

March 15, 2020

AMLE Conference 2020  
CMLA Chapter Grant Application  
Illinois State University

**1. List of Officers**

- a. Brooke Jensen: President
- b. McKenna Kuehn: Vice President
- c. Hunter Jackson: Treasurer
- d. Katie Starkey: Secretary
- e. Madeline Friend: Public Relations Director

**2. Letters of Support**

- a. Both letters are attached to this application

**3. List of Chapter Activities**

**a. *Activities Involving Middle School Students (4/5)***

- i. In the past few semesters, we have been working on member recruitment. We feel that as we grow our club, our opportunities for outreach can increase. With our internal efforts, we have almost doubled our member attendance in this academic year and are beginning to create committees for community outreach. With that being said, our chapter of CMLA has also increased young adolescent interaction for our members greatly in the past year! Currently, we have individual opportunities for our members through a K-8 school on campus. Students can volunteer weekly in a classroom before, during and after school, interacting with young adolescents and assisting staff members. We are also in charge of organizing an Illinois State University field day experience for young adolescents at Lincoln K-8 School in Peoria, IL. Our members interact with the students all day as we take them on campus tours, eat lunch with them at the dining center, and complete fun S.T.E.A.M. activities like making and shooting bottle rockets. We have built a partnership with another student organization on campus called College Mentors for Kids. In this partnership, our members have the opportunity to create activities for students in the district and interact with these students at monthly events. Not only do we interact with students from local school districts, but also community organizations such as the Boys and Girls Club of McLean county. We have made these students “Back-to-School Packs” and interact with them a few times during the semester through fundraising and community service events.

**b. *Activities Done in a School Setting (4/5)***

- i. This year, we are continuing to develop our partnerships with the local Unit 5 school district surrounding Illinois State University. We have elected a community service chair who is in contact with student council advisors and principals in order to brainstorm activities we can volunteer

at or host in their junior high schools. With our growing partnerships, our chapter of CMLA decided to host a literacy showcase for young adolescents in the local school districts. We enlisted the help of our members to create an artistic showcase for young adolescents in the three surrounding school districts. This was a multi-district literacy showcase where students were given the prompt: Using themes of character, social justice, respect, and citizenship, show how you can make a difference in your school and your community. How can you make a difference in the world as a middle school student? With that prompt, students could express themselves in a variety of mediums. A panel of judges then chose the winners for five superlative categories. Every student who submitted a piece of art will be recognized by CMLA, their peers, and their families at the Literacy Showcase event in April.

- ii. We are also still offering our members individual opportunities to volunteer at a University K-8 lab school on campus. These volunteer opportunities take place in a classroom with students grades 5-8. Some opportunities have volunteers read and tutor young adolescents, and others have volunteers assist the teacher with activities for the students.
- iii. In their junior and senior years CMLA members who are also teacher candidates in the program spend 2-4 days a week in the classroom working with young adolescents as a part of their middle grades course work and internship. This gives our members the opportunity to network with local educators and find model teachers to bring professional development to the group. We feel the immersive experience that the program provides also gives CMLA members an opportunity to see the realities of the classroom and to have questions and experiences that they want to discuss in CMLA.

***c. Activities Focused on Professional Development (5/5)***

- i. Over the past three years, our chapter of CMLA has focused heavily on professional development opportunities for our members. At almost every meeting, we bring in a speaker from the community to talk about a variety of topics regarding middle school and young adolescents. Our executive board feels strongly about incorporating professional development that is relevant to our members. Therefore, we regularly survey members and ask for topics that they would like to receive professional development on. Their responses are largely based on their experiences in the school as well as the middle level coursework. This year in particular, many of our meetings were centered around community members, teachers, and administrators talking about a variety of topics regarding middle level education. Rae Hughart, a math and English language arts teacher at Evans Junior High School, talked to our members about differentiated instruction and the grid method. Josie Bensko, a science teacher at Evans Junior High School, talked to our members about music and technology in the classroom. The board members that attended the AMLE conference in

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fall of 2019 did a mock speed learning presentation about the highlights of the AMLE conference in 2019. We had a panel of principals from different districts talk to our members about the hiring process and resume tips. Lastly, we had a panel of student teachers talk to our members about their experiences in the teacher education program at Illinois State University. We offer our members a wide variety of professional development every month by attending our meetings.

***d. Activities Done as Part of Middle Level Education Month (4/5)***

- i. During both last March and this upcoming March, our board has decided to dedicate Middle Level Education month to appreciating middle level educators in our community. We hosted a service event where members could decorate and fill bags with office supplies and fun goodies for teachers at the Regional Alternative School in Bloomington, IL. Each educator also was given a hand-written, personalized thank-you note from our members.
- ii. The cooperating teachers that host clinical students during the school year do not receive enough appreciation for their time and talents. Therefore, our CMLA chapter is hosting a “thank-you” event for these teachers in April. This event is a way to showcase their hard work during the semester. During the event, we will also show an appreciation video of clips from our clinical students saying thank you to their cooperating teachers. At the end of this event, each teacher will also receive a thank-you package with a personalized note and a fun gift related to helping future educators grow. We plan to make this event semi-annual (at the end of each semester) because it is a great opportunity for us to show our appreciation.

**4. Proposal for Presentation**

- a. The presentation proposal is attached to this application