

## Missouri NEA State Board Report

*Notes from December 2, 2016 meeting of the State Board of Education  
Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education*

On Thursday, Dec. 1, members of the state board visited four elementary schools in the Kansas City area: EPiC Elementary, Liberty; Neighborhood Academy, a charter school sponsored by the Kansas City School District; James Elementary School, Kansas City; and Three Trails Elementary School, Independence. Board members commented on inequitable resources from school to school, and the difference school-readiness makes for Kindergarten students. The positive climate and dedicated staff in each building impressed board members.

### **Riverview Gardens School District becomes provisionally accredited**

The board voted to provisionally accredit the Riverview Gardens School District, effective Jan. 4 when the second semester begins. Dr. Beckman, chair of the Riverview Gardens Special Administrative Board, thanked the Riverview Gardens staff and teacher organization for their hard work, and recognized that the “president of the state teacher organization” was in the audience. Charles E. Smith and Brent Fullington attended the state board meeting, held in Kansas City.

**Effect on governance:** None. The state-appointed Special Administrative Board stays in control.

**Effect on students who are currently using the student transfer option:** Students living in the Riverview Garden school district now attend 20 other districts and 2 charter schools. All receiving schools agreed to keep these students through the end of the second semester, and Riverview Gardens has agreed to continue paying to transport these students and pay tuition through the end of the second semester of this school year.

**Effect on future student transfers:** Riverview Gardens will not have to pay for any students to transfer to other districts beyond those who are currently in the transfer program. Riverview Gardens currently spends \$5 million on tuition and half a million on transportation annually.

DESE staff showed the state board a graph of the declining fund balances in Riverview Gardens, now at 15%, down from 54% of annual operating costs in 2013. The DESE staff said that it takes extra work and resources and time to successfully increase rigor for underperforming students. Missouri NEA believes districts need to spend the money given to it by taxpayers to help students, not keep it in the bank while children are denied the resources the funds could provide. Districts are considered financially sound if they have at least a 3% of annual operating costs in reserve.

### **Board classifies school districts for 2016**

Four provisionally accredited school districts remain provisionally accredited: Kansas City 33, Hickman Mills, Hayti, and Calhoun. The board tabled consideration of the classification of the St. Louis Public School District until their January 2017 meeting. SLPS is currently provisionally accredited and under the governance of a special appointed board.

Five-hundred ten (510) districts maintained full accreditation. You can see a chart of all Missouri school districts with total MSIP percent earned for 2014, 2015, and 2016, as well as the percent of operating fund balance in reserve at [dese.mo.gov/sites/default/files/ClassificationDec2016.pdf](http://dese.mo.gov/sites/default/files/ClassificationDec2016.pdf).

### **Kansas City superintendent requests a level playing field**

Dr. Mark T. Bedell, superintendent of Kansas City public schools, asked that charter schools be held to the same standards as other public schools. He reported that 459 students enrolled in KCPS from charter schools this year alone, which contributes to the district mobility rate of 41%. Dr. Bedell

requested social and emotional supports for students. He also asked that the board reconsider how subgroup achievement levels are used in MSIP. Dr. Bedell pointed out the vast difference between a school district with 30 students in a traditionally underperforming subgroup and a district where over 90% of students are members of traditionally underperforming subgroups. 24.7% of KCPS students are English language learners, the highest of any Missouri school district. 13% of KCPS students are homeless- over 1800 students. KCPS earned 70% of MSIP points in 2016. This score would be 64% if it were not for MNEA's success at getting legislation preventing results from new state assessments to lower MSIP scores.

### **Education and workforce development discussion**

President of the St. Joseph Chamber of Commerce Patt Lilly shared the need for more workers trained in specific skills. Lilly shared how several businesses in the St. Joseph area are working with schools in innovative programs to train workers to meet those needs. Board member John Martin stated that often states and local governments give businesses a tax break to locate in the area, but that money would be better spent to expand innovative programs that develop the workforce needed. Lilly agreed that a well-trained workforce is a major consideration in whether to relocate a business or keep the business where it is. Board member Charlie Shields suggested that school districts pay teachers to do summer externships in local businesses.

### **Board approves publishing three rule changes for public comment**

Changes to three rules affecting charter schools are required to comply with changes passed by the Missouri legislature in 2016. The first change moves the deadline for approval of new charter applications from December 1 to January 31. The statute specifies that the department has 60 days to review the application prior to approval, so applications must be received by December 1.

The second proposed rule establishes the method for expediting the renewal process for a charter school that has an annual performance report consistent with a classification of accredited for three of the last four years. The process serves to meet Section 160.405(9)(2)(d), RSMo.

The third proposed rule defines terms for expediting the application for replication and expansion of a charter school into approved areas. Participation is limited to charter schools that receive 85 percent or more of the total points for three out of the last four years on the annual performance report. The expedited replication and expansion process meets Section 160.408.1(1), (2), and (3), RSMo.

### **In other business, the board:**

- Heard funding school support and intervention programs for struggling schools is a legislative priority for DESE in 2017.
- Visited the Truman Medical Center mobile dental clinic that provides dental services to students covered by Medicaid in the Independence school district.
- Visited the Truman Medical Center mobile fresh food market that goes to areas of Kansas City that lack grocery stores.
- Heard about connections between health and learning.

The next meeting of the State Board of Education will be January 10, 2017. 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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