

September 14, 2016

Dear School Administrators:

As we all know, the safety and preparedness of our students and staff is a top focus of Missouri's schools. Next month, Missouri schools have an opportunity to both raise the level of school preparedness and to educate children about the risk of earthquakes in our state. On Thursday, October 20, at 10:20 a.m., Missouri will participate in the Great Central U.S. ShakeOut earthquake drill.

I encourage Missouri schools to participate in the drill. Last year, more than 400,000 students, teachers, and staff throughout Missouri took part in the drill that helps schools incorporate earthquake awareness and safety tips into classroom instruction. In addition to Missouri, 13 other nearby states will participate, with more than 2 million people already signed up.

The ShakeOut increases awareness of the "Drop, Cover, Hold On" method of protecting ourselves during an earthquake. Many items inside buildings would fall during an earthquake, so knowing what to do when you feel an earthquake can prevent injuries and deaths.

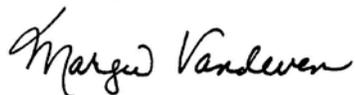
By state statute, schools in the eastern half of Missouri are required to conduct two earthquake drills each school year. Participation in the ShakeOut will be counted as one of those two required drills.

Register your school to participate at www.shakeout.org/centralus. Once you have registered, you will receive information on how to conduct your school drills, including preparedness information and other resources.

Our schools have taken a leadership role in participating in this important event and showing that we can be prepared for a variety of disasters and other emergencies. I encourage you to join me and thousands of Missourians in participating in the Great Central U.S. ShakeOut at 10:20 a.m. on October 20.

If you have any questions regarding the ShakeOut, please contact Jeff Briggs, earthquake program manager at the State Emergency Management Agency, at (573) 526-9232 or jeff.briggs@sema.dps.mo.gov.

Sincerely,



Margie Vandeven
Commissioner of Education