



Key provisions in SB 68 supported by Aligned

Comprehensive Emergency Operations Plans (EOPs)

All school districts and charter schools will be required to adopt detailed emergency operations plans that address school safety, interagency collaboration, and mental health considerations. Plans must be shared with local emergency services and reviewed annually. DESE will establish standards and require annual physical security site assessments.

Cardiac Emergency Response Plans

Beginning in the 2026–27 school year, public schools must implement a cardiac emergency response plan. This includes staff training, AED placement on campuses and at athletic venues, and coordination with emergency services. Schools are not required to purchase AEDs unless state funding is provided.

Grade-Level Equivalence Reporting

DESE will add a “grade level” category to statewide assessment reporting for grades 3–8. This complements existing categories (advanced, proficient, basic, and below basic) and aims to provide clearer information to parents and policymakers on student mastery and readiness. Results will be reported in aggregate, non-identifiable formats and factored into Annual Performance Reports (APRs).

Minimum Teacher Salary Flexibility

This provision removes the requirement that a teacher’s master’s degree be in a subject directly related to their teaching assignment in order to qualify for the higher minimum salary. This change supports recruitment and retention amid Missouri’s ongoing teacher shortage.

Teacher Externship Program Extension

The sunset on Missouri’s teacher externship program has been repealed. This program offers a powerful professional development opportunity, allowing teachers to gain first-hand workplace experience in industries tied to their subjects. It helps educators bring relevance to student learning and strengthen the classroom-to-career connection.

Models of Reading Instruction

Phonics-based instruction will become the required primary method for teaching word reading in Missouri. The bill prohibits the use of the three-cueing system, which lacks strong evidence of effectiveness and may impede the development of skilled readers. Visual aids may still be used, but only to support—not replace—phonics instruction.