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Serving All Middle Level and High School Administrators

MoASSP Update June 21, 2018

Video Version: <https://youtu.be/sPSRQc-wGHY>

MoASSP Principals,

In the movie or the stage play “The Lion King”, the song *Circle of Life* by Elton John and Tim Rice, reminds me of the place in life I find myself today, and where you will be someday as well. At some point in time we begin to realize “*There’s more to see than can ever be seen and more to do than can ever be done*” (lyrics by Tim Rice). We learn that the joy is in the journey, and what we see and what we do impacts everyone within, and many outside, our sphere of contact. We know there is a circle of life, and part of our role is to prepare the next leaders to keep the circle intact. In a few days MoASSP will have a new leader. Clark Mershon will be great for many reasons, and the most important two are his vast experience and his communication skills. As an administrator, Clark has served as a middle level principal, a member of central office, and as a high school principal. He also has a solid team to help him with the managerial side of the organization, which will allow him to have ample time to evaluate the present vision of MoASSP, and to develop relationships with the major players who impact your work as principals in Missouri, and at the national level. He will get plenty of help from Doug, Katy, and Ginny who will provide the support he needs to ensure the transition is smooth.

Clark will answer to a great Board of Directors. They are knowledgeable, collaborative, and eager to serve the needs of all secondary principals in Missouri. It is gratifying to see fifteen leaders grow cerebrally in both knowledge and in the capacity to influence their buildings, districts, and the state.

I have always considered myself lucky, and I owe nearly all of my success to the quality people who continually propped me up, supported me, gave me second chances, and overlooked my flaws. I have been most proud to serve along-side some of the greatest leaders in America. Principals who tirelessly put themselves on the line each day in support of the students and people they serve. MoASSP was the catalyst for my continual learning, of my association with knowledgeable principals, and for the opportunity to contribute to change both in the organization and with the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education in Missouri.

Even before working in the MoASSP office, MoASSP provided me many opportunities to influence education in Missouri. As a principal, I was on several committees with DESE, wrote letters of support for our issues, spoke at conferences, and made many friends. More importantly, I was influenced by some of the best principal leaders in America, and I can say that with complete confidence because of the opportunities MoASSP has given me to interact at the national level in a manner similar to the two previous executive directors.

I never aspired to have the title of Executive Director. For three years I watched Jim King and understood he was a gifted man who was passionate about MoASSP and the members he served. I was humbled to be offered the position knowing the shoes were big. The anxiety was high, and my initial state of mind was “Don’t screw this up, Phil.” What I soon realized was the Board and the MoASSP members make this organization run, and a little of the anxiety went away as I traveled the state and realized the support was systemic and a powerful force.

For the last 7 years I have been in the MoASSP office, and for the last 4 years as the Executive Director. I can honestly say, it has never felt like work. All I ever wanted to do was teach, and I was granted that dream. I have had a wonderful career serving students, teachers, and most recently principals. I firmly believe the principal members of MoASSP are the most knowledgeable about teaching, learning, and the value of leadership of any state in the country. MoASSP is in good hands with your guidance and extended effort.

I will miss you, your smiles, your successes, and your friendship, but the circle of life has to run its course. I know you will continue to grow this organization into an even more influential and powerful educational force that will intentionally grow more leaders and make Missouri one of the most positive learning states in the country.

2018-19 Changes in the Law for Education (see the attachment for many of the changes and more details than below) – 40 laws were passed this session in Missouri that will have an impact on education in your district or your building. Some of the laws are mandated and others are suggested or become law if certain conditions are met. Share the list with central office or your local MoASSP District members. A few big changes are, but not limited to:

- District Suicide Plan in place by July 1, 2018 (what will you do about training?)
- Mandated dyslexia training required during the 2018-19 school year.
- ACT and WorkKeys – if your school district pays for all students to take the ACT, students must have a choice of which assessment they take.
- High schools must provide students with resources and information on high-demand jobs, certifications, skills, salaries etc. by November 1, of each year.
- Middle level or high school – if you teach human sexuality in a class you must adjust the curriculum to include sexual harassment, sexual violence and consent.
- Virtual courses August 2018 – This bill is a bit complicated and your legal representative should help draw up policy.
- Attorney-in-fact - This bill is a bit complicated and your legal representative should help draw up policy.
- Coming for 2019-20 – Allowing math, science, or practical arts credit for a computer science course.

[NASSP National Conference](#) – Join 89 Missouri principals in Chicago, July 11-13. There is still time to register for the NASSP National Conference. Could we get to 100? If you are going, join us for a reception *Hyatt Regency McCormick Place 2233 S Dr. MLK Drive, Chicago, IL. Thursday, July 12th, 5:00 PM – 7:00 PM. Two drink tickets and light refreshments.*

The MoASSP Board of Directors and Your District Presidents and President Elects met last week – I want to thank the presidents and the Board of Directors for giving of their time at this year’s summer board meeting. The more knowledge a principal has about the inner workings of the state

and federal government bodies, and the organizations that impact the building, the better understanding a leader has about systems, organizations, leadership, and influence. Seeing things from different angles, through the eyes of a variety of viewpoints and associations creates better leaders capable of communicating the importance and the vision for education. In two short days the presidents were able to increase their network exponentially, gain valuable knowledge, and reflect on their own skills and practice. They heard from executive directors JoAnn Bartoletti of NASSP, Kerwin Urhahn of MSHSAA, Steve Yoakum of PSRS, Doug Hayter of MASA, and the new executive director of MoASSP Clark Mershon. Just think of the years of experience in leadership, problem solving, and national and international relations that this group was exposed to in two short days. It is always our goal every meeting to inform, inspire, and advance the leadership skills of every attendee. The feedback was that the goal was achieved.

MoASSP and NASSP Membership is Open –This is a great time to join the 1,200 members that make up MoASSP, the MoASSP District, and the 555 NASSP members from Missouri. Membership forms can be accessed through our [“Fillable Forms”](#) available on the website and either mailed in, emailed as a PDF, or sent to your central office for purchase order. The [MoASSP Store](#) has easy access for credit card purchases. Our store allows VISA, Master Card, and Discover.

New Commissioner - There were 10 applicants for the job of commissioner in December, but Shields says they will have to reapply if interested. Shields says this board needs to be very deliberate; no need to rush due to Roger Dorson’s leadership as Interim Commissioner.

We have a quorum! – Carol Hallquist and Peter Herschend have been appointed to the state board of education. That gives the board 5 members in good standing and they had their first meeting June 14, 2018. Carol is new to the board and her learning curve will be steep, but with 4 experienced members in place the rhythm and tone of the board will not undergo major changes at this time.

It has been a great pleasure serving you. The more you know, the more you understand **It Really is the Principal of the Thing!**