

Second Draft of Proposed Revision of National Middle School Association/National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education Middle Level Teacher Preparation Standards

The AMLE Professional Preparation Advisory Committee requests commentary and recommendations regarding the second draft of the Association for Middle Level Education/National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education Middle Level Teacher Preparation Standards. The new standards will not go into effect until 2013. These are initial level standards that will be used for review of undergraduate middle level teacher preparation programs and graduate programs that lead to initial certification/licensure. Please note that the content of these standards cannot duplicate NCATE Unit Standards that apply to all teacher preparation programs (e.g., diversity or technology). The purpose of this posting is to request feedback for the NMSA Professional Preparation Advisory Board so that the standards can be further refined. Please send questions, comments and recommendations to Ken McEwin, AMLE Program Review Coordinator at mcewinck@appstate.edu. This review period ends October 31st.

**Association for Middle Level Education (AMLE)
Middle Level Teacher Preparation Standards**
formerly National Middle School Association
AMLE Professional Preparation Advisory Committee

Second Draft August 2011

***All Young Adolescents:** The middle level standards interpret “all young adolescents” to be inclusive, comprising students of diverse ethnicity, race, language, religion, socioeconomic status, gender, sexual orientation, regional or geographic origin, and those with exceptional learning needs.*

***Middle Level:** The grade levels included in “middle level” are determined by middle level teacher licensure regulations in each state, for example grades 4-9, 5-8, 6-9.*

PROGRAMMATIC STANDARD

Programmatic Standard 1: Middle Level Courses and Field Experiences

Institutions preparing middle level teachers require course content that directly addresses middle level education and require middle level field experiences.

Element a. Specialized Middle Level Course Content: The content of required courses addresses middle level topics including those reflected in the performance-based AMLE Standards (e.g., middle level philosophy and organization, young adolescent development, middle level curriculum, and middle level instruction and assessment).

Element b. Middle Level Clinical Experiences: Early and continuing middle level clinical experiences, including student teaching, are required.

Supporting Explanation

There is a strong consensus among middle level educators, policy makers, professional practice boards, state departments of public instruction, and other stakeholders that teachers of young adolescents need specialized professional preparation to be highly successful. Calls for specialized middle level preparation began in the 1920s as the first separately organized middle level schools were created and continues today with 46 states now having middle level teacher licensure regulations that are distinct from those for teachers of young children in elementary schools and older adolescents in senior high schools. There is also much agreement regarding the components that are appropriate for middle level specialized professional preparation. Those elements are reflected in the Association for Middle Level Education Middle Level Teacher Preparation/National Council for Teacher Education Approved Middle Level Teacher Preparation Standards.

Programs seeking national recognition from the Association for Middle Level Education (AMLE) must document that there is course content that directly reflects the content of the AMLE Standards (e.g., middle level philosophy and organization, content knowledge, young adolescent development, middle level curriculum and instruction). There is no specific number of middle level courses or a specified number of credit hours that must be required. However to gain national recognition, middle level teacher preparation programs must focus directly on the AMLE Standards and be clearly distinct from preparation programs designed to prepare teachers to teach other developmental age groups at other educational levels (e.g., teachers of young children in the lower grades of elementary schools; teachers of older adolescents in senior high schools).

Middle level field experiences must also be documented in the program report. Middle level grade levels are determined by the grades included in the middle level licensure regulations in each respective state (e.g., 5-8, 6-9). Preparation programs that include elementary grades and high school grades are not reviewed by AMLE except under special circumstances as outlined by a policy paper available from AMLE or NCATE. It is important that documentation included in the program review report shows that at least one pre-student teaching middle level field experience is required and that student teaching is at the middle level.

PERFORMANCE-BASED STANDARDS

Note: It is crucial for institutional representatives submitting middle level programs to understand that assessments for the performance based standards must contain the language and content of the AMLE Standards. Listing generic standards that are more appropriate for use as unit standards and placing AMLE Standards names and/or numbers beside them in a matrix, or utilizing some other similar listing, does not constitute alignment and will not lead to national recognition by AMLE.

PRINCIPLE A: THE LEARNER AND LEARNING

Standard 1: Young Adolescent Development

Middle level teacher candidates understand the major concepts, principles, theories, and research related to young adolescent development, and they provide opportunities that support student development and learning.

Element a. Knowledge of Young Adolescent Development: Middle level teacher candidates understand the major concepts, principles, and theories of young adolescent development -- intellectual, physical, social, emotional, and moral.

Element b. Implications of Young Adolescent Development for Middle Level Curriculum, Instruction, and Schooling: Middle level teacher candidates utilize their knowledge of young adolescent development when selecting instructional strategies and making curricular decisions. They understand the implications of young adolescent development for school organization, learning environments, and components of successful middle level programs and schools.

Supporting Explanation

Middle level teacher candidates understand how young adolescents grow and develop, recognizing that patterns of learning and development vary individually within and across the cognitive, linguistic, social, emotional, moral, and physical areas, and use this knowledge to design and implement appropriate and challenging learning experiences. They use their understanding of individual differences of young adolescents, and of diverse cultures and communities, to ensure inclusive learning environments that enable all young adolescents to achieve high standards. Middle level teacher candidates work collaboratively with team members and others to use their knowledge of young adolescent development to create learning environments that support individual learning, that encourage positive social interaction, active engagement in learning, and self motivation. They demonstrate the ability to use their knowledge of young adolescent development effectively when selecting instructional strategies and making curricular decisions. Middle level teacher candidates successfully participate in developmentally responsive middle level programs and practices in a variety of grade organizations that include the middle grades.

PRINCIPLE B: CONTENT

Standard 2: Middle Level Curriculum

Middle level teacher candidates understand and use the central concepts, tools of inquiry, standards, research and structures of content to plan and implement curriculum that develops all young adolescents' competence in subject matter.

Element a. Subject Matter Content Knowledge: Middle level teacher candidates demonstrate a depth and breadth of subject matter content knowledge that reflects the subjects they teach, for example, mathematics, English/language arts, reading, science, social studies, speech and drama, health, physical education, and family and consumer science. They incorporate literacy skills and state-of-the-art technologies into teaching the content of the subjects they teach.

Element b. Interdisciplinary Nature of Knowledge: Middle level teacher candidates understand the interdisciplinary nature of knowledge and help young adolescents make connections among subject areas. They assist young adolescents in making connections with their own ideas, interests, and experiences. Middle level teacher candidates understand that middle level curriculum should be relevant, challenging, integrative, and exploratory and provide learning opportunities that enhance critical thinking and problem solving in their specialty fields (e.g., mathematics, social studies, health).

Element c. Middle Level Student Standards: Middle level teacher candidates are knowledgeable about local, state, national and common core middle level curriculum standards and know how to teach and assess the content of those standards.

Supporting Explanation

Middle level teacher candidates understand the central concepts, tools of inquiry, and structures of the subjects they teach. They create learning experiences that make knowledge in the subject areas assessable and meaningful to all young adolescents to assure mastery of the subjects being taught. Middle level teacher candidates engage young adolescents in learning experiences related to local and global issues that help them connect concepts in ways that enhance critical thinking, creativity, and problem solving. They integrate culturally relevant content to build on young adolescents' background knowledge. Middle level teacher candidates have a comprehensive knowledge of student content standards and learning progressions in the subjects they teach.

Standard 3: Middle Level Philosophy and School Organization

Middle level teacher candidates understand the major concepts, principles, theories, and research underlying the philosophical foundations of developmentally responsive middle level programs and schools, and they work successfully within these organizational components.

Element a. Middle Level Philosophical Foundations: Middle level teacher candidates demonstrate an understanding of the philosophical foundations of developmentally responsive middle level programs and schools.

Element b. Middle Level Organization and Best Practices: Middle level teacher candidates understand effective components of middle level programs and schools and demonstrate their ability to use that knowledge to function successfully within a variety of school organizational settings (for example, K-8, 6-8, 7-12). Middle level teacher candidates understand and participate successfully in middle level programs and practices such as

interdisciplinary teaming, advisory programs, flexible block schedules, and professional learning communities.

Supporting Explanation

Middle level teacher candidates have a comprehensive understanding of the concepts, principles, theories, research, and successful practice underlying the philosophical and historical foundations of middle level education. They are able to articulate the rationale for developmentally responsive programs and practices, such as interdisciplinary teaming and advisory programs, and they use this knowledge in their practice within the context of the school setting. Middle level teacher candidates demonstrate their ability to participate effectively in middle level practices such as interdisciplinary teaming and advisory/advocacy responsibilities. They exhibit a commitment to developmentally responsive organizational structures that foster socially equitable educational practices. They engage in developmentally responsive practices and components that reflect the philosophical foundations of middle level education. They understand that best practices, when authentically implemented, can be successful in a variety of school organizational patterns that enroll young adolescents (e.g., grade 6-8, K-8, 7-12).

PRINCIPLE C: INSTRUCTIONAL PRACTICE

Standard 4: Middle Level Instruction and Assessment

Middle level teacher candidates understand, use, and reflect on the major concepts, principles, theories, and research related to data-informed instruction and assessment, and they employ a variety of strategies for a developmentally appropriate climate to meet the varying abilities and learning styles of all young adolescents.

Element a. Content Pedagogy: Middle level teacher candidates are knowledgeable about teaching and assessment strategies that are especially effective in their content fields.

Element b. Middle Level Instructional Strategies: Middle level teacher candidates know a wide variety of teaching, learning, and assessment strategies, and apply them in ways that increase learning for all young adolescents. Middle level teacher candidates create learning experiences that encourage exploration, problem solving, creativity, and critical thinking so that young adolescents can be actively engaged in learning.

Element c. Middle Level Assessment and Data-informed Instruction: Middle level teacher candidates develop and administer assessments and use them as formative and summative tools to create meaningful learning experiences by effectively judging prior learning, implementing effective lessons, reflecting on young adolescent learning, and adjusting instruction based on the knowledge gained.

Element d. Young Adolescent Motivation: Middle level teacher candidates understand how to motivate all young adolescents and facilitate their learning through a wide variety of developmentally responsive materials and resources, for example technological resources,

manipulative materials, and contemporary media. They establish equitable, caring, and productive learning environments for all young adolescents.

Supporting Explanation

Middle level teacher candidates understand and use multiple methods of assessment to engage young adolescents in their own growth and to monitor closely their own progress. They understand the differences between formative and summative applications of assessment and are knowledgeable about when to utilize each. Middle level teacher candidates prepare young adolescent learners for the demands of particular assessment formats and make appropriate accommodations in assessments for learners with exceptionalities and language learning needs. They employ technology to support assessment practice to engage young adolescents in assessing and addressing their own learning needs and interests.

Middle level teacher candidates effectively analyze assessment data to understand patterns and gaps in learning, to guide planning and instruction, and to provide meaningful feedback to all young adolescents. Middle level teacher candidates plan developmentally responsive instruction that supports all young adolescents and assists them in meeting rigorous learning goals by drawing upon knowledge of content areas, middle level curriculum, cross-disciplinary skills, and pedagogy. They capitalize upon their knowledge of young adolescent development and on community context. Middle level teacher candidates understand and use a wide variety of developmentally responsive teaching, learning, and assessment strategies that assist young adolescents in developing a comprehensive understanding of content areas and their connections as well as helping them acquire skills that apply knowledge in meaningful ways.

PRINCIPLE D: PROFESSIONAL RESPONSIBILITIES

Standard 5: Middle Level Professional Roles

Middle level teacher candidates understand the complexity of teaching young adolescents, and they engage in practices and behaviors that develop their competence as professionals.

Element a. Professional Roles of Middle Level Teachers: Middle level teacher candidates understand their unique roles as middle level professionals, for example their roles as members of teaching teams and as advisors to young adolescents.

Element b. Advocacy for Young Adolescents and Developmentally Responsive Schooling Practices: Middle level teacher candidates serve as advocates for all young adolescents and for developmentally responsive schooling practices. They understand their professional leadership responsibilities to assist all stakeholders in efforts to create equitable opportunities for all young adolescents to maximize learning.

Element c. Working with Family Members and Community Involvement: Middle level teacher candidates understand and value the ways diverse family structures and cultural

backgrounds influence and enrich learning. They communicate and collaborate with family members and community partners, and participate in school and community activities.

Element d. Dispositions and Professional Behaviors: Middle level teacher candidates demonstrate positive orientations toward teaching young adolescents and model high standards of ethical behavior and professional competence.

Supporting Explanation

Middle level candidates are ready to apply and model high standards of professional ethics as they begin their teaching careers. During clinical experiences and in other environments, they demonstrate ethical practices and treat all learners and colleagues equitably. They collaborate successfully with colleagues, family members, and the larger community. Middle level teacher candidates understand how to capitalize on the diversity found in families and community members and do so successfully as appropriate for their levels of experience and expertise.

Middle level teacher candidates understand their roles as middle level teachers and demonstrate their ability to serve successfully in these unique roles (e.g., members of interdisciplinary teams, advisory teachers, teachers of integrative middle level curriculum). They serve as advocates of young adolescents and developmentally responsive middle level curriculum and instructional strategies. Middle level teacher candidates are also knowledgeable advocates for developmentally responsive middle level programs, practices and schooling. They recognize that many members of the public and the teaching profession view young adolescents in inaccurate negative, and damaging ways and that they have ethical responsibilities to help reverse the negative stereotypes of this age group that are so predominant in our culture. Middle level teacher candidates engage in ongoing professional learning and use the knowledge gained to improve their effectiveness while understanding how the choices they make influence others (e.g., other learners; family members; other professionals; community members). They seek appropriate leadership roles and look for opportunities to take responsibility for young adolescent learning and to collaborate with other learners, family members, and other school professionals to ensure learner growth.