

November 21, 2012

Dear Constituents,

The Department of Elementary and Secondary Education is aware of confusion and misinformation about the Missouri School Improvement Program 5 resource and process standards following their public release for comment in the Missouri Register on November 1, 2012. We will attempt to clarify the purpose and use of resource and process standards; performance standards; and graduation requirements.

In September of 2012, the State Board of Education completed MSIP 4<sup>th</sup> Cycle accreditation classifications for all Missouri school districts based on MSIP 4 performance standards. The MSIP 5 performance standards were approved by the State Board of Education in December of 2011, and these standards go into effect December 2013. **These performance standards are the standards and indicators that will affect the next round of accreditation classification decisions for school districts.**

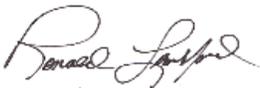
**The resource and process standards have not affected accreditation since 2006**; these serve only as a guide for districts when investing their resources. The Department doesn't review compliance with these standards in districts unless annual performance reports reflect concerns that warrant further review. **The resource and process standards should also not be confused with state graduation requirements**, which only serve to outline the minimum credits a student needs for a high school diploma and are not impacted by the proposal under consideration.

The goal of the changes to the resource and process standards is providing **local control** to districts allowing parents, community leaders, school boards, administrators and students to decide what courses are needed in their communities. Though the number of course offerings is no longer defined by a number of units, **the importance of the content in each area of study is not diminished**. Programs of high quality will always be needed to prepare students for life after high school graduation.

The resource and process standards are available for public comment through November 30, 2012.

The ultimate goal of the Missouri School Improvement Program is to help all children prepare for success in school and in life. Working together toward this common goal, Missourians can help future generations realize that success.

Sincerely,



Ron Lankford