

#charlestonescenarios
#charlestonsharedfuture

Charleston Shared Future Executive Summary

A Community Scenario Project on the Future of Education in Charleston County



We hope that this collective exercise of expressing four possible futures for education in Charleston County will stimulate reflection and discussion, and inspire action.

Introduction

In 1835, a law was passed in the state of South Carolina that made it illegal to teach a person of color to read and write—punishable by imprisonment and corporal punishment.

This law, one of the first related to the education of African Americans, laid the foundation for much of the educational structure in Charleston today. This storied and sordid past has brought us a deeply divided school district that works for most white people in a ‘minimally adequate’ way, while failing to serve most children of color and of poverty, just as it was designed to do 180 years ago.

[Where, though, might we be 200 years after this legislation, in the year 2035?](#)

To answer this question, the Charleston Shared Future Team was assembled in September of 2018. The team includes those who are insightful, influential, and interested in education, and who have the capacity to make things happen. They agree that something must change, but initially differed vastly on what needed to change and how. The team represents diversity in many facets: race, gender, age, ethnicity, and roles in the community. Their different positions and perspectives position them to engage, understand, and influence all of Charleston County’s communities.

The team first developed a shared understanding of the current educational system in Charleston County. From this shared understanding, four scenarios describing possible futures for public education (PreK-12th grade) in Charleston County and descriptions of ‘What could happen’, over the next 17 years were created. Along the way, the team argued, debated, listened, and learned from each other. The team came together eventually from widely different points of view to form a common understanding of what could happen in order to invite the Charleston community to join forces with us to change the system to better serve our children.

It is not as if the District and the citizens of Charleston County were unaware that problems existed... as recently as twenty years ago, in 1998, a group of Harvard researchers conducted a study of the Charleston County School District. They concluded that, if not corrected, the path we were on would lead to a “lack of equity and excellence for all of our children.” The Charleston Planning Project for Public Education, as it was named, presented a comprehensive set of recommendations for improvement covering governance reform and resource reallocation. The two most critical issues addressed in the report are:

- (1) The right of every child – not some, not most, but every child – to have the opportunity for equitable access to an excellent education, and
- (2) The critical need for an effective overhaul of the existing dysfunctional and ineffective governance structure of the Charleston County School District.

[The 1998 Report and its recommendations were largely ignored.](#)

More recently, a report produced in December 2017 by the Avery Institute at the College of Charleston, “The State of Racial Disparities in Charleston County, South Carolina 2000–2015”, documented the consequences of racial bias across our county and its effects on the quality of life and economic well-being of our citizens, and the education of our children. The Avery report was followed in October 2018 by an extensive report by Clemson University, who issued “The Inclusion and Equity Report”, painting an almost identical picture as the 1998 Harvard report, with six recommendations that were substantially similar.

Perspectives to engage, understand, and influence



We thank all involved in the conversations that led to the creation of these scenarios. The Charleston Shared Future Team represents diversity in many facets: race, gender, age, ethnicity, and roles in the community. Their different roles and perspectives position them to engage, understand, and influence Charleston County’s communities.

Stronger commitment to providing all students with quality educations

It is easy to get involved. Your energy can be put to use helping to make our schools great.



What would improve our students' educational experience?

Three students from Charleston County were part of the Scenario Team, attending the workshops and bringing their own perspectives into the conversation.

Their involvement was invaluable, often pushing the rest of the team. It's clear that students are committed to this community and want to help shape its future.

We asked the students on the Scenario Team to share the scenarios with some of their peers to get more feedback. In doing so, they heard that a technological future, like that presented in *Techtowne*, didn't resonate with everyone. As one student said, "The idea of limiting kids to online-based classes decreases our ability to interact. If anything, that will give rise to poorer lifestyles. An all-technological future is not a guarantee and kids should not be taught only based on that."

Another said, "The scenarios I thought would have the worst effect were *Techtowne* and *1835*. As nice as *Techtowne* sounds in theory, I think removing the social aspect of education would have terrible effects. The students would have no ability to socialize and collaborate, leading them to failure in career. Obviously *1835* is bad because resources would be wrongly allocated as the gap increases, leaving hundreds of kids with little to no proper schooling. *Sweetgrass Basket* and *Reconstruction* would probably have the best effect as they would most properly prepare students for the future."

One more said, "More students should be involved to provide their perspective. I think the presentation of the scenarios was thorough and well put together. I like the different paths they each took. I felt that several different issues were correctly identified. This team and its work are incredibly helpful to Charleston County, and it gave me lots of hope for the future."

For instance, the following two recommendations from the 2018 Clemson study were essentially the same as Harvard's findings in 1998:

(1) "Make School District Governance More Efficient, Accountable, and Credible: CCSD must address the governance structure related to the constituent districts, which has deepened the district's divisions by race, poverty, and political status. Additionally, any actions undertaken by CCSD or its governance boards must include as a critical component the impact that any action taken will have on building or eroding of trust among all groups."

(2) "Reform the System to Ensure Access to Quality Schools: CCSD must address the effectiveness of the district's magnet and choice programs in terms of determining if they are achieving the goals under which they were formed. The Board must be willing to take actions to open, close, merge, and redesign ineffective schools or programs. The district must also ensure equitable access to high-quality programs and courses for all students."

The 2018 Clemson Report was followed by the AdvancED Accreditation report that makes clear future accreditation will hinge on the reduction of existing disparities and inequity. Of its five recommendations, two mirror those of the 1998 report and the Clemson study. Again, AdvancED discusses the allocation of resources by imploring that "[t]he district must move from an environment where one must 'advocate for equity' to one that allocated for equity". AdvancED also echoes the need to refine the District's governance structure. The report reminds us that "[t]he historical

conditions throughout the community stand in the way of meeting the needs of every child as such customs and practices were not intended to support every child rather to protect the independence of small communities that exist in parts of the county. The school district would benefit greatly from the removal of the constituent board structure established by Act 340, adopted in 1968."

Finally, in November 2018, the *Post and Courier* released an investigative series, "Minimally Adequate," chronicling "South Carolina's persistent failures in education [that] are leaving students unprepared for the world that awaits them." The series called on readers to create public demand for a change to the "minimally adequate" requirement of education in our state; to amend the constitution to "mandate a high-quality education for all;" and to follow the lead of other states that have "made stronger commitments to providing all students with quality educations."

The four scenarios that follow are, in part, the result of external forces like technology and demographic changes that could influence our future in different ways. What happens next is largely determined, however, by what we as a community do now. Our past need not dictate our future. However, we must understand and learn from our past, in order to create a better future for all our children. We hope that this collective exercise of expressing four possible futures for education in Charleston County will stimulate reflection and conversation, and inspire action to change the current situation.

Challenge Your Thinking



STRETCH
COLLABORATION



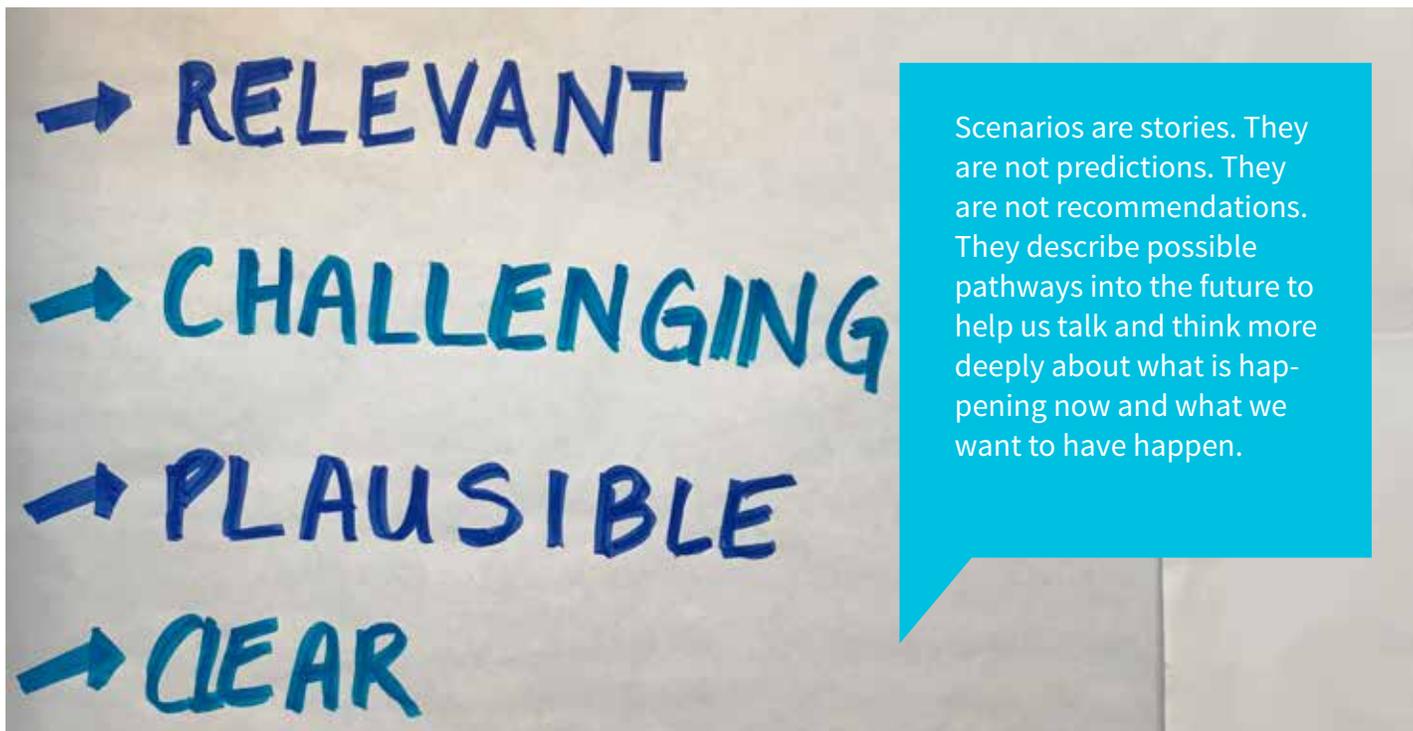
SYSTEMS
CHANGE



TRANSFORMATIVE
SCENARIO
PLANNING

What Scenarios Are

The Charleston Shared Future Scenarios are stories about what could happen in the future—not what will happen (forecasts) or what should happen (policy recommendations), but what could possibly happen between now and 2035 in terms of the future of education in Charleston County taking into account political, economic, social, and cultural dynamics.



Scenarios are stories. They are not predictions. They are not recommendations. They describe possible pathways into the future to help us talk and think more deeply about what is happening now and what we want to have happen.

The four scenarios that follow were constructed by a diverse, local team from the Charleston County Community that bridges race, sectors, geography, politics, age, and roles. They present four different stories about what the future of education might look like in 2035 in Charleston County and some possible paths that get us to those endpoints.

They are not predictions, nor are they a vision, proposal, or plan.

They are, however, **plausible**—the events and actions presented in the scenarios make logical sense, are internally consistent, and could take place.

They are **challenging**—they offer a chance for us to notice our blind spots and may present us with ideas or insights we hadn't considered before.

They are **relevant**—they take into account what

is happening and has happened in Charleston County.

Finally, they are **clear**—each scenario incorporates critical certainties—things that we know about the period from now until 2035 for sure, and then uncertainties—things that could change over that period and cause different events to happen in each scenario, which makes the four scenarios distinctive from one another.

Success of a Scenario

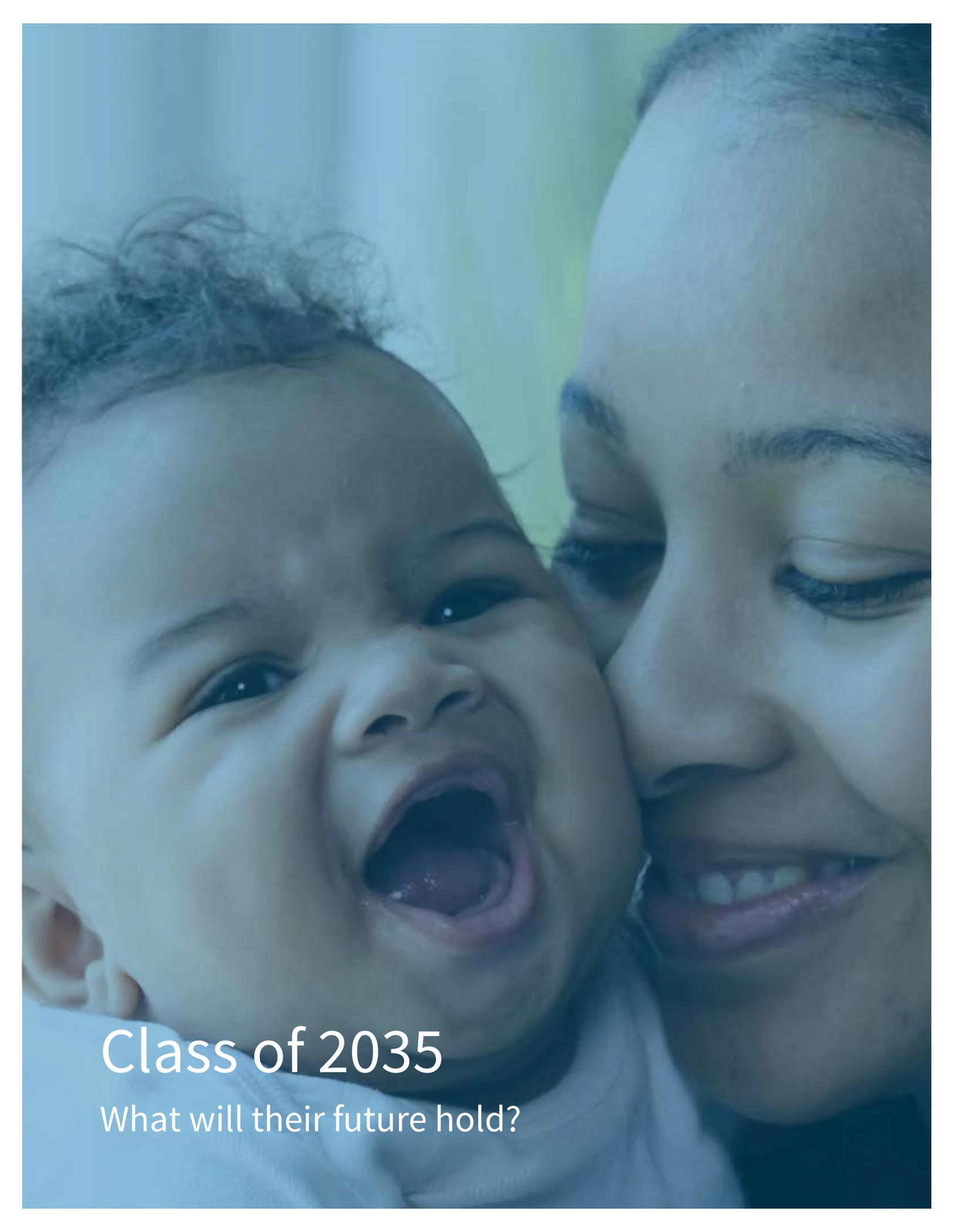
The success of a scenario or set of a scenario is not evaluated by whether these situations actually occur in the future, but rather by whether they influence the strategies and choices of today. Sometimes the most significant scenario is, in hindsight, the one we manage to avoid.

In developing scenarios, we create a common

language that allows us to talk about the challenges of the present and the future. Based on this conversation, we can make choices and form strategic alliances that allow us to promote the future reality that we desire.

Therefore, for the scenarios to be successful, it is essential for people to reflect on and talk about them. This reflection may be individual or collective, face-to-face or virtual. We encourage any concerned citizen to gather with others and talk about the different stories and their implications.

The purpose of structured reflection on the scenarios is not to arrive at a consensus about what will happen. It is to engage a diverse group of participants in a discussion about what could happen, using the scenarios to inform and inspire individual and collective strategies, illuminate possible pathways, and clarify next steps.



Class of 2035

What will their future hold?

Four Scenarios in Brief

Scenario 1: 1835

A fixed point in time with no way forward

Charleston County, 2035 – Modest changes and advances in the late 2010s eventually stall in the face of political divisions, competing loyalties, and the revolving doors of leaders and key administrators. Educational structures and community aspirations suffer under the legacy of the 1835 law that outlawed educating people of color, as well as funding restrictions from Act 388 which was passed in 2006. Repeated failure to act on recommendations from generations of studies and analysis maintains an imbalanced dynamic, where some schools are high-achieving and students are performing well and other schools are failing.

Racial inequities reverberate throughout Charleston County. Distrust persists and neighborhoods are segregated by race and/or income. Crime has tarnished Charleston’s reputation as a tourist destination, and the city has become known for its hate crimes. 2035 finds key educational outcome indicators unchanged and anxiety growing across the business and civic community.



Over time, most changes and advances ultimately stall and students end up leaving Charleston to find employment and better opportunities.

- Multiple school boards continue to exist with high levels of conflict, both within and between the boards and board members.
- District leadership and staff turnover is constant.
- The system works for a part of the community, but not for most.
- CCSD’s reputation declines throughout this period, eventually losing accreditation and causing community members who can to look elsewhere for their children’s education.
- Very few people want to work for the district or partner with them.
- Pockets of opportunity offered by select schools and in specific fields continue to exist, but are available to only a few. Some of the best and worst schools in the country are in Charleston County.
- Racial tensions increase, leading to increased numbers of hate crimes.
- Neighborhoods continue to be segregated and many neighborhood schools, mostly in African American areas, have fewer resources.
- The achievement gap continues to widen. A failing education system leads to increased dropout rates, higher student discipline and mental health referrals, and youth suicide rates.
- Large businesses start hiring from elsewhere. This brings in a population that can afford what the locals cannot, leaving locals unemployed and further disillusioned, resorting to crime and violence.
- Tourism continues to be the major economic driver, but service industry professionals are forced to live far from their jobs, resulting in a lack of workforce.
- Businesses also slow down their hiring and investment. Charleston County’s economy declines over time.
- By 2035 the public-school system is abandoned by many, students are disillusioned, their link to their hometown and community is tenuous, and those who did well leave Charleston for places that are thriving and offer better employment options.

Educational structures and community aspirations suffer from the legacy of 1835 law and Act 388.

Scenario 2: Sweetgrass Basket

A slow and intensive process like that of making a basket. The sweetgrass must be processed before it is pliable enough to produce useful products.

In this scenario, years of research and studies accompanied by an amended CCSD strategic plan and focused action from many sectors of Charleston County gradually yield important reforms. Constituent Boards are dismantled and recruitment and retention of talented educators and administrators improves. A better compensation and professional development system attracts more minority teachers to Charleston. An investment in extensive culturally appropriate programming in both the community and CCSD leads to broader understanding of how poverty and racism affect educational outcomes and, eventually, to policies and practices that affirm diversity and create an inclusive, welcoming climate. A vocal minority of residents hold onto traditions that contribute to Charleston’s reputation for being racist and unsafe for some based on their identities. However, innovative policies appear to be leading to a holistic approach to much-needed psychological and mental health services for students.

It takes ten years to phase out Act 388 and devise other tax reforms that enough people could buy into and support. Stronger academic goals and benchmarks are now being communicated to more stakeholders and, as a result, the achievement gaps have narrowed and there is more support for change. There remains a critical affordable housing shortage for teachers which impacts recruitment and retention. Tensions with people who benefited from the old system remain strong. Because there is more engagement between the school and the community (including grassroots organizations) the tensions and conflicts are visible to many and contribute to anxiety about the future. Some of the rural schools and smaller urban schools are considered for closure, generating apprehension.

Longtime local families begin to see that their family members are better prepared for employment in Charleston’s growing economy. It has taken a long time, but there are more successful partnerships between CCSD, businesses, nonprofits, and grassroots organizations. Many minority families continue to experience a deep socio-economic gap that positions them outside the mainstream of an improved Charleston.



Years of research and studies accompanied by an amended CCSD strategic plan and focused action gradually yield important reforms.

- Slow and steady improvements create a gradual shift.
- School-level decision-making becomes the norm and more multi-stakeholder teams are involved in the process.
- Facilities Funding Referendum passes in 2020 providing more capital improvements for schools.
- Act 388 completes a ten-year phase out.
- Constituent Boards are disbanded through reforms to Act 340.
- CCSD Board elections are aligned with the County Council seats.
- CCSD Board extends the length of the school day and the school year. Some

Achievement gaps are starting to close and progress is made, though gaps still exist.

- businesses oppose this move as it impacts their labor force.
- Trust builds between the District and the community through engagement programs and conscious transparency, yet pockets of distrust remain.
- An emphasis on teacher recruitment, retention, salaries, and housing support is met with mixed reactions though these efforts begin to show the needed progress.
- Student social and academic needs are better served through a holistic approach.
- Achievement gaps are slowly starting to close, postsecondary enrollment gradually begins to increase.
- Community and family engagement with the schools continues to grow in all segments of the population.
- Curriculum is designed to be culturally relevant and rigorous, better preparing students for postsecondary school and the workforce.
- A variety of approaches are taken to reduce racism, allowing pockets of Charleston County to become more inclusive.
- The economy thrives and a school-to-work pipeline far outstrips the school-to-prison pipeline through business partnerships and engagement.
- There is still a social divide along racial lines.
- There is much progress made—yet gaps still exist.

Scenario 3: Reconstruction

The need to reconstruct a system that was designed not to benefit all

Reform, centralization, and restructuring produce a transformed CCSD with well-funded schools and a more diverse cadre of talented educators. A large group of committed citizens (educators, parents, grassroots leaders, business people, the faith community, and nonprofit leaders) realize that change from the status quo has to occur quickly. The repeal of Acts 340 and 388, and adoption of recommendations from the Clemson study and AdvancED, sparks optimism and turmoil simultaneously. Geographic zone restructuring, adoption of Culturally Responsive Teaching, and passage of a sales tax referendum provide the framework for a stronger educational system attuned to the needs of many more students—especially students of color, poverty, and with special needs. Strong data on student progress and continuous engagement with the business and nonprofit community result in productive and effective partnerships.

By 2035 there is a sense of pride and hopefulness in many quarters. School employees have a salary structure that reflects their training and professional stature. Surveys track the engagement and progress of students in the system. Graduates talk about wanting to return to Charleston after college or other postsecondary activities because they understand the breadth of opportunities available to those educated in the Charleston system.

While much of the innovation is trending in a positive direction, other changes are not proving to be as successful as hoped. But the shift in attitudes mean that there is more willingness to try new ideas and re-group when something is not yielding the desired results. Resistance to changing the state pension and healthcare systems threatens some of the reforms because a full package of compensation and benefits are needed to retain the people they attract. There continues to be a need for tough conversations with people who liked the old systems and structures. The economy is booming, although this is now threatened by population shifts and jobs becoming more competitive. The need for change in State policy and continued community engagement continues.



Reform, centralization, and restructuring produce a transformed CCSD

- Central CCSD control over most decision-making, programs, and initiatives.
- Engaged stakeholders foster a grassroots movement focused on creating better educational outcomes for all students.
- After a rocky start, trust builds between community members and the District.
- A significant number of initiatives are undertaken but are met with resistance from those for whom the system is already working.
- Transparency and difficult conversations help more community members to support efforts that will benefit all students.
- Charlestonians move to repeal Act 340 and Act 388. Strong opposition is ultimately overcome and the efforts are successful.
- From classroom to Board room, professional development and shifts in pedagogy propel CCSD toward new structures that result in increased student engagement and higher performance.
- Four geographic zones are created and schools in each zone become more diverse, equitably resourced, and consistent in number of students.
- Change is hard for some, and school closures particularly so. Pushback is intense.
- With the help of professional development opportunities for teachers, there is a renewed focus on high expectations and developing independent thinkers, and classrooms become rigorous learning environments.
- A centralized hiring and staff-assignment process is implemented, initially leading to a chaotic feeling and some attrition. CCSD provides support to help people through this restructuring.
- Community training and dialogues on issues of race are held to overcome barriers and increase understanding.
- While reforms lead to initial disruption including turnover in administration and the School Board, data shows improved student outcomes.

Much of the innovation is trending in a positive direction; other changes are not proving to be as successful.

Scenario 4: Techtowne

Technology drives the future

In this scenario, technology produces both progress and disparity. The what, when, and how of education change significantly after the School Board and administrators adopt new technologies. The private sector is eager to provide resources to remake the educational system, and these new technologies hold the promise of catapulting Charleston to the educational technology top tier. Special-needs students now have technologies

enabling them to learn and adjust more easily. These investments get Charleston ahead of the curve—so far ahead that citywide infrastructure proves inadequate to ensure access for all to reliable internet services to use these technologies.

Many people in and outside of Charleston are excited when a technology-centric School Board is elected to lead the once-struggling system in this new direction. Virtual learning becomes the core of the technology advances, leading to more learning outside the classroom. Neither homes, families, bricks-and-mortar schools, nor community centers are prepared for this shift. While the need for K3-6 teachers is steady, the number of teachers needed for secondary schools drops. On the other hand, the need for psychologists, speech and learning specialists, and mental health practitioners increases. Students report feeling more isolated and their ability to interact interpersonally and in groups decreases, affecting their employability. Many students are excited by the opportunity to be more technologically savvy. The economic viability of Charleston is challenged by technology, an unevenly prepared workforce, a healthier aging workforce, and stronger competition for opportunities. Housing and the development of healthy communities are a continuing challenge as gentrification persists. Racism receives uneven attention through the period of technological growth.



Investments in technology move Charleston ahead of the curve, but infrastructure proves inadequate.

- A new School Board is elected and they promote a vision of Charleston County as the world-class technology leader in education.
- Although new technology infrastructure becomes widely available, many high-poverty families do not have access to devices or internet.
- There is a high demand for a technologically capable workforce and businesses provide training and funding to the district to provide what's needed.
- As schools become more virtual, the community votes down future sales tax referendums, feeling that bricks and mortar buildings are less necessary.
- CCSD favors specialized learning that directly meets employers' needs, over creativity and the arts.
- Teachers' roles change to instructional coaches, specializing in innovation, design, and problem-based learning.
- A new evaluation system rewards teachers who adapt and become proficient in technology, while teachers who don't or can't adapt leave the profession.
- Students are groomed to fill specific roles in specific fields based on algorithms that identify aptitude and slot them into those places. Businesses, colleges, and universities use these algorithms too, so students do not have much choice. Choice requires additional funds and resources only available to the "haves."
- More high school and middle school students work from home individually, and their soft skills begin to decline. Technology also isolates groups from each other, causing privacy concerns and fostering mistrust.
- Increased investment in wraparound services like mental health counselors, speech pathologists, and psychologists is necessary—reducing cost savings in other areas.
- Students with special needs both win and lose. Some of their learning needs can be met more easily with technology, and in the early years, that can be developmentally inappropriate.
- There is little reduction in racism. Virtual learning offers more culturally relevant curriculum and opportunities for more

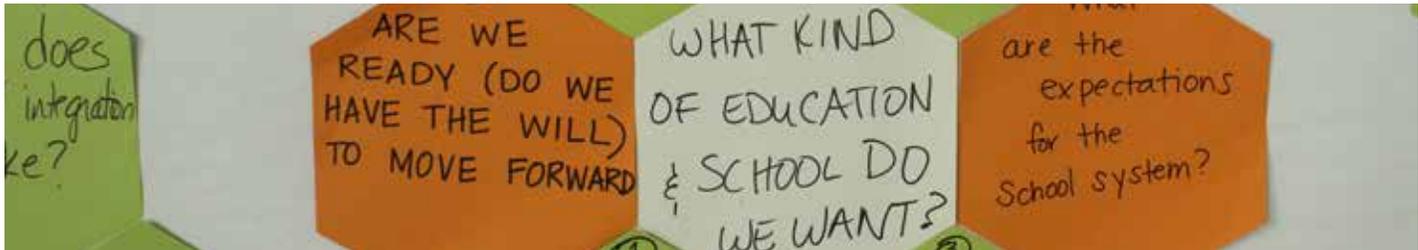
A period of technological growth ensues
but racism receives uneven attention.

- diverse experiences, but local segregation remains and less interaction between people makes them wary of others.
- Virtual and remote learning make global educational opportunities accessible beyond Charleston County.
- The economic gap is exacerbated between those that have technological aptitude (and access) and those that don't.
- Over time, manufacturing becomes entire-

ly automated, people work longer due to better health, and unemployment begins to rise. Many face a future of increased education and fewer opportunities. CCSD works to actively prepare students for whatever the future jobs will be.

Scenario Building Blocks

In constructing the scenarios, the team took into account both “certainties”—elements that will be **present in all scenarios** in the **same** way, and then “uncertainties”—elements that are **present in all the scenarios** but what happens to them **varies from story to story**. The uncertainties are what differentiate one scenario from the other.



Notes from group planning sessions show the kinds of questions the Scenario Team was asking.

Are we ready to move forward?
What questions are we asking ourselves and our communities?

Certainties

- Technology is available across the education system.
- Allocation of resources will continue to be an issue.
- Changes in leadership/administration.
- Race issues/racism will continue to exist.
- There will be school choice.
- Educators will continue to play a role.
- Students are different and will continue to have individual needs, learning styles, opportunities.
- Students need to feel safe in order to thrive.

Uncertainties

- Governance and policy structure may change in various ways.
- How CCSD organizational structure, roles and responsibilities evolve.
- How resources are allocated.
- The face of community and civic engagement throughout Charleston County.
- Changes in pedagogy, student achievement, and readiness.
- The existence of racism and discrimination, and efforts to counteract it.
- Changing demographics and economics of Charleston County.

Comparison of Scenarios

Uncertainty	Scenario 1: 1835	Scenario 2: Sweetgrass Basket	Scenario 3: Reconstruction	Scenario 4: Techoatne
Governance & Policy Structure	District & Constituent structures remain in place, with internal conflicts creating ineffectiveness.	Progressive reforms take place. Act 388 is phased out over 10 years. No Constituent Boards.	Act 388 relief. No Constituent Boards. Fewer schools, each with bigger student populations. Adoption of AdvancED Continuous Improvement System.	CCSD embraces the role of technology & focuses on meeting employers' needs. Sales tax referendum fails.
CCSD Organizational Structure, Roles and Responsibilities	Constant turnover of leadership means that teachers receive inconsistent support. More charter schools are developed.	School-level decision making. Gradual restructuring of administrative functions.	Centralized CCSD decision-making. District is restructured into four geographic zones. Cycles of refinement after initial disruption. Universal 3K and 4K education.	Board adds members from industry. Role of teachers changes. CCSD creates a virtual school option.
Allocation of Resources	Student needs are not met. Act 388 leads to reduced funding allocation to schools.	Schools given more autonomy. Teacher shortages continue. Expanded services for students.	More equitable school funding allocation & redistribution of resources. Competitive teachers' pay.	Virtual schools lead to reduction in number of teachers and other staff. Increase in wraparound services.
Community & Civic Engagement	Parents & communities have little trust in CCSD and so fewer of them partner with it. Community action produces little change.	More community participation in decision making. Stronger school-community relationships.	Deep community engagement. Some schools function as community centers providing wraparound services for students & adult learning. New business partners.	Technology leads to better-informed youth and families, but continued loss of social and other basic skills.
Pedagogy, Student Achievement & Readiness	Only some students continue to achieve. Few gains in student achievement for poor & non-white students.	Additional school programs & longer school year. Student achievement gap decreases.	Data-driven examination of teacher & student performance. Extended-year schools. Educational opportunities are distributed equitably.	Pedagogy uses artificial intelligence to produce more independent, individualized learning and remote delivery.
Racism & Discrimination	Increases in hate crimes, disciplinary referrals, and psychological problems. Families take students out of public options & schools become more segregated.	Racism programs available. Schools become better integrated. Neighborhoods continue to be segregated. Fewer students end up in prison.	CCSD and community racism awareness programs. Controlled Choice model. More diverse CCSD staff.	Technology equalizes access to education but no structural efforts to address racism.
Demographics & Economics of Charleston	Tourism continues to be a major industry, but technology employers recruit outside of Charleston for talent. Businesses downsize or delay investment leading to increased local unemployment & crime.	Sectors of the economy continue to thrive. Business partnerships grow. Minority families' socio-economic gaps continue.	Economy still booming. Jobs become more competitive.	Charleston becomes an innovation hub. CCSD partners with tech companies. Increased gentrification. Fewer jobs due to automation, requiring more education.

Glossary

3K and 4K: A program for children, usually three and four years old, for the purpose of preparing them for kindergarten.

Achievement Gap: The term “achievement gap” is often defined as the differences between the test scores of minority and/or low-income students and the test scores of their White and Asian peers. But achievement gaps in test scores affect many different groups. Some groups may trail at particular points, for example, boys in the early years and girls in high school math and science. Differences between the scores of students with different backgrounds (ethnic, racial, gender, disability, and income) are evident on large-scale standardized tests. Test score gaps often lead to longer-term gaps, including high school and college completion and the kinds of jobs students secure as adults.

Accreditation: Is a process by which individual schools or entire school districts are certified as achieving minimum standards of quality in providing education to their students. This lends more credibility to a diploma obtained from an accredited school versus a diploma from an unaccredited school.

Act 388: Passed in 2006, Act 388 exempts any owner-occupied property in South Carolina from paying for public school operations. This means that anyone that lives in the house that they own do not pay for any of the costs for running a school; such costs include expenses such as teacher salaries and benefits, student transportation, books and other educational materials, costs for students with special needs (autism for example), arts and music, sports, other enrichment programs, etc. Act 388 allows for a 1% sales tax increase to fund school operations, which has not kept pace with rising costs of operating schools.

Act 340: Under Act 340 of 1967, otherwise known as the Act of Consolidation, the South Carolina Legislature consolidated the eight school districts of Charleston County into the Charleston County School District (CCSD). The eight districts were kept as “special districts” called “constituent districts. The Act specified that CCSD was to be governed by a board of trustees; in addition, each of the eight constituent districts was to have a board of trustees.

ACT Test: The ACT is an entrance exam used by most colleges and universities to make admissions decisions. It measures a high school student’s readiness for college, and provide colleges with one common data point that can be used to compare all applicants. It is similar to, and serves the same purposes, as the SAT Test.

AdvancedED: An accreditation agency that assessed the quality of CCSD’s educational, governance, resource allocation, and organizational systems in 2018.

Algorithms: A term used to describe a usually complex equation or formula, often for the coding or programing that creates computer software.

Allocation of Resources: Resources are a school district’s funds, staff (teachers and other school-based personnel), grants, and property, and allocation is how these resources are distributed to schools and in what proportion. An example is the per pupil dollar amount that the district allocates to each school.

Artificial Intelligence: Artificial intelligence (AI) is an area of computer science that emphasizes the creation of intelligent machines that work and react like humans.

Apprenticeship Programs: Regional employers in a variety of industries offer students work opportunities to get paid to shadow and understudy full-time workers.

School Autonomy: School autonomy is a concept that means different things to different people:

- For school principals it appears to mean being cut loose from central office bureaucrats, giving principals control over the flexible use of global budgets and the destiny of their own school.
- For parents it appears to mean making schools more accountable to parents by giving them a greater say over how resources are used, making parents more engaged with the school.
- For teachers it appears to mean greater empowerment for them to make decisions about student learning.
- For the business and corporate community it appears to mean more competition and a commitment to market forces so as to produce more efficient and effective schools to meet their needs.
- For policymakers it appears to get them off the hook for being responsible for schools in the longer term with shrinking tax bases and competing demands upon scarce tax dollars.

Bricks and Mortar: Used to describe a traditional business or school that operates in a building, when compared to one that operates over the internet.

Charter School: A public school that is sponsored by a local district, the South Carolina Public School District, or a higher education authorizer. As set in state law, a charter school has flexibility with some regulations in exchange for a high level of accountability. Students are selected by lottery and there can be no barriers to entrance like entrance exams. Each year, charter schools participate in the same standardized testing and must complete an external financial audit just like a school district.

College and Career Readiness: The knowledge and skills a student needs to be successful in all future endeavors including credit-bearing, first-year courses at a postsecondary institution (such as a two or four-year college, trade school, or technical school) or to embark successfully on a chosen career.

Consolidated School Board: Charleston County’s board is described as consolidated since it was formed. The consolidated Board of Trustees oversees policy, finance, and personnel for the Charleston County School District.

Constituent District: Constituent districts are a type of governance structure in Charleston County that was authorized by South Carolina Act 340 of 1967. Charleston has the only such governance structure in the state, and as far as can be determined, the only such structure in the U.S. Act 340 created eight constituent districts in Charleston County, each with an elected governing board authorized:

- To assign students to non-magnet local schools in the constituent district, subject to appeal to the CCSD Board of Trustees.
- To consider and determine student transfer requests, both inter and intra-district, subject to appeal to the CCSD Board of Trustees.
- To hear and decide student discipline appeals, subject to appeal to the CCSD Board of Trustee.
- Inform CCSD Board of Trustees of well-being of district schools.

Controlled Choice: A model developed to achieve student-body diversity, provide choice regarding one’s school of enrollment, and promote school improvement.

Clemson University Inclusion and Equity Study: The CCSD Board contracted with Clemson in December 2017, and in the months since, this group conducted interviews and discussions with a wide range of CCSD stakeholders, including teachers, students, district personnel, and community members. They researched and analyzed issues related to diversity, inclusion, and sources of tension throughout the district.

Culturally Responsive Teaching: A pedagogy that recognizes the importance of including students’ cultural references in all aspects of learning.

Demographics: Statistical characteristics of a human population, such as race, ethnicity, gender, age, education, profession, occupation, income level, and marital status.

Diversity: The extent to which there is a variety in the demographics of a population.

Institutional Discrimination: What makes this form of [institutional] discrimination even more dangerous than other forms of discrimination is the fact that it is ‘institutionalized’, meaning that it has been incorporated into the very procedures, structures, and processes of various organizations—so it’s not just one person who is discriminating, but an entire organization. These include the government and other corporations, public institutions like schools, healthcare centers, and police forces, as well as financial institutions like banks and investment firms, along with other social bodies. Two CCSD examples include: (1) creation of South Carolina’s Equalization Schools in the 1950’s and (2) Act 340, both of which perpetuated racial segregation in Charleston’s schools.

Equity: Merriam-Webster defines equity as “justice according to natural law or right”, however for the purposes of the scenarios, we have defined equity more similarly to the Cambridge Dictionary; “equal treatment; fairness”. For the purposes of these scenarios, equity does not mean that all students/schools get the same things at the same rates. It does mean that resources are allocated in a way that even the proverbial playing field.

Feeder Patterns: In education, a term used to describe a group of elementary, middle and high schools that serve a given neighborhood or zone.

Gentrification: The phenomenon of wealthier people moving into a neighborhood, thereby increasing the property values and cost of living in the area and eventually pricing out less-wealthy residents.

Geographical (Attendance) Zones: School attendance zones outline where children in a particular neighborhood will attend public elementary and middle school, junior high or senior high.

Governance: The oversight and policy responsibility for an organization within which rules, procedures and practices are formed and expected to comply.

Grass Roots Movement: In education, the collective action of parents, students and or teachers toward a common goal.

Harvard Report: A report created in 1998 by Harvard University spearheaded by Dr. Charles Willie (Harvard University) that proposes a plan for educational improvement of the Charleston County Public Schools.

Inclusion: the welcoming, tolerance and acceptance of diverse individuals within an organization.

Inequity: lack of fairness or justice.

Magnet School: Schools/programs are public schools that offer a specialized curriculum, not available elsewhere, often with specific admissions requirements.

Marginalized: a group that is disadvantaged by the majority.

Montessori Method: A child-centered educational approach based on scientific observations of children from birth to adulthood developed by Dr. Maria Montessori. The method has been time tested, with over 100 years of success, in diverse cultures throughout the world. It is a view of the child as one who is naturally eager for knowledge and capable of initiating learning in a supportive, thoughtfully prepared learning environment. It is an approach that values the human spirit and the development of the whole child—physical, social, emotional, cognitive.

Neighborhood Schools: Schools defined strictly by neighborhood, assigned according to boundaries drawn by the school board. Children were assigned a school according to their physical address. Most adults today grew up in this school environment.

Parochial Schools: A church-run primary or secondary school.

Pedagogy: Refers to the “interactions between teachers, students, and the learning environment and the learning tasks.” This broad term includes how teachers and students relate together as well as the instructional approaches implemented in the classroom. It is the study and theory of the methods and principles of teaching.

Post and Courier: A local newspaper, also the oldest and largest local newspaper in South Carolina.

Private Schools: Private schools, also known to many as independent schools, non-governmental, privately funded, or non-state schools, are not administered by local, state or national governments.

Project Based Learning: A teaching method in which students gain knowledge and skills by working for an extended period of time to investigate and respond to an authentic, engaging, and real-world complex question, problem, or challenge.

Public Schools: a free school, funded by local, state and the federal government.

Professional Development (PD): Ongoing learning programs to earn or maintain teachers’ or other employees’ professional credentials and improve their professional knowledge, competence, skill, and effectiveness.

Racism: As defined by Cambridge, “the belief that some races are better than others, or the unfair treatment of someone because of his or her race”.

Reform: To change, with the intent to improve.

SAT Test: The SAT is an entrance exam used by most colleges and universities to make admissions decisions. It measures a high school student’s readiness for college, and provide colleges with one common data point that can be used to compare all applicants. It is similar to, and serves the same purposes, as the ACT Test.

School Choice: The ability to choose to attend a school other than the one that serves one’s attendance zone.

Segregation: Both the official practice and the practical result of keeping people apart, usually people of different sexes, races, or religions. The Supreme Court unanimously ruled that racial segregation in schools was unconstitutional.

Socioeconomic Status: Socioeconomic status (SES) is defined by the American Psychological Association (APA) as the “social standing or class of an individual or group,” which is “often measured as a combination of education, income and occupation.” His or her family status can have a significant impact on a learner’s capacity to achieve in a formal school setting.

Student Achievement: Academic performance generally determined through testing against pre-established standards.

Tax/Bond Referendum: A voting process that gives voters the power to decide if a school district should be authorized to raise funds through either a sales tax or sale of bonds for the purpose of building or renovating schools or other capital projects.

Teacher Allocations: Refers to the number and types of teachers assigned to a school, which impact a school’s student-teacher ratio. A student-teacher ratio expresses the relationship between the number of students enrolled in a school and the number of teachers in the school. For example, a student-teacher ratio of 20:1 indicates that there are twenty students for every teaching position.

Technology Advisory Board: A body or committee that provides non-binding strategic advice to the board or management of a corporation, organization, or foundation.

Title I Schools: A provision of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act passed in 1965; it is a program created by the U.S. Department of Education to distribute funding to schools and school districts with a high percentage of students from low-income families.

Virtual School: An education program where teaching and learning takes place on-line, used instead of or as a supplement to a traditional school.

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Charleston Shared Future

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