

New York State
Middle Level Education
Summit² Initiative Newsletter

August 11, 2009



**GOVERNOR DAVID A. PATERSON SUPPORTS NYS
MIDDLE-LEVEL EDUCATION SUMMIT²**



STATE OF NEW YORK
EXECUTIVE CHAMBER
ALBANY 12224

DAVID A. PATERSON
GOVERNOR

August 13 – 14, 2009

Dear Friends:

I am delighted to send greetings to everyone in attendance for the New York State Middle School Association's Middle Level Summit².

The future growth and prosperity of our great State and Nation hinges to a great extent on the effectiveness and outreach of our education systems. While recent, dramatic measures have been taken to address the immediate challenges of our current economic climate, I believe that the single most important thing we can do to achieve prosperity in the 21st century is to restore our preeminence in education.

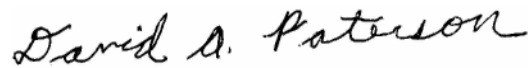
We need a well-educated, well-prepared workforce to carry our State forward. Today, employment opportunities and, as a result, earning potential, are directly tied to education – those without a high school diploma earn significantly less over a lifetime than those with a college degree. In 2007 alone, 90,000 New York State students dropped out of high school. Last year the graduation rate among Hispanic and African-American students was a paltry 47% and 51%, respectively. We must address these inequities – which impact all New Yorkers – if we are to compete in an increasingly competitive global marketplace, and we must be able to deliver a comprehensive, innovative education to a diverse public.

This forum brings organizations together to share and exchange ideas and strategies in order to raise awareness of the *Regents Policy Statement on Middle Level Education* and the State Education

Department's *Essential Elements of Standards – Focused Middle Level Schools and Programs*. I support this focus. The middle school years mark a pivotal period in youth development, as young people undergo physical, mental, social, moral and emotional changes which will dramatically impact their lives as adults. The NYSMSA and participants of this summit know well the unique challenges inherent to middle level education, and can take pride in their commitment to our State's adolescent population – tomorrow's leaders.

With warmest regards, and best wishes for a productive conference and continued success in advancing a vital agenda.

Sincerely,



David A. Paterson

www.ny.gov

Governor's MOYA Proclamation to be announced at Summit²

October will be declared The Month of the Young Adolescent (MOYA) across New York State. Planning for MOYA will begin during Summit². Participants will coordinate plans aimed at highlighting the ways in which their organization's mission, goals, and objectives support the development of the middle-level student. They will also come to agreement on statewide activities that will focus the state's attention on the developmental needs of the young adolescent and how these needs will be met by implementing the NYS Board of Regent's Policy Statement and SED's Essential Elements as referenced in CR 100.4.

It's not too late!

If your organization does not yet have a representative registered for Summit² it's still not too late. We will accept registrations at the door. There are a large number of organization-leaders signed up, but there is always room for a few more colleagues. Besides, your organization's membership deserves to be represented.

Lineup of speakers and forum participants is stellar - - again!

We are still waiting on a few more commitments, but here is our outstanding presenter lineup so far:

Dr. Meryll H. Tisch, Chancellor, NYS Board of Regents

Duffy Palmer, NYS Secretary for Education. Office of the Governor

Dr. Sheila Evans Trannum, Associate Commissioner, SED

Maria Neira, NYSUT Vice President

Dr. Betty Edwards, executive Director, National Middle School Association

Verone Kennedy, Middle School Coordinator, NYCDOE Division of Teaching and Learning Office of Curriculum, Standards and Academic Engagement

Dr. Sabrina Hope King, Chief Academic Officer, N.Y.C. D.O.E. Division of Teaching and Learning, Office of Curriculum, Standards and Academic Engagement

Yolanda McBride, Senior Policy Analyst

Christine C. Quinn, New York City Council Office of Speaker

Diane Ward, the Director of the Senate Education Committee will be at the Summit as a participant representing NYS Senator Suzi Oppenheimer, Chair of the Senate Education Committee

About the Summit² Agenda

All aspects of the agenda will focus on fostering a collegial effort aimed at bringing about the full implementation of the Regents Policy Statement on Middle-Level Education and SED's Seven Middle-Level Essential Elements as referenced in Commissioner Regulation 100.4. Brief addresses that focus on aspects of our mission will be given during the opening and closing each day and before and after breaks. The majority of time will be dedicated to building action plans to be carried out by participating organizations during the 2009-10 school year. A cocktail reception will be held in the Well of the Legislative Office Building at the close of the first day on August 13.

Organizations that are on board with the Middle Level Summit Initiative so far . . .

- Association of Math Teachers of NYS
- Business Teachers Association of NYS
- Career Tech Ed Admin - ACTEA
- Catholic School Administrators Association of NYS
- Cattaraugus-Allegheny MS Principals Group
- Council of School Supervisors and Administrators
- eSchool Data, LLC
- Just for the Kids – NY, University at Albany School of Education
- Nassau County Math Teachers/ Supervisors
- Nassau County MS Principals Association
- National Middle School Association
- NY Association of Colleges for Teacher Education
- NY Association of School Psychologists
- NY Counseling Association, Inc
- NY Daily News
- NY Newspaper Publishers Association
- NYC Art Teachers Association
- NYS Afterschool Network
- NYS Art Teachers Association
- NYS Assembly Education Committee
- NYS Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development
- NYS Association of Foreign Language Teachers
- NYS Association of School Nurses
- NYS Association of Teacher Educators
- NYS Bar Association
- NYS Board of Regents
- NYS Center for School Safety
- NYS Council for the Social Studies
- NYS Council of Administrators for Music Education
- NYS Council of Educational Organizations
- NYS Council of School Superintendents
- NYS Department of Health
- NYS Department of Labor
- NYS Education Department Office of School Improvement and Community Services
- NYS Education Department, Career and Technical Education Support
- NYS Education Department, Office of Bilingual Education and Foreign Language Studies
- NYS Governor's Office – Secretary for Education
- NYS Middle School Association
- NYS Office of Mental Health Div of Child/Family
- NYS Parent Teacher Association
- NYS Reading Association

- NYS School Boards Association
- NYS School Counselors Association
- NYS School Library Media Specialists
- NYS School Music Association
- NYS School Social Workers Association
- NYS Senate Education Committee
- NYS Senate Research Services
- NYS Senator Oppenheimer's Office
- NYS Student Support Services Center
- NYS Technology Educators Association
- NYSUT
- Pearson Education Publications/Prentice Hall
- PBS – TeacherLine NY @WNED
- Rockwell Museum of Western Art
- School Administrators Association of NYS
- Science Teachers Association of NYS
- SED Middle-Level Liaisons
- SED Off of Higher Education; Learn & Serve America
- Staff Curriculum Development Network
- WAMC Northeast Public Radio
- Westchester Putnam MS Principals' Assn
- WSWHE BOCES Middle-Level Principals' Group

NYSUT to publish a middle-level parent handbook

Last year NYSUT's middle-level go-to person, Elizabeth Sheffer, almost made it to the first Summit, but she ended up at the last minute visiting her oral surgeon instead. That didn't keep her down. Over the course of the year, we collaborated on the development of a middle-level parent handbook, and it is now in galley format. It will be a great addition to our middle-level tool box. We expect it to be distributed across the state soon. So far, it appears that Elizabeth will make it to Summit² barring another unforeseen circumstance.

Success in the Middle Act reintroduced

In an effort to strengthen middle level education and increase high school graduation rates, Congressman Raúl Grijalva (D-AZ) and Sen. Jack Reed (D-RI) have reintroduced the Success in the Middle Act (H.R. 3006/S. 1362). A key feature of the act is the authorization of \$1 billion annually for grants to local school districts to improve low-performing schools that contain middle grades.

Then Senator Barack Obama initially sponsored this bill in the US Senate prior to his election to the office of President. NYSMSA Executive Director, Dennis Tosetto, was acknowledged by the National Middle School Associations for his contribution to the development of *Success in the Middle : A Policymaker's Guide to Achieving Quality Middle level Education*. This guide was part of NMSA's contribution to the initial roll out of the bill.

A copy of NMSA's Success in the Middle Policy Guide can be found at:
<http://www.nmsa.org/Advocacy/PolicyGuide/tabid/784/Default.aspx>

Make your voice heard now! Contact your members of Congress to educate them about the importance of middle grades and urge them to co-sponsor the Act. However, please keep in mind that it is best to communicate with our elected officials by telephone or email. Mail delivered by the US Postal Service can be expected to go through security procedures that can take extremely long periods of time to complete.

Don't forget to bring materials to share

Please don't forget that there will be a "Take One" table where participants can distribute materials from their organizations. There will also be another table where materials can be displayed for review purposes and not for distribution. Feel free to share conference materials, Journals, professional papers, research, etc.

Reflection from the 2008 Summit to be available on line

Recently, we reviewed the "reflections" that were turned in by participants at the end of the 2008 Middle Level Summit. Many of them were so focused and succinct in relating, in practical ways, why this ongoing initiative is so important that they just had to be shared. Our NYSMSA Webmaster, Jeff Craig, will have them posted shortly at www.nysmsa.org in the section labeled "MIDDLE LEVEL SUMMIT." They are truly outstanding and well worth the time it takes to read them.

Parking suggestion

If you are not well versed in the meandering streets of Albany, we suggest that you park in the below ground VISITORS parking area at the Empire State Plaza. (Directions are available at www.googlemaps.com.) From that parking area, the signage is good all the way to the Legislative Office Building (LOB) and it is an all inside walk. Be sure to note the floor and parking area (colors and numbers) before walking away from your car. Also remember the location of the elevator as you leave it to walk down the main concourse.

Because the Empire State Plaza is the entranceway to a group of government buildings, State Police will check you ID as you enter the parking area and you will receive a complete airport type security inspection when you are leaving the Plaza to enter the LOB, so attend to what you have on your person before leaving your car. Also, when your identification is checked as you first enter the parking area, ask where you should park for the LOB as that can save you from having to take a rather long walk.