



NOVEMBER 17, 2025

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

# MARE Focus

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**Superintendent Search Program** – One of the many services that MARE provides is a quality, yet affordable Superintendent Search Program. If you are retiring this year or making plans to move, we would welcome the opportunity to work with your district to find the next leader. Contact Kevin Sandlin, MARE Executive Director, at (660) 747-8050 or by email at [ksandlin@moare.com](mailto:ksandlin@moare.com) for more information.

**Linn Co. R-I Superintendent Search** – Dr. Jerry Cochran is the search consultant. He can be reached at (660) 596-3184 or [cochrani115@gmail.com](mailto:cochrani115@gmail.com). **(12/8/2025)**

**Archie R-V Superintendent Search** – Dr. Margret Anderson is the search consultant. She can be reached at (816) 898-0005 or [mg2.anderson@gmail.com](mailto:mg2.anderson@gmail.com). **(12/5/2025)**

*Closed Searches - Altenburg #48, Kirbyville R-VI, Maryville R-II, Chaffee R-II, Santa Fe R-X, Morgan Co. R-I, NE Randolph Co. R-IV, Pettis Co. R-V- More Searches Posting Soon!*

**2025 MARE/MO K-8 Conference Recap** – We are very appreciative of all of those who attended and supported our 2025 MARE/MO K-8 Conference on October 22-24, 2025! It was our largest and maybe our best conference to date! Overall, we had 300 attendees, 95 Exhibitor Tables with 210 vendor representatives, and 81 presenters. Thank you to our amazing sponsors listed below:

**Platinum Level (\$2,000.00)** – BalanceHQ, Claim Care, Inc., EdCounsel, LLC, iCEV, MOCAAT, SIC Midwest, Software Unlimited & Veregy

**Gold Level (\$1,500.00)** – Coryell Roofing, Curriculum Associates, Daikin TMi, Forrest T. Jones/MEUHP, GRP WEGMAN, Hoener Architects, LLC, L.J. Hart & Company, OSBA/Acrisure, Penmac Education Staffing, Reynolds Construction & Commercial Roofing & Smith Paper & Janitor Supply

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**Bronze Level (\$600.00)** – American Fidelity, EDX Consulting/Lifted, First Onsite Property Restoration, Gilmore & Bell, P.C., IMS Technology Group, Inclusive Leadership Lab, Inter-State Studio, Midwest Bus Sales, Midwest Transit Equipment, MUSIC, Navitas, Opa! Food Management, Performance Services, Piper Sandler & Company, Quality Network Solutions, SchoolsPLP, Step Up Consulting, Tarkett Sports Construction Company, The Fantastechs & Universal Construction Company.

**Join us next year for the MARE/MO K-8 Conference on October 21-23, 2026!**

## **Ethical AI for School Leadership**

Unlock the future of ethical AI in education with our free monthly webinar, your gateway to innovative insights and practical strategies for school leadership. Use the

registration link not only to secure your spot, but also to let us know if you're excited to join us in Kansas City or if you'd like our team to bring this transformative event to a location near you. Your input helps us make these sessions accessible where they're needed most. Don't miss the chance to help shape the next wave of professional development in education!

Click Here for the full year's agenda and the [Interest/ registration form](#)

**Foundation Formula Modernization Task Force** — The School Modernization Task Force is now conducting Working Group meetings until early December. The meetings will be livestreamed. It is vitally important that school leaders, BOE members, community patrons and those who support public schools tune in to these meetings or listen to the recordings to stay informed. The group will reconvene with scheduled Task Force meetings in January. For more information on this work, please check out the website at this link: [Missouri School Funding Modernization Task Force](#).

## **Eduthings Platform – Get Your Data Right!**

Are you tired of spending hours on June Core Data reporting? We'd like to tell you about Eduthings, a powerful platform that transforms how you manage and report CTE data.

**Eduthings** eliminates the need for juggling multiple spreadsheets and combing through your SIS data by automating key processes like **student CTE classification, data tracking, and report generation**. It takes your data from simple reporting to **meaningful analysis**, helping you make informed decisions with confidence.

### **Eduthings Key Benefits:**

-  No more spreadsheets—automated data management
-  Accurate student classification and reporting
-  CTE Data Tracking – WBL, CTSO, RYA, IRC, Advisory Board
-  Compliance support for state and federal requirements
-  Time-saving tools that reduce manual entry and errors



### **Want to see it in action?**

**Email us** to schedule a personalized demo and discover how **Eduthings** can simplify your workflow.

**\*\* Please share this with your person responsible for CCR data tracking and June Core Data Submission!**

**Dr. Calee McElwain**  
Territory Manager

Company | 800.922.9965

Direct | 660.200.5041

[\*\*Schedule a Meeting »\*\*](#)

## **2025-2026 MARE Scholarship Program Information**

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-two (22) \$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 is in the mail to all Missouri colleges and universities that offer teacher education programs and certifications. The deadline to apply for this scholarship is Friday, March 13, 2026.

**Materials must be received by this date!**

[2025-2026 College Scholarship Guidelines & Application](#)

[2025-2026 College Scholarship Guidelines in Word](#)

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. This includes HS students from tuition paying MO K-8 MARE member school districts. Last year, MARE, with support from EdCounsel, LLC provided forty-three (43) \$750.00 scholarships to graduating high school seniors from all over the state. The deadline to apply for this scholarship is Friday, March 13, 2026.

**Materials must be received by this date!**

[2025-2026 HS Senior Scholarship Guidelines & Application](#)

[2025-2026 HS Senior Scholarship Guidelines & Application in Word](#)

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 **\$316,250.00** in scholarships through these two programs.

## **DESE – Missouri Job Board**

*DESE is excited to announce the continuation of their partnership with Nimble to **provide Missouri schools with innovative hiring and recruitment tools**. As part of this partnership, districts have **free access** to post on the statewide job board, which sees over 100,000 job seekers annually, a premium recruiting service that delivers high quality candidates looking for teaching positions in your area directly to your leaders' inboxes, and use of Nimble's applicant tracking system.*

*To learn more, register for an informational webinar on December 2 at noon CST. You can also schedule a call with our partners at Nimble or contact DESE with any questions!*

## **Quote of the Week**

**"Gratitude can transform common days into thanksgivings, turn routine jobs into joy, and change ordinary opportunities into blessings."**

*William Arthur Ward*

## **MARE Board Training Calendar for 2025**

### **MARE Board Training Dates – 2025**

#### **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!**

**2025-2026 Missouri School Directory** - Each MARE member school district will receive one free copy. If you pre-ordered extra copies through MARE, we will have those to deliver as well. We will have these to deliver to our member schools at area MASA meetings in late October, throughout November and December if needed.

#### **CESO Communications Partnership/Opportunity**

MARE members now have access to free communications support through a new partnership with CESO Communications. Each member district can benefit from one free phone call/video consultation (up to one hour) during the 2025-26 school year.

CESO Communications is a team of school communication professionals from across the country with a combined experience of more than 300 years. CESO provides services to school districts of all sizes focusing on their communications needs. Our main point of contact for CESO is Jill Filer, who spent 32 years working in Harrisonville Schools. She has been recognized for her leadership and service specifically for mentoring and supporting both school communications professionals and superintendents from around Missouri and the United States.

The focus for your free hour-long appointment is completely up to you and your district's communication needs. Topics could include any of the following:

Internal Communications  
Social Media  
Website  
Communications Training  
Superintendent Transition  
Bond/Levy Campaigns  
Community Engagement  
Communications Planning

Even though Jill will be the person responding initially, she will be supported by the entire 19-member CESO team.

To access this free service, call Jill at (816) 738-1055 or email her at [jill.filer@theceso.com](mailto:jill.filer@theceso.com) to schedule an appointment.

**Outstanding Rural Education Awards** — MARE/MO K-8 presented the following awards at our conference luncheon on Thursday, October 23<sup>rd</sup>:

**Outstanding Rural Support Staff Member Award – Udena “Nug” Davis, Phelps Co. R-III**

**Outstanding Rural Teacher Award – Erin Dalager, Kirbyville R-VI**

**Outstanding Rural Administrator Award – Dr. Sarah Wisdom, New Bloomfield R-III**

**Outstanding Rural School District Award – Midway R-I**

**MO K-8 Administrator of the Year Award – Dr. Chrystal Mayfield, Strasburg C-3**

**“Friend of Rural Education” for 2025 – Dr. Doug Hayter**

**Welcome New Associate Members** – Since July of 2025, the following organizations have been added as MARE Associate Members: **balanceHQ, Hoener Architects, LLC, Inclusive Leadership Lab, Oasis Intergenerational Tutoring, Kummer Center for STEM, Sonus Benefits, Denovo Construction Solutions, Kids Read Now, Federal Education Consulting Group, Interpres Building Solutions, Navigate Building Solutions, CESO Communications, Core360 Benefits Group, Coalter Insurance Group & Cariina.** Please watch for upcoming postings on the MARE website and in new MARE Focus articles. We greatly appreciate these businesses joining the MARE family!

**Save the Date** – 16<sup>th</sup> Annual MARE Scholarship Golf Tournament – Monday, July 20<sup>th</sup>, 2026 at Osage National Golf Course. \$90.00 per person or \$360 per team!

## **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 nearly \$4 billion in assets for over 260 Missouri Participants, including school districts (as of March 31, 2025).

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><br>Vice-President<br>Investment Services                        | <b>Jason Hoffman</b><br>Vice-President<br>Investment Services                        | <b>Paul Ziegler</b><br>Coordinator, Sales &<br>Relationship Manager                  |
| (417) 228-4148<br>jjungmann@pmanetwork.com                                           | (573) 212-6258<br>jhoffman@pmanetwork.com                                            | (417) 387-6005<br>pziegler@pmanetwork.com                                            |

## **Board Member Survey Opportunity for Research**

My name is Katherine Hairston, and I serve as AED of Leadership Development at the MSBA and am a doctoral student at Mizzou. I'm conducting a statewide study examining how Missouri school board presidents enact leadership and how their leadership is perceived by board members and superintendents. Link to Survey: [Board Member Survey](#) I also have a QR code I can share with you. I would be very grateful if MARE would consider sharing the survey link with your members. The survey takes about 5–10 minutes and seeks input from superintendents, board presidents, and board members. I would also be happy to share a summary of the findings with you and your members once the study concludes this spring. I deeply value the insights of Missouri's rural education leaders and would appreciate any opportunity for their voices to be included. Thank you for considering this request, and please let me know if you have any questions or need additional information about the study. Best regards, Katherine Whitaker Hairston Doctoral Student, University of Missouri Associate Executive Director of Leadership Development, MSBA 573-208-7885 | [hairston@mosba.org](mailto:hairston@mosba.org)

## **Amy Herrman – CESN Planner for DESE**

My name is **Amy Herrman**, and I serve as the **Career Education Special Needs (CESN) Planner** for the Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE).

In my role, I support administrators, special education staff, counselors, and Career and Technical Education (CTE) instructors with strategies to help students with special needs successfully access and participate in CTE programs.

I'd be happy to assist the **Missouri Association of Rural Education** by presenting at professional development events or sharing resources with your districts. Please feel free to pass along my information to those who may benefit. I've attached a **CESN brochure** and a few examples of presentations I can provide or customize to meet your needs:

**Facilitating Equitable Access: Special Needs Students in CTE**

**Enhancing Career Opportunities: Accommodations and Modifications in CTE**

I've also included an article on **Pathways to Skilled and Technical Sciences**, a DESE initiative to help high schools introduce CTE opportunities earlier, as well as the **Missouri High School CTE Admissions Best Practices** document.

Please review the attached materials and let me know if I can be of assistance. I'd also appreciate your help sharing this information with your members through your newsletter or email groups.

I look forward to connecting!

Best regards,

Amy

**Dr. Amy Herrman**

Career Education Special Needs Planner, South Central RPDC

Missouri University of Science and Technology

Career Education Special Needs (CESN)

aherrman@mst.edu | cell: 573-578-0542

## **School Based Mental Health News**

The School-Based Mental Health section at the Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) would like to share some of the recent projects we have been involved with and related upcoming opportunities for local education agencies. Please feel free to share any or all of these resources with your members.

1. School mental health teams are invited to join staff from DESE's School-Based Mental Health and School Counseling & Student Wellness sections to learn more about the **Missouri Framework for School-Based Mental Health** (SBMH Framework). Both morning and afternoon session options will be held around the state in October and November in addition to virtual options in December. (See attached flyer for information on the "Introduction to Missouri Framework for School-Based Mental Health"). You can find more information about the SBMH Framework in the September 20, 2025 section of the [DESE Update website](#) and access the [Framework](#) or register for a session on the [DESE Mental Health Resources for School Staff and Students page](#). We also offer a two-day virtual "Foundations of School-Based Mental Health" training for school mental health teams who want to dig deeper into the

SBMH Framework and assess the comprehensiveness of their school mental health system.

1. The Missouri Suicide Prevention Network (MSPN) has released the 2025 edition of the [Suicide Prevention & 988 Guide for Missouri Schools](#). This resource is intended to support schools in their ongoing efforts to prevent youth suicide, respond effectively and navigate a suicide crisis, and understand how to engage with Missouri's behavioral health crisis services.

This updated edition includes:

- a. Strategies and resources available to help strengthen school or district-wide suicide prevention efforts and promote safe, supportive environments for students
- b. Information on how schools can utilize 988, mobile crisis response, and behavioral health crisis center services
- c. Updated, evidence-based suicide prevention programming
- d. New resources for parents and guardians explaining 988 and available supports
- e. Immediate steps schools can take in the aftermath of a suicide death

This guide complements DESE's recently revised [Youth Suicide Awareness and Prevention Model Policy](#) and is intended to be used alongside it to strengthen school preparedness and response efforts.

There is a post about this guide on MSPN's Facebook page at <https://www.facebook.com/share/p/1AF8KEer6G/> that could be shared.

1. (MSPN) is seeking applicants for its new **Youth Advisory Board (YAB)**. This board will ensure that youth voices play a central role in shaping the state's suicide prevention efforts. The YAB will act as a bridge between young people and MSPN leadership, offering valuable insight, feedback, and advocacy to make programs and policies more effective and youth-centered. Board members will focus on:

- a. Integrating youth perspectives into MSPN initiatives
- b. Promoting mental wellness and reducing stigma among their peers
- c. Advocating for stronger mental health supports in schools and communities

They are looking for high school students who are passionate about mental health and making a difference. You can access more information and the application [here](#), we've attached a flyer (QR code on the flyer goes to that linked document with information and the application), and there's a post on MSPN's Facebook page at <https://www.facebook.com/share/p/19uPF4baus/> that could be shared.

Thank you!

On behalf of the DESE School-Based Mental Health team,

Katie Epema, MEd, BSW | Director of School-Based Mental Health | Office of College and Career Readiness | 573-526-4358 | <https://dese.mo.gov/mental-health-resources>

**Happy Thanksgiving from MARE!**

## Learning Blade Corner

Learning Blade, in partnership with the Maritime Industrial Base (MIB) Program invites your students to participate in our **Service Member Letter Writing Campaign** this school year!

This exciting initiative gives students a chance to complete the Beneath the Waves mission and to express appreciation for active and retired service members while strengthening writing, reflection, and communication skills. It's an impactful way to connect classroom learning to real-world careers!



To participate, simply download the [Service Member Letter Writing Campaign Instructions PDF](#) from the **References** tab in the Learning Blade platform. The PDF includes all the details you'll need—lesson plan, mailing information, and printable cover letter.

Sign up for your FREE Learning Blade account to explore the *Beneath the Waves* mission and participate in the *Service Member Letter Writing Campaign*. Get your students started today at [LearningBlade.com/State](https://LearningBlade.com/State).

## MARE Organization Staff

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