



**21<sup>st</sup> Century Schools  
Mississippi Education Initiative  
Cisco Systems  
Oct. 25, 2005**

**Genesis of Program**

- Cisco, the Cisco Foundation and Cisco employees combined to donate approximately \$4 million to the Gulf Coast relief efforts, but Cisco wanted to make a longer-lasting commitment to the region.
- Cisco has long had a passion for education: Cisco's Networking Academy program has assisted more than 100,000 students and workers in 150 countries annually receive training that prepares them for high-tech networking jobs.
- The Mississippi Education Initiative was developed to assist communities impacted by Hurricane Katrina. Cisco's intention is to help lead a coalition of public, private, and non profit organizations to provide a holistic approach to rebuilding the educational systems with a "21<sup>st</sup> century" approach.
- Cisco chose Mississippi because it possesses both a great need to improve its school system and has a committed leader who has worked tirelessly to do so. The state's school system ranks 49<sup>th</sup> in the country. From the day he came into office, Gov. Haley Barbour and other committed leadership has recognized the importance of improving Mississippi schools.
- Cisco initially focused on helping schools destroyed by Katrina. It was apparent however, that the most devastated schools would not be in a position to immediately benefit from the program because it would be some time until they are operational.
- Ultimately, schools and school districts in the Hattiesburg area were identified because they had suffered some damage from Hurricane Katrina, but were not completely devastated and were capable of being rebuilt fairly quickly. Schools were also selected for demonstrating leadership in improving test scores and for demonstrating leadership in using technology.

**Goals of the Mississippi Education Initiative**

- Help create a blue print for modernizing 21<sup>st</sup> century schools that will begin in Mississippi and can be replicated around the country.
- Create a model school that incorporates the latest technology and educational programs to provide the very best learning opportunities for students and adult learners.
- Demonstrate to the rest of the country what schools should look like in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.
- Organize partners, work with local authorities, organizations and government.
- Contribute best in class Cisco leaders for 6-12 month rotation assignments to the MEI schools.
- Implement a process and an approach to rebuilding and transformation based on Cisco's expertise from other educational programs including the Jordan Education Initiative and the Cisco Networking Academy program that includes 10,000 academies in more than 150 countries.

**Cisco's Commitment**

- \$20 million investment in Mississippi to modernize targeted schools.
- Provide technical and educational assistance in 32 Mississippi schools (19,700 students).

- Select Cisco employees who become 21S Fellows will provide Mississippi schools consulting and expertise in educational governance, curriculum development, teacher training, e-learning and the use of technology in schools for one year.
- Provide technologies and programs to modernize targeted schools:
  - Wireless Meshed Networks with Wireless Bridging to remote schools
  - Anywhere, anytime access for teachers, students & parents
  - Disaster preparedness and education continuity
  - 100% Virtual Courses for middle and high school students
  - Converged IP Voice, video and data communication resources for schools
  - Live and archived video for teacher professional learning communities
  - State of the Art content capture and delivery architecture

### **Selected Districts and Schools**

**Cisco expects to reach almost 20,000 (19,700) students at 32 schools and 7 school districts throughout Mississippi:**

- Forrest County Agricultural High School (Forrest County Agricultural District) — 500 students
- Forrest County School District—2400 students
- Hattiesburg School District—4700 students
- Lamar County School District—7200 students
- Petal School District—3700 students
- Moss Point High School (Moss Point School District)—900 students
- Harrison County Central High School (Harrison County School District)—800 students

### **Vision for 21st Century Communities**

The vision for 21st Century Schools is very simply to go beyond the incremental – by combining the two great equalizers in life: education and the Internet. Out of the great tragedy of Hurricane Katrina comes the responsibility to do more than rebuild, but to make what was here better than it was before. With this vision, we believe we can skip a generation of educational achievement in Mississippi and the Gulf Coast region, and then later others parts of our country.

There are five guiding principles in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century School vision:

**1. World-Class Education**

*Access to curriculum that produces documented improvements in student outcomes that close the performance gap and enable faster mastery of curriculum and applied learning at grade level.*

**2. Networked Community**

*A seamlessly connected whole, inclusive of students, teachers, parents, administrators and citizens.*

**3. Exemplary Administration**

*Characterized by efficiency, transparency, productivity and insight; enabled by the integrated assessments, applications and networks which drive continuous improvement, including automated and integrated parent involvement.*

**4. Teachers First**

*Providing best- in-class resources, educational technology and support with the continuous and ongoing professional development necessary to make the transition from the industrial to the information age teaching and learning.*

**5. Student Centered**

*Providing 24/7 anywhere, anytime access, to best in class localized curriculum and integrated assessment, based on rigorous state standards, with the flexibility that*

*technology makes possible, ensuring that all students can be successful in learning to the best of their abilities.*

Our announcement today is about bringing these principles to the Gulf Coast region to aid in the post-Hurricane Katrina rebuilding activities. The rebuilding process could have dramatic positive impact for those who, previous to the disaster, may not have been able to experience newer facilities and latest technologies and the opportunities they provide. Leveraging these technologies can decrease the cost of rebuilding, while enhancing the standards and chance for success in education.