

## **Professional Standards for Educators of Early Adolescents\***

The following knowledge, skills, attitudes, values and actions characterize exemplary leaders in the education of early adolescents, and are the standards upon which the MLMED is based.

1. Thorough knowledge and acceptance of, and inquiry into, the nature and needs of early adolescents in the:
  - a) biological, b) social/emotional, and c) cognitive/psychological realms.

Subsumed here is an understanding of the physical, emotional, intellectual and moral development (including health and sexuality) of young adolescents, and awareness of small and large scale processes by which this development can be nurtured. These processes would involve school, home and community contexts, and informal and institutional settings.

2. Sufficient content preparation to: a) lead in-depth study in major subject area(s); and to b) make well-founded linkages to other academic and exploratory areas.

Implicit is a well-rounded education in the liberal arts with some of the breadth of an elementary generalist, some of the depth of a secondary specialist, and a sound intellectual capacity to understand and convey the interrelatedness of varied subject disciplines.

3. Ability to a) design, implement and assess developmentally-appropriate curriculum and pedagogy which emphasizes holistic learning, exploration, interdisciplinary organization, and active, successful learning for students with b) diverse interests, abilities, and cultural and linguistic backgrounds.

Appropriate curriculum and pedagogy would include, but not be limited to, teaching of reading, writing, speaking and listening in authentic contexts; team planning and teaching; individualized instruction; cooperative/collaborative learning; basic skills and enrichment learning; effective use of educational technology; teaching of skills and attitudes for lifelong learning; cross-age grouping; flexible scheduling; service and apprenticeship learning. Assessment should include a broad range of formative and summative, teacher-designed and standardized, authentic and decontextualized, and student and parent measures. Emphasis must be placed on recognizing and addressing the diversity within and across various subgroups of students and families.

4. Able to effectively apply sound a) communication, b) management and c) counseling skills to address the highly demanding and diverse needs of early adolescents in instructional and guidance capacities, to develop communities of learning, and to d) collaborate effectively with students, parents, community members and colleagues.

Teachers should be committed to and capable of serving as close, positive role models for students; facilitators of personal growth and development of self-esteem; leaders of student activities; and able to develop and maintain positive intellectual, social and emotional environments in the classroom and school. They should be able to apply effective human relations skills in a variety of contexts including with individuals, small groups and large groups; school and community settings; and faculty teams.

5. A commitment to being outstanding professional middle level educators, including: a) exercising leadership in instruction and schooling; b) constantly examining and improving upon one's work; c) able to interpret and critique a variety of research methodologies, and capable of utilizing at least one.

Implicit in middle level philosophy and in current trends toward shared school governance is a spirit of collaboration and inclusiveness. Educators should be prepared and committed to collaborate with all other stake-holders in promoting positive development for early adolescents. They should also be prepared and committed to serving as leaders, spokespersons and advocates in the rapidly developing field of middle level education in order to steer the field on a course of continued development and reflection.

\* 1995/Revised 1998, 2000, 2002, 2004, 2005; 2007 -- Developed by the Hawai'i School-University Partnership Implementation Task Force for Middle Level Teacher Education; Paul D. Deering & Antonette Port, Co-Chairs. Drawn from: Alexander & McEwin, 1988; Burnkrant, 1991; Butler, Davies & Dickinson, 1991; Center for Early Adolescence, 1994; Irvin, 1992; Jackson & Davis, 2000; Johnston & Markle, 1986; Lawton, 1993; Mergandoller, 1993; Middle Grades Teacher Education Task Force, 1991; National Board for Professional Teaching Standards, 1993; NMSA, 1982, 1991a, 1991b; Scales, 1993, Stevenson, 1998.