



MID-STATE SPECIAL EDUCATION

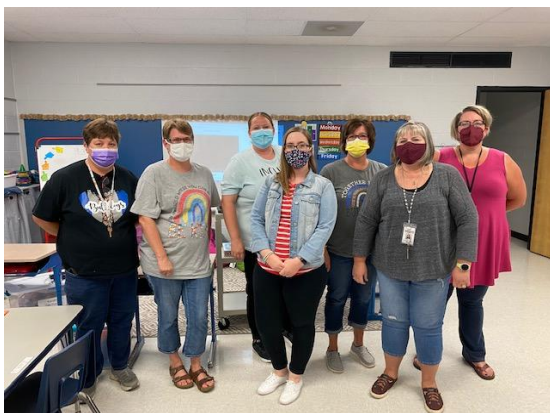
The Mid-State Messenger **October 2021**

Physical Therapy Appreciation Month!



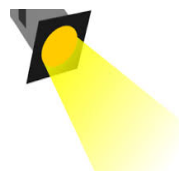
October is Physical Therapy Appreciation Month. MSSE and our member districts greatly appreciate the dedicated physical therapists and physical therapy assistants who are working hard every day to improve the lives of students! Therapists include Kelli Evans (RPT), Deanne Perry (RPT), Jane Goeken (RPT), Amy Ashmore (LPTA), Amber Schulze (LPTA), Lauren Himer (LPTA), and Crystal Tarin (LPTA).

Augmentative & Alternative Comm.



Debbie Musgrave and Lorinda Jennings (SLPs) provided an AAC training to special education teachers and assistants to answer questions about LAMP and to share tips to incorporate AAC into the classroom. The foremost goal of AAC is that the children reach for the device every time they have anything to communicate. So, it is important to

ensure easy access to the device at all times. The child should be encouraged to seek the device when they need to communicate. The AAC device is the student's voice, so the device is truly an extension of the student.



Employee Spotlight



Emma Reichert, Behavior Specialist, is welcomed with open arms anytime she enters a school building. With 11 years of experience serving as an Early Childhood Teacher and Behavior Specialist for Mid-State, Emma brings a wealth of knowledge and practical interventions to those students who struggle behaviorally. She currently provides direct service to 59 students in 12/13 districts. In addition, she closely monitors 44 students who have already benefited from her services and no longer require regular, direct contact. Emma's work allows more students to remain in their home schools and gives teachers the support they require to meet the needs of their students. To further expand her expertise, Emma is now enrolled in the Board Certified Behavior Analysis program through SIU. This is a very intense program requiring 2000 hours of supervised fieldwork in addition to 18 graduate

hours. Lyn Becker is fortunate to be able to provide Emma's supervision and looks forward to seeing her continued professional growth. Please join us in letting Emma know how much she is appreciated.

Tips & Tricks for DHH

Michaela Hartley, Hearing Itinerant, provides a weekly "tips and tricks" newsletter. In the latest edition, Michaela's **Tip** was about Language Gaps. Michaela explained that students with hearing loss tend to have "swiss cheese language" with unpredictable gaps in vocabulary and their concepts. This is due to the lack of language access to pair with background experiences. The **Trick** to try is to provide concrete visuals for concepts and vocabulary. As Michaela explains, "show instead of tell". If you are not already on her email list to receive her Tips and Tricks, please email Michaela at michaela.hartley@midstatespec.org. Feel free to contact her with questions or suggestions you may have. Other newsletter topics from this year include: Hearing is Not Understanding, Closed Captions, and Hearing & Vision Loss are Not Similar.

Ramsey Revamps ELA Curriculum

Ramsey school district has purchased *Study Sync*, a McGraw Hill curriculum for ELA special education instruction. Ramsey teachers and administration reflected on student data for their junior high students and explored a research based and standards based curriculum to address all aspects of ELA. *Study Sync* is not a special education curriculum, but it allows junior high special education teachers to teach students grade level standards and expose them to grade level reading texts and higher level thinking questions. The program is up to date in terms of electronic integration where students can do their work on any device: chrome book, computer, cell phone, ipad, etc. The program allows for students to add notes to the text, highlight important concepts, and integrate high level writing prompts as well as vocabulary. The on-line text can even be read to students. Special education teachers at Ramsey address IEP goals through research based programs such as Really Great Reading and Moby Max. Using all these programs collectively allows them to have multiple data sources and a variety of research based

programs to target ELA standards and demonstrate student growth.

Emotional Support Dog at Morrisonville



Students in the Morrisonville School district have another resource for emotional support--one of the four legged kind! Meet Scout, an emotional support dog that has joined their ranks of educators. Scout provides companionship, helps to

ease fears and depression, and plays a great game of fetch. She has helped students work through anxiety attacks, emotional breakdowns, and puts a smile on faces throughout the district. Pictured are Scout and sophomore student Patrick Lipe.

Panhandle Welcomes New Staff



Lori Smothers McClung has joined the staff at Panhandle. We are thrilled that Lori agreed to come out of retirement to work at Raymond High School. Lori started her 34 year career with Mid-State in 1987 in Nokomis at South

Middle School. In 1991, she transferred to Taylorville Junior High where she served until 2002. Lori was the Vocational Coordinator until 2006. She finished her career in 2021 at Pana High School when she retired. Wedding bells rang when she remarried on June 5, 2021 and changed her last name from Smothers to McClung! Lori became a special education teacher in order to be able to help kids. She loves her new position because she works from 11:15 to 3:15 daily. Lori says she doesn't have to rush anymore. Her biggest challenge is being able to help students that don't have help at home. Lori tries to find the positive in every situation. She truly wants to make a difference.