MARE Focus

JANUARY 26, 2026 | 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.

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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.

Breckenridge R-I Superintendent Search – Dr. Margret Anderson is the Search Consultant. She can be reached at (816) 898-0005 or **mg2.anderson@gmail.com**. **(02/11/26)**

Newburg R-II Superintendent Search – Dr. Michael Jinks is the Search Consultant. He can be reached at (660) 441-7473 or **19mj46@charter.net**. **(02/06/26)**

New Search Posting in SE Missouri on January 30, 2026! (02/26/2026)

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, Archie R-V, Linn Co. R-I, North Harrison R-III, Madison C-3, Prairie Home R-V & La Monte R-IV.

Foundation Formula Modernization Task Force

— The group will meet at 10:00 a.m. on Monday, January 26th **(Virtual Meeting only!)** at the State Board Meeting Room in Jefferson City. For more information on this work, please check out the website at this link: Missouri School Funding Modernization Task Force.

Quote of the Week

Leadership is lifting a person's vision to high sights, the raising of a person's performance to a higher standard, the building of a personality beyond its normal limitations.
—Peter Drucker

ESSA Changes – March 1st Workshop – Fed Ed Consulting

Once March 1 arrives, school districts must move from preparation to action under ESSA Equitable Services—and the expectations come quickly.

With nonpublic school data becoming available, districts must determine which nonpublic schools require consultation, initiate timely communication, document the process, and plan compliant services. For many districts, knowing where to start, and most importantly, how to do it correctly, can be challenging.

The Federal Education Consulting Group **invites you to a 2-hour virtual workshop designed to guide districts through this critical phase, *From Data to Delivery:***

Navigating ESSA Equitable Services After March 1. The workshop will be held Thursday, February 26th, 2026, 1pm - 3pm via Google Meet.

This practical session will walk participants step by step through:

- Interpreting nonpublic school data
- Identifying consultation obligations
- Conducting meaningful and timely consultation
- Required documentation and timelines
- Common compliance pitfalls—and how to avoid them

Whether your district is new to Equitable Services or simply wants to ensure its processes are in compliance, this workshop will provide clarity, confidence, and actionable next steps.

Who should attend:
Superintendents, Federal Programs Coordinators, and staff responsible for ESSA compliance.

Register today to ensure your district is prepared and compliant. Training limited to 100 participants.

Sincerely,

Julie Cowell and Theresa Villmer

Federal Education Consulting Group
Guiding Success in Implementing Education Policy

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. Since 2017, MARE has provided a total of **$316,250.00** in scholarships through these two programs.

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! Thanks to our very generous sponsors, we were able to commit over $43,000 to new scholarships for the 2026-2027 school year for students wanting to become Missouri teachers. Please make plans now to support this growing event!

MOCAAT – What Can You Do for Me?



Welcome New Associate Members – MARE is pleased to welcome the following as New Associate Members: Absolute Janitorial Services, LLC, CoffeeTree Group, First Onsite Property Restoration, Finalsite, & HaloRRS, LLC. Be on the lookout for more information on these MARE supporters on the website (coming February 19th), direct emails to membership and future MARE Focus articles. We appreciate their support for our work here at MARE!

Now more than ever, we have to be engaged in the legislative arena in Jefferson City. Please join the weekly MASA calls, read the weekly bulletin, continue to reach out to your area legislators and find key leaders in your community to speak up! Together, we can protect public education!

Board Training Schedule for 2026 – See dates/locations below!

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

- Friday, May 29, 2026 (12:00 noon - 6:00 p.m.)
- Saturday, May 30, 2026 (8:00 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.)

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

- Friday, June 12, 2026 (12:00 noon - 6:00 p.m.)
- Saturday, June 13, 2026 (8:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.)

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

- Friday, June 19, 2026 (12:00 noon - 6:00 p.m.)
- Saturday, June 20, 2026 (8:00 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.)

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

- Friday, June 26, 2026 (12:00 noon - 6:00 p.m.)
- Saturday, June 27, 2026 (8:00 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.)

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

- Friday, July 10, 2026 (12:00 noon - 6:00 p.m.)
- Saturday, July 11, 2026 (8:00 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.)

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

- Wednesday, October 21, 2026 (11:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.)
- Thursday, October 22, 2026 (8:00 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.)

Lake Ozark, MO - The Lodge of the Four Seasons

- Friday, December 4, 2026 (12:00 noon - 6:00 p.m.)
- Saturday, December 5, 2026 (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, scan and email to ksandlin@moare.com

CESO/MARE Partnership Opportunity

Just a reminder to all our MARE members....You 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.

The focus for your free hour-long appointment is completely up to you and your district's communication needs. Are you taking on a superintendent role or is your district welcoming a new superintendent? Do you have a bond/levy on the April ballot? Is it time to update your strategic plan? Would you like to develop a plan for improving social media content or internal communications? Does your website need a refresh?

The consultation can cover one topic or multiple areas of support.

To access this free service, call CESO Lead Strategist Jill Filer at (816) 738-1055 or email her at jill.filer@theceso.com to schedule an appointment.

Learning Blade Corner

February 2026 LB Corner

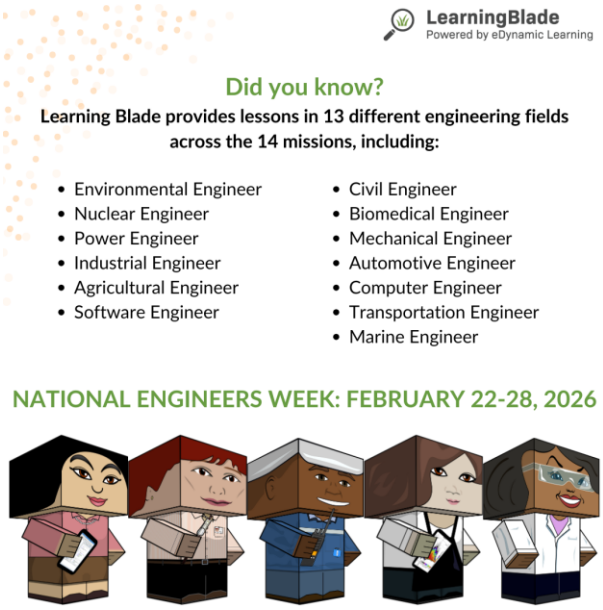
Celebrate National Engineering Week (Feb 22–28, 2026) by inspiring students to **"Reimagine the Possible"** with Learning Blade's engineering career exploration resources!

Learning Blade offers educators a wide range of engaging Missions and lessons, providing students with an exciting glimpse into the diverse opportunities in the world of engineering.

Engineering careers in Learning Blade include:

- Environmental Engineer
- Nuclear Engineer
- Power Engineer
- Industrial Engineer
- Agricultural Engineer
- Software Engineer

- Biomedical Engineer
- Mechanical Engineer
- Automotive Engineer
- Computer Engineer
- Transportation Engineer
- Civil Engineer
- Marine Engineer



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

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Legislative Issues Impacting Rural Education

GREATER MARYVILLE CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

OUR FIRST POWER HOUR OF 2026 IS AN EDUCATIONAL SESSION ON

LEGISLATIVE ISSUES IMPACTING RURAL EDUCATION



TUESDAY, JANUARY 27
8:30 -9:45 AM
NODAWAY CO ADMINISTRATION
403 NORTH MARKET, MARYVILLE

Session topics & speakers include

- Diversion of funds from public education to private, urban schools and charters - **Duane Martin, EDCounsel**
- The impact of potential funding changes on local school districts panel conversation with **John Rinehart of LJ Hart, Nancy Greeley of MO Dept of Elementary & Secondary Education**, and others

Attend to learn how decisions in Jefferson City are impacting the educational system in Nodaway County.

for more information

660-582-8643

director@maryvillechamber.com

Missouri Youth Leadership Forum - The Governor's Council on Disability is pleased to announce **that applications are now open for the 2026 Missouri Youth Leadership Forum (MO-YLF)**.

This is a highly regarded, week-long program designed for Missouri high school students with disabilities, ages 16-21. MO-YLF provides delegates with a structured, immersive experience focused on developing critical leadership skills and ensuring a successful transition to post-secondary education, employment, & independent living.

Delegates will spend the week on the University of Missouri campus in Columbia, engaging with successful adult mentors and leaders from the disability community. **The entire program is offered at no cost to selected delegates**, thanks to support from our generous sponsors and donors.

Please share this opportunity with your colleagues, family members, or constituents who may know a student who would benefit from participation.

Watch the Experience Come to Life!

To truly capture the **energy and scope** of the Forum, we encourage you to view the following promotional videos. Produced by the Office of Administration (OA) communications team, these resources feature highlights from the 2024 Forum, including legislative role-playing, collaborative projects, adaptive sports, social events, and personal testimonials from parents and staff:

- Missouri Youth Leadership Forum Video for Parents and Teachers
- Missouri Youth Leadership Forum Video for Potential Delegates

Mark your calendar!
When: July 14-18, 2026
Where: University of Missouri – Columbia
Application Deadline: March 16, 2026

MO-YLF is more than just a leadership camp. It's an immersive program that delivers critical leadership and transition skills through five core pillars:

- **Leadership & Advocacy:** Workshops cover key areas like self-advocacy, goal setting, and self-determination.
- **History & Culture:** They will explore the rich history of disability rights and culture while connecting with successful mentors.
- **Career & College Readiness:** Delegates get vital resources to prepare for a successful transition to adulthood and careers.
- **Community & Friendship:** They will form friendships and networks with peers and young leaders from the disability community.
- **Recreation & Fun:** The experience is rounded out with adaptive sports, social events (talent show, dance), and more

If you know a student who would benefit, encourage them to apply or learn more by visiting: disability.mo.gov/gcd/ylf

Applications close on **March 16, 2026**—don't let them miss this chance!

Together, let's support the next generation of leaders in Missouri's disability community.

Sincerely,

The Governor's Council on Disability