

Missouri NEA

2020 legislative session highlights

Otto Fajen, MNEA Legislative Director

WHAT PASSED:

Ethics and CLEAN: SJR 38 (Hegeman) would reverse the redistricting reforms of Amendment 1 if approved by voters. Population counts could exclude children and non-citizens. Moves partisan fairness to lowest priority. Interferes with court remedy of a bad map.

Elections and COVID-19: SB 631 (Hegeman) allows absentee ballots (without notary) for voters who have contracted COVID-19 or are at risk of contracting or transmitting COVID-19 (2020 only). Allows notarized “mail-in” ballots (2020 only) for those seeking to avoid risk of COVID-19.

Budget: Full formula funding, \$13.5 M cut to transportation, and possible 10% cut to colleges and universities (must have enhanced Medicaid to make it up). Given the high level of uncertainty, no appropriation line is a guarantee that the funding will be available next year.

Taxation: SB 676 (Luetkemeyer) requires physical inspection of every property with an assessment increase over 15% and shifts the burden of proof on appeals to the assessor in such cases. No caps on assessment increases. Also exempts CARES checks from state income tax.

Use of public funds in elections: HB 1854 (Pfautsch) revises prohibition of using public funds for election purposes. Penalty for a purposeful violation is raised to class 4 election offense.

License Reciprocity: HB 2046 (Grier) requires licensing boards, including SBOE, to grant license reciprocity for professionals, including teachers, holding current, professional license from another state. HB 1511 (Lynch), SB 656 (Cierpiot) and SB 718 (White) grant greater teacher license flexibility for military spouses.

Vaping ban in schools: HB 1862 (Wood) prohibits vaping in public school buildings in the same manner as smoking is currently banned. Removes the infraction penalty.

PSRS/PEERS staff salaries: HB 1467 (Pike) includes language providing that salaries and benefits of executive director and employees of PSRS/PEERS shall be public information.

Lead testing in schools: HB 2120 (Kidd) allows schools to test drinking water for lead content. If the test shows levels at or above EPA standards, the school shall inform all parents.

WHAT DIDN'T PASS:

(everything else)

Charter school issues (expansion, funding, recovery charter HS)

Vouchers

Anti-union attacks

Expansion of full-time virtual programs

Reading instruction mandates

Expansion of guns in K-12 schools or college campuses

Residential property assessment caps

Strict photo ID requirements

Initiative petition changes

Gifted education requirements

Home school activities participation requirements

IEP recording requirements

Policies on seclusion and restraint

Superintendent sharing stipend

Superintendent salary caps

Annexation of Special School Districts

Treatment of penalties and fines in school formula

Restrictions on public employee advocacy

Minimum wage repeal in private schools

Restrictions on human sexuality instruction, LGBTQ clubs, trans athlete

participation Optional course in the Bible

Student newspapers and prior restraint

Pupil transportation funding

TIF reform