

# SDAMLEmail

# November 2020

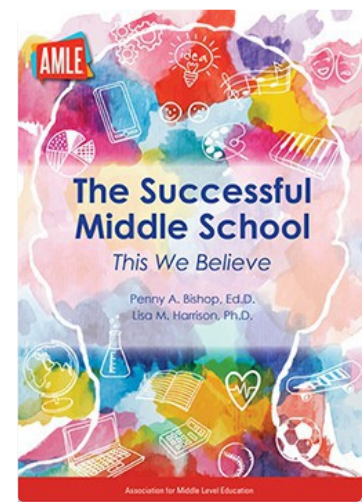
Updates from South Dakota Middle Level Education

## Featured Story

**The newest edition of AMLE's landmark middle school position paper is now available!**

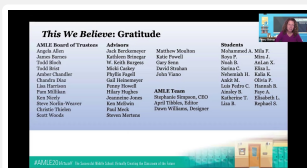
### [The Successful Middle School: This We Believe](#)

Have you heard the exciting news? The fifth edition of AMLE's landmark position paper, *The Successful Middle School: This We Believe*, has just been released! Recognized as the best articulation of the middle school concept and grounded in the latest research, the book explores the five essential attributes and 18 characteristics of successful middle grades schools.



For a limited time, **get free shipping on orders placed by November 30**. And purchase copies for your entire team with special bulk discount pricing.

## Video Introduction and Overview of The Successful Middle School: This We Believe



[Bishop - Harrison - ...](#)

[drive.google.com](https://drive.google.com)

## This We Believe: The One Pager

Five essential attributes and 18 characteristics of successful middle grades schools

## The Successful Middle School: This We Believe

### Essential Attributes

AMLE affirms that an education for young adolescents must be:

#### Responsive

Using the distinctive nature and identities of young adolescents as the foundation upon which all decisions about school are made.

#### Challenging

Cultivating high expectations and advancing learning for every member of the school community.

#### Empowering

Facilitating environments in which students take responsibility for their own learning and contribute positively to the world around them.

#### Equitable

Providing socially just learning opportunities and environments for every student.

#### Engaging

Fostering a learning atmosphere that is relevant, participatory, and motivating for all learners.



From *The Successful Middle School: This We Believe*, published by the Association for Middle Level Education. Build your own professional development plan with the Successful Middle School program.

Visit [amle.org/sms](http://amle.org/sms)

### Characteristics

Successful middle schools exhibit the following 18 characteristics:



#### Culture and Community

- Educators respect and value young adolescents.
- The school environment is welcoming, inclusive, and affirming for all.
- Every student's academic and personal development is guided by an adult advocate.
- School safety is addressed proactively, justly, and thoughtfully.
- Comprehensive counseling and support services meet the needs of young adolescents.
- The school engages families as valued partners.
- The school collaborates with community and business partners.



#### Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment

- Educators are specifically prepared to teach young adolescents and possess a depth of understanding in the content areas they teach.
- Curriculum is challenging, exploratory, integrative, and diverse.
- Health, wellness, and social-emotional competence are supported in curricula, school-wide programs, and related policies.
- Instruction fosters learning that is active, purposeful, and democratic.
- Varied and ongoing assessments advance learning as well as measure it.



#### Leadership and Organization

- A shared vision developed by all stakeholders guides every decision.
- Policies and practices are student-centered, unbiased, and fairly implemented.
- Leaders are committed to and knowledgeable about young adolescents, equitable practices, and educational research.
- Leaders demonstrate courage and collaboration.
- Professional learning for all staff is relevant, long term, and job embedded.
- Organizational structures foster purposeful learning and meaningful relationships.

## Mini-Survey: Positives in a Challenging Year

Share your experiences with SDAMLE members - shine a light with your school insights & discoveries from these past months. Results will be shared in our upcoming newsletters.



## Middle School Walk and Talk

### A Podcast Series

This podcast series offers heart, hope, and health to members of our middle school communities. Hosts Phyllis Fagell and Joe Mazza model wellness as they walk and talk while recording each episode. Listeners are encouraged to take a walk, too, as they listen to discussions on self-care, student well-being, school culture, and more.

[Middle School Walk and Talk – A Podcast Series](#)

## Teacher Pep Talk

A crowd-sourced, positive way to start your day! Listen to educators from all over the world as they tell stories, share uplifting anecdotes, and offer inspiring messages to encourage your heart and energize your mind as you prepare to meet your students each day.

[Check out the listing by clicking here!](#)



## TWITTER #MSCHAT

Join us Thursdays, 7 PM CST / 6 PM MST to discuss relevant Middle School topics and a great easy way to keep on top of personal professional development!!



## Stories of positive and supportive relationships and healthy school culture

Read the entire article here:

[The Power of Positivity](#)

By: Shanna Speakman-Spickard, Ed.D.

EXCERPT:

We all have the power to live happier lives and help other school leaders, educators, and students to do the same. It starts with the decision to shift our mindset to focus on the positive in our lives and schools. People who are positive have more success, are happier, and have more energy. Research proves this.

According to Mayo Clinic, choosing to be positive leads to better health, less stress, and more coping skills. Seppala and Cameron (2015) add that positivity leads to productivity, collective efficacy, higher trust, and better attendance, which leads to better staff and students! As school officials, we have the power to write the story. Dr. John Draper speaks about being the positive ambassadors of schools and to stop "belly aching" because as educators "if we talk negatively about them [our schools]..., we give permission for everyone else to badmouth us [education]." Now when faced with difficult and unprecedented times, finding the good is even more important. [Continue reading at AMLE](#)

## TECH WITH TARA--APP ALERT!

[Mentimeter](#)

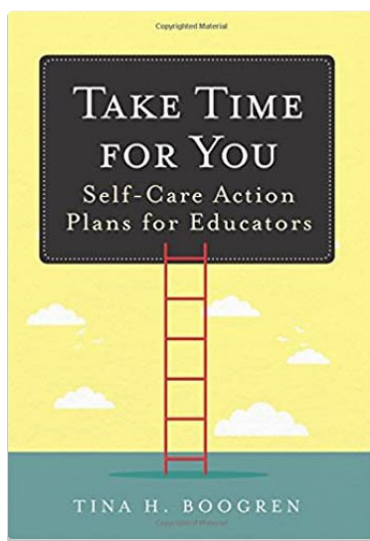
Regardless if you're remote, hybrid or face-to-face...use live polls, quizzes, word clouds, Q&As and more to get real-time input!

Mentimeter is an Interactive Presentation Platform that transforms presentations, meetings and lectures by turning passive audiences into engaged contributors. We give everyone a voice independently of how loudly they talk.

Via menti.com audiences connect to your presentations through smartphones without needing to download anything. Mentimeter makes real-time interaction and visualization of opinions, questions and thoughts possible through WordClouds, Multiple Choice Questions, Q&A's Quizzes and more.



## BOOK STUDY COMING THIS WINTER



### Take Time for You: Self-Care Action Plans for Educators

Teaching can be physically and emotionally challenging, but that doesn't mean it has to be stressful. Practicing self-care is not selfish or an indulgence; it is necessary in order to recharge, rejuvenate, and reclaim the joy in education. It's time that educators start filling their buckets by embracing self-care! We invite you to join SDAMLE members for an excellent read in the winter months ahead.

Start date & signups to be announced soon.  
Graduate credit will be available.

## MIDDLE SCHOOL HUMOR



### Just in time for Thanksgiving!

A young man named John received a parrot as a gift. The parrot had a bad attitude and an even worse vocabulary. Every word out of the bird's mouth was rude, obnoxious and laced with profanity.

John tried and tried to change the bird's attitude by consistently saying only polite words, playing soft music and anything else he could think of to "clean up" the bird's vocabulary.

Finally, John was fed up and yelled at the parrot. The parrot yelled back. John shook the parrot and the parrot got angrier and even ruder.

John, in desperation, threw up his hand, grabbed the bird and put him in the freezer. For a few minutes the parrot squawked and kicked and screamed. Then suddenly there was total quiet. Not a peep was heard for over a minute. Fearing that he'd hurt the parrot, John quickly opened the door to the freezer.

The parrot calmly stepped out onto John's outstretched arms and said "I believe I may have offended you with my rude language and actions. I'm sincerely remorseful for my inappropriate transgressions and I fully intend to do everything I can to correct my rude and unforgivable behavior."

John was stunned at the change in the bird's attitude. As he was about to ask the parrot what had made such a dramatic change in his behavior, the bird continued,

"May I ask what the turkey did?"

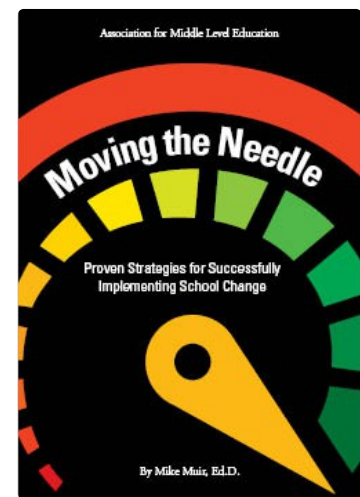
## READ THIS!

### **Moving the Needle: Proven Strategies for Successfully Implementing School Change**

School improvement isn't a one-time event. As our world rapidly changes, so must we change how we "do school." Good school leaders are constantly re-evaluating how best to serve our students by identifying areas that need improvement and courageously working with colleagues and the community to facilitate and embrace change that aims to help students develop the academic and personal skills they need to be successful.

In this timely resource, Mike Muir offers:

- Insights into the change process, including myths and challenges
- Ways to face the "we've always done it this way" mentality
- Strategies for bringing team members to embrace a mindset of being agents of change rather than victims of change.
- Details about every aspect of a successful change process
- Practical and doable strategies.
- How to develop shared leadership teams
- Ideas for engaging diverse stakeholders
- Tips for supporting team members



This book is one that every administrator, team leader, teacher leader, and counselor should get familiar with and use to make the change process a success for all.

## Upcoming Events!

# #EdcampSDAMLE

## When

*Saturday, March 13th 2021 at 9am*

## Where

*3201 South Kiwanis Avenue  
Sioux Falls, SD*



## South Dakota Association for Middle Level Educators



### SDAMLE

 Facebook  @EdSDAMLE

South Dakota Association for Middle Level Education (SDAMLE) is the professional association of teachers, administrators, parents, and other stakeholders who have joined together to support the development of quality programs that serve the needs of young adolescents. SDAMLE exists to promote a better understanding of middle grades education in our state. SDAMLE is the source of ideas, information, and support for middle level educators in South Dakota.

#### 2020-2021 SDAMLE Board Members

President: Kyley Cumbow, Georgia Morse Middle School

Treasurer: Lisa Kissner, Huron Middle School

Secretary: Tara Johanneson, O'Gorman Junior High

Membership Coordinator: Reva Potter, Belle Fourche Middle School

Past President: Todd Brist, Watertown Middle School

Board Member: Sherri Nelson, Brandon Valley School District


Board Member: Steven Gors, Madison Middle School

Board Member: Cotton Koch, Madison Middle School

Board Member: Madeleine Gonsoir, Simmons Middle School

Board Member: Kris Evje, Milbank School District

University Representative: Teri Bauerly, Black Hills State University

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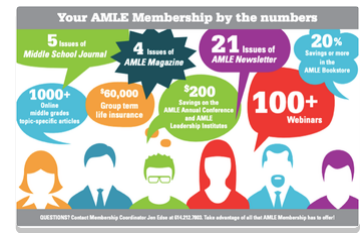
 (605) 773-7330

 [sdamle.weebly.com](http://sdamle.weebly.com)

# Association for Middle Level Education

**You are a passionate middle grades educator.**

You appreciate the uniqueness of every student in your classroom. You advocate for your students every day while helping them along their individual path to achievement. You chose the middle grades because you understand the impact one teacher can make on the lives of 10 to 15 year olds. ***You are AMLE!***



**AMLE Membership Information:**

<http://www.amle.org/membership.aspx>