

*Remarks for the  
Education Reform Press Conference  
December 20, 2002*

- The Education Reform Act of 1982 was a milestone for education in Mississippi. It was visionary at best.
  - improved state school governance, leadership and finance,
  - improved professional preparation and growth of school personnel,
  - improved school performance, and
  - higher student achievement.
  
- The most significant education reform in MS history has taken place since 1982
  
- My Priorities for MS / jobs, security, health care, and education.
  
- Meeting these priorities not always easy, especially in schools
  
- Determined to make a difference in the educational system of this state
  - Teacher pay from 49<sup>th</sup> to 19<sup>th</sup> / many of you here going into education
    - Making commitment today for your career tomorrow
  - Computers in the Classroom / NGA says first in nation / MS “at head of wave of technological innovation”
  - MS one of six states for “Following the Leaders” / No Child Left Behind
  - Leadership Summit / six priorities from early childhood to adult learning
  
- Keeping education a priority with a budget that puts Schools First / 62 percent
  
- Budget will be key issue of upcoming legislative session
  - Must budget based on real numbers, not on hope
  
- My budget fully funds teacher pay raise, restores the MAEP to FY04 funding level, replaces one time money put into adequate education
  
- Brain trust focuses on stopping flow of best and brightest out of MS
  - 10 year commitment of \$200M matched by universities and colleges
  - Build MS’s intellectual capacity / research capabilities
  - Grants for graduate assistants to stay in MS / cultivate teachers
  - More momentum for economic development
  
- *We’ve invested hundreds of millions of dollars in buildings*
  - *Time to invest in people.*

- Creating jobs is trademark of administration
  - Building a future through quality education is personal passion
- Commitment is focused, but aim is broad
  
- *Bottom line: We shortchange education, we shortchange our future*
  
- There are a lot of things people said we couldn't do here
  - Raise teacher pay
  - Put computers in every classroom
  - Land a \$1.5 billion auto plant
  
- We've been surprising a lot of people lately / MS setting the standard
  - Refusing to settle for the status quo
  
- You all know what it's like to push a truck from stopped position / hard to do
  - Once rolling, easier to push
  
- MS used to be like a stopped truck / we put our shoulders into our work
  - Now we're moving fast
  - Need to keep momentum going / your help is important
  
- Will Rogers: Even if you're on the right track, you'll get run over if you just sit there
  - MS not sitting still