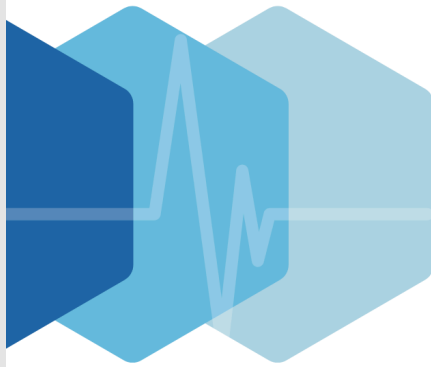
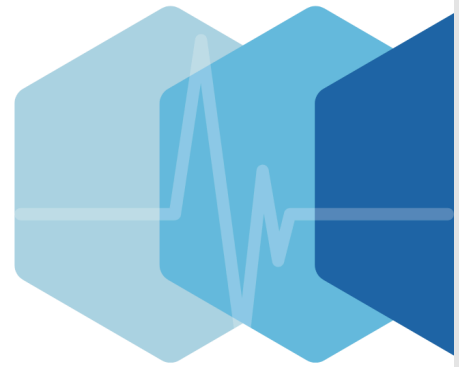


To view this email as a web page, go [here](#).

Can't see the images? [View As Webpage](#)



## PROFFESIONAL PRACTICE PULSE



April 2026



Forward

# Welcome to the Pulse of Professional Policy & Practice!

We are in the midst of testing season, and the strain can be heavy on your day-to-day interactions with students, the opportunities you get to truly connect with students, and the time you have left for them to genuinely learn the content. Whether you are an educator of a tested subject or an educator who is not directly giving an assessment, testing season interrupts us all.

Remember, the education of your students goes beyond these mandated assessments, and you live it with every interaction that you have with students. Assessments themselves are not bad; they are a key tool for learning. The ones that matter most, though, are the ones that you and your colleagues create for YOUR students. Locally created assessments are the most instructionally useful tests that you have. And the best part? YOU created them and can act on those results immediately. No state test can ever do that for you.

Let's get through these few weeks and then get back to the true learning that schools are meant to be for.

Sending strength, team! You and your students GOT THIS!

Samantha Hayes  
MNEA Director of Professional Policy & Practice  
[samantha.hayes@mnea.org](mailto:samantha.hayes@mnea.org)



## COURSE OFFERINGS

COLLECTIVE  
BARGAINING

ENGAGEMENT  
& CAPACITY

LEADERSHIP

ENTERPRISE  
OPERATIONS  
& MORE!

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](https://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 >>](#)



## Top Takeaways: DESE & State Board

The [March 2026](#) meeting of the Missouri State Board of Education focused on educator certification, addressing critical budget shortfalls, and innovative assessment models.

The [April 2026](#) State Board of Education meeting centered on a shift toward more aggressive oversight and strategic alignment with state leadership.

## Educators: A perpetual THANK YOU for your input!

I cannot stress enough how much the “Elevate Teaching” DESE workgroup needed practitioner input! We received 292 responses from [this survey](#). (It will remain open for the remainder of the school year. Thank you for taking the time to complete it. We would love more responses. Please share it with your colleagues.

The Elevate Teaching DESE workgroup believes that:

- Teachers shape the lives of many beyond the classroom.
- Teachers build a lasting legacy.
- Teachers lead, inspire, & grow others.

[Share the Survey](#)

---

# Learning Opportunities

# ASSESSMENT & ACCOUNTABILITY in Missouri



**PANEL DISCUSSION**  
**APRIL 16, 2026**  
**4PM CST**



**REGISTER TODAY!**  
ZOOM LINK IS SENT  
AFTER REGISTERING



**OTTO  
FAJEN**  
Missouri  
NEA



**DR.  
CHARLES  
MUNTER**  
University of  
Missouri



**HARRY  
FEDER**  
FairTest

**PAM  
HEDGPETH**

Success  
Ready Student  
Network



**MIKE  
FULTON**

Success  
Ready Student  
Network



**SAMANTHA  
HAYES**  
Moderator  
Missouri  
NEA



## Missouri Assessment and Accountability: Past, Present, and Future

Recorded Webinar from April 16, 2026

Our expert panel with various vantage points—nationally, statewide, and in the classroom—discussed the past, present, and future of Missouri Assessment and Accountability.

**Panelists:**

- Otto Fajen (MNEA)
- Harry Feder (FairTest)
- Mike Fulton (Success Ready Student Network)
- Pam Hedgpeth (Success Ready Student Network)
- Dr. Charles Munter (University of Missouri Professor)

Create an MNEA Learns Account to Watch >>

## 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](mailto: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 \$80 through Baker 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, [enroll in Baker University to receive your graduate credit](#).

[Learn More](#)

# National Board Certification Assistance

[Share this flyer >>](#)

## MEMBER TESTIMONIAL

"It is very overwhelming to look at all the National Board material and this highlights important information. It also made getting organized more simple. There were good questions and insights from everyone."



## MEMBER TESTIMONIAL

"I thought I could just figure this all out but after diving into each component and standard, I realized I couldn't navigate this half as easy without the expertise of the awesome Jump Start facilitators."



## MEMBER TESTIMONIAL

"NEA National Board Jump Start demystifies the process and allows for a thorough analysis of various parts that someone would probably not take the time to do independently as they wouldn't know how valuable the process is."



Teachers report that obtaining National Board Certification is one of the most rewarding experiences in their careers. It is a journey filled with self-exploration and examining practices that leads to more success as an educator. Many Missouri school districts recognize National Board Certification with stipends or movement on the salary schedule.

- [NBC Stipends by Missouri School Districts](#)
- [NBC Certification Roadmap at a Glance](#)
- [National Board Areas of Certification](#)
- [National Board for Professional Teaching Standards](#)

## Jump Start to National Board Spread the word.

MNEA National Board Jump Start is a comprehensive seminar designed to provide National Board candidates with important information about the certification process, time to examine component and Assessment Center requirements, the opportunity to plan how to meet requirements, and time to collaborate, gather resources and information needed to pursue certification — all in a supportive, constructive, and collegial environment.

This workshop is for first-time, returning, and advanced candidates who plan to submit any components of National Board Certification in the 2026-2027 school year.

# NATIONAL BOARD

for Professional Teaching Standards®

## Jump Start Session

July 13-15, 2026

Missouri NEA Headquarters  
1810 E Elm Street  
Jefferson City, MO 65101

Deadline to register: June 21

Registration may close earlier if we reach the maximum capacity of 40 participants.

**Member Fee:** \$65 per day or \$195 for all sessions

**Non-Member Fee:** \$165 per day or \$495 for all sessions

Fees include lunch and morning coffee.

[Read More & Sign Up >>](#)

*Congratulations!*  
**26**  
**MISSOURI NEA MEMBERS**  
COMPLETED  
NATIONAL BOARD  
for Professional Teaching Standards®  
CERTIFICATION IN 2025

**MNEA** Missouri National Education Association  
Our Union • Our Profession

*Congratulations!*

JESSICA AUSTERMANN  
JENNIFER BARTIN  
GREGORY BAUM  
LISA BOURGEADE  
TIFFANY BUTTRAM  
STEPHANIE BYRNE  
ETHAN CARTEE  
TRINA CORNELL  
JAIME DEMAR  
REBECCA DUTCHER  
ASHLEY FOSSUM  
KAITLYNN JANSEN  
KIM KEARBEY

**MNEA** Missouri National Education Association  
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JENNIFER MCCLANAHAN  
MELISSA NEDVED  
LORI RIDDLE  
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PATRICK TROY  
CASSIDY URIE  
COURTNEY WELLS  
CAROLYN WOLF

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# Professional Practice Program Highlights



## Working Conditions Listening Tours Perspective from a Columbia MNEA leader

Noelle Gilzow, Columbia MNEA President, sat down with MNEA Director of Professional Policy & Practice Samantha Hayes to describe her experience in partnering with district administration to perform a Working Condition Listening Tour in Columbia Public Schools. Listen to her perspective and experience with implementing WCLT.

[Listen Now >](#)

Please explore the reports that we have completed during the 2024-2025 School Year.

- [Pattonville Working Conditions Report](#) (Fall 2024)
- [Columbia Public Schools Working Conditions Report](#) (Spring 2025)
- Parkway School District (Spring 2026)



In addition to the reports that your district receives from external evaluators, your local also gets a personalized, curated Action Report that includes contract language examples; MNEA and NEA resources, toolkits, and opportunities; and references to endorsed organizations.

**This program is looking for four schools to partner with for the 2025-26 and 2026-27 school years.** We have updated our requirements to implement WCLT in your district; if you would like to see new avenues forward for WCLT in your district, please contact Samantha Hayes, your UniServ Director, or any MNEA Leadership if your local is interested in participating in the next round of pilot schools!

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## Professional Policy & Practice Communication and Feedback

MNEA Professional Policy & Practice is always open to your feedback. Submit your input at any time!

# PROFESSIONAL POLICY & PRACTICE

## Missouri NEA Professional Policy & Practice Department Communication Preference Survey

Help the Professional Policy and Practice Department understand how you prefer to receive information regarding their updates and resources.

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



Not shared

Which of the following communication methods do you prefer for receiving information from the Professional Policy and Practice Department? (Select all that apply)

- Email Newsletter (Monthly Newsletter - The Professional Policy & Practice Pulse)
- Dedicated MNEA Website Page/Section
- Short Video Updates (e.g., on YouTube or social media)
- Podcast/Audio Segments
- Social Media Posts (e.g., Facebook, X)
- Webinars or Virtual Information Sessions
- In-person Presentations/Workshops
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_

Do you have any comments or suggestions regarding the Professional Policy and Practice Department's communication?

Your answer \_\_\_\_\_

Submit

Clear form

Submit Feedback >>

# Partnerships



## CALLING ALL District Representatives

Help spread the word about an amazing offer for MNEA members

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



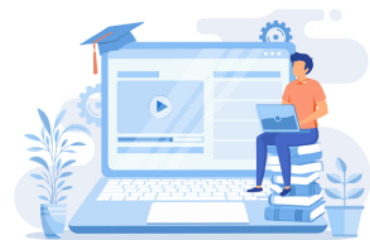
**It's only \$250 for nine graduate credits.**

**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 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



### **TO ORDER:**

Email Mick Jackson at [mick@virtualeduc.com](mailto:mick@virtualeduc.com) with your name, district, and shipping address.

OR

CALL 1-800-313-6733

[Download a Flyer >>](#)

# Missouri Job Board by Nimble

## Free job search tools for Missouri teachers

Nimble is excited to announce the continuation of its partnership with the Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) to provide [free, innovative job search tools](#) designed to make finding a great teaching job easier than ever.

Nimble offers the only job search tools built around what teachers truly need, making it faster and easier to find a job you'll love. Teachers create a profile and can apply to multiple jobs in seconds. With job listings from every school in Missouri housed in one up-to-date hub, teachers can see the full picture of opportunities available to them. Smart filters—like commute times, salary schedules, and more—save valuable time when searching for the right-fit job.

You can also receive personalized job matches tailored to your preferences. Take the research-based preferences quiz to highlight schools where you're most likely to thrive. Nimble also gives you early access to principals for real conversations, so you can get to know schools beyond their job postings.

All of these tools are accessible through the built-in personal workspace that keeps your entire search organized from start to finish. The result: an easier path to finding the right school, quick access to every job in your area, and the confidence to choose the role that fits you best.

[Get started by completing your profile](#): Be discovered by schools hiring today. Find roles that fit your life and goals – and connect directly with principals who are ready to hire.

Share [this flyer](#) with teachers you know looking for a teaching job they'll love.

## Great teachers change lives

Nimble's technology helps schools find amazing educators for every classroom



## Deep Dive: Recent Reads and Resources

### Professional Practice

- [Kindergartners Aren't Talking Enough in Class. Why That Matters.](#)

### Politics and Education

- [States are Learning the Wrong Lesson From The 'Mississippi Miracle'](#)

- [The Good, Bad, and Ugly of Screen Time: An Explainer](#)

## Resources from our Partners

- [Hook Center Policy Briefs](#)

- [Missouri treasurer's office posted MOScholars student data on its website for nearly a year](#)

- [Eliminating the income tax would create a \\$5 billion hole in Missouri's budget, leading to cuts for local public schools](#)

- [Legislative Overload in Missouri Public Education](#)

## 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*

The MNEA Professional Practice Pulse is published monthly.

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[www.mnea.org](http://www.mnea.org)

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