

January 27, 2003

The Honorable Mark Sanford
Governor of South Carolina
State House
Columbia, South Carolina 29211

Dear Governor Sanford:

As Chairman of the Southern Regional Education Board, I want to welcome you to membership on the Board. As Governor, you are a member of the Board of America's first compact for education. SREB is an interstate organization focused on state education, so your work in Congress may not have brought you into direct contact with our staff or programs. SREB was established by action of Southern governors and legislatures over fifty years ago. South Carolina was among the original signers of the Southern Regional Education Compact that includes 16 states. In some ways the aim then and now is simple. SREB enables Southern states to work together to pool their resources and accomplish together what they cannot do alone. More recently, for example, South Carolina colleges and universities joined with more than 300 public and independent colleges and universities to form SREB's *Electronic Campus*, the nation's largest higher education electronic marketplace, with 8000 courses and 250 degree programs available on-line.

As Governor, you serve *ex officio* as one of South Carolina's five representatives on the Board. Other South Carolina members and term completion dates are: Representative Ronald P. Townsend (2003), President Ronald R. Ingle (2004), Senator Nikki G. Setzler (2005) and Superintendent Inez Moore Tenenbaum (2006). Each year on June 30 a term on the Board expires, and you will have the opportunity to reappoint that person or you may appoint someone else to the term. The only stipulation is that the SREB Compact requires that each state must have at least one educator and one legislator in its representation on the Board.

Superintendent Inez Moore Tenenbaum is representing South Carolina on SREB's Executive Committee at the present time. Representative Ronald Townsend serves on SREB's Legislative Advisory Council and was elected by his fellow senators and representatives to chair the Council this year. As legislative members of the Board, Representative Townsend and Senator Nikki Setzler serve on the Council for a specified term by virtue of being legislative members of the Board. Senator John W. Mathews, Jr. serves on the Council as a gubernatorial appointee and does not serve a specified term.

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The Council advises the Board on legislative matters and serves as a permanent steering committee for SREB's Annual Legislative Work Conference at which legislators and educators meet to discuss matters of mutual interest. Legislators who serve on the Council value their membership for the information and perspectives they receive as well as the network of legislative colleagues they develop.

SREB's Regional Contract program, which began in the early years of the Board, enables states to share costly programs for health professionals and to postpone--or even avoid--duplicating some of these programs. Over several decades of SREB's Contract program, thousands of South Carolinians have earned degrees in optometry, osteopathic medicine, podiatry and veterinary medicine at nationally recognized colleges and universities. By purchasing contracts through the Regional Contract Program for student spaces at other state institutions, South Carolina saves millions of dollars annually because it does not have to fund a veterinary college or college of optometry. For 2003-2004, South Carolina residents are in SREB spaces earning degrees in optometric education at Southern College of Optometry and the University of Alabama at Birmingham, and in veterinary medicine at the University of Georgia and at Tuskegee University.

I know that President Musick will want to seek an appointment with you to review South Carolina's participation in the Board's programs which benefit South Carolina's citizens.

In the meantime, I hope you will mark your calendar for the Board's 2003 annual meeting to be held June 22-24 at the Driskill Hotel in Austin.

Very truly yours,

RONNIE MUSGROVE

RM:klr

cc: Mark Musick, President
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