

Missouri NEA State Board Report

*Notes from January 12, 2016 meeting of the State Board of Education
Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education*

Board approves a framework for early consideration of classification of Riverview Gardens in 2016

Riverview Gardens School District requested the State Board of Education consider reclassifying the district in the fall of 2015 because they earned 79.3% on Annual Performance Report in 2015. Full accreditation is 70% or above. The state board declined to do so, as they wanted two years of scores that merit reclassification and changing the classification in mid-school year would cause upheaval due to its effect on student transfers. Missouri statute is silent on rights of students when a district regains accreditation. The Riverview Gardens APR scores were 45.4% in 2014, and 28.6% in 2013.

In December 2015, the board directed the DESE to develop a method to evaluate the progress of Riverview Gardens in order to consider reclassification in June of 2016. Due to statutorily required changes to the state assessment system, student achievement data needed for the 2016 APR will be available much later, thus delaying production of APR and subsequent classification decisions until after school starts in the fall of 2016. Reclassification in June 2016 rather than December 2016 allows certainty for the 2016-2017 school year.

The approved plan includes January to March DESE reviews of the comprehensive school improvement plan, financials, curriculum, climate and culture, and the educator effectiveness system. In April, DESE reviews student achievement using commercial interim assessments the district is currently using. Riverview Gardens will have to attain 70% of the available points required in college and career readiness, attendance, and graduation rate, as most of this data will be available in June 2016.

Superintendent Dr. Scott Spurgeon answered questions. Dr. Spurgeon stated the community has a very positive perception of Riverview Gardens schools. Their biggest challenge is recruiting and retaining teaching staff. The district has spent \$25 million on student transfers that could have been spent on educating students and increasing the pay of staff. In response to a question about what the state can do to help, he replied:

- Stabilize the state assessment system.
- Provide formative assessments aligned to the final state assessments so the district can gauge the progress of students during the year.
- Release sample state test items so students can practice what they are tested on.

Board declines request to change St. Louis Public Schools classification

On December 1, 2015, the board voted to maintain the St. Louis Public Schools (SLPS) provisional classification. On December 14, 2015, the State Board and the Department received a request from the St. Louis Special Administrative Board (SAB) to reconsider the decision, as SLPS 2015 APR score was 76.1%. The SAB outlined significant accomplishments within the district as part of the rationale for their request for full accreditation. While the board commended SLPS for their progress, they declined to change the accreditation status, stating that established policy and practice require that multiple years of performance data be considered in the classification decision. SLPS APR scores were 43.2% in 2014 and 24.6% in 2013. The student transfer law does not apply to provisionally accredited districts, so there is no disruptive affect from changing the classification in December 2016 if 2016 scores warrant the change.

DESE gives preliminary report on the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA)

The Every Student Succeeds Act, the national education law that replaces No Child Left Behind, was signed into law on December 10, 2015. ESSA reauthorizes the Elementary and Secondary Education Act

of 1965. DESE gave the board a broad overview of ESSA. DESE stated their view that Missouri meets or exceeds the requirements in most areas of ESSA. Over the next several months, DESE staff will give the Board a detailed explanation of one section of ESSA each month. Missouri NEA believes ESSA opens new possibilities for changes in state policy on district accountability and teacher evaluation.

Board received an update on the teacher job market in Missouri

The department provided general information to the board on various factors that influence supply and demand of teachers in Missouri and its implications for Department initiatives regarding educator certification, preparation, evaluation and equity. According to the Why Teach Survey, October 2015, the five primary reasons for going into and staying in the teaching profession are:

1. Making a difference in the lives of students
2. Thought I would be good at it
3. Interest in the subject
4. Making a difference in society
5. Desire to work with children/young people

The top three reasons teachers leave the profession are the workload is too high, unhappy with the quality of leadership, and insufficient pay. Oklahoma is the only neighboring state with a lower average teacher salary than Missouri, though salaries within Missouri vary widely. National average student to educator ratio is 16 to 1; in Missouri it is 17 to 1. Since 1987, both nationally and in Missouri, 2 to 3 times as many new teachers are certified each year than are hired. Shortages persist in STEM subjects and special education. In urban high-poverty schools, high performing teachers leave at about the same rate as low performing teachers. The report gave suggestions on actions schools can take to increase teacher retention in rural and urban schools.

Board hears Top 10 by 20 mid-year update

The Top 10 by 20 initiative aims for student achievement in Missouri to rank among the top 10 performing states by the year 2020. DESE highlighted this school year's key target accomplishments and the focus for 2016-2017. Board member Michael Jones stated his belief that reaching top 10 was a fantasy when Missouri teacher salaries stand at 40th place among the states.

In other business the board:

- Approved Fiscal Year 2016 Financial Summary
- Approved change of career center for Hartville students from Lebanon to Mountain Grove for financial and distance reasons
- Approved publication in the *Missouri Register* of a notice of proposed rulemaking to rescind Rule 5 CSR 20-100.180, relating to the Waiver of Regulations. The rule being rescinded is no longer necessary for the implementation of the Missouri School Improvement Plan.
- Received an update on education bills filed for the 2016 Missouri legislative session.

The next meeting of the State Board of Education will be February 16, 2016. Missouri NEA will be there! If you have any questions, contact Brent Fullington or Ann Jarrett at 800-392-0236.

Details of state board agenda items can be found at <http://dese.mo.gov/state-board-education/agendas-minutes>.

Respectfully submitted,
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