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OFFICE OF GOVERNOR RONNIE MUSGROVE  
INTEROFFICE MEMORANDUM

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**TO:** GOVERNOR  
**FROM:** RILEY  
**SUBJECT:** BERNIE RICE: TEACHER UNIVERSE AND DESTINATION READING  
**DATE** 6/17/03  
**CC:** DAVIDSON, PROSPERE

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Per your directions via Richard following your dinner with Bernie Rice, I've followed up with Rice as to his *Teacher Universe* and *Destination Reading* products. Rice and his business partner, Deborah Bond, and I had a conference call on May 28 to discuss *Teacher Universe* and *Destination Reading*.

Rice and Bond are leaving RiverDeep to form their own company to market *Teacher Universe* and *Destination Reading*. They are looking for one state with Internet accessibility in classrooms to serve as a pilot for their products to guide the entire instruction of the classroom. They are proposing to deliver: 1) *Teacher Universe* - a teacher technology integration assessment for all current and future teachers in Mississippi; and 2) *Destination Reading* - a significant literacy instructional pilot of professional development and student curriculum for 600 Mississippi teachers – 5% of all Mississippi elementary teachers.

Rice and Bond would implement *Teacher Universe* over a 5-year period to assess Mississippi's 50,000 (35,000 current + 15,000 new teachers' over the five-year period) teachers' knowledge and capacity of integrating technology in classroom instruction:

Year 1	assess 15,000 teachers
Year 2	assess 12,00 teachers
Year 3	assess 9,000 teachers
Year 4	assess 7,000 teachers
<u>Year 5</u>	<u>assess 7,000 teachers</u>
TOTAL	assess 50,000 teachers

The assessment would have a price tag of \$650,00 the first year and would gradually decrease from \$300,000 the second year down to approximately \$200,000 in Year 5.

600 teachers would then be selected, possibly based upon their assessment and reading scores in their classrooms or schools, to participate in the *Destination Reading* student curriculum which would provide those teachers with approaches to reading supported by activities, tutorials, assessments and modeling of best practices instruction. *Destination*

*Reading's* online professional development program would assist the 600 chosen teachers in using the *Destination Reading* student curriculum in their classrooms. The professional development program provides teachers with an individual and self-paced learning path based on what they already know and don't know about reading instruction. *Destination Reading* is also self-paced for students and enables teachers to monitor students' progress and administrators to track their teachers' understanding of reading instruction.

The license for *Destination Reading* runs \$640,000, but it is a perpetual license.

*Destination Reading* would also involve \$630,000 for management services, which would include evaluation and planning; a written paper at the end of the year, which could be used to attract continuation funding, as to scientific results of implementation of the multi-media curriculum and professional development; and, project management.

Overall, Rice said that Mississippi would be looking at the program running approximately \$2.65 million for the first year (NOTE: The numbers in the text above total \$1.92 million. I've got an email into Rice as to the \$730,000 difference.) We would also have the decreasing cost of the assessment in Years 2-5.

If you want to consider implementing this, I think there are several items that we have to consider:

- We need to see a demo of the products, so we need to invite Rice back to town for a meeting. As this is a K-3 reading curriculum, I'd suggest that we invite Barksdale Reading Institute (due to our large number of BRI schools) and MDE to also attend the demo.
- Is the program scientifically sound? (NOTE: According to Rice, a summative evaluation of the program should be complete this summer.)
- We'd have to consider potential funding mechanisms (private partnerships, do we implement a smaller pilot at lesser costs, etc...). Rice said he has met with Secretary Rod Paige who said this looks like break through programs, but he wants to see the results of the trial projects. If Rice comes back with successful trial project results, the USDE will throw money at governors to use this.

I'm recommending that we see a demo and then go from there. Please advise as to if we can invite BRI and MDE to the demo and as to any other steps that you want me to take at this time. Thanks!

Set up demo \_\_\_\_\_

Okay to invite BRI and MDE \_\_\_\_\_

Demo for our office only \_\_\_\_\_