

CHAMPION FOR PUBLIC EDUCATION PLEDGE

WHEREAS, from Oconee to Horry, Chesterfield to Charleston, The South Carolina Education Association (The SCEA), through its membership and resources, is committed to improving all aspects of public education in South Carolina through collective action. Providing for and ensuring that children and families of every race, background and zip code have the freedom to learn and pursue their dreams through unfettered access to a quality education is the most important function of our state government; and

WHEREAS, the Constitution of South Carolina designates public education as the only public good to be afforded its own article in that document, signifying that the most important function of state government is to ensure that the children and families have unfettered access to high-quality public education, and to provide all resources necessary to serve that purpose; and

WHEREAS, South Carolina's present and future economic and social wellbeing are dependent on having an educated citizenry across race, place, and faith who are capable of enjoying and participating in the freedoms of expression, belief and self-determination assured by our democratic values; and

WHEREAS, whether Black or white, Latino or Asian, Native or newcomer, we want children to have an education that illuminates who we are, where we've been, and the brighter future we can build together; and

WHEREAS, for decades certain politicians have denied some children the resources needed for a quality education based on what they look like or where they live while attempting to send public dollars to private schools; and

WHEREAS, I support The SCEA's collective effort to have the South Carolina legislature acknowledge that the classroom is the epicenter of care and learning in the public schools. And it is through the creative and professional exchange between teacher, parent, and student that the educational mission of our state is fulfilled; and

WHEREAS, in support of The SCEA's commitment to improve the state's system of public education for all children—no exceptions, I join in that commitment and support changes that result in an unprecedented legislative initiative to create and deliver consistently the conditions that make available a high-quality educational experience to every child in South Carolina.

THEREFORE, As a **Champion of Education**, I support:

- Creation of a dynamic public education system that respects and strengthens the roles, rights, and opportunities of that system's unreplaceable core, the classroom professional; and
- Respect for the professional standards that define, enhance, and protect the critical role that educators perform in public schools; and
- Development of new employment contract models for classroom educators and other professionals employed by the state and local school districts, which reflect a commitment to respecting and uplifting the voice and rights of educators and public school staff; and
- Implementation of bold solutions to grow and retain South Carolina's workforce of education professionals by offering industry-competitive salaries, benefits, and employment rights; and
- A permanent commitment by the General Assembly to raise base-contract educator salaries—exclusive of bonuses, stipends, or other inducements—to meet or exceed the national average.

AND THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, As a **Champion of Education**, I will ...

- Ask the members of the South Carolina General Assembly to stand with The SCEA, and with South Carolina's children and families, in our efforts to improve public education from Oconee to Horry and Chesterfield to Charleston by strengthening the security and professional standing of educators; and
- Commit to advancing high-quality public education in South Carolina by advocating for meaningful contracts, salaries, benefits, rights, and professional standards that strengthen the critical learning connections between educators, students, and families; and
- Support the inclusion of classroom professionals in any discussion held at the worksite, district, or state wherein decisions are considered which will alter their in-class and worksite responsibilities, impact their safety, and/or expose them to known or anticipated health risks; and
- Support any new legislative initiative for funding the development of educators' skills, and other professional development activities whose results are intended to enhance public education; and
- Advocate to fully fund the education-funding formula to ensure that every South Carolinian student can enjoy the same Constitutional guarantee of access to high-quality public education; and
- Require that the South Carolina General Assembly heed the Constitution's plain instruction that public funds shall support public schools only—not private institutions that pick, choose, and discriminate against children.

Name
Champion of Public Education

Name
The SCEA

