



# Legislative Platform 2018-19

## Operational Funding

**Closing the Gap on Educational Funding.** Last year, the Missouri General Assembly was able to fully fund the foundation formula for the second consecutive year despite increased weighted average daily attendance as a result of changes to the thresholds and the inclusion of early childhood education in every school district's attendance calculation. While this investment provides valuable resources to local schools, Missouri still ranks near the bottom nationally in the percentage of state funding schools receive and school transportation stands at \$198 million underfunded. As a result, **we urge** the General Assembly to continue to meet the call of the state's foundation formula and begin prioritizing the closure of the current transportation funding shortfall.

## Workforce Development and Capital Funding

**Maximizing Public Education's Role in Workforce and Economic Development.** With leaders in Jefferson City focusing on workforce development, we believe that public schools in Missouri must play a key role in improving the economic climate of the state. For the last decade, rather than focusing on the skills that students need to be successful in college or the workforce, our schools have been forced to focus efforts on performing well on state and federally mandated standardized testing. The regimented system that has been created is a detriment to student engagement and success, teacher recruitment and retention, and the development of our state's workforce. **We urge** the General Assembly to support efforts both legislatively and by the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education that:

1. Allows schools to implement a local accountability model that is specialized to the community needs of the district
2. Promotes school districts to develop career pathways, internships, and apprenticeships at the high school level that are aligned to local workforce needs
3. Allows school districts to focus their efforts to help kids be successful in their post-secondary endeavors as opposed to mandatory standardized test results
4. Provide dedicated capital funding for career and technical center cooperatives and innovation centers that focus on career pathways aligned to workforce needs.

## Financial

**Bonding Capacity.** *We support* passage of legislation that enables local voters to authorize the sale of bonds for local school districts with a simple majority vote at a minimum 20% of the district's assessed valuation.

**Tax Increment Finance (TIF) Reform.** While supportive of economic development, *we encourage* legislation that:

1. Strengthens equitable voting representation on TIF Commissions for school districts
2. Ensures the economic impact of TIF projects are shared equitably among the various taxing entities
3. Provides sufficient (new) revenue for maintaining quality educational opportunities resulting from growth in enrollment

## Policy

**Local Control.** *We oppose* any legislation that erodes the authority of local school boards and undermines the voice of local voters.

**Public Funds for Public Schools.** *We oppose* any legislation such as tuition tax credits, vouchers, or scholarship programs that finance non-public schools with public funds.

**Open Enrollment and Charter Expansion.** *We oppose* any legislation that mandates open enrollment of students without engaging impacted stakeholders and successfully creating detailed policy that provides thoughtful direction in addressing the various complications such as funding, overcrowding, transportation, test score accountability, and athletic participation. Charter schools should be held to the same standards as all public schools to determine effectiveness before passing legislation to expand to other parts of the state.



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