

MEMO

TO: Governor
FROM: Riley
SUBJECT: Mississippi Writes: ETS Partnership with MS and Nissan
DATE: March 31, 2003
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You'll remember in your last meeting with Donna Davis, that she mentioned that ETS is interested in helping to build on the Computers in the Classroom initiative. She and I have been corresponding via email and will be meeting on April 8 with Don Back and Sharon Robinson of ETS.

ETS wants Mississippi to be the model for implementation of its *Criterion* online writing program. The *Mississippi Writes* initiative (our preliminary name for this project) could be implemented in our K-12 schools and possibly our community colleges. Donna, Don and I originally discussed a possible partnership with the Canton schools, but ETS is interested in taking it bigger than one school. According to Donna, ETS has spoken to Nissan representatives that they have worked with on other projects and Nissan is interested in partnering with ETS in Mississippi.

ETS's *Criterion* is a web-based (thus, the tie in to the Computers in the Classroom Initiative) service that utilizes e-rater, ETS's automated scoring technology, to offer students real-time analysis/evaluation of their writing skills. *Criterion* detects errors in grammar, mechanics and usage. It also offers teachers the ability to insert comments regarding errors. *Criterion* offers students greater opportunity to improve their skills at their own pace and makes it easier for teachers to evaluate students' work.

I'll update you after our April 8 meeting. ETS would like to arrange a phone call between you and Kirk Langraf, ETS president, after I've had a chance to brief you on our April 8 meeting.