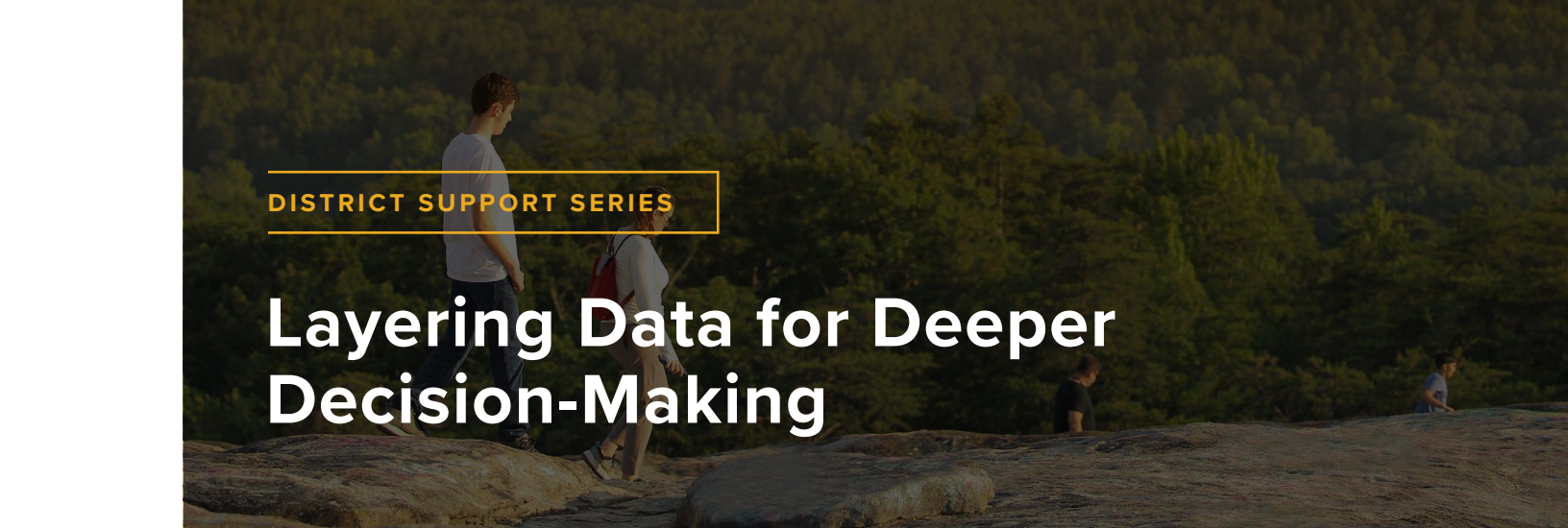




DISTRICT SUPPORT SERIES

Layering Data for Deeper Decision-Making

District and school leaders are inundated daily with data. From state-mandated test scores and report card ratings to staffing metrics and climate survey results, the sheer volume can be overwhelming. Data sets are far too often examined in isolation—each one reviewed for compliance, reporting, or surface-level trends. When data are siloed, however, the opportunity for deeper strategic insight is lost.

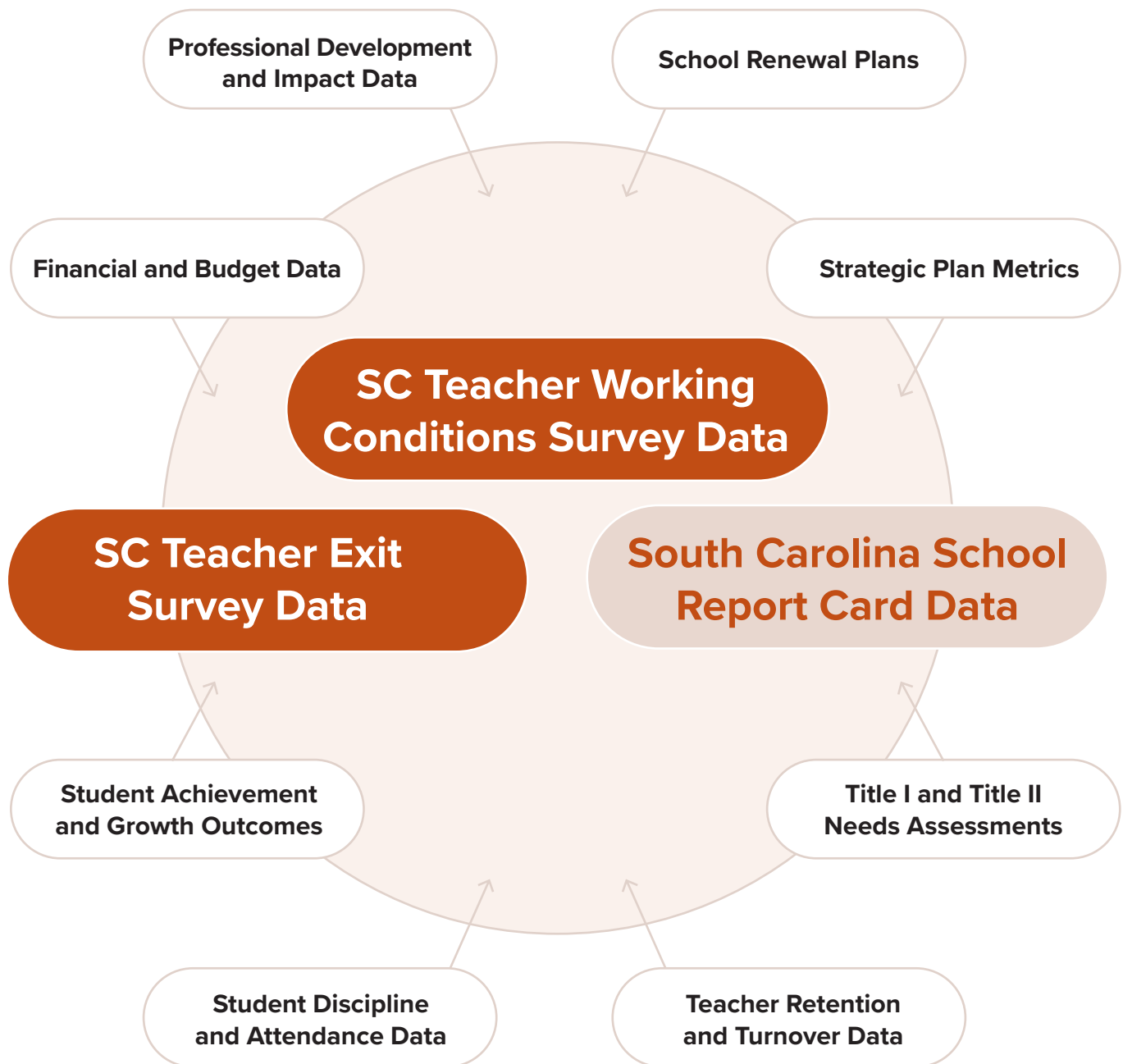
Seventy-five percent of South Carolina's traditional public school districts participated in the 2025 SC Teacher Working Conditions Survey (SCTWCS), gaining access to powerful district-specific data on teacher perceptions and their workplace experiences. Examined in isolation, these data provide compelling insights into teachers' job demands and resources.

Yet, the true power of survey results for school and district leaders emerges once they are layered with other data, like South Carolina School Report Card metrics, teacher retention data, and Title I and II needs assessments. By triangulating these and other data sources, schools can move beyond compliance and data collection and begin to make more meaning—drawing connections between the working conditions teachers experience and the outcomes schools aim to achieve.

Why Connecting Data Sources Matters

ADDING CONTEXT	UNCOVERING SYSTEMS-LEVEL CONDITIONS	ASKING THE RIGHT QUESTIONS
Isolated data can show that something is happening (e.g., rising teacher turnover, declining student outcomes), but without context, the “why” may be misunderstood.	By layering SCTWCS data with other metrics, school and district leaders gain greater clarity of the specific conditions contributing to both successes and challenges.	When SCTWCS data are considered with other key indicators, leaders are better able to ask the right questions, identify patterns, and tailor interventions that address root causes over symptoms.

LAYERING DATA WITH SCTWCS RESULTS: WHERE TO START



The following chart expands further on key examples of data sources that, when triangulated with SCTWCS results, help school and district leaders connect the dots between teacher perceptions and systems-level performance.

DATA SOURCE	SIGNIFICANCE FOR ALIGNMENT
Financial and Budget Data	SCTWCS data can support the examination of investment of funds in staffing, professional development, and support roles. Additionally, they may provide insights into under-resourced areas that align with budget priorities.
Professional Development and Impact Data	SCTWCS results capture teachers' perceptions regarding the relevance and accessibility of current professional development. As such, they can be used to assess the alignment of professional development needs and offerings.
SC Teacher Exit Survey	With participation in the annual SC Teacher Exit Survey, administered by SC TEACHER, districts can compare their SCTWCS findings with data on exiting teachers' reasons for leaving and types of movement to better tailor strategies for retention.
School Renewal Plans	School Renewal Plans require a focus on continuous improvement; working conditions impact improvement. SCTWCS results can provide meaningful input and justification for these strategies.
South Carolina School Report Card Metrics	Comparing accountability metrics to teacher perceptions reflected in SCTWCS data can shed light on the impact of teacher experience in school outcomes.
Strategic Plan Metrics	Using SCTWCS data ensures teacher perspectives are reflected in strategy development. This approach can also help align teacher-reported conditions with district and school improvement goals.
Student Achievement and Student Growth Outcomes	Teacher working conditions are often correlated to student performance and can help districts and schools tell the story surrounding the conditions that promote academic success.
Student Discipline and Attendance Data	Examining teacher perceptions related to student behavior and engagement as documented in SCTWCS data may help uncover root causes of challenges associated with student discipline and attendance.
Teacher Retention and Turnover Data	SCTWCS results can be used to identify conditions and diagnose core concerns potentially impacting teacher retention, such as workload or administrator support.
Title I and Title II Needs Assessments	SCTWCS data strengthen justification for resource allocation, which is required by federal law. Furthermore, these findings can provide rationale to support plans for instructional support, recruitment, retention, and professional development.



From Insight to Impact: How One District Put Layered Data to Work

The leadership team at Richland School District Two offers a compelling, real-world example of how layered data can move a system from analysis to action. District leaders examined SCTWCS results alongside teacher retention trends and uncovered meaningful connections between working conditions and attrition patterns. They used these data to pinpoint specific areas—such as novice teachers’ perceptions of autonomy and professional development support and middle school teachers’ perceptions of administrative support and shared governance—that influenced educators’ decisions to stay or leave the district. This layered approach helped the team better understand the “why” behind their numbers and shape more targeted strategies for continuous improvement and support.



Dr. Franklin Foster, Senior Chief Officer for Human Resources at Richland Two, presents at the 2025 SC TEACHER Insights Symposium on the district’s work turning SCTWCS data into actionable insights to support teacher retention and recruitment practices.

Connecting Data Sets in Your District

When paired thoughtfully with other key data sources, SCTWCS results become more than a snapshot—they become a lens for deeper understanding and strategic action. Layering data is not about adding complexity; it’s about providing greater clarity. By connecting teacher perspectives to systemwide outcomes, leaders can make more informed, equitable, and sustainable decisions.

Districts participating in the SCTWCS are provided SC TEACHER tools and workshop opportunities for acting on survey data at no cost to districts.

CONNECT WITH US TO...

- Access guides and crosswalks for applying survey data to Cognia accreditation, PADEPP assessment, and strategic planning.
- Suggest a topic for our District Support Series or Data + Insight Workshops that would benefit your district’s work.
- Stay up to date on future resources and workshop opportunities by signing up for our monthly newsletter.



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