

February 20, 2002

To: School District Superintendents

From: Richard L. Thompson, State Superintendent of Education

Re: Positive Budget News from Mississippi House of Representatives

As you are aware, the State Department of Education staff has been working diligently during this legislative session to insure adequate funding for K12 education programs. I am pleased to inform you that this morning the House Appropriations Committee approved an amendment to the K12 appropriation bills for FY 2003 that would provide an additional \$64 million to K12 education programs.

These funds are contingent upon the passage of House Bill No. 1379, which provides for the electronic transfer of sales tax payments. The sales tax bill has passed the House but is pending in the Senate.

We realize that this information is being shared early in the process, but we sincerely believe that it is a step in the right direction. We are particularly proud that the education budget is the only budget that has received attention for an additional appropriation. In addition, House Bill No. 1815, which would restore the FY 2002 reductions to public school districts, has been filed and is pending action in the House Appropriations Committee.

We will keep you posted and will continue to work hard on behalf of our students.