

**MISSOURI NEA'S  
STATE BOARD REPORT**

*Notes from the May 17, 2007, meeting of the State Board of Education*

**STATE OF MISSOURI CONSIDERED FOR RECEIVING GRANT**

Information was presented by Rev. Archie that the State of Missouri, as well as ten (10) other states, are being considered to receive a \$15,000 grant to study areas of adolescent literacy.

The survey topic will be “does age and demographics play a major role in the adolescent literacy rate in Missouri”?

**BOARD ELECTS NEW PRESIDENT AND VICE PRESIDENT**

Russell V. Thompson was elected President and David Liechti was elected Vice President of the Missouri State Board of Education.

Dr. Thompson served as president of the Board from 2000-2002. He retired from the Columbia Public School System after serving nearly 20 years as superintendent.

Mr. Liechti was appointed to the Board in 2003 and is the former president of the St. Joseph Board of Education. He is a self-employed Certified Public Accountant.

**BOARD DISCERNs “TOUGH CHOICES TOUGH TIMES”**

Ms. Demien spoke of her disapproval of certain topics as proposed by the book “Tough Choices Tough Times” during the March 22, 2007 National Association of State Boards of Education Conference. A work study group stated some of the major topics discussed in the book. These topics included:

- How the U.S.’s educational system can stay competitive with other countries.
- Recommendation of stimulating energies in the classroom.
- Recommendation of allowing creativity and innovation in the classrooms.
- Discouraging “cherry-picking” in classrooms.
- Recommending using National Standards in Education versus Federal Standards.

The Missouri Board of Education recommends getting local communities, churches, and businesses involved with education so that Missouri standards are not “pulled down” with less rigorous national standards. The Missouri Board of Education stated they are opposed to certain national testing and standards and will document, sign, and make public their opposition after the meeting adjournment.

**BOARD RECEIVES REPORT OF THE HAYTI-R11 SCHOOL DISTRICT**

Improvement Efforts were presented to the Missouri State Board of Education by the Hayti R-11 School District. Superintendent Jeff Tucker reported progress in the district and high success rates with the “Reading First” Program.

The report is as follows:

- Progress in after-school tutoring programs grades 7-12<sup>th</sup>
- Discipline in schools has dropped significantly
- Introduction of after school tutoring, ACT prep classes, and college application writing courses.

- 17 of 18 students in this program were accepted into top 100 colleges in the country with over \$1 million raised in scholarships.
- High scores with the students in the “Reading First” program
- New technology in classrooms is improving educational experiences for students.
- Introduction of MAP Assessment test 3 years ago and have seen major changes in reading scores since.
- MAP Performance benchmark program is working well with all students K-12
- Majority of students reach benchmarks
- 23% increase in reading achievement every year since 2004 with benchmark program.
- 77% of children reach benchmark (K-3) in 2006-2007

### **BOARD APPROVES CHARTER RENEWAL FOR DERRICK THOMAS ACADEMY**

Renewal of the Charter School Application for Derrick Thomas Academy was passed. The renewal stipulations include: renewals for 5 years, sponsorship through MO Dept. of Education of Greater Kansas City, and affiliation with Edison School.

### **BOARD APPROVES SPONSORSHIP OF THE CAN! ACADEMIES OF ST. LOUIS**

The Can! Academies of St. Louis were given approval even though St. Louis has not supported charter schools in the past. The Can! Academies of St. Louis will be part of the non-profit organization America Can!, that operates public charter high schools in Texas and which has a contractual agreement with a middle school and a high school in Baton Rouge, Louisiana. The Can! Academies provide a second chance for students who have dropped out of school or who are at significant risk of dropping out of school. The Can! Academies of St. Louis proposes a school opening in the 2007-2008 school year with a goal of serving 400 students with a maximum of 18 students per class.

### **READY TO WORK PROGRAM INTEGRATED HARD/SOFT SKILLS**

A Ready to Work Program representative reported that potential employers, which includes CEO’s, Human Resource Directors, and Senior Level Managers are searching for candidates with a strong blend of critical and analytical skills as well as written and verbal communication skills. The program is working on integrating both hard and soft skills into the program. The Missouri State Board of Education stated the need for all public schools to work on improving students hard and soft skills to prepare them for the work force. Hard skills include analytical and technical capabilities and soft skills encompass verbal and written communication skills.

### **BOARD GETS UPDATE ON ST. LOUIS SCHOOL DISTRICT**

The board heard a report listing the following updates regarding the St. Louis School District. The updates are as follows: The St. Louis Board sent out e-mail encouraging superintendents to not accept transfers from the St. Louis City School District. Most of the problematic issues lie within the South and West portions of the district. Five (5) school owned buildings closed this year. St. Louis School District will be classified as unaccredited effective June 15, 2007.

**IN OTHER ACTION THE STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION:**

1. Legislation Initiatives was discussed.
2. Vocational Rehabilitation for Fiscal Year 2008 was approved.
3. Board approved Professional Education Programs for Southwest Baptist University, Bolivar, MO.
4. Board approves One-Year Transitional Plan for the Carl. P. Perkins Career and Technical Education Improvement Act of 2006.
5. Board approved the Professional Development State Level Grant Budget for the Fiscal Year 2008.
6. The board considered the teaching certificates of four (4) Missouri teachers. Three (3) licenses were revoked and no action was taken on the other individual. Several teaching and substitute certificates were approved.