



OCTOBER 28, 2025

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

MARE Focus

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

Veregy

MARE PARTNERSHIPS

- LEGAL
HOTLINE:
EDCOUNSEL,
GUIN
MUNDORF,
MICKES
O'TOOLE,
TUETH
KEENEY
- EDPLUS
- AMERICAN
LEGION BOYS
STATE
- GIRLS STATE

MISSOURI
ADMIN. JOB
POSTING

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 for more information.

Morgan Co. R-I Superintendent Search – Dr. Jamie Burkhart is the search consultant. She can be reached at (660) 525-0952 or jamiebeth.burkhart@gmail.com. (10/31/2025)

Northeast Randolph Co. R-IV Superintendent Search – Dr. Jerry Cochran is the search consultant. He can be reached at (660) 596-3184 or cochranj115@gmail.com. (11/3/2025)

Pettis Co. R-V Superintendent Search – Dr. Jamie Burkhart is the search consultant. She can be reached at (660) 525-0952 or jamiebeth.burkhart@gmail.com. (11/7/2025)

Linn Co. R-I Superintendent Search – Dr. Jerry Cochran is the search consultant. He can be reached at (660) 596-3184 or cochranj115@gmail.com. (TBD)

Closed Searches - Altenburg #48, Kirbyville R-VI, Maryville R-II, Chaffee R-II, Santa Fe R-X - 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

Silver Level (\$1,000.00) – A-Lert Roofing Systems, Cariina, Coalter Insurance Group, Guin Mundorf, LLC, Heartland Business Systems, LearnSafe, Mickes O'Toole, LLC, Missouri Educator's Trust, Rural Schools Initiative (UCM), S.M. Wilson & Company, Stifel, Trane U.S. Inc., Kummer Center for STEM, & Tueth Keeney Cooper Mohan & Jackstadt, P.C.

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](#).

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

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 — 16th Annual MARE Scholarship Golf Tournament – Monday, July 20th, 2026 at Osage National Golf Course. \$90.00 per person or \$360 per team!

Thank You for Making a Difference!

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!**

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 to schedule an appointment.

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.

Quote of the Week

"In any moment of decision, the best thing you can do is the right thing, the next best thing is the wrong thing, and the worst thing you can do is nothing." — Theodore Roosevelt

Drone Academy Workshop

Also, here's the website: <https://topdroneacademy.weebly.com/>.



2025
November 17 & 18

Top Drone Academy Conference

Build Career Pathways with Drone Technology

Explore high-demand career pathways with professionals in drone piloting, commercial operations, and industry applications.



Cost – \$110.00 Per Person
Open to Educators, Secondary & Postsecondary Students, and Drone Enthusiasts

Top Drone Academy
Held at Old Kinderhook Resort
Camdenton, MO



For More Information
Aaron Paneck, Apanek@depcollc.com
Linda Stinson Linda.Stinson@dese.mo.gov
Byekwaso.Gilbert@dese.mo.gov
Missouri Department of Elementary & Secondary Education
<https://topdroneacademy.weebly.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 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:

 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
---	---	---

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>

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.

MARE Organization Staff

Kevin F. Sandlin -- Cell Phone: (660) 351-0596 -- Email: ksandlin@moare.com
Executive Director

Jerry L Cochran, EdD. -- Cell Phone: (660) 596-3184 -- Email: cochranj115@gmail.com
Assistant Executive Director

Ray V. Patrick, EdD. -- Cell Phone: (660) 909 – 5118 – Email: rpatrick@moare.com
Associate Director

Missouri Association of Rural Education
710 N College, Suite C
Warrensburg, Missouri 64093
(660) 747-8050
Fax: (660) 747-8160
Website: www.moare.com

If you are the intended recipient but do not wish to receive communication through this medium, please notify the sender immediately.