

For Immediate Release

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Contact: John Sewell

601-359-2916

Independent Education Study Finds Mississippi Is A Leader in Preparation for “No Child Left Behind”

(Jackson, MS) – Governor Ronnie Musgrove said a recent study prepared by the independent Education Commission of the States stands as further evidence of the progress Mississippi is making in improving education. The study, which examined the ability of states to comply with the major requirements of the “No Child Left Behind” legislation, ranked Mississippi as one of the states leading the nation.

“The results of this study demonstrate clearly that we have made education a priority in Mississippi, and we have done so ahead of the federal requirements,” Musgrove said. “Our focus has always been on making sure every one of our children has an opportunity to learn, and to fulfill their promise and potential.”

The study examined 40 federal requirements of the “No Child Left Behind” act, and found Mississippi was one of 12 states currently meeting at least half of those requirements. Last September, Mississippi was one of six states selected to participate in the first phase of the “Following the Leaders” pilot project, designed to provide the technology resources and guidance to help implement the mandates of “No Child Left Behind” in 15 school districts around the state.

“We had already put into place testing and accountability standards more stringent than those called for in the federal legislation, so we were well-prepared before this law was ever passed,” Musgrove said.

The important thing now, said Musgrove, is for federal funding to be provided so states can meet all the requirements of the law.

“During this national recession, we are stretched beyond capacity in meeting all the needs of our people,” he said. “I urge President Bush and Congress to fully fund this law and help the states – and more importantly, our children – prepare for the future.”

In addition to Mississippi’s high scores on “No Child Left Behind,” Musgrove has also led the way on raising teacher pay, placing an Internet-accessible computer in every classroom, and funding education – from kindergarten through higher education – first and at 62 percent of the general fund.

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