

THE CONNECTICUT ASSOCIATION OF SCHOOLS
The 63rd Annual Meeting

2014-2015 Annual Report
MIDDLE SCHOOL DIVISION

Submitted by Deane Renda, Chair, Middle Level Board of Control

■ Eight Connecticut Core, Community of Practice sessions were presented at CAS during the 2014-2015 school year. The topics were:

Making the Case for the Common Core and What We Learned in Year One
CT Core Standards Look-fors in Mathematics and Literacy
Implications for SPED/SRBI and EL
Relating CCS to Curriculum Development
The digital Library and Formative Assessment
Learning Progressions: A Guide to Vertical alignment in Math
Communication with Parents and the Community
Get Close for Deeper Thinking: Close Reading

■ Donna Schilke and Earle Bidwell represented CAS at the Association for Middle Level Education Convention in Nashville, Tennessee. They shared CAS's Emergency Response Team initiative with colleagues from around the country.

■ The Middle Level Athletic Guidelines have been reviewed and revised by Deane Renda from Whisconier Middle School, Paul Cavaliere Jr. from Sage Park Middle School, retired principal Joe Scheideler, and Earle Bidwell and Steve Wysowski from the CAS-CIAC staff.

■ Under the direction of Jennifer Buckley, the CAS Middle Level Leadership Conference enjoyed a banner year at Trinity College. Aric Jackson and Dr. Mikey Fallon keynoted the event.

■ The Dodd Kids Care Club at Dodd Middle School in Cheshire was the most recent recipient of the Arthur Director Student Leadership Award. The award, named for the founder of Connecticut Lighting Centers, recognizes the Connecticut middle school that best employs the Middle Level Leadership Conference slogan of "Making Acceptance Acceptable."

■ "Arts in the Middle" was bursting at the seams. A record number 14 presenters and 270 students participated in the day long, hands-on event.

■ The Scholar-Leader Banquet was held on Thursday, May 28, 2015 at the Aqua-Turf. The keynote speaker was Catherine Freeman, CAS Middle Level Exemplary Educator. Although retired from WTIC radio, Scott Gray was the master of ceremonies.

■ The New England League of Middle Schools will have new leadership on July 1, 2015. The incoming director is anxious to rebuild a strong relationship with CAS. Incoming NELMS board member, Erin Scholes, will be invited to the next meeting of the Middle Level Board.

■ CAS is partnering with "Dylan's Wings of Change Foundation" to develop programs for elementary middle and high schools in CT. The Wingman program is designed to recognize children for their unique and individual strengths, improving self-image and self-confidence while strengthening camaraderie and developing a stronger community. Ultimately we dissolve the "us" and "them" barrier, making it every child's responsibility to treat one another with kindness and respect, not just the child with differences. In so doing, all children become one another's "Wingman" Four middle schools, are currently part of the planning process headed by Ian Hockley and Erin Schumacher from the Foundation. School of the Year, New Fairfield Middle School, will be the pilot school.

■ Al Sackey and Mandy Ryan are taking the lead in developing a rubric to recognize schools for Exemplary Advisory Programs. It should be completed and ready for implementation during the 2015-2016 school year.

■ Under the leadership of Kate Lund, Stacey Chambers and Kristen Bernier, work has been started on a rubric to recognize schools for Exemplary 21st Century Skills.