

## President's Message

All middle level educators know how valuable our time is. Our busy schedules require us to squeeze every minute for its maximum use. Like many of you, this forces me to often delay reading email, answering phone messages, or sorting through my mail until 6:30AM or 9:00PM, depending on what's on the calendar or how the day went.

It was during one of those early morning "read the week's mail" sessions that I ran across this troubling headline in the NASSP *NewsLeader* - "**Report: Middle School Concept is Ineffective.**" Needless to say, even without my first cup of coffee, my blood pressure jumped! Reading the article, I quickly spotted a name I knew, Cheri Yecke.

For those of you who might have missed her in the news, Dr. Yecke is the former head of Minnesota's education department, and now serves as the K12 education chancellor of that bastion of progressive thinking, Florida. The article cites a report by Dr. Yecke from the conservative Thomas B. Fordham Foundation, "**Mayhem in**

**the Middle: How Middle Schools Have Failed America – And How to Make Them Work**". Fordham Foundation president and public education critic Chester Finn and former US Secretary of Education William Bennett enthusiastically endorse Dr. Yecke's positions.

Dr. Yecke apparently views middle level advocates, like teachers at Interstate 35-Truro, or Waverly-Shell Rock, or Newton as, "Radical activists" who, "do not see the American middle school as an organization to impart academic knowledge, but as an instrument through

which they can force social change." We radicals "have implemented [our] plans and endangered the education of all middle school children—especially those who are gifted."

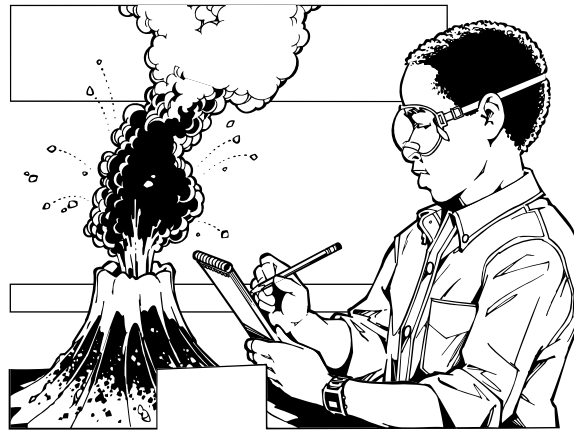
I'm sorry, folks. I've been an educator in this state for over 30 years, mostly at the middle level, and I've yet to see any middle school teacher endanger *any* student's education regardless of program, race, gender, economic status, or what's on their I-pod. This broad-brush criticism is not only an insult to all of us, but a threat as well. Yecke states that, "middle school activists and social reformers made it clear that the middle school was not just a new educational organization, but a

means promoting social egalitarianism by coercing gifted students to be like everyone else. This was nothing less than a declaration of war against gifted children."

Those of you in Clear Lake, in Davenport, in Des Moines – when was the last time

you declared war on ANY child? Would Ankeny or Ames tolerate anything but the best for their students, gifted or otherwise? [www.Greenwood.com](http://www.Greenwood.com) says that, "Yecke shows that the inadequacies of our systems of research and education pose a greater threat to U.S. national security over the next quarter century than any potential conventional war that we might imagine," and that "Yecke asserts that it is time for the American public to reject the radical middle school movement before too much damage is done."

*continued on page 2*



# MIDDLE LEVEL UPDATE

Executive Director,  
Steve Kwikkel  
President,  
Marc McCoy  
President-Elect,  
Brad Buck  
Treasurer,  
Matt DeBaene  
Secretary,  
Bev Maronn  
MWR Conference Chair,  
Deborah Rose  
Newsletter Editor,  
Keri Schlueter  
Website Editor and  
Building Reps. Coordinator,  
Vicki Westerly  
Directors-At-Large,  
Vacant  
Directors:  
Central Region,  
Mary Decker  
Northwest Region,  
Pauline Zabka  
Southeast Region,  
Amanda Stablein  
Southwest Region,  
vacant  
Northeast Region,  
Bill Sousbe

### Highlights of this issue:

NMSA Coming to Iowa .....	page 2
Call for Nominations .....	page 5
Mini-Grant Recipients .....	page 4

### Topics for the next issue:

- Election Ballots
- Educator of the Year Information
- Summer Camp Registration

## President's Message *continued*

I'm sorry, folks, but I'm not aware that middle level education in Marion or Madrid or Melcher-Dallas is damaging anyone. On the contrary, I believe, and hope you do as well, that the middle level educators of this state are consummate professionals, that they firmly believe in what's best for ALL kids, and that by embracing the middle school concept we embrace excellence in instructional practice while upholding high standards of empathy, nurturing, and care for our kids.

You can find a far more eloquent response to Dr. Yecke on the NMSA website, specifically at:

<http://www.nmsa.org/Advocacy/MessagesfromNMSA/NMSAResponds/tabid/319/Default.aspx>

In part, it notes that, "We will continue to advocate for middle level schools that engage every student in a challenging, meaningful curriculum and provide an environment that fosters respectful and supportive relationships among students, faculty, families, and communities. Such schools ensure that academic excellence in a developmentally appropriate learning environment is available to every young adolescent, including the gifted and talented."

This describes YOUR school and MINE. As IAMLE members it's our job to always be advocates for what's good for middle level kids. My challenge to you is to let folks in your community know the good things you're doing. Be a cheerleader for middle level education! Participate in MOYA activities next year! The more community members we get into our schools - as visitors, volunteers, at games, at performing arts events - the less they'll have to rely on people like Dr. Yecke and her ilk for their vision of middle level education!

**Marc McCoy**

# 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 at  
NMSA- 800-528-6672, [asummers@nmsa.org](mailto:asummers@nmsa.org),

or Rick Herrig, NMSA North Region Trustee, Wood Intermediate School, Davenport, Iowa at 563-391-6350, [herrigr@davenportsschool.org](mailto:herrigr@davenportsschool.org).

Please watch the NMSA and IAMLE websites for more information!

## Sixth Annual Summer Camp



Simpson College, Indianola, Iowa

**June 19 – June 21, 2006**

Presented by: **Iowa Association for Middle Level Education  
& Simpson College - Indianola, Iowa**

***Jack is back!*** Join us this year as Jack Berckemeyer, NMSA's Assistant Executive Director, Dale Henze, UW-Platteville, and other prominent consultants guide this year's participants as we explore classroom practices that raise student achievement. This year's camp features both workshop and breakout sessions specifically designed for reading, math, science, classroom management, and improved student performance across all disciplines. See the IAMLE website for details.

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

Rick Herrig, [herrigr@davenportsschools.org](mailto:herrigr@davenportsschools.org)  
Wood Intermediate School  
5701 N. Division Street, Davenport, IA 52806  
563-391-6350



# Something Old. Something New. Something Borrowed. **Something Better**

Steve Kwikkel – Executive Director

In the fall of 2003, our building implemented a team-based master schedule. Team oriented master schedules are not new to middle schools. The schedule we settled on was not something new – but it was certainly something borrowed. No sense in reinventing the wheel so we borrowed the concept from my days at Spencer Middle School. Now, in year three of our transformation, we believe we have something better.

Recently I was contacted by a larger metro school as to how our schedule is structured and what we've found are effective strategies in promoting student achievement. Then, and this was sheer coincidence, I received a call from a neighboring rural school with a question about how we've been able to maintain daily teaming as they will be facing massive revenue losses next year and their teaming is now threatened. Both schools appear to be facing some challenging issues in the next couple of years but in each conversation I stressed the importance of teaming.

In my opinion, teaming is the single most critical element that must be present in highly effective middle schools. Without it, the natural tendency is to drift back to *isolationism* in terms of what happens in the classroom and in efforts to improve your school. Since we began our teaming approach to teaching adolescents, we've observed many positive outcomes from our efforts. While we don't pretend to have all the answers, we firmly believe the primary reason for our steady improvement in student achievement is directly related to the quality of our teachers and the fact that our teams meet daily. Fewer kids are falling through the cracks. Teams are having more contact with parents and students. And finally, our teams have developed a more comprehensive view of making our new schedule work *for* them and not *against* them.

Below you'll find a copy of our master schedule. Teacher's whose names are highlighted are shared staff. I've included just a few key elements which may be of interest.

- Blocked team and prep periods.
  - ~ For parents, easier access to teams. A larger chunk of time means more options.
  - ~ Axis teachers see one team's students over two periods. This has translated into more efficient teaching for the teacher and greater team flexibility in altering their daily schedule.
- Each team has a special education teacher assigned to it.
  - ~ Related special education services are streamlined and delivery is more consistent.
- 5<sup>th</sup> Period Orchestra
  - ~ Orchestra is put into our core content rotation of classes. They meet 4 times per week which does not impact our band schedule during 8<sup>th</sup> period.
- Chorus meets in "chunklets".
  - ~ Students are assigned to chorus in smaller groups throughout the day. They can meet as a whole group as needed during 8<sup>th</sup> period.
- **8<sup>th</sup> Period or E.R.** (Enrichment & Remediation)
  - ~ This period allows teachers to offer additional enrichment and remediation to students as needed and as identified by the teams.
- Homeroom Period
  - ~ This was moved to the end of the day to help reduce the number of students missing class time for extra-curricular activities. (We are currently re-examining the content of this program.)
- Learning Center / At-Risk Program
  - ~ General education students identified for extra academic assistance.
- **Collaborative Teaching** (Special Ed. & General Ed.)
  - ~ Although we just implemented this strategy in earnest this fall, early indications from our collaborating teachers is very positive.

Updated		8:25 - 9:08	9:11 - 9:53	9:56 - 10:38	10:41 - 11:23	Period 5		12:39 - 1:21	1:24 - 2:06	2:09 - 2:51	2:54
Sept 6-05		Period 1	Period 2	Period 3	Period 4	11:26 - 11:51	11:26 - 12:08	Period 6	Period 7	Period 8	3:19
8TH TEAM		Rm	43 min.	42 min.	42 min.	42 min.	42 min.	42 min.	42 min.	42 min.	HR
Mr. Prescott	210	LANG ARTS	LANG ARTS	LANG ARTS	LANG ARTS	L - LANG ARTS		<b>GR8 Prep - Team</b>	E. R. 8	HR 8 - 210	
Mr. Staack	208	ALGEBRA	PRE-ALG.	PRE-ALG.	PRE-ALG.	L - PRE-ALG			E. R. 8	HR 8 - 208	
Mr. Severson	309	SCIENCE	SCIENCE	SCIENCE	SCIENCE	L - SCIENCE			E. R. 8	HR 8 - 309	
Mr. Beall	209	HISTORY	HISTORY	HISTORY	HISTORY	L - HISTORY+			E. R. 8	HR 8 - 209	
Mrs. Boerigter	314	RESOURCE	INCLUSION	RESOURCE	RESOURCE	L - RESOURCE			RES. E.R.	HR 8 - 314	
Mrs. Sickles TA		SH 8-304	SH 8-304	SH 8-205	SH 8-205	L - SH 8 211		SH 8-210	SH 8-210	CL2 - 8TH	BRK
7/8 TEAM		Period 1	Period 2	Period 3	Period 4	Period 5	Period 6	Period 7	Period 8	HR	
Mr. Hovden	307	SCIENCE 8	SCIENCE 8	<b>Green Team - Prep</b>	SCIENCE 7 / Lunch	SCIENCE 7	SCIENCE 7	E. R. 7	HR 7 - 307		
Mrs. Harrison	310	LANG ARTS 7	LANG ARTS 7		LANG ARTS 8 / Lunch	LANG ARTS 8	LANG ARTS 7	E. R. 7	HR 7 - 310		
Mr. Bardal	203	Strategies	HISTORY 8		SCI Lang. Arts / Lunch	Co-Teach Science	SCI Math	SCI - E.R.	HR 7 - 204		
Mrs. Jamison	312	Co-Teach Science	SCI Lang. Arts		Co-Teach Geography/ Lunch	SCI Reading	SCI MATH	SM - E.R.	HR 7 - 312		
Mrs. Thorson	204	HS	HS		GEOGRAPHY 7 / Lunch	GEOGRAPHY+	GEOGRAPHY	E. R. 78+	PLUS		
Mrs. Sedgwick	205	Acc Math 7	MATH 7	Lunch / ALGEBRA 8	MATH 7	MATH 8	E. R. 8	HR 8 - 205			
Mr. Groth	204	HISTORY 8	Learning Ctr.	Lunch	Prep	Learning Ctr.	Learning Ctr.	Learning Ctr.	Learning Ctr.		
Mrs. Sutton - TA		SH 7-303	SH 7-303	SH 8-204	SH 7-204	L - SH 7-103	SH 8-209	SH 8-209	Media 7/8	BRK	
7th TEAM		Period 1	Period 2	Period 3	Period 4	Period 5	Period 6	Period 7	Period 8	HR	
Mrs. Toay	305	<b>Sigma Team - Prep</b>	LANG ARTS	LANG ARTS	LANG ARTS - L	LANG ARTS	LANG ARTS	E. R. 7	HR 7 - 305		
Mr. Souhrada	303		I-ALGEBRA	MATH	MATH - L	MATH	MATH	E. R. 7	HR 7 - 303		
Mr. Soesbe	306		SCIENCE	SCIENCE	SCIENCE - L	SCIENCE	SCIENCE	E. R. 7	HR 7 - 306		
Mr. Nellis	304		GEOGRAPHY	GEOGRAPHY	GEOG - L	GEOGRAPHY	GEOGRAPHY	E. R. 7	HR 7 - 304		
Mrs. Harrell	301		RESOURCE	INCLUSION	RESOURCE - L	RESOURCE	RESOURCE	RES. E.R.	HR 7 - 301		
Mrs. Kaleas - TA		SH 7-305	SH 7-305	SH 7-310	SH 7-310	SH 7-CL3 - L	SH 7-208	SH 7-208	CL3 - 7TH	BRK	
AXIS		1: A B	2: A B	3: A B	4: A B	Period 5	6: A B	7: A B	Band / Lab	HR	
Steege / Gates	101	7 PHYS. ED	7 PHYS. ED	8 PHYS. ED	7 PHYS. ED	PREP / LUNCH Duty	8 PHYS. ED	8 PHYS. ED	LAB / Team	I.M.	
Miss Siler	102	7 CHORUS	7 CHORUS	8 CHORUS	7 CHORUS	PREP / LUNCH	8 CHORUS	8 CHORUS	CHS / Team	HR 8 - 102	
Mrs. Staack		7 READ ST.	7 READ ST.	7 READ ST.		Elementary	Elementary	Elementary	Elementary	Elementary	
Mrs. Wehr	211	Dev. Reading	Dev. Reading	Dev. Reading	8 READING	PREP / LUNCH	8 READING	8 READING	E. R. 8	HR 8 - 211	
Mrs. Bubb	107	7 ART	7 ART	7 ART	8 ART	PREP / LUNCH	8 ART	8 ART	LAB / Team	HR 7 - 107	
Mr. Butler	108	7 IND TECH	7 IND TECH	7 IND TECH	8 IND TECH	PREP / LUNCH	8 IND TECH	8 IND TECH	LAB / Team	HR 7 - 108	
Mrs. Kuhse	103	7 FCS	7 FCS	7 FCS	8 FCS	PREP / LUNCH	8 FCS	8 FCS	LAB / Team	HR 8 - 103	
Mrs. Graettinger	100	Lessons	Lessons	Lessons	Lessons	PREP / LUNCH / LESSONS	Lessons	Lessons	7/8 BAND	HR 8 - 100	
Mr. Stover	100	HS	HS	HS	Lessons	PREP / LUNCH / LESSONS	Lessons	Lessons	LAB / Team	HR 7 - CL3	
Nrs. O'Neill	100	Lessons	Lessons	Lessons	Lessons	7-8 ORCHESTRA	HS	HS	HS	HS	
Mr. Groth	201	GREEN	GREEN	LEARN CTR	LEARN CTR	LEARN CTR	LEARN CTR	LEARN CTR	LEARN CTR	Prep	
Mrs. Cowell	MC	MEDIA	MEDIA	MEDIA	MEDIA	PREP / LUNCH	MEDIA	MEDIA	MD / Team	HR 8 - MC	
Mrs. Louis	212	Elementary	Elementary	Elementary	Elementary	PREP / LUNCH	Dev. Reading	Dev. Reading	Dev. Reading	HR 8 - 204	

## National Conference Parallels History

By Rick Herrig, Summer Camp Director

Exhausted from four days of attending sessions and events, I sat on the plane reflecting on the experiences that this year's National Middle School Association's Annual Conference offered me in Philadelphia, PA. Perhaps motivated by the inspiration of the Liberty Bell and Constitution and Independence Halls, it was a walk back in history that reminded us all of the risks others took year's ago to provide us the America we have today. The conference called upon us to bear arms against the unintended injustice imbedded in our educational institutions across the country. Despite our personal frustrations and feelings with regard to the mandates of NCLB, we face an education system that has enslaved a segment of our society and our (educators') acceptance of the belief that not all students can learn to high levels, which has created an educational caste system that dangerously parallels life in America pre-Revolutionary War.

Rick Stiggins' impassioned call to use assessment as a learning, not just monitoring, tool is no less a proclamation in the educational arena that the cry 'taxation without representation' was to the colonists who demanded a voice in government. Author Juan Williams story of Thurgood Marshall's first experiences with poor children in the south heightened the inequities of America and limited opportunities for a bright future much the same way as the early American press featured stories of British-imposed squalor in the colonies. Lastly, teacher and author Erin Gruwell's story of her experiences as a teacher in one of California's inner city schools and the battles she fought side by side with her students as they sought their independence from the oppression year's of systematic educational indifference was as compelling as George Washington's leadership was to the colonists who fought against overwhelming odds.

A huge stretch to make such comparisons?...only if one's mind is clouded by a sense of futility or one that lacks the energy and ambition to change the world. Start the revolution in your classroom or school, let your Liberty Bell toll and signal the world that your call to arms has begun. Make your classroom the Independence Hall for your students and let your constitution read, "We the people of my classroom, in order to form a more perfect environment, establish justice, insure tranquility, provide for equitable opportunity, promote the general welfare, and secure liberty and future prosperity, do ordain this constitution for all who enter this classroom."

## 2005 Mini-Grant Awards Total \$3,000

Steve Kwikkel, *At-Large Director*  
*W-SR Jr. High*

This year the IAMLE mini-grant program awarded four schools a maximum of \$750 each to help fund their respective grant proposal. On behalf of the board and our grant readers, I want to thank all of our participants who applied for this year's grant money. We hope you will again participate in next year's program and encourage your peers to do the same. For more information check out our website at [www.iamle.org](http://www.iamle.org).

### **Improving Collaboration & Interaction in Science for All Students**

Washington Irving Elementary School –  
Waverly, Iowa

Teachers: Liesa Bailey, Shelby Soeder,  
Maxine Borglum, Marty Clary, Jo  
Lehman

Phone: 319-352-2658

Funding Support: Equipment

### **Hands on Science Outreach for All.**

Wood Intermediate School –  
Davenport, Iowa

Teacher: Marci Davis

Phone: 563-391-6350

Funding Support: After school program.

### **Cardio-Fitness Physical Education**

Parkview Middle School –  
Ankeny, Iowa

Teacher: Merron Hart

Phone: 515-965-9640

Funding Support: Curriculum training

### **Go-Hawk Gear, Inc.**

Waverly-Shell Rock Jr. High School –  
Waverly, Iowa

Teacher: Kristie Kuhse

Phone: 319-352-3632

Funding Support: Equipment





# Call For Nominations

IAMLE invites all members in good standing to consider serving Iowa in one of the following Board of Director positions:

## ELECTED POSITIONS

### • PRESIDENT-ELECT

**\*Directors term of office: three (2) years.** Duties include presiding in the absence of the President. To review the Constitution and By-Laws and other procedural documents; to serve as an ex-officio member of any committee or task force of the Association at the direction of the President; and other duties as may be prescribed by the Board of Directors.

## IAMLE Board Election Timelines:

- Nomination Applications Due ..... January 13, 2006
- Slate of Candidates Confirmed ..... January 13, 2006
- Ballots Mailed (Included in Update) ..... Feb. 18, 2006
- Ballots Due (Postmark) ..... March 30, 2006
- Election Certified ..... April 25, 2006
- Candidates Notified ..... April 26, 2006
- Results Released for Posting ..... April 28, 2006

## APPOINTED POSITIONS

### • EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

**Term of office: two (2) years.** 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; serve as the Association's representative at any requested function; and perform all duties incident to the position or as assigned by the President or Board of Directors. The Executive Director shall be an ex-officio member of the Board of Directors and the Executive Council without voting rights.

---

**Nomination forms may be found on the  
IAMLE website at: [iamle.org](http://iamle.org)  
or by contacting  
Steve Kwikkel @ 319-352-3632  
or by e-mail: [kwikkels@waverly-shellrock.k12.ia.us](mailto:kwikkels@waverly-shellrock.k12.ia.us)**

### • NEWSLETTER EDITOR

**Term of office: one (1) year.** Duties include: soliciting, formatting, and printing of articles submitted for publication in Update newsletter; selection of printer; timely publication of quarterly newsletter; purposeful expenditures within allocated budget; and perform all duties incident to the office of Newsletter Editor

### • MEMBERSHIP CHAIR

**Term of office: one (1) year.** Duties include: recording membership information as received; maintaining an accurate database of new and renewal memberships; provide Board of Directors with regular membership updates; send notice of pending expiration to Association members; respond to member inquiries with regard to membership status; and perform all duties incident to the office of Membership Chair.

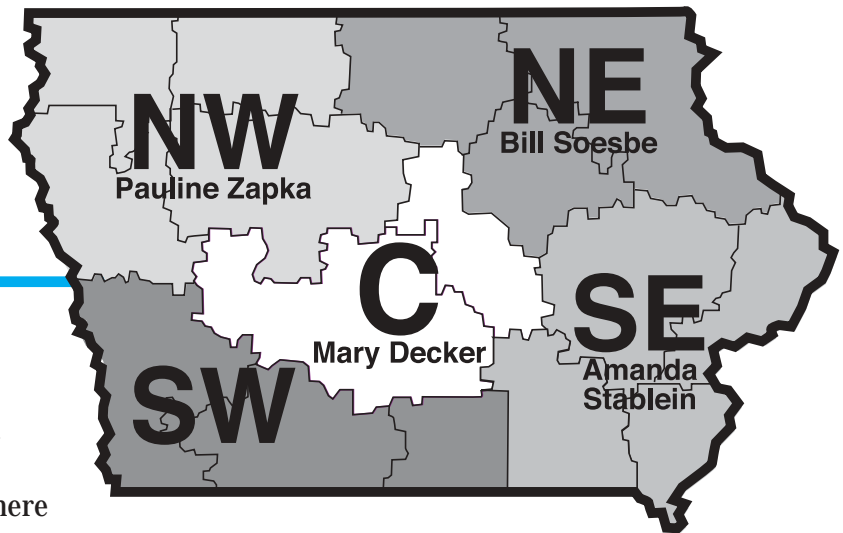
### • TREASURER

**Term of office: three (3) year.** The Treasurer shall have the charge and custody and be responsible for all funds and securities of the Association; receive and give receipts for money due and payable to the Association; and deposit all such money in the name of the Association. The Treasurer shall be bonded.

### • SUMMER CAMP DIRECTOR

**Term of office: one (1) year.** Duties include: all planning of IAMLE 3-day summer professional development workshop. Planning includes: developing curriculum, developing camp budget, arranging speakers/consultants, preparing contracts as needed, securing continuing education and college credit options, securing site for camp, preparing/coordinating all food and beverage contracts, developing supportive materials including books and handouts, plan/develop appropriate social arrangements for attendees, secure door prizes, recording all registrants and mailing attendee database to membership chair, develop and conduct camp evaluation, prepare and provide summer camp report with budget information to IAMLE board, work with previous camp director(s) as needed. The Director is a non-voting member of the board. Compensation currently assigned as a \$15/attendee stipend paid at conclusion of camp.





## Southeast Iowa Conference

Join with other middle level educators to get new ideas from your peers on creating a quality-learning environment for young adolescents. There is something for everyone at this conference designed for middle level educators who are interested in expanding their knowledge and strategies in the classroom.

Keynote Speaker-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.

His keynote address: Landing Big Jake, takes educators on a nonchalant walk into the defining moments of a young fisherman's life and it's parallel to educating today's youth.

When: **April 5, 2006** from 4:30-8:00 pm.  
Dinner provided.

Where: **Wood Intermediate School**  
5701 N. Division Street  
Davenport, IA 52806  
(563) 391-6350

Who: Teachers, Administrators, Pre-service teachers

Cost: \$35.00

Registration Deadline: April 1, 2006

How to register: registration form can be found at  
[www.davenportschools.org/wood/](http://www.davenportschools.org/wood/)  
or call (563) 391-6350

## Northwest Iowa Sectional

The Northwest Iowa Sectional Conference will be held on March 29 at Spirit Lake Middle School in Spirit Lake. This conference will provide educators the opportunity to come together to learn, share, and visit. Plans include beginning with a meal followed by a keynote speaker. Breakout sessions, which will include chat sessions, will follow. Registration materials and program information will be sent to middle schools in the Northwest Iowa District.

If you have any questions, please call Steve Ratzlaff, Spirit Lake Middle School principal at 712-336-1370 ([sratzlaff@spirit-lake.k12.ia.us](mailto:sratzlaff@spirit-lake.k12.ia.us)) or Pauline Zabka, NW Iowa Director at 515-272-4361 ([zabkap@n-kossuth.k12.ia.us](mailto:zabkap@n-kossuth.k12.ia.us)).

## Central Sectional - Meet Us in the Middle

This year's central sectional was moved from the spring to the fall. The September 29<sup>th</sup> sectional featured Rick Herrig as the keynote. Rick once again sent the participants out to the sectional breakouts in a festive and upbeat mood.

Eighty participants from the central Iowa area and students from Drake enjoyed breakout topics in the areas of Special Education/Inclusion, Brain Compatible Teaching/Learning, Student Leadership Academy and Bullying.

The fall timeline was a big hit this year so look for the Central Sectional next year in late September.

# Midwest Regional Middle Level Conference

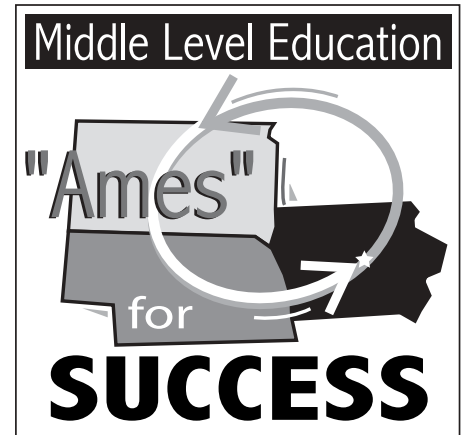
Another successful Midwest Regional Middle Level Conference is in the books. From October 12 through the 14, over 1,000 middle level educators from Iowa, Nebraska and South Dakota converged at the Sioux Falls Convention Center. Once again, participants were treated to a wide variety of breakout sessions and outstanding keynote addresses.

Now it is time to look forward to 2006 when the conference comes back to Ames, Iowa on October 11-13. It is not too early to make plans to attend. Why not suggest using a professional development day and have the whole faculty attend? Having done just that in 2003, I can say that even those most tentative about attending discovered a very worthwhile, meaningful and enjoyable professional development experience. The group rates offered allow districts an affordable alternative to bringing in their own speakers and a way for teachers and administrators to personalize their learning.

Whether attending as a group or as an individual, each day participants

1. hear a nationally recognized keynote,
2. choose eight breakout sessions presented by both experts and practitioners,
3. meet with exhibitors and see the latest resources for middle level education,
4. visit with other educators about the joys and challenges of educating our students, and
5. eat a great lunch.

The 2006 conference committee is working hard to ensure that the conference meets the needs of educators in this era of accountability. We have scheduled three outstanding keynote speakers: Theresa Hinkle, Dr. T. Roger Taylor and Larry I. Bell. The Call for Presenters for breakout sessions was released in Sioux Falls and can be found on the IAMLE website. If you are interested in presenting or have suggestions for presentations, please let us know. More detailed information about the conference will be on the website in the spring. Don't wait though, mark Oct. 11-13 on your calendars now and plan to attend the 22<sup>nd</sup> Annual Midwest Regional Middle Level Conference in Ames.



**Midwest Regional  
Middle Level Conference  
October 11-13, 2006  
Ames, Iowa**

The Hotel at Gateway Center and  
the Iowa State Center

For more information contact:

Deborah Rose,  
Berg Middle School  
1900 N 5<sup>th</sup> Ave E  
Newton, IA 50208  
rosed@newton.k12.ia.us

## How Far Out Do You Cast?

Years ago when I would go catfishing, I would try and throw my line across the river to the other side. Ironically, if I were on that side I would throw my line back across the river. Why was that? It was not because the fishing was any better, but because I thought I would have a better chance of being successful if I cast my line as far out as I could.

In education, we also sometimes cast our lines too far out because we think greater success can be found there. We overlook the spots close to us in favor of the unknown. We look for resources and ideas from other districts, but ignore our own colleagues and contacts.

I remember a time when I needed heart diagrams for my science classroom. I could have bought pictures from a commercial supply company, but instead I

approached a teacher in my building about them. I did not know the teacher very well, but had always observed him during staff meetings doodling. During a conversation I learned he loved to draw, and I needed drawings, so we worked out a deal. He would make original drawings for my classroom and I was to... You know what; he never asked anything of me. He was content with simply helping my students learn and grow. The drawings turned out spectacular and really helped educate my students about the circulatory system.

Next time you go fishing, look around a little bit and make sure you don't over cast: look around your building, district, and community and find those honey holes that harbor success.

Bill Soesbe

## Corporate sponsors of IAMLE



**Perfection Learning<sup>®</sup>**  
CORPORATION

### 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](http://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.



### Change of Contact Information:

Sandy DeSchinckel  
Pearson Educational  
Measurement  
2510 N. Dodge St.  
Iowa City, IA 52404  
319-358-4375  
[sandy@deschinckel.net](mailto:sandy@deschinckel.net)

[www.iamle.org](http://www.iamle.org)

### IAMLE homepage [www.iamle.org](http://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

Editor: Keri Schlueter  
Ankeny, Iowa  
[kschluet@ankenyk12.ia.us](mailto:kschluet@ankenyk12.ia.us)  
515/965-9640 Work



MIDDLE LEVEL EDUCATION

IAMLE UPDATE  
Iowa Association for Middle Level Education  
909 mNE 15th Street  
Ankeny, IA 50021

PRSR STD  
U.S. POSTAGE  
PAID  
PERMIT NO. 762  
DES MOINES, IA