



## **Lowcountry Graduate Center Education Advisory Board Meeting Minutes**

December 13, 2018

### **I. Call to order**

Director Dr. Nancy Muller called to order the regular meeting of the K-12 Education Advisory Board at 4:30 PM on December 13, 2018 at the Lowcountry Graduate Center.

### **II. Attendees:**

Dr. Nancy Muller – LGC  
Jonathan Solomon – LGC  
Terri Nichols – Charleston County School District  
Darlene Anderson, Ed.D. – Northwood Academy  
Carmelina Livingston – STEM Lowcountry Collaborative  
Juliet White, Ph.D. – Colleton County  
Tracy Wilson – Microsoft T.E.A.L.S  
Troy Evans – Teach for America

### **III. Presentations**

#### a) Microsoft T.E.A.L.S in the Lowcountry

Technology Education and Literacy in Schools, or TEALS for short, is part of Microsoft philanthropies and helps high schools throughout the US and British Columbia, Canada build and grow sustainable computer science programs. TEALS pairs trained computer science professionals from across the technology industry with classroom teachers to team-teach computer science.

Tracy Wilson is the regional manager for the states of Georgia and South Carolina and currently works with about 5 high schools within the Charleston Metro Area; West Ashley, Wando, Hanahan, Academic Magnet, and Stall. Tracy stated that

there is a certain curriculum that TEALS has for students; and that the program is a multi-step process for schools, starting with high-level support to less support as time progresses.

Dr. Nancy Muller asked about how TEALS is matched with the schools they work with, and does the organization rely on schools to find the experts?

Teals is growing rapidly, and has been currently targeted outreach. There is an advocate at the Charleston Metro Chamber of Commerce who helps Tracy with matching volunteers to schools and classrooms. Schools are also involved in the process of finding experts through district human resource departments and sending letters out to business partners.

In terms of rural areas, Tracy stated that the model was built to target rural areas of the country. The goal for TEALS is to target 25% rural schools across the United States.

TEALS provides all the materials, except for webcams and microphones.

Carmelina Livingston asked about computational thinking and whether the organization connects problem-solving methods with computer science. Tracy stated that the organization does connect skills from all other sectors and helps students connect problem solving methods with the computer science aspect.

A part of TEALS' mission is teaching students how to be good digital and informed citizens with how modern technology works and its impacts on society.

Juliet White of Colleton County School District asked about any additional costs on schools or districts. The only additional costs are equipment, (webcam and microphones), plus any background checks and/or out of pocket expenses up to \$500 that are reasonable expenses.

Nancy asked if there are any restrictions to schools, and it was stated that TEALS will work with any school and has no restrictions.

The application for schools and districts are on the website:

<https://www.tealsk12.org>.

b) Teachers & Teach for America within South Carolina

Teach for America is a member of the AmeriCorps national service network, and organization which helps advanced education equality and equity through a network of service volunteers.

Troy Evans is the Executive Director of South Carolina's Teach for America (TFA). Under his leadership, he recognizes the desperate need for teachers and better education within the state. For the 2017-18 school district, there was a 550 teacher deficit.

Currently, Colleton County School District has one of the highest amount of teachers through TFA, while there are some teachers through TFA within Charleston County School District.

Education equity is the main focus of TFA and recruit leaders, not just teachers. Recruitment is currently 70% undergraduate students and is a difficult process, with only five to six percent accepted to teach in a classroom from the applicant pool. In South Carolina, the applicants who are placed in classroom are 50% people of color and go through an 8 week 'boot camp' located in Mississippi. Troy is optimistic that by 2020 there will be a 'boot camp' location within South Carolina.

Every placed teacher is assigned a 'coach' who mentors the new recruits. Coaches are all former teachers, and are full-time staff members with Teach for America.

Troy admits that there are challenges to recruiting applicants to come to, or stay in, South Carolina. Some ways to attract talent is incentives of recommendations, professional development and extensive opportunities. There are also many opportunities for mentorship programs, possibly internship opportunities, and other benefits.

According to Troy, the 2021 goals are to reach 1500 teachers within the South Carolina border, and also to have alumni engagement plus 10,000 in leadership development programs. The last goal is to see changes to the system of South Carolina education through advocacy and working cooperatively with the state government.

To find out more information on Teach for America – South Carolina:

<https://www.teachforamerica.org/where-we-work/south-carolina>

c) SC Commission on Higher Education Newest initiative

On 26<sup>th</sup> of November 2018, Jonathan Solomon, Administrative Assistant for the Lowcountry Graduate Center, was asked to test out and view a new website planned by the SC Commission on Higher Education. GetSmartSC is a new college resource hub for parents, high school students, current college students, and high school career counselors.

Developed by student interns from Midland Technical College located in Columbia, the site offers step by step processes and links to ensure that the college process is easy to navigate. Separated into five categories, “Going to College,” “Returning to College,” “Military,” “Financial Assistance,” and “Careers.” Each category has sub categories, such as “Where to start” under the going to college tab. <https://getsmartsc.com/>

All data about different colleges is provided by the colleges themselves as required by law. Every year, public colleges must give updated information of programs, costs, and expenses.

Under the “Financial Assistance” category, there is a link to the new “Palmetto Calculator.” This calculator is only for undergraduate studies and for public four year institutions, meaning technical colleges are excluded. The calculator has five comprehensive sections to show how much college truly costs within four years.

After entering the school, discipline, program, location of campus, and degree wanting to be obtained, visitors can enter the different fees of books and supplies, room & board, and meal plans.

The calculator then takes you through state scholarships and federal grant aid, student loans, comparison of different schools in regards to cost of programs, and finally a summary of all information comprised of the data entered.

One of the best features of the calculator is how much the starting salary of jobs within the program of choice.

To the Calculator: [https://getsmartsc.com/palmetto\\_calculator/](https://getsmartsc.com/palmetto_calculator/)

#### **IV. Adjournment**

Director Dr. Nancy Muller adjourned the meeting at 6:00 PM.

Minutes submitted by: Jonathan Solomon

Minutes approved by: Name