

SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 24

WHEREAS, every student matters, every school matters, and every community matters; and

WHEREAS, poverty has a deep impact on student learning; and

WHEREAS, transferring students out of unaccredited school districts is not in the best interest of all students and will not lead to improvement of unaccredited districts, revitalization of poverty stricken communities, or increased academic outcomes for Missouri students; and

WHEREAS, in struggling school districts, the state should focus on improving individual schools; and

WHEREAS, money should be spent on improving instruction rather than transporting students; and

WHEREAS, keeping every student, school, and community intact results in a stronger Missouri; and

WHEREAS, in order to improve unaccredited schools and increase academic outcomes of Missouri students, a solution including support and early intervention must be provided; and

WHEREAS, local control builds strong communities; and

WHEREAS, the current school transfer law is archaic and was passed at a time when the state of Missouri accredited schools in a very different way than is currently done; and

WHEREAS, the resources and expertise to solve the issue of low performance in school districts, particularly those in high poverty areas, exist right here in the state of Missouri:

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the members of the Missouri Senate, Ninety-seventh General Assembly, Second Regular Session, the House of Representatives concurring therein, hereby strongly encourage the State Board of Education to:

- Grant the Kansas City school district provisional accreditation. The State Board of Education granted the St. Louis public schools provisional accreditation after they showed two years of improvement on the Missouri School Improvement Program. Kansas City has done this;
- Utilize its authority to create an accreditation and intervention model that allows reform and governance changes in a struggling school district so that a district has a chance to be successful before becoming bankrupted by the student transfer law;
- Utilize authority given to the State Board of Education and DESE by the passage of SB 125 in 2013 to intervene immediately in districts where reform and change has failed to show any progress in student achievement, lapse these districts, and attach them to other school districts;
- Utilize a model of supports and interventions that have been proven to increase achievement in Missouri school districts with high levels of poverty;

- Submit a budget request to the General Assembly to cover the cost of tuition and transportation for students who have transferred from the Riverview Gardens and Normandy school districts to other school districts; and
- Make the Commissioner of Education responsible for the success of districts that have dropped below full accreditation or employ a staff member of DESE that will be responsible for overseeing such school districts' progress toward regaining full accreditation; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Secretary of the Missouri Senate be instructed to prepare properly inscribed copies of this resolution for the Commissioner of Education and each member of the State Board of Education.

Resolution

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