



■ **National Middle School Association**

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Charlie Parsons, President and CEO  
DARE America  
PO Box 512090  
Los Angeles, CA 90051

Dear Mr. Parsons,

National Middle School Association is dedicated to advancing the lives of young adolescents through improved educational systems. To accomplish this mission we are always looking for ways to improve our students' education. As part of this process, we reviewed DARE America's new *keepin' it REAL* middle school substance use prevention curriculum and believe that this curriculum is a valuable tool for student healthy decision-making. The curriculum facilitates active learning and encourages students' higher level thinking skills. The lessons support many of the goals stated in NMSA's position paper, *This We Believe: Keys to Educating Young Adolescents* including

- Be able to think rationally and critically and express thoughts clearly.
- Understand and use the major concepts, skills, and tools of inquiry in the areas of health and physical education, language arts, world languages, mathematics, natural and physical sciences, and the social sciences.
- Recognize, articulate and make responsible, ethical decisions concerning his or her own health and wellness needs.
- Develop the interpersonal and social skills needed to learn, work, and play with others harmoniously and confidently.

Not only will *keepin' it REAL* help middle school students lead healthy lives and accomplish the goals we see as crucial for our students, but it is easy to use; comes in customizable rural, urban, and suburban versions; and strengthens community-school bonds. Additionally, DARE's unique delivery system gives it instant credibility and enhances security with the presence of an officer on campus. As a result, NMSA wishes to be an active partner with DARE America for the *keepin' it REAL* middle school substance use prevention curriculum.

We look forward to our continued collaboration on this important initiative.

Sincerely,

The Honorable Drew Allbritten, Ed.D.  
Executive Director