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Orientation Handbooks for Incoming Junior High Students and Their Parents for Winlock School District Number 232

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EDUCATIONAL TECHNOLOGY CENTER
CENTRAL WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY

ORIENTATION HANDBOOKS FOR INCOMING JUNIOR HIGH
STUDENTS AND THEIR PARENTS FOR WINLOCK
SCHOOL DISTRICT NUMBER 232

A Project Report
Presented to
The Graduate Faculty
Central Washington University

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

by
Patricia J. Imler
November, 1981

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Chapter I

INTRODUCTION, PURPOSE, AND RATIONALE

Introduction

Winlock School District #232 is located thirteen miles south of Centralia/Chehalis, Washington. It is a rural school district with two schools, K-6 and 7-12, and has a total student enrollment of approximately 700. The seventh grade students predominately come from within the district; however, two neighboring districts contribute less than fifteen percent to Winlock's seventh grade student enrollment.

At present, there is an incomplete orientation program for incoming seventh-graders and their parents. During the first two weeks of June, sixth-graders are invited to tour the junior/senior high school and are encouraged to ask questions of the student tour guides. Prior to school opening in the fall, the junior/senior high school principal invites incoming seventh grade students and their parents to the school and familiarizes them with curricula, school policies, and activities. Separate student/parent question and answer sessions follow the large group presentation. The evening is concluded with a tour of the buildings for both incoming students and their parents.

Purpose and Rationale

The purpose of this project is to develop for Winlock School District, a handbook for student and parent orientation into seventh grade. The project will include:

- 1) A review of recent trends and literature in the area of student and parent orientation;
- 2) a plan for implementation of the handbook;
- 3) handbooks for students and parents; and
- 4) an evaluation of the success of the handbooks.

For purposes of this project, the term incoming student shall mean any student about to enter or entering the seventh grade of a junior/senior high school. Junior/senior high school shall mean grades seven through twelve in one school. Orientation, as defined by Webster's New Collegiate Dictionary, is the act or process of acquainting with the existing situation or environment. (42:809) At Winlock, student orientation will acquaint incoming students with curricula, school policies and procedures, and activities. Parent orientation will present parents with physical, social, and mental characteristics of the teenager, school policies and procedures, and provide information concerning the curricula and activities.

One of the most perplexing times in the life of any individual is when he is subjected to a new environment that is different from the one to which he has been accustomed. Making the transition from elementary to junior/senior high school a smooth and pleasant one for incoming students has been a problem faced by educators since the disappearance of

the "little red school house."

A few years ago, after six years teaching the sixth grade, I was asked to change to the junior/senior high school because the administration wanted to bridge the gap in curricula from elementary school to seventh grade. Naturally, I was glad for the additional experience and agreed to the change. In the new situation I shared, to some degree, the emotional, educational, and social adjustments that incoming students must make.

What causes the problem of adjustment for incoming students? The reasons are many and varied, but these are probably the most outstanding as Paul Schwartz in his magazine article "Articulation Between the Elementary and Junior High School" states:

It is a recognized fact by educators that merely changing schools in itself can produce anxious moments, but the sudden change-over from having one teacher all day long to having six or seven teachers in different classrooms for different subjects can be of much concern to a twelve-year-old. (37:31)

For seven years these students have experienced the security of belonging to and being identified with a certain group. One teacher each year has guided and helped them in their education and social adjustments. The incoming students have been the "upperclassmen" of the elementary school - now they have to begin all over to gain status. They often feel strange in a new building, where they are relatively unknown, and find themselves having to cope with high school students. There are new rules, new courses, new and more homework

requirements, and changing clothes and showering in gym class. All this newness seems almost overwhelming to the erstwhile sheltered elementary student.

Ivan W. Fitzwater warns educators that:

The danger always exists that the mental health of youngsters may be affected by this abrupt change in school environment. In addition many weeks of valuable teaching time may be lost because junior high school teachers find it necessary to re-establish an atmosphere of security for learning. (19:36)

From my own experiences and observations I realized Winlock School District was not meeting the needs of incoming students. Our "sink or swim" method of advancing students from an elementary school to a junior/senior high school with a partial orientation process seemed to accelerate the already present feeling of inferiority, anxiety, and stress expressed by many of our students. Ivan Fitzwater emphasizes "adjustment problems like these have caused orientation programs to become absolutely necessary in most school systems." (19:36)

As schools have grown larger and more complex, school-community relations have tended to deteriorate. Parents talk about the disappearance of the personal element. They are confused about whom to contact in order to discuss the particular needs of their child. "In fact," Erna Evans explains in her magazine article "Orienting Junior High Parents":

They (parents) appear fearful that the schools are no longer interested in the individual student and that one pupil's concerns may seem trivial to this impersonal bureaucracy. She goes on to say parents of (incoming)

seventh grade students suffer from many apprehensions, the most prevalent of which is that the individual student will be lost in a sea of anonymity. (18:729)

Every school district wants parent cooperation, participation, and improved community relations. It would, therefore, be of benefit to the Winlock School District to orientate parents of incoming students to the school's policies and procedures.

Chapter II
BASIC CONSIDERATIONS IN PLANNING
ORIENTATION HANDBOOKS

The major emphasis of an orientation handbook is on alleviating anxieties and creating a more secure atmosphere for incoming students. Parents of incoming students also suffer from many apprehensions about their child's new school environment. The most prevalent being that their individual child will be lost in a sea of anonymity. Therefore, incoming student and parent needs and concerns must be the basis for planning orientation handbooks.

Orientation Based on Student Needs

An orientation handbook should be planned to be comprehensive in meeting incoming student needs and in helping him adjust to the new school. An incoming student needs to make a variety of adjustments. Fuller emphasized that:

Foremost among the social and personal needs are the needs for affection and security; for feeling of belonging and of being like others; for status and recognition in the group; for a sense of personal worth and self-esteem; for a chance to experience curiosity and to develop varied and satisfying interests; for a philosophy of life and a sense of conformity and consistency in terms of that philosophy; and a need to accept the conditions (the realities) of one's life.

The physiological needs include need for the materials and conditions essential to maintenance of health and need for sex adjustment. (22:146)

A great deal of the undesirable behavior among students results from the incoming student's efforts to meet his social needs. (22:146) Many of the objectives of the orientation handbook should be to meet the social needs of the incoming student. Also, the planner must keep in mind the physiological need of the incoming student who is in a period of rapid physical growth development.

The two basic needs are closely related. Actually, they are interdependent and interactive. Since they interact on one another, they are thought of as biosocial in nature. (38:115)

The school has a responsibility for helping pupils meet these so-called biosocial needs. The orientation handbook can play a major role in meeting this responsibility by expediting the adjustment and assimilation of the pupil to the school.

In developing an orientation handbook. the planner must realize that the incoming student in the junior/senior high school is not an adult, nor is he considered a child. He thinks and is ready to assume some of the freedoms and privileges of adulthood. In most cases, he wants to understand the new school, but there are many things which bewilder him.

A few things which bewilder incoming students and in which they should be oriented as a basis for ready adjustment to the new school are the following:

- 1) The customs and traditions of the school -- its

- history, songs and yells, special sports events, and honors and awards;
- 2) extra-class activities -- assemblies, clubs, music organizations. social functions, athletics, student government organizations, pupil publications and speech groups;
 - 3) certain administrative policies -- the marking system, use of textbooks and equipment, basis for promotions and failures, use of the library, participation in extra-class activities, the cafeteria, transportation, homework, and final examinations; and
 - 4) rules and regulations -- school hours, reasons for leaving classes or the building, absence and tardiness, changes in pupil programs, use of automobiles and bicycles, payment of fees and fines, mutilation of school property, corridor conduct, transfer or withdrawal from school, library rules, make-up work for absence, responsibility for valuables, and fire drills.
(25:240)

Making a list of this type in the local situation is one method of establishing a basis for planning and determining content for the orientation handbook.

One of the important things for the planner of an orientation handbook to remember is that as many incoming student problems as possible should be anticipated. Failures of certain incoming students to adjust to the new school will furnish valuable clues in solving problem areas. Handbook planners can profit by thinking through the problems encountered when entering a new school from the incoming student's angle which will give the planner a better insight into the smaller adjustment problems that could go undetected and therefore unplanned for in the orientation handbook.

(21:84)

Orientation Based on Parent Needs

An adequate orientation program involves some means of acquainting the parents of incoming students with the new school. Fox points out:

A good orientation program should also include means of acquainting the parents of new pupils with the new school...Orienting parents to the new school may well be as important as orienting pupils. (20:45)

Parents see seventh-graders as too young to attend the junior/senior high school; they see the loss of the protective aura of the elementary school; the parents view with initial trepidation many of the practices of the junior/senior high school - dances, interscholastic sports, an extensive array of courses, increased student choice and freedom.

Parent's anxieties may be alleviated by providing them with information to help them understand their adolescent's physical, mental and social adjustments. Fox states:

Individual growth and development is a unitary process. Many of the most important learning experiences that promote growth and development take place in the home. (20:45)

Taking a closer look at the characteristics that make-up the adolescent, as suggested by Kaplan (27:205-6), will provide a foundation of understanding for the parent to better help their child adjust to the new school. Not only is this a transitional period academically speaking, but this is a period of physical and social transition as well.

During this three-fold transition girls develop more

rapidly than boys and are usually taller and proportionately heavier than boys. Boys now are growing broad shouldered, deep chested and heavier with accompanying annoying voice changes. Muscular growth is very rapid and with it comes the awkward age that remains for the next two or three years. Because of this increase in size and strength of muscles, the youngsters show greater interest in outdoor activities. As the boys follow sports, the girls prefer, in addition to group games, small group activities that can be carried on by two or more people.

The concern over physical appearance should not be underestimated. While the girls are disturbed by the many physical changes, the boys are concerned about changing voice and growth of hair on the face.

Parents should keep in mind that no matter how keen their adolescent's enthusiasm is, their attention span may be short even if the activity is very engrossing. They are interested in fads, but these fads change overnight. They desire to conform to standards of their age group and feel the need of a group even though friendships tend to change rapidly. Girls are interested more in older boys and tend to look to high school boys for their "dates."

It is important here to remember that the standards of the group may be stronger than response to adult guidance. This explains why parental authority may be difficult to maintain during this period. Status within the family is often not as important as status with peers. The adolescent

now is beginning to seek his own place in life around him, thus tending to break away from adults. Unfortunately, this tendency goes hand in hand with a "know-it-all" attitude. The adolescent expects and demands the family to recognize the importance of his friends, his activities, and his group interest. He is highly sensitive and his feelings are very easily hurt either by peers or adults. Status takes priority over every aspect of developmental characteristics. The adolescent realizes that he can attain status through many and various devices. It is the school's and parents' responsibility to guide this seeking out of status along positive lines.

The third transition that faces the adolescent is the social one. All the problems mentioned above may be manifested in this social adjustment. Here the adolescent is, the incoming student in junior/senior high school, no longer a child, he thinks, ready to assume the freedoms and privileges of adulthood. Whereas, the parent is equally sure that his offspring, now in secondary school, is still a child exposed to all the temptations and vicissitudes that have never faced man. So it is on this uncommon ground that the adolescent and parent can and often do meet, discuss, and differ. Here is where the school, teachers, and parents can do yeoman's work in guiding the adolescent and helping him to see that he is no longer a child but on the other hand is not yet an adult.

Cooperation of the home in promoting good attendance,

satisfactory behavior, proper attitudes and successful learning experiences on the part of the adolescent is extremely significant in the adjustment of the incoming student. A good orientation handbook gives the parents an opportunity to understand the purposes, problems, and procedures of the new school and tends to further the full cooperation of home and school.

Orientation Handbook

The handbook has wide use and is a popular tool in orientation programs. The orientation handbook is often referred to as the "Welcome Booklet", to give it greater appeal. Because of the importance of the handbook, it will be described here in some detail.

The incoming student handbook should be planned to answer typical questions asked by students and to give general information that will help the student become acquainted with the school. To increase its effectiveness and to serve its intended purpose, it should be revised constantly. Dated information is quickly recognized by students and the handbook's effectiveness is lessened.

The handbook should be attractively illustrated and written in a style appealing to the pupils and parents it is intended to serve. Careful editing and the use of a better grade of paper will add to its voluntary and lasting usefulness. The most common size is $4\frac{1}{4}$ by $5\frac{1}{2}$ inches. This size is popular because it simplifies school duplication on

standard 8½ by 11 inch paper.

It can be written the preceding semester by an English class as a project, by a committee of pupils guided by the counselor and homeroom teachers of incoming students, or by the counselor, representative junior high teachers and sixth grade teachers and assisted by art pupils and the art teacher. In some schools it is published by the commercial department as a student project. The above suggestions for developmentation of the handbook were paraphrased from Smith. (38:142)

A great deal of attention should be given to the content and organization of the handbook. In reference to a study on item frequency in handbooks, Koos stated:

A list of items reported in the order of frequency at best gives a chaotic impression of the content of handbooks. One who examines a number of handbooks will encounter examples that are so poorly organized as to suggest the need of careful attention to organization in order to make this type of publication as useful as possible. (29:42)

Smith suggests that a handbook begin with a statement of how and why the booklet was written and an appeal to the incoming student to learn about their school and to share responsibility for its improvement. The foreward should reassure incoming students that they are welcome and will be treated with courtesy, consideration and friendliness from the beginning. (38:142)

In addition to the foreward, the handbook should contain the following items of general information:

1. A list of the entire personnel of the school, with titles and positions...
2. A plot of the building and grounds, with room numbers or other designation of the use of room space. This sketch should be kept on regular-sized pages, even though more than one page is needed.
3. The school colors, mottoes, insignia, and songs.
4. A list of names of all student-body officers and a word of welcome from the president.
5. Greetings from the principal.
6. Greetings from the school secretary, explaining how she and her office can help pupils.
7. Greetings from the low-seventh counselor, with a statement of how he will serve low-seventh pupils, where and when he can be seen.
8. A list of the low-seventh homeroom teachers, together with their room numbers.
9. A description of the location and operation of the attendance office, with emphasis upon regulations affecting pupils.
10. A description of the location and operation of the school nurse's office, together with important health and safety regulations.
11. A description of the location and operation of the cafeteria and its regulations. It is desirable to include here sample menus and prices.
12. A description of the instructional program, together with a statement of required and elective courses for grades 7 to 9.
13. A detailed time schedule.
14. A description and explanation of the student-body organization, with emphasis upon the student court and the indoor and outdoor traffic organizations.
15. A description of the assembly, showing its operation, the nature of its programs, and what is expected of pupils.
16. A description of student publications, showing how interested pupils may participate in these activities.
17. A description of other extra-class activities, with an explanation of how to join, the cost of participating in various activities, and the time the activities are scheduled. (38:143)

School personnel concerned with orientation seem to agree that the handbook is a valuable tool in helping the incoming student and their parents to become better informed, thus encouraging a more favorable attitude toward their new school.

Back-To-School Night

An important event of the school year in much of the literature reviewed was the early fall parent-student visitation night. This activity, usually called back-to-school night, has become an increasingly common method of improving school and community understanding throughout the United States.

At Forrestville North Upper Grade Center, Chicago, Illinois, a letter is mailed home to incoming students and parents inviting them to a back-to-school night. The principal welcomed the incoming students and their parents outlined what was expected of the students, explained what Forrestville had to offer, and stressed the importance of cooperation between the home and school. Discipline, good grooming, development of good study habits, and self-reliance were discussed as were the added responsibilities of the incoming student. The handbook, on pupil conduct and discipline sent to the incoming student and their parents, served as a basis for the discussion of conduct and discipline. Incoming students and their parents had an opportunity to discuss and ask questions of the principal. (30:135-6)

Kalamazoo Public Schools in Michigan, invited thier parents to school by sending them a letter.

Dear Parents:

Would you like to know more about the junior high school your child will be attending next year? You are invited to a meeting at South Junior High School Cafeteria on Monday evening, June 4, at 7:30 p.m. We Will talk about the child's daily life in junior high,

the noon hour, the health and physical education classes, the school services, the classroom and homeroom groupings for next fall, and other phases of school life. You will have an opportunity to meet your child's homeroom teacher for next fall as well as some of his classroom teachers. There will be an opportunity for you to ask questions that will help you better to understand our school.

It will be a splendid opportunity to get acquainted with the school and some of the teachers. Since our plans for next fall are somewhat different from usual, we are more than usually eager for you to attend. Students are not invited to come at this time, since they will be coming in school groups the following afternoon.

We will be looking forward to meeting you on June 4.
(4:278)

At Pattengill Junior High School, Lansing, Michigan, incoming students and their parents are invited to an orientation evening to acquaint them with parts of the school program, to give certain information which would be helpful to both students and parents in preparation for school in September, and to become acquainted with the physical setup of the building.

Plans for the Pattengill Orientation Evening include a general meeting in the auditorium at which time an explanation of policies, procedures, practices, and the counseling program are explained. The audience is then divided into discussion groups and moved from the auditorium into Pattengill. After the discussion period, those who wish to do so are conducted on a short tour through the building. Booklets of information are prepared and handed to the families on Pattengill Orientation Evening. (6:106)

An infinite variety of activities and procedures may be used for orienting incoming students and their parents. Which of these to employ should be decided upon the individual needs of the schools, incoming students, and their parents. The activities should be carried out systematically, and provision should be made for regular evaluation in order to determine whether the needs of the school, incoming students, and their parents are being met.

Chapter III
PROCEDURES OF THE PROJECT

Prior to developing and implementing handbooks for incoming students and their parents as part of Winlock's seventh grade orientation program, the writer initiated and obtained approval and support from the school board, superintendent, and junior/senior high school principal.

Information gleaned from reviewing current literature relating to orientation programs and handbooks and examining handbooks from some school districts in the State of Washington for their content and format were the basis for developmentation of this project.

The criterion used for selection of content for the student handbook was based on the following needs of incoming students to:

- A. adjust to a new environment
- B. know academic requirements
- C. know social and athletic activities
- D. know school policies and procedures, and
- E. eliminate instruction time lost due to incoming student questions relating to articulation between elementary and secondary school

Parent handbook criterion for content selection constituted the ensuing:

- A. Questions asked of the writer during parent conferences relating to adolescent's physical, mental, and social development.

- B. Concerns about school policies and procedures relevant to attendance, detention, grades, and progress reports, and
- C. Assistance in their child's transitional process.

Cognizant of people's receptiveness to informative handbook material, this writer espoused to have an eye-catching cover designed to entice the incoming student and their parents to read and contemplate the handbook information. Due to the prodigious body of information, the size of the booklets was reduced to $4\frac{1}{4}$ x $5\frac{1}{2}$ inches to enhance their readability.

The junior/senior high school principal was consulted for input relating to content, format, and implementation. His suggestions for accuracy and execution were utilized in development and implementation. A copy of the incoming student and parent handbooks is contained in Chapter IV.

Prior to the opening of school in the fall, a letter from the principal and writer along with both handbooks were mailed to incoming students and their parents. The letter welcomed them to Winlock Junior/Senior High School, introduced them to the handbooks, and invited them to an orientation event. The participants were also encouraged to bring their handbook to the gathering. A copy of the letter mailed to incoming students and their parents is contained in Appendix A.

The junior/senior high school principal agreed to entertain questions and clarify points of interest pertaining to the booklet's contents at the orientation event.

A month following the orientation occasion, a questionnaire to evaluate the success of the handbook's contents was given to all participating incoming students and mailed with a stamped self-addressed return envelope to participating parents. A copy of the student questionnaire and parent questionnaire are contained in Appendix B and C respectively.

A week after the parent questionnaire was mailed, a postcard was sent to participating parents encouraging them to return their questionnaire and thanking them for their assistance in evaluating the parent handbook.

This project was designed to help administrators, teachers, students, and parents of the Winlock School District understand and better adjust to the academic, social and emotional jump from elementary school to a junior/senior high school. It also provided an incoming student and his parents separate handbooks of information about their new environment. After implementation and evaluation of the orientation handbook, it would be subject to evaluation and modification each year.

Chapter IV
STUDENT HANDBOOK

PARENT HANDBOOK

Chapter V

SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS

So the data gathered might be of value in further student and parent handbooks, the summary of results and recommendations to be made are presented in this concluding chapter.

Summary

The main purpose in developing a handbook for incoming junior high students was to assist them in adjusting to their new school environment as quickly and easily as possible. It was the writer's belief that before these students could settle down and learn, they must feel secure in their new environment, and a student handbook contributed greatly to this feeling of security.

The parent handbook's purpose was to provide parents with information to assist them in understanding adolescent development, school policies, and academic progress reports. The parents' cooperation and understanding in supporting a partnership between home and school augmented their child's adjustment to seventh grade.

Student/Parent Welcome Night

The Winlock School District Student/Parent Welcome Night was attended by forty-four percent of the incoming

seventh grade students and forty percent of their parents. A general meeting of both students and parents was held to welcome them and introduce the administrators and teachers, who were able to attend. Following the general meeting, the students and parents were separated for a question and answer period. At the conclusion of both sessions, students and parents were given a tour of the school.

Student Concern Regarding Junior/Senior High School

Through the use of a questionnaire and student handbook, the seventh grade students evaluated their concerns about junior/senior high school life. The following pertains to these concerns.

Questions about school hours. As pointed out in Table I, forty-eight and sixty-four percent, respectively, of the seventh grade students surveyed indicated they were "greatly" concerned about where they were to go the first day of school. The students were least concerned about recess.

Table I
QUESTIONS ABOUT SCHOOL HOURS

Question	Great Concern	Some Concern	No Concern
What are the school hours?	12%	52%	37%
Are there any study periods?	11%	62%	27%
Will we go to classes the first day or just to the gymnasium?	48%	31%	21%
What time should we arrive at school?	26%	35%	39%
Is there any recess?	0%	4%	96%
How will I know where to go when school starts in the fall?	64%	21%	15%

Questions about subjects. Of the seventeen categories covered in the questionnaire, the questions pertaining to subject choices, physical education, clothing, and homework appeared to concern the seventh grade students the most as indicated in Table II.

Table II
QUESTIONS ABOUT SUBJECTS

Question	Great Concern	Some Concern	No Concern
How many subjects do I take?	15%	52%	33%
Is there any choice of subjects?	23%	42%	35%
May girls take shop and boys take home economics?	5%	31%	64%
Are science courses available?	6%	27%	67%
What do we wear for physical education?	23%	58%	19%
Is there much homework?	25%	54%	21%
What grading system is used?	16%	24%	60%
Are there class changes at the trimester's end?	9%	50%	31%
Will there be field trips of some kind?	17%	56%	27%
Do I get to choose any of my teachers?	17%	27%	56%
Will I be able to work on the school newspaper or annual?	2%	17%	81%
Why are there so many different teachers?	16%	17%	67%
How large are the classes?	9%	29%	62%
Do teachers give homework on weekends and holidays?	25%	46%	29%
Do I have to write in ink?	11%	52%	37%
Can you be a library, office, or teacher aide?	6%	21%	73%
Is there a regular library class?	8%	38%	54%

Questions about athletic program. It was interesting to note that the seventh grade students were more interested in knowing about the general aspects of junior high sports than specific details within the program itself. In Table III there appeared to be greatest interest in the question of grade average seventh-graders needed to participate in sports. Lesser concern centered around the questions of student body card, cheerleaders, and pep club.

Table III
QUESTIONS ABOUT ATHLETIC PROGRAM

Questions	Great Concern	Some Concern	No Concern
What grade average do I need to be in the sports' program?	38%	39%	23%
Do we need a physical examination before participating in sports?	27%	40%	33%
Do we need a student body card to participate in sports?	8%	44%	48%
Are there junior high cheerleaders?	18%	17%	65%
Is there a pep club?	10%	21%	69%

Questions about library. In Table IV the seventh-graders were more concerned about going to the library during class time than they were about the responsibility of returning a book on time.

Table IV
QUESTIONS ABOUT LIBRARY

Questions	Great Concern	Some Concern	No Concern
Is there a school library?	17%	29%	54%
What is the fine on library books?	8%	44%	48%
Can you go to the library during a class period?	15%	62%	23%

Questions about music. The questionnaire respondents indicated seven percent more interest in band or orchestra being taught as compared to chorus being taught which is evident in Table V.

Table V
QUESTIONS ABOUT MUSIC

Questions	Great Concern	Some Concern	No Concern
Is there a band or orchestra?	9%	31%	50%
Is there a chorus?	6%	27%	57%

Questions about school activities. In Table VI, the question of how to participate in junior high trips and special activities concerned eighty-eight percent of the seventh grade students. As a contrast, only fifty-eight percent of the students responding were concerned about attending high school athletic events and dances.

Table VI
QUESTIONS ABOUT SCHOOL ACTIVITIES

Questions	Great Concern	Some Concern	No Concern
Are there any clubs?	14%	44%	42%
Are there any dances?	26%	37%	37%
What are acceptable clothes for school?	11%	29%	60%
Are there school parties?	19%	54%	27%
Are there days when you wear certain kinds of clothes?	13%	56%	31%
May we buy a school annual?	22%	42%	37%
Are there junior high pep assemblies?	9%	60%	31%
Can we attend high school athletic events and dances?	14%	44%	42%
May we bring a visitor to school?	9%	37%	54%
How do we get to go on junior high trips and take part in special activities?	48%	40%	12%

Questions about supplies. The students surveyed pointed out in Table VII that their concerns pertaining to school supplies were relatively low. The greatest concern pertained to school fees.

Table VII
QUESTIONS ABOUT SUPPLIES

Questions	Great Concern	Some Concern	No Concern
Are books and supplies furnished by the school?	12%	40%	48%
Are school supplies available for purchase at the school?	17%	25%	58%
Do you have to buy the books?	22%	33%	45%
Do you have to have covers on your books?	8%	48%	44%
Should we bring any paper, pencils or pens?	29%	21%	50%
Do we bring any money with us?	17%	46%	37%
Are there any school fees I must pay?	27%	52%	21%

Questions about building facilities. In their new school environment most of the seventh-graders were exposed for the first time to lockers. It was intriguing to note in Table VIII that the concerns pertaining to locker rules were greater than choosing their locker and locker partner.

Table VIII
QUESTIONS ABOUT BUILDING FACILITIES

Questions	Great Concern	Some Concern	No Concern
Is a map of the school available?	37%	21%	42%
How many students are assigned to each locker?	19%	42%	39%
Are books kept in lockers or in desks?	19%	19%	62%
May we pick our locker or locker partner?	33%	27%	40%
What rules are there for lockers?	18%	44%	38%
Do the lockers have locks?	19%	37%	44%

Questions about student government. The students surveyed pointed out in Table IX they were concerned primarily about when they got their student body card. They were least concerned about student government.

Table IX
QUESTIONS ABOUT STUDENT GOVERNMENT

Questions	Great Concern	Some Concern	No Concern
Is there a student council?	11%	27%	62%
When do we get our student body card?	19%	44%	37%
Are there class officers?	14%	40%	46%

Questions about transportation. At the Winlock Junior/Senior High School all students ride the school bus to school. As the students' responses indicated in Table X, the greatest concerns were a note from their parents if they were going to a friend's house after school and availability of bus transportation if they stay after school. Their least concern was riding bicycles to school.

Table X
QUESTIONS ABOUT TRANSPORTATION

Questions	Great Concern	Some Concern	No Concern
May we ride bicycles to school?	3%	35%	62%
If necessary to stay after school, will bus transportation be available?	19%	52%	29%
Do we need a note from our parents if we are going to a friend's house after school?	30%	35%	35%

Questions about lunch program. Eighty-four percent of the seventh-graders were concerned the most about the cost of a lunch as indicated in Table XI. The students were least concerned about the way lunches were served and how much time they had for lunch.

Table XI
QUESTIONS ABOUT LUNCH PROGRAM

Questions	Great Concern	Some Concern	No Concern
Are lunches served in the cafeteria or by a lunch cart?	10%	23%	67%
What is the cost of a lunch?	40%	44%	16%
What do we do at lunch time?	18%	38%	44%
How many lunch periods are there?	12%	25%	63%
Are there seconds in lunch?	12%	38%	50%
Can we purchase milk only?	17%	35%	48%
Is the snack bar open during lunch?	29%	31%	40%

Questions about counseling. In Table XII, the questionnaire respondents indicated they were concerned about what procedures they were to follow relating to attendance and school rules. The respondents were the least concerned about the school enrollment total and receiving special help.

Table XII
QUESTIONS ABOUT COUNSELING

Questions	Great Concern	Some Concern	No Concern
What happens when you are absent?	46%	33%	21%
When do we get our first report cards?	21%	50%	29%
What are the rules of the school?	39%	40%	21%
What is necessary to get on the Honor Roll?	29%	42%	19%
How many students are there in the whole school?	8%	23%	69%
What happens if you are tardy?	39%	40%	21%
What is a passing grade?	32%	39%	29%
What happens if you do not get all your homework done?	44%	29%	27%
Are you allowed to leave the school if you have some kind of an appointment?	25%	40%	35%
What are the reasons for being expelled?	25%	40%	35%
What is detention?	21%	37%	42%
Is there any special help in junior high?	7%	44%	49%

Explanations about general school policies and procedures. Seventh grade students reread the general information, policies, and procedures for the Winlock Junior/Senior High School and evaluated those items as to their ease in understandability. The seventh-graders indicated, as is evident in Table XIII, one hundred percent understanding of lock and lockers, sportsmanship, and study habits. The students indicated difficulty in understanding fire and other drills, closed campus, assembly schedule, positive recognition, and map of the school.

Table XIII

EXPLANATIONS ABOUT GENERAL SCHOOL
POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Explanation	Yes	No
Attendance	96%	4%
Tardiness	94%	6%
Early Dismissal	94%	6%
Closed Campus	92%	8%
Detention	98%	2%
Lock and Lockers	100%	0%
Student Guests and Visitors	94%	6%
Riding School Buses	100%	0%
Fire and Other Drills	87%	13%
School Activities	98%	2%
Assemblies	98%	2%
Office Phones	96%	4%
Library	98%	2%
Cafeteria	98%	2%
Bell and Period Schedule	98%	2%
Assembly Schedule	92%	8%
Class Behavior	98%	2%
Hall Behavior	98%	2%
Dress and Appearance	96%	4%
Sportsmanship	100%	0%
Sports Eligibility	96%	4%
Student Rights and Responsibilities	96%	4%
Study Habits	100%	0%
Meaning of Grades	98%	2%
Notice of Needed Improvement	98%	2%
Positive Recognition	92%	8%
Grade Point Average (G.P.A.) and Honor Rolls	96%	4%
Academics	98%	2%
Map of School	85%	8%

General information questions. At the end of the general information survey, there was space for the students to explain what was not easily understood. The following is a list of these responses:

1. What do the words "positive recognition" and "closed campus" mean?
2. Where do I go during a fire drill?
3. Where is the front of the school on the map?
4. Which teachers teach in which room?
5. Can my parent call the school if I forget my absent, tardy, or early dismissal note?

Additional questions that seventh-graders had about junior/senior high school. At the end of each section of questions and at the end of the questionnaire, there was a space for students to write questions that they might have that were not covered in the questionnaire. The following is a list of these responses:

1. What happens if I get detention and do not take it?
2. What will my schedule be for the first day of school?
3. During homeroom class what am I to do?
4. How can I work in the snack bar and cafeteria?
5. What do I do if I forget my schedule of classes?
6. How many books am I allowed to check out of the library?

7. Are there school musical instruments available for student use?
8. Can I take both band and chorus?
9. What is a school annual?
10. What is A.F.S. Club?
11. Why do I need a cover on my books?
12. Do I have to register for school?
13. What do I do if I forget my locker number, key, or combination?
14. Can I change my locker?
15. Who is the student council?
16. Can I buy just the main dish or parts of the lunch?
17. Where are the seventh grade lockers?
18. What is an insurance waiver?
19. What do I do if my locker is broken into?

Parents' understanding of adolescents and school policies and procedures. Through the use of a mailed questionnaire, the parents of the seventh grade students evaluated the parent handbook information as to its helpfulness and ease in understandability. As indicated in Table XIV, page 40, on the average, eighty-three percent of the parents responded positively to the "helpful" category of the questionnaire, and one hundred percent responded positively to the "easily understood" category of the questionnaire.

Of the fifteen questions asked on the questionnaire, the questions pertaining to the physical, emotional, and intellectual growth of adolescents and the suggested list of parents' responsibilities received four percent negative response to the "helpful" category.

Table XIV
PARENT HANDBOOK QUESTIONNAIRE

Question	Easily Understood			Helpful		NA*
	Yes	No	NA*	Yes	No	
The information relating to physical, emotional, and intellectual growth of adolescents?	92%		8%	88%	4%	8%
What to do when my child has problems in school?	100%			83%		17%
Sometimes we, as teachers and parents, forget this is a changing emotional, physical, and intellectual time for adolescents and we need to remind ourselves that we, as adults, should be aware of the changing moods of adolescents. The suggested list of parents' responsibilities?	83%		17%	88%	4%	8%
Attendance policy and procedures?	100%			83%		17%
Tardiness policy and procedures?	100%			83%		17%
Early dismissal policy and procedures?	100%			83%		17%
Detention policy and procedures?	100%			83%		17%
Meaning of grades explanation?	100%			79%		21%
Notice of needed improvement procedures?	100%			83%		17%
Positive recognition procedures?	100%			83%		17%
Progress report procedures?	96%		4%	79%		21%
Parent conference procedures?	100%			83%		17%
Grade point average (G.P.A.) and honor rolls explanation?	100%			83%		17%
Student rights and responsibilities explanation?	96%		4%	83%		17%
Map of school?	100%			92%		8%
*No answer was given						

Parent questionnaire additional comments. Fifty-four percent of the parents wrote additional comments at the end of the parent questionnaire. The following is a list of these comments:

1. Very good idea.
2. Have each and every teacher also study the handbook.
3. Very well done.
4. Your time and effort in preparing both handbooks are appreciated in our family. Only wish they had been available a few years ago.
5. Thank you for taking the time to provide helpful information to us parents.
6. I found the parent handbook most helpful to me.
7. We are new in the district and found the handbook to be more helpful than any we have seen previously.
8. The information booklet and the tour of the school seemed to help relieve the nervous hassel when school started.
9. This handbook is concise and helpful. You did a great job. I wish we had this several years ago. It also shows parents the WHS staff is fair and reasonable and communication should be a 360° circle, parent-child-teacher.
10. I am familiar with the information in the handbook but for new students and parents it would be very

informative.

11. I disagree all the responsibility lies with the parents in the attitude of the child at school. I believe the teachers' attitudes at school toward the child is a major factor in that child's attitude, which the handbook fails to mention.
12. We would like you to know how helpful the handbook was to our daughter. It eased her fears tremendously.

Recommendations

This project of developing a student and a parent handbook for the Winlock Junior/Senior High School revealed to the writer some recommendations which will perhaps not only clarify some of the needs of incoming students and their parents to a junior/senior high school, but which will also help to improve the orientation program being conducted.

Student Handbook Information Improvements

1. Inform students about registering for school in the fall.
2. Explain that either band or chorus may be taken.
3. Define more clearly the terms: Student council, A.F.S., positive recognition, closed campus, insurance waiver, assembly schedule, and honor roll.

4. Describe what students are to do and where they are to go during fire and other drills.
5. Label the map of the school with the teacher's name, subject, and room number; the front of the school; the entrance, and seventh grade lockers.
6. Explain that parents may call the school to verify absences, tardies, and early dismissals.
7. Clarify what homeroom is and what takes place during that period of time?
8. Tell students when they will receive their schedule of classes.
9. State how a student may become employed in the cafeteria and snack bar.
10. Explain what a student should do if they forget their class schedule.
11. Justify why students should cover their textbooks.
12. State how many books a student may check out of the library at a given time.
13. Describe how students procure a musical instrument for band.
14. Elucidate about the school annual.
15. Narrate what a student should do if they forget their locker number, key, combination, or if their locker is vandalized.
16. Expound on purchasing a portion of the school lunch.

Parent Handbook Information Improvements

1. Change the phrasing of the first sentence of the second paragraph on page two to the following: In summary form, we would offer the following suggestions to aid you in guiding your son or daughter to becoming a successful and self-sufficient junior high student. This change in phrasing is less dogmatic and threatening to the parent.
2. Delete paragraph three on page two that begins with: The following general information will...
3. Label the map of the school with the teacher's name, subject, and room number, the front of the school, and entrance.
4. Add a sentence regarding teacher's attitude toward the child can have a positive and sometimes a negative effect on the child's attitude toward school. This should be inserted on page one as part of paragraph four.

Student Handbook Printing Corrections

1. Correct answer one of the question: What are the school hours? As follows: ...Each class is approximately fifty-five minutes with five minutes between classes.
2. Adjust spacing on the following items to be consistent with outlining format: Attendance,

Assemblies, BELL AND PERIOD SCHEDULE, ASSEMBLY SCHEDULE, Class Behavior, Hall Behavior.

Sportsmanship, Sports Eligibility, Grade Point Average (G.P.A.) and Honor Rolls, and Academics.

3. Indent numbers on the headings under GENERAL INFORMATION and SCHOOL STANDARDS.

Parent Handbook Printing Corrections

1. Insert headings to separate the information on pages one and two so it is visually more attractive and easier to read.
2. Adjust spacing on the following items to be consistent with outlining format: Numbered and letter information and paragraph one of page three.
3. Center school phone on inside cover.

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Appendix A

LETTER TO SEVENTH GRADE STUDENTS AND PARENTS

Winlock School District No. 232

311 N. W. FIR STREET
WINLOCK, WASHINGTON 98596

SUPERINTENDENT'S OFFICE 785-3582
DENNIS S. COUCH, SUPERINTENDENT
CAROL HAUN, BUSINESS MANAGER
WINLOCK JR./SR. HIGH SCHOOL 785-3537
WILLIAM ZEPP, PRINCIPAL
WINLOCK MILLER ELEMENTARY
SCHOOL 785-3516
CHARLES LAWS, PRINCIPAL

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

JERRY KORPI
CY MEYERS
BARBARA DUGAW
WILLIAM BEARSE
JOHN RAUPP

August 14, 1981

Dear Seventh Grade Student and Parents:

Summer vacation is almost at an end and you are probably thinking and preparing for the 1981-82 school year.

This year is one of particular interest to both of you as _____ will be entering the seventh grade.

The administrators, teachers, and students are eager to make this transition from elementary school to junior/senior high school a smooth and pleasant experience.

As a seventh-grader, we want you to feel comfortable about your first day of school, so we have enclosed a booklet that will answer most of your questions about coming to Winlock Junior/Senior High School.

As a parent, we realize you too might have some concerns about how you can help your child better adjust to this transition. We have enclosed a booklet for you that outlines some adolescent changes that occur with this age of student and some general information about school.

We look forward to meeting both of you and have planned a Student/Parent Welcome for August 26, 1981, at 7:30 p.m. in the gymnasium. At this time students and parents will be able to ask question about the information in their handbooks and any other concerns they may have. You will also be given the opportunity to tour the buildings.

Plan to join us in welcoming you to your new school and you are encouraged to bring your respective handbook to the event.

Sincerely,

William E. Zepp
Principal

Patti Imler
Junior High Teacher

Please note:

The signatures have been redacted due to security reasons.

Appendix B

PROJECT QUESTIONNAIRE FOR STUDENTS

PROJECT QUESTIONNAIRE FOR STUDENTS

Listed below are questions about the seventh grade handbook. Were these questions important to you when you came to Winlock Junior/Senior High School?

Please tell just how much these questions were of concern to you by placing a circle around the word at the left of the questions that best describe your feelings. Circle the word Great if it was of great concern, Some if it was of some concern, and None if it was of no concern at all.

Below each section of questions is a space for you to write other questions, about the topic that have not already been covered, that bothered you when you first entered seventh grade.

QUESTIONS ABOUT SCHOOL HOURS

- Great - Some - None What are the school hours?
- Great - Some - None Are there any study periods?
- Great - Some - None Will we go to classes the first day or just to the gymnasium?
- Great - Some - None What time should we arrive at school?
- Great - Some - None Is there any recess?
- Great - Some - None How will I know where to go when school starts in the fall?

QUESTIONS ABOUT SUBJECTS

- Great - Some - None How many subjects do I take?
- Great - Some - None Is there any choice of subjects?
- Great - Some - None May girls take shop and boys take home economics?

Great - Some - None	Are science courses available?
Great - Some - None	What do we wear for physical education?
Great - Some - None	Is there much homework?
Great - Some - None	What grading system is used?
Great - Some - None	Are there class changes at the trimester's end?
Great - Some - None	Will there be field trips of some kind?
Great - Some - None	Do I get to choose any of my teachers?
Great - Some - None	Will I be able to work on the school newspaper or annual?
Great - Some - None	Why are there so many different teachers?
Great - Some - None	How large are the classes?
Great - Some - None	Do teachers give homework on weekends and holidays?
Great - Some - None	Do I have to write in ink?
Great - Some - None	Can you be a library, office, or teacher aide?
Great - Some - None	Is there a regular library class?

QUESTIONS ABOUT ATHLETIC PROGRAM

Great - Some - None	What program is available for girls?
Great - Some - None	Are showers available?
Great - Some - None	Are there any after-school sports?

Great - Some - None	What grade average do I need to be in the sports' program?
Great - Some - None	Do we need a physical examination before participating in sports?
Great - Some - None	Do we need a student body card to participate in sports?
Great - Some - None	Are there junior high cheerleaders?
Great - Some - None	Is there a pep club?

QUESTIONS ABOUT LIBRARY

Great - Some - None	Is there a school library?
Great - Some - None	What is the fine on library books?
Great - Some - None	Can you go to the library during a class period?

QUESTIONS ABOUT MUSIC

Great - Some - None	Is there a band or orchestra?
Great - Some - None	Is there chorus?

QUESTIONS ABOUT SCHOOL ACTIVITIES

Great - Some - None	Are there any clubs?
Great - Some - None	Are there any dances?
Great - Some - None	What are acceptable clothes for school?
Great - Some - None	Are there school parties?
Great - Some - None	Are there days when you wear certain kinds of clothes?
Great - Some - None	May we buy a school annual?
Great - Some - None	Are there junior high pep assemblies?
Great - Some - None	Can we attend high school athletic events and dances?
Great - Some - None	How do we get to go on junior high trips and take part in special activities?

QUESTIONS ABOUT SUPPLIES

Great - Some - None	Are books and supplies furnished by the school?
Great - Some - None	Are school supplies available for purchase at the school?
Great - Some - None	Do you have to buy the books?
Great - Some - None	Do you have to have covers on your books?
Great - Some - None	Should we bring any paper, pencils, or pens?
Great - Some - None	Do we bring any money with us?
Great - Some - None	Are there any school fees I must pay?

QUESTIONS ABOUT BUILDING FACILITIES

Great - Some - None	Is a map of the school available?
Great - Some - None	How many students are assigned to each locker?
Great - Some - None	Are books kept in lockers or in desks?
Great - Some - None	May we pick our locker and locker partner?
Great - Some - None	What rules are there for lockers?
Great - Some - None	Do the lockers have locks?

QUESTIONS ABOUT STUDENT GOVERNMENT

Great - Some - None	Is there a Student Council?
Great - Some - None	When do we get our student body card?
Great - Some - None	Are there class officers?

QUESTIONS ABOUT TRANSPORTATION

Great - Some - None	May we ride bicycles to school?
---------------------	---------------------------------

Great - Some - None

If necessary to stay after school, will bus transportation be available?

Great - Some - None

Do we need a note from our parents if we are going to a friend's house after school?

QUESTIONS ABOUT LUNCH PROGRAM

Great - Some - None

Are lunches served in the cafeteria or by a lunch cart?

Great - Some - None

What is the cost of a lunch?

Great - Some - None

What do we do at lunch time?

Great - Some - None

How many lunch periods are there?

Great - Some - None

Are there seconds in lunch?

Great - Some - None

Can we purchase milk only?

Great - Some - None

Is the snack bar open during lunch?

QUESTIONS ABOUT COUNSELING

Great - Some - None

What happens when you are absent?

Great - Some - None

When do we get our first report card?

Great - Some - None

What are the rules of the school?

Great - Some - None

What is necessary to get on the Honor Roll?

Great - Some - None	How many students are there in the whole school?
Great - Some - None	What happens if you are tardy?
Great - Some - None	What is a passing grade?
Great - Some - None	What happens if you do not get all your homework done?
Great - Some - None	Are you allowed to leave the school if you have some kind of an appointment?
Great - Some - None	What are the reasons for being expelled?
Great - Some - None	What is detention?
Great - Some - None	Is there any special help in junior high?

GENERAL INFORMATION

Were the explanations about the following policies and procedures easily understood when you read them?

Yes - No	Attendance
Yes - No	Tardiness
Yes - No	Early Dismissal
Yes - No	Closed Campus
Yes - No	Detention
Yes - No	Lock and Lockers
Yes - No	Student Guests and Visitors
Yes - No	Riding School Buses
Yes - No	Fire and Other Drills

Yes - No	School Activities
Yes - No	Assemblies
Yes - No	Office Phones
Yes - No	Library
Yes - No	Cafeteria
Yes - No	Bell and Period Schedule
Yes - No	Assembly Schedule
Yes - No	Class Behavior
Yes - No	Hall Behavior
Yes - No	Dress and Appearance
Yes - No	Sportsmanship
Yes - No	Sports Eligibility
Yes - No	Student Rights and Responsibilities
Yes - No	Study Habits
Yes - No	Meaning of Grades
Yes - No	Notice of Needed Improvement
Yes - No	Positive Recognition
Yes - No	Grade Point Average (G.P.A.) and Honor Rolls
Yes - No	Academics
Yes - No	Map of School

Any questions under General Information you answered No, please explain below what you did not understand?

Please specify any additional information you would like to have added to this handbook for seventh grade students.

Appendix C
LETTER TO PARENTS

September 25, 1981

Dear Parents:

Enclosed is a questionnaire for you to evaluate the Parent Handbook you received in the mail prior to school beginning in the fall.

Please take a few minutes to answer the questions and mail it in the self-addressed stamped envelope, which is enclosed, by OCTOBER 1, 1981.

Thank you for your participation and cooperation in assessing the effectiveness of the Jr. Hi. Parent Handbook.

Sincerely,

Patti Imler
Jr. Hi. Teacher

Appendix D

PROJECT QUESTIONNAIRE FOR PARENTS

PROJECT QUESTIONNAIRE FOR PARENTS

Listed below are questions about the Winlock Junior/Senior High School Seventh Grade Parent Handbook.

Please tell if the information was Helpful and Easily Understood by placing a circle around the word under each category at the left of the question that best described your feelings. Circle Yes if it was helpful and easily understood and No if it was not helpful and helpful and easily understood.

<u>HELPFUL</u>	<u>EASILY UNDERSTOOD</u>	<u>QUESTIONS</u>
Yes - No	Yes - No	The information relating to physical, emotional, and intellectual growth of adolescents?
Yes - No	Yes - No	What to do when my child has problems in school?
Yes - No	Yes - No	Sometimes we, as teachers and parents, forget this is a changing emotional, physical, and intellectual time for adolescents and we need to remind ourselves that we, as adults, should be aware of the changing moods of adolescents. The suggested list of parents' responsibilities?
Yes - No	Yes - No	Attendance policy and procedures?
Yes - No	Yes - No	Tardiness policy and procedures?
Yes - No	Yes - No	Detention policy and procedures?
Yes - No	Yes - No	Meaning of grades explanation?
Yes - No	Yes - No	Notice of needed improvement procedures?
Yes - No	Yes - No	Positive recognition procedures?

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<u>HELPFUL</u>	<u>EASILY UNDERSTOOD</u>	<u>QUESTIONS</u>
Yes - No	Yes - No	Progress report procedures?
Yes - No	Yes - No	Parent conference procedures?
Yes - No	Yes - No	Grade point average (G.P.A.) and honor rolls explanation?
Yes - No	Yes - No	Student rights and responsibilities explanation?
Yes - No	Yes - No	Map of School

We would appreciate any additional information you would like to have added to make our handbook more useful in the future?

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS:
