

## Editor's Notes

In this issue of the *Middle Grades Research Journal (MGRJ)*, volume 2, number 1, we feature four manuscripts chosen from more than two dozen submissions. *MGRJ* is the only "hard" copy research journal currently in existence that publishes studies addressing middle grades issues, and I thank our Review Board for their expertise in helping us maintain the highest quality publication possible. All manuscripts submitted for consideration of publication in *MGRJ* were examined and rated by three different members of our Review Board, and we are privileged to present four of the most highly rated manuscripts in this issue.

The lead study is "A Randomized Evaluation of the Success for All Middle School Reading Program" by Anne Chamberlain, Cecelia Daniels, and Nancy A. Madden of the Success for All Foundation, and Robert E. Slavin, Johns Hopkins University. The researchers randomly selected 322 sixth grade students from two high poverty middle schools to participate in an examination of the effects of the Reading Edge Program. Classroom observations were also conducted. Significant results were found after one year of implementation.

The second study in this issue of *MGRJ*, "Teaching and Learning Middle Grades Mathematics with Understanding," by Gerald Kulm, Robert M. Capraro, and Mary Margaret Capraro of Texas A&M University addresses teaching for understanding and teaching to meet high stakes testing requirements. State assessment data were collected on sixth-grade students in Texas, along with "at-risk" indicators, i.e., socio-economic status and ethnicity. Students identified as at-risk were found to have significantly higher point gains than non-at-risk students as measured by the Texas Assessment of Academic Skills.

In his study titled, "Mentoring and Standardized Achievement of African American Males in the Elementary and Middle Grades," Kenneth Anderson, University of North Carolina, Wilmington, provides data indicating that mentoring can influence standardized test results in a positive direction. This important work leads to a number of recommendations for the improvement of academic success for African American males through a number of support strategies including, but not limited to, mentoring.

Our fourth study tackles one aspect of schooling (self-esteem) as compared between two popular grade-span configurations: K-8 Elemiddle Schools and 6-8 Middle Schools. Margaret Zoeller Booth, Heather Chase Sheehan, and Mark A. Early of Bowling Green State University title this study, "Middle Grades' School Models and Their Impact On Early Adolescent Self-Esteem." The researchers used a mixed-methods longitudinal design throughout the 2004-2005 academic school year to collect data. Middle grades students attending

the K-8 elemiddles consistently exhibited higher levels of self-esteem than did their middle school counterparts. Further, analyses of gender differences found that “girls are more negatively impacted by middle school environments than boys.” This is yet another important study to consider when debating the merits of one organizational type over others, and I’m sure it will be added to the mix in future discussions. The current K-8 Elemiddle School movement has been the topic of much lively discussion over the past four to five years, and it will probably continue throughout the current decade.

David Hough, Editor-In-Chief  
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