
OFFICE OF GOVERNOR RONNIE MUSGROVE
INTEROFFICE MEMORANDUM

TO: GOVERNOR
FROM: RILEY
SUBJECT: EDUCATION EXCELLENCE PARTNERSHIP: COMMUNICATIONS ASSISTANCE
DATE: 6/20/2000
CC: BOYD
FILE

The following is for your reference only. No action is required.

The Education Excellence Partnership (EEP) recently submitted a request for proposal to this office, offering an opportunity for Mississippi to apply for communications assistance to help build strong statewide support for standards-based education reform. EEP also sent the RFP to Dr. Thompson, Dr. William Lewis, the Mississippi Association of Educators, and the Mississippi AFT. EEP sent this RFP to seven states and will select two of these states as pilots for using communications effectively to 1) counter and surpass the opposition to the standards, assessment and accountability movement; and, 2) build support for the extra effort required to meet higher standards.

If selected, Mississippi will serve as a “learning and testing laboratory” for one year. Work will include developing messages, testing messengers, developing third-party allies, using localized versions of national advertising and hosting events. The results of this year’s work will be shared with other states. EEP will provide a tailored plan of action, research, communications assistance and training to the two pilot states. The two pilot states will also receive state-level data, an estimated \$11,000 value, on the Business Roundtable’s national poll to assess the public’s understanding and attitudes about testing. In return, the states are expected to adapt their existing communications budget to accommodate the project, provide staff support, document progress of work, assist in conducting research, identify third-party supporters (parents, teachers, school personnel), and host one of two meetings held for the pilot states, with EEP paying all on-site costs

Johnny Franklin of the Public Education Forum thinks this is a great opportunity. Steve Williams of the Department of Education reported that the RFP is perfect to address the uncertainty surrounding the new accountability plan. The Department of Education is preparing its response to the RFP and will provide us with a copy of its proposal.

Theresa Clark of NGA called to ensure that Mississippi responding to the RFP and was glad to hear that the Department of Education is submitting a proposal.