



Virtual Community Conversation on Education February 26, 2021 | 9:00 – 10:30 a.m.

Discussion Notes

Community Conversation Participants

- Debbi Akers (The CornerStone Initiative)
- Francis Akridge (Huntsville City Council)
- John Allen (Huntsville Committee of 100)
- Adam Bernick (Greengate School & Randolph School)
- Alka Bhargav (AUM Foundation)
- Jessica Bolling (AUM Foundation)
- Liz Boykin (The Schools Foundation)
- Jeanne Brown (WPS Leadership Council)
- Margaret Bugbee (Community Foundation for Northeast Georgia)
- Regina Burden (Girls Inc.)
- Jodie Clements (WPS Leadership Council)
- Jerry Courtney (Heart of the Valley YMCA)
- Meade Davis (Randolph School)
- Leta DeMaioribus (WPS Leadership Council)
- Elaine Dickson (Christian Job Corps of Madison County)
- Allison Dillon-Jauken (Arts Huntsville)
- Mary Grace Evans (Redstone Federal Credit Union/WPS Leadership Council)
- Jenifer Ferguson (HudsonAlpha Institute for Biotechnology)
- Elizabeth Fleming (The Schools Foundation)
- Jennifer Geist (The Salvation Army)
- Thandi Gooden (AAA PTA)
- Hilary Gould (Christmas Charities Year Round)
- Leah Gradl (Kent Companies)
- Amy Harbarger (Christian Job Corps/WPS Leadership Council)
- Slade Hogan (Asbury Church)
- Heidi Holt (The Literacy Council of Central Alabama)
- Stephen Hooks (Westminster Christian)
- Melea Horton (WPS Leadership Council)
- Cynthia Kaye (Alive Studios)
- Kristi Krieger (Leidos/Dynetics)
- Ann Kvach (Community Foundation of Greater Huntsville)
- Jennifer Linton (WEDC Foundation)
- Michelle Linville (Big Brothers Big Sisters of the TN Valley)
- Patty Lowe (WPS Member)
- Jessica Luther (Heart of the Valley YMCA)
- Stephanie Lyas (The Literacy Council)
- Stephanie Malone (Girls Inc.)
- Amy Mason (Madison County Elementary School)
- Heather Mason (Heals, Inc.)
- Jean McCrady (WPS Member)
- Holly McCarty (WPS Leadership Council)
- Nikki Mertz (HudsonAlpha Institute for Biotechnology)
- Suzette Mikell (Boys & Girls Club of North Alabama/Jones Valley Elementary PTA)
- Cathy Miller (United Way Of Madison County)
- Karen Mockensturm (Fantasy Playhouse Children's Theater & Academy)
- Molly Mullinax (The CARE Center)
- Jeannie Munger (Defense Intelligence Agency/Missile and Space Intelligence Center)

- Aneisha Nolen (The CARE Center)
- Libby Parker (Village of Promise)
- Lydia Pennington (Huntsville Madison County Chamber of Commerce)
- Michelle Ramey (Oakwood University)
- Marquitta Riggins (AIDB)
- Jennie Robinson (The ELM Foundation)
- Lee Shaw (Madison City Schools)
- Amy Slamp (Community Volunteer)
- Jane Slocum (City of Huntsville – Mill Creek CNI)
- Jessica Hovis Smith (Longview Financial Advisors/WPS Leadership Council)
- Jay Stark (Montessori School of Huntsville)
- Susan Still (WPS Member)
- Kelly Suber (Jones Valley Elementary PTA)
- Jennifer Swoboda (Library Foundation/ Junior League of Huntsville/Fantasy Playhouse)
- Melissa Thompson (Community Foundation of Greater Huntsville)
- Rebecca Turk (Huntsville Botanical Garden)
- Tina Watts (Boeing)
- Wendy Yang (Village of Promise)

Organizations and Governmental Agencies Identified That Offer Educational Services in Our Community

- 100 Black Men
- AIDT
- Alabama A&M University
- Alabama Institute for Deaf and Blind
- Alive Studios
- Arc of Madison County
- Arts Huntsville
- Asbury Church
- AUM Foundation
- Big Brothers Big Sisters of TN Valley
- Boys & Girls Club of North Alabama
- Broadway Theatre League
- Burritt on the Mountain
- Calhoun Community College
- CAP & GOWN
- Chamber Foundation
- Christian Job Corps
- Church based tutoring programs
- Cyber Huntsville
- Cyber Reach
- Early Works
- Fantasy Playhouse Children's Theater & Academy
- Future Forward
- Girls Inc
- Greengate School
- Heart of the Valley YMCA
- Hispanic Latino Advisory Council of Huntsville
- HudsonAlpha Institute for Biotechnology
- Huntsville Achievement School
- Huntsville Ballet
- Huntsville Botanical Garden
- Huntsville City Schools
- Huntsville Committee of 100/Creative Cities Fund
- Huntsville Council of PTAs
- Huntsville Homebuilders Association Apprentice Academy
- Huntsville Inner City Learning Center
- Huntsville/Madison County Chamber of Commerce
- Huntsville Madison County Library
- Huntsville Museum of Art Academy
- Huntsville Symphony Orchestra
- Huntsville/Madison County Chamber of Commerce
- J.F. Drake State Community & Technical College
- Jackson County: The Michael Scott Learning Center
- Junior League of Huntsville
- Kids to Love
- Lincoln Academy
- Little Lincs

- Little Mountain Forest School
- Madison City Schools
- Madison County Schools
- Maitland Conservatory/Maitland Arts Initiative
- Microwave Dave Music Education Foundation
- Montessori School of Huntsville
- North Alabama Arts Education Collaborative
- North Alabama Center for Educational Excellence
- North Alabama Works
- Oakwood University
- Randolph School
- Real Fathers Making a Difference
- Riley Center
- Rocket City Scholarship Granting Organization
- Rotary
- SAIL (Summer Adventures in Learning)
- School systems
- Second Mile
- The CARE Center
- The CornerStone Initiative
- The Schools Foundation
- United Way of Madison County
- University of Alabama in Huntsville
- Village of Promise
- WEDC Foundation
- Westminster Christian
- Win Early Literacy

Gaps Identified in Service and Opportunities

- Foster mentoring
- Whole child (not just academics)
- Foster excitement
- Transportation
- Time for working parents to access services
- Learning loss
- Tutoring/tutors
- Qualifications of teachers
- Parental bad experience translates to child
- Engaged staff
- Language barriers
- Access to education
- Community partners
- Technology
- Parental engagement
- Disparity in education
- Economic differences in schools and families
- Full day learning support
- Teacher recruitment/retention
- Not enough career counseling
- Gaps in communication in connecting with clients
- Childcare, especially for single moms entering or staying in workforce
- Location of childcare
- Educator training – anxiety effect (hunger, etc.) on learning
- Need more teachers
- Affordability and availability of childcare
- Lack of adult literacy skills
- Lack of soft skills
- Access to computer and internet
- Racial and econ equity gaps
- 10% of HSV doesn't have high school diploma or GED
- Lack of exposure to available career opportunities
- Learning style – thriving or not – virtual
- Truancy – 10,000 missing students
- Digital divide
- Need for outdoors
- Fewer teachers have STEM focus – can make more money in these fields outside of educational system

Barriers Identified to Accessing Services and Opportunities

- Childcare – access, quality, cost
- Transportation
- Awareness and communication of resources
- Lack of confidence, support mentor
- Relationships for resource groups to connect
- Balance of virtual/in-person
- Racial and income equity
- Co-op opportunities and entry level for jobs
- Internet and computer access
- Upskilling and reskilling
- High cost to start a childcare facility – lack of capital investment
- PreK teachers
- Mental health – affordable and accessible
- Time commitment
- Housing primary need so then harder to reach other services
- Single family homes – flexibility with jobs
- Confidence to interact, especially with technology if lacking skills
- School/workplace terminology
- Language, especially English Language Learners, special needs, or deaf
- Lack of childcare workers
- Equity – lack of AP for students of color
- Lack of communication devices to connect to needed services
- Access to broadband
- Get educators out of same routine – need for innovation
- Lack of trust by some parents because of previous experiences

Community Priorities (Group report)

- Hire more career coaches
- Improved communications between high school counselors
- Increase of employer education in high school classes (accessibility to industry experience)
- Change in mindset around certain industries, like advanced manufacturing – make it sound more appealing
- Increase awareness around local opportunities around careers and training
- Equity – education and opportunity for students of color and those living in poverty (lack of advanced classes and other opportunities)
- Literacy – Teacher training to ensure that K-2nd grade learn to read before 3rd grade. Some students require additional assistance and many parents do not have the resources to provide this (should be part of the educational system, not just available to those that can afford a tutor)
- Mental Health – not in the broad sense, but specifically addressing social and emotional health following the pandemic (we have all been in survival mode)
- Communication of programs and opportunities
- COVID slide

Top Priorities Identified by Attendees

Topics	# of Unique References
Equity	13
Literacy (child and adult)	10
Communication	6
Tutoring	6
Mentoring/Job Shadowing	5
Parental Engagement	5
Accessibility	4
Broadband Access/Technology	4
Employment Readiness	4
Teacher Recruitment	4
Whole Child	4
Adult Education/Career Development	3
COVID Slide	3
Early Childhood Education/Readiness	3
Mental Health	3
Quality, Certified Teachers	3
Teacher Pay	3
Affordable Childcare	2
Awareness	2
Excitement in Education	2
Funding	2
Lack of Connection	2
Learning Loss	2
STEM	2
Teacher Retention	2
Transportation	2
<i>*26 other topics received one vote</i>	