

# MISSOURI

OVERALL RANK: 38TH<sup>1</sup>  
TIER 4 (WEAK)

STRONGER  WEAKER

OVERALL				38	
1. RESOURCES AND MEMBERSHIP			33		
2. INVOLVEMENT IN POLITICS					47
3. SCOPE OF BARGAINING		23			
4. STATE POLICIES				40	
5. PERCEIVED INFLUENCE			24		

## AREA 1: RESOURCES AND MEMBERSHIP TIED FOR 33RD

Missouri’s teacher unions stand out neither for their member-generated resources nor for the level of education expenditures in their state. Just 76.6 percent of Missouri teachers are unionized, the 26th-highest unionization rate across 51 jurisdictions (although well above the average rate of 60.9 percent where bargaining is permitted but not required). The Show Me State’s state-level NEA and AFT affiliates bring in \$167 annually per teacher in the state (44th of 51). While state spending on education is relatively high (K-12 education accounts for 21.7 percent of state expenditures; 15th), overall per-pupil spending is moderate (\$10,935 per year; 29th). Roughly 54 percent of total K-12 education dollars go toward teacher salaries and benefits (28th).

## AREA 2: INVOLVEMENT IN POLITICS<sup>2</sup> TIED FOR 47TH

Missouri’s teacher unions are less involved with state political campaigns than their counterparts in nearly every other state. In the past ten years, their direct donations equaled only 0.25 percent of contributions to candidates for state office (40th), and 0.39 percent of contributions to state political parties (41st). Their presence at the Democratic and Republican national conventions was also minimal, with just 12.1 percent of Missouri delegates identifying as teacher union members (31st).<sup>3</sup>

*AREA 3: SCOPE OF BARGAINING*  
*23RD*

Missouri is one of three states that *explicitly* permit—but not require—collective bargaining by teachers (eleven other states implicitly allow it by neither prohibiting nor requiring it). However, few provisions of collective bargaining are addressed in state law: Of the twenty-one items examined in our metric, two—wages and terms and conditions of employment—must be negotiated (should a district choose to bargain at all). State statute does not address the remaining nineteen. Unions may automatically collect agency fees from non-member teachers, but teacher strikes are not allowed.

*AREA 4: STATE POLICIES*  
*40TH*

Teacher employment and charter school laws are less aligned with traditional union interests in Missouri than in most other states. Missouri is one of only eleven states where districts must consider teacher performance in determining which teachers are laid off. It is also one of just five states in which teachers must work five years before receiving tenure (the national norm is three), although it does not require that student learning factor into tenure decisions or teacher evaluations. Unions typically oppose autonomy for charter schools, but Missouri law grants them partial exemptions from state laws and teacher certification requirements, and full exemption from district collective bargaining agreements. The state also permits new, conversion, and virtual charter schools—although only in 2012 did the state allow charters in districts other than Kansas City and St. Louis.

*AREA 5: PERCEIVED INFLUENCE*  
*24TH*

Stakeholders report that Missouri's teacher unions are active in shaping education policy but do not dominate the process. They indicate that the unions, along with the state school board association and association of school administrators, are all influential in education policy. Respondents note that the unions are effective in warding off education proposals with which they disagree, and that policies proposed by the governor in the latest legislative session were in line with union priorities, although the *outcomes* of that session were only somewhat in line.<sup>4</sup> Finally, they report that state education leaders are only sometimes aligned with teacher union priorities.

*OVERALL*  
*38TH*

Missouri's teacher unions do not distinguish themselves across any of the areas of strength examined in our metric, and the state's overall rank places it in the middle of the fourteen bargaining-permitted states. The state is one of only nine that did not rank higher than 20th in any single area.

## DEFENSIVE PLAY

Unions in states seeking Race to the Top funding or NCLB waivers tend to find themselves on the defensive, and the Missouri National Education Association (MNEA) is no exception. At the close of the 2012 legislative session, its legislative director wrote, “MNEA defends public education against extremist attacks: Legislative leaders push extreme agenda and fail to act on real needs of students and educators.”<sup>5</sup> Among the measures most offensive to the MNEA were proposals to eliminate tenure and “last in, first out” layoff policies, ensure that ineffective teachers were eligible for dismissal, require that at least half of every teacher’s evaluation be based on student test scores, and implement performance-based pay. After heavy amending, none of those measures passed—not because lawmakers didn’t want the reforms, but because House-Senate bickering and union-supported amendments left the bills without teeth.<sup>6,7,8</sup> Despite the fact that it could not enact statewide teacher evaluation standards, however, Missouri secured a 2012 NCLB waiver after it agreed that districts would develop, pilot, and implement student-achievement-based systems locally.<sup>9</sup>

The legislature did manage to put politics aside and pass a bill expanding charter schools from St. Louis and Kansas City to all failing districts, despite MNEA’s opposition that they should be limited until the charter accountability system is improved (and until charter teachers receive due process rights).<sup>10</sup> But with an NCLB waiver in their pocket, and state leaders who can’t seem to agree, Missouri’s teacher unions may be able to rest easy for awhile. At least until lawmakers take up discussions over tenure and evaluations again—which they’ve vowed to do.

# MISSOURI RANKINGS BY AREA AND INDICATOR

OVERALL RANK: 38TH			
Area and Rank <sup>a</sup>	General Indicator	Sub-Indicator	Sub-Indicator Rank/Status <sup>b</sup>
<b>AREA 1: RESOURCES &amp; MEMBERSHIP</b>  33*	Membership	By rank, what percentage of public-school teachers in the state are union members?	26th
	Revenue	By rank, what is the total yearly revenue (per teacher in the state) of the state-level NEA and/or AFT affiliate(s)?	44th
	Spending on education	By rank, what percentage of state expenditures (of state general funds, state restricted funds, state bonds, and federal "pass-through" funds) is directed to K-12 education?	15th
		By rank, what is the total annual per-pupil expenditure (of funds from federal, state, and local sources) in the state?	29th
		By rank, what percentage of total annual per-pupil expenditures is directed to teacher salaries and benefits?	28th
<b>AREA 2: INVOLVEMENT IN POLITICS</b>  47*	Contributions to candidates and political parties	By rank, what percentage of the total contributions to state candidates was donated by teacher unions?	40th
		By rank, what percentage of the total contributions to state-level political parties was donated by teacher unions?	41st
	Industry influence	By rank, what percent of the contributions to state candidates from the ten highest-giving sectors was donated by teacher unions?	42nd
	Status of delegates	By rank, what percentage of the state's delegates to the Democratic and Republican conventions were members of teacher unions?	31st
<b>AREA 3: SCOPE OF BARGAINING</b>  23	Legal scope of bargaining	What is the legal status of collective bargaining?	Permitted
		By rank, how broad is the scope of collective bargaining?	29th*
	Automatic revenue streams	What is the unions' legal right to automatically collect agency fees from non-members and/or collect member dues via automatic payroll deductions?	Permitted
	Right to strike	What is the legal status of teacher strikes?	Prohibited
<b>AREA 4: STATE POLICIES</b>  40	Performance pay	Does the state support performance pay for teachers?	State-sponsored initiatives offered in select districts
	Retirement	By rank, what is the employer- versus employee-contribution rate to the teacher pension system?	42nd*
	Evaluations	What is the maximum potential consequence for veteran teachers who receive unsatisfactory evaluation(s)?	Teacher improvement plan
		Is classroom effectiveness included in teacher evaluations? If so, how is it weighted?	Not required
	Terms of employment	How long before a teacher earns tenure?	Five years
		Is student/teacher performance considered in tenure decisions? If so, how is it weighted?	Not included
		Is seniority considered in teacher layoff decisions? If so, how is it weighted?	Optional; May be considered among other factors
		Is teacher performance included in teacher layoff decisions? If so, how is it weighted?	Required; Considered among other factors
Class size	By rank, what percentage of the teaching workforce was dismissed due to poor performance?	28th	
	Is class size restricted for grades 1-3? If so, is the restriction higher or lower than the national average (20)?	Yes; Higher	

Area and Rank	General Indicator	Sub-Indicator	Sub-Indicator Rank/Status
<b>AREA 4: STATE POLICIES</b>  <b>40</b>  (cont.)	Charter school structural limitations	Is there a cap (limit) placed on the number of charter schools that can operate in the state (or other jurisdiction) and/or on the number of students who can attend charter schools?	State cap with limited room for growth
		Does the state allow a variety of charter schools: start-ups, conversions, and virtual schools?	Yes
		How many charter authorizing options exist? How active are those authorizers?	Two or more w/limited jurisdiction
	Charter school exemptions	Are all charter schools automatically exempt from state laws and state/district regulations (except those that safeguard students and fiscal accountability)? If not, are they eligible for exemptions?	Partially; Some automatic exemptions for all schools
		Are all charter schools automatically exempt from state teacher-certification requirements? If not, are they eligible for exemptions?	Partially; All schools receive automatic exemptions for some teachers
		Are all charter schools automatically exempt from collective bargaining agreements (CBAs)? If not, are they eligible for exemptions?	Yes

<b>AREA 5: PERCEIVED INFLUENCE<sup>c</sup></b>  <b>24</b>	Relative influence of teacher unions	How do you rank the influence of teacher unions on education policy compared with other influential entities?	Second- or third-most influential
	Influence over campaigns	On a scale from always to never, how often do Democratic candidates need teacher-union support to get elected?	Often/Always
		On a scale from always to never, how often do Republican candidates need teacher-union support to get elected?	Sometimes
	Influence over spending	To what extent, from strongly agree to strongly disagree, do you agree that even in times of cutbacks, teacher unions are effective in protecting dollars for education?	Neutral
		Given recent budgetary constraints, would you say that teacher unions generally make concessions to prevent reductions in pay and benefits or fight hard to prevent those reductions?	Sometimes concede, sometimes fight
	Influence over policy	To what extent, from strongly agree to strongly disagree, do you agree that teacher unions ward off proposals in your state with which they disagree?	Agree
		On a scale from always to never, how often do existing state education policies reflect teacher-union priorities?	Often
		To what extent, from totally in line to not at all in line, were state education policies proposed by the governor during your state's latest legislative session in line with teacher-union priorities?	Mostly/Totally in line
		To what extent, from totally in line to not at all in line, were legislative outcomes of your state's latest legislative session in line with teacher-union priorities?	Mostly not in line/Somewhat in line
	Influence over key stakeholders	On a scale from always to never, how often have the priorities of state education leaders aligned with teacher-union positions in the past three years?	Sometimes
Would you say that teacher unions typically compromise with policymakers to ensure that their preferred policies are enacted, or typically need not make concessions?		Sometimes compromise, sometimes do not need to concede	

\* Tied with another state

<sup>a</sup> Area ranks are calculated using a weighted average of sub-indicators. For a more detailed description, see Appendix A.

<sup>b</sup> Where possible, we report a state's rank as compared to other states on a given metric. For example, out of 51 states, Missouri has the 26th-highest percentage of teachers who are union members. Otherwise, we report a status: In Missouri, collective bargaining is permitted, and union agency fees are also permitted. For a more detailed description of our metrics and methodology, see Appendix A. To request the raw data for your state, send an email to [uniondata@edexcellence.net](mailto:uniondata@edexcellence.net).

<sup>c</sup> For all survey questions, stakeholders were asked specifically about teacher unions, candidates, policies, and leaders in their state. In addition, we asked about unions and policies in the "current legislative session," but because legislative calendars vary from state to state, responses refer to policies proposed and enacted within the 2010-11 window.

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## ENDNOTES

<sup>1</sup> A state's overall rank is calculated as follows: First, we score it on multiple sub-indicators (sub-indicator data and scores for Missouri are shown in the table, *Missouri Rankings by Area and Indicator*). Second, we take a weighted average of the sub-indicators in each of five areas. In each area, we use that average to place the states in rank order. For example, in Area 1: Resources and Membership, Missouri is ranked 33rd of 51 based on the weighted average of its sub-indicators. To generate the state's overall rank, we average the five area ranks together, then re-order the states. For a more detailed description of data sources and methodology, see Appendix A.

<sup>2</sup> Readers should note that these figures include only direct donations from unions and union-connected PACs, but not their spending on electioneering/advertising, mobilizing the union's own membership, lobbying, or advocacy. A recent *Wall Street Journal* report found that donations and lobbying activities account for a small share of union political spending compared with their expenditures on member mobilization and advocacy. Even the AFT agreed, making the argument that since its mission is organizing and activism, it will naturally spend significant amounts on these activities. Thus, the percentages we report here are extremely conservative representations of what unions actually spend on politics. For more information, see Appendix A, Area 2; Tom McGinty and Brody Mullins, "Political Spending by Unions Far Exceeds Direct Donations," *Wall Street Journal*, July 10, 2012; and Jeff Hauser, "Wall Street Journal Compares Union Political Spending to Corporate Donations," AFL-CIO, July 10, 2012.

<sup>3</sup> At the time of publication, the 2000 conventions were the most recent for which such detailed data were available in forms that met rigorous standards. However, 2008 data provided by the Democratic National Convention were highly correlated with the reliable figures from 2000.

<sup>4</sup> We asked stakeholders about unions and policies in the "current legislative session," but because legislative calendars vary from state to state, responses refer to policies proposed and enacted within the 2010-11 window.

<sup>5</sup> Otto Fajen, "MNEA Defends Public Education Against Extremist Attacks," Missouri National Education Association, accessed August 30, 2012, [http://www.mnea.org/Missouri/News/MNEA\\_defends\\_public\\_education\\_against\\_extremist\\_at\\_268.aspx](http://www.mnea.org/Missouri/News/MNEA_defends_public_education_against_extremist_at_268.aspx).

<sup>6</sup> Ibid. See also Otto Fajen, "Legislative Update," Missouri National Education Association, May 25, 2012, <http://www.mnea.org/Uploads/Public/Documents/Capitol/LegUpdates/2012/19-May25.pdf>.

<sup>7</sup> Virginia Young, "Pressure Builds For Teacher Tenure Reform," *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*, April 8, 2012, [http://www.stltoday.com/news/local/education/pressure-builds-for-teacher-tenure-reform/article\\_ad0134b0-0e8b-5a75-8222-294e43da6c5c.html](http://www.stltoday.com/news/local/education/pressure-builds-for-teacher-tenure-reform/article_ad0134b0-0e8b-5a75-8222-294e43da6c5c.html).

<sup>8</sup> Elisa Crouch, "Missouri To Develop New Teacher Evaluation Tool," *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*, April 4, 2012, [http://www.stltoday.com/news/local/education/missouri-to-develop-new-teacher-evaluation-tool/article\\_25b7c53c-9cc4-52ba-a831-f252f67b6c08.html](http://www.stltoday.com/news/local/education/missouri-to-develop-new-teacher-evaluation-tool/article_25b7c53c-9cc4-52ba-a831-f252f67b6c08.html).

<sup>9</sup> "ESEA Flexibility Requests and Related Documents," U.S. Department of Education, accessed September 4, 2012, <http://www.ed.gov/esea/flexibility/requests>.

<sup>10</sup> Fajen.