



# Legislative Platform 2019-20

## Operational Funding

**Closing the Gap on Educational Funding.** Missouri legislators have recently shown a commitment to fully fund our state's foundation formula. For that, we are grateful. However, when the state encountered difficult economic times due to the Great Recession, we saw transportation funds cut by nearly one-third, the Career Ladder Program eliminated, Parents as Teachers cut in half and a substantive decrease in the Public Placement Fund. Next session, the formula will require less additional funding than in previous years. As a result, **we urge** the legislature to seize this opportunity to invest significantly in school transportation and the other aforementioned categorical line items.

## 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. Allow schools to implement a local accountability model that is specialized to the community needs of the district.
2. Promote school districts to develop career pathways, internships, and apprenticeships at the high school level that are aligned to local workforce needs.
3. Allow 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 Incentive Reform.** While supportive of economic development, *we encourage* legislation that:

1. Strengthens equitable voting representation and the unanimous support of all taxing jurisdictions for any tax abatement project or otherwise provide an opt-out provision.
2. Ensures the economic impact of inventive 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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