

# SDAMLEmail \*

# November 2021

South Dakota Association for Middle Level Education

Welcome to SDAMLE! We are a group of educators that love everything about middle school students (even on full moons!). Our purpose is to make connections between educators across the state, provide professional development and support, and understand the needs of our middle school educators. The SDAMLE board is more than willing to work on the needs presented to us so please do not hesitate to reach out to any of the board members for 2021-2022.

Kyley Cumbow GMMS/Pierre MS principal  
Lisa Kissner Huron MS teacher  
Reva Potter Belle Fourche MS teacher  
Todd Brist Watertown MS principal  
Tara Johanneson College (USF) representative  
Cotton Koch Madison MS principal  
Madeline Goinser Aberdeen MS teacher  
Mikaela O'Bryan Bennett County MS principal  
Adriann Frankenhoff Aberdeen MS teacher  
Kris Evje Milbank MS principal  
Kendra Becker Redfield MS principal



**SAVE THE DATE: SDAMLE's Annual EdCamp March 26, 2022**



**10 Great Free Games for Middle School Students**

Whether they're built for the classroom or are more focused on entertainment, there's learning to be found in any game -- if you look closely enough. History, math, science, language, and tech skills come alive with these 10 great free games for grades 6–8. Use them to pique students' interest in a new topic, help them acquire new skills, or provide real-world context.

If you're looking for ways to introduce game-based learning into your classroom, check out our Teaching Strategies for how to [Find the Learning in Any Game](#).  
<https://www.common sense.org/education/top-picks/10-great-free-games-for-middle-school-students>

## Additional Games -

XtraMath

Practice Basic Math Facts

Blooket

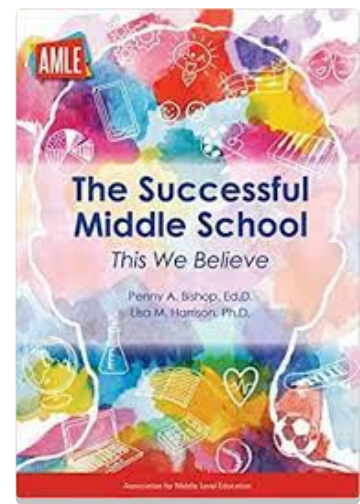
Run a class review game on almost any subject.

First in Math

## Book Study Upcoming!

SDAMLE will be offering a book study on the newly released *Successful Middle School: This We Believe*.

Graduate credit through the University of Sioux Falls will be offered, as well as CEUs. The book study will run approximately eight weeks from the end of January/beginning of February to the middle/end of March. The book study will be asynchronous, but paced each week with discussion posts on Google Classroom and an action paper being the primary assignments. Look for further details and sign up information in the December and January newsletters.



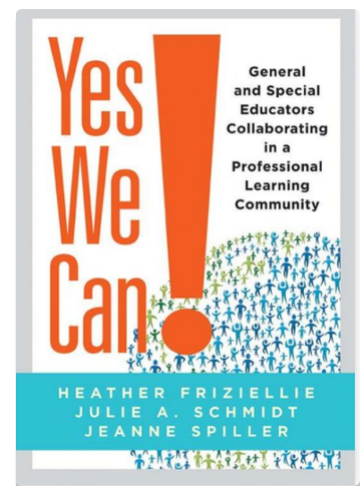
## Read This!

### Yes We Can!

General and Special Educators Collaborating in a Professional Learning Community

By: [Heather Frizellie](#), [Julie A. Schmidt](#), [Jeanne Spiller](#)

Utilizing PLC practices, general and special educators must develop collaborative partnerships to close the achievement gap and maximize learning for all.



### Is It Working in Your Middle School?

This book guides you through a system to plan, implement, and evaluate any initiative, strategy, or program. Although designed to be used by middle level educators, this framework works for any grade level or school.







## 10 Take-Aways From #AMLE21

### What a fantastic weekend of inspiration, idea sharing, and connecting at #AMLE21!



Since not all of our members were able to join us online this weekend, we've collected some top insights from our 48th Annual Conference for Middle Level Education. Feeling #AMLE21 FOMO? You can still participate by registering for #AMLE21 On Demand with access to the conference platform and recorded sessions through December 17th. Learn more about #AMLE21 On Demand.

There were big announcements, like the kick off of the Solve Together 2.0 student contest and the launch of the Career Exploration in the Middle Grades Playbook Challenge. There was recognition of wonderful educators working tirelessly to advocate for the middle grades, like Linda Hopping, Nikki Woodson, and Lisa Harrison. And there was the shared collegiality of together figuring out how we can reach every student and create great schools.

1. Amid an increase in highly-scripted curriculum and programs, Rick Wormeli reminded us of the **power of a teacher as an instructional professional**. "It's pompous and reckless for districts to demand educators follow a purchased curriculum with no ability to deviate. The word fidelity is an insult to teachers, who are hired for their wisdom and creativity, not to read scripts." Rick also provided great strategies for responding to a student's, "I don't know." Instead try, "If you DID know, what would you say?"
2. Jack Berkemeyer reminded us that **the cornerstone of the middle school model is good teaming** and provided excellent tips to help teams to help increase student engagement, improve relationships, and increase teacher.
3. Laurie Barron and Patti Kinney emphasized that **belonging is at the heart of classroom management**. Need a great idea to promote positive relationships with students' families? In each staff meeting, get two post cards to send home to connect with students and their families.
4. Our students are struggling socially and emotionally amid another challenging school year. Kim Campbell reminded us that **the characteristics of trauma can mimic those of ADHD** and to be aware of the potential for misdiagnosis.

5. Dr. Gholdy Muhammad delivered an impactful keynote address on providing culturally and historically responsive education. She reminded us of the importance of the words. The next time a student walks in late, instead of admonishing, try instead, “Now that you are here, we are more complete.
6. Phyllis Fagell reminded us that our young adolescent students are resilient, and how to foster that resiliency.
7. Shelli Casler-Failing and Taylor Norman helped us **examine the value of productive struggle**. “Let students use each other as a support system rather than just giving them the answers,” they explain. Giving answers promotes learned helplessness, while not giving answers can build students into problem solvers.
8. Dynamic duo Amber Benson and Ruby Voss outlined their **strategy for effective co-teaching**. Themes of communication, data review, and student-centeredness emerged.
9. Our amazing student participants, from keynote panelists to our Great Middle School Student Voice Off Contest finalists, **reminded us of the power of the student voice** and what tremendous things can happen when we give them meaningful opportunities to share their own visions for their educations and their futures. As Voice Off finalist Riley Sipe put it, “No matter what language you speak, the middle school years are the ideal time to set students on the path to being good leaders.”
10. A common theme of relationships emerged – not just between educator and student but between educators themselves as well. Relationships were at the heart of every topic. We heard about the role of relationship in culture, discipline, engagement, instruction, and staff development. Most importantly, we learned from all our presenters, sponsors, and thousands of participants, the value of each other and **finding out we never have to go it alone**.



## 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.

 [sdamlemail@gmail.com](mailto:sdamlemail@gmail.com)

 (605) 773-7330

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

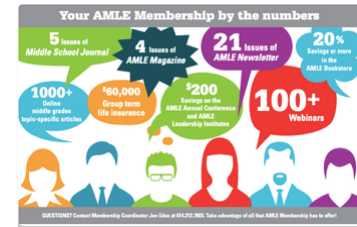




## Association for Middle Level Education

### **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:**

<https://my.amle.org/Membership/Join>

AMLE is the only international organization of its kind for middle school educators. With a community more than 35,000 members strong, AMLE is the go-to source for middle level education peer-reviewed research, best practice, and professional development. Explore our content and resources to learn why we are so passionate about young adolescents and get a sense of what's possible when middle school educators support each other with a shared vision of success. <https://www.amle.org/>

## **2021-2022 Board Members**

**President: Kiley Cumbow (Pierre)**

**Treasurer: Lisa Kissner (Huron)**

**Secretary: Adriann Frankenhoff (Aberdeen)**

**Membership Coordinator: Reva Potter (Belle Fourche)**

**Past President: Todd Brist (Watertown)**

**Board Member: Cotton Koch (Madison)**

**Board Member: Kris Evje (Milbank)**

**Board Member: Madeline Goinsler (Aberdeen)**

**Board Member: Kendra Becker (Redfield)**

**Board Member: Mikaela O'Bryan (Bennett County)**

**University Rep: Tara Johanneson (USF)**