

National Board Certified Teachers  
Reception/Press Conference  
Thursday, January 18, 2001  
5:00 p.m.  
North Atrium of Central High School

### Talking points

- We are here today to recognize and congratulate 389 Mississippi teachers who are among an elite group of educators.
- These men and women have achieved the highest of professional standards in the field of teaching.
- Mississippi now boasts the 4<sup>th</sup> highest number of teachers achieving National Board Certification in the United States.
- These teachers made the decision to take on this rigorous challenge that will not only make them better teachers, but will also improve the quality of learning for all our students.
- Only 51 percent of teachers across the US who applied for the certification, for the 1999-2000 school year, attained this high level of achievement.
- Mississippi's National Board Certified Teachers are going that extra mile to invest in themselves and in turn, invest in our students.
- We are all investing in education.
- Mississippi has taken one of the largest steps forward for the state, in the area of education, by passing legislation to raise teacher pay to the Southeastern average.
- A raise in teacher salaries is an investment in our teachers and our students.
- With higher teacher salaries, Mississippi will be able to recruit new teachers and retain the great ones we have.
- Mississippi teachers continue to outshine teachers in other states.
- Our National Board Certification numbers are a resounding testament to their commitment to teaching.
- Removing the five percent revenue growth condition on pay increases would be a strong testament of our commitment to Mississippi's teachers.
- The five percent condition on pay raises for teachers isn't a commitment; it's an excuse.
- By funding their raises every year, with no excuses, we show our commitment to them and to our students.
- I urge legislators - remove the five percent condition.
- Show our teachers – our students – that we believe in them – that we believe in a strong education for our children.
- Educating our children must be our first priority.
- I am excited, and pleased to welcome many of Mississippi's top teaching professionals to this afternoon's reception held in your honor.
- Thank you for your dedication to education.