

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

I would like to extend warm greetings and welcome you to another year of experiences with MO-CASE! As you begin the 2020-2021 school year, I sincerely hope you are safe and your health is strong.

As I began to consider a message from the MO-CASE team, my thoughts immediately went to the past 6 months and all that has transpired. As leaders in education we have bravely entered the unknown, then attempted to find a “new normal” and locate comfort within very uncomfortable situations.

Each of us possess unique talents and each of our stories are one-of-a-kind. In the context of our own learning story, the struggles and the successes, I offer the following three-part message.

First, keep learning. Learning can be tough and uncomfortable. Yet without lifelong learning, we become stagnant and complacent. Learning gives us meaning. We can not escape change, but the changes we are experiencing give learning new relevance. Change is exhilarating and can be frightening. Occasionally there are times when a system is unhealthy and change is inevitable in order to “get better” or survive.

For educational leaders, specifically special education, we are committed to providing, supporting and innovating creative ways to service our specific student population. Currently, we are asking questions I never thought we would ever ask. I encourage you to find positive people and networking groups to surround yourself with in this time of uncertainty. We in MO-CASE have continuously worked together to find answers to questions and ways around barriers, so this is really nothing new. We worked together to take aim at moving targets and focus on solutions even when the goal posts shifted. As uncomfortable as it may be, we try to view each new day as a learning experience. The learning stakes are simply too high not to view our strange new days this way. This is what we do as leaders and learners.

Second, I encourage you to engage in regular self-reflection. As special educators we understand the need to self-reflect, however, self-reflection is one of the most difficult things we do. It is also one of the most powerful. Self-reflection may cause us to feel vulnerable, fearful, isolated, and afraid. Self-reflection forces us to look at ourselves and we may not like what we see. So WHY invest the time? Self-reflection on what we were and what we hoped to be supports our well-being. Our well-being is extremely important, especially now. Your decision to self-reflect shows courage and confidence and will ultimately provide clarity for future improvement. Self-reflection helps us grow internally which we in turn use to benefit others.

Finally, I could not assert this point enough, always, always, always remember your WHY. Your WHY is what makes you different from others. Why do you get out of bed in the morning? Why do you choose to continue in this career? What is your purpose? What is your cause? Why do we in MO-CASE continue in good times and in bad to educate our students? I encourage you to begin to think from the inside out. I urge you to find your why FIRST, and then begin your work. Your WHY guides your destiny, your legacy, your purpose.

Each of you in MO-CASE stands for what is unique and common to all the excellent special educators across the country. Now is our moment to begin the next chapter in a never ending story of learning, reflecting and seeking.

Thank you for what you do!

Dr. Ashley Krause,
MO-CASE President



By Lisa Robbins

This year, 2020, will go down in history for so many unprecedented events in the world and our country because of this year's Covid-19 global pandemic. Professional basketball games came to halt. Professional baseball has totally revamped their plan, reduced the amount of games they will play, and they are playing games without anyone in the stands! Several college football teams are waiving play for this year due to the uncertainty of Covid-19. The fall out of this epidemic has not been lost on our children and youth as they were forced to move to an online/virtual format of instruction for the last two and half months of the 2019-2020 school year. While some schools have decided to begin their year providing instruction online/virtual others are scrambling to implement many changes to attendance policies due to a 6-foot social distancing requirement along with everyone required to where some sort of cloth face covering. Is this our new normal? Who knows? But, one thing is for sure, if you have not been involved in political decisions, now is the time to become involved and informed!



Grassroots campaigns and demonstrations of activism have made the front pages of newspapers across the country as individuals ban together to help shape, among others, our educational systems. Black Lives Matter demonstrations, movements to defund police, and Covid 19, among other hot topics have become the focus of many political campaigns this year. One of the benefits of living in a democratic system is that all citizens have the right to advocate. As a voter, you are an essential part of our democratic system and your advocacy can be an important tool to influence Congress and its actions. Citizens are more powerful than they realize when it comes to influencing members of Congress to take a position of support or opposition on legislative actions. A study conducted by the Congressional Management Foundation discovered that constituent visits to the Washington, D.C. office (97%) and to the district/state office (94%) have “some” or “a lot” of influence on an undecided member of Congress (CITE). While I am in no way suggesting that we all need to figure out ways to pilgrimage to Washington, D.C. or even to Jefferson City, I am suggesting that we work to gain knowledge on what legislation may be upcoming nationally and locally and how that legislation may impact us, our families, our community, and those who cannot advocate for themselves.

CLICK THE BLUE BUTTON TO CONTINUE....



This year, the Division of Special Education, Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, held their annual New Director Academy virtually each morning the week of August 3-7. Due to that format, MOCASE did not have an opportunity to speak directly to the new Special Education Directors and staff who attended. MOCASE understands the challenges a new Special Education Administrator faces as soon as they accept the position, and even more so in this unprecedented time of COVID-19. As a result, we would like to share just a few of the excellent opportunities MO-CASE can provide for a new Special Education Director.

Our Administrator Mentoring Program (AMP) offers new Special Education Directors the opportunity to work with a veteran special education administrator for two years. The mentor and the new Director will have contact with one another for at least 10 hours each of those years. This might be virtually, over the phone or actually in person. The mentor is there to help the new Director work through DESE deadlines, compliance issues, data questions and just to be the support that is so often needed in a position that is unique in a district. Understanding the nuances of special education can be confusing so having someone who has walked the walk as a guide is extremely helpful and comforting. If you are interested in this program, click on the New Director tab on the MO-CASE website <http://www.mo-case.org/AMP> for additional information and to get registered.

New Special Education Directors should also consider attending the fall MO-CASE conference which will be going virtual this

year. This conference offers a plethora of learning opportunities focused on topics such as leadership, instruction, social-emotional well-being and compliance. For many special education Directors, this becomes the one conference each year they try to attend to keep up with what's going on in the rest of the state in the field of special education. To find more information and to register, click on the events tab on the MO-CASE website <http://www.mo-case.org/Events>.

One additional terrific resource new Special Education Directors should become acquainted with is the local LASE group (Local Administrators of Special Education) in their area. This is a group of professionals doing the same job, dealing with the same situations and the same challenges who meet at various times of the year to collaborate and share ideas, thoughts and, yes, sometimes even frustrations. Becoming connected with your area LASE organization gives you an automatic support group. To find out the closest group in your areas, click on the membership tab on the MO-CASE website <http://www.mo-case.org/LASE>.

Congratulations on your new position! MO-CASE will be planning some additional activities for new Directors throughout the year. If you are interested in these activities or need assistance with any of the things listed above, please contact me at jrothermel@edplus.org and I will be happy to help you in any way I can. Have a terrific school year!



UPDATE:

Typically held in Washington, D.C., during July, the Special Education Legislative Summit (SELS) is an opportunity for educators from across the country to make a difference by advocating for change with Members of Congress.

The COVID-19 pandemic brought the Summit to new heights with a Virtual SELS being held over the course of two weeks from **July 13-24, 2020**. Over 1,500 grassroots advocates represented all 50 states.

The first week was dedicated to advocacy training on key issues. These included the following:

- A Live Townhall Event kicked off the Virtual SELS experience and provided a program overview of the week along with a presentation of the first set of tools necessary in becoming an advocate.
- An overview of funding to include the ins and outs of federal funding for special education. This included the “asks” in this area regarding expectations for this year’s appropriations.
- Current information regarding teacher shortage, the current status of the Higher Education Act, as well as “asks” in this area.
- An overview of not only the state of the mental health crisis, but also a glimpse into what educators may be facing as programs and schools reopen this fall. “Asks” for when meetings with Members of Congress

were discussed.

- The current status of issues and funding related to COVID-19.

The second week consisted of a series of scheduled virtual meetings with Members of Congress and their staff. This enabled participants to activate their advocacy skills by communicating the discussed “asks” with Members.

Missouri had 34 participants, which was a record for our state. We were able to meet with all ten Members of Congress, or their office staff. The meetings with the Senators are extremely important. We had 20 participants in the virtual meeting with the office of Senator Blunt, and 17 participants in the virtual meeting with the office of Senator Hawley.

MO-CASE believes this was a very successful event and look forward to SELS 2021 and having even more participants.



Submitted by

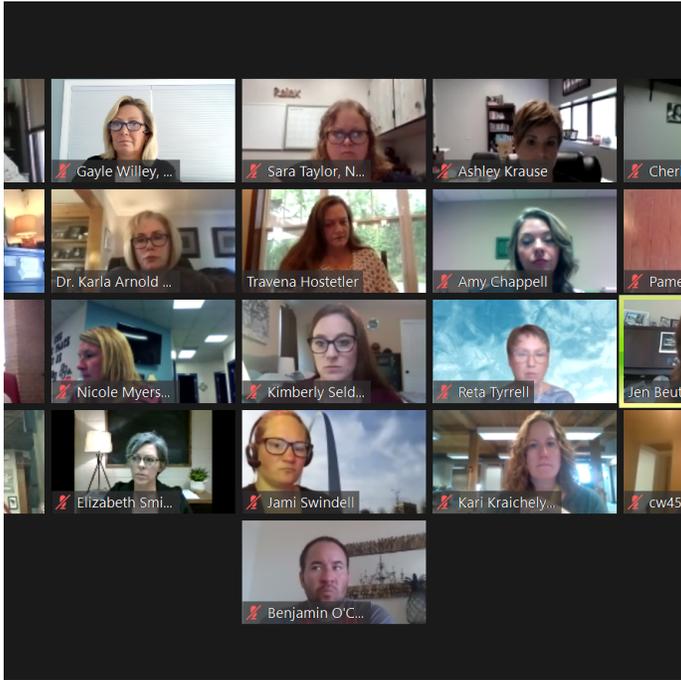
Dr. Karla Arnold, Director of Innovation and Learning

Carrie Turner, Legislative Co-Chair

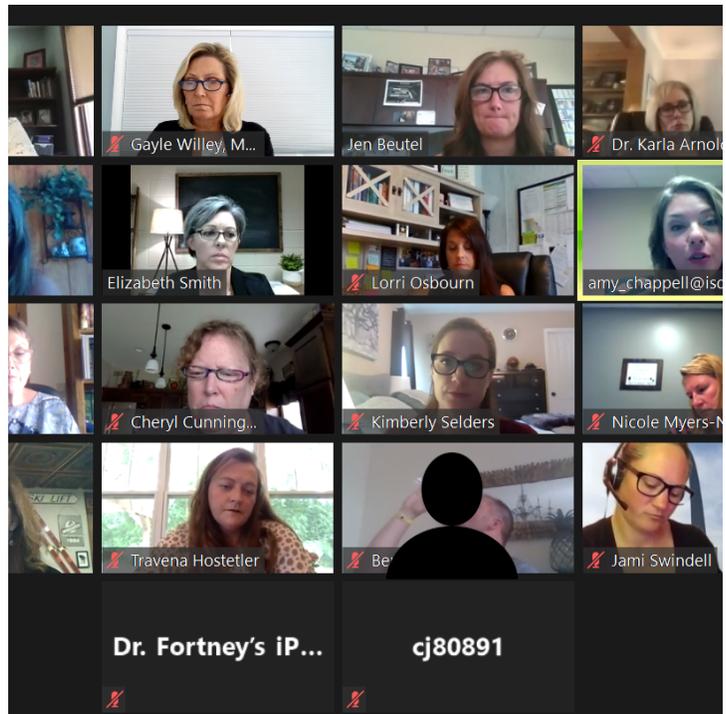
Dr. Travena Hostetler, Legislative Co-Chair



A screenshot during the CEC Special Education Legislative Session. This was taken during a Zoom meeting with Legislative Aid, Caitlyn Wilson from Senator Roy Blunt's Office.



A screenshot of CEC/MO-CASE members during a Zoom meeting with Legislative Aide Chad Johnson from Senator Josh Hawley's Office. This was during the CEC Special Education Virtual Legislative Summit July 13-21.



A screenshot during the CEC Special Education Legislative Session. This was taken during a Zoom meeting with Legislative Aid, Micheal Kostovos from Representative Billy Long's Office.



It is important to support the advancement of one's profession, and becoming a member of your professional organization says you are very committed to your profession and actively participating in its advancement.



Involvement with a professional organization will afford the participant an opportunity to network with colleagues. Making connections with others who have similar interests reinforces why one has chosen this career. It enables new professionals to associate with senior members of the profession and learn from them. Joining a professional organization is critical in keeping up-to-date on the latest knowledge and practices locally, regionally, and nationally. It helps the professional to stay abreast of current issues and opportunities and will also assist in advancement of knowledge and skills for the member who becomes involved.

Ask yourself the following questions:

- Do you know someone who-
- is in need of a mentor?
 - is seeking out learning opportunities that will further their knowledge?
 - has shown strong leadership skills?

Did you think of a colleague, family member or friend? Now, more than ever, is the time to reach out and talk with them about the benefits of joining CEC/CASE/MO-CASE. Encourage them to join **and** get involved!

MO-CASE Benefits

MO-CASE proudly offers the following supports/services:

- Networking with exceptional educators
- Representation on DESE or other state level committees
- Information on state and federal issues
 - Legislative awareness and advocacy
 - "The Director"- MO-CASE's quarterly newsletter
 - Charles Cummings Scholarship Program

MO-CASE offers the following Professional Development Opportunities:

- MO-CASE Law Conference
- MO-CASE Special Education Administrators' Conference
- Annual Collaborative Conference
- Professional Development Resources on Website

Update on June Board Meeting

The MO-CASE Board of Directors met on June 23, 2020 at Margaritaville for a day and a half of reflecting, reviewing and planning. Each Board member had their own 6' table and the Resort was accommodating to our need for distance and safety.

The theme for the meeting, ***"Two Years in Review"***, was led by Vicki McNamara, President. The Board reflected on the Strategic Plan and the collaboration around committee work to help meet the goals.

The Board highlighted the work on Advocacy/Legislation and saw that the time and energy spent going to Jefferson City in February of 2020 was important and impactful and will continue this year.

We viewed the videos that were put together by Travena Hostetler and Nick Cotta that Highlighted MO-CASE from our Board Members, Members and Sponsors. Not only were they a lot of fun but they will be used to highlight and recruit members.

Our 2020-2021 Budget was approved and updates from the Executive Committee and standing chairs were given.



The collaboration continued with Dr. Barr and Ginger Henry joining us. They shared updates from DESE, Special Education on Maintenance of Effort, teacher shortage, Speech implementers. Dr. Barr has made a commitment for Special Education Directors in MO to have access to the LRP *Special Ed Connection*. Please call 1-800-515-4577 x6303 or email: specialiedconnection@lrp.com to request more information.

The commitment and hard work of each Board member is truly valued. The next Board meeting will be before the Virtual Fall Conference.

A huge "Thank You" goes out to Mike Baumgardner from *SpedTrak* who sponsored the Board's dinner. Mike shared the progress monitoring tool from SpedTrak and answered questions.



**Submitted by Liz Smith, LASE Coordinator,
MO-CASE Board of Directors**

Sometimes being a Special Education administrator or process coordinator can be a lonely job. Quite often we may be the only one in our district. That is why it is so vital to reach out to collaborate with other leaders who work in similar roles. We are very lucky to have our **Local Administrators in Special Education (LASE) Groups** that meet regularly across the state. MO-CASE provides support to our LASE groups by providing up to date information on policy and legislative issues that could directly affect special education which can be quickly disseminated to LASE group contacts. The LASE groups provide a local affordable means for professional development, collaboration, and networking for Special Education Directors and Process Coordinators across the state. If you are new to your role or have never attended a LASE meeting in your area I would encourage you to review the provided list and contact the LASE representative closest to you. Have a wonderful school year and we look forward to seeing you at a LASE meeting this year!

For more information on a LASE group in your area please reach out to the listed contact below who would be closest to your location! If you need further assistance in finding a group close to you, please feel free to contact me, Kinsey Cissna at

cissnak@palmyra.k12.mo.us



LASE GROUP	CONTACT	EMAIL
Chariton Valley LASE	Beth Andrews	bandrews@westran.k12.mo.us
Early Childhood Special Education	Cindy Edwards	cedwards@stcmo.org
Four Rivers LASE	Cheri Fortney	cfortney@stcmo.org
Jefferson County LASE	Matt Whitehead	whitehead_matt@hsdr3.org
JJCBS	Annie Knox	annie.knox@harrisonvilleschools.org
KC LASE	Meagan Patterson	mpatterson@center.k12.mo.us
Lake Area Directors LASE	William (Bill) Altermatt	altermattb@osageschools.org
Mid-MO LASE	Sarah Baumgartner and Amanda Wogan	sbaumgartner@nc.k12.mo.us; amanda.wogan@sc.k12.mo.us
NE MO LASE	Tonya Grant/President	tgrant@atlanta.k12.mo.us
North Central Lase	Becky Morris	bmorris@pattonsburg.k12.mo.us
NW MO LASE	Lexi Heck	lheck@fxbulldogs.net
Scenic Rivers Area	Larry Williams	larryrw64@gmail.com
SE MO LASE	Teresa Green, Ed.D.	tgreen@sgdragons.org
South Central LASE	Vickie Gorsuch	vgorsuch@ccr2.org
Southwest LASE-Joplin	Adam Lett	alett@mcdonaldco.k12.mo.us
Springfield LASE	Lorri Osbourn	losbourn@trilakescoop.com
St. Charles/St. Louis County	Tami Yates	tlyates@ssdmo.org
St. Louis City Charter	Kari Kraichely	kkraichely@kippstl.org
West Central LASE	Sarah Mason	smason@clintoncardinals.org

DON'T FORGET!!

We are going VIRTUAL this fall!

Registration is now Open for the 2020 43rd MO-CASE Virtual Fall Conference!

Our educational landscape is ever-changing! Join us for up to the minute best practices from a legal, educational, and behavioral lens. Attendee-favorite Lawyer Potpourri will feature attorneys from across the state for a "Year in Review," COVID-19 Best Practices and Pitfalls, and more.

When: Sunday, September 20th-22nd

Featured Sessions:

- Keynotes speakers Monday and Tuesday
- Live Law Conference on Sunday afternoon

Virtual Attendees will have the option to watch Live or watch on your own time up for up to 14 days beginning Sept 20, 2020.

[MO-CASE.ORG/EVENTS TO REGISTER!](https://mo-case.org/events)



"CASE continues to grow in membership (we recently surpassed our 5,000-member goal!) and has proven to be an effective and influential organization. We appreciate your partnership in this very important work."

-Phyllis Wolfram, CASE Executive Director

A Special THANK YOU to our amazing Sponsor who supported our June 2020 Board Meeting!





MO-CASE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Elected Officers:

President: **Dr. Ashley Krause, Farmington R7**

Past President: **Dr. Vicki McNamara, Camdenton RIII**

President Elect: **Marlena Walley, Raymore-Peculiar**

Treasurer: **Dr. Cheri Fortney, Franklin**

*Secretary: **Liz Smith, Reeds Spring School District**

Appointed Members:

Professional Development: **Dr. Jen Beutel, Platte County**

*LASE Chair: **Kinsey Cissna, Palmyra R-1 School District**

LASE Rep: **Christina Harbour, Sullivan School District**

*LASE Rep: **Teresa Green, Ste Genevieve School District**

LASE Rep: **Mindy Garrett, Poplar Bluff R-1 School District**

LASE Rep: **Tami Yates, Special School District**

*LASE Rep: **Ben O'Connor, Barton Dade Jasper Special Education Cooperative**

Policy and Legislation (co-chair): **Travena Hostetler, Special School District**

Policy and Legislation (co-chair): **Carrie Turner, Grain Valley**

AMP/New Directors: **Jeanne Rothermel, St Louis RPDC**

ECSE Rep: **Cindy Edwards, Franklin County Special Education Coop**

Communications & Technology: **Nick Cotta, Lebanon School District**

Higher Education Rep: **Dr. Lisa Goran, University of Missouri**

Higher Education Rep: **Dr. Lisa Robbins, University of Central Missouri**

Higher Education Rep: **Dr. Reesha Adamson, Missouri State University**

Charter School Rep: **Kari Kraichely, KIPP Charter**

*MO CEC Rep: **Sally Bloom, Retired Columbia Public**

MACCE/SEAP: **Amy Wilson, Columbia Public Schools**

*New position/Board member

MO-CASE STAFF

Gayle Willey, Executive Director

Miriah Fowler, Conference Planner/Admin Assistant

Karla Arnold, Director of Innovation and Learning (July 1, 2020)

3550 Amazonas Dr.

Jefferson City, MO 65109

573-644-7804

www.mo-case.org

office@mo-case.org

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"MO-CASE is a subdivision of the Council of Administrators of Special Education (CASE) -
A division of the Council for Exceptional Children (CEC)."