



## Hazelwood East student arrested for attacking teacher



SPANISH LAKE, Mo. - A Hazelwood East High School student was arrested Friday morning, accused of slapping his teacher. The incident happened in a classroom with other students present and at least one student recorded the incident with their cellphone camera. "Behavior that we saw today, it's simply unacceptable," said Ross Green, Public Relations Specialist with the Hazelwood School District. Video taken inside the classroom, shows a 16-year-old boy standing at the front of the classroom and in front of a female teacher's desk. According to the district, the teacher took steps to de-escalate the situation by calling the student's mother. Instead, the student swings his left arm, slapping the teacher in the face. "Any incident that might involve violence from a student, we take seriously, we investigate immediately, and we work with any responding law enforcement who might be handling that situation," Green said. Kimberly McKenzie, Director of Communications and Public Relations for Hazelwood School District, said each high school in the Hazelwood School District has two St. Louis County Police Department school resource officers on-site, along with additional school security officers. A school security officer arrived moments after the incident and stopped the student as he tried to leave the room. In the cellphone video, the student can be seen struggling with the officer. A school resource officer took the student into custody and he was transferred to family court. The district said all policies and procedures were followed and parents were notified shortly after the incident. Police said neither the teacher nor the security officer requested medical attention. The district said the teacher left school after the incident. The district said it is offering the teacher and students who may be upset over Friday's incident counseling and resources to help them feel safe when they return to school. The student's future in the Hazelwood School district will be decided based on the outcome of the police investigation and in accordance with the district's code of conduct. Hazelwood School District issued the following statement after the incident: "The Hazelwood School District does not condone violence of any nature. The safety of our students, faculty, and staff is the District's number one priority. "The District at all times followed their policies and procedures, as well as state statutes. Parents are always contacted after an assault has occurred. Parents are always contacted at the first stages of behaviors that are contrary to the District's Student Code of Conduct. "Most parents are responsive and cooperative; however, that is not always the case. "Students who consistently exhibit troubling behavior are provided additional support at the Hazelwood Opportunity Center (Alternative Learning). "When an assault occurs on a staff member, the police are contacted. The student, if a juvenile, is usually taken into custody and taken to the Family Court. School Administrators cooperate fully with the police and juvenile authorities. This practice was followed in the case at hand."

# Paying teachers



Daniel Foley, right, shakes hands with Parkade Elementary School Assistant Principal Brian Rehg following an interview during a career day for prospective teachers last Saturday at Smithton Middle School. Foley, a 2018 graduate of Central Methodist University, interviewed for a job as a physical education teacher. [HUNTER DYKE/TRIBUNE]

## Columbia schools near top in region

By Roger McKinney  
Columbia Daily Tribune

Daniel Foley said he likes the salary Columbia Public Schools offers.

Foley will graduate from Central Methodist University in May. Last Saturday, he interviewed for a position as high school and elementary physical education teacher at a hiring event at Smithton Middle School. He said he had studied the CPS salary schedule.

"I think it's very competitive," he said. "It's pretty good for a district this size."

He said pay was a factor in his job search.

"I think teacher pay is important to keep teachers happy,"

Foley said. "Everybody would like more money. That's just the world we live in."

Columbia schools have the fourth-highest minimum salary in the central Missouri region, according to the annual survey of teacher pay by the Missouri State Teachers Association. The survey reports minimum salaries and top salaries based on education levels of applicants in each of the state's 518 school districts.

While the survey doesn't compare teacher salaries in Missouri with those in other states, MSTA executive director Bruce Moe said in the introduction that Missouri had dropped

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## Public schools see pay fall below average in most states

By Andrew Van Dam  
The Washington Post

In a search for jobs which once paid well, but have fallen below average in most states, we considered hundreds of industries. Public schools stood out.

In the early 1990s, when today's veteran educators were starting out, public-school teachers and support staff pulled in above-average paychecks in 26 of the 42 states for which the Labor Department had comparable data.

By 2017, their earnings topped the average in just one state, Rhode Island.

Over that time, public-school teacher and staff earnings fell relative to the average worker in all 42 of those states.

The biggest relative drop came in Wisconsin. In the early nineties, Wisconsin public-school teachers and staff earned about 1.2 times average workers' pay. In recent years, that number has fallen to about nine tenths of the statewide average. The smallest drops came in Alabama, West Virginia and Mississippi. In those states, teacher pay was already below average.

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## SCHOOLS

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from 40th to 41st in national rankings of teacher salaries and Kansas moved ahead of Missouri.

Aurora Meyer, MSTA spokeswoman, said the survey allows members and student members to compare salaries and benefits when seeking a job.

"Rural districts might not be able to compete with suburban districts with salaries, but if a rural district offers fully paid benefits, that can be incredibly appealing," Meyer said.

The survey can also help teachers decide where to apply when moving and superintendents also use the survey to compare how well their districts compete for teachers, she said.

She said the state also has to remain competitive with other states.

"I think Missouri has a statewide problem that is going to require a statewide solution," Meyer said.

Teachers didn't become teachers to get rich, but they should be able to pay their bills and see a doctor, she said.

"Missouri loses graduates every year to states like Alaska and Hawaii," Meyer said. "We're not as competitive state to state."

The minimum salary in Columbia Public Schools is \$36,000. The region's highest minimum pay is \$37,050 at School of the Osage in Miller County.

Columbia has the region's seventh highest minimum with

a master's degree, at \$37,631 and the top salary schedule maximum, at \$76,099.

Kathy Steinhoff, president of the Columbia Missouri National Education Association, the teachers' union, said salary improvements always are an issue for its members.

"I think we have a lot of room to go" on salaries, Steinhoff said. "We fall near the bottom of our comparison districts."

She said if Columbia schools must increase salaries to recruit and retain the best teachers. Collective bargaining negotiations begin Monday.

"The biggest problem is the state," Steinhoff said. "We can't be spending our time talking about charter schools when the state can't fully fund education. The state keeps changing what full funding means."

Many districts with comparable enrollment have higher salaries. Hazelwood, in St. Louis County, has a minimum salary of \$40,941; a minimum master's degree salary of \$46,966; and a salary schedule maximum of \$87,269. Blue Springs, in Jackson County, has a minimum salary of \$37,000; a master's degree minimum of \$41,357; and a salary schedule maximum of \$80,215.

"As a district and a community, we've put an emphasis on improving employee compensation," said Michelle Baumstark, Columbia schools spokeswoman. "A large part of our most recent levy increase approved by voters was dedicated to improving pay for our employees."

Voters approved the 65-cent increase in property taxes in 2016.

The salaries the district offers allows it to recruit both new teachers and veteran teachers with many years of experience, said Nickie Smith, director of human resources. The district also pays 100 percent of employee health and dental premiums, she said.

Columbia is the largest district in Boone County and pays the highest salaries. To compete, superintendents from neighboring districts highlight other benefits to recruit teachers.

The Harrisburg School District has a minimum of \$34,625, a master's degree minimum of \$37,625 and a salary schedule maximum of \$57,325. It uses its four-day week as a recruitment tool, Superintendent Steve Combs said.

The district does the best it can on teacher salaries, though it can't compete with what Columbia offers.

The pool of teacher candidates produced by the University of Missouri, Columbia College and Central Methodist University is not as large as it once was, making recruitment more difficult, he said.

"I definitely feel the crunch here," Combs said.

The Centralia School District has a minimum salary of \$32,600, a master's degree minimum of \$35,700 and a schedule maximum of \$57,150. Superintendent Darin Ford said Columbia simply has more resources than his district.

"Not everyone can work in Columbia," Ford said.

Some teachers work in a smaller town by choice, he said, and some leave after a few years.

"Some get away and head south" to Columbia, Ford said.

"We feel like we have a lot to offer here. A lot of teachers stay and raise their families."

The Southern Boone School District in Ashland has a minimum salary of \$33,100, a master's degree minimum of \$35,500 and a schedule maximum of \$60,400. Superintendent Chris Felmlee said the district has increased its minimum by \$500 for several years. He said teachers get an extra \$100 when they reach five years and 10 years. He said his district also pays the full premiums for health insurance.

The Hallsville School District has a minimum salary of \$32,000, a master's degree minimum of \$34,700 and a schedule maximum of \$59,450. Superintendent John Downs said Hallsville teachers work across subjects and grade levels and the collaborative environment appeals to many teachers.

The proximity to the teacher education programs also is a benefit, he said.

The Sturgeon School District has the lowest salaries in the county, with a minimum of \$30,000; a master's degree minimum of \$31,800 and a top-end salary of \$45,450.

Superintendent Geoff Neill said his district offers Career Ladder to teachers, which compensates teachers for spending additional time in projects interacting with students. The state retirement system for teachers is a great benefit for all teachers.

Neill said he thinks new graduates seek out districts that will pay them the most when they start their careers.

Outside of Boone County, The minimum salary for teachers in Mexico is \$34,500, with

a master's degree minimum of \$37,500 and a schedule maximum of \$56,000. The Moberly School District has a minimum salary of \$35,532, master's degree minimum of \$37,682 and top-end salary of \$60,375. In Boonville, the minimum is \$30,600; master's degree minimum, \$35,955; and schedule maximum, \$53,397.

A refrain heard as teacher candidates left their job interviews last Saturday was some form of "I didn't get into teaching for the money."

"It's not why I teach," said Caroline Hanson, who moved to Columbia from Virginia, where she said teachers are paid better.

"Honestly, I wouldn't have gotten into the field if I didn't have a passion for it," said Jayme Tips. She previously was a teacher in Tulsa, Okla., but she said she stopped teaching when she had small children because child care would have taken half of her small teacher's salary. Oklahoma teachers last year marched to the State Capitol to demand higher pay.

Daniela Hoyls, an MU senior education major, said salary is important, but as a new graduate with no experience, she's not in a position to demand a high salary. She said she hadn't reviewed the CPS salary schedule.

Stormi Pryor said she moved to Columbia from Texas, where teachers are paid better. This is her third year as a teacher.

"It's important," Pryor said of pay. "I wouldn't say it's a leading factor. You've always got to have a living."

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## FIVE THINGS TO KNOW ABOUT PUBLIC EDUCATION IN MISSOURI AND ST. LOUIS

The phrase "public school" might conjure up memories of heavy backpacks, favorite teachers or questionable cafeteria food. But even if you spent years in Missouri public schools, how well do you know your state's education system? In conjunction with this

week's lists of largest St. Louis area school districts and charter schools, we rounded up some of the biggest trends in regional public education.

—Lea Konczal

1

### FOUR-DAY SCHOOL WEEKS

The Warren County School District voted in January to go to a four-day week, making it the latest in a string of districts to make the change since the option was first allowed in 2009. Thirty-five Missouri school districts currently operate on four-day schedules (typically Tuesday-Friday). The majority of districts adopting the program are from rural areas, and district administrators have cited desires to retain teachers and raise student attendance as reasons for making the switch. More districts could also nix a day in the near future — in the 2019-2020 school year, a new law will replace the required minimum school days with a required minimum of hours. The law is aimed at allowing schools more flexibility to make up for canceled days due to weather or other causes.

2

### THE RISE OF MAGNET SCHOOLS

Most people are familiar with charter schools, privately-operated, free public schools that offer an alternative to traditional public schooling in Missouri. However, magnet schools are less known but a growing third option in St. Louis. These free, publicly-run schools are often more academically selective than charter schools and tend to focus on specific areas such as STEM or the arts. St. Louis Public Schools has 30 magnet schools, at least three of which opened in the last 10 years. (There are currently 16 charter schools in the St. Louis area, down from 18 last year.) St. Louis' newest magnet high school, the Collegiate School of Medicine and Bioscience, earned a perfect performance rating from the state in 2016, the most recent year for which data was available.

3

### WESTWARD EXPANSION

The four St. Louis area school districts that have grown the most since 1991 are outside the metro area: Wentzville R-IV, Lincoln County R-III (in Troy), Wright City R-II of Warren County and Ft. Zumwalt R-II (in O'Fallon). Wentzville has had a 284 percent enrollment increase over that time, from 4,369 students in 1991 to 16,788 students in 2018. The trend correlates with overall population growth — St. Charles County, home of the Wentzville R-IV School District, experienced the biggest growth from 2010-2017, according to U.S. Census Bureau estimates. On the flip side, many districts closer to St. Louis city have been losing students as families move to the suburbs. St. Louis Public Schools has had the biggest drop — a 47 percent decline — from 1991 to 2018. The city's population fell by 3.3 percent between 2010 and 2017.

4

### AID FOR HUNGRY AND HOMELESS STUDENTS

According to the Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, 50 percent of the state's students qualify for free or reduced-price lunch. The percentage has held steady for the past five years, but in that time more schools and school districts in the St. Louis area have begun opening food pantries to give children food to take home. The Hazelwood and Rockwood school districts already have programs, and the Parkway School District opened its food pantry at Parkway Northeast Middle School in 2017. Some districts are going even further to support students in need. Jennings School District in St. Louis County opened its second Hope House in December — a homeless shelter that provides students with shelter, food and counseling services.

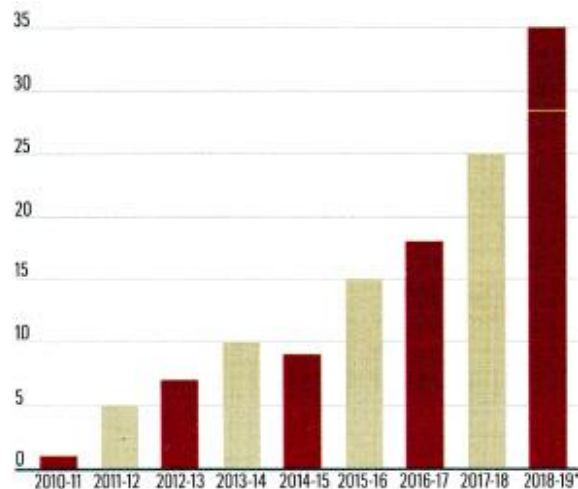
5

### CAREER PREP

College and career readiness programs are slowly being woven into the fabric of Missouri's public secondary education system. Across the state, the number of secondary students earning one or more credits in a career education program has grown by 8 percent from 2008 to 2018. Such programs aren't just technical skills courses for trade students. The St. Louis CAPS program, part of a national network, offers professional classes for high school juniors and seniors in four participating school districts. Students meet outside school walls to explore careers in areas such as medicine, engineering and global business. Other districts have similar initiatives — Parkway School District's Spark! program, modeled after CAPS, allows students to work in hospitals and pitch startups to business leaders.

## MISSOURI SCHOOL DISTRICTS WITH FOUR-DAY WEEKS

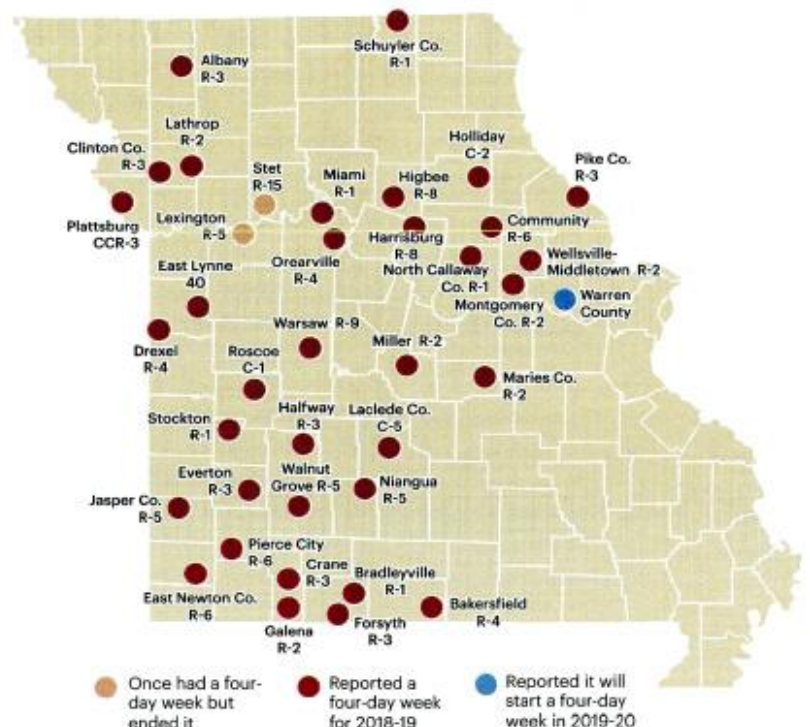
35 districts reported they would have four-day weeks in the 2018-2019 school year



\*THIS REPRESENTS THE NUMBER OF DISTRICTS THAT REPORTED THEY WOULD HAVE FOUR-DAY WEEKS IN THE 2018-2019 SCHOOL YEAR. THE STATE WILL NOT RECEIVE CONFIRMATION OF THESE REPORTS UNTIL THE END OF THE SCHOOL YEAR.

SOURCE: MISSOURI DEPARTMENT OF ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION

## MAPPED: DISTRICTS WITH FOUR-DAY WEEKS



## THE LIST

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### LARGEST SCHOOL DISTRICTS

RANKED BY FALL ENROLLMENT FOR THE 2018-2019 SCHOOL YEAR

District / Prior Rank (*not ranked)	Address and Phone	Total Enrollment 2018-2019	Total Enrollment 2017-2018	State Annual Performance Rating 2017 <sup>1</sup>	Number of Teachers	Total Operating Annual Budget	Number of Schools	Superintendent
<b>1</b> Special School District of St. Louis County <sup>2</sup> (2)	12110 Clayton Rd. Town & Country, MO 63131 314-989-8100	23,262	23,013	75%	2,634	\$462.04 million	7	Don Bohannon
<b>2</b> Saint Louis Public Schools (1)	801 N. 11th St. St. Louis, MO 63101 314-231-3720	22,988	23,216	68.2%	n/a	n/a	75	Kelvin Adams
<b>3</b> Rockwood School District (3)	111 E. N. St. Eureka, MO 63025 636-733-2000	20,857	20,930	98.6%	1,607	\$227.34 million	33	Eric Klotz
<b>4</b> Fort Zumwalt School District (5)	555 E. Terra Ln. O'Fallon, MO 63366 636-240-2072	18,375	18,250	99.3%	1,500	\$285 million	27	Bernard DuBray
<b>5</b> Hazelwood School District (4)	15955 New Halls Ferry Rd. Florissant, MO 63031 314-953-5000	17,864	18,423	85%	1,281	\$196.58 million	33	Nettie Collins-Hart
<b>6</b> Parkway School District (7)	455 N. Woods Mill Rd. Chesterfield, MO 63017 314-415-8100	17,626	17,599	98.6%	1,437	\$240.06 million	31	Keith Marty
<b>7</b> Francis Howell School District (6)	4545 Central School Rd. St. Charles, MO 63104 636-851-4000	17,551	18,018	99.3%	1,236	\$193.14 million	23	Mary Hendricks-Harris
<b>8</b> Wentzville R-IV School District (8)	280 Interstate Dr. Wentzville, MO 63385 636-327-3800	16,802	16,378	97.5%	1,164	\$191.06 million	19	Curtis Cain
<b>9</b> Fox C-6 School District (9)	745 Jeffco Blvd. Arnold, MO 63010 636-296-8000	11,483	11,926	98.9%	n/a	n/a	18	Jim Wipke
<b>10</b> Ferguson-Florissant School District (10)	8855 Dunn Rd. Hazelwood, MO 63042 314-687-1910	10,581	10,900	67.1%	779	\$125.99 million	25	Joe Davis
<b>11</b> Mehlville School District (11)	3120 Lemay Ferry Rd. St. Louis, MO 63125 314-467-5000	10,075	10,200	92.1%	750	\$120 million	19	Chris Gaines
<b>12</b> Edwardsville Community School District No. 7 (12)	708 St. Louis St. Edwardsville, IL 62025 618-656-1182	7,587	7,566	n/a	467	\$84.39 million	13	Lynne Andre Nancy Spina
<b>13</b> Lindbergh Schools (13)	9350 Sappington Rd. St. Louis, MO 63126 314-729-2400	6,958	6,850	98.2%	466	\$73.83 million	11	Tony Lake
<b>14</b> Lincoln County R-III School District (14)	951 W. College St. Troy, MO 63379 636-462-6698	6,506	6,482	n/a	501	\$79.65 million	13	Mark Penry
<b>15</b> Ritenour School District (15)	2420 Woodson Rd. St. Louis, MO 63114 314-493-6010	6,484	6,586	77.9%	395	\$69.9 million	10	Chris Kilbride
<b>16</b> Collinsville Unit No. 10 School District (16)	201 W. Clay St. Collinsville, IL 62234 618-346-6350	6,350	6,435	n/a	406	n/a	11	Robert Green
<b>17</b> Alton School District 11 (17)	1854 E. Broadway Alton, IL 62002 618-474-2600	6,315	6,391	n/a	413	n/a	10	Mark Cappel
<b>18</b> Northwest R-1 School District (18)	4290 Gravois Rd. House Springs, MO 63051 636-677-3473	6,087	6,194	92.1%	453	\$70.05 million	10	Dei Kirchofer
<b>19</b> Granite City Community Unit School District No. 9 (19)	3200 Maryville Rd. Granite City, IL 62040 618-451-5800	5,900	5,900	n/a	345	\$65	8	Jim Greenwald
<b>20</b> Kirkwood School District (20)	11289 Manchester Rd. Kirkwood, MO 63122 314-213-6100	5,789	5,760	98.6%	431	\$67	8	Michele Condon
<b>21</b> Pattonville School District (21)	11097 St. Charles Rock Rd. St. Ann, MO 63074 314-213-8500	5,786	5,660	100%	497	\$99 million	10	Tim Pecoraro
<b>22</b> East St. Louis School District 189 (22)	1005 State St. East St. Louis, IL 62201 618-646-3000	5,782	5,718	n/a	331	\$95.6 million	10	Arthur Culver
<b>23</b> Riverview Gardens School District (23)	1370 Northumberland Dr. St. Louis, MO 63137 314-869-2505	5,557	5,591	70.7%	375	\$135,000	13	Scott Sourgeon
<b>24</b> School District of the City of St. Charles R-VI (24)	400 N. 6th St. St. Charles, MO 63301 636-443-4000	4,922	4,995	91.1%	557	\$87.86 million	13	Jason Selfrit
<b>25</b> Belleville Township High School District 201 (25)	920 N. Illinois St. Belleville, IL 62220 618-222-8241	4,735	4,624	n/a	263	n/a	2	Jeff Dossier

#### CLOSER LOOK

**272,222**

Total fall enrollment for the 2018-2019 school year at the top 25 listed largest school districts.

**273,605**

Total fall enrollment for the 2017-2018 school year at the top 25 listed largest school districts.

**452**

Total number of schools at the top 25 listed largest school districts.

#### ABOUT THE LIST

Information on The List was supplied by the Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, the Illinois State Board of Education, and individual school districts and school district representatives and could not be independently verified by the St. Louis Business Journal.

Local is defined as St. Louis, St. Charles, Lincoln, Warren, Franklin and Jefferson counties and the city of St. Louis in Missouri; and St. Clair, Madison, Jersey, Clinton, Calhoun, Macoupin, Bond and Monroe counties in Illinois.

NA = Not Applicable or Declined to Disclose

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#### WANT TO BE ON THE LIST?

If you wish to be surveyed when The List is next updated, or if you wish to be considered for other Lists, email your contact information to Lea Konczal at lkonczal@bizjournals.com.

<sup>1</sup> The Annual Performance Report is calculated by the Missouri Department of Elementary & Secondary Education and represents the percent of total possible AFR points the district earned in 2017. 2018 data is not yet available. To be fully accredited, districts must score at least 70 percent.

<sup>2</sup> Special School District provides staffing for special education services for the 22 school districts in St. Louis County.