

MEMO

TO: Governor
FROM: Riley
SUBJECT: Brad Ewing: School Scoop Software
DATE: March 31, 2003
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I met with Brad Ewing of the Harbor Group last week to review the School Scoop software program. The Harbor Group is owned by Jody Harbor. Ewing requested this meeting after you launched St. Richard's website, which utilized the software, last month. He said that you said you wanted more info on the software. (I don't know if this is true or not.)

School Scoop offers a web site for parents and students and offers administrators and teachers the ability to develop the information on the web site themselves. School Scoop is aimed at improving communications between parents and schools. Via a password, parents can obtain a calendar of school activities, as well as their child's grades, assignments and attendance information.

A school administrator can update information (activities, schedules) on the website without having to rely on a technical staff member. Teachers can utilize the software as an attendance roster, as well as a gradebook. The software is not aligned to the Mississippi benchmarks and does not offer lesson plans or resources for teachers.

I was really impressed with the software until I realized that it does not offer any information regarding our benchmarks. It does offer a lot of information to parents, but I think other softwares offer more to parents and school personnel.

Ewing displayed the software at MASS's recent legislative meeting in Vicksburg. He has also tried to arrange a meeting with Parents for Public Schools. He asked if we could give our support to the product or could I suggest others for him to contact to request a meeting for a demonstration. I explained to Ewing that we cannot endorse products, but I did give him the names of several superintendents that are interested in technology and suggested that he offer to demo the software to MAE, AFT and MPE. I don't know if any of the superintendents will be seriously interested due to the lack of alignment with benchmarks. I'm also going to get Kameron Ball or someone in MDE's technology division to give him some guidance about the vendor list.

Please advise as to if you wish for me to take further action on this item.