

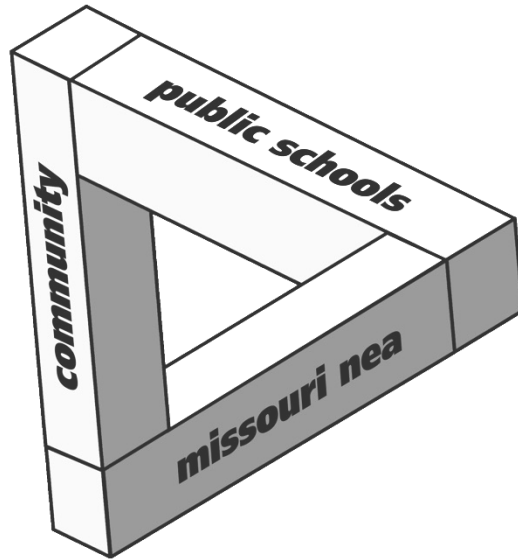
MNEA

FOR CHILDREN AND PUBLIC EDUCATION



**LEGISLATIVE
PLATFORM**

Missouri NEA Vision Statement



Mission Statement: To serve as the united voice to promote, advance and protect public education and to advocate for the rights and interests of students and our members.

Core Values

Public Education and the Students

- Advocating for the foundations and philosophies of public education and the success of all students who attend our public schools
- Advocating within communities, recognizing that forming and organizing partnerships within a variety of communities is essential to the advancement of public schools, children, and human and civil rights

Member Driven Organization

- Uniting members into a local, state and national organization where members have the final authority over the policies and direction of the Association. Such policies shall guarantee membership for all eligible educational employees and minority involvement.

Member Advocacy

- Advocating for members in all arenas
- Organizing to unite the education professional and to advocate for members
- Providing services that enhance the professional development and personal growth of members

Objectives

- Quality public education for all students
- Unite, empower and advocate for education employees
- Collaborate and promote partnerships within the community
- Essential operating systems

Missouri National Education Association

Phil Murray, MNEA President
DeeAnn Aull, MNEA Executive Director

For Children and Public Education

Legislative Platform

*Proposed by the Legislative/Resolution Committee to the
MNEA Representative Assembly, Nov. 21, 2020.*

MNEA Legislative/Resolutions Committee

Melissa Albright, co-chair – MNEA-R
Christina Andrade Melly, co-chair – Ritenour NEA
Andy Slaughter – MNEA-BOD Liaison – Meramec Valley NEA
Andrea Cavanaugh – North Kansas City NEA
Janette Colquitt – MNEA-R
Scarlet Cormack – Springfield NEA
Netty Doyle – Independence NEA
Maggie Harr - Special District NEA
Wendy Kline – Independence NEA
Kate Kraybill – Blue Springs NEA
Amanda Minear – Columbia MNEA
Tara Mueller - Special District NEA
James Mueller – Fox NEA
Emily Neal – STLCC-NEA
Gail Rock – MNEA-R
Annette Trantanella - Special District NEA
Michael Vierling – Coalition of Graduate Workers
Dorothy Walk – MNEA-R
Jeanne Weber – MNEA-R
Lynnea Wootten – St. Joseph Education Association
Otto Fajen – MNEA Staff Liaison
Patrick Layden – MNEA Staff Liaison

As an advocate for children and public education, the MNEA presents our Legislative Platform. Each item consists of a statement of what the Association believes and then a statement of action requested of the Missouri General Assembly.

The platform rationale language is contained in a separate appendix. This historical and explanatory document is available as a resource maintained by staff and allows the Association to focus the Platform on core beliefs and corresponding legislative actions.

Also, to highlight the importance of collective bargaining, an asterisk is added after the title of each plank that could be partially or totally dealt with through collective bargaining. The platform includes cross-references from platform planks to related MNEA Resolutions along with a unique label before the title of each plank, such as “L-A1” before Safe Schools, to allow cross-references from each MNEA Resolution to related Legislative Platform planks.

COLLECTIVE BARGAINING PREAMBLE

In many places in this platform, we highlight the opportunity for important issues to be resolved locally through collective bargaining, rather than requiring a state legislative solution. Missouri education employees should have the legal right to organize and bargain collectively, through an exclusive representative of their choosing, the terms and conditions of their employment and other matters of mutual concern, including, for example, the development of instructional programs and policies, salaries and benefits, class size and safety standards. Passage of such a law would be consistent with the recent Missouri Supreme Court decision granting all public employees the constitutional right to collective bargaining. To highlight the importance of collective bargaining, an asterisk is added after the title of each plank that could be partially or totally dealt with through collective bargaining. The following table lists those 48 planks:

| | <u>plank</u> | <u>page</u> |
|---|--------------|-------------|
| Safe Schools | L – A1 | 1 |
| Immunity from Liability | L – A3 | 1 |
| Ban on Corporal Punishment in the Schools | L – A4 | 1 |
| Safety Standards | L – A5 | 2 |
| Climate Controlled Learning Environment | L – A7 | 2 |
| Technology in Education | L – A9 | 3 |
| Protection of Student Information Transmitted Electronically | L – A10 | 3 |
| Employee-Student Communications Policy | L – A12 | 3 |
| Student Attendance Requirements | L – C1 | 7 |
| Four Day School Week | L – C2 | 8 |
| Support for Teachers in National Board Certification Process | L – E3 | 21 |
| Professional Development Committees | L – E4 | 21 |
| Performance of Medical Procedures | L – E5 | 22 |
| Peer Assistance and Review | L – E7 | 22 |
| High Quality Evaluation System for Teachers | L - E8 | 23 |
| Class Size | L – F1 | 23 |
| Support Services Ratios | L – F2 | 23 |
| Teacher Planning Time | L – F3 | 23 |
| Duty Free Lunch | L – F4 | 24 |
| Education Employees' Liability Involving Student Communications | L – F5 | 24 |
| Special Education Instructional Time | L – F6 | 24 |
| Respecting The Finality of Course Grades Established by a Teacher | L – F7 | 24 |
| School Calendars | L – G3 | 26 |
| Support for Excellence in Higher Education | L – G5 | 27 |
| Intellectual Diversity | L – G6 | 27 |
| High Standards for Science Education | L – G7 | 27 |
| Teacher Salaries | L – H1 | 28 |
| Living Wage for Education Support Professionals | L – H2 | 28 |
| Minimum Salary Schedules | L – H3 | 28 |
| Teacher Retention | L – H4 | 28 |
| Eliminating Inequities in Compensation | L – H6 | 29 |
| Prompt Payment for Contracted Duties if Desired | L – H7 | 29 |
| Insurance Coverage for Health Care and Accidents | L – H8 | 29 |
| Children of Non-Resident School Employees | L – H10 | 30 |

| | <u>plank</u> | <u>page</u> |
|--|--------------|-------------|
| Access to Reasonably Priced Health Insurance and Prescription Drugs for Retired Education Employees | L – I10 | 32 |
| Collective Bargaining | L – J1 | 36 |
| Procedural and Substantive Due Process for All Education Employees | L – J3 | 37 |
| Confidentiality and Job Security | L – J4 | 37 |
| Academic Freedom for Higher Education | L – J5 | 37 |
| Protection from Bullying, Harassment and Discrimination in the Workplace | L – J6 | 37 |
| Change of Employment between Districts | L – J7 | 38 |
| Employee Rights During Annexation, Dissolution or Structural Change | L – J8 | 38 |
| Employee Rights during Structural Change for St. Louis County Special School District | L – J9 | 38 |
| Reductions in Force | L – J10 | 38 |
| Special Education Cooperatives | L – J11 | 39 |
| Education Employee Protection from False Charges | L – J13 | 39 |
| Tenure and Tenure Retention | L – J15 | 40 |
| Political Involvement | L – J17 | 40 |

MNEA Believes

That every child deserves a safe place to learn, with the facilities needed to prepare each child for a challenging future

That every child has a constitutional right to a free public education, and that all citizens benefit from a system of free public schools open to all children

plank page

| | |
|--|---|
| Safe Schools L – A1 | 1 |
| Gun-Free Schools L – A2 | 1 |
| Immunity from Liability L – A3 | 1 |
| Ban on Corporal Punishment in the Schools L – A4 | 1 |
| Safety Standards L – A5 | 2 |
| Mandated Seat Belts for School Buses L – A6 | 2 |
| Climate Controlled Learning Environment L – A7 | 2 |
| Energy Alternatives for Schools L – A8 | 2 |
| Technology in Education L – A9 | 3 |
| Protection of Student Information Transmitted Electronically L – A10 | 3 |
| Posting Student Work on Teacher Websites L – A11 | 3 |
| Employee-Student Communications Policy L – A12 | 3 |

Fulfill Missouri's Financial Obligation to Provide Great Public Schools and Public Colleges and Universities

| | |
|---|---|
| Constitutional Right to a Free Public Education L – B1 | 4 |
| Adequate and Equitable Funding for Great Public Schools for Every Child L – B2 | 4 |
| Protecting Students from Impacts of Attacks on School Revenues L – B3 | 5 |
| Higher Education Opportunities L – B4 | 5 |
| Fair Funding For Quality Public Higher Education L – B5 | 5 |
| Public Dollars for Public Schools L – B6 | 5 |
| Maintaining and Increasing Investment in Public Education to Provide Great Public Schools for Every Child and Promote Economic Success for all Missourians L – B7 | 6 |
| Fair, Adequate and Sustainable Taxation to Support Public Education L – B8 | 6 |
| Fair and Adequate Local Funding for Great Public Schools L – B9 | 6 |
| Increased Funding for Special Education L – B10 | 7 |

Ensure Children Are in School, Ready to Learn

| | |
|---|----|
| Student Attendance Requirements L – C1 | 7 |
| Four-Day School Week L – C2 | 8 |
| Education of Foster and Homeless Students L – C3 | 8 |
| High School Course Requirements L – C4 | 8 |
| College Required Curriculum for the Public Schools L – C5 | 8 |
| Parental Involvement in Student Success L – C6 | 8 |
| Alternative Schools L – C7 | 9 |
| Compulsory School Attendance –Beginning L – C8 | 9 |
| Compulsory School Attendance- Completion L – C9 | 9 |
| Drop In Schooling and School Flex Programs L – C10 | 10 |
| Academic Progress and Graduation L – C11 | 10 |
| Access to Public Education for Resident Students L – C12 | 10 |
| In-State Tuition for Undocumented Students L – C13 | 10 |
| Early Childhood Education L – C14 | 11 |
| Development of Learning Standards and Curriculum L – C15 | 11 |
| Teacher Accountability for Student Performance L – C16 | 11 |
| High Stakes Testing L – C17 | 12 |
| Access to Appropriate Special Education Services L – C18 | 12 |
| Assessment of Students with Special Needs L – C19 | 12 |
| Placement of Early Childhood Students in Special Education Programs L – C20 | 12 |
| Education for Gifted and Talented Students L – C21 | 13 |
| Healthcare for All Children L – C22 | 13 |
| Coordinated School Health Programs L – C23 | 13 |
| Trauma-Sensitive Schools L – C24 | 13 |
| Soft Drink and Snack Consumption L – C25 | 14 |
| Nutrition of School Meals L – C26 | 14 |
| Public School Attendance Options L – C27 | 14 |
| Access to Student Information L – C28 | 14 |
| Bullying in Schools L – C29 | 15 |
| Equal Opportunity and Safety for All L – C30 | 15 |
| Campus Safety and Accountability L – C31 | 15 |
| Pupil Transportation L – C32 | 15 |

| | |
|--|----|
| Summer School L- C33 | 16 |
| Religious Non-Participation in Instruction L –C34 | 16 |
| Extended Learning Time L- C35 | 16 |
| Fair Housing Policy and Integration of Public Schools L- C36 | 16 |
| Home Schools L- C37 | 17 |

MNEA believes that public schools should have effective and accountable governance

Ensure Effective and Accountable School Governance

| | |
|---|----|
| Autonomy of the State Board of Education L – D1 | 17 |
| Nonpartisan Commission for Higher Board of Education L – D2 | 17 |
| School Accountability L – D3 | 17 |
| School Board Member Accountability L – D4 | 18 |
| School Board Member Training L – D5 | 18 |
| School Governing Board Elections L – D6 | 18 |
| Right to Local School Governance L – D7 | 19 |
| Access to School Information L – D8 | 19 |
| Protect Missouri Act L – D9 | 19 |
| Promoting Citizenship and Participation Elections L – D10 | 19 |
| Defense of the Nonpartisan Court Plan L – D11 | 20 |
| School Districts Adjusting to Student Transfers L - D12 | 20 |
| Ethics In Government L--D13 | 20 |

That every child deserves highly qualified teachers

Prepare Teachers and Provide Continuous Professional Development

| | |
|---|----|
| Professional Standards Board L – E1 | 21 |
| Professional Teaching Standards L – E2 | 21 |
| Support for Teachers in National Board Certification Process L – E3 | 21 |
| Professional Development Committees L – E4 | 21 |
| Performance of Medical Procedures L – E5 | 22 |
| Certification Standards L – E6 | 22 |
| Peer Assistance and Review L – E7 | 22 |
| High Quality Evaluation System for Teachers L – E8 | 23 |

Provide Teachers with Sufficient Time to Plan, Teach and Give Individual Attention

| | |
|--|----|
| Class Size L – F1 | 23 |
| Support Services Ratios L – F2 | 23 |
| Teacher Planning Time L – F3 | 23 |
| Duty Free Lunch L - F4 | 24 |
| Education Employees' Liability Involving Student Communications L – F5 | 24 |
| Special Education Instructional Time L–F6 | 24 |
| Respecting the Finality of Course Grades Established by a Teacher L – F7 | 24 |

Involve Teachers in Making Improvements and Innovations

| | |
|---|----|
| Charter Schools L – G1 | 25 |
| Virtual Education L – G2 | 26 |
| School Calendars L – G3 | 26 |
| Adult Literacy L – G4 | 26 |
| Support for Excellence in Higher Education L – G5 | 27 |
| Intellectual Diversity L – G6 | 27 |
| High Standards for Science Education L – G7 | 27 |
| Missouri State High School Activities Association (MSHSAA) L – G8 | 27 |
| Sex Education L – G9 | 27 |

Provide Compensation and Benefits Needed to Attract and Retain the Best Teachers and Staff

| | |
|---|----|
| Teacher Salaries L – H1 | 28 |
| Living Wage for Education Support Professionals L – H2 | 28 |
| Minimum Salary Schedules L – H3 | 28 |
| Teacher Retention L – H4 | 28 |
| Teacher Recruitment L – H5 | 29 |
| Eliminating Inequities in Compensation L – H6 | 29 |
| Prompt Payment for Contracted Duties if Desired L – H7 | 29 |
| Insurance Coverage for Health Care and Accidents L – H8 | 29 |
| Regulation of Long Term Care (LTC) Insurance L – H9 | 30 |
| Children of Non-Resident School Employees L – H10 | 30 |
| Higher Education Affordability L – H11 | 30 |

**MNEA believes that every child
deserves highly qualified teachers**

(continued from page vi)

***Provide an Actuarially Sound Retirement Plan Needed to Attract
and Retain the Best Teachers and Staff***

| | |
|--|----|
| Member Control of Retirement System L – I1 | 30 |
| Protection of the Retirement System L – I2 | 30 |
| Protection of Retirement Benefits L – I3 | 31 |
| Earning Cap for Determining Final Average Salary L – I4 | 31 |
| Fair and Equitable Retirement Compensation L – I5 | 31 |
| Graduated Multiplier from 25 to 35 Years of Service L – I6 | 31 |
| Gain Sharing L – I7 | 31 |
| Cost-of-Living Adjustments L – I8 | 32 |
| Increase in Retirement Benefits for The Public Education | |
| Employees Retirement System L – I9 | 32 |
| Access to Reasonably Priced Health Insurance and Prescription | |
| Drugs for Retired Education Employees L – I10 | 32 |
| Right to Purchase Retirement System Credit L – I11 | 32 |
| Retirement Contribution Rate L – I12 | 33 |
| Impact of Mandatory Social Security on Retirement Provisions L – I13 | 33 |
| Disability L – I14 | 33 |
| Partial Disability Retirement Benefits L – I15 | 33 |
| Survivor Benefits L – I16 | 33 |
| Employment of Retired PSRS/PEERS in Public Education L – I17 | 34 |
| State Income Tax on Retirement Income L – I18 | 34 |
| Pension Deduction L – I19 | 34 |
| Actuarial Studies L – I20 | 34 |
| Impact of Social Security Offsets on Educators | |
| Receiving Public Pensions (GPO/WEP) L – I21 | 34 |
| District 403(b) Plans L – I22 | 35 |

Teachers and Employees Empowered to do Their Best Work when the Rights of These Employees are Respected

***That teachers and other school
employees are empowered to do
their best work on behalf of
Missouri's children when the
rights of these employees are
respected***

| | |
|---|----|
| Collective Bargaining L – J1 | 36 |
| Union Suppression and “Right to Work” L - J2 | 36 |
| Procedural and Substantive Due Process for All Education Employees L – J3 | 37 |
| Confidentiality and Job Security L – J4 | 37 |
| Academic Freedom for Higher Education L – J5 | 37 |
| Protection from Bullying, Harassment and Discrimination in the Workplace L – J6 | 37 |
| Change of Employment Between Districts L – J7 | 38 |
| Employee Rights during Annexation, Dissolution or Structural Change L – J8 | 38 |
| Employee Rights during Structural Change for | |
| St. Louis County Special School District L – J9 | 38 |
| Reductions in Force L – J10 | 38 |
| Special Education Cooperatives L – J11 | 39 |
| Changing Special School Districts L – J12 | 39 |
| Education Employee Protection from False Charges L – J13 | 39 |
| Hot-Line Procedures L – J14 | 39 |
| Tenure and Tenure Retention L – J15 | 40 |
| Equal Rights L – J16 | 40 |
| Political Involvement L – J17 | 40 |
| Legislative Platform Acronyms | 41 |
| Alphabetical Listing of Planks | 43 |

**MNEA Believes That Every Child Deserves
A Safe Place To Learn,
With The Facilities Needed
To Prepare Each Child For A Challenging Future**

L-A1 SAFE SCHOOLS *

(Resolutions: A-1, B-5, B-6, C-9, C-10, C-12, F-19, I-2, I-3, I-4, I-17)

Belief: Student learning is improved when students and education employees are in a safe environment.

Action: The Association urges the General Assembly to pass legislation that provides funding for agencies involved with a student to meet and plan for that student's success. The Association further urges the General Assembly to fund the creation of a communication structure that provides education employees with the information required by the Safe Schools Act in a timely manner. Additionally, the Association urges the General Assembly to provide funding for grants that enable school districts to implement emergency planning and preparedness, school safety and security measures and conflict resolution programs. The Association urges the legislature to ensure that any legislation regarding student restraint should allow local school policies to ensure the safety and dignity of both students and staff.

L-A2 GUN-FREE SCHOOLS *

(Resolutions: C-9, C-12)

Belief: All students and education employees must be allowed to learn and work in a safe environment free of unauthorized guns and other deadly weapons. Severe penalties should be enacted and strenuously enforced for criminal actions involving guns and other deadly weapons in school settings. Weapons should not be carried within our public schools by those not meeting law enforcement requirements. Greater respect should be given to the wish of a majority of our citizens who voted against the increase in firearms in the statewide referendum.

Action: The Association urges the General Assembly to reverse the proliferation of firearms and ensure that unauthorized weapons are not allowed on school property. The Association requests the General Assembly to change language in S.B. 75 to state that all school personnel may participate in a simulated active shooter and intruder drill.

L-A3 IMMUNITY FROM LIABILITY *

(Resolutions: F-12, F-13, F-16, F-17)

Belief: Education employees should not be held liable for situations or incidents in the school setting that are beyond their control and not the result of negligence.

Action: The Association applauds the General Assembly's passage of teacher tort immunity. The Association now asks that it be expanded. All education employees acting in a reasonable and prudent manner should not be held liable for school incidents beyond their control.

L-A4 BAN ON CORPORAL PUNISHMENT IN THE SCHOOLS *

(Resolution: B-30)

Belief: Corporal punishment hinders effective teaching/learning and may act as a model for violent behavior.

Action: The Association urges the General Assembly to enact legislation that bans corporal punishment in Missouri schools, replacing it with alternative methods of discipline, including community service.

L-A5 SAFETY STANDARDS **(Resolutions: C-9, C-13)*

Belief: Missouri public school students and employees should be provided full protection from faulty and dangerous facilities, equipment and materials. Effective teaching in the schools requires that safe conditions exist and safety laws are enforced.

Action: The Association urges the General Assembly to enact legislation that protects the safety and health of public school students and employees. This legislation should include requirements for annual inspection and compliance with all existing safety and health standards including identification and removal of friable asbestos, lead contamination in school water supplies, environmental air pollutants and pests.

L-A6 MANDATED SEAT BELTS FOR SCHOOL BUSES*(Resolutions: C-9, C-13)*

Belief: Decisions regarding requiring seat belts on school buses should be based on consideration of competent research on bus transportation safety data and the needs of students, parents and schools to have choices in transportation that suit their needs.

Action: The Association urges the General Assembly to reject the request for a state mandate that would require seat belts on all school buses unless it:

1. Provides full state funding to provide shoulder harnesses and seat belts in all buses in all districts;
2. Provides full state funding for costs incurred by districts for the necessary additional buses, bus drivers and additional required fuel; and
3. Provides full immunity for districts and school employees regarding any liability arising from student misuse or failure to use harnesses and seat belts.

L-A7 CLIMATE CONTROLLED LEARNING ENVIRONMENT **(Resolutions: A-17, C-14)*

Belief: Missouri public school districts should provide their students and employees with a healthful and reasonably comfortable working and learning environment.

Action: The Association urges the General Assembly to pass legislation that will prohibit the use of revenue from bonds for construction of buildings that lack effective year-round climate control. Further, legislation should limit districts to holding classes for students only to such times and places in which a reasonable range of temperatures (65-75 degrees F.) can be maintained in the classroom or indoor work place. Climate control must protect air quality, ventilation and filtration and must be designed to ensure energy conservation.

L-A8 ENERGY ALTERNATIVES FOR SCHOOLS*(Resolutions: A-9)*

Belief: Schools should make every effort to utilize alternative and renewable energy sources, such as wind, solar, landfill gas, biomass, and small hydroelectric projects.

Action: The Association urges the General Assembly to enact incentives to promote renewable energy programs and projects to lower energy use and costs to taxpayers.

L-A9 TECHNOLOGY IN EDUCATION **(Resolutions: B-14, B-21, B-24, B-25)*

Belief: Integrating all classrooms with 21st century technology will give educators the resources to improve student achievement. This increased access to technology creates a demand for technology personnel to maintain equipment and train staff and students.

Action: The Association urges the General Assembly to adequately fund technology improvements, programs and supplies, staff training and staffing of technical support personnel. The Association also urges the General Assembly to permanently fund technology and needed technology personnel.

L-A10 PROTECTION OF STUDENT INFORMATION TRANSMITTED ELECTRONICALLY **(Resolutions: F-18)*

Belief: Communication should be held as confidential and not shared with others without a compelling reason. In school environments, confidential information on minors is regularly communicated.

Action: The Association encourages the General Assembly to adopt proactive legislation to protect confidentiality of students, parents and education employees by prohibiting the monitoring of education employees phone conversations, e-mail and faxes by school districts or any other entity without a court order.

L-A11 POSTING STUDENT WORK ON TEACHER WEBSITES*(Resolutions: C-15, F-12, F-16, F-17, F-18)*

Belief: The posting of student work on electronic networks creates a potential liability risk to the educator who posts the work.

Action: The Association urges the General Assembly to adopt proactive legislation to protect teachers from lawsuits or disciplinary action as a result of posting student work.

L-A12 EMPLOYEE-STUDENT COMMUNICATIONS POLICY**(Resolutions: B-20, C-15, F-16)*

Belief: All employee-student communication should be conducted in a way that is appropriate and professional. Policies regarding employee-student communication should be locally determined, protect student and educator safety and well-being, provide clear and practical guidance to educators, respect employee-student relationships that exist outside of the school context, promote student learning and success and be responsive to changing technologies and district needs.

Action: The Association thanks the legislature and Governor for approving legislation to clarify the legal situation regarding employee-student communications policies and to leave the discussion and approval of the policy at the local level without specific state limits on particular modes or types of communication.

**MNEA Believes That Every Child
Has A Constitutional Right To A Free Public Education,
And That All Citizens Benefit From
A System Of Free Public Schools Open To All Children**

Fulfill Missouri's Financial Obligation to Provide Great Public Schools and Public Colleges and Universities

L-B1 CONSTITUTIONAL RIGHT TO A FREE PUBLIC EDUCATION

(Resolutions: A-1, A-9, B-26, I-2)

Belief: Missouri NEA believes that great public schools are a basic right for every child. The Missouri Constitution prescribes, at length, that education of children is one of the government's central purposes. The Constitution should require the legislature to appropriate adequate funding for public education.

Action: The Association urges the General Assembly to place on the statewide ballot a constitutional amendment to explicitly declare that public education is a fundamental right. The Association urges the General Assembly to place on the statewide ballot a constitutional amendment to require the legislature to appropriate funding for public schools, based upon the standard of adequacy contained in the state's funding law.

L-B2 ADEQUATE AND EQUITABLE FUNDING FOR GREAT PUBLIC SCHOOLS FOR EVERY CHILD

(Resolutions: A-1, A-9, A-10, A-13, A-17)

Belief: According to the Missouri Constitution, a primary purpose of state government is to establish and maintain free public schools. The state should not attempt to transfer blame for inadequate state funding onto school districts. In order to fulfill this commitment, the state must have financial resources to adequately fund public K-12 and higher education and other vital services. Without this funding, teachers and other school staff will not have the resources to prepare all students to succeed in life. Students need smaller class sizes; up-to-date textbooks and computers; safe and modern buildings; qualified, caring teachers and support professionals in every classroom and actively involved parents and community leaders.

Action: The Association urges the General Assembly to place on the statewide ballot a constitutional amendment to explicitly declare that public education is a fundamental right.

The Association calls on the General Assembly to enact legislation to provide adequate and equitable state funding to all public schools by revising the funding formula to:

1. Increase the base level adequacy amount and the weighting factors for at-risk, special education and ESL to those levels recommended by the Augenblick adequacy study;
2. Deduct local property taxes only corresponding to those raised by the required \$2.75 minimum levy;
3. Provide enhanced funds for summer school for districts with a large fraction of at-risk students; and
4. Create a mechanism by which the impact of formula underfunding will be shared among all districts, not just the most vulnerable.

The Association calls on the General Assembly to keep its commitment to all of Missouri's students by appropriating full funding for the school formula.

The Association urges the legislature to provide for adequate school facilities by establishing a program of state support for renovation and construction of school facilities.

L-B3 PROTECTING STUDENTS FROM IMPACTS OF ATTACKS ON SCHOOL REVENUES

(Resolutions: A-1, A-9, A-13, A-17)

Belief: Missouri NEA believes that great public schools are a basic right for every child. Students should be protected from the impact of attacks on state and local revenue sources. According to the Missouri Constitution, a primary purpose of state government is to establish and maintain free public schools. Without adequate funding, teachers and other school staff will not have the resources to help prepare all students to succeed in life.

Action: The Association urges the General Assembly to place on the statewide ballot a pro-active revenue proposal that will make state revenues more adequate and sustainable while also making state taxes more fair (based on the ability to pay).

The Association calls on the General Assembly to reject any attempts to reduce state revenues and to enact a long-term funding solution to adequately fund public education at levels outlined by S.B. 287.

L-B4 HIGHER EDUCATION OPPORTUNITIES

(Resolutions: B-35, E-3, F-15)

Belief: A college education should be available to all qualified Missourians. Post-secondary vocational or technical training should likewise be accessible. All students need to know that funding will be available to help them attend college or other post-secondary training and that programs exist to help reduce or eliminate educators' student debt.

Action: The Association urges adoption of a comprehensive college guarantee program that provides sufficient funding to ensure that all qualified Missourians are able to attend college or other post-secondary training. The Association thanks the legislature for adopting a requirement that all public employers notify current and new employees of their potential eligibility for federal student loan forgiveness programs available to public employees. The Association urges the General Assembly to refrain from restricting appropriations to deny in-state tuition to in-state students without lawful immigration status.

L-B5 FAIR FUNDING FOR QUALITY PUBLIC HIGHER EDUCATION

(Resolutions: A-15, B-35)

Belief: Missouri NEA believes that quality public institutions of higher education are one of the most important public assets in the State of Missouri, and require increased funding in order to ensure student success.

Action: The Association urges the General Assembly to adequately fund both the operations and capital needs of public colleges and universities. The Association further urges the legislature to reject the undue politicization of higher education appropriations and to fully fund performance formula increases to public institutions of higher education.

L-B6 PUBLIC DOLLARS FOR PUBLIC SCHOOLS

(Resolutions: A-1, A-4, A-5, A-6)

Belief: State revenue earmarked for education should be used only to support public schools.

Action: The Association urges the General Assembly to reject all legislation that would forego or expend state revenues, whether directly or indirectly, for K-12 or early childhood programs in private and religious schools. Public funds should be used for public schools exclusively.

L-B7 MAINTAINING AND INCREASING INVESTMENT IN PUBLIC EDUCATION TO PROVIDE GREAT PUBLIC SCHOOLS FOR EVERY CHILD AND PROMOTE ECONOMIC SUCCESS FOR ALL MISSOURIANS

(Resolutions: A-1, A-9, B-38)

Belief: States must make wise investments in the public sector in order to provide the services and create the kind of communities where people will want to stay and live and where successful, modern businesses will want to locate. This is the critical connection between state tax policy, economic success and funding for education and other services. The legislature should be accountable to the people for adequate school funding through proper court jurisdiction.

Action: The Association calls on the General Assembly to place on the statewide ballot a repeal of the refund provisions of the Hancock Amendment and enact a usable budget stabilization fund. That fund will be financed during years with high revenue growth and readily available in years with inadequate revenue growth to maintain sufficient funding for public education and other services. The Association calls on the General Assembly to place on the statewide ballot a constitutional amendment requiring the legislature to annually declare whether public education and other constitutionally required services are adequately funded and providing that, if such services are determined to be insufficiently funded, the deficiency shall be presumed to be due to lack of state funding. Furthermore, the Association urges the General Assembly to reject any proposed constitutional amendment placing an arbitrary cap on state spending, such as Colorado's Taxpayer's Bill of Rights, that would prevent the legislature from fulfilling its obligation to provide adequate funding to provide great public schools for every child and other services to meet the needs of all Missourians.

L-B8 FAIR, ADEQUATE AND SUSTAINABLE TAXATION TO SUPPORT PUBLIC EDUCATION

(Resolutions: A-1, A-9)

Belief: Taxes should be fair, adequate and sustainable. Missouri's tax policy falls far short on all three criteria: Missouri's taxes are unfair in their impact on the poor, Missouri's taxes are not adequate and Missouri's taxes are not sustainable.

Action: The Association urges the General Assembly to adopt and send to a statewide vote a proposal to significantly increase state revenues as needed to meet anticipated state budgeting requirements for the next several years, including appropriate increases in funding for public education as enumerated elsewhere in this platform. The legislation should revise personal and corporate income tax to make these more progressive, improve fairness and equity, ensure that corporations pay a fair share of state income taxes and extend the state sales tax to cover some or all services without increasing the overall state or local sales tax revenues. The Association urges the legislature to establish the Streamlined Sales and Use Tax Agreement in Missouri.

L-B9 FAIR AND ADEQUATE LOCAL FUNDING FOR GREAT PUBLIC SCHOOLS

(Resolution: A-1, A-9, A-13, B-38)

Belief: Local school taxes, primarily from property taxes, provide a stable revenue source and help maintain local accountability and governance of school districts. Tax assessment practices across the state should be fair, uniform and carefully monitored by the state. All Missouri taxing jurisdictions deserve equity in decisions granting tax reduction incentives. These incentives should only be granted in instances of demonstrated need. Reassessment should not cause a shift of tax burden from one class of property owner to another. School districts should have local control over their own tax rates.

Action: The Association urges that the General Assembly pass legislation that would give school districts an equal voice over any tax abatement or tax increment financing plan involving their property tax revenue either by giving districts veto power or an equal vote on the board making the decision to approve or deny the abatement or financing plan. The Association urges the General Assembly to enact legislation to require detailed disclosure of the proposed benefits of TIFs and other incentives, to limit such incentives to instances where it is clearly shown that development would not occur without such incentives and to allow reclaiming the tax benefits awarded if the project fails to generate the employment or other benefits promised in the

original proposal. The Association urges adoption of a ban on residential TIFs. The Association urges the General Assembly to reject efforts to enact residential property assessment freezes and allow the law establishing separate tax rate rollbacks for each of the property classes to be fully implemented statewide. The Association urges submitting to a statewide vote a proposal to allow simple majority approval of school bond issues. The Association urges passage of legislation to allow school districts to continue to roll back tax rates against the tax rate ceiling rather than the current rate and to retain CPI growth on property tax revenues each year.

L-B10 INCREASED FUNDING FOR SPECIAL EDUCATION

(Resolutions: A-7, A-8, A-9, B-33)

Belief: Our special needs children, like all of Missouri’s children, deserve the best education possible. Equality in receiving an outstanding education should not be based on whether a child has special needs. Local districts have been forced to offset shortfalls in special education funding by diverting funds intended for students in the regular education program.

Action: The Association urges legislation that will restore state funding for special education to 1993 levels of a minimum of 34 percent of the cost by increasing appropriations while also restoring full funding of the foundation formula.

In addition, the General Assembly should enact legislation that:

1. Ensures a student’s program placement is based on individual need and the federally legislated “least restrictive environment” provision of Individuals with Disabilities Education Act;
2. Provides initial and ongoing training for regular and special education staff;
3. Assists local programs as they protect the due process rights of exceptional students and regular education students and the teachers or education employees involved with them;
4. Secures release time that education employees may use in planning and implementing Individualized Education Plans (IEP), including time for necessary participation in “care team,” “child study team” or other conferences which benefit the education welfare of the student;
5. Guarantees appropriate, fully-staffed support services for the exceptional child;
6. Ensures adequate and equitable state and local funding for special education programs;
7. Provides for monitoring of class and/or caseload size in regular and special education programs; and
8. Secures lowered class and/or caseload sizes when specific programs warrant a decrease due to the education setting or needs of the students and education employees involved.

Further, the Association urges the General Assembly to adopt a concurrent resolution urging the U.S. Congress to fully fund the IDEA.

Ensure Children are in School, Ready to Learn

L-C1 STUDENT ATTENDANCE REQUIREMENTS *

(Resolution: B-36)

Belief: Education programs across the state cannot reach their full potential without adequate funding. Any increase in student attendance requirements without a substantial increase in funding would further dilute the day-to-day resources of districts in Missouri.

Action: The Association insists that any legislation to increase school attendance requirements be accompanied by a commensurate increase in state funding to cover additional school expenses and

increased employee salaries. The Association urges the General Assembly to revisit student attendance requirements in the event of extreme inclement weather or other disasters.

L-C2 FOUR-DAY SCHOOL WEEK *

(Resolutions: A-9, A-16, A-17, B-37, C-1)

Belief: The Association believes a five-day school week is best for students, families and the learning community. The Association believes that any switch to a four-day school week due to financial reasons should be a short-term measure.

Action: The Association urges the General Assembly to place before voters a proposal to repeal the Hancock Amendment and to adopt and send to a statewide vote a proposal to significantly increase state revenues as needed to meet anticipated state budgeting needs for the next several years, including appropriate increases in funding for public education, so that districts have adequate revenues to operate schools for a full, five-day school week.

L-C3 EDUCATION OF FOSTER AND HOMELESS STUDENTS

(Resolutions: C-1, C-5, C-7)

Belief: Foster and homeless students should not face additional obstacles to pursuing their education. State law should promote educational stability and success for foster and homeless students.

Action: The Association urges the General Assembly to strengthen the Foster Care Bill of Rights to include the provisions to stay in the school of attendance to finish current terms.

L-C4 HIGH SCHOOL COURSE REQUIREMENTS

(Resolutions: A-7, A-12, A-17, B-2)

Belief: High school course requirements established by the state should provide a comprehensive core of study for all students while retaining flexibility to meet the varying educational needs of students and allow schools and teachers flexibility in meeting those needs. The State Board of Education should consider the impact of additional course requirements on student participation in other required and elective subject areas and on the ability of students to meet all requirements with a normal course load.

Action: The Association urges the General Assembly to provide additional resources for all school districts, as provided elsewhere in this platform, to ensure that school districts can maintain a broad array of elective course offerings while offering all required courses.

L-C5 COLLEGE REQUIRED CURRICULUM FOR THE PUBLIC SCHOOLS

(Resolutions: A-9, A-12, A-15, B-35)

Belief: The State Board of Education is responsible for setting a core curriculum for all students. Not all students need to meet the requirements for attending college. Colleges need to communicate in some detail what they desire from incoming freshmen, and the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education needs to relay that information to the school districts.

Action: The Association asks the General Assembly to allow the public schools to design their own curriculum and to encourage the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education to gather information from the colleges and provide as much detail as possible to help the public schools design college track curriculums. The Association urges the legislature to reject efforts to require school districts to reimburse students for the cost of remedial higher education courses.

L-C6 PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT IN STUDENT SUCCESS

(Resolutions: B-36, C-1, C-5, C-14, C-16, C-22)

Belief: Parental involvement supporting consistent daily school attendance, regular communication between parents, students and teachers and student accountability and ownership for setting and attaining

educational goals affords the best opportunity for optimum student achievement. Parents and educators should be able to take a stand against tests that serve no educational purpose.

Action: The Association urges the General Assembly to enact legislation to ensure that educators and school districts are protected from accreditation or financial penalties when parents choose to opt students out from state-mandated or federally mandated, standardized tests. The Association urges the General Assembly to amend the current educational neglect law to reflect parental responsibility. The Association urges legislation that would:

1. Restore full funding of Parents as Teachers program;
2. Encourage and provide funding for schools to implement innovative ways in which to increase positive parental involvement without monetary cost to families;
3. Reflect a stricter policy to ensure that students attend school on a regular basis;
4. Provide state funds to employ school district social workers to assist families with attendance and other family crisis issues; and
5. Result in the mandatory reporting of “neglect” to the Family Support Division within the Department of Social Services after 10 school days for the failure of parents to participate in the re-admission conference that includes the student.

L-C7 ALTERNATIVE SCHOOLS

(Resolutions: B-39, C-15)

Belief: Students do not all have the same learning styles. Schools need funding and appropriate regulations that allow schools the flexibility to deal with these differences. Missouri has many different models of alternative education programs to address these differences, including nontraditional, safe-school and high school equivalency credentials. In addition, violent and chronically disruptive students should be removed from the regular classroom and placed in an appropriate alternative public school setting that meets their educational needs.

Action: The Association requests the General Assembly to maintain and increase state support for school districts to establish and maintain alternative schools. The Association urges the General Assembly to recognize, in law, high school equivalency program status as an alternative education program. The Association also urges the General Assembly to have DESE count students completing their high school equivalency credentials to the graduation rate of the local district. The Association also asks that funding be provided for programs that develop innovative teaching techniques, flexible scheduling and alternative schools and programs in order to ensure students have the opportunity to finish high school.

L-C8 COMPULSORY SCHOOL ATTENDANCE-BEGINNING

(Resolutions: B-31, B-36)

Belief: Student academic success is best achieved when quality education programs are available in early childhood. All students should attend full-day kindergarten.

Action: The Association urges the General Assembly to immediately mandate full-day kindergarten attendance and lower the minimum age for mandatory school attendance to age six.

L-C9 COMPULSORY SCHOOL ATTENDANCE-COMPLETION

(Resolutions: B-36)

Belief: Students’ academic success, employment opportunities and life-long earnings are all improved by staying in some form of quality education program until high-school credentials, at a minimum, are obtained. Every effort should be made to provide appropriate programs to encourage every student to finish

high school. State data tracking should be designed to allow verification of whether a student has dropped out of school or transferred to another school within the state.

Action: The Association urges the General Assembly to enact legislation to prohibit employers from employing children under the age of 17 during school hours without written approval from their school district verifying that such employment is consistent with the educational plan for the student.

L-C10 DROP-IN SCHOOLING AND SCHOOL FLEX PROGRAMS

(Resolutions: B-36, B-37, C-1)

Belief: Every effort should be made to provide appropriate programs to encourage students to finish high school. State data tracking should be designed to allow verification of whether a student has dropped out of school or transferred to another school within the state and to provide access to student records for transferring students. Students should have flexible options and quality public school programs available that help them meet their challenges and have academic success.

Action: The Association urges DESE to inform all parents who home school their children of the variety of options available for their children's education. The Association also urges the General Assembly to enact legislation to mandate each local school district to have a liaison to coordinate both the 'drop in' and flex time students' education. The Association thanks the General Assembly for enacting legislation that allows a student to earn a career and technical education certificate in addition to the general diploma.

L-C11 ACADEMIC PROGRESS AND GRADUATION

(Resolutions: A-9, B-2, B-27, B-28, B-29, B-36, B-37, B-39)

Belief: Education is an essential component to success. To this end, the Association believes that many students require additional programs to keep them in school. Key decisions regarding assessment, placement, additional instruction and advancement should be made at the local level with district, employee, parent and student input.

Action: The Association urges the General Assembly to fully finance the Persistence to Graduate fund and to consider expanding the grants to include districts with less than 60 percent of students eligible for a free or reduced-price lunch. The Association urges the legislature to ensure that state law leaves key decisions regarding assessment, placement, additional instruction and advancement at the local level with district, employee, parent and student input.

L-C12 ACCESS TO PUBLIC EDUCATION FOR RESIDENT STUDENTS

(Resolutions: A-1, A-7, B-39, I-2, I-14, I-15)

Belief: Access to a great public school is a basic right for every child, and this right extends to every child living in Missouri. Enforcement of immigration law is a federal issue. Education employees should dedicate their attention to educating students, not enforcing immigration laws.

Action: The Association urges the legislature to reject any attempt to deny access to public education to any resident student.

L-C13 IN-STATE TUITION FOR UNDOCUMENTED STUDENTS

(Resolutions: A-1, A-15, B-35)

Belief: Undocumented students who have attended and graduated from high school or obtained a high school equivalency credential and are taking measures to become a citizen of the United States should be provided the opportunity to attend a Missouri public college or university. A Missouri high school diploma or high school equivalency credential should provide documentation for "undocumented students" for verification of in-state tuition status.

Action: The Association urges the General Assembly to require Missouri public higher education institutions to accept graduates of Missouri high schools and Missouri high school equivalency credential

recipients at the in-state tuition rate. The Association urges the General Assembly to reject any legislative attempts to deny undocumented students who have graduated from high school or earned a high school equivalency credential the right to attend a Missouri public college or university or to receive financial aid for which they are otherwise qualified.

L-C14 EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION

(Resolution: A-9, B-6, B-31, C-1)

Belief: The developmental years from birth to school entry have a significant impact on the educational future of children. Early childhood programs and/or parent educator programs should be available to all Missouri families.

Action: The Association urges the General Assembly to restore Missouri's leadership in Early Childhood Education by increasing revenues and providing opportunities for our state to make sound investments. The Association urges the state to revise corporate tax loopholes and tax credits that reduce state revenue and to provide adequate funding for home visitation programs, pre-school classes and screening services, including transportation to such services, and parent-child early education programs as well as programs for teen parents. The Association also calls on the General Assembly to provide adequate funding to ensure that all children in Missouri have universal access to quality pre-kindergarten instructional programs in their school district. In addition, legislation should be enacted requiring instructors to possess Early Childhood teaching certification and to be placed on locally adopted salary schedules for teachers. The Association urges that access to tenure be granted for all certified pre-kindergarten teachers in all pre-kindergarten programs in the state.

L-C15 DEVELOPMENT OF LEARNING STANDARDS AND CURRICULUM

(Resolutions: B-26, B-29)

Belief: The Association believes that educators must have an active role in the establishment of procedures for the planning, development, implementation, monitoring, and refinement of curricula at the national, state, and local level.

Action: The Association urges the legislature to encourage state development of learning standards while maintaining the design and implementation of curricula at the local level.

L-C16 TEACHER ACCOUNTABILITY FOR STUDENT PERFORMANCE

(Resolutions: B-27, B-28, D-8, D-21, F-20)

Belief: Excellence must be the objective of the education system and of accountability evaluations. Classroom teachers can be accountable only to the degree that other parties who share this responsibility (legislators, other governmental officials, boards of education, administrators, parents, students and taxpayers) are also held accountable. Teachers, parents and students know better than state and federal legislators whether a local school is meeting the needs of its students.

Action: The Association opposes a limited definition of accountability that seeks to make only the classroom teacher accountable for student learning based on flawed instruments to measure progress. As legislation is enacted, the Association urges the General Assembly to:

1. Continue to provide additional funds for developing and evaluating new accountability programs;
2. Ensure that teachers have a definite role in formulating new standards of accountability;
3. Ensure that, if punitive sanctions are imposed, they are proportionate to the power of the stakeholders in the system;
4. Emphasize locally-developed assessments, rather than state created tests;

5. Establish evaluation and compensation programs that are not tied to a single student performance instrument, are developed with teachers and are agreed to in binding local collective bargaining agreements; and
6. Ensure employee rights are respected.

L-C17 HIGH STAKES TESTING

(Resolutions: B-26, B-27, B-28)

Belief: The Association believes that, while testing is a necessary part of the educational process, a single testing event does not provide a multifaceted picture of the student as a motivated learner and a member of society. High-stakes decisions involving state accreditation of public schools and school districts, tracking, grade promotion and graduation based on a single testing event present major education and motivational challenges. Standardized tests should not restrict curriculum and instruction and the testing format should be valid and reliable. All standardized tests should be culturally relevant and unbiased. Teachers should not teach only to the state assessments.

Action: As legislation is enacted, the Association urges the General Assembly to create a structure for local accountability based on a comprehensive set of school quality indicators such as those established in NEA's Priority School Program;

L-C18 ACCESS TO APPROPRIATE SPECIAL EDUCATION SERVICES

(Resolutions: B-33, C-1)

Belief: The Missouri NEA believes that students with special needs are entitled to a free, appropriate public education. These students must be identified and evaluated on a case-by-case basis by a legally constituted assessment team. Staff and parents must share in all planning and decisions that involve placement and provision of services to students with special needs. Policies should ensure appropriate placement, services, educational environment, curriculum and staff training. Local affiliates must monitor their school districts' compliance with special education legislation.

Action: The Association urges the legislature to ensure that state law pertaining to education of students with disabilities is fully consistent with federal law and allows appropriate flexibility for the IEP team to make proper determinations for a student's free, appropriate public education. The Association supports legislation that provides dedicated funding that allows for the most appropriate placement, staffing and teacher training needed for all students with an IEP.

L-C19 ASSESSMENT OF STUDENTS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS

(Resolutions: B-27, B-33, I-15)

Belief: All students and teachers deserve a valid and practical instrument to assess progress. A special educator's function is to provide instruction to improve student achievement, not to write test items and construct valid tests. The testing instrument should not excessively impede instruction time.

Action: The Association asks the General Assembly to enact legislation to ensure that MAP-A is a valid measure of student progress, rather than a test of the teacher's ability to write the test, and ensure that special education instructors have adequate time for instruction of necessary skills based on their students' IEPs.

L-C20 PLACEMENT OF EARLY CHILDHOOD STUDENTS IN SPECIAL EDUCATION PROGRAMS

(Resolutions: B-31, B-33)

Belief: State law should not interfere with the Individualized Education Plan process for placement of any special education student by enacting a preference for a placement in a private provider program.

Action: The Association thanks the General Assembly for replacing the preference for private placement of ECSE students with a requirement that the IEP committee give due consideration to all appropriate placement options.

L-C21 EDUCATION FOR GIFTED AND TALENTED STUDENTS*(Resolutions: B-1, B-13)*

Belief: All gifted and talented students need a challenging curriculum and a program that identifies and meets their unique needs.

Action: The Association urges the General Assembly to provide adequate funding for gifted and talented programs in all school districts.

L-C22 HEALTHCARE FOR ALL CHILDREN*(Resolutions C-1, C-5, C-7, C-14, C-15, C-16, C-20, C-21, C-22, C-23, C-24, C-25, C-26, C-27, C-29, C-30)*

Belief: Adequate and timely healthcare services are vital to maintain the health of all children throughout the state. Proper healthcare is critical to ensuring that all children come to school ready to learn and must be established as a fundamental right.

Action: The Association urges the General Assembly to establish access to quality medical, mental, dental and vision healthcare as a fundamental right for all children in the state who are not yet beyond the age of 21 years and still enrolled in school. The Association requests that the General Assembly provide state funding for school-based mental health services for students and expand access to community-based mental health resources for students and families.

The Association urges the legislature to support the extension of Medicaid under the Affordable Care Act in order to access federal funds available to help the most needy of Missouri's uninsured families.

L-C23 COORDINATED SCHOOL HEALTH AND WELLNESS PROGRAMS*(Resolutions: C-7, C-20, C-21, C-22, C-23, C-24, C-25, C-26, C-29, C-30)*

Belief: The Association believes educational institutions should provide a comprehensive program of student wellness, including emphasis on good nutrition and physical activity. Wellness programs can support emotional well-being of students, assisting students to overcome obstacles to academic achievement and enabling students to maximize academic progress. The Association believes educational institutions should provide access to student health services for every student. The Association believes students should have access to vision and hearing screening programs in the school with referrals to medical providers when warranted. This should include specialty services such as Low Vision Exam.

Action: The Association requests that the General Assembly pass legislation to require that educational institutions provide health and wellness services for all students whenever school is in session. The Association urges the General Assembly to pass legislation requiring that state school accreditation procedures include school wellness programs with physical education and daily recess. The Association urges the General Assembly to pass legislation supporting the Children's Vision Commission recommendations of required vision screenings for kindergarten, first and third grade students, and follow up specialty services, as needed.

L-C24 TRAUMA-SENSITIVE SCHOOLS*(Resolutions: C-1, C-20, C-22, C-24, C-25)*

Belief: Schools have an opportunity to ensure that family and community violence does not undermine students' chances for educational success.

Action: The Association urges the legislature to provide funding to support programs for trauma-sensitive schools, when such programs are determined necessary by the local district and based on best practices.

L-C25 SOFT DRINK AND SNACK CONSUMPTION*(Resolutions: C-14, C-22, C-26)*

Belief: Missouri public school students deserve facilities that provide healthful choices. Students should not be provided access to beverages or snacks that are harmful to their health.

Action: The Association urges the General Assembly to pass legislation limiting the sale of soft drinks and snacks with poor nutritional value in Missouri public schools to non-school hours.

L-C26 NUTRITION OF SCHOOL MEALS*(Resolutions: C-14, C-26)*

Belief: Healthy and nutritious meals help children grow, develop, and succeed in school. Missouri public schools should provide well-balanced, nutritious meals for their students.

Action: The Association urges the General Assembly to pass legislation to mandate Missouri public school food programs provide students with well-balanced meals and nutritious food choices so that they are able to stay healthy and succeed in school. The Association urges the General Assembly to pass legislation to ensure that serving sizes are appropriate for the various age groups within a school.

L-C27 PUBLIC SCHOOL ATTENDANCE OPTIONS*(Resolutions: A-1, A-3, A-7, A-9, A-13, A-17)*

Belief: The state, school boards, school staff, parents and students should all strive to make every school a great public school all students deserve. Public schools should be accountable at the local level. All public school attendance options should be thoroughly researched, subject to local governance and designed to serve the best interests of students and schools. The NEA Priority Schools Campaign is an effective model to improve targeted neighborhood schools.

Action: The Association urges the General Assembly, when considering state action on public school attendance options, to reject open enrollment or voucher programs. The Association further urges the General Assembly to restore decision-making authority to the locally elected school board. The Association also urges the legislature to provide resources necessary to implement proven strategies for school improvement. The Association thanks the legislature for enacting provisions to revise the transfer tuition rate calculation to ensure that neither sending nor receiving school districts are disproportionately affected and to ensure that students with a disability are not denied a free and appropriate education consistent with options otherwise provided to other students.

L-C28 ACCESS TO STUDENT INFORMATION*(Resolutions: A-1, C-15, I-8)*

Belief: Missouri public school students deserve respect for their individual privacy rights when enrolling to attend school or participate in school programs. Teachers and other school personnel should have comprehensive and immediate access to all relevant student information regarding current students and newly enrolled students.

Action: The Association urges the General Assembly to pass legislation clarifying that all school district employees, when requesting a student's Social Security number for any purpose, must inform the student and the student's parent that disclosure of the student's Social Security number is completely voluntary and is not required for enrollment or participation in any school program, unless specified in law or the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education rule, and establishing reasonable penalties for any violation of this policy. The Association requests that the General Assembly pass legislation requiring a common data format for digital and electronic school records to promote transferability of student information.

L-C29 BULLYING IN SCHOOLS

(Resolutions: B-1, B-15, B-21, C-9, C-11, C-12, C-13, C-14, C-15, C-16, C-18, C-22, C-25)

Belief: All students should feel physically and emotionally safe while in the school environment. The Association supports policies that eliminate bullying, physical violence, verbal abuse and intimidation in all schools. Every school district should provide access to counseling and suicide prevention programs by trained personnel for students who are struggling with trauma, bullying or harassment in any form.

Action: The Association requests the General Assembly to pass legislation allowing school districts to enact the bullying policy deemed appropriate by the school board, including the option to enumerate specific categories or attributes which may be related to bullying, including, but not limited to, ethnicity, religion, socioeconomic status, disability, actual or perceived sexual orientation and gender identity and expression.

L-C30 EQUAL OPPORTUNITY AND SAFETY FOR ALL

(Resolutions: B-5, B-18, C-9, C-10, C-11, C-12, C-13, C-14, C-15, C-16, C-18, C-20, C-21, C-22, C-24, C-25, C-26, I-2, I-14, I-15, I-16, I-17)

Belief: All persons, regardless of sexual orientation or gender identification, should be afforded equal opportunity within the public education system and not be subjected to physical abuse, harassment or discrimination. Every school district should provide access to counseling and suicide prevention programs by trained personnel for students with regard to sexual orientation or gender identification. Appropriately established programs of sex education must include not only issues related to human reproduction but to diversity of sexual orientation. Comprehensive HIV/AIDS education programs should be established and include education about all means of transmission.

Action: The Association urges the General Assembly to reject any legislative effort to interfere with or prohibit district and school programs to address discrimination and bullying of targeted groups, including students with regard to their sexual orientation or gender identification. The Association also urges the General Assembly to pursue legislation that guarantees equal opportunity and safety for all students and school personnel in Missouri's public schools, regardless of sexual orientation or gender identification.

L-C31 CAMPUS SAFETY AND ACCOUNTABILITY

(Resolutions: A-1, A-2, C-9, C-10, C-11, C-12, C-13, C-15, C-24, C-25, I-1, I-3, I-13, I-14, I-15, I-16, I-17)

Belief: Missouri NEA believes that students have a right to be protected from sexual assault in their schools and on college and university campuses and that educational institutions have an obligation to address the problem of sexual assault.

Action: The Association urges the General Assembly to pass legislation protecting students from sexual assault in their schools or college and university campuses and obligating educational institutions to address campus sexual assault and reporting requirements.

L-C32 PUPIL TRANSPORTATION

(Resolutions: A-1, A-7, A-9, C-19)

Belief: Access to a quality public education must include the transportation services needed to ensure each student is in school and ready to learn.

Action: The Association urges the General Assembly to fully and adequately fund pupil transportation, including special education pupil transportation, and to require school districts to provide pupil transportation for all students who need school transportation services to attend school regularly. Taking into account the instability and unpredictability of the cost of operating busing systems, funding of student transportation must be regularly reviewed by the legislature.

L-C33 SUMMER SCHOOL*(Resolutions: A-1, A-7, A-9, B-1, F-3)*

Belief: Missouri public school students should be provided summer school opportunities for enrichment and/or remediation. Summer school attendance should not be required based upon the results of mandated assessments.

Action: The Association urges the General Assembly to reject any attempt to eliminate or reduce state aid or summer school attendance. The Association furthers urges the General Assembly to resist attempts to mandate summer school attendance based on results of statewide assessments.

L-C34 RELIGIOUS NONPARTICIPATION IN INSTRUCTION*(Resolutions: B-39, C-1)*

Belief: Missouri students have the right to receive educational opportunities that will enable them to understand and succeed in the world around them. Providing students the right of refusal to participate in academic assignments based on religious beliefs should release school districts and educators from consequences under district accreditation and educator evaluation. Refusal of instruction should not interfere with other students' opportunity to learn nor alter local curriculum.

Action: The Association urges the Missouri General Assembly to enact legislation to protect districts and educators from accreditation and evaluation penalties when parents choose to opt students out of instruction for religious reasons.

L-C35 EXTENDED LEARNING TIME*(Resolutions: A-1, A-7, A-9, B-29, F-3)*

Belief: All children benefit from adequate time in the classroom, but at-risk students may need additional instructional time to reach achievement goals. Resources should be available to meet the needs of students who would benefit from additional time in the classroom. Local affiliates should participate fully in the design, authorization, implementation, evaluation, and continuation of summer school, alternative calendars, extended school day or year, and year-round school programs. Policies governing these programs must take into consideration the impact on the community and be in accordance with the Association's principles for professional salaries and class size. These programs must be staffed by properly certificated/licensed employees. The opportunity for employment in such programs should be on a voluntary basis.

Action: The Association urges the General Assembly to fully fund programs that allow districts to explore and invest in positive opportunities that provide extended learning time for students.

L-C36 FAIR HOUSING POLICY AND INTEGRATION OF PUBLIC SCHOOLS*(Resolutions: A-1, I-1, I-6, I-24)*

Belief: Both society and public schools should be fully integrated. Policies and guidelines for school integration must be strengthened and must comply with judicial decisions and civil rights legislation. All citizens should be free to reside in the communities of their choice. Honest and open conversation is a precursor to change. All members of the educational community should engage in conversations to examine assumptions, prejudices, and the effects of discriminatory practices.

Action: The Association urges the General Assembly to pass legislation requiring that public housing subsidies and development policies ensure significant inclusionary zones and affordable housing options in all municipalities and local governments within an identifiable metropolitan area or other area with diversity in socio-economic status.

L-C37 HOME SCHOOLS*(Resolutions: A-1, A-6, C-9, C-14, C-16)*

Belief: A child’s educational and social development is best taught in a school setting. In some cases, however, children are being taught at home. To ensure that all children have an equitable and quality education, guidelines for home education programs must exist.

Action: The Association encourages the legislature to resist efforts to weaken oversight and regulation of home school instruction. The Association encourages the General Assembly to enact legislation requiring that parents and guardians who elect to home school their children provide a written plan of instruction to the local school district that adheres to educational standards established by DESE. The Associations also encourages the General Assembly to enact legislation to provide oversight for home schools if a plan of instruction is not provided or if it is reported that the home school environment is unsuitable for instruction.

Ensure Effective and Accountable School Governance

L-D1 AUTONOMY OF THE STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION*(Resolutions: A-12, D-3, D-5, G-1, G-3)*

Belief: General regulatory oversight of public schools should remain in the hands of nonpartisan, appointed board members who select a chief state school officer, the commissioner of education. This duty should not be politicized and transferred to a cabinet post appointed by the governor. Oversight of pre-K-12 public education should not be merged with oversight of higher education. Merger of the current K-12 and higher education governing boards would diminish the focus on guaranteeing a high quality pre-K-12 education as a fundamental right for every student in Missouri. Likewise, the concentrated governing attention necessary to keep Missouri’s higher education institutions competitive on an international level would not be as strong in a merged governance structure.

Action: The Association opposes any attempt to remove the authority of the State Board of Education to select the commissioner of education and transfer the position to a cabinet post appointed by the governor. The Association also urges the legislature to reject any attempt to merge or reduce the oversight of pre-K-12 or higher education until it has guaranteed a high quality pre-K-12 education as a fundamental right for every student with equitable and adequate funding and until it has addressed the need of higher education to remain competitive so Missouri’s graduates are prepared to compete in a global economy. The Association urges the legislature to enact shorter State Board terms or reasonable term limits, or a combination thereof.

L-D2 NONPARTISAN COMMISSION FOR HIGHER EDUCATION BOARD APPOINTMENTS*(Resolutions: A-13, A-15)*

Belief: The Association believes that limiting partisan politics is important for fair and knowledgeable governance of our public universities and colleges. Governing board members of public colleges and universities should be selected on the basis of merit, not political connections.

Action: The Association urges the General Assembly to adopt legislation similar to that used in Virginia to create a nonpartisan process for higher education board appointments in Missouri.

L-D3 SCHOOL ACCOUNTABILITY*(Resolutions: A-1, A-2, A-7, A-12, A-13, A-17, A-18, B-1)*

Belief: Public schools should be professional, purposeful enterprises, with clear and attainable goals. Public schools should have rich, well-balanced and coherent curricula, which focus on developmentally appropriate and varied assessments that demonstrate student growth. State accreditation and intervention should support, rather than undermine, school district efforts to improve outcomes for all students.

Action: The Association requests the General Assembly to pass legislation requiring the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education to create a new system of accreditation and assessment that promotes local control of curriculum, school operations and assessments. The Association also encourages the General Assembly to pass legislation requiring DESE to: 1) establish a district accreditation process similar to that used by recognized school accrediting agencies or set a standard of accreditation that relies on one or more recognized accrediting agencies, 2) maintain a clear distinction between accreditation and accountability and 3) reduce the reliance on state-required assessments for district and school accountability to the maximum extent allowed under the ESSA and other applicable federal requirements. The Association urges the General Assembly to reject efforts to allow the State Board of Education to interfere in school district operations by accrediting individual school buildings.

L-D4 SCHOOL BOARD MEMBER ACCOUNTABILITY

(Resolutions: A-13)

Belief: The integrity of the democratic process in Missouri is dependent on the ability of the electorate of Missouri to govern the actions of their elected officials.

Action: The association urges the General Assembly to enact legislation that provides for a recall procedure for elected school board members who are not serving the needs of the district whether or not any school in the district has been declared academically deficient. The Association also urges the legislature to pass legislation to limit school board member's term of office to three years in all districts, except those with populations over 300,000 persons. The Association also urges the legislature to enact legislation that would require board members to live in the district while serving on the school board.

L-D5 SCHOOL BOARD MEMBER TRAINING

(Resolutions: A-13)

Belief: State required hours of training for school board members should not be used to promote the philosophy of the organization providing the training. School employee organizations should be allowed to participate in and support school board member training.

Action: The Association urges the General Assembly to ensure that training required for new school board members consists of factual information to help the board members understand the functions of a school district and the functions of a school board, rather than promote a philosophy of how board members should conduct themselves. The Association urges the General Assembly to authorize school employee organizations to participate with other organizations in developing and providing school board member training.

L-D6 SCHOOL GOVERNING BOARD ELECTIONS

(Resolutions: A-13, H-1, H-2)

Belief: School governing boards are a very important part of governance for both school districts and community colleges. A citizen who runs for and serves on an elected school governing board is performing a valuable service to the community. Patrons of that district should have the opportunity to voice their support and choose governing board members through their vote. School districts should have the option to continue their board structure as they grow to urban school district size.

Action: The Association urges the General Assembly to pass legislation requiring that all school governing board candidates appear on a ballot, allowing patrons to express their support or lack thereof, even if the number of candidates filed is equal to or less than the number of openings on the school governing board. The Association urges the General Assembly to address the trigger that changes a district from a seven-director board of education to an urban board of education and create a process by which a district can vote to choose to retain the seven-director terms of office and election cycle.

L-D7 RIGHT TO LOCAL SCHOOL GOVERNANCE*(Resolutions: A-1, A-12, A-13, A-17, A-18, H-2)*

Belief: Missouri citizens have a right to vote for a local school board. Election of local officials is a fundamental principle of United States federalism. It is local people who best understand the needs of their communities as well as the vision for what skills are needed for the future of the communities. Students receive a better education when they attend schools governed by a locally elected and accountable school board.

Action: The Association calls on the General Assembly to enact legislation that discontinues the automatic dissolution of unaccredited school districts and replacement of locally elected school boards with state-appointed SABs. The Association requests the General Assembly to enact legislation to return the control of locally elected school boards in an expedient manner.

L-D8 ACCESS TO SCHOOL INFORMATION*(Resolutions: A-9, A-10, A-13, A-14, B-33)*

Belief: Citizens can only meaningfully participate in government and hold their elected officials accountable when the processes of decision making as well as the results of those decisions are conducted in an open and transparent way. Citizens must have access to public records and information about their public schools.

Action: The Association urges the General Assembly to pass legislation that strengthens the Sunshine Law and provides greater transparency of public decision-making and accountability for school boards. The Association requests the General Assembly to pass legislation requiring school districts to annually provide DESE, as a central repository, with the adopted salary schedules for all employee categories, all extra duty compensation schedules, all employee benefit schedules, the school calendar, the district budget and local school board policies.

L-D9 PROTECT MISSOURI ACT*(Resolutions: A-9, H-1, H-2)*

Belief: Missouri's initiative petition process should be used to express genuine, grassroots policy initiatives. The initiative process should have safeguards to ensure that interest groups are not allowed to abuse the process by deceptive signature gathering practices. A change of address after signing should not disqualify the signature, if the registered voter is still a Missouri resident.

Action: The Association commends the legislature on the passage of language to ensure that signature gatherers sign a sworn statement that their statements are true and correct and they have not committed a forgery offense and to create the crime of signature fraud. Furthermore, the Association urges the legislature to designate the Secretary of State (SOS) Voter Registration File as the official resource to validate signatures on an initiative petition. Also, requiring the SOS Voter Registration File to maintain a voter's previous address going forward, will allow the legislature to clarify that the address at the time of petition signing is available during the signature verification process.

L-D10 PROMOTING CITIZENSHIP AND PARTICIPATION IN ELECTIONS*(Resolutions: H-1, H-2)*

Belief: Voting is a constitutional right that should not be restricted by unnecessary voter photo identification requirements or other additional barriers to the voting franchise.

Action: The Association urges the legislature to oppose any attempt to enact further voter ID restrictions or other measures that would have the effect of suppressing voter turnout among the most vulnerable of our citizens. The Association further urges the legislature to enact legislation that would increase citizen involvement in the election process.

L-D11 DEFENSE OF THE NONPARTISAN COURT PLAN*(Resolutions: A-1, A-9, I-1, I-22)*

Belief: The Missouri Nonpartisan Court Plan is essential for the state to select qualified judges in a way that limits partisan politics in the selection process. This nonpartisan plan is so effective that a majority of states have adopted the “Missouri Plan.” Fair and impartial courts are vital to democracy and the preservation of our rights, including the fundamental right of access to a great public school.

Action: The Association urges the General Assembly to refrain from any changes in the Missouri Nonpartisan Court Plan.

L-D12 SCHOOL DISTRICTS ADJUSTING TO STUDENT TRANSFERS*(Resolutions: A-1, A-3, A-7, A-9, A-12, A-13, A-17)*

Belief: The foundation of our democratic society is to provide effective and accountable public schools for all students. School districts deemed “unaccredited” must be provided with resources and expertise necessary to reach levels of accountability called for by legislation and regulation.

Action: The Association requests that the General Assembly provide resources and expertise to districts which are, or will become, unaccredited so the district can continue to function for students remaining in the district. The loss of funds from the state should be offset for several years as a district adjusts to new realities as a student “sending district.” The state should assume the cost of transportation that the state legislature mandated.

L-D13 ETHICS IN GOVERNMENT*(Resolution: H-4)*

Belief: In accordance with the Missouri State Motto, “Let the welfare of the people be the supreme law,” the Association believes balance, fairness and accountability are vital to a successful democracy. Fair, ethical and transparent governance encourages democratic participation and increases accountability of elected officials to their constituents.

Action: The Association urges the legislature to support and implement the reforms of the CLEAN Missouri initiative, approved by voters as Constitutional Amendment 1 in November 2018, that will increase transparency and accountability and embody ethical governance by:

1. Creating a nonpartisan redistricting program that avoids partisan gridlock and court involvement;
2. Establishing and enforcing strong campaign contribution limits and reforms;
3. Limiting gifts from lobbyists and the entities they represent to legislators, legislative staff and other elected officials;
4. Creating restrictions on government officials charged with serving the public interest becoming paid lobbyists following their time in office;
5. Ensuring that the legislature operates under the same open records law as other public entities in Missouri; and
6. Enacting measures that prescribe ethical principles for all public officials.

The Association urges the legislature to refrain from enacting any proposal to undo or reverse the reforms of the CLEAN Missouri initiative.

MNEA Believes That Every Child Deserves Highly Qualified Teachers

Prepare and Evaluate Teachers and Provide Continuous Professional Development

L-E1 PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS BOARD

(Resolutions: A-12, G-1)

Belief: One characteristic of a professional is vestment of the authority and responsibility to establish, maintain and enforce professional standards within the profession.

Action: The Association urges enactment of legislation which creates an autonomous, independent teacher licensure commission, composed of a majority of classroom teachers, having the sole responsibility for approval of teacher education programs, establishment of standards for certification, maintenance of standards and retention within the profession. Further, the Missouri Constitution should be amended to require that classroom teachers be represented on the State Board of Education.

L-E2 PROFESSIONAL TEACHING STANDARDS

(Resolutions: D-3, G-1, G-3)

Belief: Missouri's teachers deserve clear professional standards that define the role of a public school teacher.

Action: The Association urges enactment of legislation that requires the State Board of Education to establish, by rule, a statewide mentoring program based on the teacher standards cited in S.B. 291. The Association urges the legislature to require district teaching standards to be included in each school district's report card.

L-E3 SUPPORT FOR TEACHERS IN NATIONAL BOARD CERTIFICATION PROCESS *

(Resolutions: F-4, G-1, G-6)

Belief: Research clearly indicates that the most significant inside-of-school influence on students' academic success is the quality of the instruction they receive. Our state government and local school districts should support those teachers who strive to reach the highest instructional standards.

Action: The Association urges the General Assembly to pass legislation providing that the entire application fee for National Board Certification be paid for candidates including renewal candidates; National Board Certified teachers receive a significant annual stipend for achieving certification; and Missouri accept National Board Certification in lieu of Missouri certification in all teaching areas in which National Certification is available.

L-E4 PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEES *

(Resolutions: D-1, D-3)

Belief: Excellence in teaching requires the constant upgrading of professional skills by all employees in a school district. Professional education growth should be monitored and funded by a district Professional Development Committee (PDC) elected by teachers and funded by the local district or state, or both. Support professionals should also have decision making roles in and funding for a PDC to meet their needs. Professional development is increasingly more important in maintaining a highly-skilled work force as many career teachers retire, new teachers enter the profession from a variety of backgrounds and other fields, forms of alternative certification become more prevalent, federal and state mandates must be implemented,

and technology changes happen almost overnight. With more new teachers avenues for teacher entry there is a greater, not lesser, need for professional development.

Action: The Association urges the General Assembly to restore state professional development funding to \$20 million, provide adequate yearly increases in professional development funding to maintain a highly-skilled workforce and establish a minimum amount of \$300 per employee to be set aside for PDCs. Such legislation should explicitly provide that these funds may be used for tuition reimbursement. In districts where the funds from the current statute generate more funds than \$300 per employee, the higher amount should be used. PDCs for education support professionals should be created and implemented using the same guidelines as PDCs for certified teaching staff. The Association opposes efforts to separate professional development funding from the foundation formula appropriation or reduce either the state financial commitment for professional development funding or local professional development placement requirements.

L-E5 PERFORMANCE OF MEDICAL PROCEDURES *

(Resolution: C-21, C-22, C-24, F-12)

Belief: The primary responsibility of an education employee is the education of students. Students deserve to have medical procedures performed only by qualified, licensed medical professionals. Education employees should have the right to refuse to administer medication or perform medical services without fear of repercussion.

Action: The Association urges the General Assembly to mandate school districts to provide trained medical professionals to perform all nonemergency medically related services and to provide basic first aid training to all education employees and Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (CPR) training, including Automated External Defibrillator (AED) certification, for all staff expected to be able to use AED devices. The Association urges the legislature to ensure that only school nurses and other medical professionals may be required by a school district to obtain training to administer medication.

L-E6 CERTIFICATION STANDARDS

(Resolutions: D-3, D-4, D-5, D-6, D-8, D-12, D-13, G-3, G-8)

Belief: To guarantee equal opportunity for all Missouri children, certification standards must be high and uniformly enforced throughout the state. State certification standards should be established and controlled by an accountable public agency, not a private entity. Any alternative certification route programs should require adequate teacher training. Every attempt should be made to reduce barriers and ease portability of certification between states. Temporary certification should be used only to enable teachers to remediate deficiencies caused by differences among states' teacher training programs.

Action: The Association urges the General Assembly to enact legislation to upgrade certification standards that require adequate and effective professional development for all teachers regardless of number of years of teaching experience and monitor implementation of any such standards to ensure their strict uniform enforcement. Any legislation establishing alternative routes to certification or reducing the rigor of traditional teacher training should require adequate teacher or administrator training. The Association urges the General Assembly to repeal the mandate that the State Board of Education automatically recognize ABCTE certification or ensure that the policy is fully under the control of the State Board of Education.

L-E7 PEER ASSISTANCE AND REVIEW *

(Resolution: D-20)

Belief: High standards within the teaching profession and continuous improvement in professional practices are cornerstones of successful educators. Under certain circumstances, a peer assistance or peer review program is an appropriate mechanism for achieving these objectives.

Action: The Association recommends the General Assembly enact legislation that would authorize local school districts and local education associations to jointly establish, at local option, peer assistance and review programs.

L-E8 HIGH QUALITY EVALUATION SYSTEM FOR TEACHERS **(Resolution: D-3, D-21, D-24)*

Belief: The teaching profession is a cornerstone of society and composed of individuals who strive to meet the highest standards of accountability as determined through a quality evaluation system. Teaching evaluation systems must be professional, objective and transparent and provide teachers with meaningful feedback and appropriate support to enhance practice and improve student learning.

Action: The Association urges the General Assembly to reject any legislation that seeks to arbitrarily specify the way student test scores or any other particular indicator is used in a district teacher evaluation system.

Provide Teachers with Sufficient Time to Plan, Teach and Give Individual Attention

L-F1 CLASS SIZE **(Resolutions: D-14)*

Belief: Education is most effective in meeting individual students' needs, from pre-kindergarten through higher education, when there is a small number of students in the classroom and when there is a limited number of students assigned to an educator. Standards for class size are best determined locally through collective bargaining, faculty input and higher education professional organizations.

Action: The Association supports collective bargaining legislation to enable local associations to negotiate class size standards that promote excellence in instruction and student success. Average class size should not include librarians, counselors, administrators and special education teachers because including them skews the number downward and does not reflect reality.

The Association supports the class size standards recommended by DESE for pre-K-12 students and supports legislation to establish class size standards for higher education that promote excellence in instruction and student success.

L-F2 SUPPORT SERVICES RATIOS **(Resolution: B-33, E-6)*

Belief: Inadequately staffed support services adversely affect students within the learning environment. Providing quality contact time and services is essential to the well-being of students as they enter the classroom. Appropriate staff support services are best determined locally through collective bargaining.

Action: The Association supports collective bargaining legislation to enable local associations to negotiate appropriate staff support services.

L-F3 TEACHER PLANNING TIME **(Resolution: D-10, D-11)*

Belief: Effective teaching in the classroom demands careful daily preparation.

Action: The Association urges the General Assembly to enact legislation that would require an adequate daily planning period. The planning period should: 1) provide access to the classroom during the contract day unencumbered by other duties, responsibilities or travel, 2) compensate teachers for loss of planning time due to substitute teaching, 3) provide a minimum planning period for teachers of at least 50 consecutive minutes per school day, when possible, or at least 300 minutes per school week and 4) provide that this planning period shall not include lunch time, travel time or time before or after school.

L-F4 DUTY FREE LUNCH **(Resolutions: F-8)*

Belief: Education employees at all levels should be permitted to have a lunch period free from all duties associated with their employment.

Action: The Association urges enactment of collective bargaining legislation to allow local associations to negotiate a guarantee that all full-time education employees will have a lunch period of not less than thirty uninterrupted minutes. During such a period, education employees should not be required to perform any instructional or supervisory duties, nor should this period be considered a part of planning time or travel time.

L-F5 EDUCATION EMPLOYEES' LIABILITY INVOLVING STUDENT COMMUNICATIONS **(Resolutions: C-15, C-17, C-18, E-4, F-12, F-13, F-14, F-15, F-17)*

Belief: Students in public schools must have the right to exercise freedom of expression pursuant to First Amendment case law in school communications and must accept the responsibilities that come with any right. Student communications sponsors should be adequately trained on freedom of expression issues and should be protected from reprisal when supporting student expression rights.

Action: The Association urges passage of legislation that guarantees public school students the right to exercise freedom of expression and protects an education employee from discipline for refusing to suppress the free expression rights of students. The legislature should direct the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education to require journalism teachers and newspaper sponsors to be trained to advise students on freedom of expression issues.

L-F6 SPECIAL EDUCATION INSTRUCTIONAL TIME **(Resolutions: A-7, B-33, I-18)*

Belief: The primary job of a teacher is teaching students. However, because of the demands of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, special education teachers have difficulty finding the time to teach necessary skills required by the student's Individualized Education Plan. Special educators cannot perform their primary function of teaching students when they are busy completing the huge amounts of paperwork associated with special education. All education employees should be compensated for special education-related work time occurring outside of contracted hours.

Action: The Association urges the General Assembly to require the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education to encourage school districts to adopt the state IEP format, which provides a standardization of the IEP. School districts should also be encouraged to create the position of documentation specialist. Documentation specialists would be responsible for initiation and completion of all paperwork, other than the IEP, so that special education teachers may have optimum instructional time in the classroom, as well as evaluation and planning time.

L-F7 RESPECTING THE FINALITY OF COURSE GRADES ESTABLISHED BY A TEACHER **(Resolutions: B-27, F-12, F-17, F-18, F-20)*

Belief: The final course grades assigned to a student by a teacher should be respected. The teacher is the education professional with the best knowledge and understanding of a student's academic performance in a course and is best qualified to determine a student's grade.

Action: The Association urges the General Assembly to adopt legislation to establish that, when grades are given for any course of instruction offered by a school, the grade earned by a student is the grade determined by the teacher of the course. The determination of a student's grade by that teacher, in the absence of clerical or mechanical mistake, fraud or bad faith, is final and no teacher shall be held liable in any civil or criminal action by or on behalf of any student on the basis of such student's final grade or grades.

Involve Teachers in Making Improvements and Innovations

L-G1 CHARTER SCHOOLS

(Resolutions: A-1, A-3, A-4, A-5, A-7, A-9, A-13, I-1, I-2, I-3, I-6, I-9, I-14, I-19)

Belief: The Association is committed to rigorous learning standards, decentralized and shared decision making, diverse educational offerings, and the removal of restrictive requirements within the public schools. Charter schools serve students and the public interest when they are authorized and held accountable by the locally-elected school board. Charter schools should be authorized or expanded only after a district has assessed the impact of the proposed charter school on local public school resources, programs and services. Public charters, like all public schools, must provide students with a free, accessible, non-sectarian, quality education that is delivered subject to the same basic safeguards and standards as every other public school. Fully virtual or online charter schools cannot, by their nature, provide students with a well-rounded, complete educational experience, including optimal kinesthetic, physical, social and emotional development and should not be authorized. Funding for charter schools should not diminish funding for the school district in which a charter school operates. Any legislation should hold charter schools and sponsors accountable, make the operations of schools transparent and protect the rights of schools, parents, teachers and other school employees. For-profit management companies should not operate charter schools. Charter school personnel policies should contain effective safeguards to ensure that teachers and other staff are not terminated arbitrarily or capriciously or for standing up for the best interest of students when the profit motive controls charter school decisions.

Action: The Association urges the General Assembly to revise the current charter school legislation in a manner consistent with the MNEA position paper on charter schools by:

1. Ensuring charter schools are authorized and held accountable by the same democratically accountable local entity that authorizes other alternative school models in a public school district such as magnet, community, educator-led or other specialized schools;
2. Ensuring a school district authorizes a public charter school only if the charter is both necessary to meet the needs of students in the district and will meet those needs in a manner that improves the local public school system;
3. Ensuring public charters, like all public schools, provide students with a free, accessible, non-sectarian, quality education that is delivered subject to the same basic safeguards and standards as every other public school, namely, in compliance with: i) open meetings and public records laws, ii) prohibitions against for-profit operation or profiteering as enforced by conflict of interest, financial disclosure and auditing requirements, iii) the same civil rights, including federal and state laws and protections for students with disabilities, employment, health, labor, safety, staff qualification and certification requirements as other public schools and iv) the same standards of accreditation, accountability and academic assessment and performance as other public schools;
4. Ensuring that the school district may authorize or expand a charter school only after the district has assessed the impact of the proposed charter school on local public school resources, programs and services, and the impact of the charter on the racial, ethnic and socio-economic composition of schools and neighborhoods and on equitable access to quality services for all district students, including students with special needs and English language learners;
5. Ensuring the authorizing school district provides parents with the same information about charters that is provided to parents about other district schools, as well as information about any significant respects in which the charter departs from district norms in its operations including the actual charter of the school;
6. Ensuring that fully virtual or online charter schools are not authorized;

7. Limiting the state’s role in charter authorization and oversight to ensuring that local school districts only authorize charters that meet the criteria in the MNEA policy and do so by way of a procedure that complies with the MNEA policy; and

8. Establishing a moratorium on authorization or expansion of charter schools until the safeguards and process defined in the MNEA policy are met and ensuring that the renewal of existing charter schools is under the authorization of the local school board.

The Association urges the General Assembly to repeal or postpone the expansion of charter school authorization until the current charter school law has been revised in a manner consistent with the MNEA position paper on charter schools, and those revisions have been determined to create adequate accountability, transparency and respect for the rights for all charter schools and students.

L-G2 VIRTUAL EDUCATION

(Resolutions: A-5, B-23, B-26, B-33)

Belief: Virtual public schools can serve as a valuable tool and resource for schools and students. Virtual education must incorporate high instructional standards, public accountability and strict oversight. Virtual schools have the ability to enhance the public educational opportunities for students. Distance learning as a tool and resource for schools and students should not be replaced by virtual schools.

Action: The Association urges the General Assembly to adequately fund virtual course access through public schools. In adopting any policy on virtual schools, the Association urges the General Assembly to develop policies and procedures that promote equitable access, target students who can make best use of the resources, students with the greatest educational needs for such resources, ensure high instructional standards, public accountability and local control.

L-G3 SCHOOL CALENDARS *

(Resolutions: A-7, A-13, B-36, C-14, F-3, F-4)

Belief: In order for school districts to maintain local control, individual school boards should be allowed to set their starting dates, length of school term and school calendar in whatever manner they determine would provide the most educational benefit for the students of their district. School districts should have the option to construct a school calendar, which makes the most efficient use of the investment in both staff and facilities throughout the year. Extended school terms help improve student learning and minimize expansion of the achievement gap, which increases more rapidly when children are not in school, such as during an extended summer break.

Action: The Association urges the General Assembly to enact legislation that would allow increased funding for schools that move to an extended school year, especially for districts with a large fraction of at-risk students. The Association also urges the General Assembly to enact legislation, which would allow funding for incentive payments for schools that move to a year-round school and climate control for all classrooms. The Association asks that the General Assembly restore a local option to set school start dates.

L-G4 ADULT LITERACY

(Resolution: B-17, B-39)

Belief: The success of a democracy is directly related to the participation of its informed citizens. Literacy is a basic requirement of an informed populace.

Action: The Association urges the General Assembly to enact legislation to address adult illiteracy through increased emphasis on family literacy and adult education.

L-G5 SUPPORT FOR EXCELLENCE IN HIGHER EDUCATION *

(Resolutions: A-9, A-15, A-16, B-35, C-15, D-1, D-3, D-21, D-24, E-3, E-4, F-9, F-11, F-12, F-14, F-15)

Belief: Missouri's increasing demand and need for excellent higher education calls for a rededication to disciplinary standards and procedures. Only the most rigorously trained, professionally reviewed and appropriately compensated academics can provide the learning environments necessary for intellectual achievement, economic success and full civic engagement of our students and our state. Educators must be optimally trained and guaranteed the academic freedom and respect that allow them to best fulfill their responsibilities as teachers, researchers and public servants. In meeting these standards, we can thereby ensure that our state continues to prosper. Anything less than such a commitment harms our abilities to attract the best scholars, retain their services and facilitate the education Missourians demand.

Action: The Association calls on the legislature to fully fund higher education, to endorse academic freedom and the tenure process to enhance the access to and quality of higher education for all Missourians.

L-G6 INTELLECTUAL DIVERSITY *

(Resolutions: B-35, C-15, E-4, E-5, E-7, E-8, F-11, F-12, F-13, F-14, F-15)

Belief: The cardinal value of academe is the pursuit of truth. Missouri students deserve access to excellent public higher education institutions in this state.

Action: The Association urges the General Assembly to reject any legislation or proposal that prevents free academic inquiry at public higher education institutions.

L-G7 HIGH STANDARDS FOR SCIENCE EDUCATION *

(Resolutions: A-7, B-21, E-1, E-3, E-4, E-6)

Belief: Students in public schools deserve to receive a science education that provides them with a foundation in understanding the scientific method and tested scientific principles. Curriculum decisions should be locally decided, and proposals that are not subject to the standards of scientific review should not be mandated in public school science curricula. Inclusion of such proposals in public school curricula should be a matter of local control along with the manner in which such proposals are discussed.

Action: The Association urges the General Assembly to reject any legislation or proposal that would mandate school districts to include the teaching of intelligent design in public school science courses. The Association urges the Missouri General Assembly to place a repeal of the student opt-out portion of the Missouri Constitutional Amendment 2 (2012) on a statewide ballot.

L-G8 MISSOURI STATE HIGH SCHOOL ACTIVITIES ASSOCIATION (MSHSAA)

(Resolution: A-7)

Belief: The Missouri State High School Activities Association (MSHSAA) is a voluntary, nonprofit, independent educational organization of Missouri's public, private and parochial junior and senior high schools. MSHSAA is a democratically run association with member schools not only electing the governing board but also setting major rule changes through elections by the members. Educators should continue to establish the policies and procedures that govern the activities of the thousands of Missouri students who participate in high school activities.

Action: The Association asks that these decisions continue to be made by the member schools that make up and operate MSHSAA.

L-G9 SEX EDUCATION

(Resolutions: A-7, B-10, B-16, B-19, B-20, E-4)

Belief: Local school districts should be able to make decisions as to the type of sex education they provide with emphasis on the latest medically factual information regarding methods of prevention of pregnancy and sexually transmitted diseases. Appropriately established programs of sex education must include not only

issues related to human reproduction but to diversity of sexual orientation. Comprehensive HIV/AIDS education programs should be established and include education about all means of transmission.

Action: The Association urges the General Assembly to restore local control regarding sex education in the schools.

Provide Compensation and Benefits Needed to Attract and Retain the Best Teachers and Staff

L-H1 TEACHER SALARIES *

(Resolution: F-4)

Belief: Teachers should be compensated with professional salaries that recognize the value of experience, ongoing education, certification, degrees and additional assignments. Such salaries should be at a level sufficient to attract beginning teachers to the profession and to retain experienced teachers. Professional salaries can best be attained through the collective bargaining process at the local level.

Action: The Association urges the General Assembly to continue to increase funding through the state foundation formula to ensure that no Missouri district has an average teacher salary below the national average. The Association urges the General Assembly to only authorize alternative pay structures within a collective bargaining agreement and to reject any attempt to eliminate salary schedules or establish any system of so-called “merit pay” outside of formal collective bargaining agreements at the local level. The Association urges the General Assembly to reject any effort to establish a district mandate that evaluation and compensation programs be tied to a single student performance instrument.

L-H2 LIVING WAGE FOR EDUCATION SUPPORT PROFESSIONALS *

(Resolution: F-4)

Belief: Compensation for education support professionals should reflect the value of experience, additional education and certifications. Compensation should be competitive with private business, to attract new and retain experienced/skilled employees. Salaries should be at a level sufficient enough to attract and retain Educational Support Professionals (ESP), and this is best done at the local level through the collective bargaining process.

Action: The Association urges the General Assembly to ensure a living wage for ESPs by providing funding increases that keep up with the cost-of-living index. The Association continues to urge legislation that ensures all salaries are bargained locally.

L-H3 MINIMUM SALARY SCHEDULES *

(Resolution: F-4)

Belief: The state should provide adequate state funding for all schools and give school districts the authority to protect their local tax base from tax giveaways. Local employee organizations should be empowered to negotiate salaries and working conditions through collective bargaining. A statewide salary schedule is a tool to undermine local control through collective bargaining.

Action: The Association calls on the General Assembly to provide adequate and equitable school funding for competitive salaries in all districts. The Association urges the legislature to reject any effort to impose a statewide minimum salary schedule for teachers.

L-H4 TEACHER RETENTION *

(Resolutions: D-2, D-3, D-4, D-7, D-25, F-2)

Belief: Students cannot be guaranteed the highly qualified teachers they deserve if new teachers decide to leave the profession within their first few years. New teachers cannot be expected to stay in the profession when they feel overwhelmed, unempowered and underpaid.

Action: The Association calls on the General Assembly, elsewhere in this platform, to enact collective bargaining for teachers and other public school employees; bargaining rights will empower teachers and address the pay issue. The Association urges the General Assembly to create a teacher retention grant program that would further address the issue of teachers leaving the profession. Districts could apply for these grants to fund innovative local programs that might include, but would not be limited to: an expanded mentoring program; release time for veteran teachers to assist new teachers; assigning new teachers to work in the classroom with a veteran teacher for parts of the day or week; and assigning new teachers less than a full teaching load. Districts would have to demonstrate an actual improvement in their retention rate for new teachers in order to be eligible for grant renewal.

L-H5 TEACHER RECRUITMENT

(Resolutions: D-2, J-7, J-8)

Belief: Students cannot be guaranteed the highly qualified teachers they deserve unless talented, intelligent, caring individuals are recruited to join the teaching profession.

Action: The Association calls on the General Assembly to provide a tuition-free college education at any Missouri public higher education institution to any person who earns a Missouri teaching certificate and teaches in a Missouri public school for a minimum of five years. The Association also asks the General Assembly to appropriate funds to promote the teaching profession.

L-H6 ELIMINATING INEQUITIES IN COMPENSATION *

(Resolution: F-4)

Belief: All certified education employees with instructional responsibilities have the right to receive appropriate compensation by being placed on the professional salary schedule.

Action: The Association urges the General Assembly to enact legislation to require school districts to place all certificated employees with instructional duties on the professional salary schedule.

L-H7 PROMPT PAYMENT FOR CONTRACTED DUTIES IF DESIRED *

(Resolution: F-4)

Belief: All employees should be given the opportunity for prompt payment of their contracted duties but should be offered the opportunity of receiving payments on a 12-month basis for convenience.

Action: The Association supports legislation that would ensure employees have the option to choose prompt payment or payment over 12 months.

L-H8 INSURANCE COVERAGE FOR HEALTH CARE AND ACCIDENTS *

(Resolutions: F-5, F-6)

Belief: As a basic benefit of employment, education employees should be provided adequate health, dental, vision, mental health and accident insurance coverage. Health care coverage is quickly approaching a state of crisis. Solutions need to be found to better control costs, to expand coverage and allow individuals to choose their own doctors and hospitals. Local districts or the state should offer the option of at least one fully funded health and accident defined-benefit plan for their employees. This plan should include coverage for routine comprehensive physical exams, prenatal and obstetric services and preventive examination services.

Action: The Association urges the General Assembly to place on the statewide ballot, a repeal of the provisions of the Hancock Amendment in order to enact legislation requiring all school districts to provide adequate health, dental, vision, mental health and accident defined-benefit insurance for all education employees and retirees through a local district plan, the statewide participatory plan or a universal care/single-payer health care system for the state of Missouri. Such legislation should also protect employees when a change in insurance is made by a district to ensure equivalent coverage. The Association strongly opposes any effort to eliminate the requirement that school districts offer health insurance to retirees.

L-H9 REGULATION OF LONG TERM CARE (LTC) INSURANCE

(Resolution: F-6)

Belief: All Missouri citizens, including those who purchased long-term care insurance prior to 2004, should be afforded “equal protection” from unnecessary and excessive rate increases.

Action: The Association urges the General Assembly to enact legislation directing the Missouri Division of Insurance to provide regulatory approval of all long-term care rate increases filed in the State of Missouri regardless of the date the policy was issued.

L-H10 CHILDREN OF NONRESIDENT SCHOOL EMPLOYEES *

(Resolution: C-5, C-26)

Belief: There are educational, economic and practical benefits for allowing a child to attend school in the district wherein his or her parent is employed.

Action: The Association urges the General Assembly to pass legislation mandating that, upon request of the employee and upon space available in the school district, children of all employees be permitted to attend the school district where employed, at no cost to the employee and without limitation based on student needs or capabilities.

L-H11 HIGHER EDUCATION AFFORDABILITY

(Resolutions: A-1, A-15, B-35)

Belief: Missouri’s undergraduate students deserve access to high-quality student loans at the lowest possible cost and interest rate.

Action: The Association urges the legislature to protect MOHELA and other student loan programs from being sold or transferred to private ownership.

Provide an Actuarially Sound Retirement Plan Needed to Attract and Retain the Best Teachers and Staff

L-I1 MEMBER CONTROL OF RETIREMENT SYSTEM

(Resolution: F-22, F-23)

Belief: Decisions affecting the Public School Retirement Systems (PSRS) and Public Education Employee Retirement System (PEERS)] should be made by a board chosen by the members of those systems.

Action: The Association urges the establishment of a new board which has equitable representation of the following constituencies: those already retired; active members of the PEERS system; and, active members of the PSRS system. Each constituency would exclusively elect the board member or members to represent it on the PSRS Board.

L-I2 PROTECTION OF THE RETIREMENT SYSTEM

(Resolution: F-22, F-23)

Belief: All threats to the solvency of the retirement systems should be rejected.

Action: The Association urges the legislature to refrain from enacting benefit reductions for active members. The Association urges the legislature to reject any attempt to take assets from the PSRS or PEERS systems, change the defined benefit programs to defined contribution programs or to take control of the system away from the PSRS Board. The Association urges the legislature to reject any attempt to take control of system assets from the MOSERS system.

L-I3 PROTECTION OF RETIREMENT BENEFITS*(Resolution: F-22, F-23)*

Belief: Retirement plans for education employees should provide an adequate, guaranteed pension payment for life for all eligible, retired employees. Retirement systems should be operated carefully with a priority to ensuring the long-term financial capability of the system to meet the payment demands of retirees while ensuring reasonable contributions from active members. Any changes to pension benefits should be carefully considered over a number of years and should be made only with the broad approval of both active and retired members of the affected system. Every effort should be made to ensure that the benefits of current and future active members are consistent and equitable.

Action: The Association urges the legislature to refrain from enacting benefit reductions for active members or reduced benefits for new active members. The Association urges the General Assembly to enact legislation to stabilize CURP employer contributions.

L- I4 EARNING CAP FOR DETERMINING FINAL AVERAGE SALARY*(Resolution: F-22, F-23)*

Belief: All retirement system members, after a career in education, deserve any benefit that they have legitimately earned.

Action: The Association urges the General Assembly to reinstate the 20 percent rule or make adjustments that do not unjustly reduce members' retirement benefits.

L-I5 FAIR AND EQUITABLE RETIREMENT COMPENSATION*(Resolution: F-22, F-23)*

Belief: After a career of educating and caring for the children in our public schools, teachers and other education employees deserve the best retirement benefits possible, given the funds available.

Action: The Association urges that the General Assembly use future profits gained through investments to move toward a goal of a retirement benefit that is a true 80 percent of the retiree's salary. While moving toward this goal, those members who are already retired should receive a fair share of the investment profits based on years of service, contributions paid into the system compared to active members and number of years a person has been retired.

L-I6 GRADUATED MULTIPLIER FROM 25 TO 35 YEARS OF SERVICE*(Resolution: F-22)*

Belief: A logical system for teacher retirement must take several factors into account. Teaching is demanding and requires teachers to have a positive attitude in order to deal well with public school children. Teachers and other education employees who have 25 or more years in the profession should continue to have the option of retiring with a fair return for their years of service. At the same time, educators who choose to give more years of service, from 30 to 35 years, should be rewarded with even higher levels of retirement benefits.

Action: The Association urges the General Assembly to renew the 2.55 percent multiplier for 31 years or more of service making it a permanent feature of the system.

L-I7 GAIN SHARING*(Resolution: F-22)*

Belief: Funding of the Public School Retirement System is largely dependent on success of financial markets. The Association believes that during strong market cycles some profits are needed to offset weaker market cycles. Some profits are needed for system improvements and some should be returned to the participants.

Action: The present retirement system, which guarantees certain defined benefits for our members, should not be threatened. Gain sharing money for actives should be placed in an investment account as directed by the member.

L-18 COST-OF-LIVING ADJUSTMENTS

(Resolution: F-22)

Belief: Retired teachers should receive annual cost-of-living increases.

Action: The Association understands the importance of stabilizing the financial condition of the retirement system but asks that the 80 percent cap be removed as soon as possible. Eventually, the COLA increases should begin on the first January after retirement.

L-19 INCREASE IN RETIREMENT BENEFITS FOR THE PUBLIC EDUCATION EMPLOYEE'S RETIREMENT SYSTEM

(Resolution: F-22)

Belief: PEERS school employees who meet the challenges of the educational system and fulfill the requirements for retirement should be afforded the maximum benefit the system will allow.

Action: The Association recommends increasing the multiplying factor to 1.65 percent, reducing the COLA waiting time to the first January after retirement, further increasing the percentage allowed under the COLA cap and giving corresponding increases to those already retired.

L-110 ACCESS TO REASONABLY PRICED HEALTH INSURANCE AND PRESCRIPTION DRUGS FOR RETIRED EDUCATION EMPLOYEES *

(Resolutions: F-5, F-6, F-22)

Belief: After a career of educating and caring for children in our public schools, teachers and other education employees should have access to adequate health care in their retirement years with emphasis on availability of reasonably priced prescription drugs.

Action: The Association requests that education employees be allowed the right to wait until a year after they retire to decide whether to select staying on a school district's health plan at their own cost. The Association also asks that the General Assembly allow voluntary membership of all educators and retirees in MCHCP.

L-111 RIGHT TO PURCHASE RETIREMENT SYSTEM CREDIT

(Resolution: F-22)

Belief: Members of both the Public School Retirement System and Public Education Employee Retirement System should be allowed to purchase credit for time spent in the service of country, community and family. All time spent in federally funded service organizations and time spent on family or medical leave deserves equal treatment. Members should also be allowed to purchase credit for teaching half-days for those years in which half-day teachers were not covered by PSRS.

Action: The Association urges the General Assembly to enact legislation allowing members who served in federally funded service organizations, such as the Peace Corps, VISTA, etc., who spent time on unpaid family or medical leave, who taught half-days prior to half-day service being included in PSRS, or who served as certificated teachers in nonpublic schools to purchase retirement credit under the PSRS. Further, whatever rights for purchase of credit are granted to teachers in the PSRS should be granted as well to members in the PEERS. The Association thanks the General Assembly for enactment of simplified service credit purchases as contained in H.B. 346 (2003) and the expanded service credit purchase options contained in H.B. 443 (2005). The Association requests that the General Assembly allow the purchase of prior service credit on an actuarial basis with a corresponding reduction in monthly benefit as an alternative to up-front purchase of service credit. The Association requests that the legislature enact a mechanism for members no

longer employed by a school district to buy allowable service credit, provided that all such purchases are made in a way that is actuarially neutral for the system.

L-I12 RETIREMENT CONTRIBUTION RATE

(Resolution: F-22)

Belief: Education employees should not have to contribute the same number of dollars to the retirement system at the same rate as the school districts.

Action: The Association urges the General Assembly to enact legislation repealing this equal contribution requirement and setting the employee contribution rate at a lower level with the retirement board being given the authority to set the employer rate at whatever rate is necessary to maintain current benefits and to raise only the employer rate to cover the cost of any further improvements. Further, collective bargaining legislation should be enacted to allow a local organization to negotiate an agreement for the employer to pay any portion of the employee's contribution.

L-I13 IMPACT OF MANDATORY SOCIAL SECURITY ON RETIREMENT PROVISIONS

(Resolution: F-22)

Belief: Public employee retirement funds that elected not to become part of the federal Social Security system, such as the Missouri Public School Retirement System, should not be forced to join Social Security. If the federal government does mandate PSRS participation in Social Security, PSRS members should not be penalized.

Action: The Association urges the General Assembly to revise the portion of the retirement law that would go into effect in the event of mandatory Social Security. Such changes should be designed to maximize benefits and minimize the member contribution rate. The Association urges the General Assembly to clarify in law that the current retirement law definition for "teacher" applies to all school districts for the purpose of determining required Social Security coverage for PSRS members.

L-I14 DISABILITY

(Resolution: F-22, I-18, I-19, I-23)

Belief: Every education employee, regardless of years of experience, has the right to adequate benefits if permanently disabled.

Action: The Association urges the General Assembly, when the system is financially able, to pass legislation providing for immediate investiture in the retirement system for disability retirement benefits at two-thirds of a disabled employee's income prior to the disability.

L-I15 PARTIAL DISABILITY RETIREMENT BENEFITS

(Resolutions: F-22, F-23)

Belief: Teachers who have been declared eligible for disability retirement and who wish to teach part time and are physically capable of doing so should be eligible for partial disability payment in the event that part-time employment is realized.

Action: The Association urges legislation to provide that a teacher who has been declared eligible for disability retirement and who subsequently determines that he or she wishes to teach part time would be eligible for a partial disability payment in the event that part-time employment is realized.

L-I16 SURVIVOR BENEFITS

(Resolution: F-22)

Belief: A member of the retirement system should be able to designate someone who will receive survivor benefits when the member dies. The designee should benefit from payments into the system made both by the member and by the member's employer.

Action: The Association urges the General Assembly to provide that a retirement system member may designate someone to receive survivor benefits and that, if the member dies before retiring, the designee will receive the benefits that the designee would have been entitled to if the member retired and then died.

L-I17 EMPLOYMENT OF RETIRED PSRS/PEERS IN PUBLIC EDUCATION

(Resolutions: D-13, F-4, F-22, F-23)

Belief: Many school districts have great difficulty finding qualified candidates to serve as substitute teachers, adversely impacting the continuity of education for students and burdening co-workers who are often asked to “cover.” Retired members of the Public School Retirement System and Public Education Employee Retirement System should be able to fill the role of substitute teachers for more than 550 hours assuming it does not lead to those substitutes filling the place of a full-time teacher. Limitations on working after retirement should be consistently applied to all retirees to provide fair and equal treatment and protect the financial status of the system.

Action: The Association requests that the number of hours allowed be increased, or that the limitation be based on income, as long as there are restrictions that prevent retired teachers from being employed in place of a full-time teacher. The Association also urges the General Assembly to remove any restriction for a PSRS retiree from working in a PEERS position or a PEERS retiree from working in a PSRS position.

L-I18 STATE INCOME TAX ON RETIREMENT INCOME

(Resolution: F-22)

Belief: Retired education employees should be treated equitably in the amount paid the state in income tax.

Action: The Association urges the General Assembly to enact legislation to equalize the taxable income limits for those receiving benefits from the PSRS and those receiving benefits from Social Security.

L-I19 PENSION DEDUCTION

(Resolution: F-22, F-23)

Belief: Retired education employees should be offered the same convenience as active education employees in paying professional dues, making regular charitable contributions or other regular expenses.

Action: The Association urges the General Assembly to require that Public School Retirement System provide a mechanism, similar to payroll deduction, through which retired education employees can have regular amounts deducted each month from their retirement benefit payments for professional dues, charitable contributions and other lawful purposes.

L-I20 ACTUARIAL STUDIES

(Resolution: F-22, F-23)

Belief: The General Assembly should have all the information it needs when making decisions about education employee retirement plan changes.

Action: The Association suggests the General Assembly to enact a law to require the PSRS board to provide such actuarial studies as are requested by General Assembly members.

L-I21 IMPACT OF SOCIAL SECURITY OFFSETS ON EDUCATORS RECEIVING PUBLIC PENSIONS (GPO/WEP)

(Resolution: F-22, F-23)

Belief: Retired educators in Missouri and 14 other states should not be penalized because they have a public pension.

Action: The Association urges the General Assembly to adopt a concurrent resolution urging the U.S. Congress to eliminate the GPO and WEP.

L-I22 DISTRICT 403(b) PLANS*(Resolution: F-22)*

Belief: School districts should have full “fiduciary responsibility” regarding their 403(b) plans. District 403(b) plans should be subject to industry standard requirements designed to serve the interests of the participants by operating solely in the interests of the plan participants, having reasonable and transparent costs, and featuring broadly diversified investment options designed to reduce risk and increase return in a portfolio.

Action: The Association urges the General Assembly to enact legislation to require school districts and other public employers to exercise full fiduciary responsibility over their 403(b) plans.

**MNEA Believes That
Teachers And Other School Employees Are Empowered
To Do Their Best Work On Behalf Of Missouri’s Children
When The Rights Of These Employees Are Respected**

L-J1 COLLECTIVE BARGAINING *

(Resolutions: D-9, D-14, D-16, D-20, D-24, E-2, E-3, F-1, F-2, F-4, F-5, F-7, F-8, F-9, F-10, F-13, F-14, F-15, F-20)

Belief: Missouri education employees should have the legal right to organize and bargain collectively, through an exclusive representative of their choosing, the terms and conditions of their employment and other matters of mutual concern, including the development of teacher evaluation, instructional programs and policies. An exclusive representative for education employees should have the ability to agree, through collective bargaining with binding arbitration, to modifications of salary, working conditions, employee rights and other terms of employment that may vary from those provisions otherwise specified in state law. All education employees should be allowed to have funds deducted from their paychecks in order to support the representatives of their choosing.

Action: The Association urges the legislature to repeal the portions of H.B. 1413 (2018) that impair employee rights to participate in public sector unions and provisions that interfere with local control of public sector bargaining. The Association further urges the General Assembly to enact implementing legislation that guarantees all education employees the right to organize and bargain collectively as required by the Missouri Constitution under the recent Missouri Supreme Court ruling. Such legislation should provide for: exclusive representation; good faith bargaining; a clear process for ratification and the right to mediation, fact finding and binding arbitration for grievances and settling impasse. The Association recommends the legislature enact legislation authorizing collective bargaining agreements negotiated with an exclusive representative and subject to binding arbitration to include modifications of salary, working conditions, evaluation systems, employee rights and other terms of employment that may vary from those provisions otherwise specified in state law.

L-J2 UNION SUPPRESSION AND “RIGHT TO WORK” *

(Resolutions: D-9, D-14, E-2, F-1, F-4, F-11, H-1)

Belief: The constitutional right of public employees to bargain collectively may be rendered ineffective unless public employee unions are allowed to operate effectively.

Action: The Association urges the legislature to repeal the portions of H.B. 1413 (2018) that impair employee rights to participate in public sector unions and provisions that interfere with local control of public sector bargaining, including onerous and conflicting recordkeeping requirements, mandatory recertification, restrictions on bargaining and restrictions on bargained agreements.

The Association opposes efforts to limit the right of school employees to bargain with their employers, including efforts to restrict the financial means for bargaining groups to conduct Association activities.

The Association urges the legislature to refrain from enacting any legislation that limits employees’ rights to use payroll deduction for any Association purpose, including political action.

The Association further urges the legislature to reject any attempt to erode the prevailing hourly wage requirement. The Association also urges the legislature to enact legislation requiring employers to promptly and accurately report wage data necessary to properly determine the prevailing wage rates in all areas of the state, with appropriate consequences to employers for failure to report such data.

The Association also urges the legislature to refrain from enacting any legislation that limits employee unions from negotiating fees to compensate for the costs of fulfilling their duties as exclusive representative.

L-J3 PROCEDURAL AND SUBSTANTIVE DUE PROCESS FOR ALL EDUCATION EMPLOYEES *

(Resolutions: C-12, C-15, D-20, D-21, D-22, D-25, D-26, E-3, F-9, F-10, F-11, F-12, F-13, F-15, F-17)

Belief: All education professionals should have the expectation of continuous employment and access to due process, following a probationary period of an appropriate length for their position, provided that the employee is in good standing and is meeting the standards established for that position by state law, district policy and any applicable bargained agreement. True procedural and substantive due process will provide teachers additional protection when combined with the expectation of continuous employment provided by the current tenure law and would extend those rights to noncertified staff. The protection of education employees from arbitrary or capricious decisions pertaining to employment is a necessary condition for quality education.

Action: The Association urges the General Assembly to enact legislation that guarantees all education employees procedural and substantive due process, including replacing the school board in the hearing process with an impartial officer or, at a minimum, allowing access to a preliminary hearing before an impartial officer.

L-J4 CONFIDENTIALITY AND JOB SECURITY *

(Resolutions: C-30, F-18, F-19, F-24, F-26, F-27, I-7, I-8)

Belief: Education employees should be assured the same privacy and rights afforded students in reference to such issues as chemical dependency, mental health, gender identification, drug testing and HIV/AIDS. Policies developed by local districts should protect job security and consider all related information or results as confidential.

Action: The Association urges the General Assembly to enact legislation protecting the rights and jobs of all education employees and restricting the access to, and use of, information related to employees, including health-related information, results of background checks, leave and benefits information.

L-J5 ACADEMIC FREEDOM FOR HIGHER EDUCATION *

(Resolutions: B-27, D-19, E-1, E-2, E-3, E-4, F-9)

Belief: Academic freedom is essential to foster quality teaching in Missouri's public colleges and universities. Freedom in research is fundamental in advancing the truth. Academic freedom in its teaching aspect is fundamental in protecting the teacher's rights in teaching and the student's freedom in learning. Professors employed by public universities are entitled to full freedom of research and the publication of the results. Teachers are entitled to academic freedom in the classroom in discussing their subjects, provided their remarks are related to the subject matter of a given course or lesson plan. Public university professors are citizens, members of a learned profession, and officers of an educational institution. When they speak or write as citizens, they should be free from institutional censorship or discipline.

Action: The Association urges the General Assembly to pass legislation that guarantees the academic rights of all public higher instructors.

L-J6 PROTECTION FROM BULLYING, HARASSMENT AND DISCRIMINATION IN THE WORKPLACE *

(Resolutions: C-9, C-11, C-12, C-15, C-16, C-18, F-9, F-10, F-11, F-12, F-13, F-14, F-15, F-18, F-19, F-25, I-14, I-15, I-23, J-3)

Belief: All education employees deserve to work in an environment free from workplace bullying, harassment and discrimination. Bullying and harassment, whether discriminatory or not, are unacceptable occupational health hazards.

Action: The Association urges the General Assembly to enact legislation prohibiting all abusive workplace bullying and harassment, regardless of whether such conduct is discriminatory or not, and extending this protection to all education employees, regardless of protected group status, who seek redress for being subjected to an abusive work environment. The Association further urges the General Assembly to reject

any attempt to weaken the definitions of workplace bullying, harassment or discrimination and to extend the protections of the Missouri Human Rights Act to protect sexual orientation and gender identity in housing, disability and the workplace. In addition, the legislation should require administrators to attend a workplace bullying and harassment workshop.

L-J7 CHANGE OF EMPLOYMENT BETWEEN DISTRICTS *

(Resolution: F-4, H-4)

Belief: Teachers should have the opportunity to change their employment from one school district to another without financial penalty. To assist the individual to accomplish this goal, school districts should accept unlimited prior teaching experience and place the individual on the appropriate salary placement step.

Action: The Association urges the General Assembly to require school districts to grant full credit for all previous years of teaching experience when placing newly hired teachers on the salary schedule. The Association recommends the legislature provide additional funding to encourage school districts to hire experienced teachers.

L-J8 EMPLOYEE RIGHTS DURING ANNEXATION, DISSOLUTION OR STRUCTURAL CHANGE *

(Resolutions: A-17, F-4, F-21, F-24, H-4)

Belief: In the event that a school district is to be restructured, annexed or dissolved, it is crucial that the rights of education employees be protected.

Action: The Association urges the General Assembly to enact legislation providing that, if addition or reduction of staff becomes necessary during annexation, dissolution or restructuring, affected, tenured teachers and noncertified employees shall be hired based on seniority and placed on the appropriate salary step which maintains full credit for length of service. Furthermore, this legislation should provide teacher credit toward tenure, and a previously tenured teacher shall gain tenure status with the first contract. Noncertified employees shall retain seniority. Such employees shall carry accumulated leave to their new or restructured district. If multiple teacher retirement systems are involved in the annexation or restructuring, the legislation shall provide for the individual choice of a combined-benefit option or a buy-in option that is actuarially sound.

L-J9 EMPLOYEE RIGHTS DURING STRUCTURAL CHANGE FOR ST. LOUIS COUNTY

(Resolutions: B-33, F-4, F-5, F-6, F-21)

Belief: In the event that the Special School District of St. Louis County is re-structured, it is critical to the students with special needs of St. Louis County that the certified and noncertified staff who educate them be protected.

Action: The Association calls for the General Assembly to enact legislation that preserves the rights, salaries, tenure and accrued benefits of the certified and noncertified employees of SSD in the event of restructuring.

L-J10 REDUCTIONS IN FORCE *

(Resolution: F-21)

Belief: The practice of placing education employees on involuntary leaves of absence during declining enrollment, school district reorganization or adverse financial conditions of the school district should consider seniority within the district. However, consideration should be given to maintaining a proportionate number of certificated minority personnel.

Action: The Association urges the General Assembly to amend existing statutes to use seniority as the basis for placing any education employee on involuntary leave. The Association also urges repeal of the provision

of S.B. 968 allowing financial nonrenewal and urges enactment of language to ensure that all reductions of teacher positions are made by reduction in force rather than nonrenewal.

L-J11 SPECIAL EDUCATION COOPERATIVES *

(Resolution: F-4)

Belief: Education employees of Missouri’s special education cooperatives should be treated equally with other teachers and support personnel of Missouri.

Action: The Association urges the General Assembly to require salary schedules for special education cooperative teachers and support personnel. The Association also urges the General Assembly to mandate that special education cooperative teachers be given tenure provisions within the cooperative and, if the cooperative dissolves, for said tenure to be transferable to participating districts.

L-J12 CHANGING SPECIAL SCHOOL DISTRICTS

(Resolutions: A-13, H-2)

Belief: Special School Districts are established by a vote of the people and any dissolution or structural change also should be approved by a vote of the people in that special school district.

Action: The Association urges the General Assembly to enact legislation providing that the dissolution of, or structural changes in, special districts occur only by a vote of the people in that special school district.

L-J13 EDUCATION EMPLOYEE PROTECTION FROM FALSE CHARGES *

(Resolutions: C-9, C-16, F-12, F-13, F-14, F-15, F-17, F-19)

Belief: The Association believes students should be protected from potential abuse by adults in all school settings and activities. Also, the Association believes the process for protecting students should not come at the expense of the rights of the professional educator.

Action: The Association urges the General Assembly to correct the provisions of S.B. 54 relating to references and mandated reports by correcting terminology in the reporting requirements and removing the reporting of allegations in employee references. The Association calls on the General Assembly to correct the process that damages an education employee’s professional standing by requiring that any record of false allegations of child abuse or other false allegations of misconduct be sealed immediately. The Association urges the enactment of legislation to assist the local school board and employee association in negotiating a fair policy that does not presume education employees are guilty or limit their professional opportunities if false allegations are made against them.

L-J14 HOT-LINE PROCEDURES

(Resolutions: C-5, C-9, C-13, C-15, C-16, F-12, F-13, F-17)

Belief: The hot-line system established to protect children from abuse should also protect education employees from harassment and unsubstantiated charges.

Action: The Association urges the General Assembly to enact legislation that would instill balance in the child abuse hot-line system. The Association commends the General Assembly for the passage of legislation that makes rules clear and straightforward for protecting children and the mandated reporters who report instances of neglect and abuse. The legislation should afford the accused his or her constitutional rights—the right to subpoena documents and call witnesses, the right to a fair due process hearing before a hearing board trained in the hearing and decision-making process—and provide that the record of a person found to have been falsely accused be sealed immediately.

L-J15 TENURE AND TENURE RETENTION **(Resolutions: D-20, E-3, F-9, F-10, F-11, F-12, F-14, H-1)*

Belief: All teachers should be granted tenure at the beginning of their fourth year of teaching in a Missouri public school. All teachers should receive equitable treatment when calculating credit toward tenure. All years of service in Missouri school districts should be credited toward tenure, and previously tenured teachers who change school districts should be able to reacquire tenure after a one-year probationary period. Additionally, tenure should be immediately granted to all teachers returning to a district within five years after leaving a district where they were previously tenured.

Action: The Association urges the legislature to enact legislation granting teachers tenure after three years of service. The Association urges the General Assembly to enact collective bargaining legislation to assist the local association in negotiating to correct this situation by providing that all years acquired toward tenure be credited wherever accrued, that teachers who have acquired tenure in any Missouri school district be granted tenure after a one-year probationary period and that teachers who return to a district within five years where they were previously tenured be granted immediate tenure. The Association urges that access to tenure be granted for all certified pre-kindergarten teachers in all pre-kindergarten programs in the state.

L-J16 EQUAL RIGHTS*(Resolutions: A-8, B-1, F-11, F-12, I-1, I-2, I-3, I-4, I-15, I-16, I-17, I-18, I-20, I-22, I-23)*

Belief: Equality under the law should not be abridged due to gender.

Action: The Association calls on the General Assembly to:

1. Adopt legislation which would provide for gender neutral language in existing laws;
2. Propose an Equal Rights Amendment to the Missouri Constitution;
3. Ratify an Equal Rights Amendment when submitted to the state legislatures for ratification;
4. Adopt legislation establishing equal opportunity and gender equity in education; and
5. Adopt legislation to correct inequities due to gender-based wage disparities.

L-J17 POLITICAL INVOLVEMENT **(Resolutions: F-7, F-11, H-1, H-2, H-3)*

Belief: Education employees should have the right to full participation in the political process at all levels. They should be able to serve as examples of active participation in the political arena. To deny or limit this right for education employees prevents them from serving as examples of political participation before students and denies them the constitutional right to participate in government.

Action: The Association, therefore, urges the General Assembly to:

1. Ensure the right of full political participation for education employees;
2. Enact legislation guaranteeing education employees a leave of absence with no penalty to serve in an elected or appointed political office where absence from job duties is required; and
3. Propose a constitutional amendment to allow legislators, who are qualified, to teach or work in public schools.

Legislative Platform Acronyms

| | | |
|----|----------------|--|
| 1 | | |
| 2 | | |
| 3 | ABCTE | American Board for Certification of Teacher Excellence |
| 4 | ABLE | Achieving a Better Life Experience |
| 5 | ACT | American College Test |
| 6 | AED | Automated External Defibrillator |
| 7 | AHC | Administrative Hearing Commission |
| 8 | AIDS | Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome |
| 9 | ALEC | American Legislative Exchange Council |
| 10 | ALTGLES | Alternative Grade Level Equivalents |
| 11 | ARRA | American Recovery and Reinvestment Act |
| 12 | AYP | Adequate Yearly Progress |
| 13 | CEE | Committee for Educational Equality |
| 14 | COLA | Cost-of-Living Adjustment |
| 15 | CPI | Consumer Price Index |
| 16 | CPR | Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation |
| 17 | CURP | College and University Retirement Plan |
| 18 | DB | Defined Benefit |
| 19 | DC | Defined Contribution |
| 20 | DESE | Department of Elementary and Secondary Education |
| 21 | ECSE | Early Childhood Special Education |
| 22 | ERA | Equal Rights Amendment |
| 23 | ESEA | Elementary and Secondary Education Act |
| 24 | ESL | English as a Second Language |
| 25 | ESP | Education Support Professional |
| 26 | ESSA | Every Student Succeeds Act |
| 27 | FY | Fiscal Year |
| 28 | GASB | Governmental Accounting Standards Board |
| 29 | GPO | Government Pension Offset |
| 30 | H.B. | House Bill |
| 31 | HIV | Human Immunodeficiency Virus |
| 32 | HJR | House Joint Resolution |
| 33 | IDEA | Individuals with Disabilities Education Act |
| 34 | IEP | Individualized Education Plan |
| 35 | IRS | Internal Revenue Service |
| 36 | LEA | Local Education Agency |
| 37 | LTC | Long Term Care |
| 38 | MACCE | Missouri Advisory Council for the Certification of Educators |
| 39 | MAP | Missouri Assessment Program |
| 40 | MAP-A | Missouri Assessment Program-Alternative |
| 41 | MCHCP | Missouri Consolidated Health Care Plan |
| 42 | MDI | Missouri Division of Insurance |
| 43 | MMAT | Missouri Mastery Achievement Test |
| 44 | MNEA | Missouri National Education Association |
| 45 | MOHELA | Missouri Higher Education Loan Authority |

| | | |
|----|---------------|---|
| 1 | MOSERS | Missouri State Employee's Retirement System |
| 2 | MOSIS | Missouri Student Information System |
| 3 | MOST | Missouri Savings for Tuition |
| 4 | MPERS | MoDOT and Patrol Employee's Retirement System |
| 5 | MSHSAA | Missouri State High School Activities Association |
| 6 | MSIP | Missouri School Improvement Program |
| 7 | NCLB | No Child Left Behind |
| 8 | NEA | National Education Association |
| 9 | PDC | Professional Development Committee |
| 10 | PEERS | Public Education Employee Retirement System |
| 11 | PPACA | Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act |
| 12 | PSLF | Public Service Loan Forgiveness |
| 13 | PSRS | Public School Retirement System |
| 14 | RTTT | Race to the Top |
| 15 | RYH4K | Raise Your Hand For Kids |
| 16 | SAB | Special Administrative Board |
| 17 | SARA | State Authorization for Reciprocity Authority |
| 18 | S.B. | Senate Bill |
| 19 | SJR | Senate Joint Resolution |
| 20 | SSD | Special School District of St. Louis County |
| 21 | STEM | Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics |
| 22 | TABOR | Taxpayer Bill of Rights |
| 23 | TIF | Tax Increment Financing |
| 24 | VISTA | Volunteers In Service To America |
| 25 | WEP | Windfall Elimination Provision |

ALPHABETICAL LISTING OF PLANKS

43

| | <u>page</u> | | <u>page</u> |
|---|-------------|--|-------------|
| Academic Freedom for Higher Education..... | 37 | Eliminating Inequities in Compensation..... | 29 |
| Academic Progress and Graduation..... | 10 | Employee-Student Communication Policy..... | 3 |
| Access to Appropriate Special Education Services..... | 12 | Emp. Of Retired PSRS/PEERS in Public Ed..... | 34 |
| Access to Public Ed. for Resident Students..... | 10 | Emp. Rights during Annexation, Dissolution or Structural Change..... | 38 |
| Access to Reasonably Priced Health Ins. and Prescription Drugs for Ret. Ed. Emp..... | 32 | Emp. Rights during Structural Change for St. Louis Co. Special School Dist..... | 38 |
| Access to School Information..... | 19 | Energy Alternatives for Schools..... | 2 |
| Access to Student Information..... | 14 | Equal Rights..... | 40 |
| Actuarial Studies..... | 34 | Equal Opportunity and Safety for All..... | 15 |
| Adequate and Equitable Funding for Great Public Schools for Every Child..... | 4 | Ethics in Government..... | 20 |
| Adult Literacy..... | 26 | Extended Learning Time..... | 16 |
| Alternative Schools..... | 9 | Fair and Adequate Local Funding for Great Public Schools..... | 6 |
| Assessment of Students with Special Needs..... | 12 | Fair, Adequate and Sustainable Taxation to Support Public Education..... | 6 |
| Autonomy of the State Board of Education..... | 17 | Fair and Equitable Retirement Compensation..... | 31 |
| Ban on Corporal Punishment in Schools..... | 1 | Fair Funding for Quality Public Higher Edu..... | 5 |
| Bullying in Schools..... | 15 | Fair Housing Policy and Integration of Public Schools..... | 16 |
| Campus Safety and Accountability..... | 15 | Four-Day School Week..... | 8 |
| Certification Standards..... | 22 | Gain Sharing..... | 31 |
| Change of Employment between Districts..... | 38 | Graduated Multiplier from 25 to 35 Years of Service..... | 31 |
| Changing Special School Districts..... | 39 | Gun-Free Schools..... | 1 |
| Charter Schools..... | 25 | Healthcare for all Children..... | 13 |
| Children of Non-Resident School Employees..... | 30 | High Quality Evaluation System for Teachers..... | 23 |
| Class Size..... | 23 | High School Course Requirements..... | 8 |
| Climate Controlled Learning Environment..... | 2 | High Stakes Testing..... | 12 |
| Collective Bargaining..... | 36 | High Standards for Science Education..... | 27 |
| College Required Curriculum for Public Schools.... | 8 | Higher Education Affordability..... | 30 |
| Compulsory School Attendance-Beginning..... | 9 | Higher Education Opportunities..... | 5 |
| Compulsory School Attendance-Completion..... | 9 | Home Schools..... | 17 |
| Confidentiality and Job Security..... | 37 | Hot-Line Procedures..... | 39 |
| Constitutional Right to a Free Public Education.... | 4 | Immunity from Liability..... | 1 |
| Coordinated School Health Programs..... | 13 | Impact of Mandatory Social Security on Retirement Provisions..... | 33 |
| Cost-of-Living Adjustments..... | 32 | Impact of Social Security Offsets on Educators Receiving Public Pensions..... | 34 |
| Defense of the Non-Partisan Court Plan..... | 20 | Increase in Retirement Benefits for the Public Education Employees Retirement System..... | 32 |
| Development of Learning Standards and Curriculum..... | 11 | Increased Funding for Special Education..... | 7 |
| Disability..... | 33 | In-State Tuition for Undocumented Students..... | 10 |
| District 403(b) Plans..... | 35 | Insurance Coverage for Health Care & Accidents.. | 29 |
| Drop-In Schooling and School Flex Programs..... | 10 | Intellectual Diversity..... | 27 |
| Duty Free Lunch..... | 24 | Legislative Platform Acronyms..... | 41 |
| Early Childhood Education..... | 11 | Living Wage for Ed. Support Professionals..... | 28 |
| Earning Cap for Determining Final Average Salary..... | 31 | Maintaining and Increasing Investment in Public Ed. to Provide Great Public Schools for Every Child and Promote Economic Success for All Missourians..... | 6 |
| Ed. Emp. Protection from False Charges..... | 39 | | |
| Ed. Employees' Liability Involving Student Communications..... | 24 | | |
| Education for Gifted and Talented Students..... | 13 | | |
| Education of Foster and Homeless Students..... | 8 | | |

| | |
|---|----|
| Mandated Seat Belts for School Buses..... | 2 |
| Member Control of Retirement System..... | 30 |
| Minimum Salary Schedules..... | 28 |
| Missouri State High School Activities Assn..... | 27 |
| Non-Partisan Commission for Higher Education | |
| Board Appointments..... | 17 |
| Nutrition of School Meals..... | 14 |
| Parental Involvement in Student Success..... | 8 |
| Partial Disability Retirement Benefits..... | 33 |
| Peer Assistance and Review..... | 22 |
| Pension Deduction..... | 34 |
| Performance of Medical Procedures..... | 22 |
| Placement of Early Childhood Students in | |
| Special Education Programs..... | 12 |
| Political Involvement..... | 40 |
| Posting Student Work on Teacher | |
| Websites..... | 3 |
| Procedural and Substantive Due Process for | |
| All Education Employees..... | 37 |
| Professional Development Committees..... | 21 |
| Professional Standards Board..... | 21 |
| Professional Teaching Standards..... | 21 |
| Promoting Citizenship and Participation in | |
| Elections | 19 |
| Prompt Payment for Contracted Duties | |
| if Desired..... | 29 |
| Protect Missouri Act..... | 19 |
| Protecting Students from Impacts of Attacks on | |
| School Revenues..... | 5 |
| Protection from Bullying, Harassment and | |
| Discrimination in the Workplace..... | 37 |
| Protection of Retirement Benefits..... | 31 |
| Protection of Student Information | |
| Transmitted Electronically..... | 3 |
| Protection of the Retirement System..... | 30 |
| Public Dollars for Public Schools..... | 5 |
| Public School Attendance Options..... | 14 |
| Pupil Transportation..... | 15 |
| Reductions in Force..... | 38 |
| Regulation of Long Term Care (LTC) Insurance... | 30 |
| Religious Non-Participation in Instruction..... | 16 |
| Respecting the Finality of Course Grades | |
| Established by a Teacher..... | 24 |
| Retirement Contribution Rate..... | 33 |
| Right to Local School Governance..... | 19 |
| Right to Purchase Ret. System Credit..... | 32 |
| Safe Schools..... | 1 |
| Safety Standards..... | 2 |
| School Accountability..... | 17 |
| School Governing Board Elections..... | 18 |

| | |
|--|----|
| School Board Member Accountability..... | 18 |
| School Board Member Training..... | 18 |
| School Calendars..... | 26 |
| School Districts Adjusting to Student Transfers... | 20 |
| Sex Education..... | 27 |
| Soft Drink and Snack Consumption..... | 14 |
| Special Education Cooperatives..... | 39 |
| Special Education Instructional Time..... | 24 |
| State Income Tax on Retirement Income..... | 34 |
| Student Attendance Requirements..... | 7 |
| Summer School..... | 16 |
| Support for Excellence in Higher Education..... | 27 |
| Support for Teachers in National Board | |
| Certification Process..... | 21 |
| Support Services Ratios..... | 23 |
| Survivor Benefits..... | 33 |
| Teacher Accountability for Student | |
| Performance..... | 11 |
| Teacher Planning Time..... | 23 |
| Teacher Recruitment..... | 29 |
| Teacher Retention..... | 28 |
| Teacher Salaries..... | 28 |
| Technology in Education..... | 3 |
| Tenure and Tenure Retention..... | 40 |
| Trauma-Sensitive Schools..... | 13 |
| Union Suppression and “Right to Work” | 36 |
| Virtual Education..... | 26 |



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