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Speaker Lucas Praises Education Task Force

Group finalizes and submits report ahead of January deadline

(Columbia, SC) – House Speaker Jay Lucas (District 65-Darlington) issued the following statement after the [House Education Policy Review and Reform Task Force](#) concluded its business and unanimously approved a final version of their report weeks ahead of schedule. In February, Speaker Lucas tasked the group with submitting their findings for comprehensive education reform by the beginning of next legislative session.

“The approval of today’s report is a promising step towards advancing education reform in South Carolina,” Speaker Lucas said. **“The unwavering commitment Chairwoman Rita Allison and the rest of this distinguished panel shares for our education system is evident in their ability to unanimously agree on specific ideas that will help give our students access to a 21st century education. I am very proud of this group and their extraordinary leadership in laying the groundwork for comprehensive education reform.”**

Over the next few weeks, many of these recommendations will be introduced as part of the House education reform package. Each bill will then be referred to the appropriate committee and continue throughout the legislative process.

“Effectively reforming South Carolina’s education system will be a challenging process, but I am confident that this report serves as a tremendous starting point. Many of the specific

policies adopted in this report show that money is not the solution to all of our problems. Instead, we must take a look at ways that give the Department of Education and our locally elected school boards the flexibility they need to provide for our students' needs. Moving forward, I look forward to beginning debate on this important issue so that we can put reforms in place that will give every student access to the education they deserve," Speaker Lucas concluded.

**The House Education Policy and Review Task Force is a seventeen-member panel that includes elected officials, former school administrators, Superintendent of Education Molly Spearman, business professionals and representatives from the plaintiff's districts in the Abbeville lawsuit. This is the first time that a group of this nature has been formed to address education reform in recent decades. The Task Force has been working since February on policy recommendations and received input from experts and concerned citizens at meetings in Columbia, Abbeville County and Dillon before breaking into five subcommittees to address designated areas of need.*

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