

SPRING 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.

Ray V. Patrick  
Executive Director  
201 South Holden Street  
Suite 202  
Warrensburg, MO 64093  
Phone (660) 747-8050  
Fax (660) 747-8160  
rpatrick@moare.com  
Website: www.moare.com

## **MARE Calendar** **2010-2011**

February 24-26, 2011  
Annual MARE Conference  
Resort at Port Arrowhead  
Lake Ozark, MO  
\*\*\*\*

May 2, 2011  
Board Meeting  
Jefferson City  
10:00 a.m.  
\*\*\*\*

June 1 & 2, 2011  
Custodial Workshop  
St. James R-I  
St. James, MO  
\*\*\*\*

June 14 & 15, 2011  
Custodial Workshop  
Naylor R-II  
Naylor, MO  
\*\*\*\*

June 28 & 29, 2011  
Custodial Workshop  
New Franklin R-I  
New Franklin, MO

### **Rural School District Summit**

*Looking to the future to review current trends/options that Rural School Districts have should statewide consolidation become a legislative priority.*

**When:** Monday, March 14, 2011

**Where:** Jefferson City

**WATCH FOR FORTHCOMING DETAILS**

## **“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

**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

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.

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.**

WORKERS COMPENATION – 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.



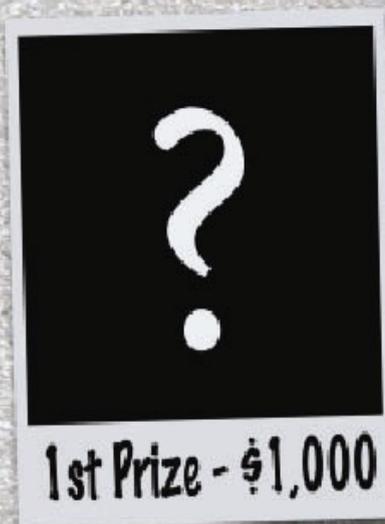


Companies/Organizations	Contact	Phone Number
ABC Systems, Inc.	George Baker	(573) 348-5600
ACT, Inc	Rick Bryant	(847) 634-2560
Allied Bus Sales	Jeff Futrell	(800) 890462-0173
American Boiler Services, Inc.	Mike Hemphill, Dean Phillips	St. Louis (800) 235-5377 – Kansas City (888) 440-0382
American Trust Group Holding	S.L. Baker, Ray Shoaf	(573) 374-9991
Budget Plus Software	Leland Foster	(816) 847-6610
Capstone Insurors, Inc.	Kevin Krueger/JR Collins	(800) 201-3249
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
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
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
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
McKinstry Co., LLC	Jon M. McCoy	(913) 515-0711
Mickes Goldman O'Toole, LLC	Tom Mickes, Teri Goldman	(314) 878-5600
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 City Insurance Group	Kerry Hoffman/Lonnie Thompson	(314) 835-1050
National Financial Brokerage	Gerald W. Littell	(573) 289-4211
Naught-Naught Insurance Agency	Bruce Gentry	(573) 874-3102
New System	David Thompson	(314) 420-5742
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	(800) 844-0884
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 Yelkovac	(314) 880-3600/(816) 448-3730
VIRCO Inc.	Luke Bligh	(314) 518-5973

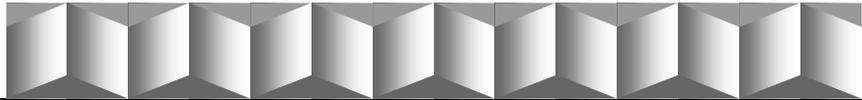
# GET YOUR CAMERA READY!

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](http://www.midwesttransit.com/photocontest) for complete contest rules.



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



**GUIN MARTIN MUNDORF**  
LLC

Attorneys at Law

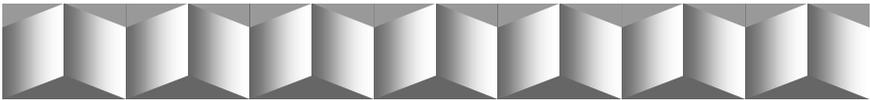
*Kansas City      St. Louis      Collinsville, IL*

Introducing a law firm  
**dedicated exclusively to the representation of  
public school districts.**

**Contact:**  
**Duane Martin or Shellie Guin**

**Kansas City Office:**  
9237 Ward Parkway, Ste. 240  
Kansas City, MO 64114  
816.333.1700  
Fax 816.886.3860  
[www.gmschoollaw.com](http://www.gmschoollaw.com)

The choice of a lawyer is an important decision and should not be based  
solely upon advertisements.





**Missouri Association of Rural Education**  
**Legislative Platform**  
**2010-2011**

**State Issues:**

1. **Supports** efforts to work with the Governor, the Missouri Legislature, and DESE to identify long-term solutions for full funding of Missouri public education.
2. **Supports** increased appropriations for the public schools, which are sufficient to fully fund the foundation formula and further equalize support of each child in Missouri.
3. **Supports** the appropriate distribution of federal funds (i.e. Education Jobs) through the current funding formula with support for the Department of Education to enforce the language/intent of the bill, by not allowing the governor to supplant federal funds or reduce Missouri's current obligation to fund the formula.
4. **Supports** efforts for the restoration of formula shortfalls for FY10 and FY11 as well as cuts and/or withholdings of categorical funds including transportation, parents as teachers, career ladder, and support for local professional development centers.
5. **Supports** efforts for the restoration of funding for state services in particular the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) that because of fund reductions is under-staffed preventing needed support of rural school districts.
6. **Supports** increased funding for transportation to address the increasing operational costs and concerns for student safety.
7. **Supports** the on going evaluation of the effectiveness of the Dollar Value Modifier on rural school districts.
8. **Supports** legislation to increase funding for Small Schools Grant in order to expand the program to include districts with an ADA of 351 to 450+ with consideration being given to a District Size Modifier in the formula.
9. **Supports** legislation requiring the State to provide assistance to rural provisionally accredited and unaccredited school districts to aid those districts in returning to full accreditation status.
10. **Supports** legislation that defines the parameters of collective bargaining for public school employees while preserving the local boards' authority to make final decisions in the best interest of their respective districts.
11. **Supports** legislation to provide adequate educational resources (funding) for district summer school programs.
12. **Supports** legislation to expend the prohibition of punitive damages against political subdivisions; Extension of Sovereign Immunity protection to all employees and volunteers of political subdivisions, and legislation to Reverse the consequences of the Schoemhl Decision (Supreme Court ruling that spouses of claimants who die subsequent to their injury and whose death had nothing to do with the original compensated injury are entitled for continuation of benefits).
13. **Supports** legislation to assist districts (through funding) wishing to share staffs or programs.
14. **Supports** legislation exempting public schools from paying state motor fuel tax for fuel consumed by buses.
15. **Supports** legislation that would mandate the utilization of seat belts on school buses on the basis that scientific evidence can demonstrate a marked increase in student safety and such a mandate would be totally funded (by the State) to include all costs associated with such legislation. (Funding to include additional equipment, equipment upgrades, personnel, etc.)
16. **Supports** legislation restricting any political subdivision from abating existing taxes or re-directing potentially new taxes to another subdivision.
17. **Supports** legislation preventing further erosion of and shifting of tax burdens from business to individual taxpayers forcing school districts to adjust levies upward to recover revenues lost due to the adverse decisions of the State Tax Commission.
18. **Supports** legislation removing school districts from prevailing wage requirements.
19. **Supports** legislation that would allow Missouri voters to amend the State Constitution to provide for a simple majority approval of public school general obligation bond issues.
20. **Supports** legislation that provides state funding for mandated increases in the minimum teacher's salary in Missouri.
21. **Supports** legislation that would reverse/eliminate the newly enacted statutory legislation for all funding penalties related to summer school programs.
22. **Supports** legislation not allowing a school board member to file for re-election if the required 16 hours of board training had not been completed within three years.
23. **Supports** legislation allowing the local school district the option to provide a hiring incentive or salary schedule modification to attract/retain teachers based upon demonstrated need for teachers certified in identified shortage subject areas.
24. **Supports** the affordability/accessibility of healthcare.
25. **Supports** legislation for increased funding for the use/upgrade of technology, internet connection support of MOREnet, and alternative instructional options.

## One Common Sense National Health Care Solution

### *Promote Health Savings Accounts*

By Mark Iglehart, Assistant Vice President, Forrest T. Jones & Company

Whether you are an advocate of the Affordable Care Act, which was signed into law on March 23, 2010, or you oppose it, the reality remains that something was and continues to be needed to curb health care expenses. According to government estimates, **17%+ of our nation's gross domestic product is consumed by spending on health care.**

([www.governmentspending.com](http://www.governmentspending.com))

In addition to the high cost of health care and the dozens of items that make our nation's health care debate so complex and polarizing are two huge issues: **the Uninsured and Freedom of Choice.** How can you help address these issues at your district? If you haven't done so already, you should seriously consider **implementing a Qualified High Deductible Health Plan coupled with a Health Savings Account (H.S.A.) as your core medical plan for your district employees.** To be most effective the district should pay part of the premium savings into the employee's own H.S.A. bank account where they will control how it is utilized for their health care. We have seen this strategy work well for our clients over the past several years and for our own company plan where over 50% are now covered on the core H.S.A. option.

Without going into the nuts and bolts and **tax advantages of H.S.A.'s**, the bottom line is that when a person is spending their own money they are likely to pay more attention to their own health, health care expenses and treatment outcomes. In-network eligible preventative care is covered at 100% on H.S.A. plans, which provides another good incentive to help people focus on wellness too.

**Look before you Leap.** If you are not ready to go "all in" with your H.S.A. strategy, you can still offer your employees and retirees one or two "buy-up" plan options (depending on your carrier) with traditional co-pays for doctor visits and prescriptions. You'll want your agent to provide solid benefit-cost analysis and supporting data to make a strong case for the move. Then, once you make your decision your agent should also provide hands on implementation and ongoing service to ensure effective participant and payroll supervisor education and buy-in for the long-term success of your program.

**How do H.S.A's impact the above mentioned two national issues?** *The uninsured.* H.S.A. premiums are significantly lower than comparable traditional PPO or HMO plans. Thus, more individuals can afford to obtain and maintain coverage in the future. *Freedom of choice.* Individuals can choose their own medical providers and pay them directly from their own tax-free H.S.A. funds. For more expensive care, you would still likely want to stay within your carrier's preferred network to benefit from their negotiated discounts and lower out of pocket limits.

Think H.S.A first. Make 2011 the year you do your part to address true health care reform.

(Anthony Hartsfield, MARE Member from the Pemiscot R-III School District will be presenting "Consumer Driven Health Plans: Advantages and Responsibilities" at the MARE Conference on February 25 at 9:30.)

# Happy Smiles. Happy Staff.

## *Your District's Voluntary Dental Program Can Make a Difference!*



For no-obligation quotes  
and benefits contact  
Missy Maxwell at  
(800) 821-7303, ext. 1179;  
mmaxwell@ftj.com.

- Select Your Own Dentist
- Multiple Plan Options
- Competitive Rates & Benefits
- Proven Enrollment, Billing & Claims Service

**Ask about plans with  
"rollover" benefits.**

 **Forrest T. Jones  
& Company**  
Group Insurance Administrator  
3130 Broadway, Kansas City, MO 64111

#5234 0111

## Reflections on The Winter of 2003

### SNOW DAYS

By Randy Dewar

Central Missouri State University (presently Central Missouri University)

*(Reprint of previous MARE Newsletter article)*

As we face another Missouri winter we can reflect on one of the toughest decisions forces upon a Superintendent of Schools—THE SNOW DAY.

The winter of 2003-2004 is off to a snowy start. As always, there has been heavy snow in many areas and little or no snow in other regions. While the state has not experiences a massiv<sup>3</sup> ice storm, like in 2002, icy roads have still been a factor in decisions to cancel school or delay opening in the morning.

A feature in The School Administrator, February 2003, presented some common sense thoughts on what to do and what not to do in calling a snow day. The response from readers across America was surprising. Missouri school leaders are not the only superintendents worrying over snow day decisions. Some thoughts, gained over 20 years of experience, are most appropriate for the rural superintendent who is moving children over many miles of country roads. Our city/suburban counterparts will have limited understanding of the challenges of gravel and even dirt roads with one-lane bridges that, if plowed at all, are plowed by the resident farmer who lives nearby.

The short and slick summary of the article, "The Snow Day: One Tough Call" from The School Administrator is a good reference for rural superintendents in the future.

#### Eight Common Mistakes

##### **Mistake #1. Calling off school on the basis of a weather forecast**

The weathercaster can be wrong. When he is, he can laugh it off with his next forecast. The superintendent who called off school can't laugh it off. The television weather report may cover weather that is sufficiently far away to make the forecast becomes reality before calling off school.

##### **Mistake #2. Delaying an obvious call until the morning**

If the weather is already bad and the roads are getting worse, call off school the night before. This saves parents from last minute childcare concerns and it saves the superintendent from getting up so early the next morning to make a snow day call that was obvious the previous night.

##### **Mistake #3. Failing to recognize the dangers of extreme cold**

Sometimes it is too cold for school. Marginal roads slow bus routes. Children at the end of the route are waiting longer and longer for the bus to arrive. Extreme cold with wind chill places these children at risk of frostbite. It is also important to be sure that buses will start in the extreme cold.

##### **Mistake #4. Passing the responsibility to someone else.**

The decision to close school, or not, belongs to the superintendent. Enjoy your exalted position. Stand up and make the call. Passing the blame/credit on to someone else will not win friends. People will still hold you responsible.

##### **Mistake #5. Getting stuck in the snow and being unable to call in to cancel school.**

Our friends in the city can rely on a quick cell phone call to communicate. They may not understand that in rural areas a cell phone tower may be too far away or hidden by hills and trees. Be careful where you roam on a snowy day. Better yet, have other people check things out for you. Make sure that you can communicate your decision.

##### **Mistake #6. Making a decision without sufficient road reports from a variety of locations.**

There are too many miles of back roads for one person to check. Have people in strategic locations check out their own area and report back to you. Remember that conditions in one end of the district may be totally different than those in the opposite end of the district.

It is wise to check with neighboring districts to see if they have made a decision. There is comfort in numbers.

Naturally, the superintendent will check with the person in charge of transportation. One big difference here is that, in rural areas, the superintendent may well be in charge of transportation ( and everything else).

*(Continued on page 23)*

## ***SOME THOUGHTS ON PUBLIC FINANCE***

By Larry J. Hart  
President/CEO  
L.J. Hart & Company

In the current economic situation, we sometimes hear school districts express their concern over how to pass a general obligation bond issue with the perceived voter reluctance to approve new spending. The needs of Missouri School Districts to finance new facilities, or improvements to their existing structures, have not decreased. In fact, there is possibly more need for new money General Obligation Bonds because facilities that are well maintained can serve to ease pressure on the Operating Funds and avoid emergency uses of these funds that could otherwise pay for salaries and more directly impact student achievement. An additional benefit to the District can be achieved when a General Obligation Bond Issue is utilized to pay off an existing Capital Facilities Lease, thereby freeing up the money budgeted to make the lease payments.

While there is no campaign strategy that will guarantee passage of a bond issue, voters are generally receptive when they are well informed about the reasons why the funds are needed, how the new issue will benefit the students, and the impact on their taxes. Even though the economy and subsequent reduction in state funding have caused numerous difficulties for School Districts and their patrons, some opportunities do surface that can become important parts of the campaign message. Interest rates remain at low levels; which means that some bond issues can be “no tax levy increase” proposals. Most general and sub contractors are eager for work, and the prices for projects continue to be very competitive. Many Districts have found that they can get much more for their money in these conditions. The public is increasingly aware of the state revenue circumstances and want to preserve a quality education program in their local school system, even when it means an operating levy or debt service fund levy increase. It is very important, though, to provide the details of how the money is to be used and what the impact

is on their individual tax bill. If the election fails, it still serves the Board and administration by educating the citizens about the district’s needs, which can prove to be very important for future attempts.

In order to get this information to the voters, campaign committees should be well organized and work hard to complete specific assignments. It is often better for the election effort to concentrate on the frequent voters, those individuals who consistently voted in previous elections. By using the information about who these persons are, the committee can avoid much wasted time, effort, and expense. It has been a proven method for achieving election success.



16401 Swingley Ridge Road • Suite 210 • St. Louis, Missouri • 63017-0740  
(800) 264-4477 • www.ljhartco.com

### Creative Financing Ideas for Local Governments, Schools, Counties, Cities

#### OUR SERVICES

- Debt Repayment Plans
- Cash Flow Analyses
- Investment Assistance
- Construction Fund Reinvestment
- Form C Calculations
- Missouri School Foundation Formula Expertise
- Bonding Capacity
- Lease Financings
- Credit Enhancement
- Developing Election Strategies
- Refunding Analyses
- School Bus Lease Financing



***Staffed To Serve Your Needs***

To summarize this message, I would emphasize that school districts recognize where the economic downturn might lead in the event conditions continue at present levels or even get worse. Based upon these unfavorable projections, think in a proactive manner about what actions can occur locally to avoid the worst case future outcomes, and communicate the facts to the community. The familiar cliché “God helps those who help themselves” is applicable. One final postscript is to state that many are already in the midst of implementing these suggestions and we applaud and support those activities.

(Parent's Guide to Internet Safety, Continued from page 2)

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) 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!!***

**Late model PRE-OWNED school buses ready for IMMEDIATE delivery!**



**18 Blue Bird All Americans**

**12 Blue Bird Visions**

**5 Blue Bird Micro Birds**

**CALL TODAY FOR DETAILS!**

- 2006 - 2010 models
- 16 - 83 passengers
- 5,000 - 50,000 miles
- Air conditioning
- Wheelchair lifts
- Air and hydraulic brakes
- Automatic transmissions
- Gasoline and diesel engines

**FINANCING OPTIONS AVAILABLE!**



---



*“The Bus Experts”*

**Central States Bus Sales, Inc.**

[www.centralstatesbus.com](http://www.centralstatesbus.com)

**800-825-8273**

# MARE CONFERENCE REGISTRATION

FEBRUARY 24, 25, 26, 2011

RESORT OF PORT ARROWHEAD – LAKE OZARK, MISSOURI

School or Organization \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Purchase Order #: \_\_\_\_\_ County Code \_\_\_\_\_

**Registration Fee:** (No Registration Fee for Spouse/Associates/Guests/Board Trainees – Meal packages for Spouse/Associates/Guests/Board Trainees listed below)  
 (Registration fee includes tickets for breakfast, luncheon, and banquet)

1<sup>st</sup> & 2<sup>nd</sup> registration from same school district (all meals included) \_\_\_\_\_ # @ \$120. each = \_\_\_\_\_

3<sup>rd</sup> & 4<sup>th</sup> registration from same school district (all meals included) \_\_\_\_\_ # @ \$100. each = \_\_\_\_\_

5<sup>th</sup> + registrations from same school district (all meals included) \_\_\_\_\_ # @ \$75. each = \_\_\_\_\_

**Spouse/Guest/Board Trainee Meal Package:** \_\_\_\_\_ # Total number of individuals attending.

**Package A:** All meal events – (Includes ticket for breakfast, luncheon, banquet)  
 \_\_\_\_\_ # @ \$60. each = \_\_\_\_\_

**Package B:** Additional individual meal prices:

Friday Breakfast: \_\_\_\_\_ # @ \$13. each = \_\_\_\_\_

Friday Luncheon: \_\_\_\_\_ # @ \$15. each = \_\_\_\_\_

Friday Dinner Luncheon \_\_\_\_\_ # @ \$22. each = \_\_\_\_\_

Saturday Breakfast \_\_\_\_\_ # @ \$13. Each = \_\_\_\_\_

**Total Amount Due:**

NAME	Type (Superintendent, Board Member, Board Member Trainee, Guest, Associate, Exhibitor)	✓ If Attending Board Training

Fax Registration and P.O. to (660) 747-8160

Or mail to:

MARE

210 South Holden, Suite 202

Warrensburg, Missouri 64093-3400

**Refund Request/Cancellations must be received prior to February 23, 2010  
 NO refunds after that date because of fixed costs.**

## 4 Day School Week: How, When and Why

Dr. Chris Blackburn  
Superintendent  
Lathrop R-II School District

As a result of the 2009 legislative session, SB 291 created §171.029, RSMo that allows school districts some discretion with their school calendars. The number of required hours remained the same, but the total number of days required was changed from 174 to not less than 142. Under the old law, the maximum length of the day could only be 7 hrs, but under the new law it was extended to 8 hours. This new law brought about discussions across the state as the state financial situation became grim.

Lathrop R-II School District first discussed the 4 day school week during the school board retreat in August, 2009. Information was shared about the requirements of the new law, what the possible savings might be, what other states currently utilize a 4 day school week schedule, and what possible concerns accompany such a schedule. After the retreat, there wasn't much discussion for a while, but the seed had been planted. Building level administrators began thinking about it and discussing it informally with their staffs.

2009-2010 SY was very unsettling for school districts throughout the United States. While Missouri may have been better off financially than many other states, school districts throughout the state knew that times were bad, getting worse, and that our budgets would be affected. Articles were written every day about the doom and gloom of the state's financial status and the drastic cuts that were going to be taken. Those articles were shared with board and staff, discussed at monthly board meetings, and much of the information was shared in local newspaper articles or newsletters. It was important to be sure that everyone knew about the financial status of the state and how it would affect our local school district. We knew that changes and/or cuts were going to have to be made to the 2010-2011 school district budget. At the February, 2010 school board meeting, during budget discussion, the president of the board brought up the possibility of a need to look at all budgetary savings options, including the 4 day school week. So, the process began.

As we all know, change can be challenging, but ours would probably be more challenging due to the limited time before the end of the school year. So, we began quickly. Administrators began working at the building level with their staffs to determine the changes that would be necessary and their affects upon the students. Building level staffs worked closely throughout the process and the teaching staff was very supportive of the change. A newsletter was put together and sent out to every parent/guardian in the district. The newsletter consisted of general information, information about state funding concerns and how it may affect our local district, information about a 4 day school week and a survey for the parents regarding a 4 day school week. A community meeting was set up for the first part of April. The meeting was held to share budget information and discuss the 4 day school week. Different budgetary scenarios were discussed depending upon state funding. Information about the 4 day school week was also shared that included a Research Summary Brief from 2009 on the 4 day school week and the possible savings to our district if implementation took place.

The parent survey results were very interesting and provided some valuable feedback. We had pretty much decided that the 4 day week would be Monday through Thursday, with Friday being the Fifth Day, but the survey showed the need to look at a Tuesday through Friday schedule with Monday as the Fifth Day. There was approximately a 50% response to the surveys. They were emailed to those households that we communicate with through email and regular mail to those that we do not. From the responses, 80% were in favor of the 4 day. With the positive response, we felt it necessary to send another survey to determine if there would be a preference of Monday or Friday as the Fifth Day. That response was split, but feedback helped us decide to use the Tuesday through Friday schedule with Monday as the Fifth Day.

In the next couple of months, March and April, there was a lot of information gathered and shared. The survey results and some information from the Research Brief were shared and discussed. Administrators and board members had contacted schools in other states that were currently on a 4 day school week, and that information was shared.

There was *push back* about changing to the 4 day school week. In fact there was a small group of constituents that fought very strongly against the change. Their concerns centered upon the same possible concerns that were brought out in the Research Brief and shared with the community. The concerns were: childcare, loss of academic time, and not enough financial savings.

*(Legislative Platform—Continued from page 9)*

26. **Supports** legislation to create educational standards for home-schooled students and institutes procedures for enforcement of those standards.
27. **Supports** the maintenance of a strong Public School Employee Retirement System (PSRS/PEERS).
28. **Supports** efforts to work with the IRS and the Missouri Office of Administration to ensure that all members of the Missouri Public School Retirement System holding a valid teacher certificate continue to be exempt from payment of Social Security taxes.
29. **Supports** legislation to address issues with the PSRS/PEERS COLA Cap.
30. **Opposes** legislation that would require PSRS/PEERS to combine/consolidate in whole or part and/or asset investments with any or all of the other state retirement systems.
31. **Opposes** legislative/constitutional mandates that would interfere with the local board of education's efforts/responsibilities to operate the school district. (Example: 65% Solution)
32. **Opposes** any attempt to change the current non-partisan process for appointing the Commissioner of Education. (As recommended by MO State Government Review Commission.)
33. **Opposes** legislation mandating that school districts educate students who have been suspended or expelled.
34. **Opposes** legislation restricting school administrators from prior review of student publications.
35. **Opposes** legislation forcing non-voluntary school consolidation.
36. **Opposes** legislation forcing non-voluntary open enrollment between school districts
37. **Opposes** legislation allowing state funding (tax dollars) in the form of vouchers /scholarships/tuition tax credits, for non-public schools.
38. **Opposes** legislation creating any new property tax relief programs by freezing, reducing, limiting, eliminating or exempting the current property tax base.
39. **Opposes** legislation mandating new programs without appropriating the necessary funds to implement and maintain the programs.
40. **Opposes** legislation removing the local board of education authority to set salaries/benefits for any member of the district staff.
41. **Opposes** legislation restricting/changing the basic governance, policies and services provided by educational support organizations to the local school district (i.e. MSHSAA, MUSIC, etc.).

#### **Federal Issues:**

1. **Supports** assessments to improve student achievement, but opposes the expansion of testing under No Child Left Behind to grades 9 through 11.
2. **Supports** the critical role that career and technical education plays in preparing rural students for the workforce and further education.
3. **Supports** the expansion of the definition of a high-need school district to include rural school districts in addition to high-poverty districts, recognizing the unique staffing needs and shortages of geographically isolated districts.
4. **Supports** maintaining E-Rate as an element of the Universal Service Fund.
5. **Supports** the fulfillment of Congress' promise of mandatory funding of IDEA at 40 percent of the National Average per Pupil Expenditure for every child in special education.
6. **Supports** the reimbursement of rural districts for medical expenses attributed to Medicaid eligible students.
7. **Supports** the use of poverty indicators in place of census poverty as the measure of student poverty within rural school districts.
8. **Supports** the Formula Fairness Campaign to end Title I formula discrimination against disadvantaged rural students with the elimination of the "Number Weighting" provision.
9. **Supports** the continuation of the Rural Education Achievement Program.
10. **Supports** the continued funding of Title I dollars in meeting the needs of poor rural districts.
11. **Supports** fully funding of the authorized amounts promised under NCLB.
12. **Supports** efforts to work with the IRS and SSA to ensure that all members of the Missouri Public School Retirement System holding a valid teacher certificate be exempt from Social Security taxes.
13. **Supports** legislation to repeal the WEP and GPO provisions for Social Security.
14. **Opposes** the use of Federal funds to fund private schools through vouchers, scholarships, or tuition tax credits.
15. **Opposes** the federal government issuing any un-funded mandates within education.
16. **Opposes** legislation that would force mandatory Social Security for new teachers.
17. **Opposes** mandates in the Child Nutrition Bill that would require school food service directors to be certified.

**(Adopted July 31, 2010)**

**(Revised October 4, 2010)**

## Planets in Strange Places

By Trudy E. Bell

Red star, blue star, big star, small star—planets may form around virtually any type or size of star throughout the universe, not just around mid-sized middle-aged yellow stars like the Sun. That's the surprising implication of two discoveries in 2006 from the 0.85-meter-diameter Spitzer Space Telescope, which is exploring the universe from orbit at infrared (heat) wavelengths blocked by the Earth's atmosphere

At one extreme are two blazing, blue “hypergiant” stars 180,000 light-years away in the Large Magellanic Cloud, one of the two companion galaxies to our Milky Way. The stars, called R 66 and R 126, are respectively 30 and 70 times the mass of the Sun, “about as massive as stars can get,” said Joel Kastner, professor of imaging science at the Rochester Institute of Technology in New York. R 126 is so luminous that if it were placed 10 parsecs (32.6 light-years) away—a distance at which the Sun would be one of the dimmest stars visible in the sky—the hypergiant would be as bright as the full moon, “definitely a daytime object,” Kastner remarked.

Such hot stars have fierce solar winds, so Kastner and his team are mystified why any dust in the neighborhood hasn't long since been blown away. But there it is: an unmistakable spectral signature that both hypergiants are surrounded by mammoth disks of what might be planet-forming dust and even sand.

At the other extreme is a tiny brown dwarf star called Cha 110913-773444, relatively nearby (500 light-years) in the Milky Way. One of the smallest brown dwarfs known, it has less than 1 percent the mass of the Sun. It's not even massive enough to kindle thermonuclear reactions for fusing hydrogen into helium. Yet this miniature “failed star,” as brown dwarfs are often called, is also surrounded by a flat disk of dust that may eventually clump into planets. (This brown dwarf discovery was made by a group led by Kevin Luhman of Pennsylvania State University.)

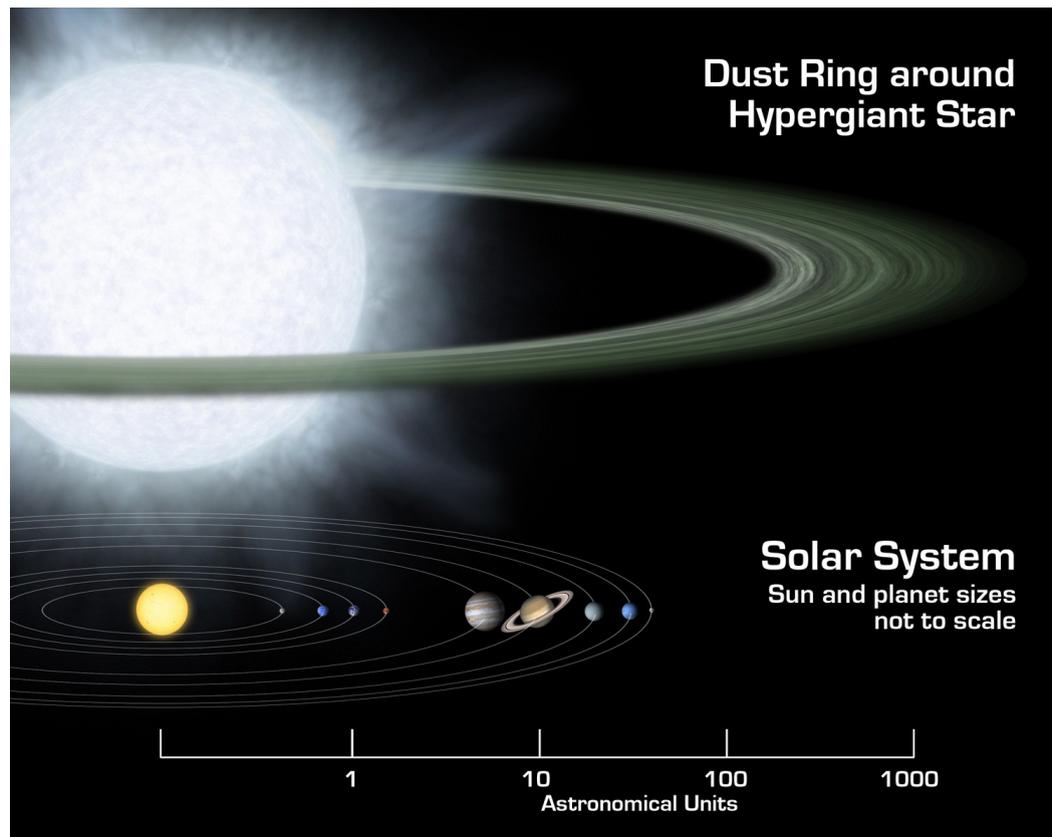
Although actual planets have not been detected (in part because of the stars' great distances), the spectra of the hypergiants show that their dust is composed of forsterite, olivine, aromatic hydrocarbons, and other geological substances found on Earth.

These newfound disks represent “extremes of the environments in which planets might form,” Kastner said. “Not what you'd expect if you think our solar system is the rule.”

Hypergiants and dwarfs? The Milky Way could be crowded with worlds circling every kind of star imaginable—very strange, indeed.

Keep up with the latest findings from the Spitzer at [www.spitzer.caltech.edu](http://www.spitzer.caltech.edu). Kids and their grownup friends can enjoy beautiful images from Spitzer while playing Spitzer Concentration at The Space Place ([spaceplace.nasa.gov/en/kids/spitzer/concentration](http://spaceplace.nasa.gov/en/kids/spitzer/concentration)).

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



*Caption:*

*Artist's rendering compares size of a hypothetical hypergiant star and its surrounding dusty disk to that of our solar system.*

## An in-house website is cheaper ... or is it?

There is a common misconception that creating, hosting and maintaining an in-house website is free. Actually when you calculate the total cost of ownership, the cost is much higher than a SOCS license.

An in-house website may seem like a cheaper way to produce a website, but what many forget to include are the hidden costs. Time is money and your technical professional's time is valuable and should be calculated into the overall cost of your website.

When you add up the time to:

- research and purchase components
- design the layout and navigation
- develop the code
- perform ongoing maintenance and updates
- post new articles and update content

**Become the superhero of your school's website.**

Build your professional online image with:

- Easy Website Updates
- Timely Event Notifications
- Classroom Tools
- Language Translation
- Live Customer Support

**SOCS**  
Easy School Websites

Simplified Online Communication System  
800.850.8397 | [www.SOCS-hero.org](http://www.SOCS-hero.org)

... all while redirecting your technical team from other priority projects, you realize how much is actually spent on an in-house website.

According to a web article from District Administration\*, the average technical professional salary for a rural community is \$59,870 per year or \$257 a day. The average salary for a technology professional in a small town is \$73,000 per year or \$312 a day.

If a technical professional spends only two days a month on your website, that equals approximately \$6,000-\$7,500 a year.

Plus, it's hard to put a price on your public image. A technology professional may not have the luxury or the skills to devote time to design and messaging. A website takes more than technical knowledge. It takes creative design and public relations skills.

With a SOCS license, you not only get the easiest content management system on the market, you get:

- personal customer service
- a professionally designed website
- web hosting services with unlimited content
- redundant state-of-the-art security and disaster recovery
- a list of features that engage students and interact with your community
- and the ability to have an unlimited amount of contributors develop content

Plus there are no hidden fees for system upgrades, customer support or training.

You too, can become a website superhero when you realize what SOCS can do for your school and community. Contact Stacey Musil at 800.850.8397, ext. 6691 or [staceym@fes.org](mailto:staceym@fes.org) for more information.

\*9<sup>th</sup> Annual Salary Survey: Administrator Roles Shift With the Times by Alan Dessoff, September 2009; <http://www.districtadministration.com/viewarticlepf.aspx?articleid=2116>

(Four Day Week -Continued from page 15)

Several things were done to address the childcare issue. The district offered a childcare certification class for students from 7<sup>th</sup> – 12<sup>th</sup> grades. It was decided to start a before and/or after school care program for school aged students that would be financially supported by participation fees. Two local churches worked with the district to set up Monday day care programs. After the May board meeting, a survey was sent to parents inquiring about utilizing the before and/or after school care program, and if they would be interested in the Monday daycare program. We received 6 responses that were interested in the before and/or after school care and 3 that would be interested in the Monday program. We continued to discuss it in articles during the summer, but at the beginning of the school year we ended up with 10 students in the before and/or after program and still only 3 for the Monday program so the churches dropped it.

It was shared with parents and community members that there would not be a loss of academic time because the district would still have to provide at least 1,044 hrs of instruction. In fact, we shared that with the 4 day school week OUR students would be in school more consistently than they had in the years with 5 day weeks. The previous year our students had been in school 39 weeks, 26 of those weeks were interrupted by early release or fewer than 5 day weeks. There were actually 13 uninterrupted 5 day weeks and 13 weeks of 4 days or less. The current 4 day school week calendar results in 35 weeks of 4 full days and 3 weeks of less than 4 days, which are the 1<sup>st</sup> week of school, Thanksgiving week, and the last week of school. There are no early release days.

At the same time that we changed to a 4 day school week, we also changed from a block schedule to a 7 ½ period day. The ½ period is a seminar/advisory period at the end of each day. This change resulted in middle and high school students having each class every day, instead of every other day, and therefore more homework per evening. Some people felt that the more homework was a result of the 4 day.

The financial savings that were projected were approximately \$120,000 and that was from only 2 sources: classified salary and benefit savings and some transportation savings. Those were the only 2 areas that could be shown in black and white. While we believed there would be savings on utilities, food service items, and some other areas, we would need to wait to actually see the data for comparisons.

The May board meeting was the meeting at which the board would vote to adopt the 4 day schedule, or not. The meeting was held in the Performing Arts Center at the Middle School and there were a lot of people present. Major television stations from the Kansas City area were also in attendance. The board allowed community members to share their support and/or concerns. The board then voted to adopt the 4 day school week with a 5 – 2 vote.

The first half of the year has gone by great. A parent survey and a student survey were done at the end of September and the parent survey results are on the district website. In January, a survey was done with the faculty and another parent survey sent out. The faculty continues to support the 4 day and they suggested some good questions to be included on the

second parent survey. Both parent survey results will be posted on the website.

Changing to a 4 day school week has not been easy, but I commend the Lathrop School Board for going ahead and adopting it. I believe that we have been proactive, instead of reactive. We didn't wait for our reserves to deplete before taking action. We didn't want to change the programs that the students were experiencing. We didn't want to enlarge the class sizes. We put those dramatic changes on hold for at least one more year. The continuation of the educational program in the classrooms is what must come first.



**MICKES GOLDMAN  
O'TOOLE, LLC**  
ATTORNEYS AT LAW

**Named One of the Best Law Firms  
by US News and Best Lawyers**



555 Maryville University Dr, Suite 240  
St. Louis, MO 63141  
Phone: 314.878.5600  
Fax: 314.878.5607



221 West Lexington, Suite 114  
Independence, MO 64050  
Phone: 816.874.8000  
Fax: 816.874.8925

Toll Free: 1-866-287-8678

**Proudly Serving Missouri School Districts with  
Experienced Education Attorneys**

The choice of a lawyer is an important decision and should not be based solely upon advertisements.  
This disclosure is required by rule of the Supreme Court of Missouri.

## Forrest T. Jones & Company A Comprehensive Employee Benefits Program Manager

Endorsed by:



### All Your Fringe Benefits Under One Roof

#### Group Benefits

- Multiple Plans & Carriers
- Customized Website
- H.S.A. Education Specialists

#### Retirement Savings

- 403(b) & 457 Plans
- Administration
- Compliance

#### Voluntary Programs

- Allstate Workplace Division
- Dental & Vision Plans
- S125 Cafeteria Plan Services
- Retiree Insurance Programs

Outstanding Customer Service

For Information and Proposals Contact:



Forrest T. Jones & Company  
Anne Slentz  
(800) 821-7303, ext. 1108  
moeducators@ftj.com  
www.ftj.com/moed



FTJ is the Missouri Educators Unified Health Plan Administrator

#5234 1210

## 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.

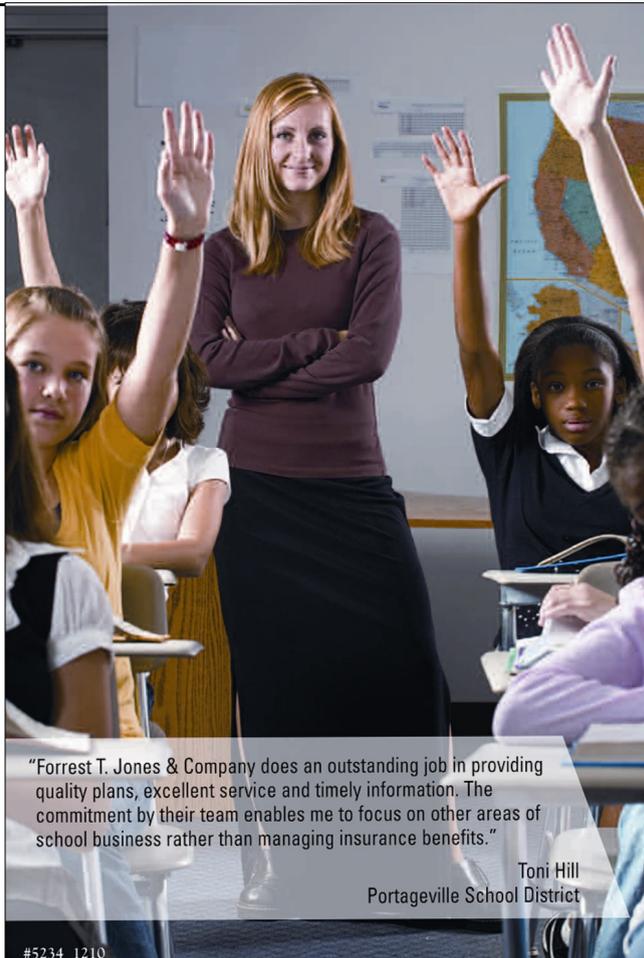
School districts interested in more information about the superintendent search services should forward inquiries to:

**MARE Superintendent Searches**  
Dr. Ray V. Patrick  
201 South Holden St., Ste 202  
Warrensburg, MO 64093

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



"Forrest T. Jones & Company does an outstanding job in providing quality plans, excellent service and timely information. The commitment by their team enables me to focus on other areas of school business rather than managing insurance benefits."

Toni Hill  
Portageville School District

#5234 1210

## The Missouri Educators Unified Health Plan:

*You have questions...We have answers.*

Over 90 Missouri School Districts have joined the MEUHP to work together on a district, regional and statewide basis for the best combination of strength, stability and service in their health employee benefit plan.

The MEUHP is just one of the many employee benefit plans available through Forrest T. Jones & Company (FTJ). As a full-service broker, we can shop the best plans from the best carriers to fit your particular needs. For more information, contact your FTJ representative or Mark Iglehart at (800) 821-7303 x1298.

MISSOURI EDUCATORS  
UNIFIED HEALTH PLAN, INC.

**MEUHP**

"UNIFIED FOR STRENGTH,  
STABILITY & SERVICE"

[WWW.MEUHP.COM](http://WWW.MEUHP.COM)



### Forrest T. Jones & Company

3130 Broadway • P.O. Box 418131  
Kansas City, MO 64141-8131  
(800) 821-7303

[www.ftj.com/moed](http://www.ftj.com/moed) • [moeducators@ftj.com](mailto:moeducators@ftj.com)

**Serving Missouri Educators since 1953!**

## Ten Safety Rules for Kids Who Use the Internet

### Teaching Kids to Stay Safe Online

From [Michigan Department Of Attorney General](#)

If you have a child in the home who has access to your computer, these ten safety rules will help them enjoy the Internet safely.

1. Always ask your parents' permission before using your full name, address, telephone number or school name anywhere on the Internet.
2. Always tell your parents or guardian if you see something online that you know is wrong or that makes you feel uncomfortable.
3. Don't respond to messages that make you feel uncomfortable or uneasy.
4. Never give out a credit card number or password online.
5. Never send out your picture without your parents' permission.
6. Be careful when someone offers you something for nothing, such as gifts or money.
7. Don't ever accept a gift or an offer that involves having someone visit your house.
8. Never arrange to meet someone you've met online in person unless you discuss it with your parents and an adult goes with you.
9. Talk to your parents to set up rules for going online. Decide with them the best time of day to be online, the length of time to be online, and appropriate areas to visit.
10. Get to know your "online friends" just as you get to know all of your other friends. Be sure that you are dealing with someone that you and your parents know and trust before giving out any personal information about yourself via email.



**CLAIM CARE**  
Incorporated

*INTEGRITY • HONESTY • CHARACTER*

THIRD PARTY PROGRAM ADMINISTRATION  
*for*

- ♦ SCHOOL DISTRICT ADMINISTRATIVE CLAIMING (SDAC)
- ♦ DIRECT IEP THERAPY
- ♦ LOCAL TAX EFFORT BILLBACK — PUBLIC PLACEMENT FUND

877.327.5308 ph

Paris, Missouri • [claim@centurytel.net](mailto:claim@centurytel.net)  
Stacy L. Dye, Founder & President



simplifying **Mo HealthNet**

## Consider a Bond Issue

**By: Tom Howard, Sales Consultant for Septagon Construction Management**

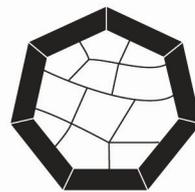
In the 20 years that I was a superintendent, Missouri schools went through many fluctuations in the level of state funding for our mission of educating the children of the state. There were more “lows” than “highs”, but not since the great depression has Missouri faced the financial shortfalls we now are experiencing. School administrators are being forced to look into every nook and cranny of their budgets to find ways to make the dollar stretch farther than they ever have before. As in the past, facility maintenance and repairs take a backseat to things that more directly affect the education of our students.

As all superintendents know, the funding for facility repairs usually comes out of Fund 4, Capital Improvements. The source of this money has changed a couple of times over the years, from a tax levy set in that fund, to a transfer from Fund 1, to various combinations of the two. Money is also put into this fund as a result of bond sales paid from Fund 3, Debt Service. Almost always, money for facilities comes from local sources with very little state help. With huge shortfalls in state funding, districts must now rely on their local funds to pay for a larger share of their operating expenses. For example, the state used to pay for 80% of the cost of transportation. That amount has shrunk in the last couple of years, and it appears that it will be totally eliminated for 2011-2012. That expense does not go away. Schools will need to find local money to continue to bus students. Now, when financial stress is so great, anything a district can do to save money in the operating fund allows the district to focus more money on things that directly affect student learning.

Districts that have passed bond issues in the past may be lucky enough to ask the voters for a no-tax-levy-increase bond issue through a ballot initiative. When this type of bond issue is passed, the current bonds are then restructured and new bonds are sold to extend the years of payment. If it has been a number of years since the old bond issue was passed, or if the district has been able to pay off bonds early, schools can sell additional bonds without requiring an increase in the debt service tax rate. The revenue from these bond sales can provide money for repairs and energy renovations that will make their buildings operate more efficiently. The funds from these bonds can be used for many projects, such as replacing a roof, updating lighting or replacing old, inefficient HVAC systems. While a lease purchase would be a funding option, the school would have to make lease payments out of Fund 4, taking money that could be used for teachers, transportation and instructional items for the classroom. A no-tax-levy-increase bond can provide the money to do these same things, while increasing the amount of money that districts can use to keep the educational process going. It gives them desperately needed flexibility to use funds where they are needed.

Take a walk through your facilities and make a list of things that could help your district be more efficient. Ask your principals to do the same. Then match up the lists and set priorities based on what work “has” to be done now, what work will need to be done in the near future, and what you would like to see after the needs have been met. When doing this, ask yourself, “Will this save money in the operating fund now or in the near future?” Most schools will end up with a fairly long list of items that will drain the budget of desperately needed funds. These are things that can be done with bond funds and help you survive the current crisis.

## BUILDING A TEAM



**SEPTAGON**  
CONSTRUCTION

For more information, contact:

**Dennis Paul**  
at 660-827-2112, ext. 139  
or **Tom Howard**  
at 573-826-0640

[www.septagon.com](http://www.septagon.com)

Sedalia, MO • Columbia, MO • Jefferson City, MO • Osage Beach, MO  
Des Moines, IA • Cedar Rapids, IA

(Snow Days—Continued from page 11)

**Mistake #7. Calling a now day because the private schools are closing.**

This mistake is less likely in rural areas because private schools are less likely in rural areas. However, it would be a mistake to base a decision on what private schools are doing. Many private schools rely on private vehicles for transportation. They are also under a different set of rules for the school calendar and days of attendance.

**Mistake #8. Accepting calls at home from community members regarding the snow-day decision.**

Advise callers to tune in to the radio or TV. If you start answering inquiries, you will never stop. On a snowy and cold Missouri morning your phone must be open for real business calls.

**Your Plan For Snow-Days**

This is a good time to reflect upon the winter and how your plan for making the snow-days built into the school calendar for next year. Reflect on those who call you with road conditions and decide if their advice was sound and whether they should be a part of your system of decision making for next year. Add people to report on areas where you feel uncertain. Review your calling tree to be sure that it works even better next time.

**Three Final Thoughts For the Rural Superintendent**

First, respect the decision of the parent who decides to keep a child at home because of winter weather. It is the parent's responsibility to do what they think is right to keep their child safe.

Second, when in doubt, call off school. Err on the side of caution. There will be a better day to hold school.

Then, plan to get to your office and be ready to take the calls. Snow-day or no snow-day, you are in for some free advice. Enjoy your exalted position!

Randy Dewar was a superintendent for 20 years in Missouri, Wisconsin, and Oklahoma. He now teaches Educational Administration courses at Central Missouri University, Warrensburg, MO, 64093.

A Missouri company . . .

Improving Missouri schools . . .

. . . growing Missouri's economy



*Helping Missouri schools create 21st century learning environments with energy saving and environmentally responsible building renovations, and complete state-of-the-art security solutions.*

With over 60 projects in Missouri, CTS is the leader in helping Missouri schools improve learning environments and reduce energy expenditures!

- Missouri School Districts 46
- Missouri School Projects 65
- Repeat Customers 41%
- Buildings Improved 141
- Students Impacted 63,836

**CTS**  
CONTROL TECHNOLOGY  
AND SOLUTIONS

15933 Clayton Road, Suite 110  
St. Louis, MO 63011

p 636.230.0843  
f 636.230.5886

www.thectsgroup.com



Missouri Association of Rural Education  
201 South Holden Street, Suite 202  
Warrensburg, Missouri 64093-3400

NON-PROFIT  
Permit No. 1  
**PAID**  
Centerview, MO  
64019

**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:

#### **MARE Superintendency Searches**

**MARE**  
**201 South Holden**  
**Suite 202**  
**Warrensburg, MO 64093**

**Phone: (660) 747-8050**  
**Fax: (660) 747-8160**  
**rpatrick@moare.com**

#### **Yes!!!! I want to be a member of MARE** *( Prices effective July 1, 2009 )*

\_\_\_\_\_ K-12 School Districts — \$300 yearly

\_\_\_\_\_ K-8 School Districts — \$200 yearly

\_\_\_\_\_ Not for Profit Corps & Institutions — \$125 yearly

\_\_\_\_\_ For Profit Corps (Associate Members) — \$275 yearly

\_\_\_\_\_ Individual Member from Non-Member Institutions — \$30 yearly

\_\_\_\_\_ Student Membership — \$2.50 yearly

\_\_\_\_\_ Newsletter sent to district board members — \$25 yearly

\_\_\_\_\_ School District Six Digit School Code

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Title: \_\_\_\_\_

School/Organization: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City/State/Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Email Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Mail to: MARE, 201 South Holden St, Suite 202,  
Warrensburg, MO 64093 or fax: (660) 747-8160