



Alicia V. Hughes

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Innovative and impact-driven virtual education leader with 14+ years of experience managing remote teams, improving student outcomes, and guiding K-12 systems through strategic change. Expert in leading school operations, building culture in virtual environments, and developing leaders through coaching and professional learning. Recognized TEDx speaker and published thought leader in virtual leadership best practices.

CONTACT

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CORE COMPETENCIES

- Virtual Team Leadership
- Strategic Planning & Operations
- Change Management
- Public Speaking & Facilitation
- Instructional Coaching
- Culture Building in Remote Settings
- Stakeholder Engagement
- Conference & Course Design

EDUCATION

- M.Ed., Education Administration** – American Public University
- M.A., Historic Preservation** – University of Georgia
- B.A., Social Studies Education** – Winthrop University

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Founder & Leadership Consultant

SPARKING UP LEADERSHIP, LLC | March 2024 – Present

- Design and deliver professional learning on virtual leadership and remote culture-building
- Facilitate leadership coaching and workshops at national conferences (DLAC, FETC, TEDx)
- Developed a suite of online courses for virtual team collaboration and innovation
- Empower schools and organizations to maximize success in digital environments

Professional Development Specialist

Imagine Learning, Amplify, Merlyn Minds, Proximity Learning | March 2024 – Present

- Provide training and implementation support for blended and online learning programs
- Build rapport and confidence with educators adapting to new tools and technologies

SPEAKING ENGAGEMENTS

Featured Speaker: TEDx

JesterCirED – Building Relationships
in a Virtual World

National Conferences: FETC, DLAC,
Beyond School Hours, SREB, WELead,
Kids First, Remote K12, Pearson
Leadership

Session Topics:

- How to Build Culture and Sustain It in the Virtual Space
- Using Influence to Drive Performance
- Leading, Laughing, Learning
- How a Virtual School Found Success
- Handling Big Organizational Change

CERTIFICATES

- **SC Educator Certificate:** Middle & High School Social Studies, Principal (Elem/Sec)
- **SC Read to Succeed**
- **SC Gifted & Talented**
- **SC Certified Mentor & Evaluator**

SERVICE

- **Program Committee:** DLAC, OLC, Pearson
- **Founding Committee:** Virtual Prep of SC
- **Education Board Member:** The Citadel, Winthrop
- **Principal Mentor**
- **Engagement Lead:** Human Intelligence Movement

Executive Director (Head of School)

SC Connections Academy | June 2022 – March 2024

- Led school operations for 6,300 students & 260 staff
- Oversaw instruction, curriculum, finance, compliance, and HR with a \$19M+ budget
- Increased graduation rate and improved College & Career Readiness metrics
- Leadership team reorganization to improve student achievement
- Negotiated strategic enrollment freeze to prioritize student support and retention

High School Principal

SC Connections Academy | June 2019 – June 2022

- Managed academic programming for 2,800 students
- Increased graduation rate from 35% to 90%
- Boosted College & Career Readiness from 33% to 54%
- Maintained staff satisfaction above 95%

High School Assistant Principal

SC Connections Academy | June 2013 – June 2019

- Led student engagement, teacher evaluation, EL services, and discipline
- Created academic dishonesty policies and advisory council
- Achieved 90%+ course passage rates across departments

Secondary Social Studies Teacher

SC Connections Academy | Jan 2010 – June 2013

Charleston County School District | Aug 1999 – Oct 2007

- Teacher of the Year several times
- implemented Freshman Academy model
- Served as mentor and master teacher