

President's Message

Last Saturday as my wife and I were driving home from Des Moines, we talked at length about the world in which today's adolescents function. We both have worked with young people for many years, she as a social worker, me as an educator, so we have a reasonable wealth of experience on the subject.

As Baby Boomers often do (ad nauseum!) we lamented the changes that had taken place, not only since we grew up in the 50's and 60's, but even since our sons were middle school kids in the 90's. One question we wrestled with was, "Are today's middle schoolers different from the way we were?" This occupied our conversation for some miles as we cruised east past the lovely scenery bordering I-80. We talked about zits, first periods, training bras, facial hair, hormones, hope, dreams and fears. We talked about first crushes, homework, great teachers, horrible teachers, mystery meat at lunch, bullies, and the Beatles. Throughout this conversation, we noted that, for the most part, adolescence then and now have much in common. Then why does it seem so foreign, even for those of us who work with kids on a daily basis?

"Context" was the word my wife came up with. If the biology and psychology of adolescence hasn't changed all that much, the stage on which it's played out is radically different. I recall a classmate bringing a Playboy magazine, presumably lifted from dad or big brother, to school in 7th grade. As a crowd of testosterone-poisoned young men leafed through the pages (there were ARTICLES?) in the back of the locker room, we formed at least a vague notion that there were mysteries and wonders and maybe even dangers in the adult world at which we could only speculate. Today's 7th graders have an entire porno store on their desk at home, merely by the presence of a computer with an Internet connection. Girls who could look to the Monkees as idols or Aretha Franklin

as a role model now have Marilyn Manson or Christina Aguilera. We wrote notes to boys and girls we liked or ones we didn't. Now kids can post their inner most thoughts on Xanga for everybody at school or beyond to read. Our list went on and on, just as yours could.

Big deal, Marc. The world's changed – get over it! That of course is true, so why wax nostalgic here? I guess the answer lies in how we as middle level educators help our kids cope with their world. NCLB and CSIP plans, with all due respect, don't address the world in which our kids live. It's their "real world", the reality of their "now".

Middle school isn't a wasteland to pass through as quickly as possible. It's as valid and important a stage of life as any in which we find ourselves. Imagine if you lived your life now as simply a means to get to IPERS and a rocking chair as soon and painlessly as possible. What an empty life that would be. I will always maintain that our world and our kids' world are as "real" and valid as Wall Street, Microsoft, or Rockwell Collins.

Middle level educators understand the value of relationships with kids. Teaming, schools within schools, interdisciplinary education, advisor/advisee: these aren't part of some "radical social engineering" plan. They're ways to help our kids learn and grow in THEIR world. Perhaps now more than ever, the role of advisory takes on critical importance. Building interpersonal, communication, and cooperation skills must be balanced with solid academics, not dismissed because of politics or pressure from the "real world". Folks, we need to advocate, advertise, and raise Cain if need be to get our kids the kind of responsive, democratic (small "d" there!) schools they deserve, where ALL their needs are met. This ain't Oelwein in 1964....

Spring is coming! Hang in there!

Marc

"Are today's middle schoolers different from the way we were?"

Highlights of this issue:

Election Ballots	page 2
Summer Camp Registration	page 5
NW Conference Information	page 4

Topics for the next issue:

- Election Results
- Educator of the Year Information
- Mini-grant Information

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Southeast Region,
Amanda Stablein
Southwest Region,
vacant
Northeast Region,
Bill Sousbe

Farewell!

It's with some reservation that I write this article as I'll have effectively resigned my position as Executive Director by the time this newsletter reaches you. I've been associated with IAMLE for almost nine years and in a variety of roles. Unfortunately, my personal and professional world is changing, and with that comes the realization that I must make some changes.

I want to thank all past and present board members for their work on behalf of Iowa's middle level educators. Although IAMLE has been around for over 20 years, my hunch is that very few people truly understand the scope of IAMLE's efforts in promoting middle level education. As a volunteer organization, IAMLE's future lies with the next generation of leaders from the teaching ranks and school administration. Each year, a handful of dedicated educators are hard at work planning sectional conferences, the annual summer camp at Simpson College, the Midwest Regional Conference, putting together information for our newsletter, consulting with individual schools, managing our webpage and membership database. With an active membership of around 700, it's impressive to think that this all gets done with volunteer labor.

My time, so to speak, has come. If you've ever thought about becoming an active member of IAMLE, now is the time to act. As you will see in this issue, we have several openings on our board which will need to be filled in order for IAMLE to continue its work throughout the state. I would encourage you to contact either myself or one of our board members at www.iamle.org to learn more about the various board openings.

I want to thank my good friends who remain on the board and wish them the best. The work is critical. Your efforts are appreciated. Best wishes.

Steve

National Speakers in Your Own Backyard! Saturday March 11th

Mark your calendars now so you don't miss this awesome opportunity.

Hoover High School/Meredith Middle School, Des Moines, Iowa

Join your colleagues and other middle grade educators at a workshop designed to enhance your skills and classroom strategies. National Middle School Association (NMSA) is joining with Iowa Association for Middle Level Education (IAMLE) in hosting this workshop on Saturday, March 11. Workshop sessions will be conducted by Debbie Silver (Differentiated Instruction); Judith Irvin (Literacy); and Sue Thompson (Closing the Achievement Gap.) The workshop will be held at Hoover High School/Meredith Middle School in Des Moines.

For more information or to register, please contact:

Al Summers, Director of Professional Development

NMSA- 800-528-6672,

asummers@nmsa.org,

or

Rick Herrig, NMSA North Region Trustee,

Wood Intermediate School,

Davenport, Iowa

563-391-6350,

herrigr@davenportsschool.org.



Please watch the NMSA and IAMLE websites for more information!

Why Attend Camp this year?

1. **Jack is back!** Join us this year as Jack Berckemeyer, NMSA's Associate Executive Director, returns to camp. Other featured speakers and consultants include: Dale Henze, Dr. Kristin Crabtree-Groff, Theresa Hinkle, and Jean Schultz. This year's camp features both workshop and breakout sessions. Registration forms and camp information are on the following pages.
2. New this year is an opportunity for schools to attend NMSA's Coordinated School Health strand at this year's summer camp. The goal of the program is to improve the health of young adolescents by enhancing and supporting the development of a coordinated school health program to address adolescent health risks. Your school sends a team of three individuals to camp. Jean Schultz, Program Coordinator for the Coordinated School Health program will conduct two days of training during the camp. Teams select a health-related topic/issue and prepare an action plan and local health professionals will be brought on board to provide resources for attendees. Once the action plan is developed, a one day follow-up conference is scheduled to check progress. Schools seeking financial support for their attendance can apply for a \$200/person reimbursement grant.
3. Workshop strands will be aligned with coursework requirements for middle level endorsement programs offered by area colleges. Additionally, graduate credit offered by Simpson College and AEA license renewal credit options is available.
4. Camp is now only three days, packed full of training opportunities by national and regional experts in the field of middle level implementation, classroom management, coordinated school health programming, and school leadership.

For more information regarding this year's camp, contact:

Rick Herrig

herrigr@davenportsschools.org

Wood Intermediate School

5701 N. Division Street, Davenport, IA 52806

563-391-6350

Sixth Annual Summer Camp

Simpson College, Indianola, Iowa

June 19 – June 21, 2006

Presented by




Iowa Association for
Middle Level Education





Reasons to Attend:

This year's consultants feature a return of Jack Berckemeyer: The current Assistant Executive Director for the National Middle School Association, Jack returns to Summer Camp after a four year absence. Jack has presented to middle level educators in thirty different national and international locations. He is known for his practical teaching ideas that involve and motivate young adolescents. Author and editor of one of NMSA's most popular member benefits, Classroom Connections, Jack's responsibilities for NMSA includes working with their 58 affiliate organizations throughout the world. He has been a judge for the Disney American Teacher Awards and serves on the selection committee for the USA Today All Teacher Team.

 **Dale Henze:** After more than 30 years in education, most at the middle school level, Dale Henze retired in 2001 as principal at Galena (Illinois) Middle School. During his tenure at GMS, he led the faculty and staff through the transition from a traditional junior high to a middle school philosophy helping them earn the distinction as a Blue Ribbon school. A frequent presenter at the Teaching the Transescent Seminar at the University of Wisconsin – Platteville, Dale now serves the university as an adjunct professor in the education department. We welcome his return visit to Simpson and look forward to his presentations on advisory programming, transitioning activities, teaming.

 **Dr. Kristen Crabtree-Groff:** A former school improvement consultant for Heartland AEA 11 and member of the AEA 11 Middle School Satellite Team, Dr. Crabtree-Groff brings vast experience in school reform. A middle school language arts teacher for 13 years, she also taught exploratory courses including Spanish and Communications. A 1987 graduate of Coe College, Dr. Crabtree-Groff earned her Masters of Science in Teaching, Learning, and Leadership from Drake University in 1993 and has completed her Curriculum Specialist coursework. She earned her Doctorate in Educational Leadership at Drake University in 2003.

 **Theresa Hinkle:** Currently the South/East Teacher Trustee for the National Middle School Association, Theresa is a former president of the North Carolina Middle School Association. A former Teacher of the Year recipient for her district and state finalist, she has presented throughout the East and South and worked with many school districts in North Carolina on topics including Reading in the Content Area, Teaming, Interdisciplinary Instruction, and Organizing for Success. A 28-year veteran of middle level, she is National Board Certified in Early Adolescent English/LA and is currently teaching LA/SS on a 3-person interdisciplinary team at Kernodle Middle School, Greensboro, North Carolina.

 **Jean Schultz:** NMSA's coordinator of both the Health Promoting Schools and Coordinated School Health programs, Jean brings with her the experience necessary for teams to leave camp with an action plan to improve a school's response to the health and fitness needs of the young adolescents we serve.

Workshop strands offered this year include: Middle Level Implementation, Instructional Strategies, Classroom Management, School/Team Leadership, and new this year, the Coordinated School Health Programming strand. Participants attending the Coordinated School Health Programming will attend two days of training specific to this model. Participation requires teams of three people from each building.

Participants will leave camp with an action plan for implementing a health-related initiative.

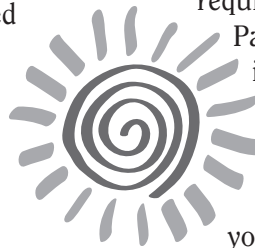
What's Summer Camp About?

Remember those days at camp when you were young? The things you learned, the friends you made, and the FUN you had can be more than memories of the past. Join us as we re-create some of those by-gone days during three days of camp devoted to best practice in middle level education.

Set in the serene atmosphere of Simpson College, located in Indianola, Iowa, you get the best of both worlds – small-town friendliness and a good mix of city life. Located 12 miles south of Des Moines, Indianola is a town of 13,000 friendly people. Simpson College offers air-conditioned dorms, excellent meeting facilities, and use of computer facilities during camp.

Campers will attend keynote, work-shop, and break-out sessions addressing current best practice in the following topics:

- Research-based Middle Level Implementation
- Coordinated School Health Programming
- Advisory and Transition
- Curriculum and Assessment Practices
- Teaming Practices
- Instructional Strategies



Is College Credit Available?

Simpson College is offering one- and two-hour graduate credit options. CEU's are also available through AEA 11.

When is Registration Due?

- Registration materials are due by May 13, 2006
- Camp is limited to first 75 individual attendees
A waiting list will be compiled on a first-come basis.

Who Can Attend?

Individuals and teams are welcome to attend. Whether you attend camp as a team or individual, you will leave camp with an understanding of NCLB and the tools to implement current best practice in your classroom, team, or building. Consultants will be available to work with individuals or teams as they develop actions plans. Round table discussion opportunities will exist for individual attendees during team time.

What do Registration Fees Include?

- Lodging (double) at Simpson College's air-conditioned Picken Hall
- Meals (nine included)
- Linen service including pillow, bed and pillow linen, blanket, towel, washcloth, soap, and glass
- Camp T-shirt
- Materials and Handouts
- Evening social following Monday keynote

*Camp format meets Turning Points 2000 School Reform Model

What is the Daily Schedule?

Monday, June 19

9:00-10:00 AM	Registration
10:00-Noon	Welcome and Opening Sessions
1:00-5:00 PM	Team Time/Workshops
5:00-7:00 PM	Dinner/Keynote: Jack Berckemeyer (Great Hall, Pfiffer)
7:00 PM	Social (Great Hall, Pfiffer)

Tuesday, June 20

7:00-8:30 AM	Breakfast
8:45-12:00 PM	Team Time/ Morning Workshops
12:00-1:00 PM	Lunch
2:00-5:00 PM	Team Time/ Afternoon Workshops
5:00-7:00 PM	Dinner: A Touch of of Small Town Iowa (American Legion Hall)

Wednesday, June 21

7:00-8:30 AM	Breakfast
8:45-9:15 AM	Morning Activity/ Team Time
9:30-11:45 AM	Breakout Sessions
12:00-1:00 PM	Lunch
1:15-3:15 PM	Breakout Sessions/Afternoon Activity
3:45-4:00 PM	Closing/Evaluations

NOTE: \$15/person Early Bird Discount on registrations paid in full by April 15, 2005

\$200/person reimbursement grants available for schools sending teams of three to the Coordinated School Health strand.

(Complete and detach registration form below)

Summer Camp at Simpson College Registration Form

Please print clearly or type: (Return to Rick Herrig, Wood Intermediate School, 5701 N Division St., Davenport, IA 52806)

Name: _____ School: _____ District: _____

Address: _____ e-mail: _____

School City/Zip: _____ Phone: _____

Home City/Zip: _____ Phone: _____

Team Members: _____ Roommate: _____

____ Check here if attending the Coordinated School Health Strand, \$200/person reimbursement grants available for attending this strand. Contact Rick Herrig for details regarding reimbursement option.

____ Full Time Camper Registration \$355 (\$380 if single room) T-shirt Size: S ____ M ____ L ____

____ Day Camper Registration \$315 XL ____ XXL ____

____ Special School Registration (up to 5 staff) \$2000 (includes one-day in-service)*

____ Check enclosed (payable to IAMLE) P.O.# _____ (\$35 cancellation fee)



Place an X in the appropriate box indicating your selection. Space is provided for a write-in candidate.

President-Elect (Vote for one)

The President-Elect shall preside in the absence, inability, or refusal of the President to act; review the Constitution and By-Laws and other procedural documents and recommend additions, deletions, omissions or corrections deemed necessary; serve as ex-officio member of any committee or task force of the Association at the direction of the President; and do other such duties as may be prescribed by the Board of Directors.

Write-in candidate: _____
(Name, School, Location)

Secretary

The Secretary shall keep the minutes of the meetings of the members, the Executive Council, and of the Board of Directors; see that all notices are duly given in accordance with the provisions of the Constitution and By-Laws.

Write-in candidate: _____
(Name, School, Location)

Director At-Large

Conduct the business of the Association; assist in the establishment of policy for the Association; approve the annual budget; appoint an Executive Director, Regional Chair, Treasurer, Newsletter Editor, and Membership Coordinator; and interpretation of the Constitution and By-Laws.

Write-in candidate: _____
(Name, School, Location)

ADDITIONAL VOTE FOR THOSE IN THE SW REGION ONLY

Southwest Director

Steve Seid - Clark Community Schools, Osceola, IA

Write-in candidate: _____
(Name, School, Location)

Appointed Positions – IAMLE invites all members in good standing to consider serving Iowa in one of the following Board of Directors Positions. Interest may be indicated below and nomination forms may be found on the IAMLE website.

Executive Director

The Executive Director shall coordinate the operation of the Association with the Authority delegated by the Board of Directors. The Executive Director shall serve as chairperson of the Elections Committee; whenever possible, be the Association's representative at any requested function as requested by the Board. The Executive Director shall be an ex-officio member without voting rights.

Nomination of candidate: _____
(Name, School, Location)

Newsletter Editor

Term of office: one year. Duties include soliciting, formatting, and printing of articles submitted for publication in Update newsletter; selection of printer; timely publication; purposeful expenditures within the allocated budget; and perform all duties incident to the office of Newsletter Editor

Nomination of candidate: _____
(Name, School, Location)

Membership Chair

Term of office: one year. Duties include: recording membership information as received; maintaining an accurate database of new and renewal memberships; provide Board of Directors with regular membership update; send notices of pending expiration to Association members; respond to members inquiries with regard to membership status; and all duties incident to the office of Membership Chair.

Vicki Westerly – I35 Middle School, Truro, IA

Nomination of candidate: _____
(Name, School, Location)

Summer Camp Director

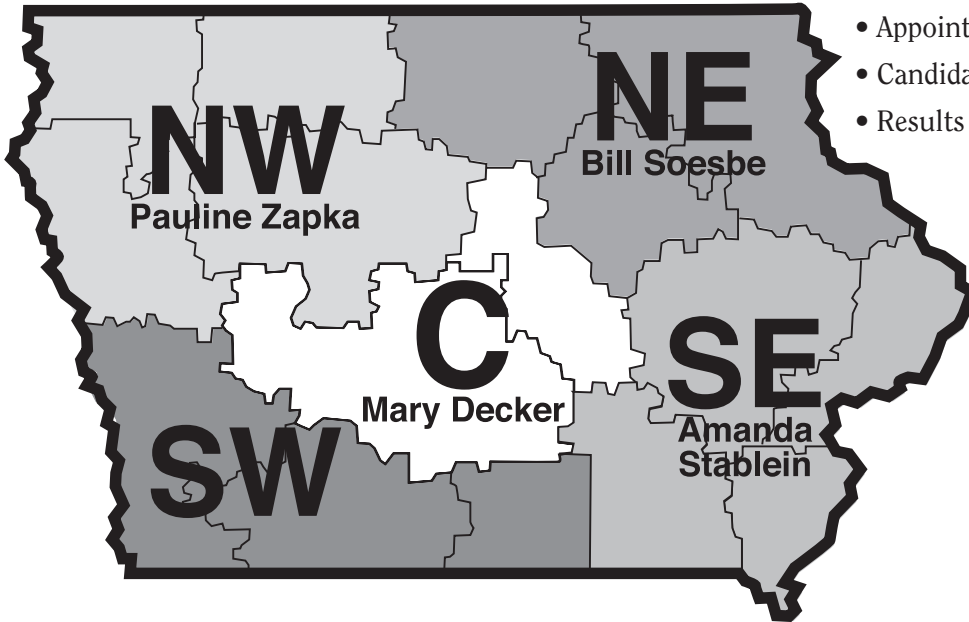
Term of office: one year. Duties include all planning of IAMLE 3-day summer professional workshop. Planning includes: developing curriculum, camp budget, arranging speakers/consultants, preparing contracts, securing credit options, site, and materials, and all duties incident to hosting the summer workshop.

Nomination of candidate: _____
(Name, School, Location)



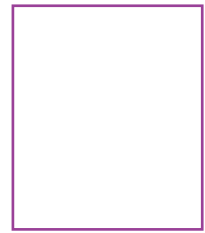
IAMLE Board Appointment Timelines

- Nomination Applications Due....March 30, 2006
- Appointments CertifiedApril 25, 2006
- Candidates NotifiedApril 26, 2006
- Results Released for PostingApril 28, 2006



Fill out the Nomination form on the other side, tear out the full page, fold in half, staple, stamp, and drop in the mail.

Ballots must be postmarked by March 30, 2006.



**IAMLE
2006 State
Election
Ballot**

**Postmark by
March 30, 2006**

Attn: Steve Kwikkel
Waverly-Shell Rock Junior High School
215 3rd Street. NW
Waverly, IA 50677

Northwest Iowa Middle School Sectional Conference

March 29th is the date to remember. On that evening from 4:45 to 8:15, Spirit Lake Middle School will be hosting the Northwest Iowa Middle School Sectional Conference. IAMLE is helping to sponsor this event.

The evening will begin with registration and dinner between 4:45 and 5:45. Following this we will meet for a welcome, door prizes, and to hear our keynote speaker, Rick Herrig. Rick is the North Region Trustee for the National Middle School Association and the past IAMLE Executive Director. He is the principal at Wood Intermediate School in Davenport. Rick's topic will be "Herding Cats: Myths About Young Adolescents." Rick is a dynamic speaker and will deliver a very positive message!

Following the keynote, attendees will have the opportunity to attend breakout sessions. Breakout sessions will cover the following topics:

- Bullying, Hazing, and Harassment in Schools
- Second Chance Reading
- Northland Alcohol and Drug Abuse Program
- PE: Stackers/Climbing Walls/DDRC (Dance, Dance, Revolution)
- Smart Music
- Making Research Real: Motivating and Assessing Your Students Using Informational Text Features
- Teaching Mathematics for Understanding—Problem-based Instructional Tasks and Meaningful Distributed Practice Problems
- Using Inspiration for Meaningful Instruction and Learning
- Beyond Anne Frank and Beyond the Holocaust—Resources and Ideas
- Constructing and Administering Tests to Benefit All Students
- Making the Connection to Resources that Support Curriculum Content Standards and Student Achievement.
- Service Learning - How to Improve Student Learning, Student Attendance and Improve Student Behavior

There is something for everyone.

Registration cost is \$35, which includes a meal and membership to IAMLE. There is also a special registration fee of \$10 for pre-service teachers. Registration materials and program information will be sent by email or by van mail to area schools soon. You can also obtain a registration form and program information at IAMLE's web site: www.iamle.org. Click on Upcoming Conferences and then Northwest Sectional Conference. Registration deadline is March 22.

Questions and more information can be directed to

Pauline Zabka, NW Director,
zabkap@n-kossuth.k12.ia.us
(515-272-4361) or

Steve Ratzlaff, Spirit Lake Middle School Principal
sratzlaff@spirit-lake.k12.ia.us
(712-336-1370 x 2000).

A Lesson Worth Remembering



In college I had a social science professor who taught me a great lesson about life. I took a psychology class with her that's main focus centered on relationships. I was an overachiever who read everything I was supposed to read and did my assignments to a higher standard than what was required. On the final exam I got every question right except for the last one. Unfortunately, that question was weighed most heavily. The question was: What is the name of the custodian who takes care of the second floor for this building? I briefly thought to myself: how and why was I supposed to know this?

I remember seeing the gray haired man every night as I walked to class. Upon arriving, he was always emptying or picking up the cigarette butts outside the building. After class, he was mopping the floors starting from the east hall and working his way to the west side of the building. Now that I thought about it, I could virtually set my watch by what tasks he was completing at the time. Why didn't I know his name? I was too busy or rushed. I was reading my required texts and proofing papers. I was making lesson plans and developing assessments for my fictitious students. Those were all good excuses, but in reality, I just plain didn't care about him. He did his thing, and I did mine.

I realized right then, sitting in my desk staring at that final question, that I had missed the whole point of the class. I was so consumed by the theories and ideas that I completely missed the practical side of it. It was all about people and relationships, and although I had learned everything I was supposed to, I never took the time to use it or truly learn from it. The people who were successful in that class were not the ones like me who absorbed everything from the books and teacher, but those who actually applied and used that knowledge to get to know those around them. They fostered and developed those relationships instead of just learning or studying them. After I completed my exam and left the last answer blank, I tracked down the old man and introduced myself to him. He looked at me with a grin and in a tired, but gruff voice said, "You missed that last question on the psych test didn't you?"

Get to know those around you – teachers, students, parents, custodians and the like. They have a lot more to offer you than you will ever know, and you have a lot to offer them as well.

-Bill Soesbe, Northeast Director



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Membership News



Please notify the IAMLE Membership Chair of any changes of address, e-mail, or position that have occurred in the last year. By doing so, your mailings will arrive as scheduled.

We are always looking to serve you better and in order to do so your updates are important.

The Membership Fee is \$20.00; if you have not renewed your membership please do so by sending your application via e-mail or regular mail to: Vicki Westerly, Interstate 35 Middle School, P.O. Box 200, Truro, IA 50257 or you can go to our website iamle.org and send your application via the internet. You will receive a confirmation telling you to send your payment to the Membership Chair immediately. Payment is required to activate your membership. The membership year extends one year from the month of application.

www.iamle.org

IAMLE homepage WWW. iamle.org

The Iowa Association for Middle Level Education - the only affiliate of the National Middle School Association in Iowa - is dedicated to meeting the needs of young adolescents and committed to promoting educational improvement for middle level students.

The IAMLE UPDATE is the official newsletter of the Iowa Association for Middle Level Education and is published four times each academic year. Subscription to the IAMLE UPDATE is included in IAMLE membership dues.

IAMLE UPDATE Volume 12, Number 7

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MIDDLE LEVEL EDUCATION

IAMLE UPDATE

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