

Summer 1970

A Survey of Selected Middle School Programs in Washington, Oregon, and California

Kenneth L. Van Diest
Central Washington University

Follow this and additional works at: <https://digitalcommons.cwu.edu/etd>



Part of the [Educational Administration and Supervision Commons](#), and the [Educational Assessment, Evaluation, and Research Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

Van Diest, Kenneth L., "A Survey of Selected Middle School Programs in Washington, Oregon, and California" (1970). *All Master's Theses*. 1539.
<https://digitalcommons.cwu.edu/etd/1539>

This Thesis is brought to you for free and open access by the Master's Theses at ScholarWorks@CWU. It has been accepted for inclusion in All Master's Theses by an authorized administrator of ScholarWorks@CWU. For more information, please contact scholarworks@cwu.edu.

128

SURVEY OF SELECTED MIDDLE SCHOOL PROGRAMS IN
WASHINGTON, OREGON, AND CALIFORNIA

A Thesis
Presented to
the Graduate Faculty
Central Washington State College

In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Master of Education

by
Kenneth L. Van Diest
July, 1970

LD
5771.31
V35

SPECIAL
COLLECTION

175459

Library
Control
Division
Washington
D.C.

APPROVED FOR THE GRADUATE FACULTY

Roy F. Ruebel, COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN

Byron L. DeShaw

James Monasmith

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This writer wishes to express sincere appreciation to Dr. Roy Ruebel, Chairman of the thesis committee, who endeavored to bring about a scholarly study.

Earnest appreciation is also extended to Dr. James Monasmith and Dr. Byron DeShaw for their assistance and encouragement.

It has been through the efforts of these men that this study has evolved.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
LIST OF TABLES	viii
 Chapter	
I. THE PROBLEM AND DEFINITIONS OF TERMS USED	1
THE PROBLEM	1
Statement of the Problem	1
Importance of the Study	2
Limitations of the Study	2
DEFINITIONS OF TERMS USED	3
Selected	3
Middle School	3
Programs	4
II. REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE	5
REASONS FOR MIDDLE SCHOOL ESTABLISHMENT	5
Criticism of the Junior High School as a Reason	5
Economic Reasons	9
Sociological Reasons	11
Educational Reasons	12
Interscholastic Athletic Reasons	16
The Four-Year High School as a Reason	17
PROBLEMS CONCERNING MIDDLE SCHOOLS	20
Problems Concerning Personnel	20

Chapter	Page
General Problems Concerning the Middle School	21
RECOMMENDATIONS CONCERNING MIDDLE SCHOOLS	22
Recommendations Concerning Philosophy and Planning	22
Recommendations Concerning the Educational Program	23
Recommendations Concerning Colleges of Education	25
III. PROCEDURES USED IN THE STUDY	26
The Questionnaire	26
Selection of the Questionnaire Recipients	27
Data Gathering	28
Treatment of the Data	30
IV. RESULTS OF THE SURVEY	31
THE BACKGROUND OF MIDDLE SCHOOLS IN WASHINGTON, OREGON, AND CALIFORNIA	31
Individual School Enrollments	32
Average Student Body Enrollments	32
Grade Level Organization	32
Design of Middle Schools	36
Years that Present Grade Level Organizations Were Put Into Effect	36
Individuals or Groups Most Responsible for Initiating Action to Institute Middle Schools	39
THE REASONS FOR INSTITUTING MIDDLE SCHOOLS REPORTED IN WASHINGTON, OREGON, AND CALIFORNIA	39
Reasons Reported in Washington	41
Reasons Reported in Oregon	43

Chapter	Page
Reasons Reported in California	45
A Summary of the Reasons Reported in Washington, Oregon, and California	47
THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE REASONS FOR INSTITUTING MIDDLE SCHOOLS REPORTED IN WASHINGTON, OREGON, AND CALIFORNIA	49
The Effectiveness Reported in Washington	50
The Effectiveness Reported in Oregon	52
The Effectiveness Reported in California	52
A Summary of the Effectiveness Reported in Washington, Oregon, and California	55
MAJOR PROBLEMS PRINCIPALS HAVE ENCOUNTERED WITH MIDDLE SCHOOLS REPORTED IN WASHINGTON, OREGON, AND CALIFORNIA	55
Major Problems Reported in Washington	57
Major Problems Reported in Oregon	59
Major Problems Reported in California	59
A Summary of the Problems Reported in Washington, Oregon, and California	61
RECOMMENDATIONS OF MIDDLE SCHOOL PRINCIPALS REPORTED IN WASHINGTON, OREGON, AND CALIFORNIA	63
Recommendations Reported in Washington	64
Recommendations Reported in Oregon	66
Recommendations Reported in California	66
A Summary of the Recommendations Reported in Washington, Oregon, and California	68
V. SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS	72
SUMMARY	72
CONCLUSIONS	74
RECOMMENDATIONS	76

Chapter	Page
BIBLIOGRAPHY	78
APPENDIX A. Letter to the Washington State Superintendent of Public Instruction	82
APPENDIX B. Letter to all Individual State Superintendents of Public Instruction in the Thirteen Western States	84
APPENDIX C. Cover Letter and Questionnaire	86

LIST OF TABLES

Table	Page
I. Number and Percent of Middle Schools Indicating Certain Reasons for Establishment as Reported by 110 Middle Schools	8
II. Number of Respondents in Relation to Total Schools Surveyed	29
III. Student Body Enrollments Reported for Grade Combinations 4-8 of Middle Schools in Washington, Oregon, and California	33
IV. Average Student Body Enrollments Reported in the Middle Schools of Washington, Oregon, and California	34
V. Grade Level Organization of 35 Middle Schools Reported in Washington, Oregon, and California	35
VI. Design of 34 Middle Schools Reported in Washington, Oregon, and California	37
VII. Years That Present Grade Level Organizations Were Put Into Effect	38
VIII. Individuals or Groups Most Responsible for Initiating Action to Institute Middle Schools Reported in Washington, Oregon, and California	40
IX. Reasons for Instituting Middle Schools Reported in Washington	42
X. Reasons for Instituting Middle Schools Reported in Oregon	44
XI. Reasons for Instituting Middle Schools Reported in California	46
XII. A Summary of the Reasons for Instituting Middle Schools Reported in Washington, Oregon, and California	48

Table	Page
XIII. The Effectiveness of the Reasons for Instituting Middle Schools Reported in Washington . . .	51
XIV. The Effectiveness of the Reasons for Instituting Middle Schools Reported in Oregon	53
XV. The Effectiveness of the Reasons for Instituting Middle Schools Reported in California . .	54
XVI. A Summary of the Effectiveness of the Reasons for Instituting Middle Schools in Washington, Oregon, and California	56
XVII. Major Problems Principals Have Encountered with the Middle School Reported in Washington . . .	58
XVIII. Major Problems Principals Have Encountered with the Middle School Reported in Oregon	59
XIX. Major Problems Principals Have Encountered with the Middle School Reported in California . . .	60
XX. Summary of the Major Problems Principals Have Encountered with the Middle School Reported in Washington, Oregon, and California	62
XXI. Recommendations of Middle School Principals Reported in Washington	65
XXII. Recommendations of Middle School Principals Reported in Oregon	66
XXIII. Recommendations of Middle School Principals Reported in California	67
XXIV. A Summary of the Recommendations of Middle School Principals Reported in Washington, Oregon, and California	69

CHAPTER I

THE PROBLEM AND DEFINITIONS OF TERMS USED

The junior high school, since its inception as a learning institution has been subject to a considerable difference of opinion concerning its goals. Throughout its history, the functions and goals of the junior high school have been defined and redefined. Particularly within this decade, numerous educators have challenged the historical success of the junior high school in its education of adolescents. The concept of the middle school has been proposed by many educators as a remedy for the shortcomings of the traditional junior high school. Each year of this ten year period has been accompanied by a continual growth of school districts adopting a middle school program.

I. THE PROBLEM

Statement of the problem. It was the purpose of this study (1) to determine if the reasons for implementing middle schools have been justified by practice; (2) to determine the major problems principals have encountered with the middle school; and (3) to provide recommendations for school districts considering the adoption of a middle school program.

Importance of the study. The philosophy behind the middle school is becoming less fragmented as its application from theory into practice increases. The reasons given for instituting middle schools are available in educational literature, but there is little information regarding the effectiveness of middle schools after they were implemented. The relative youth of the middle school offers an opportunity and a need for investigation into the unique problems that may result from such an educational innovation.

This study was pursued to assist administrators and school boards of Washington State as they make decisions regarding school organization. In addition, it was anticipated that school districts considering the middle school might profit from the experiences gained from those presently committed to it.

It was assumed by the researcher that the principals receiving the questionnaire were directly involved in the decisions regarding the implementation of a middle school, that principals are well qualified to answer, and that the results of the questionnaire, accompanied with contemporary practices and apposite literature, were applicable in formulating recommendations concerning the adoption of the middle school.

Limitations of the study. The scope of the study was limited to middle schools in the states of Washington, Oregon, and California. Schools selected for the study were

recommended by the three State Superintendents of Education, based on their data of schools operating under the title "middle school" or "intermediate school," and including grades five or six through eight as of May, 1969.

II. DEFINITIONS OF TERMS USED

Selected. In this study, "selected" shall refer to the individual schools in the states of Washington, Oregon, and California. The schools were recommended by the State Superintendents of Education as operating under the title of intermediate schools or middle schools.

Middle school. Research indicates that the term "middle school" has manifold meanings to the experts in the field of middle school education. Judith Murphy designates it to mean:

. . . a school in between elementary and high school, housed separately and, ideally, in a building designed for its purpose, and covering at least three of the middle school years, beginning with grade 5 or 6 (19:7).

In somewhat broader terms, Paul J. Zdanowicz states that:

. . . the middle school is a program designed for pre- and early adolescents in that age group that spans the traditional elementary and secondary years--usually grades five or six through eight--with the goals of sharpening skills and providing a general education in a format that is flexible (16:3).

For the purpose of this study, the "middle school" shall be defined only as a school that educates pupils ranging from grades four, five, or six through grade eight

and whose purpose is to provide them with a general education.

Programs. Throughout this report, "program" shall be interpreted to mean the entire school endeavor in all academic and non-academic areas directed toward the education of the student body. It shall not be interpreted to refer to a singular school activity or academic department such as a school mathematics program or a student activity program. Instead, such separate offerings must all be combined into one composite definition.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

The junior high school has become the most common educational organization for adolescents in the United States. Numerous educators have disputed its success in the education of youth, and as a result, the middle school is emerging as an alternative to the junior high school. The following research describes the reasons given for instituting middle schools, the unique problems that have resulted after the adoption of a middle school program, and recommendations for schools contemplating the middle school as an alternative to their present type of educational organization.

I. REASONS FOR MIDDLE SCHOOL ESTABLISHMENT

Criticism of the Junior High School as a Reason

The reasons found in educational literature for the establishment of middle schools are many and varied. A close examination of existing literature reveals that the weaknesses of the traditional junior high school provide the foundation from which many educators have increasingly sought wider acceptance of the middle school.

The junior high school was initiated with little regard for the known differences between junior high school

age boys and girls (12:2). All too often today, junior high school programs are sorely out of line with their objective of providing an educational program structured to meet the needs of preadolescent and early adolescent pupils (16:30).

The largest portion of criticism has been centered on the name "junior" and the immense duplication between junior and senior high schools. The name "junior high school" itself proves to be more of a hindrance than a help in developing a program especially for early adolescents (7:2). Theodore C. Moss states:

Many educators have been appalled at the rigid departmentalization and the plethora of activities including dances, interscholastic sports, and marching bands, that make these units "imitative high schools--junior grade" (18:39)!

Frequently, one finds junior high school students housed in the old high school buildings. This in itself has a tendency to perpetuate many aspects of a high school program such as departmentalization. It also proves to be an obstacle toward meeting the requirements of a modern junior high school program (16:30).

The carry-over effect of junior-senior high school duplication has also permeated the academic subjects. The newer science programs in the junior high school have taken on the appearance of watered down versions of high school courses in physics, chemistry, and biology. Social studies courses are often taught by teachers that were trained to teach in the senior high school. As a result, one finds a considerable duplication in teaching techniques and materials,

not to mention the subject matter of the courses themselves, in grades seven through twelve (7:4).

Lately, there has been more pressure on the junior high school to emphasize the academic subjects. The outcome has been to push the fine arts, industrial arts, dramatics, and homemaking courses further into the background of the total junior high school program (16:29).

The junior high school has not escaped criticism on the grounds of impeding racial integration. Moss notes that "a four-year high school, drawing from larger areas, could add one more year of integrated education" (18:39).

William Alexander and Ronald Kealy have revealed the importance that general criticisms of the junior high school have been as a factor in the reasons for the establishment of middle schools in the United States. Their 1967-1968 study (Table I, page 8) of 110 middle schools shows that 24.5 percent, or twenty-seven of the schools reporting, listed to "remedy the weaknesses of the junior high school" as a reason for instituting a middle school (1:117).

The original premise for the establishment of the junior high school has long been passe. Nevertheless, those who continue to support the junior high school utilize other arguments for the retention of the system (12:2). Middle school advocates note that it will not mimic the senior high school; "rather that it can be designed to meet the educational needs of the younger adolescent without trying to fit him into the senior high school mold" (7:4).

TABLE I
 NUMBER AND PERCENT OF MIDDLE SCHOOLS INDICATING CERTAIN
 REASONS FOR ESTABLISHMENT AS REPORTED
 BY 110 MIDDLE SCHOOLS

Reason	Schools Reporting	
	No.	%
To eliminate crowded conditions in other schools	64	58.2
To provide a program specifically designed for students in this age group	49	44.6
To better bridge the elementary and the high school	44	40.0
To provide more specialization in grades 5 and/or 6	33	30.0
To move grade 9 into the high school	27	24.5
To remedy the weaknesses of the junior high school	27	24.5
To try out various innovations	26	23.6
To utilize a new school building	23	20.9
To use plans that have been successful in other school systems	14	12.7
To aid desegregation	7	6.4
Other	13	11.8

Source:

William Alexander, "The Middle School Movement,"
Theory into Practice, June, 1968, p. 117.

Economic Reasons

Economic reasons frequently appear to be fundamental factors in the increasing quantity of middle schools.

As a result, much of the logic in support of the middle school can be attributed to increasing enrollment pressures. Middle schools can provide a means of resolving overcrowded conditions. In planning for school construction, the middle school can release more space in elementary and secondary schools. The new grade level organization allows the elementary school to move one or two grades into the middle school while the middle school no longer is responsible for grade nine (16:35).

While studying middle school developments in cities and fast-growing suburbs of the northeastern states, William A. Cuff found in districts with expanding enrollments, simple arithmetic often led to the construction of middle schools that were the result of definite middle school planning. The study indicated that few of the schools surveyed seemed to be planned for a permanent basis, although a slight trend toward specific middle school planning did appear (8:85).

Alexander found in his 1967-1968 study (Table I, page 8), that the desire to alleviate crowded conditions in other schools was the most frequently reported reason for the establishment of middle schools. Another economic reason cited by 20.9 percent of the schools reporting was the desire to utilize a new school building (1:115).

In California the tremendous increase in enrollments alone has caused many of the separate elementary-school districts to build separate schools to house the seventh and eighth grades (19:58).

When school districts adopt the middle school due to building and enrollment pressures, they are not met without criticism. This writer has found that the opponents of middle schools most often cite the educational unsoundness of building and enrollment problems in implementing middle schools as the foundation of their censorship.

R. P. Brimm is very critical of those who establish middle schools in order to resolve accelerating enrollments:

This current period of controversey--middle school versus junior high school--gives school men an excellent opportunity to play the "numbers game": fitting organization to facilities while pretending to make such decisions on psychological, sociological, and educational principles (7:6).

School districts that have adopted the middle school for primarily economic reasons, have provided ample grounds for skepticism regarding the soundness of their educational motives (9:138).

Judith Murphy perhaps best summarized middle school development at present, when she reported that "the value of the new pattern may be in helping solve problems that are primarily social or economic or administrative than purely educational (19:6).

Sociological Reasons

The middle school has been regarded as a means of attaining many objectives. This writer feels the middle school has gained the attention of educators and special interest groups as a possible solution to the problems of school desegregation.

Schools in our larger cities, in particular, have resystematized grade level organizations in order to remedy the problem of segregated schools. There is little question that the growing number of middle schools in some larger cities is a result of the powerful influence in the need to find new schemes to provide integration. This is mainly the source for the New York plan for grades five through eight and a large part of the rationale for Pittsburgh's six through eight plan (27:87).

City superintendents and school boards have demonstrated growing interest in the desirable goals to be achieved through the reorganization of grades within school systems. Racial imbalance appears to be greatest in grades one through six. One solution would be to retain the local elementary school pattern for elementary age youngsters, but terminate it with grade four or five. Middle schools could then house students from a larger geographical area, providing a more equitable racial balance. Students would then move on to high school, normally the best racially integrated level of any school system, after grade eight (19:7).

However, a close examination of the literature reveals that all educators are not in accord with the utilization of middle schools as a means of achieving integration. It is now realized that middle schools constructed in ghetto areas are normally fed by elementary schools that are segregated, and intermediate schools located in middle class neighborhoods are fed by white segregated elementary schools. Civil rights leaders in larger cities have concluded that the middle school is not the solution for providing integrated schools in ghetto areas (11:475).

Alexander's study (Table I, page 8) revealed that only 6.4 percent of the schools surveyed reported desegregation as a reason for establishing a middle school (1:117). The study indicated that adopting middle schools as a means to specifically reduce or eliminate school segregation has been a minimal factor among the total range of reasons for instituting middle schools.

Educational Reasons

One of the primary reasons for establishment of the middle school is earlier student maturation. Three decades ago, children were not thought capable of the more mature behavior of the preadolescent in today's society (13:15).

Today's youth is more knowledgeable at an earlier age. They are physically bigger than past generations and although not always measurable, they have attained a more wide-ranging sophistication at an earlier age (19:15).

"There is enough evidence to support the fact," writes Neal C. Nickerson, "that children are physically and emotionally maturing earlier than during the period when junior high schools were first conceived" (20:14).

Since 1910 and the beginning of the junior high school, puberty is occurring 1.3 years earlier. This fact, combined with the knowledge explosion of the last few years, enables one to see the rationale of those who believe that the grade combinations of six to eight are as logical as grades seven through nine were in 1910 (9:136).

Proponents of the middle school argue that among boys and girls in grades six through eight, there is less difference in maturity than among boys and girls in grades seven through nine. Pupils in grades six through eight are more physically, socially, and emotionally compatible as an age group than the seven through nine age group (16:33).

Not all of the literature concerning middle schools supports the view that boys and girls mature much earlier than previous generations did. Max Bough writes that "there is a lack of empirical evidence to support . . . the notion that American youth enter the adolescent period earlier than in former years. . . ." (5:12).

Although there does exist some evidence that today's youth may mature earlier by a month or two than previous generations did, this in itself hardly justifies a one or two year change in grade level groupings (7:6).

One of the main objectives of the middle school, and therefore a primary reason for its establishment, is to take greater account of the social, emotional, intellectual, and physical needs and interests of preadolescent children. Children ten through fourteen have entered into an age of rapid and continual change in all categories of human growth and development. In order to aid children during this period of growth and adjustment, the middle school "would serve as a transitional phase between the paternalism of the neighborhood elementary school and the varied departmentalized environment of the senior high school" (19:7).

Both the junior high school and the middle school serve a transitional function. The middle school achieves this objective in a more comprehensive manner than the junior high school. Its purpose is more than looking ahead toward the high school; it is an enabling one. It should not be regarded as an institute whose aim is preparatory or remedial, but one whose primary attribute is in adjusting to preadolescent children and their efforts to cope with change (3:118). The middle school should provide an atmosphere that fosters self-identity and inner stability, enabling a student to smoothly progress from preadolescence to adolescence (14:291).

In his book, The Intermediate School, Leslie Kindred compiled the following list of educational advantages of the middle school as cited by its proponents: (1) more constructive challenges are presented to students in grades five and

six than in normal elementary programs, (2) it combines secondary school concern for academic accomplishment with elementary school concern for the total child, (3) courses in a four-year sequence can be provided and accompanied by special equipment and rooms, (4) greater opportunity for the students to lead and benefit in activities patterned for this age group, (5) foreign languages can be offered in a longer sequence, (6) availability of more classroom specialists in grades five and six, and (7) the middle school retards too fast a growth process allowing children to be children a little longer (16:4).

In 1966, Pearl Brad conducted a study of the developmental and educational advantages claimed for the middle school. The following represents a few of the advantages derived from the study: (1) there is less emphasis on a subject-centered curriculum and more on a child-centered approach because of less academic and social pressure from the secondary school, (2) children of the same developmental age level have more opportunity to work together, (3) special needs are served better through a child-centered program aiding in a smoother transition, (4) there is more flexibility in curriculum development, (5) there is greater utilization of staff in their subject areas and over-all distribution, (6) the duplication of staff and facilities is reduced, (7) greater freedom and flexibility in the curriculum allows for the incorporation of new concepts while not eliminating the better aspects of the form-curriculum, and (8) the

rigidity of the program is replaced by flexibility, and the focus on skills, not content, both provide an improved educational transition from the elementary to the high school (6:531).

Alexander's study of middle schools (Table I, page 8) indicated that educational reasons were an important factor in their establishment. Of the schools reporting, 44.6 percent wanted to provide an educational program that would be tailored specifically for the children attending the school, 40.0 percent to improve student progression from elementary to high school, 30.0 percent to furnish greater specialization in the fifth and/or sixth grades, and 23.6 percent to implement numerous innovations (1:117).

Atkins condensed the full meaning and rationale of the middle school when he reported that it is "characterized organizationally by flexibility, environmentally by sensitivity to changing needs, and instructionally by individualization" (3:119).

Interscholastic Athletic Reasons

Interscholastic athletics are an established part of most junior high school programs. There is a difference of opinion among educators whether or not competitive athletics should remain a part of the junior high school program. Kindred feels most educators believe that interscholastic athletics do not belong in the middle school or the junior high school. His rationale is that the demands of interscholastic competition is not conducive to the best physical

and emotional development of youngsters in middle and junior high schools. Kindred also points out that there is too great a chance of permanent injury resulting from contact sports (16:320). An improved alternative, he believes, would be to provide a comprehensive intramural and extramural sports program and encourage the participation of all students (16:320).

Alexander found in his study of 110 middle schools, however, (Table I, page 8) that in approximately half of the schools attempting to improve on the weaknesses of the junior high school, there was no elimination of interscholastic athletics (1:115). Richard Post states that "if the community wants a competitive athletic program for twelve-, thirteen-, and fourteen-year-olds, it's going to have one regardless of the school organization" (21:485).

The Four-Year High School as a Reason

Proponents of middle schools feel that the four-year high school offers definite educational advantages. A forceful argument for the establishment of the four-year high school is the earlier maturation of today's youth. The advanced intellectual, physical, and social development of today's ninth grader tends to clearly distinguish them from seventh and eighth graders. The ninth grade student of today has more in common with sophomore students than with seventh or eighth grade pupils (16:31).

Another factor favoring the removal of the ninth grade from the junior high school is the Carnegie Unit. The Carnegie Unit imposes serious limitations on the flexibility of a three-year junior high school. The ninth grade daily schedule may revolve around fifty- to fifty-five-minute class periods which also set the pattern for the class scheduling of seventh and eighth graders (7:5).

Even of those junior high schools that have become completely independent of the senior high school, many are still handicapped by various required course offerings, such as the first year of a foreign language. In addition, their schedules may be altered to fit the requirements of high school graduation. In effect, two programs are being conducted at such junior high schools, one for seventh and eighth graders and one for ninth graders. A separate program for ninth graders merely results in the needless necessity of supplying many of the same facilities such as vocational equipment and language laboratories to both the junior and senior high schools (5:13).

Middle school advocates find that with the absence of the ninth grade in junior high school, there tends to be fewer and less severe discipline problems (17:330). As a result, Kindred feels that eighth graders are less likely to mimic ninth graders in their behavior and dress and more readily adhere to the rules and regulations controlling social contact (16:31).

An important feature of the four-year high school is the effect it provides on reducing the social, emotional, and academic pressures on a nearby middle school. Kindred notes that

. . . eighth graders no longer find it necessary to compete with ninth graders for academic honors and leadership positions. Pressures and tensions are lessened as a result and these younger pupils enjoy more freedom to explore their own interests and capabilities (16:31).

Principal Ron Hilvers, of Reading, Ohio, feels that activities such as formal dances, interschool competition, as well as other activities that cause unnecessary emotional and social stress, can be considerably de-emphasized in a middle school (28:106).

Concerning the entire issue of the four-year high school, Alexander (Table I, page 8) found that of the 110 schools reporting, 24.5 percent listed as one of their reasons for establishing a middle school the addition of grade nine to the high school (1:117).

The positive attributes of the four-year high school is not met without criticism among educators. In Florida, an investigation was conducted in two schools to find whether ninth graders received greater academic benefit in a junior high school or senior high school organization. One school was a junior high school including the ninth; the other was a high school including the ninth grade. The study demonstrated that a

. . . difference in academic success in the ninth grade does not rest so much with its placement in either the junior or senior high school as it does with the program of instruction and instructional staff involved (25:76).

The committee on Junior High School Education of the National Association of Secondary School Principals of 1967 did not support the inclusion of ninth graders in a four-year high school. The Committee felt that the readiness of most ninth graders for the activities of a normal high school is questionable (26:70).

II. PROBLEMS CONCERNING MIDDLE SCHOOLS

Problems Concerning Personnel

This writer has found that literature concerning the problems encountered by middle schools is quite limited. Undoubtedly, the restricted quantity is due to the relative quantity and immaturity of middle schools.

The majority of middle school problems seem to relate to teacher personnel. One issue in particular appears to be in acquiring the type of staff most desirable. Middle school authorities seem to feel that child-centered and not subject-centered teachers are to be sought. When the ninth grade is included in the junior high school, there is a tendency to hold or retain the more subject-oriented teachers. Transferring the ninth grade to a high school might accelerate the departure of such teachers from the middle school.

Because the middle school emphasizes different methods than the traditional junior high school, the need for preservice and in-service training of teachers is a significant issue. Junior high schools were in existence for many years before colleges acknowledged the need to

provide separate courses for junior high school teachers and administrators. The middle school could well be faced with an identical problem (11:475). A major concern could be the "lack of sufficient resources (including funding) for re-training personnel," notes John G. Freudenberger, "in the philosophy, techniques, and methods of the newer middle schools" (28:107).

Pearl Brad feels that the reallocation of teachers and counselors in a new middle school should be of immediate concern. Consideration might be given to establishing, training, and certification requirements specially for middle school counselors and teachers (6:532).

General Problems Concerning the Middle School

A primary problem of middle schools is one of philosophy. The middle school should be not envisioned as a method to provide change, but rather as an innovation in itself. Whatever the community involved, it is basically a mistake to adopt the middle school in anticipation that it will in itself resolve more fundamental problems (28:107).

James DeVirgilio perceives problems that are centered around the middle school student and the development of:

. . . a curriculum that incorporates immediate concerns of children who are in the sensitive transcendent period of development and who are in the active process of reacting, counteracting, or rebelling to growing up in today's world (10:104).

III. RECOMMENDATIONS CONCERNING MIDDLE SCHOOLS

Recommendations Concerning Philosophy and Planning

Prior to establishing a middle school, a considerable amount of time and effort should be given to educational philosophy as well as preliminary planning of the middle school. Philip Pumerantz recommends that public school systems (1) develop a workable middle school model of program and organization, that will assist planners in developing a practice that is meaningful to separate communities, (2) review the philosophical, social, and psychological premises for middle grade education, and (3) carry out research within the community that will provide information for solving problems and instituting new programs (23:211).

Before a middle school is adopted, the following points should be considered: (1) that the students' progression from a self-contained classroom to a highly departmentalized high school be made a gradual one, (2) that provision is made for every student to be well-known by at least one teacher, and (3) that the middle school exist as a distinct, pliant, and singular unit designed for fulfilling the needs of preadolescent and early adolescent children (4:487).

A lengthy period of planning and investigation for the middle school is a prudent path to follow. Only after a careful study of the middle school student by the staff concerned should any attempt be made to initiate work on

middle school building plans, educational program, organization, and the staff to be included. Visits to other middle schools should be avoided until the study of the middle school student has been thoroughly done. Whatever plans are then made should be comprehensive, beginning with the elementary school staff and middle school staff members, parents, children, and all other concerned persons. If at all possible, new programs and practices included in a middle school should be introduced experimentally. Early publicity and visitation by others is to be avoided. Evaluation is necessary, but only after allowing sufficient time for the new middle school to resolve many of the problems that accompany a new school. Most important, provide for extra funds that can be used for experimentation with evaluation and for future planning (2:357).

Any local educational system should concentrate on coordination of program and facilities. The elementary, middle, and high schools should meet to study ways of efficiently utilizing existing resources to their best advantage at all three levels (24:400).

Recommendations Concerning the Educational Program

The educational program is the heart of the middle school. Edgar Pray and John McNamara recommend that ways must be found to combat the hazards of the depersonalized departmental pattern in schools. Also, teachers in grades five and six need to have specialized knowledge in subject matter fields (22:408).

The general purposes of a middle school educational program were best summarized by Strickland and Alexander.

They concluded that the primary purposes were:

1. To serve the educational needs of the "in-betweenagers" in a school coming between the school for earlier childhood and the high school for adolescents.
2. To provide optimum individualization of curriculum and instruction for a population characterized by great variability.
3. . . . a curriculum which includes provisions for:
(a) a planned sequence of concepts in the general areas, (b) major emphasis on the interests and skills for continued learning, (c) a balanced program of exploratory experiences and other activities and services for personnel development, and (d) appropriate attention to the development of values.
4. To promote continuous progress through and smooth articulation between the several phases and levels of the total educational program.
5. To facilitate the optimum use of personnel and facilities available. . . . (24:398)

To enable the middle school to provide an optimum learning environment, the non-graded and continuous progress concepts must be incorporated (15:283). Above all else, the middle school should be a place where the opportunity to succeed exists and where the program is secondary to the success of the child (4:487).

Middle school social life and athletics should not escape the scrutiny of educators. Social activities that have acquired a sophisticated nature should be eliminated. Interscholastic athletics can as well be removed, and replaced with a program that involves greater participation (10:104). An improved alternative would be to provide a

comprehensive intramural and extramural sports program and encourage the participation of all students (16:320).

Recommendations Concerning Colleges of Education

Colleges of education must provide new programs that focus instruction and assistance on education for the middle school years. They can (1) assist teachers and public school systems by developing pre- and in-service programs for teachers of the middle grades; (2) encourage a new investigation of the premises for education of middle school children, conduct research and aid local communities in evaluating their present programs, and provide a medium for public school teachers and professors to exchange information about middle school education; and (3) develop regional centers for gathering data concerning middle grade education (23:211).

One of the vital ingredients to a successful middle school program is teachers with adequate experience in the team approach to education. The colleges of education should provide early and ample opportunity for aspiring teacher candidates to become involved in team teaching situations with children of many ages and grade levels (24:400).

CHAPTER III

PROCEDURES USED IN THE STUDY

This chapter contains a description of the procedural steps undertaken by the investigator to determine the reasons given for implementing middle schools, whether the reasons have been justified by practice, the major problems principals have encountered with middle schools, and recommendations for school districts considering the adoption of a middle school program. A questionnaire sent to middle school principals in Washington, Oregon, and California was determined as the most effective means for obtaining the necessary data.

The Questionnaire

The four-page combination checklist and short-answer questionnaire (Appendix C, page 86) was developed by the investigator after a comprehensive review of the available educational literature concerning the reasons for instituting middle schools.

Part one of the questionnaire was intended to provide general information such as: school addresses, enrollment size, type of grade level organization, design of the school, and identification of those persons who were most instrumental in initiating action to institute a middle school.

Part two contains a list of sixteen possible reasons for the establishment of a middle school. The respondent was asked to examine each "reason" and identify: (1) whether or not that reason was a factor for instituting a middle school, and (2) whether or not those reasons proved effective.

Part three is divided into two areas consisting of short fill-in questions. The first area is intended to determine the major problems principals have encountered with the middle school that are different from a traditional junior high school.

The second area of part three requires the respondent to list, in no specific order of importance, five recommendations he would offer to a school district considering the adoption of the middle school.

Selection of the Questionnaire Recipients

In preparation for this investigation, a letter (Appendix A, page 82) was sent to the Washington State Superintendent of Education requesting the names and addresses of the state superintendents of education of the thirteen western states of America.

After receiving the names and addresses of each state superintendent, a letter was sent by the investigator to each one (Appendix B, page 84). The state superintendents were requested to forward the principals' names and school addresses of schools classified as middle schools in their respective states according to the definition of this study. At this time, it was determined by this researcher and the

committee chairman to limit the number of states in the study to Washington, Oregon, and California because: (1) two state superintendents of education did not respond to the letter, (2) four of the thirteen states did not operate schools classified as middle schools, and (3) four states classified only four or less schools as middle schools.

Since the middle school is a relatively new form of school organization, this investigator felt that the state superintendents of education were in the best position to have current data on the number and location of middle schools within their respective states. The superintendents were asked either to send a list of all middle schools in their states or to select a random sample if the total number was excessive. In each case, the state superintendents returned a list that included all schools classified in May, 1969, as middle schools according to the definition of this study or of districts operating such schools. As a result, a cover letter and the questionnaire were sent to the principals of all schools known and classified as middle schools in Washington, Oregon, and California by the state superintendents of education in those states. A copy of each instrument may be found in Appendix C, page 86.

Data Gathering

The questionnaire was mailed on November 15, 1969. The principals were requested to return the questionnaire, if possible, by December 15, 1969.

Table II shows the number of schools surveyed in each of the three states, the number of responses received, and the percentage of returns from each state.

TABLE II
NUMBER OF RESPONDENTS IN RELATION TO
TOTAL SCHOOLS SURVEYED*

State	Number Surveyed	Number Responding	Percent Responding
Washington	17	16	94.7
Oregon	8	5	62.5
California	29	19	65.5
Totals	54	40	74.2

*Figures include one school in Washington and Oregon that returned the questionnaire stating that there is no middle school in their district, and one school from California that returned the questionnaire stating that the school to be surveyed no longer is in existence.

Of the fifty-four schools to which questionnaires were sent, forty (74.2 percent) were represented in the response. Washington represented the highest return (94.7 percent), while California (65.5 percent) and Oregon (62.5 percent) were less. This researcher assumes that the distance of California from Washington affected the total percentage of returns. The difficulty in obtaining the principals' names and local school addresses in Oregon is also assumed by the investigator to affect the total percentage of returns in comparison to the percentage of returns from Washington.

Treatment of the Data

After the data had been gathered according to plan, it became necessary to analyze the responses to each section of the questionnaire. Responses to all questionnaire sections were tabulated, summarized, converted to percentages and frequency scales, and retabulated.

CHAPTER IV

RESULTS OF THE SURVEY

The purpose of this chapter is to present the data gathered and to present an analysis of these findings. The questionnaire contained questions dealing with the background of the canvassed middle schools, the reasons for instituting middle schools, and whether such reasons have been justified by practice, the major problems principals have encountered with the middle school, and recommendations for school districts considering the adoption of a middle school program.

I. THE BACKGROUND OF MIDDLE SCHOOLS IN WASHINGTON, OREGON, AND CALIFORNIA

It was the intent of section one of the questionnaire to provide information on the general background of the middle schools included in the survey. Section I consists of six tables concerning individual school enrollment size, average student body enrollments, grade level organization of middle schools, the years that present middle schools were put into operation, and the individuals or groups most instrumental in initiating action to institute middle schools in Washington, Oregon, and California.

Individual school enrollments. Table III, page 33, discloses the wide range of middle school enrollments. The smallest middle school enrollment was 180 in Washington and the largest was 1,400 in California. The mode ranges from three hundred to four hundred students in the three states surveyed. California reported the largest number of students (9,519) attending middle schools. Washington was second in total enrollment with 7,010 students and Oregon third with 2,170.

Average student body enrollments. As shown in Table IV, page 34, the states of Washington and Oregon have fairly comparable average enrollment figures of 530.9 and 542.5 respectively. California, however, is considerably higher than Washington or Oregon. Their average enrollment is 634.5 students per middle school, or an average of approximately one hundred more students enrolled in each middle school.

Grade level organization. It is interesting to note that each of the three states surveyed reported a different grade level organization. Table V, page 35, indicates that fourteen of the fifteen middle schools in Washington were organized according to the grade combination of six through eight.

Oregon reported two middle schools organized according to grades five through eight, one by grades four through eight, and one with grade eight only.

TABLE III

STUDENT BODY ENROLLMENTS REPORTED FOR GRADE COMBINATIONS
4-8 OF MIDDLE SCHOOLS IN WASHINGTON,
OREGON, AND CALIFORNIA

Washington		Oregon		California	
Enrollment	Number of Schools	Enrollment	Number of Schools	Enrollment	Number of Schools
180	1	400	1	300	2
225	1	450	1	400	2
230	1	520	1	401	1
240	1	800	1	510	1
365	2			540	1
520	1			625	1
525	1			660	1
670	1			703	1
685	1			738	1
850	1			750	1
855	1			811	1
1,300	1			1,400	1
<u>Totals</u>					
7,010	13	2,170	4	9,519	15

TABLE IV
AVERAGE STUDENT BODY ENROLLMENTS REPORTED IN THE
MIDDLE SCHOOLS OF WASHINGTON,
OREGON, AND CALIFORNIA*

States	Student Body Enrollment	Number of Schools	Average Student Body Enrollment
Washington	7,010	13	530.9
Oregon	2,170	4	542.5
California	9,518	15	634.5

*Figures include any grade and/or grade combination of four through eight.

TABLE V
 GRADE LEVEL ORGANIZATION OF 35 MIDDLE SCHOOLS
 REPORTED IN WASHINGTON, OREGON,
 AND CALIFORNIA

States	Grades 6-8		Grades 5-8		Other Grade Levels*	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Washington	14	93.3	0	0	1	6.7
Oregon	0	0	2	50.0	2	50.0
California	4	25.0	11	68.8	1	6.2
Totals	18	51.4	13	37.1	4	11.4

*Other grade levels are:

Washington: 1 school grades 7 and 8
 Oregon: 1 school grades 4-8 and 1 school
 eight only
 California 1 school grades 7 and 8

The majority (68.8 percent) of middle schools in California were organized into the grade combination of five through eight, with the next most popular combination being six through eight.

The larger percentage of California middle schools organized according to grades five through eight could account for the higher average school enrollment in relation to Washington and Oregon (Table IV, page 34).

Design of middle schools. Table VI, page 37, discloses that in all three states canvassed, 23 percent of the schools housing preadolescent pupils were remodeled to meet necessary needs and 62 percent were not designed or built as middle schools. Only 15 percent of the remaining middle schools were actually designed and built as middle schools.

Since 62 percent of the schools reporting in Washington, Oregon, and California were not either designed or built as middle schools, it can be seen that most of the schools are actually physical plants that were designed and built as traditional elementary, junior, or senior high schools.

Years that present grade level organizations were put into effect. Table VII, page 38, shows the earliest middle school in California in 1943, and the most recent middle schools in Washington and California in 1969.

TABLE VI

DESIGN OF 34 MIDDLE SCHOOLS REPORTED IN WASHINGTON, OREGON, AND CALIFORNIA

States	Designed and Built as a Middle School		Remodeled to Meet Necessary Needs		Not Designed or Built as a Middle School*	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Washington	2	14.3	1	7.1	11	78.6
Oregon	1	25.0	1	25.0	2	50.0
California	2	12.5	6	37.5	8	50.0
Totals	5	15.0	8	23.0	21	62.0

*Not designed or built as a middle school (62 percent) should be interpreted to mean that the building was designed and built as a traditional elementary, junior, or senior high school.

TABLE VII
YEARS THAT PRESENT GRADE LEVEL ORGANIZATIONS
WERE PUT INTO EFFECT

Year	Washington	Oregon	California	Frequency of Year	Percent of Frequency
1943			1	1	2.9
1945			1	1	2.9
1950			1	1	2.9
1953			1	1	2.9
1957	1		1	2	5.9
1959			1	1	2.9
1960		1	1	2	5.9
1961	1	1	2	4	11.8
1963	2			2	5.9
1964			1	1	2.9
1965			2	2	5.9
1966	5	1	1	7	20.6
1967	1		1	2	5.9
1968	4	1		5	14.7
1969	1		1	2	5.9
Totals	15	4	15	34	99.9

One school in California did not respond to the question concerning the year that the present grade level was put into effect.

The largest number of middle schools established in any single year was seven in 1966. Approximately 79 percent of all middle schools canvassed were established in the decade of 1960 to 1969. Prior to 1960, only 21 percent were established. Clearly, the growth of the middle school in Washington, Oregon, and California is a phenomenon of the nineteen sixties.

Individuals or groups most responsible for initiating action to institute middle schools. Of all the individuals or groups most responsible for initiating action to institute middle schools, Table VIII, page 40, discloses that individual superintendents (45.5 percent) were the definite leaders. Following the superintendents were the individual school principals with 18.2 percent.

It is interesting to note that teachers as individuals or groups accounted for less than 3 percent of the responsibility for initiating action to institute middle schools, while the leadership of school boards and community individuals totaled only 3 percent.

II. THE REASONS FOR INSTITUTING MIDDLE SCHOOLS REPORTED IN WASHINGTON, OREGON, AND CALIFORNIA

The objective of this section of the questionnaire was to determine the reasons for instituting middle schools in the states of Washington, Oregon, and California. The tables presented provide statistics concerning the reasons for establishing middle schools, and a summary of Section II.

TABLE VIII

INDIVIDUALS OR GROUPS MOST RESPONSIBLE FOR INITIATING ACTION TO INSTITUTE
MIDDLE SCHOOLS REPORTED IN WASHINGTON, OREGON, AND CALIFORNIA

Individuals and/or groups	Washington		Oregon		California		Frequency of Group	Percent of Frequency
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent		
A. Teachers								
B. Principals	3	20.0	1	25.0	2	14.3	6	18.2
C. Superintendents	6	40.0	3	75.0	6	42.8	15	45.5
D. School Boards	1	6.6					1	3.0
E. Special committees or study groups	2	13.3			1	7.1	3	9.1
F. Community individuals or groups								
G. Items A-F	1	6.6					1	3.0
H. Principals and Superintendents	1	6.6			3	21.4	4	12.1
I. Superintendents and school boards					1	7.1	1	3.0
J. Principals, Superin- tendents, and school boards	1	6.6					1	3.0
K. No known individual or group					1	7.1	1	3.0
Totals	15	99.7	4	100.0	14	100.0	33	99.9

Reasons reported in Washington. As shown in Table IX, page 42, the desire to eliminate crowded conditions in other schools was cited by 80 percent of Washington respondents. Overcrowded schools were a key motivating force in instituting middle schools.

In addition, a fairly high percentage of schools reported a need to utilize a new school building (40 percent) and to move grade nine into the high school (60 percent). These two reasons tend to support the need to eliminate overcrowded schools in Washington. However, there appears to be more of an emphasis on utilizing the existing building facilities than on the construction of new buildings as a solution to eliminate crowded conditions in other schools. The heavy emphasis placed on moving grade nine to the high school leads this investigator to believe that solving the crowded conditions in other schools is being primarily solved in this manner.

The need to reduce financial costs was only reported by 13.3 percent of the respondents indicating middle schools are not primarily built for monetary reasons.

The figures in Table IX, page 42, also illustrate that at least 40 percent of the respondents established middle schools for the following additional reasons: to provide a better transition from elementary to high school, to provide a program specially designed for preadolescents, to try out various innovations in teaching methods and curricular plans, to eliminate or reduce the emphasis on

TABLE IX
REASONS FOR INSTITUTING MIDDLE SCHOOLS
REPORTED IN WASHINGTON

Items	Schools Reporting	
	Number	Percent
To eliminate crowded conditions in other schools	12	80.0
To utilize new school building	6	40.0
To move grade nine into the high school	9	60.0
To eliminate ninth grade discipline problems	1	6.6
To reduce school financial costs	2	13.3
To provide better transition from elementary to high school	7	46.6
To provide a program specially designed for preadolescents and that relates more closely with their needs and interests	8	53.3
To provide for the earlier emotional, social, and physical development of pupils (grades 5-8 or 6-8)	5	33.3
To utilize existing staff, teaching equipment and classroom facilities	5	33.3
To try out various innovations in teaching methods and curricular plans	6	40.0
To provide more special services and/or specialization in grades 5 or 6	5	33.3
To improve the guidance program in grades 5 and/or 6	4	26.6
To eliminate or reduce the emphasis on interscholastic athletics	9	60.6
To develop a better intramural program	6	40.0
To de-emphasize social pressures of high school	8	53.3
To eliminate the Carnegie Unit	3	20.0

interscholastic athletics, to develop a better intramural program, and to de-emphasize the social pressures of high school.

The necessity of establishing a middle school in order to eliminate ninth grade discipline problems was reported by only 6.6 percent of the respondents in Washington.

Overcrowded conditions and interscholastic athletics appear to be the prime factors for instituting middle schools in Washington with social and educational concerns secondary.

Reasons reported in Oregon. As shown in Table X, page 44, providing a program specially designed for pre-adolescents and utilizing the existing staff, teaching equipment, and classroom facilities was reported by 100 percent of Oregon middle schools.

Seventy-five percent of the respondents cited a need to provide for the earlier emotional, social, and physical development of pupils in grades five or six through eight.

Moving grade nine to the high school, reducing financial costs, and eliminating ninth grade discipline problems were not considered as reasons for instituting middle schools.

Table X, page 44, discloses that the necessity of utilizing a new school building and eliminating crowded conditions in other schools was recorded by 50 percent of the middle schools.

TABLE X
REASONS FOR INSTITUTING MIDDLE SCHOOLS
REPORTED IN OREGON

Items	Schools Reporting	
	Number	Percent
To eliminate crowded conditions in other schools	2	50.0
To utilize new school building	2	50.0
To move grade nine into the high school	0	0
To eliminate ninth grade discipline problems	0	0
To reduce school financial costs	0	0
To provide better transition from elementary to high school	2	50.0
To provide a program specially designed for preadolescents that relates more closely with their needs and interests	4	100.0
To provide for the earlier emotional, social, and physical development of pupils (grades 5-8 or 6-8)	3	75.0
To utilize existing staff, teaching equipment, and classroom facilities	4	100.0
To try out various innovations in teaching methods and curricular plans	2	50.0
To provide more special services and/or specialization in grades 5 or 6	2	50.0
To eliminate or reduce the emphasis on interscholastic athletics	1	25.0
To develop a better intramural program	1	25.0
To improve the guidance program in grades 5 and/or 6	1	25.0
To de-emphasize the social pressures of high school	1	25.0
To eliminate the Carnegie Unit	1	25.0

Unlike Washington (Table IX, page 42), Oregon middle schools reported a higher percentage of reasons emphasizing educational needs and a smaller percentage concerning interscholastic athletics, intramural sports, and crowded school conditions.

Reasons reported in California. The figures in Table XI, page 46, illustrate the elimination of crowded conditions in other schools (75 percent) as a major factor for instituting middle schools in California. California and Washington (Table IX, page 42) both appear to solve the problem of crowded school conditions by shifting grades within existing schools rather than emphasizing a building program as a solution. Moving grade nine into the high school was reported more frequently in California than in Washington (Table IX, page 42). This can be accounted for in the different percentage of grade level organizations between the two states. The middle schools in Washington are primarily organized according to the grade combination of six through eight (93.3 percent), and California according to grades five through eight (68.8 percent) (Table V, page 35).

Table XI, page 46, indicates that ninth grade discipline problems were not a reason for instituting middle schools in California. The results of the study show that all three states reported it as a reason of little or no importance.

TABLE XI
REASONS FOR INSTITUTING MIDDLE SCHOOLS
REPORTED IN CALIFORNIA

Items	Schools Reporting	
	Number	Percent
To eliminate crowded conditions in other schools	12	75.0
To utilize new school building	5	31.3
To move grade nine into the high school	1	6.3
To eliminate ninth grade discipline problems	0	0
To reduce school financial costs	3	18.7
To provide better transition from elementary to high school	10	62.5
To provide a program specially designed for preadolescents and that relates more closely with their needs and interests	11	68.7
To provide for the earlier emotional, social, and physical development of pupils (grades 5-8 or 6-8)	9	56.2
To utilize existing staff, teaching equipment and classroom facilities	10	62.5
To try out various innovations in teaching methods and curricular plans	7	43.7
To provide more special services and/or specialization in grades 5 or 6	8	50.0
To improve the guidance program in grades 5 and/or 6	4	25.0
To eliminate or reduce the emphasis on interscholastic athletics	0	0
To develop a better intramural program	4	25.0
To de-emphasize the social pressures of high school	4	25.0
To eliminate the Carnegie Unit	0	0

In California the elimination or reduction of emphasis on interscholastic athletic was not reported as a reason in any return, whereas in Washington (Table IX, page 42) it was a significant reason (60 percent). The writer feels that either California middle schools do not emphasize interscholastic athletics or else found no reason to reduce any existing emphasis in this area.

Table XI, page 46, also discloses that respondents in California like Oregon (Table X, page 44) also placed more importance on educational reasons such as: providing a program specially designed for preadolescent, and providing for the earlier emotional, social, and physical development of middle school pupils, than did Washington (Table IX, page 42).

A summary of the reasons reported in Washington, Oregon, and California. In the three states surveyed, Table XII, page 48, shows that 74.3 percent of the respondents established middle schools in order to eliminate crowded conditions in other schools. Overcrowded school conditions appears to be a basic factor behind an increasing quantity of middle schools.

The method of eliminating crowded school conditions seems to be solved through a combination of new buildings to house pupils (37.1 percent), and the shifting of grade nine into the high school (28.6 percent).

TABLE XII

A SUMMARY OF THE REASONS FOR INSTITUTING MIDDLE SCHOOLS
REPORTED IN WASHINGTON, OREGON, AND CALIFORNIA

Items	Schools Reporting	
	Number	Percent
To eliminate crowded conditions in other schools	26	74.3
To utilize new school building	13	37.1
To move grade nine into the high school	10	28.6
To eliminate ninth grade discipline problems	1	2.7
To reduce school financial costs	5	13.5
To provide better transition from elementary to high school	19	54.3
To provide a program specially designed for preadolescents and that relates more closely with their needs and interests	23	65.7
To provide for the earlier emotional, social, and physical development of pupils (grades 5-8 or 6-8)	17	48.6
To utilize existing staff, teaching equipment and classroom facilities	19	54.3
To try out various innovations in teaching methods and curricular plans	15	42.9
To provide more social services and/or specialization in grades 5 or 6	15	42.9
To improve the guidance program in grades 5 and/or 6	9	25.7
To eliminate or reduce the emphasis on interscholastic athletics	10	28.6
To develop a better intramural program	11	31.4
To de-emphasize the social pressures of high school	13	37.1
To eliminate the Carnegie Unit	4	11.4

Secondary but important reasons for instituting middle schools appear to be the following: providing an educational program specially designed for preadolescents and that relates more closely with their needs and interests (65.7 percent), providing for a better transition from elementary to high school (54.3 percent), utilizing the existing staff, teaching equipment and classroom facilities (54.3 percent), and implementing various innovations in teaching methods and curricular plans (42.9 percent).

Elimination of ninth grade discipline problems (2.7 percent), reduction of school financial costs (13.5 percent), and elimination of the Carnegie Unit (11.4 percent) are shown in Table XII, page 48, to be minor reasons for instituting middle schools.

III. THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE REASONS FOR INSTITUTING MIDDLE SCHOOLS REPORTED IN WASHINGTON, OREGON, AND CALIFORNIA

The intent of this section of the questionnaire was to determine whether the reasons for establishing the middle schools surveyed have proved to be effective. A total of four tables are presented in Section III. The first three tables provide statistics concerning the effectiveness of the reasons for instituting middle schools in the different states, while the fourth table is a summary of Section III.

The effectiveness reported in Washington. Table XIII page 51, shows that instituting a middle school was highly effective in eliminating crowded conditions in other schools (73.3 percent), as well as moving grade nine into the high school (60 percent).

In only two other areas, eliminating ninth grade discipline problems (20 percent) and providing more specialized services and/or specialization in grade six (40 percent), did instituting a middle school in Washington prove to be more effective than the original reasons for adopting one.

An interesting result is in the area of interscholastic athletics and intramural sports. These two areas (Table IX, page 42) were expressed by the respondents as fairly strong reasons for instituting the middle school. Yet, both reasons showed a considerable decline in anticipated effectiveness after the middle school had been established.

Table XIII, page 51, also illustrates that the reasons of reducing school financial costs (6.6 percent), providing a better transition from elementary to high school (26.6 percent), providing a program specially designed for preadolescents (33.3 percent), implementing various innovations in teaching methods and curricular plans (26.6 percent), and de-emphasizing social pressures of high school (33.3 percent), all decreased in planned effectiveness after establishment of a middle school.

TABLE XIII

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE REASONS FOR INSTITUTING MIDDLE
SCHOOLS REPORTED IN WASHINGTON

Items	Schools Reporting	
	Number	Percent
To eliminate crowded conditions in other schools	11	73.3
To utilize new school building	6	40.0
To move grade nine into the high school	9	60.0
To eliminate ninth grade discipline problems	3	20.0
To reduce school financial costs	1	6.6
To provide better transition from elementary to high school	4	26.6
To provide a program specially designed for preadolescents and that relates more closely with their needs and interests	5	33.3
To provide for the earlier emotional, social and physical development of pupils (grades 5-8 or 6-8)	5	33.3
To utilize existing staff, teaching equipment and classroom facilities	4	26.6
To try out various innovations in teaching methods and curricular plans	4	26.6
To provide more special services and/or specialization in grades 5 or 6	6	40.0
To improve the guidance program in grades 5 and/or 6	4	26.6
To eliminate or reduce the emphasis on interscholastic athletics	4	26.6
To develop a better intramural program	4	26.6
To de-emphasize the social pressures of high school	5	33.3
To eliminate the Carnegie Unit	1	6.6

The effectiveness reported in Oregon. Table XIV discloses that in providing a program specially designed for preadolescents and for utilizing the existing staff, teaching equipment, and classroom facilities, the reasons for instituting middle schools proved to be 100 percent effective.

With the exception of eliminating the Carnegie Unit, all original reasons (Table X, page 44) for instituting the middle school in Oregon proved to be equally effective after its establishment. Elimination of the Carnegie Unit was 25 percent less effective than originally intended.

The effectiveness reported in California. Table XV, page 54, indicates that eliminating crowded conditions in other schools and providing a program specially designed for preadolescents (68.7 percent) were the reasons most effective after instituting the middle school in California. In addition, 62.5 percent of the respondents reported the middle school to be effective in providing a better transition from the elementary to high school. The same percentage was reported in Table XI, page 46, showing reasons for instituting the middle school in California.

Table XV, page 54, shows that the effectiveness of reducing school financial costs (12.5 percent), utilizing a new school building (25 percent), utilizing the existing staff, teaching equipment, and classroom facilities (56.2 percent), and improving the guidance program in grades five or six declined in relation to the anticipated effectiveness.

TABLE XIV

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE REASONS FOR INSTITUTING MIDDLE
SCHOOLS REPORTED IN OREGON

Items	Schools Reporting	
	Number	Percent
To eliminate crowded conditions in other schools	2	50.0
To utilize new school building	2	50.0
To move grade nine into the high school	0	0
To eliminate ninth grade discipline problems	0	0
To reduce school financial costs	0	0
To provide better transition from elementary to high school	2	50.0
To provide a program specially designed for preadolescents and that relates more closely with their needs and interests	4	100.0
To provide for the earlier emotional, social, and physical development of pupils (grades 5-8 or 6-8)	3	75.0
To utilize existing staff, teaching equipment, and classroom facilities	4	100.0
To try out various innovations in teaching methods and curricular plans	2	50.0
To provide more special services and/or specialization in grades 5 or 6	2	50.0
To improve the guidance program in grades 5 and/or 6	1	25.0
To eliminate or reduce the emphasis on interscholastic athletics	1	25.0
To develop a better intramural program	1	25.0
To de-emphasize the social pressures of high school	1	25.0
To eliminate the Carnegie Unit	0	0

TABLE XV

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE REASONS FOR INSTITUTING MIDDLE
SCHOOLS REPORTED IN CALIFORNIA

Items	Schools Reporting	
	Number	Percent
To eliminate crowded conditions in other schools	11	68.7
To utilize new school building	4	25.0
To move grade nine into the high school	2	12.5
To eliminate ninth grade discipline problems	0	0
To reduce school financial costs	2	12.5
To provide better transition from elementary to high school	10	62.5
To provide a program specially designed for preadolescents and that relates more closely with their needs and interests	11	68.7
To provide for the earlier emotional, social, and physical development of pupils (grades 5-8 or 6-8)	9	56.2
To utilize existing staff, teaching equipment, and classroom facilities	9	56.2
To try out various innovations in teaching methods and curricular plans	7	43.7
To provide more special services and/or specialization in grades 5 or 6	8	50.0
To improve the guidance program in grades 5 and/or 6	3	18.7
To eliminate or reduce the emphasis on interscholastic athletics	2	12.5
To develop a better intramural program	5	31.3
To de-emphasize the social pressures of high school	4	25.0
To eliminate the Carnegie Unit	1	6.3

A summary of the effectiveness reported in Washington, Oregon, and California. Table XVI, page 56, discloses the reason for instituting middle schools with the highest percentage of effectiveness was eliminating crowded conditions in other schools (65.7 percent).

Moving grade nine into the high school (31.4 percent), eliminating ninth grade discipline problems (8.1 percent), and providing more special services and/or specialization in grades five or six (45.7 percent) were the only individual areas in which the total percentage of effectiveness was greater than the total percentage of reasons for instituting the middle school (Table XII, page 48).

With the exception of one, the effectiveness of all other reasons for instituting middle schools declined only a marginal amount. Nevertheless, such results indicate to this investigator that the reasons have not proved to be as effective as they were intended.

IV. MAJOR PROBLEMS PRINCIPALS HAVE ENCOUNTERED WITH MIDDLE SCHOOLS REPORTED IN WASHINGTON, OREGON, AND CALIFORNIA

The objective of this portion of the questionnaire was to determine the problems middle school principals have encountered. Since the middle school is largely a recent type of educational institution for preadolescents, emphasis was placed on problems of a unique nature.

TABLE XVI

A SUMMARY OF THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE REASONS FOR
 INSTITUTING MIDDLE SCHOOLS REPORTED IN
 WASHINGTON, OREGON, AND CALIFORNIA

Items	Schools Reporting	
	Number	Percent
To eliminate crowded conditions in other schools	23	65.7
To utilize new school building	12	34.2
To move grade nine into the high school	11	31.4
To eliminate ninth grade discipline problems	3	8.1
To reduce school financial costs	3	8.1
To provide better transition from elementary to high school	16	45.7
To provide a program specially designed for preadolescents and that relates more closely with their needs and interests	20	57.1
To provide for the earlier emotional, social, and physical development of pupils (grades 5-8 or 6-8)	17	48.6
To utilize existing staff, teaching equipment, and classroom facilities	17	48.6
To try out various innovations in teaching methods and curricular plans	13	37.1
To provide more special services and/or specialization in grades 5 or 6	16	45.7
To improve the guidance program in grades 5 and/or 6	8	22.7
To eliminate or reduce the emphasis on interscholastic athletics	7	20.0
To develop a better intramural program	10	28.6
To de-emphasize the social pressures of high school	10	28.6
To eliminate the Carnegie Unit	2	5.7

The results from each state surveyed were statistically presented in separate tables, with an additional table for the summary.

Major problems reported in Washington. The major problems reported by Washington middle school principals are diverse in content and number. Of the twenty-two items listed in Table XVII, page 58, informing and educating the public to a new school philosophy (item 8), community pressure against toning down the interscholastic athletic program (item 13), and sixth graders not blending in well with seventh and eighth graders (item 17) were each reported twice.

None of the remaining items on Table XVII, page 58, were reported more than once. However, there are several other problems listed that can be correlated by topic area. As an example, items two, six, fourteen, fifteen, sixteen, seventeen, and twenty-two on Table XVII, page 58, are all indirectly concerned with teaching personnel. It appears to this writer that the general area of teaching personnel contains the most frequent number of problems.

Items four, ten, and nineteen can also be grouped according to problems regarding plant size and facilities. In these items, principals have expressed concern for initiating new programs in a building built as a junior high school and the need for additional space.

TABLE XVII

MAJOR PROBLEMS PRINCIPALS HAVE ENCOUNTERED WITH THE
MIDDLE SCHOOL REPORTED IN WASHINGTON

Items	Frequency of Mention
1. No problems	1
2. A grade conscious, subject matter oriented staff	1
3. Student activity program	1
4. Difficulty in initiating new programs in a building built as a junior high school	1
5. Re-orienting oneself to the concerns of elementary parents	1
6. Breaking the traditional teaching, grading, and scheduling patterns	1
7. Difficulty re-establishing appropriate activities for this age group based on actual need	1
8. Informing and educating the public to a new school philosophy	2
9. Difficulty in providing constructive outlets for promotion of student responsibility and self-discipline	1
10. Moving to a junior high building creates problems in physical plant layout	1
11. Sixth grade girls (mostly) copy older dress and mannerisms more readily	1
12. Continuity in progression to grade nine and then to senior high	1
13. Community pressure against toning down the inter-scholastic athletic program	2
14. For teachers to accept the difference in the two programs	1
15. Lack of properly prepared teaching personnel	1
16. To which professional group to belong to	1
17. The sixth grade age-group does not blend in very well with the seventh and eighth grade students	2
18. Problems concerning grade level and classroom departmentalization	1
19. The need for larger classrooms	1
20. Top dog attitude among some eighth grade students	1
21. Eighth grade students are anxious to take part in high school activities	1
22. The sharing of high school teachers which therefore dictates the middle school schedule	1

Major problems reported in Oregon. Oregon middle school principals have encountered only five major problems, each reported in Table XVIII. Items two and four appear to be related. Scheduling due to a variety of subject area specialists (item 2) and providing elective courses (item 4) total 40 percent of the reported problems.

The difficulty of attracting qualified personnel, developing leadership in grades five or six, and providing more specialized facilities each account for 20 percent of the problems encountered.

TABLE XVIII

MAJOR PROBLEMS PRINCIPALS HAVE ENCOUNTERED
WITH THE MIDDLE SCHOOL REPORTED IN OREGON

Items	Frequency of Mention
1. Not enough specialized facilities--i.e. shop, home economics, etc.	1
2. Scheduling problems due to a variety of subject area specialists	1
3. Attracting qualified personnel	1
4. Harder to provide elective courses	1
5. Difficult to develop leadership in grades five and six	1

Major problems reported in California. According to Table XIX, page 60, principals most frequently reported no major problems (item 9). This could be partially due to the number of California middle schools that have been in operation longer than in Washington and Oregon (Table VII,

TABLE XIX

MAJOR PROBLEMS PRINCIPALS HAVE ENCOUNTERED WITH THE
MIDDLE SCHOOL REPORTED IN CALIFORNIA

Items	Frequency of Mention
1. Getting better prepared teachers for the middle school	2
2. Difficult to hold teachers in grades seven and eight; they want to move to the high school	1
3. Secondary teachers cannot teach below grade seven according to state law	2
4. Fifth graders are too immature	1
5. Departmentalizing grades five and six is questionable	2
6. Lack of adequate counseling	2
7. Lack of administrative help	1
8. Lack of funds commonly available to high school districts	1
9. No major problems	5
10. Scheduling problems in terms of departmentalization when dealing with fifth graders	1
11. Subject matter teachers	1
12. Grading	1
13. Parents don't like the middle school	1
14. Two programs--sixth grade self-contained and seventh and eighth grade departmentalization	1
15. Primary teachers "mother" the fifth and sixth graders too much	1
16. Getting parents to better understand the middle school philosophy	1
17. General scheduling problems	1
18. Flexibility	1

page 38), or because of the emphasis (68.8 percent) on organizing their middle schools according to grades five through eight (Table V, page 35).

However, by categorizing items one, two, three, six, seven, eleven, and fifteen, ten responses can be combined into the general heading of staff and personnel problems. These equal approximately 38 percent of the total returns regarding middle school problems.

The remaining problems reported relate to a variety of topics such as: scheduling, departmentalizing, and accepting of the middle school by parents.

A summary of the problems reported in Washington, Oregon, and California. Table XX discloses the most significant single problem reported was attracting and retaining qualified personnel (16.3 percent). In California, state law apparently does not allow secondary teachers to teach below grade seven. Other common problems relating to personnel among the three states were: keeping teachers from moving to the high school, having too many subject-matter oriented teachers, and finding better prepared teachers.

A total of 16.3 percent of the principals reported problems related to scheduling, flexibility, and grading. Most of the concern in this area, however, is centered on scheduling. Numerous principals found it difficult to schedule the following: enough elective courses, pupils in

TABLE XX
 SUMMARY OF THE MAJOR PROBLEMS PRINCIPALS HAVE
 ENCOUNTERED WITH THE MIDDLE SCHOOL
 REPORTED IN WASHINGTON, OREGON,
 AND CALIFORNIA

Items	Problems Reported	
	Number	Percent of Total Number
1. Problems concerning qualified personnel	8	16.3
2. Problems concerning scheduling, flexibility, and grading	8	16.3
3. Other general problems	7	14.3
4. No major problems	6	12.2
5. Problems concerning number of classrooms, facilities, and plant size	3	6.1
6. Problems concerning community and parent orientation	3	6.1
7. Problems concerning proper student activities (curricular and extra-curricular)	3	6.1
8. Problems concerning the maturity and acceptance of fifth and sixth graders in the middle school	3	6.1
9. Problems concerning departmentalization	2	4.1
10. Problems concerning subject-matter orientated teachers	2	4.1
11. Problems concerning eighth grade students	2	4.1
12. Problems of breaking with traditional programs and acceptance of new ones	2	4.1
Totals	49	99.9

grade five because of departmentalization, and classes because of a conflict with subject area specialists.

Although 12.2 percent of the total problems reported were entitled "no major problems," five of the six responses were from California middle school principals.

The responses in Table XX, page 62, relating to the number of classrooms, facilities, and plant size represented only 6.1 percent of the total. Since only 15 percent of the total schools surveyed were designed as middle schools and 23 percent were remodeled to meet necessary needs (Table VII, page 38), it indicates to this investigator that a larger number of problems regarding the lack of school plant size and facilities would have been reported.

Other more minor difficulties were concerned with departmentalization, subject-matter oriented teachers, eighth grade students, and teachers unable to break with traditional programs and accept new ones (4.1 percent each).

V. RECOMMENDATIONS OF MIDDLE SCHOOL PRINCIPALS REPORTED IN WASHINGTON, OREGON, AND CALIFORNIA

The purpose of this section of the questionnaire was to obtain the recommendations of middle school principals in Washington, Oregon, and California, and to make them available to school districts considering the adoption of a middle school program.

The recommendations from each state surveyed were statistically presented in individual tables and then summarized according to their similarity.

Recommendations reported in Washington. The most frequent recommendation listed in Table XXI, page 65, is to develop a strong parent orientation program (item 1). Washington middle school principals reported more emphasis on orientation programs than the principals in Oregon and California combined.

The following recommendations were each reported twice: develop a middle school philosophy, objectives, and program before making a change (item 6); seek assistance of teachers and administrators in planning the program (item 2); and employ personnel whose philosophies are consistent with middle school objectives (item 13).

The remaining recommendations in Table XXI, page 65, were each reported once. A number of them can be grouped into the following general areas: consider carefully the type and extent of departmentalization (items 5 and 8); plan for adequate classroom size and playground facilities (items 4 and 15); and include a learning resource center and team teaching facilities in the middle school (items 18 and 19).

The gist of two recommendations was in the form of a warning regarding the middle school. Item ten warns that the middle school is not an answer to earlier maturation, and item twelve cautions against those who would merely organize a school according to grades five or six through eight and term it a "middle school."

TABLE XXI
RECOMMENDATIONS OF MIDDLE SCHOOL PRINCIPALS
REPORTED IN WASHINGTON

Items	Frequency of Mention
1. Develop a strong parent orientation program	4
2. Teachers and administrators should help plan the program	2
3. Special education should be included in the program	1
4. Provide large enough classrooms	1
5. Give consideration to departmentalization of classes like art, physical education, and music	1
6. Develop the middle school philosophy, objectives, and program before making a change	2
7. Provide a concentrated in-service program for teachers	1
8. Use departmentalization sparingly	1
9. Begin planning early and consider what we know about kids	1
10. The middle school is not an answer to earlier maturation	1
11. Consider the middle school philosophy only to the extent of available staff and facilities	1
12. Organizing a school according to grades 6-8 or 5-8 does not make it a middle school	1
13. Staff with personnel whose philosophies are consistent with what you are trying to do	2
14. Set up machinery for continual evaluation	1
15. Consider the playground needs of younger students	1
16. Be honest with yourself and the public concerning your reasons for the middle school	1
17. Involve the citizens of your community	1
18. Provide provisions for large and small group instruction	1
19. Provide learning recourse centers of independent study	1
20. Staff the school with elementary trained teachers	1
21. Forget many of the traditional seventh and eighth grade characteristics or they will influence the school too much	1

Recommendations reported in Oregon. Principals of the middle schools surveyed in Oregon provided only two recommendations (Table XXII). One principal recommended that careful planning of both building and program should be exercised. The other principal offered the sound advice of hiring school administrators one year in advance to work on the program.

TABLE XXII

RECOMMENDATIONS OF MIDDLE SCHOOL PRINCIPALS
REPORTED IN OREGON

Items	Frequency of Mention
1. Plan your building and program carefully	1
2. Hire school administrators one year in advance to work on the program	1

Recommendations reported in California. Table XXIII, page 67, discloses only two recommendations that were reported more than once in California. Two principals, both in charge of schools organized according to grades five through eight, felt that grade five should not be included in the middle school (item 11). Considering that 68.8 percent (Table V, page 35) were organized according to grades five through eight, this writer feels that the two principals reporting dissatisfaction with that type of organization indicates only minor significance.

TABLE XXIII
RECOMMENDATIONS OF MIDDLE SCHOOL PRINCIPALS
REPORTED IN CALIFORNIA

Items	Frequency of Mention
1. Provide the proper school plant, and allow room for flexibility	1
2. Plan the school plant according to grade groups	1
3. Select the staff for the special fields according to who can work well with fifth and sixth grade students and teachers	1
4. Classes should be with one teacher for at least two periods per day	1
5. Keep the grade level groups together even when changing classes	1
6. Plan the middle school to fit the program	1
7. Have a parent orientation program at least one year before opening the school	1
8. Expect a good middle school to cost more per pupil in grades five and six	2
9. Have all grades departmentalized	1
10. Employ a staff with a sound background in child development and open to change	1
11. Do not include grade five in the middle school	2
12. Limit the school enrollment to 500	1
13. Utilize flexible scheduling in the middle school	1
14. Provide adequate elective subjects in the middle school program	1
15. Employ elementary trained teachers if possible	1
16. Supply adequate facilities and personnel in the middle school	1
17. Semi-departmentalize grades five and six, use core in grade seven with complete departmentalization in grade eight	1

Two principals mentioned that one may expect a good middle school to cost more per pupil in grades five and six (item 8). This investigator believes that this recommendation is significant because 18.7 percent of California middle schools (Table XI, page 46) and 13.5 percent of all middle schools surveyed (Table XII, page 48) listed the reduction of financial costs as a reason for instituting a middle school.

Many of the other recommendations in Table XXIII, page 67, are concerned with the following: departmentalization (items 4, 9, and 17), plant size and facilities (items 1 and 16), and personnel (items 3, 10, and 15).

A summary of the recommendations reported in Washington, Oregon, and California. Table XXIV discloses that of the nine groups of recommendations, no individual category completely dominated the total percentage of recommendation (page 69). The largest single category of recommendations (16.7 percent) were related to the middle school staff. The principals felt that selection of the middle school staff should be carefully considered. The staff should be adequately prepared to teach in the middle school, believe in the general objectives and philosophy of middle school education, and work especially well with fifth and sixth grade children.

Recommendations concerning the middle school program (14.6 percent) were frequently cited. Attention was drawn to the inclusion of a learning resource center, team

TABLE XXIV

A SUMMARY OF THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF MIDDLE SCHOOL
PRINCIPALS REPORTED IN WASHINGTON,
OREGON, AND CALIFORNIA

Items	Recommendations Made	
	Number	Percent of total number
1. Recommendations concerning parent orientation programs	5	10.4
2. Recommendations concerning the planning of the middle school building and facilities	6	12.5
3. Recommendations concerning the type and extent of departmentalization	5	10.4
4. Recommendations concerning the middle school philosophy and objectives	7	14.6
5. Recommendations concerning the middle school staff	8	16.7
6. Recommendations concerning the middle school program	7	14.6
7. Recommendations concerning individuals and/or groups involved in planning the middle school	3	6.2
8. Recommendations concerning the grade levels to be included in the middle school and the total pupil enrollment	3	6.2
9. Other general recommendations	4	8.3
Totals	48	99.9

teaching, adequate elective subjects, flexible scheduling, and special education.

Recommendations relating to the middle school philosophy and objectives also received 14.6 percent of the total percentage of recommendations in Table XXIV. The primary concern was that the philosophy and objectives to be achieved should be formulated prior to any further action.

The category of planning the middle school building and facilities accounted for 12.5 percent of the total percentage of recommendations. The basic emphasis was on the following: adequate classroom size, proper playground facilities for each grade level, a flexible building design, and construction of the plant according to the grade levels to be included.

The recommendations regarding the type and extent of departmentalization (10.4 percent) were not in accordance. A wide range of alternatives was suggested. Departmentalization in only grades seven and eight was encouraged by some, while others urged the use of core or the elimination of departmentalization altogether.

Establishing an adequate parent orientation program also accounted for 10.4 percent of the total recommendations. It was advised that school officials be honest with the parents regarding their reasons for instituting a middle school and to include middle school parents and other community members in the planning process.

Recommendations regarding the individuals and/or groups to be involved in planning the middle school and the grade levels to be included (items 8 and 9) each received 6.2 percent of the total percentage.

CHAPTER V
SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

I. SUMMARY

The purpose of the study was to determine if the reasons for implementing middle schools have been justified by practice, to determine the major problems principals have encountered with the middle school, and to provide recommendations for school districts considering the adoption of a middle school program. This information was achieved through: (1) a questionnaire study of forty middle schools selected by the state superintendents of education in Washington, Oregon, and California; and (2) a careful review of the available literature regarding middle schools.

An analysis of the information acquired from questionnaire respondents has afforded the following major findings.

Of the schools surveyed, the smallest individual enrollment was 180 in Washington and the largest was 1,400 in California. California totaled the largest number of pupils enrolled in middle schools and had an average enrollment close to one hundred more students per middle school.

The majority (51.4 percent) of middle schools were organized according to the grade combination of six through eight with the next most common (37.1 percent) being grades

five through eight. Washington had the highest percentage (93.3 percent) of schools organized into a common grade level pattern of six through eight.

Sixty-two percent of the middle schools were not designed or built as such. Twenty-three percent were remodeled to meet necessary needs and only 15 percent were designed and built as middle schools.

Although the middle school is primarily a recent innovation, it dates as far back as 1943 in California. The greatest number of middle schools established in any one year was seven in 1966, and close to 79 percent were initiated in the decade of 1960 to 1969.

Of all the individuals or groups most responsible for initiating action to institute middle schools, superintendents account for over 45 percent of the responsibility with principals being a distant second. The influence of teachers, school boards, and community individuals was rather insignificant.

Over 74 percent of the middle schools were established in order to eliminate crowded conditions in other schools. Reasons relating to educational program improvement accounted for nearly 66 percent with improvement in the transition from elementary to high school and utilization of the existing staff, teaching equipment, and classroom facilities, each amounting to approximately 54 percent.

The most effective reason for instituting the middle school was the elimination of crowded conditions in other

schools. Of all the reasons offered, only moving grade nine into the high school, eliminating ninth grade discipline problems, and providing more specialized services for the lower middle school grades proved to be more effective than their anticipated effectiveness.

The most frequent individual problem confronting middle school principals is attracting and retaining qualified personnel (16.3 percent). Problems relating to scheduling, flexibility, and grading account for over 16 percent of the total with the main concern centered on scheduling.

After categorizing the individual recommendations into similar topics, no single category thoroughly dominated the total percentage. Recommendations regarding the middle school staff such as: personnel who have adequate professional training, who can work well with fifth and sixth grade pupils, and who are not subject-matter orientated, accounted for the largest number. Suggestions concerning the school program, philosophy, and objectives ranked second in frequency. The individuals and/or groups to be involved in planning the middle school, the grade levels to be included, and the total pupil enrollment were least often recommended.

II. CONCLUSIONS

Based on the preceding findings, the following major conclusions were drawn regarding the middle school reported in Washington, Oregon, and California.

Educational reasons are not the prime movers for instituting middle schools. In 64 percent of the cases reported, the decision to establish the middle school was reached by school administrators for such purposes as: (1) eliminating crowded conditions in other schools, and (2) moving grade nine into the high school.

There is a lack of total planning in the physical plants housing middle school pupils. Twenty-three percent of the schools were remodeled to meet necessary needs, 62 percent were not designed or built as a middle school, leaving the incidence of instituting a middle school program in a building designed and built as one relatively low.

Eliminating crowded conditions in other schools, providing a program specially designed for preadolescents, and providing a better transition from elementary to high school are the three most important reasons for establishing middle schools found by this study, and tend to parallel the findings of William Alexander's 1968 study (1:112) in their rank order of importance. This study shows that in practice, however, the anticipated effectiveness of those reasons did not result.

The majority of reasons for instituting the middle schools have not been justified by practice. Seventy-five percent of the reasons for establishing the middle school declined in their anticipated effectiveness.

A need exists for a teaching staff who can better compliment the purposes and objectives of the middle school.

The largest number of problems and recommendations reported were related to improving the existing staff and employing more adequately prepared teachers.

The middle school is being primarily instituted as a remedy for overcrowded schools. Providing a program that relates more closely with the needs and interests of pre-adolescents and providing a smoother transition from elementary to high school are significant individual factors for establishing middle schools, but remain overshadowed by excess enrollment problems.

III. RECOMMENDATIONS

After an extensive review of the available literature concerning middle schools and a thorough analysis of the results of this study, the following recommendations are offered school districts considering the adoption of a middle school:

1. Begin planning the school early and consider what we know about the needs and interests of preadolescents.
2. Plan the building to fit the philosophy, objectives, program, and grade levels of the school.
3. Plan a flexible building that allows for changes in program and space allotments.
4. Initiate a comprehensive parent orientation program well in advance of opening the school.
5. Encourage parents and other community members to participate in the planning process.

6. Involve classroom teachers in planning the building and implementing the program.
7. Provide an early and comprehensive in-service program for the selected middle school personnel.
8. Hire administrators at least a year in advance to work on the program.
9. Select the middle school staff early with emphasis on personnel whose philosophies are reasonably consistent with the philosophy and objectives of the school.
10. Consider employing elementary trained teachers and/or personnel who can work well with pupils in the lower grades.
11. Carefully consider the type and extent of departmentalization.
12. Question the effectiveness of reducing financial costs by establishing a middle school.
13. Hesitate in adopting the middle school in order to eliminate overcrowded conditions.
14. Carefully plan for the different social and physical needs of the pupils in the lower grades.
15. Provide for program evaluation and involve the teaching staff.
16. Organize the middle school according to grades six through eight.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

BIBLIOGRAPHY

1. Alexander, William M. "The Middle School Movement," Theory into Practice, 7:114-117, June, 1968.
2. Alexander, William M. "The New Rchool in the Middle," Phi Delta Kappan, 50:355-357, February, 1969.
3. Atkins, Neil P. "Rethinking Education in the Middle," Theory into Practice, 7:118-119, June, 1968.
4. Batezel, George W. "The Middle School: Philosophy, Program, Organization," The Clearing House, 42: 487-490, April, 1968.
5. Bough, Max. "Theoretical and Practical Aspects of the Middle School," The Bulletin of the National Association of Secondary School Principals, 53: 11-15, March, 1969.
6. Brad, Pearl. "The Middle School in Practice," The Clearing House, 43:530-532, May, 1969.
7. Brimm, R. P. "Middle School or Junior High? Background and Rationale," The Bulletin of the National Association of Secondary School Principals, 53:1-7, March, 1969.
8. Cuff, William A. "Middle Schools on the March," The Bulletin of the National Association of Secondary School Principals, 51:82-86, February, 1967.
9. Curtis, Thomas E. "Middle Schools in Theory and Practice," The Bulletin of the National Association of Secondary School Principals, 52:135-140, May, 1968.
10. DiVirgilio, James. "The Administrative Role in Developing a Middle School," The Clearing House, 43:103-105, October, 1968.
11. Gastwirth, Paul. "Questions Facing the Middle School," The Clearing House, 41:472-475, April, 1967.
12. Grooms, M. Ann. Perspectives on the Middle School. Ohio: Charles E. Merrill Books, Inc., 1967. 152 pp.

13. Havighurst, Robert. "The Middle School Child in Contemporary Society," Theory into Practice, 7:120-122, June, 1968.
14. Heller, Robert C., and James C. Hansen. "The Middle School and Implications for the Guidance Program," Peabody Journal of Education, 46:291-297, March, 1969.
15. Howell, Bruce. "The Middle School--Is it Really Any Better?" The North Central Association Quarterly, 43:281-287, Winter, 1969.
16. Kindred, Leslie W. (ed). The Intermediate Schools. New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1968. 53lpp.
17. Madon, Constance A. "The Middle School: Its Philosophy and Purpose," The Clearing House, 40:329-330, February, 1966.
18. Moss, Theodore C. "The Middle School Comes and Takes Another Grade or Two," The National Elementary Principal, 48:37-41, February, 1969.
19. Murphy, Judith. Middle Schools. New York: Educational Facilities Laboratories, 1968. 64pp.
20. Nickerson, Neal C. "Regroup for Another Try," Minnesota Journal of Education, 43:12-15, November, 1966.
21. Post, Richard L. "Middle School: A Questionable Innovation," The Clearing House, 42:484-486, April, 1968.
22. Pray, Edgar H., and John A. McNamara. "Transition to Middle School," The Clearing House, 41:407-409, March, 1967.
23. Pumerantz, Philip. "Relevance of Change Imperatives in the Junior High and Middle School Dialogue," The Clearing House, 43:209-212, December, 1968.
24. Strickland, Joan H., and William Alexander. "Seeking Continuity in Early and Middle School Education," Phi Delta Kappan, 50:397-400, March, 1969.
25. Strickland, Virgil F. "Where Does the Ninth Grade Belong?" The Bulletin of the National Association of Secondary School Principals, 51:74-76, February, 1967.

26. The National Association of Secondary School Principals, "Recommended Grades or Years in Junior High or Middle Schools," The Bulletin of the National Association of Secondary School Principals, 51:68-70, February, 1967.
27. Turnbaugh, Roy C. "The Middle School--A Different Name or a New Concept?" The Clearing House, 43:86-88, October, 1968.
28. William, Emmett L. (ed.). "The Middle School," Theory into Practice, 7:106-107, June, 1968.

APPENDIX A

LETTER TO THE WASHINGTON STATE SUPERINTENDENT
OF PUBLIC INSTRUCTION

April 4, 1969

Dear

I am presently working toward a Master's Degree at Central Washington State College. My thesis topic is "Middle Schools in the Western United States."

I would appreciate your cooperation in sending me a list of the names and addresses of the state superintendents of public instruction in the following states:

Alaska
Hawaii
Montana
Oregon
California
Idaho
Utah
Colorado
Nevada
Wyoming
Arizona
New Mexico

Thank you for your cooperation and assistance.

Respectfully,

Ken Van Diest

APPENDIX B

LETTER TO ALL INDIVIDUAL STATE SUPERINTENDENTS
OF PUBLIC INSTRUCTION IN THE
THIRTEEN WESTERN STATES

April 24, 1969

Dear

I am presently working toward a Master of Education Degree at Central Washington State College. My topic is "Middle Schools in the Western United States."

I would greatly appreciate your cooperation in sending me a list of school names and addresses that are classified as middle schools in your state. I am primarily interested in those schools that are grouped in the fifth, sixth, seventh, and eighth grade levels and are termed "Middle Schools."

I realize that in some cases the total number might be too numerous to list. In such a case, it would be appreciated if a random or selected list was chosen by your office.

Your cooperation and assistance is appreciated. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Ken Van Diest

APPENDIX C

COVER LETTER AND QUESTIONNAIRE

October 14, 1969

Dear Principal:

Enclosed you will find a questionnaire concerning the middle school which is part of a study being undertaken under the direction of Central Washington State College. For the purpose of this study, a middle school is one that consists of grades five or six through grade eight and aids in the transition from elementary to high school.

It is quite possible that you participated in a study by William Alexander which was completed in June, 1968, and which dealt primarily with the reasons for establishment of middle schools. The present study proposes to start from the reasons found by Alexander and attempt to determine (1) whether the reasons given prior to reorganization proved valid after reorganization, (2) the major problems involved, and (3) valid recommendations for schools contemplating the move.

Your response, together with those of other administrators in Washington, Oregon, and California, will aid considerably in an effort to understand the reasons, problems, and recommendations associated with the adoption of a middle school.

The results of this survey will be made available to all respondents. All replies will be kept confidential, and under no circumstances will individual schools be identified.

Please accept my sincere thanks for your time and patience in helping me collect this data. I would appreciate having the questionnaire returned by December 15. The enclosed postpaid envelope is for your convenience in returning the questionnaire.

Respectfully,

Ken Van Diest

QUESTIONNAIRE

THE REASONS, PROBLEMS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS
ASSOCIATED WITH THE ADOPTION OF A MIDDLE SCHOOL

Principal's name: _____

Name of school district: _____

address	city	state	zip
---------	------	-------	-----

Your school enrollment is: _____

Please circle the grade organization in your school:

A. 6-8 B. 5-8 C. Other _____

In what year was your present grade level organization put into effect?

Was your school: (Please circle one)

- A. Designed and built as a middle school.
- B. Remodeled to meet necessary needs.
- C. Neither A or B
- D. Other _____

Which individual or group was the most instrumental in initiating action to institute a middle school in your district? (Please circle one)

- A. Teachers
- B. Principals
- C. The superintendent
- D. The school board
- E. Special committees or study groups
- F. Community individuals or groups

I would like a copy of the results of this study. Yes _____ No _____

Questionnaire Directions:

Please circle Yes or No under Column A (reasons for instituting a middle school) and also circle Yes or No under Column B (have those reasons proved effective?) Please answer the short fill-in questions as directed.

<u>REASONS</u>	<u>COLUMN A</u>		<u>COLUMN B</u>	
	(Was a reason for instituting a middle school)		(Has proved to be effective)	
A. To eliminate crowded conditions in other schools Comment: _____ _____	Yes	No	Yes	No
B. To utilize new school building Comment: _____ _____	Yes	No	Yes	No
C. To move grade nine into the high school Comment: _____ _____	Yes	No	Yes	No
D. To eliminate ninth grade discipline problems Comment: _____ _____	Yes	No	Yes	No
E. To reduce school financial costs Comment: _____ _____	Yes	No	Yes	No
F. To provide a better transition from elementary to high school Comment: _____ _____	Yes	No	Yes	No

- G. To provide a program specifically designed for pre-adolescents and that relates more closely with their needs and interests
 Yes No Yes No
 Comment: _____

- H. To provide for the earlier emotional, social, and physical development of pupils (grade 5-8 or 6-8)
 Yes No Yes No
 Comment: _____

- I. To better utilize existing staff, teaching equipment and classroom facilities
 Yes No Yes No
 Comment: _____

- J. To try out various innovations in teaching methods and curricular plans. (i.e.-team teaching, non-graded programs, etc.)
 Yes No Yes No
 Comment: _____

- K. To provide for more special services and/or specialization in grades 5 or 6
 Yes No Yes No
 Comment: _____

- L. To improve the guidance program in grades 5 and/or 6
 Yes No Yes No
 Comment: _____

- M. To eliminate or reduce the emphasis on interscholastic athletics
 Yes No Yes No
 Comment: _____

- N. To develop a better intramural program
Comment: _____

- Yes No Yes No
- O. To de-emphasize the social pressures of high school
Comment: _____

- Yes No Yes No
- P. To eliminate the Carnegie Unit
Comment: _____

- Yes No Yes No

PROBLEMS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

As an administrator of a middle school, what major problems have you encountered with the middle school that are different from a traditional junior high school? Please list these in rank order of importance.

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

What recommendations would you offer to a school district considering the adoption of the middle school? Please list.

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.