

# State Senator Robert Mayer The Mayer Memo

Senator Robert Mayer - Serving Butler, Dunklin, New Madrid, Pemiscot, Ripley, Stoddard & Wayne Counties



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## A Very Promising Scholarship Program for Missouri Students

Expanding college scholarships to thousands more Missouri students is the aim of Senate Bill 558 — a bill I recently filed that would establish the “Missouri Promise Program.”

The Missouri Promise Program, which would serve as a successor program to the current A+ Schools Program and would be administrated by the Department of Higher Education, would extend college scholarships to *all* eligible high school students and no longer require program participation through an A+ designated high school. Scholarships for qualifying students would be available for use at community colleges, technical or vocational schools and for an additional two years for graduates who go on to a four-year university.

Under the proposed Missouri Promise Program, students would be required to attend a public high school in Missouri for at least three years prior to graduation, have made a good faith effort to secure other sources of funding, have earned a certain grade point average, be enrolled full-time at a public community college, vocational school or technical school or private vocational or technical school, and maintain a certain grade point average while receiving the scholarship. In addition, the scholarships would require staying away from discipline issues. The proposed scholarship expansion would provide two years of free community college tuition to an estimated additional 19,300 Missouri students and additional free tuition for as many as 8,200 students at public four-year universities.

Education is among the state’s top priorities and making college more affordable for families, particularly those middle-class families who have struggled to pay for college beyond a two-year degree, is paramount. I believe the Missouri Promise Program would serve as an opportunity for more Missourians to realize their dreams of a higher education, would significantly boost enrollment at our state’s four-year colleges and universities, and would substantially increase the economic benefits of living and working in our great state.

As always, if you have comments or questions about this week's column or any other matter involving state government, please do not hesitate to contact me. You can reach my office by phone at 1-877-291-5584.

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