



2025 SCASA Innovative Ideas Institute Breakout Sessions

Monday, June 16, 2025
11:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.

Addition by Subtraction: How Efficient and Effective Collaborative Teams are Using Essential Standards to Improve Student Learning

Robby Roach, Will Jones, and Darryl Imperati, Palmetto High School

This session will focus on how the school leadership has increased collective teacher efficacy. Collaborative content area teacher teams have been empowered to deconstruct standards and identify essential learning targets and this practice has led to increases in student learning.

From Vision to Victory: A Superintendent's Vision Provides Victory for Students

Steve Glenn, Greenwood District 50

Join Dr. Steve Glenn as he shares his journey of transforming a high-poverty, underperforming school district with a compelling vision that resonated with stakeholders. In just five years, Dr. Glenn's strategic vision propelled Greenwood School District 50 from 53rd to 22nd in state rankings. This session will equip you with practical strategies to flip the script in your own district, turning challenges into opportunities for student achievement. Join us to explore how vision can lead to tangible victories for students!

Cyclical Review of Educational Accountability in SC: What do Stakeholders Say?

Dana Yow and Matthew Lavery, SC Education Oversight Committee

Educational accountability in South Carolina is meant to support the continuous improvement of teaching and learning so that students are equipped with a strong academic foundation to meet the Profile of the South Carolina Graduate. Just as SC School Report Cards are meant to communicate to a variety of stakeholders the conditions, opportunities, and challenges that schools and students are experiencing, it is important to continuously re-evaluate the system as a whole to provide for continuous improvement. To that end, state law (§59-18-910) requires the EOC to seek feedback on our educational accountability system from a broad array of stakeholders to inform continuous improvement in our state. So far in 2025, we've conducted regional listening sessions, conducted surveys, and convened a key State Stakeholder Group to inform our review. Come hear an update of what we've learned from parents, business and industry persons, community leaders, and educators so far and provide your input as we seek feedback to set goals for the next five years.

All Really Means All- How a Multi-District Career Center Supports High Schools with getting all students college and/or career ready.

Tiffany Estes, Cecil Bonner, Stephanie Broadwell, and Haley Stollar, Anderson Institute of Technology

The Anderson Institute of Technology is a multi-district career center serving students from 3 school districts (Anderson 3, 4 and 5). In this session, administration will share innovative practices to help students become college and/or career ready, including non-diploma students. We will discuss the strategies (what worked and what didn't) and how we collaborated with each of our feeder high schools to meet their individual needs and implementation of work-based learning opportunities. Additionally, we will discuss the hiring of a Transition Instructor and how this position supports our teachers and students, especially those students with IEPs and 504 plans, and our future plans to expand course offerings for students with disabilities.

Supporting Personalized Learning through MTSS

Elizabeth Watts, Devyn Gibbons, Allen Kirby, and Ricky White, Walker Gamble Elementary School

Have your teachers and/or interventionists struggled with implementing an effective and successful multi-tiered system of supports? Do instructional strategies and skills meet the individual learning needs of struggling students? Is progress monitoring data collected weekly, in an efficient manner, and used to guide instructional decisions? Join Walker Gamble Elementary School's administrators and literacy coach to discuss how a successful MTSS model leads to student growth and achievement. Through the development of a master schedule which provides ample time for tiered instruction, learning has become more personalized to build student skills and understanding of content. A teams approach has also been incorporated into third through fifth grade intervention blocks. Presenters will share resources including progress monitoring forms, data sheets, and schedules that are used at WGE to create a successful MTSS process.

Bringing the Fun: Innovative Ideas for Improving School Culture and Student Achievement

Angel Ferguson and Diamond Berry, Bells Elementary School

Learn firsthand how innovative strategies turned obstacles into opportunities. Explore new ways to foster collaboration, invigorate community involvement, and achieve outstanding student outcomes by injecting FUN into school through the use of monthly and quarterly celebrations, school-wide themed events, school clubs, staff team building activities and more. These strategies will ignite enthusiasm among students and staff. Learn how to adjust your processes and embed culture and core values throughout your school to create an environment that students, teachers, and parents want to be a part of. Whether an educator, administrator, or leader, this session offers practical and adaptable strategies for overcoming challenges, building a positive school culture, and elevating student achievement. You will be inspired to implement positive change in your school community to make school a FUN place to learn and grow.

Hot Topics in School Law that Every Administrator Needs to Know

Kathy Mahoney, Vernie Williams, and Dwayne Mazyck, Halligan Mahoney & Williams

This session will focus on the very latest school law issues resulting from new laws passed by the legislature, as well as recent court cases applicable to the school setting.

Maximizing the power of SLOs and Collective Teacher Efficacy: Lessons Learned from a Decade of School-based Professional Study

Tammy Pawloski, Francis Marion University

Are you concerned that your Student Learning Objective (SLO) process is not as effective as it is intended to be? Do you see a need for authentic educator reflection that is actionable in real time, rather than at the end of the year when students are already gone? Learn how these common concerns led to the development of a budget-neutral professional study model that utilizes a simple approach for guiding educators to 'inspect what they expect.' Explore a four-step process for embedding SLOs into a simple-to-manage and budget-neutral sustained professional study model that is informed by the newest research on Collective Teacher Efficacy, the often-overlooked educational influence John Hattie describes as having the greatest impact on student learning. Take away specific strategies for elevating the power of SLOs and pitfalls to avoid.

Break Down Silos with ClassLink Analytics to Drive Informed Decision-Making

Stephanie Jacobs and Rachel Holloway, York District 4

In the Fort Mill School District, we are committed to supporting student learning by providing high-quality resources to advance student learning, including digital tools and various technologies. While we provide some tools and programs at the district level, we know that teacher-leaders and schools are learning about new technologies they may want to use with students. As a result, the Technology Services department created the "Digital Resource Request" process. Participants will learn about the evolution of the educational resource procurement process and how it has helped to break down silos in our district. Often, the rigor applied to evaluating digital resources students use daily stops once the purchasing decision is made. Yet, it is just as essential to assess materials after the purchase. The question and conversation now becomes, "Should we keep the resource?" Different data is needed to support that decision-making process. That's where ClassLink's usage of analytics becomes integral to the conversation. Listen to how we have opened the lines of communication in our district, creating a culture where data-informed conversations and decisions are made that impact students' learning outcomes. Participants will walk away with practical tips and "tricks" that can be easily implemented.

TraffickProofSC: Educating and Empowering Communities to Address Human Trafficking

Ashley Bishop and Blake Easter, SC Attorney Generals Office Human Trafficking Task Force

Participants will learn what human trafficking is, indicators of trafficking, and SC trends. Additionally, we will discuss a curriculum, professional developments for school staff, and information for parents that are offered free to schools in South Carolina.

Behavior Regulation and Emotional Wellness: The BREW-Haha of a K-5 Team Approach to Improving Student's Availability for Learning

Wanda Gadsden, David Walker, Alycia Williams, and Christina Prince, Office of Special Services; and Annette Pletcher, Fort Dorchester Elementary School

Dorchester School District Two and Fort Dorchester Elementary School proudly initiated the Behavior Regulation & Emotional Wellness (BREW) Program at the start of the 2023-2024 school year following an initial period of planning with the BREW Task Force, which began in the spring of 2023. We are pleased to share program planning, processes, progress, and projections with your district and school teams. The DSD2 BREW Team is a committed group of representatives from the Office of Special Services in partnership with the Fort Dorchester Elementary School administrative team, faculty, and staff who share the leadership, accountability, and responsibility along with students and families to reach both behavioral and academic success!

The BREW program is built on the principles of applied behavior analysis, MTSS, social-emotional learning, positive student-teacher relationships, parent involvement, and ultimately student buy-in. The BREW Program foundationally incorporates the qualities of safety, dignity, rapport building, and trust in

all student interactions. Our primary goal in the development of BREW remains to improve students' availability for learning and return them to their home schools better equipped with skills to navigate the daily routines and expectations of K-5 school life to experience social, emotional, and academic success.

Leveraging the Use of Data for in a Primary School

Jacqueline Norton, Dina Knight, and Thomas, Lake Carolina Elementary Lower School

Early childhood experiences set a foundation for social, emotional, and academic success. Students must be exposed to strategies that foster access to intervention and support to develop the skills needed for future academic success in their chosen pathways. Tier 1 instruction is necessary because it provides students with structure and an opportunity for an inclusive learning environment. Strong Tier 1 instruction is essential to ensuring that all students are afforded the opportunity to make progress when instruction is tailored to their needs with intentionality. Tier 1 also includes providing all a safe, supportive, and challenging learning environment. Utilizing data to make decisions about student learning is essential to monitoring our students' growth and success. Utilizing data is more than collecting data points; the crucial question is, what is being done with the data to inform instruction using evidence-based strategies?

Understanding the Impact of Chronic Absenteeism on Student Performance

Aveene Coleman, SC Department of Education

In this session, participants will gain an understanding of chronic absenteeism, including the significance of regular attendance and strategies for addressing chronic absenteeism. Participants will understand the definition and scope of chronic absenteeism, examine the impact of chronic absenteeism on student outcomes, examine data trends and absenteeism rates and discuss effective interventions and strategies to improve attendance.

Subgroup Support

Joey Greene, SC Department of Education

This session is designed around subgroup supports-no improvement designation is required for attendance-open to all TSI, ATSI 1st and 2nd Cycle schools. We will be deepening our understanding of root causes to explore potential action steps and looking at promising actions across the state taken by schools who are showing improved subgroup outcomes and who have exited their designation.

Monday, June 16, 2025

1:15 p.m. - 2:15 p.m.

Portfolios and High Quality Work in CTE

Bryce Myers, Lexington Technology Center

Over the last two years, one of our primary goals of our work plan at Lexington Technology Center has been for our teachers to have students produce high quality work samples that include craftsmanship, authenticity, and complexity. This process has been a regular part of our professional learning and of building a culture of high expectations. Finally, we want students to record their high quality work through CTE portfolios and to be able to show their work and learning to our business and community partners for an authentic experience that could potentially lead to future employment.

It's Not the Same Without You: Addressing Chronic Absenteeism in SC

Tenell Felder and Matthew Lavery, SC Education Oversight Committee

South Carolina's chronic absenteeism rate is over 20%. In addition to empty classroom seats, this negatively impacts our students' academic achievement. According to the most recent SC READY Math data, only 23% of chronically absent students are on grade level for math compared to 47% of their peers. Similar SC READY ELA data corresponds with national research showing that children chronically absent as early as preschool, kindergarten, and first grade are much less likely to read at grade level by the third grade and are four times more likely than proficient readers to drop out of high school. As our state chronic absenteeism rates remain high, what can be done to help students and parents appreciate the importance of coming to school? The South Carolina Education Oversight Committee is tackling the issue. This session will cover insights the EOC found during focus groups and surveys while presenting data that shows the importance of school attendance. Attendees will also get a sneak peek at the "Not the Same Without You" public awareness campaign that will kick off in July.

Best Practices for Working with Advocates & Educational Consultants

Adam Porter, Lindsey Marino, Nicole Lee, and Jennifer Thomas, Lancaster County Schools; and Vernie Williams, Halligan, Mahoney & Williams

In this session, participants will acquire tools that can be implemented immediately to reduce tensions in IEP and 504 meetings when an advocate or educational consultant is present. We will cover setting norms, best practices, building rapport, navigating challenging and contentious situations, and more!

Navigating the Path: Insights for New Testing and Accountability Coordinators in South Carolina

Chastity Evans, Fairfield County Schools and Rock Ratterree, Richland District 2

Embarking on a journey as a Testing and Accountability Coordinator in South Carolina can be both exciting and overwhelming. In this presentation, we will explore the essential knowledge and skills that can ease this transition. Drawing from personal experiences and best practices, we will share key insights on understanding state testing protocols, data management, and accountability measures. Participants will learn about the critical resources available for support, effective communication strategies with stakeholders, and the importance of fostering a culture of continuous improvement. This session aims to empower new coordinators with the tools and confidence they need to navigate their roles successfully, ensuring that they can contribute to their schools and districts in meaningful ways. Whether you're just starting out or looking to refine your approach, join us for a valuable discussion on what every new coordinator should know to thrive in this pivotal role.

3 C's for Becoming a Trajectory-Changing School: Culture, Consistency, and Coherence!

Angela Hinton, Spartanburg School District Two; Zachary McQuigg, Boiling Springs High School; Erik Gerstenacker, Chesnee High School; and Rebekah Mattison, Cooley Springs-Fingerville Elementary

Recent research indicates that “trajectory-changing” schools, or schools whose students consistently grow an average of 1.3 years of growth per year, do three core things well: They create a culture of belonging, deliver consistent grade-level instruction, and build a coherent instructional program. Our partnership with Dr. Doug Fisher and Dr. Nancy Frey has been a game-changer for Spartanburg School District Two. Over the past three years, we have exceeded the standards of 'districts like ours' in poverty parameters. Our students have consistently outperformed in all areas of SC Ready and the EOCs. The success stories from some of our "trajectory-changing" schools and the strategies we've developed to support the three core areas will be shared and are a testament to our commitment to student growth.

Trailblazing Together: Empowering Women Leaders in Education

Kathy Hipp, Anderson School District 3 and Brenda Kelley, Anderson School District 5

In today's educational landscape, women leaders often face unique challenges that require a robust toolkit of self-care, confidence, communication skills, and resilience. This session is designed to empower female administrators and educational leaders by addressing crucial aspects of personal and professional growth. We will delve into practical strategies for time management, overcoming gender bias, building unshakeable confidence, and fostering resilience in the face of adversity. Join the discussion as we explore how self-care and intentional leadership can transform challenges into opportunities and support your journey as you write your personal story as a trailblazing leader.

The Rehabilitative Power of Behavior Improvement and Student Success

Chonsie Eechaute, Kim Robbins, and Brion Rutherford, East Edisto Middle School

Promoting student success through behavior improvement can be effectively achieved by implementing the "Four R's" strategy: refocus, recognition, reflection, and reconnection. This structured approach aims to reduce recidivism in the behavior improvement room and foster long-term positive change. Recognizing the importance of in-school suspension (ISS) as a rehabilitative tool rather than a punitive measure is critical for fostering positive student outcomes. When ISS programs focus on behavior improvement, skill-building, and reflection, they provide students with opportunities to learn from their mistakes in a constructive environment. Instead of isolating students or merely punishing them for their actions, a rehabilitative ISS encourages personal growth, accountability, and the development of emotional regulation. This approach not only benefits the student by promoting positive behavioral changes but also contributes to a more supportive and inclusive school culture.

AI for Admin Superstars: Reclaim Your Time & Unleash Creativity

Stephanie Jacobs and Rachel Holloway, York School District 4

Ditch the drudgery and embrace the power of AI! This session will introduce you to practical AI tools like Canva, Gemini, and Adobe Express, designed to automate tasks, enhance communication, and boost your creative output. Learn how to design stunning visuals, generate personalized content, and streamline your workflow, so you can focus on what matters most: leading your school to success.

Grit and Growth: Elevating Practices for Sustainable Success

Justin Ludley, Megan Yount, and Stephanie Rees, Greer High School

This session will explore how Greer High School refines its systems and practices to foster long-term student achievement. By embracing a culture of grit and growth, Greer High has implemented strategic initiatives that address diverse student needs, leading to measurable improvements.

Key initiatives include: 9GR Student Success Cohort Meetings: A targeted approach for tracking students' academic and social progress; Freshman Academy Support Structures: A robust framework designed to provide personalized support for freshmen, focusing on academic intervention, social-emotional learning, and proactive engagement to reduce dropout rates and increase promotion; EOC (End of Course) Support and Incentives: Innovative strategies to prepare students for End of Course assessments, including data-driven interventions and incentive programs that motivate and reward academic improvement and excellence; School-Wide PLC Development: Ongoing professional learning communities promoting collaborative teacher development and instructional best practices; "Attacking the GAP" (SE and MLL Subgroups): Focused efforts to address achievement gaps through targeted interventions and equity-focused instruction. Participants will gain actionable strategies to create a culture of grit and growth, empowering educators to enhance their practices for lasting student success.

Empowering Educators: The Assistant Principal's Role in Supporting Teachers Inside and Outside the Classroom

Stanley Rogers, North Middle High School and Alyssa Mitchell-Pelzer, Lockett Elementary School

In today's dynamic educational landscape, the role of the Assistant Principal (AP) extends far beyond administrative tasks. This presentation will explore innovative strategies for Assistant Principals to effectively support teachers, fostering a collaborative environment that enhances both teaching practices and student outcomes. We will discuss actionable approaches for providing instructional leadership, facilitating professional development, building relationships that lead to open communication and trust, and promoting teacher well-being. Join us to discover how Assistant Principals can become invaluable allies in empowering teachers to thrive in and out of the classroom!

AR²: A Site Based Approach to Teacher Recruitment and Retention at Longleaf Middle School

Teresa Mingo, Kimberly Danner, and Martin Sims, Longleaf Middle School

At Longleaf Middle School, we view teacher retention as part of an ongoing, three-phase cycle: Attraction, Recruitment, and Retention (AR²). Our unique AR² approach recognizes that these phases often overlap, creating a holistic system that fosters trust and builds strong relationships among teachers, administrators, and the school community. While we value the essential role of our Human Resources division, we believe successful staffing requires more than external support—it demands effective, site-based systems.

This presentation will explore how Longleaf has developed and implemented systems that align with our AR² model. From creating an attractive school culture that draws in high-quality educators, to recruiting teachers who fit our values, and ultimately retaining them through intentional, relationship-based strategies, we ensure that every phase of the cycle is deeply integrated. Join us as we share our practices, successes, and challenges in cultivating a professional environment where educators can thrive, ultimately benefiting our students and community.

One Team, One Purpose

Melida Reeves, Kelly Dunlap, and Erica Brady, La France Elementary School

In intervention services, all staff are strategically utilized to maximize support for students facing academic or behavioral challenges. Teachers, specialized staff, related arts teachers, and support personnel collaborate to create a holistic approach tailored to individual needs. Classroom teachers work closely with intervention specialists, who bring expertise in specific strategies and resources. This collaboration ensures interventions are data-driven and effective. School counselors may also be involved, addressing social-emotional factors that can impact learning.

Champions for Instructional Change: Aligning Teacher Support with the 2024 SC CCR ELA Standards

Brenna McCormick and Kayce Prince-Harvey, SC Department of Education

Participants can expect an engaging professional development session designed to empower school administrators with the tools and strategies necessary to effectively align teacher observation, evaluation, and coaching practices with the 2024 SC CCR ELA Standards. Focused on utilizing the "ELA Essentials: A Coaching Checklist," the session will cover how this tool supports instructional improvement and aligns with the new standards. This session will provide an overview of key components of the standards and practical insights into the evaluation of teachers of language arts using the South Carolina Teaching Standards 4.0 rubric.

Monday, June 16, 2025
2:30 p.m. - 3:30 p.m.

Overcoming Absenteeism: The Impact of Mental Health Support and Parental Involvement

Kelly Brown, Lexington-Richland School District 5 and Jami Marino, Cook Center for Human Connection

Anxiety, depression, and other mental health challenges contribute to absenteeism and learning loss, creating a vicious cycle that hinders academic progress. Discover effective strategies to combat chronic absenteeism, including mental health programs, fostering supportive school environments, and engaging families. This session will equip you with a multifaceted approach to provide the necessary interventions to keep students present and engaged in their education.

Rome Wasn't Built In a Day; Neither is District Transformation. Timing is Everything

Jaime Hembree, Pamela Turman, Melissa Cockrell, and Sulema Wright, McCormick County Schools

Hear how the McCormick County School District leadership team engaged their staff to make district transformation a reality, yielding improvement in school report card ratings. Learn who they involved, what structures they put into place, and the cultural shifts that were made to achieve substantial results. Attendees will hear how district leadership and school administration teams worked seamlessly together to implement needed change. Participants can walk away with "use the next day strategies" that will yield progress, growth and transformation across their school district.

Is your Graduation Rate and Career and College Readiness Rate on Life Support?

Deneathra Butler, REFOCUS ACADEMY; Tira Williams and Bobby Hall, Hunter Kinard Tyler High School

Is your graduation rate at 90% or higher? If not, why? With some strategic, deliberate strategies you can get your grad rate off of life support. By strategically using your guidance counselor, career specialist, assistant principal, and your teachers in the building you can build a winning team for your senior class. How can the building level team, ensure that all high school students graduate as being career or college ready? Do they have multiple goals? Do they want to join the armed forces? Are they dual enrollment ready? Are they ready for AP courses? Or, are they work ready? Let's give each student a personalized experience so that they can meet the profile of a SC graduate.

Using AI in Schools: Updates from the SREB AI Commission

Bob Stokes and Ivy Coburn, Southern Regional Education Board (SREB)

As chair of the SREB AI Commission, Governor Henry McMaster charged his committee with forming policy recommendations and strategy guidance for states and districts regarding the use of AI in Education. A focus will be on both inward facing (tools to help teachers and leaders) as well as outward facing (applications involving student use) methods of implementing AI in schools. South Carolina and SREB are on the forefront of implementing AI in a manner to best meet the needs of the students we serve. Come and hear about the plan.

Meeting Staffing Needs by Supporting Paraprofessionals in Their Transition to Teaching

Jennifer Watson, Columbia College

With teacher shortages continuing to challenge schools nationwide and often having the most severe impact on our most needy students, paraprofessionals represent an untapped resource in solving staffing challenges. Paraprofessionals already possess invaluable experience working closely with students and faculty, which makes them ideal candidates for teaching roles. By investing in the professional growth of paraprofessionals, schools can address staffing shortages more efficiently while promoting diversity, inclusivity, and staff retention. By providing paraprofessionals with the right support as they work towards a teaching degree, principals can help them transition into full-time teachers, strengthening the teaching workforce and improving student outcomes. This session will equip attendees with actionable tools grounded in current research with non-traditional students enrolled in a teacher preparation program in South Carolina.

Admin Swap Shop: Sharing Tricks of the Trade in School Administration

Michael Lovecchio, Beaufort-Jasper Academy for Career Excellence

Learn some leadership hacks from a seasoned “hack” and other great educators who attend! Being a school administrator is juggling with one hands tied behind your back—you need balance, finesse, and a few well-kept secrets. In this interactive session, we’ll ditch the formalities and dive into a dynamic roundtable discussion. Our goal? To swap the most effective tricks of the trade. Whether you’ve got a communication tip that’s saved your sanity or a brilliant strategy for promoting your school, this is the place to share. Together, we’ll explore everything from creating a vibrant, student-centered culture to connecting with key stakeholders. Participants will leave with practical tools, new connections, and fresh energy to make school life easier.

Ties that Bind, Changes that Stick: A School Improvement Model for Rural Communities

Alyssa Leibman, Wallace-Gregg Elementary School; Wendy Frazier, Dewey L. Carter Elementary School; and Latonya Yates-Ford, Savannah Grove Elementary School

With a 2023-2024 report card of "Excellent" for Dewey L. Carter, "Good" for Savannah Grove, and "Good" for Wallace-Gregg for the first time in both school's history, joins us for a session that provides concrete and step-by-step ways to invigorate your rural community to rally around meaningful school improvement. Participants will receive a tactical plan for exiting CSI, raising report card results, creating rigorous instruction, strategically using Title 1 funds for maximum student impact, and recruiting top-quality teachers in a rural community with nearly 100% student poverty levels.

From Doubt to Belief: Building a Successful Early College Program

Brandon Baskett, The College Center

Tired of watching your students settle for less? Ready to empower them to achieve their dreams? Join us to learn how we created The College Center (TCC), Lexington County School District One's groundbreaking early college program.

Discover how to build a thriving early college program that offers students the opportunity to earn an associate's degree for free. Don't miss this opportunity to gain practical knowledge and inspiration that can transform your school and the lives of your students.

Breakthrough Bootcamp

Rob Burggraaf and Jennifer Wise, Lexington School District Two

This session will run participants through a miniature version of Lexington Two's interventionist bootcamp. For years our schools offered Tier III intervention for reading and math, but they significantly varied in terms of structure, resources, and the number of certified interventionists. For change to happen and students to grow, we need a highly trained combat force to fight through learning gaps and lead our students to higher ground and a stronger position. To start the year with a three-day bootcamp for all our academic interventionists, both certified and classified, with professional development specifically tailored to their role. Topics include an overview of Tier III instruction, expectations of their role, diagnostic assessments, how to plan effective interventions, resources and strategies to leverage with students, progress monitoring, and using artificial intelligence to help differentiate instruction. This format allows our elementary and middle school interventionists to work alongside each other for better vertical articulation, as data indicates a significant drop in student success when they make the transition from elementary to middle school. Come lace up your combat boots, go through a basic training, and come out prepared to fight the challenges of intervention back at your own school or district.

A Blueprint for Success: Aligning the Components of Teacher Clarity with the 3 Questions of a PLC!

Angela Hinton and Jaime Dawson, Spartanburg School District Two; Stephanie Blanton, Cooley Springs-Fingerville Elementary School; Casey Corn, Rainbow Lake Middle School; and Steven Olejnik, Spartanburg School District Two

According to Hattie's research on powerful influences on learning, Teacher Clarity has a .84 effect size - which can more than double the student learning rate in a year. In this presentation, you will learn how educators at all levels in Spartanburg Two (district, school, and classroom) are ensuring that everyone in their system not only understands the components of Teacher Clarity but implements them with fidelity through the district's Teaching and Learning Team (TLT) process - our version of data-driven, focused PLCs. Participants will learn how our district has aligned the components of teacher clarity with the three questions of a PLC (TLT): 1) What do we want all students to learn? 2) How will we know when they have learned it? and 3) How will we respond when some students have learned and some have not? In addition, we will share our processes for engaging all administrators, instructional coaches, and teachers in the learning and implementing our TLTs aligned with Teacher Clarity. When teachers are intentional in organizing curriculum, instruction, and assessment around teacher clarity, students not only know what they are learning but where they are on their pathways toward mastery of the standards!

Empowering Educators: The Journey to Transforming Schools

Dawn Hooker, Alexander Elementary School; Jennifer Couch, Lakeview Middle School; and Charlotte McDavid, Greenville County Schools

We are committed to ensuring that students achieve their highest potential. To that end, we have revamped our tier one instruction and improved various services within the school. We've also implemented a comprehensive system to address behavioral issues effectively. As a school, we are dedicated to overcoming the stigma of being perceived as a failing institution. We are actively working to change this narrative and reshape the perception of our school within the community.

Implementing the 2025 South Carolina College- and Career-Ready Mathematics Standards

Sandra Ammons and , SC Department of Education

During the session, participants will receive information about implementation of the 2025 SC College- and Career-Ready Mathematics Standards including major focus points and course pathways. Participants will leave with resources to support successful implementation of the 2025 math standards.

Instant Ideas

Each presenter shares their personal and professional passions for a total of 8 minutes. The following topics will be shared.

Workforce Centers of Excellence: how school, industry and community come together.

Brad Henry and Perry Mills, SC Public Charter School District

Free Online High School STEM Elective Courses

Daniel Dorsel, SC Governor's School for Science and Mathematics

Building and Sustaining Affinity Spaces

Kalila Wilson and Tasha Joyner, Black Educators Affinity Group

Teaching Students to Become Accountable for Their Own Data

Tanya Wilson and Caroline Hunt, Eastside Elementary School

AI-Ready Classrooms: Preparing for the Future with Generative AI

Heather Dickerson, Anderson School District Three

Tuesday, June 17, 2025

8:30 a.m. - 9:30 a.m.

Best is the Standard - Setting the Stage with Honest and Targeted Leadership

Adam Coats and Emily Wilson, Starr-Iva Middle School

Small changes can create immeasurable gains for your school! At our school we promote and believe, "Best is the Standard," and this is grounded in our culture and our actions. Whether it is having a difficult conversation, analyzing and refining instructional strategies, or addressing the entire culture of the school, sometimes we (as leaders and educators) must be vulnerable and humble ourselves to see the change we hope to usher in. Join us as we pull back the curtain on the good, the bad, and the ugly in our schoolwide journey.

We Are Blue Ridge-Bridging the Gap Between Middle School and High School

Sandra Taylor and Ashley Wardlaw, Blue Ridge High School

This session explores how Blue Ridge Middle and High team together to ensure a seamless transition for students moving from middle to high school. Since 2021, we have focused on building strong relationships and fostering collaboration during this critical 8th to 9th grade matriculation. Key initiatives include the Math Switcharoo and Science Switcharoo, where administrators, instructional coaches and teachers from both schools engage in peer observations and feedback. We share insights, best practices, and constructive feedback, ultimately enhancing our teaching strategies. By delving into the standards for both middle and high school, we identify connections and gaps that exist. This enables us to align our curricula, providing continuity of learning for success in Biology and Algebra 1. Our approach also builds strong relationships among staff. We cultivate an environment where collaboration flourishes and a culture of shared responsibility for student success exists.

Through our collective efforts, we aim to empower our students, ensuring they are well-prepared to face high school with confidence. This initiative exemplifies our commitment to student success and our belief that collaboration among educators is key to achieving this goal. Together, we are building a brighter future for our students, one transition at a time.

Transforming Early Math Learning in Spartanburg School District 7

Terry Pruitt and Brett Vaughn, Spartanburg School District 7; and Jen Evans, Age of Learning

This presentation delves into how Spartanburg School District 7 leverages cutting-edge educational technology to elevate early math instruction. Through the dynamic use of the My Math Academy platform, the district harnesses artificial intelligence to personalize learning and provide educators with real-time, actionable insights. Participants will discover how Spartanburg 7 effectively uses data to drive instructional strategies and significantly boost student outcomes with early learners.

Balancing Students' Rights Against the Greater Good: Fair Discipline and School Safety

Kelvin Williams, Sumter County Schools

Balancing Students' Rights Against the Greater Good: Fair Discipline and School Safety explores the delicate balance between safeguarding individual students' rights and ensuring a secure, productive school environment. This session provides school administrators with strategies for making fair, proportionate disciplinary decisions that consider both the needs of individual students and the broader school community. Through case studies and practical examples, participants will learn how to uphold due process, protect privacy, and maintain students' right to education, while managing safety concerns. Effective communication techniques and collaboration with staff and parents will also be highlighted to ensure transparency and trust throughout the discipline process.

Beyond The Blueprint: Optimizing District Initiatives for Lasting Impact

Latoya Dixon, York 1 School District and Stephanie DiStasio, TSG Education Advisors

In this session, we will explore key elements of strategic planning that are often overlooked and provide actionable recommendations for optimizing district initiatives. From implementing outcome-based contracts with vendors for program evaluation to rethinking traditional approaches for building working groups, this presentation will offer practical strategies, such as community conversation checkpoints, to drive meaningful and measurable improvements. Discover how to align district goals with innovative methods to ensure lasting impact for students, staff, and community.

Evolving HR in K-12: From Compliance to People-Centered Operations

Jennifer Hart, Aiken County Public Schools

As the demands on K-12 education systems grow, the role of Human Resources must adapt to focus more on people-centered strategies that support both educators and staff. This presentation explores the transformation from traditional HR to People Operations within the K-12 sector, emphasizing employee well-being, engagement, and the strategic use of data to improve workforce outcomes. Attendees will gain insights into how this shift can lead to a more supportive, collaborative, and efficient educational environment, fostering better performance and retention in schools.

Tips and Tools for Improving Your School's Special Education Programs

Peter Keup and Abbey Duggins, SC Department of Education

The presentation will discuss tools and reports in EDPlan SC that can be used by school site administrators to improve IDEA implementation and student outcomes at their schools. The presentation will also provide tips for school site administrators for improving specialized instruction through the use of high quality instructional materials and for reducing the use of exclusionary discipline for students with disabilities.

Office of Instructional Supports - "Looking Back, Moving Forward: OIS Team Updates & 25-26 Goals"

Alisha Greene and Marie Gibbons-Tammy Graham-Elizabeth Schumpert and Charlene Gleaton, SC Department of Education

"Looking Back, Moving Forward: OIS Team Updates & 25-26 Goals" will showcase key highlights from the 24-25 school year and outline the strategic goals for 25-26, as presented by team leads from the SCDE's Office of Instructional Supports. Representatives from the Read to Succeed, Early Learning, Palmetto Math Project, and MTSS teams will each have 10-15 minutes to share their team's successes, challenges, and progress over the past year. They will also provide insight into their vision and goals for the upcoming year, focusing on growth, continued success, and innovative strategies to meet the goal of 75% of students at or above grade level by 2030.

Tuesday, June 17, 2025

9:45 a.m. - 10:15 a.m.

AI Magic in Education: The Customer Service Revolution

Arika Trimmell, K12 Insight

Discover how generative AI is reshaping customer service in schools. This session will delve into how AI is being used to enhance communication, streamline processes, and support school districts across the nation. Join us to see real-world examples of AI applications, including automated workflows and a constantly available chatbot. At the end of the session, you'll have the opportunity to discuss the technology's impact on K-12 communication and ask questions about its potential benefits and implementation. If you're interested in AI, workflow automation, or transforming customer service in education, this session is one you do not want to miss!

Career-Ready Students: Leveraging CTE Programs for Career and Academic Excellence

Jennifer Holliday, Beverly Wood, Newberry County Career Center

In today's rapidly evolving job market, equipping students with both academic knowledge and practical skills is critical. This session will educate school leaders on how Career and Technical Education (CTE) programs play a vital role in enhancing students' academic achievement and career readiness. We will explore how integrating CTE into a comprehensive academic strategy can lead to improved career-ready scores on School Report Cards. Attendees will learn strategies for aligning CTE programs with industry demands and academic standards, fostering student engagement, and promoting pathways to successful careers. Join us to discover how your school can leverage CTE to build a stronger, more career-prepared student body.

One Big Happy Family: Organizing School Culture to Facilitate Student Involvement

Allison Hepfner and Brandon Haskins, D.R. Middle School

At D.R. Hill Middle School, fostering a culture of high student involvement is central to enhancing student achievement and pride. In this session, the audience will learn about the collaborative initiatives and diverse extracurricular opportunities offered, encouraging students to take active roles within the school community. The school emphasizes leadership and character development, empowering students to make decisions and take pride in their accomplishments. We want to share how D.R. Hill Middle School staff creates an environment where students feel valued and inspired, leading to improved academic outcomes and strong community spirit.

Addressing the General Education Gap for students in an Intensive Behavior Setting

Lia McKay, Erin Flanagan, Amber McCoy, Rebecca Fuller, and Matthew Rodgers, Larne Elementary

Students in intensive behavioral settings often are very capable of grade level work, however, the many disruptions in learning due to disruptive behaviors impact their grade level performance. The traditional model of a self-contained special education class is not typically able to provide the general education curriculum and support these students still need. Our classrooms include a general education teacher, as well as a special education teacher and an assistant, to address both the behavior and academic needs for our students. And it has made all the difference.

Data-Driven Transformation: Learning from Joanna-Woodson Elementary School's EOC Trailblazer Success

Arneice Renwick and Janice Farmer, Joanna-Woodson Elementary

Discover how Joanna-Woodson Elementary School revolutionized its learning environment through data-driven collaboration. In this session, you'll learn actionable strategies to: foster a data-literate culture: Create a school environment where data informs decision-making at all levels; build teacher capacity: Empower your educators to use data to improve instruction effectively; and engage stakeholders: Involve parents and community members in the data-driven learning process. Terry Pratchett wisely stated, "If you don't know where you come from, then you don't know where you are, and if you don't know where you are, then you don't know where you're going." By leveraging data, you can set clear goals, track progress, and ensure students are on the right path.

Building and Sustaining a Culture of Excellence

Eric Masaitis, Katresa Charles, and Katherine Spigner, Alice Drive Elementary School

How did Alice Drive Elementary earn its first ever Excellent rating on the SC School Report Card? How did we do it again the next year? There is no magic bullet, but there is a little bit of magic in all that we do. Learn how we built a culture based around trust, collective leadership, and high expectations for all. Learn how leadership has learned to let the teachers teach the standards and not push new initiatives chasing short-term results. How do we not only attract the best people, but get the best out of the people we already have? Why does the principal say he is not student-centered, and what does he mean by that? How does STEM-based learning fit into the culture of the school? Learn how data and MTSS went from being negative four letter words into invaluable resources for student growth. Learn what challenges have we faced over the past few years, how we overcame them, and where we are going from here. If you are looking for an energetic and fast-paced, yet practical and thoughtful presentation about one school's journey and its four pillars of success, then this is the session for you.

Parents & Teachers + Collaboration = Student Success

Nicole Torbert-Moorer, Stacy Kubu, and Michelle Traynum, Homeland Park Primary; and Stephanie Rincon, Anderson School District Five

Parents and caregivers are invited to monthly bi-lingual sessions designed to reach all of our school's populations and are based on needs of early literacy and math skills, including pre-reading activities, storytelling, listening to and following directions, as well as vocabulary development. Interactive and age-appropriate activities are designed to foster a love for reading, language development, and math. The program will encourage parents to create a home environment conducive to learning, promoting literacy through the availability of books and other hands-on educational tools. Math manipulatives are purchased, and suggestions are given on how to use them, so that the parents are better equipped to help their child/children at home. We want to create a supportive learning environment that benefits both adults and their children.

Leveling Up Education: Integrating Esports into Middle School Curriculum

Ashley Williams and Joshua Greene, Beech Springs Middle School

In this session, attendees will learn how esports can be seamlessly integrated into the middle school curriculum to enhance student engagement, build teamwork, and develop critical thinking skills. The session will explore the logistics of starting an esports program, including securing funding, choosing the right games, and involving students from diverse backgrounds. The principal will also discuss the academic and social-emotional benefits observed among students participating in esports, such as improved problem-solving abilities, increased self-confidence, and stronger peer relationships. Participants will gain insights into how esports can be a powerful tool for reaching students who might not be engaged in traditional extracurricular activities. The session will also provide practical strategies for overcoming common challenges, such as balancing screen time and ensuring inclusivity. Whether you're new to the idea of esports in education or looking to enhance an existing program, this session offers valuable guidance and inspiration for bringing the benefits of esports to your school.

Retaining Teachers through Positive Climate

Taylor Crosby, Pinecrest Elementary School

This session will look into ideas for how you can retain good teachers in your building by creating an environment where they are happy to come to work everyday!

Unlocking Student Potential: Elevate Support, Amplify Report Card Success

Jordan Ward and Carol Hill, Hannah-Pamplico High School

Hannah-Pamplico High School significantly improved its school report card score, rising from 46 (Below Average) to 59 (Average), through targeted efforts for at-risk students. The Highway to Higher Ed program allows selected 8th graders to start high school early by demonstrating their ability to handle high school coursework. The Renew Ed program, funded by the EEDA Grant, identifies students struggling with grades, attendance, or discipline and provides targeted interventions through an At-Risk Facilitator in a multi-tiered support system. Additionally, the Summer Bridge Program supports students transitioning from middle school by enrolling them in summer math and English classes taught by their future high school teachers.

Beyond student programs, the school enhanced its focus on data. Staff meetings included data reviews, comparing results year-over-year, and aligning them with school report card criteria. A key finding was a data entry issue with PowerSchool, inputting work-based learning in the wrong area. The school also collaborated with local organizations, such as the Pee Dee Coalition of Governments and SC Works, to provide career readiness opportunities for students through work-based learning programs.

Making Magic Happen with MTSS- Calling all Secondary Schools!

Rhonda Gregory, Greenville Technical Charter High School

MTSS isn't just for elementary students. Layers of support are necessary for high school students. Now more than ever, middle and high schools must implement systems of support for students. Explore how GTCHS gives students what they need to be successful through a unique approach to scheduling which allows for all teachers to offer daily office hours, WIN time for students weekly, and a Friday work session which allows for re-teaching, content mastery, and student accountability. Learn how a daily advisory period, built into the master schedule with advisors who "loop" with students, is essential for student success. Explore strategies for how students can be held accountable for missing or incomplete work during our Friday work sessions, as well as given an opportunity to show mastery, after meeting with a teacher during office hours, on a previously failed assessment. In addition, walk away with ideas for how to progress monitor students and coordinate work sessions for Tier 2 and Tier 3 supports. Finally learn how a designated "What I Need Time" coined as "WIN" is being implemented this school year during the day to give intentional content time for students and teachers to work on whatever the student needs each week. How are we able to do this? Come learn #thewarriorway and walk away with ideas for how you, too, can implement this in your building without it being an initiative or "one more thing to do." Instead, learn how this is a mindset and can be simplified to work for everyone.

Secondary Teachers' Perceptions on How Administrators Affect the Induction Process for New Teachers

Emily Duplantis, Dorchester School District Two and Greg Harrison, The Citadel

Schools nationwide are facing alarming teacher attrition rates. In suburban southeast South Carolina, 5% of teachers leave within their first three years, a rate that has doubled in just five years. This explanatory case study explores how shared decision-making and additional principal support during the induction process can improve teacher retention. Grounded in Hawthorne's participative leadership and Vygotsky's sociocultural theories, the study aims to give early career educators a voice. Using questionnaires and interviews, data was collected from 15 secondary teachers in their induction year. Thematic analysis revealed two key factors in reducing attrition: consistent, approachable administrative

support and the implementation of shared decision-making, where teachers collaborate in planning. When these factors are present, teachers experience a stronger sense of belonging and increased career longevity. Join us to hear what this district is doing to help retain their educators.

Tuesday, June 17, 2025
11:15 a.m. - 12:15 p.m.

Confessions of a Seasoned Novice: The good, the Bad, the Ugly of My First 90 Days as Superintendent.

Tony Hemingway, Fairfield County Schools

As a new superintendent, the first 90 days set the tone for your leadership and pave the way for long-term success. This session offers an opportunity to reflect on the initial challenges, accomplishments, and insights gained during this critical period. Participants will explore effective strategies to build relationships, drive student achievement, and foster community trust.

School Safety on a Budget: Protecting Schools without Breaking the Bank

Rich Todd, York School District Four

School districts and building administrators have the awesome responsibility of maintaining safe learning environments under very challenging circumstances. They must protect against a wide array of natural, manmade, and technological risks, hazards, and threats, often with limited resources. This session will discuss no- and low-cost strategies for enhancing school safety and provide an overview of free resources available to schools and district. School-safety grant opportunities will also be discussed.

Increasing Career Ready Numbers Through Teamwork

Craig Washington, Lashawnte D McCray-Sarvis, and Eugenie Parker, Heyward Career and Technology Center

Increasing Career Ready Numbers Through Teamwork. Learn how Heyward Career and Technology Center collaborates with eight high schools in Richland One, despite differing schedules (AB and 4x4), to achieve a remarkable 92% career readiness rate. Discover the keys to success, including effective communication on attendance, industry testing documentation, student recognition, and virtual learning opportunities. Our dedicated staff will demonstrate practical strategies and share their experiences in fostering career readiness among students. Don't miss this opportunity to enhance your school's career readiness initiatives!

Supporting Your "New Best" Teachers and Leaders

Melissa Tollison, Brad Moore, Becky Brady, and Seth Young, Anderson School District One

Now, more than ever, school districts feel the pressure of ensuring educators and leaders feel supported. Extraordinary efforts are actualized to create conditions for educators and leaders to increase their effectiveness while also retaining the best and the brightest. Anderson School District One provides an additional layer of support for induction principals and assistant principals in the form of our "New Best" leadership cohort. Patterned after a similar program for induction teachers at Powdersville Elementary School, our "New Best" cohort empowers new school leaders in ASD1 with critical knowledge and skills during these crucial formative years in school leaders. Join us for this session in which we will share strategies and practical "next steps" to begin your own system of support for new educators and leaders.

Enhancing Learning Through High Quality Instructional Materials

Paige Mitchell and Nicole Barker, SC Department of Education

We will discuss how to integrate high-quality instructional materials into our educational framework. These materials-aligned with learning standards, engaging, and accessible-are key to enhancing student outcomes and supporting diverse learning styles. By providing teachers with flexible resources, we can foster more effective teaching and empower students to excel. Investing in these materials ensures equity, improves retention, and promotes critical thinking. We will look at a

structured plan to implement, and evaluate these materials, ultimately leading to a more dynamic and inclusive learning environment.

Collaboratively Building Comprehensive Multilingual Learner Program Services

Tanya Franca, Greenville County Schools

Collaboratively planning effective services for multilingual learners is achieved when utilizing data, various program service delivery models, and multiple stakeholders. This session shares the collaborative process, data- and research-based guidelines, and examples of success. Attendees receive templates, graphic organizers, and resources needed to adjust and implement in programs, schools, and districts.

Starting Strong: Key Lessons for Early Principals on Boosting School Performance and Sustaining Growth

Charles Redfearn, Jefferson Elementary School

In this session, we'll explore essential strategies for early principals to drive meaningful school improvement and sustain growth. Drawing from my experience as a principal, including the successful turnaround of my school's state report card from Unsatisfactory to Average in just one year, I will share key lessons learned in building strong leadership teams, improving instruction, and fostering a positive school culture. Attendees will gain actionable insights into how to overcome common challenges and create lasting change in their schools.

Instant Ideas Session

Each presenter shares their personal and professional passions for a total of 8 minutes. The following topics will be shared.

Using the Arts as a Catalyst for Student Engagement

Emily Prado, Arts in Basic Curriculum Institute

Unlocking Potential: Innovating Support for the Whole Child

Ashley Taylor, Elizabeth Ray, Alethia Woodham, and Sarah Blackmon, Pate Elementary School

Micro-credentials in Action: Personalizing Professional Learning in South Carolina

Elizabeth Scarbrough, University of South Carolina and Fran Rogers, Greenville County Schools

Creating Culture to Achieve Success!

Shannon Berry and Candace Bohachic, Gordon Elementary School

Listen, Learn, Lead: Empowering Assistant Principals and Aspiring Leaders Through Collective Efficacy Cycle & Mentorship

Kay DeWalt, Fort Mill Elementary School; Jessica McCreary, Riverview Elementary School, and Rashaud Brown, Gold Hill Elementary School

Tuesday, June 17, 2025

1:30 p.m. - 2:30 p.m.

School Turnaround: Leadership & Talent Development

Melissa Brubaker, Marvaye Payton, and Vannessa Oldland, North Charleston Elementary School

This session will focus on the first two domains of rapid school improvement from the Center for School Turnaround and Improvement. Participants will be led through the processes put in place that led to continuous growth at our school, moving from Below Average on the State Report Card to Good. The session will discuss ways to strengthen school improvement through strong literacy and math instruction and how to develop a strong PLC process centered around data-driven instruction. As part of this process, presenters will discuss ways to narrow your school's focus using a clear timeline, action steps, and identifying persons responsible for progress monitoring. This session is part one of two, with the second focusing on the areas of instructional framework and culture.

Don't be Scared It's Just: It's Just LEA*dership

Traci Hogan, Kate Malone, and Jason Warren, Greenville County Schools

Join us for an engaging session, "Don't Be Scared: Leading as the LEA in Special Education," where we empower school and district leaders to embrace their leadership roles in fostering inclusive education. This interactive workshop blends fun with practical insights, ensuring participants leave with concrete strategies to avoid common pitfalls and enhance their leadership practices. Participants will explore scenarios that illustrate the challenges and triumphs of serving as the Local Education Agency (LEA) for special education. Role-playing activities allow attendees to embody various perspectives, including those of families, educators, and LEAs, promoting empathy and understanding. Attendees will reflect on their dispositions toward students with disabilities and their families while developing essential skills in conflict resolution, communication, and resource management. This session highlights the importance of creating welcoming, inclusive environments that treat every student as a valued participant. Attendees will gain actionable practices that can be implemented in their schools immediately. Join us for a spirited exploration of leadership in special education and discover how to transform potential challenges into opportunities for growth, ensuring that all students receive the support they need to succeed.

Discovering the Power of Collaboration: How a PLC Focused School Can Ensure that All Students Learn at High Levels

Kyle Whitfield and Megan Selman, Wren High School

Research continually shows that effective schools embrace collaboration in the PLC process to sustain high levels of student achievement. Many high schools have struggled with effectively implementing and sustaining PLCs within the constraints of high school scheduling, in particular the ability to allocate time for common planning. Wren High School is in year 4 of our PLC journey and would like to share the failures and successes of creating a PLC that positively impacts student achievement. In this session, you will learn about our continued focus on effective PLC strategies such as ensuring common planning for all teachers, increasing rigor in all classrooms, utilizing effective common assessments, and providing remediation and enrichment for all students.

Dealing with Social and Emotional issues of AP students

Norman McQueen, HCS Scholars

AP, Dual Enrollment and Honors track and other students who are highly gifted, tend to have different stressors and issues than other high school students. Grades, parent expectations, autistic spectrum disorders, and social immaturity may cause emotional issues that affect their daily lives and cause classroom and grade issues. This session will deal with ways to address stress and emotional complications within AP and honors classes. Freshman Seminar, social functions, and collaborative classroom activities will all be discussed to give teachers and administrators a set of tools to assist students as they become highly successful students. These activities will help students work through social and emotional issues that may affect class dynamics, their learning at a high level, and the ability to be successful in highly demanding coursework

NotebookLM: Helping Your Team Make Sense of Information Overload with Collaborative Spaces and AI

Jeff Taylor, Greenville Technical Charter High School

NotebookLM is a Google tool designed to help users make sense of complex information from various sources. School and district administrators can use this tool to create collaborative digital workspaces, leveraging Google's Gemini AI as a research assistant. Quickly find answers by asking AI about your board policies or course offerings, ask AI to write a press release about upcoming events on your calendar, quickly summarize data from your SC School Report Card, and so much more.

Unlocking Opportunities: K-12 School Spaces for Community Use

Tamara Osborne, York School District Four

This presentation explores the benefits, strategies, and management of a K-12 facility rental program, focusing on how schools can maximize the use of their spaces to serve both educational and community needs. We'll cover how renting out gyms, auditoriums, and fields can generate additional revenue, foster partnerships with local or national organizations, and strengthen community engagement. Key topics include streamlining the booking process, balancing internal school events with external rentals, and ensuring proper maintenance and security. Thinking outside of the box to best fit your community needs. Attendees will learn best practices for marketing school spaces, setting competitive rental rates, and managing logistics efficiently. By the end, participants will have actionable insights into creating a sustainable rental program that benefits students, schools, and the broader community.

Engagement = Retention: Building a Culture Where Employees Thrive

Ashley Watson, Aiken County Schools

This presentation will equip leaders with the insights and practical tools needed to foster a workplace where employees feel valued and are motivated to stay, ultimately reducing turnover and creating a positive organizational culture. We will explore the connection between employee engagement and retention, providing actionable strategies for creating a positive work environment that encourages long-term commitment and productivity.

Transforming School Culture to Support Students in Poverty

Stanley Rogers, North Middle High School and Martin Sims, Longleaf Middle School

This presentation is designed for educators, administrators, and school leaders who are passionate about fostering equitable learning environments for students from economically disadvantaged backgrounds. Participants will explore strategies to change school culture and create a supportive, inclusive, and empowering atmosphere that addresses the unique challenges faced by students in poverty. This session is essential for those committed to closing the achievement gap and ensuring that every student has the opportunity to succeed, no matter their background.

Unlocking Potential: How Schools Can Effectively Utilize Palmetto Pathways

Anna Duvall and Roger Hedgis-Kligerman, SC Department of Education

Student academic opportunities, recognitions, and indicators have increased tremendously in recent years, with a corresponding increase in the complexity of tracking the completion of requirements to meet stated criteria. Hours of tedious manual transcript and pathway progression audits and unintentional human errors are leading to missed opportunities that negatively impact South Carolina students. To assist school districts with the monumental task of pathway progression tracking, the SCDE is providing Palmetto Pathways for free!

Palmetto Pathways is a dynamic pathway progression tracking tool that centralizes data from various sources, alleviates tedious manual transcript and pathway progression audits, and ensures the fidelity of implementation of the South Carolina Uniform Grading Policy (SC UGP) and related regulations. But Palmetto Pathways is much more than an auditing tool!

Come and learn innovative ways schools can leverage Palmetto Pathways data to not only monitor student progress- but also to identify achievement trends, gaps, and areas for growth. Come experience how Pathway's actionable insights can improve academic outcomes that will lead to student success. We will explore how to implement and integrate Palmetto Pathways into their existing frameworks to enhance educational outcomes and foster a supportive environment that promotes academic success.

Tuesday, June 17, 2025
2:45 p.m. - 3:45 p.m.

Launching your Principalship: Strategies for Success

Ryan Poston, St. James High School

Join for an insightful presentation tailored for new and aspiring principals. "Launching Your Principalship: Strategies for Success" offers a dynamic roadmap to navigate the exciting yet challenging journey of becoming an effective school principal. In this engaging session, we draw from our extensive experience as principals to impart practical wisdom, key insights, and essential strategies. We will cover critical topics, including leadership principles, building a positive school culture, fostering effective teacher relationships, and managing administrative responsibilities. Participants will gain actionable takeaways on communication skills, decision-making, and leveraging technology to streamline school operations. The presentation will emphasize the importance of stakeholder engagement, collaboration with teachers and parents, and the art of problem-solving in the ever-evolving educational landscape. With real-world anecdotes and evidence-based practices, we empower new principals to set themselves up for success, emphasizing the significance of adaptability and resilience in the role. This presentation promises to inspire, equip, and motivate the next generation of educational leaders to excel in their principalship and make a lasting impact on their schools and communities.

There Is No Magic: Intentional Processes to Reduce Discipline and Produce Outcomes in High Schools

Sam Fuller, Tami Shaffer, and Angela Hodges, South Aiken High School

South Aiken High School has been experiencing a shift in demographics for 10+ years that has seen an increase of Pupils in Poverty. Despite this shift South Aiken is in the midst of six consecutive years of decreased student referrals (61% decrease from 2018-2019 to 2023-2024) while also seeing consistently "Good" academic outcomes. These positive outcomes are the result of intentional processes to include positive branding, admin/counselor partnerships, vision casting, clearly communicated expectations, and positive relationships. This presentation will provide participants with an overview of how we live "All Means ALL".

All This Data and For What?

Bethany Giles, Georgetown County Schools and Marsha Moseley, Southern Regional Education Board (SREB)

We collect data from multiple sources: state and local assessments, classroom performance data and more. See how one school district used data to develop relationships, increase students' and teachers' success, and begin to transform a school system.

Elevating Educational Excellence: A Strategic Framework for School Success

Darah Huffman and Angela Abercrombie, Riverside High School

What does "Beyond" mean to you? How do you take a high-performing school and push it to achieve even more? In this session, we'll explore strategies for moving beyond success and into the realm of continuous growth and excellence. Learn how to empower your team by fostering an environment where teachers, staff, and students embrace a growth mindset. Discover how restructuring our Faculty Council, utilizing a digital data wall, and implementing our Warrior GRIT program—focused on "Push, Support, and Celebrate"—has driven Riverside High School to new heights. This presentation will equip you with tools to continuously push your school, support your staff, and celebrate success, all while striving for more. Join us as we explore how to lead your school to go beyond what anyone thought possible.

Section 504: Fact vs. Fiction – Myths, Missteps, and Best Practices

Sarah Longshore, Lexington School District One and Barbara Drayton, South Carolina Department of Education

In this interactive session, school and district leaders will explore the often misunderstood nuances of Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (Section 504). From compliance requirements to the persistent myths surrounding its implementation, this session will arm attendees with the tools needed to demystify the federal law. We will break down common misconceptions and discuss best practices to ensure that your school or district is implementing Section 504 with fidelity. Using real-life scenarios and practical examples, we'll address frequent misinterpretations and guide participants through effective strategies to support students under this important federal legislation. Participants will leave with clear, actionable steps and the confidence to lead your teams toward compliance and success.

Who Cares for the Carers? Explore the Secondary Effects of Trauma on School Administrators.

Denise Fowler, Airport High School

School administrators work with various stakeholders everyday and are often the problem solvers for those they face. This session will explore trauma, secondary trauma, the effects on the administrator, and how to avoid the effect.

Empowering International Teachers: Understanding. And Addressing The Challenges Foreign Teachers Face With Cultural and Instructional Adjustment To The US

Jasmine Matterson, Crestwood High School

This presentation is designed for all schools that hire or plan to hire international teachers. Educators will learn about the the background issues and challenges faced by international teachers in the US classroom. Presenter will provide research based evidence to support some research based practices that are necessary to help international teachers perform at their best.

SHINE: Leading a School Through MTSS to Affect Tier 2 Intervention

Christy Dodd and Carly Herron, Flat Rock Elementary School

We will share how we have managed the MTSS process to specifically identify Tier 2 intervention students, needs, and resources to impact direct instruction during a dedicated intervention period daily in our school. We will show how our SHINE (Students Having Intervention, Needs Met, and Enrichment) program has changed our school climate and positively impacted student achievement.

Public Charters and Their Accountability

John Payne, SC Public Charter School District

The South Carolina Charter Act (the Act) has one goal – reducing the achievement between low performing students and their higher performing peers in our state's public charter schools. The Act also requires charter authorizers and schools to establish new forms of accountability. This session is designed to provide information on how the statutorily named charter authorizer, the South Carolina Public Charter School District (PCSD), with representative school leaders, established and deployed a charter accountability system, which compliments the South Carolina Consolidated Accountability System, that considers academics, finance, and operations, including specific requirements under the Act. The new system, styled the "AFO Index" provides in simple language schools' performance in meeting their specific educational goals and academic performance as required by the Act, as well as other academic, financial, and operational metrics. The session will include a brief background discussion of the PCSD's public charter schools and itself as both the Local Educational Agency (LEA) and authorizer, a discussion of the process employed by the PCSD to create the AFO Index, and a

discussion of how the PCSD is holding schools' accountable with increasing outcomes for all students, financial transparency and stability, and operations that meet or exceed state requirements.