



the
ADVOCATE
NEWS & VIEWS ON MIDDLE LEVEL EDUCATION

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Happy Fall to All GMSA Members!

It's a great time to be in middle school!

Georgia Middle School Association is a leader for continuous improvement in the education of middle grades students through promoting exemplary educational practices and offering support and resources to all Georgia middle grades educators.

<http://gamiddleschoolassociation.org>

Mark your calendars for the

39th Annual GMSA Conference

February 26-28, 2017!

The 2017 conference will be held at the Rainwater Conference Center in Valdosta.

Be a part of the GMSA Conference in 2017! There are several ways to get involved:

- **Submit a proposal to present at the conference**
- **Apply for a Teacher Grant**
- **Apply with your colleagues to be Team of the Year**
- **Nominate yourself or a colleague as Educator of the Year**
- **Come learn and network with middle grades educators from across the state!**

Our Conference Theme is MAGIC IN THE MIDDLE!



Middle grades educators know all about the magic of “The Wonder Years”. Join other educators to share and learn best practices for educating young adolescents. Cast a spell when you present on your school’s successes with STEM, differentiation, PBIS, assessments, and more! Spellbind your audience with information about integrated curriculum, new resources, and a range of technologies!

Find information about registration, submitting a proposal for a presentation, and awards on our website: <https://gamiddleschoolassociation.org/conference/>.

“A little magic can take you a long way.”

Roald Dahl

Our keynote speaker will be Sharon Faber. Dr. Faber has been an educator for more than 30 years and has taught almost every grade level and been an assistant principal, principal, middle school facilitator, director of reading, and a college faculty member. She is a literacy expert and the president of Faber consulting. A resident of Cumming, Dr. Faber has been a keynote speaker at district, state, national, and international conferences. Her book, *How to Teach Reading When You Are Not a Reading Teacher*, has informed an inspired many educators, and her work has appeared in a range of educational journals. Dr. Faber will motivate and inspire you!

“The world is full of magic things,
patiently waiting for our senses to grow sharper.”

W.B. Yeats

GMSA Board of Directors

Our outstanding board of directors includes administrators, college level faculty and students, retired educators, and active teachers. We are here to represent you.

Name	Role for GMSA	Affiliation
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Our contact information is on our website:

<https://gamiddleschoolassociation.org/>

"It is important to remember that we all have magic inside us."

J.K. Rowling

Georgia Lighthouse Schools to Watch

A program of the National Forum to accelerate Middle Grades Reform



The National Forum to Accelerate Middle Grades Reform sponsors the Schools to Watch (STW) program. Georgia was one of the first three states to be a part of this prestigious program. Our STW program is called Georgia Lighthouse Schools to Watch.

A school is identified as a Lighthouse School to Watch (LSTW) based on its implementation of four domains: academic excellence, developmental responsiveness, social equity, and organizational structures and supports. These domains are grounded in research-based best practices for middle schools.

At the GMSA conference in February, schools are recognized as newly identified or re-designated as Lighthouse Schools to Watch.

There are currently 18 Lighthouse Schools to Watch in Georgia. After a school is initially identified as a LSTW, it can be re-designated every three years.

Further information about this program can be found on the National Forum website (www.mgforum.org) and the Georgia Middle School Association website (<https://gamiddleschoolassociation.org/lighthouse-schools-to-watch/>).

Go to our website to submit a proposal to present at our conference, to learn more about Lighthouse Schools to Watch, to contact a board member, or to apply for one of our awards.

Notification for conference presentations will be December 1, so apply today!

The Advocate is the newsletter of the Georgia Middle School Association. Amanda Wall is the Editor. The President of GMSA is Neal Tam, and the Executive Director is Jim Allen. The editor welcomes submissions and notes from readers: awall@georgiasouthern.edu. Find GMSA online at <https://gamiddleschoolassociation.org/>