

To NMSA Members: A Letter in Support of Ed Vittardi for President

When Ed Vittardi asked if I would write a letter supporting his candidacy for NMSA president, I did not hesitate to say yes. During and since my time on the Board of Trustees and as President, I have been involved with many aspects of the association. I have worked in collaboration with Ed on several of those NMSA projects, have observed him as an NMSA board member, and have watched and participated with him over several years in strategic planning for the Ohio Middle Level Association. I am convinced that he is the person that NMSA needs at this time in its history and that he is totally qualified to lead the association successfully.

In my conversation with Ed, I asked two questions. "Why do you want to be president?" "What is your vision, as president, for NMSA?" If I had held any questions about Ed as president (I didn't), his responses to those two questions would have put them to rest.

I am impressed with the specifics of Ed's vision. Beyond that, I am further impressed that his vision reflects a balance of idealism and pragmatism. He talks of the future in a way that connects to the origins of the association . . . and in a way that reinforces the foundation tenets of NMSA and places them in the context of the 21st Century. But a simple dreamer he is not. His idealism is balanced with a pragmatic understanding of the 21st Century -- its change and challenge.

In Ed's words, "NMSA in so many ways . . . mirrors our country . . . I believe as a country we now have . . . hope . . . due to leadership."

NMSA is not going untouched by the economic and educational issues in America or the world. The economy has negatively impacted NMSA resources. Today, school and middle school reform do not enjoy the attention it once did. And as always, the energy, passion, and commitment to middle schooling is continually needing a strong and active voice to represent those of us committed to young adolescents, their development, their education, and their schools. Ed, too, provides hope for success . . . for our association and in all three of those categories.

However, simply providing hope is not enough to address challenges, analyze them for understanding, and collaboratively forge solutions in order to move an association forward successfully. To do that requires a certain set of innate skills and intelligence honed with and enhanced by background experiences in personal and professional relationships, educational theory and knowledge, and managerial and administrative tasks and requirements.

It is my belief that Ed Vittardi is a candidate who would bring hopeful, positive and pragmatic leadership as the association faces economic and educational challenges. Beyond that hopeful approach lies a proven record of successful problem-solving, recognizing issues and being proactive in addressing them, maintenance of relationships, school improvement, and simply . . . in making things better. He is a successful teacher

and principal and leader. His substantive knowledge combined with his administrative skills make him highly qualified to be president of NMSA.

Finally, I know that Ed's decision to run for NMSA president is embedded in humility and a sincere desire to be of service. Again, in his words, "This has never been a job but truly a passion."

Ed Vittardi is running for president of NMSA . . . for all the "right" reasons. He is qualified, experienced, bright, and motivated – all the ingredients for success. I hope you will join me in voting for Ed Vittardi, a vote for a positive future for our association.

Pete Lorain