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May 10, 2019

Pat G. Smith, Director  
Wil Lou Gray Opportunity School  
3300 W Campus Rd  
Columbia, South Carolina 29170

Dear Director Smith:

On behalf of the Education and Cultural Subcommittee, thank you, and your staff for your recent presentations to the Subcommittee relating to Wil Lou Gray Opportunity School's staffing and for hosting us for a site visit. In preparation for our next meeting, please respond to the following by June 3, 2019:

- What successful practices implemented at WLGO could public schools across the state replicate?

### **Students**

#### *Future Opportunities*

- What professional certifications are available to students attending WLGO?
- How does WLGO collaborate with technical colleges, other than Midlands Tech?

#### *Activities*

- Do WLGO students have a community service or volunteerism requirement?
- List student community service opportunities.
- Does the school still have a drill team that participates in drill competitions? If not, why not?
- How do you ensure WLGO's campus is welcoming to students with diverse spiritual and religious needs?

### *Discipline*

- Please provide a copy of the student discipline policy. If it is in the student handbook, provide a copy of the entire handbook.

### **Staff**

- Provide a copy of the agency's exit survey for staff departing the agency. How has agency leadership used data from the survey?
- What is the process for addressing staff input about agency operations?
- Early in the oversight process, agency staff stated they were in the process of reviewing and updating position descriptions. Have agency staff completed the review? What types of changes were implemented because of the review?
- Agency staff testified the greatest improvement needed is in salaries. Has the agency performed any salary studies for each of the position types? For each position type, what is the percentage difference between the mean salary for the position at WLGO and the mean salary for entities competing for the same staff?

### **Administration and Governance**

#### *Foundation*

- Provide a list of members of the board of the Wil Lou Gray Foundation.
- Who has signatory authority for Wil Lou Gray Foundation checks?
- Provide the foundation's policies regarding expenditure of funds.
- Are donations to WLGO to the school or to the foundation?
- Does the foundation utilize any of the school's resources?

#### *SWOT Analysis*

- How is the agency addressing the weaknesses and threats stated in the SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats) Analysis provided in the February 11, 2019, letter?
  - Weaknesses
    - Folks and communities still don't know about WLGO
    - Not situated to address the growing need for interested applicants ages 15 and younger
  - Threats
    - Increase in online K-12 tuition-free programs, home schooling, magnet and charter schools, military academies, independent private schools, various GED programs (WIA, Christ-Central Ministries), TARA HALL, SC Youth Alternative
    - More applicants with gang affiliations
    - More applicants indicating special mental health challenges that WLGO is not qualified to handle

#### *Physical Plant*

- Please provide WLGO's last Comprehensive Permanent Improvement Plan (CPIP) submitted in accordance with S.C. Code § 2-47-55.
- What are the agency's processes for prioritizing building maintenance and capital projects?

*Board Training Effectiveness*

- List the topics covered in the board training.
- Has the agency measured the effectiveness of the training?

*Collaboration*

- Provide a copy of the agency's agreement with Lexington 2.
- Provide a copy of any agreement with other state agencies.

*Cyber Security*

- Broadly describe WLGOS' steps to protect applicant and student data.

*Marketing*

- As the agency collects more precise marketing data, have any patterns emerged about the return on investment of different marketing strategies?

If these questions would yield responses that are not an accurate reflection of the agency or if additional time is needed to respond, please contact Committee staff. The Subcommittee looks forward to our next meeting, on June 11, 2019.

Thank you for your service to the citizens of South Carolina and for your continued cooperation with the legislative oversight process.

Sincerely,



Joseph H. Jefferson, Jr.  
Subcommittee Chair

cc: The Honorable Neal Collins  
The Honorable Patricia Henegan  
The Honorable Tommy M. Stringer