



Show-Me

Literacy...

The "Official" Newsletter of Literacy in Missouri

WINTER '08

ISSUE No. 134

St. Louis Makes Top 10 List of America's Most Literate Cities, 2007

City	Overall Rank 2007	06 Rank	05 Rank
Minneapolis, MN	1	2	2
Seattle, WA	2	1	1
St. Paul, MN	3	5	9.5
Denver, CO	4	8	6
Washington, DC	5	3.5	3
St. Louis, MO	6	12	15
San Francisco, CA	7	9	5
Atlanta, GA	8	3.5	4
Pittsburgh, PA	9	6	8
Boston, MA	10	11	7

A Look Back, 2003-2007

The release of the 2007 America's Most Literate Cities survey coincides with renewed widespread interest in reading and literacy. The National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) recently published a "disturbing story" indicating that, at all levels, Americans are reading less and reading less well, and that this behavior correlates with declining measures of the health of our society.

Looking back on five years of data, I find that these new studies are borne out by some of the five-year trends in these surveys of America's most and least literate cities.

One of the most disturbing trends is that while Americans are becoming more and more educated in terms of their time spent in school and their education level accomplished, they are decreasing in terms of literate behaviors. This is particularly obvious in our lack of support of bookstores and the constantly diminishing circulation of newspapers. Forty-three of the 59 cities studied have a higher percentage of high school graduates than they did five years ago, and 46 of the cities have a higher percentage of college graduates, so clearly the trend across the country is for people to stay in school longer and achieve a higher grade level of accomplishment. Nevertheless, every city in the study declined in Sunday newspaper circulation save one--St. Paul, Minnesota--and only four--Cleveland, Indianapolis, Louisville, and St. Paul--had consistent increases in weekday circulation. So while Americans are becoming more and more "educated," they are reading newspapers less.

Top 10,

Continued on page 5

Missouri's High School Dropouts

High school dropouts are three times as likely to slip into poverty as those who finish high school from one year to the next; they make up nearly half of the heads of households receiving public assistance. Between 1973-1997, the average hourly wage for high school dropouts decreased 31% when adjusted for inflation. Economic prospects for dropouts will be even gloomier as more jobs require advanced skill and technical knowledge.

High school dropouts are at risk for other negative outcomes like becoming a teen parent or spending time in prison. The children of dropouts are much less likely to graduate themselves, perpetuating a cycle of diminished opportunities. One-third of children whose parents did not complete high school must repeat a grade. They also require special services and are suspended or expelled more frequently.

Youth may be tempted to drop out of school if they live in communities where a large number of service jobs are available. Unfortunately, most of these are low-paying jobs with few opportunities for advancement. The immediate economic return will be offset by a decrease in future earnings.

Not all youth drop out of school and become employed. In Missouri, 10% of teens were not in school and not working in 2004. These youth are often called "idle" or "disconnected" teens. These teens are "disconnected from the roles and relationships that set most young people on pathways toward productive adult lives. Disconnected young women are more likely to rely on public assistance, while disconnected young men are more likely to spend time in jail. Idle youth may be or are more likely to become homeless, compounding their disadvantage.

These youth may have been disconnected long before high school. Children who move four or more times during their childhood are more likely to drop out than less mobile children. Missouri defines "high mobility" as more than 25% of students transferring in or out during the school year. In 2005, the state average for student mobility was 26.3%. Only one in four school districts experienced high mobility in 1997. By 2005, one in two schools reported this level of transfers. Higher mobility rates were more likely in districts with higher rates of child poverty.

Another aspect of this disconnection is apparent in a recent study of drop out prevention programs. Dropping out of school is easy. Students who have done it say they simply stopped going to school one day. Some said they dropped out because they thought school principals or teachers wanted them to. Others said they dropped out because of circumstances beyond their control. Either way, they may have encountered little resistance from others around them. To remain in school, youth must have access to caring adult models, responsive schools and supportive communities.

In Missouri, the dropout rate increased between the 1992 and 1994 school years but has declined since then. There were 10,341 dropouts in the 2004/05 school year. Another important measure of school achievement is the graduation rate, or the percentage of ninth graders who complete high school four years later. In 2005, 85.7% of students graduated with their peers. The graduation rate increased steadily between 1997 and 2005 school years.

Source: Kids Count in Missouri 2005

Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education

The Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education estimate that approximately half of the students who drop out of school eventually achieve their G.E.D. certificates.

School District Findings

Over half of the school districts in Missouri had less than 2% of enrolled students drop out of school in 2005.

Only seven school districts had 8% or more students drop out of school.

Children with Disabilities

Dropout rates are substantially higher for children with disabilities. In 2002, the dropout rate for children with disabilities was substantially higher (35%) than the overall rate in Missouri (3.6%). Graduation rates for these children were substantially lower than for all other children.

Racial Data

The dropout rate was 4.6% for minority students and 3.4% for white students.

Resources@MCCE

Career Education Resources
Missouri Center for Career Education
Resources.MCCE.org

Resources@MCCE, Missouri's career education resource library is funded by the Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education. The resources include books, guides, directories, games, kits, videos, and more. Resource materials are available for loan to educators of Missouri's schools. The only cost for the resources is the return shipping.

Resources are available for all occupational areas as well as various ancillary areas such as special needs, adult education, career education, gender equity, and professional development. Quick and easy access enables educators throughout the state to:

- supplement and enhance curriculum
- find up-to-date information about all aspects of education
- stay abreast of current developments in specific content areas

For Additional Information-Questions-Comments-Suggestions Contact:

Resources@MCCE

Career Education Resources

Missouri Center for Career Education

University of Central Missouri
TRG 306
Warrensburg, MO 64093

Toll Free: 800.392.7217

Fax: 660.543.8995

Web Site: Resources.MCCE.org

Cathy Kahoe, Resource Coordinator

Email: Resources@mcce.org

Provided by Cathy Kahoe, Resource Coordinator, Resources @ MCCE

GED Test Accommodations

If you observe...

then your student may benefit from...

- | | |
|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • squinting eyes while reading • eyes watering while reading • complaining of letters moving on the page • inability to read for long periods of time • eyes becoming bloodshot while reading • complaining of headaches while reading • holding text close to face to read | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • colored transparent overlays |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • making notes while reading • forgetting directions while completing assignments/tasks | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • clear transparent overlays with a highlighter |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • appearing to be lost on the page • having trouble with multi-step problems • making notes while reading | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • temporary adhesive notes (Post-Its®) for spatial notes |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • leaning on hand while reading • plugging ears with fingers while reading • easily distracted by environmental noise while reading | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • earplugs |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • squinting eyes while reading • complaining of headaches while reading • holding text close to face to read | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • large print text • magnifying glass |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • having trouble concentrating for extended periods of time | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • one test per day |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • tracking text with finger • having difficulty keeping the place on the page | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • straightedge |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • squinting eyes while reading • complaining of headaches while reading • shading eyes while reading or listening | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • visor |

Top 10,

(cont. from page 1)

We are also supporting local bookstores far less often. Not a single city in our survey has more independent bookstores now than five years ago. Fifty-seven out of 60 cities reported fewer retail booksellers in 2007 than in 2003; in several, the number of booksellers per capita dropped by half of what was reported in 2003. At the macro level, the market does seem to reflect the “alarming” story that the NEA reports.

There are, however, a few bright spots in this year’s study indicating that reading practices in some areas have improved or at least stayed the same while they have definitely changed in nature. Per capita publication of magazines in the United States increased in 87 percent of the cities studied. Libraries are staying even, with the number of library buildings, volumes in the collection, and circulation of books and other materials staying about steady in terms of the number of cities advancing and declining. Consistent improvements have occurred in the number of branches per capita in Boston and El Paso, Texas. Portland, San Francisco, and St. Paul have moved well up in circulation per capita, and Boston, Detroit and San Francisco have consistently increased their library holdings.

The internet explosion has also clearly taken effect with substantial growth of reading online. Almost all the cities have more free internet access points. More people are reading newspapers online and buying books online than in previous years.

So with five years of data and a retrospective look, what are some of the trends in terms of specific cities? First, there are some perennial winners. Minneapolis, Seattle, Pittsburgh, Denver, and Washington, D.C. have appeared in the top 10 in every year the study has been conducted. Close behind them are Atlanta, Cincinnati, Portland, and the rising star of literate cities, St. Paul, Minnesota.

St. Paul has moved up in the rankings every year from 11th to 9th to 5th to 3rd. It is the only city in the United States in which Sunday newspaper circulation has increased per capita and one of very few in which weekday circulation has increased. St. Paul’s library system is good and improving; it is one of the few cities which improved in all three variables of branches, volumes, and circulation. Public access to internet communications has increased substantially in every year the study has been conducted. St. Paul has had a large increase in the publication of professional journals and an even more impressive increase in the publication of magazines. The city has held its own in very declining markets for bookstores. And St. Paul has the fifth highest percentage of the population with a high school diploma and the tenth highest with a college bachelor’s degree. So St. Paul is certainly a bright spot.

Dr. Jack Miller,
President,
Central Connecticut State University

Reprinted from America’s Most Literate Cities 2007 Web Site

Health Literacy Facts

In a 1993-94 study conducted at two public hospitals, 23.6% of patients with inadequate functional health literacy did not know how to take medication four times a day, compared to 9.4% with marginal functional health literacy and 4.5% with adequate functional health literacy. 81.1% of patients with inadequate functional health literacy did not understand the rights and responsibilities section of a Medicaid application, compared to 31.0% with marginal functional health literacy and 7.3% with adequate functional health literacy.

([Williams, p1680](#))

Reprinted from the National Institute for Literacy web site. You may view other articles at <http://www.nifl.gov/nifl/facts/health.html>

MAEL-PDC Training Schedule

March

<http://maelpdc.org/>

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
						1 Content Standards Initial AEL & ESL St. Louis Content Standards Initial AEL—KC AEL & ESL Content Standards/CASAS Follow-up—Parkway
2	3 ESL Content Standards/CASAS Follow-up—Carthage	4 ESL Content Standards/CASAS Follow-up—Springfield	5 AEL Content Standards Followup Camdenton	6 Math Institute—Rolla	7 ESL—Online	8 BTAP Wkshp—Columbia ESL Content Standards/CASAS Follow-up—KC
9 BTAP Wkshp—Columbia	10 ESL Content Standards/CASAS Follow-up—KC	11	12 Literacy Coordinator Training - Columbia	13 Health Literacy—Online	14	15 ESL Content Standards/CASAS Follow-up—KC
16	17 ESL Content Standards/CASAS Follow-up—St. Louis	18 ESL Content Standards/CASAS Follow-up—St. Louis	19 AEL & ESL Content Standards CASAS Follow-up St. Charles	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29 ESL Content Standards/CASAS Follow-up—Jeff City
30	31					

COABE Conference

St. Louis, Missouri

Show Me Success: Empowerment Through Diversity

Hosted in conjunction with MAACCE

April 28—May 1, 2008

For more conference information go to:

<http://www.coabe.org/index.cfm?fuseaction=conferences>

Upcoming Certification Workshops

PCW Workshop- Columbia

February 23-24, 2008

April 5-6, 2008

BTAP Schedule-Columbia

March 8-9, 2008

June 7-8, 2008

Upcoming Events Week of February 25

- | | |
|---------|--|
| 2-25-08 | S-Know Bound Content Standards-Online
1-2:00 p.m. Social Studies
3-4:00 p.m. Workplace
5-6:00 p.m. Science
7-8:00 p.m. Communication |
| 2-26-08 | S-Know Bound Content Standards-Online
7-8:00p.m.-ESL Inter-Personal Communication |
| 2-28-08 | New Director Training-Jefferson City- 9-3:30 p.m. |
| 2-29-08 | Numeracy Debut-Columbia 8:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. |

For more information go to <http://maelcdc.org/>