

CPR Report Submitted!

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- 5 **Institution:** Columbus State University
- 6 **Review Status:** Triggered Review
- 7 **Degree level:** Bachelors
- 8 **Degree acronym:** BSED
- 9 **Degree/Major:** BSEd in Middle Grades Education
- 10 **CIP Code:** 13120301
- 11 **College,
School/Division:** College of Education
- 12 **Department:** Teacher Education
- 13 **CPR Plan
followed:** Yes
- 14 **Future institutional
plans for program:** Maintain at present level
- 15 **Supplemental file:** MG BSEd Exec-Sum.doc
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Executive Summary for the BSEd Middle Grades Education Program

Major Findings of the Program's Quality and Productivity

Program Quality: Very Strong

In February 2005, a continuing approval review of the College of Education was conducted by a Board of Examiners (BOE) consisting of representatives from the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE) and the Georgia Professional Standards Commission (PSC). The 2000 NCATE Standards and the Georgia 2000 Standards were used to assess the unit and its programs. The BOE judged all standards to be met for the unit and for all Middle Grades Education initial and advanced programs.

The initial preparation program in Middle Grades Education prepares highly qualified teachers of young adolescents who possess the knowledge, skills, and dispositions necessary to promote high levels of learning for all students in grades 4-8. In academic content courses in two teaching fields, general education courses, middle grades education courses, and various field experiences, candidates have multiple opportunities to demonstrate excellence in teaching, scholarship, and professionalism. Creating opportunities for candidates to demonstrate excellence in these three areas is consistent with the COE Conceptual Framework, the standards of the National Middle School Association, and is reflected in the broad goals of the middle grades education program.

Program Productivity: Satisfactory

Enrollment in the B.S.Ed. Middle Grades Education (MGE) program has increased fairly consistently over the past four years, from 53 students in Fall 2001 to 80 students in Fall 2004. The average yearly enrollment over the four-year period was 70.5. Among the programs offered in the Department of Teacher Education, the MGE program ranks second in average student enrollment. Required courses are offered on a regular basis, and enrollment in those courses is adequate. This helps to contribute to the cost-effectiveness of the department. The majority of students in the program are female and minorities are well represented; on average, 32% are minorities. A significant number of students are part-time and have work and family responsibilities in addition to their academic studies.

From 2001-2005, the average number of degrees conferred was 5.75. While the number of degrees conferred has remained small, course enrollment has been very strong. This can be attributed to a significant number of non-degree seeking post-baccalaureate certification candidates. Though the number of bachelor degrees conferred in the last three years is less than 10 per year, the number of program completers at the undergraduate level averages 14 per year. An examination of the graduation pattern indicates that about every five to six years, a group of more than 10 candidates completes the traditional undergraduate program. This fall (2005), ten MGE candidates are enrolled in student teaching with another eight slated for spring 2006.

List of Recommendations for Improving Program Quality

In response to the No Child Left Behind definitions for "highly qualified" teachers in grades 4-8, consideration is being given to restructuring the program to respond to new staffing configurations at these grade levels. Currently, MGE majors enrolled in the BSEd program select two concentration fields from among math, science, social studies, and English

language arts. In most middle schools, teachers are placed in one academic area, with an additional assignment of one section of a reading class. Grade 4 or 5 teachers are likely to teach a morning block of reading/language arts with afternoon instruction in the other content fields. To prepare BSEd candidates for this staffing shift, the Middle Grades Program Advisory Committee (PAC) will consider the submission of a new curriculum plan that would require all majors to have a concentration in reading and one of the other four content fields. The PAC will convene in January 2006 and initiate the curriculum change process in Fall 2006 to be effective Fall 2007.

List of Recommendations for Improving Program Productivity

The Middle Grades Program Advisory Committee (PAC) will oversee the following efforts to improve the curriculum, courses, and resources offered to teacher candidates in an effort to improve productivity.

- Align coursework with the new Georgia Performance Standards (2005-2006) in order to prepare candidates to employ the new standards in lesson and unit planning during field placements and after graduation in their first professional position.
- Explore ways to provide additional support for students in undergraduate middle grades courses (ongoing). The College of Education Diversity Committee is attempting to launch such a program. This initiative, Avenue for a Culture of Excellence (ACE), provides mentoring and study group opportunities for underclass education majors in order to improve retention.
- A position for a new Middle Grades faculty member has been approved and a search underway in Fall 2005. The individual hired would have responsibilities for advising in the undergraduate program. This would bring stability to undergraduate advising and will hopefully improve recruitment and retention efforts.

Conclusion about the Program's Viability at CSU

The B.S.Ed. Middle Grades program at CSU is an extremely viable one. As indicated by the evaluation of the NCATE/PSC Board of Examiners in February 2005, the quality of the program is very strong. All NCATE/PSC standards were judged to be met for all initial and advanced programs.

The viability of the program is also ensured by the collaborative relationship that exists between the College of Education and P-12 teachers. Representatives from these groups work together to make improvements to the middle grades education programs at CSU and to impact middle level education in our region.

Graduates of the B.S.Ed. Middle Grades program are also a valuable resource for our graduate program in Middle Grades Education. A substantial number of program graduates teach in systems served by CSU, especially Muscogee County. Our undergraduate programs in middle grades education have helped to create a cadre of leaders within our Partner School Network. Graduates often serve CSU as pre-student teaching cooperating teachers and cooperating teachers for student teaching. They are an invaluable asset in assisting with the development of our undergraduates and alternative preparation candidates.

Program Improvement Plan

In response to the findings of the Comprehensive Program Review, the faculty members and

administrators of the B.S.Ed. in Middle Grades Education propose the strategies outlined below to improve the quality, productivity and viability of the program. These strategies will be facilitated by the Middle Grades Education Program Advisory Committee (PAC).

<i>Departmental Plans and Priorities</i>	<i>CPR Indicator</i>	<i>Projected Timeline</i>
1. Align appropriate graduate courses with the Georgia Performance Standards (GPS) to make the individual courses as well as the program highly attractive to prospective teacher candidates who will be implementing the GPS in their first professional positions.	Quality Productivity Viability	2006-Ongoing
2. Provide additional support for students in undergraduate Middle Grades courses through programs such as the Avenue for a Culture of Excellence (ACE) supported by the COE Diversity Committee.	Quality Productivity Viability	2006-Ongoing
3. Fill the vacant position for a faculty member in the Middle Grades program	Quality Productivity Viability	2006-2007

The resources needed to accomplish these priorities should be minimal. Departmental resources will be allocated as necessary to accomplish these plans. The Middle Grades Program Coordinator will be provided one course release time each academic year to provide leadership to these activities. The Program Coordinator will communicate additional resource requests as needed to the appropriate administrator within the College of Education at Columbus State University.

Summary Recommendation and Supporting Rationale

Recommendation: *Maintain the Program at the Current Level*

The program quality is very strong. Efforts to increase productivity include attention to advisory endeavors as well as a consideration for a new program design. Middle Grades Education is unique in its structure in that it embodies characteristics of its early childhood and secondary counterparts. Early childhood majors complete one content field concentration in the College of Education (reading) and one in the College of Science (math). Secondary majors complete a major in one academic discipline in the College of Science or Arts and Letters whereas middle grades majors are required currently to complete two concentrations. Middle grades majors must also be prepared to teach in upper elementary and middle school grades. They are to be generalists as well as content specialists. The Middle Grades Program Advisory Committee is investigating the redesign of undergraduate middle grades education to include a required concentration in reading and a choice of one other from among math, science, social studies, and English language arts. This design is proposed to have future candidates meet the requirements of the Georgia Professional Standards Commission and the No Child Left Behind mandates for “highly qualified” teachers.