



# **Education** **Transformation** **TASK FORCE**

Missouri National Education Association

**Missouri**  
**NEA**  
*Something Better  
for Children and  
Public Education*

# Education Transformation TASK FORCE Purpose and Charges

*“The goal of public education is for all students to have access to a quality public school where they can develop the knowledge and skills to participate fully in our democracy and succeed in this dynamic 21st century world.”*

~MNEA Education Transformation Task Force, November 2009

**Purpose:** To examine the state affiliate’s position on a variety of issues regarding educational transformation and to determine the “building blocks” for transforming public schools.

**Charges:** The Task Force is assigned the following charges:

- To discuss and define the goal of public education
- To examine “education reform” efforts that lead to teacher quality, teacher retention and quality curriculum
- To examine the infrastructure and funding necessary to support “quality” in public education
- To examine professional compensation models including traditional schedules and alternative plans and develop an MNEA position paper on professional compensation models
- To recommend ideas for educating members on task force findings and recommendations
- To make recommendations to the Resolutions Committee and Legislative Committee for platform revisions
- To make recommendations to the MNEA President and Board regarding areas of reform that MNEA needs to specifically address



# Transforming Public Schools, Colleges and Universities Criteria and Indicators

**Transforming Missouri’s public schools in a meaningful, sustainable way requires more than a single solution.** It will require examining the content (what is taught), the process (how learning and teaching take place) and the context (the environment of teaching, learning and working) of our public schools. It will require respectful, difficult conversations among all stakeholders – students, parents, educators, community members and those who determine policies and enact the laws that govern school districts and our institutions of higher education. The most effective changes will come when decisions are local and collaborative. All stakeholders – students, parents, educators and community members – should work together to develop and implement education decisions.

We must recognize that our students come from diverse backgrounds, and educators must have the tools they need to teach students “where they are,” thus connecting the joy of learning to each student’s real world.

The following brief describes Missouri NEA’s beliefs about the considerations that must be examined collaboratively to continue transforming public schools and institutions of higher education so that all students have access to a quality public education. Overarching all of these criteria is our desire to reach the ultimate goal of creating a great public school for every student and our belief that collective bargaining is the vehicle for achieving that goal.

*Throughout this document, the terms “educators” and “education employees” refer to teachers and education support professionals, and any referral to “students” implies “all students.”*

## 1. School Readiness Programs and Services

Early childhood education is vitally important to every child’s success. To create lifelong learners, we must make a concerted effort to meet the physical, emotional and social needs of all children. Perhaps the most important key to successful early childhood education is the involvement of the child’s parents. We support greater parental involvement in early education decisions, as well as organized efforts to integrate instruction on effective parenting skills in childcare and preschool classes. We advocate for contin-

“At the desk where I sit, I have learned one great truth. The answer for all our national problems—the answer for all the problems of the world—comes to a single word. That word is education.”

~ Lyndon B. Johnson



“Although education and the acquisition of skills is a lifelong process, starting early in life is crucial.”

~ Ben Bernanke,  
Chairman of the Federal Reserve

ued efforts to ensure that children, from birth, receive proper nutrition and mental stimulation for healthy development of the body and mind.

## Current Programs That Should Continue and/or Expand

**Parents as Teachers** – Parents must be actively and integrally involved as partners with teachers in fostering a child’s development. It is vital that Missouri’s “Parents as Teachers” program be provided at no cost to parents with services available to all. Program administrators should strive to serve an increased number of low-income families.

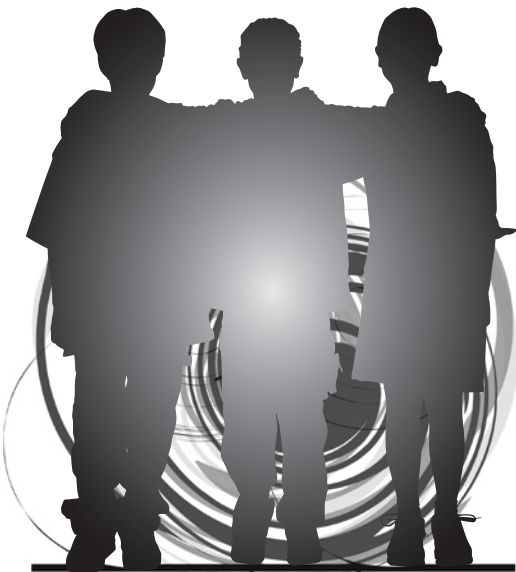
**Head Start** – This program must continue and expand to include more children. To ensure a continued quality program, instructors must receive the same salary and benefits elementary teachers receive. The program must expand to provide comprehensive services to low-income families with children under the age of three, as well as low-income pregnant women.

**Public Early Childhood Education** – An optional program of public early childhood education must be provided for all children whose parents choose to participate. Early childhood activities must include pre-academic skills, incorporating music, art, fine and gross motor activities and socialization skills.

**Mandatory Full-Day Kindergarten** – All school districts in Missouri currently offer full-day kindergarten classes. However, attendance is optional, and in some districts parents are required to pay for the extra half day of classes for their kindergarten students. Full-day kindergarten must be made available to all children at no additional expense to parents, with the compulsory attendance requirement lowered from the current seven years to six years of age.

**Early Childhood Special Education** – To help meet the challenges of children with disabilities, Missouri must expand Early Childhood Special Education classes for any pre-school child whose needs have been identified. Adults who work with children with an identified disorder must receive proper training to understand its many complexities, appropriate treatment and empathy to the unique challenges children with disorders face.

**Professional Development Opportunities** – Professional development opportunities must be provided for all teachers and support professionals who work with young children.



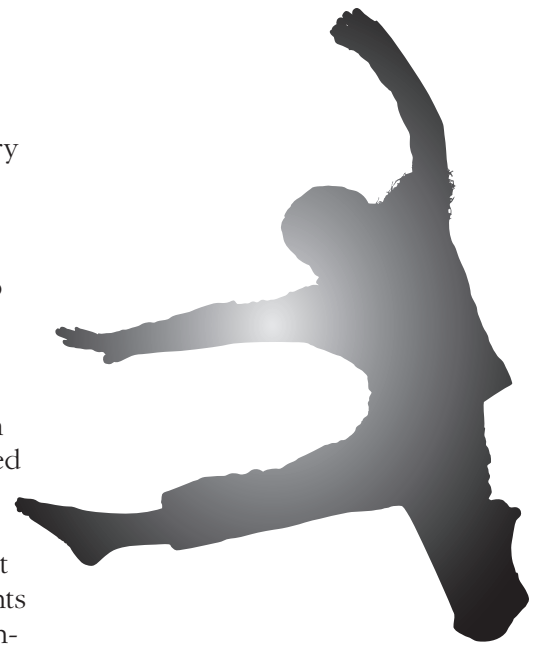
## New Programs That Should Be Established

**Quality Rating System (QRS) for Childcare Facilities** – A voluntary program to rate childcare facilities must be established and the rating must be based upon measurable criteria. QRS would give clear and comparative information about class size, activities, safety, teacher training, student/ teacher ratio and other valuable information to help parents select the facility that best meets their needs.

**Early Childhood Teacher Standards** – Teachers who work with young children must have a bachelor's degree with a specialization in early childhood development and education and must be compensated on a professional salary schedule.

**Early Childhood and Kindergarten Standards** – Studies show that educational programs, birth to three, are effective in providing students a solid educational foundation. Thus, Missouri must align developmentally appropriate early childhood and kindergarten standards to make a smooth transition/bridge between programs, such as Head Start, First Steps, and Parents as Teachers and local school districts.

We believe that effective early childhood education can be accomplished by parents in a home setting, by properly trained caregivers in a childcare facility, by teachers in a school setting or by a combination of these options. Regardless of the setting, young children must be offered high quality early childhood education opportunities that encourage curiosity and creativity.



## 2. Workforce Quality

To ensure high quality, effective education employees, employment conditions must be met through collectively bargained agreements that clearly define qualifications, expectations and responsibilities of both the education employee and the local school district/educational institution.

**The following components will help create a high-quality workplace and an effective workforce in the public school setting:**

**Clear Vision** – A unity of purpose and an accountability system must be designed to support the instructional goals of the district/educational institution.

**Culture of Empowerment** – A culture of empowerment and participatory decision making must be in place. This culture includes education employees and the local association in all hiring decisions.

**Collective Bargaining** – A strong salary schedule, working conditions and effective evaluation procedures must be collectively bargained and will apply to all education employees. All efforts toward outsourcing or privatization of school services must be opposed.

“Missouri will recruit, prepare and support effective educators and leaders as measured by the number of qualified professionals entering the profession, demonstrating mastery of skills and competencies and improving student performance.”

~ Office of Social and Economic  
Data Analysis, University of  
Missouri





**Employee Certification** – Teacher/education professional certification programs must be provided by respected, quality institutions and must directly relate to current public school practices. Routes to alternative certification must include pedagogy, classroom management skills and extensive field experiences. Districts should provide monetary assistance to assist employees who work toward additional certification.

**Standards Board** – An independent standards board responsible for education certification/licensure must be established by the state. This board must supervise all certificate/licensure-related issues for education employees including substantive due process protections.

**Employment Practices** – Bargained, open, fair and consistent procedures must be followed in the hiring process and throughout the employment of all education employees.

**Job Equity** – Collaborative work assignments and student load equity must be bargained, with a research-based ratio of students to education employees. Teachers should not have to work from a cart, and educational employees should not be assigned excessive job duties.

**Collaborative Atmosphere** – Employees must work in a collaborative atmosphere conducive to a climate of school/community partnership, and employers must budget time for educators to collaborate or do research during the contract day.

**Work Within Certificate Area** – Education professionals must work within their individual certificate area with no out-of-field assignments.

**Professional Development** – Employees must receive differentiated professional development that is relevant to each employee. High-quality mentoring programs must be in place for all education employees. The cost of employee training can be minimized by reducing employee turnover, which costs as much as \$17,872 per employee.<sup>1</sup>

**Equipment and Supplies** – Adequate and appropriate equipment, materials and supplies must be provided for all education employees.

**Transfers, Reorganization and Financial Constraints** – A process dealing with transfers due to closing of schools, reorganization of schools/districts or financial constraints must be bargained for all education employees.

A highly skilled professional workforce is necessary for public schools to succeed in the 21st century. Laws and regulations that undermine the profession are detrimental to the educational process. The person best able to participate in discussions and decisions regarding the improvement of education is the person directly responsible for students whether that be a teacher or education support professional. These are the people who must be included in decisions that affect educational workforce quality.

### 3. Conditions of Teaching and Learning

Missouri NEA believes that it is essential to create an effective teaching and learning environment for the entire school community. A key goal for our students is to develop skills to participate in a global society.

#### The following are key areas to support effective conditions of teaching and learning:

**Safe Environment** – A safe environment is a foundational element in creating effective teaching and learning conditions. Educators must work to create a respectful, nurturing environment for themselves and students. Facilities must provide a sheltering environment that protects students and educators from inside and outside threats as well as provide a comfortable, welcoming environment for instruction. Educators must create and support intervention systems that respect the abilities and needs of all students.

**Resources** – All resources must focus on supporting and improving instruction and the learning environment. Curriculum and technical support must be up to date and support best teaching practices. Books and materials must be age and ability appropriate and support the curriculum. Facilitators and mentors must receive training in curriculum, instruction, technology and research to assist all educators in best practices and innovation. Educators and students must have access to research materials and tools in an environment that supports active learning. Educators must have adequate planning and conference time to prepare, collaborate and reflect on effective instruction.

**Flexibility** – Educators must develop schedules to best meet the learning needs and styles of students. Daily, weekly and yearly schedules must allow flexibility to facilitate best practice and effective instruction. Teaching assignments must allow for creativity, professional growth, academic freedom and collaborative instruction.

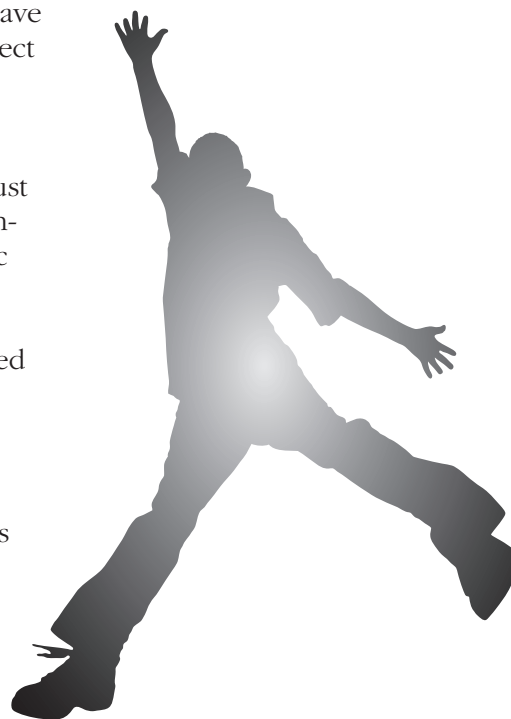
**Professional Responsibility** – Educators must be involved and engaged in the decision-making and input process in all areas of teaching and learning. Educators must have autonomy within the classroom environment to make critical decisions in lesson delivery as well as a voice in shaping decisions in curriculum and the teaching and learning environment. Emphasis must be placed on clear and reasonable expectations as well as professional decision-making.

**Facilities** – To ensure effective teaching and learning, schools and classroom facilities must be safe, clean, functional and welcoming. Facilities must be student, educator, parent and community friendly.

**Relevance to the community** – Educators must share a collaboratively developed mission with the community to enhance the effectiveness of teaching and learning. School staff must involve parents and the community as resources to enhance instruction to strengthen support for education and increase the commitment of all stakeholders.

“School facilities have a direct effect on teaching and learning. Poor school conditions make it more difficult for teachers to deliver an adequate education to their students, adversely affect teachers’ health, and increase the likelihood that teachers will leave their school and the teaching profession. Our nation’s school facilities are a critical part of the educational process. Their condition and upkeep must be addressed in the ongoing discourse about student achievement, teacher effectiveness, and accountability.”

–National Clearinghouse  
for Educational Facilities



MNEA advocates for creation of infrastructure and services that support a safe, healthy school environment with class sizes conducive to personalized instruction and supportive of innovation. The goal must be to create a culture of trust and respect for all stakeholders with an emphasis on collaboration. Conditions for teaching and learning must be agreed upon and outlined in collectively bargained contracts. Instruction must be designed and shaped by meaningful data. Progress must be evaluated through an ongoing, transparent process that includes input from and feedback to all educators including administrators, teachers, other professional educators, parents and support staff.

## 4. Parent and Community Involvement in Pre-K-12 Education

“Decades of research show that when parents are involved, students have: higher grades, test scores, and graduation rates; better school attendance; increased motivation, better self-esteem; lower rates of suspension; decreased use of drugs and alcohol; fewer instances of violent behavior”

~ Parent Teacher Association

Missouri NEA believes that it is essential for students’ parents/guardians to be actively involved in supporting their children’s success in education. Schools must work with and support parents to ensure that physical, emotional and social needs of all children are met.

**The following programs and policies offer a range of options for education employees to be involved in efforts to increase parent and community support for student success.**

**Engagement** – Educator unions and school districts must constructively engage with parents, parent groups and the community on key issues such as funding, testing, student mobility and parent expectations. Efforts must be made to solicit new ideas from community and business groups. Educators must work to develop opportunities for parent and community involvement. Schools must be welcoming places for students and parents. Childcare and transportation must be provided to allow parents to participate in school activities. Educators must make home visits to connect with parents and students (provided that additional contract days are bargained to reflect any increase in educators’ overall workloads).

**Parent Education** – Educators must have resources available to provide parent education programs, including mentoring and training for parents who lack educational skills or parenting skills to support their own success and the success of their children.

**Impact of School Closures** – Educators must highlight the impact of school closures and restructuring on families, neighborhoods and communities. Public charter schools must be accountable and transparent and must respect the rights of students, parents and school staff.<sup>2</sup> Educators and parents must be aware of the impact of public charter schools on district schools.

**Expanded Use of Schools** – Schools are the hub of the community and can incorporate wraparound services from food pantries, charitable





organizations and others. School libraries must have expanded hours for student use. Residential school settings must be established, where appropriate, to serve high-risk students. Schools must increase support for and interest in applied science, dual enrollment, internships and community service.

#### **Expanding Opportunities for Lifelong Student Learning –**

Parents/guardians must be involved in their child's entire educational experience, which includes an educational plan for grades seven through 14. Educators must provide opportunities for all students to continue lifelong learning (including ways for students to loop back into school, if necessary) and must emphasize the validity of training for all employment skill levels.

Strong and effective programs to engage parents/guardians and the community in their schools will help strengthen local organizations and fulfill MNEA's vision of a great public school for every student.

## **5. Quality Curriculum and Standards**

Public education must transform to meet the social, physical, emotional and academic needs of all students. Educators must have both technological and instructional resources available in their classrooms to give students the skills necessary to thrive in the complex work environments of the 21st century.

**The following are the necessary components to meet the learning needs of all students.**

**Academic Freedom** – Educators must have the freedom to deliver the curriculum in a way that reflects their teaching styles as well as meets the needs of their students. Differentiated instruction is one example of an academic strategy that can meet the learning style of students as they attain academic success. It must also address a variety of student abilities.

**Rich, Relevant and Integrated Curriculum** – The development of a relevant curriculum that is rich in content, is an ongoing process. Ample planning time during the school day is needed to provide support for collaboration among educators. Collaboration and ample planning time allow educators to develop creative and innovative lessons to meet the needs of the ever-changing student population. Challenging lessons will pique student curiosity and move them beyond their comfort zone in order to master world-class academics and standards.

When new curricular or instructional programs are adopted, school districts/educational institutions must evaluate them to determine whether these new approaches are effective. The evaluation must be research-based as well as objective and free from political bias.



“It is time for us as states to challenge the education system and finally answer the question, ‘What will it take for every child to be successful?’ Fewer, clearer and higher standards will help us get there.”

~ Gene Wilhoit, executive director  
of the Council of Chief State  
School Officers

**Balance** – Although there has been a great emphasis on developing math and communication arts skills, educators must teach the “whole child.”

To meet the needs of the whole child, course work must include the study of social studies, science, literature, foreign language, fine arts, career and technical education, and health and physical education.

**Instruction to Develop and Support Team Skills** – Developing team skills for today’s graduates is an expectation of the work community. Graduates will spend time in a workplace where they must multi task, work on teams, collaborate with consultants at home and abroad, and effectively use ever-changing technologies. Educators must teach information and communication skills, teach thinking and problem-solving skills, and develop the students’ ability to read and evaluate massive amounts of information. Teachers must promote the development of interpersonal and self-direction skills that encourage student responsibility.

**Dynamic Learning Environments** – Educators must act as facilitators who engage students in learning to sift, sort, connect and evaluate information. Educators must teach information literacy skills necessary for students to function in a global economy, thus giving them ownership of their learning.

**Special Needs Students** – Alternative curriculum and classroom settings are required to address the academic needs of students with specific educational needs. Schools must offer more career/technical education programs, alternative programs (school-to-work, for example) and other specialized choices that will appeal to students’ desires to combine academics with hands-on learning. In addition, schools must provide high quality alternative educational opportunities for students who are non-traditional learners.

**Re-examining High Schools** – A primary goal of all educators is to increase the high school graduation rate. To meet this goal, viable options include:

- Flexible scheduling that gives students the opportunity to fast-track for early graduation.
- Options for dual enrollment and advanced placement classes that offer students the opportunity to earn college credit.
- Career and technical education for all students.
- Virtual classrooms that give all students the opportunity to take courses online or take additional classes

**Access to Schools “24/7”** – Schools can provide an important service by allowing the community to use school buildings after hours. Building utilization could include (but is not limited to) night school classes for members of the community, student tutoring, adult education, health and wellness programs, sports activities and club meetings.



**Year-Round/Summer School** – School districts must explore the feasibility of year-round school and/or summer school for students with demonstrated needs. Another consideration could be a weekday boarding school to meet students’ needs.

**Virtual Public Schools** – Virtual public schools may serve as a valuable tool and resource for schools and students. Virtual schools must: incorporate policies and procedures that promote equitable access; target students who can make best use of the resource; target students with the greatest educational needs for such resources; ensure high instructional standards; and, incorporate public accountability that includes an annual evaluation and review of the program.

Virtual schools have the ability to enhance the public educational opportunities for students but cannot supplant the need for public school opportunities.

Diminished curriculum, narrow focus on testing and loss of local decision making have changed teaching and learning in schools. School districts must streamline the extraneous demands and paperwork on education employees in order to increase time for in-depth learning and time to teach/re-teach.

Although state and federal mandates require testing, the increasing number of district assessment benchmarks—weekly, monthly, quarterly and annually—need to be reduced.

## 6. Higher Education

Missouri NEA believes that continued learning through public higher education institutions and programs is vital to a sound economy and to the ongoing survival and success of our communities and our society. Any successful reform or program of improvement must include recognition of the full range of value provided by higher education and a commitment of the resources necessary to make success attainable.

Cooperation and communication between Pre-K-12 and higher education institutions is imperative. Where that relationship falters or fails, students and adults will be disadvantaged in job selection and retention, lifetime earning potential and their capacity to contribute as citizens to our communities and our society.

While higher education programs educate a significant percentage of the population, a much larger percentage has lost potential because advanced programs are unavailable or unaffordable for them. MNEA firmly believes that reductions in funding and program support for education for all citizens from early childhood through advanced higher education is destructive to the security and future of the nation. Successful reform or systemic improvement of public higher education cannot succeed in an environment of reduced resources. Support for public higher education is an investment in Missouri’s most valuable resource: its citizens.



“What the best and wisest parent wants for his own child, that must be what the community wants for all its children.”

—John Dewey

## MNEA calls for:

1. Programs that will halt and reverse the current alarming trend toward reduced funding of public institutions of higher education.
2. Programs that will create stronger partnerships between Pre-K-12 school districts, community college and university programs to provide a seamless education program for students.
3. Programs that will facilitate better coordination between public community colleges, colleges and universities to offer meaningful, flexible, accessible and affordable programs of study to create a culture of life-long learning.
4. Programs that will facilitate the ability of community colleges to offer innovative, targeted education programs designed to meet specific needs of the communities they serve, and provides access to the full range of higher education's benefits to those for whom that access might otherwise not exist.
5. Programs of study that will meet the needs of an increasingly mobile, technologically dependent population must be created.
6. Programs that invest in broad-based, affordable, and relevant continuing education for all students and adults must be created. Programs need to be created that result in a greater achievement/graduation rate across Missouri.
7. Programs that will recognize and support the intrinsic value of a broad-based higher education, achievement and academic practice to individuals, communities and society.
8. Programs that will recognize and facilitate the role of higher education faculty and employees to create, staff, strengthen and guide institutions of higher education through the shared-governance model with full/complete collective bargaining rights.
9. Programs that will create accreditation and quality standards for all public and private institutions that offer degree programs within the state in order to protect students, businesses and communities from fraudulent or educationally deficient programs.
10. Programs that will recognize and support the principles of academic freedom and the continuity of programs ensured by a tenure system.

The American Dream is the promise of a better life for all. That dream requires a seamless transition between pre-K-12 education and higher education institutions. Businesses need to attract and retain a well-educated, well trained workforce to remain competitive in the 21st century. That workforce needs to possess essential critical-thinking skills and a desire for life-long learning to meet the demands of the 21st century. A well-rounded system of public higher education will provide not only 21st century skills, but also an intrinsic value to both the individual and to our communities that cannot be fully appreciated in purely economic or civic terms.



## 7 Accountability and Student Assessment

Stakeholders at all levels share responsibility for the support and improvement of public education. Improvement must be the intent of all actions. School employees welcome evaluations based on multiple measures of their performance but cannot be the only stakeholders held accountable for student performance. Data systems that capture meaningful data regarding actions of all stakeholders in support of public schools must be created and implemented. Data systems must be designed to provide information predetermined as necessary for making informed decisions. Data must reflect the amount of time spent on test-preparation activities and reflect actual student achievement and learning.

Accountability applies to all stakeholders: the community, students, parents, educators, administrators, school boards, state and federal lawmakers and policy makers.

**A framework for a more complete and effective structure of school accountability must include:**

### Community

**Resources** – Communities must provide infrastructure and resources such as police, clean water and air, safe routes to school and school facilities in order to support learning. Together with state lawmakers, states must provide adequate funding for staff salaries, programs and supplies.

**Student support** – Community members must have high expectations for all students, including internships for secondary students and service learning experiences for all students.

**Involvement** – Parents must be actively involved in school programs. Volunteers must serve on school committees and provide feedback. School boards must be held accountable for oversight of parent involvement.

**Learning readiness** – The district must provide multiple opportunities for information/data to be shared with the community on mobility rates, access to medical care, preschool availability, housing and poverty levels.

### Students

**Attendance** – Students must be on time for school and ready to learn.

**Participation** – Students must complete assigned work and ask for help when needed. They must join in class discussions, carry their weight on group assignments, and show respect toward other students, school staff and volunteers.

**Mental alertness** – Students must get adequate sleep, exercise and nutrition for optimal mental alertness.

**Monitor progress** – Students must monitor their progress toward learning goals, make changes as needed and try new ways of learning.



“The goal of accountability should be to support and improve schools, not the heedless destruction of careers, reputations, lives, communities and institutions.”

~ Diane Ravitch (2010)





## Parents

**Attendance** – Parents must help counsel their children on the importance of adequate sleep, proper nutrition and getting to school on time every day. Furthermore, parents must keep their children at home when they have a fever and/or could spread an illness.

**Partnership** – Parents must partner and communicate with educators and support school discipline decisions. Parents must work with their children to teach them good study skills (i.e., providing time and space for completing homework, checking to see that homework is complete, limiting television, video games, cell phone and computer access and encouraging children to exercise daily).

**Involvement** – Parents must actively participate in school programs, volunteer at school(s), provide feedback as requested and hold the school board accountable for its education and financial decisions.

**Guidance** – Parents must teach responsibility, appreciation and respect for others.

## Educators

**Effective Educators** – Educators must demonstrate a deep understanding of subject matter and use appropriate instructional strategies to help students meet rigorous standards, understand and engage students in critical/creative thinking and problem-solving, and use various classroom assessment strategies to monitor student progress.

**Professional Development** – Educators must participate in the planning of school-based professional learning, meet regularly with colleagues during the school day to plan instruction, analyze student data to monitor and revise school and classroom improvement strategies, collaboratively set professional learning goals, and receive follow-up support when implementing new classroom practices as a result of professional learning.

**Learning Environment** – Educators must establish a learning environment that is emotionally and physically safe, communicate high expectations for every student and analyze the impact of attitude, background, culture and social class on the teaching process. They must create an inclusive learning environment that allows every student to reach his/her potential.

**Family Involvement** – Educators must demonstrate respect and appreciation for students, families and their cultural backgrounds, must communicate with families and must include families in the educational process.

## Principals/Middle Management (P/MM)

**Professional Development** – P/MM must promote the use of research-based instructional strategies and effective collaboration skills through modeling at staff meetings, committee meetings and school-wide events.

They must structure the school day/week to include regular meeting times for staff collaboration during the school day and share instructional leadership with highly skilled teachers.

**Limited Goals** – P/MM must identify school improvement/professional development goals by analyzing a variety of disaggregated data with the staff. They must involve the staff in planning and implementing high quality professional learning, focus resources on a small number of collaboratively selected high-priority goals, and collaborate with staff to create rubrics that clearly describe expected classroom practices and the implementation process for new classroom practices.

**School Culture** – P/MM are responsible for collaboratively building a school culture of trust and are collectively responsible for student learning in an environment that is emotionally and physically safe for teachers and students. They must maintain a culture that respects risk-taking, encourages collegial exchange, sustains trust, resolves conflict and engages the whole staff as a learning community to improve the learning of all students. They must work to create a school culture that supports innovation and continuous improvement.

**Family involvement** – P/MM must demonstrate respect for students and families and implement strategies to increase family involvement while taking cultural backgrounds into account.

**Teacher and Staff Evaluations** – P/MM must ensure that teacher and staff evaluations are fair and timely, are locally bargained and use multiple, valid and reliable measures of teacher and staff practice. Evaluation systems must be developed and agreed upon in a collaborative process involving affected personnel and must be designed primarily to improve instruction and spur professional development and growth.

## Superintendent and Other District/Institution Administrators

**Professional Development** – Superintendents/administrators must bargain policies and structures that support implementation of learning communities within the district/education institution. They must ensure that learning teams have access to materials, have time and resources to accomplish their goals and promote the use of 25 percent of the work-week for job-embedded learning.<sup>3</sup> They must work with the school board to adequately fund comprehensive, district-wide professional development and provide incentives for mentoring, developing curriculum, participating in leadership opportunities, presenting workshops, serving on school improvement committees, etc.

**Effective Leaders** – Superintendents must work collaboratively with all stakeholders, advocating and practicing distributed leadership to create commitment to and ownership of district goals. In addition, they must ensure that district administrators are prepared to be skillful leaders. Superintendents must provide sustained experiences for administrators to learn about group processes, group dynamics, the stages of group development and group decision making. They must support the



training of evaluators to conduct fair, transparent and impartial staff evaluations. They must encourage and train teachers as instructional leaders.

**Limit Goals** – Superintendents must focus on improvement efforts on a small number of high-priority goals that can be accomplished with available resources and ensure full implementation, lasting two to three years. These goals must be collaboratively set with unions and principals. School improvement programs must be based on research and analysis of student work.

**Equity** – Superintendents must ensure that district policies addressing educational equity issues for all students are bargained.

**Education Employee Evaluations** – Superintendents must ensure that educational employees' evaluations are fair and timely, locally bargained and use multiple, valid and reliable measures of staff practice. These evaluation systems must be developed in a collectively bargained process and must be designed to improve student learning.

**Family and Community Involvement** – Superintendents must ensure that district policies, facilities and personnel are welcoming to families and must encourage the involvement of families and community in the education of children.

**Data** – Superintendents have the responsibility of making sure that data is accurately collected and reported. This data must include allocation of resources, student load and space; preschool availability; teacher preparation; working conditions; student achievement; and quality of curriculum.

## School Board/Board of Governors/Trustees (The Board)

**Bargained Agreements** – The board must adopt collectively bargained employee agreements that require a work schedule that supports ongoing collaboration and learning time during the school day, as well as providing additional compensation for activities that extend beyond the contract day or that are in addition to what is required of all staff.

**Compensation** – The board must provide professional compensation and a living wage for support staff and must support voluntary, alternative compensation structures that are locally bargained with affected personnel.<sup>4</sup>

**Professional Learning** – The board must adequately fund professional learning with five to ten percent of the district's budget allocated to professional learning.<sup>5</sup>

**Time to Learn** – The board must collaborate with staff and community to determine the age-appropriate beginning and ending times for the school day (i.e., secondary schools should begin 8:30 a.m. or later).<sup>6</sup> The board must provide after-school programs where needed. If there is a need for more learning time, options could include moving to a year-round schedule or lengthening of the school year. School schedules for learners at all levels must be bargained to meet the needs of all learners. The board must compensate staff for additional days of work. The board must provide high quality early education and Parents as Teachers programs. Tutoring opportunities for students should be freely available.

**Hiring** – The board must bargain a policy of hiring fully certified/licensed professionals and must bargain a policy of hiring the most qualified individuals.

**Curriculum** – The board is responsible for ensuring that all steps have been taken to provide a well-rounded and research-based curriculum to all students. (See "Quality Curriculum and Standards," Section 5-c.)

**Effective Leadership** – The board must demonstrate fiduciary responsibility and a commitment to lifelong learning (demonstrated by participation in school board training) and model a commitment to students and their learning.

## Federal and State Policy Makers

- Education must be the state’s primary responsibility.
- State legislators must be responsible for adequately and equitably funding public schools/institutions for all students at all levels.
- Federal policies and programs must support, not hinder, state and local efforts to maintain and improve public schools.
- Testing must support and inform instruction and be used to help target additional resources when needed. Testing must not be used to punish states, districts or school staff.
- State law must empower all education employees to advocate for better working conditions and resources for their students through collective bargaining.

**Accountability applies to all stakeholders:** the community, students, parents, educators, administrators, school boards, state and federal law-makers and policymakers.

## 8 Funding for Education & Schools – The Bedrock of Successful School Systems

Public Education must be the first job of the state and the top priority of the legislature; therefore, revenues must be adequate, fair and sustainable to support public schools/educational institutions.

**Missouri NEA believes that the following actions and reforms can help to generate and sustain adequate revenue to support quality public schools:**

**State Funding** – The Missouri Funding Formula must effectively support stated education outcomes/goals and be fully funded. The state must create incentives for school districts to establish and maintain operating fund balances not to exceed ten percent of the expenditures from operating funds, including transfers to fund capital projects.

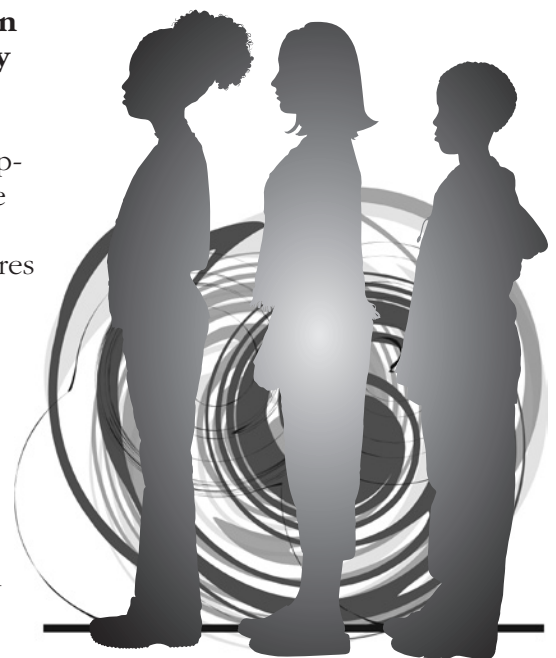
**Resources must address the unique needs of students and schools.** Resources must be focused around:

- Instruction
- Facilities/Capital needs

**Educated public** – School employees and the community must be educated about school funding and the funds necessary to maintain and sustain public schools. The public must understand and believe

“That some children are more equal than others in American public schools is an abomination, a national disgrace, and an ugly pustule on democracy’s fair visage.”

~ Bob Chase, Former NEA President



that actively supporting and promoting education is the economic engine for the state and the nation.

**School district cooperation** – School districts must work cooperatively to:

- Share resources and reduce or eliminate unnecessary duplication of educational expenditures.
- Form cooperatives with other districts for the purchase of common supplies and services.
- Create a system for pooling of statewide school assets to maintain AAA Bond rating.

**Economic research** – Economic research must be used to inform education employees, community members and elected government leaders about the advantages to the state and communities in the development of progressive tax policies, economic development plans and funding for public education/education institutions.

**State Revenues must be adequate, fair and sustainable.**

Public Education must be the first job of the state and the top priority of the legislature. Revenues must be adequate, fair and sustainable in order to support our public schools/educational institutions.





# Footnotes & Resources

## Footnotes

1. *New Teacher Support Pays Off: A Return on Investment for Educators and Kids*, New Teacher Center Policy Brief, Fall 2007; [www.newteachercenter.org/pdfs/NTC\\_Policy\\_Brief-Hill\\_Briefing.pdf](http://www.newteachercenter.org/pdfs/NTC_Policy_Brief-Hill_Briefing.pdf)
2. Missouri NEA's Position Paper on Charter Schools ([www.mnea.org](http://www.mnea.org))
3. This standard is taken from *Learning Forward* (formerly the National Staff Development Council – NSDC)
4. Missouri NEA's position paper on Professional Compensation in Missouri ([www.mnea.org](http://www.mnea.org))
5. This standard is taken from *Learning Forward* (formerly the NSDC)
6. Curcio, G., Ferrara, M., & Gennaro, L.D. (2006). *Sleep loss, learning capacity and academic performance. Sleep Medicine Reviews*, 10,323-337

## Resources

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