

*Remarks for the
Mississippi School Counselors Association
February 21, 2003*

- Recognize Amy Harvison (President, MS School Counselors Association)

- Story of Jordan / 15-point buck / priorities

- Priorities for MS / jobs and education

- Meeting these priorities not always easy, especially in schools

- Education is the priority now
 - REPRESENTS HISTORIC ACTION
 - UNPRECEDENTED COOPERATION
 - MISSISSIPPI IS MOVING FORWARD

- Impact of national recession
 - More than \$7 trillion lost in stock market
 - More than two million Americans out of work
 - States cutting school week / releasing prisoners / massive lay-offs

- Effects of national recession touches everyone
 - Recession has no respect for political parties
 - Every state affected

- Have to deal with the impact here in MS
 - Protect people in short term / prepare for long term

- Best way to do that is through education
 - Everybody benefits from good schools

- *Just as important, students benefit from qualified professionals there to help them make the most of their promise and potential*
 - *That's the role you play as counselors*

- *So many challenges and pressures on our children today*
 - *We have to let them know we're there for them / committed to them*
 - *Thank you for helping make that commitment known*

- Comprehensive plan for education
 - Funding education at 62%
 - Fully funding MAEP for the first time
 - Funds teacher pay raise
 - Addresses needs of higher education

- We are making a difference
 - Teacher pay from 49th to 19th
 - Computers in the Classroom
 - MS one of six states for “Following the Leaders”/ No Child Left Behind
 - Leadership Summit/six priorities from early childhood to adult learning
 - Princeton Review - #6 best testing in the nation

- Investments in education benefit every Mississippian, not just students
 - People want to live in good communities
 - Good schools, good jobs, good communities

- Those are the results of good leadership
 - Those are the results our people demand and deserve

- The bills I signed earlier this month fund education for one year, but the fight we fought and won, changes the way we fund education forever

- Gone are the days when we fund education
the last week of the session

- Gone are the days when our school children
compete for funding with convicted felons
in our prisons

- Gone are the days when we shortchange our
schools

- Gone are the days when we shortchange our
future

- **MISSISSIPPI HAS ENTERED A NEW
ERA**