
OFFICE OF GOVERNOR RONNIE MUSGROVE
INTEROFFICE MEMORANDUM

TO: GOVERNOR
FROM: RILEY
SUBJECT: PUBLIC EDUCATION FORUM'S TASK FORCE ON TEACHER QUALITY
RECOMMENDATIONS AND PRESS CONFERENCE
DATE 2/12/03
CC: KINNEY, MAYO

You may remember that I served on the Public Education Forum's (PEF) Teacher Quality Task Force, which worked during 2001 and 2002 to review the issue of teacher quality and to develop recommendations on how MS can have a qualified, competent and caring teacher in every classroom. Dr. Phyfa Eiland, Superintendent of the Hinds County Public Schools, and Dr. Huntley Biggs, Executive Director of the MS Power Foundation, co-chaired the task force which was comprised of persons representing educators, MDE, SBCJC, IHL, our office, the Legislature and the private sector.

I've attached a copy of the final document for your review. PEF is hosting a press conference next Tuesday, February 18, at 11:00 in the capitol to release this document. Peggy Howard called yesterday and requested that I speak on your behalf at the press conference (she said that Blake had said this would be your call) as to why teacher quality is so important. I alerted Lee Ann and Phillip to this and we agree that you should be the one to speak, as this is an education event that will probably get a lot of coverage. Dr. Eiland, Rep. Cecil Brown, Den Knecht, and Dr. Johnson are also scheduled to speak. Senator Videt Carmichael has not confirmed that he will speak. We wanted to brief you on the task force work and recommendations first. The final recommendations are as follows:

Compensation and Professional Advancement

- Create a compensation and professional advancement system based on demonstrated expertise and contributions to student learning.
- Study the feasibility of establishing an independent Board of Professional Teaching Standards to design and implement a model system.

Recruitment and Retention

- Develop a partnership among economic and educational agencies and organizations to promote Mississippi as a desirable place to live, learn and work.
- Extend financial incentives to teachers in high demand subject areas, such as science, mathematics and special education.
- Provide financial incentives for retired teachers to return to full-time teaching.

- Adjust the PERS service credit factor to pay 100% of final adjusted salary after 35 years of service.
- Allow qualified children of Mississippi teachers to attend state colleges and universities tuition free.

Teacher Education

- Align community college and university curricula to prepare students for success in teacher education programs.
- Establish a structure and funding to employ teachers with National Board Certification as adjunct university faculty.
- Create university/school partnerships that provide opportunities for pre-service teachers to work part-time in schools while pursuing degrees.

Professional Development

- Initiative a two-year induction program for new teachers.
- Establish a school-based professional development model aimed at improving student achievement based on the National Staff Development Council's Standards for Staff Development.
- Provide teachers with non-instructional time for collaborative planning and professional training.
- Form cadres of National Board Certified teachers to provide technical assistance to practicing teachers and professional development to school districts.

School Leadership

- Fully implement state standards for school leaders focused on instructional leadership and on providing a work environment conducive to learning.
- Expand induction and mentoring programs for new administrators to ensure access for all.
- Create a network of outstanding principals for mutual support and mentoring of aspiring school leaders.
- Utilize multiple administrative positions to address effectively the dual roles of school manager and instructional leader.

The bottom line is that we should invest in our teachers' educational preparation, as well as their ongoing professional development, in order to ensure that they are adequately prepared. These investments extend to support systems (mentoring, induction, school leadership), as well. Investing in our teachers fits perfectly with our *Schools First* priority. The recommendations also encourage a systemic approach of both pre- and in-service preparation between K-12 through university level, which can enhance our three educational systems working together. The report also recommends utilizing the talents and resources of our National Board Certified Teachers.

Do you want to participate in the press conference on the 18th at 11:00?

Yes _____

No _____