



**American Educational Research Association
Special Interest Group:
Middle-Level Education Research
Bylaws**

Article I. NAME OF THE SIG

The name of this Special Interest Group (“SIG”) is the Middle-Level Education Research SIG, (hereinafter, the “SIG”).

Article II. AFFILIATION OF THE SIG

The SIG is a Special Interest Group of the American Educational Research Association (hereinafter, “AERA” or “Association”) established to facilitate the formation of research specialties of an intra- or cross-divisional nature and to increase the exchange of knowledge within research arenas of special interest, and for other purposes in keeping with achieving the mission and objectives of the Association.

Article III. GOVERNING AUTHORITY OF THE SIG

The SIG shall be governed by the Association’s Articles of Incorporation, Bylaws and policies, as periodically amended. The Bylaws, decisions and actions of the SIG shall not conflict with the Association’s Bylaws and policies, including the *SIG Handbook* and all guidelines, procedures and policies associated with the Association’s Annual Meeting and its program.

Article IV. PURPOSE OF THE SIG: Middle-Level Education Research

Section 1. Purpose. The purpose of the SIG is to improve, promote, and disseminate educational research that affirms and celebrates the diversity of young adolescents by disrupting and transforming middle level education in equitable and just ways.

Section 2. Methods. The methods used to achieve the purpose of the SIG will be the publication of research in newsletters/journals, presentations of research findings at an annual conference, and other professional activities deemed appropriate by the SIG.

Article V. MEMBERSHIP IN THE SIG

Section 1. Eligibility. Membership in the SIG shall be open to any AERA member who supports the purpose of the SIG and who pays the specified SIG dues and all additional fees required of SIG members by the Association.

Section 2. Joining the SIG. AERA members shall join the SIG by paying SIG dues and Association fees through the AERA Central Office using the appropriate AERA print or electronic form.

Section 3. Members in Good Standing. SIG members are considered ‘in good standing’ immediately upon the recording of their dues as paid-in-full by the AERA Central Office.

Section 4. Length of Membership in the SIG. The length of membership in the SIG shall be from the date membership dues are recorded by the AERA Central Office to the end of the AERA membership year as established by the Association. AERA members may join the SIG at any time, but SIG membership expires simultaneously with AERA membership.

Section 5. Voting Rights. All SIG members in good standing, with fully paid SIG dues, shall be entitled to vote for SIG officers and on any other matter where a ~~membership~~ vote is required or taken.

Article VI. OFFICERS

Section 1. Required Officers. The SIG shall have a Chair, Secretary, and Treasurer who shall be elected and shall serve as the three required officers. The SIG may have any other officers that its members from time to time choose to designate.

Section 2. Other Officers. The other officers of this SIG shall be: Vice Chair, Immediate Past Chair, and Chair-Elect/Program Chair.

Section 3. Eligibility to Hold Office. All members in good standing of both AERA and the SIG and who are not restricted from holding a particular office due to requirements in the Association's or the SIG's Bylaws and policies shall be eligible to run as candidates for election or be appointed as officers and for any office within the SIG.

Section 4. Length of Term of Office. Unless otherwise specified in these Bylaws, the term of each officer shall be for two years. The term of each officer shall begin the day following the close of the AERA Annual Meeting and end on the last day of AERA Annual Meeting, two years later.

Section 5. Eligibility to Succeed to the Same Office for Consecutive Terms. Individuals shall not be eligible to succeed themselves to the same office for consecutive terms.

Section 6. Automatic Succession of Offices. There shall be an automatic succession of the following offices, from Vice Chair to Chair-Elect/Program Chair to Chair to Immediate Past Chair, in that order such that the person elected as Vice Chair shall automatically assume the office of Chair-Elect/Program Chair following the completion of one term as Vice Chair, and then shall automatically assume the office of Chair following the completion of one term as Chair-Elect/Program Chair, and then shall automatically assume the office of Immediate Past Chair following the completion of one term as Chair.

Section 7. Limit to Length of Service in One Office. No person may serve in the same office for more than three consecutive years. The Chair of the SIG shall be charged with ensuring that this requirement is met.

Section 8. Officers as Members of AERA for Entire Term. All individuals serving as officers of the SIG shall be members of AERA during their entire term of office.

Section 9. Vacancies. Whenever any elected office is vacated for any reason before the term of that officer has been completed, the SIG Chair shall on advice from the MLER Executive Committee appoint a replacement until new elections are held. This replacement shall assume the full duties and responsibilities of that office immediately upon appointment. In the case of the Chair position being vacant, the MLER Executive Committee shall by majority vote elect an individual to complete the term of the Chair.

Article VII. DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE OFFICERS

Section 1. Chair. The Chair shall be responsible for: (a) the general administration of the SIG; (b) ensuring that the SIG Bylaws are followed; and (c) acting as liaison between the SIG and AERA and the SIG and the SIG Executive Committee as well as national and international organizations involved with middle grades education. Additionally, the chair shall; (d) preside at all meetings of the MLER Executive Committee and at the Annual Business Meeting; (e) appoint ad hoc committees as needed; and (f) provide leadership appropriate for the SIG's continued growth and development. Unless otherwise specified in

these Bylaws, the Chair of the SIG shall appoint persons to assist officers, to chair committees or to carry out other work of the SIG.

Section 2. Secretary. The Secretary shall be responsible for: (a) recording the minutes of all meetings and disseminating these minutes to the general membership; (b) conducting all elections; and (c) coordinating the mailing of SIG material as necessary.

Section 3. Treasurer. The Treasurer shall be responsible for: (a) managing the financial accounts of the SIG and the safekeeping of all financial documents of the SIG; and (b) providing a financial report to the general membership at SIG meetings.

Section 4. Chair-Elect/Program Chair. The Chair-Elect/Program Chair shall be responsible for: (a) acting as the Chair in the Chair's absence; (b) facilitating the Program Committee (comprised of proposals reviewers, session chairs, and discussants); and (c) managing all correspondence with AERA in the establishment of the annual program. If there is a host or co-sponsoring organization, the individual serving as program chair of that organization shall be an ex-officio voting member of the SIG Program Committee.

Section 5. Vice Chair. The Vice Chair shall be responsible for: (a) facilitating the Membership Committee responsible for monitoring the SIG's membership database and aiding recruitment efforts; (b) organizing the Research Roundtables at AMLE, and (c) assisting the Chair and Chair-Elect/Program Chair in areas identified by the MLER Executive Committee.

Section 6. Immediate Past Chair. The Immediate Past Chair shall be responsible for: (a) assisting the Vice-Chair in maintaining the SIG's membership database and membership directory; and (b) assuming other duties as assigned by the Chair.

Article VIII. NON-OFFICER LEADERSHIP POSITIONS

Section 1. Non-Officer Leadership Positions. The SIG may from time to time establish important leadership positions that are not officers of the SIG.

Section 2. Titles of Non-Officer Leadership Positions. There are two types of non-officer positions: elected council members and appointed non-officer leadership positions. The SIG membership shall elect individuals to non-officer leadership positions as council members to carry out leadership or task assignments of the SIG for the benefit of the SIG. Additionally, the MLER Executive Committee may appoint the following non-officer leadership positions to carry out leadership or task assignments of the SIG for the benefit of the SIG: newsletter editor, web manager, social media manager, historian, and executive advisor.

Section 3. Eligibility. All members in good standing of both AERA and the SIG and who are not restricted from holding a particular non-officer leadership position due to requirements in the Association's or the SIG's Bylaws and policies shall be eligible for election or be appointed to any nonofficer leadership position within the SIG.

Section 4. Length and Limit of Term for elected Council Members. Unless otherwise specified in these Bylaws, the term of each elected Council Member shall be for two years and no one may serve consecutive terms.

Section 5. Length & Limit of Term for Appointed non-Officer Position. A person may serve in the same appointed non-officer position for no more than three consecutive years.

Section 6. Non-Officers as Members of AERA for Entire Term. All individuals serving in non-officer positions of the SIG shall be members of AERA during their entire term of office.

Section 7. Vacancies. Whenever any non-officer position is vacated for any reason before the term has been completed, the SIG Chair with the approval of the MLER Council shall appoint a replacement until the date of the next elections cycle for that position or date when the appointed non-officer position is set to end. This replacement shall assume the full duties and responsibilities of that position immediately upon appointment.

Article IX. DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF NON-OFFICER POSITIONS

Section 1. Council Members (Councilors). The Council Members (Councilors) are seven members of the SIG who shall be responsible for: (a) attending at all official SIG meetings, (b) attending leadership meetings throughout the year, (c) participating and/or assuming leadership for standing and ad hoc committees, (d) representing the SIG in other organizations and conferences whenever possible, (e) serving as a member of the MLER Executive Committee.

Section 2. Newsletter Editor/s. The Editor/s of the SIG's newsletter, *The Chronicle of Middle Level Education Research* shall be responsible for: (a) publishing a minimum of two issues of newsletter annually; and (b) serving as a non-voting member of the MLER Executive Committee.

Section 3. Web Manager. The Web Manager of the SIG's website shall be responsible for: (a) maintaining and updating the content of the SIG website, (b) providing the SIG membership with easy electronic access to information regarding SIG-sponsored activities, (c) serving on the Communications Committee, and (d) serving as a non-voting member of the MLER Executive Committee.

Section 4. Social Media Manager. The Social Media Manager shall be responsible for (a) coordinating postings on various social media outlets (e.g., Twitter, Facebook, Instagram), (b) serving on the Communications Committee, and (c) serving as a non-voting member of the MLER Executive Committee.

Section 4. Historian. The Historian shall be responsible for: (a) keeping the SIG's history current; (b) submitting an annual report at the Annual Business Meeting and (c) serving as a non-voting member of the MLER Executive Committee.

Section 5. Executive Advisor. The Executive Advisor shall be responsible for: (a) advising the SIG's leadership with regard to the SIG's mission and strategic goals; (b) continuing efforts to forge alliances with professional associations (e.g., Association of Middle Level Education, National Association of Professors of Middle Level Education, National Forum to Accelerate Middle-Grades Reform), the U.S. Department of Education, and other organizations that address issues pertinent to middle level education; (c) facilitating the Communications Committee; (d) disseminating information through the SIG's listserv, newsletter, meetings, conferences, and similar forums; and (e) serving as a non-voting member of the MLER Executive Committee. Typically Executive Advisor is a past chair or someone with a long term connection to the MLER SIG. The Executive Advisor may serve for a maximum of three (3) consecutive years.

Article X. MLER EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Section 1. Membership. There shall be an MLER Executive Committee consisting of the SIG Chair, Chair-Elect/Program Chair, Vice Chair, Secretary, Treasurer, Immediate Past Chair, and Executive Advisor (*ex officio*).

Section 2. Responsibilities and Powers. The MLER Executive Committee shall have responsibility and powers to direct and review the general affairs of the SIG within the limits set forth in these Bylaws and to provide leadership. Other duties and powers of this Committee are as follows: (a) appointment of the Executive Advisor; and (b) appointment of other non-officer positions.

Section 3. Meetings. The MLER Executive Committee shall hold at least one business meeting each year and shall communicate as needed throughout the year. One business meeting shall be held during the Annual Meeting of AERA. An additional networking and research session/meeting is held at the annual conference of the Association for Middle Level Education (AMLE). The Chair shall be responsible for ensuring that these meetings are scheduled and held, and for creating and distributing the agenda for these meetings.

Section 4. Quorum and Decision-making. A majority of the members of the MLER Executive Committee and Council members (if determined) shall constitute a quorum, and decisions of the MLER Executive Committee shall be made by a majority of those present, provided a quorum is present.

~~Section 5. Voting. The SIG will operate using three tiers of voting: (a) officers only, (b) officers and non-officer council members, and (c) full membership. The Chair, Program Chair, and Vice Chair will determine which tier of voting is needed and initiate the voting process.~~

Article XI. NOMINATIONS AND ELECTIONS

Section 1. Oversight of the Nominations and Elections Process. The MLER Executive Committee shall be responsible for setting up, monitoring, and providing other oversight duties regarding all aspects of the nomination and election processes of the SIG.

Section 2. Nominations Committee. The Nominations Committee shall consist of Chair, Chair Elect/Program Chair, Vice Chair, Immediate Past Chair, and Secretary.

Section 3. Nominations and Nomination Process.

Section 3a. The Nominations Committee shall seek eligible individuals to serve as candidates for each elected officer and elected non-officer position. An ideal slate of candidates for leadership positions will include a diverse population from an array of institutions and backgrounds. To foster an inclusive approach to nominations, all SIG members along with Executive Council and Council Members are encouraged to nominate SIG members and SIG members are encouraged to self-nominate.

Section 3b. No SIG member may nominate an individual for any SIG office or elected non-officer position without the prior consent of the individual nominated.

Section 3c. The Chair shall ensure that the Nominating Committee elicits at least two candidates for each position to be elected. No election may be held or will be certified by AERA for any elected position unless there are at least two candidates nominated and placed on the ballot for that position.

Section 3d. By the deadline set by the Association, the Nominations Committee shall submit the names of the candidates and any other information required by AERA for inclusion in the AERA electronic ballot system. The deadline for this submission shall be determined by the Association.

Section 4. Date for Completion of Election Tabulation. All election processes and tabulation of votes for designated officers and non-officer positions for the following year shall be completed within the timeline and by the deadline established by AERA in conducting its electronic election of Officers of the Association. The Chair of the Nominations Committee shall receive the results of the balloting from the

AERA Central Office.

Section 5. Notification of Results. The SIG Chair shall be responsible for reporting the results to the membership.

Article XII. MEETINGS

Section 1. Annual Business Meeting. The SIG shall hold its Annual Business Meeting in conjunction with the AERA Annual Meeting. Unless otherwise noted in these Bylaws, decisions made during this meeting shall be made by the majority of SIG members present and voting.

Section 2. Other Meetings. The SIG may hold other meetings at times and places approved by the Executive Committee and vote of the SIG members. The SIG may conduct SIG business and vote on motions in person, electronically/digitally, or by e-mail or mail.

Section 3. Officer and Committee Meetings. The Officers and Committees of the SIG shall meet when, where and as needed to conduct the business of the SIG or carry out the charges of the committee within the parameters and requirements of these Bylaws. The SIG Chair, other SIG officers and committee chairs shall set the meetings and notify all officers of the date, time, place and agenda or purposes of the meetings.

Section 4. Notice of Meetings. Announcement of day, time, and place of any official business meeting of the SIG membership shall be made by the SIG Chair as far ahead as is reasonably possible. In all cases, notice shall be communicated to members at least three weeks in advance of a meeting.

Section 4a. On petition of twenty percent of the voting members, the MLER Council must call a business meeting to be held within three months of the date of the petition.

Section 5. Rules of Order. The Executive Council and Council Members shall govern the Annual Business Meeting at AERA and the Annual Networking and Research Session/Meeting at AMLE. In all cases to which they apply and do not conflict with the provisions of these Bylaws and the Association Bylaws, Robert's Rules of Order (current edition) shall govern all business meetings of the SIG.

Article XIII. DUES AND OTHER FISCAL CONCERNS

Section 1. Dues. Dues for the SIG shall be decided by vote of the SIG's Executive Committee.

Section 2. Effective Date of Dues Increases. All changes in dues shall go into effect for all categories of SIG membership for the following membership year as determined by the Association.

Section 3. Allocation of SIG Assets. The SIG Chair, in consultation with the MLER Executive Committee, shall authorize the expenditure of SIG funds for any allowable purpose that is requested and approved.

Section 3a. The SIG Chair and the Treasurer shall provide for an operating budget.

Section 4. Overseeing the Allocation of SIG Assets. The SIG Chair and the Treasurer shall have the joint responsibility to ensure that all SIG assets, including money collected via dues, are allocated and spent in ways and in a timely manner to fulfill commitments made by the SIG members or MLER Executive Committee, to pay fees to the Association, to pay debts and to enhance and promote the SIG and the purposes, goals and objectives of the SIG and the Association.

Article XIV. AERA-APPROVED AWARDS

AERA SIGs may confer awards that are approved by the AERA Executive Board. Detailed information about AERA-approved awards may be obtained from the AERA Central Office and from the AERA website.

Article XV. TERMINATION/DISSOLUTION OF THE SIG

Section 1. Membership Decision to Voluntarily Dissolve the SIG. Should it be decided that the SIG is no longer meeting the needs and serving the purposes for which it was founded, the SIG shall be voluntarily dissolved by a majority vote of the members present at a SIG Business Meeting followed by a two-thirds vote of those SIG members voting in a postal, e-mail, or electronic ballot administered by the AERA Central Office within 30 days of the vote to terminate passed at the Annual Business Meeting. A message of the results of this ballot shall be sent in writing to the SIG membership, AERA Central Office and Chair of the SIG Executive Committee by the SIG Chair within one week of the counting of the votes.

Section 2. Other Circumstances that May Result in the Dissolution of the SIG. The SIG may automatically be dissolved should its membership fall below the minimum number established by Council for active SIGs; should its members approve the merging of the SIG with one or more other SIGs, or for other reasons pursuant to the Bylaws of the Association and the SIG. In addition, a Special Interest Group may be dissolved by the AERA Council for good and sufficient reasons.

Section 3. Distribution of SIG Assets. Should the SIG be discontinued for any reason, its assets shall be used to pay all outstanding debts and obligations. Any remaining funds shall be returned to the AERA.

Article XVI. RATIFICATION AND AMENDMENTS

Section 1. Approval Process of the Initial Bylaws. The process for approving the initial Bylaws shall be as follows, with the actions of AERA Council noted for the information of membership:

Section 1a. The officers of the SIG shall decide the process for the construction of a draft of the Bylaws and offer SIG members an opportunity to comment on this draft. The officers shall be responsible for making specific revisions, additions and/or deletions in the Bylaws based upon the feedback and suggestions.

Section 1b. After the membership has provided feedback and input on the draft of the Bylaws, the SIG Chair shall submit a copy of the draft to AERA Central Office for review. Central Office may send it back to the SIG Chair with comments for revisions or may forward the Bylaws to the SIG Executive Committee for review and recommendation to the AERA Council for approval. The SIG Executive Committee may return the Bylaws to the SIG Chair to address specific concerns before making a recommendation to the AERA Council.

Section 1c. The AERA Council may require changes or revisions in the language of the Bylaws or amendments thereof prior to final approval. Once approved by the AERA Council, the SIG Chair shall be notified that the Bylaws are in effect and will stay in effect until notification in writing to Central Office of the favorable or unfavorable vote of SIG members. The SIG Chair and officers, with the assistance of the AERA Central Office, shall then complete the process of getting approval of the Bylaws by a vote of SIG members. The SIG Chair shall have 30 days to convey in writing to Central Office and the Chair of the SIG Executive Committee the dates and manner of voting decided upon by the SIG officers.

Section 2. Ratification. After AERA Council approval, these Bylaws shall require a majority vote of those members voting electronically, such voting to be administered by the AERA Central Office on behalf of the SIG. The AERA Central Office shall transmit in writing the manner, dates and results of this vote to the SIG Chair within 10 days of the final count of the votes.

Section 3. Effective Date of Implementation. These Bylaws shall take effect immediately upon receipt in writing to the AERA Central Office by the SIG Chair acknowledging the Central Office's written

statement of the favorable vote of the SIG membership for the presented version of the Bylaws or amendment(s) thereof.

Section 4. Amendments to the SIG Bylaws. These Bylaws may be amended by a majority vote of those members voting at a duly called Annual Business Meeting and a majority of the members voting by postal, e-mail, or electronic voting as designated by the Executive Committee of the SIG or elsewhere within these Bylaws. Amendments to the SIG Bylaws must be approved by the AERA SIG Executive Committee and Council.

Article XVII. POSTING OF THE SIG BYLAWS

Within 30 days of the membership's adoption of the SIG Bylaws approved by the AERA Council and all amendments to the Bylaws, the entire set of Bylaws shall be posted on the AERA website for the SIG with the dates of Council's approval and membership adoption included. The SIG Chair shall send an electronic communication to all SIG members announcing the posting of the Bylaws on the SIG website.

Forwarded to AERA Central Office: April 5, 2009

AERA Council Approval Date: June 27, 2009

MLER SIG Approval Date: February 24, 2010

Posting to MLER Website Date: February 28, 2010

Minor Revisions Sent for Membership Vote: February 10, 2012

MLER SIG Approval of Revisions Date: March 12, 2012

Revisions requested by AERA: June 13, 2012

Revisions forwarded to AERA for approval: September 1, 2022

Temporary Approval to Revision by Nathan Bell: September 21, 2022