



MISSOURI SENATE

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Senate Panel Considers Sen. Rob Mayer's Education Bills to Expand College Scholarships, Modify School Funding Formula

JEFFERSON CITY — Testimony in support of two education bills sponsored by Sen. Rob Mayer, R-Dexter — one that would expand college scholarships to thousands more Missouri students and one that would modify the calculation of the state adequacy target for schools — was heard today (3/11) during public hearings held at the State Capitol.

Senator Mayer's [Senate Bill 558](#) would create the "Missouri Promise Program," which would serve as an extension to the current A+ Schools Program. The program, which would be administered 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. 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 who meet the requirements.

"Making college more affordable for families, particularly middle-class families who have struggled to pay for college beyond a two-year degree, is very important for helping Missourians realize their dreams of a higher education — the results of which will ultimately benefit us all," Sen. Mayer said.

[Senate Bill 453](#) modifies the elementary and secondary education funding formula in several ways. It would remove the current 5 percent growth cap in the state adequacy target calculation in the school foundation formula. The state adequacy target is the determined adequacy target amount of money needed to educate each Missouri student. Through Sen. Mayer's proposal, state funds would flow more quickly to

school districts through the school formula and allow hold harmless school districts to receive additional state funds.

Senator Mayer's proposed legislation would also distribute the gaming revenues derived from Proposition A through the Classroom Trust Fund, which would clarify and ensure a more effective and efficient distribution of these new education funds. The proposal also adds a gifted component to the calculation of the school foundation formula's weighted average daily attendance, which would provide funding for gifted students.

"This bill provides a better way of distributing education money to Missouri school districts for the students it is intended to benefit," Sen. Mayer said.

Both bills are under consideration by the Senate Education Committee.

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