

SDAMLEmail

September 2020 Updates from SD Middle Level Education

I know we are all holding our breath this school year, hoping that each day takes us to the next week with our students. Every district is in its own unique situation and that can result in those that teach the middle grades to feel even more isolated. This group's main goal is to unite those that find the joy in working with these crazy adolescent learners. By sharing and collaborating, we may be able to lessen the load since we know being mentally and emotionally ready for our middle schoolers is a must. The SDAMLE board is always welcome to new ideas and thoughts to connect every middle school teacher in the state - from east to west, from small school to the biggest.

Make sure to join our facebook group

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/sdamle/>



National Association for Middle Level Association

The national conference is going virtual. This may be a PD opportunity that your administrator would support. <https://www.aml.org/annual/Home/tabid/244/Default.aspx>



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

SDAMLE HAPPY HOUR

Join other middle level teachers for an hour of conversation and support. Join for a bit or the entire hour.

Topic: SDAMLE happy hour

Time: Sep 28, 2020 06:00 PM Central Time (US and Canada)

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84449689921?pwd=MkZCWFdubXVGMUtKd3ZqTlpIV2E4UT09>

Meeting ID: 844 4968 9921

Passcode: 00C97a

Fall 2020: Featured SDAMLE School!

Brandon Valley Middle School

Check out their favorite books, apps, websites and strategies!

<http://sdamle.weebly.com/brandon-valley-middle-school.html>





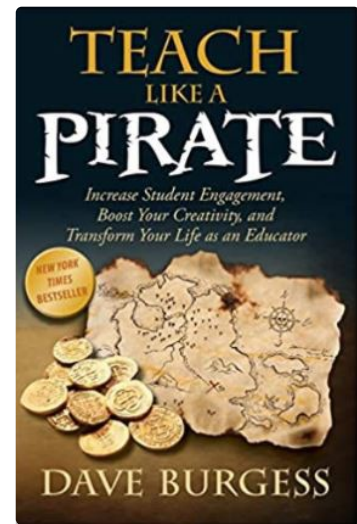
Read This!

Teach Like A Pirate

This book offers inspiration, practical techniques, and innovative ideas that will help you to increase student engagement, boost your creativity, and transform your life as an educator. You'll learn how to:

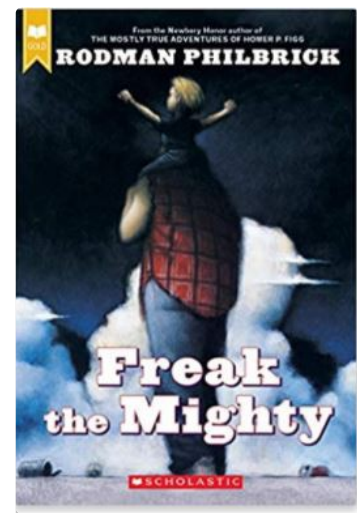
- Tap into and dramatically increase your passion as a teacher
- Develop outrageously engaging lessons that draw students in like a magnet
- Establish rapport and a sense of camaraderie in your classroom
- Transform your class into a life-changing experience for your students

This groundbreaking inspirational manifesto contains over 30 hooks specially designed to captivate your class and 170 brainstorming questions that will skyrocket your creativity. Once you learn the Teach Like a PIRATE system, you'll never look at your role as an educator the same again



ONE OF THE BEST READ ALOUDS FOR MS STUDENTS: FREAK THE MIGHTY

Two boys - a slow learner stuck in the body of a teenage giant and a tiny Einstein in leg braces - forge a unique friendship when they pair up to create one formidable human force.



Middle School Humor!



How Do You Spell Student Success? G-r-o-w-t-h A teacher team shares ideas for tapping into student engagement to promote growth By: Ruby Voss, Amber Benson

In room E8, at Northside Middle School in Roanoke County, Virginia, we view student success as a significant growth over previous math achievement scores. What does significant growth entail, you might ask? We often wonder as well! In our collaborative class, whether face-to-face or virtually, success is measured by growth on a student-by-student basis, and it's measured on a class-by-class basis. Success also includes the growth of each student's emotional learning by gaining independence and decision-making skills. When students belong to a group in which their input and achievement are valued, students' self-esteem increases and peer collaboration flourishes.

In room E8, there is usually a rumble of activity. If there is relative quiet, either we are testing or we have taken our class to another location for an activity that requires more space than our classroom offers. Some might call this level of daily activity undisciplined; the eighth grade math team of BensonVoss calls it engagement. In August of 2017, Amber Benson and Ruby Voss, both new to Roanoke County, were paired together and vowed to use this level of student engagement to promote growth. We continue to rely on active student engagement, without regard to the method of delivery. We have found that our students respond to energetic and imaginative methods whether they are in class or online.

In room E8, our primary focus is to teach our students how to think independently, how to ask meaningful questions, and how to choose answers deliberately. We accomplish these things by embracing data-driven instruction and by teaching our students to embrace data-driven learning. Our weekly tests are a mix of previously taught skills and new information. We analyze the data collected from our Friday assessments, and we use it to make decisions for the following week. Our homework, focus, and exit questions rely on this crucial information. This careful analysis of student results and data-driven instruction promotes student ownership and growth. Finally, we present this data to our classes at our Monday data meetings. Our classes learn to read line graphs and follow their progress in learning the curriculum. After the discussion of data, we review the topics in which students demonstrate less than a 70% success rate. Each student scoring under 70% receives individualized feedback and the opportunity to redo and discuss questions they missed on the previous week's test. In room E8, we teach our students independence by providing all class information on Blackboard. If a student is absent, they can find the day's activities, notes, assignments, and instructional videos on Blackboard; therefore, there is never a reason to be behind. We have recorded more than 300 instructional videos over the past two years that are available on our YouTube channel. These videos are available for remote instruction, remediation, homework help, and test preparation. Our newest effort to teach our students independence is the use of QR codes on class notes and weekly homework. QR codes allow immediate access to "help" by linking to appropriate videos on our channel. In room E8, we teach our students how to ask meaningful questions by challenging their current understanding of mathematics and by encouraging them to strive for a deeper understanding. We consistently teach beyond the Math 8 curriculum into additional algebraic and geometric concepts. A great example of this is our daily focus and exit activities, in which each of our classes engages in a friendly competition. Because it is a competition between classes, students have greater buy-in and ask questions to earn the highest class percentage possible. Not only do we ask students to solve problems in their focus activities, but we use the exit questions to teach decision-making skills. Exit questions ask students what the first step of a problem should be, to define vocabulary words, or to access prior knowledge. After two years of utilizing our focus/exit combination, we have seen a positive change in decision-making skills.

In room E8, we teach our students how to choose answers deliberately by encouraging them to consider important questions. *Did I read the question carefully? Did I highlight important information? Does my answer make sense? Did I use previous knowledge? Did I use Desmos to its full potential?* Our

students are encouraged to work deliberately and never choose an answer without a good reason. Deliberate students will demonstrate growth. Guessing is not an option because guessing is not deliberate.

In room E8, on the second floor of Northside Middle School, we are a family. On March 16, 2020, our family was separated but we came together using technology. We continued to focus on student engagement and student growth. We continued to focus on teaching our students how to think independently, how to ask meaningful questions, and how to choose answers deliberately. We continued to celebrate our accomplishments and we built on our struggles. There is nowhere we would rather be, and each year keeps getting better.

Ruby Voss and Amber Benson (BensonVoss) are a collaborative math team at Northside Middle School, Roanoke, Virginia.

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A District Game Changer

When it comes to student success, positive school culture can be as important as the curriculum. When students are engaged, motivated, and empowered, academic success will almost always follow. This is especially true in the middle grades.

If you would like to read more click on the link below. This was found on our <https://www.amle.org/>

<https://www.amle.org/BrowsebyTopic/Leadership/LeadDet/TabId/191/ArtMID/813/ArticleID/1129/A-School-District-Game-Changer.aspx>



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: 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

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Board Bio of the Month

Hello, I am Kyley Cumbow. I have been either the assistant principal or principal at Georgia Morse Middle School in Pierre since 2006. I absolutely love middle schoolers. Seventh graders tend to be my favorite because they are just so confused, somewhat like a middle child. In our teacher interviews, we ask what the best thing about middle schoolers is and when people light up and go on and on about all the fun there is when working with middle school students, we know we have a good fit for our school.



I am a Nebraska girl, but I have been in South Dakota long enough that I may need to stop saying that ALTHOUGH you cannot take the Husker out of a Nebraska girl. I graduated from Concordia College in Seward, NE. I received my advanced degrees from Chadron State College (NE) and USD (SD).

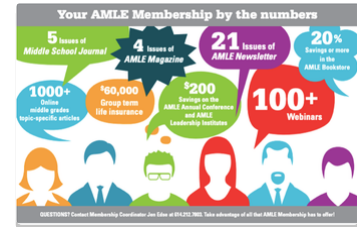
In my free time, I am mom to four wonderful kiddos. Addison is a junior, Kaden a 7th grader, Gage a 6th grader, and Vince a kindergartner. My husband works as a wildland firefighter for the US Forest Service. We are always on the go, but I have been told more than once to enjoy it while it lasts.

If GMMS or I can ever be of assistance to you, please don't hesitate to contact me at kyley.cumbow@k12.sd.us or 773.7330.

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>