

NORTH CAROLINA ASSOCIATION FOR MIDDLE LEVEL EDUCATION

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At Glance Inside Summer 2017

The North Carolina Association of Middle Level Education is committed to publishing manuscripts on all topics related educating young adolescents. This edition of the *North Carolina Middle School Journal* contains five articles that address issues relevant to our work in middle level education. Allow me to borrow from the reviewers of each manuscript and give you a glance inside.

The Common Core Standards form the basis for the North Carolina Standard Course of Study, which drew us to the work of Toole and Hall in their presentation of student and teacher perspectives and how instructional practices have changed. “Young Adolescent Needs = The Common Core” is timely and of value showing what sort of strategies should be implemented in a middle grades math classroom. Further fulfilling our need for research that provides insight into middle grades practices is the work of Andrei. “Teachers Sharing New Digital Technology: Practices from the Field,” outlines Andrei’s experience of one small department in a middle school and provides us with data that is concise and clear in that context.

Through her experience as a practitioner, Miller highlights the use of Socratic Seminars as a means for teaching thinking and comprehension. Miller’s “Socratic Seminar Discussion: A Vehicle for Teaching Thinking and Comprehension,” provides a connection to how seminars address essential attributes of a successful middle grades education. Miller helps us “see” a seminar in action and provides research that supports the benefits of using Socratic Seminars.

From a practical standpoint, Richman, Luther, and Richman’s “Rethinking Teacher Preparation for the Inclusive Middle Grades Classroom,” is consistent with the challenges faced in middle schools in North Carolina. Given the increasing teacher attrition rate, it is important to address pre-service teacher education programs and how their design and requirements affect teachers, specifically, their effectiveness in the classroom and likelihood of remaining in the profession. Richman, Luther, and Richman suggest that addressing literacy instruction at the middle level in addition to adolescent psychology while students are working in middle schools will help bridge the gap between theory and practice, preparing pre-service teachers for the challenges they will face. Thornton adds to the discussion in her piece, “Saving Our Best Teachers and Our Future in Teacher Preparation: The Potential of Clinical Education.” Since it has significant impact on the quality of public education, teacher preparation is a current topic that continues to be timely and critical. Descriptive in nature, Thornton’s report addresses the need for candidates to spend time in strong middle schools.

As I have mentioned in previous issues of *NCMSJ*, we are optimistic that again through this issue we will have a positive impact on teachers across the state, and around the world. We encourage you to continue the dialogue with all of our authors. E-mail addresses are included at the end of each manuscript.

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