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Education and Cultural Subcommittee

**Tuesday, November 26, 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., on Tuesday, November 26, 2019, in Room 321 of the Blatt Building. All members were present for 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 Stringer moves to approve the minutes from the Subcommittee’s prior meeting on November 4, 2019. A roll call vote is held, and the motion passes.

Representative ’s motion to approve the minutes from the November 4, 2019 meeting:	Yea	Nay	Not Voting: Present	Not Voting: Absent
Neal A Collins			✓	
Patricia Moore Henegan	✓			
Joseph H. Jefferson, Jr.	✓			
Tommy Stringer	✓			

- III. Representative Stringer noted at the last meeting in response to his questioning of representatives with the Office of Finance: (1) local school districts can apply for grants from the federal government that are not administered by the Department of Education, and (2) the department does not track this income. While aggregate data may be available from the department about federal income school districts receive, he believes knowing the amount by category would be helpful. He moves that the study include a recommendation that the Department of Education develop and implement a procedure to track by category all sources of federal funds school districts receive. A roll call vote is held, and the motion passes.

Representative Stringer’s motion that the Department of Education develop and implement a procedure to track by category all sources of federal funds school districts receive	Yea	Nay	Not Voting: Present	Not Voting: Absent
Neal A Collins	✓			
Patricia Moore Henegan	✓			
Joseph H. Jefferson, Jr.	✓			
Tommy Stringer	✓			

- IV. Representative Jefferson notes that salaries for state officers are provided for in S.C. Code § 1-1-1210, a statute that was last revised in 1989. The salary for our state superintendent of education is \$92,007. From a review of a 2017 article in Education Week noted in one of the Department of Education’s responses to the Subcommittee’s questions, it appears that South Carolina’s superintendent of education is the second lowest paid state chief education officer in the nation. Only Arizona pay its chief education officer less, and only three other states pay their chief education officer less than \$100,000. The average pay for a chief state education officer is \$174,000. As another comparison, the average South Carolina school district superintendent salary at the end of the 2017-2018 school year was \$161,686. Representative Jefferson moves that the General Assembly continue as a priority the review of educator salaries, in particular our teachers, and as

part of a comprehensive review examine the superintendent of education’s salary which is among the lowest in the nation. A roll call vote is held, and the motion passes.

Representative Jefferson’s motion that the General Assembly continue as a priority the review of educator salaries, in particular our teachers, and as part of a comprehensive review examine the superintendent of education’s salary which is among the lowest in the nation.	Yea	Nay	Not Voting: Present	Not Voting: Absent
Neal A Collins	✓			
Patricia Moore Henegan	✓			
Joseph H. Jefferson, Jr.	✓			
Tommy Stringer	✓			

Discussion of the Department of Education

- I. Chairman Jefferson provides opening comments and states that this is the subcommittee’s third meeting with the Department of Education. Further, he explains the purpose of the meeting is to continue the discussion of the Department of Education.
- II. Chairman Jefferson places the following Department of Education staff members under oath:
 - Dr. John Payne, Deputy of the Division of Federal Programs, Accountability, and School Improvement;
 - Dr. Latoya Dixon, Director of the Office of School Transformation;
 - Liz Jones, Director of the Office of Assessment;
 - Sarah Longshore, Director of the Office of Federal and State Accountability;
 - Rebecca Davis, Director of Special Education Services; and
 - Stephanie DiStasio, Director of the Office of Personalized Learning.

Superintendent Molly Spearman is present for the latter portion of the meeting. Chairman Jefferson then reminds all individuals sworn in during prior Committee meetings they remain under oath.

- III. John Payne; Sarah Longshore; Liz Jones; Rebecca Davis; and Latoya Dixon provide testimony about the Division of Federal Programs. Sarah Longshore testifies about the Office of Federal and State Accountability: mission, vision, turnover rates, and deliverables. Liz Jones testifies about the Office of Assessment: mission, turnover rates, and deliverables. Rebecca Davis testifies about the Office of Special Education Services: purpose from the federal Individuals with Disabilities Act (IDEA); demographics of students with disabilities; 2019 Annual Federal IDEA grant; state performance plan; focus areas based on data, turnover rates, deliverables; and programs and initiatives. Latoya Dixon testifies about the Office of School Transformation: vision, mission, turnover rates, deliverables, comprehensives support and improvement schools,

priority schools, additional targeted support and improvement schools, school improvement network, monitoring impact, charter school planning and implementation grant program, return on investment, and statewide professional learning.

- IV. Stephanie DiSasio testifies about the Office of Personalized Learning including turnover rates and deliverables.
- V. Agency staff respond to Subcommittee member questions about various topics, including, but not limited to:
 - Divisional lever for success;
 - Minimum student grade policy that some school districts may have;
 - Student college and career readiness;
 - School district accreditation;
 - Student testing including those required by the federal government and multiple tests that may be required in the eighth grade;
 - State spending for pupil; and
 - Student Individualized Education Programs (IEP).

Adjournment

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