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OFFICE OF GOVERNOR RONNIE MUSGROVE  
INTEROFFICE MEMORANDUM

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**TO:** GOVERNOR  
**FROM:** RILEY  
**SUBJECT:** MDE REQUEST FOR LETTER OF SUPPORT FOR 21<sup>ST</sup> CENTURY LEARNING GRANT  
**DATE** 3/22/01  
**CC:** FILE

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MDE has requested a letter of support from you for its application for a 21<sup>st</sup> Century Community Learning Centers grant. The grant program is designed to target funds to rural and urban communities that have low achieving students and high rates of juvenile crime, school violence, and student drug abuse, but lack the resources to establish after-school centers. 21<sup>st</sup> Century Community Learning Centers enable rural and inner-city school districts to fund public schools as community education centers, keeping children safe in the aft-school hours and providing academic enrichment, homework centers and tutors, and a range of cultural, developmental and recreational opportunities.

MDE's proposal, Project HOPE, consists of a consortium of 27 districts throughout the state. The Mississippi Department of Education is taking the lead in developing the 3-year grant application but, if proposal is awarded, will not receive any of the funds. Tupelo School District will serve as the fiscal agent and coordinating school district for the consortium.

Project HOPE is designed to help students and parents in Mississippi achieve higher standards and secure brighter futures. The Project HOPE proposal includes an array of inclusive and supervised services that include expanded learning opportunities (such as enriched instruction, tutoring or homework assistance) for children. It will also focus activities in the areas of arts, academics, athletics, and acclamations of self worth by partnering with community agencies, businesses, and individuals.

I've attached a letter of support for your signature.

March 22, 2001

Dr. Richard L. Thompson  
State Superintendent of Education  
P.O. Box 771  
Jackson, MS 39205-0771

Dear Dr. Thompson:

I am pleased to offer my support to the consortium of twenty-seven Mississippi school districts that has developed Project HOPE (Helping Others Promote Excellence) to help students and parents in Mississippi achieve higher standards and secure brighter futures.

The goals of Project HOPE closely match my administration's goals of insuring that every child receives an effective education, that families in need are provided literacy training and job training, that quality after-school programs are offered to our students, and that community partners work with and support our schools' efforts. I endorse Project HOPE's goals of serving approximately 450 adults and 750 children in various school districts across Mississippi.

I look forward to working with the consortium of schools and community partners participating in Project HOPE to advance Mississippi's students and our communities. As always, thank you for your service to our students and to our state.

Very truly yours,

RONNIE MUSGROVE

RM:klr