

SC-SIC Conference to Feature Family Engagement Speaker Constantino

Dr. Steven M. Constantino, educator, author, consultant, and the nation's leading practitioner in the field of family engagement in schools, will be the featured speaker at the SC-SIC's 2008 Annual Conference.



Dr. Steven M. Constantino

This year's conference, titled "Reaching Higher by Reaching Out," is scheduled for Saturday, March 8, at the Columbia Conference Center in the capital city's St. Andrews area. The event marks the 30th anniversary of SICs in South Carolina.

Those planning to attend the conference should pre-register by March 4, 2008, as seating will be limited to 300.

Doors will open at the conference for registrant sign-in beginning at 8:30 a.m. The conference program begins at 9:30 a.m., and includes keynote speaker Constantino, a buffet lunch, updates on education-related legislation, and presentation of the SC-SIC's Advocate of the Year Award and the 2008 Dick and Tunky Riley School Improvement Award. State Superintendent of Education Dr. Jim Rex will also address the conference.

A conference agenda and registration materials are included in this issue of Council News.

Keynote speaker Constantino's presentation is entitled "Engaging All Families: A Proven Path to Achievement for All." Demand for increased student performance has never been higher. Over 40 years of empirical data and remarkable success sto-

ries prove that engaging families in the educational lives of our children leads to all children learning at higher levels. Constantino, Founder and President of Family Friendly Schools, will share his humor and inspiring success story to describe the framework to successfully engage all families.

"We're very excited that Steve will be with us again," said SC-SIC Executive Director Cassie Barber. "He was our speaker for the conference several years ago and through the years has remained a true friend and supporter of our parent involvement efforts here in South Carolina. We're very pleased that he will be able to bring his message and enthusiasm to us again this year."

Constantino is a nationally-recognized educator who as a high school principal led Stonewall Jackson High School (Prince William County, Virginia) to recognition as one of *Newsweek* magazine's "Top 100 High Schools" in 2000 and 2003, and *Time* magazine's "High School of the Year" in 2001. He founded Family Friendly Schools in 1999, dedicated to helping schools and districts around the country to increase student achievement by developing networks of integrated relationships between leadership, staff, and families creating a culture of high performance and learning outcomes. His program, "Engage All Families," is a five-step process designed to create data-driven results through family engagement now used by hundreds of schools and districts in 35 states.

He has been featured in numerous publications and is the author of two books, "Making Your School Family Friendly," and "Engaging All Families," both published in 2003.

Photo credit: www.familyfriendlyschools.com

Hudson, Weston Join SC-SIC Staff

Tom F. Hudson and Barbara Flemming Weston have joined the staff of the SC School Improvement Council.



Tom Hudson

Hudson serves as Director of Program Services, assisting in the planning, implementation and evaluation of SC-SIC services provided on the state, regional and district levels for some 16,000 local School Improvement

Council members in South Carolina's 85 school districts.

Weston will serve as Council Specialist, providing support to local SICs of those schools rated as "unsatisfactory" on the state's School Report Cards, to include training and site visits to schools regarding SIC roles, responsibilities and parent/community engagement in local public schools.



Barbara Weston

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Message from . . . the Executive Director **Cassie Barber, M.A.**

So what's new at SC-SIC this school year? To me, it seems like almost everything is new - or at least is being updated or modified in some way. Many of you know that I was named executive director of SC-SIC last July following the retirement of long-time director Dr. Jean Norman. Working with our accomplished staff and committed Board members I am enjoying the challenges and opportunities generated by my new role. Together we are using the foundation built by Dr. Norman to take School Improvement Councils to new levels of activity and effectiveness. Below is some of "what's new" so far this school year:

- We are slowly changing our logo color from blue to garnet in honor of our relationship with the University of South Carolina - especially the College of Education - which provides us with a physical and collegial home. Thank you!

- New staff members Tom Hudson and Barbara Weston bring their considerable expertise to SC-SIC. We also have some excellent new Board members joining our seasoned team to advise our organization (see pages 1 and 5).

- A new database system allows individual schools to keep track of their membership information and receive immediate reports telling them if their Council roster complies with state law. This new system encourages accountability and also reduces postage costs by ensuring that SC-SIC mailings are going to "good" addresses.

- SC-SIC collaborated with a variety of our education friends and colleagues to host 23 SIC trainings at schools, in districts and on college campuses across the state. No matter what district or school they represent, SIC members were welcomed at any training they chose to attend. More than 900 individuals received training last fall! In addition, 80 administrators representing 61 districts attended our training in Columbia designed to help them facilitate their local SICs - and many have held their own SIC trainings as a result.

Spring will bring additional trainings, our annual conference featuring Dr. Steve Constantino of Family Friendly Schools (page 1), Legislative Advocacy Day (page 6), the Dick and Tunky Riley School Improvement Awards (page 6), new publications and much more. I encourage you to visit the SC-SIC website at <http://sic.sc.gov> often to take advantage of all the technical assistance support we have to offer you and of course you are welcome to call us toll-free at 1-800-868-2232 any time.

This school year marks the 30th anniversary of the legislation that created School Improvement Councils in South Carolina. SC-SIC has a new mission statement to guide our work that reflects the original intent of that legislation: *To support and promote civic engagement for quality public education through school improvement councils.* We must remember that SICs provide a measure of accountability for public education in South Carolina. As the greater community becomes more involved in their local public schools, the schools will be more accountable to their communities - and in turn, the community will be more appreciative and supportive of public education. Building strong relationships between public education and the students, parents and community it

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COUNCIL NEWS . . . is an award winning publication of South Carolina School Improvement Council. Circulation 16,000. Your comments and articles are welcome. Contact Claudia Wolverton, Editor at:

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The University of South Carolina system provides affirmative action and equal opportunity in education and employment for all qualified persons regardless of race, religion, sex, national origin, age, disability or veteran status.

" Reaching Higher by Reaching Out "

SIC 2008 Annual Conference

- REGISTRATION FORM -

(One form per person, please!)

MARCH 8, 2008

COLUMBIA CONFERENCE CENTER

169 LAURELHURST AVE.

COLUMBIA, SC 29210

803-772-9811

PLEASE PRINT LEGIBLY.

Your nametag will be created using this registration form.

Name _____

Mailing Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____ Daytime Phone _____

Email Address _____

Full Name of District _____

Full Name of School _____

My primary relationship to a School Improvement Council is:

() Parent () Teacher () Administrator () Student () Community Member () Other _____

Registration fee of \$20.00 includes lunch and materials. (Make checks payable to SC-SIC.) No cash or credit cards accepted. Deadline to register is 5 p.m. on March 4. No refunds will be given after the deadline, however you may send a substitute if you cannot attend. Please notify SC-SIC of the change before the training.

Payment Method (must check one)

() Will pay by check or money order at the training

() Check or money order enclosed

() District office or school will pay fee. PURCHASE ORDER NUMBER _____

() Check to here to apply for scholarship - **UNSATISFACTORY SCHOOLS ONLY - 1 per school; open to first 100 schools to apply**

I understand that I am responsible for final payment of my registration fee or for arranging payment through my school or district office if they have agreed to pay my registration fee.

Participant's Signature (*required*) _____

You may FAX or MAIL your completed registration form.

FAX - 803-777-0023

ADDRESS - SC-SIC, USC College of Education, Suite 001, Columbia, SC, 29208

No registrations accepted after the deadline. All registrations must be received - not postmarked - by

Tuesday, March 4, 2008. Confirmations will be either by email or phone.

Contact SC-SIC if you do not receive a confirmation by the day before the conference.

IF YOU DO NOT RECEIVE A CONFIRMATION, YOU ARE NOT REGISTERED!

No on-site registrations.

QUESTIONS? Call 800-868-2232 or 803-777-7658

"Reaching Higher by Reaching Out"

**2008 Conference Agenda
Columbia Conference Center**

8:30 - 9:30 AM	Registration with Continental Breakfast
9:30 AM	Welcome
9:45 AM	Keynote Address by Dr. Steve Constantino "Engaging All Families - A Proven Path to Achievement for All"
10:45 AM	Break
11:00 AM	Legislative Update - Presenter TBD
11:45 PM	We Did It! Success Stories from Riley Award Winners
12:15 PM	Buffet Lunch
1:00 PM	SC Superintendent of Education Dr. Jim Rex
1:30 PM	Awards Presentation: SC-SIC Advocate of the Year Presentation Dick and Tunky Riley School Improvement Award
2:00 PM	Adjourn

Directions to Columbia Conference Center:

From Greenville/Spartanburg/Irmo:

- I-26 East to Piney Grove Road - Exit 104
- Turn LEFT onto Piney Grove Road crossing over I-26
- Turn right at the second light onto Fernandina Road (at the San Jose Restaurant)
- Continue on Fernandina for 9/10 mile and take a left at the Westpark Entrance "A" onto Laurelhurst Avenue, directly beside the Hampton-Pontiac-Buick car dealership
- Columbia Conference Center is the first building behind the dealership

From Charleston:

- I-26 West to Piney Grove Road - Exit 104
- Turn RIGHT onto Piney Grove Road
- Turn right at the first light onto Fernandina Road (at the San Jose Restaurant)
- Continue on Fernandina for 9/10 mile and take a left at the Westpark Entrance "A" onto Laurelhurst Avenue, directly beside the Hampton-Pontiac-Buick car dealership
- Columbia Conference Center is the first building behind the dealership

From Augusta:

- I-20 East to I-26 West
- I-26 West to Piney Grove Road - Exit 104
- Turn RIGHT onto Piney Grove Road
- Turn right at the first light onto Fernandina Road (at the San Jose Restaurant)

- Continue on Fernandina for 9/10 mile and take a left at the Westpark Entrance "A" onto Laurelhurst Avenue, directly beside the Hampton-Pontiac-Buick car dealership
- Columbia Conference Center is the first building behind the dealership

From Charlotte/Florence:

- I-77 South to I-20 West
- I-20 West to I-26 West (Begin here traveling from Florence)
- I-26 West to Piney Grove Road - Exit 104
- Turn RIGHT onto Piney Grove Road
- Turn right at the first light onto Fernandina Road (at the San Jose Restaurant)
- Continue on Fernandina for 9/10 mile and take a left at the Westpark Entrance "A" onto Laurelhurst Avenue, directly beside the Hampton-Pontiac-Buick car dealership
- Columbia Conference Center is the first building behind the dealership

From Downtown Columbia:

- I-26 West to Piney Grove Road - Exit 104
- Turn RIGHT onto Piney Grove Road
- Turn right at the first light onto Fernandina Road (at the San Jose Restaurant)
- Continue on Fernandina for 9/10 mile and take a left at the Westpark Entrance "A" onto Laurelhurst Avenue, directly beside the Hampton-Pontiac-Buick car dealership
- Columbia Conference Center is the first building behind the dealership

“Message from the Executive Director”

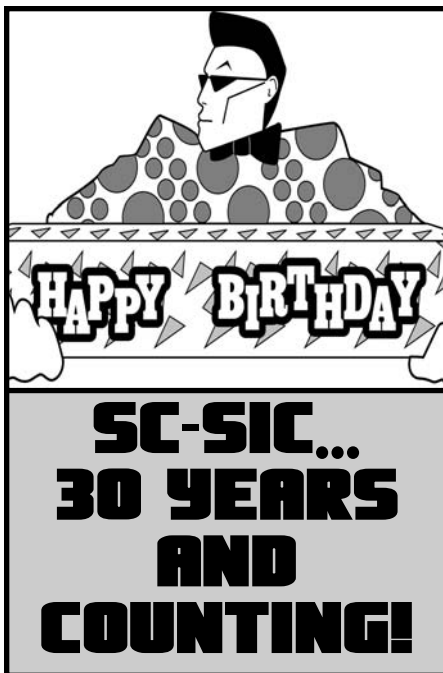
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serves benefits each of us as individuals and our state as a whole. It's important work.

Granted, change - even positive change - can be painful at times. My brother Brett, a systems engineer, often says, "Everyone is for progress, but no one is for change." Working with more than 1,100 individual schools and 85 districts to assign passwords and load contact information is a mammoth task that has been difficult for us and for some of you - especially those with finicky network firewalls! But all the time and trouble is worth the development of a new system that provides the substance that real accountability brings. And our new training plan has generally been a success, but if you visit the website you'll see that some of our trainings were extremely well attended, while others were a bit of a disappointment. Staff is working to analyze what works and what doesn't and offer you the best service we can.

You've told us that you appreciated the special Riley Institute edition of the newsletter published last fall ... thanks for contacting us and please continue to be in touch. Your ideas, questions and feedback help us to do our jobs better. I thank YOU, the local SIC members, for doing your jobs - giving your time and talents to improve your local school and public education all across South Carolina.

Cassie



Four named to SC-SIC Board of Trustees

Virginia Alston Brown, Ed.D., of Sumter, Michael L. Lisle, Jr., of Summerville, Retha Ross, of Darlington, and E' Lane C. Rutherford, of Pawleys Island, have been named to the South Carolina School Improvement Council (SC-SIC) Board of Trustees.

"These outstanding individuals have a deep commitment to education and a passion for the well being of South Carolina's children," said Board Chair Jeff Nicholson. "We are very fortunate to have their contributions to the Board, the SC-SIC and our vision for the future of our state's public schools."

Dr. Brown is a 35-year career educator, having served as a classroom teacher, guidance counselor, assistant principal, and principal on the elementary and middle school levels. She has been the director of instruction for Sumter School District 17 for the last seven years.

Lisle's professional career includes nearly 10 years in educational services, including leadership positions with the Communities in Schools program in Florida, and as director of academic intervention services with the Florida Department of Education. He currently serves as director of children and youth services for Trident United Way in North Charleston.

Ross has been a volunteer in public schools in a number of communities for over 30 years, serving as a reading tutor, room parent and teacher's aide. A strong advocate for parent, teacher and student involvement in schools, Ross has also served on the Darlington Middle School SIC and is a past president of the Parent-Teacher Association.

Rutherford's professional background includes service in youth ministry and civic education programs. A former executive director of Kids Voting SC for Georgetown County, and a past parish administrator for Holy Cross Faith Memorial Episcopal Church in Pawleys Island, she has been that church's director of youth ministries since 2004.

“SC-SIC Welcomes New Staff Members”

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"We are extremely pleased to have Tom and Barbara as members of the SC-SIC team," said Executive Director Cassie Barber. "We welcome their considerable experience and their demonstrated commitment to civic involvement in public education."

Hudson has over 20 years of experience in communications and constituent/media relations, most recently as public information officer for Beaufort County Schools and previously in both the public and private sectors. His professional work has been recognized by the National School Public Relations Association (NSPRA), the SC Chapter of NSPRA, and by the state's chapter of the Public Relations Society of America, and he has provided numerous training and workshop sessions on the local, state and national levels.

He holds the Bachelor of Arts degree in Religion/Philosophy from Maryville College (TN), and is a current board member of the SC Chapter of NSPRA, a past member of SC-SIC Board of Trustees, and past vice chair of the Mossy Oaks Elementary School (Beaufort) School Improvement Council.

Weston is a retired 30-year career educator who most recently served as Lead Teacher of English at Midlands Middle College at Midlands Technical College. She was previously Curriculum Coordinator for Orangeburg County Consolidated School District Three, has served several administrative capacities with the SC Department of Education, was a Teacher in Residence at the former SC Center for Teacher Recruitment, and for 24 years was a classroom teacher of English, reading and drama in Richland School District One schools.

She holds a Bachelor of Arts degree from SC State University, a Masters of Education degree from Cambridge College and is currently a doctoral candidate in Education at Nova Southeastern University. A three-time Teacher of the Year honoree, Weston was a 1995 national Milken Educator Award recipient. She is a former member of the SC Board of Education, past vice chair of the SC Professional Review Committee of Colleges and Schools, a past member of the SC School Improvement Council Board of Trustees, and has been a member of the College of Charleston's School of Education Advisory Board.

2008 SIC Honor Roll Schools

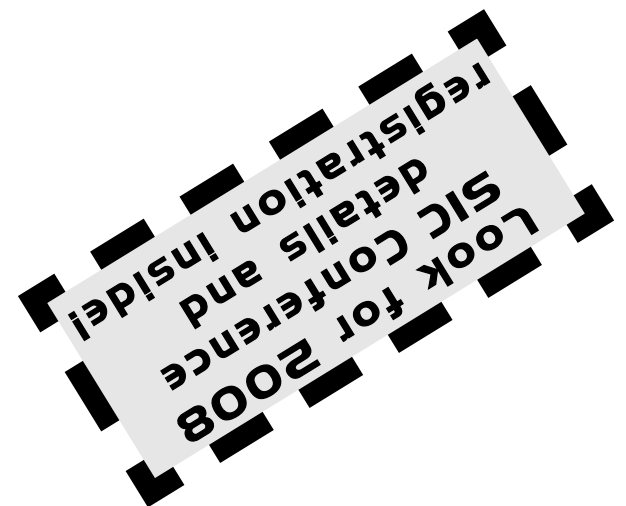
Congratulations to these schools who earned Honor Roll status with their Level One applications for the Dick and Tunky Riley School Improvement Award! One exemplary SIC will be announced as the Riley Award winner on March 8. Good luck to all!

- **Annie Burnside Elementary**, Richland 1, Columbia
- **Bell's Crossing Elementary**, Greenville County, Simpsonville
- **Bookman Road Elementary**, Richland 2, Elgin
- **Camden Elementary School of the Creative Arts**, Kershaw County, Camden
- **Lake Forest Elementary**, Greenville County, Greenville
- **Laurel Hill Primary**, Charleston County, Mt. Pleasant
- **Meadowfield Elementary**, Richland 1, Columbia
- **Monarch Elementary**, Union County, Union
- **Paul Knox Middle**, Aiken County, North Augusta
- **Pineview Elementary**, Lexington 2, West Columbia
- **Silver Bluff High School**, Aiken County, Aiken
- **Stone Academy of Communication Arts**, Greenville County, Greenville
- **Sue Cleveland Elementary School**, Greenville County, Piedmont

Join Us For Advocacy Day

SC School Improvement Council, the League of Women Voters of SC and the American Association of University Women of SC will co-sponsor a Legislative Advocacy Day on **Tuesday, February 19 at the Marriott Hotel in Columbia**. The event will feature speakers from Furman University's Riley Institute, who will share results from the largest education study ever conducted to determine what the public thinks about education in South Carolina and how to improve it. Early childhood education and how we fund education will be key topics, and Kathy Maness, executive director of Palmetto State Teachers Association, will share tips on how to communicate with legislators.

The fee for the event is \$35 per person and includes lunch. Parking is available at a cost of \$5. Participants will walk over to the SC Statehouse following the event to meet with their legislators and attend committee meetings. Visit <http://sic.sc.gov> to download registration information, which must be postmarked by February 12. On-site registrations will be accepted for \$40, but pre-registration is strongly recommended. All SIC members are welcome and encouraged to attend!



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