



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

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Senator Pearce Participates in Legislative Discussion at MPER Retreat

JEFFERSON CITY—Senator David Pearce (R-Warrensburg) on July 30 attended the University of Missouri Partnership for Educational Renewal (MPER) Governing Board Summer Retreat in Lake of the Ozarks to participate in a legislative roundtable discussion on education. Senator Pearce and two members of the House of Representatives took part in the legislative meeting, which was also attended by Warrensburg native Dr. Dan Lowry, co-director of MPER.

For the last five years, the board has invited Missouri legislators to sit down with administrators from all levels of public education to discuss issues that affect Missouri students and their families. Legislators and participants devoted a significant amount of time to discussing the implications of level funding for the foundation formula and other trends affecting public education, including “Race to the Top,” a competition for funding among the states carried out by the federal government to improve public education.

“If we are to improve the quality of education students in Missouri receive, we need to work through the tough issues we face, such as funding concerns and accessibility to higher education,” Sen. Pearce said. “Coming together to develop solutions is a great start, and now we need to make efforts to implement our ideas.”

As the largest educational partnership in the nation, MPER is composed of the MU Colleges of Education and Arts and Sciences, 22 rural, suburban and urban school districts, the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, and two community colleges. The organization’s main goal is to simultaneously improve elementary and secondary education and the teacher preparation program at MU.

“Missouri students and public education are facing some of the greatest trials of all time,” Dr. Lowry said. “A record-breaking recession and on-going state and local tax deficits are forcing school leaders to make difficult decisions that will have strong impact on several areas of education, which will inevitably result in repercussions on student learning. In addition to economic concerns, our children are being negatively influenced by social concerns that relate to the family and society in general. Opportunities such as the MU Partnership for Educational Renewal that provide for discussion between legislative leaders and educational leaders are one of the strongest measures of cooperation that can be taken during this difficult period in our nation’s and Missouri’s history.”

Senator Pearce is chairman of the Senate Education Committee and the Senate’s Missouri Educated Citizenry 2020 Committee.

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