
OFFICE OF GOVERNOR RONNIE MUSGROVE
INTEROFFICE MEMORANDUM

TO: LITTON
FROM: RILEY
SUBJECT: TEACHER PAY RAISE AND ACCOUNTABILITY INFO
DATE 12/29/00
CC: FILE

Boyd just came by and told me to pull the following from a memo I did for him for the August DGA meeting and to get it to you ASAP. Here it is.

Governor Ronnie Musgrove is dedicated to setting unprecedented goals and achieving unparalleled progress in Mississippi's public education system. Our state and our children deserve progress. Mississippi's citizens demand results. Together we can achieve our goals.

Teacher Pay

Mississippi cannot be expected to attract and retain qualified teachers to educate our children if we are not willing to pay a competitive salary for such qualified teachers. Mississippi's 1998-1999 classroom teachers' average salary was \$29,500, while the southeastern average was \$35,817.

Governor Musgrove signed HB 1134 into law on May 1. This legislation provides for a \$337.9 million plan to raise Mississippi teacher pay to the Southeastern average by the 2005-2006 school year. Mississippi's teachers will start seeing larger paychecks during the 2001-2002 school year. Mississippi's teacher pay average will go

from the present \$31,900 to the predicted Southeastern average of approximately \$41,000 by the 2005-2006 school year. This is an approximate 30% raise.

HB 1134 provides that teachers only receive these raises each year if the state economy grows by at least five percent a year. Governor Musgrove is opposed to the 5% growth provision and will work with the legislature next year to remove this growth provision to ensure that we provide this raise regardless of the growth of Mississippi's economy. Governor Musgrove is committed to pay raises for our teachers and that, as a state, we are committed to putting education first in Mississippi.

Governor Musgrove believes we must pay our teachers competitive salaries so that we don't lose experienced educators to neighboring states and so that top students are encouraged to go into teaching. We must make the commitment to improving and building upon Mississippi's public education system so that we may develop the workforce that will attract new business and economic growth to our state.

Accountability

Governor Musgrove also signed SB 2488, the 2000 Educational Accountability Bill, which provides for schools to be evaluated based on: 1) students achieving a grade-level proficiency or, 2) students exceeding an annual growth expectation in the number of students not testing at grade-level proficiency, but who are showing improvement. Schools not meeting established growth expectations or grade-level proficiency standards will be designated Priority Schools. 7-member evaluation teams (appointed by the State Superintendent and approved by the State Board of Education) will be sent to these Priority Schools to identify personnel in need of professional development and to assist in the development and evaluation of improvement plans for the school. Identified

personnel will be given two years to improve and may be dismissed after two years if improvement is not made.

Our teachers and administrators are committed to excellence and Governor Musgrove's administration is committed to supporting public education in Mississippi.