



MARE Focus

FEBRUARY 13, 2025

FROM THE DESK OF MR. KEVIN SANDLIN, MARE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

ENDORSEMENTS

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- EDPLUS
- AMERICAN LEGION BOYS STATE
- GIRLS STATE

MISSOURI ADMIN. JOB POSTING

Legislative Session – Key Open Enrollment Items

– As all of you are aware, the battle for public education regarding Open Enrollment is raging in Jeff City again this year. HB 711 has passed out of the Education and Review Committees and is poised for debate on the floor. It appears that SB 70 & SB 215 have been combined and passed out of the Education Committee. I am attaching a number of documents to this article for your consideration. Please review these closely. We need more school districts to pass the Open Enrollment Opposition Resolution. At present, 204 schools impacting over 400,000 lives have made this commitment. This list has been shared with several legislators and they are talking about it and taking note! I will also be including some talking points for this issue from a couple of sources. Please reach out to your representatives and senators to let them know where you stand on this issue. Please try to get BOE members, patrons, community leaders and some of your district success story former students to reach out to these folks. This is not just a rural issue! It is a public education issue and will impact all of us in a myriad of ways including planning, budgeting, facility construction and usage, staffing, community impacts, etc. I am optimistic that if we can get the right folks to engage, we can stop this legislation again this year. Please join or continue the fight!

Districts Opposing Open Enrollment

Talking Points 2025

New Talking Points

Superintendent Search Program

– MARE has been retained to assist with:

Eminence R-I Superintendent Search – Dr. Mike Jinks is the consultant. He can be reached at (660) 441-7473 or 19mj46@charter.net. **Closes 02/28/2025!**

** New search posting soon!

Closed Searches – Maysville R-I, Northeast Nodaway Co. R-V, Franklin Co. R-II, Osage Co. R-III, Putnam Co. R-I, Lakeland R-III, Green Ridge R-VIII, Sullivan, Orrick R-XI, Jamestown C-1, Bucklin R-II & Lonedell R-XIV!

Check out the MARE website at www.moare.com for announcements/applications!

Save the Date

– The 2025 MARE/MO K-8 Conference will be held on October 22-24, 2025 at the Lodge of Four Seasons. Plans are underway to make this our biggest and best ever. Please block this on your calendar now and make plans to join us! I promise you will have a great time and learn a lot! More information will be posted on the website and appear in an upcoming MARE Focus. Our goal this year is 325 in attendance!

It is a great day to impact the life of a child!

MARE Scholarship Programs – Guidelines & Applications

The Missouri Association of Rural Education offers two scholarship programs for students interested in becoming teachers and returning to rural school districts to teach. The first program is the MARE Rural Missouri Scholarship Fund. This program is open to only junior and senior level students attending Missouri colleges or universities that offer degrees in education. Applicants must have completed 60 or more credit hours and have declared a major in education. Last year, MARE provided twenty-three (23) \$1,000.00 scholarships. We plan to present 20-25 \$1,000.00 scholarships this year alone! Information for this program is available below. This information was mailed to all Missouri colleges and universities that offer teacher education programs and certifications. The deadline to apply for this scholarship is Friday, March 14, 2025.

[2024-2025 Guidelines & Application for College Scholarship Awards](#)

The second scholarship program offered by MARE is open to graduating high school seniors of MARE member school districts. Applicants must have indicated plans to pursue a degree in education. Only senior students from MARE member school districts are eligible to apply. Last year, MARE, with support from EdCounsel, LLC provided thirty-eight (38) \$750.00 scholarships to graduating high school seniors from all over the state. The deadline to apply for this scholarship is Friday, March 14, 2025.

[2024-2025 Guidelines & Application for HS Senior Scholarship Awards](#)

If you have any questions regarding these Scholarship Programs, please contact Kevin Sandlin, Executive Director, at (660) 747-8050 or ksandlin@moare.com. Since 2017, MARE has provided a total of \$262,000.00 in scholarships through these two programs.

Learning Blade Statewide Webinar – Tuesday, February 25th!

Learning Blade is a fully-funded by DESE. It is a supplemental, STEM/CS/CTE toolbox of interactive online lessons, ready-to-use lesson plans, and classroom activities designed to expose primarily 5th -9th grade students to STEM/CS/CTE-related career opportunities and help them develop key skills as they move forward and make career path decisions.

Join this statewide webinar!

"Empowering STEM/CS/CTE and Career Exploration Success: Unlocking Student Potential with Learning Blade",

Register for the

Tuesday, February 25th, 2025 at 3:30-4:30pm CST statewide training webinar [HERE](#).

Participants will gain confidence in using Learning Blade. For the best training experience, **create your FREE account in advance at www.LearningBlade.com/MO**

Training is always available at no cost to educators. Schedule a time that works for you by visiting <https://calendly.com/d/3xc-4s3-99n>.

Thank you,

Michele

Michele Linch, PhD
State Director
Learning Blade - Career Blade - Ready for Industry!
c: 501.766.3931
e: michele@learningblade.com

Thank you for your heart of service for kids!

USDA Rural Development Grant Funding Opportunity

Up to \$1 Million in Grant Funding—Apply Now!



The [USDA Distance Learning and Telemedicine \(DLT\) Grant](#) program is offering **\$40 million in funding** to improve education and healthcare access in rural areas. With a **20% set-aside** for substance use disorder (SUD) and opioid use disorder (OUD) projects, this grant can be a transformative opportunity for your community.

Eligible projects include:

- Interactive video equipment for distance learning or telemedicine
- Virtual reality headsets and training simulators
- Broadband transmission facilities, cybersecurity, and more


Key Details:

- **Deadline:** March 6, 2025
- **Award Size:** \$50,000 to \$1,000,000
- **Eligibility:** State & local governments, Tribes, Nonprofits, Nonprofits and Incorporated, For-profit Businesses, & Consortia
- **Cost Share:** Applicants provide a 15% match

[KCAV](#) will help you determine grant eligibility and the best approach for higher chances of getting awarded. Our team is here to guide you through the application process, ensuring you maximize your chances of success.

Why partner with KCAV?

- Expertise in distance learning and telemedicine technology.
- All items purchased through KCAV fall under the [Greenbush contract](#), ensuring compliance and cost savings.

 **Fill out the form below** to start planning your project and leveraging this grant opportunity!

[Start Now](#)

MARE Board Training Calendar for 2025

MARE Board Training Dates – 2025

Southeast Missouri - Poplar Bluff, MO – Holiday Inn – (573) 712-9021

- Friday, May 30, 2025 (12:00 noon - 6:00 p.m.)
- Saturday, May 31, 2025 (8:00 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.)

Northeast Missouri - Kirksville, MO - Holiday Inn Express (660) 956-4682

- Friday, June 13, 2025 (12:00 noon - 6:00 p.m.)
- Saturday, June 14, 2025 (8:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.)

Southwest Missouri - Bolivar, MO - Comfort Inn - (417) 326-6169

- Friday, June 20, 2025 (12:00 noon - 6:00 p.m.)
- Saturday, June 21, 2025 (8:00 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.)

West Central Missouri - Warrensburg, MO – Quality Inn - (660) 747-3000

- Friday, June 27, 2025 (12:00 noon - 6:00 p.m.)
- Saturday, June 28, 2025 (8:00 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.)

Northwest Missouri - Maryville, MO - Holiday Inn Express (660) 562-9949

- Friday, July 11, 2025 (12:00 noon - 6:00 p.m.)
- Saturday, July 12, 2025 (8:00 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.)

Lake Ozark, MO – The Lodge of the Four Seasons (Conference)

- Wednesday, October 22, 2025 (11:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.)
- Thursday, October 23, 2025 (8:00 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.)

Lake Ozark, MO - The Lodge of the Four Seasons

- Friday, December 5, 2025 (12:00 noon - 6:00 p.m.)
- Saturday, December 6, 2025 (8:00 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.)

***** Please share this information with any new Board member who has not completed the 18.5 hours of required training! MARE is an approved Board Training provider!**

To register, please complete the form found on our website and fax to (660) 747-8160, scan and email to ksandlin@moare.com, or go online (www.moare.com) and complete the electronic form found under Board Training.

Save the Date – The 15th Annual MARE Scholarship Golf Tournament will be held on Monday, July 21st at Osage National Golf Course in Lake Ozark, Missouri. We will accept the first 36 paid teams for this growing event. Last year's event raised over \$35,900.00 for scholarships for students interested in teaching in rural Missouri schools.

Plan now to join us!

Making a Difference Matters – Each Day, Every Child!

Quote of the Week

**“Love is the only force capable of transforming an enemy into a friend.”
Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.**

Missouri Social Studies Curriculum News – Rhett Oldham

1. The EOC Government Insights and Strategies Conclave on Tuesday, February 11th from 9:00-11:30 does not require preregistration and the Webex link is in the newsletter.
2. The EOC Government Test Prep on March 18th at the Capitol Plaza is 100% full with a waiting list. You can still sign up but just understand you are signing up for the waiting list.
3. Finally, teachers who have participated in the Missouri Museum Initiative or the Ecosystem Pilot Project should have received two emails concerning the process of compensation for attending and creating a bellringer lesson and the instructions for how to submit your \$500 resource grant. Anyone attending a Missouri Museum Initiative event after February 1st will receive those same instructions in early March.

This is an exciting time to be a social studies teacher in Missouri and I am so proud to be able to travel the state and talk to passionate teachers about all the great work they are doing in the classroom. Take care and have a great week!

Here is the newsletter. [Newsletter](#)

Best regards,

**Dr. Rhett Oldham
Director of Social Studies Curriculum-DESE
573-751-0398 (w)**

"Travel is fatal to prejudice, bigotry, and narrow-mindedness"-Mark Twain

MARE Board Elections for 2025 – MARE will be electing/appointing Regional Executive Board Members in Regions, A, C, E, G and I this year. In addition, one member from a MARE member school district's BOE and a Higher Education Representative will be appointed. **All current Board members up for re-election/appointment have expressed interest in serving another two-year term through June 30, 2027!** (Due to the recent retirement decision of Dr. Brian Robinson, MARE will be in need of a Board Member to represent Region J, which includes the following counties - Atchison, Holt, Nodaway, Andrew, Buchanan, Platte, Clay, Worth, DeKalb, Clinton, Ray, Caldwell, Daviess, Gentry and Harrison. If you are serving as a Superintendent or Asst. Superintendent in a MARE member school district within one of these counties and you have interest in representing Region J, please reach out to me at ksandlin@moare.com or (660) 747-8050!)

Innovate 2025 Conference – February 23-25, 2025

The **innovate 2025 conference scheduled for February 23 – 25** provides a variety of opportunities to connect, learn and grow alongside educators and thought leaders. From breakout sessions led by national speakers and regional educators, panel discussions with local experts and an exhibitor expo, teachers and leaders will benefit from the content around instructional design, culture and climate, technology and leadership.

What to Expect:

- **Engaging Breakout Sessions** led by educators sharing practical and inspiring insights
- **Interactive Content Panels** with education leaders on hot topics and trends
- **National Speakers** with proven strategies and innovative ideas that can be implemented immediately into your school/classroom
- **exhibitor expo and podcast row** featuring innovative tools and resources

Conference Topics:

Sessions are designed to spark ideas, introduce new strategies and challenge traditional thinking in critical areas of leadership, wellness, belonging, integration, culture and design. Topics include:

- AI in education
- Digital Literacy
- Student Engagement
- Competency-based Instruction and Assessment
- Building Classroom Culture
- Enhancing Creativity in the Classroom
- Student and Educator Wellbeing
- Student and Educator Leadership
- Behavior Management
- Lesson Design

Keynote Speakers

This year's lineup includes:

- **Stephanie Boyce** – Founder of [Freshclassroom](#), Stephanie wants to show ALL people entry points for engagement to ensure equitable outcomes for students.
- **Taylor Hughes** -Author of *Road to Wonder*, [Taylor's storytelling and digitalization](#) will spark wonder in every aspect of life.
- **Roy Moye, III** – Funder of [STEMusic](#), Roy wants to inspire the next generation of multicultural STEM professionals through engaging and entertaining music.
- **David Preston** – Author of *Academy of One*, David will share practices and strategies for Open-Source Learning.

Expanded Content & Registration Options:

This year, the conference has expanded to 2 ½ days! Registration options include two-day or single day registrations. **All registrations include the Sunday evening keynote with Taylor Hughes and the exhibitor expo cocktail party on Monday afternoon.**

Ready to Register?

Get your team ready for #innovate25! Discover more about the conference on the [website](#) and secure your spots [here](#). **Early Bird Registration ends December 18!**

Christine Stanek McDonald

Director of Communications

EducationPlus

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o: 314.692.1233 | c: 314.443.6990

MOCAAT – What Can You Do for Me?

The MOCAAT® Advantage:
Missouri's Trusted Financial Management Resource for School Districts.

Our experienced team, with broad expertise in Missouri school budgeting, finance, and investments, thoroughly manages over \$3 billion in assets for over 240 Missouri Participants, including school districts (as of September 30, 2024).

Since inception in 2020, MOCAAT has provided a new level of service and performance to Missouri communities.
Our philosophy – Partnership.

Maximize the potential of your reserve funds, tax revenues, state revenues, and bond proceeds with our professional guidance.

For financial support tailored to your district's unique needs, contact us:

 John Jungmann Vice-President Investment Services (417) 228-4148 jjungmann@pmanetwork.com	 Jason Hoffman Vice-President Investment Services (573) 212-6258 jhoffman@pmanetwork.com	 Paul Ziegler Coordinator, Sales & Relationship Manager (417) 387-6005 pziegler@pmanetwork.com
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MOPERC Information

Propane school buses are more cost-effective than electric buses. They also offer the lowest total cost of ownership of any fuel type — conventional or otherwise.

There are also dozens of public and private [incentive programs](#) designed to help schools keep money where it belongs — in the classroom. Opportunities to adopt propane buses and infrastructure include:

- [Missouri Propane Education & Research Council](#), which offers incentives up to \$10,000.
- State funding from the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education is offering a 2nd round of grants. [Applications are due March 15, 2025.](#)
- The **Volkswagen Environmental Mitigation Trust**.
- **Propane supplier** incentive programs.

[Missouri schools](#) enjoy up to **50% savings in fuel and maintenance** expenses annually with propane school buses. Many districts report saving **\$3,700 per propane bus per year!**

Learn more at PropaneMissouri.com/school-bus, or contact luke@propanemissouri.com.

ICEV Learning Event – Save the Date!



SAVE THE DATE

MISSOURI CURRICULUM & INSTRUCTION SUMMIT

**TUESDAY
JUNE 17TH
COLUMBIA, MO**

THE PROFESSIONAL LEARNING EVENT FOR MISSOURI EDUCATORS

MORE INFORMATION COMING SOON!

New Associate Member – Opportunity for MARE Schools



Tomorrow's Information Today

It's my pleasure to introduce you to K12 Corral, a vast collection of education data from EVERY school district in the United States. Everything from Graduation Rates, Dropout Rates, Per Pupil Spending, Bond & RFP tracking to State Test Scores for every grade level and every subject at every campus!

Information you can certainly use to compare your district with others within your state. All of this is presented in a very user-friendly environment and is incredibly affordable!

With Wr*AI*ngler, our AI component, you have absolutely no boundaries when it comes to your vision! Wr*AI*ngler can help support your Grant Writing efforts and the arduous RFP process. You can perform comparative analyses

relative to other school districts, and even perform individual vendor analyses. All of this is available at your fingertips. We have also included over 450 sample prompts to get you started but you may also use your own.

MARE has negotiated a 10% subscription discount for any member district who wants to participate. For more information, please visit <http://k12corral.com/> and register for one of the upcoming workshops.

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