

May 22, 2014

Dr. Ty McNichols, Superintendent
Normandy School District
3855 Lucas and Hunt Road
St. Louis, MO 63121-2919

Dear Dr. McNichols:

On February 20, 2014, the Missouri State Board of Education voted unanimously to take control of any action with fiscal implications in the Normandy School District, including spending, contracts and other financial obligations. The purpose of this action was to help assure that the students of the Normandy School District would be able to complete the 2013-14 School Year without a major disruption should the district, due to impact of tuition costs for students that transferred from the district, run short of operating funds prior to the close of the year. On February 26, 2014, you received a communication outlining the operations for implementing this action of the State Board.

On May 21, 2014, it was reported in the St. Louis Post-Dispatch that a petition had been filed in the St. Louis Circuit Court challenging the federal and state constitutionality of the law that has forced the Normandy district to pay transportation and tuition expenses for about 1,000 children who left to attend higher-performing school districts. Named in the suit were the Missouri State Board of Education and twenty (20) area school districts.

The oversight plan provided to the district on February 26, 2014 contained multiple provisions relative to the financial operations for the Normandy School District through June 30, 2014. Three of which were:

1. The District will provide to the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education a list containing information on all unresolved legal claims against the District. The information will include date of initiation of legal action; amount of claim for any dispute that is pending; and, status of litigation.
2. The District shall notify the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education in writing and supply all necessary documentation of any new, unplanned and/or emergency expenditure-that arises. Moving forward with any action of this type will require written authorization from the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education.
3. All contract extensions will require approval from the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education.

The purpose of this communication is to serve as notification that expenditures relative to this most recent action have not been and will not be approved by the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education. This action should be terminated to assure that that no district funds are utilized to defray the associated costs, which violates the terms under which the State Board of Education allowed the local board of education to continue governance of the district after loss of accreditation pursuant to Missouri Revised Statute §162.081.3(1).

Respectfully,



Ronald Lankford

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c: Chris L. Nicasastro, Commissioner of Education
Senator Kurt Schaefer, Senate Appropriations Chair
Representative Rick Stream, House Appropriations Chair
Mike Nietzel, Senior Policy Advisor, Office of the Governor
Margie Vandeven, Deputy Commissioner, Learning Services
Mark VanZandt, General Counsel
Roger Dorson, Coordinator, Financial and Administrative Services
Mick Willis, Assistant Superintendent of Finance, Normandy School District