

NaPOMLE Newsletter

Welcome NAPOMLE Members!

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It was the best of times, it was the worst of times...

As we learn more—through brain research, inquire—based learning, service learning, collaboration, developmentally responsive practices, and earlier field experiences; we are also faced with new state and national mandates. These mandates place restrictions on what we, as middle level researchers, know is good practice in the place restrictions on what we, as middle level researchers, know is good practice in the middle level classroom. It is to our advantage to vigilantly affect state and national policies through research and networking at our University and school district levels and to employ simulta-

neous renewal of our middle level certification structures through collaboration with local communities.

We are forced with the ultimatum — if not now, when? NAPOMLE, in collaboration with NMSA, state, and local organizations, can potentially act as one of the driving forces to spread the news of what is best for the ten to fourteen year old. Each member in each University and school district is heard when all members work together to speak to preservice and inservice teachers, school superintendents, principals, and middle school mentor teachers.

Many states are deciding on implementation of

middle level certification.

Some are reinstating the two-level K-8 and 8-12 to provide a broader hiring base to overcome the

teacher shortage. In some locations little attention is paid to what is best for middle level student learning. It is crucial to act now and to engage legislators in conversations about what is best for the adolescent through emails, phone calls, and letters.

We are all voters, too.

Dr. Shirley Theriot
University of Texas
At Arlington



You Are Invited!

There will be a joint meeting of the Collegiate Middle Level Association (CMLA) and National Professors of Middle Level Association (NAPOMLE) on Thursday, October 31 at 11:15-12:15 in the Sellwood Room of the Portland Convention Center. This session will be held during the Affiliate Strand time and is planned to give an opportunity for members of both organizations to get acquainted and to promote and inform others their goals. If you are interested in beginning a chapter of CMLA or of joining a national group of professors who share an interest in young adolescents, please plan to join us.

O d d s and E n d s

October is the Month of the Young Adolescent. To read more about it and to find out about activities that your school can do, visit the NMSA website at www.nmsa.org October 17 is National Middle School Shadow Day. Arrange for a reporter or a parent to shadow a kid that day.

A position paper of the National Assoc. for Sport and Phys. Education is available at www.aahperd.org/naspe/template=position-papers.html Entitled "Co-curricular Physical Activity and Sport Programs for Middle School Students" this paper looks at both sides and emphasizes the educational value of sports.

If you haven't already printed out a copy of the National Forum's position paper on testing do so. Available online at www.mgforum.org/higtakes/page1.htm>*****

An Invitation to Visit Literacy Matters

<http://www2.edc.org/literacy/matters>

A Professional Development Website focusing on Literacy Development in the Middle Grades

Just in time for the new academic year, the Literacy Mat-

ters Website is

launching a new teacher website focusing on what matters most in adolescent

literacy development. Our first "matter" is how to integrate

adolescent literature into the middle grades curriculum.

Not only have we gathered information, found links to great websites, and

sought out other resources, but we have also organized all of this in a



meaningful way, especially for middle school teachers. If you want to find

out more about how to select adolescent literature, ways to use questioning, classroom practices for helping students respond to literature, and how to assess strategies, then come investigate

<http://www2.edc.org/literacymatters/>.

But that's not all.

Want to try out a fun and friendly e-Learning event, offered at NO CHARGE from September 23 to October 6, you are invited to participate in "A Taste of Junior Great Books: Rules of the Game." Co-developed by the Junior

Great Books Foundation and Education Development Center, this e-Learning event (called a Happening) provides wonderful resources for introducing

"Rules of the Game" by Amy Tan into your classroom. In this Happening, you will be able to:

- Read a summary of the story
- Access the story online (with key vocabulary highlighted and defined)
- Print out the story to distribute to your students
- Print out a lesson plan
- Follow links to websites on San Francisco's China Town and chess
- Find other information about teaching literature
- Engage in conversation about what works and what doesn't work in the classroom

It's all there. It's all free. Hope to see you at Literacy Matters <http://www2.edc.org/literacymatters/>.

*Deborah Thomas, Ph.D.
Associate Professor
Georgia Southern University*

Inside Story Headline

The revised National Middle School Association-National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education Approved Middle Level Teacher Preparation Standards are required for institutions submitting middle level programs for review beginning with the 2002-2003 academic year. Institutions can choose the old or new standards during the current academic year. The new standards, which are performance-based, are available for the initial, masters, and doctorate levels. They can be downloaded from the NCATE or NMSA websites. All standards include the categories of knowledge, dispositions, and performances. Rubrics are also provided for all standards. Matrices have been designed for all degree levels and should be online by November 1, 2002.

Requirements regarding whether middle level teacher preparation programs should submit program reports to NCATE for review by NMSA vary

from state to state. In some states all middle level teacher preparation programs have to submit program reviews as a part of the accreditation process. In these states, program approval process has been shifted from a state function to a national one. In other words, states are depending on national reviews for the state approval.

In other states, national review of programs is voluntary. In these states, faculty often choose to voluntarily submit their programs for review so that these programs can become nationally recognized by NMSA. In still other states, programs are reviewed by the states, but the states have adopted NMSA standards as state standards. In this case, all programs in the state have to meet NMSA standards whether or not they are in institutions with nationally accredited teacher preparation units.

The information provided above relates to the program approval process, not

national unit accreditation by NCATE. However, the program review is part of the national accreditation process. NMSA reviews only programs that are submitted as part of this national unit accreditation process and only during the five-year accreditation cycle.

Additional information will be presented at the Portland conference. Please feel free to contact Ken McEwin, Program Review Coordinator with questions or requests for information. [mcewinck@appstate.edu, 828 262-2200]



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Inside Story Headline



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Back Page Story Headline

Two charter members of POMLE, John Lounsbury and John Myers, are currently involved in a major middle school reform initiative in Georgia. When the National Forum to Accelerate Middle Grades Reform invited states to apply for the opportunity to institute a Schools to Watch Program in their state, Georgia applied for one of the three slots – and was selected along with California and North Carolina. Georgia’s application submitted by the Georgia Middle School Association (GMSA) and the Georgia Alliance for Middle Level Excellence (GAMLE) was viewed positively because GMSA had already planned a Lighthouse School Project that dovetailed nicely with the Schools to Watch concept and had built its criteria on those of the National Forum. In addition, the exis-

tence of GAMLE with NaPOMLE as one of its constituents was strong evidence of the collaboration the National Forum sought.

The seven-member Lead Team of the project, which includes Myers and Lounsbury, was trained by a group headed by Joan Lipsitz from the National Forum. They are now evaluating applications to determine which schools warrant a site visit as a potential Beacon School and possibly recognition as a Lighthouse School to Watch. Several other POMLE members will be involved as the program is implemented. All involved believe this program will have a major, positive impact on Georgia’s middle schools.

Detailed information about the program including the criteria, definitions, and related materials are available on the GMSA website (www.gmsa.net).