

Month of the Young Adolescent

In October, middle schools across the nation celebrated the Month of the Young Adolescent by focusing on advocacy for 10-to-15-year-old students. A wide variety of activities have been used across the state to promote community engagement, highlight the importance of middle school experiences and to encourage students to dream big as they discover the endless possibilities in the larger world. The mission and vision of the South Carolina Middle School Association has long guided our Board to advocate for teachers and students by providing excellent professional development opportunities that highlight the best programs and practices in the country. Through the efforts of our organization, partnerships with colleges and universities and collaboration with other partners, emphasis is squarely focused on ensuring quality educational experiences for middle school students. Each partner also works to raise the public's awareness of the importance of a quality middle level education in the lives of students.



Leading the Way to Success!

SOUTH CAROLINA MIDDLE SCHOOL ASSOCIATION

2010 Conference Issue

Leading the Way to Success

This March, our conference will again offer sessions focused on best practices to meet the ever-changing needs of our students and to help teachers raise student achievement. The Executive Director, Board and conference committee work diligently to bring nationally recognized presenters to re-energize and inspire our attendees. The strength of our conference is that we always have excellent presentations by state level educators from every facet of teaching and learning. They share their experiences and how they overcome challenges in their everyday lives to create environments of high expectations and to share how they work to continuously improve their craft.

Because of the reputation of our conference and the number of great educators who attend, we attract nationally recognized professional developers to our state. This year we



Jack Berckemeyer

Saturday, March 6,
2010 Keynote
Speaker

**Middle Level
Education- Living It,
Loving It, and
Laughing About It**



Sara Davis Powell

Sunday, March 7,
2010 Keynote
Speaker

**Wayside Teaching:
A Middle Grades
Imperative**

A Message from:

are fortunate to have Jack Berckemeyer and Sara Davis Powell as our keynote presenters. Both of them are long time middle level advocates, authors and high energy presenters who infuse their presentations with humor and real life experiences with middle school students and teachers.

We have all encountered difficult financial times over the past two years. There have been staff reductions, budgets have been tightened and programs have been put on hold or canceled. Yet each of us still works in our varied roles to serve children and the families in each of our communities. The quality of our conference each year and your support continues to make it an excellent professional event that helps us meet our mission and vision.. We continue to evolve and change to meet the needs of our attendees and the adolescent child. This year for the first time, we are credit card accessible for conference registration, hotel accommodations and even our bookstore. We are excited about this new option and believe it will help the organization better meet the needs of our attendees. The Sheraton has consistently been a real partner with SCMSA, and they also recognize the financial challenges many of us face. For the first time, they are offering a reduced rate for rooms for the conference until mid-December. This will allow those of you who will use the conference as a tax deduction to reap even more benefits this fiscal year.

Last year more than 800 educators came together in March for our conference, and we are grateful that you continue to support the efforts of the organization to meet your professional development needs. We look forward to another great conference in 2010. In addition to our state presenters and nationally recognized keynote speakers, we will be joined by Dr. Jim Rex our State Superintendent of Education who will share some of the state successes from his tenure. He is sure to motivate us to continue to explore ways to better serve our students. We will also make some changes to our presentation structure and to the use of the facility to meet your needs. Each year, the feedback we receive is constructive and informative. We carefully monitor our costs, services and programs to meet the needs of our attendees. We want our conference to be as one attendee said last year, "The best conference I attend each year". We look forward to seeing you in March!

News for members

The South Carolina Middle School Association is now approved to accept credit cards for conference registration and membership. Credit cards will also be accepted at the Conference Bookstore.

Margeret Spivey,
President of SCASA-
Middle Level
Principals Division

Visionary Leadership:
Focusing on
Excellence in the
Middle

Administrators attending the middle school conference are invited to attend sessions specifically selected by the SCASA middle level division for middle school leaders. These opportunities for administrators will be on Saturday, March 6, 2010. Hopefully, Saturday sessions will be more accessible to all administrators planning to attend the SCMSA conference. Topics will include information on utilizing current technology, addressing needs of at-risk students, advocacy and leadership, as well as a networking session for administrators in your area and across the state. You do not have to be a member of SCASA to attend any of the available sessions, but you will have the opportunity to join while attending the conference. Current administrators are the target group for these sessions; however, these leadership opportunities will also be of value and interest to district administrators, lead teachers, and anyone going into a leadership position in the future. We look forward to seeing you at the conference.

SCMSA members receive reduced conference registration rates. It is not too late to join SCMSA. Membership information can be found by using this link: [Join SCMSA](#)

Early bird registration rates for the conference are in effect until December 15, 2009. Register a team of at least 5 and save even more. You can register on line by using this link: [Conference registration](#)

We have received a special early bird rate from the Sheraton through December 15, 2009. If you know that folks from your school or district are coming to the conference, please take advantage of the early bird conference registration fee and hotel rate. Reservations may be made by using this link: [Special Conference Rate](#)

Biography of Jack Berckmeyer

Nationally-recognized presenter, author, and humorist, Jack Berckmeyer, began his career as a middle school teacher in Denver, Colorado. After two years of teaching he was named as an outstanding educator at his school, and shortly thereafter he was identified as one of the outstanding educators in the district. In 2003, he received the Outstanding Alumni Award from the Falcon School District. He is also the 2009 Middle Level Educator of the Year for Ohio. Jack brings his energy, humor, and expertise of the middle level adolescent to all staff development as he helps teachers and administrators remember why this job makes a difference. Jack has presented in conference and school district settings both nationally and internationally.

Jack served as a judge for the Disney American Teacher Awards and the selection committee for the USA Today All Teacher Team. Jack Berckmeyer is known for his motivating, practical teaching ideas, communicating a message of hope, laughter, and insight to the nature of the young adolescent.

Jack was also the Assistant Executive Director for the National Middle School Association for 13 years. He is the co-author of [H.E..L.P for Teachers](#) and [The What, Why, & How of Student-led Conferences](#), and the author of [Managing the Madness- A Practical Guide to Middle Grades Classrooms](#).

Jack is a proud graduate of the University of Northern Colorado. Jack is currently the Director of Professional Development for Incentive Publications and the Director of the Nuts and Bolts Symposium in Denver, Colorado and Destin, Florida.

Biography of Sara Davis Powell

Sara Davis Powell is a teacher, from the middle school classroom to teacher preparation as a professor and chair of education at Belmont Abbey College in North Carolina. She is a young adolescent advocate who writes about middle level teacher preparation, emphasizing a balance of theory and developmentally responsive and academically

Sample of the exciting session topics being offered during the 2010 conference

Jack Berckmeyer
- "Student Led Conferences - The Sure Bet"
- "Language Arts Strategies that Meet the Needs of Young Adolescents"
- "Teaming and the Middle Level Teacher"
- "Classroom Management Strategies That Work"

Sara Davis Powell
- "Block Scheduling: Making the Most of Extra Time"

South Carolina Practitioners
*Special Education Inclusion and Co-Teaching
*Literature Circles
*Career Guidance
*Related Arts
*What is Working in High Poverty Schools
*Schools to Watch Strand
*Best Practices in all subject areas
*SCPoMLE Strand
*Administrators' Strand
*Differentiated Instruction
*Brain Research

Quick Links

[Middle School Magic Application](#)

Deadline December 7, 2009

rigorous practice..

She is actively involved in local classrooms and the middle school community through the facilitation of professional development, supervision of clinical interns, and research and writing about middle level issues. She is also a frequent speaker at regional and national conferences, where her enthusiasm for middle level education has proven contagious. Dr. Powell's most recent books include [Introduction to Middle School](#), 2nd edition (Pearson 2011), [An Introduction to Education: Choosing Your Teaching Path](#) (Pearson, 2009), and [Wayside Teaching: Connecting with Students to Support Learning](#) (Corwin, 2010). Married with four sons, three daughters-in-law, and two grandchildren, she enjoys lakeside sunsets with her husband, Rus, and spending time with her sons and their families. When not on her dock, with her family, or writing at home, chances are she can be reached at Belmont Abbey College, 100 Belmont-Mt. Holly Road, Belmont, North Carolina 28012; (704)461-5059; sarapowell@bac.edu

[National Forum to Accelerate Middle Grades Reform](#)

[Schools to Watch](#)

2007

[Lugoff-Elgin Middle School](#)

2008

[Blythwood Middle Palmetto Middle](#)

2009

[Belton Middle School](#)



Comments from attendees about the SCMSA Conference

- It's one of the best conferences I attend each year.
- I wish it could be longer.
- This is all great. Thanks for all you do!
- The presenters were enthusiastic and inspired me. This is my first year of teaching, so I got a lot of great ideas!
- I enjoyed every session I attended.
- This has been a tremendous learning experience for me!

We look forward to seeing you at the 2010 South Carolina Middle School Conference as we are **Leading the Way to Success.**

Rita Mantooth

Conference
Chairperson

South Carolina
Middle School
Association

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