

April 28, 2008

Dear Principals and Superintendents,

I am writing to ask for your help with a very important issue. Last year at this time I wrote you with information about our 14<sup>th</sup> annual Middle Grades Institute, sponsored by the Vermont Middle Grades Professional Development Collaborative. This group is comprised of professors from Vermont colleges and joins with experienced practitioners to bring the best professional development to our middle school teachers. Our summer '07 Institute was our best yet, with over 80 participants from around Vermont.

This year's Institute will be held at Vermont Technical College in Randolph, Vermont from June 22 to June 26 with a follow-up day on November 19. I need your support to ensure that all teachers will have access to this professional development opportunity. As a result of snow days, many schools will still have their own PD days after June 22. I have received e-mails from people who are working toward their endorsement and want to take one of the strands offered this summer at the Institute, but because of their own district's late ending date are reticent to sign up. I have spoken to several principals, two superintendents and Bob Stevens, executive director of the VPA, who urged me to write asking for your assistance. Speaking for myself as director of the Collaborative, I am very appreciative of any support you can offer your teachers, and the opportunity to exchange days at the Institute for district in-service time.

Participants at the Institute may choose from any of the following strands: Nature and Needs of Early Adolescents, Middle Level School Organization, Middle Level Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment, Embedded Literacy in Middle Level Education, Practitioner's Workshop: Team Teaching in the Middle Grades, or our most recent addition, Middle Schooling and Post Secondary Success. These courses are offered for 3 graduate credits, for work toward middle level endorsement, for professional credit as well as for 45 professional development hours.

We look forward to again serving your classroom teachers who best meet their students' needs by engaging in on-going personal and professional development.

Respectfully,

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