



Rockwood School District State Legislative Platform

January 2015

Rockwood supports the local autonomy of school districts and opposes any unfunded mandates. The Rockwood School District is led by the principle that quality education is a responsibility shared by the home, school, community, state and nation. The following legislative priorities are recommended:

A. PROPERTY TAXES

1. Supports legislation that would require Tax Increment Financing (TIF), Chapter 100, or Chapter 353 tax abatement governing boards providing a minimum 50% pass through to school districts (similar to fire districts), including taxing authority representation in proportion to the impact on the taxing authority, and requiring voter approval if the governing authority does not follow the recommendations of the TIF Commission.
2. Supports legislation that would provide for reassessment for 50% of all property annually or allow the sum of two years of CIP increases in property tax calculation to be consistent with the current two-year reassessment cycle.
3. Supports legislation to improve the property tax credit law regarding property taxes for senior citizens but does not support the establishment of property tax freezes or homestead exemptions.
4. Supports consistent assessment practices across the state.

B. STATE APPROPRIATIONS/FUNDING FORMULA

1. Supports providing annual funding increases that are sufficient to fully fund the foundation formula, transportation, and any new programs. In the 2014 session, the General Assembly approved HB1689. A provision was placed into this early childhood legislation that changes the way state funding is distributed to districts when the formula is under-funded. If the formula is not fully funded, which is estimated to cost \$130 million more than the current appropriation, Rockwood will lose more than \$2 million each year. This will also be an issue with a significant number of districts. To avoid the effects of this re-distribution, it is even more important that the legislature fully fund the formula.
2. Opposes legislation that would mandate open enrollment.
3. Opposes legislation that would shift money from public schools to private schools.
4. Supports changes in the State Foundation Formula that increases the summer school funding.

C. OTHER STATE ISSUES/GOVERNANCE

1. Opposes legislation that diminishes local control of school districts.

2. Supports legislation to enhance state funding to fully fund the formula including sales tax on internet sales and taxes on tobacco and alcohol.
3. Supports legislation to reform tax credits based on the recommendations of the Missouri Tax Credit Review Commission including a sunset provision, annual reviews, credits subject to appropriations process and limits on combining credits for the same project.
4. Supports an amendment to the Missouri Constitution that would allow the voters of Missouri to provide a simple majority approval of general obligation bond issues.
5. Supports legislation to hold charter schools to the same accountability standards as public schools and opposes any legislation that would diminish funding to the state's public schools.
6. Supports maintaining the current laws regarding school star dates and attendance eligibility.
7. Opposes any additional limitations on state revenue growth such as a "Taxpayer Bill of Rights" (TABOR) given that the Hancock Amendment limits revenue growth.
8. Believes if it is mandated that student safety is improved through the use of combination lap/shoulder harness seatbelts or other design changes, all costs (including reduced bus capacity and retrofitting) must be fully funded by the state.
9. Supports exempting public schools from paying state motor fuel tax consumed by school buses.
10. Supports maintaining the current number of election dates that are available to school districts.
11. Supports legislation to extend a school district's immunity from liability to include suits brought under the Missouri Human Rights Act. Such immunity would also include school board members and school district employees.
12. Rockwood supports the EducationPlus' approach to "Improving Unaccredited Schools in Missouri."
13. Supports restoring funding for Parents as Teachers and providing additional funds for preschool programs.
14. Supports implementation of the Common Core, and the appropriations necessary to fully fund the assessment systems and technology requirements associated with its implementation. Districts across the state have placed significant time and resources into this implementation, and halting the implementation would have a serious and harmful impact on our students.
15. Opposes merging another retirement system with the existing PSRS or PEERS retirement plan.

Federal Legislative Platform

1. Supports legislation that would require full federal funding of all services and related costs required by the Individuals with Disabilities Act (IDEA), No Child Left Behind, Section 504, or any other federally mandated programs. All Federal mandates should be suspended until these programs are fully funded.

2. Supports local control of school district operations and finances to allow local patrons to determine the appropriate level of spending to support programs they desire.

Tim Rooney, Chief Financial and Legislative Officer
Rockwood School District
St. Louis County, Missouri
Phone: (636) 733-2019
Email: rooneytim@rockwood.k12.mo.us