2021 LEGISLATIVE PLATFORM

As the bedrock of strong local communities, public schools have continued to serve our students’ educational and emotional well-being in the midst of a global pandemic. Every school district is experiencing a unique set of issues that requires flexibility and a decision-making process rooted in local control to meet the needs of students, staff and families. This experience has put a spotlight on the ability of schools to innovate and deliver varying modes of education. It has never been more critical to support and fund public schools’ ability to educate our children to ensure the future success of our state and will require us to work together in identifying additional alternative funding sources.

Addressing Students’ Educational, Social and Emotional Well-being
The success of all children in our public schools depends greatly on our ability to meet their social and emotional needs. The needs of students and staff have grown exponentially during the pandemic. The inability to serve these needs may cause educational progress to suffer. We support:

- Funding for additional instructional support for academic interventions to meet unique student needs
- Funding all the public schools’ necessary services to address the mental health needs of our students
- Funding of access to early childhood education programming and opportunities

Ensuring Accountability and Innovation
The importance of meaningful assessment and accountability is always critical to the success of our students. Due to the varying modes of education delivery throughout the state in response to the pandemic, it is critical that student assessments are developed and administered locally. We support:

- The elimination of a statewide standardized test in the spring of 2021
- A purposeful assessment developed locally to ensure an equitable process to depict student progress
- Innovative practices that will improve and enhance student learning and employability skills

Supporting Local Control
The pandemic has highlighted the unique challenges of each community across the state and school districts have adjusted to meet the individual needs of their students, families and communities. We support:

- School districts’ ability to choose appropriate virtual learning providers that meet student needs, follow DESE guidelines, utilize Missouri standards and employ Missouri teachers
- Keeping local dollars and school policy decisions under the direction of locally elected school boards

Funding NOW for Missouri’s Future
Our students and school communities will continue to face hardships from the effects of the pandemic and it is critical that Missouri public schools are fully funded with access to additional funding to serve and invest in the future of more than 900,000 Missouri public school children. We support:

- Continued full funding of Missouri public schools including additional transportation funding to meet the 75% minimum required by law
- Combatting the anticipated teacher shortage by growing the next generation of educators and retaining teachers by increasing salaries through the identification of new funding sources
- Supplemental funding to meet the ongoing needs of our students, staff and families that will not minimize in the coming of months