

While it can be tempting to try to time the market and ride the wave of short-term rates, our investment adviser believes this strategy may not be the most appropriate in the long run. PFM Asset Management's* (PFMAM) view is that a properly developed investment strategy which aligns a portfolio's investment horizon to its constraints and long-run objectives is the most prudent approach. In a recent white paper entitled "Investing in a Falling Interest Rate Environment,"¹ PFMAM discusses the typical interest rate cycle, importance of portfolio segmentation, long-term considerations for investment strategies, and how investors should prepare for likely Fed rate cuts.

- The current inversion in the yield curve has resulted in higher yields on shorter-term investment options relative to longer-term investments.
- While these higher short-term yields may be attractive today, longer-term strategies have historically outperformed across a variety of interest rate environments.

Investing in a Falling Interest Rate Environment

- A disciplined strategy, incorporating liquidity needs, investment time horizon, and prudent risk management, is generally preferred over attempts to time the market.
- With the Federal Reserve (Fed) signaling the beginning of an easing cycle, now is a good time to be considering the benefit of extending duration to lock in today's available yields. This includes the potential benefit from having income locked in for a longer period time as well as the potential from price appreciation from longer-duration securities.

MOSIP encourages you to speak with a PFMAM team member who can work with you to evaluate your cash flows and liquidity needs to help build strategies that involve both short-term and long-term investment options. Please contact Trish Oppeau at 314.619.1792 / oppeaut@pfmam.com, Nick Kenny at 573.234.0814 / kennyn@pfmam.com, or Angie Hughes at 816.402.0018 / hughesa@pfmam.com.

* PFM Asset Management is a division of U.S. Bancorp Asset Management Inc. Please see mosip.org for relevant disclosures.

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support, and empower each other in leadership.

In addition, Dr. Karla Eslinger, Commissioner of Education, will join us to offer her insights on the current state of education in Missouri.

All current and aspiring female leaders—including assistant superintendents, superintendents, directors, teacher leaders, principals, and college professors—are welcome at this event!

The cost for the Summit is \$125.

MASA members may register for the summit by going to their MASA FinalForm site. Those needing assistance with registration, please call or email MASA Administrative Assistant, Melissa Shannon, (573) 638-4825 or melissa.shannon@mcsa.org.



Noted podcaster and National Academic Advisor for ClassLink, Jerri Kemble, will present "Turning Up the Volume on Women in Leadership," an empowering experience where participants will explore impactful ways women can uplift,



The primary presenter for this year's summit is Julie Lee, who will share insights into targeting specific skills that foster connection. Julie will discuss creating authentic relationships with your team, building a thriving work culture, and ensuring that team members feel valued.

Spring Conference, March 26-28 Margaritaville Resort

Be sure to make plans to register for the 2025 MASA/MOSPRA Spring Conference March 26-28, at Margaritaville Resort & Conference Center, Lake Ozark, Missouri. The Spring Conference will provide attendees more than 40 breakout sessions on topics that include AI, attracting and retaining teachers, leadership, important legal issues, school finance, curriculum and instruction, safety, communications and public relations, mental wellness, facility management, innovative education practices and workforce development.

Wednesday morning will include a pre-conference workshop "AI for School Leaders." This three-hour session lead by William Grube, will include insights on positioning your district to benefit from AI while mitigating risks, followed by hands-on, focusing on using AI for human capital, communication, data analysis, business services, teaching, and learning

Our First General Session will be on Wednesday, March 26 at 2:00 p.m. Our keynote speaker is **Josh Varner**. Josh,



Josh Varner

whose keynote is "Be Their Hero: Trauma Informed Care," has worked with over 200 organizations all over the country manage increased stress in the workplace. Josh uses a combination of storytelling and humor to make this challenging topic fun and engaging.

Wednesday afternoon will also include several breakout sessions, and the popular "Dialogue with the Commissioner" session. On Wednesday night both MASA and MOSPRA will hold their respective receptions and banquets.

On Thursday, March 27, participants will have multiple professional development sessions from which to choose. The Exhibition Hall, which is housed in the main lodge, will be open throughout the morning with a complimentary continental breakfast.

Thursday's Lunch and General Session will feature Olympic leadership speaker,

whose keynote is "Be Their Hero: Trauma Informed Care," has worked with over 200 organizations all over the country manage increased stress in the workplace. Josh uses a combination of storytelling and humor to make this challenging topic fun and engaging.

Ruben Gonzalez, who will inspire and equip you to win more. Ruben will share his experience of surrounding himself with those who could help him reach his goals. Ultimately, Ruben was able to create a Dream Team and by working through his team he was able to realize his dream



Ruben Gonzalez

On Friday morning, the MASA Business Meeting will be held and MOSPRA will hold a special breakfast and extended PR session.

Registration information was provided earlier via email. Additional conference information will be provided in January. Those needing assistance in registering should contact MASA Executive Assistant, Melissa Shannon: melissa.shannon@mcsa.org, or call (573) 638-4825.

Additional information including lodging can be found at www.MASAAonline.org.

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We know Missouri Education Finance

As a national leader on a powerful platform, our team of experts leverage localized knowledge to deliver tailored solutions that meet your unique goals.

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MASA SPOTLIGHT

A Publication of the Missouri Association of School Administrators

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David Schmitz Named 2025 Superintendent of the Year



Dr. David Schmitz

The Missouri Association of School Administrators (MASA) has announced the selection of Dr. David Schmitz, Superintendent of the Lebanon School District, as the 2025 Missouri Superintendent of the Year. Dr. Schmitz was honored during the MSBA/MASA Annual Fall Conference held October 19, 2024, at the Kansas City Convention Center, Kansas City, Missouri.

MASA Executive Director, Dr. Doug Hayter, stated, "Dr. David Schmitz has a true servant's heart. From the work he has done to improve early childhood education to the support he shows his staff, he is connected to those in his district. Dr. Schmitz has so many wonderful leadership qualities, and I know he will be a great representative of his fellow Missouri superintendents."

Dr. Schmitz is in his seventh year as Superintendent of the Lebanon School

District. Dr. Schmitz has served in multiple roles since he began his career in educational leadership. Dr. Schmitz served as an assistant principal with the Fulton School District; an assistant principal and principal with the Springfield Public Schools; and the Director of Secondary Schools with the Springfield Public Schools.

Dr. Schmitz has dedicated himself to ensuring students receive the best his district can offer. In his application he noted the work that has gone towards early childhood education including opening an Early Childhood Center and naming the district's first Director of Early Childhood Programming.

Dr. Schmitz places a premium on internal and external communications. The district has implemented a comprehensive multimedia communications strategy centered around consistent messaging focused on their mission and vision.

Known for advocating for public education, Dr. Schmitz actively engages with legislators to ensure Missouri's public education system is supported by effective laws.

The Missouri Association of School Administrators is pleased to honor Dr. Schmitz as the 2025 Missouri Superintendent of the Year.

Dr. Schmitz will be recognized during the first general session of the American Association of School Administrators National Conference on Education on March 8, 2025 for his state selection.

2025 AASA Conference March 6-8

The American Association of School Administrators (AASA) will host the 2025 National Conference on Education from March 6-8 at the Ernest N. Morial Convention Center in New Orleans, Louisiana. This year's theme is "Future Driven Leadership."

Missouri attendees are invited to the Missouri Breakfast on Friday, March 7, at 7:30 a.m. at the Hilton Riverwalk. Sponsors are American Fidelity Assurance, Audio Enhancement, Chartwells, and Veregy (formerly CTS).

The MASA President's Reception will take place from 5:00-6:30 p.m. at Mulate's Restaurant on March 7, with sponsorship from Ameresco, Coryell Roofing, EdCounsel LLC, Gilmore Bell PC, Guin Mundorf, LLC, Just Right Reader, PFM Asset Management, Piper Sandler, Right at School, Schneider Electric, Stifel, and Varsity Tutors. Members of the Kentucky School Administrators will join MASA members for this special event. Both events are free to attend, and spouses are welcome at the President's Reception.

Missouri's Superintendent of the Year, Dr. David Schmitz, will be honored during the first general session on Saturday, March 8.

For more details and to register, visit www.aasa.org. Please note that the Missouri Room Block is fully booked; for other accommodations, refer to AASA's hotel information at <https://nce.aasa.org/travel-hotels/>.



By Dr. Doug Hayter,
MASA Executive Director

One of the major items impacting the work of Missouri’s public schools and accordingly for MASA, is the passage of legislation over the decades. Last fall, I shared information about the history of Missouri’s Commissioners of Education. In this fall’s edition of the MASA Spotlight, I want to share information regarding an outline of some key education legislation. Missouri has had significant education legislation over the past five decades that has shaped its public education system. Here are some key laws and reforms:

Desegregation Orders and St. Louis Settlement (1970s-1990s)

Missouri, under federal court orders, desegregated its schools and, in the 1980s, entered a settlement funding city and suburban schools in St. Louis. The state supported a voluntary interdistrict transfer program, allowing St. Louis students to attend suburban schools and vice versa. The program, run by the Voluntary Interdistrict Choice Corporation (VICC), is now funded like other Missouri public schools and overseen by participating district superintendents. With a phase-out in place, students can continue until 2035-2036.

Missouri Outstanding Schools Act (1993)

This landmark act increased state funding for schools and raised

Five Decades of Major Education Legislation

accountability standards for schools and teachers, and it introduced the Missouri Assessment Program (MAP), the state’s standardized testing system, to evaluate student progress.

Missouri School Improvement Program (MSIP) – Ongoing Revisions

MSIP, initially created in the 1990s, is the accreditation and accountability system for Missouri schools. The program has gone through multiple versions (MSIP 1-6), each adjusting evaluation criteria, academic standards, and performance metrics for schools.

Virtual School Legislation (2006 and 2018)

The Missouri Virtual Instruction Program (MoVIP) was established in 2006, allowing students to take online courses. In 2018, Missouri passed a law expanding access to virtual education, letting students enroll in online programs through their local districts with state funding.

Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) Compliance (2015)

When the federal ESSA replaced the No Child Left Behind Act in 2015, Missouri adapted its state standards and accountability measures to align with the new federal requirements.

Charter Schools (1998-2022)

Charter Schools were established in 1998, and we have seen their metamorphosis in “Oversight and Quality” (2009), "Charter School Expansion" (2012), "Transparency and Oversight" (2016), "Enrollment and Accountability" (2021), and "Charter School Funding" (2022).

Senate Bill 727 – Omnibus Education Bill (2024)

The 2024 Omnibus Education Bill introduces several key changes: an increase in education savings

account (ESA) funds, expansion of charter schools to Boone County, and adjustments in student counting for the funding formula to include ADA and membership. It re-establishes minimum instructional days in certain districts and updates voting procedures for switching to a four-day school week. The bill also raises beginning and master’s degree teaching salaries, allows pay differentiation for hard-to-staff subjects, and provides a Basic State Aid bonus for districts meeting the new minimum-day requirements.

Understanding our history is key per this famous quote: "Those that fail to learn from history are doomed to repeat it." (Winston Churchill in a 1948 speech to the British House of Commons). Only by doing so can we navigate the ever-changing political landscape and its impact on education in Missouri and across our country today and in the years to come.



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MASA Business Associate Members

The following companies and organizations have joined MASA as Business Associate Members for 2024-2025. Please consider these companies when your district is making purchases or seeking professional assistance. MASA has established a link to the websites of most of these businesses at www.masaonline.org. (Choose the Business/Associate Members tab.)

Abre	FinalForms/AMP	MOREnet
Acrisure Midwest	Finalsite	Musco Lighting
Ameresco	FiredUP Consulting Group / Kevin Daniel	Nabholz
American Bus Sales, LLC	Fisher Tracks, Inc.	NAVIGATE Building Solutions
American Fidelity	Flexible Educators	Navitas
American Foundation for Suicide Prevention (AFSP)	Forrest T. Jones & Company	Network for Educator Effectiveness/EMINTS
Apptegy	Frontline Education	Opaa! Food Management
Audio Acoustics	Gaggle	Paragon Architecture
Audio Enhancement	Gilmore & Bell, P.C.	Parent ProTech Inc.
Aviben	Globe Life Family Heritage	ParentSquare
AVID Center	Great Expectations Education Foundation	PCC Sports
Azimuth Renewables	Great Southern Recreation	Penmac Education Staffing
Benchmark Education Co.	Grplwegman	Performance Services
BLDD Architects	Guin Mundorf LLC	PFM Asset Management - MOSIP
Boehne Financial Group, Inc.	Hand2Mind	Piper Sandler & Co.
Bond Architects, Inc.	HBS	Plasma Games
Buxton Kubik Dodd Design Collective	Health Plan Management Group	Play & Park Structures
Cambridge Educational Services of Illinois	Heartland Seating, Inc.	Quality Network Solutions
Capturing Kids Hearts	HMH NWEA	Raymond James
Care to Learn	Holland Construction Services, Inc.	Renaissance
Catapult Learning	Hollis + Miller Architects	Right At School
CBIZ Benefits & Insurance Services Inc	Horace Mann Companies	S. M. Wilson & Co.
Central Bank	iLearn LLC	Safe & Sober
Central States Bus Sales	Imagine Learning	Safe Haven Defense
Cherry Road Media	Imms	Sapp Design Associates Architects, Inc.
Claim Care, Inc.	incite Design Studio	SAS Institute, Inc
ClassLink	Inter-State Studio & Publishing Co.	Schneider Electric
Color Art & Scott Rice	IXL Learning	School Status
Common Goal Systems	Just Right Reader	Show-Me Curriculum Administrators Assoc.
Computer Information Concepts, Inc. (CIC)	K12Insight	SIC Roofing
Corner Greer & Associates, Inc.	Kelly Education	Simply Bright Ideas
Coryell Roofing	KEY Apparel	Smith System
Creative Learning Systems	Kiefer USA	Sodexo
Cunningham Recreation	KPM CPAs & Advisors	Software Unlimited
Curriculum Associates	L.J. Hart & Company	Southern Bus & Mobility
D2E Health Plans	Lashly & Baer, P.C.	Southwest Baptist University
Dake Wells Architecture, Inc.	Launch Virtual Learning	SSC Services for Education
Demco	Lebra	STEP Up Consulting
Discovery Education	LegalShield	Stifel
DLR Group	Lindenwood	Studer Education
Ecco Ride Transportation	Lumen Touch	SWC of Kansas City
EdCounsel, LLC	Lunchtime Solutions	Tech Electronics, Inc.
Educational Consulting Services (ECS)	McCownGordon Construction	Trane U.S. Inc.
EducationPlus	McKinstry	Tueth Keeney Cooper Mohan & Jackstadt, P.C.
Educator Retirement Solutions	Method Learning	Tyler Technologies
EDX Consulting	Mickes O'Toole, LLC	United Healthcare
Energy Solutions Professionals	Mid-America Sports Construction	USI Insurance Services
Entegrity	Midwest Bus Sales	Varsity Tutors
ESCO Recycling	Midwest Transit Equipment, Inc.	Veregy
Ess	Missouri Educators' Trust (MET)	Virco Inc.
Evangel University	Missouri United School Insurance Council (MUSIC)	Wagner Portrait Group
Facility Solutions Group	Missouri Valley	
Fantastechs (The)	MMA-St Louis (Marsh & McLennan Agency)	
FGM Architects Inc.	Mocaat/PMA Financial Network, LLC	
Filament Essential Services - SOCS		

MASA President’s Report
From the Capitol to the Classroom

By Dr. Jeremy Tucker, Liberty School District



As educational leaders, we witness the impact of legislative decisions on our classrooms. The gap between policymaking and the realities of our schools often results in unintended consequences for our students, families, and teachers. By building relationships with legislators early and engaging regularly, we can help bridge the gap between the Capitol and our classrooms. We as school leaders must build these relationships, but it’s even more powerful when students meet with elected officials and influence legislation.

During Missouri’s 2022 spring legislative session, AP Government students at Liberty North High School, along with their teacher, Mr. Kurt Gates, actively supported House Bill 1683, sponsored by Representative Chris Brown. The bill proposed a uniform AP credit acceptance policy across Missouri colleges and universities. Through informational packets, meetings with legislative staff, and testifying at hearings, these students shared the impact the bill would have on their futures. Students from other districts joined the campaign to support

HB 1683 lobbying for college tuition assistance and access to advanced coursework in high school. At the federal level, through the AP Advocates initiative, teachers continue these efforts by advocating for the Advanced Coursework Equity Act (SB 327 9) and increased ESSA Title IV funding. Examples of advocacy in both Jefferson City and Washington, D.C., demonstrate the impact that students and teachers have when advocating for educational issues, working alongside elected officials who support their causes.

The collective good work by students, teachers, and legislators is not only gratifying, but an incredible teaching moment.

Priorities and Reaching Out

Each year, many school districts and Boards of Education develop their own legislative platforms or priorities. Others rely on professional organizations or regional collaboratives to support their advocacy efforts. Recently, the Missouri Association of School Administrators (MASA) finalized its legislative priorities and platform for the spring 2025 legislative session. These priorities include securing funding for public education, supporting the profession, recruiting

and retaining teachers and support staff, and focusing on the quality of public education. MASA’s platform covers a range of topics under the categories of Education Policy and Finance, serving as a resource and talking points on key educational issues.

By working with elected officials we can shape education policy and design learning experiences that meet the needs of all students. Active engagement with elected officials is essential to ensuring that education remains a legislative

priority. Strategies to build relationships with policymakers include:

- **Collaboration:** Partner with other districts and community groups to strengthen advocacy efforts.
- **Stay Informed:** Keep up to date on education-related legislation through MASA, and share how issues impact your students, district, and community.
- **Showcase Your Schools:** Invite legislators to visit your schools to see innovative practices firsthand and hear the stories of your students and teachers.
- **Active Listening:** Understanding others’ perspectives can help you find common ground and communicate your own priorities more effectively.
- **Engage the Community:** Keep parents, teachers, and community members informed about educational issues and encourage them to contact their legislators.

Engagement this spring in the legislative process will assist to better align education policies with classroom realities, benefiting students and enhancing the democratic process. By directly communicating with state legislators, educators can contribute to informed policies that reflect the needs of students, families, and teachers. As we near the start of the legislative session, school leaders are uniquely positioned to model respectful dialogue, share classroom insights, and ensure policies serve their communities as we bridge the gap between the Capitol and the classroom.

Best wishes for the holiday season!

