Key Licensure Assessment #7: Middle Childhood Practices Portfolio  
Middle Childhood Education: EDUC 312  
Overview  
Undergraduate Initial Teacher Preparation Program  
Educator Preparation Unit  
Muskingum University

1. **Description of the Assessment and Its Use in the Program**

Key Licensure Assessment #7: Middle Childhood Practices Portfolio is designed to assess a candidate’s understanding of developmentally appropriate middle school practices. The Portfolio is developed in EDUC 312: Developmentally Responsive Middle Schools. The Middle Childhood Practices Portfolio consists of four components. The components are as follows:

**Component 1: Advisory Lesson Plan:** One important aspect of successful middle level schools is advocacy/advising. According to *This We Believe* (2003) “…all adults in developmentally responsive middle level schools are advocates, advisors, and mentors.” (p.16). This mentorship is integrated in the culture of the school and is evident in such activities as communicating with young adolescents about their concerns about life in and out of school or through advisory programs. Therefore, one assignment collected for this Portfolio is an advisory lesson plan.

**Component 2: Student Event Reflection:** A second document collected for this assessment is a reflection on attendance at a student event. The effort to know and understand the unique developmental aspects of young adolescents should extend beyond the school day. The middle childhood education candidates at Muskingum University engage in learning about young adolescents in non-academic settings by attending an extracurricular event and creating a reflection paper about what they observed as it relates to young adolescent development. The reflection paper then becomes a component of the Portfolio.

**Component 3: Communication Plan:** The Association of Middle Level Education (AMLE) also supports carefully constructed family and community partnerships as necessary components of successful schools for young adolescents. To assess middle childhood education candidates’ understanding of the ways in which schools and teachers can reach out to families and community in inviting ways, candidates are required to develop a plan for family and community communication which becomes a component of the Portfolio.

**Component 4: Philosophy Statement:** The final component is a formative assessment of the way in which middle childhood education candidates are adopting the philosophy of the AMLE as they learn about young adolescents and successful middle schools. Teacher candidates develop a philosophy statement which becomes a component of the Portfolio.

This collection of assessments is used to document:

- teacher candidates’ understanding of young adolescent development
- teacher candidates’ understanding of the major concepts, principles, theories, and research underlying the philosophical foundations of developmentally responsive middle level programs and schools
- teacher candidates’ understanding of the major concepts, principles, theories and research related to working collaboratively with family and community members
- teacher candidates’ knowledge of advisory/advocate theories, skills, and curriculum.
The Middle Childhood Practices Portfolio is assessed by the EDUC 312 course instructor.

To be admitted into student teaching at Gateway 2, a candidate must complete Key Licensure Assessments #6 and #7 (Interdisciplinary Unit Plan and Middle Childhood Practices Portfolio) with at least 80% of the elements of the AMLE standards across the two assessments rated at meets element and no element rated unacceptable.

2. **Description of How the Assessment Specifically Aligns with the Association of Middle Level Education (AMLE) Standards (2001)**

The following elements of the AMLE standards are evaluated through this key licensure assessment.

Standard 1: Middle level teacher candidates understand the major concepts, principles, theories, and research related to young adolescent development, and they provide opportunities that support student development and learning. Specifically: 1K1, 1K2, 1K4, 1K5, 1K6, 1K7, 1K8, 1D1, 1D2, and 1P1

Standard 2: Middle level teacher candidates understand the major concepts, principles, theories, and research underlying the philosophical foundations of developmentally responsive middle level programs and schools, and they work successfully within these organizational components. Specifically: 2K1, 2K3, 2K4, 2D1, 2D2, 2P1, 2P2, and 2P3

Standard 6: Middle level teacher candidates understand the major concepts, principles, theories, and research related to working collaboratively with family and community members, and they use that knowledge to maximize the learning of all young adolescents. Specifically: 6K1, 6K2, 6K3, 6K4, 6K5, 6K6, 6K7, 6K9, 6D1, 6D2, 6D3, 6D4, 6P1, 6P4, and 6P6

Standard 7: Middle level teacher candidates understand the complexity of teaching young adolescents, and they engage in practices and behaviors that develop their competence as professionals. Specifically: 7K5

In particular, the **Advisory Lesson Plan** (Component 1) aligns with the following AMLE elements:

| Element 1K5: Understand issues of young adolescent health and sexuality |
| Element 1D1: Are positive and enthusiastic about all young adolescents |
| Element 1D2: Respect and appreciate the range of individual developmental differences of all young adolescents |
| Element 1P1: Establish close, mutually respectful relationships with all young adolescents that support their intellectual, ethical, and social growth |
| Element 2K1: Understand the philosophical foundations of developmentally responsive middle level programs and schools |
| Element 2K3: Understand the rationale and characteristic components of developmentally responsive middle level schools |
| Element 2K4: Knows best practices for the education of young adolescents in a variety of school organizational settings |
| Element 2D1: Believe in the philosophical foundations that support developmentally responsive and socially equitable programs for all young adolescents |
| Element 2D2: Are committed to the application of middle level philosophical foundations in their practice |
Element 2P1: Apply their knowledge of the philosophical foundations of middle level education when making decisions about curriculum and instruction
Element 2P2: Work successfully within developmentally responsive structures to maximize student learning
Element 2P3: Articulate and apply their knowledge of the philosophical foundations of middle level education in their classrooms, schools, and communities

The Student Event Reflection (Component 2) aligns with the following AMLE elements:

Element 1K1: Understand the major concepts, principles, and theories of young adolescent development – intellectual, physical, social, emotional, and moral
Element 1K2: Understand the range of individual differences of all young adolescents and the implications of these differences for teaching and learning
Element 1K5: Understand issues of young adolescent health and sexuality
Element 1K7: Understand that the development of all young adolescents occurs in the context of classrooms, families, peer groups, communities and society
Element 1K8: Are knowledgeable about how the media portrays young adolescents and comprehend the implications of these portraits
Element 1D1: Are positive and enthusiastic about all young adolescents
Element 1D2: Respect and appreciate the range of individual developmental differences of all young adolescents
Element 1P1: Establish close, mutually respectful relationships with all young adolescents that support their intellectual, ethical, and social growth
Element 2K1: Understand the philosophical foundations of developmentally responsive middle level programs and schools
Element 2K3: Understand the rationale and characteristic components of developmentally responsive middle level schools
Element 2K4: Knows best practices for the education of young adolescents in a variety of school organizational settings
Element 2D1: Believe in the philosophical foundations that support developmentally responsive and socially equitable programs for all young adolescents
Element 2D2: Are committed to the application of middle level philosophical foundations in their practice
Element 2P1: Apply their knowledge of the philosophical foundations of middle level education when making decisions about curriculum and instruction
Element 2P2: Work successfully within developmentally responsive structures to maximize student learning
Element 2P3: Articulate and apply their knowledge of the philosophical foundations of middle level education in their classrooms, schools, and communities

The Communication Plan (Component 3) aligns with the following AMLE elements:

Element 6K1: Understand the variety of family structures
Element 6K2: Understand how prior learning, differing experiences, and family and cultural backgrounds influence young adolescent learning
Element 6K3: Understand the challenges that families may encounter in contemporary society and are knowledgeable about support services and other resources that are available to assist them
Element 6K4: Know how to communicate effectively with family and community members
Element 6K5: Understand that middle level schools are organizations within a larger community context
Element 6K6: Understand the relationships between schools and community organizations
### Element 6K7: Know about the resources available within communities that can support students, teachers, and schools

### Element 6K9: Understand the roles of family and community members in improving the education of all young adolescents

### Element 6D3: Value the variety of resources available in communities

### Element 6D4: Are committed to helping family members become aware of how and where to receive assistance when needed

### Element 6P1: Establish respectful and productive relationships with family and community members that maximize student learning and well being

### Element 6P4: Identify and use community resources to foster student learning

### Element 6P6: Encourage all young adolescents to participate in community activities and services that contribute to their welfare and learning

The **Philosophy Statement** (Component 4) aligns with the following AMLE elements:

### Element 1K1: Understand the major concepts, principles, and theories of young adolescent development – intellectual, physical, social, emotional, and moral

### Element 1K2: Understand the range of individual differences of all young adolescents and the implications of these differences for teaching and learning

### Element 1K4: Understand the implications of young adolescent development for school organization and components of successful middle level programs and schools

### Element 1K6: Understand the interrelationships among the characteristics and needs of all young adolescents

### Element 1K7: Understand that the development of all young adolescents occurs in the context of classrooms, families, peer groups, communities and society

### Element 6K1: Understand the variety of family structures

### Element 6K2: Understand how prior learning, differing experiences, and family and cultural backgrounds influence young adolescent learning

### Element 6K3: Understand the challenges that families may encounter in contemporary society and are knowledgeable about support services and other resources that are available to assist them

### Element 6K4: Know how to communicate effectively with family and community members

### Element 6K5: Understand that middle level schools are organizations within a larger community context

### Element 6K6: Understand the relationships between schools and community organizations

### Element 6K7: Know about the resources available within communities that can support students, teachers, and schools

### Element 6K9: Understand the roles of family and community members in improving the education of all young adolescents

### Element 6D1: Respect all young adolescents and their families

### Element 6D2: Realize the importance of privacy and confidentiality of information when working with family members

### Element 6D3: Value the variety of resources available in communities

### Element 6D4: Are committed to helping family members become aware of how and where to receive assistance when needed

### Element 6P1: Establish respectful and productive relationships with family and community members that maximize student learning and well being

### Element 6P4: Identify and use community resources to foster student learning
Element 6P6: Encourage all young adolescents to participate in community activities and services that contribute to their welfare and learning

Element 7K5: Know advisory/advocate theories, skills, and curriculum

3. Assessment Instrument

Middle Childhood Practices Portfolio Guidelines

As you complete the following, refer to the scoring guide for Key Licensure Assessment #7 to ensure that you include all expectations for this assessment.

Purpose of the Assessment  The collection of documents (Middle Childhood Practices Portfolio Components) in this assessment allows for the assessment of several aspects of developmentally responsive middle school practices including: the candidate’s educational philosophy, the candidate’s understanding of creating relevant advisory lessons as an advocate and advisor of young adolescents, the candidate’s understanding of young adolescent development in non-academic settings, and the candidates’ ability to create a plan for communication with family and community which exemplifies what is known about the importance of family and community in the success of middle school programs. The following AMLE standards are assessed through the Portfolio. They are as follows:

AMLE Standard 1: Middle level teacher candidates understand the major concepts, principles, theories, and research related to young adolescent development, and they provide opportunities that support student development and learning. Specifically: 1K1, 1K2, 1K4, 1K5, 1K6, 1K7, 1K8, 1D1, 1D2, and 1P1

AMLE Standard 2: Middle level teacher candidates understand the major concepts, principles, theories, and research underlying the philosophical foundations of developmentally responsive middle level programs and schools, and they work successfully within these organizational components. Specifically: 2K1, 2K3, 2K4, 2D1, 2D2, 2P1, 2P2, and 2P3

AMLE Standard 6: Middle level teacher candidates understand the major concepts, principles, theories, and research related to working collaboratively with family and community members, and they use that knowledge to maximize the learning of all young adolescents. Specifically: 6K1, 6K2, 6K3, 6K4, 6K5, 6K6, 6K7, 6K9, 6D1, 6D2, 6D3, 6D4, 6P1, 6P4, and 6P6

AMLE Standard 7: Middle level teacher candidates understand the complexity of teaching young adolescents, and they engage in practices and behaviors that develop their competence as professionals. Specifically: 7K5

Below are the components that are to be included in the portfolio:

Component One: Advisory Lesson Plan

Directions: From your interactions with young adolescents during your field experience, your observations during your field experience, and the reading you have completed for EDUC 312, choose a relevant topic which addresses needs of middle childhood students. Design a lesson plan (20-30 minutes) that would fit into a typical advisory session at a developmentally responsive middle school. The lesson should address the affective domain or specific needs of middle childhood students. The lesson should be student centered and engaging to the learners.
Component Two: Student Event Reflection

Directions: Make arrangements to attend an extracurricular event held at your field experience placement. This could include such events as sports, dances, or club meetings. Act as an observer of the many interactions you will see and make notes related to the following areas of young adolescent development: social, physical, intellectual, and moral. Use your notes to create a reflection paper which relates what you observed to the work of middle childhood teachers. Think about such questions as: How can teachers support the development of their students in the various aspects addressed? What are some of the major issues that exist in the lives of young adolescents in non-academic settings? What were things which you expected to see? What things did you observe which were unexpected? How have things changed from your own time as a middle school student?

Component Three: Communication Plan

Directions: Read chapter 9 of Turning Points 2000: Educating adolescents in the 21st century by A. Jackson and G. Davis. Using the information you find, create a communication plan which demonstrates your understanding of parenting and diverse communities and their importance in successful middle schools. Include each of the following areas:

• a plan as to how a teacher can investigate the community to learn about students’ background and experiences so they may be used in the classroom.
• a method for evaluating the needs of parents and ways to be responsive to those needs
• communications with parents/guardians for both good news and intervention needs
• a plan for informing parents of classroom expectations
• a plan for informing parents of classroom plans, events, needs, test schedules
• a plan for supporting the parents and community in their understanding of the needs of young adolescents
• a method of collaborating with the parents and community to identify and share out of school learning opportunities
• a plan to involve parents and the community in the classroom in ways which will impact student achievement

Component Four: Philosophy Statement

Directions: Use the checklist given by the course instructor to identify categories and strengths of beliefs. Use that list to craft a written statement of your beliefs about middle childhood students, teaching middle childhood students, and the structures supportive of middle childhood students. Remember to make connections to the mission of the educator preparation program as articulated in the conceptual framework (encourage, empower, and equip ALL students) of Muskingum University’s Education Department and to the work of the AMLE.