MEXICO EDUCATION CENTER
Board of Education Report

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Mexico Education Center Overview

Enrollment Details

- **Initial Overall MEC/Mocap Enrollments (as of August 21, 2024)**: 144 students attempted enrollment.
- **Current Enrollment**: 95 students across MEC and MOCAP
- **Students Who Have Withdrawn**: 40 have returned to in-seat schools or moved to another virtual provider.
- **Current Breakdown**: 41 in-seat students in MEC, 54 virtual students in MOCAP
- **Attendance** is currently at 1st sem is 89% for the in-seat program

Key Reasons Families Choose MEC Alternative School

The Mexico Education Center (MEC) and MOCAP (Missouri Course Access Program) are centered around *comprehensive-based learning principles*. The goal is to provide an educational experience that fosters the overall development of students, preparing them for success in both their academic and personal lives.

1. **Personalized Learning**: Families appreciate the individualized attention and tailored educational plans that cater to their children's specific needs.
2. **Flexible Scheduling**: The school offers flexible scheduling options, allowing students to balance work, family commitments, and other personal circumstances.
3. **Supportive Environment**: Parents value the nurturing atmosphere, especially for students struggling in traditional school settings.
4. **Alternative Pathways**: MEC provides customized educational options for students facing unique challenges. Imagine Learning Edgenuity effectively supports a competency-based education model, where progress is measured by acquiring knowledge and skills rather than time spent in class. The Imagine Learning Edgenuity platform enhances this by offering:
    - Personalized Learning Pathways

- Focus on Mastery
- Increased Flexibility
- Recognition of Prior Knowledge
- Relevant, Real-World Skills
- Career and Life-Ready Skills
- Potential for Early Graduation
- Improved Student-Teacher Relationships
- Reduction in Dropout Rates
- Adaptability to Varied Learning Environments

Missouri Course Access and Virtual School Program (MOCAP)

The Missouri Course Access and Virtual School Program (MOCAP) was established in **2018**. It was created to provide students across Missouri with access to virtual learning opportunities and a broader range of courses that might not be available in their local school districts.

MOCAP effectively incorporates key elements of a Competency-based learning model that prioritizes student achievement and mastery over seat-time or traditional grades. The shift to MOCAP aimed to expand access to online learning, allowing students to enroll in online courses full-time or part-time.

Missouri Options Program

Launched in 2002 by DESE, the Missouri Options Program offers an alternative pathway for students at risk of dropping out. Aimed at those aged 17-21, it allows students to earn a high school diploma through a combination of coursework, career exploration, and supportive services. Participants typically take the HiSET exam, which is recognized as equivalent to a high school diploma by employers and educational institutions. The HiSET is a *competency-based program* that assesses essential skills and knowledge needed for high school graduates, emphasizing mastery and practical skills over traditional classroom learning.

Focus on Future Success

Our emphasis on preparing students for future employment or further education resonates with families seeking practical, career-oriented educational opportunities.

Overall Impact

MEC is regarded by families as a place where their children can thrive academically, personally, and professionally.

FOCUS: *Graduation*

Mexico Education Center: Current Operations and Program Overview

- **Session Structure:**
  - The program is divided into two three-hour sessions, held five days a week.
  - Students are assigned to one of these sessions upon enrollment.
  - This structure ensures balanced class sizes, low teacher/student ratios, and maximizes student effectiveness.
  - The program currently has two teachers.
- **Attendance and Progress Expectations:**
  - MEC maintains a high standard for attendance, with a current rate of over 90% for 90% of the students.
  - Students must consistently make progress toward graduation, achieving at least 3 credits or more per semester.
  - The curriculum primarily utilizes Imagine Learning Edgenuity, allowing students to work at their own pace.
  - JAG (Jobs for America's Graduates) is offered as a direct instruction elective course.
  - Employment is required for students, providing another avenue to earn credits.
- **Program Accountability:**
  - Students may be dismissed from the program due to lack of progress or attendance issues, ensuring that those who remain are committed to their education.
  - This decision is difficult but necessary, given the demand for the program and the commitment required from students.
- **Missouri-Options Program:**
  - The program has successfully encouraged many students to return to school, positively impacting the district's overall graduation rate.
  - The main HiSET testing location is at the Mexico Higher Education Center, through Moberly Area Community College. There are other test locations throughout the surrounding towns.
- **Upcoming Reviews and Conferences:**
  - Monthly Student Focus Meetings
  - Evaluation categories include academic progress, attitude, JAG grade, employment, and attendance.
- **Current Achievements:**
  - For the 2024-2025 school year, In-Seat MEC has graduated 28 students.
  - For the 2024-2025 school year, MIssouri Options has graduated 10 students.
  - For the 2024-2025 school year, Mocap has graduated 5 students so far

This overview highlights the structure, expectations, and achievements of the MEC, emphasizing the commitment to student success and the impact of the program on individual students and the broader school district.

FOCUS: *Programs*

JAG (Jobs for America's Graduates) Program Overview

- **Program Purpose:**
  - JAG is a grant-funded dropout prevention program focused on teaching life skills and employability skills to students who face barriers in their lives.
  - The program aims to prepare students for success in both their personal and professional lives.

January 2025 School Year Activities:

JAG students had an enriching and varied month, engaging in activities that were both practical and insightful. Throughout this period, we focused on equipping students with valuable life skills while nurturing a growth mindset. Here's a recap of the key activities:

- Mr. Neely and Mr Widaman spent time conducting JAG (Jobs for America's Graduates) interviews with new students, helping them navigate the process and understand the expectations of the program. He engaged students in discussions about their career interests, personal strengths, and future goals, emphasizing the importance of communication and professionalism in interviews. Through this activity, students gained valuable experience in presenting themselves effectively, building confidence, and preparing for real-world job opportunities. Mr. Neely created a supportive and encouraging environment, ensuring that each student felt comfortable while learning essential job readiness skills.

- Students participated in the NCAA Tournament Challenge: Staff engaged MEC students in a JAG lesson using the NCAA bracket to teach teamwork, strategy, and decision-making. Students learned how to create and analyze a bracket, discussing factors that influence team performance, such as rankings, past records, and player statistics. Through group discussions and collaborative decision-making, students practiced critical thinking and teamwork, understanding how strategy plays a role in both sports and real-life situations. The activity fostered engagement and friendly competition while reinforcing valuable problem-solving skills applicable beyond the classroom. Top 2 students won gifts for their participation

- Guest speaker:Guest speaker Robert Minnie, a Job Corps alumnus, shared his firsthand experience of spending over a year in the program. He provided MEC students with an in-depth look at the opportunities Job Corps offers, including vocational training, academic support, and life skills development. Robert highlighted the structure of the program, daily routines, and the hands-on training available in various career fields. He also discussed the personal growth and discipline he gained during his time there, emphasizing how Job Corps can be a valuable pathway for students seeking career readiness and independence. His insights gave students a real-world perspective on how Job Corps can help them build a successful future.

- TED Talk: TED Talks are influential presentations given by experts and thought leaders on a wide range of topics, including education, personal growth, and innovation. These talks are designed to inspire, educate, and challenge audiences with new ideas and perspectives.In his TED Talk-style lesson, Mr. Neely introduced students to the concept of SMART Goals, which are Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, and Time-Bound. He explained how setting clear and realistic goals can help students stay focused, track progress, and achieve success in academics, careers, and personal development. Mr. Neely encouraged students to apply SMART Goals in their daily lives, whether for improving grades, building better habits, or planning for their future careers. By breaking down big goals into smaller, manageable steps, students gained a practical strategy for long-term success.

- Meditation and Mindfulness: Mr. Widaman taught students about the benefits of meditation and mindfulness, emphasizing how these practices can reduce stress, improve focus, and enhance overall well-being. He explained that mindfulness helps individuals stay present in the moment, allowing them to manage emotions more effectively and make better decisions.If all students took advantage of these techniques, they could experience less anxiety, better concentration, and improved emotional resilience, leading to a more positive and productive school environment. Mr. Widaman also highlighted how meditation can be used before tests, during stressful situations, or in daily life to build mental strength and self-awareness. Encouraging students to incorporate mindfulness into their routines could result in higher academic performance, better relationships, and an overall healthier mindset.

- Brent Sadler and Kiki Long from United Credit Union spoke to students about the importance of money management, loans, and financial responsibility. They introduced students to the benefits of using United Credit Union as their financial branch, highlighting the services available to help them manage their money effectively.The presentation covered budgeting, saving, and understanding loans, including how interest rates work and the importance of building good credit. They emphasized how responsible financial decisions early on can set students up for future success, whether it’s saving for college, purchasing a car, or managing everyday expenses.By learning these skills, students gained valuable insight into how to avoid debt, plan for financial goals, and make informed banking decisions, giving them a solid foundation for their financial future.

These activities contributed to the students' personal and professional growth, reinforcing important life skills and encouraging a sense of community and teamwork.

- **Ongoing Support for Graduates:**
    - JAG teachers maintain contact with graduates from previous years to provide ongoing support as they transition into post-secondary opportunities.
    - Topics discussed during these follow-up meetings include employment opportunities, college applications, FAFSA, and community resources.

These meetings are held outside of class time, both in person and virtually. This summary captures the essence of the JAG program's efforts to support students in

overcoming barriers, developing essential skills, and preparing for their future careers or further education. The program's proactive approach, including follow-up support for graduates, is a crucial element in ensuring long-term success for its participants.