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Serving All Middle Level and High School Administrators

MoASSP Update November 17, 2017

Video Version: <https://youtu.be/sLobY9q-d-k>

MoASSP Principals,

[The value of professional organizations](#) - In states where education professional organization voices are silenced, students suffer. An intended or unintended consequence of releasing our commissioner would splinter the education groups and disrupt the relationships that have been solidified over the last several years. By bringing together all facets of education and putting a premium on collaboration, Dr. Vandeven has shown she supports all aspects of education in Missouri. As a visible and open participant with MoASSP and other educational groups, Dr. Vandeven has not only shared her vision but has adjusted it based on the knowledge she has received through her open leadership style. As a result of the collaborative effort, MoASSP has had significant influence in many areas involving secondary education. You are the best contact for the big picture view of school cultures, student successes, and the present-day adolescent difficulties. Your knowledge and influence are particularly important to help support and drive education in Missouri. Without the collective voice of MoASSP, someone else is speaking for you and it may not always be a positive story.

Thank you for expressing your opinion to the State Board of Education and your Senator. Many of your emails have been sent to the board and the Senators are now aware of the problems that will result from firing the commissioner. You may see more at [St. Louis Post Dispatch, November 16, 2017](#). If you have **NOT** sent an email to the State Board of Education, your Senator, or the governor's office, please do so today. State Board of Education sbe@dese.mo.gov, copy it to the their Senator at [Senator Look-up](#), and the [governor's office](#) (this one will take a little work, about 2 minutes) MoASSP would top over 1,200 emails to the board.

[Are your students Civics Ready?](#) – The Nebraska Board of Education is working on adding another “C” to College and Career Ready, Civics Ready. *The definition, which was discussed at the board's meeting last week, breaks the idea of civic readiness into four key areas: knowledge (of government, civic rights); skills (public advocacy, gathering and processing different viewpoints); actions (volunteering, voting); and dispositions (concern for others' constitutional rights and freedoms, respect for processes and laws governing the republic).*

Celebrations and Collaboration – Traveling the state and attending principal meetings, education award banquets, visiting with principals in rural Missouri and suburban areas, has been educational for the participants and for me. It is exciting to see the lengths principals, teachers, and school districts have gone to meet the needs of students. “Art on the Van Gogh” brings art to schools in Southwest Missouri. McDonald County schools bring Museum-quality art to students via a mobile art bus. They have created art lessons to be used on the bus and train teachers to embed a variety of lessons in instruction. Think of the possibilities, character education, science, history, math, and communications arts. A program like this could be offered at all levels in a district. Did you ever think about the meat counter at your grocery store? Who cuts it and how do you know they are offering you the best cuts? One small school has a business that sold over \$25,000 in meat products last year. They are the only state-inspected meat processing facility operated by students in the State of Missouri. Think about what they learn as part of this Ag program that offers a food service program called “Miller Cardinal Pride Meats.” Another principal shared a strategy that saved time and made communication with parents more personal. Charlie Belt, of Blue Springs South, does not answer emails from parents with emails, he calls. It is much more efficient and there is much less chance of miscommunication. Other principals shared concerns about student mental health and the struggles schools are having with social skills.

ACT Conference – You may Register for the Conference at [ACT State 2018 MISSOURI ACT STATE ORGANIZATION CONFERENCE](#) – Show-Me Missouri ACTion. This year’s conference is in St. Louis at **Saint Louis University, Cook Hall on Monday, January 8, 2018.** 8:00 am to 2:50 pm. Lunch will be provided.

Getting principals together at monthly meetings serves multiple purposes. The principal’s job is lonely and isolating. You can hide in your office and be a reactive principal who maintains the status quo, or you can challenge yourself and your teachers to take risks and explore exciting ways to engage students in learning. Regardless of your situation, you owe it to your teachers, students, and yourself to meet with your “fellow wizards.” Seeing what other schools are doing increases your knowledge. It also primes the pump for creativity and adapting or adjusting ideas that meet the needs of your students. Another purpose is for your own personal well-being. You need to have a place to share your struggles, successes, and your internal angsts. No one knows the intricacies of the principalship better than your peers. Make time for yourself and GET OUT of YOUR DISTRICT.

Have a wonderful Thanksgiving. It Really is the Principal of the Thing and you deserve a short break.