



Upstate Education Spectrum – Spring 2019

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PROFESSION ELEVATION

Committee Chair: Randall Fowler | Director of Human Capital, Legacy Early College

Committee Goal:

Focus on elevating the profession by creating opportunities to share the message of current educators.

Summary of Work to Date:

The PE Committee's conversation thus far has centered on how to create a successful marketing campaigns (ex: Nebraska's "I Love Public Schools", #Teach864, etc.) that highlight the importance of teachers and the benefits of pursuing a career in education. The Committee is exploring what audiences to target and how content/message will be different for different audiences. A draft framework has been developed that describes the campaign's purpose and stakeholders.

Recommendation(s) of the Committee:

- Through numerous meetings the committee has recognized that investing students and families in the idea of teaching as a long-term profession is imperative elevating the profession of teaching.
- TATT members should develop a brand that can generate questions and prompts for educators to answer and contribute towards.
- Local influencers in business, government, faith, non-profits, and other clusters should be approached for features on how the profession should be elevated.
- Messaging should be tailored to K5-12 students, but also to the families of future educators as well.

Workshop Preview:

- How can we involve regional "influencers" to promote this campaign?
- What type of marketing strategy can be used to push the message of elevating the profession?
- Where should our focus lie in regards to parents, students, career changers, etc.?
- What challenges does this type of message face within the Upstate community?
- What pieces are necessary to move this recommendation of a messaging campaign from thought to action?
- How should the message be tailored to different audience members? For example, should messaging for faith-based groups differ from the message to business leaders?

Committee Members

Brantley Enloe, Spartanburg District Two
Trey Forrester, Union County School District
Randall Fowler, Legacy Early College (Chair)
Dr. Jim Hale, Limestone College
Julie Hartman, Bob Jones University
Kem Harvey, Spartanburg Community College
Lienne Medford, Converse College
Dr. Fay Sprouse, Ware Shoals District 51

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TEACHER RECRUITMENT & RETENTION

Committee Chair: Margaret Spivey | Director of Professional Employment, Greenville County Schools

Committee Goal:

Explore the question of “Why Be a Teacher?” by looking at strategies for teacher recruitment & retention, including compensation, external perception, etc.

Summary of Work to Date:

The TR&R Committee has broken up into three subcommittees, with each researching 1) incentive packages for teachers, 2) alternative certification routes, and 3) messaging specifically for parents. These focus areas were determined following the Committee's initial call. Each subcommittee presented their findings regarding their respective focus area during the April 5th call.

The incentive package sub-committee contacted various districts in state and out of state. Research focused on what would attract future teachers to the upstate as well as how to package those incentives in a way to make the information readily available on the web for people to find. Emerging areas of focus for the incentive package included employee discounts, affordable housing, professional development, degree advancement, loan forgiveness, and other financial incentives.

The sub-committee investigating alternative certification options explored a variety of pathways. The focus of the work was to inquire about the successes and drawbacks of these programs, as well as explore ways to make it easier for career changers and other individuals to enter the teaching profession. The work of the committee moved in the direction of focusing on policy surrounding the support and development of alternative certification pathway particularly for institutes of higher education.

The third sub-group began with a focus on messaging to youth and parents about positive aspects of becoming a teacher. This topic in particular had substantial overlap with the work of the Profession Elevation committee. For this reason, this sub-committee turned its attention toward building interest in the teaching profession in both middle and high school by increasing the presence of Pro Team and Teacher Cadet Programs across the region. Pro Team is a pre-collegiate middle school program designed to promote interest of middle school students in the education profession. Teacher Cadet is the high school counterpart of Pro Team, which is also designed to encourage high school students to consider teaching as a career. There are 6 Pro Team sites in the upstate and 42 Teacher

Recommendation(s) of the Committee:

- Develop a teacher recruitment incentive package to attract top talent to the Upstate
- Focus on advocating for policy to help higher education establish alternative certification programs
- Increase the presence of both Teacher Cadet and Pro Team programs across the Upstate

Workshop Preview:

- What is your organization doing around this type of work, specifically incentive packages?
- How does your organization make available the incentive resources to outside stakeholders? What platform is used?



- How can we assist with policy improvement and reform for the establishment of Alternative Certification Programs within Institutes of Higher Education?
- In what ways can we promote Pro Team and Teacher Cadet classes in our middle and high schools?
- Are there ways we can incentivize taking the Pro Team and Teacher Cadet classes?
- In what ways could other K-12 and Higher Education partnerships (like Expressway to Tiger Town) be forged and/or supported?

Committee Members

Jay Blankenship, SC Department of Commerce
Mark Butler, Anderson University
Kim Clardy, Anderson School District Four
Dr. Patricia Jones, Presbyterian College
Christi Loudon, Greenwood School District 50
Kathryn McColskey, North Greenville University
Candice Moore, Greenville County Schools
Carlos Phillips, Greenville Chamber
Margaret Spivey, Greenville County Schools (Chair)
Cheryl Wiggins, Fluor
Gerald Witt, Greenwood School District 50

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UNDERSTANDING THE CHALLENGES

Committee Chair: Dr. Laura Reynolds | Dean, USC Upstate

Committee Goal:

Use surveys and other mechanisms to better understand the concerns/challenges of teachers and then craft strategy for who and how to impact those issues.

Summary of Work to Date:

The UTC Committee first focused on gaining a better understanding of teacher attrition and retention in South Carolina and nationwide, regional approaches to attrition, attrition initiatives in other states and regions, and related policy concerns. Through the committee's review of a wide band of literature, data, and policy, members noted the synergy between the TATT focus and the data/focus of CERRA, state-wide data gaps, on-going legislative initiatives, and similar projects in other organizations. Committee members highlighted a focus that would assure a solid understanding of current practice regarding teacher departure documentation in our state before we move to construct new measurement processes, and that our TATT work should leverage possible partnerships with other organizations working toward similar goals.

The UTC Committee concluded that in order to begin to formulate new or improved questions and processes for use when teachers exit the classroom, we should first understand the nature of current practices in South Carolina districts. By documenting what districts do when teachers exit their classrooms, we can collectively ask better questions, increase the validity of the information collected, and strive toward more meaningful insights. By seeking a partnership with CERRA and establishing a picture of state-wide practices, it will be possible to derive best-practice, standardize processes, and provide resources in order to assure those processes occur.

On behalf of the committee, Dr. Reynolds initially met with CERRA regarding a collaboration to better understand the teacher shortage, specifically regarding teacher retention and departure from classrooms, districts, and the profession. After connecting with CERRA's research team and Dr. Jennifer Garrett, as well as academic/scholarly partners, the UTC Committee considered exit data and questionnaires used in other states, CERRA data and prompts, and debated the particular challenges of exit interview formats, analysis, as well as issues of power dynamic. CERRA and UTC formed a partnership to use the insights of the committee and the needs of CERRA to create and administer a district-level survey to document the current practices surrounding teacher exit interviews. The UTC reviewed CERRA data and current survey questions at the April workshop, and those insights and contributions were used to create the survey administered by CERRA this week and that is displayed as a part of the UTC station at this event.

Recommendation(s) of the Committee:

The UTC Committee contextualizes the CERRA / district survey and the data that results as critical in the development of standard "best practice" protocol state-wide for teacher exit data collection and reporting. The findings from the CERRA / UTC district survey will be critical in the development of a survey or focus group / interview protocol used in conjunction with the state-wide protocol to probe more deeply the reasons teachers are exiting the profession or specific schools/districts and address those issues.

Workshop preview:



A. View the CERRA/UTC survey of districts:

What are the exit processes, procedures, and questions currently used state-wide, and what similarities, differences, and patterns exist in reported practices?

Who, what, where, when and how are exit interviews done and how is that data reported?

B. Brainstorm regarding the processes, procedures, and questions that should be required as a part of best-practice state-wide:

1. What demographics/information should be included?
2. What processes and data are most useful in "exit" interviews / scenarios?
3. What are the challenges for districts in the "exit" process and how might partners help mediate?
4. Where should "exit" information go, and how should it be disseminated?
5. How could higher education, industry, and other stakeholders partner to assist?

Committee Members

Curtis Anderson, Upstate Workforce Board
Curtis Askew, DataNgin Consulting LLC
Evelyn Butler, New York Life
Stacey Hettes, Wofford College
Leah Hughes, Clemson University College of Business
Eric Kauffman, EXPERIA
Sarah Kitts, Spartanburg Community College
Dr. Laura Reynolds, USC Upstate (Chair)