

**For Immediate Release**

July 10, 2003

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## **Governor Musgrove: Education Report Shows Progress**

(Jackson, MS) – Governor Ronnie Musgrove said today’s release of the National Assessment of Educational Progress 2002 Writing Assessment shows Mississippi is leading other southern states in education and continuing to make progress.

“This is further evidence that the investment we’re making in education is paying dividends,” said Musgrove. “We will continue to focus on strengthening education, strengthening accountability, and strengthening our investment in Mississippi’s children.”

The report measured writing assessments of students in the 4<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grades in 33 states. Only five other states (Delaware, Florida, Maryland, Massachusetts and Missouri) had higher gains in 8<sup>th</sup> grade writing scores than Mississippi.

U.S. Secretary of Education Rod Paige, a native Mississippian, said the nation’s schools were moving in the right direction.

“I am really happy to see that more students are writing better, finding more power in their pens and pencils and, in this era, keyboards,” Paige said.

Musgrove said the placement of an Internet-accessible computer in every classroom would have a positive impact on future assessments.

“We are giving our children the tools they need to succeed in the 21<sup>st</sup>-century economy,” Musgrove said. “The combination of strong communications skills and strong technology skills is vital to compete and win in today’s global marketplace, and our kids will have that combination.”

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