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Nixon and lawmakers see their rift widen

GOP stands more united

As seats become more secure, Legislature pushes its pro-business agenda.

Firing back

Governor drops cautious demeanor that marked first term, sharply criticizes bills.

BY VIRGINIA YOUNG

vyoung@post-dispatch.com > 573-556-6181

JEFFERSON CITY • Gov. Jay Nixon's rocky relationship with the Republican-led Missouri General Assembly got rockier this legislative session.

Legislators enacted an income tax cut over the Democratic governor's veto, ditched his proposed Medicaid expansion and insisted that students in unaccredited districts have an option to go to private schools, despite his protests.

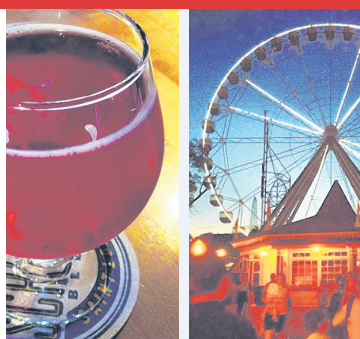
They also ignored his call for campaign contribution limits and, for the fifth year, brushed aside his call for tax credit reform. On top of that, they held hearings to impeach him.

Thirty minutes after they adjourned on Friday, Nixon shot back. Eight bills that passed in the final eight hours of the legislative session would hand out special tax breaks that could cost the state treasury between \$263 million and \$483 million and bust the budget, he told reporters.

The tax breaks would go to groups such as "fast-food restaurants, power companies,

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Nixon should honor Brown vs. Board of Education by vetoing vouchers. **Editorial, A18**



SUMMER FUN GUIDE

Our picks for more than 200 St. Louis things to see, do & eat!

SPECIAL SECTION


TONY'S NEW JOB

La Russa is named 'chief baseball officer' of Diamondbacks.

SPORTS • C5


A TALE OF TWO CITIES

From sports to food, museums to celebs, writers offer a guide to STL and KC.

HOME & AWAY • H1

ONE TO GO

California Chrome takes second leg of Triple Crown in Preakness.

SPORTS • C1


ROBERT COHEN • rcohen@post-dispatch.com
 World champion Joey Chestnut raises the hand of Marlene Wigginton of Troy, Ill., who won a trip to Coney Island after eating 9½ hot dogs in 10 minutes at Busch Stadium on Saturday.

Gorging themselves to greatness

Nathan's eating contest here comes down to half a hot dog.

BY DANIEL NEMAN

dneman@post-dispatch.com > 314-340-8133

About 14,000 hot dogs, give or take a few, were eaten Saturday at Busch Stadium.

So there is nothing special about 88 of them in particular, except this: They were eaten by four guys. In just 10 minutes.

Twenty-seven and a half of the dogs were consumed by Sean Gordon — and that was good enough to send him on to the annual Fourth of July International Hot Dog Eating Contest, held at the Nathan's Famous hot dog stand at Coney Island in New York.

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THE GRADE DIVIDE

Across our region, children from poor households struggle academically most everywhere they are found.

37%

of students who receive free/reduced lunch pass state math exams

68%

of all other students pass state math exams

And where poverty is concentrated, academic failure is pervasive.

Here's a snapshot of the 52 lowest-rated schools in the area...

92.4%

of students receive free/reduced lunch

95.3%

of students are minorities

17.1%

of students are proficient in math

... Compared with 387 schools rated as fully accredited

35.7%

of students receive free/reduced lunch

27.6%

of students are minorities

60.2%

of students are proficient in math


STEPHANIE S. CORDLE • scordle@post-dispatch.com

Kindergartner Mackayla James points recently to a word posted in his classroom at Glasgow Elementary School in the unaccredited Riverview Gardens School District.

BY ELISA CROUCH

ecrouch@post-dispatch.com > 314-340-8119

AND WALKER MOSKOP

wmoskop@post-dispatch.com > 314-340-8349

Brad Busby has seen the effects of poverty rise in the Riverview Gardens School District in the 15 years he's been a counselor there, and he believes it has hurt student success.

"Hunger. Exhaustion," he said, ticking off the circumstances that confront pupils daily at Glasgow Elementary School. First-graders with post-traumatic stress disorder. Children whose families have faced multiple evictions. "Sometimes the parents aren't there at night," he contin-

ued. "I did a home visit last month. There were 19 people in that house."

They are the trappings of poverty. And where poverty is found, so too, is academic struggle.

The correlation between high-poverty schools and low academic achievement sounds obvious, and it is well-documented over decades. But as Missouri has had perhaps its deepest conversation to date about the state of its failing schools, the connection between poverty and performance has never been so plain.

Data analysis by the Post-Dispatch shows that in schools with some of the

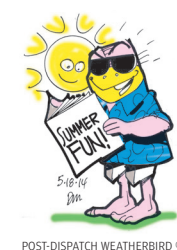
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Fairs to remember



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