

*Remarks for the  
National Board for Professional Teaching Standards  
March 1, 2003*

- Once again want to welcome board to  
Mississippi
  
- Always excited about the opportunity to talk  
about what we're doing here
  - Yesterday I shared with you some of the  
good work we're doing in education
  - Teacher pay
  - Computers in the Classroom
  - Princeton Review / testing 6<sup>th</sup> best in  
nation

- We're proud of all that we're doing to improve education
  - Investing 62 percent of general fund when other states cutting to the bone
  - Now's the time to invest in education
  
- Want to speak also to the good work being done by Mississippi's teachers
  - They're on the front lines of our classrooms
  - We all know the incredible influence they carry
    - Important for that influence to be positive and well-qualified

■ Proud of the 1,459 Nationally Board

Certified Teachers and their commitment to the classroom

- Mississippi currently ranks 6<sup>th</sup> in nation in board certified teachers
- 321 new certified teachers in 2002 / 7<sup>th</sup> among the 50 states

■ We were also one of the first states to offer a financial incentive package for teachers to complete the certification process

- \$6,000 annual bonus
- Reimbursement of \$2,300 fee

- We demonstrated our commitment to our teachers
  - They are keeping the commitment strong
  
- Continued investment in board certified teachers is critical to continuing the good work we've been doing here
  
- Want to mention another area where we are investing in our board certified teachers
  - World Class Teaching Program / created by Legislature in 1996

- This program provides mentoring for teachers pursuing National Board certification
  - Also provides professional development for teachers, in areas such as standards and assessment for National Board pre-candidates

- World Class Teaching Program currently operating at 6 locations in Mississippi
  - Mississippi State University
  - University of Southern Mississippi
  - USM's Gulf Coast campus
  - Ole Miss
  - Delta State University
  - Jackson State University

- World Class Teaching Program based on premise of National Writing Project
  - “The best teacher of a teacher is another teacher”
  - This program has proven its effectiveness in the certification process
  
- Our investment in education and in our teachers is an investment in our future
  - We’re not going to shortchange our future