



GOVERNOR RONNIE MUSGROVE

New Initiatives – State of State
January 9, 2003

SCHOOLS FIRST FUNDING

By committing 62% of the general fund budget to education, we can fully fund our K-12 public schools, including the Mississippi Adequate Education Program (MAEP) and the teacher pay raise. It will also increase support funding for our universities and our local community and junior colleges and will enhance state financial aid for our university students.

SUMMER START

Summer Start provides an extended-year, full-day kindergarten to children who have not been exposed to basic skills by allowing them to begin kindergarten two months the summer before they would ordinarily enter and to continue for two months after kindergarten, right before entering first grade. This program provides children with the chance to catch up earlier on basic skills so they are developmentally ready to acquire higher skills during the regular kindergarten period. Approximately \$5 million provides four extra months of instruction. Summer Start will reduce the need for remediation and special education, lower dropout rates, increase the skills of our workforce, and ultimately save the state millions.

SUPPORT OUR STUDENTS (SOS)

Support Our Students was established in 1995 to provide high quality after-school mentoring activities and related services for at-risk children in grades K-9. These activities include academic and cultural enrichment and conflict resolution/violence prevention activities. With a \$2 million investment, we can expand the current program of approximately 19 SOS sites to over 250.

MISSISSIPPI BRAIN TRUST

The Mississippi Brain Trust will use \$200 million in bonds – \$20 million a year over the next 10 years - to develop an intellectual infrastructure. The Brain Trust will build a reservoir of professors to develop new ideas and to prepare our workforce for the highly skilled jobs of today and tomorrow. University, college, and community college research and training will aid in the recruitment and retention of the world's best scholars. The Brain Trust will strengthen Mississippi's intellectual capacity by endowing chairs and professors at our universities and colleges and funding graduate student assistantships; sabbaticals with business and industry; major equipment purchases; and, workforce training.

MISSISSIPPI RURAL ECONOMIC IMPACT AUTHORITY

The Mississippi Rural Economic Impact Authority will use \$20 million in bonds to provide assistance to new and existing businesses and training for people who have lost their jobs in rural Mississippi. This program will target counties with a population of 30,000 or less, or a municipality with a population of 10,000 or less.