



MU News Bureau

Daily Clips Packet

August 3, 2017

MISSOURIAN

Fewer parking permits at MU incenses students

GINA BALSTAD AND MICHAEL CALI, 9 hrs ago

COLUMBIA — **A reduction in the number of available student permits for MU parking facilities in the core of campus means many students with cars will be out of luck.**

MU reduced the number of core campus permits from 3,025 to 2,625, said MU spokeswoman Liz McCune. Officials said they want to reduce congestion on campus and the environmental effects triggered by more student vehicles.

Officials hope to encourage more carpooling, bike commuting and use of public transportation, Director of Parking and Transportation Mike Sokoff said in an email.

MU students took to Twitter and Facebook Monday to express their frustrations with changes to the availability of parking permits.

The change in parking management comes after a review of the university's existing parking system by a private company called NuPark, said MU Operations Communications Manager Karlan Seville. Discussions between the consultant and the Campus Parking and Transportation Standing Committee during the previous academic year led to the changes.

The new system is confronting students as they return for the fall semester, which begins Aug. 21. Changes are also being made to citations, meter rates for students and visitors, shuttle routes and a new system for policing parking in MU's numerous garages.

"We had a very antiquated system," Seville said. Before the changes, MU parking officials had a small paper card for each permit holder stored in a file cabinet, Seville said. She said the NuPark representative could not remember seeing any other university with a system so antiquated.

Less availability

The number of permits — or lack thereof — was one of the frustrations voiced on social media by MU students. Fewer passes were sold this year as part of the parking management changes, McCune said.

"Previously, garages were oversold, which means at times, there were permit holders who could not find a parking space," McCune said. "Our new system eliminates this problem but results in fewer passes being available."

MU has 23,298 parking spaces in seven garages and 80 parking lots. This year, spaces available to students consisted of 2,000 in core-campus garages and 625 on core-campus surface lots. Another 2,375 spaces in perimeter lots are also available. Officials define "core campus" as the area bounded by Providence Road, College Avenue, Stadium Boulevard and Elm Street.

The system was used for the first time during the summer, when 2,875 permits were sold.

Last week 2,200 permits were sold to graduate students; on Monday, 1,100 were sold to seniors, McCune said.

Hourly parking

Students will still be able to purchase hourly passes for garages but they will no longer place a receipt on the dashboard. Instead, students will use a kiosk and input their license plate number, desired amount of time and payment. The virtual permit is then issued and will be recognized by license plate readers on top of parking enforcement vehicles.

The digital upgrade will make it easier to avoid getting a citation in the first place, Seville said.

Using a new mobile app called Whoosh!, hourly parkers can receive notifications that their time is about to expire and add payment to avoid a ticket.

"You can sit in class and add additional time to your meter," she said.

In addition to being easier to pay, the rates for all meters on campus will be universally changed.

"Every meter on campus will be \$1 an hour from now on," Seville said.

The price of temporary permits has also increased. A daily permit was previously \$4 and is now \$5; a weekly pass was \$12 and is now \$15; and a monthly pass was \$21 and is now \$25.

Violators will no longer find an orange envelope under a windshield wiper. They will now receive an email — complete with a photo of their vehicle — and a description of the violation and the fine amount. The fine can be paid through an online portal called Tiger Park, accessible through a link in the emailed ticket.

Other changes

The parking structure system will also see a complete overhaul. The garages will now be split into different levels. Students will mostly be restricted to parking on the fourth, fifth and sixth floors, Seville said. The uncovered top floors spots will actually drop in price under the new system.

"The parking consultant suggested that we charge surface lot prices for the top of garages because it is not a covered space," Seville said. "Those rates have gone down if you only park on the top."

Parking permit costs remain the same for students, faculty and staff. Students pay \$144 for a surface lot and \$168 for a garage. Faculty and staff members pay \$216 for a surface lot space and \$252 for a garage space. Prices are for the academic year.

Students who need to park in garages at odd hours now have to purchase one of three special permits, Seville said. Students who want to park between 1 and 8:30 a.m. will need an A.M. permit. Those who need late night parking between 5 p.m. and 1 a.m. must buy a P.M. permit. Those who want to park their car in a university garage overnight will need to buy an evening permit.

The A.M. and P.M. permits are for those who work late at night or early in the morning. There is no extra cost, but work hours will be verified before they are distributed. This verification will be more strictly enforced for the P.M. permits.

The old system of not enforcing parking in the garages after 5 p.m. is over.

"If you do not have a permit, you cannot park overnight in the garages," Seville said.

Campus surface lots will not escape changes. Because of low ridership, Seville said the shuttle route to Mizzou North will be eliminated. This cut has allowed MU parking to add another shuttle on the more heavily traveled SG4 line that serves Hearn Center lots, she said.

MU is also paying NuPark \$80,000 a year to operate the new Tiger Parking portal and maintain the license plate reader equipment, Sokoff said.

No seat at the table

A spot for student representation was available on the committee but went unfilled, keeping a student voice from being part of the discussion, said Missouri Student Association President Nathan Willet.

"That's not uncommon," he said. "Traditionally MSA has left a lot of standing committees unfilled."

While Willett is frustrated with the way MU is handling the current parking situation, he also recognizes that it does fall within the responsibility of student government as well.

"They could definitely be handled better," he said. "But it all goes back to being proactive in filling those spots instead of reactive to the policies."



The Harmful Effects of Spanking Can Last for 10 Years

By: Rachel Grumman Bender

Generated from News Bureau press release: [Spanking Can Be Detrimental for Children's Behavior, Even Ten Years Later](#)

It's no surprise that [spanking](#) and yelling at [children](#) starting at a very young age can have a negative effect on them.

But a new [study](#) from the University of Missouri, which was published in *Developmental Psychology*, shows those negative effects on a child's development are long-lasting. The researchers noted that most studies on the consequences of physical discipline, such as spanking, only look at the effects for a year or two, while this study found that physical discipline during infancy can affect a child's temperament and behavior well into fifth grade — and even in the adolescent years.

In the study, researchers looked at what types of discipline low-income European American and African-American parents — all of whom were enrolled in the Early Head Start Research and Evaluation Project — typically used. When parents used severe discipline — spanking, [yelling and screaming at children](#), or grabbing them harshly — starting as young as 15 months old, those children were more likely to show increased aggressive and delinquent behaviors in the fifth grade.

The study also revealed that African-American children are particularly vulnerable to being severely punished at 15 months old, which negatively affects their child development.

[Gustavo Carlo](#), one of the study's authors and the Millsap professor of diversity at the University of Missouri, tells Yahoo Beauty that more research is needed to understand why. "In other studies, in general, usually the findings of the negative outcomes associated with harsh discipline

have been found for kids of all backgrounds,” he says. “I think one part of it is that this study, unlike others, is looking at long-term effects. It could be that harsh discipline has a negative impact on all kids, but maybe it has a particularly long-lasting effect on kids from African-American backgrounds.”

The researchers found that a child’s temperament is also influential in terms of handling harsh discipline — to a certain extent. For example, if a child has a naturally resilient temperament, he or she may be able to emotionally overcome a parent’s severe discipline, but there’s a limit. At a certain point, the child can’t bounce back and the severe punishment negatively affects development.

“Maybe there is a tipping point where some discipline is good, but if it becomes too harsh, too severe, it overwhelms any effects the child may bring to the situation from their temperamental qualities,” says Carlo.

However, Carlo notes that harsh discipline is just one of several factors that influence how children develop. “Parents at a certain point may yell and [severely] discipline their children, but how our kids turn out — whether they turn out to be relatively good kids or bad kids — is not going to depend solely on how you discipline a child,” he says. “But this is one piece of that puzzle.”

He adds: “As we identify what are all of the different factors that influence child development, the severity of the discipline is one factor. The temperament is another, as well as who the kid hangs out with, whether it’s good kids or bad kids. [Severe discipline] is one piece of it and increases the likelihood that your child may turn out to have less positive consequences.”



[Spanking an infant changes behavior as a teen](#)

By: Michael Hawthorne

Generated from News Bureau press release: [Spanking Can Be Detrimental for Children’s Behavior, Even Ten Years Later](#)

"It is very important that parents refrain from physical punishment as it can have long-lasting impacts," Gustavo Carlo says in a press release. [The University of Missouri professor is](#)

behind a study recently published in Developmental Psychology that looked at the long-term ramifications of spanking and other forms of physical discipline.

While previous studies have shown spanking can have negative effects on child development in the short term, Carlo's study found children who faced physical discipline in infancy could continue to see negative effects into their teen years.

The study looked at data from 1,840 mothers and children. Information was collected on children at 15 months old, 25 months old, and in fifth grade.

The study found that African-American children who were severely punished at 15 months were more likely to be delinquent and aggressive in fifth grade. They were also less likely to help others.

However, the study didn't find the same link in European-American children. "Our findings show how parents treat their children at a young age, particularly African-American children, significantly impacts their behavior," Carlo says.



First Day of School for New MU Chancellor

By EDWARD McKINLEY

Alex Cartwright, former State University of New York System provost and executive vice chancellor, took over as MU's chancellor Tuesday.

His arrival marked the first day MU has had a non-interim chancellor since the end of 2015. Although he officially began Tuesday, he's been actively involved behind the scenes for some time.

[At a UM System Board of Curators retreat last month](#), Cartwright called for MU and the system to build a "winning culture." He said the university needs to actively recruit faculty and staff that aren't just smart and talented but are also good human beings. He said by doing so, employees will encourage one another and recognize that "we're all on the same team."

A major issue for MU and the system has been a decline in state funding. Cuts to higher education funding, as well as enrollment declines, have forced MU to trim about \$60 million in reserves, programs and more than 400 jobs.

Because of this, President Mun Choi, system Chief Financial Officer Ryan Wrapp, curators and campus officials have discussed at recent meetings how the system's primary source of revenue will need to shift from state funding to tuition. At its July 28 teleconference meeting, the board discussed how funding for educational buildings has historically been from state or federal funding, but this cannot be the case going forward.

Cartwright is also stepping into the position at a time when MU's enrollment has nosedived. This year's first-time freshman class is estimated to be about 4,009 students, while three years ago, in 2014, the fall first-time enrollment was 6,515 — a decrease of almost 40 percent.

But Cartwright feels there's room for optimism.

"If you look at this institution, it has all of the components of being an absolutely great institution, an institution that has a tradition unlike many others in this country," Cartwright said [when he took the job](#). "And I believe not only is it an attractive place, but it can become a premier public research university in this country."

Research is a key emphasis for MU going forward, Choi has said. Cartwright was the president of the State University of New York's research foundation from January 2015 to June 2016.

[Curators voted Friday](#) to request state funding for capital budget projects. MU's priority project was a planned new Translational Precision Medicine Complex, where new treatment techniques and technology would be developed and applied.

MU has come under fire for lacking diversity. The Liaison Committee on Medical Education [found that MU's medical school](#) needed to improve the diversity of its students or risk losing its accreditation. The racial climate on campus was at the root of unrest in the fall of 2015 that led to the resignations of Loftin and former President Tim Wolfe.

Cartwright brings experience in broadening diversity in a university setting. "Dr. Cartwright introduced and saw adopted a sweeping diversity, equity and inclusion policy which applies to all campuses and SUNY's System Administration," according to [the State University of New York's website](#).

The State University of New York, commonly known as SUNY, is the largest state university system in the country. It has about 1.3 million students, and it is made up of 64 universities, [according to its website](#).

Cartwright is married, has two children and was born in the Bahamas. He graduated from the University of Iowa with a doctorate in electrical and computer engineering, and he is a fellow of the American Association for the Advancement of Science for his work researching and teaching optical engineering.



NAACP issues its first statewide travel advisory, for Missouri

By NANCY COLEMAN

(CNN)The NAACP is sending a strong message to people of color traveling through Missouri: Go at your own risk.

The organization is circulating a travel advisory after the state passed a law that Missouri's NAACP conference says allows for legal discrimination. The warning cites several discriminatory incidents in Missouri, included as examples of "looming danger" in the state.

The NAACP says this is the first travel advisory ever issued by the organization, at the state or national level. The Missouri conference initially published the advisory in June, and it was recognized nationally at the NAACP's annual convention last week.

"Individuals traveling in the state are advised to travel with extreme CAUTION," the [advisory warns](#). "Race, gender and color based crimes have a long history in Missouri."

Why now?

The advisory was issued after [Senate Bill 43](#) -- which makes it more difficult for employees to prove their protected class, like race or gender, directly led to unlawful discrimination -- passed through the Missouri Legislature in June. Missouri Gov. Eric Greitens signed it into law soon after.

Greitens and other supporters of the bill have said it puts Missouri's standards for lawsuits in line with other states.

But that's not how the NAACP sees it. The Missouri NAACP State Conference called the legislation a "Jim Crow Bill."

"This does not follow the morals of Missouri," Conference President Rod Chapel Jr. told CNN. "I hate to see Missouri get dragged down deep past the notion of treating people with dignity."

There have been other instances of discrimination in the state that could have elicited an advisory before this, several of which are listed in the warning. Among them are racist incidents reported at the University of Missouri that prompted [protests across campus](#) in 2015, as well as the state

attorney general's [annual report](#) that found black drivers were stopped by police at a rate 75% higher than white drivers.

Chapel said he met with Greitens about the Senate bill several times. After the bill passed, he said they had a "fair and frank discussion" about what the legislation would do. At a later meeting, Chapel said he brought several faith leaders in the community to talk with the governor about theology and morality.

"Ultimately, none of that worked," Chapel said.

Neither the governor's office nor the Missouri Division of Tourism responded to multiple requests for comment.

What does it mean?

The advisory doesn't tell people to not go to Missouri. Rather, the NAACP wants minority travelers to be aware of what it says are potential risks.

"People should tell their relatives if they have to travel through the state, they need to be aware," Chapel said. "They should have bail money, you never know."

In the advisory, the NAACP urges individuals to "warn your families, co-workers and anyone visiting Missouri to beware of the safety concerns with travel in Missouri." These concerns, the organization writes, could include unnecessary search and seizures and potential arrest.

Traditionally, travel advisories are released ahead of severe weather or political disruptions. The [State Department](#) publishes international travel warnings and alerts for countries with ongoing violence, frequent terrorist attacks or increased health risks, to name a few.

The ACLU has issued travel advisories similar to the NAACP's in the past: one for [Arizona](#) in 2010, and one in [Texas](#) earlier this year. Both advisories were circulated after state laws passed allowing law enforcement officers to question a person's immigration status.

What will it take for the advisory to be lifted?

After SB43 passed through the Legislature, the initial travel advisory was supposed to last until August 28, when the bill would potentially go into effect.

That changed when Greitens signed it into law.

"We see this travel advisory remaining in effect for the foreseeable future," Chapel said.

He wants to see several changes in the state before the advisory is lifted, starting with the repeal of the law that prompted the advisory in the first place.

Chapel also said there should be a plan in place on how the state is going to address people of color being stopped by police at a disproportionate rate. He also wants to see a change in how Missouri prosecutors handle hate crimes.

"We need to have some basic ground rules for how human beings treat each other," Chapel said.

THE KANSAS CITY STAR.

Editorial: NAACP travel advisory — is Missouri the new Mississippi?

By The Kansas City Star editorial board

AUGUST 02, 2017 6:37 PM

The NAACP has singled out Missouri for this distinct non-honor: Ours is the first state for which the civil rights group has issued a travel advisory, warning people of color to approach with caution.

This is a dramatic announcement, and it's human nature that our first response might be to wonder whether we're really such standouts when discrimination is so rampant. But let's not waste any time indulging that impulse because we have real problems to fix.

Among them is the recently enacted Missouri law that as of Aug. 28 will make employment discrimination suits all but impossible to win. (Unless you have the ex-boss on tape saying, "You bet race is the reason I'm firing Miss Smith," how can anyone prove that race wasn't just a reason but the reason?) The law, which will require fired workers to prove that bias was the explicit reason they were let go, rather than that bias was a contributing factor, is an embarrassment and a mistake the public should demand that lawmakers correct.

But instead, the word Missouri these days evokes the police shooting of Michael Brown in Ferguson, the slurs against black students at the University of Missouri and the recent death of Tory Sanders, a mentally ill black man from Nashville who took a wrong turn, ran out of gas, approached cops for help and wound up dead in a southeast Missouri jail cell after officers reportedly used a stun gun and pepper spray on him.

Rod Chapel, the president of the Missouri NAACP, asked, "How do you come to Missouri, run out of gas and find yourself dead in a jail cell when you haven't broken any laws?" Fair question.

A piece on the conservative site Red State counters that the advisory "seems more like political vengeance against Missouri's tort reform than actual fear." We disagree and note that Missouri reported 100 hate crimes in 2015, the most recent year statistics were available from the FBI's hate crime reporting program. (That puts us 16th in the country, but that other states also have some soul-searching to do excuses nothing.)

Just a few months ago, the windows of a Blue Springs barbershop were covered with racial slurs. And the most recent attorney general's report shows black drivers in Missouri were 75 percent more likely to be pulled over than white drivers.

Against this backdrop, we don't see how our Justice Department can justify going after discrimination against white people or how our president can claim he was joking when he encouraged police officers to rough up suspects. If he was trying to be funny, that was one twisted joke.

The NAACP is letting people know, Chapel said, that "people need to be ready, whether it's bringing bail money with them, or letting relatives know they are traveling through the state."

Our own advisory is that while most Missourians welcome all travelers to our state, our law enforcement officials and lawmakers do need to think about why we're seen in such a negative light. And it's up to the rest of us to make sure they lose their jobs if they don't.



NAACP Issues Travel Advisory for Missouri

Watch the story: <http://mms.tveyes.com/PlaybackPortal.aspx?SavedEditID=93d2d767-2501-4cb2-8a7d-143f51485cce>

THE KANSAS CITY STAR.

Editorial: Gov. Eric Greitens is awfully cozy with his big-dollar donor

By The Kansas City Star editorial board
AUGUST 02, 2017 6:37 PM

Missouri Gov. Eric Greitens continues to bestow political perks upon one of his benefactors, the St. Louis pharmacy benefits manager Express Scripts. Ethics be darned.

On Monday, the governor named an Express Scripts vice president to the University of Missouri Board of Curators.

That followed his July executive order awarding Express Scripts a no-bid contract to fight opioid addiction.

Express Scripts Deputy General Counsel Julia Brncic might be a fine choice for curator. But her appointment is clouded by questions about political quid pro quos.

Express Scripts paid \$10,000 to Greitens' inaugural fund, according to the company's own disclosures of political contributions. The firm also made a \$25,000 donation to Greitens' campaign committee.

Those donations loom large in assessing why Greitens might have tapped Express Scripts to do an end-around the way every other state in the nation is tackling opioid addiction. Other states have launched programs that allow doctors and pharmacists to see a patient's prescriptions to flag abuses and encourage treatment.

Greitens ignored that solid practice.

This deal calls for Express Scripts to use its data systems to flag overprescribing doctors or pharmacists. It's a worthy goal. But the perception is that Express Scripts received a good rate of return for \$35,000 in donations. The contract is reportedly worth \$250,000.

The governor's office has reacted incredulously to criticism, insisting that those who dare to connect the dots are being "ridiculous."

Express Scripts is the nation's largest manager of prescription drug benefits. They negotiate drug prices for insurers and employers, brokering discounts with drug manufacturers.

The role of such pharmacy benefit managers is often overlooked. But they are beginning to draw scrutiny as federal investigators look into the skyrocketing costs of prescription drugs.

Express Scripts has generated headlines lately.

Until April, Blue Cross-Blue Shield health insurer Anthem was Express Scripts' biggest client, generating nearly 20 percent of its revenues. But Anthem said it will drop Express Scripts in 2019 when its contract runs out, and the insurer filed a \$15 billion lawsuit against the firm, alleging that Express Scripts had cheated Anthem out of \$3 billion in cost savings annually.

As an industry, prescription benefits managers are notoriously secretive about their business practices in making deals with drugmakers, which are generally covered by non-disclosure agreements.

The Missouri-based company's role in the industry needs to be well understood. Unfortunately, Greitens' apparent coziness with Express Scripts may complicate his administration's efforts to fight opioid addiction and tackle other items on his agenda.

Greitens has shown a perpetual disregard for transparency and ethics, relying on dark money and swatting away questions about secret contributions that could influence his decisions.

The governor must change course before his inclination to keep constituents in the dark undermines any good intentions his administration might have to help Missourians.



Central High graduate test drives the nation's capital through prestigious summer program

News-Leader staff

The path from college campuses around the globe to Washington, D.C., is a well-beaten one. However, as Central High graduate and rising University of Missouri junior Tricia Swartz noted in discussing why she applied to the Kinder Institute on Constitutional Democracy's Kinder Scholars D.C. Summer Program, well-beaten does not always mean well-chosen.

“In the past, when I asked other people about their experiences in D.C., I was never given the exact same answer: some people love the environment there, and others believe D.C. is not the right place for them. I figured it would be best for me to experience the city myself, and then from there, I could decide if D.C. is something I want to pursue after graduating from college.”

The Kinder Scholars Program brings up to 20 Mizzou undergrads to the capital each year to intern with government offices, nonprofits, and media outlets throughout Washington, and study the nation's constitutional history and traditions in the eight-week “Beltway History & Politics” seminar.

Schwartz attended Missouri Girls State in high school and later participated in a youth leadership exchange to Beijing organized by the Midwest-US China Association and Missouri Boys and Girls State programs. **On campus at MU, where she majors in Political Science and minors in American Constitutional Democracy, she is a 2017 Sue Shear Leadership Academy Fellow; a staff writer and editor for the Kinder Institute's Journal of Constitutional Democracy and an alumnus of its undergraduate Society of Fellows program; an active participant in the Missouri Students Association's Student Court; a recipient of the J.G.**

Heinberg Scholarship; and an officer in the Pi Sigma Alpha Political Science Honor Society, through which she co-organized a fall 2016 public forum on campus for Boone County's candidates for the state House of Representatives.

While much of Swartz's recent coursework has focused on the early history of the United States, as well as the natural law philosophy that shapes the nation's moral aspirations, she described how her position as a summer intern in Congresswoman Vicky Hartzler's office has already provided a unique opportunity to begin drawing connections between the origins and present state of American government.

To go along with "learning more about the different causes that Congresswoman Hartzler supports, such as efforts to reduce human trafficking," Swartz cited witnessing the collaboration of the public and private sectors as an early highlight from the summer.

MISSOURIAN

\$600,000 revenue guarantee enabled flights to and from Denver

SADIE LORRAINE COLLINS, 15 hrs ago

COLUMBIA — A \$600,000 revenue guarantee sealed the deal to schedule daily United Airlines flights between Columbia and Denver.

The revenue guarantee will act as a safety net for United in case they don't earn enough money from the Denver flights, said Steven Sapp, community relations director for the city of Columbia. The fund ensures the airline will make at least \$600,000 for the first year of the flights.

Private donors gave a total of \$200,000 to the guarantee, with \$400,000 coming from public entities, including Boone and Cole counties, Jefferson City and MU.

The largest cash outlay — \$200,000 — came from MU, but Columbia contributed \$250,000 in marketing costs to help ensure the success of United in the region, Sapp said. The guarantee does not cover United flights to Chicago, which began [Tuesday](#). The first flight to Denver took off Wednesday morning.

The revenue guarantee is modeled after a similar program used to entice American Airlines' commitment to Columbia Regional Airport. In 2013, officials [struck the same deal with American](#). That revenue guarantee — worth \$3 million — covered flights to O'Hare International Airport and Dallas/Fort Worth International Airport and spanned two years.

Although a two-week dip in the number of passengers sparked a one-time payment of [\\$22,562 in March 2013](#), all donors to that deal ultimately were reimbursed for their contributions, including interest.

"We feel very confident that demand is there, and we really do look forward in being a partner in this," said Jefferson City Mayor Carrie Tergin. "We were last time, and we realize the benefit to Jefferson City."

Donors to the guarantee are anticipating that United flights will bring new economic growth to Columbia and neighboring cities, Sapp said.

"We know that we've lost businesses that were looking to come to Columbia and central Missouri because before American and United arrived, we didn't have adequate air service," Sapp said.

If the Denver outcome is positive, it will bode well for further expansion to more airports, said Andrew Bell, United's manager of sales in Missouri.

"All indications are positive so far," Bell said. "The market needed more service, and we're happy to bring it. We're a growing airline, so we are always looking."

The partnership generated roughly 25 new jobs at the airport, said Stephanie Green, a corporate instructor with United.

"It's the old 'build it, and they will come,' " Sapp said at a welcome celebration at the airport Wednesday afternoon.

Fifteen minutes later, the first flight from Denver to Columbia landed, amid the cheers of a crowd at the celebration.

"Now that we have both American and United, we think even bigger things are on the horizon," Sapp said.

ST. LOUIS POST-DISPATCH **MISSOURIAN**
**EDITORIAL: Greitens sends wrong message
with funding cuts for free ACT testing**

THE ST. LOUIS POST-DISPATCH, 32 min ago

NO MU MENTION

Gov. Eric Greitens' \$4 million cut from the state education fund that allowed high school juniors to take the ACT test for free will make it tougher for students to take the major college exam most need to pursue higher education.

It will also hurt school districts whose state performance ratings increased when more students took the test and scored well on it. And it will significantly undermine efforts to boost Missouri's status as a business-friendly state with a college-educated, ready workforce.

How this fits with Greitens' campaign pledges to bring more employers to Missouri is anyone's guess. ACT test scores are a key barometer of student preparedness.

Some wealthier school districts where the need for financial aid is not as critical will be able to absorb the cost so it can remain free for students. But that won't happen in low-income districts where economically disadvantaged students need the most help scraping together the test fee, which can total \$62.50 with the recommended optional writing portion.

State-paid testing for college students was a two-year effort that was neither state nor federally mandated, which made it easy to cut when Greitens sought ways to balance the budget. The state is mandated to administer other tests, such as the MAP (Missouri Assessment Program) test and end-of-course exams, to all students.

The ACT was designed to predict students' college readiness. Some colleges no longer make the SAT or ACT mandatory for admission, but most do. The results can also be highly influential for students who have low high school grade-point averages or are applying to competitive schools. ACT scores also can affect academic scholarship awards.

Erecting more financial barriers will reduce participation. Post-Dispatch reporter Kristen Taketa said Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education data show that in 2016, the year after Missouri began offering the free college entrance exam, the percentage of public school graduating seniors who took it increased to 93 percent from 67.6 percent.

As more students participated, however, the average composite score fell from 21.7 to 20.2. The slight loss was offset by the increase from 30.9 percent to 39.5 percent of Missouri graduates who tested at or above the national average.

Students who qualify for free or reduced-price lunches will be able to take the ACT for free if their districts request waivers from the national ACT organization.

That's not the same as Missouri demonstrating with actions, not just campaign promises, that it has the most work-ready force possible, and that it's ready to provide jobs so graduates aren't lured to other states.

Encouraging industries that states want to attract, such as technology, finance, law and health, requires an educated population ready to meet employers' qualifications. Missouri is letting down prospective businesses and students by eliminating free testing.