click on *Video Archives* for a listing of archived videos for the Committee.

Attendance

- I. The Educational and Cultural Subcommittee meeting was called to order by Chairman James E. Smith, Jr., on Wednesday, July 13, 2016, in Room 108 of the Blatt Building. The following members of the Subcommittee were present: Chairman Smith, Representative Gary E. Clary, and Representative Joseph H. Jefferson, Jr.

Minutes

- I. House Rule 4.5 requires standing committees to prepare and make available to the public the minutes of committee meetings, but the minutes do not have to be verbatim accounts of meetings. It is the practice of the Legislative Oversight Committee to provide minutes for its subcommittee meetings.

II. Representative Jefferson moved to approve the minutes from Subcommittee’s meeting on May 19, 2016. A roll call vote was held, and the motion passed.

Rep. Jefferson’s motion to approve the minutes from May 19, 2016:	Yea	Nay	Present	Not Present
Rep. Clary	✓			
Rep. Jefferson	✓			
Rep. Stringer				✓
Rep. Smith	✓			

Representative moved to approve the minutes from the Subcommittee’s meeting on June 23, 2016. A roll call vote was held, and the motion was passed.

Rep. Jefferson’s motion to approve the minutes from June 23, 2016:	Yea	Nay	Present	Not Present
Rep. Clary			✓	
Rep. Jefferson	✓			
Rep. Stringer				✓
Rep. Smith	✓			

Discussion of the School for the Deaf and Blind

I. Chairman Smith said that all testimony would have to be given under oath, and that each person would be limited to ten minutes of testimony. Each person was sworn in individually. The italicized notation is the approximate start time for each person on the archived video (<http://www.scstatehouse.gov/video/videofeed.php>).

John Payne, South Carolina Department of Education 6:13

Mr. Payne is a commissioner of the School for the Deaf and Blind and an employee at the Department of Education. He testified about some of the services offered to blind and deaf students in South Carolina, and the School’s collaborative efforts with other state agencies and groups. Mr. Payne answered questions asked by Representative Jefferson, Chairman Smith, and Representative Clary.

Mike Hollifield, Executive Director of Halter 29:10

Mr. Hollifield is a retiree from the School, and is currently the Executive Director of Halter. Mr. Hollifield testified about his organization’s partnership with the School, and how the collaboration has helped the organization serve disabled children by teaching them equestrian skills. Mr.

Holyfield answered questions asked by Chairman Smith and Representative Clary.

Linda McCrary, Alumna of School for the Deaf and Blind 40:18

Ms. McCrary testified about her experience attending the School after struggling to succeed in other schools. Ms. McCrary later worked at the School as a teacher. Ms. McCrary answered questions asked by Representative Jefferson and Chairman Smith.

Andy Patrick, Parent of Deaf Child 53:30

Mr. Patrick is the parent of a student at the School and a member of the Walker Foundation who testified about his child's experience at the School as a deaf student. Chairman Smith, Representative Jefferson, and Representative Clary thanked Mr. Patrick for his testimony and praised him for his work at the Foundation and for the positive influence he has had on his adopted son's life.

Tina Herberg, Associate Professor at University of South Carolina - Upstate 1:04:02

Dr. Herberg testified about her experience working at the visually impairment clinic at USC-Upstate, and the university's partnership with the School. She answered questions asked by Chairman Smith, Representative Clary, and Representative Jefferson.

Anita McDaniel, South Carolina Association for the Deaf 1:25:52

Ms. McDaniel is an alumna of the School for the Deaf, and testified about her experiences at the school as a student. She also testified about the collaborative efforts between the South Carolina Association for the Deaf, of which she is the Executive Director, and the School. She answered questions asked by Representative Jefferson.

Rhonda Thompson, Commission for the Blind 1:30:46

Ms. Thompson testified on behalf of the Commission for the Blind about that agency's partnership with the School. She answered questions asked by Representative Jefferson and Representative Clary.

Kyle Walker, Commission for the Blind 1:37:39

Mr. Walker is the Director of Human Services at the Commission for the Blind, and he testified about his agency's partnership with the School. He answered questions asked by Representative Jefferson.

Tim Geter, South Carolina Vocational Rehabilitation Department 1:41:50

Mr. Geter testified on behalf of the Vocational Rehabilitation Department about its collaboration with the School. He answered questions asked by Representative Jefferson and Chairman Smith.

- II. The Subcommittee recessed for a short break.
- III. **Jerry Francis, Commission for the Blind 2:04:05**

Mr. Francis testified about the Commission’s collaboration with the School. He answered a question asked by Chairman Smith.

Rebecca Bates, Commission for the Blind 2:09:52

Ms. Bates is the Transition Counselor for the Commission, and testified about her experience being stationed at the School. She answered questions asked by Chairman Smith and Representative Jefferson.

- IV. Representative Clary moved that the Subcommittee Study of the School for the Deaf and Blind include a statement that the Subcommittee provided an opportunity for public comment and a list of the names of those who provided testimony. A roll call vote was held, and the motion was passed.

Rep. Clary’s motion that the Subcommittee Study of the School for the Deaf and Blind include a statement that the Subcommittee provided an opportunity for public comment and a list of the names of those who provided testimony:	Yea	Nay	Present	Not Present
Rep. Clary	✓			
Rep. Jefferson	✓			
Rep. Stringer				✓
Rep. Smith	✓			

- V. Committee staff provided an overview of the agency’s customers, stakeholders, and partners.
- VI. Chairman Smith administered the oath to all of those present from the School for the Deaf and Blind who were present to testify on behalf of the agency who had not already been sworn in. Those who took the oath were: Linda Coon (Director of Special Education and Student Services) and Scott Falcone (Director of the Division of Outreach Services).
- VII. Ms. Koon testified about the services that the School offers to deaf and blind students.

Chairman Smith asked for the number of teachers at the School who could read Braille. Ms. Koon said that she did not have the information at the time, but would submit the answer to the Subcommittee in writing.

Chairman Smith asked for an explanation of the way in which the School provides the least restrictive environment possible to its students.

Chairman Smith asked for the per pupil cost of the School. Ms. Koon said that she would submit that information to the Subcommittee in writing.

Chairman Smith asked for the School's mission statement.

Chairman Smith asked for an explanation of the job positions at the School in which an employee would make minimum wage. Ms. Coon said that she would submit that information to the Subcommittee in writing.

Chairman Smith asked for information to be submitted to the Subcommittee in writing about the turnover rate at the School among its teachers and the compensation data that apply.

Representative Jefferson asked for information about the racial diversity at the School. Ms. Coon said that she would submit that information to the Subcommittee in writing. Chairman Smith asked that Ms. Koon ensure that the submission include statistics for both the School's staff and students.

Chairman Smith asked if there was any cost to a parent to enroll in the School.

Representative Clary asked if the School's teachers who teach deaf students were required to know sign language.

Representative Clary asked if the School's teachers who teach blind students were required to be able to read Braille.

Mr. Falcone testified before the Subcommittee about the School's outreach methods and services.

Dr. Page McGraw, Director of the School for the Deaf and Blind, testified about the School's collaboration with other agencies and partners

Representative Clary asked about the ways in which children are screened for hearing and vision impairments so that they can have access to the resources that the school offers.

VIII. The meeting was adjourned.