Mizzou, Sterk agree to 7-year contract

By Dave Matter St. Louis Post-Dispatch, 13 hrs ago

Also ran in sports- “Mizzou's Sterk led San Diego State to new heights”

COLUMBIA, MO. • The University of Missouri System Board of Curators approved a seven-year contract for new Missouri athletics director Jim Sterk on Tuesday, interim chancellor Hank Foley announced at University Hall on the Mizzou campus.

Sterk will be formally introduced at a press conference Thursday at 11 a.m. at the Columns Club at Memorial Stadium. Foley declined to answer questions after emerging from the brief curators meeting that was conducted via conference call.

Sterk, 60, who spent the last six years as AD at San Diego State University, will make a guaranteed salary of $700,000. His annual base salary will be $500,000 and he'll also make $200,000 in non-salary monthly increments. He can earn up to $150,000 a year for various incentives. Sterk will receive $150,000 per year in deferred compensation payable at the end of the contract, which expires in 2023.

Sterk more than doubled his salary. He was making $315,000 at San Diego State.

"This is a wonderful day for Mizzou and Tiger fans everywhere,” Foley said in a prepared statement. "Jim's leadership in intercollegiate athletics is unparalleled, and we are thrilled he is going to bring his talents, energy and passion for working with student-athletes to Columbia. He is just what Mizzou needs at this time."

"My passion is building upon the successes of good athletic programs and helping to make them great,” Sterk said. "Whether it is guiding and mentoring student-athletes, working with coaches to ensure they have the resources they need or cheering with the fans, I realize that athletics is one of the most visible programs at a university. Mizzou's recent entry into the SEC
makes it highly visible, and I am excited about the opportunity to help continue to lead it on the national stage."

In the wake of former AD Mack Rhoades’ surprising move to Baylor after just 14 months on the job, Missouri negotiated a high buyout should Sterk leave before the contract expires. He'd owe Mizzou $1.4 million, reduced by $200,000 for each of the first six years of employment. The buyout cannot be less than $200,000.

Rhoades was working on a five-year contract at Mizzou with a guaranteed salary of $600,000. He owes MU $800,000 for leaving during the second year of the deal.

"Mizzou athletics — and all of Mizzou Nation — will benefit from having someone of Jim’s caliber on board," Foley said. "He has a superb winning record, is committed to the importance of diversity and inclusion efforts and will help restore pride and confidence in an athletics program that is working to overcome a challenging year."

Mizzou’s press release confirming Sterk’s hire included a comment from former St. Louis Rams great Marshall Faulk, who played at San Diego State: "Jim elevated SDSU to a respectable level both athletically and academically. His leadership was instrumental in the rise of SDSU success. How we cared for our student-athletes was his No. 1 concern. While I’m sad to see him go, I am equally happy for Jim and his family, and I told him he is going to love the people of Missouri. Mizzou, you hired a man with impeccable integrity."
Board of Curators approves hiring of Jim Sterk as Missouri’s athletic director

BY TOD PALMER
tpalmer@kcstar.com

Also ran in sports- “Mellinger Minutes: Mizzou and new A.D. Jim Sterk, Justin Houston and the Chiefs, and more”

Missouri made the hiring of Jim Sterk as the school’s new athletic director official Tuesday when the university system’s Board of Curators approved his contract at a special meeting.

After emerging from the brief closed-door executive session, MU interim chancellor Hank Foley said, “I’m very happy to report that the board has, in fact, approved the contract for Jim Sterk and Jim will indeed be the next athletic director at the University of Missouri.”

Sterk agreed to a seven-year contract through June 30, 2023, with a base salary of $500,000. It includes an additional $200,000 in guaranteed annual compensation plus incentives worth up to $150,000 more.

During the contract term, Sterk — who will be introduced at 11 a.m. Thursday at a news conference in the Columns Club at Memorial Stadium in Columbia — also is entitled to $150,000 per year in deferred compensation, making the potential total value of the contract $1 million annually.

Sterk’s agreement also includes a $1.4 million buyout that goes down by $200,000 with each year of employment at Mizzou. He will assume his new role with the Tigers on or before Sept. 1.

Sterk succeeds Mack Rhoades, who resigned July 13 to become the athletic director at Baylor.

Sterk’s colleagues say Missouri hit a home run with the hire.
“Mizzou really picked a winner, a really terrific person, and he’ll be great for that university,” UCLA athletic director Dan Guerrero said.

Guerrero developed a relationship with Sterk in the pre-expansion-era Pac-10, when Sterk served as Washington State’s athletic director from 2000 to 2010.

“Jim has always had a certain sense of leadership that is the kind people rally around, both within the department and externally,” said Guerrero, who is the chairman of the NCAA Division I Men’s Basketball Oversight Committee. “He is a strong leader, will create a lot of stability and will win over a lot of fans in a very short period of time.”

Guerrero cited Sterk’s selection for the Division I men’s basketball committee in May — a position, Guerrero confirmed, that likely will be withdrawn because Kentucky’s Mitch Barnhart also was appointed to the committee and only one is permitted per conference — as proof of his stature and the respect he has professionally.

Texas A&M athletic director Scott Woodward — who was lured away from Washington, where he’d been since 2008, in January — also worked with Sterk in the old Pac-10 days and championed the hire.

“They sure got a good guy in Jim Sterk,” Woodward said. “The university is very lucky to have him. I know he’s glad, I’m sure, to be at Missouri. To me, just looking at it at a glance, it looks like a very good fit.”

Woodward is eager to work with Sterk again in a new setting.

“When I think of Jim Sterk, I think of a guy with very high integrity and very good values,” Woodward said. “Jim and I worked closely together and — in most situations, except when you’re on the field of play — you work collaboratively together. The good of the whole is what you’re after. Jim was always in that frame of mind. I really look forward to working with Jim in the Southeastern Conference.”

San Diego State interim athletic director Jenny Bramer, who is in her 13th season with the Aztecs, also sang Sterk’s praises.

“He’s genuinely nice, which is good in working for him, but it’s also good in his decision-making,” Bramer said. “We make a lot of decisions at San Diego State that are good for student-athletes. They may not be the flashiest or a keep-up-with-Joneses approach, but they are right for the student-athletes. That’s a credit to him and his concern for student-athlete welfare.”
Athletic department fundraising reached an all-time high at San Diego State during Sterk’s tenure — including construction of the $15.8 million Jeff Jacobs J.A.M. Center, a practice facility for men’s and women’s basketball.

Sterk also helped implement the Coryell Legacy, a scholarship endowment program, that raised $16 million and also helped fund upgrades to locker room and strength and conditioning facilities.

Aztec athletics also more than doubled its fundraising total for athletic scholarships to $5.6 million last year under Sterk’s guidance.

Bramer, who also spent time at Oklahoma, says Sterk “will be fantastic in that setting” at Mizzou and in the SEC.

“I think he’s going to be a little different,” she said. “He is not a win-at-all-costs guy, but he still wins.”

Since Sterk’s arrival, only Ohio State and Louisville have a better combined winning percentage in football and men’s basketball than San Diego State, which won 32 conference titles during his tenure.

Guerrero was impressed with the job Sterk did at Washington State and thinks he can replicate the success he’s had there (and at San Diego State) during his tenure at Mizzou.

“I think there are a lot of parallels in many respects,” Guerrero said. “When you start to compare institutions within a given conference, there clearly are institutions that, however you define it, have an edge over other institutions. Certainly, the fact that Washington State was not in a metropolitan community and did not have the level of resources that some other institutions had made it very challenging for Jim. Yet he kept those programs in Pullman competitive and made some terrific hires.”

Woodward also forecasts the Tigers as an athletic department on the rise.

“When you have a guy who’s very competent and has high integrity, your chances are good you’re going to be successful,” Woodward said. “That’s Jim Sterk to a T.”
Missouri confirms hire of San Diego State's Sterk as AD

Generated from News Bureau press release: “Mizzou announces Jim Sterk as new Athletic Director”

COLUMBIA, Mo. (AP) - The University of Missouri said Tuesday it has hired San Diego State's Jim Sterk as its new athletic director on a seven-year contract.

He will be paid a base salary of $700,000 and will start no later than Sept. 1. Interim Chancellor Hank Foley said Sterk was exactly what Missouri needs as it replaces Mack Rhoades, who left for Baylor.

Sterk has spent the past six years at San Diego State, helping the school to what Missouri said was the most successful five seasons in SDSU's athletic history - 32 team conference championships and the fourth-highest combined winning percentage in the country in football and men's basketball.

The 60-year-old Sterk was also the AD at Washington State and has held positions at Portland State, North Carolina, Maine, Seattle Pacific and Tulane. The former football and basketball player is a 1980 graduate of Western Washington and received his master's degree in sports administration from Ohio University.

Sterk was recently honored as the AD of the year by National Association of College Director of Athletics and was selected to the Division I Men's Basketball Committee.

San Diego State has hired Jenny Bramer as interim AD.
UM Board of Curators approves Jim Sterk as next AD

By Daniel Jones

Tuesday, August 9, 2016 at 7:00 pm

Jim Sterk will be MU's new athletic director, MU Interim Chancellor Hank Foley announced Tuesday evening.

He will be introduced at a press conference Thursday at 11 a.m.

"This is a wonderful day for Mizzou and Tiger fans everywhere," Foley said in a release, though he deferred questions from reporters until Thursday. "Jim's leadership in intercollegiate athletics is unparalleled, and we are thrilled he is going to bring his talents, energy and passion for working with student-athletes to Columbia. He is just what Mizzou needs at this time."

Sterk was the athletic director at San Diego State University for six years, but resigned his post there Monday. He will begin his tenure at MU no later than Sept. 1.

The UM Board of Curators approved Sterk's contract in a closed executive session Tuesday evening.

The contract lasts seven years, during which Sterk will earn $700,000 annually in guaranteed wages, with a base salary of $500,000 and non-salary compensation of $200,000.

The contract also allows for an additional $150,000 annually in incentives for "achieving benchmarks in academic/social achievement, athletic performance, and financial performance." If Sterk completes the contract, he would receive another $150,000 per year in deferred compensation.

Sterk's buyout is $1.4 million. That figure will decrease by $200,000 each year he is on the job.

According to USA Today's database, Sterk made $315,000 annually in base salary at SDSU, where he was under contract through 2020.
Mack Rhoades, MU's last athletic director, earned $600,000 per year in guaranteed salary. His original buyout was $1 million, with the amount decreasing $200,000 annually. His buyout to leave after 14 months was $800,000.

Sterk was named the 2015-16 Under Armour AD of the Year by the National Association of Collegiate Directors of Athletics. SDSU also is coming off a record fundraising year for scholarships and a new basketball facility, according to MU's release.

"My passion is building upon the successes of good athletic programs and helping to make them great," Sterk said. "Whether it is guiding and mentoring student-athletes, working with coaches to ensure they have the resources they need or cheering with the fans, I realize that athletics is one of the most visible programs at a university. Mizzou's recent entry into the Southeastern Conference "makes it highly visible, and I am excited about the opportunity to help continue to lead it on the national stage."

MISSOURIAN

Missouri announces Jim Sterk as new athletics director

BROOKS HOLTON AND LINDSEY JENKINS, 12 hrs ago

COLUMBIA — Jim Sterk was officially named the athletics director at the University of Missouri, according to a Tuesday news release from Missouri Athletics.

"This is a wonderful day for Mizzou and Tiger fans everywhere," Interim Chancellor Hank Foley said in the release. "Jim's leadership in intercollegiate athletics is unparalleled, and we are thrilled he is going to bring his talents, energy and passion for working with student-athletes to Columbia. He's just what Mizzou needs at this time."

The hire was announced following a UM System Board of Curators meeting Tuesday at which Sterk's contract was approved. The board met for a special meeting "for consideration of certain confidential or privileged communications with university counsel, negotiated contracts and personnel matters all as authorized by law and upon approval by resolution of the Board of Curators," according to a public meeting notice.
Sterk's contract is for seven years. He will be paid a guaranteed annual base salary of $500,000, with an annual non-salary compensation of $200,000. Sterk will officially take office on or before Sept. 1. The new athletics director could also receive up to $150,000 per year "for achieving benchmarks in academic/social achievement, athletic performance and financial performance including revenue generation and development," according to the offer letter from Foley.

Former athletics director Mack Rhoades' salary for 2015-16 was $600,000, according to the MU salary database.

Phil Snowden, a member of the five-person advisory committee that conducted the search for Missouri's new athletics director and a member of the UM System Board of Curators, said that several candidates were considered for the position.

Some of the candidates considered were Derrick Gragg from Tulsa, Jeff Compher from East Carolina and Rick Hart from Southern Methodist University, according to a report from the St. Louis Post-Dispatch.

"Jim stood out and certainly is one of the top people in the athletics directorship world in the United States," Snowden said. "If you talk to people around the country, they’ll all give him very high marks," he said.

Sterk graduated from Western Washington University in 1980, where he earned four varsity letters in football and one in basketball. He still holds the school record for most career tackles with 164. Paul Madison, WWU athletics historian and director of sports information while Sterk was enrolled, said he always knew Sterk was "a cut above."

"He goes the extra mile for people," Madison said. "He’s there for the tough times and the good times, and there’s no doubt in my mind that he’ll do a tremendous job there."

Madison also said Sterk is a very good singer, though he would disclose no further information on Sterk's karaoke song of choice.
"When we inducted him into the WWU Hall of Fame, he mentioned he was involved in that (singing)," Madison said with a laugh. “He can sing, there’s no doubt about that.”

Sterk, 60, has worked as an athletics director since 1995. He started his career at Portland State, where he worked from 1995 to 2000. He then worked as an athletics director at Washington State from 2000 to 2010. He became the athletics director at San Diego State University in 2010 and was working there before it was announced on Monday that he would take over as Missouri’s athletics director.

Snowden said that Sterk’s many years of experience will prove beneficial in an athletics department dictated by many rules and regulations.

"Athletics is a very multi-faceted, complicated department within the university and to have someone with his professional experience will add a lot," he said.

Sterk’s ability to foster excellence both inside and outside of athletics added to his appeal as a candidate, Snowden said.

"He has performed at a very high level, not only on the field with championships, but also in the classroom, and that’s just as important," Snowden said.

During the last four years of Sterk’s time at San Diego State, 94 percent of student athletes were able to graduate, according to the San Diego State Athletics website. Additionally, 60 percent of student-athletes received scholar-athlete status, meaning they had above a 3.0 cumulative GPA or 3.2 semester GPA.

"He has tremendous integrity and I think Missourians will take to him, and we’ll continue to build in the SEC, and we’ll have championships in several sports here," Snowden said.
UM Curators Approve Hire of Jim Sterk as New MU Athletic Director

The University of Missouri has officially announced Jim Sterk as its new Athletic Director.

"This is a wonderful day for Mizzou and Tiger fans everywhere," MU Chancellor Hank Foley said in a written statement Tuesday night. "Jim's leadership in intercollegiate athletics is unparalleled, and we are thrilled he is going to bring his talents, energy and passion for working with student-athletes to Columbia. He is just what Mizzou needs at this time."

The press release says Sterk was "chosen from a varied and impressive field of candidates with input from an advisory committee composed of faculty, staff, students and athletic supporters." The UM System Board of Curators met Tuesday afternoon and voted to approve a seven-year contract that will pay Sterk "a base and guaranteed salary of $700,000."

"My passion is building upon the successes of good athletic programs and helping to make them great," Sterk said in a written statement. "Whether it is guiding and mentoring student-athletes, working with coaches to ensure they have the resources they need or cheering with the fans, I realize that athletics is one of the most visible programs at a university. Mizzou's recent entry into the SEC makes it highly visible, and I am excited about the opportunity to help continue to lead it on the national stage."
Sterk has been SDSU's athletic director for six years. San Diego State announced last night on its website that Sterk had resigned after six years with the school and would take over at Missouri on Sept. 1.

1. Missourinet reports that under Sterk’s leadership, fifty SDSU teams have gone on to NCAA championships and 20 of them reached top 25 rankings nationally.

The 60-year-old Sterk will replace Mack Rhoades, who recently left for Baylor.

For more information about Sterk, follow this link to the official release from Mizzou Athletics.

**Foley: New athletic director Jim Sterk "just what Mizzou needs"**

Watch story: [http://mms.tveyes.com/PlaybackPortal.aspx?SavedEditID=1c99a723-7ec8-44dd-9050-a952e826e143](http://mms.tveyes.com/PlaybackPortal.aspx?SavedEditID=1c99a723-7ec8-44dd-9050-a952e826e143)

COLUMBIA -MU made it official Tuesday afternoon, announcing Jim Sterk was hired to be the new athletic director and will start on or before Sept. 1. Chancellor Hank Foley said Sterk is "just what Mizzou needs at this time."

"This is a wonderful day for Mizzou and Tigers fans everywhere," Foley said in a statement. "Jim's leadership in intercollegiate athletics is unparalleled, and we are thrilled he is going to bring his talent, energy and passion for working with student-athletes to Columbia."
In the same statement, Sterk said his passion is building on the success of good athletic programs and making them great.

"Whether it's guiding or mentoring student-athletes, working with coaches to ensure they have the resources they need or cheering with the fans, I realize that athletics is one of the most visible programs at a university," he said.

Sterk will be paid a base and guaranteed salary of $700,000, according to the university.

Sterk has served as athletic director at San Diego State University for the past six years. He also served as the athletic director at Washington State University from 2000-2010 and Portland State University from 1995-2000.

He was named the NACDA athletic director of the year in 2015-2016, and is currently a member of the NCAA Division 1 men's basketball committee.

Foley said, "Mizzou athletics - and all of Mizzou Nation - will benefit from having someone of Jim's caliber on board."

Sterk takes over for interim AD Sarah Reesman, making him the fifth athletic director for Mizzou this year. Reesman began her tenure last Friday, taking the place of interim chancellor Hank Foley who also briefly held the position.

Mizzou's athletic director position initially opened up on July 13, when former AD Mack Rhoades left for the same position at Baylor University. Rhoades' tenure at Mizzou lasted only 15 months, after taking over for Mike Alden who stayed at Mizzou from 1998 to 2015.

Missouri announces Jim Sterk as athletic director

Watch story: http://mms.tveyes.com/PlaybackPortal.aspx?SavedEditID=ccbde7c4-303a-4230-a41f-7aca30be9e8b
COLUMBIA, Mo. — **The University of Missouri announced that Jim Sterk will be the school's next athletic director.**

Sterk is scheduled to officially take over as Mizzou's AD no later than September 1. He signed a seven-year contract. His annual base salary is $700,000. He can earn an extra $150,000 per year with incentives.

The announcement comes one day after reports surfaced, stating that Sterk resigned from his role as AD at San Diego State University. Sterk spent the last 10 years of his career as head of the Aztecs' athletics department.

But, he's excited for a new challenge.

"Mizzou's recent entry into the SEC makes it highly visible, and I am excited about the opportunity to help continue to lead it on the national stage," Sterk said in a release from Missouri.

Interim Chancellor Hank Foley expressed his pleasure with the hiring of Sterk.

"Mizzou athletics--and all of Mizzou Nation--will benefit from having someone of Jim's caliber on board," Foley said.

Missouri will officially introduce Sterk as athletic director on Thursday at 11 a.m. inside Memorial Stadium.

**Sterk officially named Mizzou athletic director**


COLUMBIA - **Jim Sterk is officially named the next athletic director at the University of Missouri, interim chancellor Hank Foley announced Tuesday.**
As ABC 17 confirmed on Monday, Sterk leaves his post at San Diego State, where he spent the last 6 seasons growing the athletic department. Since 2011-2012, the Aztecs had 32 team conference championships.

“My passion is building upon the successes of good athletic programs and helping to make them great,” Sterk said in a statement through the University of Missouri. “Whether it is guiding and mentoring student-athletes, working with coaches to ensure they have the resources they need or cheering with the fans, I realize that athletics is one of the most visible programs at a university. Mizzou’s recent entry into the SEC makes it highly visible, and I am excited about the opportunity to help continue to lead it on the national stage.”

The UM System Board of Curators approved Sterk's 7-year contract. His base and guaranteed salary is $700,000. According to the release, Sterk will start "on or before September 1."

One of San Diego State's most famous alumni, Marshall Faulk, also praised Mizzou for hiring Jim Sterk. Faulk is a member of the Pro Football Hall of Fame and played for the Indianapolis Colts and St. Louis Rams.

“Jim elevated SDSU to a respectable level both athletically and academically,” Faulk said in a statement. “His leadership was instrumental in the rise of SDSU success. How we cared for our student-athletes was his No. 1 concern. While I’m sad to see him go, I am equally happy for Jim and his family, and I told him he is going to love the people of Missouri. Mizzou, you hired a man with impeccable integrity.”

Sterk was named Athletic Director of the Year this past year. Mizzou will host a news conference for Sterk at 11 a.m. on Thursday.

**Playground zoning leads to more active playtime for school-aged children**

*In addition to the health benefits, students also perform better in the classroom*

*Generated by News Bureau press release: Playground Zoning Increases Physical Activity During Recess*
Most school-aged children would readily admit that their favorite part of the school day isn’t math, science, or English. Recess has always been a favorite for kids because it gives them a break from academics and allows them to expend pent-up energy in some playtime.

**However, research has shown that not all kids take advantage of this time to run around and be active, which may adversely affect their health in the long run. Luckily, a new study from the University of Missouri shows that zones that include specific games encourage even the most hesitant students to participate in healthy exercise.**

“Playground zoning is one way schools can be proactive in their students’ health and wellness. Recess is the best way for young children to be active, and through playground zoning, schools can ensure that children are achieving maximum benefits during their recess period,” said associate professor Stephen Ball.

**More active playtime**

“Zoning” a playground involves more than just creating separate spaces for different games, although that is one major part of it. Additionally, the researchers say that the technique is also meant to encourage vigorous playtime that goes beyond what kids are used to.

For example, the researchers say that a zone designated for kickball can be improved by reworking it into “hustle kickball,” where kids play the game in a rapid fire manner instead of waiting in line to kick. Other sports and activities can be reworked in a similar manner to keep kids moving and reduce sedentary time.

The study analyzed how effective zoning was for keeping kids active. Young participants were fitted with accelerometers and had their playtime tracked. The researchers found that kids who participated in a zoned recess period were much more physically active than kids who underwent a normal recess period.

**Better academic performance**

In addition to the health benefits, the researchers say that zoning a playground could also lead to academic benefits as well.

“Past research has proven that activity helps academic performance. By reworking traditional recess games to be more vigorous, children are able to increase their physical activity in a really easy way, improving their health and doing better in school,” said Jill Barnas, a doctoral student at the University of Missouri.

The full study will be published in *The Physical Educator*. 
Teacher's negative attention leads to student's negative behavior

This story was a result of an MU News Bureau press release: http://munews.missouri.edu/news-releases/2016/0808-negative-attention-from-teachers-can-lead-to-more-negative-student-behaviors/

A new study says that students who receive more negative attention from teachers, experience increases in problems with emotional regulation, concentration and disruptive behaviour.

The researchers at University of Missouri-Columbia also found that teachers gave Afro-American students and students who received free or reduced lunch more negative attention than other students.

"Finding an efficient, accurate and consistent way to observe teachers' interaction with students is important, not only for educational research, but also for evaluating and coaching teachers," said researcher Wendy Reinke.

"Student-teacher interaction is important because students will repeat actions if those actions garner attention. If a teacher gives attention to a student for prosocial behavior, such as praising them for good work, then the student is more likely to do similar good work in the future. If a teacher gives attention to a student for problem behavior, such as reprimanding them for disrupting the class, the student also may be more likely to repeat this behavior--especially if this is the only way to get a teachers' attention," she added.

The observational model developed by Reinke and her fellow researchers is called the Brief Student-Teacher Classroom Interaction Observation (ST-CIO) model and features a five-minute observation developed to quickly assess teacher interactions.

Classroom observers can use the ST-CIO to monitor short student-teacher interactions to determine the nature of those interactions (positive or negative) and is efficient enough to allow observers to make note of teacher interactions with every student in the classroom in a relatively short period of time.

In their study, Reinke and her team used the ST-CIO to observe 53 teachers and 896 students in K-3 classrooms.

They found that their observational method allowed them to capture nuanced interactions that were consistent with previous research.
She said this model can help researchers more efficiently study student-teacher interaction, as well as serve as a tool for principals.

"We have shown that this method is an effective and efficient tool for researchers. However, the method is very simple to practice and could provide principals doing classroom observations or coaches and consultants working with teachers with a tool to observe teachers and give them consistent, valuable feedback. This feedback can be helpful to provide teachers with awareness of how they interact with students. This will help teachers learn to direct positive attention toward students with whom they may be having regular negative interactions," Reinke further said.

The study has been published in Assessment for Effective Intervention. (ANI)

**Academic Minute: Exercise and Gut Microbes**

*Generated by News Bureau press release: Deactivation of Brain Receptors in Postmenopausal Women May Lead to Lack of Physical Activity*

Exercising may also help you in ways you can’t see. In today's Academic Minute, the University of Missouri's Victoria Vieira-Potter explores why exercise helps inside your gut. Vieira-Potter is an assistant professor of nutrition and exercise physiology at Missouri’s College of Human Environmental Sciences. A transcript of this podcast can be found [here](#).

Listen to the story: [https://www.insidehighered.com/audio/2016/08/10/exercise-changes-gut-microbes](https://www.insidehighered.com/audio/2016/08/10/exercise-changes-gut-microbes)
Math skills in preschool help kids succeed later on

WASHINGTON — A new study suggests preschoolers are more likely to do well with math when entering kindergarten if they grasp two basic concepts: words associated with numbers, and the quantities they represent.

The word ‘two,’ for example, means a pair of things, such as your eyes.

“It seems kind of mundane to us, but it’s actually a very difficult process for kids,” said psychologist Dave Geary, from the University of Missouri Department of Psychological Sciences and Interdisciplinary Neuroscience.

Preschoolers are also more likely to have later success with math, Geary said, if they understand that addition and subtraction mean you get more or have less of something.

“What we found was that kids who were a little bit delayed in the learning of the meaning of these number words really weren’t very fluent at processing numbers when they hit kindergarten,” Geary said.

The study, published in the Journal of Experimental Child Psychology, included 112 preschool children ranging from 3 to 5 years old. It evaluated their math skills upon entering and leaving preschool.

Geary and his team will continue to follow the children through first grade.

They believe the current study’s findings could help narrow the focus of what kids are taught before kindergarten and lead to greater success later in school.
When working with very young children to build basic math skills, Geary suggests using groups of three or fewer items. “So you start with one and you add one more — how many is that? Or you start with three and you take away two, how many is that?” Geary explained.

Yes, Tim Kaine really tweeted that he would ‘broker deal’ to resume KU-Mizzou Border War rivalry

BY CHRIS FICKETT

cfickett@kcstar.com

As someone who grew up in Kansas, cheered for the Jayhawks’ basketball team and graduated from the University of Missouri, Democratic vice presidential candidate Tim Kaine seems like the right person to help reinstate the KU-MU Border War rivalry.

Even Missouri Gov. Jay Nixon, a Mizzou fan, said so Saturday during an appearance at the Chiefs’ training camp in St. Joseph: “When he’s the vice president, he can finally melt the ice between the Jayhawks and Tigers.”

That quote made one story, but certainly it wouldn’t lead to a second, right? Plenty of fans in and around Kansas City would like to see KU and MU in an annual basketball or football series again. But would Kaine respond, given the importance of a national presidential campaign vs. a regional college sports rivalry?

He did.

Yes, this Kansas-raised, Mizzou-educated VP candidate will broker a deal to reinstate the Border War! https://twitter.com/KCStar/status/762004826679017472 ...
On Tuesday, Kaine took up Nixon’s challenge, posting on Twitter that “Yes, this Kansas-raised, Mizzou-educated VP candidate will broker a deal to reinstate the Border War!” along with a link to The Star’s story about Nixon’s comments.

The Jayhawks called off annual athletic series with Missouri after the Tigers left the Big 12 to join the Southeastern Conference in 2012.

Nixon was pleased to see Kaine’s tweet, posting later Tuesday that the “Next VP (is) not afraid of solving tough problems.”

BenFred: Restoring Border War would make Tim Kaine a Mizzou legend

By Ben Frederickson St. Louis Post-Dispatch, 8 hrs ago

Tim Kaine might not be so bad after all.

Some people — OK, I was one of them — bashed the Democratic vice-presidential candidate for being a Kansas-born Mizzou alum who claims to root for Kansas basketball while not giving much of a rip about its struggling football program. To top it all off, his parents pull for Kansas State. But hey, let’s forget all that — if Kaine can come through on the most crucial claim made during the current election cycle.

Yes, this Kansas-raised, Mizzou-educated VP candidate will broker a deal to reinstate the Border War! https://twitter.com/KCStar/status/762004826679017472 ... 9:45 AM - 9 Aug 2016
If Kaine can kick-start negotiations to resume the Mizzou-Kansas Border War, he should be a first-ballot entry into the True Son Hall of Fame. A seventh column should be erected in his honor. Jesse Hall should become the Kaine Cathedral.

Kaine's bold proclamation came in response to this fascinating Kansas City Star story. Missouri Gov. Jay Nixon told the Star's Blair Kerkhoff that he believes a Hillary Clinton/Tim Kaine victory would put Kaine in position to broker a deal that would restore one of, if not the best, rivalries in college sports.

“He’s stuck right in the middle of it,” Nixon told the Star. “It’s not the most important issue he’s facing right now...We just need to start playing again.”

Who doesn't agree with that? Nothing compares to Tigers-Jayhawks. Nothing. The Border War had history, heartache, heroes, you name it. Heck, the trash talk between the two fan bases since the rivalry stopped has included more vitriol than any of the "rivals" either school has attempted to turn its attention to since. I'm looking at you, Arkansas.

There are some who believe annual meetings of Tigers and Jayhawks on the football field and basketball court would be watered down now that Mizzou is in the SEC. That's Big 12 bluster.

There are some who cite a struggling Mizzou basketball program and/or an anemic Kansas football program as the reason(s) to stay away, citing strength of schedule nonsense and a potential lack of interest. Hogwash.

Last time I checked, Mizzou is playing Eastern Michigan and Delaware State in football this season. And Kansas hoops played Northern Colorado, Chaminade, Loyola, Holy Cross, Montana and UC Irvine in 2015-16. Swapping one cupcake per year in both sports would not only beef up both schedules, but also put fans in seats. They could even play the games at Arrowhead Stadium and the Sprint Center in Kansas City and let both schools split the profit every year.

Make it happen, Tim Kaine.
Cement your legacy.

Columbia Board of Education gives go-ahead for Chapter 100 approval

The Columbia Board of Education on Monday unanimously voted to appoint board member Darin Preis to a Chapter 100 review panel and to have him vote in favor of a tax break for a local manufacturer.

Dana Light Axle Products, 2400 LeMone Industrial Blvd., has proposed investing $39 million in new machinery and equipment at its local plant. The money would create 135 full-time jobs starting at $15.75 an hour, increasing employment to 224 workers.

The company is seeking a 50 percent personal property tax abatement on the new equipment using Chapter 100 bonds from the Boone County Commission.

CPS would gain $1.2 million in revenue during the seven-year abatement. The city would receive $81,580 more, and the Daniel Boone Regional Library District would receive an additional $61,504.

The Boone County Collector’s website shows Dana Axle paid $37,773.66 in personal property taxes and $90,999 in real estate taxes in 2015. The company’s annual personal property tax bill would increase to $237,975.74 with the 50 percent abatement, according to information provided by Regional Economic Development Inc.

Dave Griggs, chairman of REDI’s incentives subcommittee, presented the proposal to the board.

Griggs said the Columbia manufacturing plant opened in 1988. On average, workers at the local facility have been with Dana Axle for about 23 years.

“These are career jobs, not just factory jobs,” he said.

He said all the hiring would be done from Boone County and neighboring areas.
The company makes drive train components for companies including Ford and Toyota, Griggs said. The added equipment and employees will help fulfill new contracts for the company.

“They’re making a significant investment,” Griggs said. “They’re going to continue investing in the plant.”

Preis said the proposal is a good one, referring to manufacturing as “the holy grail of economic development.”

He admitted requests for tax breaks often carry an implicit threat of a business leaving town, but he said Dana Axle representatives did not emphasize that. Preis said the tax abatement would help ensure the community continues to thrive.

“I firmly believe we’re saving this facility in our community,” Griggs said. He said there also might be opportunities for partnerships with the Columbia Area Career Center and Moberly Area Community College to create worker training programs.

ABC Laboratories Inc. and Kraft Heinz Co. previously received approval under the Chapter 100 program. The ABC Labs project was in 2006, while Kraft Heinz was last summer. The ABC abatement will expire in December 2018.

Judith Stallmann, a professor of agricultural and applied economics at the University of Missouri, said the problem with this sort of incentive is that the company typically has more information about its plans than the government does.

She said the government in a sense is forming a partnership with the company. Companies that partner typically share detailed information about each other, she said, noting the company should be willing to provide the same details to taxing districts.

“The firm always has more information than the government,” she said. “It takes a lot of due diligence to figure out what the real plans are.”

Once an agreement is established, Stallmann said, a well-written contract would at least assure the taxing districts they will get what is promised.

The review panel will meet Aug. 18 to vote on whether to forward the proposal to the Boone County Commission. The commission has the final say in the matter.
Zika Moves Quickly, and Scientists Fear That Journals Aren't Keeping Pace

With the Zika virus spreading north into the United States, Alessandro Vespignani of Northeastern University pulled together some important information he wanted to share.

Mr. Vespignani, a professor computer sciences, led a research team that created the first model of the global spread of Zika based on the travel patterns of individual people.

In the hands of policy makers such as the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the model could give health experts critical guidance on what to tell the public and where to deploy medical resources at a time of widespread anxiety and uncertainty.

Mr. Vespignani and his team, however, faced their own anxiety and uncertainty. It typically takes months to shepherd a piece through the publication process of a major academic journal. The researchers were projecting an epidemic’s spread within days. What good options existed for sharing those projections?

One method — posting the work online before seeking peer review — is fast. But it can jeopardize the chances that the work is taken seriously or allowed for publication by a peer-reviewed journal, which is a critical part of the academic reward structure. Publishing in a fast-paced journal was another option, but that too could prioritize speed at the possible cost of academic respect. The top-ranked journals increasingly
offer their own faster publishing channels, but those are often reserved for just a select set of top-priority papers.

In the end, Mr. Vespignani chose the first option. He posted his paper last month to bioRxiv, a free online distribution service run by the Cold Spring Harbor Laboratory. "There are many more pros in posting the paper and giving the community the ability to look at all the results in real time," he explained.

But the dilemma still unsettles him and many other researchers working on fast-moving public-health threats. In the past decade or so, experiences with outbreaks that include SARS, H1N1, and Ebola have greatly improved the mechanisms and strategies that journals and scientists use to quickly share vital information. But in the eyes of many researchers who study epidemics, the solutions remain scattered and incomplete.

"We’re not getting information to the scientific community in a timely manner," said Peter Jay Hotez, dean of the National School of Tropical Medicine at the Baylor College of Medicine and founding editor-in-chief of *PLOS Neglected Tropical Diseases*. "And as a result, for things like Zika, we’re relying on this informal system of journalists from major newspapers, emails from colleagues, picking up the phone and talking to thought leaders, and it creates misinformation."

Finding solutions is complicated because the tradeoffs are complicated. In 2009 Kamran Khan, an associate professor of medicine at the University of Toronto, faced a situation similar to that encountered by Mr. Vespignani. Dr. Khan and some colleagues analyzed the flight itineraries for passengers leaving Mexico to try to predict the global spread of H1N1, both to help manage public concerns and help medical professionals prepare.
A leading medical journal, which he asked not be named, printed their findings. But even with an expedited process it took more than a month, greatly reducing the ultimate value of the published information, Dr. Khan said. His research team had to consider not only the expected time of publication, but the need to pare down their report to help speed the process, he said.

'Fast' vs. 'Easy'

Years later, Dr. Khan said, systems have improved. But they still leave researchers with perishable information struggling to figure out their best options. "It consumes a lot of energy and a significant amount of time thinking through some of this," he said, "just because we’re trying to navigate a process that is inherently slower than the pace of many of these emergencies."

Pioneering efforts include arXiv.org and bioRxiv.org (pronounced "archive" and "bio-archive"), where researchers can freely post findings. But the lack of peer review on such sites can leave readers uncertain about quality while exposing researchers to the prospect—albeit now dwindling—that major peer-reviewed journals will reject the work as no longer novel.

Journals in the PLOS Currents series are specifically designed to handle reviews quickly, though they do not maintain the strong reputation of a top medical journal. Meanwhile, the more widely acknowledged top journals, including Science and Nature, have created their own fast-track processes for selected articles.

"Fast" at such top journals can mean as little as 48 hours to online publication, said Lone Simonsen, a research professor in the Department of Global Health at George
Washington University and an editor at *PLOS Currents Outbreaks*. For that kind of treatment, however, "you have to have something that’s spectacular," she said.

Quicker also doesn’t mean "easier" peer review, said Steven J. Cooke, a professor of environmental science and biology at Carleton University who has studied journals' efforts to speed their publication processes. Instead, editors seeking outside reviewers work even more aggressively to find them, sending multiple emails and following them with phone calls, or using their own editorial teams, Mr. Cooke said.

"There are ways to move really key pieces forward with more speed, while maintaining the same rigor," he said.

That attitude has become an every-day priority at the *Journal of Infectious Diseases*, said one of its associate editors, William Schaffner, a professor of preventive medicine and infectious diseases at Vanderbilt University. The editor in chief, Martin S. Hirsch, regularly grades the associate editors on how quickly they move manuscripts through the review process, Dr. Schaffner said.

In many cases, Mr. Schaffner said, the journals move so fast that the limiting factor is the speed with which the authors can respond to reviewer questions. But there are limits to increasing both speed and volume, Dr. Hotez said. After all, peer reviewers are fellow researchers who are already being asked to take time to read and assess papers without compensation.

Many journals also have revised policies that ban the consideration of manuscripts that have already appeared on publicly available sites such as arXiv.org and bioRxiv.org. The World Health Organization helped push that change by creating its own online space for such manuscripts, called Zika Open, and asking leading journals not to treat such submissions as ineligible for publication.
'Habits of Academia'

Sites like bioRxiv can complicate life for public-health officials as much as it helps them, Mr. Cooke said. In some cases, he said, the quick release of working papers could create public pressure for a response that policy makers might not yet see as justified.

Mr. Vespignani discussed his findings separately with experts from the CDC and other agencies to get feedback and help them understand his work. Such agencies typically have their own ways to evaluate science, Mr. Cooke said, with an eye on potential applications that a journal peer-review process might not include.

The paper from Mr. Vespignani’s group is a good example of the challenges confronting researchers and journals facing public-health emergencies, said Stephen S. Morse, a professor of epidemiology at Columbia University. The work appears to be valuable, Mr. Morse said, yet it’s not a simple matter to assess whether it could or should have waited for peer-review treatment.

Among the questions the Vespignani team has helped highlight, Mr. Morse said, is whether researchers and universities are placing appropriate emphasis on journal publication as a measurement of career success. Mr. Vespignani, for his part, feels journals need to work harder to balance oversight with timeliness. "We should get out of the habits of academia," in which peer review has become too much of a struggle for perfection, he said.

For Dr. Hotez, a chief concern is accuracy. He said he’s troubled by repeated references in the media to the idea that some 80 percent of people with Zika are asymptomatic, because there’s little scientific basis for such an estimate, and because people on the ground in South America warn him against believing that. Giving more
researchers better options to report their findings quickly might help counter such misimpressions, Dr. Hotez said.

Either way, he said, the struggle of the scientific community to respond to Zika is "yet another wake-up call that business as usual is not adequately keeping the scientific community informed."