

MEMORANDUM

TO: Jimmie Bell
FROM: Lee Ann Mayo
RE: Article for the South Mississippi Journal
DATE: 122302

From Governor Musgrove:

“Education is the foundation for the future of our state. It is the foundation for economic development. By investing in our children, we are moving Mississippi beyond the status quo of 48th, 49th, or 50th.”

“We have made great progress in the last three years.”

- Computers in the Classroom
 - The National Governors Association has confirmed that Mississippi is first in nation with Internet –accessible computers in every public school classroom (more than 30,000 classrooms)
 - NGA: MS “at the head of the wave of technological innovation”
- Test scores are up
 - Princeton Review ranked MS testing 6th in nation
- Teacher pay – moving from 49th to 19th in nation
- More high school graduates going to college/ 62%
 - 6th highest in nation according to Southern Regional Education Board
- More than 300 teachers achieved national board certification this year
 - MS in top ten in the nation in # of board certified teachers
 - MS first in nation to offer higher pay for board certification

“In the face of a national recession, now is not the time to back off our commitment to education and our future. That’s why I proposed 62 percent of the budget for Fiscal Year 2004 for education. This amount fully funds Mississippi Adequate Education Program and the teacher pay raise. It also provides \$200 million for the “brain trust”, for our universities and junior colleges. We’ve invested in buildings; it is time to invest in our people. If we shortchange education, we shortchange the future of our state.”

“A new economic development plan was a priority when I first took office. We developed the Advantage Mississippi Plan and the results of this bold initiative are that we are now recognized as a leading competitor in economic development.”

- Nissan plan = \$1.5 billion investment/5,000 direct jobs
 - Nissan expanded before plant even complete
- MS is in the top ten for small business survival
- 47,000 new jobs/27,000 through expansion of existing business
 - \$12.5 billion in investment
- All this accomplished because we refuse to settle for status quo.