

Walhalla High School
School Improvement Council Agenda
February 12th, 2018

- I. Welcome **In attendance were: Principal Steve Garrett, Amanda Gladys, T. Jason Moss, Paul Holleran, Lisa Nock, Brian Ridsen, Annette Orr, Melinda Fischer, Carrie Dunton, Katherine Allen, Jessica Duke, Lorilei Swanson, Rachel Twitty, Elliot Wechter, Meredith Cobb, John Twitty, and Tricia Burgess**
 - a. Appoint time keeper for meeting **Thank you Annette Orr**
 - b. Sign in – **Sign in sheet passed around**
 - c. Light Breakfast -**Thank you Mr. Garrett**
- II. Approve November Minutes – Tricia Burgess
Minutes sent out by email for preview
Minutes approved
- III. Student Presentation (nature trail)
Rose Noel, Kristen Heape and Josiah Alridge presented a PowerPoint presentation: *Outdoor Experiential Learning Lab and Multi-Use Nature Trail*. This is a student led service project at Walhalla High School (WHS). The students invited SIC to partner with them as part of the wellness initiative.
- IV. Student Committee Report
It was recommended that the students present the PowerPoint at the next student SIC meeting.
- V. Student and Teacher Comments - **No comments**
- VI. Co-Chair Report- Lorilei Swanson & Jessica Duke - **Report Attached**
WHS recognized as an SC SIC Honor Roll SIC. The Seneca Journal article is attached.
- VII. Parent Advisory Committee - Tricia Burgess
 - **Discussed the draft form of the 2019-2020 modified school calendar. Tricia will email every SIC member a copy for review. The District Office may create a survey that will be given to all County residents to gain an understanding of how residents feel about a modified schedule.**
 - **The District Office will not consider dividing the district lines on inclement weather days.**
- VIII. Committee Reports
 - a. Communication - **Report attached**
 - b. Wellness - **Wellness event will be held on March 17th and the next committee meeting is Feb 14th at 5:30. Members will hike the proposed nature trail and**

begin planning for the Volunteer Work Day. The Committee will work with the Latino Outreach Committee to develop a health oriented wellness day for Latino families early next year.

- c. **Teacher Appreciation – Annette reported that all WHS staff will receive a Valentine’s Day treat from SIC today. A raffle “basket” will be given out monthly: March is Cookies and Hot Chocolate, April is Gardening and May is Summer.**
- d. **Parent/Student Engagement Report attached**
- e. **Data Collection – The SIC parent survey is ready just in time for student IGP meetings. Paper copies and an online format will be available in the front lobby so parents can complete the survey while they wait for their IGP meetings.**
- f. **Riley Award Report Attached**
- g. **Recruitment, Retention, Elections - Committee Chair resigned and Lorlei Swanson requested that another SIC member chair this committee. Nominations for next year SIC members will be accepted in March and the election will be held in April.**
- h. **Report to the Parents – Deadline is April 30th. Committee will compare this date with the District Office deadline.**
- i. **Latino Outreach - Report attached**

IX. **Principal Report – Steve Garrett**

- **February 27th is the free ACT test for Juniors. Over 200 students have signed up for it**
- **Boys Varsity Basketball are undefeated in our Region**
- **Assistant Principal Mrs. Phillips is retiring but will become our graduation coach**
- **We have two new Assistant Principals selected for next year: James Powell and Jennifer Crawford**
- **There is a vacancy for a new Athletic Director**
- **We have a new employee in the media center: Mr. Eicher**
- **A cover has been ordered for the Soccer scorekeeper**

X. **Public Comment and Discussion**

- **Parents are having problems signing into Canvas to schedule their child’s IGP meeting.**
- **Brain Riden from The Tutoring Center announced that they are providing a “Major Night”. This is to help students learn about different majors and see what could be the right fit for them. The event is February 16th, 4:30-5:30pm.**

XI. **Adjourn**

8:45

SIC Co-Chair Report

Lorilei Swanson and Jessica Duke

February 2018

Accomplishments:

- Open House/Family Focus Night
- Level Two Riley Award portfolio and narrative submitted
- Obtained copy of Seneca Journal article
- Parent survey approved and ready for IGP meetings
- Presented at Freshman Focus Night

Announcements:

- Importance of monthly chair reports for current committees
- Need an elections chair or co-chair
- SC SIC Annual Meeting Date is April 14th
- Wellness Fair is March 17th
- Final Parent Advisory Committee Meeting is March 28th, 2018 at the District Office

To Do:

- Need to get nomination forms ready and posted on line
- Need to get SIC display ready for front entrance during IGP meetings

Communication Committee

Jessica Duke - Chair

Joy Duncan, Melissa Dempsey, Laura Estes, Katherine Allen - Members

February 13, 2018 SIC Meeting

Accomplishments

- Social Media Sites:
 - Facebook: facebook.com/WHSSIC/
 - Twitter: [@WHS_SIC @WalhallaHighSIC](https://twitter.com/WHS_SIC)
 - Email: WHSSIC@g.oconee.k12.sc.us
 - Website: WHS_SIC
- SIC Meeting dates posted to social media.
- Ongoing news articles related to SIC accomplishments being published on SIC social media.
- Met with Mr. Garret and updated school's Facebook page.
- Worked with Riley Award Committee to assist in writing and submitting 2018 application.
- Promoted the SIC student led 1st Annual Snow Ball.
- Promoted the Grace's Closet Movie Night Fundraiser.
- Promoted the SIC Canvas for Parents event.
- Promoted the Holiday Dessert Day in appreciation of our teachers.
- Promoted WHS SIC being named to the SC-SIC Honor Roll.
- Submitted quotes to the paper for news story on the SC-SIC Honor Roll.
- Created a flyer for and promoted the upcoming Open House/SIC Family Focus Night.
- Holding discussion via email to map out the plan for the future newsletter.
- Advertised moving of SIC meeting dates.
- Assisted Riley Award Committee with documentation for level 2 of the 2018 application.

Future Actions:

- Regularly remind SIC members and teachers of the SIC social media presence and request information/events to post.
- Continue to promote the social media pages and remind all new SIC members to like, follow and share with their friends to increase followers.
- Help create flyers for and share any SIC events.
- Continue to hold discussions around potentially developing a quarterly or bi-yearly newsletter for parents in coordination with the school.

Student/Parent Engagement Committee Report

February 13, 2018

- Continuing to work on preparing for Underclassmen Awards Night
- Discussed Canvas parent training with Lana McCall -- her suggestion is to have the district develop a training module with required practice tasks to work through rather than just information modules

Amanda Harris

Riley Award Committee Report

Chair: Lorilei Swanson

Members: Jessica Duke, Amanda Harris, Kiley Dempsey

February 2018

Accomplishments:

- Completed Level Two Narrative and Portfolio
- Successfully mailed application to SC-SIC by February 12th, 2018 deadline

To Do:

- Plan to attend the SC SIC annual meeting on April 14th, 2018

Latino Outreach Committee Report

February 2018

Chair: Esther Phillips

** On January 25th we had our FASFA night with our seniors at WHS. We had a total of 16 families and I would say we had between 5-6 Hispanic parents show up. I know it is a small amount of participation but I was very please with the outcome. I personally called each of our parents and invited them and we also had a call out (in Spanish) from WHS. Who said things would be easy but it always pays off. That's



my motto .

**On February 14th we will continue with our workshop with our parents of the ESOL program at Oconee Academy. This months focus is Read to Succeed. Reminding our parents how important it is to read at home with our kids. Strategies on how they can help them even if they are not fluent in English. Promote, promote and promote reading.

** I'm also working on inviting bilingual students from Clemson University to volunteer for our health fair in March. The more the merrier!

**Last month we had our first all Spanish reading program at our public library. We had 0 turn out but we were not discourage and will continue promoting this wonderful program.

** We are approaching 4K screening at the end of this month and a week in April. This is a great opportunity to interact with our Hispanic community and invite them to all these great programs.

**I'm in contact with Walter Torres and United Way to promote services provided by this great organization.

Walhalla High named to South Carolina SIC Honor Roll for 2018

By Greg Oliver

The Journal

WALHALLA — Walhalla High School is among 19 schools statewide to be named to the South Carolina School Improvement Council Honor Roll for 2018-19 in recognition of efforts to foster civic engagement in public education.

As a result, the school will vie for the SC-SIC's annual Dick and Tunky Riley Award for School Improvement Council Excellence. Named after the former South Carolina governor and his late wife, the Riley Award was created in 2002 to recognize the vital contributions made by more than 1,200 local SICs and their nearly 14,000 SIC members across the state.

Walhalla High School Principal Steve Garrett was excited about the news.

"This is fantastic news for our school," Garrett said. "We have worked hard to establish an active SIC with many parents, teachers and students participating in collaborative efforts. Our School Improvement Council has worked really hard the last couple of years and is well deserving."

Garrett said one area in which the hard work has paid off is increasing the involvement of stakeholders in the SIC.

"We changed the meetings to the mornings to involve more students and established an SIC Student Committee headed up by our Teacher of the Year," he said. "We want to hear our students voices and input as a way for them to bring to the table any concerns. We regularly have 25 to 30 at our SIC meetings and sometimes 40 (there are 43 overall members – including 15 parents, 10 community members, eight students, five teachers, four administrators and one Family Liaison)."

Tom F. Hudson, SC-SIC Executive Director, said his organization asks School Improvement Councils across the state to apply for the annual Riley Award for SIC Excellence.

"Any School Improvement Council serving a school which has been open for at least one year is eligible to apply," Hudson said, adding that several dozen applications were received this year for consideration. "In the process, we ask SICs to tell us their stories of what they accomplished in the previous school year and the impact these efforts have made on behalf of their schools and students."

Hudson added that the value of South Carolina's School Improvement Councils cannot be emphasized enough.

"When parents, community members, educators and students come together to address school needs, establish goals and undertake meaningful activities to meet them, everyone benefits," Hudson said.

Lorlei Swanson chairs the Walhalla High SIC while Jessica Duke serves as co-chair. Swanson, who, along with Dora Leonard, was named the 2016 School Improvement Council Advocates of the Year, said it "means the world to us" to be recognized as an SC-SIC Honor Roll School.

"We have a large group of parents, teachers, community members and administrators who are actively involved in improving Walhalla High School by increasing student and parent engagement and creating a welcoming atmosphere for all," Swanson said. "This is truly a team effort and we have been working together for several years to reach this level of achievement. We want to thank Mr. Garrett for his support of our school improvement efforts and SC-SIC for their invaluable resources and expertise."

While increasing student and community involvement was one goal accomplished during the past school year, Swanson said the Walhalla High School School Improvement Council realized a number of other goals as well: supported the integration of Tamassee-Salem High School students and families into their first year experience at Walhalla High School; improved communication with parents and increased opportunities for parent involvement; increased school recognition with a variety of student achievements; supported programs that increased access and resources for disadvantaged students; and collected data to help evaluate current goals and identify future goals.

"We plan to continue our momentum and grow stronger during the 2017-18 school year," Swanson said, adding a few of the events the SIC is supporting this year include the Green Steps recycling initiative, Litter Free

Football game, Canvas workshop, Snow Ball White Christmas Fundraiser and the College Information Night for juniors and their parents.

Duke said the Walhalla High School Improvement Council is special “because of the enthusiasm and full participation of each and every one of our members made up of students, parents, community, teachers and faculty.”

“The school and our Walhalla High School family means a lot to us and it shows in the amount of work and dedication our members put in,” Duke said.

Garrett said he was very appreciative and impressed by the SIC's sponsorship of a recent event in which Dr. Myriam Torres, a professional development facilitator, spoke to the entire Walhalla school attendance area about the importance of reaching out and improving collaboration and communication with Hispanic families.

“There was a lot of great communication and information,” Garrett said. “They gathered a focus group of parents from the Hispanic community and worked closely with establishing a relationship.”

SIC members also did a survey examining student engagement, parent engagement and parent satisfaction. From that survey, they looked at ways to create actions and opportunities for parents to get involved.

“We really want to know ways they want to be involved – what they would want to be a part of,” Garrett said.

The School Improvement Council is mandated by law and serves as an advisory committee to the school's principal and faculty. Not only does the SIC bring stakeholders together but is also responsible for working with school administration to develop and support the five-year school improvement plan. The SIC also monitors and evaluates the school's success in reaching the plan's goals and objectives.

Oconee County District Superintendent Michael Thorsland said parent and community involvement “is a key to any school's success.”

“School Improvement Councils provide a wonderful opportunity for parents and community members to be involved in a school,” Thorsland said. “We are proud of the members of Walhalla High's SIC and are thankful for the contribution they make to their school.”

Now that the school has been named to the SC-SIC Honor Roll for 2018-19 – in which they had to earn 85 of 100 points on its application to reach Level One status – the next step is to reach Level Two.

For the second level of competition, Swanson said a portfolio must be submitted that provides more details about what the committee accomplished last year – including minutes, committee chair reports, fliers, data collected, social media posts and photos. Of the five schools selected for the final level of competition, the winner will be announced at the SC-SIC annual meeting in April.

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