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Serving All Middle Level and High School Administrators

MoASSP August 31, 2017

Video Version: <https://youtu.be/N2wEePkIxrQ>

Principals,

GREAT STARTS for Missouri Schools – the 2017-18 school year began like no other I have seen. We started with an eclipse, hurricane Harvey blasted Texas with a rain of epic proportions, and now a problem with the **Algebra I and English Language Arts II EOC's** ([Commissioner Vandeven](#)). The EOC problem had to be handled quickly and not using the scores for the APR was emergency room treatment so that schools and districts would not suffer APR damage as a result of Questar's problem. It also bought time to decide how to handle the conundrum long term. If you want more information review yesterday's email from plewis@moassp.org.

It could have been worse, Houston is the fourth largest city in the country and millions have been impacted. I know many of your schools are already finding ways to help with the problems they are experiencing. On the plus side, the science teachers have been able to tie learning to the eclipse and the hurricane events. Just think of the possibilities that are available to work these events into every curriculum in the building, not just science.

Here in Missouri, nearly every principal I have communicated with has been excited about the first days of school. We want every day to be a cause for celebration. Having a great start is so important for the entire school year because it shows the students the value of a positive school culture.

A principal's position is tough because of the managerial demands and the leadership that is a must to move the building forward. It is not possible to know everything that falls under the umbrella of building management and principal leadership, but the more you know the safer it is for you, your teachers, and the students. Every so often principals need to get together with his or her peers to share, gain new knowledge, and get away to make sense of it all. When a difficult dilemma arises, most of us

understand we need to find the time to let our minds wander. We take a walk, do something mindless, and let the mind do its job without outside distractions. If your knowledge is limited, it is really easy for your mind to find a solution. The more you know the more undistracted time your mind needs to sort, separate, and reorganize to find the best solution to the quandary. Take time for yourself to help your building grow and lead your teachers into getting better. The more you know, the better you can serve. Go to district meetings or round tables, attend the state conferences, and join in the celebrations of the principals who are being honored.

Where to go for knowledge, links, and peer connections:

- **MoASSP/NASSP/District Memberships** - [MoASSP Online Store](#) or use the [Fillable Membership Form](#).
- MoASSP/MCCTA Fall Conference - [MoASSP/MCCTA Fall Conference](#)
- MoASSP District Contacts, Meeting Dates, Times, and Locations - <http://www.moassp.org/> hit District Dropdown and hit the member district for your school

BE DILIGENT WITH HARASSMENT AND BULLYING ISSUES - There are three cases with principals being handled by NASSP in Missouri over student suicides. There are civil cases and even criminal cases regarding principals handling of harassment issues and bullying. Make sure you are hot-lining or contacting local law enforcement about ANY issue. Make sure you have a paper trail for everything. [EdCounsel has](#) a summary on the back page of a handout you might wish to review. I'm sure other law firms have similar hard copies available for your use and you should use your school attorney's information.

[Trauma Informed Schools](#) – This should be on your district website. This is enough for the 2017-18 school year.

[What can you do about helping possible hate-group members?](#) Hate groups, fake news, and propaganda have been in the news lately. Good teaching will help students avoid propaganda, will probe and not preach, and will suggest alternative communities. (Education Week Teacher) Another good site is from the [Harvard Library](#), *Fake News, Misinformation, and Propaganda*.

How do you deal with success and what responsibilities do you have to share successes? Does your influence stop at your school door? When was the last time you were interviewed for something positive on the radio, television, or even by the local newspaper? You are so busy trying to juggle the issues in your own building or your own district that you fail to realize you can be of service at the state

level and at the national level. You can impact the state and America from the principal's office. [National Public Radio interviewed Kevin Grawer](#) of Maplewood Richmond Heights about how MRH teachers guide a difficult conversation about race, diversity, and differing beliefs, *you know, I think the first thing you do as a school is you have a safe and supportive space where everybody feels they belong. That's key. Then they have, you know the ability to disagree with somebody and do it without being disagreeable.* Be ready for those big moments by presenting at an MoASSP conference, asking to give a presentation at your MoASSP District meeting, or maybe presenting at the NASSP National Conference next summer.

Think outside the box – We seem to be stuck in the school paradigm that has been around for over a century and when we try to think creatively it is in that mode. ***If it is going to happen, it needs to happen with our secondary schools and our creative principal minds.*** Be thinking about how we can influence DESE with fresh ideas and ways to validate our student successes. How do we get out from under the Carnegie unit and into a continual learning experience where learning outside the classroom is equally as valuable as inside the classroom? [When judging school quality](#), the public gives much more weight to students' job preparation and interpersonal development than to their standardized test scores, the poll shows. That said, though, Americans do still value traditional academic preparation, especially opportunities for advanced academic studies.

The public offers little support for standardized testing in contrast to the deep interest in testing by policy makers over the last two decades. Less than half of adults (42%) say performance on standardized tests is a highly important indicator of school quality – that includes just 13% who call test scores extremely important. Far more point to developing students' interpersonal skills (39%) and offering technology and engineering instruction (37%) as extremely important.

ACT You have some time– As you prepare your communication to the community and to the news outlets on the release date of, September 7, 2017, hit a couple of the highlights in your information. One big point is we raised out state average two-tenths of a point and Missouri ranks 4th out of 17 states that have census testing. As most of you are aware, the state census testing will no longer be part of the state budget for assessments. If your school district chooses to pay for the ACT, the company has made available the dates and windows for assessing the students second semester. The cost for the ACT in-school assessment is \$45.00 for the ACT (Paper & Pencil) and \$61.50 for the ACT+ Writing (Paper & Pencil).

[Planning for the spring ACT testing dates and window.](#)

District Testing Key Dates and Deadlines

	Registration/Contact	Initial Testing Date	Make-up Test Date	Online Testing
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		(Paper)	(Paper)	Window
Spring 2018	September 29, 2017	February 27, 2018	March 20, 2018	February 27-28, 2018 March 6-8, 2018
Spring 2018	October 27, 2017	April 3, 2018	April 24, 2018	April 3-5, 2018

Beginning Teacher Assistance Program Workshops: All beginning teachers must attend a workshop as part of their certification process. Workshops are available at three different sites.

Sponsored by MoASSP and MAESP

Time: 9:00 am - 3:00 pm

Cost: \$88.00

October 12th (University of Central Missouri)

October 13th (Lindenwood University)

October 14th (Lindenwood University)

Register by going to the [Online Store](#) or use our [Fillable Form \(Click Here\)](#)

Fax back the fillable form to 573-445-6416 or email to kkovar@moassp.org

Thank you for all you do for our students in Missouri. Your leadership and guidance helps enhance student and teacher learning. Yes, it really is the principal of the Thing.