



Five new members join SC-SIC Board of Trustees for 2012-13

The SC School Improvement Council Board of Trustees has gained five new members for 2012-13.

Myriam E. Torres of Columbia, and Jeff Nicholson of Rock Hill, joined the SC-SIC Board over the summer to fill unexpired terms. Donna Hooks of Myrtle Beach, Luanne L. Kokolis of Rock Hill, and Amelia B. McKie of Columbia, came to the Board through election in the fall to serve full three-year terms.

The SC-SIC Board of Trustees is composed of 21 members representing all corners of South Carolina and acts in an advisory capacity to the SC School Improvement Council (SC-SIC), which serves nearly 15,000 members of local School Improvement Councils in the state's 1,100-plus K-12 public schools.

“We are very pleased to have these very capable and committed people join the ranks of the SC-SIC Board of Trustees,” said Board Chair Ellen M. Still. “We look forward to their insights and contributions to the Board as it assists SC-SIC in reaching out to engage all community members in the lives of our students, our schools, and the future of South Carolina.”

Dr. Torres is Director of the Consortium for Latino Immigration Studies and a Clinical Assistant Professor in the Department of Epidemiology and Biostatistics at the University of South Carolina's Arnold School of Public Health in Columbia. She holds PhD in Epidemiology and Master of Science in Public Health from USC's Arnold School of Public Health, the Master of Public Health from Universidad de Antioquia (Medellin, Colombia), and a nursing degree from Universidad Javeriana (Bogota, Colombia). She has been a member of SC Department of Health and Environmental Control's Commissioner's Advisory Council on Elimination of Health Disparities, has served on Board of Directors of My Amigos Bilingual Education Center (MABEC) and the South Carolina Hispanic/Latino Health Coalition, and she has served on the Hispanic Advisory Committee of the SC Commission for Minority Affairs.

Mr. Nicholson is an estimator with Laboratory Design & Equipment in Fort Mill. A native of Greenwich, Connecticut who has lived in South Carolina since 1975, he is the recipient of numerous Rock Hill School District 3 and state volunteer awards. He has been involved with several groups at Rock Hill's South Pointe High School, including serving as a member and Chair of that school's local SIC. He previously served on the SC-SIC Board of Trustees from 2004 until 2011, including service as Board Chair from 2007 to 2009. In 2005, Mr. Nicholson was awarded the Board's statewide SIC Advocate of the Year Award recognizing his exemplary efforts on behalf of School Improvement Councils in his district and across the state.

Ms. Hooks has served as a classroom teacher and administrator in the Horry County Schools for over 30 years, most recently as principal of Burgess Elementary School since 2007. A 2009 finalist for South Carolina Elementary Principal of the Year, she was inducted into the Burgess Community Hall of Fame in 2010. Under her leadership, Burgess Elementary has been named a Palmetto's Finest winner and has received the South Carolina Palmetto Gold Award for Student Academic Performance and the Palmetto Silver Award for Closing the Achievement Gap for several years. The Burgess Elementary School

Improvement Council was the 2011 statewide recipient of SC-SIC's Dick and Tunky Riley Award for SIC Excellence. Ms. Hooks holds the Master of Education degree in Special Education and Master of Education degree in Administration from the University of South Carolina, and the Bachelor of Arts degree in Education, also from USC.

Dr. Kokolis is a career educator who currently serves as Associate Superintendent for Planning and Program Support in Rock Hill School District 3. She joined the Rock Hill 3 staff in 2006 as Executive Director of Student Services following 20 years of service to the Indiana (PA) Area School District as a principal, assistant principal and high school teacher. An adjunct faculty member at Winthrop University, Dr. Kokolis has served on the City of Rock Hill's 2020 Strategic Planning Steering Committee and the York County/City of Rock Hill Proactive Collaborative Planning Committee, as well as the York County All on Board Alcohol Drug Abuse Council and the City of Rock Hill Economic Development Council. She holds the Doctorate in Administration and Leadership Studies and the Master of Education degree in Business from Indiana University of Pennsylvania, and the Bachelor of Science degree in Business Administration/Business Education from Robert Morris University in Pittsburgh, PA.

Ms. McKie is the owner and founding partner of Nfusion, LLC, a Columbia-based communications, public relations and governmental relations firm. Previously Chief Operating Officer for McLeod Butler Communications, LLC, she currently serves as Co-Chair of the Ridge View High SIC in Richland School District 2, and previously served on the SICs of Rice Creek and North Springs elementary schools. She is a member of Ridge View High's Parent Teacher School Alliance and has served on Richland 2's Parent Engagement Committee, Centralized Enrollment Group and Website Focus Group. A graduate of Leadership South Carolina, Ms. McKie has also served as a court-appointed Guardian Ad Litem, as a member of the Heathwood Hall Episcopal School I/MS PSA Board, and as a member of the Black Expo Board of Advisors. Ms. McKie holds the Bachelor of Arts degree in Psychology from USC.

Interested in being considered for service on the SC-SIC Board of Trustees? Submit your resume or bio along with a letter of intent to the Board at sic@mailbox.sc.edu.