

April 2015



The First 90 Days

Dear Fellow Missourians:

The first three months as Missouri's Commissioner of Education have gone by quickly. Thank you for all the kind words of encouragement as we work to serve Missouri's children.

During these first 90 days, I have had the good fortune of visiting schools around the state and gathering feedback from school leaders, parents and students. I wanted to share two observations I have made so far.

First, Missouri students are doing amazing work in the classroom – work that is being applied to real-world situations. Take for example a student from Centralia who turned an FFA project into a successful agriculture business. Or look at the dozens of students in the Kansas City area who participate in professional internship programs every day. The enthusiasm and energetic ideas that our students and teachers put forth are remarkable.

Second, it is vital that we continue to grow and improve in order for ALL Missouri students to graduate college and career ready. This improvement effort is not just important to students, parents and teachers. It must be a priority for all Missouri citizens.

Think about this: By 2020, 65 percent of all jobs in the United States will require some form of postsecondary education. Improving public education in Missouri will help ensure Missouri's economy continues to thrive into the next decade and beyond.



Our students simply must be college and career ready when they graduate high school. We have to put an effective educator in every classroom, and make sure children have the opportunity to attend a high-quality early childhood education program. We have to ensure ALL Missouri students receive a high-quality education.

I hope to continue this dialogue in the coming months. Thank you for all your support of Missouri's children.

Margie Vandeven