



July Newsletter, 2011

Happy Summer Members,

It is hard to believe that we will be back in classes in a month. We added two new institutions to our memberships this month: Kennesaw State and Towson University. I travelled back to Milledgeville and met with Nancy Mizelle and John Lounsbury in June to talk about the Symposium 'next steps'. They want to work with participants in summarizing and creating documents from the vast amount of conversations that took place in May. Bob Ziegenfuss is organizing a work session at NMSA after our business meeting. I also attended the Kentucky POMLE and Tennessee POMLE groups meetings in June. Kentucky is arranging a place for us to socialize at NMSA November 11, and Tennessee is going to help host next summer's POMLE symposium May 14-16. Finally, I travelled to Washington D.C. to represent us at a "High Performing Middle Grades Schools Share Strategies with Congress" sponsored by NASSP, the Forum, NMSA, and the Alliance for Excellent Education to promote middle level education. It has been a busy and inspiring summer. As we move forward, I hope you are willing to work with us to promote middle level education in your state as well as across the nation and around the world.

Part I: Advocacy on the Hill

I traveled to Washington D.C. June 22. "The National Forum to Accelerate Middle-Grades Reform, NASSP, National Middle School Association, Alliance for Excellent Education and Honorary Co-host Representative Raul Grijalva (D-AZ) hosted a Congressional briefing on Wednesday, June 22 to discuss the critical role that middle grades schools play in the PreK-12 continuum and to highlight the accomplishments of two high performing middle grades schools: Woodbridge Middle School located in Woodbridge, VA and M.O. Ramay Jr. High School located in Fayetteville, AR." Senator Whitehouse and Congressman Grijalva spoke at the June 22 congressional briefing on high performing middle grade schools. In addition, Patti Kinney, the Associate Director of Middle Level Services presided. I asked Debby Hassak and Patti Kinney to share a few words. This is what was sent to the National Forum participants. I attached two documents from Debby and Patti.

It was a tremendous moment last week at the National Forum's Schools to Watch conference when Secretary Duncan presented his first major address regarding middle grades education. You can find the speech at <http://www.ed.gov/news/speeches/making-middle-grades-matter>. It was incredible to have a sitting Secretary of Education speak on behalf of the middle grades and devote his entire comments to the middle grades, STW and our i3 work. Your contributions to the middle grades movement are immeasurable and for all of your efforts, we are most grateful and appreciative.

Our contacts at the Department said: "Spread the speech far and wide!" Please share the Secretary's Comments with your district leadership, your parent organizations and with your students to let them know what their efforts mean to the national middle

grades movement. Please link it with your websites and include your press release about the conference and your participation. The press release can be found on <http://schoolstowatch.org> under the conference page. Unlike years gone by, the Department is now quite aware of the middle grades; the Secretary of Education has noted our accomplishments and our challenges ahead; and we look forward to furthering our mission in the upcoming year.

Jean Gossman a reporter for Ed Daily was at the gala dinner and wrote an article on the Secretary's speech. The article can be viewed at <http://schoolstowatch.org>

Following the Secretary's comments, Senator Whitehouse accepted the National Forum's Legislator of the Year Award. The press release from his office can be found at <http://whitehouse.senate.gov/newsroom/press/release/?id=a6c47aca-7a0d-4f0e-b3f9-c37515960ae4>. In addition, NASSP, NMSA, AEE and the National Forum conducted a Hill Briefing on the middle grades on June 22 at the Capitol Visitors' Center. Both Senator Whitehouse and Representative Grijlava participated in the briefing. Nearly 90 attended the briefing, and we are already making plans for another collaborative event next June.

It was an honor to represent National Association of Professors of Middle Level Education in D.C.

Part II: Action in Milledgeville

As we consider our role as advocates for middle level education, we need to help spread the news to our legislators. This leads to the work that is ongoing from the Milledgeville Symposium. Our plan is to have reports from the subcommittees that began their work in May.



The following is a taste:

Melanie Greene, south region board member reports: I am happy to report that the South Region has been engaged in a flurry of historical events recently! As you know, the NAPOMLE Conference was hosted by our Georgia College colleagues. The main focus was

on the legacy leaders, which was featured in the newest book by my ASU teammates, Dr. Ken McEwin and Dr. Tracy Smith. As a follow-up to this important conference, many of us are busy writing "Proclamation" statements. I am most pleased with the work of the Curriculum Committee that evolved, of which I am a member. We are working collectively on a statement to advocate for a renewed focus on curriculum at the national, state, and local levels. More to follow...

Reflections from the table discussion on teacher licensure and principals:

Associations should take a stance when states either don't have MS principal. We believe there is a strong case to be made for strong licensure and cite research that cites school effectiveness based upon the presence of a quality leader. Build the case based on the knowledge of the research found in ES and HS, and build a case for the importance of doing the research in MS to see if it holds in MSs. Use the same approach of defining the knowledge, competencies, and beliefs that should be articulated as standards and then study those and their relationship to student success.

We have to position ourselves to build on the knowledge about the importance of teacher certification at other grade levels and build the case for teacher certification at the MS level based on the other evidence of the importance at all grade levels. In other words, the same approach for teacher to student achievement as for principal to student achievement.

The table question had a parenthetical (e.g.) to prepare resolutions for NCATE and AACTE. Studies can be done that would look at teacher satisfaction, teacher leadership qualities, etc. and link that back to level of principal leadership. It will be more difficult to change the principal certification/endorsement than to do the same for principals.

In the North region, Stuart Knapp shared that he is culling CMLA groups to set up a communication among professor groups and state CMLA groups.

As we process the information, we will be looking at ways to synthesize and what areas we want to focus on individually and collectively. Bob Ziegenfuss is working on the schedule to continue this work in Lexington in November at the NMSA conference. Al Seed is heading up next summer's symposium in Memphis, TN (May 14-16).

Part III: NaPOMLE Collaboration and Communication in Louisville

First, the nomination committee is accepting nominations for middle level education chapters for the fall (Betty, what should I add?)

Second, we are suggesting that state POMLE groups consider meeting together Thursday evening after our regular meeting November 10 to plan, greet, and collaborate. If your state does not have any representatives other than you we encourage neighboring states to invite you to work with them. The Marriott (attached to the convention center) has a restaurant called "Champions" which has relatively inexpensive food and would be a nice place to meet. There are also rooms and chairs around the convention center that are conducive to meeting. If your group would like to make arrangements for a time and place, let me know and I will include it in the September newsletter.

Third, on Friday evening, November 11, at 4:30, the newly established Kentucky POMLE

invite us to the 3rd Floor Atrium of the Galt House, in Lexington. We believe this will be after the AERA SIG meeting.



Kentucky POMLE members met in Lexington, June 30 to approve a constitution and plan a reception for NMSA. (l-r) Susan Wood, president, Chris Cook, secretary; Penny Howell, president-elect; Laurie Henry, Christa Jackson. Not shown: Nancy McCrary.

POMLE groups across the nation are working to collaborate with one another. We are so appreciative of the state middle level organizations that sponsor meeting space for POMLE groups. This summer the Tennessee professors met at the annual Tennessee Association of Middle Level Educators in Sevierville, Tennessee and provided dinner

Wisconsin Middle Level Education Association is sponsoring a forum for teacher educators in October. Kristin Angela, Cardinal Stritch University, and Alison Bunte, former NAPOMLE officer and Prof Emeritus-UW-Platteville are serving as facilitators. Tom Lo Guidice and Deb Patee (NAPOMLE members) are organizers of this event.

This summer, Kentucky professors approved a constitution and elected officers Susan Wood, President, Penny Howell, President-elect, Shawn Faulconer, secretary/treasurer. It is our hope that at NMSA in November, we will be able to share strategies for collaboration with one another and have two suggestions.

Part IV: Updating Files

Ideas

It is always exciting to consider options and ideas for improving our organization and to share our experiences, our celebrations. As the months move towards November, we will be creating an agenda of topics to discuss at the NMSA conference. Four suggestions have been shared with me. We will talk about these at the NMSA conference. A suggestion has been to consider having state meetings during the NMSA conference. We recommend

you contact your state people and plan on meeting after our best practices sessions and business meeting with your state members. I have put a request into the planning committee to see if we can use rooms prior to the main conference. I was not able to get a confirmation on this. A second recommendation has been to consider raising the cost of “institutional membership” and/or limiting the number of professors who are a part of each institutions member. We will bring this up at the board meeting in November. Currently, the average number of members being shared at an institution is less than 10. Rather than increase the membership fees for institutions, I would recommend lowering the fee for individuals. A third proposal has been to create a different process for electing officers of NaPOMLE. Currently nominations are taken, member profiles are shared, and nominees are invited to speak on their behalf at the NaPOMLE meeting. With our ability to communicate electronically, I recommend that we use the technology we have, run elections prior to the business meeting so that at the business meeting, members were able to participate in the election of officers and that those officers come to NMSA ready to work. A fourth suggestion is to consider publishing electronic materials through NaPOMLE. The work we began in Milledgeville is a perfect reflection of what needs to be shared. If you have other suggestions, please pass them on to your regional representative.

Respectfully,

Nancy Ruppert, President, NaPOMLE

CALL FOR MANUSCRIPTS

Current Issues in Middle Level Education

**The premiere journal of the National
Association of Professors of Middle Level
Education**

SEE

<http://napomle.org/journal.html>

FOR SUBMISSION GUIDELINES

