



# MARE Focus

FEBRUARY 27, 2025

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

## ENDORSEMENTS

American Fidelity Assurance Co.

Claim Care, Inc.

Forrest T. Jones & Co.

Hamlin Energy

IMS Technology

L.J. Hart & Company

MASA MTS

MEUHP

Mike Keith Insurance

MO. Consult. For Ed.

MOCAAT

M.U.S.I.C.

SOCS

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## MARE

### PARTNERSHIPS

- LEGAL HOTLINE: ED COUNSEL, GUIN MUNDORF, MICKES O'TOOLE, TUETH KEENEY
- 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, 229 schools impacting over 422,000 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

## 2025 Open Enrollment Talking Points

## Open Enrollment - New Talking Points

**Superintendent Search Program** – MARE has been retained to assist with:

**Fair Play R-II Superintendent Search** – Dr. Maggie Anderson is the consultant. She can be reached at (816) 898-0005 or [mg2.anderson@gmail.com](mailto:mg2.anderson@gmail.com). **Closes 03/21/2025!**

**Spring Bluff R-XV Superintendent Search** – Mr. Darryl Pannier is the consultant. He can be reached at (573) 803-9008 or [darrylpannier@yahoo.com](mailto:darrylpannier@yahoo.com). **Closes on 3/14/2025!**

\*\*\*\*\*New Searches may be posted 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 & Eminence R-I.**

**Check out the MARE website at [www.moare.com](http://www.moare.com) for announcements and 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!

## 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](mailto:ksandlin@moare.com). Since 2017, MARE has provided a total of \$262,000.00 in scholarships through these two programs.

## Drug Awareness Virtual Conference Event

**LAST CHANCE!**

**YOU'RE INVITED**

**6<sup>TH</sup> ANNUAL TEACHING CANNABIS (AND OTHER DRUGS!\*) AWARENESS AND PREVENTION VIRTUAL CONFERENCE**

\* TOBACCO/NICOTINE, FENTANYL/OPIOIDS, ALCOHOL, HALLUCINOGENS, AND OTHER SUBSTANCES!

**April 9<sup>th</sup> & 10<sup>th</sup>, 2025**  
8:00 a.m. - 2:30 p.m. (PST)

**LOCK IN EARLY BIRD PRICING**

The poster features a large orange arrow pointing right with the text 'LAST CHANCE!' inside. Below this, the text 'YOU'RE INVITED' is written in white on a dark green rectangular background. The main title '6<sup>TH</sup> ANNUAL TEACHING CANNABIS (AND OTHER DRUGS!\*) AWARENESS AND PREVENTION VIRTUAL CONFERENCE' is displayed in bold, dark green letters. A small icon of a video conference with four participants is positioned to the left of the date. The date 'April 9<sup>th</sup> & 10<sup>th</sup>, 2025' and the time '8:00 a.m. - 2:30 p.m. (PST)' are written in orange. At the bottom, a dark orange rounded rectangle contains the text 'LOCK IN EARLY BIRD PRICING' in white. The background of the poster is a light green and blue gradient with faint silhouettes of hands.

## **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](mailto:ksandlin@moare.com), or go online ([www.moare.com](http://www.moare.com)) and complete the electronic form found under Board Training.

**Save the Date** – The 15<sup>th</sup> Annual MARE Scholarship Golf Tournament will be held on Monday, July 21<sup>st</sup> 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!**

## **Quote of the Week**

**“The power of rural education lies in the people, the core values and the relationships that are built.” (Anonymous)**

## **Missouri Social Studies Curriculum News – Rhett Oldham**

As I send this edition of [Engage Missouri: Social Studies Leaders Newsletter 1.12](#), I hope you are finally getting back in your classroom so you can teach! There are some great resources in this newsletter K-12 so I hope you find something that is useful and engaging in your classroom. As always, if you need anything, please send a note my way. Take care and have a great week.

**Best regards,**

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

**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](mailto:ksandlin@moare.com) or (660) 747-8050!**

## **MCE Policy Updates Available**

The February 2025 updates are currently available on the MCE website located at [www.moconed.com](http://www.moconed.com). For your convenience, access to the updates is located on the homepage under the "Updates" section on the left-hand side of the page. Simply select "View All Updates" to view or download current and past updates.

For those Districts utilizing MCE’s webhosting services, the updates are now available on your District portal. Which can be accessed by visiting the [MCE District Portal](#).

If you have any questions concerning these revisions or their implementation, please feel free to contact Tom Mickes or Nicole Boyles-Taylor.

Thomas A. Mickes  
Cell Phone: (314) 330-8903  
Email: [tom@moconed.com](mailto:tom@moconed.com)  
Nicole D Boyles-Taylor  
Cell Phone: (314) 258-7484  
Email: [nicole@moconed.com](mailto:nicole@moconed.com)

## 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:

 <b>John Jungmann</b> Vice-President Investment Services (417) 228-4148 jjungmann@pmanetwork.com	 <b>Jason Hoffman</b> Vice-President Investment Services (573) 212-6258 jhoffman@pmanetwork.com	 <b>Paul Ziegler</b> 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](http://PropaneMissouri.com/school-bus), or contact [luke@propanemissouri.com](mailto: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!

I wanted to reach out because we believe members of MARE would greatly benefit from attending the **Missouri Curriculum & Instruction Summit**, happening on June 17, 2025 in Columbia, MO.

This event is designed to support Missouri's instructional leaders with innovative learning opportunities. Right now, **Early Bird registration is open**, and we'd love your help in spreading the word to rural educators who could take advantage of this opportunity.

You can find more information and register here: <https://sites.google.com/stepupconsultingservices.com/mocis/home>

Thank you,

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Valorie Montgomery  
Senior Director of Marketing & Operations



## **New Associate Member – Opportunity for MARE Schools**



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### **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.

**NEW Associate Members** – MARE is pleased to welcome Carroll Seating Company, Daikin TMI, Ecco Ride Transportation, Goblins, Holland Construction Services, HR Advisors MO, LLC, IT Recycling Answers, Learning Blade, Missouri School Expertise, LLC, Southwest Center for Education Excellence, Stark Caverns, Team Builders Academy, LLC, Thrivent Financial, Twotrees Technologies, 4M Building Solutions, K12 Corral, and Kansas City Commercial Roofing as New Associate Members. For more information on these great members, please check out the MARE website and future MARE Focus feature articles.

### **MARE Organization Staff**

Kevin F. Sandlin -- Cell Phone: (660) 351-0596 -- Email: [ksandlin@moare.com](mailto:ksandlin@moare.com)

Executive Director

Jerry L Cochran, EdD. -- Cell Phone: (660) 596-3184 -- Email: [jcochran@moare.com](mailto:jcochran@moare.com)

Assistant Executive Director

Ray V. Patrick, EdD. – Cell Phone: (660) 909 – 5118 – Email: [rpatrick@moare.com](mailto:rpatrick@moare.com)

Associate Director

Missouri Association of Rural Education

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Warrensburg, Missouri 64093

(660) 747-8050

Fax: (660) 747-8160

Website: [www.moare.com](http://www.moare.com)

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