

ECONOMIC IMPACT

**of the
South Carolina School for the Deaf and the Blind**

**On the
State of South Carolina**

Fiscal Year 2004

(July 1, 2003 - June 30, 2004)

DETAILED NARRATIVE

**Sponsored by
The Walker Foundation of the
South Carolina School for the Deaf and the Blind**



Prepared by Omega Associates, LLC

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This FY04 study of the economic impact of the South Carolina School for the Deaf and the Blind (SCSDB) on the SCSDB service area economy was completed by Omega Associates, LLC, an educational and management consulting organization located in Greenville, South Carolina. Omega Associates utilizes the services of educators and researchers who have worked with numerous colleges, local governments and agencies, non-profits, and businesses on issues of economic development, economic impact, management, and fund-raising. This report is provided for the private use of The Walker Foundation and for the South Carolina School for the Deaf and the Blind. Duplication or adaptation of this report is prohibited without written permission of Omega Associates.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This study demonstrates the vital importance of the South Carolina School for the Deaf and the Blind (SCSDB) to our state's industry and business volume, school employees, community citizens, and the overall vitality of the state. Employment, income, and expenditure impacts are significant, as are the returns on investment.

The desired outcome between an educational institution and the community is that the school provides more value than it requires to operate. In the case of SCSDB, Omega Associates can emphatically conclude that the school has a significant net positive impact on the community! The school more than pays its own way with respect to government services and resources utilized each year. In fact, SCSDB has a great return on investment. *Returns for South Carolina public monies are impressive with an estimated return of \$4.92 for every state-appropriated dollar invested in SCSDB.*

In considering the economic impact SCSDB has on South Carolina, it is important to recognize that:

1) SCSDB provides an economic impact of more than \$57 million to the South Carolina economy in the form of money that is accrued from direct expenditures, the indirect and induced multiplier effect, and visitor and family expenditures. The three measures contributed to SCSDB's total economic impact by providing an estimated cumulative value of more than \$57 million for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2004.

Direct Budget Expenditures Impact	\$31.17 Million
(Actual operational and budget expenditures)	
Indirect and Induced Multiplier Effect	\$24.94 Million
(Estimated indirect expenditures and ripple effect in the local economy)	
Family and Visitor Expenditures	\$ 1.10 Million
(Estimated effect of families relocating to the Spartanburg area and visitors to SCSDB-sponsored activities)	
Cumulative Economic Expenditures Impact	\$57.21 Million

2) SCSDB's consolidated and efficient services drive savings stemming from both enrolled and outreach services, thereby bringing a conservative total benefit of \$121.72 million to the citizens of South Carolina as described below:

Enrolled Student Services	\$ 3.30 Million
The Walker Foundation	\$ 1.00 Million
Medicaid Funds	\$ 2.30 Million
Outreach Services	\$ 2.43 Million
Redistribution of Braille/Large Print Books	\$ 200,000
Teachers Contracted to Public School Districts	\$ 2.12 Million
Training for Teachers	\$ 107,000
Self-Sufficiency of Graduates	\$.99 Million
Protection of Federal Dollars	\$ 115.00 Million
	<hr/>
Cumulative Economic Savings Impact	\$ 121.72 Million

**Combined Impact of Economic
Expenditures and Savings:
\$178.93 Million**

Based on these positive results, it is clear that the South Carolina School for the Deaf and the Blind has a very significant sphere of influence and brings forth significant economic gains for the state. This positive impact is mainly due to the school's efficient operations and the provision of quality educational and life-skills training for citizens with special needs throughout South Carolina.

STUDY OVERVIEW

The South Carolina School for the Deaf and the Blind (SCSDB) has proudly served South Carolina citizens with disabilities for more than 155 years. Since its Spartanburg campus opened in 1849, SCSDB has benefited the economy of Spartanburg County and the state of South Carolina.

In Fiscal Year 2004 (FY04), SCSDB served 814 citizens through early intervention and main campus programs in addition to serving more than 23,000 South Carolina citizens through six outreach service centers in Columbia, Conway, Florence, Charleston, Rock Hill, and Spartanburg. In addition, SCSDB's services aided families and professionals in all 46 South Carolina counties and the school served the majority of the state's 85 school districts during FY04.

SCSDB is a valuable asset for South Carolina and Spartanburg County because it creates jobs for South Carolina citizens and attracts federal grants and other revenue from outside the state. In addition, the school provides exceptional preschool, kindergarten - grade 12, and adult educational opportunities for citizens with special needs; trains students in technical skills to meet local employer demands; and enhances the local quality of life.

The positive impact that the South Carolina School for the Deaf and the Blind has on its service area is a reality that is well known by school administrators¹ and Walker Foundation leaders, but is a well-kept secret for many citizens in the communities the school serves.

This Economic Impact Study quantifies and describes, for the first time publicly, the dramatic economic and social impact of the South Carolina School for the Deaf and the Blind on the citizens, businesses, and economy within its service area. This report quantifies for key constituent groups an estimate of the economic impact of SCSDB on South Carolina communities during FY04.

In October of 2004, The Walker Foundation of the South Carolina School for the Deaf and the Blind commissioned a study by Omega Associates, LLC to measure the economic benefits of the South Carolina School for the Deaf and the Blind to its service area. Omega, an independent research firm that specializes in quantifying the economic impact of organizations on their service areas, quantified the school's impact

on South Carolina's economy for FY04. The study revealed that both the quality of life and economic stability in South Carolina are enhanced in large part due to the investment, influence, and impact of the school, its employees and volunteers, and its training and educational programs.

This overview highlights the dramatic findings of the recently completed Economic Impact Study using FY04 data. The study results quantify the following two areas of economic impact that SCSDB affords South Carolina citizens: 1) large-scale economic gains that accrue to South Carolina because of SCSDB operations and expenditures, and 2) economic savings in the form of money and time that do not have to be spent thanks to the specialized educational, social, and community services contributed by SCSDB's quality programs and skilled employees.

Three impactors were measured to determine accrued expenditures. These three measures contributed to SCSDB's total economic impact by providing an estimated cumulative value of more than \$57 million to the economy of South Carolina for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2004 (FY04).

Direct Budget Expenditures Impact	\$ 31.17 million
Indirect and Induced Multiplier Effect	\$ 24.94 million
Family and Visitor Expenditures	<u>\$ 1.10 million</u>
Cumulative Economic Expenditures Impact	\$ 57.21 million

The results derived from this study demonstrate the vital importance of SCSDB to South Carolina's industry and business volume, school employees, community citizens, and the overall viability of the state. Employment, income, and expenditure impacts are significant, as are the returns on investment.

This report uses financial and enrollment data provided by SCSDB, as well as state and national statistics, to quantify the character and magnitude of the economic influence the institution exerts on the area. As used here, *area* generally refers to the South Carolina School for the Deaf and the Blind service area of all South Carolina counties. Financial² and enrollment³ data are for the school's 2004 fiscal year (2003-2004). Other data reviewed include SCSDB's internal research data, National Center for Educational Statistics (NCES), Statistical Abstracts, SC Department of Commerce Capital Investment Report⁴, and other relevant state⁵ and national sources.

There are limitations in this study. As impressive as the economic impact estimates are, readers should note that the study is not exhaustive. The results represent conservative estimates of the school's actual economic impact. Measurements are not always absolute. Numbers are based on actual information provided by the school or other professional sources. When published numbers are not available for validation, non-biased surveys and intuitive estimates are utilized. School expenditures are not adjusted for salary, taxes and benefit payments, nor are household mortgage principal and interest payments deducted. The methodology employed in this study does not attempt to measure other social, medical, or cultural benefits and/or cost dimensions of potential intangible impact, such as the value of public lectures, social events, cultural activities, or public service by school personnel.

This study is a one-year "snapshot," thus long-term effects fall outside the report's numeric measurement. For example, cumulative applied research or long-term improvements in the quality of community life that result from the existence of the school are not within the scope of the present study.

The purpose of this study is to provide valid, realistic, current measurements of economic impact to which local citizens can relate and understand.

MEASURING ECONOMIC IMPACTORS

In order to estimate a cumulative effect of the South Carolina School for the Deaf and the Blind on the state economy, this report examines two areas of economic impact that SCsDB affords South Carolina citizens: 1) large-scale economic gains that accrue to South Carolina because of SCsDB operations and expenditures, and 2) economic savings in the form of money and time that do not have to be spent thanks to the specialized educational, social, and community services contributed by SCsDB's quality programs and skilled employees.

Quantified Economic Gains Accrued to South Carolina Because of SCsDB

In the area of economic gains that accrue to South Carolina, there are three aspects of SCsDB economic impact for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2004. This portion of SCsDB's economic impact had an estimated cumulative value of more than \$57 million. The three measures of economic impact gains were:

- ◆ **Direct Expenditures** – Presents actual operational and capital budget expenditures of the school for FY04. It is the economic activity created by SCsDB's direct conduct of business, such as payroll, purchasing of supplies and equipment, and the completion of capital projects;
- ◆ **Indirect/Induced Multiplier Factor** – Estimates indirect expenditures of SCsDB employees and other entities that create a multiplier or ripple effect in the local economy. It is the result of SCsDB employees buying goods and services, thus passing their earned dollars on to a variety of businesses, plus the impact of those businesses respending those dollars in the same manner;
- ◆ **Family/Visitor Spending** – Estimates the expenditures of the families who relocate to the Spartanburg area to support their SCsDB student and estimates the expenditures of visitors who visit the Spartanburg area because of SCsDB or a function housed there.

Adding the three measures together to present a cumulative accrued economic impact demonstrates the very significant importance of the South Carolina School for the Deaf and the Blind to the economic and social well-being of the service area for fiscal year 2004. The value of SCsDB's accrued economic impact is as follows:

Direct Budget Expenditures Impact	\$ 31.17 million
Indirect and Induced Multiplier Effect	\$ 24.94 million
Family and Visitor Expenditures	<u>\$ 1.10 million</u>
Cumulative Economic Expenditures Impact	\$ 57.21 million

Traditional economic impact studies typically calculate a relatively simple estimate of impact by combining direct expenditures with a multiplier factor based on input-output analysis. Family and visitor spending factors are not normally measured by researchers in traditional economic impact analysis, but these earnings are included in this study because they are important aspects of SCSDB's impact. This measure is a non-traditional approximation of the school's role in increasing family and visitor expenditures in the Upstate area of South Carolina. Officials of the Strom Thurmond Institute at Clemson University⁶ and other independent economic analysts have noted that the family and visitor spending measures are far more difficult to quantify than the traditional measures. Despite measurement challenges, this non-traditional factor is estimated in this study of SCSDB's FY04 economic impact.

Each of these three measures are studied independently, then all three elements are added together to provide a cumulative economic impact for a one-year period of time. Although the three elements do not account for all variables through which the school impacts the local economy, the results detailed in the study demonstrate the significant value of SCSDB to the economic well being of its service area.

DIRECT EXPENDITURES IMPACT

Cash expenditures represent the fundamental driver of economic impact. The **direct expenditure impact** of the South Carolina School for the Deaf and the Blind's budget in 2003-2004 was \$31.17 million. An economic benefit results when dollars are spent by the school for day-to-day operations and/or capital improvements, as those dollars circulate directly into the economy. The **total expenditures of \$31.17 million** represent both **operational expenses of \$22.63 million** and **capital spending of \$8.54 million**. Of the total, salaries and benefits represented the largest portion, capital investments were the next largest, and the balance included primarily school purchases of goods and services.

It should be noted that the school attracts significant revenue from outside the state. The majority of this funding stems from Medicaid and other federal government grants and contracts. In addition, because of its outstanding educational and service opportunities, the school has captured the attention of both external and internal donors and private foundations, bringing both gift income and recognition into the state.

In FY04, SCSDB audited operating expenditures were allocated as follows:

Chart 1: SCSDB Expenditures in FY04

Salaries	\$ 13.644	Million	43.771%
Capital and Construction Expenditures	\$ 8.538	Million	27.390%
Fringe Benefits	\$ 4.101	Million	13.155%
Contractual Service	\$ 2.458	Million	7.886%
Utilities	\$ 0.751	Million	2.409%
Supplies	\$ 0.549	Million	1.760%
Insurance and Rental	\$ 0.357	Million	1.146%
Travel	\$ 0.281	Million	0.901%
Special Items	\$ 0.247	Million	0.792%
Teacher Pay Carryforward	\$ 0.098	Million	0.313%
Gas and Diesel	\$ 0.078	Million	0.252%
Capitalized Equipment	\$ 0.061	Million	0.196%
Small Equipment	\$ 0.009	Million	0.029%
Total Operating and Capital Expenditures	\$ 31.17	Million	100.00%

The school's total operating and capital expenditures recognized in this study include both the standard operating expenditures of \$22.63 million, plus one-time capital expenditures of \$8.54 million, for a total of **\$31.17 million in direct spending**, most of which were spent within the state. Considering this

sizeable amount of direct spending, it is clear that SCSDB is a significant purchaser of goods and services on a statewide level. This direct economic gain is appreciated by all regions of South Carolina.

INDIRECT/INDUCED MULTIPLIER EFFECT

While the direct impact figures are significant, the actual impact of SCSDB's budget expenditures and employment is even greater, as they multiply, or "ripple" across the service area. SCSDB expenditures, along with the multiplier that can be applied to them, create additional jobs and economic prosperity throughout South Carolina. Wholesale, retail, service, and manufacturing businesses benefit by providing goods and services to the school, as well as meeting those needs for its faculty, staff, students, and visitors.

A multiplier effect, in addition to direct expenditures, is at the heart of traditional economic impact analysis. An offshoot of SCSDB's \$31.17 million in direct spending, the multiplier effect occurs when local vendors who supply school needs respend school dollars locally, when students and visitors spend money for goods and services, and when SCSDB faculty and staff spend a large portion of their salaries in the state to meet their personal needs.

Using a conservative model based on the American Council on Education impact model and the IMPLAN®⁷ economic impact modeling system, this Omega study suggests each direct dollar spent by SCSDB generates an additional \$0.80 of spending in the SCSDB service area. The result is an **indirect/induced multiplier impact of \$24.94 million**.

The local multiplier concept can be better understood by considering the household-level spending behavior of SCSDB personnel. Approximately 57 percent of SCSDB's expenditures go to faculty and staff employees in the form of salaries and benefits. Since nearly all SCSDB employees live in South Carolina, it is assumed that they use their salaries to purchase the majority of their consumer goods from local establishments. Additional jobs and income are generated outside of the school when SCSDB employees spend these salaries on retail goods, housing, food, and professional services. In turn, local businesses recirculate incoming revenue to provide for their own employee's salaries, goods, and services.

Official government estimates for spending and employment multipliers are available based on input-output analysis. However, multiplier estimates are not constants and vary across the country depending

on the industrial base and spending habits in each individual community. Multiplier factors, ranging from 0.43 to over 1.50^{8,9,10,11,12,13,14,15,16,17} have been identified in other economic impact studies concerned with county-sized geographic areas in different regions of the country.

Combining the South Carolina School for the Deaf and the Blind's \$31.17 million in direct spending with the \$24.94 million indirect multiplier effect, a cumulative traditional impact of \$56.11 million was added to the state economy's business volume in FY04. More than \$56 million per year represents a tremendous boost to the local SCSDB service area economy, but in looking at the school's overall economic impact there is much more to consider than the traditional direct and multiplier impacts.

FAMILY AND VISITOR EXPENDITURES IMPACT

The scope and result of the school's educational, recreational, and cultural activities generates additional economic impact to South Carolina. SCSDB grows the area economy by attracting professionals to live and work in South Carolina, both as faculty and staff at the school and in the form of parents who relocate to the Upstate area in order to live near their SCSDB student. In addition, SCSDB athletic and cultural events draw visitors to the Upstate, which generate visitor spending in the area. In addition to the impact of relocation and special events, alumni, families, and friends traveling to the campus to visit students and staff and attend school functions generate revenues for the local hospitality industry.

Relocation of Families

The Upstate economy benefits by virtue of families of special needs children relocating to the Upstate area so that their children may attend SCSDB either as day students or as residential students with family close by. In these cases, one or both parents work, buy goods and services, and pay taxes. At this time, many such families are residing in and around Spartanburg County. For this study, we conservatively assume that 15-20 families have relocated and are living and working in the Spartanburg area due to their SCSDB student. According to the U.S. Census Bureau, the Spartanburg County mean income of families who attain their income via employment earnings is approximately \$52,000¹⁸. Using this mean income, it is estimated that more than \$1 million in spending/respending is generated annually by these families in Spartanburg County.

Events/Visitor Spending

Each year, SCSDB hosts one or more major events, such as the Pan American Games for the Blind in 2001, which bring visitors to the area. This impact will increase now that the Walker Hall renovations are complete and this facility begins to draw visitors for a variety of performing arts and other programs.

In 2004, SCSDB attracted the USABA National Goalball Championships for blind athletes to the area. This event brought some 74 athletes and 32 support staff from nine states to Spartanburg County. In addition to the athletes and support staff, hundreds of spectators came from near and far to watch the week-long competition. Over the course of the school year, SCSDB hosted more than 1,000 visitors on the main campus in Spartanburg for events such as the goalball championships, homecoming, sports events, conferences/workshops, and many special guests. It is conservatively estimated that each of these 1,000 visitors spent an average of \$50 per day in Spartanburg County, with an average stay of two days, which accounts for a total expenditure of \$100,000 for lodging, food, entertainment, gas, and other goods and services during their stay.

Total Visitor and Family Expenditures

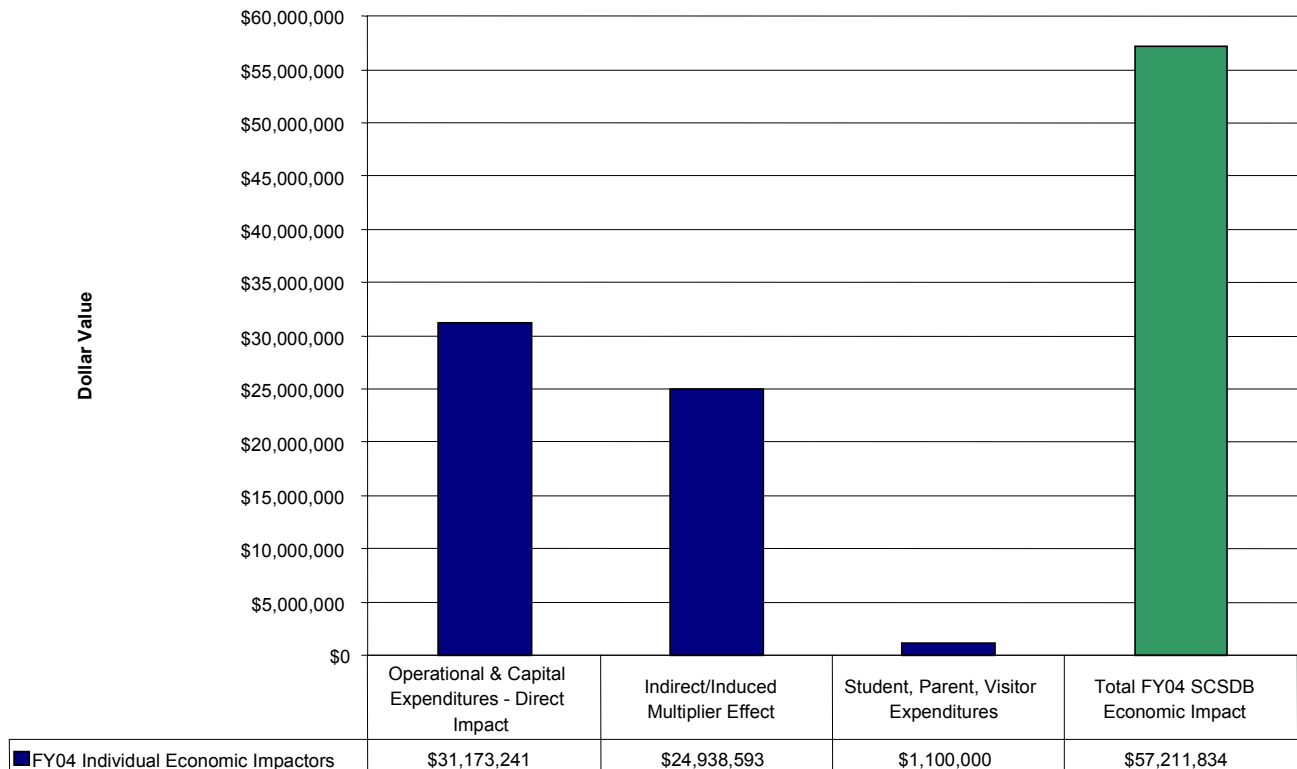
Combining the annual impact of **families who have relocated to the Spartanburg area** with the conservative estimate for **visitor spending** during events at SCSDB provides for an **additional annual economic impact of \$1.1 million** that accrues to the SCSDB service area.

Cumulative Economic Impact Gains and Return on Investment (ROI)

In summary, the three aspects of the SCSDB economic impact that produced direct economic gains for South Carolina during the fiscal year ending June 30, 2004, had an estimated cumulative value of more than \$57 million.

Chart 2: FY04 Gains From SCSDB Economic Expenditures Impact

South Carolina School for the Deaf and the Blind Cumulative Economic Expenditures Impact FY04



Based on these positive results, it is clear that the South Carolina School for the Deaf and the Blind has a very significant sphere of influence and brings forth significant economic gains for the state. This positive impact is mainly due to the school’s efficient operations and the provision of quality educational and life-skills training for citizens with special needs throughout South Carolina.

The desired outcome between an educational institution and the community is that the school provides more value than it requires to operate. In the case of SCSDB, Omega Associates can emphatically conclude that the school has a significant net positive impact on the community! The school more than

pays its own way with respect to government services and resources utilized each year. In fact, SCSDB has a great return on investment.

The school clearly returns far more value than it requires to operate. This study has shown that in **FY04 SCSDB** had an estimated **cumulative impact** on South Carolina communities of **\$57.21 million**. Utilizing this cumulative economic impact of \$57.21 million, **every dollar of SCSDB's expenditures** provides a very **positive return on investment (ROI) of \$1.84**. Returns for South Carolina public monies invested in SCSDB are even higher. With a total **appropriations investment of \$11.62 million**, the estimated **return for every \$1 of state appropriations invested in SCSDB in FY04 is \$4.92**. As impressive as SCSDB's economic impact is for 2004, this current impact can be just the beginning of further expansion of economic activity and development throughout South Carolina.

Economic Savings and other Qualified Gains Accrued to South Carolina Because of SCSDB

Economic gains in the form of dollars accrued to the state of South Carolina represent only a modest portion of the total cumulative influence of the institution. In addition to the economic gains provided by SCSDB, the school also serves as an instrument for economic benefit in the form of savings and other qualitative benefits that accrue to South Carolina. The school affords these benefits and savings in several ways:

- 1) SCSDB combats unemployment through the provision of quality jobs;
- 2) SCSDB employees provide for a better tomorrow by serving others;
- 3) SCSDB helps to insure that South Carolina meets federal mandates and maintains federal and grant funding;
- 4) SCSDB helps to reduce welfare costs for South Carolina's citizens who are sensory disabled;
- 5) SCSDB aids local school districts and other state agencies in providing economical services.

SCSDB Provides Quality Employment

Employees, students, and volunteers – people involved directly with SCSDB – provide an additional perspective on the benefits the school provides. In addition to being a large purchaser of goods and services, SCSDB is also a major employer, providing 345 full and part-time jobs for faculty and staff, with 184 of these positions being at the professional executive level. Of these 184 professional and executive level employees, an average of 24.5 percent are minorities and 51 percent are females. In reviewing SCSDB's total employment it is important to note that almost 30 percent of all employees are members of a minority group. In comparison, the population of Spartanburg County is 51.4 percent female and the minority population is 26.7 percent. These figures indicate SCSDB compares favorably with the demographics of the local community.

In addition to the positions that are currently occupied at SCSDB, the school has 210 positions that would be appropriate for displaced textile workers - technicians, paraprofessionals, clerical, etc. These job opportunities represent much needed hope for South Carolina citizens who are facing unemployment, a problem that has become all too frequent. According to a news article from June 2004¹⁹, South Carolina's

unemployment rate was 6.6 percent, which was higher than the national average of 5.6 percent. At this same time, the SC Employment Security Commission stated that Spartanburg County had an unemployment rate of 9.0 percent. By offering quality jobs and serving as a quality employer, SCSDB can help to reduce the unemployment of South Carolina's citizens.

SCSDB Employees Care About South Carolina

SCSDB faculty and staff are productive and caring citizens who bring many benefits to South Carolina. SCSDB employees are actively engaged in professional organizations, community groups, and other public service endeavors. Anecdotal evidence suggests high levels of community involvement on the part of SCSDB and its employees in public service, economic development efforts, civic leadership, and other activities. The social benefits from school personnel involved in professional associations and community organizations combine to enhance the quality of life in and around the SCSDB service area. By participating as community leaders, these employees strive to make South Carolina a better place to live.

SCSDB Aids South Carolina in Meeting Government Mandates and Attaining Government Funds

South Carolina's educational system is bound by the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), which requires that all children have made available to them "a free, appropriate public education" designed to meet their individual needs. In South Carolina, the Department of Education (SC DOE) and the Office of Exceptional Children (SC OEC) are responsible for ensuring that this federal mandate is met. SCSDB serves as a partner with the state in providing education to the citizens of South Carolina who are deaf, blind, or sensory multidisabled. Because SCSDB's professional staff members are proficient in serving the specialized needs of South Carolina's citizens who are sensory disabled, SCSDB plays a crucial role as an "insurer" for the state as it works to meet federal IDEA mandates, funded at more than \$115 million each year.

According to FY04 research completed by the SC OEC, there were 111,077 total special education citizens eligible for preschool and kindergarten - grade 12 programs in South Carolina. Because individuals who are sensory disabled make up only a very small percentage of those students, they are considered "low incidence."

Because of the limited number of individuals with sensory disabilities, it is often complicated and expensive to provide these citizens with an "appropriate public education." Additionally, it is extremely difficult to incorporate the teaching of useful life skills into their educational experience.

Regardless of the difficulty of meeting these mandates, each South Carolina school district is required by law to provide specific services to their students who are deaf and blind. If the state and its school districts fail to meet these mandates, the federal government may withhold millions of dollars in federal funding. SCSDB's consolidated and comprehensive offerings are frequently utilized to help meet these mandates. In fact, SCSDB serves the state and its citizens by covering many requirements that South Carolina must have in place in order to have legal compliance with IDEA and to protect the \$115+ million that our state receives in annual IDEA funding from the federal government. The most significant of these services provided by SCSDB include:

- 1) Aiding South Carolina in its ability to provide required continuum of placement options: SCSDB is part of the required continuum of placement options that mandate a state must be able to offer a wide range of placement options to children with disabilities. These placement options begin with the regular classroom in the home school and extend to hospital/homebound placements, as appropriate. SCSDB covers the requirements that the state education system must be able to offer "special day or residential schools" for its students with disabilities, as appropriate and agreed upon by the student's planning team.
- 2) Helping South Carolina meet its requirement to provide special textbooks to students with disabilities in a timely manner: SCSDB serves as South Carolina's center for the production and distribution of all braille and large print books for ALL of our state's students who require these adaptive textbooks. In collaboration with the SC Department of Education (SC DOE), SCSDB helps to meet the regulations of IDEA on adaptive textbooks in two ways: a) first, to order or produce the books so that all children with disabilities have the type of adaptive textbook they need; and b) second, to have the books produced and distributed in a timely manner (so that students with visual impairments get their books at the same time as other students – and not six weeks or months later, as has been reported so often in the past).
- 3) Assisting South Carolina in its effort to meet the requirement of providing early intervention services to children who are deaf or blind from birth to three years old: SCSDB carries out South Carolina's legal responsibility for early intervention services (EI) provided to infants and toddlers (ages birth-

three years old) and their families. Through this program, last year SCSDB served more than 400 of these youngest special education children (and their families) in all 46 South Carolina counties – as required by state and federal law.

- 4) Helping South Carolina meet the requirement to be able to provide specialized public school services for students who are deaf or blind: SCSDB's role as an itinerant service provider is increasing every year. Through these SCSDB services, public school districts are now able to meet their IDEA requirements, without requiring change of enrollment for the student to the SCSDB campus program. During the past fiscal year (2003-04), SCSDB provided an array of instructional and support services for more than 400 students in 82 of South Carolina's 85 local school districts. Through the itinerant teacher model, SCSDB is able to employ a teacher who can work with individual students in multiple districts. This arrangement means that local school districts can meet the requirements of IDEA and No Child Left Behind (NCLB) in a very effective, efficient, and economical manner. SCSDB's service allows the local districts to "buy" only the portion of the teachers' time that is needed for the specific student. It also makes available to the local school districts only those teachers who have the specialized training and certification for these students – which keep the districts in compliance with federal and state education law, such as IDEA and NCLB.
- 5) Aiding South Carolina in its ability to provide required professional training so that teachers are identified as both certified and highly qualified in their respective teaching areas: SCSDB serves as the state leader when planning professional training (for both pre-service and in-service education personnel) in the areas of deaf education and visual impairments education. SCSDB provides the state's primary clinical training site for students who are pursuing college and graduate level degrees in local colleges of education and therapy for people with disabilities. These colleges include Converse College, University of South Carolina Upstate, Presbyterian College, and area technical colleges.
- 6) Assisting South Carolina in its effort to meet the requirement to develop and implement a statewide deaf-blind project: In addition, SCSDB, through a federally funded grant and in partnership with the SC DOE, is the lead agency for provision of services to students who are deaf-blind (ages birth through 21). The primary focus of the "SC Interagency Deaf-Blind Project" is the deployment of regional deaf-blind education teams, composed of SCSDB teaching professionals, who offer an educational review for children registered on the deaf-blind census. These consultations occur in the student's classroom setting, or, for a preschooler, in the home environment. In accordance with IDEA, these consultative reviews assist students in achieving goals as indicated in their Individualized Education Program (IEP) or Individualized Family Service Plan.

The "economies of scale" afforded by SCSDB's expertise and specialized offerings are especially beneficial to school districts that serve smaller populations, as these districts would find it difficult, if not impossible, to maintain the critical mass of students with sensory multidisabilities required to affordably provide technology and instruction to their special needs students. In addition to the financial difficulty of paying for the technology and instruction, if each district were required to find the resources it needed, at the lowest cost, on their own, they would expend a great deal of resources and time. Thankfully, South Carolina school districts can turn to SCSDB to meet the needs of their small populations of sensory disabled students. Therefore, because SCSDB pools its specialized services under one roof, it allows for more efficient use of scarce resources and effective use of specialized personnel.

SCSDB's efficient distribution of the skills and talents it houses, keeps the state from spending unwarranted extra dollars to provide the mandated services from multiple providers. The **school's consolidated, efficient, and effective services serve as a form of "insurance"** for South Carolina as it provides services that meet the federal mandates handed down to the state as requirements **to help secure the state's IDEA funding**, which totals **more than \$115 million per year**.

SCSDB "Economies of Scale" Drive Savings Through Enrolled and Outreach Services

SCSDB's consolidated and efficient services drive savings stemming from both enrolled and outreach services, thereby bringing greater benefit to the citizens of South Carolina.

Savings Stemming from SCSDB Enrolled Student Services and The Walker Foundation

Significant **savings of almost \$3.30 million stem from enrolled/on-campus offerings and support from The Walker Foundation:**

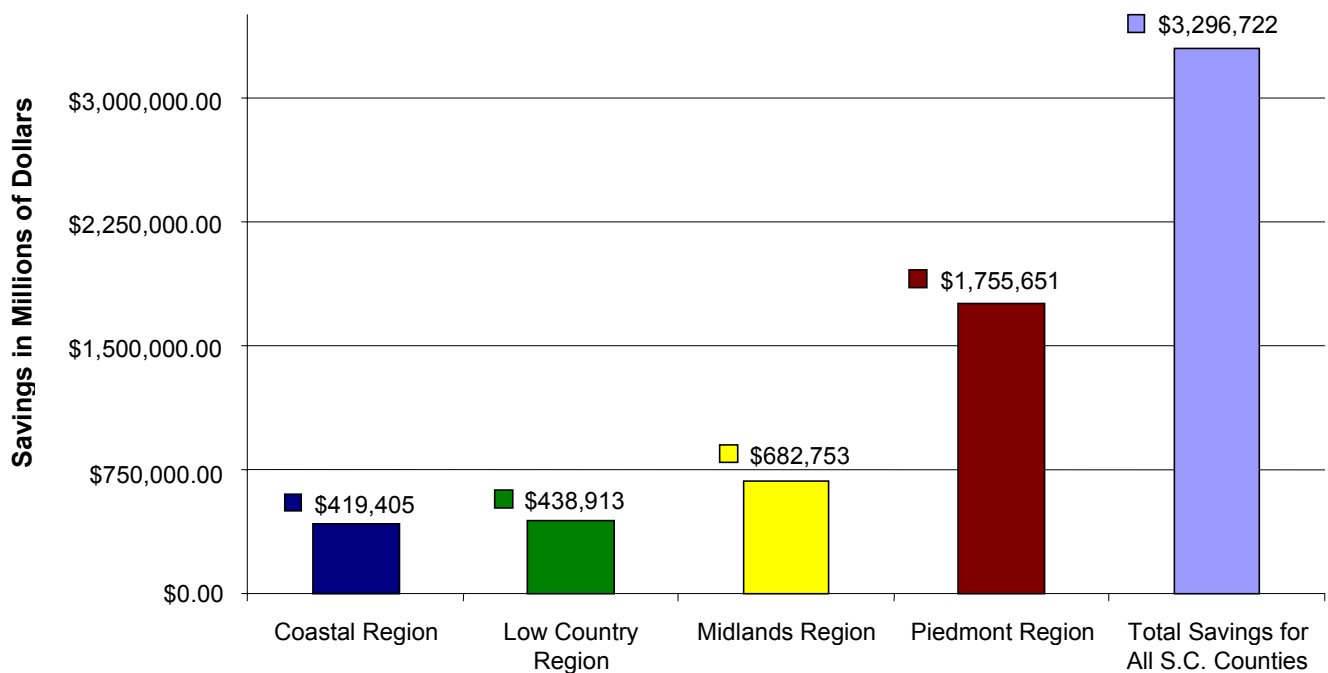
1. SCSDB's quality services help ensure that the state will bring in Medicaid funds for therapeutic and medical services. In FY04, these Medicaid funds totaled \$2.296 million.
2. The Walker Foundation, the school's fund-raising arm, provided grants totaling an average of \$1 million per year over the past three years to SCSDB. Examples of these grants include funding for student computer lab updates, an automated back-up system for the school's technology network, mini-grants for student-related projects to SCSDB faculty and staff applicants, and support of the Walker Hall renovation.

The savings accrued to South Carolina resulting from SCSDB enrolled services benefit each of South Carolina’s counties. These savings, which are grouped by SCSDB service region, are shown in the graph below. The percentages used to determine the dollar amounts for each service area are based on enrollment data taken from the SCSDB Summary of Services for 2003-2004. These percentages are attained by categorizing the 338 enrolled students in preschool – grade 12, based on their county of origin, and then compiling the total number of students served from each county into their designated service region. (The 64 enrolled postsecondary students were not included because they receive very limited or no Medicaid funded services from the school.)

Chart 3: Savings to South Carolina - Stemming from SCSDB Enrolled Student Services and The Walker Foundation

**Total FY04 Estimated Savings Gain Accrued to South Carolina Counties
Stemming from Enrolled Services and The Walker Foundation**

(Separated by SCSDB Service Region)



See Appendix 1 for explanation of Regions.

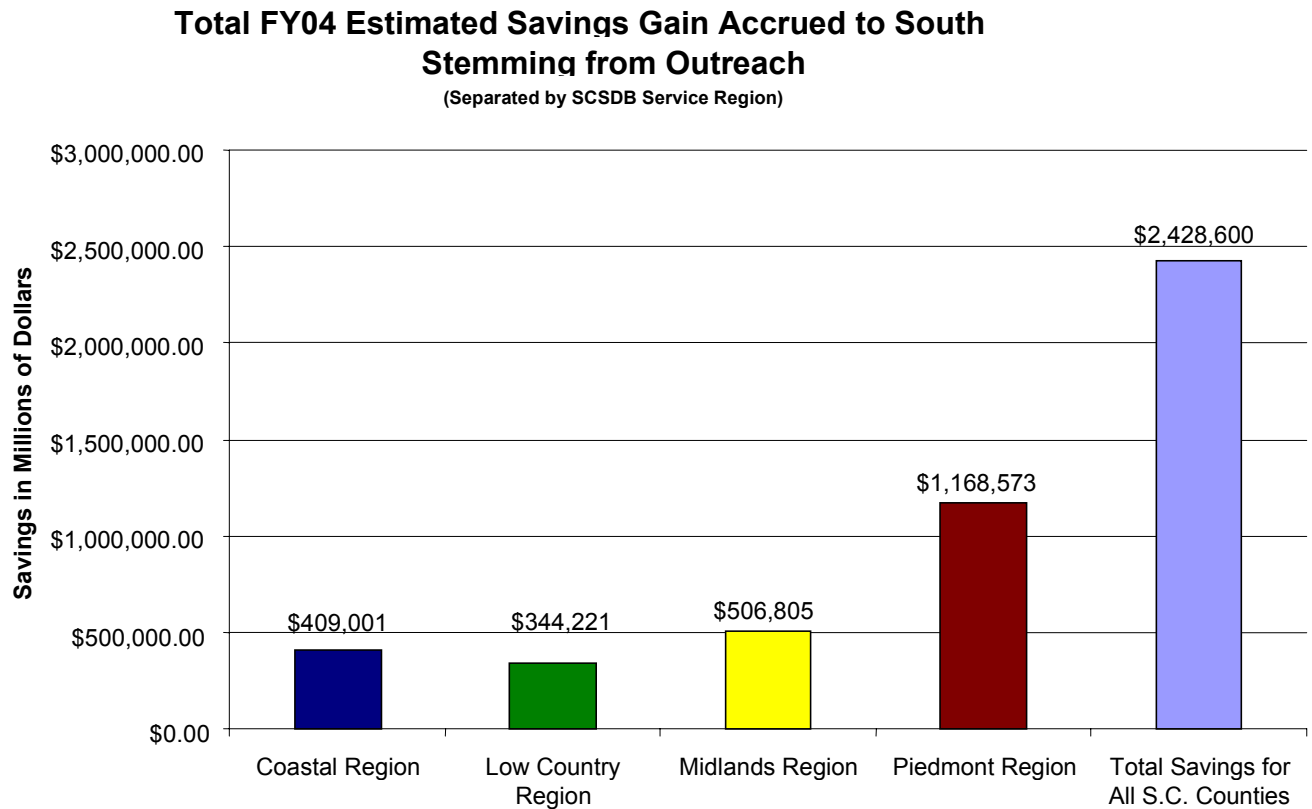
Savings Stemming From SCSDb Outreach Services

Significant **savings of more than \$2.4 million stem from outreach service offerings** in the following three forms:

1. SCSDb's outreach services in the form of SCSDb's provision of braille textbooks through the Braille Prison Project and the redistribution of unused braille and large print books for all schools save public school districts an estimated \$200,000 per year.
2. SCSDb saves South Carolina school districts training costs of approximately \$107,000 annually by providing free or minimally priced training for teachers.
3. SCSDb saves South Carolina \$2.12 million annually by providing teachers on contract to the majority of South Carolina public school districts. These teachers are able to meet the needs of multiple school districts' populations of deaf or blind students and prevent the districts from having to hire their own teachers. Estimated savings of \$2.12 million are based upon the following criteria:
 - SCSDb currently serves 414 students.
 - These 414 students are divided by an average ratio of eight students per teacher.
 - We assume 51 teachers could meet the needs for the whole state. This estimate is very conservative because we are assuming that we can group students into groups of eight, but in reality this would be very difficult because the students are spread randomly across the state's geographic makeup.
 - The salary is conservatively estimated for each of these 51 teachers at \$32,000 per year, and the fringe benefits are applied at 30 percent (\$9,600) of each teacher's total salary.

The savings accrued to South Carolina resulting from SCSDb outreach services benefit each of South Carolina's counties. These savings, which are grouped by SCSDb service region, are shown in the graph below. The percentages used to determine the dollar amounts for each service area are based on Outreach Services data from the SCSDb Summary of Services for 2003-2004. These percentages include all citizens helped through the following outreach services: Assessments, Vision Services to Public Schools and Agencies, Hearing Services to Public Schools and Agencies, Early Intervention Program, Educational Workshop/Program Participants, Sign Language Class Participants, Sign Language Interpreting Services, and Summer Programs. The percentages are attained by categorizing all citizens served by the above outreach programs, based on their county of origin, and then compiling the total number of citizens served from each county into their county's respective service region.

Chart 4: Savings to South Carolina - Stemming from SCSDB Outreach Services



See Appendix 1 for explanation of Regions.

SCSDB Promotes the Self-Sufficiency of South Carolina's Citizens Who Are Sensory Disabled

In addition to serving as a form of "insurance" for the state as it attempts to meet federal mandates, SCSDB's expertise in specialized service offerings for individuals who are deaf, blind, or multisensory disabled affords South Carolina the ability to efficiently educate and train the small segment of its population with special needs. As a result, the majority of these citizens can become self-sufficient, productive members of society.

Statistics from the government report *"The Survey of Income and Program Participation"* (SIPP)²⁰ show that people with disabilities are often associated with lower levels of income, which often leads to an increased likelihood of poverty and a higher dependency on welfare²¹. SCSDB is able to effectively and efficiently combat this impending poverty, and the welfare costs that are associated with it, by incorporating both a rigorous educational component and health and therapy services into the lives of the citizens it

serves. SCSDB's multifaceted educational program effectively prepares South Carolina's sensory disabled students to contribute to society as adults.

In FY04, SCSDB provided services to 402 students on campus in Spartanburg, to thousands of citizens through multiple outreach services, in addition to 412 children, aged birth-three, who were aided via Early Intervention (EI) programs. The EI programs teach parents skills for working with their child who is deaf and/or blind to develop necessary early childhood skills. The EI programs are significantly important in aiding in the personal development of special needs children because they enable the child to be more likely to succeed in the classroom and to be less likely to require government monies to meet his/her needs later in life. Research has proven that at-risk children (including students with disabilities) who are provided quality preschool and early childhood services are far more likely to become successful, productive adults.

An SCSDB education also provides a solid basis for approximately 80 percent of its sensory disabled graduates to become self-sufficient, tax-paying citizens, based on statistics gathered over a six-year period. For the small percentage of students who are unable to enter the workforce, an SCSDB education provides a great service to the citizen and financial benefit for the government, because the majority of students who meet their Individualized Education Program (IEP) objectives are able to care for their own basic needs, thereby frequently preventing them from having to enter a subsidized living facility. These measures of success are extremely significant when one notes that national statistics (taken from the 2004 *Annals of the Deaf*, Employment Report, Hartford, Connecticut and the National Federation of the Blind 2004 Employment Report, Baltimore, Maryland) regarding individuals who are deaf or blind report unemployment/underemployment rates of approximately 60 percent.

SCSDB's on-campus programs and staff are respected for excellence and innovation in education. SCSDB's extraordinary educational provision is best demonstrated by the following measures of success:

- ◆ Student dropout rate: 0.9 percent (retention rate: 99.1 percent)
- ◆ Students who meet their Individual Education Program (IEP) Objectives: 93 percent
- ◆ Graduates employed or enrolled in postsecondary programs: 78.2 percent

- ◆ SCSDB graduates have a higher successful placement rate at both one and two years out of school than South Carolina and national students with disabilities. (According to a 1995 study by the American Foundation for the Blind, the estimated percentage of blind and visually impaired people ages 18-54 who are employed is 30 percent)
- ◆ SCSDB achieves tremendous success (i.e. Palmetto Gold School Award recipient three years in a row: 2002 - 2004) as an educational provider in spite of the fact that the student population is 100 percent disabled with 85 percent eligible for Medicaid and free/reduced price lunches.

Clearly, SCSDB provides benefits that aid South Carolina by helping to meet federal mandates and maintain federal funding. In addition to this key function, the school also helps increase the self-sufficiency of the state's sensory disabled population, thereby increasing taxable income and reducing the state's necessary expenditures for welfare, living assistance and incarceration. **SCSDB's high** placement rates for its graduating students support the assumption that the school **contributes** to South Carolina **in the form of money that is saved through the increased self-sufficiency of its graduates.** The dollar basis for these savings is based on an average of four years (1999-2002) of SCSDB graduate data²² and the following three fiscal categories:

1. An estimated savings of \$20,600 per adult in annual income (based conservatively on pay of \$10 per hour) that would not be earned if the adult were not self-sufficient, can be contributed to their state and community;
2. An estimated savings of \$12,000 per employed adult based on the savings of *not* paying welfare to these individuals and their families;
3. An estimated annual savings of \$14,975 per self-sufficient adult that is *not* paid for incarceration.

The sum total of the above three savings categories is \$47,575 per year. This dollar amount is applied to the SCSDB data, which indicates that SCSDB averages 26.25 graduates per year, and that 79.55% of those graduates leave SCSDB as self-sufficient adults. Based on calculations stemming from this data, averaged over four years, it is reasonable to assume that **the annual savings due to increased self-sufficiency of SCSDB graduates is \$993,455.**

Cumulative Economic Savings Impact

All in all, SCSDB's economic impacts, in the form of savings that accrue to South Carolina communities, combine to represent a tremendous impact that cannot be ignored. This study estimates that **the economic savings impact** on behalf of South Carolina can be conservatively **estimated at more than \$121 million annually**.

CONCLUSION AND SUMMARY

South Carolina can and should be proud of the continued growth and outreach of SCSDB. SCSDB is the lead agency providing services for South Carolina citizens who are sensory disabled, is a leader in efficiently training teachers of children who are sensory disabled, and is a field-test site for testing new software that will be used to aid the sensory disabled population. The school works in collaboration with the SC DOE and its school districts to provide quality education to citizens who are deaf and blind and to protect and encourage federal funding. Because of its expertise in specialized service offerings for individuals who are deaf, blind, and sensory disabled, SCSDB affords South Carolina the ability to efficiently educate and train its special needs population thereby enabling them to become productive members of society.

This investigation into the economic impact of the South Carolina School for the Deaf and the Blind reveals that SCSDB has a very significant positive effect on the economy of South Carolina. South Carolina is fortunate to have a top-quality, specialized educational institution like SCSDB.

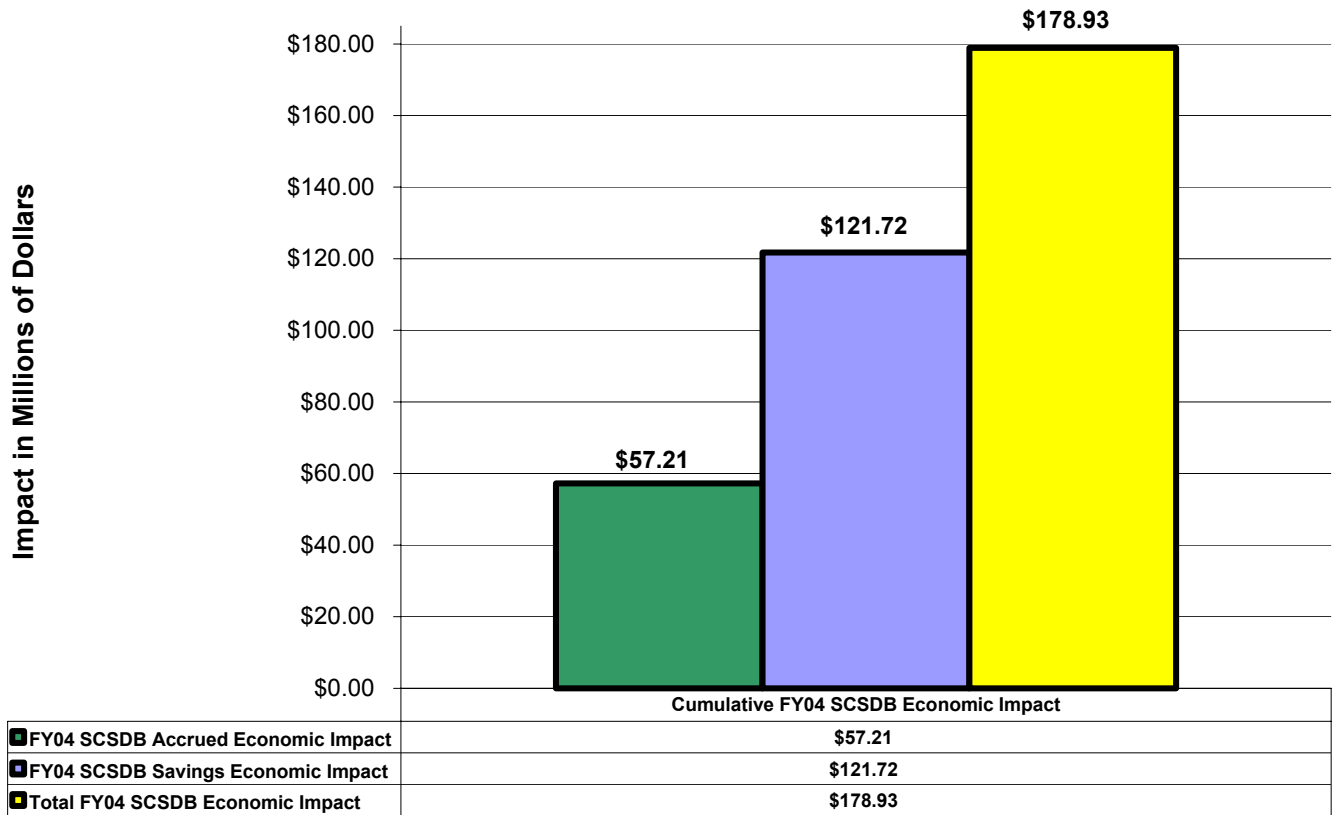
In considering the economic impact SCSDB has on South Carolina, it is important to recognize that:

1. SCSDB provides an **economic impact of \$57.21 million to the South Carolina economy in the form of money that is accrued** from direct expenditures, indirect and induced multiplier effect, and visitor and family expenditures; and
2. SCSDB provides an **economic impact of approximately \$121.72 million to the South Carolina economy in the form of savings**, or expenditures that were NOT incurred by South Carolina and its citizens, due to the efficiency with which SCSDB provides its much needed, specialized services.

Both forms of economic impact are extremely important, as they combine to produce **\$178.93 million in benefits that accrue to South Carolina**, and benefit each of the state's major regions. SCSDB provides opportunities for a significant segment of South Carolina's population. The South Carolina School for the Deaf and the Blind is a valuable and viable part of the community and has a very significant positive impact on the state! Clearly, SCSDB is deserving of strong support from both public and private organizations in the future.

Chart 5: FY04 SCSDB Cumulative Accrued and Savings Economic Impact

FY04 SCSDB Cumulative Economic Impact on South Carolina



APPENDIX 1: REGIONS USED WITHIN THIS STUDY REPRESENT THE COUNTIES SERVED BY EACH SCSDB REGIONAL OUTREACH CENTER.

Coastal Regional Outreach Center:

Chesterfield
Clarendon
Darlington
Dillon
Florence
Georgetown
Horry
Lee
Marion
Marlboro
Sumter
Williamsburg

Midlands Regional Outreach Center:

Aiken
Bamberg
Barnwell
Calhoun
Chester
Fairfield
Kershaw
Lancaster
Lexington
Orangeburg
Richland
York

Low Country Regional Outreach Center:

Allendale
Beaufort
Berkeley
Charleston
Colleton
Dorchester
Hampton
Jasper

Piedmont Regional Outreach Center:

Abbeville
Anderson
Cherokee
Edgefield
Greenville
Greenwood
Laurens
McCormick
Newberry
Oconee
Pickens
Saluda
Spartanburg
Union

APPENDIX 2: METHODOLOGY

A number of models have been utilized over the years to measure economic impact of an educational institution on its community. The economic impact findings contained in this study for the South Carolina School for the Deaf and the Blind on its service area result from standard measurement tools and documented statistics applied by independent professionals at the firm of Omega Associates, LLC. The quantitative assumptions are conservative. The analysis excludes increased values in quality of life factors and increased benefits that would likely accrue to society in general over a period of time. This one-year economic impact estimate may be compared to that of other public educational institutions.

The impact study begins by applying the American Council on Education impact model and the IM-PLAN® economic impact modeling system, both of which are used in many impact studies performed throughout the nation. The Strom Thurmond Institute at Clemson University and other independent economic analysts use traditional methods to measure direct and indirect impact and Omega Associates has adopted a similar approach as it quantifies the economic impact of educational organizations. In addition, estimates of Family and Visitor Expenditures are derived from national and local statistics, as well as from school data.

A KPMG Peat Marwick newsletter²³ noted that, in addition to easily quantifiable traditional measures, an educational institution provides its community with a rich variety of economic and social benefits that are difficult to quantify but are very significant. Benefits may include:

- ◆ Gains to “human capital,” measured by the increased earning potential of students and graduates;
- ◆ Generation of additional businesses, jobs, and tax revenues by expenditures directly or indirectly related to the school;
- ◆ Attraction of financial resources (tuition, grants, gifts) from outside the area;
- ◆ Provision of efficient services, facilities, and expertise to the community; and
- ◆ Benefits from savings and investments of the school and its related constituencies.

The original model for measuring the current dollar impact of an educational institution on a local area was a 1971 monograph by Caffrey and Isaacs²⁴, published by the American Council on Education,

entitled "Estimating the Impact of a College or University on the Local Economy." Economists across the U.S. adopted Caffrey and Isaac's approach for both professional and academic applications. Journals in regional economic science embraced the methodology as sound and reflecting the best theory of the day. Although the first publication was never revised, it has held its position as the definitive work on the subject.

Some changes have been suggested in the structure of the equation to reduce certain biases. For example, if jobs creation estimates are a goal, a researcher might modify employment estimates by the ratio of consumer price indexes. Or, a researcher might exclude multiplier estimates on school bank balances where there is a compensating balance requirement in effect to make the estimates more accurate. If estimates aim only for a macro snapshot of impact, they do not attempt such adjustments.

Other impact studies use different models. MGM²⁵ is a Money Generation Model developed by the National Park Service (NPS) for estimating the economic impacts of NPS visitor spending on a local region. MGM2 is a new version developed by researchers at Michigan State University to measure park economic benefits. Some studies emphasize impact over long periods of time²⁶ and, in the opinion of this writer, dilute the powerful statement of the impact in one fiscal year. One study²⁷ produced conclusions that were so difficult to interpret that the report results were never circulated to the public.

Researchers use the local economic impact analysis model (LOCI) to identify impact of new industries and calculate limits for incentives offered to attract new investments. William Riall²⁸ of the Georgia Institute of Technology indicates, in a personal note, that the LOCI model is not appropriate in kindergarten - grade 12 educational institution impact studies since it was "a tool developed originally to help cities and counties define the limits of incentive offers to prospective manufacturing operations." Riall recommended the "standard 'traditional' economic impact methodology that applies multipliers to your direct impacts" for an educational institution like the South Carolina School for the Deaf and the Blind.

IMPLAN^{®29} is an input-output economic impact model that is widely used in the United States. It is used to estimate the impact of many things including recreation, education, and tourism. The IMPLAN[®] model was tailored for the analysis of the economic impact of Clemson University and the University of

South Carolina System³⁰ and "every attempt was made to gauge the effects of the System with accuracy, using conservative estimates." It is the basic model used by Omega to determine the multiplier for this study as well.

In 1991 Ryan³¹ proposed a simpler model to understand the tangible impact of an educational institution on its community. Ryan modified the Caffrey-Isaacs model and the Ryan model has been adopted by numerous public and private educational institutions (e.g. Burlington County³² and El Paso County³³). The Ryan model is more efficient for small institutions because it relies on existing information that is likely to be available in the business and institutional research offices of many educational institutions. Aspects of the Ryan model are used in this study, and for this SCSDB study, information is from financial statements, enrollment and financial aid reports, other school records, and surveys of local officials and firms. Additionally, financial and economic data from federal, state, and local sources were utilized.

Using ideas and suggestions from economists and researchers at Clemson University, the University of South Carolina, Georgia Institute of Technology and other sources, Omega Associates developed a hybrid model to estimate annual economic impact of educational institutions on their communities. The model utilizes widely accepted traditional methodology plus non-traditional measures to assess annual values for the three major impactors estimated in the accrued economic impact section. Omega has applied this traditional model to a small private college in Gaffney, South Carolina³⁴ as well as to community colleges as small as Williamsburg Technical College³⁵ and as large as Greenville Technical College³⁶ or Pikes Peak Community College³⁷.

Lessons learned in those settings were adapted and customized to fit the particular character of the South Carolina School for the Deaf and the Blind and its service area. Whenever questions over magnitudes or relevance of particular items arose in the SCSDB analysis, conservative assumptions, values or decisions were intentionally utilized.

The approach used in this study is consistent with those discussed in a 1996 article in the *Chronicle of Higher Education*³⁸ and a 2004 article in *CASE Currents* that described the significant role of economic impact studies in "understanding and communicating [educational] institutions' roles as engines of

economic development."³⁹ One purpose of assessing the economic impact is to allow school officials to tell the "whole story" regarding the importance of the school so that the institution can attract more public appropriations and private contributions. In times of tight state budgets, the educational systems in South Carolina are encouraging individual institutions to emphasize the value of the state system through "champion" spokespersons.⁴⁰ This encouragement is increasingly being spread to all South Carolina educational institutions for which private fundraising is possible.

Positive results stemming from this economic impact study and other positive information may be disseminated via many avenues including: letters, brochures, media articles, editorials, and civic club presentations. The intent of this analysis is to tell the whole story of the value of SCSDB in the SCSDB service area. Additionally, the study's positive reports should encourage public and private constituents to invest their time, energy, and finances into the South Carolina School for the Deaf and the Blind.

APPENDIX 3: OMEGA CREDENTIALS

Overview: Omega Associates, LLC, specializes in producing Economic Impact Studies for colleges and other institutions. An Omega impact study quantifies the dollar value of an institution on its community, during a one-year timeframe, because of the presence of the institution being studied. A study measures multiple impactors, including direct, indirect, and visitor expenditures. Omega has a strong record of providing economic impact analyses services and products using a process that benefits institutional advancement, increases awareness of an institution's value, strengthens the case for support, and provides an excellent pre-campaign cultivation and community awareness activity. The final report increases the public visibility of the institution, greatly assists in its private fund-raising efforts, and provides justification for funding from state and local governments.

Personnel: Omega Associates LLC is a minority-owned, South Carolina-based company.

The Principal and President is Kay M. Payne. Kay is a retired educator who has a M.Ed. from Georgia Southern College and a B.A. from Columbia College. She is primarily responsible for Omega's strategic planning and financial administration.

Director of Project Coordination for Omega Associates is Janet Easterling. Janet graduated from Converse College with a degree in Business Management and an emphasis in Marketing and Organizational Management. She is completing a Master of Public Administration program through Clemson/USC at University Center Greenville and is active in the Upstate Center for Entrepreneurial Development. Janet joined Omega in the spring of 2002 and has completed economic impact studies for large and small institutions in several states. Prior to Omega, Janet gained broad professional experience in the telecommunications industry with NewSouth Communications where she held positions in financial analysis, market strategy, and product development.

Additionally, Omega utilizes the services of several individuals who are involved as consultants and add value stemming from backgrounds in education, fund-raising, and business.

Clients: Omega Associates is in the process of conducting, or has completed since 2002, an Economic Impact Study with the following Institutions:

- ◆ Aiken Technical College - SC
- ◆ Bob Jones University - SC
- ◆ Brunswick Community College - NC
- ◆ Greenville Technical College - SC
- ◆ Northeastern Technical College - SC
- ◆ Piedmont Technical College - SC
- ◆ Pikes Peak Community College - CO
- ◆ Savannah Technical College - GA
- ◆ Spartanburg Memorial Auditorium - SC
- ◆ Spartanburg Technical College - SC
- ◆ Wake Technical Community College - NC
- ◆ Williamsburg Technical College - SC

References at each institution can validate the success of their economic impact study process. Names and contact information are available upon request.

The Omega website is: www.omega-impact.com.

ENDNOTES

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