

# **Education Budget Crisis of 2002**

## **Budget Action Plan**

**February 19, 2002**

**Six-Step Plan for Week One**

*Mississippi Association of School Superintendents*  
*Mississippi School Boards Association*



## Budget Action Plan - Week One

The impact of the mid-year budget cuts just made by the Governor and the projected reductions in funding for next year by the Legislature have created a budget crisis for local school districts in Mississippi never before seen. MASS and MSBA propose this action plan to local school leaders as a unified response from the education community to these cuts. **Your cooperation is essential if we are to have any hope of relief in restoring cuts/reductions.**

The response from the education community should be simple and to the point. Public education funding is different from other state budget needs and should be a first priority. We need:

1. **Restoration of the mid-year budget cuts for this budget year (\$53.4 million);**
2. **Full-funding of the MAEP for next year (\$111 million).**

### ACTION CHECKLIST:

1. Immediately prepare Budget Worksheets A and B attached to this Plan. The two worksheets should show the amount of cuts/reductions for your district for each year, along with possible reductions-in-force, local tax increases required, or other measures necessary to achieve a balanced budget. **FAX a copy of this completed form to the MASS Office no later than Wednesday, February 20<sup>th</sup>.**
2. These completed documents should then be provided to your local newspaper for its use, with an oral explanation of the magnitude of the reductions-in-force or, alternatively, local tax increases that may be required to absorb these cuts.
3. Call your local Senators and Representatives now (601-359-3770) and make an appointment for a meeting with them on Friday afternoon or Saturday. Show them the worksheets and make sure that they understand the options you may be forced to exercise and solicit **commitments of support** from them to help restore the cuts/reductions. It is important that they feel some responsibility and ownership in solving this problem along with you. When you have secured an appointment, **FAX a copy of the Legislator Meeting Assignment Schedule form to the MASS office no later than Thursday, February 21<sup>st</sup>.**
4. **FAX a copy of the Legislator/Newspaper Meeting Response form back to the MASS office no later than Monday, February 25<sup>th</sup>.**
5. **Plan to attend a statewide meeting of education leaders in Jackson on Tuesday, February 26<sup>th</sup>, at 9:30 a.m. at the Crown Plaza Hotel, followed by a press conference on the steps of the Capitol at 11:00.** Bring board members, school business officials, key administrators, PTA leaders and others you think may be

interested in helping this effort. **FAX a copy of the Statewide Meeting Attendance form to the MASS office no later than Friday, February 22<sup>nd</sup>.**

6. Invite your local legislators to lunch with your delegation on Tuesday, February 26<sup>th</sup>, immediately following the press conference. Find out what, if anything, your legislators have been able to do towards working on our common goal and what recommendations they might have for further action, by them and by us. **FAX a copy of the Statewide Meeting Results form to the MASS office no later than Wednesday, February 27<sup>th</sup>.**

### **Schedule Recap:**

**Wednesday, February 20<sup>th</sup>** - completion of Budget Worksheets A&B

**Thursday, February 21<sup>st</sup>** - meet with newspaper editor

**Friday, February 22<sup>nd</sup>** - meet with local legislators

**Tuesday, February 26<sup>th</sup>** - 9:30 statewide meeting in Jackson; 11:00 press conference at steps of Capitol; 11:45 lunch with local legislators

We are enclosing several documents and fax-back forms for your use. They are:

1. Budget Worksheet A for FY2002 (2001-2002 school year)
2. Budget Worksheet B for FY2003 (2002-2003 school year)
3. Legislator Meeting Assignment Schedule Form
4. Legislator/Newspaper Meeting Response Form
5. Statewide Meeting Attendance Form
6. Statewide Meeting Results Form

If you have any questions, please call the MASS office at (601)981-9995.

**All faxes should be sent to the following special fax number: (309) 407-7291**