



## October 2017 Update

### Wisconsin Association for Middle Level Education

### Wisconsin Schools to Watch

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Greetings to the Members of the WI STW Inaugural Team!

We are excited to stay connected with you, give you an update on our progress, and also continue to provide you and your teams with direction.

### **Our work:**

- We've participated in various online meetings with Ericka Uskali, Executive Director of the National Forum to Accelerate Middle Grades Reform and Linda Hopping, our STW mentor.
- We continue to work with Ericka on identifying funding sources. She is working with folks on the national level who have made a commitment to funding every state STW program. We will be meeting online with Horace Mann representatives relative to funding in the near future.
- We are working on the state application. Linda provided samples from other states. We recognize that we have some unique situations in WI (i.e., test scores and restrictions on sharing some information). We want our application to be well done and to stand the test of time and thus are investing the time now.
- We have been working with Nicole Nevers, webmaster for WAMLE, and she has created the required template for STW on the WAMLE website.
- We are discussing potential members for a board of review for our WI STW efforts. Members of this group would review online applications and make recommendations to the co-directors on which schools would warrant a visit. Members of this group would also potentially be part of the group of folks who would visit schools to determine if they meet the criteria to be named as a WI School to Watch. These individuals cannot be connected with any of your districts and they may not receive any payment for their work.
- We continue to communicate with other directors and Shelley will have the opportunity to meet with directors at the upcoming AMLE conference in PA.

### **Your work:**

- Please continue to focus on development of the components identified in the [Schools to Watch Rubric](#) that you were provided during the training (on the flash drive).
- Although not required, you can use the [Self Study and Rating Rubric](#) that is available in an electronic format for any school to use as a school improvement tool. To complete the electronic format please contact [nationalforum@middlegradesforum.org](mailto:nationalforum@middlegradesforum.org). The 2016-2017 price is \$300.

The rubric is available for downloading free of charge. No adaptations to this self-study and rubric may be used without written permission from the Schools To Watch Committee and Board of the National Forum to Accelerate Middle Grades Reform. The rubric will take 20-25 minutes to complete. Please let us know if you plan to use the electronic Self Study & Rating Rubric so as we can learn from your experience and use this information to support others.

- The rubric is divided into four domains:
  - Academic Excellence
  - Developmental Responsiveness
  - Social Equity
  - Organizational Structures and Processes.
- Under each domain there is general criteria followed by concrete, expected examples of excellence. Self-rate each general and detailed component. Your self-ratings should reflect your perceptions for your whole school, not for your specific classroom, grade level, or subject. The ultimate goal is to be consistently excellent and rate a well-evidenced **score point 4** in every component (general and detail) of every section. Even when that ultimate goal is reached, a true high performing middle school will continue to seek ways to improve as new challenges arise.
  - A **4** in any general and detail component means the practice is highly and completely implemented, systemic, coherent in every classroom, by every teacher, across the school.
  - A **3** in any general and detail component means that there is a high degree or maturing quality of implementation that is systemic, but it may not be coherent or of the highest quality in every classroom and by every teacher, but certainly by most, 75 percent or better.
  - A **2** in any general and detail component means that there is a mixed, fair, immature quality of implementation. A 2 also means that practices may include many teachers but not the majority. The program may be too new to have realized accountable results or to be evaluated as effective.
  - A **1** in any general and detail component means that the practice may just have gotten started, (very immature), or is only practiced by a handful of practitioners.
- Identify either state or local standardized assessment results in reading and math that you can use to demonstrate a three year trajectory of your students' progress. Some have indicated that you use Measures of Academic Progress, STAR, or other types of measures. This data will be required to be submitted with your application.
- We want to remind you that once the application is up, it will be at least ONE FULL YEAR before we will be identifying schools where we will make visits. We will keep you updated.

Finally, we would appreciate hearing about your efforts to address the various components of the rubric. We'll be eager to share strategies that you are using to improve. We will also be eager to let others know how you are working to improving your overall learning environment.

Thank you for your interest, your patience as we move forward, and most importantly - your commitment to the best middle level education you can provide our young adolescents!