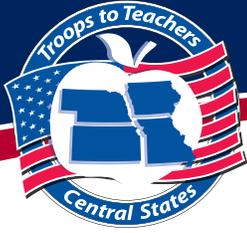


# TROOPS TO TEACHERS



✦ JEFFERSON CITY OFFICE  
**877.530.2765**

✦ ST. LOUIS OFFICE  
**314.729.2444**

✦ KANSAS CITY OFFICE  
**816.241.1705**

## OVERVIEW OF THE TROOPS TO TEACHERS PROGRAM

Troops to Teachers (TTT) is managed by the Defense Activity for Non-Traditional Education Support (DANTES), Pensacola, Florida. The purpose of TTT is to assist eligible military personnel to transition to a new career as public school teachers in "high-need" schools. A network of state offices has been established to provide participants with counseling and assistance regarding certification requirements, routes to state certification, and employment leads. The TTT homepage provides information and resource links, including a job referral system to allow participants to search for job vacancies as well as links to state Departments of Education, state certification offices, model resumes, and other job listing sites in public education. Troops to Teachers is not a teacher certification program. Troops to Teachers Candidates must meet all state teacher certification requirements for the state where they desire to teach.

### History

Troops to Teachers (TTT) was established in 1994 as a Department of Defense program. The National Defense Authorization Act for FY 2000 transferred the responsibility for program oversight and funding to the U.S. Department of Education but continued operation is by the Department of Defense. As of 1994, over 20,000 Troops to Teachers participants have been hired nationally in public schools through the program.

### Goals and Objectives

Reflecting the focus of the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001, the primary objective of TTT is to help recruit quality teachers for schools that serve low-income families throughout America. TTT helps relieve teacher shortages, especially in math, science, special education and other high-needs subject areas, and assists military personnel in making successful transitions to second careers in teaching. Funding has been appropriated for FY 2014 to provide financial assistance to eligible participants, provide placement assistance, referral services, and maintain a network of state offices. Military personnel interested in a second career in public education may submit a registration form.

Pending availability of funds, financial assistance may be provided to eligible individuals as stipends up to \$5K to help pay for teacher certification costs or as bonuses of \$10K to teach in schools serving a high percentage of students from low-income families. Participants who accept the Stipend or Bonus must agree to teach

for three years in schools that serve students from low-income families in accordance with the authorizing legislation.

### Proud to Serve Again!

As the teacher shortage continues to grow, school districts are increasingly turning to TTT to find new teacher candidates. School districts that hire one military veteran through TTT almost always come back looking for more "just like him/her." Military veterans have established a reputation as excellent teachers and exemplary role models for today's students. The leadership skills, breadth of experience, dedication, commitment and maturity that our former marines, sailors, soldiers and airmen bring to the classroom are attributes sought by public school administrators and parents. If you are considering teaching as a second career, register online or submit a Registration Form to Troops to Teachers and join the thousands of other military veterans who are "Proud to Serve Again."



TROOPS TO TEACHERS



SCAN CODE AND BE THE FIRST ONE TO LEAVE A MESSAGE. MENTION THAT YOU USED THIS CODE AND RECEIVE A FREE GIFT.

TO FIND OUT IF YOU ARE ELIGIBLE FOR GI BILL EDUCATION AND TRAINING BENEFITS, CALL 888.442.4551

## Eligibility

New Legislation January 2, 2013:

Recent changes to the legislation governing the Troops to Teachers (TTT) program expand eligibility requirements providing a greater number of military members with access to program benefits!

All current and former members of the U.S. Armed Forces whose last period of service is characterized as honorable may participate in the program for counseling and referral services. Those who meet certain education, military service and registration requirements may also be eligible to apply for TTT financial assistance to assist with their transition to the classroom.

## Referral and Placement Assistance

Effective January 2, 2013, Troops to Teachers offices nationwide are now able to provide personalized counseling and referral assistance to all military members, past or present, who have served honorably. Troops to Teachers registration is open to all veterans regardless of time in service who have an interest in education in Pre-K public, Charter, Bureau funded and DoDEA as school teachers, resource teachers and non-instructional positions such as paraprofessionals, teacher's aides, counselors, psychologists, school nurses, librarians, media specialists, speech therapists, audiologists, physiotherapists, resource officers, school principals, and vice principals.

## Registration

Registration is open to any veteran whose last period of service is characterized as Honorable with an interest in instructional positions such as teacher or resource teacher or non-instructional positions such as paraprofessional, teacher's aide, counselor, psychologist, school nurse, librarian, media specialist, speech therapist, audiologist, physiotherapist, resource officer, school principal, or vice principal. Financial assistance is available to eligible participants who are working to become certified teachers in public K-12, schools, charter schools or Bureau of Indian Affairs schools.

To register or find out more about Troops to Teachers go to [www.proudtoserveagain.com](http://www.proudtoserveagain.com). The national office at the Defense Activity for Non-Traditional Education Support (DANTES) is the final authority on all eligibility issues, we recommend you contact them directly if you have any questions.

A state office will assist you in identifying licensing pathways, teaching opportunities, and understanding your state's certification requirements. If you want to be a teacher, our state counselors want to help you!

**NOTE:** Former military personnel currently serving as certified teachers may qualify to use the stipend or bonus to seek an additional endorsement, particularly in high need areas such as math, science, and special education.

## Obligations

Individuals receiving financial assistance must agree to teach for three years. Reserve personnel must also commit to continue their reserve service for an additional three years or agree to continue reserve service until eligible for retirement, whichever is less.

## Education Requirements

Elementary or Secondary Education: Baccalaureate or advanced degree from an accredited institution at the time of application.

Vocational/Technical Education: Associates degree (or minimum of one year of college) and six years of work experience in a vocational or technical field. Eligible for vocational referral and, if applicable, vocational certification expenses only.

## Service Requirements

An individual is eligible to participate in the program only if the last period of service was honorable. For more information visit: [www.proudtoserveagain.com](http://www.proudtoserveagain.com)

## STATE TEACHER JOB VACANCY SITES

**Looking for a new job?** These are some links that may prove useful for finding certified and substitute teaching jobs. For a more complete listing go to our website:

[WWW.TROOPSTOTEACHERS.MO.GOV](http://WWW.TROOPSTOTEACHERS.MO.GOV)

MO: <http://www.moteachingjobs.com/>

IA: <http://www.iowaeducationjobs.com/>

NE: <http://www.nebraskaeducationjobs.com/>

KS: <http://www.kansasteachingjobs.com/>

## MISSOURI/IOWA/NEBRASKA/KANSAS

Chad Schatz, Director

John Hose, Assistant Director

John Parker, Supervisor

Ron Marsch, Supervisor

### Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education

Veterans Education and Training Section

P.O. Box 480, Jefferson City, MO 65102-0480

p: 877.530.2765

fax: 573.526.5710

e-mail: [dese.troopstoteachers@dese.mo.gov](mailto:dese.troopstoteachers@dese.mo.gov)

## TEACHER CERTIFICATION CONTACT INFORMATION

### MISSOURI

Debbie Butcher p: 573.751.7863

e-mail: [debbie.butcher@dese.mo.gov](mailto:debbie.butcher@dese.mo.gov)

### IOWA

Dr. Mary Lou Nosco p: 515.725.2146

e-mail: [marylou.nosco@iowa.gov](mailto:marylou.nosco@iowa.gov)

### NEBRASKA

Bethina Garrett p: 402.471.0739

e-mail: [nde.tcweb@nebraska.gov](mailto:nde.tcweb@nebraska.gov)

<http://www.education.ne.gov/tcert>

### KANSAS

Shane Carter p: 785.296.8011

e-mail: [scarter@ksde.org](mailto:scarter@ksde.org)

website: [www.kdse.org](http://www.kdse.org)

## TROOPS TO TEACHERS MENTORS

We are pleased to have a list of mentors on our web site. These people have successfully been through the process from start to finish. They are offering their thoughts, insights, and encouragement to others pursuing their goals of becoming teachers.

### WANT TO BECOME A MENTOR?

The advice and guidance you will provide is invaluable to fellow veterans interested in starting careers as K-12 public school teachers.

### WOULD YOU LIKE TO VOLUNTEER TO BE A MENTOR?

Visit: [DESE.TroopsToTeachers@DESE.mo.gov](mailto:DESE.TroopsToTeachers@DESE.mo.gov) or

click here to join us: <http://dese.mo.gov/sites/default/files/TTT-MENTOR%20CONNECTION-%202006-14.pdf>

# VETERAN'S EDUCATION & TRAINING SECTION

## MISSOURI STATE APPROVING AGENCY



### OJT PROGRAM GOES BEYOND THE FINANCIAL BENEFIT TO VETERANS

*The Police Department applied for approval and as a result there have been approximately 12 officers since approval receive benefits through the GI Bill for OJT.*

In Sep, 2001 Leo Blakley, Approval Developer, made a cold call on the Grandview, MO Police Dept. and found they had 4 or 5 recently hired officers who were veterans eligible for GI Bill education benefits. A preapproval visit was made by Mr. Blakley and Turner Shipman, Supervisor, to review the criteria and process to approve the PD for OJT VA education benefits. The PD applied for approval and as a result there have been approximately 12 officers since approval receive benefits through the GI Bill for OJT.

The Grandview PD has long been a supporter of veterans and feels the OJT program goes beyond the financial benefit to the veteran. It is felt the program is a morale booster for the officers which benefits the PD as well. Deputy Chief Dean Hutson has been the Certifying Official for the program since the beginning and supports it fully. When a new officer that is a veteran is hired he is informed about the OJT program by Deputy Chief Hutson.

Over the years Turner Shipman has been the local SAA contact for organizations with OJT programs approved. He has been Deputy Chief Hutson's primary contact for any assistance needed regarding veteran eligibility, enrollment certification, and SAA standards for the program. Mr. Shipman appreciates Deputy Chief Hutson's support of the program.

In December, 2014 the MO SAA and two members of the Government Accountability Office met with Grandview Police Dept. to provide information regarding GI Bill benefits for OJT. After briefing the GAO employees about the Grandview PD's OJT program, Deputy Chief Hutson presented a desk top award to Mr. Shipman for supporting the Department in administering the program. Mr. Shipman feels a share of this award also goes to Mr. Blakely for his efforts finding the eligible veterans at the Department and securing an appointment for the approval visit.

### STAFF

#### JEFFERSON CITY

**Chad Schatz:** Director

**John Hose:** Assistant Director

**Ron Marsch:** Supervisor

**Debbie Butcher:** Teacher Certification Supervisor

**Loretta Fennewald:** Administrative Assistant

#### ST. LOUIS

**John Parker:** Supervisor

**Robert Hummel:** Approval Developer

**Suzanne Adam:** Secretary

#### KANSAS CITY

**Turner Shipman:** Supervisor

**Leo Blakley:** Approval Developer

**Sharon Sawyer:** Secretary

#### Veterans Education & Training Section Department of Elementary and Secondary Education

P.O. Box 480

Jefferson City, MO 65109

573.751.3487

#### Veterans Education & Training Section C/O Penn Valley Community College Pioneer Campus

Room 256

2700 East 18th St.

Kansas City, MO 64127

816.241.1705

#### Veterans Education & Training Section C/O Truman Middle School

Room 22

12225 Eddie and Park Rd.

St. Louis, MO 63127

314.729.2444

It doesn't take a rocket scientist to know the GI Bill, it takes NASAA!

## ABOUT THE NASAA

The National Association of State Approving Agencies (NASAA) helps make the GI Bill work. NASAA facilitates the efforts of its member State Approving Agencies (SAAs) in promoting and safeguarding quality education and training programs for veterans, ensuring greater education and training opportunities for veterans, and protecting the integrity of the GI Bill.

NASAA is made up of more than 50 state agencies nationwide that oversee education and training programs for veterans in their respective states. Some states have separate SAAs for different types of training (schools vs. on-job, for example) but most states have a single agency to evaluate, approve, and monitor education and training programs for use by GI Bill-eligible students. SAAs provide assistance to schools and training facilities that are approved or are seeking approval. SAAs' approval decisions are transmitted to the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs so that VA can pay benefits when students enroll. SAAs play a major role in monitoring schools with approved programs to assure they continue to comply with state and federal law.

NASAA works hand-in-hand with other organizations to make the GI Bill the best possible educational assistance program for our nation's veterans. NASAA members work with government agencies, Congress, schools, and employers to assure that veterans have access to well-managed, ethical programs they can trust to help them achieve their goals.

### A Little History

State Approving Agencies were created during the early days of the World War II "GI Bill of Rights." The United States Congress, recognizing that education is a function reserved to the States, decided that each State should create or designate an agency to determine which education and training programs were appropriate for veterans to enroll in and use their GI Bill education benefits. The law establishing the education benefits program requested each State's Governor to designate such a State Approving Agency. Laws creating subsequent education benefits, like the Montgomery GI Bill and the Post 9/11 GI Bill, continued this request.

In 1948, the State Approving Agencies saw a need to coordinate their efforts nationwide and gathered to form the National Association of State Approving Agencies. Then, as now, NASAA assisted states in their efforts to do a better job for veteran-students and served as a tool to resolve mutual problems. NASAA and SAAs have been an outstanding example of the success of a State-Federal partnership that allows Federal interests to be pursued at the local level while preserving the identity, interests and sovereignty of States' rights in education. NASAA also has increased its influence in the realms of education and veterans benefits over the years, playing major roles in creation of new programs, such as the Montgomery GI Bill and the Post 9/11 GI Bill.

The primary focus of the SAAs continues to be the review, evaluation and approval of quality programs of education and training under State and Federal criteria. SAAs continue to conduct on-site supervisory/compliance visits to approved institutions and to those seeking approval, providing technical assistance to help them meet requirements. SAAs engage in outreach activities to encourage wider use of the GI Bill, by veterans, schools, and employers. Many act as state liaisons, helping military installations provide base personnel with quality educational offerings and information about education benefits.

Yet, while their fundamental role has remained the same, SAAs have evolved in response to the changes in our society over the years since World War II. SAAs and NASAA have become advocates for quality education and training for veterans and other eligible persons. They have become educational partners with the institutions themselves, facilitating even greater and more diverse educational opportunities for veterans. They have become strong advocates for the usage of the GI Bill and have developed a working partnership with the federal government which other federal agencies have tried to emulate.

As state and national priorities change, as the function of government undergoes continuous re-examination, and as the needs of our veterans evolve, state approving agencies stand ready to meet the challenges before them. Yet in spite of the need for new approaches and technologies, differing styles of oversight and enhanced criteria for performance, the fundamental reasons for which the SAAs were originally created remain as valid today as they were in the beginning.

A dedicated toll-free hotline is now available  
**FOR SCHOOL CERTIFYING OFFICIALS (SCOS) ONLY.**

**Toll-free hotline number 1 (855) 225.1159**

The hotline is available from 7:00 am to 5:00 pm, Central Time. SCOs must provide the school's facility code and be listed as a designated VA school certifying official to receive assistance through the dedicated hotline.

TO FIND OUT IF YOU ARE ELIGIBLE FOR VETERANS EDUCATION AND TRAINING BENEFITS, OR TO SEE HOW MUCH YOUR ENTITLEMENT IS, CALL 888.442.4551.



### SWEET DREAMS PILLOW

The Sweet Dream Picture Pillows are available to the children of any family whose father or mother is on active duty and will be absent from their family for at least three months.

Visit our website at:

<http://www.pillowprojectusa.com>

**SHARE THIS NEWSLETTER** This newsletter is being e-mailed to one person at each school. Please share this newsletter with all other Certifying Officials, Education officers, Unit Commanders and personnel, the Bursar's or Comptroller's Office, Human Relations office, Financial Aid Office and other interested individuals at your school/business/Unit.

It is extremely important that the information in this newsletter receives the widest dissemination in order that veterans receive the GI Bill and other educational benefits to which they are entitled. If you are reading this, email: [john.parker@dese.mo.gov](mailto:john.parker@dese.mo.gov) to receive a gift.



We do not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, disability, or age 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:

**Jefferson State Office Building, Civil Rights Compliance (Title VI/Title IX/504/ADA/Age Act) 205 Jefferson Street, Jefferson City, MO 65102-0480p: 573.526.4757 or Relay Missouri p: 800.735.2966.**

# KANSAS

## 2015 HORIZON AWARDS RECOGNIZES 32 FIRST-YEAR KANSAS EDUCATORS- Jan. 9, 2015

TOPEKA - The Kansas State Department of Education (KSDE) today announced the recipients of the 2015 Kansas Horizon Award, which recognizes exemplary first-year educators. Thirty-two first-year educators from around the state received this distinction and will be honored at a special ceremony during the Kansas Exemplary Educators Network (KEEN) State Education Conference on Feb. 20, 2015 in Topeka.

The Kansas Horizon Award program, which is sponsored by KSDE, allows all school districts in the state an opportunity to nominate one elementary and one secondary teacher for the award. To be eligible for the award, teachers must have successfully completed their first year of teaching and have performed in such a way as to distinguish themselves as outstanding. The program is a regional competition with four regions corresponding to the state's U.S. Congressional districts. Four elementary and four secondary classroom teachers may be selected for the award from each region.

Recipients of the 2015 Kansas Horizon Award were notified of their selection by Interim-Commissioner of Education, Brad Neuenswander. Neuenswander remarked, "I want to extend my congratulations to the recipients of the Kansas Horizon Award. These new educators have taken on the challenge of helping all of our students learn to their fullest potential, and I am excited by the quality of individuals we bring to our classrooms each year. I commend each of the award recipients for their dedication to making a difference in the lives of their students."

### 2015 Kansas Horizon Award Recipients - Region 1

Collin Carlson, Salina South High School, USD 305 Salina  
Leah DeTravernier, South Middle School, USD 480 Liberal  
Madeline Dierking, Logan Avenue Elementary School, USD 253 Emporia  
Justin Heeke, Miller Elementary School, USD 443 Dodge City  
Austyn McNew, Bluemont Elementary School, USD 383 Manhattan-Ogden  
Chrystiana Miller, Sheridan Elementary School, USD 475 Geary County

Maria Loewen, McPherson Middle School, USD 418 McPherson  
Olga Silverman, Solomon High School, USD 393 Solomon

### Region 2

Alyssa Buxman, Berryton Elementary School, USD 450 Shawnee Heights  
Collin Eidelson, Ottawa High School, USD 290 Ottawa  
Nichole Gurwell, Tonganoxie Elementary School, USD 464 Tonganoxie  
Laura Hochman, South Middle School, USD 497 Lawrence  
Wendy Madere, Rossville Grade School, USD 321 Kaw Valley  
Jessica Otradovec, Seaman High School, USD 345 Seaman  
Brittany Roper, Shawnee Heights High School, USD 450 Shawnee Heights  
Hannah Rosell, Earl M. Lawson Elementary School, USD 453 Leavenworth

### Region 3

Kelsey Bradley, Indian Valley Elementary School, USD 229 Blue Valley  
Jamie Droegemeier, Spring Hill Middle School, USD 230 Spring Hill  
Katherine Durick, Lakewood Middle School, USD 229 Blue Valley  
Haley Epperson, Spring Hill Elementary School, USD 230 Spring Hill  
Joel McGhee, Broadmoor Elementary School, USD 416 Louisburg  
Taylor Newman, Prairie Ridge Elementary School, USD 232 DeSoto  
Alyssa Passmore, Turner Sixth Grade Academy, USD 202 Turner  
Katherine Wilber, Monticello Trails Middle School, USD 232 DeSoto

### Region 4

Bethany Brewer, McCollom Elementary School, USD 259 Wichita  
Jessica Dosser, Garfield Elementary School, USD 402 Augusta  
Patrick Huddleston, Andover Central High School, USD 385 Andover  
Caleb McCaffree, Ruth Clark Elementary School, USD 261 Haysville  
Kathryn Richardson, Coleman Middle School, USD 259 Wichita  
Grant Threlkeld, Amelia Earhart Elementary School, USD 265 Goddard  
Susanna Tippett, Newton High School, USD 373 Newton  
Kaitlin Woellhof, Valley Center High School, USD 262 Valley Center

More information about educator preparation in Kansas can found at [www.ksde.org](http://www.ksde.org)

# NEBRASKA

## WISE, LARSEN ELECTED TO LEAD STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION



Rachel Wise of Oakland and Lillie Larsen of Lincoln were elected today to leadership posts on the State Board of Education. Wise was re-elected president of the State Board of Education on a unanimous vote.

Larsen was unanimously elected vice president. Both Wise and Larsen have served on the State Board of Education since 2013.

Wise is a retired Nebraska teacher and administrator. She has spent 36 years serving both rural and urban school districts. "I am honored and it is a privilege to have the State Board members' vote of support and the opportunity to lead the Board forward with the strong, shared leadership approach we have built over the past year," Wise said. "By working together, we can further strengthen our relationship with the Governor's Office, the Legislature, our policy partners and educators across the state.

"I am confident that the State Board will continue this year to focus on providing excellent educational opportunities for every student every day as we continue to develop, among other initiatives, the new school accountability system, AQuESTT, with a focus on quality, accountability and school improvement," Wise said.



Larsen served on the Lincoln Board of Education for 12 years before she was elected to the State Board of Education. "I am honored to be elected to serve as vice president of the Nebraska State Board of Education," Larsen said. "I look forward to working with board members to support and improve education in Nebraska for all students. "It is important to provide quality education for each and every student," she said. "The goal is to help students develop their interests and talents. I believe it is important to support students as they prepare for college and their future careers."

[http://www.education.ne.gov/ndepress/2015/Wise\\_Larsen\\_Elected\\_to\\_Lead\\_State\\_Board.pdf](http://www.education.ne.gov/ndepress/2015/Wise_Larsen_Elected_to_Lead_State_Board.pdf)

More information about educator preparation in Nebraska can found at [www.education.ne.gov/tcert](http://www.education.ne.gov/tcert)





## IOWA

### GOV. BRANSTAD ANNOUNCES 2015 IOWA TEACHER OF THE YEAR



Clemencia Spizzirri, whose passion for helping students and families stems from her own childhood in Ecuador, is the 2015 Iowa Teacher of the Year, Gov. Terry Branstad announced today at Merrill Middle School in Des Moines.

"Great teaching gives children the foundation they need to be good citizens and to successfully pursue their dreams," Branstad said. "The Lt. Governor and I congratulate Clemencia Spizzirri and thank her for being a role model to her students and colleagues."

Spizzirri, 38, has taught Spanish at Merrill Middle School in the Des Moines Public Schools for five years. She is known for helping needy children and families understand the power of a high-quality education and for her focus on ensuring that children learning English as a second language are truly part of the culture of achievement. Spizzirri also is known as a leader in the school district, the classroom and in the community.

"Clemencia Spizzirri gives students a great start on the path to success and works to ensure that every door of opportunity is open to them," Iowa Department of Education Director Brad Buck said.

"We look to the example set by great teachers to help move Iowa's education system forward," Lt. Gov. Kim Reynolds said. "Clemencia Spizzirri demonstrates the deep impact an outstanding teacher can have on children's lives." Spizzirri

grew up the youngest of seven children in Quito, Ecuador's capital city. Although her family taught her the only way to succeed was through education – Spizzirri's mother read to her, and her older brother gave her a dictionary so she could read and understand his books – she saw poverty as a barrier to an education for other families.

"I noticed the scores of youth working on the streets, trying to make a living," Spizzirri wrote in her Teacher of the Year application. "Observing the unfortunate circumstances of the youth sparked my passion to take action in helping the impoverished to elevate them through education. I felt that by becoming a teacher I could make a difference with my belief that education can empower and liberate the people."

Spizzirri started out teaching English in Quito, where she also earned her teaching degree. The country's deepening economic crisis prompted Spizzirri to obtain a visa in 2003 to move to the U.S., where her brother already lived.

Spizzirri earned a bachelor's degree in English as a Second Language from Universidad Tecnica Particular de Loja in New York and then moved to Des Moines, where she earned a master's degree from Drake University.

In her Teacher of the Year application, Spizzirri wrote that she considers working for the Des Moines Public Schools one of her greatest accomplishments, in part because she has the opportunity to inspire student achievement "by developing and sustaining partnerships that have greatly influenced the school culture in the district."

To read entire article go to [IOWADepartment of Education website](http://IOWADepartmentofEducationwebsite).

More information about educator preparation in Iowa can found at <http://educateiowa.gov/>

## MISSOURI

### MO STATE BOARD NAMES NEW MISSOURI COMMISSIONER OF EDUCATION



Following interviews with five finalists, the State Board of Education voted unanimously to select Dr. Margaret Vandeven as the next Commissioner of Education, effective January 1, 2015.

"We believe in the positive impact of the Top 10 by 20 plan on Missouri's children," said State Board President Peter Herschend. "We strongly believe that Dr. Margie Vandeven is the right person to accomplish the goals of the plan."

Board members cited Dr. Vandeven's strong background in education and extensive knowledge of education policy at the state and federal level as preparing her for the position. Her proven leadership in multiple capacities in the Department shows she is ready for the challenge. They also cited her drive and determination to make the Top 10 by 20 plan a reality.

"I am honored to serve as Missouri's Commissioner of Education, and I am committed to and focused on doing what's right for the children of Missouri," said Dr. Vandeven. "I stand ready to support

our school districts and charter schools, working together to move Missouri into the top 10 in student performance."

Dr. Vandeven brings 24 years of education experience to the role, including the last nine years at the Department. She served most recently as the Deputy Commissioner for the Division of Learning Services coordinating the work of the seven assistant commissioners. Dr. Vandeven's previous experience consists of 13 years as an English language arts teacher and administrator in private schools in Missouri and Maryland. She completed her Bachelor of Science in Education at Missouri State University, Master of Education at Loyola College in Maryland and Doctor of Philosophy at St. Louis University.

A primary focus for Dr. Vandeven will be Missouri's Top 10 by 20 initiative, a major improvement effort that aims for student achievement in Missouri to rank among the top 10 states by 2020. The plan's four goals include graduating all Missouri children ready for college and career; preparing all children for success in kindergarten; and preparing, developing and supporting effective educators.

She will serve the state as the sixth commissioner of education.

More information about educator preparation in Missouri can found at [dese.mo.gov/eq/ep/](http://dese.mo.gov/eq/ep/).

