



MASA Legislative Priorities 2015-2016

The Missouri Association of School Administrators (MASA) represents the majority of school administrators serving school districts in Missouri. The MASA legislative platform covers a multitude of issues that our members have identified which they support and oppose. While the following pages detail these positions, the following three points represent the priorities for the 2016 Legislative Session.

Fund the Foundation Formula and Categoricals: Missouri legislators made a commitment to Missouri schools with passage of SB287 in 2005. When economic times were difficult, Missouri schools saw the formula under-funded, transportation funds cut by nearly one-third; the career ladder program eliminated; and the Parents as Teachers program cut in half. In 2014, the Missouri General Assembly cut taxes in SB 509 with the promise it would spur economic development and, in turn, grow Missouri's budget. FY2017 is the first year the tax cut is phased in and indications are that Missouri's economy is growing. However, Missouri's school funding formula remains underfunded by \$509 million in FY2016. We call on the General Assembly to make the investments needed to fund the formula.

New Assessments & Standards: Last year capped off two years of monumental change to the Missouri Learning Standards and the Missouri Assessment Program. Due to the changes first adopted by the Department of Elementary Education and then changed by the General Assembly with HB 1490 in 2014 and HB 2 in 2015, Missouri is looking at adopting a new set of state standards and will be giving the equivalent of four different tests in four years. Schools need a consistent set of standards and tools in order to measure the progress of their students and respond to their educational needs. We call on the General Assembly to allow Missouri schools to respond and implement these changes without further disruption to state standards or state tests.

Support Local Control & Professional Educators: For a little more than a decade, the United States has created a system of education full of federal and state mandates, especially in the area of testing. Missouri is no different. This system is eroding local control, stifling innovation in Missouri classrooms and oppressing the talents of teachers to meet the unique needs of students in their classrooms. The lack of freedom and resources combined with the disdain for educators expressed by many policymakers is pushing experienced teachers towards early retirement and diverting highly qualified individuals away from the teaching profession. We call upon the General Assembly to support the local control of all aspects of our schools, deemphasize state-mandated standardized tests, and work to address the impending teacher shortage.