

Dear Sir,

This was originally sent to you on May 16th. I am still awaiting a response from my Public Servant.

Sincerely,

Gretchen Rhodes

----- Original Message -----

From: [Dennis & Gretchen Rhodes](#)

To: governor@governor.state.ms.us

Sent: Tuesday, May 16, 2000 10:29 PM

Subject: Suggestion for improving Education

Dear Governor Musgrove,

I am a Mississippian by choice. As such I am willing to work to help improve Mississippi and have done so by helping within the local community but also on the state level as well. I have been on Mississippi State's Engineering Advisory board for the past 5 years and have served as the chairman of one of the departmental advisory boards as well. I am well educated, have a BS in Engineering from Mississippi State University, a MS in Engineering from Drexel University, and an MBA from the University of Memphis. I am a mother of 7. Four of the children are my husband's and mine. Three of the children are nieces for which we have taken legal custody as the state was removing them from their home. God had blessed my husband and I in many ways and as such we believe that we have an obligation to provide for others in return.

I am writing you today in reference to your State of the State address. Part of your vision for the state is Education. I agree with you on many of the points that you make. You said, "In education, we have laid a strong foundation. We will see the Mississippi Adequate Education Program reach its full implementation by the year 2002. On that foundation, we must continue to strengthen our schools." We have laid a strong foundation for adequate education. With our children in mind, I would prefer that we strive for excellence. I am a resident of DeSoto County and we have one of the best school systems in the state. Our teachers and principals are dedicated and work hard to educate our children. We have programs for those with developmental needs and are raising the standards of reading ability. Where I believe we are lacking is providing for our gifted children. We need to have programs that begin earlier than the 2nd grade for children who are gifted. We should not penalize our children who are ahead by forcing them into "age appropriate" grade levels without having an alternative. Children have various gifts and their gifts are not identical. We need to be able to address the "special" needs of children who are academically and socially well above grade level. These children should not be forced to waste a year in an "age appropriate" classroom when they already know and understand the material being taught. Parents should not be forced to home school children to ensure that their child is challenged and learning rather than wasting an opportunity for furthering his mental development.

I challenge you sir to help me find away to address this issue.

Sincerely,

Gretchen L. Rhodes