

FROM PROTEST TO POLICY FORMATION

In 2007 Mississippi fully funded the MS Adequate Education Program funding formula for the first time since its passage in 1997 because grassroots community groups had identified their common ground and learned to pool their strengths and resources across the traditional barriers of race, class, geography, political party affiliation and status.

These photos focus on the intense participation of community in the Legislative budget process in 2006 prior to the 2007 legislative session, and how they kept up the pressure during the 2007 legislative session.

Photos of the demonstration, press conference and inside the Mississippi Legislature by the **Jackson, MS Clarion-Ledger**
 Photos of the budget process by **Al White, ACW Productions, Duck Hill, MS**
 Text and Layout prepared by **Southern Echo, Inc., Jackson, MS**
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↑ At the lunch break the Newton County and Newton Municipal school superintendents berated Sen. Terry Burton, who represented their school districts, for refusing to support full funding of public education.



House Education Committee Chair Cecil Brown talked with Southern Echo staffer Mike Sayer about the status of deliberations while Senate members were in a caucus.



In December 2006 for the first time in Mississippi history the Legislative Budget Committee held its budget deliberations in public session. When the Senate members refused to support the House members on full funding for the MS Adequate Education Program the Speaker of the House decided that the public needed to be able to observe the deliberations so they could understand who was trying to prevent the full funding of the state's education funding formula.



↑ When Speaker of the House Billy McCoy let it be known late one afternoon during December 2006 that the Legislative Budget Committee deliberations would be open to the public for the first time, Southern Echo, the MS Delta Catalyst Roundtable partners, and Education Stakeholder Alliance members put out the word. When the deliberations began early the next morning every seat in the meeting chamber was filled.



Mildred Conley, Asst. Director, Concerned Citizens for a Better Tunica County, presents the Purpose of the press conference organized by the MS Delta Catalyst Roundtable. MAEP supporters are behind her on the steps of 1st floor Capitol Rotunda. At the press conference the Roundtable partners presented a petition in support of full funding for the MS Adequate Education Program signed by more than 10,000 citizens gathered in just two weeks from 68 of Mississippi's 82 counties. Photo from Clarion Ledger.

During a break in the deliberations of the Legislative Budget Committee, House members caucused on strategies to overcome the lock-step loyalty of Senate members to the Governor's steadfast opposition to full funding of the MAEP. →

