

*Talking Points for Fred Zeytoonjian for 9/19/02
Following the Leaders Press Conference*

- Thank you.
- Mississippi is honored to be one of six states selected to participate in *Following the Leaders*.
- Our 15 pilot schools are eager to implement *Following the Leaders* and are committed to its success.
- *Following the Leaders* will assist Mississippi's educators, parents, administrators and policymakers in using student assessment to improve instruction in order to meet the new standards for school and student improvement outlined in *No Child Behind*.
- This project will provide a vast array of resources, ranging from technical assistance for our policy makers to lesson plan guides and classroom resources for our teachers via the Achieve Resource Center.
- We've laid a foundation for rural schools in Mississippi via our Computers in the Classroom Initiative to ensure that students in these rural schools have access to the same resources that students in our larger schools have. This initiative will place an Internet-accessible computer in every public school classroom in the state by the end of this year.

- We are enabling our students the ability to compete in a wireless, borderless economy. Following the Leaders will build on this and other initiatives to ensure that students in rural areas receive an adequate and effective education.
- *Following the Leaders* will provide our schools the opportunity to duplicate proven successful practices for the benefit of our students.
- Creating jobs for the people of Mississippi has become a trademark of Governor Musgrove's administration, but building a future for the children of Mississippi through quality education is his personal passion.
- On behalf of Governor Musgrove and the people of Mississippi, I would like to say "Thank you" to the Department of Education, Project Achieve, Accountability Works, the Education Leaders Council, the Milken Family Foundation and the Thomas B. Fordham Foundation for their commitment to *Following the Leaders*.
- *Following the Leaders* is a wonderful opportunity for our state. Mississippi's selection in the project recognizes the great job that our schools are doing.
- Thank you.