



MASA Legislative Platform

2015-2016

Education Policy

Continuous improvement of the public education system being necessary to student success,

MASA Supports:

- Ensuring that the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education has the resources needed to intervene and assist low performing school districts;
- Offering incentives for the recruitment of highly effective teachers, including retired teachers, into unaccredited districts;
- Providing specialized training for administrators, teachers and staff who work in high poverty areas or with diverse student populations that focus on the unique situations children face in their communities and culture;
- Replicating programs that have been proven to be effective in meeting the needs of students and specifically those that live in poverty or those who are considered “at-risk”;
- Defining the parameters by which employees may collectively bargain including (1) establishing the Board of Education as the decision-making body on any issue that may reach an impasse between administration and a bargaining group; (2) identifying issues and topics which may be the subject of bargaining negotiations; (3) establishing a process that does not exclude any teacher organization; (4) setting stringent and significant penalties for anyone participating in a school strike; and (5) defining “good faith bargaining”;
- Dedicating funds for programs that train superintendents and principals to deliver effective and constructive teacher evaluations;
- Reinstatement of the 2.55 multiplier for PSRS members who have 31 years of service or more;
- Creating approved pilot programs that districts may adopt which would allow those districts to be exempt from certain aspects of the state school improvement plan in exchange for a continuous improvement effort that promotes financial and organizational efficiency while focusing on the unique needs of their communities;
- Increasing Missouri’s graduation rates by offering incentives for students to stay in school and/or disincentives for dropping out;
- Ensuring students who graduate from a Missouri High School be eligible for all state financial aid made available by the state of Missouri; and
- Continuing the current independence, structure, and governance of the Missouri High School Activities Association.

Lead – Develop – Support

MASA Opposes:

- Basing a teacher's pay, a district's salary schedule, layoffs, or tenure solely on teacher evaluations until funding can be dedicated to effective teacher evaluation and evaluator programs.
- Establishing an arbitrary percentage of student performance that must be used in employee evaluations;
- Reducing the probationary period for teachers; and
- Using outside arbitrators to resolve employment disputes.

School Finance

Resources being necessary to carry out the charge of public education in the state of Missouri,

MASA Supports:

- A long-term plan to fully fund the foundation formula;
- Providing funding for early childhood programs;
- Funding the small schools appropriation for the formula;
- Restoring funds to the transportation formula as well as Parents as Teachers;
- Reinstating flexibility of professional development funds to allow for alignment with district expectations;
- Reforming Missouri's business regulatory climate to spur job creation. Examples include reforms to be made to laws regarding workers' compensation, unemployment insurance, employment, etc.;
- Consideration of revenue enhancements such as a sales tax on Internet sales tax, tobacco taxes, alcohol taxes or a general sales tax to provide long-term funding for Missouri public schools;
- Modifying the Circuit Breaker law to increase the number of eligible participants;
- Using uniform assessment processes by county assessors to provide consistent appraisals throughout the state and penalizing assessors that fail to meet the requirements;
- Reforming Missouri tax credits largely based on the recommendations of the Missouri Tax Credit Review Commission that includes the following:
Placing sunsets on all current and future tax credit programs;
 - Making all new tax credit programs subject to the appropriations process;
 - Tying the caps of tax credit programs to funding of categorical education spending;
 - Conducting a standardized, annual review of tax credit programs to monitor and report on each tax credit's return on investment;

Lead – Develop – Support

- Prohibiting the use of multiple tax credit programs on the same project, particularly the stacking of the low-income tax credit with the historic preservation tax credit; and
 - Placing a portion of the savings from tax credit reform to be dedicated to funding the improvement of school facilities and infrastructure;
- Increasing the bonding capacity for school districts;
- Allowing voters to approve bond issues with a simple majority;
- Providing additional funding for technology, MOREnet, math and science equipment, Safe Schools grants and alternative education programs;
- Creating state funding for school facility replacement and/or improvement;
- Exempting education spending from proposals, like the Taxpayer's Bill of Rights that seek to put a cap on state spending;
- Funding of the Missouri Virtual Instruction Program rather than the establishment of statewide open enrollment policies to virtual charter or virtual private schools;
- Requiring the unanimous support of all taxing jurisdictions for any tax abatement project. If unanimous support cannot be achieved, the issue should be put to a vote of the people in the affected taxing jurisdictions;
- Changes to transportation hardship law that do not financially burden either the sending or receiving district; and
- Amending Chapter 213, RSMo to eliminate claims of liability filed against individual employees, school board members when named parties in an employment action.

MASA Opposes:

- Redirecting resources from public schools to unproven, for-profit charter schools until the charter reforms passed in 2012 are implemented and proven effective;
- Diverting state funds from the public schools by any means including tuition tax credits/vouchers;
- Mandating open enrollment of students to attend schools in districts in which their parents do not pay property taxes;
- Mandating programs without appropriating the necessary funds to implement and sustain the programs;
- Any effort to change the current process for determining the taxable assessed value and tax status of senior citizen living facilities in Missouri;
- Imposing property tax reductions, freezes or limits;
- Transforming the early childhood special education program from a required to a voluntary program;
- Replacing the Missouri income tax with a sales tax;
- Forcing consolidation of school districts;
- Limiting the ability of school districts to seek civil, equitable and other legal remedies;
- Allowing open enrollment of students to attend districts in which their parents do not pay property taxes.

Lead – Develop – Support