



Senator Matt Bartle  
8<sup>th</sup> Senatorial District

MISSOURI SENATE  
JEFFERSON CITY

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## Sen. Bartle Introduces Innovative Education Reform Plan

JEFFERSON CITY—Senator Matt Bartle (R-Lee’s Summit) recently filed legislation proposing an innovative three-pronged approach to improving Missouri’s public educational system. The plan features merit-based teacher salaries, year-round school schedules and multiple kindergarten start dates.

“The solutions proposed in this bill may be bold, but they just make sense,” Sen. Bartle said. “Financially rewarding our finest teachers will attract the best and brightest to the profession. Giving our school districts the flexibility to implement fresh approaches, such as year-round school and multiple kindergarten start dates, provides them with options beyond the one-size-fits-all policy currently in place.”

The changes proposed by Sen. Bartle in [Senate Bill 815](#) include:

- **Merit-based teacher salaries:** Current law gives teachers the option to receive performance-based salary stipends in lieu of a permanent contract, but this incentive is only available to teachers in the St. Louis City School District. Under the bill, all public school teachers would be eligible.
- **Allowing a year-round schedule:** The current school schedule is based on an outdated model from another era when students were needed to help with the harvest. Under SB 815, a school district would have the option to adopt a year-round educational approach. The district must meet for the minimum number of school days currently required, but would be allowed to divide the traditional three-month summer break into a series of shorter breaks, none of which would last more than four weeks. Such an approach would foster learning as students benefit from greater educational continuity and consistency.
- **Implementing multiple kindergarten start dates:** Missouri’s current system allows a child starting kindergarten to be up to 20 percent younger than his or her classmates, determined solely by the child’s birth date. This unfairly penalizes younger, less mature children who are grouped with those who are older. Under SB 815, a school district could choose to offer parents two start dates for their kindergartener—one in the fall and one in the winter.

“We need to develop solutions that are as politically possible as they are effective,” Sen. Bartle said. “This legislation presents a common-sense approach that all sides should be able to work on together.”

The bill will next be referred to committee, where it will await a public hearing. A passing committee vote makes the measure eligible for referral to the full Senate for debate.

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