

Legislative Oversight Committee
Educational and Cultural Subcommittee Meeting
Tuesday, June 11, 2019

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AGENDA

South Carolina House of Representatives



Legislative Oversight Committee

EDUCATION AND CULTURAL SUBCOMMITTEE

Chairman Joseph H. Jefferson, Jr.

The Honorable Neal A. Collins

The Honorable Patricia Moore "Pat" Henegan

The Honorable Tommy M. Stringer

Tuesday, June 11, 2019

10:00 a.m.

Room 317-Blatt Building

Pursuant to Committee Rule 6.8, S.C. ETV shall be allowed access for internet streaming whenever technologically feasible.

AGENDA

- I. Approval of Minutes
- II. Discussion of study of the Wil Lou Gray Opportunity School
- III. Adjournment

MEETING MINUTES

Chair Wm. Weston J. Newton

*First Vice-Chair:
Laurie Slade Funderburk*

*Micajah P. (Micah) Caskey, IV
Neal A. Collins
Patricia Moore (Pat) Henegan
William M. (Bill) Hixon
Jeffrey E. (Jeff) Johnson
Marvin R. Pendarvis
Tommy M. Stringer
Bill Taylor
Robert Q. Williams*

Legislative Oversight Committee



South Carolina House of Representatives

*Gary E. Clary
Chandra E. Dillard
Lee Hewitt
Joseph H. Jefferson, Jr.
Mandy Powers Norrell
Robert L. Ridgeway, III
Edward R. Tallon, Sr.
John Taliaferro (Jay) West, IV
Christopher Sloan (Chris) Wooten*

*Jennifer L. Dobson
Research Director*

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Legal Counsel*

*Carmen J. McCutcheon Simon
Research Analyst/Auditor*

*Kendra H. Wilkerson
Fiscal/Research Analyst*

Education and Cultural Subcommittee

Thursday, March 21, 2019
Room 321 Blatt Building

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 Education and Cultural Subcommittee meeting was called to order by Chairman Joseph H. Jefferson, Jr., Thursday, March 21, 2019, in Room 321 of the Blatt Building. All members were present for some or all of the meeting.

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 Patricia Henegan moves to approve the minutes from the Subcommittee’s meeting on February 28, 2019. A roll call vote is held, and the motion passes.

Representative Henegan’s motion to approve the minutes from the February 28, 2019, meeting:	Yea	Nay	Not Voting: Present	Not Voting: Absent
Neal A Collins	✓			
Patricia Moore Henegan	✓			
Joseph H. Jefferson, Jr.	✓			
Tommy Stringer	✓			

Discussion of Wil Lou Gray Opportunity School

- I. Chairman Jefferson provides opening comments and states that this is the subcommittee’s fourth meeting with Wil Lou Gray. Further, he explains the purpose of the meeting is to receive testimony about staffing.
- II. Chairman Jefferson states all testimony provided to this Committee is under oath, and reminds everyone previously sworn in that they remain under oath.
- III. Ms. Melissa Thurstin (Director of Finance and Human Resources) and Ms. Theresa Trowell (Human Resources Manager) provide testimony about Wil Lou Gray’s staffing, employee retention measures, and employee training.
- IV. Agency staff respond to Subcommittee member questions about:
1. Medical staff turnover;
 2. Student transportation;
 3. Methods for receiving feedback about employee work conditions; and
 4. Methods for receiving feedback from parents and guardians.

Adjournment

- I. There being no further business, the meeting is adjourned.

STUDY TIMELINE

Legislative Oversight Committee Actions

- May 3, 2018 - Prioritizes the agency for study
- May 9, 2018 - Provides the agency with notice about the oversight process
- July 17 – August 20, 2018 - Solicits input from the public about the agency in the form of an online survey
- January 14, 2019 - Holds **Meeting 1** to **obtain public input** about the agency

Education and Cultural Subcommittee Actions

- January 31, 2019 - Holds **Meeting 2** with the agency to receive an overview of the agency's **history, mission, organization, products, and services**
- February 12, 2019 – Holds **Meeting 3** with the agency to receive testimony about student enrollment
- February 28, 2019 – Holds **Meeting 4** with the agency to receive testimony about educational services and retention
- March 21, 2019 – Holds **Meeting 5** with the agency to receive testimony about staffing
- June 11, 2019 – Holds **Meeting 6** with the agency

Wil Lou Gray Opportunity School Actions

- March 11, 2015- Submits its **Annual Restructuring and Seven-Year Plan Report**
- January 11, 2016- Submits its **2016 Annual Restructuring Report**
- September 2016- Submits its **FY 2015-16 Accountability Report/Annual Restructuring Report**
- September 2017- Submits its **FY 2016-17 Accountability Report/Annual Restructuring Report**
- September 2018 – Submits its **FY 2017-18 Accountability Report/Annual Restructuring Report**
- November 11, 2018- Submits its **Program Evaluation Report**
- January - June 2019- Meets with and **responds to Subcommittee inquiries**

Public's Actions

- July 17 – August 20, 2018 - Provides input about the agency via an **online public survey**
- January 14, 2019 – Provides testimony at public input meeting

AGENCY OVERVIEW

Snapshot

Wil Lou Gray Opportunity School

Agency History

In 1921, Dr. Wil Lou Gray, Supervisor of Adult Schools for the SC Department of Education, opened the Opportunity School in Tamassee as an experiment in adult education for women and girls. Between 1921 and 1957, the school rotated around the state, including stops at Anderson, Erskine, Lander, Clemson, and Columbia Colleges. In 1957, the General Assembly declared the school a body politic under the oversight of a Board of Trustees.

Residential
Academic Services
Counseling Services
Healthcare
Admissions

Five Major
Service Divisions

Agency Mission

Serve those citizens of South Carolina between sixteen and nineteen years of age who are most at risk of:

- Being retained in their grade in school.
- Dropping out of school and not completing their education.
- Not making the transition from public schools to the work force.
- Being truant from school, or whose home, school or community environment hinders rather than enhances the chance that they will stay in school and become prepared for employment.

98.41
available FTEs
(87.04 filled)

\$8,927,095
appropriated
and authorized
to spend

Fiscal Year 2018-19 Resources

Successes

As identified by the agency

- Increasing individual GED pass rates
- Partnering with S.C. Vocational Rehabilitation to recover dropouts and provide services geared toward obtaining gainful employment
- Providing service learning opportunities for students

Challenges

As identified by the agency

- Retaining agency staff
- Declining requisite academic proficiencies
- Coordinating services with other agencies

Emerging Issues

Competing alternative programs, Increasing number of applications with chronic mental health and acute medical issues, and Managing a secure, open campus environment

Source: Agency Program Evaluation Report and 2017-18 Accountability Report

AGENCY RECOMMENDATION

VI. AGENCY IDEAS/RECOMMENDATIONS

A. INTERNAL CHANGES

Question 15. Please list any ideas agency representatives have for internal changes at the agency that may improve the agency's efficiency and outcomes.

- Agency Personnel Responsible – Mr. Pat G. Smith
- Agency Personnel Responsible – Mr. Scott Gaines

Under discussion and at the idea stage, is the thought of a reward/incentive program through a small monetary stipend to promote student success upon completion of their GED. The basic concept is that if a student, within 6 months of attaining their GED, chooses one of three career paths they would be eligible for the modest reward/incentive program. The basic outline of the program is as follows. A GED graduate selects one of three career paths:

- 1) Completes 90 days of continuous employment.
- 2) Completes one full semester of post-secondary education.
- 3) Successful enlistment and reporting to duty station at the end of basic training in one of the military service branches.

This concept is under development to determine the feasibility for implementation. Requiring much collaboration to shape this thought for the obvious factors of the approximate cost \$7500 to \$10,000 to incentivize the program, cost to provide staff oversight and design a follow-up mechanism to ensure eligibility and successful completion of their career option.

B. LAW CHANGES

Question 16. Please review the Legal Standards Chart in the Accountability Report and Deliverables Chart in this report to determine (a) if changes to any of the laws may lower costs or improve outcomes; or (b) if any of the laws are archaic or no longer reflect agency practices and thus needs to be updated. Afterward, list any laws the agency recommends the Committee further evaluate.

- Agency Personnel Responsible – Mr. Pat G. Smith

The Wil Lou Gray Opportunity School has no law changes to report at this time.



Committee Mission

Determine if agency laws and programs are being implemented and carried out in accordance with the intent of the General Assembly and whether they should be continued, curtailed or eliminated. Inform the public about state agencies.

Website: <http://www.scstatehouse.gov/CommitteeInfo/HouseLegislativeOversightCommittee.php>

Phone Number: 803-212-6810

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Location: Blatt Building, Room 228