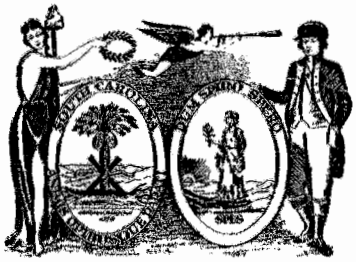
State of South Carolina

Executive Department



FILED

FEB 28 2005

Mark Hammond
SECRETARY OF STATE

Office of the Governor

EXECUTIVE ORDER NO.

2005-08

WHEREAS, one of the most important missions for our state is to produce well-educated children who are prepared to enter post-secondary education and successfully compete for highly skilled jobs in the workforce; and

WHEREAS, to achieve this mission we must be able to meet the tremendous challenges facing South Carolina's K-12 education system which include an SAT score ranking at 50th in the nation; one of the highest dropout rates in the nation – 57 percent of South Carolina ninth graders do not graduate from high school, making us next to last in graduation rates; and a significant achievement gap between African American and white students; and

WHEREAS, these challenges have not been overcome despite the fact that South Carolina spends more per pupil than the national average. South Carolina has also increased per pupil expenditures by 98 percent over the last twenty years which is the third highest increase in the country; and

WHEREAS, the state should comprehensively examine our K-12 education system in an effort to help to overcome these persistent challenges.

NOW, THEREFORE, I do hereby establish the South Carolina Education Reform Council (the "Council").

1. The Council shall examine ways to improve educational outcomes that have positive impacts on social and economic conditions in South Carolina.

2. The Council shall fully examine problems facing South Carolina's K-12 education system, including the drop out rates among high school students, the current education funding structure, the availability of highly qualified teachers, the education system's ability to adequately prepare students for a competitive workforce, and the availability of parental choices.

3. The Council shall identify reforms and policy recommendations in a final report to the Governor by no later than December 31, 2005.

4. The Council shall be comprised of members appointed by the Governor, one of whom shall serve as chair, and shall include parents, teachers, business representatives, students, education officials and a representative of the Department of Commerce.

5. The Council will be authorized in the furtherance of its mission to hold public hearings and take such other actions as it deems necessary and advisable.

6. The Council may call upon the State Department of Education, the Education Oversight Committee, the Commission on Higher Education, Technical Colleges, the Office of First Steps, the South Carolina Chamber of Commerce, the Department of Juvenile Justice and other entities as needed for advice and information.

This Order shall take effect immediately.

GIVEN UNDER MY HAND AND THE GREAT SEAL OF THE STATE OF SOUTH CAROLINA, THIS 28 DAY OF FEBRUARY, 2005.

MARK SANFORD
Governor

ATTEST:

MARK HAMMOND
Secretary Of State