

Accelerating Learning & Leadership For South Carolina

February 2021 Update



ALL4SC
College of Education

More children ready for school. More students healthy. More high school graduates ready for postsecondary and life success. New models of whole child education. A new vision of how a Research 1 university can spur innovations and create a more coherent system of teaching, learning and caring.

ALL4SC (or Accelerating Learning & Leadership for South Carolina) launched in late fall 2019 in partnership with the Fairfield County School District. Since then, the global pandemic, along with deepened economic distress and elevated systemic racism, have made our work — and education transformation — even more critical for South Carolina and our nation.

Vision for Transformation

Transformation is the essential word here. ALL4SC is one of the University of South Carolina's [Excellence Initiatives](#) and is about transforming how South Carolina children learn. We marshal resources across the entire university and beyond to reimagine education — from Zero-to-Workforce — in our state.

Our vision for transforming education in South Carolina is far different from the top-down reform efforts of the past. ALL4SC is not about tinkering around the edges of school improvement. It is about reimagining cross-sector collaboration and forging public-private partnerships in both PreK-12 and postsecondary education to spur economic mobility for every South Carolinian.

The big difference in this transformation strategy is change must be deeply grounded in the community and must be driven by educators, parents, and students, along with policy makers and business leaders.

Fairfield County School District Partnership

The Fairfield County School District signed on early to be a pilot site for ALL4SC's work. The ALL4SC team spent our first several months listening to and learning from teachers and administrators in all nine district schools.

The team also began working with a county-wide coalition, [Fairfield Forward](#), to build a shared vision and infrastructure for a [children's cabinet](#) for the community. Nationwide, children's cabinets are a proven strategy for systemically changing the fragmented ways that state and local governments do business for children and youth.

Early Successes

As the pandemic turned everyone's professional and personal lives upside down, ALL4SC launched a number of initiatives to serve children and youth to accelerate a whole child approach to education.

Zero-to-workforce education strategy

ALL4SC marshals resources across the entire university and beyond to reimagine education, from cradle to career, in our state.

- 1 Empower families, community organizations and educators to collectively serve the whole child through addressing academic, social and health needs of all students
- 2 Transform the educator workforce with redesigned roles, resources and rewards to drive student success.
- 3 Advance local and state policies to transform the state's system of education from a child's birth to workforce entry.

ALL4SC is Accelerating Learning & Leadership for South Carolina

The graphic is a vertical yellow rectangle with a white border. At the top, it has the title 'Zero-to-workforce education strategy' in bold black text. Below the title is a short paragraph: 'ALL4SC marshals resources across the entire university and beyond to reimagine education, from cradle to career, in our state.' The main content is a numbered list of three items, each with a large yellow number on the left and a blue rounded rectangle containing white text on the right. Item 1: '1 Empower families, community organizations and educators to collectively serve the whole child through addressing academic, social and health needs of all students'. Item 2: '2 Transform the educator workforce with redesigned roles, resources and rewards to drive student success.' Item 3: '3 Advance local and state policies to transform the state's system of education from a child's birth to workforce entry.' At the bottom of the graphic, it says 'ALL4SC is Accelerating Learning & Leadership for South Carolina'.

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- Worked with College of Education faculty to develop (and fund with legislative support) the [Carolina Collaborative for Alternative Preparation](#)— an innovative high-quality, competency-based approach to teaching that marries the expertise of local teachers, schools, and districts with non-profits, educational technology companies, and institutions of higher education.
- Developed a partnership with *Harmony* and *Inspire* of National University with our local United Way of the Midlands. This partnership supports Fairfield County educators as they meet the social-emotional learning needs of students and gives educators innovative tools to measure the behavioral health of the district’s elementary school students.
- Supported the launch of President Caslen’s Mentoring Initiative. Drawing on the [YESS Lab](#) (UofSC’s psychology program), we began piloting the [MentorHub](#) app with Fairfield and Marlboro County students as part of a scale-up strategy for community schooling.
- Joined with the SC Education Association, the Palmetto State Teachers Association, and the SC Department of Education to conduct a study of the lived experiences of our state’s public school teachers [teaching in the midst of the pandemic](#) to immediately inform key decision makers and identify innovations needed going forward.
- Partnered with the Fairfield County School District, Head Start, First Steps, Midlands Technical College, and the SC Program for Infant/Toddler Care to develop a 0-5 strategy for the community (to launch in Fall 2021) that will include immediate care for infants and toddlers as well as career pathways for early childhood educators in the community.
- Crafted an interdisciplinary research project to design and test an integrated student support data system drawing on education and health indicators. This research team includes faculty from the colleges of education and medicine plus the SC Revenue and Fiscal Affairs Office (pending funding from Robert Wood Johnson Foundation).
- Collaborated with engineering faculty in designing innovations in STEM education to prepare young people for the [Future of Work](#) as the intelligent machines become a fixture in the global economy.

Consider 3 facts:

1. Out-of-school factors account for the majority of differences in student achievement. Students cannot readily learn if they are hungry, traumatized, and have mental and physical health challenges.
2. Most good ideas in education sit in siloed and often duplicative programs that do not address the real problems facing educators, students and families. Fragmented efforts undermine their effectiveness and efficiency.
3. Too many teachers work in traditionally organized schools and have little or no time to learn from each other and work more closely with health and social service professionals or business leaders in their communities. Educators cannot be creative and entrepreneurial if their schools are not designed for them to be.

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- Developed an initiative, in partnership with [StudentVoice](#) and [Fairfield Forward](#), where high school students lead an asset mapping process to identify the community's strengths and challenges, evaluate its capacity, and create evidence-based solutions, which they will present to local leaders.
- Launched a collaboration with the Learning Policy Institute to develop a whole child state education policy analysis for South Carolina (prototyping a model for the nation). By working closely with the SC Joint Citizens and Legislative Committee on Children, we will develop a roadmap for developing more coherent, whole child, cross-sector policy reforms (to be published in June 2021).
- Created a practitioner network for prototyping a whole child/whole community model of schooling with five schools from Fairfield, Marlboro and Berkeley Counties (including a focus on 0-5, evidence-based mentoring, integrated student support data and other local priorities).

Diverse Partnerships

Over the last several months, we have developed collaborative efforts with KnowledgeWorks, StudentVoice, Tri-County Cradle to Career, TransformSC, SC Coalition for Math and Science, and First Steps (with others under development). More than 70 UofSC faculty have expressed interest in working with ALL4SC. Well over a dozen UofSC faculty have already been deeply involved from education, journalism, engineering, public health, social work, psychology, music and medicine. Conversations are underway with other academic and professional units (e.g., nursing, public health) as their time and talent will be needed as our work evolves.

Next Steps

Over the next several months, we will deepen the focus on our whole child/whole community partnerships across South Carolina, including [KnowledgeWorks](#), as well as the [Tri-County Cradle to Career Collaborative](#) to advance innovations in policy and practice. In March, we will launch our community school network of practice with our school-community-university partners and will establish metrics for continuous improvement and a system of shared accountability. Lexington 1 has asked ALL4SC to develop a youth development strategy for the district to align mentoring and career pathways for high need students.

Funding

The UofSC Excellence Initiative provides core funding for ALL4SC. Over the last 18 months, ALL4SC has secured more than \$1 million in external funding (innovations in teacher training, documenting the impact of the pandemic on teaching, whole child policy analysis and social-emotional learning supports). Several grant proposals related to whole child/whole community education are under development, and we are establishing philanthropic relationships with a range of national, state, and local funders and investors.

For additional information, contact [Barnett Berry](#), ALL4SC founding director