



PRACTICING WHAT WE PREACH

A Message from MSA-CESS President Lisa Marie McCauley, Ed.D., C.P.A.

Whether you're an administrator, a teacher or a student, a new academic year is traditionally a time for new beginnings. The same is true for us here at Middle States, especially this year, my first as president.

In making the transition to this new leadership position, I am fortunate to be guided by our strategic plan, which was adopted this past spring and outlines goals, objectives and strategies for continuous growth and improvement.

Sound familiar?

It should, as strategic planning is at the core of the Middle States accreditation process. We firmly believe in the importance of setting goals and developing a strategic plan that charts a course forward toward achieving those goals – for our member schools and for our own organization.

With a strategic plan in place, changes in leadership and staff do not have to mean drastic changes in direction or seismic shifts in how an organization functions. In fact, a strategic plan provides much needed consistency and stability in times of change.

That is not to say plans don't change.

We encourage schools to review and adjust their strategic plans periodically, to evaluate what's working and what may need to be fixed. And at Middle States, we practice what we preach. We regularly turn to our strategic plan to assess our progress, measure our success and identify targets we still need to reach. We make adjustments as necessary and then get back to work.

As the new president of Middle States, I am excited about our future.

It is an honor to work with our amazing staff, volunteers and Commissioners to provide schools and school systems with the quality and value that have long been associated with Middle States accreditation.

I am grateful for the opportunity to lead our organization as we move forward under our strategic plan and continue our mission of assisting schools worldwide in achieving excellence.

Sincerely,



Lisa Marie McCauley, Ed.D., C.P.A.

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• Five Practical Ways To Promote Your Accreditation
• Where in the World is MSA?

• Staff Happenings: Middle States Promotions And New Team Members

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SIX PRACTICAL WAYS TO PROMOTE YOUR ACCREDITATION

Increase Enrollment and Highlight Your School with These Simple Tips

Your school community worked hard to earn its accreditation, an important milestone that shows its commitment to providing the best education possible for students and their families.

Now it's time to capitalize on that hard work by showing current and prospective families why they should take Middle States accreditation seriously when making the decision of where to enroll their child.

1. Talk to prospective families about the accreditation process, including what it is and why it matters. Review our [Accreditation Talking Points for Admissions Staff](#).
2. Include an MSA brochure on the value of accreditation in your Admissions packet. Contact us at info@msa-cess.org to learn more.
3. Explain what it means to be accredited on your school's website, in promotional materials, on social media, in your newsletter and in conversation. Need sample language? Find it [here](#).
4. Include the MSA-CESS logo and a tagline to indicate that your school is accredited on school stationery, your website and other published materials. Need an electronic copy of the logo? Email us at info@msa-cess.org or visit the Accreditation Resources section of our website. Also, note your Middle States-accredited status in your standard phone greeting, live and recorded.
5. Check out the competition. [Search our website](#) for accredited schools by location, type, grade level or other characteristics. Find out if neighbor schools are accredited or if it's a unique accomplishment in your community.
6. Ready for the next step? Apply to become a Program of Distinction. Middle States Programs of Distinction serve as models for schools throughout the world. If you think your school has an exemplary program in any of the areas described [here](#), we encourage you to apply. [See how other schools have leveraged this special designation](#).



Visual Arts Program of Distinction recipient school
Saint Francis Preparatory School, Fresh Meadows, N.Y.

STAFF HAPPENINGS

Kelly Christian was promoted to vice president of operations, where she coordinates staff activities and responsibilities, leads training workshops at regional and international conferences and oversees marketing and public relations. Kelly began her career with Middle States in 2007 as an assistant director managing accreditation visits to international and Caribbean schools. She earned her bachelor's degree in international affairs from The George Washington University and her master's degree in nonprofit leadership from the University of Pennsylvania.

Glen Mort, Ed.D., was recently named vice president for accreditation. Dr. Mort, who joined Middle States in 2016, previously served as an accreditation officer. In his new role, Dr. Mort will oversee our skilled team of accreditation liaisons as well as continue to provide direct support to member schools. Dr. Mort earned his bachelor's degree in elementary and special education from Glassboro State College and earned his master's degree and doctorate in educational administration from California Coast University.

Mary Burke, Ed.D., recently became an associate vice president for accreditation with Middle States, and serves an accreditation liaison for member schools in the region. Mary previously served as a Middle States commissioner. She served as principal of St. Anthony of Padua School in Camden, N.J., has taught at Camden County College and was the president of a standardized test scoring company. Mary graduated with bachelor's and master's degrees from Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey, and earned her doctorate from Nova Southeastern University.

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STAFF HAPPENINGS (CONT.)

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Daniel Rufo became an associate vice president for accreditation in July. In this position, Dan works closely with school leaders, supporting them through the accreditation process and assisting with the self-study. Dan started his Middle States career in 2014 after spending nearly a decade in a classroom, most recently teaching social studies to students in grades five and six. He has extensive experience working within and alongside charter schools. Dan earned his bachelor's degree in elementary education from West Chester University of Pennsylvania and received his master's degree in instructional leadership from Neumann College.

Middle States welcomed **Jeremy Basescu** to our team in June. Jeremy is assistant manager of volunteer services and has extensive experience teaching writing classes to students and training teachers. Most recently, Jeremy was a producing director for Story Pirates, an arts education and media company. He earned his bachelor's degree from Amherst College and received his master's degree in arts from Columbia University.

In August, **Shoshana Kohn** joined the Middle States team as communications manager. In this position she develops content for digital and print media. Previously, Shoshana taught college English, served as editor-in-chief of a magazine and managed communications for a digital media company. She earned a bachelor's degree from the University of Delaware in English and a master's degree in Jewish studies from Gratz College.

A full staff directory is available [here](#).

WHERE IN THE WORLD IS MSA?

In the coming weeks, MSA staff will be travelling to a region near you to best serve our growing membership that spans more than 30 states in the United States and more than 100 other countries around the world. This fall, we will be represented at conferences for our schools in the Mid-Atlantic region of the United States, Central and South America, Africa, Europe, the Middle East, and South Asia. In addition to presenting workshops on accreditation, our staff is available to you for individual in-person meetings at each conference. Visit the links below, and contact us at info@msa-cess.org for more information.

[PA Coalition for Public Charter Schools, Harrisburg, Pa.](#)
October 9-11, 2019

[Diocese of Allentown 2019 Education Conference, Bethlehem, Pa.](#)
October 14, 2019

[New Jersey School Board Association Workshop, Atlantic City, N.J.](#)
October 21-24, 2019

[NESA Fall Leadership Conference, Bangkok, Thailand](#)
October 23-27, 2019

[MAIS: Annual Teachers and Administrators Conference, Rome, Italy](#)
October 30-November 3, 2019

[PA ILC: Integrated Learning Conference, State College, Pa.](#)
November 6-9, 2019

[AISA Conference, Cape Town, South Africa](#)
November 21-23, 2019



Vice President of Operations, Kelly Christian, recently attended the Association of American Schools in South America Governance Conference in Miami, Fla. to meet with our member schools in Central and South America.



MIDDLE STATES ASSOCIATION APPOINTS EIGHT NEW COMMISSIONERS

The Middle States Association Commissions on Elementary and Secondary Schools (MSA-CESS) is pleased to announce the recent appointment of the following eight new Commissioners:

Ligia V. Alberto, Ed.D., Bergenfield, N.J.— Alberto is director of the Bergenfield Alternative School in Teaneck, N.J. Alberto earned her bachelor's degree from Lehman College in Bronx, N.Y., and a master's degree in counseling from Mercy College in Dobbs Ferry, N.Y. She recently completed her Doctor of Education at Seton Hall University in South Orange, N.J.

Ted Beal, Jr., Edison, N.J.—Beal is executive vice president of AXA Equitable and managing director for AXA Equitable's Retirement Benefits Group in Edison, N.J. In his role with the financial services firm, Beal and his team work with more than a million public school employees nationwide to manage their retirement portfolios and have also awarded more than \$1.3 million in student scholarships.

James Evans, Esq., Camillus, N.Y.— Evans is a partner with the law firm Barclay Damon, LLP, in Syracuse, N.Y. As an attorney, Evans assists schools with policy development, board governance and risk-management issues. He is also an assistant education professor at Le Moyne College in Syracuse, N.Y.

Sarah Gallagher, Rome — Gallagher is head of school for Marymount International School Rome. Gallagher has held her current position since 2016. Prior to then she spent seven years as headmistress of Marymount International School London. She has also taught in Ireland, the United Kingdom and in the United States.

Ana Meyers, Mechanicsburg, Pa.— Meyers is the executive director of the Pennsylvania Coalition of Public Charter Schools, in Mechanicsburg, Pa. Previously she was director of legislative affairs and director of partnership programs at LeadingAge PA, a statewide association representing 360 non-profit senior facilities.

James Tucker, Middletown, Md. — Tucker is superintendent of the Maryland School for the Deaf, with locations in Frederick and Columbia, Md. He began his career teaching American Sign Language, including to students with autism, and also served as a college admissions director. He has delivered more than 100 presentations and keynote addresses at conferences and meetings worldwide since 1980.

Tara Weber, Barnegat, N.J.— Weber is an elementary supervisor with G. Harold Antrim Elementary School in Point Pleasant Beach, N.J. Weber earned her bachelor's degree in education from Millersville University and her master's degree in reading from Grand Canyon University.

Frank Whelan, Sicklerville, N.J.— Whelan is founder and president of ASI Career Institute in Turnersville, N.J. In 2014, he established E-Hired, a job search website. Whelan has been volunteering with Middle States since 2010, during which time he has evaluated schools undergoing the accreditation process and served a member of Middle States' Domestic Schools Advisory Committee.

Commissioners meet twice annually in Philadelphia, where Middle States is headquartered, to review accreditation recommendations and the organization's finances, policies and strategic plan.

HAVE YOU REGISTERED FOR FALL 2019 WORKSHOPS?

MSA-CESS offers all workshops free of charge to members, and we have a series of workshops to meet your needs at every stage of the 7-year accreditation cycle. **Sign up today!**



Organizing for
Self-Study



Developing
the Plan



Team Member
Briefing



Hosting Your
Team Visit



Completing Your
Mid-Term Report

Q & A WITH MSA-CESSE PRESIDENT LISA MARIE MCCAULEY, ED.D., C.P.A.

Lisa Marie McCauley, Ed.D., C.P.A., was appointed as the new president of the Middle States Association Commissions on Elementary and Secondary Schools effective on July 1, 2019.

Dr. McCauley previously served as Chief Operating Officer for the Middle States Association of Colleges and Schools and as Senior Vice President of Finance for Middle States Commission on Higher Education.

Prior to joining Middle States in 2012, Dr. McCauley served as the CFO for several private and public colleges. She earned her doctorate in educational leadership from Widener University in Chester, Pa., and holds an MBA in accounting and finance from the University of Scranton in Scranton, Pa.



Q. How did you develop an interest in education?

A. I discovered my love for teaching when I was working as the controller at a local community college and serving as an adjunct accounting instructor. If I knew how much I would enjoy teaching, I would have gotten into it earlier. To me – whether I’m teaching accounting or scuba diving – there is nothing more rewarding than the knowledge exchange between teacher and student.

Q. Wait, you teach scuba diving?

A. I do. I am a certified dive instructor and often visit elementary and secondary schools to offer short programs on marine science and an introduction to scuba diving.

Q. What are some of your other hobbies?

A. I love baking during the holidays. I bake 600 dozen cookies and an additional 100 nut, poppy and apricot rolls to give to family and friends. Everybody seems to like my chocolate chip cookies. The recipe is no secret. I use the recipe on the back of the bag for Toll House chips. I also enjoy gardening and traveling. As part of my theology studies – I double majored in college – I traveled throughout Europe as well as to several countries in the Middle East, including Israel and Lebanon.

Q. Did you have a favorite teacher growing up?

A. Aside from my parents, who always encouraged me to keep learning, I had a religion teacher my sophomore year who I really respected. Even though we were still in high school, he treated us like adults and listened to what we would say. He didn’t tell us what we should do. He asked questions and made us think so we could come to our own conclusions.

Q. What do you see as the greatest value Middle States accreditation brings to schools and school systems?

A. Middle States accreditation is all about growth and improvement. The peer review process is an important part of that. In fact, our member schools routinely tell us that participation in the Middle States peer review is one of the most valuable and professionally rewarding steps in the accreditation process- for both their home school and visiting team members. Also, at Middle States, we respect the unique character of individual schools and don’t have a one-size-fits all approach to accreditation. We also realize that while data is helpful, there is more to success than test scores alone.

The Team at Middle States
Wishes You a Wonderful
Start to the New School Year!

Stay up to date on
happenings at Middle States
and member schools around
the world when you like us
on [Facebook](#) and follow us
on [Twitter!](#)



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