Welcome to the 3rd Quarter Issue of *MoneySKILL Matters!*

For many educators the beginning of the school year has arrived. Or, at the very least, is just around the corner. To me, it seemed as if the summer went by very, very quickly. We hope that you had a chance to rejuvenate and get ready for another action-packed school year!

In this edition of *MoneySKILL Matters!,* you will find our regular teacher spotlight article on Michael Fiedler from Wisconsin. Be sure to read how he uses MoneySKILL in his classroom.

We also have a story by Brett Henry with Paskr. Brett is head of our IT team and has been taking the lead in recent months to help us with the MoneySKILL update. You will want to read his remarks to learn about the exciting changes and see first-hand the new look of MoneySKILL.

The Student Research Foundation reached out to us since we work with so many teachers. In this issue, you can see the story on how you can participate in their surveys with scholarship benefits for your students.

Lastly, it is with mixed emotions that we are announcing David Casserly, Director of MoneySKILL, on the AFSA Education Foundation staff has retired. David has been a tremendous help to me since I started with the foundation late last year. Although I am happy that he will be able to travel and have more free time I am sad to lose his expertise. Please join me in thanking David for his years of service and for his strong commitment to financial education. We will definitely miss him.

We hope you have a great school year and most importantly we thank you for your support of MoneySKILL. We need more educators like you so don’t hesitate to help us spread the word of how MoneySKILL is making a positive difference.

Regards,

*Rhonda Ashburn*

Executive Director
AFSA Education Foundation
Teacher Considers Teaching his “Calling”

Michael Fiedler has been teaching for 16 years now and in his words “loves to share information.” But teaching is actually his second career. Prior to that, he worked in the corporate world, holding a number of positions with both Fortune 100 and 500 companies and a few smaller business entities. He’s glad he came to teaching, though, and considers it his true “calling.”

“I do consider teaching a calling,” he recounted, “a career where I can help others achieve their full potential. I love to share information and to help others get excited about learning.”

Michael teaches grades 9-12 (14 years at Kenosha Unified District in Wisconsin and entering his third year at Indian Trail High School and Academy). He uses MoneySKILL® on several levels with his students. “First,” he pointed out, “I use the pre-test for all Personal Finance Classes to gauge financial literacy readiness. For honors and academy students, MoneySKILL completion is a required component of the curriculum. For non-honors students, MoneySKILL modules are encouraged to be completed and earn extra credit points.”

Michael first learned of MoneySKILL from a former colleague, and he likes it because of the depth of knowledge of the modules. “Most online financial literacy programs are too simplified and basic for most high school students,” he pointed out.

Though he doesn’t presume to speak for his students, over the years, he thinks their feedback and performance has indicated that MoneySKILL is “an appropriate and challenging learning tool that enhances their other coursework.”

He does believe, though, that personal finance can be very challenging for many students who lack knowledge in financial matters. “That’s where the retake option comes in,” he said. “I require all student to achieve at least a 70% score before moving on to the next module.”

Fiedler is married and lives with his wife in Antioch, Illinois. They have raised three children. They enjoy movies, travel, and just spending time together. In addition to his other work, for a number of years Michael has presented at the NIFEL Conference in Madison, WI. Here’s how that came about.

“That was 8 years ago and I have presented in Madison ever since. The people who attend the NIFEL conference are from many subject areas of teaching including: business, social studies, math and others. In addition, many attendees are from adult programs, charities, school-to-work programs, and more. After presenting the MoneySKILL program, I always have my attendees do a sample pretest. Anyone who wasn’t convinced to use Money SKILL before that, usually finds the program to be highly useful. The vast majority of attendees have shared that they will use MoneySKILL in one way or another in their specific situation.”
After more than 20 years in the financial literacy arena, David Casserly (the AFSA Education Foundation [AFSAEF] Director of MoneySKILL®) has decided to retire. Overall, his career has been varied but focused in large part on communications. At heart, he always believed he was a writer-editor, and it’s there that he found the greatest satisfaction.

One of his most interesting stops along the way was working with corporate communications at the National Association of Securities Dealers, Inc. (NASD). The organization now known as FINRA. There he worked on various marketing projects, including the initial public offering (IPO) for taking the NASDAQ® Stock Market public, an investing glossary that is still in use, and a history of the Nasdaq Market Center systems located in Trumbull, Connecticut. He worked his way up until he got the notice of the Chairman of the Board, Frank Zarb. David became his speech writer, molding Zarb’s vision of an Internet-connected market where an investor could buy or sell any stock from any market anywhere in the world.

He also spent time with a number of not-for-profit organizations along the way, including United Way—both in Indianapolis (his hometown) and at the national office in Alexandria, Virginia. He wrote a newsletter for an alternative medicine doctor and spent time with a government contractor.

He started with the national office of the Jump$tart Coalition for Personal Financial Literacy® in July of 2002. There he became the “jack of all trades,” from writing to putting together events. One of his favorite events was the Financial Literacy Day on Capitol Hill. It grew from a small event that had to go through the halls of the Senate Office Buildings, looking for attendees to one that attracted more than 500-600 attendees in most years.

In 2007, he also started making MoneySKILL presentations to teacher groups for AFSAEF, traveling from Missouri to California and upstate New York to Florida and gaining an appreciation for the hard work teachers do. When he retired from Jump$start, it seemed only natural that Susie Irvine, then President/CEO of the AFSA Education Foundation, would bring him onboard to help with marketing MoneySKILL.

Since that time, he started an online newsletter for teachers and AFSA members, began social media outlets for MoneySKILL, assisted in the development of a new website for the foundation and helped in developing a new strategic plan.
MoneySKILL Gets a Facelift!

This year—along with the new school year—comes a new look for MoneySKILL®. The AFSA Education Foundation (AFSAEF) is thrilled to announce that an upgraded version of the MoneySKILL platform will be ready to roll out in September.

In short, MoneySKILL is getting a facelift!

These upgrades targeted outdated services and experiences to provide greater program stability and access via any number of different devices. If a student wants to go mobile, now he/she can. As for instructors, staff has taken many of the educators’ suggestions that have been submitted over the years and added them as new options in the class/student management area.

A partial list of new features includes:

- **Transferring students between classes and teachers.**
- **Grouping teachers under one administrator account.**
- **Setting default selected modules for creating new classes.**
- **The student interface includes a new modern and responsive design that makes it easier to use on mobile devices as well as traditional desktops and laptops.**
- **The new design also provides additional area for reading of the curriculum, which makes it easier for the student to view and use.**

We are currently in the final phases of planning and testing and will announce a launch date soon. Be aware that staff will need have a 24-48-hour service window to permit the team time to convert all the old MoneySKILL data to the new version. This work will be performed over a weekend and you and your students will get prior notice.

We can’t wait to get this new version to you and look forward to your feedback.
Opportunity for High School Educators to Participate in Student Research Foundation Survey

In partnership with a number of leading national non-profit partners, the Student Research Foundation is asking students, educators, families, and counselors their thoughts on student career and educational paths.

As part of their 2017-18 national survey, educators will improve understanding of the aspirations of their high school students and how they can achieve their goals.

This school year, educators may receive mailed survey packets from their Research Consortia partners. Teachers can make sure they’re included by signing up here.

This work helps high school students achieve their career and educational aspirations, connecting them with postsecondary institutions interested in students, their interests and their abilities. Through one of Student Research Foundation’s partners, students also have the ability to earn scholarships to make their educational and career dreams come true.

Visit the Student Research Foundation website for past years research, as well as other information on students’ career and educational paths. You can also reach out to their staff with any comments or questions via this email: info@studentresearch.org.
Ask MoneySKILL!

Q: How can I reset a student so that he/she can retake a module?

A: To allow one student to retake a specific module, go to the teacher administration page > Students > Edit Student. Check the “Retake Module” button on the right for any module and update. That will instantly give the student a retake for that module. To allow all students in your class to retake modules, you can go to the class setup page and choose the option for auto retakes below a certain percentage for all students in all modules. You can decide on the percentage that you want for your students; although, many teachers choose 70%.

Q: Some of my students cannot retake the posttest even though they have finished all modules. The comment says, “complete the previous module before this module.” Please advise how I can have them continue.

A: They likely have retakes in other modules that are incomplete. You can allow them to continue with the post test, however. Go to the teacher admin site > Class and then, clicking the checkbox that says “Allow Post Test Before Curriculum Completion.”

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A new instructor in our school is attempting to register. She gets as far as the submit page with her information, but the “I am not a robot” captcha doesn't give her any options. Therefore, she cannot submit. Any assistance would be appreciated!

A: There should be a checkbox in the “I am not a robot” captcha and once checked it will permit submission of the account.