

SDAMLEmail February 2020

Updates from South Dakota Middle Level Education

DEADLINE APPROACHING for 2020 GRANTS/AWARDS: SDAMLE Outstanding Middle Level Educator, This We Believe Award, Innovations Grant, and Emerging Educator Award

**The deadline to apply for these recognition opportunities is
Friday, March 6th!**

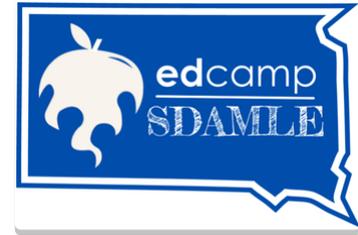
SDAMLE is excited to announce that applications are now open for the 2020 grant, award, and scholarships. Each year SDAMLE recognizes the best in middle-level education in four different categories:

1. **SDAMLE OMLE**--The South Dakota Association for Middle-Level Education Outstanding Middle-Level Educator serves to recognize and honor the tremendous contributions of outstanding middle-level educators. A nomination link will be sent to the administrator of member schools.
2. **This We Believe Award**--This year SDAMLE will be presenting one \$500 award to a deserving individual or group in recognition of his/her/their work implementing a process, project, or activity that honors the middle school philosophy. [Click here to apply for the This We Believe Award.](#)
3. **Innovation Grant**--This year there will be one grant awarded by SDAMLE for innovation in the classroom. One teacher will be awarded \$500.00 to use as seed money for a project that they would like to implement during the 2020-2021 school year. [Click here to apply for the Innovation Grant.](#)
4. **Emerging Educator Scholarship**--This year there will be two scholarships awarded by SDAMLE to be used by undergraduate students pursuing a teaching degree and anticipating to teach in a middle-level school upon graduation. Each student will be awarded \$250.00 to use towards tuition or books during the 2020-2021 school year. [Click here to apply for the Emerging Educator Scholarship.](#)

Register for SDAMLE Edcamp 2020

Be prepared to participate!

On Saturday, March 28, from 9 AM to 3:30 PM at O'Gorman Jr. High in Sioux Falls, SDAMLE Edcamp will bring middle level educators from schools around the state to discuss current issues, interests, passions, and questions. Teachers will use their shared expertise to discuss, think, and problem-solve together.



Click Below to Register!



 **EdcampSDAMLE**

www.eventbrite.com

Eventbrite - EdcampSDAMLE - Saturday, March 28, 2020 at O'Gorman Junior High School, Sioux Falls, SD. Find event and ticket information.



SDAMLE Edcamp Session
Planning



SDAMLE Edcamp Session
Group

SDAMLE Edcamp is Next Month - And What is Edcamp?

Edcamp is best described as "participant-driven professional learning". The seeds of Edcamp were sown in 2010 with a group of teachers at a conference in Pennsylvania who created discussions topics based on the interests of those who were present - and this powerful model continues today in Edcamps throughout the United States and in 45 countries. Read and watch more about the history of Edcamp at <https://www.edcamp.org/about-us>



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!!

#MSCHAT

In Our Middle School



Belle Fourche Middle School After School Program: Celebrating 20 YEARS!

The 5th-8th graders at the Belle Fourche Middle School have been supported for two decades with student-focused programming and academic enrichment beyond the regular school day.

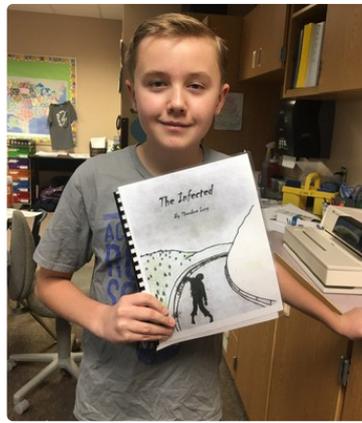
The BFMS After School/Friday Intersession/Summer Program known as "JAM," has been there for BFMS students since 1999, when it started as an after school program. When the Belle Fourche School District adopted a modified four-day calendar with Friday morning "Intersession" opportunities, the JAM program naturally expanded to provide an excellent middle school program on those Fridays from 8 AM to noon.

BFMS JAM offers extended learning opportunities for students through academic enrichment activities. These activities are mainly hands-on with an emphasis on math, reading, and science. The program is all about making learning fun and interesting. Any BFMS student, grades 5-8, can attend the after school, Friday, and summer JAM offerings.

Session offerings after school and on Fridays include Mind Your Own Business Fair, Math and Science Club, Chess Club, Lego Club, reading events, makerspace, arts and crafts, games and PE, homework help, band or choir small group practice, guest speakers, and other options based on the season and school programs.



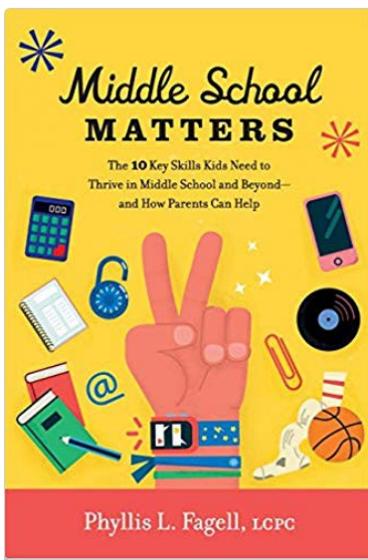
After School Guest Speaker for Veterans' Day



JAM Program - Self-published author!



Mind Your Own Business - the yearly Business Fair!



Coming Soon!

SDAMLE Spring Book Study
Middle School Matters
by Phyllis Fagell

Middle school is its own important, distinct territory, and yet it's either written off as an uncomfortable rite of passage or lumped in with other developmental phases. Based on her many years working in schools, professional counselor Phyllis Fagell sees these years instead as a critical stage that parents can't afford to ignore (and though "middle school" includes different grades in various regions, Fagell maintains that the ages make more of a difference than the setting). Though the transition from childhood to adolescence can be tough for kids, this time of rapid physical, intellectual, moral, social, and emotional change is a unique opportunity to proactively build character and confidence.

Fagell helps parents use the middle school years as a low-stakes training ground to teach kids the key skills they'll need to thrive now and in the future, including making good friend choices, negotiating conflict, regulating their own emotions, be their own advocates, and more. To answer parents' most common questions and struggles with middle school-aged children, Fagell combines her professional and personal expertise with stories and advice from prominent psychologists, doctors, parents, educators, school professionals, and middle schoolers themselves.

Tara's Tech Tip

Writer Igniter

If writing or journaling is a component of your content area, this tech tip is for you!

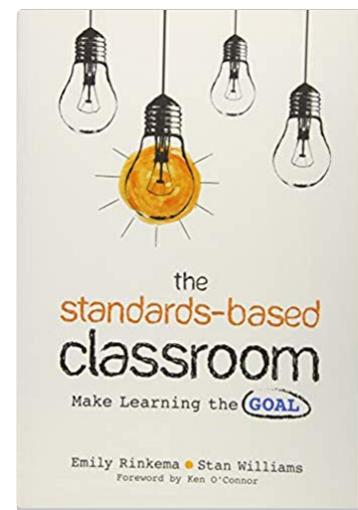
Check out the [Writer Igniter from diyMFA](#). It's a great tool to get started writing. Just click the "shuffle" button, either as a whole class or as individuals, and get the wheels of creativity moving! The Writer Igniter will randomly generate a character, situation, prop, and setting for a story, but how it all works together will be the result of a creative mind!

Read This!

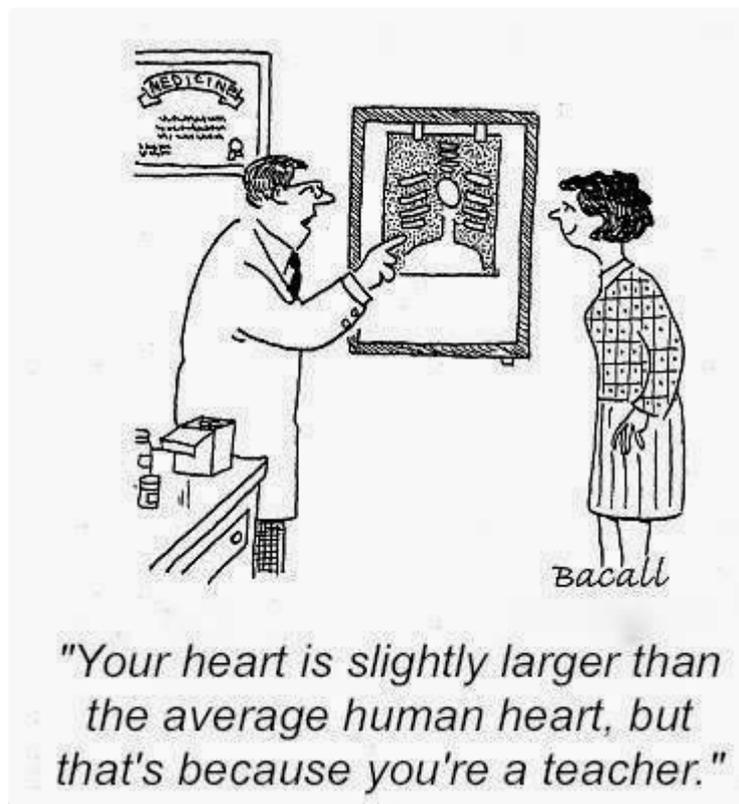
The Standards-Based Classroom: Make Learning the Goal

The Standards-Based Classroom gives more attention to how standards-based instruction can happen in a classroom rather than on a report card, making it a practical guide for teachers of all grades and disciplines. For middle school teachers, it offers step-by-step planning tools and examples for cross-curricular learning targets and student-focused instruction.

With extra emphasis recently in our state on updated standards and unpacking these for planning, this book makes a helpful companion for putting the Department of Education materials into practice. The major sections of the book, from articulating targeted instruction with K-U-D's and learning targets, to developing assessments, to designing effective instruction, and to monitoring and communicating learning, give context to the components of our state curriculum documents. The chapters related to learning targets are especially relevant, describing how teachers can plan for skill progression with learning scales, including differentiation and planning with special education needs in mind. In each section of the book, the authors Emily Rinkema and Stan Williams include multiple examples for applying SBL, as well as addressing challenges teachers may encounter.



Middle School - Where Teachers Have Very Big Hearts!



Building Successful Habits for Middle School

Smooth the transition to middle school with a focus on executive function skills

by Rachel Marcus

Increased homework demands. Multiple classes with varied grading systems and discrete homework policies. Intensified extracurricular commitments. These are just a few of the ways middle school tests students' ability to manage tasks, otherwise known as their executive function skills.

Many experts refer to executive functions as the command and control center of the brain, underlying the critically important role this "central office" plays in directing an otherwise chaotic environment. But research shows that the pre-frontal cortex, the part of the brain responsible for executive functions, does not fully develop until adulthood, leaving many middle schoolers, including both those with and without identified executive function delays, unable to supply the skills necessary for academic success.

So how can we help students develop executive function skills as they take on the added demands of middle school?

[Read the rest of the article by clicking here.](#)



Your Students Have Cell Phones

Let the torture, I mean, texting begin

by Kathleen McGuiness

A rite of passage for many students entering middle school is being handed their own cell phone. Chances are that parents of kids entering fifth, sixth, or seventh grades have discussed cell phones ad nauseum because their kids have been anticipating getting one for a long time.

It makes sense; middle school means gaining some independence, and developmentally, kids are at the age when the instinct to separate from parents begins. These discussions no doubt include the topic of texting and using social media. For parents, these conversations are an unwelcome cacophony of stressors, signaling the end of the simpler, off-the-grid days of elementary school.

But to the kids, this is exciting stuff, signaling their entrance into the world of freedom, and the best kind of freedom: social freedom.

[Read the rest of the article by clicking here.](#)



Fall 2020: Featured SDAMLE School!

Brandon Valley Middle School



BVMS Brochure 2019.pdf

[Download](#)
243.2 KB

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.

2019-2020 SDAMLE Board Members

President: Kiley 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: Jason Whiting, Sioux Falls School District

University Representative: Teri Bauerly, Black Hills State University

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Board Bio of the Month

Reva Potter teaches 7th grade language arts at Belle Fourche Middle School. Beyond the daily joys of the classroom and her outstanding students, Reva has also been the program coordinator for the school's Veterans' Day activities for the past 22 years and the BFMS Theater director for the past 14 years. All middle school students in grades 6-8 are welcome in the theater productions, which usually include a cast and



crew list of 40-50 students each year. To allow all students to participate, the school has enlisted local playwrights to develop scripts to accommodate large casts and opportunities for many levels of performance. These past two years Reva and her son Nathan Schreier wrote melodrama and mystery plays for the program. Reva's husband, Terry, has become the volunteer set builder, making the productions both school and family activities.

Participating in professional growth over the years, Reva has completed postgraduate studies in curriculum and administration, achieved National Board Certification and Renewal, and served as a mentor through various programs, most recently the SD Statewide Mentoring Program. Encouraging fellow educators in middle level education and promoting excellent educational programs for students in the middle grades are her main passions and interests.

Reva lives in Belle Fourche with her husband and youngest son, Conrad (16), and follows the adventures of their other four grown sons from afar. Her hobbies include staying active in local fine arts groups, enjoying the occasional motorcycle ride, creative writing, and reading.

Reva can be contacted at reva.potter@k12.sd.us

2018-2019 SDAMLE Board Members

Left to Right--Taylor Hamblin, Lisa Kissner, Kyley Cumbow, Teri Bauerly, Sherri Nelson, Reva Potter, Todd Brist, Steve Gors, and Tara Johanneson



Upcoming Events!

#EdcampSDAMLE

When

Saturday, March 28th, 9am

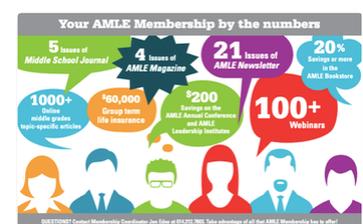
Where

*3201 South Kiwanis Avenue
Sioux Falls, SD*

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>

