

Op-Ed: Business and college leaders support area superintendents' call for education reform

As business leaders and members of the Economic Leadership Council (ELC), our organizations collectively employ about 10 percent of the tri-county workforce. We therefore have a vested interest in the educational opportunities of our future talent. We believe all children deserve access to a great education that prepares them for success in life. Addressing inequality without diminishing academic quality must be a priority. Addressing early childhood well-being and literacy are also critical for our four local school districts.

The Economic Leadership Council is comprised of CEOs, executives, and college presidents who are top-level supporters of the Charleston Regional Development Alliance. We believe our collective strength as major employers in this market can positively impact issues affecting our region's economic health and well-being.

Our community cannot succeed with the educational status quo. We can only succeed with community-wide, accountable and collaborative efforts centered on change for our children.

We have met with all four superintendents, reviewed their strategic plans, and we stand behind their visions. The four public school districts in the tri-county area are led by knowledgeable, experienced professionals who act in the best interests of all children, not a select few.

Implementation takes time and it is in the best interest of our children, parents, teachers, and our community that our school district leadership not become revolving doors, thereby lacking the stable continuity of leadership that is required.

If the Lowcountry is to create and sustain a community where people and businesses thrive for generations, together we must invest in quality education for all children. We must disrupt the status quo and support our educators, giving them the resources and leeway to make difficult but necessary changes.

For our economy to prosper, companies must have skilled employees and that preparation starts in the classroom. We encourage all area employers to lend your support to local educators, speak up, and engage in your local school districts. Productive collaboration between business, academic, and government leaders fosters creative thinking, encourages a results-oriented approach, and will position this community as a forward-focused destination for business and families.

Anita Zucker
CEO, The InterTech Group
Chair, Economic Leadership Council

*Jenkins Avenue
North Charleston*