
OFFICE OF GOVERNOR RONNIE MUSGROVE
INTEROFFICE MEMORANDUM

TO: SEWELL
FROM: RILEY
SUBJECT: EARLY CHILDHOOD GREETING ON 3/6/03
DATE: 3/5/2003
CC: MAYO

We've invested in education: accountability, teacher pay, computers, full funding first

Research shows we all learn from the day we are born. Early childhood care and education are critical to future learning ability of our children (our future students)

Leadership Summit on Higher Education identified early childhood education 1 of 6 priorities for education. Steering Committee stated that all Mississippi's children should enter school ready to interact with their peers and teachers, eager to read and able to begin working with numbers.

I (Governor) am committed to ensuring that we provide a quality education for all of our children, that is why I was so thrilled that the Department of Human Services and the Barksdale Reading Initiative entered into a partnership to make this initiative possible.

Thank Claiborne Barksdale, Dr. Cathy Grace and Edna Watts (DHS) for their work..

Recognize and thank the "Financing Universal Early Care and Education" team:

- Dr. Richard Brandon, University of Washington (**Co-Director** with Dr. Sharon Lynn Kagan)
- Dr. Sharon Lynn Kagan, Columbia University (formerly of Yale) (**Co-Director** with Dr. Brandon)
- Dr. Erin Maher, University of Washington
- Susan Ochshorn, Columbia University

We are privileged to have these national experts lead our work for the next 18 months. They will be heading an early childhood needs assessment to be conducted over the next 18 months. This assessment will identify what is needed in order to improve childcare in our state, what such improvements would cost, and what internal and external resources exist to help pay for those improvements.

It is expected that this assessment will be integral to development of legislation and policy in the near future.

Thank the task force members for their willingness to serve. Task force comprised of providers, parents, Head Start, state agencies, academicians, private sector, legislators.

Had the pleasure of hearing Dr. Craig Ramey's presentation to NGA at Winter Meeting – Ramey recognized MS's Right from Birth series and our new expanded Birth to School initiative.

Invest in our future, rather than shortchanging our future.