



MISSOURI HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
WITNESS APPEARANCE FORM

BILL NUMBER: HB 733		DATE: 2/18/2021	
COMMITTEE: Workforce Development			
TESTIFYING: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> IN SUPPORT OF <input type="checkbox"/> IN OPPOSITION TO <input type="checkbox"/> FOR INFORMATIONAL PURPOSES			
WITNESS NAME			
REGISTERED LOBBYIST:			
WITNESS NAME: DAVID JACKSON		PHONE NUMBER: 314-406-2933	
REPRESENTING: GRADUATION ALLIANCE		TITLE:	
ADDRESS: PO BOX 1865			
CITY: JEFFERSON CITY		STATE: MO	ZIP: 65102
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE:	SUBMIT DATE: 2/18/2021 12:00 AM	
THE INFORMATION ON THIS FORM IS PUBLIC RECORD UNDER CHAPTER 610, RSMo.			



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WITNESS NAME			
REGISTERED LOBBYIST:			
WITNESS NAME: KARA CORCHES		PHONE NUMBER: 573-634-3511	
REPRESENTING: MISSOURI CHAMBER OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY		TITLE: DIRECTOR OF LEGISLATIVE AFFAIRS	
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CITY: JEFFERSON CITY		STATE: MO	ZIP: 65101
EMAIL: kcorches@mochamber.com	ATTENDANCE: Written		SUBMIT DATE: 2/14/2021 8:27 AM
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WITNESS NAME			
REGISTERED LOBBYIST:			
WITNESS NAME: RAY MCCARTY		PHONE NUMBER: 573-634-2246	
REPRESENTING: ASSOCIATED INDUSTRIES OF MISSOURI		TITLE: PRESIDENT/CEO	
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CITY: JEFFERSON CITY		STATE: MO	ZIP: 65109
EMAIL: rmccarty@aimo.com	ATTENDANCE: Written		SUBMIT DATE: 2/15/2021 11:27 AM

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We support this program that will assist adults in obtaining training necessary to increase their employability by providing a workforce diploma and/or industrial skills certification.



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WITNESS NAME			
INDIVIDUAL:			
WITNESS NAME: ARNIE "HONEST-ABE" DIENOFF-STATE PUBLIC ADVOCATE		PHONE NUMBER:	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:	
ADDRESS:			
CITY:		STATE:	ZIP:
EMAIL: ArnieDienoff@Yahoo.Com		ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 2/18/2021 1:54 AM

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I am in Opposition to this Bill.How many different Programs for Diplomas can the State Officer.This is a duplication of services.



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WITNESS NAME			
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION:			
WITNESS NAME: BRITTANY WHITLEY		PHONE NUMBER: 573-340-5738	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME: MISSOURI SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY (MOST) POLICY INITIATIVE		TITLE: EDUCATION & WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT POLICY FELLOW	
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CITY: JEFFERSON CITY		STATE: MO	ZIP: 65101
EMAIL: brittany@mostpolicyinitiative.org	ATTENDANCE: Written		SUBMIT DATE: 2/15/2021 12:30 PM
THE INFORMATION ON THIS FORM IS PUBLIC RECORD UNDER CHAPTER 610, RSMo.			

PDF version of this testimony will be available on our website by 2/16:

<https://mostpolicyinitiative.org/legislative-science-notes/>*This science note was prepared by MOST Policy Initiative, Inc. a nonprofit organization aimed to improve the health, sustainability, and economic growth of Missouri communities by providing objective, non-partisan information to Missouri's decision-makers. For more information, contact Dr. Brittany Whitley, Education & Workforce Development Fellow – brittany@mostpolicyinitiative.org. This was prepared on 2/4/21 and updated on 2/14/21.*

Adult Basic Education- Workforce DiplomasExecutive SummaryApproximately 9.3% of Missourians over the age of twenty-five do not have a high school diploma or equivalency. Higher educational attainment is often associated with more job opportunities, higher income and reduced poverty. States also benefit from increased tax revenue and reduced spending on crime, healthcare and welfare programs. In 2017, House Bill 93 authorized a state-approved nonprofit to open and operate four adult high schools across the state to help Missourians over the age of 21 finish their high school diplomas and obtain industry-recognized credentials. Senate Bill 139 and House Bill 733 propose related versions of a performance-funded Workforce Diploma Program for Missourians over the age of 21 who have not yet obtained a high school diploma. Approved adult education providers would only be paid when students achieve academic (e.g., high school diploma) and employability (e.g., industry-recognized credentials) milestones. Data reporting and program evaluation in states with workforce diploma programs will be central to identifying successes and addressing barriers to meeting student and workforce needs.

Highlights

- Institutionalized (e.g., correctional institution, nursing home) and nonwhite Missourians are most likely to lack a high school diploma or equivalency.

- There is a demand for “middle skills” jobs in Missouri, which require more than a high school diploma but less than a bachelor's degree.
- The Workforce Diploma Programs proposed in SB 139 and HB 733 are substantially similar to programs in at least five states (CO, IN, KS, MI, OH). While not identical to the workforce diploma, several other states and schools use other types of integrated adult education-workforce programs (e.g., GED Bridge to College).
- Performance-based funding ensures that programs deliver specified outcomes, but may also cause some providers to limit the enrollment of “high-risk” (e.g., limited literacy) students to keep graduation rates high.
- Limitations

Most workforce diploma programs in the United States have been implemented within the last five years and their reporting requirements vary, making it difficult to measure how they directly impact the number of credentials awarded and workforce needs filled.

- Without information about those who enroll in and complete adult education programs (and if/how this changes), it is difficult to predict who will participate and benefit most from a workforce diploma program. Research

Background--EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT Individual outcomes As of 2019, approximately 9.3% of Missourians over the age of twenty-five do not have a high school diploma (or equivalency).¹ These Missourians have a lower median salary (Figure 1) and a higher poverty rate compared to those with a high school diploma or some level of postsecondary education.¹ Some adults who previously dropped out of high school choose to work toward their high school diploma or equivalency (e.g., GED, HiSET) in order to expand their job opportunities and earning potential.² The Georgetown Center on Education and the Workforce defines a “good job” as one that offers a minimum salary of \$35,000 for workers between the ages of 25 and 44 and at least \$45,000 for workers between the ages of 45 and 64. By their measure, 20% of these good jobs require a high school diploma or less, 24% require middle skills (associate’s degree, certificates) and 56% require a bachelor’s degree or higher.³ State outcomes Preventing high school dropouts and successfully recovering adult dropouts is expected to reduce state spending by averting costs related to healthcare, crime, corrections, and welfare.⁴ Linking high school diplomas to industry-recognized credentials also facilitates adult education that is targeted toward filling the workforce needs of the state. 35% of Missouri jobs are classified as “low skill”, meaning that they require a high school diploma or less and include jobs available to high school students, dropouts and Missourians with only a high school diploma. 41% of jobs in Missouri require some training after high school, but less than a bachelor’s degree.⁵ These “middle skills” jobs are projected to represent approximately one-third of the annual job openings and produce almost 132,000 jobs between 2016-2026.⁵ Those who obtain industry-recognized credentials are likely to be quickly hired, especially when school-community partnerships are established.

ADULT DROPOUT RECOVERY SERVICES IN MISSOURI Existing services All Missouri high schools (public and nonpublic) are required to report the name, address and phone number of any student sixteen years old or older to the state who leaves high school for any reason other than going to another school, college or university, or to enroll in the armed services (Mo. Rev. Stat. § 167.275). The Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) is then required to reach out to those students and let them know where the nearest location that offers adult basic education services (e.g., GED prep & testing) is located. One challenge with this system is that contact information may be incorrect, especially if schools wait to report, making it difficult for DESE to reach every student. DESE also provides MOlearns, a free, online high school equivalency preparation class. As a result of bipartisan legislation related to adult high schools (HB 93, 2017), MERS Goodwill was offered a contract in 2018 to start four adult high schools (“Excel Centers”) in St. Louis, Poplar Bluff, Columbia, and Springfield. In addition to providing free high school diplomas, these centers offer flexible courses, child care and a mentoring program.

Workforce Diploma Programs in other states Several states, including Michigan, Kansas, Ohio, & Indiana, currently operate very similar programs. Because this type of workforce diploma program has only recently been implemented statewide in these states, there is limited data about program outcomes, especially how it impacts earnings over time. Some regions have had longer running Bridges to College & Career programs where adult basic education training programs have successfully partnered with community colleges and employers to meet the needs of the area’s employment market. In Rochester, MN, their bridges program primarily focuses on training healthcare professionals, many of whom are placed at the nearby Mayo Clinic. As of 2017, ? of program participants were people of color and 86% of people who participated in Rochester’s program obtained a training-related job with benefits.

PROGRAM PARTICIPATION AND ACCESS Students: Additional information is needed about who usually participates in adult dropout recovery programs to understand which population(s) the workforce diploma program will impact most. The demographics of high school dropouts highlight what populations might benefit most from combined education and job training programs. Dropout rates among Black (7.8%) and Hispanic (10.9%) 16-24 year olds in Missouri are higher than the dropout rate for white (5.3%) 16-24 year olds.⁷ Almost one third (32.4%) of the institutionalized population between 16-24 years old does not have a diploma and is not enrolled in adult education.⁷ The Division of Offender Rehabilitative Services within the Missouri Department of Corrections requires that any offenders without a high school diploma or equivalent participate in adult basic education classes. Providers: Performance funding is often intended to promote positive student outcomes and ensure provider accountability. One concern about performance-funded programs is the unintended consequence of selective enrollment practices.^{8,9} Opponents argue that even small skill gains, especially for learners with reduced literacy skills, can be valuable but not rewarded through this type of program.

NOTES For a further discussion about the benefits and tradeoffs of specialized and general postsecondary training, see our science note-https://mostpolicyinitiative.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/11/ScienceNote_GeneralvsSpecializedEd.pdf

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