

Missouri NEA Missouri State Board of Education Report

*Notes from May 11, 2021 meeting of the Missouri State Board of Education
Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education*

Board approves Missouri Priority Standards as the basis for 2022 assessments

The Missouri Priority Standards are a subset of the Missouri Learning Standards which identify the core concepts students need to know to move through standards at the next grade-level and establish connections across domains. Over 1,300 educators contributed to identifying priority standards.

The Spring 2021 MAP and EOC analysis reports will include data on the Missouri Priority Standards and the 2022 assessments will be aligned to them. The complete catalog of priority standards by content area can be found [here](#). DESE will hold workshops this summer and fall.

DESE staff recommends \$50 million investment in teacher workforce

The American Rescue Plan Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief Fund includes funds which states can use for teacher recruitment and retention over the next three years. DESE staff plan to use ARP ESSER funds to attract teacher candidates to pursue a career in education and to keep high quality teachers in the profession. DESE will make \$10,000 grants available to districts to begin or expand Grow Your Own programs. The program goals include recruiting 2,000 new teacher candidates each year.

Another focus is to support research-based activities that lead to higher teacher retention in areas that serve students of color and students in poverty. Possible strategies include stipends for mentors, support for National Board Certification, addressing staff culture and climate issues, expanding professional learning and/or increasing teacher input and leadership opportunities.

COVID protocols should remain in place for back to school

DESE staff completed their final COVID-19 statewide webinar for school leaders and advised that in-person learning can be completed safely. Case studies show in-person learning can be safely provided on a full-time basis for all students with mitigation strategies in place. Medical personnel and DESE staff strongly recommend that all other mitigation strategies (masks, vaccinations, screenings, testing of symptomatic persons, social distancing/cohorting students, screening/limiting visitors, cleaning/sanitizing, and encouraging staff and students to stay home if sick) remain in place to provide a layered mitigation approach. The attendance rule that was created to allow hybrid and virtual schedules expires on July 30, 2021. The expectation is that all schools will be full-time, in-person for fall 2021.

DESE's priorities for supporting districts with ESSER funding

The board received a report on the state's plan for implementing the funding from the American Rescue Plan Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief (ESSER) Funds. Missouri must submit the state ARP ESSER plans by June 7, 2021, and report specific data by June 21. DESE already has the required data from school districts, so they are working on the reports.

School districts must publish their Safe Return to In-Person Instruction and Continuity of Services Plans by June 24. DESE must tell districts what their ARP ESSER allotment will be by May 24, 2021. Local APR ESSER plans are due to DESE 90 days after districts are informed of their allotment. DESE will review local plans and either approve or send back for revisions. DESE cannot distribute funds until the Missouri state legislature approves the appropriation of the funds. This could happen in

September during the legislature's veto session.

School district reopening plans must include: district supports for the academic impacts of the pandemic; how they will meet the SEL needs of students; and remedial services to support students disproportionately affected by academic interruptions and loss of instructional time.

DESE ARP ESSER fund priorities include:

- A redesign of the state assessment system to align with priority standards and competency-based learning. Optional common formative assessments will be developed.
- Expansion of the Missouri Leadership Development system – to train and support all principals. Half of Missouri's principals currently participate.
- Increasing the number of reading and math instructional specialists at Regional Professional Development Centers.
- Providing additional instructional materials, supplies, and resources and the associated educator training.
- Investment in recruitment and retention of teachers.
- Upgrade DESE's data system infrastructure to improve data quality and end user accessibility.
- Expansion of resources for social, emotional, and mental health of students and educators, to include surveys, interventions, and responsive services.

Final state budget for 2022 includes full funding of the School Foundation Formula

The Missouri legislature passed Missouri's K-12 education budget. Governor Parson and the legislature approved DESE's request of \$8,525,909 to fully fund the foundation formula. The legislature approved an increase of \$20 million for school transportation, still short of what the Missouri constitution requires. Staff at DESE and state-operated schools will receive a 2% salary increase beginning January 1, 2022, a slight mileage reimbursement increase, and \$190,000 in performance incentive funds. Multiple programs from several departments have been combined and reallocated within DESE's budget to support the new Office of Childhood. The Missouri Scholars and Arts Academies received a total increase of \$499,000.

In other business the board:

- Received a report on competency-based learning. CBL is an instructional strategy that prioritizes individual learning needs, differentiated learning pathways/pacing, and student evidence of mastery, not seat time.
- Received a report on the progress of the staffing and logistical development of the new [Office of Childhood](#).
- Voted to rescind the rule for the Missouri Critical Teacher Shortage Forgivable Loan Program, which was repealed by the Missouri legislature several years ago.

The next meeting of the Missouri State Board of Education will be on June 15, 2021. Missouri NEA will be in attendance. If you have any questions or suggestions, please contact Rebeka McIntosh or Ann Jarrett at 800-392-0236. Details of state board agenda items can be found at [here](#).

Respectfully submitted,
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