

Remarks for MS Association of Partners in
Education Governor's Awards
October 27, 2003

- Recognize and thank
 - Linda Ross Aldy-Director of MS Partners in Education
 - Jay Lee-President of the Board of Directors
 - Other board members
 - Liz Hudson-Former Director (no official title, retired this past summer, but still very involved/ without her leadership there would not be a Governor's Award)
 - All of the business partners (who have made a commitment to better schools and have donated their resources and skills to this cause)
 - Particularly the "Governor's Honor Roll" (support partnerships in more than one school district)
 - Sponsors-BellSouth, Entergy, Maddox Foundation, and Trustmark

- It is an honor to be here today for the third annual luncheon/ one of the best parts of my job/ meeting with the people who are influencing all of our futures for generations to come

- My priorities for educating our children as Governor, are similar to MAPE's mission- (helping to build local support for the success of ALL students)

- Public schools are the cornerstones of our communities and the key to a successful economy

- H.W. Lewis said, "Those who are unwilling to invest in the future haven't earned one."

- Mississippi isn't afraid to invest in our future

- Without dedicated teachers, parents, and business partnerships MS would not be enjoying some of our successes in education
 - Historic action of fully funding education first
 - Way is should always be
 - Test scores are improving
 - We announced that with our State Accountability system, more than 80% of Mississippi public schools have achieved a rating of Level 3/ Successful or higher
 - Under the federal NCLB accountability system, 50% of MS schools met the Adequate Yearly Progress requirements for
 - NCLB score: Alabama – 33%, Delaware – 43%, Tennessee – 53%, and Florida 13%

- Mississippi has its priorities straight
 - Educating and investing in our children today for dividends tomorrow
- Children in this state are our most valuable resource
 - They may only be 1/3 of our population, but they are **ALL** of our future

- Our children need to know that they have the support of their families, teachers, and the entire community
 - They see that when the entire community becomes involved in their education process-whether its through tutoring, donating money, or supplies

- Business partnerships with schools are so vital because
 - Demonstrates the direct link between good schools and strong businesses, which lead to good communities and a better MS
 - Shows businesses commitment to the children who will be their future employees

- We've accomplished a lot, and it hasn't been easy
 - Every state impacted by national recession
 - More than \$7 trillion lost in stock market
 - Alabama, Texas and Florida are raising taxes and Arkansas is cutting services

- Mississippi has refused to follow/ refused to compromise

- Mississippi is now recognized as a leader in education
 - Teacher pay/ 49th to 19th when fully implemented
 - Computers in the Classroom
 - 6th in the nation in National Board Certified Teachers
- We're proving to the people of Mississippi, and the rest of the nation, that we're serious about education
 - Serious about giving our children every advantage we can/ so they can compete on the national level
- The recent successes we have had in education would not have been possible with the cooperation and input of everyone here today
- Let's keep up the good work
- Together we can make Mississippi even better