

# Legislative Session 2011 FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

February 18, 2011



*The following FAQ provide responses to questions received by the Missouri Department of Education during the current legislative session. This document will be updated regularly and posted on the Department's website at [dese.mo.gov](http://dese.mo.gov). For more information, contact [communications@dese.mo.gov](mailto:communications@dese.mo.gov).*

## ADMINISTRATIVE COSTS

### **What are the administrative cost percentages for each public school district?**

The Department has calculated the [administrative cost percentages](#) of each school district. To calculate administrative cost percentages, the Department totaled the expenditures that were coded in each district's 2010 Annual Secretary of the Board Report in the General and Teachers Fund; function Code 2320 Executive Administration and 2400 Building Level Administration. That sum was then divided by the total expenditures reported in the General and Teachers Fund by the district in the 2010 Annual Secretary of the Board Report. The student enrollment was pulled from the Core data system that was populated by data submitted from each district.

## BLIND STUDENT LITERACY

### **How much money is used for the Blind Student Literacy Task Force?**

The following amounts have been paid out of the Blind Student Literacy appropriation to support the Blind Student Literacy Task Force. Funds are paid to reimburse task force members mileage, lodging and meals.

FY08 = \$2,450.29

FY09 = \$2,554.58

FY10 = \$2,509.78

## COMMON CORE STATE STANDARDS

### **What implications do the Common Core State Standards have for Missouri?**

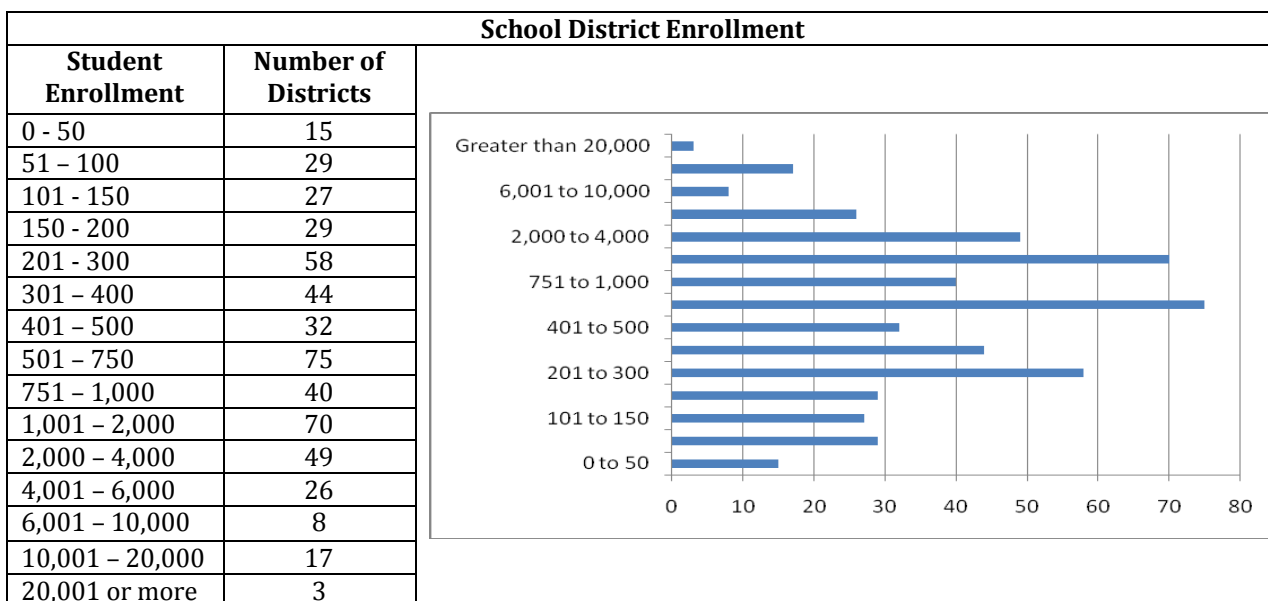
The Department has prepared a frequently asked questions document to address recent questions about the Common Core State Standards.

- [FAQ – Common Core State Standards](#)

## ENROLLMENT

### **How many public school districts are in Missouri? How large are they?**

There are currently 522 school districts in Missouri, with an average enrollment of 1,662 students. The median enrollment is 608 students. The information below represents the range in student enrollment.



### INCLEMENT WEATHER

**With all the snow days many schools have had this year, how does the inclement weather forgiveness rule work?**

State statute (Section 160.041) provides for an “inclement weather forgiveness” rule. There are many conditions, and they are described on the Department’s website at [dese.mo.gov](http://dese.mo.gov). In summary, schools are required to make up to 10 inclement weather days. A qualifying district is required to make up the six scheduled make-up days, plus half of the additional days lost up to a total of 10 make-up days. The remainder of the days and hours lost may be forgiven.

### KINDERGARTEN ENTRY

**What are the laws that regulate kindergarten enrollment?**

In most cases, children are eligible for kindergarten if they reach the age of five before August 1 of the year of enrollment. There are exceptions to this cutoff date:

- Children who are military dependents and have successfully completed an accredited prekindergarten program.
- Children who have attended an accredited kindergarten program in another state.
- Children attending the St. Louis City and Kansas City School Districts. Those districts are authorized to establish a kindergarten entry cutoff between August 1 and October 1 of the year of enrollment.

Although the state compulsory attendance law does not require a child to enroll in school until age seven, a child who is enrolled in school between the ages of five and seven years must attend on a regular basis.

### MISSOURI SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM

**Will MSIP 5 include “non-core” academic programs such as fine arts, music, drama, libraries, foreign language, school counseling and physical education?**

The Department has prepared a frequently asked questions document to address recent questions about the transition from MSIP 4 to MSIP 5.

- [FAQ – Transition from MSIP 4 to MSIP 5](#)

## **What is the status of the fourth revision to the Missouri School Improvement Program (MSIP- 5)?**

This Missouri School Improvement Program (MSIP) is the process of accrediting school districts as mandated by [state law and by State Board of Education regulation](#). The State Board of Education has conducted work sessions regarding the MSIP-5 Performance Standards in recent months. This work will continue during the board meeting scheduled for February 16. The focus of these work sessions is to draft standards and measures to be considered in determining future district accreditation. The process of adopting the revised standards as an administrative rule allows for a period of public comment after the adoption of a proposed rule. That action could be taken during the State Board Meeting scheduled for March 16, 2011.

## **PARENTS AS TEACHERS**

### **How many students that are high need are not receiving these services?**

Although districts are not required to report waiting list information, some districts voluntarily report the number of families not currently served. Information we have received to date indicates a waiting list of 3,070 high need families and 5,630 non-high need families. Currently, 106 school districts have not submitted an invoice to the Department for services provided, so these numbers are expected to increase.

## **PERFORMANCE REPORTS**

### **How did Missouri fare in the Quality Counts 2011 report?**

The annual "[Quality Counts](#)" report card released Jan. 13 shows Missouri has slightly improved its standing since last year. The state nudged its overall grade from a "C-minus" to a "C" and its national ranking from 42 to 38.

## **SCHOOL FINANCE**

### **How much state funding from all state sources did each district receive over the past five years?**

An [Excel spreadsheet](#) outlines all state funding sources by district over the past five years.

### **How has categorical funding been impacted in recent years?**

The following spreadsheets outline categorical funding by school district for Parents as Teachers, Transportation, and Career Ladder.

*Revenue comparisons by school district:*

- [Parents as Teachers](#) – 2009, 2010, 2011
- [Transportation](#) – 2009, 2010, 2011
- [Career Ladder](#) – 2011

### **What is the impact on summer school attendance on school district funding?**

[A spreadsheet](#) outlines summer school attendance and funding for Fiscal Years 2009, 2010, and 2011. Total enrollment is compared to the total number of student records that reported summer school attendance hours to calculate a percent of students who attended summer school for those fiscal years. A direct count of summer school enrollment is not collected. Summer School ADA (average daily attendance) is compared to regular term ADA to calculate a percent of summer school ADA to regular term ADA for Fiscal Year 2010 and 2009. Regular term ADA is not yet available for Fiscal Year 2011, so this could not be calculated for this year. WADA (weighted average daily

attendance) was also provided for Fiscal Year 2010 and 2009. There is no weighted average daily attendance for summer school.

**What are the fund balances of public school districts as of the end of School Year 2010?**

The [listing of unrestricted fund balances](#) of school districts is posted to the Department’s website.

**What would be the financial impact to school districts based on school funding scenarios for the foundation formula?**

The Department presented a range of state [school formula funding scenarios](#) to the House Appropriations-Education Committee on Wednesday, Jan. 26. The document outlined the financial impact to each public school district based on a range of school funding scenarios for fiscal years 2011 and 2012.

**What are the differences between the foundation formula scenarios presented by the Department and the flat funding scenario presented by the Senate?**

The Department did not run the numbers for the Senate and they do vary some from the Department’s calculation; however, not materially. The pattern of what the spreadsheet reflects is not incorrect. The variances differ from school district-to-school district and generally reflect carryovers and offsets. The significant difference is the flat funding scenario does not reflect a freeze in the Formula phase-in. Regardless of the plans being discussed for level funding, the phase-in discussion is most critical.

**What happened to the legal challenge of the Department's method of distributing foundation formula monies?**

On June 17, 2010, three resident taxpayers of the Kansas City School District filed a suit challenging the planned distribution of basic formula payments for FY 2009-2010. In *Hudgins, et al. v. Simmons, et al.*, petitioners argued that the Kansas City School District, as a “hold harmless” district, was entitled to a minimum foundation formula payment, regardless of the level of funding appropriated by the General Assembly. The lawsuit sought to block the plans of the Department to apply the appropriation shortfall proportionately to all districts. On June 18, 2010, the Cole County Circuit Court denied the claim, finding that any adjustment in state aid resulting from the suit would be made in the payments distributed to school districts during FY 2010-2011. Petitioners’ appeal to the Missouri Court of Appeals, Western District, was filed on October 22, 2010. On January 13, 2011, the petitioners withdrew their suit, ending this litigation.

**SCHOOL REORGANIZATION**

**What are the ways in which school districts can be reorganized?**

Current law allows school districts to be reorganized through 1) changes in district boundaries, 2) annexation of one district into another, 3) county-wide reorganization plans, and 4) consolidation of two or more school districts.

A change in school boundary, authorized under [Section 162.431 RSMo](#), may be placed on the ballot based on a petition signed by ten percent of the voters (by number) voting in the last school board election in each affected district. If the district votes are split, voters in one district approving the change and voters in the other rejecting the change, then the issue is decided by a board of arbitration appointed by the state board of education.

An annexation, authorized under [Section 162.441 RSMo](#), may be placed on the ballot by a petition signed either by ten percent of voters voting in the last school board election or a majority of the voters of the district, whichever is less, in the district desiring to be annexed. The issue may also be

placed on the ballot by a majority vote of the district's board of education. If the ballot item is adopted, then the receiving district's board can vote to either accept or reject the annexation.

A reorganization plan, authorized under [Section 162.171 RSMo](#), allows county commissions to submit to the state board of education plans for the reorganization of school districts. [Section 162.181 RSMo](#) provides that the state board of education shall approve or disapprove the plan either in whole or in part.

A petition for consolidation, authorized under [Section 162.223 RSMo](#), may be filed with the boards of education of each affected district. The petition must be signed by ten percent of the voters who voted in the last school board election, or one hundred voters, whichever is higher. The petition may also be authorized by a majority vote of each board of education affected by the consolidation. The proposal must be adopted by the majority of the votes cast in each affected district.

## **TRANSPORTATION**

### **What is the impact of the released transportation funding for public schools?**

In recent weeks, Gov. Nixon has released additional funding to school districts to assist in covering local transportation costs during the 2010-11 school year. On January 13, \$7.5 million was released and on February 3, an additional \$10 million was released. The Department's School Finance section has calculated the distribution of the funds to each school district for each release. Future monthly payments will be based on the new amount. Distribution of Funds: January 13 - [\\$7.5 million](#); February 3 - [\\$10 million](#).

## **VIRTUAL EDUCATION**

### **How many schools are using MoVIP to offer AP courses?**

There are 15 schools that are currently offering Advanced Placement (AP) courses through the Department's Virtual Schools Program. This compares with 258 schools offering traditional AP courses in the classroom (179 public and 79 private).