

Report of the State Board of Education February 15-16, 2007

The Missouri State Board of Education met on Thursday, Feb. 15, 2007, at the Capitol Plaza Hotel and concluded their business on Friday, Feb. 16, 2007, at the State Board of Education Room, convening both days in Jefferson City, Missouri. Seven Board of Education members were present, with one position remaining unfilled.

Reestablishment of the Transitional School District of St. Louis

The State Board of Education acted in the face of a passionate crowd. Supporters of the continuation of the current St. Louis Public Schools structure filled the hearing room to capacity. Prior to the meeting being called to order, community leaders, parents, local school board members, retired school personnel, and teachers voiced their strong opposition to the expected reestablishment of the Transitional School District of St. Louis. The State Board of Education attempted to begin its discussion of the issue before the board president called for a 30 minute adjournment due to audience interruptions. State Board of Education discussion continued after a 20 minute recess. Commissioner King's specific recommendation to the board was that the "State Board of Education reestablish the Transitional School District of St. Louis based upon a finding that this action is necessary to accomplish the purposes of Missouri Revised Statute Section 162.1100, and to ensure compliance with state educational standards under the Missouri School Improvement Program." This action could take place on March 28, 2007 and was dependent upon the district's accreditation finding at that time. If the district accreditation status was determined to be Provisionally Accredited, based on data, then the current local Board of Education structure would continue. If the district loses accreditation, then the three-person transitional board would be appointed. The three-person Transitional Board will be implemented 30 days upon the district's loss of accreditation. The State Board of Education discussion addressed several issues:

- A sense of urgency since the district has seen a consistent decline in student performance;
- As reported in the January, 2007 State Board of Education meeting, there are systemic issues that need to be addressed before student performance can be reversed;
- Clarification that the district's accreditation status would be determined on objective measures of data, rather than subjective means;
- Lack of clear policy guidelines that determine:
 - Benchmarks that trigger the re-introduction of an independent local Board of Education and
 - A clear plan that transitions the district from the three-person Transitional Board to the independent local Board of Education;
- Community input into the implementation of the Transitional Board of Education: there had been a series of community forums which provided for community input in regards to student achievement;
- Recognition that the district's issues were not quick to develop and would not be quick to reverse.

The Board of Education vote was split: 5 members voted to accept the reestablishment of the Transitional School District of St. Louis and 2 members voted against the recommendation. Upon conclusion of the vote, a brief break was called during which most of the audience left the facility voicing their desire to raise their concerns to their legislators.

High School Assessments: Action Taken

Prior to their vote, discussions on whether to implement End of Course assessments at the high school level occurred at four different times over two days. The State Board of Education discussed the issue internally three times and answered questions brought by the representatives of the Missouri Association of School Administrators in their joint meeting. The State Board of Education first discussed DESE's recommendation to replace the MAP at the high school level with End of Course assessments. Two types of exams were proposed. One type includes only terra nova style questions (Optional End of Course) while the other includes both terra nova and performance event/constructed response questions (MO Access). When the MO Access test is administered, the performance event would be taken shortly after the first semester ends and evaluate skills mastered in the first semester. The terra nova of either test design would be administered and scored the last month of school. According to the proposal, students would be held accountable by a state rule which would weigh the assessment 10% of the student's grade; districts could increase the amount if desired. The structure for test administration is exclusive of grade alignment, but consistent with course. With this in mind, it would be expected that an eighth grade student enrolled in Algebra I (a MO Access end-of-course class) would take the assessment. This student's score would then be included in their *high school's* performance data upon entry to ninth grade. Additionally, this student would be required to take the 8th grade MAP Mathematics test in addition to MAP Communication Arts, MAP Science

(when required by NCLB), and MAP Social Studies (if the district so chooses). The recommended courses and assessment style discussed are as follows:

Content Area	MO Access All students must take	Optional End of Course Students chose at least one
Math	Algebra I	Algebra II, Geometry, Integrated Math I, Integrated Math II
Communication Arts	English II	English I
Social Studies	Government	American History
Science	Biology I	Physical Science, Chemistry

The Optional End of Course assessments (terra nova only) would be taken when a student enrolls in any of the courses identified in that category. Professional development for teachers was acknowledged as a recognized need. This would be especially true if the constructed response/performance events were to be scored locally, as had been mentioned as a possibility.

Although the State Board of Education voted to support a motion to implement MO Access End of Course assessments for Algebra I, English II, and Biology I in the Spring, 2009, there appears to be several unanswered questions. Missouri NEA will be maintaining a close watch on the evolution of this issue and attempt to influence policy before it becomes a rule.

Joint Missouri Association of School Administrators and Missouri State Board of Education Meeting

The State Board held their annual meeting with MASA. Several issues were discussed, questions asked, and concerns stated.

- *End of Course Assessments:* The MASA representatives expressed concern regarding the rapid implementation of the EOCs. Several questions as to the implementation impacts to district curriculum were voiced. MASA agreed that the option was better than MAP, but had been expecting a modified ACT. They appreciated the option to have the assessment be weighted greater than 10% based on the district's discretion. They expressed concern over the grading process for the EOCs.
- *4th Cycle MSIP Standards:* There was a concern voiced as to the appearance of moving curricular targets, leading to frustration at the local levels. DESE responded that although the curriculum has remained constant, GLEs have been added. DESE agreed to meet with district curriculum directors.
- *Legislative Issues:*
 - *Vouchers:* The State Board has not taken a stance.
 - *MACCE:* The State Board has not taken a stance.

Other Reports and Actions

The State Board of Education acted on the following issues:

1. Approved 2007-2011 Mathematics, Engineering, Technology, and Science Initiative;
2. Approved rulemaking changes to allowable costs to state aid for transportation;
3. Approved rulemaking changes to the A+ Schools Program;

The next State Board of Education meeting will take place in March, 2007

Respectfully submitted,
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