
OFFICE OF GOVERNOR RONNIE MUSGROVE
INTEROFFICE MEMORANDUM

TO: GOVERNOR
FROM: RILEY
SUBJECT: NAACP'S CALL FOR ACTION IN EDUCATION & REQUEST FOR MISSISSIPPI'S
NOTIFICATION OF INTENT
DATE 5/9/02
CC: RENICK
KINNEY

Per your directions, I provided the State Department of Education with a copy of the NAACP's *Call for Action in Education* and requested their feedback on the NAACP's request for Mississippi to submit a *Notification of Intent* of Mississippi's plans to submit a *Five-Year Education Equity Partnership Plan*. This plan would outline the steps that the state will take to close racial disparities in each of the identified areas and establish indicators and milestones designed to cut the racial achievement gap by at least 50% over the next five years.

According to Dr. Susan Rucker and Joy Milam at MDE, the Assistant Attorney General Richard Roberson advised against Mississippi responding that it would submit an Education Equity Plan. Roberson advised that the state responding that it would submit such a plan would, in essence, indicate that we have a problem with education equity. MDE recommended that the following verbage be typed on the Notification of Intent under "No..."

Mississippi is currently implementing a new assessment and accountability system to identify low performing schools. In addition, we expect full funding of a new school finance program in FY 04. Further, due to No Child Left Behind we are awaiting official guidance for implementation.

NGA conducted an informal survey via its educational listserv of how states planned on responding to the NAACP's request:

- Maryland will submit a full plan that was developed through the State Department of Education with the Black Caucus of the Maryland Association of Boards of Education.
- Wisconsin indicated that they would submit a plan that addresses the significant issues, but will not likely fulfill the NAACP's requirements for 5-year benchmarks.

- North Carolina will likely send a joint letter from the State Superintendent and the Governor (or the Governor's Chief of Staff and a Deputy Superintendent) outlining actions that the state has taken and are taking.
- South Carolina will send a letter outlining its accomplishments and future plans to address the issues raised. The state has no plans to develop a 5-year plan.
- Louisiana indicated that it will likely submit a similar letter.
- Governor Siegelman's legal advisory team is reviewing the request and has not determined how to respond.
- Missouri has met with members of the local NAACP chapter to discuss the state's response and the state will likely submit a letter similar to others listed above.

I've briefed Phillip on this information. We do not think that we should respond that we will submit a *Five-Year Educational Equity Partnership Plan* because we do not know how this information will be used by the NAACP in five years. We are advising that we indicate that we will not submit a plan and that we submit the attached letter.

The NAACP is holding its Daisy Bates Education Summit in Atlanta next Thursday-Sunday (May 16-19) and will announce states' responses to the *Call for Action* at the conference.