

Teacher Pay Raise Issue
Talking Points

- I said in my State of the State Address that teachers need our support. Those teachers deserve recognition for their efforts; they deserve a fair and living wage for their labors of the heart and mind. We must take teacher pay in Mississippi to the Southeastern average, and I have not changed my position on that issue.
- Our teachers deserve additional consideration of the pay raise bills from their legislators.
- Our job is to make sacrifices now so that we can offer competitive salaries and keep good teachers in Mississippi.
- We must enact the 4-year plan, which I proposed, this year because if we allow it to fail, then we have failed the students of Mississippi.
- It is imperative that the teacher pay raise plan is passed this year, even if it receives no funding at this time. If the bill does not pass this year, then we will hear even more excuses next year as to why the bill cannot be funded. Do the right thing. Do it now, and we will fund the pay raise for our teachers by the year 2003.
- Education gives us our competitive edge.
- A better education means better jobs.
- Teachers are the fundamental piece of education. They are the keys to unlocking the door to learning for our children.
- Mississippi's children deserve our hard work and commitment to raising teacher pay.
- Public education is vital to Mississippi students.
- It is as fundamental as asking people – Do you remember the teachers that helped to shape your life and had an important part to getting you where you are today? Don't our children deserve those same type of teachers?
- Our teachers are leaving the state to find the same jobs in other states because they cannot afford to make a living on the salaries offered in Mississippi. How many teachers will we have to lose before we put our foot down and say – No More.

- Education is good for economic development. Economic development is good for competitiveness and Competitiveness is good for economic security.
- If we are not focused on providing the best education for our students then what type of future are we offering them?
- We say that we want “only the best” for our children, but we aren’t giving them the best because our best teachers are leaving the state to find higher paying jobs.
- Can we honestly look at our children and say that we did everything we could to provide them with the best available education? We can if we take this critical step to increase teacher pay. Increasing teacher pay guarantees us that Mississippi children are taught by the best teachers in the nation.
- We cannot afford to wait. The future of Mississippi’s children is in our hands and it is our responsibility to do what is right for them.
- The time to act is now and we are asking for the people of Mississippi to take a stand for our children.
- It is time to take action.
- Our challenge is to improve education for the children of Mississippi. I know that we are up for the challenge.
- We can make this happen, and it must happen now.
- The plan is simple and can be achieved within the four-year plan that has been laid on the table. We must have everyone’s commitment to begin the plan and make it happen by 2003.
- Mississippi’s children deserve better excuses than - the state’s budget is too tight. Aren’t we taught the phrase – Can’t never could. We can do this. We can raise teacher pay and better the education opportunities for our students.
- We will never improve if we continue to come up with excuses as to why this four-year plan is impossible. It can be done and it has to be done now, in this legislative session.
- The next legislative session will be too late. We have to make this happen now for our children.
- We want to work with the legislature to pass a teacher pay raise plan during this session.
- This is the right thing to do.

