



# Department of Elementary and Secondary Education

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## State Board of Education

Under the Missouri Constitution (Article IX), the State Board of Education has general authority for “supervision of instruction in the public schools.” Today, this responsibility includes the oversight of educational programs and services that serve Missourians from preschool through the adult levels.

The State Board of Education is composed of eight lay citizens, appointed by the governor and confirmed by the Senate to serve eight-year terms. The terms are staggered so that one term expires each year. No more than four members may belong to the same political party. No more than one member of the board may live in the same county or congressional district.

The board appoints the commissioner of education to serve as its chief executive officer and as director of the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education.

The primary role of the board is to provide leadership and advocacy for the improvement of Missouri’s public education system. The board also establishes policies and regulations needed to carry out state and federal laws related to public education. The board’s major duties include:

- Setting performance indicators that determine accreditation for local school districts through the Missouri School Improvement Program (MSIP). The indicators define basic requirements regarding performance on state assessments, both in aggregate as well as subgroups; high school graduation and/or dropout; advanced coursework; post-secondary and career preparedness; and other areas of student achievement;
- Establishing academic performance standards for the public schools and designing an assessment system to measure students’



PETER F. HERSCHEID  
President  
State Board of Education



MICHAEL JONES  
Vice President  
State Board of Education



DEBORAH L. DEMIEN  
Member  
State Board of Education



O. VICTOR LENZ JR.  
Member  
State Board of Education



CHARLIE SHIELDS  
Member  
State Board of Education



RUSSELL STILL  
Member  
State Board of Education

learning, as required by the Outstanding Schools Act of 1993;

- Setting education and certification requirements for all professional personnel (teachers, administrators, librarians, counselors, etc.) in public schools;
- Approving public and private educator-preparation programs in the state;
- Establishing regulations and administrative requirements for the distribution of state

and federal funds to school districts and other agencies;

- Monitoring school districts' compliance with state and federal laws and regulations. This includes the administration of federally supported programs in the areas of special education, career-technical education and child nutrition (the school lunch and breakfast programs);
- Administering the State Board Operated School Systems—Missouri School for the Blind (St. Louis), Missouri School for the Deaf (Fulton) and Missouri Schools for Severely Disabled; and
- Administering adult learning and rehabilitation services for adult citizens.

### State Board of Education

- Herschend, Peter F.**, (R), president, Branson, Congressional District 7;
- Jones, Michael**, (D), vice president, St. Louis; Congressional District 1;
- Demien, Deborah L.**, (R), Wentzville; Congressional District 3;
- Lenz, O. Victor Jr.**, (R), St. Louis, Congressional District 2;
- Shields, Charlie**, (R), St. Joseph; Congressional District 6;
- Still, Russell**, (D), Columbia; Congressional District 4;
- Vacancies (2)**, Congressional Districts 5 and 8.

### Department of Elementary and Secondary Education

Article IX of the Missouri Constitution reads, in part: "A general diffusion of knowledge and intelligence being essential to the preservation of the rights and liberties of the people, the General Assembly shall establish and maintain free public schools for the gratuitous instruction of all persons in this state within ages not in excess of twenty-one years as prescribed by law."

To help carry out this mandate, the legislature first established a state office of education, with an elected state superintendent, in 1839. The office went through several transformations until the current constitution, adopted in 1945, established the State Board of Education in its present form and created a department of education, headed by an appointed commissioner.

The Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) was reorganized and established in its present form by the Omnibus State Reorganization Act of 1974.

The department is primarily a service agency that works with educators, legislators, government agencies, community leaders and citizens



CHRIS L. NICASTRO  
Commissioner of Education



RONALD LANKFORD  
Deputy Commissioner  
Division of Financial and  
Administrative Services



MARGIE VANDEVEN  
Deputy Commissioner  
Division of Learning Services



ROBIN COFFMAN  
Chief of Staff

to maintain a strong public education system. Through its statewide school-improvement initiatives and its regulatory functions, the department strives to ensure all citizens have access to high-quality public education.

The Department of Elementary and Secondary Education is the administrative arm of the State Board of Education. In addition to the commissioner of education, the department organization reflects functions under two divisions—Financial and Administrative Services and Learning Services.

### Office of the Commissioner of Education

The commissioner of education directs the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education and fulfills other duties as prescribed by law (161.122, RSMo). These duties include: supervising schools and directing the process by which school districts are accredited; suggesting ways to upgrade curriculum and instruction in public schools; working with state and local officials to ensure efficient management of public schools; advising local school officials, teachers



C. JEANNE LOYD  
Assistant Commissioner  
Adult Learning and  
Rehabilitation Services



SHARON HELWIG  
Assistant Commissioner  
College and Career Readiness



LEIGH ANN GRANT-ENGLE  
Assistant Commissioner  
Data System Management



PAUL KATNIK  
Assistant Commissioner  
Educator Quality



DENNIS COOPER  
Assistant Commissioner  
Quality Schools



STEPHEN BARR  
Assistant Commissioner  
Special Education



MARK VAN ZANDT  
General Counsel and  
Governmental Affairs



SARAH POTTER  
Communications Coordinator

and patrons about education-related issues and laws; and seeking “in every way to elevate the standards and efficiency of the instruction given in the public schools of the state.” The commissioner is appointed by, and serves at the pleasure of the State Board of Education.

### **Division of Financial and Administrative Services**

This division is responsible for distributing all federal and state funds to local school districts and other agencies that provide education-related services. The division assists local school officials with budgeting, audits and the reporting of financial statistics, both state and federal. The division also provides assistance with school administrative and governance issues. Other personnel in this division administer the federally funded school lunch and breakfast programs. This division also manages the department’s internal business operations, such as accounting and procurement, budget and human resources.

### **Division of Learning Services**

This division is composed of offices that manage adult learning and rehabilitation services,

college and career readiness, data system management, early and extended learning, educator quality, quality schools and special education.

The Office of Adult Learning and Rehabilitation Services administers statewide adult education services, including adult education and literacy, the high school equivalency testing program, and veterans education, including the Troops to Teachers program.

Rehabilitation Services provide specialized services to adult citizens with disabilities to help them achieve employment and independence. Offices are maintained across the state to provide convenient services to clients. Rehabilitation Services personnel provide individualized counseling, training and other services to help clients achieve gainful employment or independent living. Rehabilitation Services is supported primarily with federal funds.

Independent Living Centers (ILC) are located throughout the state. ILC personnel provide counseling, advocacy, personal care and training in independent living skills for adults with disabilities.

The Disability Determinations Program is part of this office and operates under regulations of the Social Security Administration. Located in offices across the state, Disability Determinations

personnel adjudicate claims from Missouri residents seeking federal disability benefits.

The Office of College and Career Readiness provides technical assistance to local school personnel in the adoption and adaptation of the state's performance standards, and curriculum development/adoption of all content areas — math, science, social studies, English/language arts, health/physical education, fine arts and the career-technical content areas. The office assists schools and career centers with the monitoring and approving of Perkins programming.

The development and oversight of the Missouri Assessment Program, consisting of the annual, grade-level assessments for grades 3–8 and the end-of-course high school assessments, as well as the administration of the National Assessment on Educational Progress (NAEP) are also responsibilities of this office.

The Office of Data System Management is responsible for the development and implementation of the Missouri Comprehensive Data System (MCDS), which includes the student-level record system, the Missouri Student Information System (MOSIS) and Core Data, a web-based data collection system of education-related statistics. This office collects and generates data to meet federal reporting requirements and compliance, as well as provide data utilized in research and analysis that impacts policy decision-making.

The Office of Early and Extended Learning is responsible for the oversight of the department's efforts to expand and improve early learning opportunities for children and providing support for teachers, programs, parents and families of young children. Staff administers the Missouri Preschool Program and the Child Care Development Fund Grant. The office is also responsible for the development of early learning goals.

Extended learning (after school) programs provide a safe, caring and nurturing place for extended learning, social, recreational and personal life-skills development for students outside school hours. Grant programs administered by this office include the 21st Century Community Learning Centers grants and School Age Community grants. The programs foster partnerships among the schools, parents/families and communities.

The Office of Educator Quality is responsible for approving public and private educator preparation programs. The Office of Educator Quality also issues certificates (licenses) to all professional personnel who work in the state's public school systems, as well as assisting with the review of certificate-holders who are charged with misconduct.

This office is responsible for implementation of teacher, principal and administrator standards;

as well as implementation of Missouri's Educator Evaluation System.

A primary function of the Office of Quality Schools is to manage the Missouri School Improvement Program (MSIP), the accreditation/accountability system for public school districts. This office also administers a wide range of state and federally funded programs that assist local schools (Title I, Title III and other federal programs), charter and other innovative schools, as well as developing and implementing a statewide system of support for schools, communities and families. Schools are also provided assistance on federally and state-developed improvement initiatives that are coordinated with other state and regional services. This office administers the Missouri Turnaround Network and other intervention initiatives to assist chronically low-performing schools.

The Office of Special Education administers state and federal funds to support services for students and adults with disabilities. This office works with other state and local agencies to coordinate the Missouri First Steps program, which provides early intervention services for infants and toddlers with disabilities and their families. The office works with local school districts in developing and improving special education services for students (ages 3–21) with disabilities. It also provides financial and technical support for all approved sheltered workshops in the state. Sheltered workshops provide employment for adults with disabilities.

This office also oversees the operation of three school systems administered by the State Board of Education. These are the Missouri School for the Blind, the Missouri School for the Deaf and the Missouri Schools for Severely Disabled. In addition to providing direct services to eligible students with disabilities, these school systems, through their outreach programs and consulting services, assist local school personnel and families throughout the state in meeting the needs of children with disabilities.

## **Missouri Commission for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing**

The Missouri Commission for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing was created in 1988 to improve the quality of life for all Missourians with hearing loss. It advocates for public policies, regulations and programs to improve the quality and coordination of existing services for deaf and hard-of-hearing persons, and promotes new services whenever necessary.

The commission promotes deaf awareness to the general public and serves as a consultant to any public agency needing information regarding deafness; develops a system of state certifica-

tion for those individuals serving as interpreters of the deaf; maintains the quality of interpreting services statewide; maintains a census of persons with a hearing loss in Missouri; promotes the development of a plan that advocates the initiation of improved physical and mental health services for deaf Missourians; conducts or makes available workshops or seminars as needed for educating non-deaf individuals of the problems associated with deafness and ways by which these groups or agencies can more effectively interact with those who are deaf; promotes the development of services for deaf adults, such as shelter homes, independent living skill training facilities and post-school educational training that will help provide for those deaf individuals requiring such services an opportunity to live independently; and establishes a network for effective communication among the deaf adult community and promotes the establishment of TDD relay services where needed.

### **Missouri Assistive Technology Advisory Council**

The Missouri Assistive Technology Advisory Council was established in 1993. The mission of Missouri Assistive Technology is to increase access to assistive technology for Missourians with all types of disabilities, of all ages.

The Council is charged to serve as an advocate for policies, regulations and programs to establish a consumer-responsive, comprehensive, assistive technology service delivery system. The council meets at least four times a year, reports annually to the governor and the General Assembly on council activities to increase access to assistive technology, and provides programmatic direction for all activities and services.