Regional Education Report: Chapter 4

Constructive Disruption

Status Report on Public Education in the Tri-County Region

Every Child. Every Day. Cradle to Career.
The tri-county region’s public schools, by any objective measure, are failing to educate a significant number of our children. Low-income, mostly Black and Hispanic children are faring the worst, and we know it even while the evidence tells us that every child can learn.

As a community, we have proven either unwilling or unable so far to provide from infancy the support that all children and their families need to be ready for school. Then when a student leaves high school, whether as a graduate or dropout, they are sent off largely unready and unsupported. This is systems failure at its worst and at a very high cost in human potential. It is not the fault of any one child, teacher, parent, principal or superintendent; indeed, many are making heroic efforts to change the system. Rather, it is every citizen’s responsibility.

This report is about provoking the disruption of the status quo so that meaningful, systemic improvement that results in significantly improved student outcomes takes place. “Constructive” disruption has the purpose of building something better.

In the following pages, we will faithfully report the data that show little or no progress. We will also point to what needs to happen to overcome the inequity and injustice of what’s happening to our children and, frankly, to the adults doing their best within a system that is failing them as well.

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### Community Basics and Disparity Gaps

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<th>All tri-county</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Population</td>
<td>761,155</td>
<td>196,498</td>
<td>41,107</td>
<td>488,329</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of public school students</td>
<td>112,141</td>
<td>38,328</td>
<td>10,453</td>
<td>55,987</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of children under the age of 5</td>
<td>47,274</td>
<td>12,704</td>
<td>4,358</td>
<td>28,772</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of children (0 to 18) in poverty</td>
<td>30,886</td>
<td>15,200</td>
<td>3,236</td>
<td>8,023</td>
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</tbody>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Population with a high school diploma or higher</td>
<td>89%</td>
<td>81%</td>
<td>67%</td>
<td>93%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Population with a bachelor’s degree or higher</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>42%</td>
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<th>All tri-county</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Median household income</td>
<td>$57,592</td>
<td>$36,404</td>
<td>$35,482</td>
<td>$68,734</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unemployment rate (ages 16 and older)</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>Data Unavailable</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Sources: S.C. Department of Education; U.S. Census Bureau, SAIPE State and County Estimates for 2016; U.S. Census Bureau, 2016 American Community Survey 1-Year Estimates and 2012-2016 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates
The targets for improvement in our region were established a year ago through broad discussion with the community and approval by the Tri-County Cradle to Career Collaborative Board of Directors, itself a diverse group of community leaders. Targets are set to accomplish significant, achievable improvement by 2025. They are not yet set at 100% precisely because we, as a community, have much work to do, especially on behalf of under-resourced children and families.

What Needs to Happen

Attainment of these goals and nearer-term Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) targets should be embedded within tri-county school district strategies and made public. Progress in implementing these strategies should be regularly and rigorously assessed, and school leaders and school boards should be held accountable by parents, business leaders and civic leaders, including mayors, county councils and Lowcountry legislative leaders. Currently, there is no evidence that this is happening in our region.

### 2025 Tri-County Targets

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Core Indicator</th>
<th>2016</th>
<th>2017</th>
<th>2025 Target</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Kindergarten readiness</td>
<td>68%</td>
<td>80%*</td>
<td>85%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3rd grade reading proficiency</td>
<td>52%</td>
<td>48%</td>
<td>85%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3rd grade math proficiency</td>
<td>58%</td>
<td>57%</td>
<td>85%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8th grade reading proficiency</td>
<td>51%</td>
<td>45%</td>
<td>85%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8th grade math proficiency</td>
<td>37%</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>85%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>On-time high school graduation rate</td>
<td>84%</td>
<td>85%</td>
<td>90%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>College ready rate</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>40%**</td>
<td>65%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Career ready rate</td>
<td>67%</td>
<td>65%</td>
<td>95%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High school graduates enrolled in 2-year or 4-year institution</td>
<td>61%</td>
<td>59%</td>
<td>85%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High school graduates completed a 2-year or 4-year degree on time</td>
<td>35% (class of 2010)</td>
<td>34% (class of 2011)</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adults ages 25 and over with postsecondary degrees</td>
<td>43%</td>
<td>44%</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Each target includes the requirement that race disparities be reduced by half

Sources: S.C. Department of Education; U.S. Census Bureau, 2016 American Community Survey 1-Year Estimates; and National Student Clearinghouse

* Note: The Core Indicator is intended to measure the readiness of the “whole child,” while the current assessment, measured at the end of kindergarten, includes literacy preparation only. It is, therefore, insufficient, and, moreover, we believe the assessment overstates current levels of readiness.

** Note: All 11th grade high school students took the ACT, a college readiness assessment, in 2016 and 2017. At face value, results appear to show a 5 percentage-point increase. However, in the 2017 school year, the S.C. Department of Education lowered the college-ready benchmark from a composite score of 21 to 20.
Kindergarten Readiness

From birth to age 5, multiple factors influence the trajectory of a child’s intellectual, social and emotional development. Insufficient attention to developmental delays and early learning milestones impact if a child arrives to kindergarten ready to learn.

Where We Stand

The state-mandated Developmental Reading Assessment 2nd Edition (DRA2) from spring 2017, included here, establishes whether students have the literacy skills necessary to become successful readers by the end of kindergarten. A more wholistic and, we believe, more accurate assessment indicates that more than half of children entering kindergarten in fall 2017 were unready in phonics, numeracy and social and emotional development.

Nurse home visits:

Every child can benefit from nurse home visits and active follow-up on referrals, especially those who are born into poverty, yet few such opportunities exist. A possible option to provide support to all families, called Family Connects, is now under consideration by TCCC’s Kindergarten Readiness Network.

If Family Connects is implemented here, all children and their families will benefit from this free service, and the community can expect:

- Early diagnosis, referral and treatment of developmental disorders
- Fewer infant emergency room visits
- Fewer overnight hospital visits for mothers
- Overall better infant health and wellbeing
- Higher rates of breastfeeding

Affordable pre-school:

Every family needs access to high quality, affordable childcare that helps prepare children for kindergarten, yet “A” rated facilities are virtually non-existent in our region’s high poverty and rural areas.

Metanoia, a non-profit in the Chicora-Cherokee neighborhood of North Charleston, listened to what families in the neighborhood said they needed and is working to establish an A-rated early-learning center where none currently exists.

The center will offer care for children from 0 to 4 years old.

The evidence is overwhelming that quality pre-school (3K and 4K) prepares young people for school, yet, without challenges to the status quo, pre-school for all won’t happen.

Source: Developmental Reading Assessment 2nd Edition

Note: Disparity results were provided by two school districts, encompassing 68% of the tri-county population.
A child’s first eight years of life lay the foundation for all the years that follow. If a child doesn’t learn to read by third grade, he or she is at a substantial disadvantage in future grades when reading is required to learn. As for math, a student’s competency is a predictor of their long-term success, as math prepares and develops a student’s mind to accept, analyze and execute complex ideas.

### Where We Stand

**3rd Grade Reading**

- **4,226** Met Grade-Level Standards
- **4,644** Did Not Meet Grade-Level Standards

**Percent of Students Who Met Grade-Level Expectations**

- **Black**: 26%
- **Hispanic**: 30%
- **White**: 65%

**3rd Grade Math**

- **5,039** Met Grade-Level Standards
- **3,856** Did Not Meet Grade-Level Standards

**Percent of Students Who Met Grade-Level Expectations**

- **Black**: 37%
- **Hispanic**: 43%
- **White**: 72%

### What Needs to Happen

**3rd Grade Reading**

Students who are not proficient in reading, particularly those furthest behind, need the most support and more one-on-one literacy coaching in the early grades.

The **Tri-County Reading by Third Project**, sponsored and guided by Trident United Way, is underway and focuses on teacher professional development in the practice of teaching literacy to young children.

Teachers who work with the community’s youngest learners were trained last summer through the University of Florida’s Lastinger Center and are now implementing these practices in pilot schools across the four tri-county school districts.

This project should be expanded with fidelity to all elementary schools across the region if the evidence supports positive student outcomes.

**3rd Grade Math**

Mathematics is built level by level, and mastering math fundamentals in the early grades is the gateway to future coursework.

Students benefit when elementary school teachers have the tools and resources they need to supplement math curricula and build on these essential skills.

An example of a tool that was piloted in the summer of 2017 with more than 100 elementary teachers from the four regional school districts is the **Ongoing Assessment Project (OGAP)**. This project trains teachers to use a mathematical framework continuum to formatively assess student thinking and improve student learning.

It should be expanded with fidelity to include all elementary school teachers in the region if the evidence supports positive student outcomes.
Without the ability to read for comprehension, more than half of eighth graders will enter high school poorly equipped to learn skills essential for college and career. Students who do not master middle-school math will be far less likely to successfully complete algebraic- and statistics-based courses required for many careers.

### Where We Stand

**8th Grade Reading**

- Met Grade-Level Standards: 3,551
- Did Not Meet Grade-Level Standards: 4,261

Percent of Students Who Met Grade-Level Expectations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Met Grade-Level Standards</th>
<th>Did Not Meet Grade-Level Standards</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Black</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hispanic</td>
<td>36%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White</td>
<td>60%</td>
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### What Needs to Happen

When compared with elementary and high school levels, far too little support is brought to the middle grades. The middle school experience is the lynchpin between early skills development and more comprehensive learning. Moreover, it is at this level that students, especially those who aren’t performing at grade level, first begin to disengage and lose sight of education’s relevance to the real world.

The transition into and out of middle school represents a pivotal time in a child’s education and requires attention. There is little evidence that the relationship among schools in a feeder pattern is being managed in the interest of children, especially those who are struggling.

Innovative schools and project-based learning models that provide experiences to engage and excite students are showing promise. The same programs and initiatives needed in high school to acquaint students with career options and post-secondary opportunities need to be pulled into the middle school experience.

An example in our region is **Laing Middle School**, in Mount Pleasant, which creates a student-centered environment that utilizes the tools and methods of science, technology, engineering and math to solve problems. These same tools can and should be incorporated into all middle school curricula, culture and climate.

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**8th Grade Math**

- Met Grade-Level Standards: 3,113
- Did Not Meet Grade-Level Standards: 4,746

Percent of Students Who Met Grade-Level Expectations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Met Grade-Level Standards</th>
<th>Did Not Meet Grade-Level Standards</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Black</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hispanic</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White</td>
<td>55%</td>
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Source: S.C. Department of Education, SC Ready test results

In 2017, Laing Middle School of Science and Technology was named the No. 1 STEM middle school in the United States. (Photo: Charleston County School District)
High School Graduation Rate & Readiness

Preparation for further education or a career is the essential role of high school, and the diploma should be a reliable basis for determining both.

Where We Stand

Significant gains have been made in recent years in the on-time graduation rate and in closing the gap between Black and White students. However, other academic data, including college and career readiness, are not improving, and our understanding of why the graduation rate has gone up is limited. Further investigation of, for example, the number of students who “transfer” to an online high school and then drop out, is warranted.

85% on-time graduation rate

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<th>Hispanic</th>
<th>White</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>On-time high school graduation rate</td>
<td>81%</td>
<td>75%</td>
<td>88%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

40% percent of students ready for college-level work

65% percent of students ready for a career

What Needs to Happen

A larger number of students are graduating from high school still unprepared for what lies ahead. About 90% of high school graduates who enter Trident Technical College have discovered they are required to remediate in math, while others will attempt to enter the workforce without the required life and career skills.

After careful study, TCCC’s Math Pathways Project Team (MPPT) has advocated for a number of changes to advance students’ preparedness in math, including that all students complete a math course each year of high school.

Algebra Nation, a web-based tool that supplements Algebra 1 teaching and learning, was recommended to the state by MPPT and has since been implemented in 67 S.C. school districts. Through the program, students view instructional videos and receive real-time feedback. Early results show promise, and we believe Algebra Nation should be funded annually by the state.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source: Algebra Nation</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Note: While these are outputs, not outcomes, they have proven to be reliable predictors in Florida, where Algebra Nation was founded, of future improvement in end-of-course scores.</td>
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</table>

High-demand jobs require soft skills, like problem solving and communication, which are not now the focus of instruction or assessment. The Charleston Metro Chamber of Commerce, at the request of the region’s school superintendents, produced the “Common Skills in High Demand” report, identifying important competencies of a new hire. The four school superintendents have agreed to work together to embed these skills in school and after-school curricula, with an appropriate assessment of career readiness.
In this region, the fastest growing, highest paying occupations require an associate degree or higher. Sooner or later in an adult’s career, the absence of an advanced degree or certificate will prove to limit both income and advancement.

**Where We Stand**

- 59% of high school graduates from the class of 2017 enrolled in a 2-year or 4-year institution.
- 34% of high school graduates from the class of 2011 completed a degree on time.

**What Needs to Happen**

Pathways in high school should encourage those who are ready to go to college to do so. Future job growth in our region increasingly requires a two-year or four-year degree or certificate, and completion rates (34%) are insufficient to meet that need.

School districts and their high school guidance teams can and should know which students are destined for college, beginning with seeing to it that EVERY high school senior completes the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA).

The FAFSA provides grants, loans, and work-study funds to students and is a pivotal part in many students’ decision to attend college. In 2016, TCCC’s FAFSA Pilot Project, financed by The InterTech Group, selected five local high schools with the lowest FAFSA completion rates and highest poverty rates for assistance. After participating in the pilot, the combined average of the schools increased by 8 percentage points. TCCC is expanding this pilot project in 2018.

In our region, nearly 250,000 adults with some or no college are likely, at some point, to wish they had a degree or certificate. Employers and colleges working together can do more to encourage these adults to return and persist in obtaining their degree or certificate.

Data associated with individuals who are unemployed and under-employed suggest strongly that remedial reading and math programs as well as support for overcoming obstacles (e.g., transportation, student debt, and work schedules) are required for adults to enter or return to college. Yet, efforts to align our community in support of adult learners have, to date, been largely unsuccessful.

**44%** percent of adults 25 and over with an associate degree or higher.

**Adults 25 and over with an associate degree or higher**

- Black: 27%
- Hispanic: 23%
- White: 52%

*Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2016 American Community Survey 1-Year Estimates*
The systems that develop, educate and train our children and adults are, from birth, failing to serve too many families – most often under-resourced Black, Hispanic and White children. Systems failure is everyone’s responsibility, and we all must seek, demand and support – to the point of disruption – solutions proven to work.

The essential elements of constructive disruption, as we see it, involve **mobilizing the community** to insist on change, **amplifying voices**, particularly those of parents actively supporting change, and **embracing racial equity and inclusion**, to create the necessary changes to improve educational outcomes for ALL students.

“**When we achieve racial equity:**

*People, including people of color, are owners, planners, and decision-makers in the systems that govern their lives.*

*We acknowledge and account for past and current inequities, and provide all people, particularly those most impacted by racial inequities, the infrastructure needed to thrive. Everyone benefits from a more just, equitable system.*

— Center for Social Inclusion

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**Resource Equity**

We must proactively understand and address inequity in our community and in our schools. Resources directed to support school choice, school climate, academic outcomes and government mandates must be sufficient to assure equal access. *See Page 10*

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**Educator Talent Development**

We need additional qualified and culturally competent teachers and principals in tri-county region schools. Educator time and access to consistent and sustained professional development is grossly insufficient. *See Page 11*

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**The Whole Child**

Summer programs as well as those that extend the traditional school day and school year must explicitly relate to what is happening to that child in the classroom academically and developmentally – the whole child. *See Page 12*

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**Disruptors**

Programs in our region have begun to educate parents on how things really work, both inside schools and across racial lines. Those programs that are truly “of” our community need to be expanded and replicated. *See Page 13*
Equity, from an education standpoint, means ensuring resources are focused on those who need them the most. Its insufficiency in this region, from the manner in which school choice has been implemented to underfunded mandates, has the greatest impact on those in poverty, a disproportionate number of whom are Black and Hispanic.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Where We Stand</th>
<th>What Needs to Happen</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>1</strong> School choice, which allows parents to shop for schools and pick the one that best suits their children, is no choice at all for students from families living in poverty and without access to transportation. As an unintended consequence, children and families unable to take advantage of school choice may find themselves in a failing and re-segregated school with shrinking enrollment and reduced funding.</td>
<td><strong>1</strong> Where choice is school policy, transportation should be provided to those who require it. Those attending low-enrollment or rural schools should have access to the same rigorous academics and enrichment opportunities (e.g., Advanced Placement-level courses, International Baccalaureate programs, extracurricular activities) as their wealthier peers in fully enrolled schools.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>2</strong> Title I funding is the cornerstone of government assistance for K-12 schools serving students living in poverty. Schools with high concentrations of students living in poverty have insufficient supports to address their students’ health and educational needs, often the result of a toxic home environment. Without adequate funding and appropriate staff, these schools are left with disciplinary action to manage student behavior and with lowered expectations to manage academic outcomes.</td>
<td><strong>2</strong> It is estimated that the $15.5 billion spent in 2017 nationally is roughly 30 percent of the annual Title I expenditure required to serve the 11 million eligible children. In the Lowcountry, many of the 30,000 children living in poverty require mental health services, behavioral interventions and additional academic support. An additional $70 million would fully fund Title I schools in our region and would significantly aid districts in providing services that students living in poverty require.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>3</strong> The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), a federal mandate, requires schools to provide a free, meaningful and appropriately ambitious public education to all students with disabilities. The federal government is funding less than half of the 40 percent the statute requires, according to the non-profit, non-partisan think tank New America, leaving states and districts to make up the difference. In this region, the net result is a shortage of qualified staff, programs and tools needed to provide a quality education.</td>
<td><strong>3</strong> To adequately provide the services and programs students with disabilities require, the federal government should fully fund what is required by law. Districts with limited resources are, for the most part, unwilling or unable to divert resources to support this population when they see few tangible benefits in their state accountability metrics. South Carolina should not only fund the difference but should be held accountable for its ongoing reported deficiencies in meeting national IDEA standards.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>4</strong> S.C. Act 388, which passed in 2006, limited the ability of local governments to raise revenue in support of schools. Two Lowcountry districts are further disadvantaged under this law, with tax revenues redirected to other districts.</td>
<td><strong>4</strong> S.C. Act 388 should be amended or other means legislated to allow for local discretion in generating revenue to support education attainment, and the Lowcountry legislative delegation should take the lead.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

It’s entirely possible that government and public education are incapable of delivering equity for under-resourced students and those with disabilities, without either challenges to the status quo or disruptive systems change from the outside in.
## Where We Stand

1. Teacher shortages and budget constraints increase pressures on teacher time and severely limit opportunities for sustained professional development. One-in-five new S.C. teacher hires in the 2016-2017 school year left the profession, according to the Center for Education Recruitment, Retention & Advancement (CERRA).

A ready supply of well-prepared principals as instructional leaders in every school is an essential component of an educator talent development strategy. In the 2016-2017 school year, 28% of tri-county schools had principals who had been at their school for two years or less, according to the S.C. Department of Education. There is, at present, no discernible pipeline that assures excellent preparation and continuous development of aspiring principals.

2. Low pay for educators, especially in their first five years in the profession, is a handicap in attracting and retaining teachers. Teachers require at least a bachelor's degree, and starting salaries in the Lowcountry at $35,851 are not competitive with other occupations for which they qualify.

Nearly 1,000 tri-county region teachers left their positions last year because of either retirement or by choice, and the number of departures via retirement will continue to grow. Enrollment declines at schools and colleges of education, in South Carolina and across the country, are only exacerbating the crisis as new teachers can’t fill all the empty positions. Diversity in the profession, which is also important, is that much more difficult to achieve under these conditions.

## What Needs to Happen

1. Professional development programs for teachers, once they’ve entered the profession, need to be a higher priority. Districts need to fund programs and provide time within the school week for continuous learning opportunities that allow educators to advance their skills. Such programs require fidelity of implementation and sustained commitment by the districts.

The preparation, professional development and mentorship of principals is a common need across the four school districts that has been recognized by their superintendents. Collaborative work to form a regional approach is underway and has the potential for bringing an evidence-based program to the region. While there would be common content for all school leaders, the program would be tailored to fit the distinctive qualities of each district.

2. Compensation increases for teachers, especially in STEM fields, are necessary and should accompany a fair and objective evaluation system within the districts that incorporates student improvement as one of several factors. Our best teachers and principals, not only our newest ones, need incentives to serve in our most challenging schools.

3. Alternative pathways to teacher certification, which are now under discussion, need to be developed by the state’s Colleges of Education in partnership with school districts, then fast tracked through to implementation.

Evidence-based programs, such as Call Me Mister, a program to bring more Black males into the teaching profession, need to be grown and replicated. The community needs to honor and elevate the teaching profession and its importance to the success of society to encourage our best young people to participate.

It’s entirely possible that public education as we know it is incapable of delivering continuous professional development, sufficient compensation and alternative pathways to teacher certification, without either challenges to the status quo or disruptive systems change from the outside in.
The Whole Child

After-school and summer programs can be effective at both connecting with the classroom and using play to build skills, such as teamwork and problem-solving.

Below are three such programs. Rural and high-poverty schools where the need is greatest are challenged to afford these programs.

WINGS for Kids

WINGS for Kids equips at-risk children with the social and emotional skills to succeed in school, stay in school and thrive in life. Through innovative after-school programming, WINGS teaches Charleston County children how to regulate emotions, build strong relationships and make healthy decisions.

Their goal is help students become the best version of themselves by developing a child’s self-awareness, social awareness, responsible decision-making, self-management and relationship skills.

In a four-year randomized control trial study on WINGS for Kids, conducted by the University of Virginia, the pattern of results consistently supported improvement in eight socio-emotional skills and six measures of reduction in negative behavior. In addition, improvement in two of the underlying developmental skills believed to contribute to building socio-emotional skills (executive function and naming vocabulary) was significant.

Meeting Street Elementary @Brentwood

Meeting Street Elementary @Brentwood is a public-private partnership between Charleston County School District and Meeting Street Schools. Unlike a traditional community elementary school, MSE @Brentwood offers families a school model that focuses on the needs of the whole child, including an extended-year calendar, rigorous academics, extended-day programming, access to medical and dental screenings, as well as programming that encourages the development of social, emotional, intellectual and physical skills.

Extended-Day Program at Meeting Street Elementary @Brentwood:

- Free programming from 3:30 - 5:30 p.m.
- Overlapping staff
- Academic focus
- Innovative clubs and sports
- Homework help
- Same expectations of excellence from students and teachers

Charleston Promise Neighborhood

Charleston Promise Neighborhood (CPN) is a non-profit organization whose vision and purpose is to transform its “neighborhood” within a generation, in partnership with neighborhood residents and schools.

CPN provides academic support, extracurricular enrichment, school-based health care and activities to engage parents and the community in its schools and in the success of its students.

At three of four CPN schools, after-school programming is provided, including academic support and extra-curricular enrichment.

A site coordinator, an academic coordinator and certified teachers deliver personalized learning and appropriate interventions for each student to accelerate academic achievement.
Tri-County Cradle to Career Collaborative

Disruptors

There are any number of individuals and organizations in the tri-county region that have sought to mobilize the community into action regarding public education and racial equity. Below are three such programs, with varying methods, pushing for change, to the point of disruption. Our purpose here is not to endorse their methods but to make their efforts visible. Any future endorsement by TCCC would rest on evidence of effectiveness and grassroots community support.

Quality Education Project

The Quality Education Project (QEP), which began in April 2015, is a community and research-based organization that seeks to implement a quality education for all students within the public-school system. The project stands against the further privatization of school governance in Charleston County and believes the state and the local school district should be responsible for publicly governing equitably resourced schools. The project supports quality, traditional, non-charter public schools being made a priority.

How to get involved:
Email qualityeducationproject@gmail.com to be added to the email distribution list, or visit www.QualityEducationProject.org.

Racial Equity Institute

The Racial Equity Institute (REI) is a nationally recognized training model for helping communities address institutional racism, coordinated in the Lowcountry by the YWCA.

REI seeks to build a movement that reframes the problem of systemic racism and empowers the community to identify solutions and take action.

REI program objectives:
• Create a common understanding of how U.S. history has contributed to inequity
• Establish a basis for addressing our community’s involvement in equity

How to get involved:
Visit http://www.ywca-charlestonsc.org to sign up for REI training.

Charleston RISE

Charleston RISE began as a grassroots movement in January 2017 in response to the fact that too many local schools provide an inadequate education, particularly for Black students.

Charleston RISE seeks to empower local parents by mobilizing them as education advocates to improve our education system for all students. As a part of this mobilization, Charleston RISE immerses parent-volunteers in a two-phase, 30-week program designed to educate and empower “fellows” with the tools necessary to accomplish true, system-wide change. Charleston RISE plans to graduate its 100th fellow by December 2018.

How to get involved: Visit https://www.facebook.com/CharlestonRISE/ to learn more.

Taken together, these and other disruptive forces have so far proven insufficient to accomplishing systems change. To achieve equity and attainment for all children, our community may need now to consider public education reform from the outside in as other regions have done. In our view, such reform would need to meet the definition of “constructive disruption” and be embraced by those served by public education.
Who We Are

Our Story

Education is the responsibility of the entire community, not just school districts and colleges. That’s why a group of regional leaders joined forces in 2012 to create the Tri-County Cradle to Career Collaborative, which brings together partners from across the region to address large-scale social issues surrounding education.

Programs and initiatives in this region tend to operate in silos and disconnected from other organizations with similar missions. TCCC seeks to bring those organizations together to align efforts and create systemic change.

Every child is unique, and the obstacles they face are complex. Batch processing, agrarian school calendars, Carnegie unit schedules and “ivory tower” syllabi are 50 years behind what we now know about teaching and learning. The inequities embedded within and around education run deep and require deliberate action across the continuum – from cradle to career.

Our belief is that by working collaboratively through networks, consortia and project teams, our partners can change what they do to make education work better and for all children. Change will take time and happen only at the speed of trust.

Our Mission

The Tri-County Cradle to Career Collaborative is a community movement in Berkeley, Charleston and Dorchester counties, SC, committed to improving educational outcomes for ALL students.

Our Vision

• Every child will be prepared for school.
• Every child will be supported in and out of school.
• Every child will succeed academically.
• Every child will graduate from high school prepared for either further education or employment in the modern workforce.
• Every student enrolled in post-secondary education will complete successfully and will enter a career.

Our Guiding Principles

Community Engagement
We seek the direct involvement of families, students and those with first-hand experience with educational barriers. This participation includes direct roles in decision-making with an appreciative inquiry approach.

Cultural Competence
We seek to integrate the varied forms of diversity into the thoughts, actions, systems and core values of all we do. Our work requires the intentional recognition, respect and value of cultural differences within our community and collaborative approaches that are welcoming and inclusive of those differences.

Equity
Supporting the success of every child requires us to ensure resources are focused on those who need them most.
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