



## South Carolina Department of Education

Together, we can.

Jim Rex took the oath of office as South Carolina's 16th State Superintendent of Education on January 10, 2007, and is at work fulfilling the promises he made to the people of our State during his successful 2006 campaign. Those include:

- accelerating innovation;
- reforming accountability to ensure its success;
- expanding public school choices for parents and students;
- promoting fair and equitable school funding;
- and elevating and reinvigorating the teaching profession.

In fact, within weeks of taking his oath in January, Jim Rex unveiled a sweeping public school choice plan that has received broad bipartisan support in the General Assembly. He also accepted 97 far-reaching recommendations on education reform from his 78-member Transition Team.

Rex followed that with a series of town hall meetings across the state in which he listened to South Carolinians and got their feedback on his ideas and plans. In April, he won approval from the State Board of Education for a new collaborative Palmetto Priority Schools project to improve student achievement at 16 low-achieving schools.

In May, Rex was back at work, unveiling a sweeping set of recommendations designed to unify South Carolina's state and federal school accountability systems, streamline state services to struggling schools and revise the state's standardized testing system to reduce testing time and provide more detailed information to teachers.

On the same day, Gov. Mark Sanford signed new legislation to expand South Carolina's fledgling virtual schools project that was piloted last school year by the State Department of Education. In addition, the General Assembly approved a 15-year replacement cycle for school buses, a move that holds the promise of rejuvenating South Carolina's oldest-in-the-nation fleet. A few days later, both houses of the Legislature quickly overrode Gov. Sanford's veto of the bill.

In 2008, Rex continues his push for reform with a package that includes components on public school choice, testing and accountability, teacher recruitment and retention and a comprehensive look at adequate and equitable school funding.

Jim has spent most of his adult life making a difference for the children, families, schools, and communities of South Carolina. As a high school English teacher, football coach and higher education leader, he has made public education his life's mission.

In addition, he served as Dean of Education at Winthrop University, as well as Coastal Carolina University. He is the former President of Columbia College, as well as the former Vice President for Development and Alumni Relations and Vice President of University Advancement at the University of South Carolina. He is a published author and has served as a top consultant to education advocacy organizations.

But his work extends beyond the education realm. Jim has also lent his time and talents to a variety of community organizations, including serving as Chair of Clean Water South Carolina, a member of the Palmetto Conservation Foundation board of directors and chair of the Palmetto Trail. He is also the former chair of the board of the Nurturing Center, a facility created to help abused children.

Jim and his wife, Sue, share four children: Adam, Jeff, Nathan and Siri. They live on Lake Wateree in Fairfield County, South Carolina.