



The Director

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(A Subdivision of Mo-CEC)



WELCOME ABOARD!!!! DR. JOHN HESKETT

Starting July 1, Dr. John Heskett will be the Executive Director of MO-CASE. Dr. Heskett is already starting the transition, working with George Wilson and the entire MO-CASE board as he prepares to assume the reigns when George Wilson retires at the end of June.

Dr. Heskett has broad experience in special education. He started his career in the Missouri State Schools system, first as a Speech Language Pathologist, then as the Assistant Superintendent, and ultimately the Superintendent of that system. Dr. Heskett then worked for the Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education as the Coordinator for Special Education before being named Assistant Commissioner.

After retiring from the DESE, he became an Assistant Superintendent with the Pattonville School District while continuing his work with Webster University as a visiting Professor. Dr. Heskett is also a member of the Adjunct Faculty of the University of Missouri St Louis, and continues to provide educational consulting.

Dr. Heskett had provided leadership in a multitude of Missouri initiatives for students with disabilities including Project Access, Class within a Class, Early Childhood Special Education and First Steps, Revisions of the school finance for special education that supported inclusive education options, studies to prioritize needs for the education of students who are Blind/VI and Deaf/HI and support for MPACT.

When asked about his vision for MO-CASE, Dr. Heskett said, "There are significant changes that will be occurring in the near term for special education. Pressures in fiscal issues related to budgets, services for children with autism, reauthorization of the ESEA/NCLB and reauthorization of IDEA. I bring a collaborative leadership style that will contribute to finding solutions to issues such as these and others.

MO-CASE has developed into a significant educational organization in Missouri. During my term, I hope to build on the excellent reputation MO-CASE has developed and bring our organization to the minds of others as the "go to organization" for outstanding resources and answers for the education of children with disabilities.

I hope to build bridges with parent and advocacy organizations associated with children and youth with disabilities to connect the visions and dreams of diverse groups to achieve positive outcomes for children with disabilities.

MO-CASE and DESE have developed an excellent relationship. Recognition of shared values and interests has allowed a dynamic partnership to be forged. I want to continue to develop that relationship and find new ways of advancing the State's capacity to appropriately serve the needs of children with disabilities.

Students with disabilities are often consumers of services from other state agencies. Over the years I have had the opportunity to work with and develop very productive relationships with leaders in Health and Senior Services, Insurance, Mental Health, Social Services, and others. Bringing resources from those agencies to school districts in ways that support the school district mission will be a priority for me.

Connection to higher education is vital for a growing and dynamic organization. I will continue to work to bring effective ways to bring research, policy and practice together to support the growth of special education services for children with disabilities."

**Welcome, Dr. Heskett! We look forward to working with you
and continuing to move forward with your leadership.**

2010 Legislative Session Update - April 1, 2010

By: Dr. Diane Golden; MO-CASE Policy Coordinator

The Missouri budget woes have cast a significant pall over the 2010 legislative session as every proposal is followed with the question - What does it cost? Most of the budget focus has been on the FY2011 appropriations bills which have now passed the House and the Senate Committee is doing mark-up. For Special Education so far the news is good. The two increases recommended by the Governor were kept in the House passed bill including an \$11,646,095 increase for Early Childhood Special Education and a \$3,436,111 increase for the High Need Fund. Overall the foundation formula was level funded in the House passed bill. So far, Senate Appropriations Committee has reduced transportation by another \$15 million; reduced \$13.7 million from Parents as Teachers; and has eliminated \$37 million (the whole amount) for career ladder for FY2011.

In a rare move a few weeks ago, the Senate suspended all activity for the day and met in small work groups to identify ways to "streamline" state government. The goal overall was for the work groups to come up with around \$500 million in total budget reductions. The work group on education discussed a number of cost saving ideas and many were special education related including: reducing expenditures for the State Board operated programs (Missouri School for the Deaf, Missouri School for the Blind and Missouri Schools for Severely Disabled); increasing Medicaid reimbursement to schools by expanding the pool of allowable services; and reconfiguring early childhood special education to allow for a per pupil funding structure. While it is not clear what the next steps will be for these ideas, those that require statute or regulatory change will not likely be implemented this legislative session -- but could certainly be issues addressed in the next legislative session.

Both the House and Senate have passed separate bills (House Bill 1311 and Senate Bill 618) that require insurance coverage for autism services, including ABA intervention, when prescribed by a physician or psychologist for children. The House bill also creates a new regulated profession the "practice of applied behavior analysis" which is broadly defined and will require a state issued license

to practice. An exemption to the licensure is included for IDEA providers but the language may be inconsistent with IDEA and might not truly provide the exemption schools need. MO-CASE is continuing to work on the licensure part of this bill to ensure schools are not negatively impacted by a new credentialing system.

The only other major legislation that is moving so far this year is an Education omnibus bill, House Bill 1543, which revises a variety of laws regarding elementary and secondary education. It is currently on the floor for House debate and a number of amendments have been added including a waiver of the 1% professional development requirement for FY2011 and 2012 and addition of the High School Sports Brain Injury Prevention Act (HB 1548). This is the bill that had an amendment added in committee that prohibited the use of corporal punishment on students with certain types of disabilities but was removed before reaching the House floor. MO-CASE worked with the amendment sponsor and hopefully if a floor amendment is offered, it will be to prohibit corporal punishment for all students, not just those with certain kinds of disabilities.

By law, the appropriation bills must be passed by May 7 and the 2010 regular session ends on May 14. Your LASE Presidents and/or Advocacy Representatives will have current information to share with you about legislative activities from now until the end of session. Feel free to contact Dr. Diane Golden, MO-CASE Policy Coordinator at diane.mocase@gmail.com, with any questions.

~ MO-CASE APPOINTMENTS ~ New Faces!!



Board Appointments: Offered by President Roxie Lanier

LASE Coordinator: Lori Sallee
LASE Representative: Shantel Farnan
LASE Representative: Jamie Smith
LASE Representative: Vicki McNamara

Appointments effective July 1st.

2010 Spring Law Conference Recap ~ Thanks to all that attended!!!!



The 2010 Spring Law Conference was held on March 12th at Lodge of Four Seasons. Over 250 attendees had the opportunity to hear from Charles L. Weatherly, Jr. from Atlanta, Georgia. As litigation under the IDEA continues to be on the rise, most states are seeing an increase in litigated issues involving the provision of educational services to students with Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD). Mr. Weatherly's session highlighted many important principles established by pertinent

judicial and/or agency decisions in the area of educating students with autism, including an examination of what went right and what went wrong, both procedurally and substantively.

In the afternoon session, Jim Thomeczek, John Brink and David Willard of Thomeczek & Brink, LLC brought conference attendees up to date on Parent Bill of Rights; Kaitlyn's Law, Restraints and Seclusion; Service Animals; Reauthorization of IDEA and NCLB and provided a Case Law Update.

A panel of experts in the area of Autism provided information on Autism in Missouri. The panel included Joan Armstrong, Director of Project ACCESS; Stacey Martin, Autism Consultant, Lee's Summit School District and Phyllis Wolfram, Director of Special Services, Ozark School District and a Member of the Governor's Commission on Autism. Thanks are extended to the Thomeczek & Brink Law Firm for their continued partnership with MO-CASE to provide the Annual Spring Law Conference each year.

Mark your calendars for next spring: March 11, 2011.

In Memory: Karen Aslin:

A long time member of MO-CASE is being remembered. Karen Aslin, of Columbia MO died March 9, 2010. Karen began her teaching career in 1961, teaching special education students in St. Louis County, then in Des Plaines, Ill. She was on staff at the University of Missouri as director of the hospital school. Karen also worked for MO-DESE before returning to the public school system as a special education director in Malden and in Ste Genevieve. Karen had retired in 1996. Karen was a long time supporter of and advocate for students with disabilities and their education. Karen was known by many, liked by all, and will be truly missed.

Memorials may be given in Karen's name to the Neil C. Aslin Scholarship Fund at the University of Missouri Columbia, or Columbia MO Meals on Wheels.

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