

Missouri Education News
August 2007
Copyright © 2007 Queue Inc.

IN THIS ISSUE:

[Missouri Gets Dismal Marks For Teacher Policies In NEW Report—Labeled as 'Unsatisfactory'](#)

[DESE Lists More Public Schools and Districts That "Need Improvement," Based on AYP Standards](#)

[ACT High School Profile Report](#)
[The Graduating Class of 2007 - Missouri](#)

The Right Test Preparation Materials DO Make All the Difference
(advertisement)

Queue, Inc. is a pioneer in STATE-SPECIFIC ASSESSMENT test preparation and remediation workbooks. Our assessment workbooks are comprehensive, top-notch, content-heavy tools to prepare your students for Missouri's assessment tests in:

Mathematics
Language Arts
Reading Comprehension
Science
Remediation

Learn about our Missouri workbook upgrades by visiting:
<http://www.qworkbooks.com/qworkbookad.html>

Visit our website to request FREE REVIEW COPIES or contact our friendly, knowledgeable sales staff at (800) 232-2224 with any questions you may have.

We're also adding sample pages to our website gradually, so please visit Missouri's webpage!

Visit this link: <http://www.qworkbooks.com/samplerequest.html> or call (800) 232-2224 for more information.

Share Your Thoughts

about the Education Research Report and our other educational newsletters

Your comments might be posted on our website!

Visit <http://www.queuenews.com/comments.html> to leave your feedback.

Want to subscribe to the *Missouri's Education News*? Visit <http://www.queuenews.com/subsstate.html>.

Report broken links or other erroneous material by emailing editor@queuenews.com.

Missouri Gets Dismal Marks For Teacher Policies In NEW Report— Labeled as 'Unsatisfactory'

The National Council on Teacher Quality 50-state encyclopedia on states' teacher policies, concludes that many Missouri's policies are counterproductive to the nation's teacher quality goals.

The *State Teacher Policy Yearbook* is the first project of its kind to provide a 360-degree detailed analysis of how states are hurting or helping teacher quality--and what they can do to fix broken and anachronistic policies.

While Missouri ranks in the middle of all states, its poor performance illustrates the sorry state of most state polices. In the six areas assessed, including admission

standards into teaching, licensure and compensation reform, the state earned two "C" grades and four "D" grades.

Among the findings:

- The state pays insufficient attention to the content preparation of elementary teachers, increasing the likelihood that teachers finish their preparation with significant gaps in their knowledge of essential core subject areas such as American history.
- Missouri allows teachers to teach for too many years without having passed the state licensing test.
- The state does not require that schools evaluate teachers annually as is standard in most professions, nor does it require that a teacher's classroom effectiveness be the preponderant consideration of an evaluation.

Despite the bleak overall findings, there are some bright spots. For example, Missouri is one of the few states to require that a teacher has five years of experience before being eligible for tenure.

To download copies of the Missouri report, which includes national comparisons:
http://www.nctq.org/stpy/reports/stpy_missouri.pdf

DESE Lists More Public Schools and Districts That "Need Improvement," Based on AYP Standards

The Department of Elementary and Secondary Education has notified more than 250 public schools (<http://dese.mo.gov/news/2007/needimprovement.htm#lists>) and school districts that they are unlikely to meet "adequate yearly progress" goals and will be classified by state education officials as "needing improvement" during 2007-08.

Under the provisions of federal law (No Child Left Behind), these schools and

districts will be in the category of needing improvement for the first time. They are required to notify parents about the designation as soon as possible. The school districts will be required to prepare a new school-improvement plan.

"We are making a preliminary identification of new schools and districts that need improvement, as required by the law and based on 2006 MAP scores, attendance rates and graduation rates. In previous years, we made this determination after all schools had received their new test results. Federal officials have told us we must accelerate our timetable," said Stan Johnson, assistant commissioner of the department of education.

Results from the 2007 MAP tests will be released Friday (August 17).

DESE staff have officially notified local school officials that 102 additional buildings and 167 districts will be in the "needs improvement" category for the coming year. In all, the state now has about 200 school buildings that are designated for improvement.

Students in some of the newly designated schools may be entitled to transfer to other schools within their districts, and district officials are required to notify parents as soon as possible about options they may have.

List of Districts: (<http://dese.mo.gov/news/2007/districtimprovelist.htm>)

List of Schools: <http://dese.mo.gov/news/2007/schoolimprovelist.htm>

ACT High School Profile Report The Graduating Class of 2007 - Missouri

The ACT High School Profile Report for each state provides information about the performance of 2007 graduating seniors who took the ACT as sophomores, juniors, or seniors. The reports focus on performance, access, course selection, course rigor, college readiness, awareness, and articulation.

To see the report:

<http://www.act.org/news/data/07/pdf/states/Missouri.pdf>

State Score is Stable, but the Number of ACT Test-takers Rises Sharply in 2007

Missouri's average score on the ACT college-entry exam stayed the same for the third year in a row, but the number of 2007 graduates taking the test increased to an all-time high.

State education officials say they are pleased by the trend.

Missouri's average ACT score this year is 21.6, compared to the national average of 21.2, which increased this year by one-tenth of a point. The maximum possible score on the ACT is 36. The ACT is the most popular college-entry exam in Missouri and most other Midwestern states.

New statistics for the nation and each state were released today by ACT. The new data reflect the performance of all 2007 high school graduates who took the exam as sophomores, juniors or seniors.

In Missouri, 45,354 graduates took the ACT – an increase of nearly 2,500 over 2006. The percentage of Missouri graduates taking the ACT jumped to 74 percent this year from 70 percent last year. The total number of ACT-takers in Missouri has hovered at about 42,800 for the past four years.

Among states in which at least 50 percent of all high school graduates take the ACT exam, Missouri now ranks ninth with its average state score of 21.6.

"It appears that many of the additional ACT test-takers in Missouri this year were African-American or other minority students, and that is an encouraging sign," said D. Kent King, Missouri Commissioner of Education.

"Across the country and in Missouri, too few minority students are going to college and succeeding. Students need to see the ACT as an essential part of the process of pursuing higher education," he said.

According to ACT, the number of white students taking the test in Missouri dropped slightly this year (99), to a total of 32,801. The number of African-American test-takers increased by 362, to 4,563. However, the number of students in the category of "other/no response" jumped by more than 2,000 – more than 50% – to a total of 6,003.

The Department of Elementary and Secondary Education encourages all high school students to take a full menu of challenging academic courses, regardless of their immediate plans after graduating.

In Missouri, less than half of this year's graduates (47%) reported that they took the "core curriculum" recommended by the ACT. The recommended core courses are:

4 units of English and at least 3 units each of math, science and social studies.

Under new graduation standards adopted by the State Board of Education in 2005, all students, beginning with the Class of 2010, will be required to take a slate of courses in high school that meets or exceeds the ACT recommendations.

Students who take at least the recommended core curriculum in high school always score higher than the average on the ACT and substantially higher than students who do not take the more rigorous academic courses.

Students Post Gains on 2007 State "MAP" Tests

Missouri students posted small to moderate gains in reading and math at all grade levels on this year's state-required MAP tests, state education officials said today.

At the state level, African-American students also made a small gain in narrowing the gap with white students by making faster progress toward meeting annual goals.

Last spring, students in all Missouri public schools took the Missouri Assessment Program tests in communication arts and mathematics. The tests are required for all students in grades 3-8. The communication arts exam also is given in grade 11; the math exam in grade 10.

The test results:

(http://dese.mo.gov/news/2007/mapresults.htm#Missouri_Assessment_Program_State_Results,_2006_and_2007) are used by the state to evaluate public schools for accreditation purposes and to satisfy the accountability requirements of federal law (the No Child Left Behind Act).

"The investment our state is making in education is paying off with Missouri students making gains in their performance on this year's MAP tests," Gov. Matt Blunt said. "There is still much work to be done and that is why education will remain my highest priority. As Missouri's governor I have signed budgets over the last three years to increase education funding by more than half a billion dollars. Our children hold the keys to the future and it is imperative that we help provide the educational resources

they need to succeed and compete in our global economy."

"Overall, I am pleased with this year's MAP results," said Stan Johnson, assistant commissioner of the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education. "We see positive change in the percentage of students scoring at the 'proficient' or 'advanced' levels in nearly every subject and every grade. We also have moderate state-level gains in the middle grades (6-8), where our scores have been flat in recent years," he said.

The rate of progress, however, is not fast enough in many schools to meet the "adequate yearly progress" (AYP) targets that are required under federal law. As a result, more public schools in the state will be identified this year as not meeting the ever-increasing AYP goals. More schools also will be identified as "needing improvement" or some other type of corrective action.

This year, about 190 school buildings that receive federal "Title I" funding will be identified as "needing improvement," compared to 130 schools last year.

To meet the 2007 AYP goal, 42.9 percent of the students in a school had to score at the proficient or advanced level in communication arts. For math, the target was 35.8 percent. These requirements apply to all students and to nine subgroups, including minority students, students with disabilities, students who are learning English, and children from low-income families.

At the state level, Missouri students as a whole successfully met the AYP targets in both communication arts and math. However, only two subgroups – white students and Asians/Pacific Islanders – met the state's AYP goals.

While African-American students did not meet the AYP goals, their rate of progress this year exceeded that of white students in both communication arts and mathematics, Johnson said.