



State Senator Scott T. Rupp ~ District 2

# The Rupp Report

*Serving Lincoln County & St. Charles County***Column For Week of: February 15, 2010**[Website](#) | [Biography](#) | [Newsroom](#)

## Nothing Less Than The Best For Education

There may be no bigger issue at the State Capitol than education. The 2011 fiscal year budget calls for more than \$3 billion to fund Missouri's K-12 classrooms, which is a record amount for our state. As vice-chairman of the Senate Education Committee, it's my job to make sure that we're smart and efficient with that money, because our children and our schools deserve nothing less than the best we can provide to them.

That's why I've sponsored legislation that modifies the way our state approaches charter schools. Missouri's parents deserve to have all options on the table when it comes to their child's education. One measure, [SB 838](#), amends the current law and allows charter schools to be set up in any school district that has schools that have been labeled as underperforming regarding school improvement. If your local school is sinking instead of swimming, then you, as a parent, deserve the right to have your child attend a school that meets your and our state's standards.

This proposed legislation would also allow any higher education institution to be a sponsor of charter schools within their district, and to have some of those costs defrayed by the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE). It will set up policies and procedures for establishing the school and meeting academic guidelines, and it changes the performance goal review to an annual basis, rather than the current tri-annual measurement.

My other legislation relating to charter schools, [SB 835](#), allows "high risk" or "alternative" schools the opportunity to make credit arrangements outside of the school. This includes off-campus instruction, students who work, independent studies, and performance-based credit options, as long as DESE studies the alternative arrangements and makes sure that the students are still graduating, going to college, or working.

Finally, I've introduced legislation that rewards our brightest for graduating high school and getting to college early. [Senate Bill 907](#) creates the Early High School Graduation Scholarship Program, which gives the student 80 percent of that student's state aid (the amount the state would have spent on their fourth year of high school) to use toward college. The other 20 percent would go to the school district, so that the school is not penalized for letting their smartest students move on.

As we move our classrooms into the future, our schools must be as competitive and high-performing as we ask our students to be. That means opening up the system to those who can meet the standards we desire, and making sure that no student is hindered from finding their way, no matter what that way may be.

If you have any questions about the future of education or any other matter involving state government, please contact my office by phone at (866) 271-2844.

### Contact Information

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