

Missouri NEA Missouri State Board of Education Report

*Notes from the December 7, 2021 meeting of the Missouri State Board of Education
Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education*

Kerry Casey appointed to the State Board of Education, new officers elected

Kerry Casey (Chesterfield) is a founding board member of the KIPP Charter School in St. Louis and served on the board of directors until her appointment to the State Board of Education. She is also a board member for the Lift for Life Gym and the Patriot Training Foundation and a past board member of Junior Achievement of Greater St. Louis. She currently serves as vice president of Exegy, Inc. Prior to joining Exegy, Inc., Casey held executive-level positions with Thomson Reuters, MCI WorldCom, Skytel, and TWA. Casey fills the seat of Dr. Victor Lenz (St. Louis), who has served on the State Board of Education since June 2013. Dr. Lenz's term expired in July 2019. Casey's term will expire on July 1, 2027. Following Casey's swearing in, the board elected Charlie Shields as president and Carol Hallquist as vice-president, each for two-year terms.

MU and UCM ending charter school sponsorship

In June 2020, MU was found to be in noncompliance with the standards for charter sponsorship and entered a period of remediation. The university continues to be in noncompliance and the State Board of Education has suspended MU's authority to sponsor three of its six charter schools, effective January 2022: Genesis School, LaSalle Charter School, and Lee A. Tolbert Academy. Sponsorship of those schools will transfer to the Missouri Charter Public School Commission. The board approved the remedial evaluation of UCM as a charter school sponsor. UCM was found to be in noncompliance with charter standards in February 2021 and will end sponsorship of charters in June 2022. UCM sponsors six charter schools: Académie Lafayette, Crossroads Charter Schools, Hope Leadership Academy, Gordon Parks Elementary, KC International Academy, and Scoula Vita Nuova. MU and UCM will be unable to sponsor additional charter schools until reauthorized by the state board of education.

Return to local governance of Riverview Gardens and Normandy Schools

Voters will elect two board members to both the Normandy Joint Executive Governing Board and the Riverview Gardens Special Administrative Board. Two members of the Normandy JEGB will be replaced with newly elected members. Riverview Gardens SAB will expand to a full seven-member board. Commissioner Vandeven and DESE staff presented detailed transition plans for Normandy Schools Collaborative and Riverview Gardens. Both are currently accredited provisionally and will continue to be under state supervision until reaching full accreditation.

State Board established legislative priorities

The top legislative priority for the State Board of Education is raising the minimum teacher salary from \$25,000 per year to at least \$35,000 per year by the beginning of 2024-25. The board also intends to appoint a Blue Ribbon Commission to make recommendations on teacher recruitment and retention.

Other legislative priorities include:

- Addressing the digital divide in the state.
- Exploring alternatives that replace the traditional time-based education system with a competency-based system.
- Supporting policies focused on developing intrapersonal and interpersonal skills for students.
- Requiring the use of an integrated advising system that connects career advising with academic support.
- Allowing districts to count all preschool students in their average daily attendance in the foundation formula.
- Examining best practices for voluntary open enrollment that would allow students to attend the public school of their choice regardless of attendance boundaries.

The complete State Board of Education's 2022 legislative priorities are [here](#).

DESE's ongoing COVID-19 response and guidance

- Students age 5-11 became eligible for vaccination on November 3, 2021 and DESE is encouraging districts to partner with local health authorities to make vaccinations available as an additional mitigation strategy.
- Current data indicates cases and positivity rates are increasing and the rising quarantine numbers led to some school closures and critical staff shortages before and after the Thanksgiving holiday.
- The November 22nd ruling by Cole County Circuit Court regarding the authority for closures and health regulations has created confusion for districts. The Attorney General's interpretation has added to the confusion for parents and districts. DESE advises districts to work closely with their legal counsel to make local decisions. Missouri NEA's response to AG Schmitt's letter can be found [here](#).

In other business the State Board:

- Approved the following rules for publication:
 - Business Education 9-12 certificate – combined some coursework to reduce overlap in current requirements.
 - Statewide Longitudinal Data System - adds language to ensure the rule covers all confidential information maintained by the Department and to clarify the data sharing agreement.
 - School meals program – modified eight rules for compliance with federal programs and updates.
 - Computer Science – new standards and procedures to accommodate new statute. Computer Science may fulfill one unit of high school credit in math, science, or practical art.
 - HiSET program - clarify language for high school equivalence eligibility, ID, administration, and documentation requirements.
- Received a [report](#) on the progress of the staffing and logistical development of the Office of Childhood.
- Adopted a resolution honoring Beth Houf (Fulton School District), National Principal of the Year.
- Received a [report](#) on the Missouri Schools for the Severely Disabled. Missouri is the only state that directly operates schools for severely disabled students. Three regions with 34 schools serve 741 students.
- Received an [update](#) on the strategic plan and ongoing work around the board's four goals: early literacy, workforce development, teacher recruitment and retention, and safe and healthy schools.

The next meeting of the Missouri State Board of Education will be held on January 11, 2022. 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 [here](#).

Respectfully submitted,

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