



September 2026



Welcome to the Pulse of Professional Policy & Practice

What a month full of the full range of emotions, from joy (being with your students again) to exhaustion (back-to-school schedules had me asleep by 7 PM every night) to rage (the state board + DESE... am I right?).

Despite all the experiences you had this month, each of you still showed up for your students. What an honor it is to work with such exceptional individuals who always know what is important.

Thank you for your attention, time, and action on behalf of students, communities, and fellow educators. We are all better because of you.

The Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) and State Board Top Takeaways

Same format, new modality. The Pulse welcomes new audio updates for policy action at the state level. You will still get text updates linked to source materials, but most updates will come via audio so you can fit them in during your busy days.

[Listen Now](#)

PROFESSIONAL PRACTICE PULSE



LISTEN NOW:
5-MINUTE RUNDOWN OF
EVERYTHING PROFESSIONAL
POLICY & PRACTICE



State Board Meeting Top Takeaways

[September 2026 Agenda](#)

The September 2026 meeting of the Missouri State Board of Education took place at the Jefferson Building in Jefferson City, Missouri, on September 15, 2026.

Additionally, the [Missouri Council for the Certification of Educators](#) (MACCE) met on Monday, September 14, 2026, at Missouri NEA's headquarters in Jefferson City, Missouri. Shout-out to our members who serve on this council: Lisa Baldwin (NKC-NEA + new MACCE Co-Chair!), Justin Smith (NKC-NEA), Cary Sikes (Springfield NEA), Bob McKintrick (Parkway NEA), Michael Smith (Affton NEA), and Shaina Van Remus (Columbia MENA).

Key Meeting Takeaways for Members:

- **School Funding Modernization:** The Task Force is modeling an updated SAT (\$9,329), small-school sparsity adjustments, and a controversial phase-out of Hold Harmless funding protections. See MNEA's Resolution on state funding for education (A-11) [here](#).
- **State Board of Education Approves Kehoe's A-F School Grade Scheme:** Passed 7-1 over superintendents' objections regarding forced curve rankings and lack of equity measures; mid-November public release planned. Missouri NEA opposes this action that further undermines local control. Further, the State Board did not adopt the "framework" by rule, and this step appears to conflict with Missouri's law regarding administrative procedures. See Missouri NEA's Resolution on School Accountability (A-4) [here](#).
- **State Board of Education Proposes to Underfund the Formula (SBOE):** After an initial 4-4 deadlock, the Board approved an FY28 budget that cuts out more than the \$300 million increase to the Foundation Formula expected for Fiscal Year 2028. Missouri NEA opposes this action by the State Board and urges the Governor to fully fund the formula ([A-11](#) & [A-14](#)).
- **TAC & Provisional Rules (MACCE):** Rules under review to let student teachers complete 15-30 coursework hours while serving as teachers of record. See Missouri NEA's Resolution on student teaching and certification (D-4 & G-3) [here](#).

- **Alternative Routes & Substitutes (MACCE):** 502 educators are on ABCTE certificates, Teachers of Tomorrow remains on probation, and long-term substitutes comprise 5% of Missouri classroom teachers. See Missouri NEA's Resolution on alternative certifications and substitute educational professionals (G-8 & D-13) [here](#).

All proposed rules can be found here at the [Secretary of State's website](#). We will alert you to any action that needs to be taken.

Member Action Highlights



Check out the numbers on our recent action on A-F Petition, Letters, and Social Media!

[FB](#) | [IG](#)

You all were champions for getting your voices out there when there were few avenues for educators and parents to be heard. While the State Board ultimately fulfilled Kehoe's A-F School Grading Scheme and did not vote in a way that benefits students and communities, they are fully aware of the force of Missouri NEA. We will continue to raise our voices as more consequential decisions come — trust me, there are more on the way. Stay tuned for actions to be taken at critical junctions in the policy process.

More than a Letter by the Numbers:

- **More than a Letter Petition:** 1,441 (This is more signatures than the number of people the [PRIME Center](#) said supported A-F systems.)
- **More than a Letter, Letter Campaign:** 96 Letters sent to the State Board

Your Action does make a difference, and this is not the end of advocacy for this and additional (i.e. budget) policies. We have various engagement opportunities to drive change on these policies.

- Keep updated with the following resources:
 - MNEA [Action Webpage](#)
 - [MNEA Legislative Update Listserv](#) (Otto Fajen)
 - [Professional Practice Newsletter](#) (Samantha Hayes)
 - Mark your calendars for your [Capitol Action Day](#) this year
-

Professional Practice Partnership Highlights



2026 Missouri Legislative Session Wrap-Up

September 24 | 12:00 – 1:00 PM

Zoom

Join the Hook Center and legislative experts for a discussion of Missouri education legislation, its implications for schools and districts, the upcoming election landscape, and ways to engage in the legislative process.

Hook Center for
Educational Renewal
University of Missouri



REGISTER NOW

2026 Missouri Legislative Session Wrap-Up with Otto Fajen, Samantha Hayes, and Greg Kester!

Join the Hook Center for Educational Leadership & District Renewal and legislative experts for a discussion of education-related legislation from the 2026 Missouri legislative session. Speakers will explore the implications for Missouri schools and districts, offer a look ahead at the upcoming election landscape, and share strategies for engaging effectively in the legislative process.

- Date & Time: September 24, 12:00-1:00 PM
- Location: Zoom
- [Register Now](#)

Questions? Contact Riley Rohler, Hook Center Associate Director (rileyrohler@missouri.edu). For more information, visit the [Hook Center website](#).

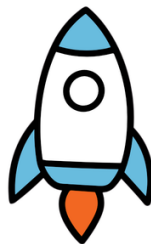
Learning Opportunities

National Board Assistance - Boost Day November 7!

These workdays are for all National Board Certification first-time candidates, advanced candidates, and renewal candidates submitting one or more components during the 2026-2027 school year. The MNEA NBCT Network provides this free opportunity for candidates. Current NBCTs are invited to register to mentor candidates and assist with logistics.

Bring your component work and questions for this workday.

REGISTER TODAY: IT'S FREE >>



- [NBC Stipends by Missouri School Districts](#)
- [NBC Background and Facts](#)
- [National Board Areas of Certification](#)
- [NBC's Impact on Student Achievement](#)
- [Nuts and Bolts of National Board Certification](#)
- [National Board for Professional Teaching Standards](#)
- [Most current news on the revised NBC process and application](#)

Questions? Contact Program Services Administrative Assistant Olivia Compton (olivia.compton@mnea.org, (417) 569-1401).

MNEA Foundation Fall Conference & Gala Registration Open



Upcoming Events



Nov. 13-15	Nov. 14	Nov. 15
MNEA Foundation Fall Conference  Keynote Speaker: Cornelius Minor	MNEA Foundation Gala  Keynote Speaker: Wade Rouse	MNEA-PAC Sustainer Legislative Brunch <i>Must be an MNEA-PAC sustainer to attend</i>

 mnea.org/fallconf

Nov. 13-15, 2026

Stephens College
Columbia, MO

The member-led MNEA Foundation Fall Conference will be November 13–15, 2026, at Stephens College in Columbia, Missouri—and you won't want to miss it. Join union members from across the state for an inspiring weekend of solidarity, professional learning, and celebration!

Keynote Speakers:

- **Friday Evening: Cornelius Minor!** Cornelius Minor is a Brooklyn-based educator who works with teachers, school leaders, and leaders of community-based organizations to support equitable literacy reform in cities (and sometimes villages) worldwide. His latest book, *We Got This*, explores how creating more equitable school spaces is embedded in our everyday choices—specifically, the choice to really listen to kids.
- **Saturday Gala: Wade Rouse (Pen Name: Viola Shipman)** Wade Rouse is a USA TODAY, Publishers Weekly, and #1 internationally bestselling author of 21 books, including memoirs, novels, and holiday novellas. His work has been translated into nearly 30 languages, and several novels have been optioned for film and television. His books have been featured by NBC's Today Show, selected as Indie Next Picks, and recognized as Michigan Notable Books. A former journalist and People magazine reporter, Rouse has also written for publications including Time, Good Housekeeping, Forbes, and Writer's Digest.

REGISTER TODAY: IT'S FREE >>

Friday, Nov. 13: Opening Session & Keynote

- Registration: 4–8 p.m.
- General Session: 6–8 p.m.

Saturday, Nov. 14: Member-Led Professional Learning Workshops

- Registration: 8 a.m.–5 p.m.
 - Sessions: 9 a.m.–4:30 p.m.
- [Tentative Agenda with Session Descriptions](#) (PDF)

Saturday Evening: 2nd Annual MNEA Foundation Gala ([must purchase tickets](#))

- VIP Pre-party: 6–7 p.m.
- GALA Dinner Presentation: 7–9 p.m.
- GALA After-Party: 9–11 p.m.

Sunday, Nov. 15: MNEA-PAC Sustainer Legislative Brunch (for PAC Sustainers only, [Sign Up to Give](#))

- Exclusive, in-depth conversation with key Missouri legislators regarding the issues that matter most to educators: 9–11 a.m.

Professional Practice Program Highlights



Evaluating Conditions for High-Impact Organizing

Introducing ECHO: Evaluating Conditions for High-Impact Organizing

(Formerly WCLT)

MNEA is proud to announce the evolution of our former Working Conditions Listening Tours (WCLT) into ECHO (Evaluating Conditions for High-Impact Organizing). ECHO has the same goals and high-quality survey tools as WCLT—the analysis of working conditions in your district; it just has a different look and structure.

While WCLT originated as a joint, multi-step process involving in-person focus groups and district partnerships, we have redesigned ECHO into an agile, survey-driven organizing tool. Locals can now lead this effort independently to organize around working conditions and build collective power—though districts are still welcome to collaborate if they choose.

What Is New in ECHO?

- Streamlined, All-in-One Format: Focus groups have been replaced by an efficient digital survey that captures both rigorous quantitative metrics and rich, open-ended, qualitative responses.
- This is a survey inclusive of all educators; the instrument is intentionally designed for:
 - Active Professional/Certified: Individuals employed in certified public school roles
 - Active Education Support Professionals (ESP)/Classified: Support staff across public school settings
 - Specialized Instructional Support Personnel (SISP): Non-classroom professionals providing targeted student academic and social-emotional supports
- Actionable, Truncated Reporting: Instead of long wait times for exhaustive external reviews, the MNEA Professional Policy & Practice Department will deliver a focused, easy-to-read report. Results break down data across 13 working conditions constructs, categorized by building level—Elementary (including Pre-K), Middle School, and High School—paired directly with representative quotes that reflect qualitative themes.

How the Timeline Works

1. Survey Window (2 Weeks): Your local opens the digital survey to your local membership, bargaining unit, or full district staff (if partnering with district leadership).
2. Analysis & Report (2–4 Weeks): MNEA analyzes the responses and returns a customized diagnostic report directly to your leadership team.

Equip your local with clear, defensible data to drive bargaining, advocacy, and worksite action. **Fill out this form if your local would like to participate in the 2026–2027 school year. Final approval for participation will be made by MNEA Leadership.***

* For those locals who have spoken to Samantha Hayes, please still fill out the form so that we have a running list of all locals who want to participate this school year.



ELEVATE YOUR **PROFESSION**. FIND YOUR **PURPOSE**. HARNESS YOUR **POWER**.

MNEA Learns: By Members, For Members

Your Expertise. Our Platform. Statewide Impact.

The New MNEA Learns platform is available and ready for you! Go to mnea.org/mnealearns to log in and view the courses available.

Create Courses for MNEA Learns!

Do you have a skill, a book recommendation, or a course idea that could help your fellow Missouri educators excel to the next level as educators?

MNEA Learns wants you!

We are looking for instructional designers and instructors to lead book studies and build digital courses for MNEA Learns. Whether you're an expert in your field or a wizard at digital course design, your voice and expertise is needed. Please [let us know](#) if you are interested in creating MNEA Learns course content.

[Instructor Interest Form >>](#)

Course Highlight

This month, we are highlighting the MNEA Treasurer's Training. This training is not just for treasurers. If you are a leader in your local, you may want to take this course, too. Learn more by logging in MNEA Learns.



with CFO Karen Struempf



\$50 per hour: Graduate Credit from Augustana University

In a new partnership with [Augustana University](#), Missouri NEA can now offer Graduate Credit for learning that occurs in our workshops, courses, and Microcredentials—whether that be in-person or on MNEA Learns—for \$50 per credit hour.

Keep an eye out for these opportunities on mnea.org/pd or our social media accounts!

NEA Micro-Credentials

Professional learning by educators, for educators

[HOW IT WORKS](#)



Personalized
More than 80 micro-credentials to choose from based on your needs



Flexible
Work at your own pace alone or with peers



Job-Embedded
Earn by demonstrating competency

MNEA Microcredentials for Certification and Graduate Credit

Micro-credentials are self-directed, project-based professional development designed to directly support your professional practice and allow you to demonstrate mastery in a particular area.

[MNEA's Microcredential Portal >](#)

Time commitment: A micro-credential generally takes up to 15 hours of work to complete. If there are enough members interested, we can form a virtual PLC through the entire Microcredential process. Email Samantha.Hayes@mnea.org if you would like to start a PLC.

Cost: Free for MNEA members. Non-members pay \$75 per submission.

Microcredentials for Certification: Initial Certificate (30 contact hours) and Career Continuous Certificate holders (15 contact hours*) need to complete Professional Development hours to uphold their certification. As long as your district approves NEA microcredentials for Professional Development, you can achieve these Professional Development contact hours via our Microcredentials!

"...(4) For the purpose of this rule, contact hours are defined as follows...

(C) One (1) professional micro-credential is equal to fifteen (15) contact hours of professional development."

*Educators with a career continuous certification are exempt from the 15 contact hours of Professional Development if 2 of the following are met:

1. Ten (10) years of state-approved teaching experience;
2. A master's degree from an accredited college or university; and/or
3. Certification from the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards, or for school psychologists, the certificate of nationally certified school psychologist issued by the National Association of School Psychologists (NASP)." ([DESE Rule 5 CSR 20-400.260](#))

Graduate Credit: Members have the option of **one hour of graduate credit per micro-credential achieved for \$50 through Augustana University**. Please check with your school district to be sure they accept these graduate credits towards advancement on your district's salary schedule. After you receive your digital badge from NEA for successful completion of your microcredential; then, enroll in Augustana University to receive credit using the link provided by NEA.

[Learn More](#)

VESI Partnership



CALLING ALL District Representatives

Help spread the word about an
amazing offer for MNEA members

**Receive FREE post cards to
distribute to your teachers!**

As you may know, members can complete up to **nine semester graduate credits** (which appear on an Avila transcript) for an annual fee of just \$250. To help spread the word, we are asking district representatives if they would care to distribute postcards to their local members about the benefit program.

We want all MNEA members to be aware of this amazing opportunity. Benefit includes:

- Three graduate credit courses per year (up to nine credits) for \$250
- Learn online at your own pace from the convenience of your home
- Over 30 online courses for graduate credit and salary advancement

To order 50-1,000 cards:

Email Mick Jackson at
mick@virtualeduc.com with your
name, district, and shipping address.

SAMPLE:

*Hello Mick, please send
250 MNEA cards to Jane
Smith (District) @ 123
Main ST, City MO 12345*

Please call 1-800-313-6744 with any questions.

**It's only \$250 for nine
graduate credits.**

**Online graduate-level courses through
VESI are backed by Avila University.**

For one low annual fee of \$250 (valued at \$750), Missouri NEA members may take one course each term (fall, spring, and summer) to complete up to three graduate courses in 12 months. Or you may take two courses in the summer



TO ORDER:

and skip either the fall or spring semester. Each course is two or three graduate credit hours, so educators can earn from six to nine graduate credits.

We want all MNEA members to be aware of this amazing opportunity. Benefit includes:

- Three graduate credit courses per year (up to nine credits) for \$250
- Learn online at your own pace from the convenience of your home
- Over 30 online courses for graduate credit and salary advancement

Email Mick Jackson at mick@virtualeduc.com with your name, district, and shipping address.

OR

CALL 1-800-313-6744

[Download a Flyer >>](#)



Professional Policy & Practice always wants your feedback, thoughts, questions, or suggestions, so this form will be available for you to enter your input at any time!

PROFESSIONAL POLICY & PRACTICE

Missouri NEA Professional Policy & Practice Department Comment Box

Whether you have a suggestion for upcoming resources, questions about policy and practice, or general feedback on our Professional Policy & Practice initiatives, let us know through this form or contacting Samantha.Hayes@mnea.org. Submissions take under two minutes and are completely anonymous.

mneawebbie@gmail.com [Switch account](#)



Not shared

Your comments, ideas, or questions

Your answer

Would you like someone from our team to follow up?

☐ Yes

☐ No

If you would like a follow-up, please enter your name and contact information below.

Your answer

[Submit Your Feedback](#)

Deep Dive: Recent Reads and Resources

- [MNEA Essential Insight for A-F Framework](#)
- [On The Clock: The Centrality of Time in Teacher Work](#)
- [“Why ‘Portrait of a Graduate’ Initiatives Struggle to Impact Instruction](#)
- [Hook Center Policy Briefs](#)

Contact Professional Practice

Please never hesitate to reach out to Samantha Hayes with any questions surrounding Professional Practice programs or activity at the federal, state, or local level.

Samantha Hayes@mnea.org
C: 573-644-9625

800-392-0236



Missouri NEA Professional Practice

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Rebeka McIntosh, President • Andy Slaughter, Vice President
Dr. Patrick Layden, Executive Director
Samantha Hayes, Director of Professional Policy & Practice
Rishanda Richardson, Director of Digital Communications & Research

Missouri National Education Association
1810 E Elm Street, Jefferson City, MO 65101
573.634.3202 • 800.392.0236
www.mnea.org

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