



## Video Transcription

Governor Jay Nixon: “The 21<sup>st</sup> century economy is knowledge-based, and the best jobs will belong to those with the best education. In the next 10 years, Missouri student achievement must rank in the nation’s top 10 if we expect to compete for the best jobs in the global economy.”

In order to reach this critically important goal, the Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education is launching the Top 10 by 20 initiative. This is an effort to help Missouri education rank among the top 10 states by the year 2020. 10 by 20 comes at a critical moment, when our education system simply must adapt to a changing world.

The pressure on public education has never been greater. Our graduates need advanced skills and knowledge to compete for emerging high-technical, high-skilled and high-wage jobs. Missouri must compete both nationally and internationally to bring these jobs to our state. Success for our residents and our communities depends on the success of our school system.

Dennis Fisher, Superintendent, Park Hill School District: “This is economic development, workforce development, that’s what it’s going to take to retain our students in the community and have employment opportunities for our students in the future.”

Rhonda Broussard, Member, Leadership St. Louis: “Public education is our number one vehicle for increasing our work force and for really elevating the level of skill and the level of entrepreneurship that we have available in the state of Missouri.”

Dan Mehan, President, Missouri Chamber of Commerce: “What we need is a qualified work force that’s up to speed with the technological challenges that we face in 2011. Those are only going to get greater.”

Kristein King, VP of Workforce Development, ABC Laboratories: “As a community, or as a state or as a nation...it just comes down to being able to compete globally.”

Where does Missouri currently stand when it comes to preparing young people for the workforce and for life?

The most recent assessments show Missouri making positive gains in math, communication arts and science. More Missouri students are taking the ACT exam, and the average score has held steady over the past six years. The percentage of high school graduates ready for college-level courses ranks 27<sup>th</sup> nationally.

While our state has made gains or remained steady on many key measures, our academic performance remains near the national average.

Chris L. Nicastro, Commissioner of Education: “There is no question that we’ve improved tremendously over the last several decades in Missouri. The problem is we haven’t improved fast enough or far enough. We still have work to do.”

If we want our students to be competitive, if we want our workforce to stand out nationally and internationally, our challenge is clear: average isn’t good enough. That’s why the State of Missouri is focusing its efforts on making education in Missouri among the top 10 by 2020. Reaching this goal will require significant reform and major changes in our education system, from pre-K through higher education.

Improving performance starts with high standards. Missouri already has rigorous academic standards in place, but in order to reach the top 10, we must expect more from our education system.

Kelvin R. Adams, Superintendent, St. Louis Public Schools: “I believe in terms of standards, students rise to the level of expectations.”

Natalie Altheuser, Teacher, Thorpe Gordon Elementary: “So, if I set my standards high and hold students accountable and want them to achieve and tell them that I expect that, then they try their best to live up to those expectations.”

Micah Melling, Student, Clinton High School: “And when someone else sets you to a higher standard, that causes you to think, ‘I can do this.’ When people show that they believe in you that also makes you believe in yourself.”

Even in the current economic climate, improving student achievement in Missouri is a goal we can reach.

Norm Ridder, Superintendent, Springfield Public Schools: “Of course you do need the financial resources to be able to support the foundation of education, but I tell you what, you can’t measure in money the will of the people.”

Reaching the top 10 will require significant effort, and everyone in our state has a responsibility to make this effort a success.

Rhonda Allen, Teacher, Thorpe Gordon Elementary: “I think it’s a very tall order; I really do. But I think that we can definitely do it. But it’s going to take everyone: parents, teachers,

administrators, community members; everybody to pull together to have high expectations of our students.”

Robin Hattori, Member, Leadership St. Louis: “You can’t have a strong community and care about the health of the region and the state without strong public education, period.”

Reaching the top 10 will have tremendous impact on our graduates, our workforce and our economic prosperity. Working toward this goal will also reach all the way directly into our classrooms.

Rebecca Walka, Student, Meadow Heights High School: “Being in the top 10 to me would make me feel very proud.”

Cara Gooch, Student, Bolivar High School: “So, it makes me happy knowing that not only is it important to me, but it’s also important to everyone else in Missouri and in my community.”

Michael Tatum, 2011 Graduate, Hickman High School: “High school is not the ending point for our students. In today’s economy, in today’s society, higher education, technical schools, all these things are the end points for our students, not high school. The idea that we can be more and that we can do more than what we are doing is kind of an amazing thing to think about.”

Chris L. Nicastro: “I think it’s a perfect time for us to set a lofty goal for ourselves to do a better job and to strive to improve, to strive to take Missouri to the top 10. All the forces are aligning: our Governor, our legislative leaders, our business community, educators, people everywhere are saying that this is the time for Missouri to step up, for us to do better. We can do it.”

To get there, everyone in communities across Missouri must pull together and do their part. Help us vault our state into the top 10. Visit our website or contact us by phone or email. It’s up to all of us to reach the top and make Missouri proud.

Micah Melling: “Top 10 by 20.”

Rhonda Allen: “We can do it.”

Dan Mehan: “Top 10 by 20.”

Kelvin R. Adams: “Missouri Proud.”