

SHOW-ME STANDARDS FROM THE MISSOURI DEPARTMENT OF ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION

The Outstanding Schools Act requires that the State Board of Education oversee the development of “not more than 75 academic performance standards.” The Show-Me Standards, developed over a period of two years with input from teachers, school officials, and citizens are the result of this mandate. There are 40 knowledge (content) standards that provide a solid foundation of knowledge in communication arts, fine arts, health and physical education, mathematics, science, and social studies.

Business and higher education communities have pointed out that, in general, students are graduating with some factual knowledge, but they are not skilled in abstract thinking, problem solving, and working cooperatively or collaboratively. Students need practice in integrating, applying, and transferring what they are learning in one context or content area to new and different situations. To remedy this, the Missouri teachers who develop the Show-Me Standards proposed 33 performance (process) standards. These standards include important process skills that students could master in order to successfully gather, analyze, and apply information and ideas; communicate effectively within and beyond the classroom; recognize and solve problems; and make decisions and act as responsible members of society. (The Show-Me Standards follow this preface.)

While intended to establish higher expectations for all Missouri’s students, the 73 Show-Me Standards do not represent everything a student should or will learn. Graduates who meet these standards, however, should be well prepared for further education, work, and civic responsibilities.

The Department of Education and Secondary Education believes that the preservation of local control is a hallmark of the Outstanding Schools Act. Local school districts have the authority, the ability, and the resources to develop rigorous and challenging curriculum that will prepare their students to be successful in the 21st century. The Department’s role is to support districts in this endeavor, helping them carry out this task by offering technical assistance, professional development opportunities, and new technologies. Each school district must determine how its curriculum will be structured and which methods to use to implement that curriculum in the classroom. We believe that local educators, parents, employers, and community leaders know best how to incorporate the Show-Me Standards into their districts’ curricula to meet the needs of their students.

July, 2005