

*Remarks for
Catholic Schools Week
January 27, 2003*

- National Celebration of important role of Catholic elementary and secondary schools play in education for America's young people.
- Catholic schools in Mississippi for 156 years
- Recognize teachers and staff who provide an outstanding education to the students.
- Story of Jordan / 15-point buck / priorities
- Priorities for MS / jobs and education.
- Meeting these priorities not always easy, especially in schools

- Determined to make a difference in the educational system of this state
 - Teacher pay from 49th to 19th / many of you here going into education
 - Making commitment today for your career tomorrow
 - Computers in the Classroom / NGA says first in nation / MS “at head of wave of technological innovation”
 - MS one of six states for “Following the Leaders” / No Child Left Behind
 - Leadership Summit / six priorities from early childhood to adult learning

- Keeping education a priority with a budget that puts Schools First / 62 percent

- Budget will be key issue of upcoming legislative session
 - Must budget based on real numbers, not on hope
 - Recognize House and Senate for historic action
 - Funding education at 62%
 - Fully funding MAEP for the first time

- Funds teacher pay raise
- Brain trust focuses on stopping flow of best and brightest out of MS
 - 10 year commitment of \$200M matched by universities and colleges
 - Build MS's intellectual capacity / research capabilities
 - Grants for graduate assistants to stay in MS / cultivate teachers
 - More momentum for economic development
- *We've invested hundreds of millions of dollars in buildings*
 - *Time to invest in people.*
- Creating jobs is trademark of administration
 - Building a future through quality education is personal passion
- Commitment is focused, but aim is broad
- *Bottom line: We shortchange education, we shortchange our future*

- There are a lot of things people said we couldn't do here
 - Raise teacher pay
 - Put computers in every classroom
 - Land a \$1.5 billion auto plant

- We've been surprising a lot of people lately / MS setting the standard
 - Refusing to settle for the status quo

- You all know what it's like to push a truck from stopped position / hard to do
 - Once rolling, easier to push

- MS used to be like a stopped truck / we put our shoulders into our work
 - Now we're moving fast
 - Need to keep momentum going / your help is important

- Will Rogers: Even if you're on the right track, you'll get run over if you just sit there
 - MS not sitting still