

Computers in the Classroom
Press Conference
Thursday, February 15, 2001
9:45 a.m.
Capitol Rotunda

Talking Points

- In my inaugural State of the State Address, I dared Mississippians to imagine computers at the fingertips of every Mississippi school child.
- We set a goal to place an Internet-accessible computer in every public elementary and secondary classroom in Mississippi by the end of 2002.
- Just this week, we have executed contracts with six vendors to place 6,325 Internet-accessible computers in Mississippi school classrooms.
- With the installation of these computers we are more than half way to meeting our goal.
- Installation of these computers has begun and will be in full-swing by March 1, 2001.
- Representatives of the six companies supplying the computers have joined us today.

- They are Business Communications, Incorporated; Dell Computer Corporation; Government Computers Sales, Incorporated; Howard Computers; Logista (Compaq Subcontractor) and Apple.
- The computers supplied by these companies were offered at substantial discounts, and vendors provided value-adds such as web sites, educational software and teacher training at no cost to the state or local school.
- We appreciate these companies' interest in, and support of, Mississippi's teachers and students.
- By placing a computer in every classroom, we are giving teachers another tool to enhance the learning environment for our children.
- We are giving our students the means to open doors that provide countless learning opportunities for them.
- Their educational opportunities are limitless.
- Our students can use this tool to learn and obtain information about current events, e-commerce,

government, science projects, college course offerings, career choices and so much more.

- Today's announcement is possible because of the strong public/private partnership we have formed to raise the funds necessary to purchase the computers.
- The members of the Governor's Task Force on Classroom Technology are to be commended for their fundraising efforts that are helping us place these 6,325 computers in Mississippi classrooms.
- Many members of this Task Force are with us today, and I want to thank them for their continued commitment to this worthwhile project.
- Their efforts have produced outstanding results, but their work is only half-done.
- We are now asking them to double, and triple their efforts to raise the funds needed for the additional computers.

- In the coming weeks Carolyn Shanks, CEO and President of Entergy Mississippi and I will kick off a campaign to secure these funds.
- It is a great feeling to know that we are on right-on-schedule to complete our goal by the end of 2002.
- And we are on track to make Mississippi the **first state in the nation to have a computer in every classroom.**
- That is the kind of number I like to hear associated with Mississippi.
- First place in providing our educators and our students with a direct link to the world of technology – that has a great sound to it.
- We will be glad to take any questions you may have, and many of our vendor representatives and task force members will be available to talk with you individually following the press conference.