

October 24, 2025



MISSOURI SCHOOL FUNDING
MODERNIZATION
T A S K F O R C E

MARE Update

MIKE KEHOE
GOVERNOR  OF MISSOURI

 **Missouri**
DEPARTMENT OF ELEMENTARY & SECONDARY
EDUCATION™

Objectives/Guiding Principles

Recommended changes to the funding formula shall ensure:

- ❖ Equality of opportunity for all students, regardless of geographic location, socioeconomic status, or other factors that cause disparate opportunities;
- ❖ Sustainability, based on realistic state and local revenue forecasts, including bounds for realistic changes in funding on an annual basis;
- ❖ Incentives are based on performance of schools and educational outcomes; and
- ❖ Adequate funding to sustain school operations and address reasonable educational costs.
- ❖ Includes support for non-traditional public school options (e.g. charter schools, virtual learning, etc.).
- ❖ Maintaining local flexibility to utilize funds to best meet student needs.

Task Force Members

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Rusty Black , State Senator (District 12)	Kerry Casey , State Board of Education
Travis Fitzwater , State Senator (District 10)	Pamela Westbrook-Hodge , State Board of Education
Ed Lewis , State Representative (District 6)	Matt Davis , Eldon School District Superintendent
Marlene Terry , State Representative (District 66)	Noah Devine , Missouri Charter Public School Association Executive Director



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Task Force Members

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Emily LeRoy , Missouri Farm Bureau Senior Advisor	Jeremy Tucker , Liberty Public Schools Superintendent
Jim Meats , Loren Cook Company Vice-President of Marketing & Sales	Chris Vas , Herzog Foundation Senior Director
Dr. Mike Podgursky , University of Missouri-Columbia Professor of Economics	Casey Wasser , Missouri Soybean Association Executive Director
Don Thalhuber , Missouri Senate Minority Caucus Policy Director	David Wood , Former Teacher and State Representative



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Task Force Timeline

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Date	Activity
May 9, 2025	Task Force Membership Announced
June 2, 2025	Task Force Kickoff Meeting
June 23, 2025	Task Force Meeting
August 13, 2025	Task Force Meeting
September 9, 2025	Task Force Meeting
September-December 2025	Working Groups Meet
January-March 2026	Task Force Meetings – Reports/Findings from Working Groups
April-August 2026	Task Force Meetings – Develop Recommendations
September-October 2026	Regional Presentations – Collect Feedback from Stakeholders
November 2026	Task Force Meeting – Finalize Recommendations
December 1, 2026	Recommendations Due to Governor Kehoe



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Task Force Meeting Topics

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Meeting #1: Task Force Overview, Foundation Formula Basics, Timeline, Logistics

Meeting #2: State Budget Process, Local Effort Review, Missouri Specific Reports

Meeting #3: Bellwether Presentation – National Trends in School Funding

Meeting #4: Missouri School Funding Litigation History, Challenges with Cost-Function Studies, Working Group Plan, Early Consensus Discussion



Task Force Early Consensus Items

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Preliminary Characteristics for Consideration:

- ❖ Student-need based formula
- ❖ Rational basis for adequacy funding target
- ❖ Mechanisms to update data/system over time

- ❖ Funding Targets
 - ❖ Student Counts
 - ❖ Local Effort Factors
 - ❖ Performance Incentives
- ❖ Meetings are virtual, livestreamed, recorded and posted on the Task Force website along with the presentation slides

Working Groups Virtual Meeting Schedule

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Funding Targets 10:30 AM	Student Counts 1:00 PM	Local Effort 10:30 AM	Performance Incentives 1:00 PM
Tuesday, September 23	Tuesday, September 23	Wednesday, September 17	Wednesday, September 17
Tuesday, October 7	Tuesday, October 7	Wednesday, October 1	Wednesday, October 1
Monday, October 20	Monday, October 20	Wednesday, October 15	Wednesday, October 15
Tuesday, November 4	Tuesday, November 4	Wednesday, November 5	Wednesday, November 5
Monday, November 17	Monday, November 17	Wednesday, November 19	Wednesday, November 19
Tuesday, December 2	Tuesday, December 2	Wednesday, December 3	Wednesday, December 3

Funding Targets Working Group Members

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Ed Lewis , State Representative (District 6)	Pam Frazier , MSBA Director, School Finance
Dr. Jeremy Tucker , Liberty Public Schools Superintendent	Mike Harris , MSTA Governmental Relations Manager
Dr. Mike Podgursky , University of Missouri-Columbia Professor of Economics	Doug Hayter , MASA Executive Director (Retired)
Don Thalhuber , Missouri Senate Minority Caucus Policy Director	Jean Peavler , South Holt School District Superintendent
Dr. Tom Prater , Mattax-Neu-Prater Eye Center	Angela Smith , Missouri House Budget Officer
Jerry Cochran , MARE Assistant Executive Director	Kent Stombaugh , Laquey School District Superintendent
Curtis Cunningham , Missouri House Legislative Analyst	Tonya Woods , Thayer School District Superintendent



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- ❖ Identifying the mechanism to establish the desired target for the combination of state and local funding (e.g. State Adequacy Target, Guaranteed Tax Base)
- ❖ Identifying mechanisms to adjust the target over time
- ❖ Connecting the funding target to the appropriations process
- ❖ Creating predictability for all stakeholders
- ❖ Resolving potential gaps between needs-based inputs versus outcome-based determinants
- ❖ Adapting to variability/changing standards in school performance ratings
- ❖ Evaluating impacts of hold harmless provisions

Student Counts Working Group Members

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Marlene Terry , State Representative (District 66)	Dean Johnson , <i>Aligned</i> Consultant
Matt Davis , Eldon School District Superintendent	Dr. Mark Penny , MASA Executive Director
Jim Meats , Loren Cook Company Vice-President of Marketing and Sales	Dr. Brian Sherrow , Chillicothe School District Assistant Superintendent
Casey Wasser , Missouri Soybean Association Executive Director	Angela Smith , Missouri House Budget Officer
Dr. Jordan Dickey , Joplin Schools Assistant Superintendent of Finance	Shannon Spradling , Guadalupe Centers Charter Schools Chief Financial Officer
Terri Foulkes , Missouri AfterSchool Network Executive Director	Daniel Williams , California School District Superintendent
Natalie Hampton , Missouri AfterSchool Network Associate Director of Policy	



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- ❖ Identifying the mechanism to count students in the distribution of funds
- ❖ Relying on enrollment versus attendance
- ❖ Consideration of the current threshold approach
- ❖ Special populations of students to consider and relative weights:
 - ☐ Low income/poverty
 - ☐ Special education
 - ☐ English language learners
 - ☐ Prekindergarten
 - ☐ Gifted
 - ☐ Homeless
 - ☐ Career and technical education
- ❖ Sparsely populated areas (density factor)
- ❖ Summer school, PreK, Afterschool
- ❖ Charter schools, Virtual schools



Local Effort Working Group Members

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Pamela Westbrooks-Hodge , State Board of Education	Jason Hoffman , Jefferson City Schools CFO/COO (Retired)
David Wood , Former Teacher and State Representative	Geoff Macy , Ladue School District Assistant Superintendent
Emily LeRoy , Missouri Farm Bureau Senior Advisor	Brad Pollitt , State Representative (District 52)
Don Thalhuber , Missouri Senate Minority Caucus Policy Director	Linda Quinley , MSBA Senior Director, School Finance
Patty Bedborough , MoASBO Associate Executive Director	Tim Reller , Wentzville School District Chief Financial Officer
Brad Cooper , Plato School District Superintendent	Mike Slagle , Raymore-Peculiar Superintendent
Chris Gaines , EducationPlus CEO	Angela Smith , Missouri House Budget Officer

- ❖ Identifying the local effort elements that need to be included in the formula as part of the state/local balance
- ❖ Updating local effort factors over time
- ❖ Consideration of discretion of local patrons on tax rates
- ❖ Consideration of income/wage factors
- ❖ Variability in property valuations
 - ❑ Inconsistent reassessment practices across the state
 - ❑ Historical bias in some assessment practices
 - ❑ Recent policy changes/trends regarding the collection of property taxes
- ❖ Impacts of tax abatements



Performance Incentives Working Group Members

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Travis Fitzwater , State Senator (District 10)	Amy Ramdsell , Heart of Missouri RPDC Director
Kerry Casey , State Board of Education	Kevin Sandlin , MARE Executive Director
Noah Devine , Missouri Charter Public School Association Executive Director	Angela Smith , Missouri House Budget Officer
Dr. Mike Podgursky , University of Missouri-Columbia Professor of Economics	Cody Smith , Compass Academy Network Senior Director
Chris Vas , Herzog Foundation Senior Director	Andy Vien , Premier Charter School Director of Finance
Aaron Hooper , Grain Valley Schools Director of Finance	Lexie Wallace , Roscoe C-1 School District Superintendent & President of the Missouri K-8 Association
Torree Pederson , <i>Aligned</i> President & CEO	



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- ❖ Identification of performance outcomes to incentivize (most critical)
- ❖ Relative weight of incentives to overall funding
- ❖ Controlling for certain input variables
- ❖ Supporting best practices to inform improvement efforts



Missouri School Funding Modernization Task Force Website

