

2007 / Fiscal Year 2008 Priorities

Increased Funding for Education

Governor Blunt has made education the state's top public policy and budget priority. Investing in Missouri's students is an investment in Missouri's future. Governor Blunt recommends a \$214 million increase for Missouri elementary and secondary education, which includes:

- \$132.6 million to continue full funding of the foundation formula.
- \$38.7 million for the foundation formula (included in the Fiscal Year 2007 supplemental budget).
- \$27.9 million for the School District Trust Fund distributions to local school districts.
- \$6 million for the High Need Program, which reimburses school districts based on student needs.
- \$3.6 million for the A+ Schools Program.
- \$2.6 million for the new Missouri Virtual School Program.
- \$2 million for the Parents as Teachers Program.
- \$477,626 for the Career Ladder Program.



2007 Legislative & Budget Priorities

Lewis and Clark Discovery Initiative

In 2007, Governor Blunt recommends the following as essential components of the vision of the Lewis and Clark Discovery Initiative:

- Quick validation of the Lewis and Clark Discovery Initiative Cooperative Agreement to allow the \$335 million in higher education capital improvement projects to get underway as soon as possible and provide \$15 million for the Missouri Technology Corporation to attract and retain high technology companies and commercialize existing research.

The Governor's budget includes the following items:

- \$25 million for Missouri's need-based financial aid programs (included in the Fiscal Year 2007 supplemental budget).
- \$3.4 million for expansion of the Primary Care Resource Initiative (PRIMO) scholarship and Area Health Education Centers (AHEC) program. Both programs promote health care accessibility in underserved areas of the state by recruiting and helping students seeking health care careers (included in the Fiscal Year 2007 supplemental budget).
- \$60 million to provide equipment and infrastructure costs for Federally Qualified Health Centers (FQHCs) throughout the state. These centers provide comprehensive primary care to low-income and medically underserved urban and rural communities and work closely with Missouri's higher education institutions (included in the Fiscal Year 2007 supplemental budget).

Putting Missouri's Children and Students First

“Missouri’s future prosperity and greatness rests firmly on the shoulders of Missouri’s children. As parents, policymakers, and leaders we strive to give them a safe path to walk and a firm footing in education from which to climb.”

- Matt Blunt

2007 / Fiscal Year 2008 Priorities Continued

2007 Legislative & Budget Priorities

Higher Education Improvement and Accountability

Governor Blunt recognizes the importance of higher education in ensuring that young Missourians are prepared for a global, high-tech economy. To improve higher education, Governor Blunt proposes:

- Simplifying our current Missouri College Guarantee and Charles E. Gallagher grant and scholarship programs; the two programs will be combined into a new, need-based scholarship program called Access Missouri.
- \$20 million increase for what will be the new Access Missouri program.
- \$39.5 million increase for Missouri’s two- and four- year public colleges and universities.
- Developing performance measures for institutions that will enforce accountability to students and Missouri taxpayers.
- A tuition accountability plan that prevents Missouri higher education institutions from increasing tuition above the Consumer Price Index unless approved by the Coordinating Board of Higher Education.
- Articulation agreements allowing smoother transitions for students moving from Missouri two-year institutions to four-year institutions.

Improving METS Education

To continue progress made toward improving METS (Math, Engineering, Technology, and Science) education in Missouri, Governor Blunt proposes:

- \$2.9 million to expand eMINTS (enhancing Missouri’s Instructional Networked Teaching Strategies), which will provide technology to 100 additional classrooms in 100 different schools.
- \$500,000 for an Afterschool Program expansion in the areas of math and science.
- \$500,000 for an Afterschool Program expansion for health.
- \$250,000 for assistance to students for Advanced Placement course testing in math and science.

2006 Successes

Increased Funding for Missouri Schools

When Governor Blunt was a candidate, he pledged that he would make education his highest priority and never withhold funds from classrooms, as was done in the past. The Fiscal Year 2007 budget, combined with the increases in Fiscal Year 2006, amounts to growth of more than a quarter of a billion dollars for education.

The Fiscal Year 2007 Budget fully funded the new foundation formula. Missouri's new formula focuses on the needs of Missouri's students instead of the taxing capacity of a school district. In 2005, the General Assembly fulfilled its job to provide a fair funding mechanism for Missouri schools by writing a new formula; in 2006, the Governor and the General Assembly followed through on their promise to fully fund the new formula. These increases, combined with Governor Blunt's Fiscal Year 2008 recommendations, will provide more than half a billion additional dollars for Missouri schools.

Increases in the Fiscal Year 2007 Budget

The Governor secured an increase of \$173.4 million for elementary and secondary education in the Fiscal Year 2007 budget, including:

- \$127.9 million for the new Foundation Equity Formula.
- \$15 million for the Small Schools Program.
- \$21.6 million for the School District Trust Fund distribution to school districts.
- \$6.1 million to educate severely disabled children that require contractual placements.
- \$1.8 million for A+ Schools.
- \$1 million for Parents as Teachers.

Governor Blunt also approved the following increases for higher education:

- \$20 million for state aid at Missouri's public higher education institutions.
- \$2.5 million for student financial aid programs, bringing total funding to \$43.4 million.

**Math,
Engineering,
Technology, and
Science (METS)
Education
Initiative**

As a result of the Governor's Math and Science Summit in April 2006, strategic goals were developed into an action plan to help more students prepare for the workforce in the METS areas. The plan includes increasing the pool of qualified METS teachers for preschool through grade 20 to provide better alignment for students. The plan will also enhance technology available to assist in school instruction through the eMINTS program and ensure that students are not only being taught, but that they are acquiring knowledge. Under the plan, a coalition will be established to continue to focus on policies that support and promote METS education and career preparation.



UPI Photo/Bill Greenblatt

In 2006, Governor Blunt signed Senate Bill 580, which establishes a P-20 Council. The council will provide an important foundation to ensure better collaboration among the departments of Elementary and Secondary Education, Higher Education, and Economic Development. By fostering greater collaboration among these state departments, Missouri will align grades K through 12, higher education, and employers to make our education system more fluid. It will close gaps and ensure students have built on the

skills and knowledge necessary for success along educational pathways to work. This work also includes an emphasis on a solid foundation in math and science.

The council will look at the establishment of tracking long-term data related to education to inform public policymaking and assist consumer choice. The council will also work to develop new partnerships between business and education leaders, increasing the understanding of workplace skills and new academic programs needed for Missouri businesses to compete in a global economy.

Increases to the A+ Schools Program

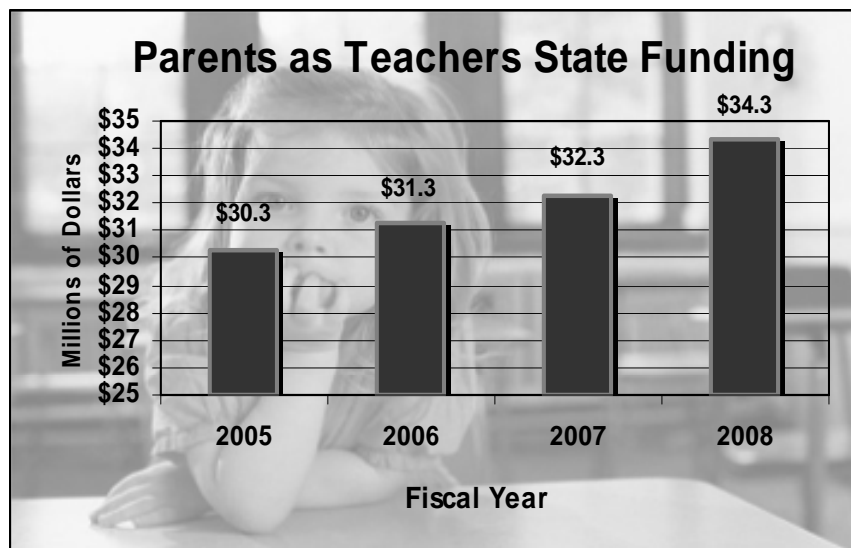
Missouri's A+ Schools Program raises academic standards and opens new doors to higher education. The program provides incentives for local high schools to reduce their dropout rates, raises academic expectations, provides better career pathways, and works closely with business and higher education leaders.

In Fiscal Year 2007, Governor Blunt provided a \$1.8 million increase for the A+ Schools Program, which brings total funding to \$18.2 million.

Increases for the Parents as Teachers Program

Parents as Teachers is a successful, worldwide program with its origins in Missouri. Parents as Teachers encourages parents to become involved early in their child's education. The program supports the parents' role as their child's first and most influential teachers. Parents as Teachers provides parent education and developmental screening services to families from the time their child is born until they are five years old.

Governor Blunt secured a \$1 million increase for Parents as Teachers in Fiscal Year 2007, bringing total program funding to \$32.3 million. This additional funding allows more visits from Parents as Teachers educators for children between the ages of three and five and increases service rates for educators serving high needs students.



Increased Payments for Residential Care

Residential care centers for children provide their services through a combination of state, private, and other support. Many residential care providers have been providing care for compensation at a level much lower than their actual costs.

Governor Blunt made closing the gap between cost and compensation a goal. In his first year in office, the Governor recommended a \$10 per day increase in care and was able to sign a budget that increased funding by \$5 per day, per child. In Fiscal Year 2007, the Governor recommended and signed a budget that included an additional \$10 per day increase for social services residential care providers and \$15 per day for mental health residential care providers. These increases total more than \$10.6 million and move the state closer to closing the gap between care and compensation for residential care providers such as Boys and Girls Town, Edgewood, Ozanam House, and others.

A New Child Support Enforcement Customer Service Center

In Fiscal Year 2007, Governor Blunt recommended \$2.6 million for a new child support enforcement customer service center to improve services to Missouri families and children. The center deals exclusively with helping Missourians who receive child support enforcement services from the Family Support Division. The center provides efficient and accessible means for parents with child support cases and employers to get answers to enforcement related questions and address other concerns. The center's work allows Missouri's child support specialists more time to focus on actions to collect child support and obtain medical support for Missouri's children from negligent parents.

Initial results from the new enforcement workflow structure supported by a central call center showed a ten percent increase in productivity (enforcement actions) and a seven percent increase in paying cases (defined as cases where a payment is made for at least three consecutive months).

Mentoring for Youth

Governor Blunt supported a combined increase of \$300,000 in Fiscal Year 2007 for two distinct youth mentoring programs. To help children of incarcerated parents succeed in school, at home, and in their communities, Governor Blunt secured \$200,000 for the Amachi mentoring program. This funding will provide mentoring services to 100 children, annually. Governor Blunt also supported an additional \$100,000 for the Missouri Mentoring Program, which offers work site and teen parent mentoring to youth at risk of entering the welfare system or the justice system. An additional 71 youth will benefit from the Missouri Mentoring Program.

A Virtual Public School

In 2006, Governor Blunt signed Senate Bill 912 to give Missouri students the opportunity to participate in a virtual school. Missouri's virtual school will begin operating July 1, 2007, and will offer students a means of alternative learning. The virtual school will also serve students whose schools do not have the resources to provide advanced or special education courses. The on-line environment provided by the virtual school will give students the opportunity to take those courses without having to travel from their own school or community.