

**Draft Remarks for Governor Ronnie Musgrove=s
Announcement of College Preparation Binder Inserts
Chastain Middle School Library
Tuesday, April 24, 2001
9 a.m.**

- X Mississippi=s future is linked to how well we prepare students to participate in a global high technology work force.
- X We know that a college degree is more valuable today than at any time in this country=s history.
- X Unfortunately too many students wait too late to start preparing for higher education.
- X Some of the reasons are (1) they are unaware of how important higher education is to their future, (2) they take the wrong (easy courses) courses while in high school, and (3) they think that they can not afford the cost of higher education.
- X Mississippi=s future workforce is made up of students just like these at Chastain Middle School. We=re here today to tell you it=s never too early to start preparing for a bright future through higher education.
- X Mississippi's adult workforce includes 423,627 individuals with high school diplomas, 259,477 with some college credit, 79,264 with associate degrees and 149,109 with bachelor's degrees.

(Source: latest available U.S. Census Data)
- X Those numbers may sound impressive, but they are not enough. The key to increasing these numbers and improving the economic outlook of our state is by producing more college graduates, which will, in turn, create a better-educated workforce.
- X We know that students interested in going to college should begin as early as the eighth grade taking the right courses, but
- X Did you know that students in Mississippi who take College Prep Curriculum score on average three points higher on the ACT than students who don=t take College Prep?
- X Did you know that a person with a bachelor=s degree earns on average \$21,000 more per year than a high school graduate, and a person with a graduate or professional school degree earns four times more than a high school graduate?

(Source: U.S. Census Bureau)
- X Did you know that the courses students take in high school not only prepare them for college, but increase the likelihood that they will be successful in college and graduate?

- X As part of their commitment to increasing access to higher education opportunities, the Institutions of Higher Learning (IHL) has developed and is distributing a set of notebook inserts (**point to large visuals**) to all 8th and 9th graders in Mississippi through their counselors that contain pertinent information about college preparation. The inserts, which can be put into any standard three-ring notebook, detail how to get admitted to college, how to finance a college education, Mississippi=s College Prep Curriculum, and contact information and websites for each Mississippi University.

- X We hope the inserts will help students make informed choices about their higher education options, including the opportunities available right here in Mississippi to receive a quality education.

Dr. William McHenry, Assistant Commissioner of Academic Affairs with IHL, can answer any specific questions you may have about the College Prep Curriculum.