

From the Editor

**THIS EDITION OF THE NORTH CAROLINA MIDDLE SCHOOL  
JOURNAL: RESPONDING TO THE NEEDS OF YOUNG ADOLESCENTS  
AND THEIR TEACHERS**

Welcome to the fourth issue of the *North Carolina Middle School Journal* online. We continue to be pleased with the number of visits to our link on the website and hope that you will find the articles in this issue to be helpful in your efforts to meet the needs of young adolescents and their teachers. As noted in our “Call for submissions,” the *North Carolina Middle School Journal* “publishes manuscripts on all topics related to the education of young adolescent learners.” Within that general mission, we are especially interested in sharing ways that middle level teachers and administrators put what they know about good teaching and good leadership into action.

We continue to feature reports from the North Carolina Schools to Watch (STW) articles by faculty and administrators at two of the schools selected in 2009. In “Moving Our Students Beyond the Standard at East Wilkes Middle School,” Jodi Weatherman and other members of last year’s leadership team present a summary of the ways East Wilkes Middle School has addressed the four central elements of the STW framework: academic excellence, developmental responsiveness, social equity, and organizational structures. In the report from Apple Valley Middle School, Marcie Wilson describes how faculty and administrators have responded to the diverse needs of students by using Learning Focused Strategies to encourage engagement and how student achievement has increased accordingly.

Five of the nine articles submitted for blind review received high marks from our panel and are presented in this issue. In “The Relationship Between Selected Leadership Behaviors and Attitudes Toward Behavioral and Social Inclusive Practices Among Middle School Principals in North Carolina,” Mary A. Houser, Gennifer Bell, Virginia Dickens, and Terence Hicks report results from a study that examined responses from principals in regard to issues of inclusion. Dustin Johnson reports the results from a survey of teachers and principals across the state in “Instructional program coherence as a possible link to increased student achievement in North Carolina Middle Schools.” In “Middle School Students with Learning Disabilities: Mathematics Instruction, Study Skills, and High Stakes Tests, Marcee Steele offers specific suggestions for teaching study skills to middle level students with learning disabilities to help them succeed in the mathematics. Lidell Shannon presents samples of her students’ drawings of scientists and an analysis of the insights they reveal in her article entitled “Pre-College Program 7<sup>th</sup> Grade Students’ Drawings of a Scientist.” In “What They Don’t Know Can Hurt Them: Preparing Pre-service Teachers for Real World Students,” Tracy Smith, Cogie Reed, Wanda Calvert, Gayle Snyder, and Kellie Johnson share ideas for helping pre-service teachers respond more successfully to the varying needs of young adolescents.

We conclude this issue with two feature columns. Johnna Faulconer offers concrete ideas for teaching academic vocabulary in “Knowing and teaching ‘the language.’” In “Forty Plus Years of Teaching and Still Going Strong,” Candy Beale reflects on her experiences as a middle level educator in what we hope will become a regular column in our journal.

As noted in our “Call for Submissions for the 2010 *North Carolina Middle School Journal*,” Tracy Smith from Appalachian State University will edit our next issue which will highlight ways that classroom teachers and university faculty are enacting new standards for learning and teaching.

Thanks for visiting our *North Carolina Middle School Journal* online Please feel free to share your ideas for improving our journal or consider writing an article for us. You may reach me at [strahan@email.wcu.edu](mailto:strahan@email.wcu.edu). I would really like to hear from you.

David Strahan, Editor  
Taft B. Botner Distinguished Professor of Elementary and Middle Grades Education,  
Western Carolina University