



Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education

— *Missouri public schools: the best choice. . .the best results!* —

MEMORANDUM

DATE: June 14, 2010
TO: Missouri Association for Career and Technical Education
Career Education Administrators and Teachers
FROM: Michael Muenks, Assistant Commissioner
Office of College and Career Readiness
Re: Career and Technical Education and Department Reorganization

On behalf of Deputy Commissioner Richard Phillips and myself, I am pleased to share information about the reorganization of the Department, our vision for the new Office of College and Career Readiness, and what impact this may imply for career and technical education programs and students across the state.

Earlier this month, several members of our staff met with the MoACTE leadership about the role (and strengths) of Career and Technical Education within the new Office of College and Career Readiness. Rest assured, the only reorganization that is taking place at this point is internal – primarily organizing staff and office space within the Department to streamline and consolidate around functions to provide greater depth, capacity and efficiency.

The Department is committed to developing an effective, efficient and innovative framework to provide Missouri students with the knowledge and skills they will need to be successful. Within the Department's new Office of College and Career Readiness, we are bringing together the academic and career-oriented instruction programs. As you know, educators are the first to point out that academic and career instruction, traditionally, have been siloed. Within this new office, we will now have the opportunity – and structure – to move the wishful conversation to action.

Now, two weeks into my new position, I am in a “seek-to-understand” mode as I lead development of our work plan and assure we carry out our state and federal responsibilities. I am delighted to have the benefit of the Career and Technical Education vision papers recently developed at the state and national levels, as I believe the priorities and suggested strategies can serve as excellent guides as we work together to create the infrastructure that will support the goals of public education.

Already, I have noted a number of Career Education “gems” that I would like to see replicated across all academic areas, such as the New Teacher Institute, the teacher mentoring program, as well as curriculum-based student organizations. I believe that future opportunities include creating a systematic approach to instruction for all academic areas, a unified approach to STEM initiatives, and developing capacity to measure the true impact of career and technical education programs.

It has been more than 35 years since the Department has undergone a significant reorganization. Commissioner Nicastro has been working with the Governor, the State Board of Education, educators, constituents, and our staff to develop a vision reflecting what we want public education to look like for our children and adult learners. The new organizational model (attached) reflects our commitment to guarantee the superior preparation and performance of every child in school and in life.

I look forward to working with you as we pursue these and other opportunities as suggested in the state and national visions for college and career readiness.