



The University of Georgia

January 16, 2009

College of Education
Department of Elementary and Social Studies Education

2009 NMSA Elections Committee
4151 Executive Parkway Suite, Suite 300
Westerville, OH 43081

Dear 2009 NMSA Elections Committee:

I am writing to support Vicki Denmark's nomination for a second term as South Region Trustee on National Middle School Association's Board of Trustees. She has served the NMSA board wisely and well during her first term, and I am excited about the prospect of having her continue as South Region Trustee. I am an associate professor and program coordinator for the Middle School Education program at the University of Georgia in Athens. I am also a long-standing member of NMSA (dating back to 1990), a frequent presenter at the association's annual conferences, and a current member of the NMSA Research Advisory Board and *This We Believe* Revision Committee.

I met Vicki several years ago at a Georgia Lighthouse Schools to Watch training in Athens, Georgia. I became more familiar with her commitment to middle level education and her amazing work ethic when she served as President of the Georgia Middle School Association. That commitment and the accompanying work ethic have served her (and us) well in her tenure as South Region Trustee.

I learned much more about Vicki's overall knowledge and experience with middle schools when she and I co-facilitated a session on middle grades education policy in October 2008. We tended to do our preparations for the session by phone late in the evening, after she had finished a long day in her role as assistant superintendent for support services in Fulton County. In those phone conversations, I found out that she has been an administrator in several middle schools and has worked in three different school districts. Each district represented its own challenges whether it was rural Hart County on the border with South Carolina or Fulton, which is within the Atlanta metro area, and she handled those challenges professionally and well.

Her extensive background in educating and advocating for young adolescents proved crucial to our session on middle grades education policy. She can speak clearly, and plainly, about the importance of middle school educators' work and the needs of middle school students. She got rave reviews after our session from the policymakers in attendance, reinforcing her status as a key voice for middle level teachers and students.

In summary, Vicki is a fine educator, advocate, and colleague, and I recommend her wholeheartedly for a second term on NMSA's Board as South Region Trustee. Please let me know if you need any further information or if I can answer any questions.

Sincerely,

P. Gayle Andrews, Associate Professor
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