

SECOND REGULAR SESSION

HOUSE BILL NO. 3102

103RD GENERAL ASSEMBLY

INTRODUCED BY REPRESENTATIVE VOSS.

6710H.011

JOSEPH ENGLER, Chief Clerk

AN ACT

To repeal sections 160.545, 174.160, 174.231, 174.251, and 178.636, RSMo, and to enact in lieu thereof five new sections relating to programs offered by public institutions of higher education.

Be it enacted by the General Assembly of the state of Missouri, as follows:

Section A. Sections 160.545, 174.160, 174.231, 174.251, and 178.636, RSMo, are
2 repealed and five new sections enacted in lieu thereof, to be known as sections 160.545,
3 174.160, 174.231, 174.251, and 178.636, to read as follows:

160.545. 1. There is hereby established within the department of elementary and
2 secondary education the "A+ Schools Program" to be administered by the commissioner of
3 education. The program shall consist of grant awards made to public secondary schools that
4 demonstrate a commitment to ensure that:

5 (1) All students be graduated from school;

6 (2) All students complete a selection of high school studies that is challenging and for
7 which there are identified learning expectations; and

8 (3) All students:

9 (a) Earn credits toward any type of college degree while in high school; or

10 (b) Proceed from high school graduation to a college **or university** or postsecondary
11 vocational or technical school or high-wage job with work place skill development
12 opportunities.

13 2. The state board of education shall promulgate rules and regulations for the
14 approval of grants made under the program to schools that:

EXPLANATION — Matter enclosed in bold-faced brackets **[thus]** in the above bill is not enacted and is intended to be omitted from the law. Matter in **bold-face** type in the above bill is proposed language.

15 (1) Establish measurable districtwide performance standards for the goals of the
16 program outlined in subsection 1 of this section; and

17 (2) Specify the knowledge, skills and competencies, in measurable terms, that
18 students must demonstrate to successfully complete any individual course offered by the
19 school, and any course of studies which will qualify a student for graduation from the school;
20 and

21 (3) Do not offer a general track of courses that, upon completion, can lead to a high
22 school diploma; and

23 (4) Require rigorous coursework with standards of competency in basic academic
24 subjects for students pursuing vocational and technical education as prescribed by rule and
25 regulation of the state board of education; and

26 (5) Have a partnership plan developed in cooperation and with the advice of local
27 business persons, labor leaders, parents, and representatives of college and postsecondary
28 vocational and technical school representatives, with the plan then approved by the local
29 board of education. The plan shall specify a mechanism to receive information on an annual
30 basis from those who developed the plan in addition to senior citizens, community leaders,
31 and teachers to update the plan in order to best meet the goals of the program as provided in
32 subsection 1 of this section. Further, the plan shall detail the procedures used in the school to
33 identify students that may drop out of school and the intervention services to be used to meet
34 the needs of such students. The plan shall outline counseling and mentoring services
35 provided to students who will enter the work force upon graduation from high school, address
36 apprenticeship and intern programs, and shall contain procedures for the recruitment of
37 volunteers from the community of the school to serve in schools receiving program grants.

38 3. Any nonpublic school in this state may apply to the state board of education for
39 certification that it meets the requirements of this section subject to the same criteria as public
40 high schools. Every nonpublic school that applies and has met the requirements of this
41 section shall have its students eligible for reimbursement of postsecondary education under
42 subsection 8 of this section on an equal basis to students who graduate from public schools
43 that meet the requirements of this section. Any nonpublic school that applies shall not be
44 eligible for any grants under this section. Students of certified nonpublic schools shall be
45 eligible for reimbursement of postsecondary education under subsection 8 of this section so
46 long as they meet the other requirements of such subsection. For purposes of subdivision (5)
47 of subsection 2 of this section, the nonpublic school shall be included in the partnership plan
48 developed by the public school district in which the nonpublic school is located. For
49 purposes of subdivision (1) of subsection 2 of this section, the nonpublic school shall
50 establish measurable performance standards for the goals of the program for every school and
51 grade level over which the nonpublic school maintains control.

52 4. A school district may participate in the program irrespective of its accreditation
53 classification by the state board of education, provided it meets all other requirements.

54 5. By rule and regulation, the state board of education may determine a local school
55 district variable fund match requirement in order for a school or schools in the district to
56 receive a grant under the program. However, no school in any district shall receive a grant
57 under the program unless the district designates a salaried employee to serve as the program
58 coordinator, with the district assuming a minimum of one-half the cost of the salary and other
59 benefits provided to the coordinator. Further, no school in any district shall receive a grant
60 under the program unless the district makes available facilities and services for adult literacy
61 training as specified by rule of the state board of education.

62 6. For any school that meets the requirements for the approval of the grants
63 authorized by this section and specified in subsection 2 of this section for three successive
64 school years, by August first following the third such school year, the commissioner of
65 education shall present a plan to the superintendent of the school district in which such school
66 is located for the waiver of rules and regulations to promote flexibility in the operations of the
67 school and to enhance and encourage efficiency in the delivery of instructional services in the
68 school. The provisions of other law to the contrary notwithstanding, the plan presented to the
69 superintendent shall provide a summary waiver, with no conditions, for the pupil testing
70 requirements pursuant to section 160.257 in the school. Further, the provisions of other law
71 to the contrary notwithstanding, the plan shall detail a means for the waiver of requirements
72 otherwise imposed on the school related to the authority of the state board of education to
73 classify school districts pursuant to subdivision (9) of section 161.092 and such other rules
74 and regulations as determined by the commissioner of education, except such waivers shall be
75 confined to the school and not other schools in the school district unless such other schools
76 meet the requirements of this subsection. However, any waiver provided to any school as
77 outlined in this subsection shall be void on June thirtieth of any school year in which the
78 school fails to meet the requirements for the approval of the grants authorized by this section
79 as specified in subsection 2 of this section.

80 7. For any school year, grants authorized by subsections 1, 2, and 5 of this section
81 shall be funded with the amount appropriated for this program, less those funds necessary to
82 reimburse eligible students pursuant to subsection 8 of this section.

83 8. The department of higher education and workforce development shall, by rule,
84 establish a procedure for the reimbursement of the cost of tuition, books and fees to any
85 public community college or vocational or technical school or within the limits established in
86 subsection 10 of this section for any two-year private vocational or technical school **or the**
87 **limits established in subsection 11 of this section for any public university** for any student:

88 (1) Who has attended a high school in the state for at least two years that meets the
89 requirements of subsection 2 of this section and who has graduated from such a school;
90 except that, students who are active duty military dependents, and students who are
91 dependents of retired military who relocate to Missouri within one year of the date of the
92 parent's retirement from active duty who meet all other requirements of this subsection and
93 are attending a school that meets the requirements of subsection 2 of this section shall be
94 exempt from the two-year attendance requirement of this subdivision; and

95 (2) Who has made a good faith effort to first secure all available federal sources of
96 funding that could be applied to the reimbursement described in this subsection; and

97 (3) Who has earned a minimal grade average while in high school or through the
98 semester immediately before taking the course for which reimbursement is sought as
99 determined by rule of the department of higher education and workforce development, and
100 other requirements for the reimbursement authorized by this subsection as determined by rule
101 and regulation of the department; and

102 (4) Who is a citizen or permanent resident of the United States.

103 9. The commissioner of education shall develop a procedure for evaluating the
104 effectiveness of the program described in this section. Such evaluation shall be conducted
105 annually with the results of the evaluation provided to the governor, speaker of the house, and
106 president pro tempore of the senate.

107 10. For a two-year private vocational or technical school to obtain reimbursements
108 under subsection 8 of this section, the following requirements shall be satisfied:

109 (1) Such two-year private vocational or technical school shall be a member of the
110 North Central Association and be accredited by the Higher Learning Commission as of July
111 1, 2008, and maintain such accreditation;

112 (2) Such two-year private vocational or technical school shall be designated as a 501
113 (c)(3) nonprofit organization under the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, as amended;

114 (3) No two-year private vocational or technical school shall receive tuition
115 reimbursements in excess of the tuition rate charged by a public community college for
116 course work offered by the private vocational or technical school within the service area of
117 such college; and

118 (4) The reimbursements provided to any two-year private vocational or technical
119 school shall not violate the provisions of Article IX, Section 8, or Article I, Section 7, of the
120 Missouri Constitution or the first amendment of the United States Constitution.

121 **11. For a public university to obtain reimbursements under subsection 8 of this**
122 **section, the following requirements shall be satisfied:**

123 **(1) Such public university shall be accredited by the Higher Learning**
124 **Commission as of July 1, 2026, and maintain such accreditation;**

125 **(2) No public university shall receive tuition reimbursements in excess of the**
126 **tuition rate charged by a public community college for coursework offered by the public**
127 **university within the service area of such college; and**

128 **(3) Such public university shall receive reimbursement for an eligible student**
129 **only if the student is enrolled at the public university in a degree program related to a**
130 **workforce shortage area. The Missouri economic research and information center shall**
131 **designate areas that qualify as workforce shortage areas for purposes of this**
132 **subdivision.**

174.160. 1. The board of regents of each state college and each state teachers college
2 shall have power and authority to confer upon students, by diploma under the common seal,
3 such degrees as are usually granted by such colleges, **including associate degrees**, and
4 additional degrees only when authorized by the coordinating board for higher education in
5 circumstances in which offering such degree would not unnecessarily duplicate an existing
6 program, collaboration is not feasible or a viable means of meeting the needs of students and
7 employers, and the institution has the academic and financial capacity to offer the program in
8 a high-quality manner. In the case of nonresearch doctoral degrees in allied health
9 professions, an institution may be authorized to offer such degree independently if offering it
10 in collaboration with another institution would not increase the quality of the program or
11 allow it to be delivered more efficiently. Such boards shall have the power and authority to
12 confer degrees in engineering only in collaboration with the University of Missouri, provided
13 that such collaborative agreements are approved by the governing board of each institution
14 and that in these instances the University of Missouri will be the degree-granting institution.
15 Should the University of Missouri decline to collaborate in the offering of such programs, one
16 of these institutions may seek approval of the program through the coordinating board for
17 higher education's comprehensive review process when doing so would not unnecessarily
18 duplicate an existing program, collaboration is not feasible or a viable means of meeting the
19 needs of students and employers, and the institution has the academic and financial capacity
20 to offer the program in a high-quality manner.

21 2. Notwithstanding sections 172.280 and 174.225 to the contrary, the board of
22 governors of Missouri State University shall have the power and authority to grant doctor of
23 philosophy degrees in disciplines other than engineering and to grant bachelor of science
24 degrees in veterinary technology.

174.231. 1. On and after August 28, 2005, the institution formerly known as
2 Missouri Southern State College located in Joplin, Jasper County, shall be known as
3 "Missouri Southern State University". Missouri Southern State University is hereby
4 designated and shall hereafter be operated as a statewide institution of international or global
5 education, health and life sciences, and immersive learning experiences. The Missouri

6 Southern State University is hereby designated a moderately selective institution which shall
7 provide associate degree programs [~~except as provided in subsection 2 of this section~~],
8 baccalaureate degree programs, and graduate degree programs pursuant to subdivisions (1)
9 and (3) of subsection 2 of section 173.005. The institution shall develop such academic
10 support programs and public service activities it deems necessary and appropriate to establish
11 international or global education as a distinctive theme of its mission.

12 2. [~~As of July 1, 2008, Missouri Southern State University shall discontinue any and~~
13 ~~all associate degree programs unless the continuation of such associate degree programs is~~
14 ~~approved by the coordinating board for higher education pursuant to subdivision (1) of~~
15 ~~subsection 2 of section 173.005.~~

16 3.] As of August 28, 2025, Missouri Southern State University shall have a statewide
17 mission designation of international or global education, health and life sciences, and in
18 immersive learning experiences.

174.251. [~~+~~] On and after August 28, 2005, the institution formerly known as
2 Missouri Western State College at St. Joseph, Buchanan County, shall hereafter be known as
3 the "Missouri Western State University". Missouri Western State University is hereby
4 designated and shall hereafter be operated as a statewide institution of applied learning. The
5 Missouri Western State University is hereby designated an open enrollment institution which
6 shall provide associate degree programs [~~except as provided in subsection 2 of this section~~],
7 baccalaureate degree programs, and graduate degree programs pursuant to subdivisions (1)
8 and (3) of subsection 2 of section 173.005. The institution shall develop such academic
9 support programs as it deems necessary and appropriate to an open enrollment institution with
10 a statewide mission of applied learning.

11 [~~2. As of July 1, 2010, Missouri Western State University shall discontinue any and~~
12 ~~all associate degree programs unless the continuation of such associate degree program is~~
13 ~~approved by the coordinating board for higher education pursuant to subdivision (1) of~~
14 ~~subsection 2 of section 173.005.]~~

178.636. 1. State Technical College of Missouri shall be a special purpose institution
2 that shall make available to students from all areas of the state exceptional educational
3 opportunities through highly specialized and advanced technical education and training at the
4 certificate and associate degree level in both emerging and traditional technologies with
5 particular emphasis on technical and vocational programs not commonly offered by
6 community colleges or area vocational technical schools. Primary consideration shall be
7 placed on the industrial and technological manpower needs of the state. In addition, State
8 Technical College of Missouri is authorized to assist the state in economic development
9 initiatives and to facilitate the transfer of technology to Missouri business and industry
10 directly through the graduation of technicians in advanced and emerging disciplines and

11 through technical assistance provided to business and industry. State Technical College of
12 Missouri is authorized to provide technical assistance to area vocational technical schools and
13 community colleges through supplemental on-site instruction and distance learning as such
14 area vocational technical schools and community colleges deem appropriate.

15 2. Consistent with the mission statement provided in subsection 1 of this section,
16 State Technical College of Missouri shall offer vocational and technical programs leading to
17 the granting of certificates, diplomas, and ~~[applied science]~~ associate degrees, or a
18 combination thereof. State Technical College of Missouri may offer ~~[associate of arts or]~~
19 baccalaureate degrees only when authorized by the coordinating board for higher education in
20 circumstances where the level of education required in a field for accreditation or licensure
21 increases to the baccalaureate degree level or, in the case of applied bachelor's degrees, the
22 level of education required for employment in a field increases to that level, and when doing
23 so would not unnecessarily duplicate an existing program, collaboration with a university is
24 not feasible or the approach is not a viable means of meeting the needs of students and
25 employers, and the institution has the academic and financial capacity to offer the program in
26 a high-quality manner. Quality for such baccalaureate degree programs shall be evaluated at
27 least in part by delivery of upper-level coursework or competencies, and defined by
28 accreditation or compliance with the Higher Learning Commission standards for bachelor's
29 degrees. State Technical College of Missouri shall also continue its role as a recognized area
30 vocational technical school as provided by policies and procedures of the state board of
31 education.

✓