



Reimagining Education

FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Reimagining education is at the heart of the Children's Education Alliance of Missouri's (CEAM) mission. We invite every Missourian to envision an educational system in which all of our children have the opportunity to flourish and prosper.

CEAM is a trusted partner to thousands of families across the state, making us our state's leading education reform organization. Our focus is on encouraging innovative state policies that impact more than one million K-12 students, many of whom have a diverse set of needs with the potential for a remarkable future. If that potential was being met, CEAM would not exist.

Many of our schools are struggling to prepare our young students for the economic realities of today and tomorrow in a system that was conceived over a century ago. CEAM challenges that way of thinking and how we're educating our children. We can no longer afford to prepare our children using this outdated system.

The truth is every child deserves a high-quality education. Long-held beliefs about who can learn, how they should learn, what they should learn and where they should learn are mired in old public policies that put a stranglehold on the future of our children, our neighborhoods and our state.

Changing the entrenched system requires a movement of passionate Missourians willing to look at things differently and reimagine education. CEAM is at the center of this movement from grassroots work in neighborhoods across the state to grassroots involvement from business, civic and elected leaders.

CEAM's message of transforming education reaches over half a million people around the state. Through one-on-one meetings, door-to-door canvassing, advocacy trainings and visits to the state capital CEAM engages, trains and activates families with a passion for their children's future. Their real life stories illustrate the impact of education policies and the need for innovative solutions in Jefferson City, local and state school board meetings, and in the media.

Their message is clear:

**We want the best possible educational options for our children
in this fast-changing world and current systems and policies
will not get us there.**

Harnessing the power of these personal stories into a force for change requires the latest communications, trainings and organizing tactics led by a group of committed leaders and supporters. The highly regarded CEAM team includes staff, board, volunteers, and our Champions of Education Reform.

We ask for your support as we continue to expand our advocacy efforts statewide. Please consider joining our growing movement as we transform education. Thank you for considering how you can get involved with CEAM!



Laura Slay

CEAM Executive Director

THE PROBLEM

For too many of our state's most vulnerable children, the promise of a quality education is unfulfilled. That unfilled promise is the result of two basic problems for Missouri children: schools that don't function as centers for learning and schools that don't fit the needs of their students.

The way we think of education in Missouri, and how it is delivered to more than one million children, is failing to keep pace with what we know about how children learn, the diversity of students across the state and the changing global marketplace of job opportunities.

Our education system is supposed to provide the chance to live successful and accomplished lives, however for many Missouri youth it traps them in self-replicating cycles of poverty.

Schools that don't function

Over the past 40 years we have more than doubled the amount of money we spend per pupil on education. With double the money we would hope for vast improvements.

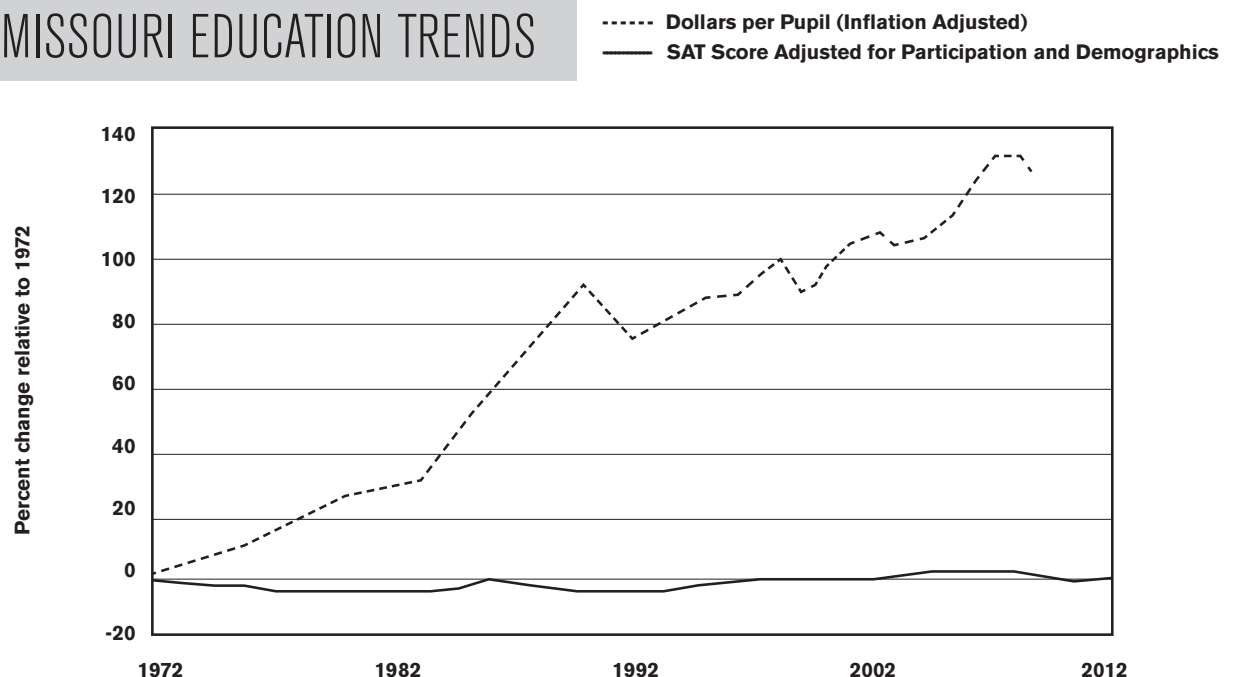
Instead, student performance on the SAT has flat-lined. According to the Missouri Department of

Elementary Education and Secondary Education website, in Missouri, only 67% of school children are proficient in English language arts and less than 50% are proficient in math. Contributing to these poor outcomes is the fact that 1 in 10 Missouri public school students are trapped in an underperforming school that, by the state's own evaluation program, would receive a letter grade of "C," "D" or "F."

The state's system of accrediting school districts uses formulas that often give the appearance that every school is succeeding by relying on data that casts the best light on the school while not focusing on actual student achievement.

A real appreciation for the quality of education a child is receiving is often only attained when a family changes schools.

MISSOURI EDUCATION TRENDS



Sources: derived using data provided by The College Board, www.collegeboard.org; the National Center for Education Statistics; and Andrew J. Coulson, "Drawing Meaningful Trends from the SAT," Cato Institute Working Paper no. 16, March 10, 2014, <http://www.cato.org/publications/working-paper/drawing-meaningful-trends-sat>.

Schools that don't fit students' needs

Quality of education is not the only issue. Families want to send their children to schools where they will feel safe and valued, yet many students find they do not fit for a variety of reasons including bullying. Parents struggle to ensure their children's safety and often when bullying occurs, the response from school leaders can leave parents fearful for their children's wellbeing.

Robert, a Normandy student with autism, faced relentless bullying for years resulting in a miserable school experience. When his family had the chance to transfer Robert to a safer school in the Francis Howell School District (as a result of a Missouri law that grants students in unaccredited school districts the right to transfer to neighboring, higher performing schools) the welcoming environment he found there renewed his spirit and zest for learning. As a result of being given the chance to choose a better school, Robert is now attending Washington University on a full scholarship.

Robert's opportunity came about at just the right time for him, while many other Missouri students remain trapped in schools that do not benefit their needs. CEAM works to help thousands of students like Robert achieve their dreams by fighting to create educational opportunities that foster hope, access, high expectations and achievement.



Many other students fail to meet their potential in schools that simply don't meet a student's learning style, personality or interests.

Parental choice in education allows families to find an educational setting that better fits their student's needs.

THE IMPACT

Missouri's failing education system has a real impact on the state's economy and health. The problem is bigger than any one student or any one community.

This is a problem for our entire state.

Employers feel the impact of failing schools

One St. Louis-based building contractor told CEAM he struggles to find employees with the basic math and reading skills to hire for his projects. Despite paying prevailing wages and working closely with apprenticeship programs, the small business owner says that many young adults who want to join the profession simply aren't equipped without remediation.

In fact, a 2016 Gallup survey commissioned by the Missouri Chamber of Commerce and Industry found that only 15 % of Missouri business owners believe

that Missouri high schools are preparing students for the workplace.

High-tech employers face similar workforce problems and at least one-fourth of the state's high school graduates have to take remediation courses during the freshman year in college.

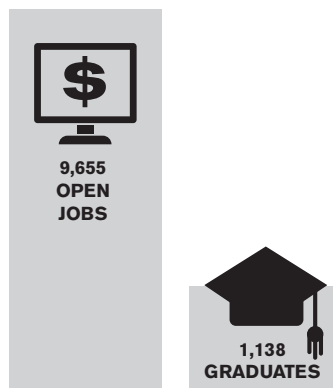
Failure to produce college-ready students, means more student debt, a diversion of resources to remediation, and a delay in graduating from college and entering the workforce.

LOST OPPORTUNITY



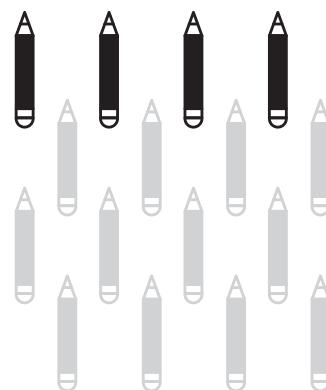
Only 1 in 10 Missouri public high schools offer advanced placement (AP) computer science.

LOST INCOME



In 2016, there were **9,655 computer science related jobs open** in Missouri, equating to \$792,192,050 in potential income for Missourians and yet the state universities only produced **1,138 computer science graduates**.

LOST RESOURCES



Of Missouri students that graduate from high school and go to college, **one-fourth will take remedial courses** their freshman year.

Missouri's education crisis is also a health crisis

Counties in Missouri that have a large proportion of adults that did not complete high school in 1990 share these traits today:

- lower levels of household income;
- larger percentage of the population who smoke;
- higher incidence of obesity;
- greater occurrence of childhood poverty;
- larger percentage of single-parent households.

Providing a high-quality education also has a dramatic impact on incarceration and recidivism in Missouri. 32% percent of Missouri prisoners in 2014 did not have a high school diploma and 48% of prisoners who leave without a high school degree or GED, return to prison within two years.

All of these challenges created by an outdated education system have contributed to Missouri's current state of economic growth. Over the past 15 years Missouri has placed near the bottom of all states.

Improving Missouri's education system could bring over a trillion dollars to the state in the next ten years according to a new study authored by Stanford University Paul and Jean Hanna Senior Fellow Eric Hanushek for the Hammond Institute Center for Economics and the Environment at Lindenwood University.

"The costs of not improving our educational system in Missouri are extraordinarily large," writes Hanushek. "We have to push harder on the incentives that we know will have positive impacts. Just as importantly, we have to actively consider truly dramatic options. To achieve true change, we must not shy from large changes in parental choice, teacher evaluations and pay, and strengthened accountability."

Meeting the challenges of 21st Century education and employment

Out of more than 500 school districts in our state, only 69 schools (21% of MO schools with Advanced Placement programs) offered an AP Computer Science course in 2016-2017. There are fewer AP exams taken in computer science than in any other STEM subject area.

Only 631 exams were taken in AP Computer Science by Missouri high school students in 2017.

- Only 20% were taken by females;
- only 29 exams were taken by Hispanic or Latino students;
- only 34 exams were taken by African American students.

Universities in Missouri only graduated one new teacher prepared to teach computer science in 2016.

CEAM supports policies that ensure high quality teachers are in every Missouri classroom. School leaders must have the ability to hire and retain effective teachers for their schools.



In 2017, African American and female students were grossly underrepresented in the total number of AP Computer Science exams taken by Missouri high school students.

THE CASE FOR CHOICE

The case for school choice is overwhelming. The vast majority of empirical studies prove that school choice programs improve academic outcomes (for not only the program participants but also the students in public schools), save taxpayers money, and reduce racial segregation.

Of the **15 empirical studies** that examined academic outcomes for students participating in private school choice using random assignment, the “gold standard” of defensible social science:

- **10 found improved test scores for school choice participants.**

Of the **21 studies** that examined school choice and how it impacts academic outcomes in public schools:

- **20 found that school choice improved public school academic outcomes.**

Of the **28 studies** that examined the financial impact for the taxpayers and public schools:

- **25 found that school choice programs save taxpayers money.**

Of the **10 studies** that examined the impact of school choice on racial segregation:

- **9 found that school choice programs move students into less segregated schools;**
- 1 found that school choice programs have no net effect on racial segregation.

Florida is an amazing example of choice at work. The options families have in Florida include traditional public schools, charter public schools, virtual schools, and access to private schools through large scholarship programs:

- 283,000 students attend charter public schools;
- over 100,000 students access private schools through the Florida Tax Credit Scholarships
- nearly 30,000 students use the McKay Scholarship program to attend private schools;
- over 10,000 special needs students use the Gardner Scholarship program.

Today rather than threaten each other's existence, the emergence of educational choice has caused all schools to improve. Today Florida public schools are posting higher test scores and over all better results.

In fact, the most recent National Assessment of Educational Progress results show that Florida is the

only state in the nation to have improved significantly in grade 4 mathematics, grade 8 reading and grade 8 mathematics between 2015 and 2017.

Same demographic – better results: North Side Community School, one of St. Louis' school choice success stories

For families living around North Side Community School, a charter public school, it means having the option of attending a school that has distinguished itself among all St. Louis area public schools for effectively closing the low-income achievement gap.

Students at North Side Community School generally come from within a three-mile radius, an area that encompasses mostly low-income communities of color. With just as many “free and reduced lunch” students as nearby traditional District schools, NSCS has posted remarkable MAP scores. In 2016, 73% of NSCS students were proficient in English language arts and 59% were proficient in math.

Compare those scores to traditional public schools in the same area, drawing from the same population of students. The nearby elementary school posted 2016 MAP scores that showed only 25% of students proficient in English and 11.6% in math. Similarly the nearest traditional public middle school posted 2016 MAP scores of 15.6% proficient in English and 4.2% proficient in math.

The school's principal is a 30-year veteran of traditional public schools, but at NSCS she found the autonomy to help build a school from the ground up that finds ways to support and educate children better than their traditional public school counterparts. NSCS now educates approximately 370 kindergarten through fifth grade students.

School choice puts students and teachers first

We need an education system designed to serve the needs of every student and not the needs of an outdated education bureaucracy.

Every student should have the chance to go to a school that puts their needs first, regardless of their zip code, income, or ability level.

And every teacher should have the freedom and support to use their passion and innovation to give kids the personalized, individualized attention they need to learn, grow and thrive.

As of September 1, 2017, 465,491 K-12 students are enrolled in private school choice programs country-wide.

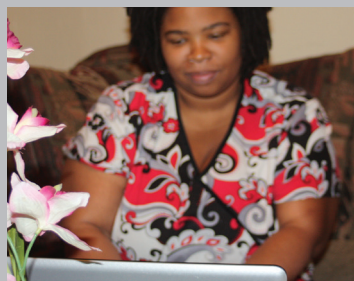
PARENTS FOR EDUCATIONAL PROGRESS

CEAM's statewide Parents for Educational Progress is a network of informed, trained and engaged parents who actively advocate at the state capital, through social and traditional media, and with local leaders and other parents. Our close, personal relationships with parents across the state are the foundation of our work.

The parents in Parents for Educational Progress, with help from CEAM, are demanding that our state adopt three simple principles that will transform education in Missouri.



1 **Give parents the right to choose** the education they believe is best for their children. We need to stop allowing institutions to take their student enrollment for granted. In this reimagining of education, all schools will need to demonstrate their value to attract students based on the quality of their educational opportunities.



2 **Families deserve information about their children's learning and about their school's performance.** Information should be easy to understand and easy to obtain. When families are trying to find the school and curriculum that best suits their child's learning needs, that information should be a simple mouse-click away.



3 **Effective curriculum implemented by effective educators** is key to successful learning. Charter schools and private schools give teachers more autonomy and freedom in the classroom, allowing teachers to use their knowledge and innovation to create more engaging and effective curriculum to best motivate their students.

To achieve these key principles CEAM supports:

Innovative education policies that create a robust and diverse educational ecosystem that includes traditional public and charter schools, private and religious schools, homeschooling and virtual education.

Transparency and accountability for all education systems that enroll Missouri students.

Policies that give power to school leaders to hire and retain best teachers for their student population. We also support policies that reward great teachers.

THE TIME TO ACT IS NOW

Missouri needs a new vision for educating our youth, one that reimagines an education delivery system that ensures that every child has access to high quality, personalized learning. This journey requires all Missourians, especially parents and employers, to make students a top-priority. We need a statewide movement of parents, employers, civic leaders and elected officials.

CEAM is uniquely positioned, as Missouri's leading education transformation organization, to make that vision a reality. CEAM equips hundreds of Missourians, from business and school leaders to parents and students with the training that they need to be powerful advocates for change in K-12 education. CEAM uses tried and true community engagement tools mixed with the latest communication tactics and web-based solutions.

CEAM is expanding across Missouri

CEAM is expanding our parent and civic engagement program statewide and building a network of community-focused advocacy groups in each of four geographic areas: St. Louis, Kansas City, Columbia and Springfield, where we will support the interests and efforts of thousands of community leaders and parents in our shared education goals for the state.

Our campaign goal

Increase statewide support for education policy change by illustrating the case for educational choice and transformation through passage of new and innovative education policies in Missouri:

- **Education Scholarship Accounts**
- **Charter School Expansion**
- **Virtual Learning and Course Access**

We will achieve this goal through the following activities and tactics:

- Connect with new stakeholders and potential advocates and grow our network across the state;
- train parents and other new advocates for policy change;
- strategically activate the CEAM network to influence more parents and leaders, connect them with elected officials, and make their personal stories known.



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