

## MLER SIG NATIONAL MIDDLE GRADES RESEARCH PROJECT

**Interactive Symposium at AERA/Chicago**

**Thursday 12 April 2007**

**4:05-5:35p.m.**

**Fairmont, Chancellor Room, Third Level**

### **Steering Committee Members**

**Gayle Andrews** is Assistant Professor at The University of Georgia. She served as the regional director of Carnegie Corporation's Middle Grade School State Policy Initiative. She is the co-author of *Turning Points 2000: Educating Adolescents in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century*. Gayle also serves on the National Middle School Association's Research Committee, the National Forum to Accelerate Middle-Grades Reform, and has been a council member of the MLER SIG for the past two years.

**Vincent A. Anfara, Jr.** is associate professor of educational administration and supervision at The University of Tennessee. In addition to being the series editor of *The Handbook of Research in Middle Level Education*, he is the author/editor of 10 books and over 80 peer-reviewed articles. He is the past president of the MLER SIG and the past chair of NMSA's Research Advisory Board.

**Penny Bishop** is Assistant Professor and Director of Middle Level Teacher Education at the University of Vermont, Burlington. She earned a doctorate in Educational Leadership and Policy Studies from the University of Vermont, and her dissertation on middle grades partner teams received the 1998 Distinguished Dissertation Award from the National Association of Secondary School Principals. Before joining the field of teacher education, Penny was a middle school teacher and an assessment consultant for the Vermont Department of Education. She currently consults with teachers and administrators in the areas of school organization, interdisciplinary and partner teaming, and school change. She is the coauthor of *The Power of Two: Partner Teams in Action* and coeditor of *Living and Learning in the Middle Grades: The Dance Continues*. Her articles have appeared in *Middle School Journal*, *Research in Middle Level Education Online*, *Current Issues in Middle Level Education*, and *Journal of Adolescent & Adult Literacy*. She has served as a member of the SIG Council for two years. Her direct responsibility was coordinating the Graduate Student Award committee.

**Micki M. Caskey**, associate professor in the Graduate School of Education at Portland State University, draws on more than 20 years of teaching in middle and high schools. Her areas of specialization include middle grades education, content area literacy, learning strategies and content enhancements, action research, and teacher education. She is president-elect of the Middle Level Education Research Special Interest Group, chair of the National Middle School Association's Research Advisory Board, editor of *Research in Middle Level Education Online*, professional developer for the Center for Research on Learning's Strategic Instruction Model, and board member of the Portland Council of the International Reading Association. She edited *Making a Difference: Action Research in Middle Level Education*, co-authored *Reading and Learning Strategies: Middle Grades through High School*, and has written numerous journal articles and book chapters.

**Kim Hartman** has been very active in the MLER SIG for 10 years. She has served as the President, Vice-President, Secretary, and Treasurer. Kim has served as a reviewer for MLER SIG/AERA proposals. She has published in the *Encyclopedia of Middle Grades Education*, *Critical Issues in Middle Grades Education*, *Middle School Journal*, and *Current Issues in Middle Level Education*. Her research interests include adolescent development, middle school culture and climate, and teacher development. Kim wishes to continue serving the SIG as a Council Member.

**Dick Lipka** is half way through his 41st year in education. His BS and MS degrees are in Elementary Education from the State University of New York College at Buffalo. His PhD. is in Educational Psychology from the University of Illinois-UC. Dick has authored/edited a dozen books and written numerous book chapter and

articles. In addition to his middle school work Dick maintains his interest in affective development in general with an emphasis upon self-concept and self esteem.

**Steve Mertens** is a Senior Research Scientist at the Center for Prevention Research and Development (CPRD) at the University of Illinois. For the past decade he has served as the project director for the design, research, and evaluation of several large-scale evaluations and research studies of comprehensive middle-grades reform projects, including Michigan Middle Start, Mid South Middle Start, and Turning Points. He and his colleagues have published over 30 research articles, book chapters, and reports addressing varying aspects of middle-grades school reform and improvement. Recent publications include the *Encyclopedia of Middle Grades Education* (with Anfara and Andrews, 2005), *A Practitioner's Guide to Understanding and Applying Middle Grades Research* (with Flowers and Mulhall, 2007), and *The Young Adolescent and the Middle School* (with Anfara and Caskey, 2007). As a SIG Council member for the past three years, Steve has been involved in forwarding the SIG's Strategic Plan through the initial planning of a SIG-based national research project. In addition, he has been working to strength the SIG's membership by identifying potential new members whose research focuses on young adolescents. Currently he serves as a Board Member of the National Forum to Accelerate Middle-Grades Reform, several editorial board positions, and recently completed a six-year term as a member of the National Middle School Association's (NMSA) Research Advisory Board.

**John Niska** is an associate professor and the coordinator of the middle level teachers' program at Rhode Island College in Providence. A former middle level teacher, counselor, and principal he also served as the executive director of the Rhode Island Middle Level Educators (RIMLE) Network composed of all the middle level schools in the state. He teaches both graduate and undergraduate courses in early adolescent development and middle school curriculum and organization and heads the Rhode Island College-Middle School Partnership Network. He is very active both as a cadre member and presenter for RIMLE, his state middle level association; the New England League of Middle Schools; and the National Middle School Association. He is one of two board members representing the East Region on the National Professors of Middle Level Education (NaPOMLE) Association.

**Elizabeth Pate** is an associate professor in the Department of Interdisciplinary Learning and Teaching at The University of Texas at San Antonio. Pate, the 1998 winner of [UGA's Richard Russell Undergraduate Teaching Award](#), received her Ph.D. from Texas A&M University in curriculum and instruction. Pate won praise for her work on the [Oglethorpe Folklore Project](#), a service learning partnership with [Oglethorpe County Middle School](#) which, among other things, eventually led to the creation of a Virtual Folklore Museum that won a [ComputerWorld-Smithsonian Award](#) for innovation in education. Her research interests include curriculum, service learning, teaching and learning strategies, and school-university collaboration.

**Kathleen Roney** has been an educator for over 25 years—as secondary and middle grades' teacher, middle school principal, and university teacher educator. In addition to teaching, Kathy's responsibilities at the Watson School for Education include coordinating the middle grades education undergraduate and graduate programs. Among her professional affiliations is membership in the American Educational Research Association, President of the [Middle Level Education Research Special Interest Group of the American Educational Research Association](#), National Association of Professors of Middle Level Education, [National Middle School Association](#), [North Carolina Middle School Association](#), and Vice President for Membership in the [Cape Fear Chapter of Phi Delta Kappa](#). Kathy has published in *The Middle School Journal*, *ClearingHouse*, *National Forum Of Teacher Education Journal*, and, *Education and Urban Society*. She is co-author of *The Developmentally Responsive Middle Level Principal* and has authored entries in four encyclopedias. Additionally, Kathy has presented at more than 35 international, national, and regional conferences.