



STATE OF MISSISSIPPI  
DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES

GREGG A. PHILLIPS  
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

January 12, 1995

Dr. Jane Hodges  
Mississippi University for Women  
Route 2, Box 411  
Carrollton, Alabama 35447

*The program used  
in this project was  
Winning.  
Jane Hodges*

Dear Dr. Hodges:

I am pleased to endorse, in the strongest possible terms, the extension of the OJJDP literacy grant.

Since October 22, 1992, we have paroled 1,654 students from Oakley Training School. To date 105 have returned for a recidivism rate of 9.97%! This phenomenal success rate can be attributed in large measure to the remedial literacy program we emplaced with your help through the literacy grant. Moreover, since the results of your study, as noted in the OJJDP Bulletin, "Improving Literacy Skills of Juvenile Detainees", October, 1994, our literacy gains have been even more profound. According to the best information available to me, we are now realizing gains of 2.4 grade levels!

As significant as literacy gains may be, the impact on the lives of our students is by far more consequential. I have personally and repeatedly seen students who are angry, hostile, and embittered because of the labels they carried - dumb, retarded, worthless - discover through our literacy program they are none of these. The transformation, yes, transformation, in their demeanor, attitude, and behavior is nothing short of amazing and is impossible to overstate!

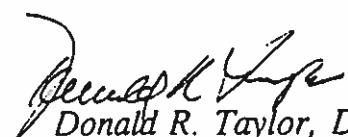
The strong positive correlation between delinquency and illiteracy has been amply demonstrated time and again. Juvenile justice archives are replete with demonstrable studies. With that, and my own personal observations, in my view there is no program presently funded at the national level more important than literacy nor with the potential to forever alter the lives of our young people.

*Dr. Jane Hodges  
January 12, 1995  
Page Two*

*I and hundreds of my students will be forever indebted to you for your assistance, concern, and dedication.*

*If I may ever be of assistance, please do not hesitate to contact me.*

*Warmest regards,*

  
*Donald R. Taylor, Director  
Division of Youth Services*

*DRT:td*

*pc: Honorable Trent Lott  
Honorable Thad Cochran  
Honorable Roger Wicker  
Honorable Bennie Thompson  
Honorable G.V. Montgomery  
Honorable Mike Parker  
Honorable Gene Taylor  
Mr. Morris Thigpen  
Mr. Gregg A. Phillips*