

■ Recognize

■ Edward Everett Hale: “I am only one, but I am one. I cannot do everything, but I can do something. And I will not let what I cannot do interfere with what I can do.”

■ Each of us has something to offer – to our families, to our communities, to our state

- This is the attitude we need to make Mississippi a better place to live, work, and raise families
  - Accomplished by continuing to make education our first priority
  
- Neither of my parents had a high school education
  - But they made sure we knew just how important and invaluable an education was
  - They taught us if we got an education that it would lead to good jobs/ I still believe this today
  
- **Good Schools = Good Jobs**

- Investing for the people of Mississippi today, for dividends tomorrow
- By working together, we have accomplished a lot, but it has not been easy
  - Every state impacted by a national recession
  - More than \$7 trillion lost in stock market
  - President Bush recently announced three million manufacturing jobs are leaving America
  - June 2003 report from Bureau of Labor Statistics: 9.4 million Americans out of work-NAFTA 41,000 to Mexico
  - Alabama, Texas and Florida are raising taxes and Arkansas is cutting services
  - Mississippi has refused to follow

- Image of Mississippi in 2003 far different than the image most know
- Moving faster than anyone else into the 21<sup>st</sup> century
- Competing and leading in the global marketplace
- Setting new standards for education and economic development
- Mississippi is a recognized leader in education
  - Teacher pay/ 49<sup>th</sup> to 19<sup>th</sup> when fully implemented
  - Computers in the classroom
  - Accountability
    - Princeton Review: 12<sup>th</sup> best testing system in nation

- Leading other states in preparedness for “No Child Left Behind”
- Three years ago 122 Mississippi schools needed to improve- today I am glad to say that the number has been reduced by 90% to 11
- Our test scores are improving
  - 6<sup>th</sup> in the nation in National Board Certified Teachers
- Historic action of funding education first (the youth are 1/3 of the population, yet all of our future)
- You play a major role in the strides Mississippi has made in education/ without your dedication and belief none of this would be possible

- February 2003 signed a comprehensive plan for education into law
  - Historic action
  - Investing in education/ 62%
  - Fully funding MAEP for the first time
  - Funds teacher pay raises
  - Funds universities and prevents tuition increases
  - Funds junior and community colleges (workforce training)
  
- We are sending the message that we mean business about education

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- Work has to continue beyond education, with focused economic development and growth to keep our best and brightest minds here in Mississippi
  - They are Mississippi's future
  - We want to give them a strong start / solid economic base
  - We've done that in past three years

■ Job creation

- Over 2,200 new and expanded facilities
- Created 53,000 new jobs
- Capital investment of over \$15 billion

■ We are increasing investment while others are cutting

■ Not easy to do/ significant in light of national recession

- More than 7 million lost in the stock market
- More than 2 million Americans out of work
- States cutting school week/ releasing prisoners/ massive lay-offs



- Demonstrates priority/ commitment to better Mississippi
  
- We're making these advances because we're getting involved, we're working together
  - We're building good schools / good jobs and good communities
  
- Together we're changing the image of Mississippi
  - Image of people working in highly skilled, well paying jobs
  - Image of children in classrooms equipped with the technology to bring the world to their desk
  - Image of global companies looking for a place to do business in this great state

- Mississippi has its priorities straight
  - Good schools/ good jobs
  - Better communities/ better Mississippi