
Mission Statement

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The Association of Illinois Middle-Level Schools, AIMS, is committed to exemplary programs, practices and policies that support professionals, families and communities who educate students, typically ages 10-14, in grades 5-8 and their transition into 9th grade. AIMS takes the leadership role in building and promoting excellence and equity in professional preparation and practice for the middle-level.

Adopted: January 20, 2001

Goals

Goal I: AIMS will serve as a forum for generating and gathering ideas regarding exemplary programs, practices and policies in middle-level education.

- **Key Objective:** To be a facilitator for envisioning approaches of meeting the needs of organizations, schools, parents and the community.
- **Key Objective:** To facilitate the development of instructional strategies for utilizing technology in teaching and learning.
- **Key Objective:** To be proactive in using technology tools for communication.
- **Key Objective:** To encourage and support research in middle-level practices and curriculum.

Goal II: AIMS will promote and disseminate information about topics such as contemporary middle-level philosophy, programs and curricula and instructional practices.

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- **Key Objective:** To expand membership benefits beyond the dual membership.
 - **Key Objective:** To maintain the AIMS Summer Institute, the Fall Conference, Exploratory, Leadership Retreat Conference, AIMS Illinois Middle Grades Network, CPRD Middle Grades Self Study and our role as a Turning Points Regional Center.
 - **Key Objective:** To educate administrators and other education leaders about best practice in middle-level education.
 - **Key Objective:** To utilize existing and emerging technology to disseminate information to all stakeholders in middle-level education.
 - **Key Objective:** To continue to provide current publications, increase publication and video availability including press releases/op ed pieces.
 - **Key Objective:** To maintain, improve and expand current training/professional development opportunities including site-based professional development and our Reach-N-Teach Cadre.

Goal III: AIMS will represent middle-level education in professional and public discussion of policies and educational programs.

- **Key Objective:** To have continued collaboration between AIMS, ISBE and the state legislature.
- **Key Objective:** To create alliances and encourage board involvement with other groups, (target underserved/under-represented areas, etc.) such as PTA/PTO, other middle school associations in bordering states, state and professional organizations.
- **Key Objective:** To be an approved Continuing Professional Development Unit provider for ISBE recertification.
- **Key Objective:** To advocate middle school practices and create an awareness of AIMS and Network opportunities.
- **Key Objective:** To advocate with the National Forum to Accelerate Middle Grades Reform for: developmentally responsive schools that support all students= physical, intellectual, emotional/ethical and social growth; academically excellent schools that challenge all students to use their minds well; and socially equitable schools that keep students= future options open.

Goal IV: AIMS will encourage colleges and universities to prepare their students to advocate for the needs of middle-level schools, students, staff and parents.

- Key Objective: To provide information to higher education institutions regarding AIMS mission, goals, events and activities.
- **Key Objective:** To use the university liaison on the AIMS Board.
- **Key Objective:** To assist middle-level schools, colleges and universities to develop field experiences unique to the middle-level for teacher education students.
- **Key Objective:** To ensure AIMS participation in the state=s Teacher Quality Enhancement Grant.
- **Key Objective:** To assist and provide information to colleges and universities about how to meet state middle-level preparation standards.
- **Key Objective:** To assist and provide information to colleges and universities about meeting school leader professional preparation standards with the middle-level learner in mind.
- **Key Objective:** To involve higher education institutions in the Summer Institute and Fall Conference.
- **Key Objective:** To be involved in certification/recertification issues.
- **Key Objective:** To encourage, support and continue to collaborate with colleges and universities to do research in middle-level education.

Goal V: AIMS will adapt to the changing initiatives and responsibilities of the organization.

- **Key Objective:** To develop a mechanism for a systematic review, at an interval to be determined by the Board, covering: Fiscal soundness, as well as policy and procedure manual and organizational effectiveness regarding these goals and objectives (including an evaluation of content delivery, an analysis of feedback from events and a Turning Points Regional Center Benchmark Review).

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- **Key Objective:** To seek and maintain funds to continue to implement the goals and activities of the Association.
 - **Key Objective:** To seek opportunities for all stakeholders to partner with the Association.
 - **Key Objective:** To respond to the developing and emerging needs of the ISBE middle-level education policies (i.e.: recertification, licensure, standards, etc.).
 - **Key Objective:** To become involved with new middle school initiatives as appropriate. (grants, new models, NAS/TP, CSR).

Adopted: March 24, 2001