



Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education
Missouri public schools: the best choice ... the best results!

Position Announcement and Instructions for Applicants

Commissioner of Education

State of Missouri



The Missouri State Board of Education is seeking highly motivated candidates for the position of Missouri Commissioner of Education. The Commissioner serves as chief executive officer to the Board and as director of the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education.

This brochure provides a complete job description, qualifications and instructions for applicants.

To guarantee full consideration, completed application packets must be postmarked or emailed by December 1, 2014. Applications must include:

- A brief personal letter to the President of the State Board of Education, expressing interest in the position and professional goals.
- A comprehensive resume detailing work experience, educational background, references and other relevant activities or accomplishments.
- A two-page essay about the single, greatest issue facing Missouri Education today.



Job Description

■ Basic Responsibilities

The Commissioner of Education supervises the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education. In fulfilling this responsibility, the Commissioner will conform to the Missouri Constitution, the statutes of Missouri and the guidance and direction of the State Board of Education. The Commissioner shall recruit and retain qualified and effective people to staff the Department; understand the intricacies of budget and Department finances; create an environment conducive to staff creativity; and exercise the power of the office for the benefit of all public schoolchildren in Missouri. In all activities, the Commissioner will respect his/her role as the lead educational agent responsible for Missouri's students.

■ Duties of the Commissioner

- Assists the Board in developing the vision, objectives and strategies that will establish clear direction for the Top 10 by 20 initiative and lead the implementation of all programs and initiatives.
- Nurtures an appropriate relationship with the State Board of Education, which includes listening to the Board and forging consensus among Board members.
- Models behavior that adapts to thoughtful lay discussion of the issues, tolerates ambiguity, respects the diversity of individual Board member's views, and directs the staff as they assist the Board in formulating direction and policy.
- Manages the process of communication with all interested groups and is personally effective in using the Commissioner's office to focus statewide efforts on Top 10 by 20 goals established by the Board.
- Establishes effective relationships with the Governor and Governor's staff, members of the legislature and other agencies' directors. Uses these relationships to further the progress toward established goals and to promote the effective delivery of public education.
- Maintains an awareness of emerging educational trends and issues and evaluates the potential impact of such trends and issues in Missouri.
- Selects, trains, motivates, and supervises the Deputy Commissioners and the Assistant Commissioners. Develops the capacity of senior staff to maintain effective relationships with the Board and implements the Board's vision.
- Manages the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, ensuring that the Department provides appropriate service to the school districts and citizens of Missouri.
- Carries out all statutes and constitutional provisions related to public education and ensures that all students are fairly and equally served under the law.
- Oversees the proper distribution and monitoring of all funds administered by the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education.



Characteristics of a Qualified Applicant

The State Board of Education will appreciate and review any additional factors and/or characteristics to this list.

- 1. Vision:** A demonstrated ability to effectively articulate a vision and challenging goals that result in highly effective public education in Missouri.
- 2. Effective Team Building:** Demonstrable accomplishment in assembling high-level people into an effective, goal-oriented, service-focused team who deliver quality services and high client satisfaction. Works to build relationships built on trust within the Department and with professional constituencies partnering with the Department in our education goals.
- 3. Empathy:** Articulates an understanding of individual diversity and how to organize the Department response to service all constituencies.
- 4. Earned Doctorate:** This high level of educational achievement is preferred, but other appropriate successful experience will be given active consideration.
- 5. Student Achievement:** Demonstrated understanding of the challenges associated with improving student achievement and the laws and systems that are intended to result in such improvement across all populations. Ability to clearly articulate a statewide commitment to this effort.
- 6. Management Skills:** Demonstrated ability and accomplishment in the following areas:
 - Employee selection, recruitment and development
 - Succession planning
 - Conflict resolution
 - Financial planning and the unique characteristics of state level financing of public schools
- 7. Excellent Communicator:** The successful candidate will have excellent written and oral skills. Will also understand the importance of education communication and the communication of Department goals and plans and the ongoing state of public education.
- 8. Policy Wise:** Demonstrated ability to advocate for and effectively represent the State Board's position on all legislative initiatives and work equally well with all political points of view.
- 9. Demonstrated Success:** Demonstrated past success in the following areas will enhance an applicant's opportunity for selection:
 - Effective management of a large public organization
 - Prior improvement of student achievement and graduation rates
 - Development of public education policy and active implementation
 - Advocacy for appropriate education funding
 - Effective leadership with diverse constituencies and publics
 - Goal setting and a track record of accomplishment
- 10. Stakeholder Engagement:** Ability to create and maintain an environment of collaboration and trust on behalf of the State Board of Education and Department with stakeholders, including parents, education professionals, the General Assembly, the Governor and the public.

■ Salary & Tenure

Under state law (Section 161.112, RSMo), the State Board of Education “shall appoint a commissioner of education as its chief administrative officer.”

The salary for this position is \$185,904.

■ Residency Requirement

State law also specifies that the Commissioner “shall be a citizen who has resided in the state for at least one year...” Based on opinions of the Missouri Attorney General, however, the State Board of Education may select a non-Missouri resident and appoint the individual to serve as acting Commissioner for one year, in order to fulfill the residency requirement.

■ Confidentiality

Applications will be held in confidence to the greatest extent possible, throughout the selection process. The Board cannot guarantee that the identity of applicants or finalist will remain confidential.



Submit Completed Application Packets to:

Peter F. Herschend, President
Missouri State Board of Education
c/o Robin Coffman
P.O. Box 480
Jefferson City, MO 65102-0480
Telephone: (573) 751-7602
Email: commissionersearch@dese.mo.gov



The Department of Elementary and Secondary Education does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, gender, national origin, age, or disability in its programs and activities. Inquiries related to Department programs and to the location of services, activities, and facilities that are accessible by persons with disabilities may be directed to the Jefferson State Office Building, Office of the General Counsel, Coordinator - Civil Rights Compliance (Title VII/ Title IX/504/ADA/Age Act), 6th Floor, 205 Jefferson Street, P.O. Box 480, Jefferson City, MO 65102-0480; telephone number 573-526-4757 or TTY 800-735-2966; email civilrights@dese.mo.gov.