



# ARKANSAS DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

*Johnny Key, Commissioner*

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May 29, 2015

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## **Gotcher Named ADE Deputy Commissioner**

**LITTLE ROCK** — Johnny Key, Arkansas Department of Education commissioner, is pleased to announce Dr. T. Mark Gotcher as the new deputy commissioner.

Gotcher, currently superintendent of the Atkins School District, will begin his new role July 1. He replaces Dr. Mike Hernandez, who was named the new superintendent of the Hot Springs School District, and Tony Wood, who will serve as the new superintendent of the Jacksonville North Pulaski School District.

“Dr. Gotcher brings a wealth of experience, not only as an administrator but as a former teacher as well,” Key said. “He has strong relationships with educators, legislators and the public, which make him exceptionally qualified for the position. I, as well as the rest of the ADE team, look forward to working with him.”

“I am honored to serve Commissioner Key and the leaders, educators and students of this state,” Gotcher said. “Leadership is about serving others, and it will be my goal to help ensure the students of our state are equipped with a 21st century education ready for post-secondary education and careers.”

As deputy commissioner, Gotcher will assist ADE staff, legislators and school districts with finance, legislation and other education issues.

Gotcher has served as superintendent at Atkins since 2013. Prior to that role, he was principal at Crawford Elementary School in Russellville from 2007 to 2013, assistant principal at Russellville Junior High School from 2005 to 2007, and assistant principal at Russellville Middle School from 2001 to 2005.

He began his career in education in 1988 as a K-12 music teacher at the Hector School District. In 1991 he served as the grades 6-12 choir director for Dardanelle High School and became the K-4 music teacher at Center Valley Elementary School in Russellville in 1993.

Gotcher earned a Bachelor of Arts in Music Education in 1988, a Master of Education in Educational Leadership in 2001, and an Educator Specialist degree in 2012 from Arkansas Tech University in Russellville. In 2015 he received a Doctor of Education in Educational Leadership from Lamar University in Beaumont, Texas.

He is a member of the Arkansas Association of Educational Administrators and Arkansas Association of School Business Officials. Gotcher currently serves on the Arkansas ASCD Executive Board, Arkansas ASCD Advocacy Committee and Arch Ford Education Service Cooperative Advocacy Committee. He has served as state treasurer for the Arkansas ASCD since July 2012 and was nominated for Arkansas Tech University 2012-2013 Graduate Student of the Year.

Gotcher and his wife, Laura, have been married almost 25 years and live in Russellville. They have four children: Audrey, Reed, Corban and Meeghan; one son-in-law: Andrew; and two grandchildren: Nate and Melody Faith.

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