

Fourth Annual MO-CASE Advocacy Day and Legislative Training
By
Carrie Turner and Dr. Karla Arnold

The 2023 Missouri Legislative Session began on January 4th. The last day of the session was May 12th. The MO-CASE Legislative Committee worked diligently throughout the session to review all filed bills relating to special education. Once reviewed, talking points were developed and sent to the School Administrators Coalition in order to provide our input. Testimony, written and in person, was provided as necessary. The work of this committee is very important to our work as leaders in special education.

There were a few bills directly related to special education this session. However, the main focus has been open enrollment, which does have an impact on students with disabilities. We continue to follow this bill very closely as it moves through the legislative process. Other bills we've continued to follow include: IEP Consent bill, Burden of Proof, Student Suspensions, and the Parent's Bill of Rights.

We held three events to involve our membership in this advocacy process. These included our annual Legislative Training, a Legislative Webinar, and Advocacy Day.

In an effort to give our membership information prior to the beginning of the Legislative Session, we held our legislative training in November. The MO-CASE Legislative Committee provided the training in a webinar format, which was well attended.

We want to give Susan Goldammer with MSBA (Missouri School Boards Association) a huge "Thank You" for partnering with MO-CASE to provide an exceptional legislative webinar. This webinar session was provided the week prior to our Advocacy Day and helped to inform attendees of the current legislative action related to bills submitted this session.

Our 4th Annual MO-CASE Advocacy Day was held in person for the second time since the initiation of this event. Scott Kimble, Director of Legislative Advocacy at the Missouri Association of School Administrators (MASA), provided the most up-to-date action happening in the legislature so all attendees would be prepared for the day. We would like to give him a huge shout out as the information he provided was phenomenal and created a fantastic learning opportunity for the 22 individuals who attended the event.

In addition to this event, we held a writing campaign a few weeks later in order to engage the rest of our membership in the advocacy process. The writing campaign specifically focused on 3 bills:

1. [HB 1163 Parental Consent for IEPs](#)
2. [HB 253 Open Enrollment bill](#)
3. [SB 85 Local Control for School Districts](#)

We would like to take this opportunity to thank the members of our legislative committee:

- Carrie Turner, Senior Improvement Consultant, Kansas City-Regional Professional Development Center (KC-RPDC)
- Tonya Rapert, Springfield Public Schools
- Sarah Moran, Farmington Public Schools
- Staci Mathes, Lee's Summit R-7 School District
- Samantha Poindexter, North Kansas City Schools

The dedication of this committee is very important to our work as leaders in special education. It takes the committee, as well as each and every special educator to work on advocacy to support our students with disabilities. We encourage you to get involved in this work. Attend the training opportunities provided and truly advocate for the best possible policy for our students.