



South Carolina Association for Middle Level Education Strategic Plan 2024-2028

History of SC-AMLE

The South Carolina Middle School Association was organized in 1977 after a committee of middle level leaders worked for two years. Larry Bolchoz, Director of Middle Schools in Charleston County, chaired the committee whose task was to form a middle school association. A group of committed educators agreed to serve on the committee: Cecile Heizer, Greenville County; James Hallman, Lexington District 2; Christine Webb, Richland District 1; and Harold McCallum, York District 4. Bolchoz stated that the purpose of the committee was to form an association...”to enable us to meet together and share our mutual areas of effort, concern, and interest in the middle schools. In this way our own needs and those of our students would be more adequately met and served.”

Larry Bolchoz served as the first president of SCMSA. In July, 1978 under the leadership of SCMSA President Mike Miller from Spartanburg District 6, an application was submitted for affiliation with the National Middle School Association. For over 30 years, SCMSA has provided professional development opportunities for educators across South Carolina. The goal of the association has been to provide a forum for educators to share in the conversation about middle schools and middle level education.

On July 1, 2014, the SCMSA officially changed its name to South Carolina Association for Middle Level Education. The change of National Middle School Association to Association for Middle Level Education prompted a realignment and rebranding of the organization. The name is more representative of the members of SCAMLE. Members include K-8 schools, 6-8 schools, 7-8 schools, 6-12 schools, 7-12 schools, colleges and universities, advocates, and pre service educators. Since 1977, the organization has had many talented educators serve as president. Each has provided leadership to advance the call of a focus on middle level education in South Carolina. In addition to strong elected leadership, the association has had talented individuals serve in a professional position. These include Phyllis Pendarvis who became the first part-time Executive Director of SCMSA. Phyllis served from 1999-2006. From 2006-2018 Linda Allen has served as part-time Executive Director. In 2018 at the retirement of Linda, Tina Jamison was selected as Executive Director. Tina served the organization for a number of years at the State Department of Education Representative and a Co-Director for the Schools to Watch initiative. In 2021, Tina left the role of Executive Director. Dr. David McDonald was selected as the fourth Executive Director in June 2021.

The SCMSA/SCAMLE leadership has remained strong throughout the association’s history. Teachers and administrators have served the organization and provided a strong voice for middle level education across South Carolina. The SCAMLE is indebted to those who have willingly given their time to further the cause of middle level education.

Vision of SC-AMLE

The vision of the South Carolina Association for Middle Level Education guides and drives the goals and plans for the organization. The vision has been carefully crafted to best explain the goals of the organization.

Vision

To be a network of support providing professional growth opportunities for middle level educators to meet the unique needs of young adolescent learners.

SC-AMLE Believes...

- The adolescent years are developmentally critical.
- All adolescents must have equitable access to experiences that are academically, socially, developmentally, culturally, and emotionally relevant.
- All adolescents must have equitable access to high quality instruction to prepare them for college and career.
- That all middle level educators in South Carolina must be respected as practitioners.
- The middle level principles as defined in the Successful Middle School/This We Believe are successful and must be preserved.
- All middle level educators must have equitable access to collaborative and meaningful professional learning opportunities.
- Middle schools must focus efforts on continuous school improvement.

Strategic Plan for SC-AMLE

During the summer of 2024, board members of SC-AMLE worked to update the comprehensive strategic plan for the organization. Primary services and initiatives were determined based upon the jointly created belief statements/ideals listed above.

The activities and services are designed to encourage growth of the organization along with expanded opportunities for members.

Members of the Board of Directors for SC-AMLE have crafted a plan to reach and maintain a strong vision and mission. Each member has provided leadership in creating this strategic plan.

Professional Learning

The goal of SC-AMLE is to provide high quality professional learning experiences for middle level educators.

Objectives

1. Increase availability and accessibility of professional learning opportunities.
2. Deliver engaging, current, and relevant professional learning opportunities.
3. Increase the community of learning of middle level educators across South Carolina.

Strategies:	Leadership:	Timeline:
Develop and maintain digital resources of high-quality materials to enhance the organization's online presence.	Webmaster SC-POMLE Member Schools Board Members Executive Director	Benchmark Year 2024 Updated Annually
Conduct a survey of members' needs to inform an annual comprehensive professional learning plan.	Regional Directors	Survey Implementation early fall 2024 Conduct Annually
Develop and implement an annual professional learning plan.	Professional Learning Chair Executive Director Board Members	Benchmark 2024 Updated Annually
Provide a strong annual conference to disseminate best practices and to allow for networking opportunities for attendees.	Executive Director Board Members Conference Committee	Annually
Provide regional opportunities for professional learning and/or networking.	Regional Directors	Annually
Provide a set of consulting and ongoing support offerings from SC-AMLE.	Executive Director Board Members	Ongoing
Add additional learning opportunities to include alternative certified, early career, and international certified teachers.		

Membership

The goal of SC-AMLE is to recruit, connect, and retain middle level educators to strengthen the professional network.

Objectives

1. Recruit new members to grow the organizational outreach and impact.
2. Connect middle level educators with ongoing support.
3. Retain members by providing high quality resources.

Strategies:

Leadership:

Timeline:

Strategies:	Leadership:	Timeline:
Maintain a set of member only benefits accessible to the membership through a password protected portal on the website.	Board Members Executive Director Webmaster	Updated annually
Increase membership annually through stronger marketing and promotion to non-member schools.	Executive Director Board Members Regional Directors	2024 benchmark 3% over three years Review Annually
Expand membership to collegiate students and develop relationships with SC-AMLE affiliates across the state.	Regional Directors Executive Director	Ongoing

Advocacy

The goal of SC-AMLE is to advocate for the organization's core beliefs.

Objectives

1. Increase awareness of issues related to middle level education in South Carolina.
2. Inform stakeholders of policy issues and resources to enhance middle level education.
3. Advance opportunities to engage in partnerships at the school, district, state, and national level.
4. Provide support to interested stakeholders regarding middle level education.

Strategies:	Leadership:	Timeline:
Invite key legislators and policy makers to functions sponsored by the SC-AMLE	Executive Director Advocacy Committee Regional Directors Executive Board	Annually
Partner with the National Forum to Accelerate Middle Grades Reform	Executive Director Executive Board	Annually
Partner with other professional education groups (AMLE, PoMLE, SCASA, etc.), as it relates to middle level education	Executive Director Executive Board	Annually
Update and distribute materials to be used to articulate the vision, beliefs, and work of SC-AMLE	Executive Director Executive Board	Annually

Communication

The goal of SC-AMLE is to promote the organization’s core beliefs and to inform stakeholders.

Objectives

1. Increase the digital footprint of SC-AMLE on a variety of platforms.
2. Communicate the organization’s core beliefs.
3. Disseminate information about SC-AMLE events.
4. Grow opportunities for networking among stakeholders.

Strategies:	Leadership:	Timeline:
Maintain a comprehensive communications plan	Executive Director Executive Board	Annually
Sustain a current website	Webmaster Executive Director Executive Board	Monthly
Utilize print and online resources for middle level educators	Webmaster Executive Director Executive Board	Annually
Maintain a member resource center on the website	Webmaster Executive Director Executive Board	Monthly
Utilize social media to share information and ideas	Webmaster Executive Director Board	Monthly
Maintain a membership branding plan	Executive Director Executive Board	Ongoing

Approved by the Board of Directors 7/27/2024.