Our New Home
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We hope you are enjoying this wonderful spring in your schools and districts! This year has brought a renewed sense of purpose and mission for SCASA as we go through our own period of growth. As the voice and advocate of quality public education for all students, we strive to provide you with high-caliber professional development opportunities to take your leadership to the next level.

We’ve just had our first “move in” anniversary, and it is amazing to look back on all of the 75 roundtables, 46 leadership development workshops, and 4 seminars and 18 other events that we’ve held in our new home—hosting more than 1,000 different school leaders. Having a home of our own enables us to provide you with a level of service and stability that would otherwise be impossible.

The Center for Executive Education Leadership (CEEL) is thriving, as dedicated school leaders at every level work to develop and improve their leadership skills. This is the third year of our comprehensive educational leadership development program, and we could not be more proud of the results we’ve seen so far. From teacher-leaders, assistant principals, and principals to district-level administrators, CEEL participants are making an impact on students and teachers in this state. They are applying what they’ve learned to motivate their students, provide a supportive environment for their staff, and raise the profile of public education in South Carolina. The 2019–20 CEEL session offerings are available on page 27 of this magazine, and we hope you will join us in the coming year.

There are many successes to celebrate this year, but none more worthy than the work that South Carolina educators do every day. In that spirit, we were thrilled to add three new inductees into the South Carolina Educator Hall of Fame and honor the accomplishments of the 2019 class of Distinguished South Carolina Public School Graduates at our “Seasons of Love Gala: The Story Never Ends.” It was a wonderful event honoring the impact of public education, and I invite you to read more about our honorees on pages 32–33.

We appreciate your membership and your commitment to the children in South Carolina. As you read the articles written by your fellow members in this magazine, we hope you will apply some of the information to your daily work and take your leadership to the next level! We look forward to seeing you at the Innovative Ideas Institute (i3) in June where we’ll hear from our keynote speakers retired Army General Colin L. Powell, the Honorable Molly Spearman, Dr. Adolph Brown, and Dr. Luke Clamp!
SPECIAL THANKS

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Before opening in 2013, River Bluff High School (RBHS) was architecturally designed and academically planned for a flexible modular schedule. Instead of a traditional bell schedule, we wanted a new approach that provided space for students to develop skills such as time management, collaboration, and independent decision making. We wanted RBHS to be a place that empowered students and placed the leadership of learning into their hands. We wanted to create a true learning environment where time benefited both students and teachers.

So how did we go about implementing a flexible modular schedule and how has it affected our students and staff?

Research and Design
Early in 2011, a team of school leaders began identifying schools who scheduled differently. We discovered three schools that had years of experience in flexible scheduling and conducted site visits. These visits allowed leaders to speak with their staff to get ideas and strategic advice on how to implement our own flexible modular schedule.

After some months of research, we moved into the design phase, using a backwards design process beginning with the end in mind: our students. How did we envision students using this learning space? What culture did we want to cultivate? What was learning going to look like day-to-day? To help us work through all of the moving parts, we hired a consultant from Pearson who had experience with modular schedule design.

By early 2013, we created our first flexible modular schedule, or FLEX MOD as we call it. Now into year six and five iterations later, our 18–19 flexible modular schedule is the dynamic force that fuels equity at RBHS.

The FLEX MOD Schedule
RBHS’s FLEX MOD schedule consists of 25 modules (mods) of time comprised of either 10- or 30-minute mods. These 25 different mods allow us to create a flexible schedule with two phases—A and B—that occur simultaneously. During the A and B phases, students attend their academic classes, or what we call “Paths of Instruction.” Each Path of Instruction (1 credit) meets 210 minutes a week, but how often each Path of Instruction meets depends on which Phase it is in:
Each student enrolls in 7 out of 8 academic paths of instruction. The remaining mods of time within a student’s schedule that is not scheduled into face-to-face instruction is Independent Learning Time (ILT). C1 and C2 paths within the middle band of our schedule are where students meet in their grade level CREWs. The gray C phase in the center is for additional path balance, which provides the flexibility necessary for our A and B phases to work. The FLEX MOD schedule is a five-day cycle that repeats 36 times.
To get a better understanding of how the FLEX MOD schedule works, let’s take a look at Sam, a junior, as she goes through her weekly schedule.

Sam has no more than seven classes a day, and some days she has only five. At a minimum, Sam gets 45 minutes of Individualized Learning Time each day; other days she gets between 75–195 minutes. Overall, Sam gets 555 minutes of unstructured time to pursue her studies independently in any manner she chooses. During ILT, Sam can visit her available teachers for one-on-one and small group instruction. Often, you’ll find Sam in the Learning Commons working on a project with her classmates. Sam does not have a dedicated lunch time; instead, she chooses to eat her lunch during any of her ILT mods between 11:00 AM and 2:00 PM. She only hears two bells throughout her day: the morning 8:15 AM bell and the final 3:40 PM bell.

The FLEX MOD approach has fostered a number of benefits for both students and staff:

- Increased teacher-led collaborative planning time
- Exposure to post-secondary learning environments, including lectures, recitations, and student-led study groups
- Additional one-on-one time between teachers and students during the school day
- Enhanced student collaborative learning experiences
- Stronger peer-to-peer and peer-to-staff relationships because of regular CREW time
- Improved interventions and learning support for struggling learners
- Wider use of best practices and blended learning techniques
- Development of soft skills, including communication, organization, and time management
- Greater access to community resources during the school day

Our data and anecdotal evidence indicate that FLEX MOD works. RBHS has received an Excellent rating by the South Carolina Department of Education, and we were named a 2019 Palmetto’s Finest School, the state’s highest award given to schools. We’ve seen improvements in our student outcomes and increases in our graduation and AP enrollment rates. Our most recent graduates (our first class to graduate after four years at RBHS) report a high level of confidence in managing time in college and meeting with professors during office hours.

Walt Disney said, “Times and conditions change so rapidly that we must keep our aim constantly focused on the future.” The future is here at our school, and the flexible modular schedule has engaged our students and staff in a new direction.

I challenge you to rethink time and design schedules that create conditions to prepare students to manage time and engage with others. We welcome your visit to River Bluff to learn with us.

Dr. Lucas “Luke” Clamp
Dr. Clamp is the founding principal of River Bluff High School in Lexington, SC, which opened its doors to students and staff in 2013 as South Carolina’s first EL Education High School. With over 16 years of experience in public education, he was selected as 2018 South Carolina State Principal of the Year and 2019 NASSP National Principal of the Year. He is passionate about developing relationships with students and staff while creating conditions for all to become effective learners, ethical people, and contributors to a better world. Follow him on Twitter @LucasClamp.
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Broaching Teacher Recruitment and Retention Through Effective Leadership

By Dr. Kimberly Strike

Introduction

According to the US Department of Education National Center for Education Statistics, in fall 2016, approximately 76 million people were enrolled in American schools and colleges, 4.6 million people were employed as elementary and secondary school teachers or as college faculty, and professional, administrative, and support staff at educational institutions numbered 5.4 million employees (p. 53). These numbers reflected approximately 3.6 million full-time-equivalent (FTE) elementary and secondary school teachers engaged in classroom instruction, which is 1% lower than ten years earlier (fall 2006). Overall, total public school enrollment is expected to increase 2% between 2016 and 2026 (p. 53). The average salary for public school teachers in 2015–16 was $58,064 in current dollars (i.e., dollars that are not adjusted for inflation) which in constant (i.e., inflation-adjusted) dollars reflects the average salary for teachers was 1% lower in 2015–16 than in 1990–91 (p. 54). Statistics show while the vast majority of teachers remain at the same school (84.3%), 8.1% move into positions in different schools, and 7.7% leave the profession (p. 209).

According to the Center for Educator Recruitment, Retention and Advancement (CERRA), the average teacher salary in 2017–18 in South Carolina was $50,182 (CERRA website). The 2018–19 statistics show that South Carolina has lost 5,300 teachers this year, of which 35% had less than five years of experience and 13% had under a year (p. 6). Statistics show that 25% of the new teachers hired in 2017–18 left teaching in South Carolina public schools, and there are 7,600 openings (p. 7). By 2027–28 there is a projected shortage of 6,000 teachers, with math, science, special education, and social studies projected to be hardest hit. While the need is growing, a study through Winthrop University shows that there is a 32% drop in students who completed SC teacher preparatory programs since 2012–13 (p. 3).

While the national statistics are favorable with 84.3% of teachers remaining in their current schools, the reality is through mobility and attrition, leaders face changes within their faculty. With baby-boomer teachers retiring and fewer aspiring teachers entering or successfully completing teacher education programs, there is competition for quality educators at a national level.

Next Level Leadership to Broach Teacher Recruitment and Retention

The mission of Next Level Leadership is “to intentionally develop well informed, knowledgeable African American leaders for the purpose of leading our communities, cities and state into the future” (Next Level Leadership website, 2019). The call for Next Level Leadership within the education system is one of shared and distributed leadership. Through shared leadership, “Leadership process and its success is a product of leaders, observers, and the situations that these individuals take part in” (Spillane, 2005 as cited in Goksoy, 2016). It reflects the knowledge, skills, and interactions of various members with shared commitments, beliefs, and values. Working together, networking, and creating and sharing resources as a
community to meet the needs of the staff and students served is done by those sharing leadership within the district, school, home, and community.

The shared leadership theory can work in collaboration and not competition with distributed leadership. “Viewing leadership in terms of reciprocal, recursive influence processes among multiple leaders is different from studying unidirectional effects of a single leader on subordinates” (Yukl and Gardner, 2020, p. 188). Distributed leadership is not delegation of work, but “collective work as well as collective learning by working on goals through communication and interaction is prominent, rather than individual work” (Halverson, 2007 as cited in Goksoy, 2016). An example of distributed leadership is building capacity of one teacher by another (Copeland, 2003 as cited in Goksoy, 2016). Support, through mentoring and coaching in particular, are ways to identify and develop skills in prospective, new, or novice teachers.

Collaboration with State Agencies, Universities and Colleges
State agencies working in collaboration with colleges and universities can hold the key to expanding options for teacher recruitment. Alternative certification that adheres to high standards and provides foundational methodology courses and use of portfolio proficiency and documented successful experience taking the place of high-stakes examinations that prove culturally biased and difficult for some to pass are considerations to entertain before the field of education reaches a level of crisis.

In addition, state agencies and school districts can work with colleges and universities to create or strengthen first-year success, retention for at-risk students to continue their educational journey, provide language and writing supports, and develop and strengthen ongoing mentoring to support the student throughout his/her program for successful completion. Social media and apps such as Zoom, Collaborate, or Skype provide the ability for those in the field to be matched with those aspiring. These apps provide flexibility with scheduling and take away geographic and other inhibitors.

Teacher retention can be strengthened through partnerships with colleges and universities through continuous education experiences, specific to degrees and certifications, to move teachers in a forward direction with their career pathways. Reduced tuition or other creative partnerships can assist with the financial costs often incurred by teachers. Additionally, specific trainings meaningful to teachers’ classroom needs or providing technological updates can take away some of the anxiety or frustration felt by teachers placed in situations where they are ill-prepared, under-prepared, or mismatched to their areas of preparation. Free, reduced, or peer trainings can assist with financial costs often incurred by teachers.

District Leadership and Teacher Recruitment and Retention
Specific to Next Level Leadership and teacher retention, “…Heavy workloads that require far more than 40 hours per week, a teach-to-the-test culture, and lack of support from bosses and parents are driving SC teachers away in record numbers” reports Self (2018) in a recent newspaper article. In looking at these reasons through a critical eye, it seems district leadership has the ability to change these current realities. Workload, culture, and support are all feasible demands that can be modified through behavior, practices, and policies of a district.
Specific to Next Level Leadership, teacher recruitment efforts can be increased by exploring interests of students in middle school and high school; collaborating with area community and four-year colleges and universities to earn college credit or obtain teacher assistant certification while in high school; setting up daycare programs; and providing tutoring sessions to scaffold potential teachers to pass basic skills exams necessary for pursuit of a career in education.

Building Leadership

“A particularly noteworthy finding is the empirical link between school leadership and improved student achievement” (Wallace Foundation, 2011, p. 6). “Leadership is second only to classroom instruction among all school-related factors that contribute to what students learn at school” (NASSP, 2013, p. 5). Findings such as these affirm and support the importance of building level leadership. What’s interesting is the focus on leadership and then effects on student learning, but what’s missing is the meat—the instruction—the teachers!

How the instructional leader leads is key to student success and impacts teacher retention. The demands on administrators and teachers alike have compounded over the years, and time is a treasured commodity. Collaborative efforts to create simple goals with a specific destination and short, direct pathway to them keep people from floundering in complexity or uncertainty. Along this same vein, the effective use of data is expected, yet teacher preparation programs typically have one general course on assessment; therefore, most learning specific to data takes place on-the-job, and during the first year/s in the classroom. Providing support through building-wide, department, or grade-level learning communities; mentoring sessions; and development of individual professional goal-setting are ways building leaders can support growth of current team members.

Workload and school culture are two additional areas of focus for teacher retention. These areas are feasible for building leadership to address through behavior, practices, and policies within the building. For example, tapping into the same teachers because they can ‘handle’ difficult students, or their schedules are easiest to modify when the list of substitutes has been depleted, are workload related, as well as having an effect on morale. They remain accountable to the students on their caseloads, and if in a district where accountability comes down to results on high-stakes tests, yet they are repeatedly pulled from their assignment or their duties are modified, they cannot produce the required expectations. Advocating and decision-making from the building level leadership does have an impact.

Teacher recruitment can be encouraged through accessibility and opportunity. Students in middle and high school or local colleges and universities who have expressed an interest in pursuing a career in education may be brought on as after-school tutors, in-class reading buddies, library assistants, summer school volunteers, playground or intramural sports assistants, or other creative areas (in compliance with laws and policies, of course). Exposure to and interaction with students of various ages can help focus an interested recruit.

Specific to Next Level Leadership, learning leadership skills is beneficial, but learning how to apply them for the good of the whole will create sustainable results. Landing a first job as an administrator or in leadership is one thing, but creating a culture of trust, mutual respect, and
collaboration to reach co-created goals fosters empowerment, improvement, and results.

**Classroom (Teacher) Leadership**
Teacher leadership encompasses targeted professional engagement to build critical competencies, build capacity in self and others, hone skills specific to instructional leadership, and serve as an advocate (Strike, Fitzsimmons & Hornberger, 2019). Teacher leaders bring a level of special knowledge about teaching, and do so outside the line of authority with the goal of promoting trust between teachers and (instructional) leaders (Mangin and Stoelinga, 2008, p. 1).

Specific to teacher retention, “Instructional teacher leadership roles can facilitate instructional improvement by providing teachers with effective professional development – sustained, supported and school-embedded opportunities to learn about the core technologies of teaching” (Mangin and Stoelinga, 2008, p. 3; Cohen & Hill, 2001; Hallman, Wenzel & Fendt, 2004; Hawley & Valli, 1999).

Through identification of knowledge, skills, dispositions, and practices of teacher leaders, the understanding of those serving in this capacity, how to engage and support them, how to challenge them and provide them voice, and how to share leadership with them in collaboration rather than competition come to light. In accordance with Next Level Leadership, teacher leadership highlights the ideal lattice vs. ladder approach to career pathways, with the ability to move forward, backward, or parallel without judgment or penalty as district, school, family, and self needs are addressed.

**Conclusion**
Effective leaders can broach teacher recruitment and retention by listening to needs, remaining resourceful, and adapting. Teacher retention can be broached by addressing workload, culture, and support through modification of behavior, practices, and policies of a district. Teacher retention can be strengthened through partnerships with colleges and universities and focusing on shared or distributed leadership with teacher leaders valued, leaned on, and effectively used.

State agencies working in collaboration with colleges and universities can hold the key to expanding options for teacher recruitment. Teacher recruitment can be encouraged through accessibility and opportunity, and efforts can be increased by exploring interests of students in middle school and high school; collaborating with area community and four-year colleges and universities to earn college credit or obtain teacher assistant certification while in high school; setting up daycare programs; and providing tutoring sessions to scaffold potential teachers to pass basic skills exams necessary for pursuit of a career in education.

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The Principal’s Role in Professional Learning

By Andrea Fulmer

Learning Forward, formerly known as the National Staff Development Council or NCSD, revised and updated NSDC’s standards into seven standards for professional learning. Learning Forward’s seven standards were learning communities, leadership, resources, data, learning designs, implementation, and outcomes. The first standard of learning communities allowed educators to increase their effectiveness and improve student achievement when the learning communities were devoted “to continuous improvement, collective responsibility, and goal alignment” (Learning Forward, 2015, p. 2). These learning communities were also noted as critical to improving teaching and student learning by a number of others, including Danielson (2007, 2014) who included being part of a professional community as one professional responsibility of teachers and DuFour (2006) who has contributed much research and writing to the field of education through his work on professional learning communities. As the principal, or instructional leader of the school, developing teacher skills in professional learning communities is an integral part of the job.

The second standard was leadership, which indicated that school leaders, principals in particular, must be able to build capacity in others while advocating and creating systems that supported professional learning (Learning Forward, 2015). As Cisler and Bruce (2013) pointed out, one responsibility of the leadership of a school was to manage varied personnel, including but not limited to teachers, counselors, media specialist, and custodial staff, in order to create a culture for learning. Notman and Henry (2011) contended that for school leaders to be successful in their endeavors to build capacity in others while supporting professional learning three leadership factors must be present; collaborative, contingent, and intrapersonal leadership. Collaborative leadership provided for teacher and stakeholder buy-in; contingent leadership addressed factors and areas of concern outside of the school; and intrapersonal leadership was the principal’s view of taking care of his own mental and physical well-being (Notman & Henry, 2011). Hargreaves (2007) stated that the principal created sustainable leadership by analyzing the past, keeping what was worthwhile and valuable, and using it to build a better future. In addition to looking inward for support, Fullan (2008) suggested that principals form partnerships with stakeholders in order to create a more continuous cycle of improvement. Leadership reached the understanding that making decisions was now a team process, and “all decisions are interdependent” (Leech & Fulton, 2008, p. 630). Therefore, leadership of the school, commonly a principal, was to not only build his own knowledge and skills but also the knowledge and skills of his staff through professional learning.

In order for effectiveness of educators to be increased, resources must be prioritized, monitored, and coordinated for professional learning to occur. Resources included people, materials, time, and training (Learning Forward, 2015). As Daresh (2006) pointed out, principals were resourceful, not allowing funding, or the lack thereof, to diminish the school climate or student success. Being resourceful meant using all resources well, especially human resources—for example, being sure teachers and staff are in the right place for the maximum benefit of student learning. Based on
experiences, some teachers are a better fit in one grade level than another. In the 21st century, principals were now called upon to use technology as a resource to better ensure learning for all (Garland, 2009). Many schools today have one-to-one technology or close to one-to-one, which has created a new dimension for some school leaders. In order to take their school to the next level, school leaders should use technologies such as smart phones, tablets, netbooks, and laptops, each representing a different and unique set of resources available to students and teachers (Garland, 2009). On a much more basic level, principals must work to protect the resource of time. Teachers need time to collaborate. Common planning times must be integrated into the master schedule, a responsibility the principal must either handle directly or delegate responsibly.

Learning Forward’s (2015) fourth standard was data. With professional learning, data came from a variety of data sources, including data on students, teachers, and the school. The myriad of data was used to “plan, assess, and evaluate professional learning” (Learning Forward, p. 3). Student achievement and improvement in learning and teaching were data-driven in order for teachers to reflect honestly on the needs of their students, and ways to meet those needs (Hargreaves, 2009). This standard goes back in some ways to PLCs, which provide teachers an opportunity to collaborate to best meet the needs of their students. Fellow educators are often the best resource available. They know what has worked in similar situations, as well as what has not worked.

Their fifth standard focused on learning designs, which means that professional learning design should be derived from a combination of theories and research on learning and teaching (Learning Forward, 2015). This combination led to the desired results of improved instruction and improved student achievement. Thus, the school leader understood that building on the past; theories, experiences, and knowledge; and embracing the future led to improved teaching and student achievement (Hargreaves, 2007). Professional learning design became embedded in the daily routines of schools, such as the PLCs (DuFour, 2004). Davis and Leon (2011) reminded school leaders that teachers were adult learners. So the theories of adult learning, also known as andragogy, meant teachers were internally motivated, self-directed, and centered on real-world applications. Knowing that teachers, as adult learners, are centered on real-world application indicates to the principal or school leader that professional learning must be readily applicable in the teachers’ current situation.

Learning Forward’s sixth standard was implementation, which means the actual carrying out new learning in one’s own classroom. Implementation, according to Learning Forward (2015), “applies research on change and sustains support . . . for long-term change” (p. 3). As Davis and Leon (2011) pointed out, implementation was change over time, which meant teachers learn and then apply new skills and knowledge to replace older skills and knowledge. Furthermore, implementation of professional learning was the result of adults, in this case teachers, moving along a learning continuum at a pace that matched their own skill, comfort, and contextual levels (Davis & Leon, 2011). Hall and Hord (2011) reminded educators the implementation standard’s purpose was to ensure the implementation of professional learning be addressed and evaluated. As Guskey and Yoon (2009) pointed out, a positive relationship between improved student learning and professional learning occurred when teachers learned in
a format similar to a workshop, but with research-based practice, active learning, and opportunity to adapt learning to their individual teaching situation. Guskey and Yoon (2009) also reminded educators that implementation begins with a small-scale study to verify effectiveness of the practice.

The final standard was outcomes, which combined teacher learning and student achievement resulting in improvement for both (Learning Forward, 2015). Mizell (2010) reminded educators that professional learning, or professional development, was the only strategy available to schools to improve outcomes for both students and teachers. In addition, Mizell (2010) succinctly pointed out that the professional learning must be effective or targeted on the skills necessary for the teacher to meet students’ needs. Most schools and school systems focused on the outcome of increased student achievement, while acknowledging that teachers acquire new knowledge and skills and implement that new knowledge and those new skills (Mizell, 2010). Outcomes were also the focus of professional learning communities (DuFour, 2004; DuFour et al., 2006). With a focus on outcomes or results, Learning Forward helped to progress the professional learning and its implementation to new levels.

Andrea Fulmer
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References


DuFour, R. (2004). What is a “professional learning community?” Educational Leadership, 6(8), 6–11.


As a school principal in South Carolina, it was a joy to provide extra care to my kindergarten students. Staff members and I provided our kindergarteners with extra attention and extra support. We listened to their soft voices and treated them as if they were the best students of the school and the world. Though this brought us great joy, we also knew that the future success of our school hinged on their success as newcomers; so it is with the new teachers in our South Carolina schools. Yes, new teachers are newcomers, but more importantly, they are great assets in all of our school districts. As hard as new teachers are to find, I encourage you to take care of them because they are definitely easier to lose!

Winning companies win because they have good leaders who nurture the development of other leaders at all levels of the organization (Tichy, 2004). In education, the first-year teacher is the potential leader and requires the most nurturing and development. Despite this reality, teaching has been one of the few careers in which newly trained practitioners are expected to begin the first day on the job being able to do all the things more experienced teachers are required to do. New teachers are expected to carry out all responsibilities and know all the procedures from the first day they step into the classroom (Renard, 2003). According to the National Commission on Teaching and America’s Future (2003), great teachers have a deep understanding of the subjects they teach. Great teachers work with a firm conviction that all children can learn. Great teachers know and use teaching skills and a complete arsenal of assessment strategies to diagnose and respond to individual learning needs. Great teachers also know how to use the Internet and modern technology to support their students’ mastery of content. They are eager to collaborate with colleagues, parents, community members, and other educators. They are active learners themselves, cultivating their own professional growth throughout their careers. Unfortunately, new teachers are exiting the profession at alarming rates, thus diminishing the next generation of great teachers and the possibility of adding positive leadership to schools and the community.

A six-month study was conducted in a South Carolina school district of approximately 500 certified teachers and 7,200 students. During this study, new teachers, new teacher’s mentors, and principals provided data through surveys and focus group interviews. Results from surveys and focus group interviews revealed a direct correlation between the district’s 92 percent new teacher retention rate and the effectiveness of the district’s New Teacher Induction Program. The study revealed the following reasons why new teachers leave:

- Lack of support
- Inadequate amounts or quality of professional development
- Minimal helpful feedback on performance that supports improvement
- Acute feelings of isolation from colleagues

(Headden, 2014)

Though these reasons are well known, the school principal has the influence to combat each of them. Research from this study revealed that effective leadership existed within the district’s new teacher induction program. In this South Carolina school district, the induction program’s coordinator, all new teacher mentors, all principals of new teachers, all district staff, and the district superintendent are expected to play vital roles in supporting new teachers. During interviews, new teachers, mentors, and the principal contributed a large portion of the program’s success to the effective leadership of the program coordinator. New teachers commented, “Whenever you needed her, she was...
always available.” Another new teacher stated, “She was phenomenal—any question, of any kind, she has been there for all of us, and she is great.” In addition, survey and focus group interviews revealed that new teachers perceived their principals, district staff, and the district superintendent in a very positive light. New teachers described their principals, district staff, and superintendent as being very personal, approachable, and helpful.

According to Learning Policy Institute, “The Role of Principals in Addressing Teacher Shortages” (February 2017), teachers identified the quality of administrative support as a key factor in decisions to leave a school. In addition, teachers point to the importance of school culture and collegial relationships, time for collaboration, and decision-making input as areas in which the principal plays a central role. Principals tend to be weaker in high-poverty, low-achieving schools, where principal quality can have an even greater bearing on teacher attrition.

In conclusion, effective school leaders were also

- effective school managers who ensured teachers have resources, communication processes, and budgets;
- effective instructional leaders who strategically hired teachers and staff and provided fair and regular teacher evaluations; and
- inclusive decision makers who listened to teachers’ ideas, included them in any school changes, and allowed independence in their classrooms as needed.

**Why Do Teachers Leave?**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reason</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Personal life reasons (pregnancy, child care, other)</td>
<td>37%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pursue a different position</td>
<td>28%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dissatisfied with school assessment/accountability policies</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dissatisfied with administration</td>
<td>21%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dissatisfied with teaching as a career</td>
<td>21%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Too many classroom intrusions</td>
<td>18%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student discipline problems</td>
<td>17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dissatisfied with support for student assessment</td>
<td>17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of autonomy</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Want or need higher salary</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of influence over school policies</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enrolled in courses to improve career opportunities</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dissatisfied with job assignment</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moved or geography issues</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The percentage of voluntary leavers who rated the factor as extremely or very important in their decision to leave. Percentages do not add to 100 because teachers can select multiple factors.

Source: LPI analysis of the Teacher Follow-Up Survey (TFS), 2013, from the Schools and Staffing Surveys, National Center for Education Statistics.
New teachers who have support through effective mentoring programs are more likely to remain in education. Teachers are leaving the classroom to pursue outside endeavors or other positions in the field. The loss of teachers may be having an impact on students and school performance. Building a sense of community and continuity in schools and programs for retaining quality beginning teachers are necessary to promote an effective learning environment and school culture (McLaurin, Smith, & Smillie, 2009).

Ingersoll and Strong (2011) state that the overall goals of teacher-induction programs are to improve the performance and retention of beginning teachers. Induction programs are going to differ in intensity, length, mentor-beginning teacher relationships, assignments, impact on student achievement, and cost of program implementation and sustainability over time. However, induction programs are essential components in the process of teacher development.

Britton, Paine, Raizen, and Pimm (2003) reported that the hallmark of effective schools is a sense of community, continuity, and coherence. Working together should be a natural instinct of people, because people crave connection. New teachers, especially, want more than a job; they want hope. New teachers want to contribute to a group, make a difference, be a part of a team, a culture, and a part of the district’s “family” on the first day they join a community of learners (Britton, Paine, Raizen, & Pimm, 2003).

As children, teenagers, and college students, they dreamed of becoming teachers and making a difference. Now, within their first five years of teaching, many are continuing to look for the exit signs of the profession. Unfortunately, there appears to be no single solution to this problem. However, effective new teacher induction programs and support from principals and district leaders have proven to be a significant part of the solution. With a personal commitment to giving new teachers what they need, school and districts leaders have the ability to impress upon their new teacher’s reality that they are valuable assets and needed members of their schools and communities. As a result, new teachers will stay in the profession, and more importantly, new teachers will stay in their school districts.

After reviewing this study, there were essential lessons to be learned. One, every new teacher has a desire to feel connected. New teachers are just like the new student that has been transferred in the middle of the year into your school. They must be welcomed and embraced by the principal and all school stakeholders.

Secondly, every new teacher has a desire to feel valued. As the school leader, validating the new teacher’s idea or publicly celebrating a positive that you observed in the new teacher’s classroom can do wonders!

Thirdly, every new teacher has a desire to feel accepted. New teachers want more than a team jersey or school jersey; they want an opportunity to make the winning basket. As the school leader, set up opportunities for your new teachers to know that the school is counting on them to come through for the team; and more times than a few, they will.

What is the point of going through the long days and nights of seeking a diamond if we are not going to take care of it once we find it? As school leaders, this does not have to be our experience. Let us take the next level of leadership by making a greater difference in the lives
of our new teachers. If the teacher shortage in our state continues, let us make sure that we are not contributing to it. Instead, let us take care of our new teachers; let us treasure our diamonds, one day, one classroom visit, one nod of affirmation, at a time! If not, we will reluctantly join in the experience that “New Teachers Are Hard to Find, But Easy to Lose!”

References


South Carolina Teaching Standards 4.0 Rubric: Not Just Another Evaluation Instrument
Being Leaders That Develop Leaders

By Jamie Thompkins

Evaluation ... we hear the word, and many of us cringe. Whether it’s something that we have done to us, or something that we are doing to others, most people do not feel comfortable at the mention of the word. As a former South Carolina teacher, I have seen the evaluation pendulum swing back and forth through the years, and though I kept every single one of those evaluations, I can say that there was very little opportunity for professional growth from the feedback that I received. That is not to say that my administrators did not do their job. In fact, they did what they were supposed to do: they observed me once or twice a year, went through the motions of sharing that evaluation, and that was the end. Growth? Feedback? Like many other teachers, I filed my “yearly or bi-yearly evaluation” away in my professional file. But ... did it help me grow as a professional? Did the APT, or the Performance for Effective Teaching model (PET), or the ADEPT, and the Expanded ADEPT models truly help me to examine, reflect upon, and develop my teaching strategies and methods? Did I walk away thinking about how I could become an even more effective teacher?

The state of South Carolina has adopted as its evaluation instrument the South Carolina Teaching Standards (SCTS) 4.0 Rubric. Divided into four domains and numerous indicators, this instrument organizes indicators into Professionalism, Planning, Instruction, and Environment. Quite simply, SCTS 4.0 provides a detailed prescription for what powerful teaching looks like in the classroom. I have used the word evaluation freely, but the SCTS Rubric is much more than an evaluation tool. It is such a powerful picture of professional practice that it should cause a paradigm shift across the state. This
rubric should represent the norm for teaching across the state.

Here is where we as evaluators and administrators have the opportunity to help teachers to fine-tune their teaching. We want to affirm the things that teachers are doing well in their classroom, and we want to help them to refine areas of weakness. The rubric provides a lens through which we may observe effective as well as ineffective teaching. Yes, we must evaluate our educators, but must there be the intimidation and the pit-in-the-bottom-of-the-stomach feeling when we mention this process? Absolutely not. If our staff is following the rubric and adopting the teaching as a common understanding of effective teaching, then everyone is on the same page. Basically, we are giving everyone the rules to play by so there is no question what the expectation should be. We work through these areas with our teachers and support them in order that they may continue to grow as educators throughout the year.

In order for teachers to adopt this common language, the process must start at the top. Do you want rock solid teachers in your building? Do you wish to see students engaged in their learning? If you haven’t taken this new rubric to heart, now is the time. Think about how you feel going into classrooms where you are continuously being called to address misbehaviors and where students are bored and ‘don’t have enough to do.' It gets old, doesn’t it? Classrooms that are paced appropriately are those that provide meaningful and relevant learning opportunities for all students, afford collaborative opportunities, offer differentiated instructional methods and strategies, and include time for students to talk about and reflect upon their learning. Wouldn’t we be more productive as administrators and wouldn’t our teachers be more productive if we all had a collective understanding of teaching and learning expectations?

Continue to consider classrooms where students are taught to think and problem solve in a variety of ways where they must “analyze problems from multiple perspectives” and “justify solutions and create and design.” Consider classrooms where teaching is for depth of knowledge and not just scratching the surface. If you haven’t embraced this instrument for what it is worth, I challenge you to unpack the indicators and
begin having discussions of how this instrument will best serve you and your teachers.

The SCTS 4.0 Rubric is a solid instrument that can provide effectual staff development opportunities. Beginning a new school year with Professional Learning Teams or staff meetings centering on the indicators within each domain will bring a common language to your faculty and will provide you with insight into your teachers’ practices as you do walk-throughs or evaluations. When the administrative team is on-board with the rubric and with the process of conferencing and observing teachers, this will make the transition across the school much easier. As previously stated, it is often difficult for some to hold “those” conferences with teachers. However, as administrators and evaluators become more comfortable orchestrating pre- and post-conferences, they will be better prepared to highlight the areas of reinforcement and refinement without the air of condemnation attached. Practice. It takes practice.

As a state, it is our goal to develop and retain strong teachers who develop and produce strong students. Just look at the Profile of the South Carolina Graduate. We are expected to turn out students who are “critical thinkers and problem solvers, who collaborate with team members, who are creative and innovative, and students who know how to learn.” Take the SCTS 4.0 Rubric and side-by-side the two documents. The distinctive features of the Profile of the South Carolina Graduate are embedded into the SCTS Rubric and provide a connectivity across the four domains.

If we truly wish for our students to show academic growth across the state, we will embrace this rubric and use it not only for evaluative purposes but also for the professional instrument it is. When we internalize the instructional practices as well as the domains of planning, professionalism, and environment, then we will all become the reflective practitioners we should be, and that, in turn, will grow students who are reflective learners as well. It’s a win-win situation.

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[https://ed.sc.gov/educators/educator-effectiveness/south-carolina-teaching-standards-4-0/](https://ed.sc.gov/educators/educator-effectiveness/south-carolina-teaching-standards-4-0/)

Jamie Thompkins
Director of PADEPP / ADEPT Facilitator
Georgetown County Schools
Center for Executive Education Leadership
2019–20 Workshops

Aspiring Leaders

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Session Title</th>
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<tr>
<td>How Can I Know If School Leadership Is Right for Me?</td>
<td>7/16/2019</td>
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<tr>
<td>Handling Difficult Conversations</td>
<td>7/24/2019</td>
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<tr>
<td>Preparing for the Role of School Leader</td>
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Assistant Principal Foundations: for early-career assistant principals

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<td>Introduction to the Role/Responsibilities of the AP</td>
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<td>10/9/2019</td>
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<tr>
<td>Classroom Management and Parent Communication</td>
<td>1/8/2020</td>
<td>2/5/2020</td>
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<tr>
<td>Key Transitions: Classroom to School Leadership</td>
<td>3/4/2020</td>
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Aspiring Principals: for assistant principals with 3+ years of experience

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<tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Planning and Data-Driven Decision Making</td>
<td>10/10/2019</td>
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<tr>
<td>Three Levels of Finance and Budget Basics</td>
<td>11/19/2019</td>
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<td>So You’re a Principal: Now What?</td>
<td>1/23/2020</td>
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<td>Recruiting and Selecting Your Team</td>
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<td>Fundamentals of Strategic Planning</td>
<td>10/29/2019</td>
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<td>Art of Effective Communication</td>
<td>2/19/2020</td>
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<td>Balancing Priorities</td>
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Principals

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<td>Developing the Resilience You Need to Succeed</td>
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<td>Relational Leadership</td>
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<td>Having the Courage to Lead</td>
<td>10/16/2019</td>
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<td>Productive Conflict</td>
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<td>Leading When Overwhelmed and Pressured</td>
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District Level Leaders

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<tr>
<td>The Art of Influencing Others</td>
<td>11/13/2019</td>
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<tr>
<td>Preparing for the Role of the Superintendent</td>
<td>2/27/2020</td>
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<td>Transformational Leadership</td>
<td>11/19/2019</td>
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<tr>
<td>Leading the Unleadable: Book Study</td>
<td>1/9/2019</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moral and Ethical Leadership</td>
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R.E.S.E.T: Using Social Emotional Learning to Cultivate Academic and Behavioral Success

By Kimberly Suber, Tishahnah Roney, and Dr. Robert A. Smalls

If you were to ask 10 teachers why they chose teaching as a profession, not a single one would reply, “to discipline children.” If teachers aren’t in the profession because they like to discipline their students, then why are the majority of teachers across America spending more than half of their class time disciplining students? In 2012, ten thousand teachers from all 50 states were surveyed to obtain their personal and unbiased account of how they perceived their classrooms, their profession, and the future of education (Scholastic, “Classroom Behavior Problems Increasing, Teachers Say”). Of all the teachers surveyed, more than half said they wished that they could spend less time disciplining their students (Scholastic, “Classroom Behavior Problems Increasing, Teachers Say”). Since 2012, other surveys have been conducted regarding student behavior. The responses to these surveys suggest that the behaviors of students in elementary, middle, and high school are declining. This decline in students’ behaviors, along with teachers’ frustration with the amount of time spent on discipline, has incited researchers, administrators, and teachers alike to seek a resolution.

All parties sought to discover the secret to improving student behavior and decreasing the amount of class time spent on discipline. In evaluating programs which have had a significant and positive impact on improving students’ behavior, research has found that programs that effectively implemented social-emotional learning tended to have higher success rates. Understanding the elements of social-emotional learning is essential to understanding how effective implementation fosters success. Social-emotional learning is defined by CASEL as the process through which children and adults acquire the knowledge, attitudes, and skills to recognize and manage their emotions, set and achieve positive goals, demonstrate caring and concern for others, establish and maintain positive relationships, make responsible decisions, and handle interpersonal situations effectively (CASEL, 2008). If an individual is able to master these skills, he/she will experience success and positivity in most/all other aspects of life. This likely prompted the studies that found a strong correlation between social-emotional learning and academic success (Zins, Building academic success on social and emotional learning: what does the research say? 2004).

The components which define social-emotional learning addresses the whole child/adult. The skills that are taught and learned based on the social-emotional learning framework are beneficial for people of all ages and any level of the social-emotional intelligence spectrum. According to the authors of The Positive Impact of Social and Emotional for Kindergarten to Eighth-Grade Students, students who appraise themselves and their abilities realistically (self-awareness), regulate their feelings and behaviors appropriately (self-management), interpret social cues accurately (social awareness), resolve interpersonal conflicts effectively (relationship skills), and make good decisions about daily challenges (responsible decision making) are headed on a pathway toward success in school and later life.
Instilling these skills and values early on is a preventative method for children who are not displaying behavior and coping limitations. Teaching these skills in response to a child who is showing difficulty with self-management and awareness is restorative and corrective. The continuous studies of social-emotional learning framework have proven that the skills and methods are effective when used in either capacity: preventative or restorative.

It was these findings regarding the successful outcomes experienced by individuals who had been taught the skills outlined in the social-emotional framework which guided the design and structuring of the R.E.S.E.T. program. This program originated because of an increase of students from K–5 being recommended to the Hearing Office and was designed to address the growing need for additional support for students in elementary school who were exhibiting behavioral limitations that were unresponsive to Tier 1 and Tier 2 interventions (Tier levels are based on the Response to Intervention tiering system). Currently, there are very few programs like R.E.S.E.T. in existence; additionally, it is a fairly new concept. The R.E.S.E.T. program currently accommodates 20 of the 28 schools, and there are discussions of future expansion in Richland County School District One located in Columbia, South Carolina. A description of the R.E.S.E.T. program was provided on the Richland County School District One website. The R.E.S.E.T. program was described as follows:

R.E.S.E.T is a short-term, therapeutic program for students in grades K–5 that are experiencing behavioral issues that interfere with their ability to succeed academically and socially. The goal is to transition students back to their home school with a plan that will aid in decreasing suspensions, reducing the number of students being recommended to the hearing board, and improving their overall academics outcome. R.E.S.E.T uses a positive behavior model with clear and consistent expectations to create a safe learning environment where progress on social and academic goals will occur for all children.

The decreed mission and goals of the R.E.S.E.T. program offer a more concise description of how the curriculum and structure of the program supports and encourages both social-emotional and academic learning. The mission and goals of R.E.S.E.T. were also outlined on the Richland County School District One website. According to the R.E.S.E.T pamphlet, the mission and goals of R.E.S.E.T. are to

- restore opportunities for positive school experiences,
- educate students to their greatest potential,
- support personalized learning through critical thinking skills,
- empower families and their child(ren) through effective home-schooling partnerships,
- transform lives through social-emotional development.

This integration of social-emotional and academic learning has proven itself to be beneficial to children with diagnosis including, but not limited to, Oppositional
Defiance Disorder (ODD), Attention Deficit Disorder (ADD), and Attention Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD). Through the use of individual and family therapy services, breathing techniques/mindfulness activities, along with lessons which aim to build self-esteem, self-awareness, self-confidence, communication, and positive relationship skills, R.E.S.E.T. addresses the physical, emotional, social, and cognitive effects of the above-named diagnosis. This is made evident by closely examining the structure of the program as it pertains to the approaches taken by R.E.S.E.T. staff when addressing students who exhibit the symptoms and/or have been diagnosed with one or more of these disorders.

In a blog entitled, Managing Oppositional Defiance Disorder in Kids, the author outlines four distinctive strategies which can be utilized to help manage the behaviors of a child exhibiting symptoms of ODD. The four strategies outlined in this blog are set a few non-negotiable house rules and enforce them with consequences, use a calm voice when dealing with your child’s behavior, celebrate your child’s successes, and create a structured environment. These strategies have been scientifically proven to successfully help manage the behaviors of children with an ODD diagnosis.

The staff at the R.E.S.E.T. program employ these same strategies with the population of students that are assigned to the program. R.E.S.E.T. has identified several non-negotiables which are important to the safety and well-being of all students and staff. The non-negotiables are throwing objects, stealing/abusing property, touching doors/technology, obscenity/cursing, refusing to complete a think time form, earning three or more think time forms, and physical harm to self or others. Staff members at R.E.S.E.T. receive extensive training and are taught to always speak in a calm tone, called the “Siri voice” when addressing a student, particularly when the student is being redirected and/or de-escalated. The accomplishments of each child assigned to R.E.S.E.T. is regularly highlighted and celebrated during social activity time each day, during student-of-the-month celebration ceremonies, and through the distribution of “positive behavior bucks” which are earned by students who choose to behave positively and show that they have learned and are actively practicing the social-emotional skills that are taught on a daily basis. These “behavior bucks” can be redeemed at the R.E.S.E.T. store each Friday afternoon. In order to ensure that the students enrolled in the R.E.S.E.T. program are benignly regularly exposed to a structured environment both at school and at home, the daily visual schedule is displayed for the students. Each class is taught by highly qualified teachers who understand the importance of planning and preparation and implement rigorous lessons to maximize the learning in the allotted classroom time, and the parents/guardians of each student are encouraged to create and follow a daily schedule which the family and child(ren) can follow while they are not in school. This schedule should include the 8:30 pm suggested bedtime and twenty minutes of parent-child interaction without distraction time. The students at the R.E.S.E.T. program also receive snack bags to take home each weekend to ensure that they have access to healthy food and snacks over the weekend when they are not receiving school-provided meals. The R.E.S.E.T. program adheres to the research-based practices regarding social-emotional learning, which have proven successful for children with disorders like ODD.

As programs like R.E.S.E.T continue to utilize social-emotional learning to cultivate success and growth for children, the need for implementation of these types of
programs will continue to become more apparent. R.E.S.E.T. data boasts high success ratings for the majority of the students who were enrolled in the program during the 2017–2018 school year. Richland County School District One is reporting a decline in the number of Hearing Office cases for grades kindergarten through fifth. Survey responses from the cooperating elementary schools, the parents of previously enrolled students, and the students themselves find that the majority of those surveyed were happy with the services and saw an improvement in the enrolled child’s behavior the majority of the time. Overall, both the necessity and success of a curriculum which includes social-emotional learning and the necessity and success of R.E.S.E.T. program are clear. Further, the need for this shift in the way students are educated is supported by data which has been and continues to be researched and analyzed. Educating and addressing the whole child, both academically and social-emotionally, is the key to ensuring success for the child, which will follow the child into adulthood. Failing to do so will lead to frustration, stress, low engagement, and low motivation for the student, the teacher, the parents/guardians, and the involved administrators. If the ultimate goal is to cultivate academic and behavioral success for every child, then the plan to achieve that goal must include the effective implementation of social-emotional learning.

References


Joseph Kenyon “Ken” East (posthumous)
A graduate of Lineville High School (Lineville, AL) in 1929, Mr. East started the first public Kindergarten program in South Carolina. He was greatly responsible for the founding of what is now Coastal Carolina University and is considered the “Father of Adult Education in South Carolina.”

Dr. Karen Woodward
A graduate of Greenwood High School (Greenwood District 50) in 1960, Dr. Woodward has 31 years of experience as district superintendent for Union County Schools, Anderson District Five, and Lexington District One. She is a lifelong educator and has been recognized nationally by the American Association of School Administrators (AASA) with the 2014 Women in School Leadership Award.

Dr. Cyril Busbee (posthumous)
A graduate of Wagener High School (Aiken County) in 1924, Dr. Busbee was a lifelong educator and was elected SC Superintendent of Education three times. As SC Superintendent from 1966–1979, Dr. Busbee oversaw the integration of South Carolina’s public schools.
SC Distinguished Public School Graduates

Lou Kennedy
A graduate of Lexington High School (Lexington District One) in 1980, Ms. Kennedy is the President, Chief Executive Officer, and Owner of Nephron Pharmaceuticals Corporation. In 2010, she helped to establish the Kennedy Pharmacy Innovation Center in conjunction with the USC School of Pharmacy.

Dr. Anne Matthews
A graduate of Lake City High School (Florence District Three) in 1960, Dr. Matthews is the first woman to be named Vice President of Rotary International and is the first woman to serve on both the Rotary Foundation Trustees and the Rotary International Board of Directors.

Craig Melvin
A 1997 graduate of Columbia High School (Richland District One), Mr. Melvin is an Emmy Award-winning television journalist and anchor of the Today show on NBC.
Teacher Residency: Improving Educator Preparation and Student Outcomes

By Dr. Michelle Cook

Instructional leadership and teacher residency

The importance of the academic success of students has required schools to demonstrate effective and instructionally focused leadership at the district and school level. Districts are held accountable to provide powerful, authentic, and rigorous learning for all students and a critical indicator of leadership effectiveness is the transformation learning opportunities and success for K12 students (Kelly & Petersen, 2011). Research has repeatedly shown that instructionally focused leaders have significant impact on the academic success of schools and districts (Kowalski, McCord, Petersen, Young, & Ellerson, 2011). Instructional leaders not only articulate an instructional vision but, more importantly, they also create and foster organizational practices and programs that influence and increase the instructional capacity and classroom achievement of their students (Petersen, 2011). Teacher Residency is one such program. Research and data has shown that teacher residency programs build and foster instructional capacity inside the classroom and that graduates of teacher residencies increase student achievement more than traditionally trained teachers (Guha, Hyler, Darling-Hammond, 2016).

What is teacher residency?

Complex challenges such as teacher retention, student achievement, and teacher and student preparedness require innovative solutions. Teacher residency programs offer a research-based, innovative approach to recruiting and retaining high-quality teachers and have been in place for more than a decade with about 50 successful, well-documented programs existing across the US (Guha, Hyler, & Darling-Hammond, 2017; Silva, McKie, Knechtel, Gleason, & Makowsky, 2014). They are, by definition, district-serving teacher education programs that pair a rigorous, full-year classroom apprenticeship with coursework tightly integrated with clinical practice. Within the residency program, high-quality mentor teachers are recruited and prepared to co-design, co-teach, and co-reflect on instruction and assessment in an immersive and sustained environment, going beyond the typical student teaching experience of a semester or less. A report examining the merit of teacher residencies concluded that the best way to ensure that every teacher is profession-ready from the first day as a teacher-of-record is for preparation programs to incorporate teacher residencies (Coffman & Patterson, 2014).

Teacher residencies are sometimes confused with other models found in education preparation programs, where candidates can be employed as teacher of record through an internship certificate while they are completing the requirements of the clinical experience. In addition, many preparation programs place candidates in school with a mentor teacher in a year-long experience. However, the candidates are not full-time in the schools for the entire experience. Teacher residencies are also confused with initiatives where candidates might have an apartment or residence provided when they teach in a high-needs district. However, research-based teacher residencies are
different from all of these models. Teacher residencies are mutually beneficial partnerships between universities and the school districts who host teachers in training. This partnership is characterized by the integration of hands-on, practical classroom experiences and coursework throughout the preparation program, which are co-designed to enhance both content knowledge and pedagogical delivery expertise, thereby strengthening the candidate’s preparation as well as improving the learning of master teachers in the partner districts (Coffman & Patterson, 2014).

**What does the research say about teacher residency?**

Teacher residency programs have operated with great success for 15 years in many other states. The research support for teacher residency programs has demonstrated the ability of these programs to attract and retain profession-ready teachers. In addition, research has indicated residents outperform their non-resident counterparts in terms of student achievement gains (Guha, Hyler, & Darling-Hammond, 2017). We have summarized the research from residency programs in the tables below. The research shows teachers prepared in residency programs stay in the classroom longer and are better prepared to thrive in more challenging settings.

### Evidence Regarding Teacher Retention

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Program</th>
<th>Retention Rate Information</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Memphis Teacher Residency</td>
<td>95% of residency graduates were still teaching in TN public schools in Year 3 compared with 41% of teachers statewide</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher Preparation Quality Grants</td>
<td>82% of residency graduates were still teaching in their same district in Year 3 or 4 vs. 72% of non-residents still teaching in their same district</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Boston Teacher Residency</td>
<td>80% of residency graduates were still teaching in Year 3 vs. 63% of non-residents. 75% of graduates were still teaching in Year 5 vs. 51% of non-residents.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>San Francisco Teacher Residency</td>
<td>80% of residency graduates still teaching in Year 5 compared with 38% of non-resident teachers from traditional programs and 20% from Teach for America</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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### Evidence Regarding Student Achievement

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Program</th>
<th>Achievement Information</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>New Visions Hunter College Urban Teacher Residency</td>
<td>Students of UTR residents and graduates outperformed those taught by other novice teachers on 16 out of 22 (73%) comparisons of NY State Regents exam</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Boston Teacher Residency</td>
<td>Value-added analysis: achievement gains initially comparable with other novice teachers in ELA and Math but overtime (by 4th or 5th year), the residency teachers outperformed other teachers by 7% of a standard deviation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Memphis Teacher Residency</td>
<td>Residency graduates had higher student achievement gains than other beginning teachers and larger gains than veteran teachers on most of the TCAP (state standardized tests)</td>
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Why do we need teacher residency in South Carolina?

Education is well established as a key determinant of economic prosperity—a cornerstone of good jobs, a better quality of life, and an increase in civic engagement. When US News & World Report (2017) released its inaugural state education rankings, SC came in last at 50th. While broad economic, social, and technological forces underlie this problem, current education solutions addressing teacher recruitment, retention, and student achievement have not improved our educational performance. Research points to extended teacher residencies as a successful approach to addressing many issues the South Carolina educational system currently faces, including teacher recruitment and retention. In the last few years, state teacher education programs provided less than 25 percent of new teacher hires (CERRA, 2019). The report by CERRA also found that in the fall of 2018, 621 teaching positions went unfilled in South Carolina—a 13 percent increase from the previous year. With the rate at which vacancies are increasing each year, this report and others suggest that the state’s chronic teacher shortage will worsen over the next ten years. In addition, 25 percent of the first-year teachers hired in 2017 are no longer teaching. The results of CERRA’s report aligns with other research indicating that many of the teachers who do not return to the profession are in their first five years of teaching. When the cost to replace a teacher is approximated at $18,000, the state cannot afford to continue losing its teachers.

In South Carolina, learner-ready teachers are vital to developing student characteristics identified in the Profile of the South Carolina Graduate. In comparison with many other states, students in SC are not performing as well on reading and math sections of the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) exams. In addition, the percentage of SC students who meet “college readiness” benchmarks on the ACT during the 2017 – 2018 school year was 47.4 percent in English, 28.1 percent in math, 34.3 percent in reading, and 23.9 percent in science (SC School Report Card, 2018). Therefore, teacher residency programs can also serve as a way to improve student achievement by focusing on the recruitment, preparation, and retention of the teacher.

What is an exemplar model of teacher residency?

The Clemson University Teacher Residency Program is the first of its kind in South Carolina. The program provides a unique, evidence-based approach to create fundamental systemic change, improve student learning outcomes, and develop leaders in schools and communities by attracting, developing, retaining, and supporting high-quality educators. The program seamlessly integrates community, district, and higher education partners with the following goals: 1) increase recruitment, quality, and retention of candidates through an immersive teacher residency preparation, aligned with school priorities, 2) increase quality of instructional leadership and retention of in-service teachers through an immersive master teacher program; and 3) improve student achievement by focusing on recruitment, preparation, and retention of teachers through a residency approach.

Teacher residents

At the center of the residency program is a combined bachelor’s to master’s degree option for undergraduate education candidates in all majors. The program replaces traditional student teaching in a candidate’s final undergraduate semester with graduate education courses, and the year following graduation is comprised
of a year-long teacher residency in one of our partner districts. Residents spend the year-round residency in a district school, moving from a collaborative, co-teaching role in the classroom to an increasingly demanding, lead-teaching role. But teacher residents do not just participate in the classroom; they also plan and attend meetings and events and engage in virtually every activity undertaken by practicing teachers—all under the guidance of a master teacher. At the culmination of the program, graduates emerge after five years of education with both a bachelor’s and master’s degree in education. More importantly though, the year-long residency provides candidates with a comprehensive experience, makes them more attractive to school districts upon graduation, and helps to ensure they will stay in the profession.

**Master teachers**
In our program, we could not have teacher residents without master teachers who are willing to engage in a program that encourages their own development. Master teachers play a critical role in the development of novice teachers but also can help to stabilize schools by prioritizing instructional leadership and student achievement. Master teacher selection is competitive as these teachers are prepared with graduate coursework in instructional coaching, and their professional growth and retention also is a top priority for the program. Master teachers also have the option of completing the requirements for an instructional coaching specialization and a Teacher Leader state endorsement to be added to their professional license, or they can complete an entire graduate program in education. Using a variety of instructional coaching strategies, master teachers provide valuable insight into effective teaching methodologies, helping residents develop the knowledge and skills that come from years of experience. They also continuously gather data about a resident’s progress to provide targeted support and feedback.

**Academic success of our students**
Teacher residencies develop high-quality teachers exceptionally well-prepared for today’s classrooms and who stay in the classroom, a pressing concern for South Carolina schools given the critical teacher pipeline issue. While there is no one standardized model, residency programs share common characteristics—they involve an investment from teacher candidates, master teachers, districts, and universities; they are built around a clinically rich, year-long field experience; they allow for talented candidates to develop knowledge and teaching skills in specific school contexts prior to becoming teacher of record; they help retain novice and master teachers in schools; and they demonstrate an impact on K12 student learning outcomes. In essence, teacher residencies require a commitment to prepare teachers in a different way. As a land-grant institution, we will continue to develop innovative initiatives to address the teacher pipeline and teacher preparation to be implemented for the benefit of the...
References


2019 Innovative Ideas Institute
Keynote Speakers

General Colin L. Powell, USA (Ret.)

Dr. Adolph Brown

The Honorable Molly Spearman

Dr. Lucas “Luke” Clamp
Advanced leadership with an equity lens and a growth mindset is paramount to move educators towards the next level. Equity and opportunity in every district, in every school, at every grade level, for students of every demographic background creates a climate and culture that resonates next level leadership. Every student receiving what they need, when they need it, and how they need it—we call that an equitable framework of opportunity within an educational setting.

Traditional leaders often stray away from the notion of educational equity. Traditional leaders embellish their fear of perpetual forward progress on the fixed notion that resources and opportunities within the educational system are scarce and ancillary. Traditional leaders do not allow themselves to see the creative solutions toward developing equitable systems in our schools. Traditional leaders allow deep-seated beliefs and assumptions in the areas of equity, diversity, fairness, and inclusiveness to cloud optimism and possibility toward maximizing positive education outcomes to the students who walk through our doors each and every day.

If we choose to be honest with ourselves, unfortunately, we would have to admit that some of us, as educational leaders, are fixed versus growth, are traditionalists versus transformationalists, practice minimalism versus maximalism, and dull the spark of creativity and possibilities within our schools. Albeit we must also understand some, if not many, educational leaders practice and implement transformational growth to maximize positive student outcomes within our schools. Whether a paraprofessional, teacher, staff member, assistant principal, principal, or district staff, we all must understand our role and impact, whether negative or positive, and our beliefs and assumptions may have on our students.

The reality of it all is that some of our students are exposed to next level leadership but as educational leaders it is our moral and ethical obligation to refine our practice both individually and collectively. So why are opportunities through an equitable lens not at the forefront of our practice? Why do some fear the possibility for every student to receive equitable opportunities in the classroom? Lastly, how do we challenge our deep-seated beliefs and assumptions as well as those of our staff to maximize positive student outcomes within an educational setting?

The answer rests in our personal challenges or strengths in equity and equality, two very different ideals but the very foundation of a growth mindset. Equity is the quality of being fair and impartial whereas equality is the state of being equal, specific to status, rights, and opportunities. Leadership must center on equity and equality. As leaders at any level within the educational system, without equity and equality as the perspective lens, we damage decisions, practice, and actions that stem from our own biases as it relates to our students.

The New Teacher Project (TNTP) is an organization in the United States with a mission of ensuring that poor and minority students receive equal access. Results of a study by TNTP published in 2018 entitled, “The Opportunity Myth,” found that students spend most of their time in school without access to four key resources: grade-appropriate assignments, strong instruction, deep engagement, and teachers who hold high expectations. The study included five diverse school systems and included the review of 5,000 student assignments, observations of nearly 1,000 lessons, analysis of more than 20,000 student work samples, and the collection of nearly 30,000 real-time student surveys. TNTP partnered with schools in rural, urban, district, and charter to listen to students’ views on their educational experiences and observe how those experiences played out, in real time, in their classrooms.
We can summarize from the above-mentioned study that as leaders at any level in the educational system our deep-seated beliefs and assumptions regarding equity, diversity, fairness, and inclusiveness drive our ability to provide access or lack thereof to the four key resources. The culminating effect of gaps in equitable decisions of leaders toward student progress creates damaging and lasting deficiencies that can lead to poor academic performance. Students must receive what they need, when they need it, and how they need it. This is the heart of next level leadership.

We as leaders know what students need. We have or should have the data on an individual level, school-wide level, and/or district-wide level. Patterns and trends in data seem to be our second language as leaders. Our actions rest in our equitable analysis of the data and the creativity within our growth mindset to understand the areas of equity we must focus on.

Equity runs deep within the educational system as it is braided throughout our profession at every level. Next level leaders should continually conduct equity audits at every level whether the classroom, grade level, building, or district. What you will find is there are obvious and not so obvious gaps that exist among all, some, and few students. There are four major areas of equity we must consider and audit: fiscal, pedagogical, accessibility, and curricular.

Fiscal equity focuses on the ability to creatively stack the resources you have and the funds allotted to build a sustainable stream of effective tools for learning. These tools can range from people to supplemental resources to after-school opportunities. Funding may be plentiful or scarce, but we must work with what we have and find ways to provide. Next level leaders master the art of revenue allocation through the alignment of one’s vision and/or goal(s). Fiscal equity must be top down as there should be no reason why classrooms or buildings receive nothing while other classrooms or buildings receive most. This is the equity of weights and balances related to student resources and environment. Pedagogical equity focuses on the ability of leaders to ensure a comprehensive and unified method and practice of teaching. We are aware some teachers’ pedagogy is not aligned with your leadership vision and/or goal(s). The root cause of why teachers’ pedagogical practices
are not aligned with your vision or goal must be examined. Many times it is our leadership which creates misalignment, and as next level leaders we must modify to improve. A pedagogical equity audit will identify gaps and provide opportunities for teachers to synergize in a cohesive unit of practice towards your targeted outcomes. Accessibility equity is simply the ability for all students to receive opportunities for success through the exposure to all resources based on student equality. Curricular equity is the ability to combine fiscal, pedagogical, and accessibility to deliver the how, the what, and the when in instruction. Data drives this area of educational equity and must be interwoven with equality. It is the panacea in where fiscal, pedagogical, and accessibility equity must succinctly align with targeted student outcomes. Curricular equity is the most damaging area of equity if left to traditionalism.

Traditional leaders fall short in one or all of these equity areas. Traditional leaders rely on traditional practices and instruction. Traditional leaders continue with minimal outcomes due to the lack of a finite focus on equitable practices. Traditional leaders move forward but the weakness lies in the fact that everything around them is moving much faster. Traditionalism is the antithesis of reform and educational progress.

Simply stated, do not be a traditional leader. If you are, it is not too late to change your lens and actions. Break out of the fixed mindset you have been so comfortable in and let positive student outcomes drive and rekindle your passion for transformation. Stretch yourself beyond and learn to grow, and do not fear mistakes along the way as next level leaders continually learn and change. Equity is your springboard toward a growth mindset in where you challenge your inner beliefs and assumptions and move confidently toward the next level.

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Book by Jimmy Casas
Review by Dr. Allen Fain, Director of Adult Education, Pickens County Schools

Culturize is a must read for any school leader as it will remind you of our purpose in education. We are here to serve and remove barriers from our students in order to help them achieve success. The book outlines core principles such as being a champion for students, expecting excellence, carrying the banner, and being a merchant of hope. Leaders must instill belief in all of our students and give them hope that they can achieve success. Relationships are key, and we must develop them with all students and define what success looks like. Every student has the possibility to make a positive impact and as leaders, we must find that spark in our students. It is important to instill in our staff our vision for excellence and educators must embrace the idea that all students can be excellent. Leaders must also expect teachers to continually carry the banner and reflect education in a positive light. Teachers must model the attitudes and behaviors they want to see repeated. Life is full of failures, but it is how we respond when we fail that is important. We will not always be successful the first time we try something. A school must embrace and surround students with the idea that it is okay to fail and be a merchant of hope for that student.

This book was a game changer for me in my current position. Many of our students were not successful in the traditional school setting. Our staff continually embrace and put into action the core principles identified in this book. They work hard each day and instill in our students belief in themselves. We have outlined what success looks like, and we celebrate each step of the way. My staff are truly champions for our students!
Making significant change requires real connections established through collaboration: connections between theory and practice, connections between the why and the how, and connections driving collaboration between district and school leadership.

Connections, physical and relational, are what allow us to have a vision and see it all come together. While we regularly read about the importance of relationships in working with students and those we supervise, we often neglect the relationships or connections necessary between and among leaders. The connection between general education and special education leaders is a perfect example.

Making connections takes an investment. But not the type of investment you may be thinking about as you read this. What it takes is an investment in purpose. Administrators and educators are clear special education refers to students who are eligible for specially designed instruction under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). However, how to best provide those services is not as clear and is incredibly challenging for schools and districts. The majority of the responsibility for providing special education services typically falls on the special education leadership and special educators themselves. Traditionally, we have allowed special education to “own” all things special education.

IDEA requires individual school teams to consider content, methodology, and delivery of instruction; yet the majority of the monitoring occurs in the area of compliance, not student outcomes. While compliance is necessary and foundational to providing appropriate instruction and services, meeting deadlines and completing tasks does not necessarily correlate to improving outcomes for students.

As administrators, preparing young people for life after high school, we know for our students to be successful after they leave our schools, they must be able to put into practice what they have learned. They must work with a multitude of individuals, as a team, towards common goals. They must make connections.

We know the world-class skills in the “Profile of the South Carolina Graduate” include creativity and innovation, critical thinking and problem solving, and collaboration and teamwork. Identifying the need for these skills, teaching them, and then assessing them clearly are three different and complicated tasks. As we work to ensure these areas are being targeted in the schools, we’ve taken a hard look at our leadership practices. In
the classroom, we know every lesson begins with an effective plan. Additionally, we complete strategic plans, professional development plans, and facilities plans. We have trained general education and special education teachers on inclusive practices and co-teaching.

Despite all of those plans and professional development, which takes countless hours and energy to attend and create, the state graduation rate for students with disabilities in 2018 was only 52.1 percent. We clearly are missing a connection. We can and must do better.

As district and school leaders, it is imperative we move to the next level to address this gap because it impacts all of our schools. But, most importantly, without these connections we are having an adverse impact on kids.

To be a next level leader, we must continue to advocate for our students, teachers, and our families. We must continue to advocate for appropriate funding for schools, for students with disabilities, for teacher salaries, and for resources and supplies. We must continue to work to address teacher recruitment and retention and work with families and communities to address issues that affect the whole child. While there is much work we can do, many of these issues are complicated, take long-term, cohesive state and national work, and are not in the immediate control of district or school administrators.

However, there is often a missing connection that we can control, almost immediately. A critical first step is for next level leaders to share the responsibility of students with disabilities and their success, or lack thereof. We need to, collectively, share responsibility for the 47.9 percent.

For leaders not formally trained and certified in special education services, the road to collaboration can appear hazy at best, and scary at its worst. Often we see leaders, excellent in their skill-set and accomplished in their career as district level leaders, totally removed from the collaboration or ownership of the success and failure of students with disabilities. For some, it may be because they trust the individuals that are the designated leaders in special education. But many times, the lack of crossover leadership from general education to special education is because of lack of knowledge and, therefore, lack of confidence by those leaders. In our most cynical state of mind, we may even think to ourselves that with this relatively small percentage of students with disabilities, “Is the cost of investing in this shared leadership worth the return as it relates to our total bottom line on the state student achievement ‘scoreboard’?”

And let’s face it, the special education experts often prefer to work independently as well. Giving up ownership of a specialty area is hard. Sometimes it is easier for a special education educator to handle a situation on their own vs. teaching someone to handle it. At the same time, the special education staff often become frustrated because the general education side of the house and administrators don’t “get” it. Yet, we keep doing what we are doing, and the results, although progressively better, have not been stellar.

The reality is if you want to move student performance and attainment in your school, you’ve got to move special education students. Strategies that work for students with disabilities often work for students without disabilities. Improving outcomes for all students in your school improves your community. The cost of investing in making connections and providing specially designed leadership is well worth that investment.

So let us take a step back and reflect for a moment. What if these barriers on both sides were removed or minimized and that all district leaders, regardless of whether they oversee special education services or have a working knowledge of the most intimate details of special education law and practice, led from the front when it came to the outcomes of students with disabilities? And what if those immersed in special education invested in the time that it takes to help leaders without that background feel confident in making global decisions and taking total ownership of the successes and challenges?
Where would your district be if collaboration between district administrators and special education services was as seamless as, let’s say, the collaboration between district administrators and human resources?

One could make the argument that a traditional district leader does not have specialized training in human resources, including the most up-to-date best practices and law. However, most district administrators often (maybe daily) involve themselves in the hiring, evaluation, and termination processes. Most of the reason for this is a comfort and confidence level of working in the realm of human resources throughout their educational career (assistant principal, principal, and district administrator).

Yet we rarely see that type of overlap and collaboration with special education and district administrators.

A natural starting point is very simple: understanding that there is a difference between professional relationships of leaders and true collaboration. Our district had plenty of professional relationships between special education leaders and non-special education leaders. Everyone was cordial, said the right things, and genuinely wanted the best for each other and the district.

But that professional relationship did not equal a truly collaborative relationship.

If we are going to change outcomes for students with disabilities, we realized we needed a more collaborative relationship to foster, instead of only the professional relationship.

We felt our starting point needed to begin at the top level of leaders that would naturally cycle down to the school administrative teams, and eventually into the classroom. By investing in the connections, we felt we could partner in the ownership and develop the why and the how and make it a joint priority throughout our district.

In Year 1, we started with trying to understand the why. There was no reason for us to make sweeping changes with anything that we were doing until we knew what was actually going on and where the gaps were in the connections. At the high school level, the principal supervisor for the 15 high schools spent time with the Assistant Superintendent for Special Education and her staff to do a deep dive into what was going on at each school with feedback on the good, the bad, and the ugly. While we found some schools were truly collaboratively owning the success of all students in the building, many of the broken connections at the school level resembled what was going on at the district level, with everyone working in silos and none of the leaders truly taking total ownership of the outcomes of students with disabilities in the same way leaders were owning that of general education students.

In the midst of this self-analysis, a problem arose in Year 1 that stemmed directly from a situation where a Special Education initiative with Read 180 and System 44 was struggling in its first year of implementation at the high schools. There were a variety of reasons why the implementation was clunky, but instead of the principal supervisor sending special education out to the schools to “fix” the issues, an opportunity arose for the collaboration that we were looking for in theory to take shape with a “real-world” problem.

The principal supervisor, in conjunction with the district special education leaders, discussed the issues without blame or finger pointing. After discussion and analysis, a solution and vision were created that would help schools
fix the problem in the short term while avoiding the problem moving forward. Having determined a fix, the next step was sharing the path forward with principals, assistant principals, and special education department chairs at the 15 high schools.

Unlike the past, instead of the Assistant Superintendent of Special Education providing the professional development and vision to the school stakeholders, it was the principal supervisor that led the meeting and set the expectations. It was a subtle shift, but it was immediately a game changer to those at the school level who saw firsthand that this was not a special education vision, but a total district and school vision.

The principal supervisor had to take ownership. The special education department had to invest time in building the capacity and knowledge of the issues and solutions to the principal supervisor. It was the give and take we said we needed to do, acted out in real time. Our culture was beginning to shift.

In Year 2, the principal supervisor shared expectations and discussed special education services at the principal beginning of the year conference. By the mid-year conferences, principals were expected to share and problem solve with their supervisor about ALL students. Time was devoted to collaborating with special education leaders and jointly owning successes and concerns. To ensure that the expectation of a partnership between general education and special education was not only apparent to principals and school leadership teams, but also to teachers, the principal supervisor created a video welcome message to special educators. He spoke about the importance of their work, his intent to support them, and the plan to visit their classrooms when he was at their schools. He also attended special education back-to-school trainings and personally shared the district’s vision of making connections as professionals for all students.

When principals saw the joint collaboration, they began to investigate within their schools the barriers between special education and general education. With this new collaborative culture that was burgeoning, high school principals felt empowered and confident in sharing some of their concerns with district leadership.

Early in the 2018 – 19 school year, some high school administrators shared concerns about IEPs not being written appropriately for their level, which is a common problem that we have all seen in real time. The high school principal supervisor listened to those concerns, but did not point blame at special education nor the supervisor of middle school administrators.

Conversely, the three district level leaders, the two principal supervisors, and one special educator formed a committee of school and district leaders and held a district-wide special education “summit”. The result was two district leaders of principals, without special education degrees, inviting and leading principals, assistant principals, guidance counselors, and special educators through a process to better inform schools with the information needed to appropriately write IEPs for the transition from middle to high school. Many connections were made between high schools and their feeder schools. The role of the special education department in that one morning shifted to be one of true support.

As we plan for our third year in this new culture, we recognize some of our contracted coaching support in reading at the secondary level is going away, potentially creating a vacuum that must be filled from within our
system. Our shared ownership and investment will be key to the success in filling that void.

As a district, we are planning now for the construction of a new high school, providing more social-emotional learning supports and increasing our employability credential programming. As next level leaders, we will plan and implement these together instead of in the silos where we used to live prior to this new vision.

When it comes to special education services, many of us have been looking at this backwards and responding reactively. Our purposeful work has often been done in isolation with special education teachers and special education service leaders owning all or most of the planning and outcomes.

For us, the culture shift concept was rather simple. The approach was, and is now more than ever, about “we” and “all.” Do we have more work to do? Absolutely. We must continue to be truly committed to intentionally making meaningful connections that establish the collaborative processes that ensure the most positive outcomes for all students.

It’s time we not only invest in the students and the teachers but also invest in connected leadership that truly establishes the collaborative environment necessary for student success. Will you join us in placing South Carolina’s graduation rate for students with disabilities on the fast track to improvement?

Traci Hogan
Assistant Superintendent for Special Education
Greenville County Schools

Scott Rhymer
Assistant Superintendent for School Leadership
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New Research Summary: iSTEM CS - Preparing Tomorrow's Leaders and Innovators  
By Dana Thompson, Regional Coordinator, S2TEM Centers SC

Tomorrow’s leaders and innovators are today’s middle school students. They face the daunting task of preparing for a technology and data driven workplace. Their employers will expect demonstration of not only world-class knowledge, but skills and career characteristics that make them agile problem solvers and adaptive team members and leaders. In short, they will be challenged to demonstrate the deeper sort of “literacy” that is outlined in Transform SC’s Profile of a South Carolina Graduate.

The recently approved South Carolina Computer Science and Digital Literacy Standards challenge leaders at the elementary and middle grades to rethink instructional support for teachers in ways that meet the call for these standards to be integrated into every grade level (K-8).

To enhance teachers’ capacity to lead as instructors, iSTEM CS, a S2TEM Centers SC research project funded by Boeing, SC, focuses on inclusion of computational thinking (CT) standards in the middle grades using strategies and protocols first developed for a prior research study focused on disciplinary literacy. CT is a core element of computer science that involves solving problems, designing systems, and understanding human behavior. CT pillars of decomposition, pattern recognition, abstraction, and algorithmic thinking are the focus for this project.

Through iSTEM CS, participating teachers engage in ongoing professional learning experiences focused on CT content and processes. Additionally, they receive onsite instructional coaching to support implementation of CT strategies in their lessons.

Coming into the project, Ms. Able (not her real name) was known for her traditional instructional style. After engaging in the first whole group session, Ms. Able “bought in” to the idea of integrating CT strategies in her math lessons. Consistent and effective support and occasional challenges from her S2TEM Centers SC instructional support specialist helped her to transform her classroom throughout the course of a year. The class setting is now student-centered and learning opportunities include exploration and collaboration. Technology is being used to enhance the content. CT strategies are employed regularly.

Ms. Books (not her real name) represents another marked example of change in practice. At the onset of the pilot, Ms. Books expressed serious doubts about implementing CT concepts in her English/Language Arts classes. The her S2TEM Centers SC instructional support assigned to support her helped her make connections between the core components of CT and the elements of fiction and nonfiction literature. CT analogues to skills necessary for analyzing novels, poetry, and informational texts were also found. Ms. Books began to intentionally use CT strategies such as story boarding and flowcharting to engage students in ELA concepts.

Though external evaluation of this research effort is not yet complete, preliminary findings show that teachers measurably improve their skills in developing and delivering lessons that align and integrate CT concepts as measured by a modified, Reformed Teaching Observation Protocol (RTOP) instrument.

We anticipate completing this study in June of 2019. As with our disciplinary literacy research findings, we will provide on-line access to best practices, lesson plans and video vignettes of CT implementation developed in this project.
Next Level Leaders Advocate for Investing in All Students

By Dr. W. Burke Royster

In January, five members of the Greenville County School Board and two of our administrative staff members traveled to Washington, DC, to the National School Boards Association (NSBA) Conference. They were able to attend sessions on advocacy and meet with members of Congress. Much of the conversation was centered on fully funding IDEA. While there, Greenville County Schools was fortunate to be highlighted at a NSBA press conference devoted to increasing awareness of, celebrating successes of, and advocating for funding for our special needs students. I am extremely proud to be the superintendent of a district with many next level leaders who collaborate around this topic, and I believe it is imperative that we continue and increase this momentum by educating and supporting our colleagues in advocating for appropriate funding for all students. It is the responsibility of all next level leaders—school board members, superintendents, district leaders, and school-based leaders—to advocate fully funding IDEA. After all, the ramifications of financial deficits never simply impact one subgroup; if they impact one student, they impact all.

Students eligible for services under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) qualify in in one or more of 13 different disability categories. IDEA applies to students’ ages three- through 21-year-olds and the categories include the following:

- autism
- deaf-blindness
- deafness
- emotional disturbance
- hearing impairment
- intellectual disability
- multiple disabilities
- orthopedic impairment
- other health impairment
- specific learning disability
- speech or language impairment
- traumatic brain injury
- visual impairment (including blindness)

In Greenville County Schools, not only has the total number of students meeting the criteria of students with disabilities increased in the last eight years, but an even greater concern is the changes within the 13 categories. For example, students with autism have more than doubled. There is also a stark increase in students with other health impairments and a steady increase in students with developmental delays. The level and complexity of services needed for students in 2018–2019 has increased drastically since 2010, yet our IDEA allocations have actually decreased.
The majority of our IDEA budget must be utilized for salaries for special education teachers, psychologists, speech-language pathologists, occupational therapists, physical therapists, and other special education direct service providers. Therefore, other needs, including professional development, curricula, and equipment become secondary and must be prioritized with state and local monies.

Under IDEA, districts are required to offer a continuum of services in the school closest to the student’s home. We have students who are severely and profoundly intellectually impaired, many of whom have multiple disabilities, whose needs cannot be met at their home-based school. In our district, those students are served at Washington Center. The current budget to operate this center is $3.9 million, not including capital expenses or food service budgeting. Washington Center currently serves 123 students. If we did not utilize state and local funds, we would not be able to provide the essential supports for these students.

Next level leaders identify challenges and develop possible solutions to critical problems, but also advocate at all levels. As leaders, it is important that we know the consequences of not investing in all of our students. For districts that do not have a strong local tax base, the gap between what should be offered and what can be offered is critical. South Carolina is a state with a significant divide in economic resources, but a growing special needs population.

South Carolina has roughly 100,000 students with disabilities identified under IDEA. The majority of these students are able to earn the state high school diploma. Yet the graduation rate for students with disabilities in 2018 was only 52.1 percent. Without a diploma, students are deprived of many job opportunities, which rob both the student and the state of the benefits of gainfully employed, contributing citizens. Additional focus is important, but additional resources are vital to this improvement.

As next level leaders, we must continue to make it a priority to advocate for all students. Improvements and positive outcomes for students with disabilities are the responsibility of all of us, not just special education leaders, educators, and their families. If Congress were to fund 40 percent of IDEA as originally promised, local and state resources would be freed to increase all teacher pay, enhance programs for special needs students, and enrich learning for all students.

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<td>Total Students with Disabilities</td>
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Dr. W. Burke Royster
Superintendent
Greenville County Schools
Next level leadership requires the skills and expertise of a gardener to see our schools and districts blossom with instructional leaders who are prepared to promote academic growth and inspire students to strive for high academic achievement. Gardeners must seed, feed, and weed to achieve the success of producing flourishing plants. With educational green thumbs, school and district administrators must strategically seed, feed, and weed leadership gardens to create a pipeline of top talent in the area of instructional leadership.

Seeding requires gardeners to enhance the environment by refining the soil before sowing seeds. Seeding a leadership garden needs the same environmental enhancement for next level leadership to take place in our schools and districts. Begin by examining leadership practices, and leadership models to see if clear expectations are rooted in an instructional focus. Clear expectations aligned with the district’s vision for teaching and learning allow instructional leaders to lead teachers and inspire students. Our seedlings should be able to go into any school in the district and see the instructional mission and vision of the school district in the day-to-day work of current school administrators. Establishing a district philosophy for high-quality teaching and learning cultivates the environment to develop instructional leadership. Instructional leaders set high expectations for teachers to design standards-based, culturally relevant, and rigorous instruction that is delivered using a variety of teaching strategies appealing to the various learning styles of students. Student-centered school districts and schools operate under guiding principles that all students will experience excellence and success. This idea resonates throughout the district and the school’s policies and practices. These leaders must demonstrate with a proven record of success, the ability to cultivate a climate where teachers and students can thrive and achieve academic and professional growth. Instructional leaders who can communicate learning outcomes for students effectively can support and coach classroom teachers to align instructional practices with the vision and mission of the school district and school.

Often, aspiring school leaders find it difficult to articulate how to demonstrate the expectations of a strong instructional leader because their experiences as a classroom teacher or assistant principal do not expose them to the level of instructional leadership required to impact high academic growth and student achievement. Making sure the soil is fertile and ready to receive seeds means removing any environmental factors that affect seed germination. Seeds experience difficulty growing when the temperature or climate isn’t favorable, if the light is absent, and the soil is not moist. Next level leadership occurs when expectations for instructional leadership are present, there is a vision for high-quality teaching and learning, and if the school and district climate support accountability for teacher and student performance. Accountability measures must support the expectations for creating environments where next level school leaders know expectations, the vision, and mission of the district and have a clear understanding of accountability metrics to sustain an environment where teachers are expected to provide high-quality instruction and students are expected to...
meet academic growth while they strive for high levels of academic achievement. It is equally essential for aspiring leaders to be supported and prepared to be next level, instructional leaders. Once the environment is cultivated and ready to grow a leadership garden, “plant the seed” by encouraging teacher leaders and those who have leadership potential to participate in next level leadership experiences.

Feeding plants boost their growth and help them to produce healthy green leaves as well as develop strong roots and stems. Choosing the right fertilizer or plant food results in a healthy crop just as choosing the appropriate nourishment to grow school administrators contributes to a bountiful cadre of instructional leaders. We must feed our aspiring leaders with learning opportunities that prepare them to fulfill the instructional vision and mission of the district and school. These experiences can be provided by shadowing strong instructional leaders and participating in leadership discussions related to teaching and learning. Advisory boards with an instructional focus on a school and district level are a healthy way to sprout instructionally focused thinking to create ways to support teachers and to encourage students to strive for higher levels of academic success. Leadership seminars and building an instructional leader pipeline led by highly effective school leaders also provides an opportunity for the growth and development of aspiring school leaders. We can also feed our aspiring leaders by giving them voice and choice with designing the leadership growth opportunity agenda and selecting learning opportunities in which they feel are necessary for continual growth towards becoming a highly effective instructional leader.

Encourage and nurture the growth of aspiring leaders by assigning leadership mentors who will share best practices and expertise in the area of instructional leadership. Leadership mentors can also find professional learning opportunities to foster growth in instructional leadership for teacher leaders and current school administrators. Feedback and feeding forward are ways to build the leadership capacity of educators who eventually become harvested as an instructional leader.

Inform school leaders and aspiring school leaders of their strengths as well as areas where improvement can be made to bring their instructional leadership to the level that supports environments where high-quality teaching and learning is paramount. The practice of feedback coupled with feeding forward, providing information to help school leaders plan for their next step in instructional leadership, strengthens the opportunities for students to grow academically and strive for high academic success, and to support teachers with providing high-quality instruction. As we routinely fertilize and nurture the leadership development of our educators by engaging them in activities that strengthen their instructional leadership abilities, feedback and feeding forward are the water and sunshine of our profession.

Weeding is a difficult task. My mother kept a flower garden that bordered the front of our house. Many times she could be found on her hands and knees pulling weeds so that they did not stifle the growth of her plants. Sometimes her back would ache, knees would hurt, and she would get calluses on her hands, but she knew that this labor would produce the botanical paradise she wanted. How much work are we as district and school leaders willing to put forth to create a leadership garden that not even the weeds of funding and time could prevent from growing? Creating learning opportunities for aspiring school leaders and existing leaders is part of the solution. Accountability for attendance and
participation is equally important. Create an opportunity where teacher leaders can participate after school or provide coverage to allow them to participate in opportunities to learn and lead during the school day.

Classroom teachers who are interested and have the potential to become school leaders can begin practicing instructional leadership skills by leading school-wide professional development, observing teachers and providing feedback, serving as mentor teachers, and serving as instructional coaches for teachers experiencing issues with delivering instructional content. Teachers can volunteer to provide coverage for colleagues during observations and coaching cycles.

As a school or district leader, we have to be innovative in delivering professional development opportunities for our leaders. School administrators can find these opportunities within the walls of a master teacher’s classroom. Identify top performing teachers and allow school administrators and aspiring leaders to observe and discuss what elements of teaching occurred to provide an environment of high-quality instruction. Match these findings with current research on best teaching practices. Have administrators and aspiring leaders identify teaching practices that encourage students to strive for high academic performance. These are low-cost ways to develop instructional leaders and to align the environment with the district’s mission and vision for teaching and learning. When cafeteria duty, hall monitoring, or other daily school tasks prevent administrators from observing and coaching teachers and attending professional development, cut those weeds by providing a growth opportunity for an aspiring administrator to become assistant principal for the day and gain practice in school supervision. Doing so will allow current administrators a chance to attend professional development designed to strengthen them as an instructional leader. Always plan follow-up activities and reflection time for teacher leaders, aspiring administrators, and school administrators who participate in activities that enhance their professional growth in the area of instructional leadership.

Seeding, feeding, and weeding our leadership gardens are definite ways to produce a bumper crop of next level instructional leaders.

Tony Hemingway
Executive Director of Human Resources
York District 2
## Leadership Garden

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<tr>
<th>SEED</th>
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<td>• Feedback and Feed Forward</td>
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<td>• Participate in leadership discussions</td>
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Is It Time for an Educational Stand Down?

By Dr. Paul Shotsberger

In the military, when an accident occurs, especially if there are multiple similar accidents in a short timeframe, there is often a concern that the problem is actually a manifestation of a larger, more systemic safety issue. In this case, the affected military branch will call for a safety stand down, a respite from operations in order not simply to fix a problem but to address root concerns and re-train those involved to ensure needed expertise and awareness. Thus, when in the summer of 2017 two different Navy ships experienced collisions in the Pacific Ocean within months of each other, officials began to suspect that the accidents were related. After months of investigation, it was determined that training had been insufficient, but also that there was widespread negligence on the part of the command and control structure. As a result, a safety stand down was implemented. Not only was there a vast re-training effort across hundreds of ships and naval bases, but there were also firings and demotions of those who had been in charge, replacing them with those who were more sensitive to the current circumstances and issues faced by the Navy personnel in that theater of operation. The point, for the purposes of this article, is that there was a recognition of systemic failures, and during the stand down that resulted, there were no operational commitments on the part of any of the units involved, facilitating a deep investigation into the causes and potential solutions for the problems being experienced.

I believe it is time for an educational stand down in this and many other states. We are not simply in extremis, as with an imminent collision between two ships, but I believe we find ourselves in a post-collision education world. Multiple related collisions have already occurred with incalculable damage done to individuals and institutions over many years. It is time to take a step back and do some serious, critical analysis of the educational system, from the top down and the bottom up, to determine the sources of problems across schools and districts, and then to begin systematically to address them. You might think that I am advocating for actions that will increase standardized test scores, or more stringent standards for teachers entering the workforce. These are common clarion calls, but they are only tangentially related to what I have in mind.

First, what have we observed over the past fifteen-plus years of educational collisions, beginning with No Child Left Behind (NCLB) up to its recent successor, Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA)? Let’s begin with what we can easily observe:

- Schools have become increasingly violent places over the decades, with not only school shootings but also bullying and threats directed at both students and teachers. This does not even take into account gang violence or violence in the community. I would suggest that there is a culture of violence in schools, and people are afraid for their safety. Despite the presence of school safety personnel and resource officers, or the installation of metal detectors at the doors, weapons and threats have proliferated. Schools have always been reflective of their surroundings, and so in some ways it might be considered surprising, considering the violent nature of American culture, if schools did not have some of the same characteristics. Still, schools had been thought of for generations as safe zones for children to learn and grow, but that reality seems to be changing.
• The school year is now dominated by standardized testing. The SC Department of Education website estimates 5.5 hours is needed for SC READY testing for grades 3–8, plus an undetermined number of hours for SCPASS Science and Social Studies exams. The website states that 20 instructional days are set aside for the “testing window.” And educators know that not much else gets done during the testing period because of disruptions to the schedules of both students and teachers. Even as the time and resources devoted to testing have increased, America’s performance in international comparisons has declined (having begun in a comparatively poor position). But that’s not all. Student writing performance has trended down, even as the need for college remediation of student writing has grown. A recent Forbes article also noted a disconnect between test scores and life outcomes (Greene, 2018). We are testing more, but achieving less.

• Teachers are leaving the profession in record numbers. At the same moment we face a crisis in numbers due to the retirement of baby boomers from the education ranks, we also have a general flight taking place by those who have been teaching five or fewer years because of the perennial issues of low pay, ever-increasing expectations, lack of support, and other reasons. The combination of these factors has produced teacher shortages in virtually every school in the state and in nearly every state. If this isn’t enough of a problem, teacher candidates are being discouraged from the profession because of more and more hurdles they have to clear, one of the highest hurdles being the Praxis content exams used for certification purposes. My area is mathematics, and so I am most familiar with the tragedy that is both the secondary Praxis math exam and the math portion of the elementary content exam. Each exam tests material that these future educators will never teach. Never. Whereas the secondary exam used to test up through calculus, which a high school teacher could imagine teaching, requires advanced understanding of probability theory and differential equations, among other topics. Likewise, the elementary exam requires a facility with high school math that is beyond the reach of all but the most gifted elementary student. Until the minimum score for the secondary exam was lowered, the pass rate statewide was below 50 percent; now it is barely above that level. If we had set out to create a system that would discourage people from the teaching profession, it would be the one we have.

I could go on, but hopefully it’s obvious from this short list that there are serious problems with schools and education. These problems have been addressed in different ways, but with little effect. The trends detailed above continue. This is why I am suggesting a stand down period of perhaps a year, but maybe more. When there is a safety stand down in the military, all operations cease and the only expectation of personnel is that they will contribute to the search for answers. We need to get to the bottom of these issues and agree on systematic solutions that bring about real change. This will require that we also get to the bottom of what the purpose of education is and what we can reasonably expect from it. To do that, we need to suspend typical expectations for such things as preparing for, administering, and reporting the results for standardized accountability tests.
We also need to use the time gained from such a suspension wisely to have deep discussions among administrators, teachers, and students about what is broken in education; to investigate and identify things like administrator, teacher, and student needs; and to suggest fundamental changes that need to be made to curriculum, instruction, testing, and reporting.

Let me give just a couple examples of the kinds of considerations I have in mind:

We hear much today in education about accountability—accountability to the state, to the district, to the administration, to the community. What we don’t hear much about is responsibility, in particular shared responsibility. There is a fundamental difference between accountability and responsibility. Noddings (2007) notes that, “Responsibility and accountability point in different directions. We are accountable to a supervisor, someone above us in the hierarchy, but we are responsible for those below us. A sense of responsibility in teaching pushes us constantly to think about and promote the best interests of our students. In contrast, the demand for accountability often induces mere compliance” (p. 206). Shapiro and Gross (2008) further elaborate, “Responsibility, while similar to accountability, can be perceived of as more inclusive by placing the onus for success or failure of students’ achievement on society as a whole and not just on schools. Society includes taxpayers, legislators, parents, teachers, and administrators as well as the students themselves. This term is an ethical one. It is not associated with blame or budget. Instead, [it] expects everyone to share in and care about educating the next generation” (p. 89).

Many educators over the decades have advocated for the education of the whole child, in particular, fostering a strong sense of ethics and morals in the student. A jam-packed curriculum and the need for standardized testing has crowded a consideration of the whole child out of schools. We are left educating only the academic part of the child, and it seems from what we have observed so far that we are not doing a very good job even of that. Over 100 years ago, John Dewey (1903) expressed the importance of schools not artificially dividing the psychological from the social in educating a child. To the extent that we consider the intellectual as distinct from the moral, he said, we do a disservice to the student. Noddings (2002) goes further and says that the curriculum should be completely based on teaching students how to be “loving and loveable people” who have the capacity for caring for others. All of this requires time to accomplish, as well as a deep commitment on the part of administration and faculty to model everything expected of students. Brimi (2009) puts it starkly: “You are a high school English teacher. The quality of your work is measured by your students’ performance on county and state standardized tests. Do you spend time on character and moral education? Or do you, in the words of a colleague, ‘imagine that all your students go home after school, read the Bible, drink milk and go to bed before ten o’clock.’” (p. 125).

The National Association of Educators states that “public education is the cornerstone of our social, economic, and political structure and is of utmost significance in the development of our moral, ethical, spiritual, and cultural values” (National Education Association, 2018, p. 191). The Association of American Educators Code of Ethics for Educators Principle I begins, “The professional educator accepts personal responsibility for teaching students character qualities that will help them evaluate the consequences of and accept the responsibility for their actions and choices.” (Association of American
Educators, n.d., Principle I: Ethical Conduct toward Students). Are we even coming close to these expectations? Is it time for a stand down?

References


## SCASA Business Affiliates

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