

SUMMER 2011



MARE

Our goal is to work in cooperation with all other education organizations, but our programs and effort will be designed to meet the specific needs of schools in rural Missouri.

Please copy and share this newsletter with board members and other school staff.

Executive Directors Report – Year-end-Review

Dr. Ray V. Patrick – Executive Director

The Missouri Association of Rural Education has again experienced a very successful year. Looking ahead to the 2011-2012 program year, MARE will be beginning its 25th year as a state educational organization working for the benefits and needs of rural school districts. The MARE Executive Board should be commended for their leadership and support as they plan for the future of the organization. Following are some of this year's highlights.

Membership: The MARE membership continues to be stable. MARE will finish the year with a total of 443 members of which 377 are school districts, 16 individual members and 50 associates. There was a slight decrease in Associate membership renewals, but listed below are the new members.

- Kromm, Rikimaru and Johansen, Inc.
- Honeywell Building Solutions
- Johnson Controls Buildings Efficiency Division
- Cooperating School Districts
- TREMCO, Inc.
- Quality Network Solutions

You will find a complete list of all Associate members (with contact information) elsewhere in the newsletter.

Conference: With the slow economy and a winter blast from mother-nature, MARE still had a very successful 2011 Conference. The general session speakers and breakout session presenters were outstanding. Special recognition goes to the outstanding support from the exhibitors. There were a total of 55 exhibitors/vendors represented. The 2012 MARE Conference is scheduled for February 23-25 at the Resort at Port Arrowhead. ***MARE will be celebrating the 25th anniversary of the organization at this conference.***

Legislative: Congratulations are in order to our education lobbyists both at the state level and the national level for their support of rural education issues. The School Administrators Coalition (SAC) guided by Penny Rector (MCSA) and the Burton & Liese Government Relations team did a tremendous job of tracking legislation, working with legislators, and keeping all of us informed of legislation that needed to be responded to in a timely manner. At the national level, Noelle Ellerson (AASA and NREA) has done an outstanding job of tracking federal legislation affecting many of the school districts special federal programs. This year, I would also recognize the great effort by Marty Strange (Rural School & Community Trust) that has worked tirelessly to promote the *Formula Fairness Campaign*, a campaign to end discrimination against rural and small schools in the federal formula for distributing funds under Title I of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act.

One of the special events this past year was the *Rural Education Summit* hosted by MARE, MASA, and the K-8 Association. Individuals coming together to consider options that rural schools might consider as available funding continues to decrease. We extend a special thank you to Richard Phillips, the presenters for the day-long event and the attendees. The future goal is to develop a strategy for school districts to use when faced with alternative options for a districts future.

Other MARE Programs:

- School Board Training – Dr. Robert Hoffman, involved in the training program from its inception, is stepping down as the lead trainer. Dr. Margaret Anderson has been appointed to be the lead trainer for the 2011-2012 school year.
- Superintendent Search -- Dr. Mike Jinks and Dr. Doug Miller have provided assistance to several boards in the selection process of su-

(Continued on page 18)

Ray V. Patrick

Executive Director

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MARE Calendar **2010-2011**

July 28, 29, 2011

Board Training

Port Arrowhead Resort

Lake Ozark, MO

August 2, 2011

MARE Scholarship Golf Tournament

Columbia, MO

February 23, 24, 25, 2012

MARE Conference & Board Training

Resort at Port Arrowhead

Lake Ozark, MO

Missouri Association of Rural Education**Officers and Board of Directors****2010-2011****Officers**

- President Austin Sutton
- Vice President Tim Crawley
- Secretary Philip C. Dorth
- Treasurer Mary Lue Potthast

Regional Board Members

- Region A: Tim Boatwright (Halfway R-III)
- Region B: Yancy Poorman (N. St Francois)
- Region C: Tim Crawley (Taneyville R-II)
- Region D: Eric Cooley (Stoutland R-II)
- Region E: Kenneth Cook (Malden R-I)
- Region F: John Brinkley (East Lynne #40)
- Region G: Kevin Sandlin (Doniphan R-I)
- Region H: Fred Weibling (Madison C-3)
- Region I: Douglas Carpenter (Norborne R-VIII)
- Region J: Jim Shultz (N. Andrew R-VI)

School Board Representatives:

- Austin Sutton (Taneyville R-II)
- John Poston (N. St. Francois Co. R-I)

Higher Education/K-8 School Representatives

- Terry Reid (Lindenwood University)
- Chris Welsh (K-8 Assn.)

Advisory Members

- Larry J. Hart (L.J. Hart & Company)
- Kristi Smalley (MO. Distance Learning)

Executive

- Ray V. Patrick Executive Director
- Philip Dorth Associate Director

“Could the Consolidation of Rural Schools Become a Legislative Issue in Missouri?”

In response to the revolutionary cause of 1775, Paul Revere, on the way to Lexington, Massachusetts, rode along the countryside, stopping at each house to proclaim, “The British are coming, The British are coming!” In service to the rural school districts of Missouri, the Missouri Association of Rural Education (MARE) believes the time is now, to sound the alarm for local communities, their school districts, as well as for local and state policy makers to become more knowledgeable of the value of rural schools in this state.

Craig Wood, a professor of educational leadership at the University of Florida, provided testimony, in the fall of 2005, telling legislators that you have two choices – you can raise taxes or consolidate schools. The question asked at the time, “Could the consolidation of rural school districts become a legislative issue in Missouri?”

The education working group of the Senate’s Rebooting Government panel recently considered ideas for saving/eliminating program funding. Most of the ideas generated were devoted to elementary and secondary education. A Kansas City area Senator Victor Callahan stated that Missouri could save more than \$65 million annually by changing the way money is distributed to small school districts and districts with declining attendance. Eliminating such provisions might give school districts an incentive to consider consolidation to cut costs, several lawmakers said. Senator Jane Cunningham reported that studies have shown that the “sweet spot” for efficiency in schools districts is 7,000 pupils. She also noted that only 54 of the 522 school districts have 4,000 or more students. (Reported by Rudi Keller writer for the Columbia Tribune). “Could the consolidation of rural school districts become a legislative issue in Missouri?”

At the MARE 2005 Conference, Greg Malhoit of the Rural School and Community Trust provided five suggestions that Missouri rural school districts needed to consider in helping to head off efforts to consolidate rural schools.

Be prepared for a major push for school consolidation; it could be imminent. The price of being small and remaining small is constant vigilance because the forces of consolidation are never far below the surface. Conditions in Missouri are particularly ripe for a major push for consolidation of small and rural schools because of the convergence of three forces:

Missouri has a tight fiscal environment where there is little or no support for raising revenue to meet higher education costs. At the local level support for property tax increases is also diminishing.

The movement for higher education standards fueled by NCLB and elevated state standards is asking rural school to vastly improve student outcomes.

The third force in 2005 was the equity and adequacy lawsuit that had been filed in Missouri. It was noted that it had been the experience in other states that the first place policymakers tend to seek out savings is cutting “unnecessary or inefficient” education spending. In the minds of many policymakers, rural schools with their higher costs, represent “fat” that can be trimmed.

WORKERS COMPENSATION – HOW MUCH DO YOU KNOW?

By: Donna Haberstroh

Gallagher Bassett Services

MUSIC Workers' Compensation Supervisor

As a school administrator you may not have day to day contact with the Workers' Compensation system, but it is vital that someone in your district be knowledgeable in this area. It is equally important that this knowledge be properly applied.

Workers' Compensation is an area where you have the opportunity and resources to control and reduce your losses. As a result, these savings will result in direct savings to your school district.

Answer the following TRUE/FALSE questions to test your knowledge of workers compensation cost containment. You can simply apply the traditional grading scale to see your results.

1. You do not need to know your district's experience modification factor as it does not affect the amount you pay for insurance coverage.
2. If a person is injured at work it is always a compensable injury under workers' compensation.
3. It is not necessary to designate a primary care facility.
4. Once you have a primary care facility in place, it is not necessary to speak with them on an ongoing basis.
5. The only reason for maintaining current job descriptions on all employees is so that the employee knows what they are supposed to be doing.
6. Reporting injuries within 3 days of the date of the injury can reduce claim costs.
7. Supervisors or department heads should do an investigation on every injury.
8. Light duty return-to-work programs save only on lost time benefits.
9. Having a Safety Committee cannot prevent future accidents.
10. Drug/alcohol and safety policies are not recommended for school districts.

ANSWERS:

FALSE: The district's experience modification factor is an important component in determining the workers' compensation portion of your membership assessment. It is based on the total value of your claims with a smaller weight, dollar for dollar, given to large claims.

FALSE: Just because someone is injured at work does not make it work related. Some injuries are idiopathic and are actually due to employee's personal medical condition or inattentiveness. If you have a bad knee and it gives out just walking down the hall, it is not work related. If you fall down the stairs and there was nothing wrong with the stairs, it is not work related.

FALSE: In the state of Missouri the employer has the right to direct medical treatment. By designating a primary care facility you are helping us to keep control of medical costs. This should be a facility that will provide you with prompt appointments and be familiar with your district in order to help in returning your employees to work even if it might be light duty.

FALSE: You need to have a good relationship with your primary care facility, making sure they know what you as the employer need following each appointment. You should be able to contact them any time with any questions you may have relative to an ongoing claim and expect a prompt response.

FALSE: If you have current, accurate job descriptions on each employee, it will assist the treating physician in determining if they are capable of returning to work full duty, if the return to work would need to be restricted, and which job duties the employee can and cannot do within those restrictions.

TRUE: By reporting claims within 3 days of the date of the injury, statistically you can reduce your claim costs by 40%. By gaining control of the medical and working with the district and physician for light duty return-to-work, we can greatly cut claim costs.

TRUE: Timely investigation of injuries is extremely important, especially in questionable or litigated claims. The time to complete the investigation is when it occurs as memories tend to bend the truth. It is important to obtain the statements of witnesses and if possible take photographs of the area where the injury happened.

FALSE: Not only does getting the injured employee back to work as soon as possible reduce the costs of the claim for the obvious reason of not having to pay lost time benefits, it can also reduce the amount of medical treatment and the amount of a settlement at the end of the claim. Judges look at equal injuries, one with minimal lost time and the other with several weeks of lost time, and will award more permanent partial disability to the person that was off work longer as they consider this a more serious injury.

FALSE: The best way to stop an injury is before it happens. By having a safety committee who meets regularly and goes over recent injuries, you can be sure to address any potential hazards before the next injury happens.

FALSE: MUSIC strongly recommends that your district have a Board-approved drug and alcohol policy in place. This, along with your safety policies should be prominently posted and all employees advised of these policies at the beginning of every school year. Since 2005 the provisions related to both drug and alcohol use and failure to abide by safety policies became much stronger. If you have a drug and alcohol policy in place, and the person is aware of that policy, and if they test positive to drugs or alcohol, there is a 50% reduction in all benefits. If they refuse testing or they test at the legal alcohol limit, benefits are forfeited. Of the safety policies, violation of safety rules can result in penalties from 25% to 50%.

How did you do? If you were able to attend one of our recent web based seminars we would hope that you got correct answers on all of these questions. These are just a few of the items covered in our seminars that are an attempt to help you take control of our ever-increasing workers' compensation costs. If you were not able to attend one of our seminars we will be posting a recording of one of our sessions on the MUSIC web site no later than June 1, 2011. Please use this to train your district contact person, department heads, principals or other administrators that you feel need to have this training.

The staff at Gallagher Bassett is always available to our district members to answer questions on compensability, medical treatment or light duty return to work. If you are not sure if something is or is not workers' compensation, feel free to give us a call. Along with the staff at Arthur J. Gallagher, we are also available to provide one-on-one training for your district.

Don't Get Caught In the Web: Drafting Effective Acceptable Use Policies*Thomas A. Mickes**Christi L. Flaherty, Of Counsel**Mickes Goldman O'Toole, LLC*

Unless you live under a rock, you're keenly aware of some of the problems that technology is quickly causing in our nation's schools. With cell phones, iPads, laptops, netbooks and smart phones, technology has gone completely portable – and it's walking through the hallways of your schools. In fact, it is now estimated that today's youth spend more time online than they do in front of the television!

Technology is here to stay – there is no arguing that it can be an effective tool to implement curriculum and communicate with today's busy parents. However, schools must be able to combat the perils of student and employee technology use, including cyber bullying, cheating, harassment, and inappropriate student-teacher relationships. The first step in the process is creating an effective and enforceable Acceptable Use Policy (AUP) for both students and staff.

Use of the District's equipment is relatively easy to monitor and regulate with firewalling and administrative privileges that allow access to anything and everything accessed with the District's equipment and connections. Students and staff should be made aware, both through policies and through postings near the actual equipment, that the system can and will be monitored for appropriate use.

The AUP should also indicate that use of the District's technology – including its equipment and connection – are a *privilege* and not a *right*. Unlike rights, privileges can be more easily taken away if abused.

Student computer “free time” should be discouraged at every grade level. Along these same lines, the AUP for staff should indicate that technology use must be consistent with the District's curriculum. Computers are no different than text books – they are another tool to implement curriculum. They are not a babysitter or another form of student recess. Teachers should be required to integrate web access into their lesson plans; if part of the day's lesson includes a visit to a particular web site in order to better implement the lesson, then the written lesson plan should indicate the web site and the teacher should research the web site prior to the instructional period in order to ensure that the content on the site is appropriate for the lesson and for the age of the students participating therein.

Both staff and student AUP's should restrict the use of social networking and private emails to communicate school business. Emails sent to and from staff regarding student progress are arguably “education records” under FERPA, record that contains “information directly related to a student and which are maintained by an educational agency or institution or by a party acting for the agency or institution.” Thus, those emails are subject to the care and weeding requirements of FERPA just as if they were created just like traditional education records. For this reason, the District must be able to access the emails, which is only possible if the District's own email system is being used for such communications.

In the author's opinion, social networks and schools mix like oil and water. There is no place for MySpace, Facebook and the like in the classroom. Many of the inappropriate relationships between students and teachers that the author has investigated over the course of the last ten years have begun online – a “friend request” on Facebook, or an instant message through MySpace. Thus, both the student and staff AUP's should indicate that social networking between students and staff is prohibited. This not only discourages students from initiating communications through social networks, but also helps to alleviate the pressure on the staff member who receives such a communications request as he or she can simply advise the student that Board policy prohibits it.

Both the staff and student AUP should list examples of inappropriate use. For example, the viewing, uploading, downloading and dissemination of pornography on or through District equipment will never be an “acceptable” use. Likewise, cursing should be included as an unacceptable use. Other examples include the encouragement of “netiquette” when communicating on or through the District's equipment.

Consequences for violating the policy should be spelled out. For students, the policy should include a statement that violation of the policy will result in disciplinary action that could include a revocation of privileges and/or expulsion. For staff, the policy should indicate that violation of the policy could result in disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal.

Finally, the AUP should be signed every year. For students, both the student and the parent should sign the policy. Although the policy may be reiterated and incorporated into a student handbook, the author advises schools to disseminate it separately from other registration material each year, and has even counseled districts to print it on colored paper. All of these suggestions alert the student and the parent to the importance of the policy and help ensure that both the student and the parent understand their mutual responsibility and accountability that comes with the privilege of using the District's equipment and connections. Annual updating and signing of the policy is encouraged simply because of the nature of the beast – what is current technology today is outdated within the year! At what age should students be required to sign the AUP? The author's opinion is that if the child is old enough to use the equipment, they are old enough to sign the AUP. Even a kindergartener is capable of writing his or her first name, with assistance.

For staff, annual signage of the AUP is recommended for similar reasons. Staff need to be reminded of the role of technology and their responsibility in using it in and out of the classroom. Explanation of the policy at orientation is recommended, and may be readdressed at in-services throughout the year. This Firm provides such in-service opportunities for students, staff and even parent groups.

Technology can certainly be a useful tool to assist in implementing the District's curriculum, but with the use comes responsibility. School Districts must safeguard their resources – their equipment, their staff and their students – from inappropriate use through Acceptable Use Policies.

Missouri Association of Rural Education

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Phone 660.747.8050 / Fax 660.747.8160

April 26, 2011

Dear Partners in Education,

The level of economic development of an area is directly related to the quality of education available. To improve the economic development of rural Missouri, an adequate number of well-trained, dedicated teachers must be available to instruct in rural school districts. The efforts of MARE support this objective through the Rural Missouri Scholarship Fund which is designed to:

- Attract quality teachers to rural school districts
- Improve the economic development of rural communities by upgrading the education system to provide a well-educated, skilled work force
- Attract intelligent, energetic individuals to furnish leadership skills in rural communities.

On behalf of the schools that belong to MARE, we would like to extend to you an invitation to be a sponsor in our **1ST Annual 2011 MARE Scholarship Golf Tournament**. We are hosting this event on August 2nd, 2011, at the A. L. Gustin Golf Course in Columbia, Missouri. The day's event will begin with lunch and registration at 11:30 with a shotgun start at 12:30.

If you would like to support the scholarship fund for students in Missouri, please choose your level of support on the enclosed Sponsorship Information flier and make your check payable to the MARE Golf Scholarship and mail it to:

Dr. Ray Patrick

MARE Executive Director

201 South Holden, Suite 202

Warrensburg, Missouri 64093

If you would like to participate in the golf tournament, please see the enclosed Registration Form for more information. If you will be entering a team, please send in your entry fee as soon as possible.

If you have any questions, please call or e-mail any of the following:

Dr. Yancy Poorman, Superintendent, North St. Francois Co. R-I, 573-358-2247 or ypoorman@ncsd.k12.mo.us

Mr. Tim Crawley, Superintendent, Taneyville R-II, 417-546-5803 or tcrawley@taneyville.k12.mo.us

Dave Halley, CTS Group, 660-216-3301 or halleydj@nemr.net

Randy Smith, CTS Group, 417-499-4666 or rsmith@thectsgroup.com

We welcome and appreciate your support for this worthy cause.

Respectfully,

MARE Scholarship Committee

1st Annual MARE Scholarship Golf Tournament Corporate Sponsorship Information

A.L. Gustin Golf Course

Columbia, Missouri

Tuesday, August 2, 2011

Lunch/Registration at 11:30

12:30 Shotgun Start - Four Person Scramble

— Founding Collaborator Flight: \$5,000

Organizations which understand the critical importance of rural K-12 education and are committed to a long-term basis to support the efforts of MARE.

Requires a minimum annual commitment of \$5,000/per year for a minimum of five (5) years. In addition, such organizations are expected to play an active role in supporting the ongoing activities of MARE and to help ensure the sustainability of MARE's teacher capacity building efforts.

Entitles Founding Collaborators to 10 players in the tournament.

Founding Collaborators will also have a recognition banner, (i.e. MARE/ Company name) displayed at clubhouse, listed as Founding Collaborator on all correspondence, posters, flyers etc.

— Platinum Flight: \$4,000

Entitles sponsor to 8 players in the tournament.

Sponsorship sign placed in highly visible area near clubhouse, verbal announcement at tournament and a sponsorship listing in the tournament brochure.

— Gold Flight: \$3,000

Entitles sponsor to 6 players in the tournament. Sponsorship sign placed in highly visible area near clubhouse, verbal announcement at tournament and a sponsorship listing in the tournament brochure.

— Silver Sponsor: \$2,000

Entitles sponsor to 2 company employees and 2 potential customers to play in the tournament.

Sponsorship sign placed in highly visible area near clubhouse, verbal announcement at tournament and a sponsorship listing in the tournament brochure.

— Bronze Sponsor: \$1,000

Entitles sponsor to 1 company employee and 1 potential customer to play in the tournament.

Sponsorship sign placed in highly visible area near clubhouse, verbal announcement at tournament and a sponsorship listing in the tournament brochure.

NOTE: Platinum, Gold, Silver and Bronze represent an anticipated yearly commitment

— Hole Sponsorship: \$250 (does not include any golf fees)

Special verbal acknowledgement at the tournament and a written list of all participants.

Banner bearing your company name will be placed on a hole.

Please choose your level of sponsorship and return with your check made payable to: MARE Scholarship Golf Tournament and mail to the following.

Dr. Ray Patrick,
MARE Executive Director
201 S. Holden, Suite 202
Warrensburg, Missouri 64093

Your company name: _____ will sponsor

— **Players: @ \$38. per player.** Golf Registration forms need to be submitted for all players, including those covered with sponsorship levels. The tournament is limited to 144 players, so early registration is encouraged.

— **Other Sponsorships: \$250** available on a first-come basis. Please call for information.

Companies/Organizations	Contact	Phone Number
ABC Systems, Inc.	George Baker	(573) 348-5600
ACT, Inc	Rick Bryant	(847) 634-2560
Allied Bus Sales	Jeff Futrell	(800) 890462-0173
American Boiler Services, Inc.	Mike Hemphill, Dean Phillips	St. Louis (800) 235-5377 – Kansas City (888) 440-0382
American Trust Group Holding	S.L. Baker, Ray Shoaf	(573) 374-9991
Budget Plus Software	Leland Foster	(816) 847-6610
Center for Distance/Independent Study	Kristi D Smalley	(573) 882-4054
Central State Bus Sales	Jeff Reitz	(636) 343-6050
Claim Care Inc.	Stacy L. Dye	(660) 327-5308
Constellation NewEnergy Gas Division, LLC	Larry D. Kilpatrick	(800) 829-3900
Control Technology & Solutions	Scott Ririe, Gina Bicknese	636) 230-0843
Cooperative School Districts	Sandy Berg	(314) 692-1224
Dake Wells Architects	Brandon Dake, Andrew Wells	(417) 831-9904
Dickinson Hussman Architects	Pamel Erb	(314) 727-8500
ERateProgram, LLC	Richard Senturia	(314) 854-1328
Facility Solution Group, LLC	Rick Bischoff	(636) 537-0203
Forrest T. Jones & Company	Terence O'Malley	(816) 968-0612
Forrest T. Jones & Company	Gary Hawkins	(660) 247-3967
Forrest T. Jones & Company	Kenneth Wilson	(417) 429-3957
Forrest T. Jones & Company (LTC)	Mark Iglehart, Harvey Day	(800) 821-7303
Foundation for Educational Services, Inc. (SOCS)	Stacey Musil	(800) 850-8397
George K. Baum & Company	Greg Brickner, Dick Bartow	(800) 821-7195
Guin, Martin & Mundorf, LLC	Duane Martin, Shellie Guin, Barney Mundorf	Kansas City (816) 333-1700
Honeywell	Joel Gundelfinger	(636) 327-6987
Insurance Benefits Consultants, LLC	Jay Boice	(417) 455-6000
Inter-State Studio, Inc	Roger Kimball	(660) 826-1764
Johnson Controls	Gerard Puleo	(314) 307-6182
Kromm, Rikimaru & Johansen, Inc.	David Kromm. AIA	(314) 432-7020
Lindenwood University	John Feely	(636) 949-4481
L.J. Hart and Company	Larry J. Hart, Roger Adamson	(800) 264-4477
Mickes Goldman O'Toole, LLC	Tom Mickes, Teri Goldman	(314) 878-5600
Mid-America Facility Solutions	Kyle Greenfield	(816) 524-5616
Midwest Bus Sales	Jack Woolfe	(913) 422-1000
Midwest Digital Systems	Nathan Dowling	(816) 439-4979
Midwest Transit Equipment	Ken Pearce, Stephen Ball	(800) 933-2412
Mike Keith Insurance	Jeanie Cunningham	(660) 885-5581
Missouri Consultants for Education	Bill Ray	(816) 322-0870
Missouri Energy Center	Bernard Thompson	(573) 751-7466
Missouri Retired Teachers Assn.	Jim Kreider	(877) 366-6782
Missouri Rural Water Association	John Hoagland	(417) 876-7258
M.U.S.I.C. / Arthur J. Gallagher & Co.	Gary VanMeter	(636) 916-3433
National Financial Brokerage	Gerald W. Littell	(573) 289-4211
New System	David Thompson	(314) 420-5742
Quality Network Solutions	Mel Workman	217-728-3155
Region VIII Educational Service Center (TIPS)	David Mabe, Kim Thompson	(866) 839-8477
Sam A Winn & Associates Architects	Sam A. Winn, Terry Holder	(417) 882-7821
Septagon Construction Company	R. Thomas Howard, Dennis Paul	(800) 733-5999
Sitton Construction Group	Doug Sitton	(314) 412-5677
Software Technology, Inc	Dan Snodgrass	(417) 350-8601
Southern Bus & Mobility, Inc.	Tom Gerbes	(866) 327-1600
Thomeczek & Brink, LLC	James G Thomeczek	(314) 997-7733
TREMCO	Matt Wegenka	(417) 894-4934
Tueth Keeney Cooper Mohan Jackstadt	Pete Yelkovic	(314) 880-3600/(816) 448-3730
USI Insurance Services, LLC	Lonnie Thompson	(573) 263-8545
Vanderford and Associates	John Vanderford	(816) 876-3072
VIRCO Inc.	Luke Bligh	(314) 518-5973

“Number Weighting” in the Title I Formula Explained in One Page

By: Marty Strange – policy director for the Rural School and Community Trust – Formula Fairness Campaign – Ending Discrimination Against Rural and Small Schools

A weighting system is used to artificially inflate the Title I student count in school districts with “high concentrations” of poverty. This objective is sound public policy which we strongly support. However, the weighting system as implemented actually undermines this good purpose.

Under this system, each district’s eligible student count is inflated using a series of brackets in which the student count is multiplied by progressively higher weight factors, much like the federal income tax, where progressively higher levels of income are taxed at higher rates.

Two weighting systems are applied to each school district. One is based on the *percentage* of students who are Title I eligible (“percentage weighting”) and the other is based on the *number* who are eligible (“number weighting”). Whichever weighting system results in the larger student count for a given district is the one that is used for that district in the Title I formula.

The brackets in the number weighting system are designed so that over 80% of all districts do not place students about the first bracket. Most districts therefore gain nothing from number weighting. Only a small number of large districts benefit from number weighting.

Moreover, the number weighting system as designed is so much more powerful than the percentage weighting system that it completely overwhelms it.

A Congressional Research Service analysis for the school year 2008-2009 compared actual Title I allocations for each school district with the allocation they would have received if only percentage weighting were used. It showed over 10,700 districts with reduced funding and about 550 with increased funding due to the fact that number weighting is included in the formula.

High-poverty rural districts were among the hardest hit by number weighting. But so were modest-sized, high-poverty urban districts like Rochester, New York, Flint, Michigan, Laredo, Texas, and Bakersfield, California.

The biggest funding gains due to number weighting were, as expected, large urban districts with large numbers of eligible students. But among the biggest funding gains were those experienced by large, *low-poverty* suburban districts like Fairfax County, Virginia, Gwinnett County, Georgia, and Jefferson County, Colorado.

This weighting system takes money from smaller districts, not matter how high their poverty rate, and sends it to larger districts, no matter how low their poverty rate.

For more information, including a searchable database showing impacts on every Title I school district in each state, go to www.formulafairness.com or contact Marty Strange, Rural School and Community Trust at marty.strange@comcast.net or 802.728.4383.

GET YOUR CAMERA READY!

Midwest Transit wants your bus photo for their 2011 calendar!

ARE YOU PROUD OF YOUR SCHOOL BUS? Midwest Transit Equipment wants to show off your bus through their 2011 calendar! The top three selected winners will receive cash prizes, and their photos will be featured in the next calendar! Visit www.midwesttransit.com/photocontest for complete contest rules.

1st Prize - \$1,000

2nd Prize - \$500

3rd Prize - \$250

*By submitting a photo, you are granting Midwest Transit Equipment full permission to use your photo for advertising purposes not pertaining to this contest.

Helping children feel good about themselves

Robert Hughes, Jr., Ph.D. former Professor, Department of Human Development & Family Studies, College of Human Environmental Sciences, University of Missouri.

All of us, including children, see ourselves in a certain way. In fact, we have a mental picture of ourselves. For children, this picture includes who they are, what they can do and how they think others see them. It may be good or bad or some of each. For example, a child may feel that he or she does well in school, not so well at sports or is good at getting along with friends.

How children feel about themselves is important for a good and healthy life. Children who feel good about themselves usually get better grades in school. They seem better at taking on hard jobs, they try their best and they usually succeed. Also, children who have a good (positive) picture of themselves tend to make better friends because they seem more sure of themselves.

Children's feelings about themselves are very important to their future. And parents can play an important role in helping children have positive feelings about themselves.

Feeling alone

Children in single-parent families often think nobody else's family is like theirs. They feel that they are different. As a parent, it is important to remind them that there are many single-parent families. Tell them about friends and others whose families are headed by a single parent. This may not work the first time, but it will help to remind children that they are not "the only ones."


Children in single-parent families, especially as a result of divorce, may also wonder if their parents still care for them and love them. Children need lots of words of love and hugs that say "I care." Remind children that friends, grandparents, relatives, teachers and others all care about them.

Children may even blame themselves for a death in the family or a divorce. They may think that it wouldn't have happened if they had just behaved better. Children need to be comforted and told that they are not to blame for death or divorce.

Building self-esteem

In order to see themselves in a positive way, children must be able to see their strong points. Self-praise is basic to positive self-esteem. Children don't praise themselves without help—it won't happen automatically. Parents can help children think in positive terms by helping them see their strong points and talents. For example, at dinner or at the end of the day, ask your child, "What did you accomplish today?" If you know about a success, you could say, "How do you feel about what you've done today?" or

(Continued on page 15)



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Helping children feel good about themselves

Robert Hughes, Jr., Ph.D., former Professor, Department of Human Development & Family Studies, College of Human Environmental Sciences, University of Missouri

All of us, including children, see ourselves in a certain way. In fact, we have a mental picture of ourselves. For children, this picture includes who they are, what they can do and how they think others see them. It may be good or bad or some of each. For example, a child may feel that he or she does well in school, not so well at sports or is good at getting along with friends.

How children feel about themselves is important for a good and healthy life. Children who feel good about themselves usually get better grades in school. They seem better at taking on hard jobs, they try their best and they usually succeed. Also, children who have a good (positive) picture of themselves tend to make better friends because they seem more sure of themselves.

Children's feelings about themselves are very important to their future. And parents can play an important role in helping children have positive feelings about themselves.

Feeling alone

Children in single-parent families often think nobody else's family is like theirs. They feel that they are different. As a parent, it is important to remind them that there are many single-parent families. Tell them about friends and others whose families are headed by a single parent. This may not work the first time, but it will help to remind children that they are not "the only ones."

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Teaching children to praise themselves does not mean that you are teaching the child to brag. Bragging puts other people down: "I'm the fastest kid in my class." "I'm better at math than anybody else." Self-praise compares the past to the present – then and now. For example, "I can run a lot faster this year than last year," or "I've really gotten better in math."

Realistic goals

A child's self-esteem is helped by success and harmed by failure. Help your children set goals that they can really reach. Help your child feel successful. Children need goals that fit and that work into their lives. Help your child meet a goal by taking small steps. Only one child can be the fastest runner in the class. But every child can run around the block one minute faster than before, and most children can work toward that goal a little bit at a time. Five seconds faster next week, five seconds faster the next week, and so on.

Children also need to know how to deal with failure. Sometimes even the best children will not be able to meet some goals. Help your children learn something about themselves even when they fail. The only total failure is when they don't learn anything from failure.

(Continued on page 11)



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(Continued from page 10)

When children don't do well at school, they can learn to study more for tests or they may try some new study skills. When children do not succeed, help them look at what they did and find ways to do things differently next time. Remember to praise them for trying.

Being perfect is never the goal. And trying to be perfect all the time is a sure way to fail. Just help children try to do better.

Feeling "down"

Like all of us, children have those days when they don't feel good about themselves. Nothing has gone right at school, or a best friend said something mean. Let your children know that you care about how they are feeling. Try to spend time alone with each child every day. It could be when you're in the car and the child is in the front seat with you. Or as you put each child to bed. Many parents find it important to have a little time alone for each child.

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Children also have those days when they feel frustrated. They tried to do something good and it didn't work. Children must learn how to handle these times so that they don't dislike themselves and let themselves become the enemy. When your children are feeling down, see if they would like to do something special for themselves. Remind them to treat themselves with kindness and love. People will treat you better if you treat yourself well.

You may know of other ways to remind children that they are worth caring about. Sometimes it helps them to be with other friends or family members that they like. Or perhaps they can think of something to do for someone else. Many times it helps to think about the needs of others and to help another person. It reminds us that we are important and have much to offer, even on a bad day.

For a list of discussion questions and an activity that you can do with your child, view this article online at <http://missourifamilies.org/features/divorcearticles/divorcefeature1.htm>.



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Space Place Partners' article May 2011

Milky Way Safari

by Dauna Coulter and Dr. Tony Phillips

Safari, anyone? Citizen scientists are invited to join a hunt through the galaxy. As a volunteer for Zooniverse's Milky Way Project, you'll track down exotic creatures like mysterious gas bubbles, twisted green knots of dust and gas, and the notorious "red fuzzies."

"The project began about four months ago," says astrophysicist Robert Simpson of Oxford University. "Already, more than 18,000 people are scouting the Milky Way for these quarry."

The volunteers have been scrutinizing infrared images of the Milky Way's inner regions gathered by NASA's Spitzer Space Telescope. Spitzer's high resolution in infrared helps it pierce the cloaking haze of interstellar gas and dust, revealing strange and beautiful structures invisible to conventional telescopes. The Milky Way Project is helping astronomers catalogue these intriguing features, map our galaxy, and plan future research.

"Participants use drawing tools to flag the objects," explains Simpson. "So far they've made over a million drawings and classified over 300,000 images."

Scientists are especially interested in bubble-like objects believed to represent areas of active star formation. "Every bubble signifies hundreds to thousands of young, hot stars. Our volunteers have circled almost 300,000 bubble candidates, and counting," he says.

Humans are better at this than computers. Computer searches turn up only the objects precisely defined in a program, missing the ones that don't fit a specified mold. A computer would, for example, overlook partial bubbles and those that are skewed into unusual shapes.

"People are more flexible. They tend to pick out patterns computers don't pick up and find things that just look interesting. They're less precise, but very complementary to computer searches, making it less likely we'll miss structures that deserve a closer look. And just the sheer numbers of eyes on the prize mean more comprehensive coverage."

Along the way the project scientists distill the volunteers' data to eliminate repetitive finds (such as different people spotting the same bubbles) and other distortions.

The project's main site (<http://www.milkywayproject.org>) includes links to a blog and a site called Milky Way Talk. Here "hunters" can post comments, chat about images they've found, tag the ones they consider especially intriguing, vote for their favorite images (see the winners at <http://talk.milkywayproject.org/collections/CMWS00002u>), and more.

Space Place Partners' article May 2011

Zooniverse invites public participation in science missions both to garner interest in science and to help scientists achieve their goals. More than 400,000 volunteers are involved in their

(Continued on page 14)

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(Continued from page 13)

projects at the moment. If you want to help with the Milky Way Project, visit the site, take the tutorial, and ... happy hunting!

You can get a preview some of the bubbles at Spitzer's own web site, <http://www.spitzer.caltech.edu/>. Kids will enjoy looking for bubbles in space pictures while playing the Spitzer concentration game at <http://spaceplace.nasa.gov/spitzerconcentration/>.

This article was provided by the Jet Propulsion Laboratory, California Institute of Technology, under a contract with the National Aeronautics and Space Administration.

Caption:

Volunteers study infrared images of our galaxy from the Spitzer Space Telescope, identifying interesting features using the special tools of the Milky Way Project, part of the Citizen Science Alliance Zooniverse web site.

Editors: Download this image at <http://spaceplace.nasa.gov/news-images/milkyway-project-website.jpg>



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(Continued from page 8)

“I bet you feel good about what you did!”

Teaching children to praise themselves does not mean that you are teaching the child to brag. Bragging puts other people down: “I’m the fastest kid in my class.” “I’m better at math than anybody else.” Self-praise compares the past to the present — then and now. For example, “I can run a lot faster this year than last year,” or “I’ve really gotten better in math.”

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MARE Superintendent Search

The MARE organization is available to all school districts throughout Missouri to facilitate superintendent searches. MARE prides itself in being able to help school districts locate and employ leaders in a very cost competitive manner.

In an effort to maintain cost effectiveness, MARE's superintendent searches make significant utility of technology to facilitate its work with boards of education who are seeking interested candidates. Mailings, notifications, listings, reviews, profiles, and other search techniques are efficiently designed and delivered to allow MARE to offer its search services at a reasonable cost to the school district. The following charges apply:

District Enrollment	Charges	District Enrollment	Charges
500 students or less	\$2,500	2501 - 3000 students	\$5,000
501 - 1000 students	\$3,000	3001 - 3500 students	\$5,500
1001 - 1500 students	\$3,500	3501 - 4000 students	\$6,000
1501 - 2000 students	\$4,000	Above 4000 students	\$6,500
2001 - 2500 students	\$4,500		

If a school district is current in their annual membership with MARE, the above professional charges will include the official mailings to every district in the state of Missouri. If a non-member district engages MARE to conduct their superintendent search, MARE will include in the above professional charges a full year's membership in the MARE organization for that school district.

School districts interested in more information about the superintendent search services should forward inquiries to:

MARE Superintendent Searches
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Warrensburg, MO 64093

Phone: (660) 747-8050
Cell Phone: (660) 909-5118
Fax: (660) 747-8160
Email: rpatrick@moare.com

MARE will provide the following services to school districts wishing to conduct their own search:

- Listing of the opening in the MARE Focus (emailing to all Missouri districts)
- Listing of the opening on the MARE website (home page with link) and MO Administrator Jobs site
- Sample sets of interview questions (no cost)
- Set of Missouri School District mailing labels (cost - \$10.00) or will provide by email for district download at no charge.



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Toni Hill
Portageville School District

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(Continued from page 2)

These forces have the potential to create the “perfect consolidation storm” that will put at risk the future of many small rural schools and rural school districts.

Be proactive in educating policymakers, the media and the general public of the value of rural schools. It is critical that every rural district work to explain how rural schools benefit students, communities, and ultimately the entire State of Missouri.

Build and work effectively with coalitions. Even with MARE and other education groups working together, one should beware of potential fault lines that may develop. Again, experience from other states shows that urban/rural/suburban coalitions that may work well initially, can and do divide when it comes time to craft remedies. The key is to make sure that whatever remedies are adopted by state policymakers do not create winners and losers – just winners.

While litigation may aid in efforts to get equitable and adequate funding for schools, ultimately, rural schools must win in the legislature. The history of school finance reform shows that rural schools might win in court yet when it comes to adopting meaningful remedies that help rural schools, they can lose what they value most – their size and location. The key defense is to have an ongoing legislative effort in place that promotes rural schools and prevents consolidation.

Engage and activate rural people and communities to support small rural schools in the policy arena. In some places, the lack of community engagement has been the Achilles heel for school districts as schools often are not able to mobilize the citizen support they need at key moments in the political process. Building and sustaining this type of support is a major challenge for schools because it often is outside of their comfort zone; but it is absolutely essential, nevertheless.

In a paper (Rural School District Consolidation)

(Continued on page 19)

What Do You Do?

Did you know that the average individual put about 8 single batteries into the trash in a year?

Batteries don't belong in the landfill. Whether they're single use alkaline (AA, AAA, C, D), lithium, button style or rechargeable batteries, there is a safe place for each of these and it isn't your household trash. Even though many manufacturers of single use batteries say they should simply be tossed when worn out (which isn't true) all batteries need to be handled with care. Some are at the very least caustic while others contain heavy metals and other toxic stuff. All can be recycled to varying degrees so it's important to help them get into their proper recycling stream.

Many battery manufacturers offer a battery collection program. If this is not feasible, many retailers now have drop off boxes in their facilities for your battery recycling needs. These collection sites usually can take everything, rechargeable batteries, single use alkaline batteries, cell phones, CD Players, MP3 Players, CDs, Portable DVD Players. This site may be part of the Rechargeable Battery Recycling Corporation collection program. The Rechargeable Battery Recycling Corporation collection program (established by battery manufacturers) operates a free rechargeable battery and cell phone collection program. Along with the common household rechargeable batteries you can drop off worn out rechargeable batteries from power tools, digital cameras, cellular and cordless phones, laptops, MP3 players and any other rechargeable that won't hold a charge any longer.

Visit their website <http://www.call2recycle.org/> for a complete listing of local drop off locations. Now that you know how to dispose of batteries safely, you might want to consider changing your battery habits. A great place to start is to reduce your use of disposable batteries from your life (except for your smoke detectors) and switch to rechargeable batteries wherever possible. A standard rechargeable battery can replace up to 300 single use batteries.

Just recently I have been looking into location, collection points and other programs to handle just these issues. This was a post from another blog that I felt focuses on the issue quiet nicely.

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(Dave Thompson, dave@janitorkatt.com)



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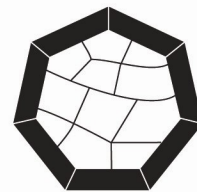
The Missouri Department of Natural Resources is providing up to \$10 million in low interest loans of 2 percent for energy efficiency projects through the Energize Missouri Schools, Public Universities /colleges and Local Governments program. Eligible loans are \$30,000 to \$2.5 million per project. Recipients will receive 100 percent of the funds upfront and zero interest during construction.

The department has made the loan program available through funding received from the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009. Loan applications will be evaluated on a competitive basis. Those with the quickest payback in years, based on project cost versus anticipated energy cost savings, will be the most competitive. The department will review applications as they are received. Applications will be processed and awarded on a monthly basis until funding is exhausted

For more information about the Energize Missouri Schools and Local Government Loan Program, please submit an email inquiry to energyloan@dnr.mo.gov or call Bernard Thompson at 573-751-7466.

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(Continued from page 1 - Executive Report)

perintendent.

- Scholarship Program – MARE provided five scholarships to teacher education majors planning to teach in a rural school district upon graduation. We are excited about the *1st Annual MARE Scholarship Golf Tournament* that will provide additional funds to support the program.
- Endorsement Program – Two new program endorsements were approved by the MARE Executive Board this year, especially designed for MARE member districts. A Group Life Insurance Program provided by Gallagher Benefit Services. A Vision and Dental Program provided by National Financial Brokerage. Other endorsements, previously approved by the MARE Executive Board include: Claim Care; Cornerstone Energy; Control Technology Solutions; Forrest T. Jones & Co. ; L.J. Hart & Company; Missouri Consultants for Education; M.U.S.I.C., and Foundation for Educational Services
- Legal Hotline Support – A very vital program of support provided by attorneys with the law firms of: Guin Martin & Mundorf - LLC, Mickes Goldman O'Toole - LLC, and Thomeczek & Brink - LLC.

Looking to the future, school districts are encouraged to continue to consider the cost savings by purchasing products/services through The Interlocal Purchasing System (TIPS) which is sponsored in Missouri by MARE. TIPS, continues to evaluate needs of rural school districts by awarding contracts to quality vendors. Currently there are 538 Awarded Vendors for Missouri governmental agencies to consider when making purchases.

On behalf of the MARE Executive Board, a BIG THANK-YOU, for your continued support of the MARE Association. To those that are retiring at the end of this school year, we wish you the best. To those that are changing positions/locations, we offer congratulations and the MARE Association support as you meet your new challenges. HAVE A GREAT SUMMER!!!

(Continued from page 17)

issued by the National Rural Education Association Consolidation Task Force (2006), the report provided a review of the literature on rural school consolidation, definition of consolidation, addressing current research and issues related to consolidation with respect to school size, economies of scale and student achievement, the following points were summarized:

There should not be “forced” consolidation.

There is no “ideal” size for schools or districts.

“Size” does not guarantee success – good schools come in all sizes.

Small districts have better achievement, affective and social outcomes.

The larger a district becomes, the more resources are devoted to secondary or non-essential activities.

Local school officials should be wary of merging several smaller elementary schools, at least if the goal is improved performance.

After a school closure, out migration, population decline, and neighborhood deterioration are set in motion, and support for public education diminishes.

There is no solid foundation for the belief that eliminating school districts will improve education, enhance cost-effectiveness or promote equality.

There is a strong negative correlation between district size and student achievement in low-income populations.

The Missouri Association of Rural Education believes by *sounding the alarm* now, ALL of us can become better informed in order to take action on behalf of rural children and ensure quality educational opportunities in rural Missouri. ***Forced closing or consolidating of rural schools based on misinformation and outdated notions of economies of scale, is unacceptable!!***

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Our purpose is to LISTEN to the NEEDS of rural Educators and then help them meet those NEEDS as efficiently as possible.
Through this type of SHARING and COOPERATION we can improve the OPPORTUNITIES for the CHILDREN of rural Missouri.

Disclaimer – The view expressed in the articles printed in this publication do not necessarily reflect the opinions held by the MARE organization, or the Board of Directors. Please direct any comments and/or suggestions to the Executive Director at (660) 747-8050 or email: rpatrick@moare.com

Superintendency Search

The MARE organization is available to all school districts throughout Missouri to facilitate superintendency searches. MARE prides itself in being able to help school districts locate and employ leaders in a very cost competitive manner.

School districts interested in more information about the superintendency search services should forward inquires to:

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