JUST THE FACTS

Missouri
The Institute for a Competitive Workforce (ICW) is a nonprofit, nonpartisan, 501(c)(3) affiliate of the U.S. Chamber of Commerce. ICW promotes the rigorous educational standards and effective job training systems needed to preserve the strength of America’s greatest economic resource, its workforce.

The U.S. Chamber of Commerce is the world’s largest business federation representing the interests of more than 3 million businesses of all sizes, sectors, and regions, as well as state and local chambers and industry associations.

The National Chamber Foundation, a nonprofit affiliate of the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, is dedicated to identifying and fostering public debate on emerging critical issues. We provide business and government leaders with insight and resources to address tomorrow’s challenges.
Are ALL children receiving a high-quality education in Missouri?

Not yet.

Missouri is not ensuring that all of its students are graduating ready for college and the workforce—yet. If current trends continue, only 15% of current high school freshman in the state will have a college diploma when they are in their mid-twenties. This means that the vast majority of graduates from Missouri schools will not be employable in jobs that require high skills.¹

Missouri has taken steps to increase expectations for students through its Top 10 by 20 Education Reform Plan. The plan sets ambitious achievement targets and strategies to ensure that by 2020 Missouri ranks in the top ten states on key indicators such as graduation rates, the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), and remediation rates. The state’s overall goal is to see all students proficient and ready for college and the workforce by the time they graduate.

While these goals are central to the transformation of education for students in Missouri, more needs to be done. Parents need transparent information about their schools and districts and parents with children in failing schools need the capacity to choose something better for their children. In order for Missouri to achieve its goals and transform education by 2020, it must ensure that these critical issues are addressed.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Missouri at a Glance²</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total enrollment</td>
<td>886,402</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of schools</td>
<td>2,291</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of school districts</td>
<td>520</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of charter schools-Kansas City and St. Louis</td>
<td>58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students who receive free or reduced lunch</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White</td>
<td>74.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black</td>
<td>16.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hispanic</td>
<td>4.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian</td>
<td>1.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Native American/Pacific Islander</td>
<td>0.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Has the state received a No Child Left Behind waiver?</td>
<td>YES</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Is the state or district a Race to the Top Grant recipient?</td>
<td>NO</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
How are Missouri schools failing the state's business community?

Missouri needs more educated workers to fill high-skill jobs.

- Sixty percent of jobs in Missouri will require a career certificate or degree by 2020, but only 37% of adults in the state currently have these qualifications.³
- Of students who enroll in two- or four-year public colleges or universities, only 19% graduate on time.⁴
- On average, a high school graduate in Missouri earns $8,109 more each year than a high school dropout. In 2011, approximately 18,000 students did not graduate from high school, equaling lost lifetime earnings of $2.3 billion.⁵
- If Missouri cut the number of high school dropouts in half, the additional spending and investments by these new graduates would be enough to support as many as 1,000 new jobs and increase the gross state product by as much as $33 million by the time they reach their career midpoints.⁶

Not enough Missouri students graduate from high school prepared for college or the workforce.

- While the state has a relatively high graduation rate of 86%, only 60% of students graduate in the urban Kansas City Missouri School District.⁷
- Only 27% of the class of 2012 achieved a score on the ACT that indicated they were ready for college-level courses.⁸
- Fifty-two percent of students attending two-year colleges and 14.1% of students entering four-year colleges need remediation.⁹
- More than 40% of minority students require remediation.¹⁰
- Missouri ranks 49th among states in the percent of high school graduates taking AP exams. Only 8.2% of high school graduates score a three or higher on a five point scale.¹¹

Missouri High School Graduation Rates, Class of 2012

Four-year adjusted cohort graduation rate
Not enough students attend high-quality schools and meet standards for proficiency in reading and math.

- As Missouri prepares to complete the implementation of college- and career-ready standards and aligned assessments, the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) shows that most students in the state are not proficient in reading and math, despite comparatively high scores on the state’s test.
- According to the Children’s Education Alliance of Missouri, achievement on the Missouri Assessment Program (MAP) shows a lack of significant progress in most districts, a decline in some of the lowest performing districts, and a widening of the achievement gap.
- Missouri faces significant socioeconomic achievement gaps on the NAEP assessment: 80% of low-income fourth-grade students are not proficient in reading, and 72% of low-income eighth-grade students are not proficient in math.

Missouri 2011 NAEP and MAP Scores
Percentage of Students Who are Not Proficient

What is Missouri doing to improve schools and prepare students to meet college- and career-ready standards?

Implementing state standards and assessments aligned to college- and career-ready standards

Missouri adopted the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) in English language arts and math in June 2010. After adopting CCSS, the Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (MDESE) initiated a process to revise its standards in other subject areas to ensure that all standards are equally rigorous and reflective of college- and career-ready expectations. Although historically curriculum development has been left to districts, MDESE is developing model curriculum to ensure that all districts, regardless of resources, will have access to a curriculum that will enable them to teach their students content aligned to the new standards.

- **Common Core Standards in reading and math.** Missouri is committed to implementing standards in reading and math aligned to the CCSS no later than the 2013–14 school year.
- **Assessments aligned to CCSS.** Missouri is a governing state in the Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium (SBAC) and will pilot and field-test the assessment system during the 2013–14 school year.
- **Academic pathways of learning to meet labor market demands.** Missouri is one of six states selected for a national education initiative designed to build career pathway systems for high school-aged students. The Pathways to Prosperity Network is a joint effort between the Pathways to Prosperity Project at the Harvard Graduate School of Education and Jobs for the Future. The project is focused on increasing high school graduation rates and the attainment of postsecondary credentials with value in the labor market. Pathways to Prosperity Missouri will initially focus on the St. Louis region with the
Missouri

longer-term goal of creating a system of career pathways that can serve students throughout the state. Initial industry areas include those with high workforce demand, including healthcare, biotech, agriculture, finance, and information technology.16

What to Watch:

• Staying the course. Will Missouri maintain its commitment to the timeline for implementing CCSS standards and the SBAC assessments?
• Will increased standards and assessments lead to improved college and career readiness? As a result of increased expectations, will more students graduate ready to attain postsecondary credentials and meet the demands of the labor market?

Holding all schools accountable for meeting state standards

Under its approved NCLB waiver, Missouri is using a modified version of its Missouri School Improvement Program (MSIP 5), which has been in place since 1992. The MAP Performance Index (MPI) will generate a single score based on a set of performance goals. Each school will receive a “core score” based on student achievement, progress, and reducing achievement gaps.

In addition to the core score, schools are evaluated on a range of accountability measures. This data is then reported in the Annual Performance Report and is used to identify low performing schools. However, unlike other states, Missouri has not established a parent-friendly A–F grading system for its schools to translate this data into practical information.

High-achievement goals. Missouri has established a set of annual measurable objectives (AMOs) for all traditional subgroups, as well as for a Student Gap Group (a group composed of black students, Latino students, low-income students, students with disabilities, and English language learners). The state has set a goal of increasing the percent of students who are proficient by 25% by 2020 (74% proficient in Math, 69.8% for reading). The goal for the Student Gap Group is to reduce the achievement gap by half by 2020 (67.8% proficient in math, 63.5% for reading). It will reset these goals when it implements the SBAC assessment system.17

Accountability for all students. Missouri will report student assessment results for traditional subgroups and include Student Gap Group test scores in accountability determinations.

Consequences for low-performing schools and districts. Missouri requires interventions in low-performing schools, but only the lowest 15% of schools. In addition, MDESE is not using its MPI and AMOs to determine the lowest achieving schools. Districts are no longer required to offer supplemental educational services or choice to students attending these schools.

Transparent school grading reports. MDESE has established the Missouri Comprehensive Data System to provide data to the public about its schools. However, instead of a user-friendly A–F grading system, parents must sift through detailed data reports for schools. District accountability reports designate them as accredited, provisional, or unaccredited, which fails to provide clear, objective information about how schools are performing.18
**What to Watch**

- **Will the state improve the transparency of its accountability system?** Will proposed legislation to create an A–F grading system become law?
- **State authority to intervene in failing school districts.** Will the legislature pass Senate Bill 7, which streamlines the process of turning around failing school districts?
- **The lowest-achieving schools need to get better!** Too many students are in poorly-performing schools, particularly in Kansas City and St. Louis (Normandy School District). Both districts are now “unaccredited” due to poor performance. Will the interventions for struggling schools and districts help? Will the new accountability system identify the right schools?

**Improving teacher effectiveness**

In June 2012, the Missouri State Board of Education approved a one-year pilot project of a new teacher evaluation system—the Missouri Education Evaluation System. The system is based on seven principles: 1) measuring performance based on research-based and proven practices; 2) using differentiated levels of performance; 3) highlighting the probationary period as a significant time of intensive support; 4) including measures of growth in student learning as evidence of performance; 5) providing regular, timely, and meaningful feedback on performance; 6) training evaluators; and 7) using evaluation results to inform employment decisions. The evaluation system is Missouri’s effort to support districts across the state, which are each required by Missouri Senate Bill 291 to set teaching standards. More than 100 districts are participating in the pilot. Under the state’s approved NCLB waiver from the U.S. Department of Education, all districts must align their local teacher evaluation systems to the seven principles and have an effective evaluation process in place by the 2014–2015 school year.¹⁹

The principles of Missouri’s system are promising, but general. Missouri’s model evaluation process is voluntary and potentially far less ambitious than many other states.

**Annual evaluations based on student achievement.** Missouri does not require that all teachers receive annual performance evaluations that are significantly informed by student achievement and student growth measures. New teachers in Missouri must be formally evaluated once a year but tenured teachers are required to be evaluated only once every five years and the state is not specific about how student achievement is incorporated.²⁰

**Tenure and dismissal tied to performance.** Missouri’s evaluation principles recommend that districts use teacher evaluation ratings to inform employment decisions, but the state does not have any specific requirements ensuring that teacher tenure decisions are informed by teacher effectiveness in the classroom. Missouri also has no policies articulating that teachers who are deemed ineffective in the classroom are eligible for dismissal.

**Pay for performance or differential pay for working in high-need schools or subjects.** Missouri neither supports differential pay by which a teacher can earn additional compensation by teaching certain subjects nor offers incentives to teach in high-needs schools. However, districts in Missouri have a good deal of discretion on teacher salaries and the state doesn’t have regulatory language that would directly block districts from providing differential pay or pay for performance results.

**Performance-based layoff policies.** In Missouri, the factors used by districts to determine which teachers are laid off during a reduction in force consider a teacher’s tenure status as well as teacher performance. Nontenured teachers are “placed on leave of absence” first, but tenured teachers “are retained on the basis of performance-based evaluations and seniority (however, seniority shall not be controlling) within the field of specialization.”²¹
Mentoring. Missouri requires that all new teachers receive mentoring. The state mandates that new teachers participate in a mentoring program approved and provided by the local district for two years. State guidelines for developing a successful mentoring program establish the following criteria for mentors: 1) having a minimum of three years of experience and 2) holding a same or similar position of grade/subject area.22

What to Watch:

• Implementation of Missouri’s teacher effectiveness principles. There is much to be determined in Missouri’s efforts to implement high quality teacher evaluations statewide. To what extent will districts in Missouri embrace the principles and how will the state monitor the quality and rigor of district evaluations? According to the state’s own data, currently only about 20% of districts in the state are using student growth data, in any form, as part of their teacher evaluation process.1 Will Missouri meet its promised statewide implementation goal for teacher effectiveness policies?

What options are available for parents who want something better for their child?

School choice, charter schools, and online learning

Missouri has recently expanded options for creating new charter schools throughout the state. However, options for public school choice for students in Kansas City were recently curtailed by the courts. This leaves parents with few options to initiate school turnaround efforts in their schools.

Charter school law. In 2012, new legislation authorized the expansion of charter schools in the state beyond Kansas City and St. Louis. Charters may now open in any “unaccredited” district and in “ provisionally accredited” districts under certain conditions. They can open in any accredited school district if they are sponsored by local school boards. The law also increased reporting and accountability requirements for charter schools.23

• Open Enrollment and inter-district school choice. Missouri law allows students to transfer out of unaccredited school districts tuition-free. However, since Kansas City lost its accreditation in January 2012, a circuit court judge has ruled that three neighboring school districts would suffer financial harm if students from Kansas City are allowed to transfer into the smaller districts.24 The state does not require districts to offer school choice with transportation for students in their lowest-achieving schools.

• Parent trigger. Missouri does not have a law that enables parents to initiate school turnaround efforts or charter school conversions.

• Private school vouchers. Missouri does not have a private school voucher program.

• Online Learning. The Missouri Virtual Instruction Program (MoVIP) offers online classes to Missouri public, private, and homeschooled students in grades K–12.25

What to Watch:

• Will charter schools expand throughout the state? Under the new law, will students have access to more educational options?

• Will students in Kansas City be able to transfer to other districts? Will the courts prevent inter-district school choice for students in the state’s lowest-performing school district?

1 Missouri’s ESEA waiver application at: http://www2.ed.gov/policy/elsec/guid/esea-flexibility/map/mo.html
State governance in Missouri

The State Board consists of eight citizens appointed by the Governor and confirmed by the Senate. Members serve staggered, eight-year terms so that one term expires each year. No more than four members of the Board may belong to the same political party. No more than one member of the Board may reside in the same county or Congressional district. When terms expire, members continue to serve until being replaced or reappointed. The Board elects its own officers each year.

For information about the members of the Missouri State Board of Education see: http://dese.mo.gov/stateboard/stateboard.html

The current Commissioner of Education is Dr. Chris Nicastro, who was appointed by the State Board in July 2009.

How to get involved:

Contact the Missouri Chamber of Commerce:

http://www.mocheamber.com/mx/hm.asp?id=home
Endnotes


4 Ibid.


11 Ibid.


21 Ibid.

22 Ibid.


