



**SANDY GARRETT
STATE SUPERINTENDENT OF PUBLIC INSTRUCTION
STATE OF OKLAHOMA**

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State Superintendent Sandy Garrett Won't Seek Sixth Term

The only Oklahoma woman ever elected to five consecutive terms in statewide public office has announced she will not extend the record to a sixth term as State Superintendent of Public Instruction. Sandy Garrett, the second longest serving state superintendent in America, will not seek re-election in the 2010 elections.

"There's an old saying in politics that 'nothing is ever over'. That's certainly true in education," Garrett said. "The fight for education excellence is never ending, and I plan to continue to be involved. It just won't be from the position of state superintendent. The challenges and rewards of this job are beyond belief. I want to continue to be of service where and when I can, even after I leave office in January 2011."

"I am especially grateful to the voters of Oklahoma and my supporters in both parties who have given me the unprecedented opportunity of serving Oklahoman children and families. It has been an incredible experience; but now it's time for someone else. My commitment to children and excellence in education is no less than it has ever been, but the time has come for me to take a different role," she said.

As state superintendent, Garrett not only serves as the CEO for the State Department of Education, but is also chair of the State Board of Education, State Board of Career and Technology Education, and a member of the board of regents for the Regional University System of Oklahoma. In all, she serves on 19 constitutional and statutory boards and commissions, and is currently serving by appointment on more than 75 other boards, commissions and task forces.

"It is a daunting task," she said, "and I wanted to make the announcement of my decision early enough to allow qualified candidates time to consider the challenges of serving as state superintendent. I will keep working hard over the next year and a half to implement today's challenging reforms in education."

Sandy Garrett was born in Muskogee and graduated from Stilwell High School. She received her bachelor's and master's degrees from Northeastern State University, and received both principal and superintendent certification at the University of Oklahoma. Garrett pursued postgraduate studies at both the University of Oklahoma and the John F. Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University.

After 15 years as a classroom teacher and gifted programs coordinator at Hilldale Public Schools in Muskogee, she joined the State Department of Education as gifted and talented



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programs coordinator before being named executive director of education programs, which included rural education, technology, satellite instruction, and library resources.

Throughout her career, Superintendent Garrett has been an outspoken advocate for children and an active participant in education reform. She played a pivotal role in implementing the state's learning by satellite program and in establishing an interactive fiber-optic instruction system in the Oklahoma panhandle in the 1980s. In 1988, she was named Cabinet Secretary of Education by Governor Henry Bellmon.

In 1990, she became the only woman in Oklahoma history elected to the constitutional office of State Superintendent of Public Instruction. In November 2006, she became the only Oklahoma woman elected to a statewide office for a fifth consecutive term.

A hallmark of her administration has been the development of pre-kindergarten programs throughout the state to the extent that Oklahoma is recognized as the national model by the national institute for early education research. In 2008, she was named national chair of the Council of Chief State School Officers' Early Childhood Task Force.

"I'm proud of our accomplishments in education in the last two decades at the Department, as well as with the career-tech and the regional universities system," said Superintendent Garrett. By focusing on key priorities of service and accountability, the Department of Education has downsized operational costs by 48.2 percent and personnel costs by 33.4%, FY1991 to FY2010. The state superintendent is also responsible for managing a budget of more than \$2.5 billion that is distributed to public schools and for which local boards of education are held accountable.

Garrett is a national pioneer in standards-based education reform with implementation of Oklahoma's first statewide core curriculum and aligned state tests, in the early 1990s, far ahead of most states. During her terms of office, Superintendent Garrett led implementation of Oklahoma's Education Reform and Funding Act of 1990 (House Bill 1017), the federal No Child Left Behind Act of 2001, and the state's Achieving Classroom Excellence Act of 2005. An early member of the National Board of Professional Teaching Standards, Garrett helped implement National Board Certification and, today, only four states have more nationally certified teachers as a percentage of the teaching workforce. Since 2007, Garrett has been pursuing time reform initiatives in Oklahoma including work with the National Center on Time and Learning, supported by the Broad Foundation, to increase the quality of time spent in schools today.

Sandy Garrett was inducted into the Oklahoma Women's Hall of Fame (2001) and the Oklahoma Educators Hall of Fame (2000). She is a member of the Northeastern State University Alumni Association Hall of Fame and, in 2000, received the First Lady's Leadership in Literacy award for her statewide efforts to improve reading instruction for children and expand literacy programs for adults. In 2009, she received the Vision Award from the Oklahoma State Teachers of the Year Association.



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"We've gone from rotary dial phones and typewriters to a digital world with more than 95 percent of Oklahoma classrooms connected to the Internet during the time I have been in office," Garrett said. "I am confident Oklahoma's progress will continue."

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Please view documents: [Oklahoma's National Rankings](#) and [List of Superintendent Garrett's accomplishments to date](#).