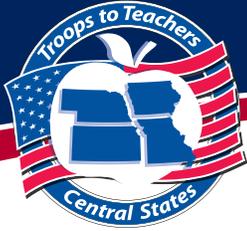


# TROOPS TO TEACHERS



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**816.241.1705**

## Consider a Public Charter School *By Troy Gipps, TTT, New England Coordinator*

Securing a full-time public school teaching position is very challenging during these difficult economic times. However, as with any employment search, it is important to fully understand the job market to maximize one's chances of success.

What many veterans transitioning to teaching may not realize is that even as the economy improves there may be a significant number of laid-off unionized teachers who will exercise their reemployment rights to fill teaching vacancies that become available in public schools. This reality could further delay a veteran's ability to secure his or her first full-time teaching position.

The standard advice still applies, such as working as a short or long-term substitute teacher and even volunteering as a tutor, mentor or coach in a school district where a veteran is interested in teaching. This approach can expose the veteran to different subject areas, grade levels and schools. It also gives hiring officials a chance to get to know the job seeker.

Veterans transitioning to teaching should also consider public charter schools as potential employers.

Charter schools operate independently of school districts, and the vast majority of these unique public schools are not unionized. This fact alone makes charter schools appealing to a mid-career changer, but there are many other reasons why public charter schools can be a good fit for veterans.

Charter schools are typically located in communities that have been underserved by traditional public schools. They are designed to bring into the public education system innovative ways of tackling achievement challenges. Many of the innovations that make charter schools successful require a greater deal of autonomy than what is typically offered in a traditional public school setting. These freedoms and autonomies may include the flexibility to extend the school day, make staffing decisions, try a new curriculum or instructional method, increase instructional time in a given subject or create a particular culture in the school.

In exchange for these freedoms, which are generally not supported in teachers' union collective bargaining agreements, charter schools are expected to produce high academic outcomes, regardless of conditions like poverty or students' histories of low academic performance. Charter school teachers are paid for performance and encouraged to fully participate in real-time decision making that drives classroom performance. Veterans are ideally suited to excel in this type of work environment.

There are currently over 6,400 public charter schools open in 41 states and the District of Columbia, serving more than 2.5 million students.

### What makes charter schools public schools?

**Charter schools are public schools because they are:**

- Tuition-free and open to every student who wishes to enroll
- Non-sectarian, and do not discriminate on any basis
- Publicly funded by local, state and federal tax dollars based on enrollment, like other public schools
- Held accountable to state and federal academic standards

### How are public charter schools funded?

In most states, when a student transfers from a traditional public school to a public charter school, the funding associated with that student will follow him or her to the public charter school. For this reason, public charter schools do not add any costs to the state's public education system. They simply represent a reallocation of resources from one school to another based upon the decision of families across the state.

Traditional public schools will certainly hold the lion's share of teaching positions for the foreseeable future, but public charter schools can provide a dynamic, engaging, rewarding and mission-focused work environment that is ideally suited for veterans new to the teaching profession.



TROOPS TO TEACHERS



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# PROGRAM SPOTLIGHT: COLUMBIA COLLEGE - ST. LOUIS

## Consider teaching. It's easier than you think!

It takes a brave person to stand up in front of a classroom full of students. The discipline and self-confidence that surely are gained through rigorous military training seem in many ways like an ideal mold for forming a teacher who can lead, direct and inspire.

If you've considered teaching as a new or second career, you probably have asked yourself two questions: What would I like to teach and how do I get my teaching certificate?

If you're unsure of what you'd like to teach, exploring the subjects that impassion and motivate you to teach will, hopefully, constitute a fun journey. Fortunately, sorting out the best subjects for you to teach can be accomplished at the same place you can obtain your teaching certificate - Columbia College-St. Louis.

The St. Louis campus is offering two teacher certification programs in January 2015, the BEACON program and the undergraduate post-baccalaureate program.

The BEACON program is for students wishing to complete a bachelor's degree along with Missouri teacher certification requirements. Students obtain a degree in a content area (such as psychology, English, math, history, etc.) and minor in a certification area such as elementary, middle school or secondary education.

The undergraduate post-baccalaureate program is for students who already hold a bachelor's degree from an accredited institution and wish to fulfill Missouri teacher certification requirements. Students in this program will take all of their certification courses at the undergraduate level.

The St. Louis campus staff will provide you with all the resources you need to discover what kind of teacher you want to be and to find a teaching position after graduation.

Having spent 14 years as a teacher and 17 years as a middle school principal, I can tell you that teaching is a noble calling that allows you to serve future generations, even when you are teaching adult students. Now, as director of the St. Louis campus, I'm proud of the opportunities Columbia College offers our adult and military students to capitalize on their knowledge, skills and passion to work as a teacher and make the future brighter for students of all ages.

Contact the St. Louis campus  
for more information at:  
[stlouis@ccis.edu](mailto:stlouis@ccis.edu) or (314) 429-5500.

All the best,  
Dr. Bob Steffes



## 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>

# VETERAN'S EDUCATION & TRAINING SECTION

## MISSOURI STATE APPROVING AGENCY



### UNDERSTANDING NEW 'IN-STATE' TUITION CEILING ON GI BILL

*By Tom Philpott - Published: September 4, 2014*

**VA reform law will push colleges to lower veteran tuition**  
A federal law passed earlier this month directing a massive \$16.3-billion overhaul of the troubled Department of Veterans Affairs health care system also aims to put pressure on colleges to lower education costs for veterans.

Perhaps the first thing veterans using GI Bill education benefits should understand about new "in-state tuition" protection that Congress approved last month is that it won't take effect for another year, by fall semester 2015.

That delay will give state-run colleges and universities - or, in some cases, state legislatures - time to prepare policies or laws to lower tuition and fees for non-resident veterans to match what in-state students face.

The delay also means the population primarily to benefit from the in-state tuition mandate are those planning to leave active duty to use their GI Bill in another year, says William Hubbard, vice president of government affairs for Student Veterans of America. That's because most current GI Bill users will have established in-state residency by then anyway.

Indeed public colleges and universities in 27 states already offer non-resident veterans in-state tuition rates. Schools that don't by July 1 next year, however, won't be able to participate in the Post-9/11 and Montgomery GI Bill programs, forcing student vets to use education benefits elsewhere.

Currently Post-9/11 benefits cover all in-state tuition and fees at public colleges and universities. But an estimated 3800 veterans annually face substantial out-of-pocket costs because they elect to attend state-run colleges as non-residents. Transferring GI Bill students, for example, can be hard hit for a year until they re-establish state residency.

But most of those impacted are newly discharged veterans who decide to attend college in states where they served last on active duty. Until they establish residency, they face out-of-state tuition and fees that their GI Bill benefits won't cover, often costing them thousands of dollars.

For-profit schools have used that gap in GI Bill coverage of non-residents enrolled in public universities to pitch their

own costly programs to veterans, touting huge amounts in tuition and fees that can be saved at their schools through use of the Yellow Ribbon feature of the Post-9/11 GI Bill.

Under Yellow Ribbon, private colleges, including for-profits, can elect to waive up to half of their tuition and fees not covered by basic Post-9/11 benefits - the current cap is \$20,235 per academic year - and the VA must match the waived amount, further enhancing the benefit.

"There's no doubt that many predatory for-profits misled vets into thinking they were getting a 'better deal' out of their GI benefits in covering higher for-profit tuition and fees," said Makese Motley, assistant director for federal policy for American Association of State Colleges and Universities.

Besides financial relief to non-resident veterans, the new law will guarantee in-state tuition to dependents of veterans who use transferred Post-9/11 benefits. That combination of breaks also could lower the federal government's tab for GI Bill benefits by \$175 million over the next decade, CBO estimates.

Public colleges and universities set lower in-state tuition rates because most states subsidize education costs for their residents. So the new requirement on state-run schools to offer non-resident veterans lower rates too threatens to create funding shortfalls unless state legislatures vote to increase subsidies or state-run schools opt to impose tuition hikes on all students.

But Hubbard, with Student Veterans of America, predicted the impact to comply on state schools would be "fairly negligible." He used California as an example.

"It's a large system with lots of schools, lots of veterans," Hubbard said. "If the entire California system were to grant tomorrow in-state tuition for student veterans, and those costs were distributed across the student population, the increase for other students would be about \$4" per semester.

To read more:

<http://www.stripes.com/news/veterans/understanding-new-in-state-tuition-ceiling-on-gi-bill-1.301424>

### 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

**Mike Bitzenburg:** 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

CLICK HERE FOR SCHOOL CERTIFYING OFFICIAL TRAINING & INFORMATION RESOURCES

or go to: [http://www.benefits.va.gov/gibill/school\\_training\\_resources.asp](http://www.benefits.va.gov/gibill/school_training_resources.asp)

## NEED A JOB?

### Consider using your GI Bill Benefits for On-the-Job Training or Apprenticeship Training.

You may be eligible to receive a monthly educational benefit check from the Department of Veterans Affairs.

#### What Is On-the-Job Training?

OJT is training you receive while actually performing a job and earning wages. Approvable OJT programs must be at least six months and up to two years in length. Some examples of OJT programs are Welder, Painter, Cook, Production Equipment Mechanic, Auto Mechanic, Corrections Officer, Police Officer and Parts Buyer.

#### What Is Apprenticeship Training?

Apprenticeship training is on-the-job training coupled with 144 hours (minimum) per year of related technical instruction. You receive your GI Bill benefit while working full time and earning wages. Apprenticeships are normally from two to five years in length. Registration with the Bureau of Apprenticeship and Training is not mandatory for veteran benefits; however, it is recommended in order for the veteran to receive journeyman's papers upon successful completion. Some examples of apprenticeship training programs are Electrician, Ironworker, Roofer, Plumber and Sheet Metal Worker.

#### Time Limits

Approval of a program may be backdated up to one year. As a general rule, veterans have 10 years after their separation from service to use the Montgomery GI Bill; 15 years for Ch. 33; 14 years for Ch. 1606 after completing MOS training.

#### How to Begin

- 1] If you do not have a job or you want a different occupation, contact your local Missouri State Job Service's Veteran Representative, who should be able to find an employer who may offer the kind of training you desire. For apprenticeships, contact the local training coordinator. Go to [helmetstohardhats.org](http://helmetstohardhats.org) for a nationwide search for openings.
- 2] Next, have your employer contact the State Approving Agency to begin the approval process. Keep in mind that not all occupations can be approved. Contact the State Approving Agency for more information.
- 3] Contact the Veterans Affairs office at 1-888-442-4551 to determine your eligibility and to obtain the necessary application forms. On-line application is recommended at [www.gibill.va.gov](http://www.gibill.va.gov).

#### Program Notes

- If you have questions concerning employment opportunities, contact the Veterans' Representative at Missouri Job Service.
- OJT and Apprenticeship benefits cease if the eligible trainee reaches the completion wage prior to the end of the training program.
- Training programs in private sector must have a progressive wage schedule with at least one raise during training and another raise at the end of training. Public sector programs are exempt.
- Eligible trainees must provide a copy of their DD-214 or Notice of Basic Entitlement (NOBE) for Guard and Reservists when applying for GI Bill the first time.
- Eligible trainees will not qualify for benefits if they were previously trained for the job objective.

Just look what is happening for the Army. (Include attached pdf with proper attribution).  
<http://dese.mo.gov/sites/default/files/vet-ed-VE-T%20Flyer.pdf>

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.



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**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

## KANSAS SCHOOLS NAVIGATE MAJOR CHANGES

*By Celia Llopis-Jepsen [celia.llopisjepsen@cjonline.com](mailto:celia.llopisjepsen@cjonline.com)*

**Brad Neuenswander, Kansas interim commissioner of education, says schools are continuing a years-long shift away from the policies of No Child Left Behind, a 2001 federal law.**

After more than a decade of national education policy that promoted a test-centric view of schools, a better approach is finally materializing, interim education commissioner Brad Neuenswander said this week. In an interview with The Topeka Capital-Journal, Neuenswander laid out the changes coming to Kansas schools in the 2014-15 school year. Chief among those, he said, is the ongoing shift away from No Child Left Behind, a 2001 federal law that required states to set uniform test-score targets in mathematics and reading for all schools, regardless of varying circumstances. For years, Kansas has worked on the key pieces of a revised approach to education, he said. That has included overhauling the state's curricular standards for math and reading, redesigning state tests, reforming teacher evaluations and other changes. "Finally everything's starting to fall into place this year," he said. It is a message the education department will emphasize to more than 1,000 Kansas educators at its annual conference in October with the theme: "It's go time."

Neuenswander, a former superintendent for the Cheney and Ellis school districts who has worked at the Kansas State Department of Education for eight years, is filling the top spot at that department while the Kansas State Board of Education seeks a new commissioner. Diane DeBacker, the previous commissioner, left her position in May to become an adviser to the director general of the Abu Dhabi Education Council in the United Arab Emirates.

Neuenswander said the ongoing changes to K-12 education in Kansas are major, and have moved gradually by design to help ensure "a soft landing." Four years ago, Kansas adopted new math and reading standards. Called the Common Core, or, in Kansas, the Kansas College and Career Ready Standards, they are part of a multistate initiative for teaching those subjects with a greater focus on preparing students for college and careers. Then, more than a year ago, the state adopted new science and history standards.

Last spring it scrapped its old state math and reading tests and piloted new ones that focus less on multiple choice and more on analytical skills. This year, all 286 of the state's school districts will use in-depth evaluations to assess teachers, principals and superintendents. And next spring, Kansas students will take the new math and reading tests again, only this time, the tests won't be a pilot run.

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

# NEBRASKA

## NEARLY 3 OF EVERY 4 NEBRASKA STUDENTS MEET STATE READING, MATH, SCIENCE STANDARDS

Nearly three of every four Nebraska public school students met state reading, mathematics and science standards in 2013-14, according to test results released today.

The 2014 state test results showed that 77 percent of the students met or exceeded state reading standards, 71 percent and 72 percent met or exceeded math and science standards, respectively. Trend data showed state test scores have improved incrementally since testing began five years ago in reading. The percentage of students proficient in reading and mathematics has improved 8 percent and 5 percent more students are now proficient in science than three years ago.

"I applaud Nebraska students and their teachers whose hard work shows in the improvement of state test results," said Education Commissioner Matt Blomstedt. "Our students are making progress, and we attribute that to Nebraska teachers who have a long history of helping their students meet the state's learning expectations. Continuous improvement of our schools and strong support for our educators will continue to benefit students."

Public school students also were tested in writing with 69 percent of the 4th graders scoring proficient. Fourth graders took their writing tests using paper/pencil. While 8th and 11th graders also were tested, those results are not available because some students in some schools experienced technical issues when taking their tests online. Those technical issues created concern about the validity of the results.

To read more of this article go to:

[http://www.education.ne.gov/ndepress/2014/3\\_of\\_4\\_Nebraska\\_Students\\_Meet\\_State\\_Standards.pdf](http://www.education.ne.gov/ndepress/2014/3_of_4_Nebraska_Students_Meet_State_Standards.pdf)



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



## IOWA

### LOST SCHOOLS: FINAL BELL FOR SOME SMALL DISTRICTS

CORWITH, IA - Chloe Carroll and older brother Esden are preparing to say a permanent farewell to their public school district, like thousands of Iowa children before them. On Tuesday, voters in this town will formally decide whether to close the district in a plan approved by the school board and already in motion as students travel to nearby Algona for sports.

When classes end next spring, it's likely the Corwith-Wesley district will be history, leaving the fate of the brick school building that's been the epicenter of community pride and activities in this town uncertain. Its student body — fewer than 110 kids in grades 7-12 — are expected to scatter next year to surrounding districts, many to Algona. One such student is Chloe Carroll, who would start her freshman year as an Algona Bulldog instead of a Corwith-Wesley Panther. "I'm really nervous because I'll be going to a new school, plus starting high school," said Carroll, 13, who anticipates her class size next year will balloon from roughly 10 to 100. Corwith's pending closure, after nearly a century in existence, is far from rare.

In 1894, Iowa had 13,433 public schoolhouses, mostly one-room rural structures considered to be their own districts. That's been whittled down to 338 districts as of July; in the last decade alone, 29 schools have been shuttered. The trend doesn't appear to be slowing anytime soon: Multiple state officials predict Iowa is on the cusp of a surge of public school mergers. The reason, they say, is that a fiscal tool - commonly known as the budget guarantee - that was depended upon for decades by many of Iowa's smaller districts with declining enrollment expired last year as part of a 10-year phaseout. As its name implies, it helped to guarantee a stable budget for districts, despite falling enrollment over multiple years.

In simple terms, Iowa's state government no longer provides a thick fiscal buffer to its pupil-hungry schools whose budgets are based primarily on student counts. In the current school year, each student brings \$6,366 in local and state revenue to their district. That's significant: Roughly 60 percent of Iowa's districts have declining enrollments, state education data show.

#### DISAPPEARING DISTRICTS

13,433: Number of public schoolhouses in Iowa in 1894 (considered their own school districts at the time), 338: Number of school districts in Iowa as of July 2014, 29: Number of schools shuttered during the last decade

To read more of this article go to:

<http://www.desmoinesregister.com/story/news/education/lost-schools/2014/09/07/lost-schools-district-consolidation/15231717/>

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

## MISSOURI

### STATEMENT IN RESPONSE TO LOWER APR NUMBERS FOR NORMANDY SCHOOL DISTRICT

*Friday, August 29, 2014*

"Lower APR numbers show the need for a fresh start for the children of Normandy," said Commissioner of Education Chris Nicastro. "As we begin the 2014-15 school year as the Normandy Schools Collaborative, under state oversight, we are determined to improve instruction, curriculum and focus on the educational needs of these students."

The Normandy Schools Collaborative was formed under state oversight on July 1, 2014. The Collaborative has hired new staff, revised curriculum and provided professional development for faculty and administrators. Schools welcomed students for the 2014-15 school year on August 18.

"We will focus on quality classroom instruction, leadership, and the use of student data to make ongoing decisions," said Superintendent Ty McNichols. "It is critical that we reverse our academic trends and that our energy and purpose be laser-like on academic improvement."

The Department believes high expectations, a clear vision and a few focused, high-impact goals will be critical to drive the improvement efforts necessary to bring about positive results.

For more information, contact: Sarah Potter, Communications Coordinator

Department of Elementary and Secondary Education

Phone: 573-751-3469

[communications@dese.mo.gov](mailto:communications@dese.mo.gov)

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

