

# The Mayer Report



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## Education Priorities Signed Into Law

JULY 02ND 2012 BY UNKNOWN

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*By Rob Mayer*

We believe the greatest investment we can make is in the mind of a child, and our commitment to education is vital to strengthening Missouri's future. This is why over the past session we worked to make sure we are giving our children access to a world-class education and given every opportunity to succeed. I am pleased that the governor has signed some of key measures we passed to give our children the best possible chance in life. This week, the governor signed [Senate Bill 576](#), which creates new educational possibilities for Missouri students while adding new accountability standards for current charter schools. Charter schools provide an option for students in low-performing or unaccredited school districts. It is similar to a public school, receiving tax dollars for funding and open to all students in the districts where it operates, but a charter school is governed by an independent school board.

SB 576 brings both transparency and new accountability to current charter schools, as well as makes changes regarding where charter schools may operate. By affording any unaccredited district with the choice to start a charter school, rural districts now have the ability to give students options in improving their education. The act also creates the Missouri Charter Public School Commission, which may approve proposed charters for its sponsorship

I am also please the governor has signed the budget bills that fund education. In crafting the Fiscal Year 2013 budget, sent to the governor in early May, it was our priority to ensure core funding was intact for both the foundation formula for K-12 education, as well as funding for higher education.

This was not an easy task, as Missouri was faced with a tough budget. Yet, we believe that even in tough budget years, we should not cut education funding, protecting our students' educational opportunities. This is why the Senate Appropriations Committee worked hard to find savings and efficiencies in state government, so that the budget we passed maintained level funding for K-12 education and restored proposed cuts by governor to higher education.

The budget sent to the governor showed the General Assembly continued its commitment to keep tuition affordable for Missouri students and their families. Unfortunately, in signing the budget bill, the governor last week asked our students to shoulder the burden of low revenue returns by making \$8.48 million in withholds in funding to our state's colleges and universities. It is our hope that the economy will improve so the governor can restore this withhold for our students' future.

By making improvements and remaining committed to providing the funding and resources to our education system, we are giving our children every opportunity to succeed. There is still much progress to be made, but these small steps continue Missouri's work towards providing each student with every opportunity to achieve their full potential.

Please feel free to contact me with your comments, questions, or issues on my website at [www.senate.mo.gov/mayer](http://www.senate.mo.gov/mayer).

*Rob Mayer of Dexter represents the 25th Senatorial District in the Missouri State Senate and is the Senate President Pro Tem.*

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