

A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF CHANGE IN MIDDLE
LEVEL SCHOOL ORGANIZATION: MIDDLE
SCHOOL OR JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL?

By

MILTON THOMAS WORLEY

Bachelor of Science
Phillips University
Enid, Oklahoma
1965

Master of Education
Phillips University
Enid, Oklahoma
1969

Submitted to the Faculty of the
Graduate College of the
Oklahoma State University
in partial fulfillment of
the requirements for
the Degree of
DOCTOR OF EDUCATION
July, 1992

Thesis
1992D
W929c

A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF CHANGE IN MIDDLE
LEVEL SCHOOL ORGANIZATION: MIDDLE
SCHOOL OR JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL?

Thesis Approval:

Aerald L. Bass

Thesis Advisor

Walter C. Johnson

John H. Bufers

Kenneth H. Clari

Dean of Graduate College

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to express my appreciation to the many people who helped this endeavor to come to fruition. To Dr. Gerald R. Bass, my advisor, belong the most heartfelt thanks for his ongoing encouragement and guidance. Dr. Bass stayed at the task of seeing this project through, even though his professional responsibility at the university changed. Dr. Kenneth St. Clair sparked the selection of the topic for this paper and he continued to provide his time and advice even after his retirement. Dr. Deke Johnson's friendly encouragement was continually welcome. Dr. John Bayless, the committee member from outside of my home department, played an integral role in the development of this study.

Mrs. Vickie Kealiher served as my proofreader and was invaluable for her counsel. Randy Smith, Lynn Wilt, Nona Smith, Wayne Stewart, and I formed a study group in the midst of our coursework in the quest for our doctoral degrees. Not only did we prod each other to prepare for our comprehensive examinations, but we provided inspiration to keep each other working toward our ultimate goal of graduation.

Many people opened their lives to me to allow this dissertation to be written. A special thank you goes to

Mr. Joed Savage, Mr. John Edelemann, Mr. Lynn Hoskins, and Dr. Jerry Rippetoe for their cooperation in allowing me to study their schools. Dr. Kem Keithly provided the challenge which began this quest. Dr. Ruth Ann Erdner helped with encouragement and technical assistance.

To my family, I extend the deepest gratitude. My wife, Linda, has constantly encouraged me in all of my efforts. Her love and sustenance have provided a stable foundation for every enterprise I have ever attempted. My daughter, Rhonda, furnished my initial inspiration to venture to complete a doctoral degree program, and her faith in me was always evident. Ross, my son, accompanied me to many of my writing sessions and motivated me to complete my task. My sister, Marny, has shown unconditional support for me my entire life. All of my family deserves a most sincere thank you.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Chapter	Page
I. INTRODUCTION.	1
Statement of the Problem	5
Significance	6
Assumptions.	6
Limitations.	7
Definition of Terms.	7
II. REVIEW OF LITERATURE.	11
History of Middle Level Education.	11
The Middle School Philosophy	13
Organizational Change Theory	22
III. RESEARCH DESIGN	31
Population and Sample.	32
Alva Middle School	33
West Junior High School	33
Instruments.	34
Data Collection and Analysis	36
IV. PRESENTATION OF FINDINGS.	38
Alva Middle School	38
Physical Description	38
Change Process	40
Data from the Principal.	45
Data from the Teachers	50
Conclusion	52
West Junior High School.	53
Physical Description	53
Change Process	55
Data from the Principal.	56
Data from the Teachers	61
Conclusion	67
Comparison of the Two Schools.	68
Additional Information	71

Chapter	Page
V. SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, RECOMMENDATIONS, AND COMMENTARY	74
Summary	74
Conclusions	77
Recommendations	80
Commentary	83
BIBLIOGRAPHY.	86
APPENDIXES.	92
APPENDIX A - <u>MIDDLE SCHOOL PRACTICES INDEX</u>	93
APPENDIX B - <u>MIDDLE LEVEL PRACTICES INDEX.</u>	106
APPENDIX C - PRINCIPAL INTERVIEW PROTOCOL.	115
APPENDIX D - ALVA SUPERINTENDENT INTERVIEW PROTOCOL.	117
APPENDIX E - MOORE SUPERINTENDENT INTERVIEW PROTOCOL.	120

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

While education has always been an important theme in American history, it began small at the local level and developed slowly. Beginning in New England as an attempt to teach an appreciation of the Bible and to train an educated clergy, formal education touched few people. Perhaps less than 20% of the population received as much as a primary education by the time of the American Revolution (Haskey & McLendon, 1962). Around 1900, it was estimated that 60% of elementary age children and 25% of the 14-to-18 year old youth were attending school. By 1950, however, possibly 95% of all elementary age children were in school as were 85% of the high school age youth.

Haskey and McLendon (1962) noted that the organizational structure and the curricular content of the school have gone through many changes over the years, from the Latin grammar school, with its emphasis upon Latin and Greek to prepare students for college, to the academy initiated by Benjamin Franklin with a curriculum which included many subjects of more practical interest to the middle class. Education remained virtually private beyond the primary grades, however, until the 1874 Kalamazoo case in which the United States Supreme Court established the

legality of public support for secondary education.

While the one-room, one-teacher school continued as the standard organization in rural areas, educators in larger communities experimented with several types of school organization, including the Lancastrian system and, eventually, the graded school. The graded school obviously became the structure that took hold and is still the standard today. Since the inception of the graded school concept around 1850, many schemes for dividing and grouping students in school have been advocated and tried. While numerous varieties of grade arrangements have been implemented, the standard division of elementary and secondary has long been accepted.

The junior high school was the first, and remains the most common, grade arrangement for students between elementary and high school. However, the popularity of the middle school has grown in recent years. A National Association of Secondary School Principals study indicated that middle level principals have changed their views as to the most efficient grade organization system for middle level schools. In that study, Valentine, Clark, and Nickerson (1981) noted that an earlier 1966 survey showed that 65% of the principals favored the seven-eight-nine grade organization while in 1980 54% favored the six-seven-eight structure as the ideal grade middle level arrangement. The most frequently cited reasons for switching to the middle school were "to provide programs

suiting to middle level children; to provide better transition from elementary to high school; and to adjust to enrollment trends" (Valentine et al., 1981, p. 108).

Alexander and George (1981) listed the following six essential features of middle schools: guidance, transition/articulation, block time schedule/interdisciplinary teams, appropriate teaching strategies, exploration, and appropriate core curriculum/learning skills. Simply placing grades six through eight in one building cannot assure that successful implementation of the middle school philosophy or that the inclusion of effective program characteristics will be achieved. While many middle school programs remain essentially the same as they were in the junior high school, some junior high schools have adopted the ideas of a successful middle school without changing the grade composition or the name of the school (Alexander & George, 1981).

The change from the traditional junior high school organization to the middle school concept was proposed by numerous practitioners over a long period of time. This change process occurred not in isolation but simultaneously with a myriad of other change proposals. In the modern era, the National Commission on Excellence in Education published A Nation At Risk: The Imperative for Educational Reform in 1983. This report ushered in a new concern for reorganizing the schools as a means of developing excellence in education.

Turning Points: Preparing American Youth for the 21st Century, was issued in 1989 by the Carnegie Council on Adolescent Development. This report is of specific interest to the study of middle level education because of its advocacy of many of the same practices championed in the middle school philosophy. In the short time since the publication of Turning Points, many related articles have been written and many schools have undertaken related efforts at restructuring. In reference to Turning Points, Stephens (1991) proposed a difference between traditional education and an education for the 21st Century based on the following nine factors:

1. knowledge
2. curriculum
3. teachers
4. school organization
5. grouping for instruction
6. classroom activities
7. student placement
8. requirements
9. student assessment (p. 20)

There exists a great diversity in the grade level organization of schools in Oklahoma at this time. The state's two largest metropolitan school districts, Tulsa and Oklahoma City, have adopted the middle school model with grades six through eight, as have many of their surrounding suburban districts including Broken Arrow, Edmond, Norman, Yukon, Mustang, and Jenks. Districts in numerous other communities, such as Bartlesville and Chickasha, have also adopted the middle school model (Oklahoma State Department of Education, 1991).

Other Oklahoma suburban districts, such as Midwest City/Del City, Choctaw/Nicoma Park, Western Heights, Sand Springs, and Union have opted for the traditional junior high school model for grades seven through nine. Other districts outside the metropolitan area, such as Muskogee, Enid, Lawton, Altus, Shawnee, and Duncan, still use the junior high school structure.

Leaders in Putnam City, one of the largest Oklahoma City districts, have announced an intention to change from the junior high school to the middle school organization by the start of the 1993-94 school year. Ponca City educators and community members are currently studying the same type of change.

While the middle school and the junior high school are the most common middle school organizations around the state, there are several other variations in the organizational structure also in use. Owasso and Stillwater have both a middle school, with grades six and seven, and a junior high school, with grades eight and nine.

Statement of the Problem

This study was designed as an examination of several general questions. Is there a best way to provide educational services to young adolescents? How should schools be organized to best serve the middle level student? Is there a real difference between the

traditional junior high school and the middle school?

This inquiry focused on two school settings: one middle school which was previously organized as a junior high school (Alva Middle School in Alva, Oklahoma) and one junior high school which formerly had been a middle school (West Junior High School in Moore, Oklahoma). A specific aim was to determine why each change was initiated, the process used to achieve that change, and the differences, if any, which resulted from the change.

Significance

Since the topic of middle level education occupies center stage in much of the current literature, it appears to be an area of popular concern. With a national effort to restructure the schools to provide excellence in education, it seems important to investigate what happens when such restructuring occurs.

Assumptions

As the principal of an externally acknowledged effective junior high school including grades seven through nine, the author of this study could easily adopt the view that the junior high school structure provides the most appropriate setting in which to deliver educational services to early adolescents. However, since a preponderance of the current literature reviewed for this study extols the virtues of the middle school, it could be

just as tempting to jump on the bandwagon and blindly support change to the middle school concept solely on the grounds of the sweeping wave of recent history in that direction. It was the basic initial assumption of this study that middle schools and junior high schools are more alike than different. A second basic assumption of this study was that differences in middle school and junior high school programs are essentially structural rather than philosophical or pedagogical in nature.

Limitations

This research was not designed to be comprehensive, but rather was planned to examine a very narrow portion of an extremely dynamic and encompassing issue. Change is constantly being undertaken and/or considered by leaders in many districts. The characteristics of each community and school district differ significantly from those of others. The change which is reviewed here has already occurred. Only two schools were examined in this study, and they may not be typical. The purpose of this work was only to give some insight into a captivating issue. Any results of this investigation, naturally, may not apply anywhere else.

Definition of Terms

Middle School: For the purposes of this inquiry, the term "middle school" is used to refer to a school which is organized to include grades six through eight.

Junior High School: "Junior high school" is defined in this study as a school consisting of grades seven through nine.

Early Adolescents: Youngsters between the ages of 10 and 15 years of age are defined as "early adolescents." Other terms used in the literature to describe members of that age group include transescents, preadolescents, in-between-agers, and young adolescents.

The Middle School Philosophy: The "middle school philosophy" pertains to a set of assumptions about how and why a middle school should be organized. A plethora of versions of such a philosophy has been proposed and a variety of elements of successful middle schools have been presented and discussed in this study. The term in this study refers to any systematic set of assumptions to provide appropriate educational services to preadolescents.

Middle School Practices: Distinctive features and principles which exemplify the epitome of a middle school are referred to as "middle school practices." Specifically, these characteristics are measured by the Middle School Practices Index (MSPI) which was developed and introduced by Riegle (1971) and has since been used frequently in research studies of middle level education. The following 18 items are measured by the the MSPI:

Continuous progress: The middle school program should feature a nongraded organization that allows students to progress at their own individual rate regardless of chronological age.

Multi-material approach: The middle school program should feature a wide range of easily accessible instructional materials. Classroom activities should be planned around a multi-material approach rather than a basic textbook approach.

Flexible schedule: The middle school program should feature a schedule that encourages the investment of time based on educational needs rather than standardized time periods.

Social experiences: The middle school program should feature social experiences appropriate for transescent youth and should not emulate the social experiences of the high school.

Physical experiences: The middle school program should feature physical experiences based solely on the needs of the students. A broad range of intramural experiences should supplement the physical education classes, which should center their activity upon helping students understand their own bodies.

Intramural activities: The middle school program should feature intramural activities rather than interscholastic activities.

Team teaching: The middle school program should feature teaching patterns that allow students to interact with a variety of teachers in a wide range of subject areas.

Planned gradualism: The middle school program should feature experiences that assist early adolescents in making the transition from childhood dependence to adult independence, thereby helping them to bridge the gap between elementary school and senior high school.

Exploratory and enrichment studies: The middle school program should be broad enough to meet the individual interests of the students. Elective courses should be a part of the program of every student.

Guidance services: The middle school program should include both group and individual guidance services for all students.

Independent study: The middle school program should offer the opportunity for students to spend

time studying individual interests or needs that do not appear in the organized curricular offerings.

Basic skill repair and extension: The middle school program should offer opportunities for students to receive clinical help in basic learning skills.

Creative expression: The middle school should offer opportunities for students to express themselves in creative manners. Student-centered, student-directed, and student-developed activities should be encouraged.

Security factor: The middle school program should provide every student with a security group: a teacher that knows him well and a peer group that meets regularly.

Evaluation: The middle school program should provide an evaluation of a student's work that is personal, positive in nature, non-threatening, and strictly individualized.

Community relations: The middle school program should feature a varied program of community relations. Programs to inform, to entertain, to educate, and to understand the community should be offered.

Student services: The middle school program should feature specialized services for students. State, county, and community agencies should be utilized to expand the range of specialists.

Auxiliary services: The middle school program should utilize a highly diversified array of personnel such as volunteer parents, teacher aides, and clerical aides to facilitate the teaching staff (Reigle, 1971, pp. 43-45).

Middle Level Education: The entire broad range of education encompassing all configurations of organization between elementary and high school are referred to as "middle level education." This term includes both the middle school and the junior high school, regardless of what philosophy is embraced.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The review of the literature has been divided into two parts. The first contains a brief examination of the history and development of middle level education in America and in Oklahoma, followed by a more extensive survey of the middle school philosophy and middle school practices. The second section includes a review of current literature concerning theories of organizational change and studies of educational change. This organization was intended to provide a logical progression through the following questions in regard to middle level education.

Where did we come from?

Where are we now?

Where do we want to be?

How do we get there?

History of Middle Level Education

Much has been written concerning the middle level of education in the United States of America. According to Thomas (1991, p. 15), "As the middle school movement gained in popularity during the 1970s and 1980s, the professional literature became more diversified." While the middle

level has become one of the basic areas of educational focus in recent years, it has not always been that way. In the early years, American public education was divided simply into elementary and secondary categories with little or no regard to a transition between the two levels. The earliest call for the organization of a transitional school between elementary and secondary can be traced to Charles W. Eliot, the president of Harvard University (Lounsbury & Vars, 1978). What was called the reorganization movement, at the time, led to the development of the junior high school. This national movement resulted from Eliot's 1888 challenge to a national gathering of public school superintendents that better preparation of students for college was imperative. This challenge stimulated interest in the eventual downward extension of secondary education from its traditional four-year organization of grades 9-12.

In 1918, The Commission on the Reorganization of Secondary Education issued a report known as the Cardinal Principals of Secondary Education which strongly recommended the use of the junior high school. The Commission's proposal called for a division of six years of elementary education and six years of secondary education. The six years to be devoted to secondary education would then be divided into two periods which were designated as the junior and senior periods (Lounsbury & Vars, 1978). Four phrases were used to justify the creation of the junior high school: economy of time, improved holding

power, bridge the gap, and meet the needs of early adolescents.

Kindred (1981) indicated that the current concept of the middle school began to develop in the late 1950s. Thomas (1991) noted that the middle school concept developed out of the junior high school's apparent inability to address the needs of the students from ages 11 to 14. According to Lounsbury and Clark (1990), the middle school movement has gained impetus from at least three main sources:

- (1) the concern for academic excellence and specialization;
- (2) the belief that young people are maturing earlier;
- (3) dissatisfaction with the typical junior high school (p. 19.).

The Middle School Philosophy

A discussion has persisted for years regarding the description and definition of the middle school. A review of the literature has demonstrated that the development of a universally acceptable definition of a middle school is decidedly lacking. The histories of the junior high school and the middle school indicate that a title or grade level designation without a focus does not make for an effective school. While some may prefer not to formalize a definition of middle schools for fear that future possibilities would be limited and initiative might be

discouraged, many experts have put forth enumerations of the essentials of the middle school philosophy in an attempt to give direction to the movement to improve middle level education.

The National Middle School Association (NMSA) was established in 1974 by a group of middle school advocates in an effort to better articulate and promote curricular and programmatic goals. In 1977, the NMSA adopted and published five "priority goals" which have served to typify the middle school philosophy.

1. Every student should be well known as a person by at least one adult in the school who accepts responsibility for the student's guidance.
2. Every student should be helped to achieve optimum mastery of the skills of continued learning together with a commitment to their use and improvement.
3. Every student should have ample experiences designed to develop decision-making and problem-solving skills.
4. Every student should acquire a functional body of fundamental knowledge.
5. Every student should have opportunities to explore and develop interests in aesthetic, leisure, career, and other aspects of life (NMSA, 1977, p. 16).

Continuing its effort to further explain the middle school concept, the NMSA, in a 1982 pamphlet entitled This We Believe, listed 10 items which would be found in an effective middle school.

1. Educators knowledgeable about and committed to transescents
2. A balanced curriculum based on transescent needs

3. A range of organizational arrangements
4. Varied instructional strategies
5. A full exploratory program
6. Comprehensive advising and counseling
7. Continuous progress for students
8. Evaluation procedures compatible with transescent needs
9. Cooperative planning
10. Positive school climate (NMSA, 1982, p. 19)

Various leaders of the early middle school movement presented their own versions of the important elements of the middle school philosophy. Alexander and George (1981) cited the following essential features of middle schools.

Guidance. The guidance system should provide an adult who has the time and responsibility for each student, assuring familiarity and continuity in providing advice on academic, personal, and social matters.

Transition/Articulation. Schools should ensure a smooth transition between elementary and high school by orienting and providing close articulation and coordination of learning experiences.

Block Time Schedule/Interdisciplinary Teams. The daily schedule should feature blocks of instructional time during which interdisciplinary teams of teachers provide appropriate learning experiences for their students.

Appropriate Teaching Strategies. A variety of teaching strategies that have been shown to be particularly effective with students of this age group should be used.

Exploratory. Schools should offer a wide range of exploratory or elective courses for students to develop their interests, and all students should have the chance to participate in intramural athletics.

Appropriate Core Curriculum/Learning Skills. A core of learning experiences appropriate to the middle phase of schooling should be required of all students, and students should master learning skills needed for future study (Alexander & George, 1981, p.151).

In another attempt to explain the middle school philosophy, Lounsbury (1978) enumerated six middle school hallmarks, or basic characteristics of the school program, that best serve the diverse needs of young adolescents.

A block of time (rather than separate periods) scheduled for academic subjects, under the

direction of an interdisciplinary team of teachers

An extensive program of enrichment, exploratory, and special-interest classes and activities

A developmental skills program that emphasizes reading and other communication and learning skills

A teacher-based guidance program that helps students develop positive attitudes, values, and self-esteem

A program that recognizes and accommodates the social needs of early adolescents

A positive school climate and a school wide atmosphere of cooperation and caring (Lounsbury, 1978, p. 57)

Cawelti in his 1988 study conducted for the Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development, tested the Alexander and George essential features of middle schools. He indicated that middle schools are much more likely to use a teacher-adviser program, provide transition and articulation activities, use interdisciplinary teaching and block schedules, and provide staff development activities that extend the range of teaching strategies appropriate to their students. Cawelti went on to suggest, however, that it is more difficult to determine if middle schools provide a sequence of learning

experiences most appropriate for this age group.

In 1989 the Carnegie Council on Adolescent Development published their Turning Points report which renewed the momentum of the middle school movement. This document included the suggestion that middle schools be designed to meet the needs of the transescent age group by inclusion of the following characteristics.

Small communities are created where students and teachers have an opportunity to know each other well over time, particularly through teaming and small-group advisories.

A core academic program is taught that integrates high-content disciplines and encourages students to think critically, develop healthful lifestyles, and be active citizens.

Success for all students is ensured by giving them access to quality instruction and high expectations, eliminating tracking, promoting cooperative learning, providing flexible scheduling, and giving teachers adequate resources.

Teacher success with this age group is developed through special preparation and greater responsibility for outcomes, including curriculum and program development.

The health and social needs of this group are recognized through the curriculum and positive experiences provided students.

The school focus is broadened to include meaningful involvement of parents and substantive support from communities (Carnegie Council on Adolescent Development, 1989, p. 12).

In reference to the proposals put forth in Turning Points, Stephens (1991) suggested that

to bring about the desired changes in our educational systems in general, and in middle level education in particular, we must be aware of and accept a shift in perspective

from the traditional approach to one of educating our students for the 21st century (p. 19).

She went on to list nine factors related to middle level education which illustrate this difference in perspective.

1. Knowledge
Traditional education: Accumulated pieces of information that can be identified and listed.
For the 21st century: A combination of needed skills and information that is rapidly changing and infinite in scope. This initial difference in views provides the base from which the following factors flow.
2. Curriculum
Traditional education: Divided into academic and special subject areas separated by category.
For the 21st century: Thematic and interdisciplinary units closely related to the students' real world and including complex skills and factual information.
3. Teachers
Traditional education: Seen as subject specialists who understand and relate well to the students -- usually for one period per day.
For the 21st century: Seen as generalists who are competent in several subject areas and can teach a wide variety of students by adapting the program to the students' needs on teams that form close relationships with their students.
4. School organization
Traditional education: Subject compartmentalized by faculty, facility, and schedules.
For the 21st century: Subjects integrated through interdisciplinary teaching teams and flexible time blocks.
5. Grouping for instruction
Traditional education: Students grouped in classes according to their acquired knowledge as determined by test scores and other measures.
For the 21st century: Flexible grouping based on the needs and interests of the students and the skills to be developed.

6. Classroom activities
Traditional education: Information is imparted to students primarily through teacher talk, textbook assignments, or audiovisual presentations; the student is a passive learner.
For the 21st century: Information that is useful and meaningful to the student is imparted through active student participation in the classroom.

7. Student placement
Traditional education: Standards of desired physical, social, emotional, and intellectual growth used for student placement in school levels.
For the 21st century: Wide diversity of physical, social, emotional, and intellectual growth with the school adapting to students.

8. Requirements
Traditional education: Specific competencies for particular grades that are sequential and have prerequisites.
For the 21st century: Skills developed according to students' individual level of growth and readiness.

9. Student assessment
Traditional education: Evaluation primarily through teacher-developed tests, textbook tests, or standardized tests that focus on recall of learned facts.
For the 21st century: Evaluation through performance-based activities (observations, products, and tests) (Stephens, 1991, p. 19)

In an earlier report, published before Turning Points and not specifically concerned with an education for the 21st Century, Molitor and Dentler (1982) cited what they found to be the most frequently expressed aims of the middle school philosophy.

1. The middle school program should emphasize individual personal growth. It should be 'child-oriented' rather than 'subject-oriented.'

2. The middle school program should focus on the

'whole child' and encourage his development in all areas: physical, social, emotional, and intellectual.

3. The middle school program should adapt to the great differences in maturity, learning styles, and levels of ability among children in the middle grades. The program should provide opportunities for working with each child at his own level and on his individual needs and interests.
4. The middle school program should emphasize broad learning and exploration. The program should avoid premature specialization or channeling of student interests.
5. The middle school program should focus on the continued development of basic skills and critical thinking and learning skills. There should be less emphasis on the content areas.
6. The middle school program should emphasize integration of information within and across subject areas.
7. The middle school program should be distinctive from other levels of education, and provide a smooth transition from the self-contained elementary classroom to the more complex environment of the senior high.
8. The middle school program should recognize the increased sophistication of today's children, yet avoid placing them in social situations for which they are not ready (Molitor & Dentler, 1982, p. 17).

Williamson and Johnston (1991) reported on the change by leaders of the Ann Arbor, Michigan, Public Schools to the middle school philosophy. They asserted that students at the middle level have distinct physical, social, emotional, and intellectual needs. To meet these needs, it is necessary for the total school staff to function as a team, along with parents, students, and the community. They reported that the Ann Arbor school board members

established as their goals to create and maintain middle schools and an environment which

recognizes the distinct needs of young people during a time of transition, based on the necessity of working consciously with the many developmental changes of young people.

calls for taking students from where they are and developing programs to meet their needs. It is a time for building and reinforcing skills, delving into increasingly abstract concepts and exploring a multitude of topics and activities.

assumes that students want to and need to organize their knowledge, learn to work well in groups, and become increasingly independent while recognizing the interdependence of all people.

encompasses organizational patterns that direct the energy and vitality of emerging adolescents toward realization of their potential (p. 61).

Williamson and Johnston also cited the Ann Arbor board's commitment that middle schools provide the following opportunities.

Learning - a strong program that provides for the achievement of all students and recognizes that students have different styles and varied rates of learning, and varied environments that enable students to become increasingly motivated as independent and as cooperative group learners in a multi-cultural school system and in preparation for a multi-cultural society.

Exploration - opportunities for the individual to discover and explore new ideas and to develop skills and interests within an environment that acknowledges individual learning styles.

Guidance/Support - support services that promote stability, growth toward self-realization, increasing independence, and responsible behavior.

Identity - opportunities for students to be recognized as individuals and build self-esteem as defined by the student's perception of himself/herself and by the regard in which the student is held among other students within the learning community.

Physical Development - experiences and challenges designed to address the rapid changes and varied physical needs of students.

Socialization - experiences that develop positive problem-solving and decision-making skills in order for students to function as increasingly responsible members of groups and the community (Williamson & Johnston, 1991, p. 61).

Arhar (1991) pointed out that the reorganization of middle level educators into interdisciplinary teams as a means of creating a sense of community which fosters social bonding has been proposed by many middle level philosophers. Interdisciplinary teaming is recommended as a way to break down the isolation and anonymity which adolescents frequently feel in school, in effect enabling students to develop both academically and personally.

Kanthak (1992) enumerated the following 10 principles of successful middle level schools.

1. Organization into small communities of learning.
2. Student centered culture.
3. Teachers expert at teaching young adolescents.
4. Relevant curriculum.
5. Appropriate instructional practice.
6. On-going advisement and guidance.
7. Comprehensive assessment.
8. Appropriate activities.
9. Advocates for students and families.
10. Visionary leadership (p. 1).

Organizational Change Theory

Lauerman (1991) indicated that the literature concerning change processes suggests that, while change is actually a tapestry of concepts from a number of disciplines, it is often perceived as logical, rational,

and separate. Schein (1985) argued that how one goes about analyzing change depends on one's frame of reference, one's initial assumptions about the change process, and one's goals.

Etzioni (1991), in discussing decision making and social change, suggested three approaches to decision making which include rationalism, incrementalism, and mixed scanning. Rationalism assumes that those individuals or groups responsible for making decisions have all the knowledge necessary to determine the proper course and will act rationally in evaluating the information they possess. Incrementalism appears to be more entropic, suggesting that no one is totally rational and that most decisions are made randomly by building on previous random decisions. The rational model is most associated with totalitarianism while incrementalism appears to be much more pluralistic. The third model which Etzioni promoted, mixed scanning, attempts to strike a balance between the other two extremes. Etzioni favored an attempt to evolve a new decision-making model based on values, habits, and emotions rather than on high-power information processing.

According to Smith (1982), what is designated as change depends on the perspective from which events are viewed. Perspective may include that of

- (1) a member of the group who is personally affected by a set of events
- (2) a change agent who is deliberately attempting to produce new and different responses in members of the group

- (3) a group member who is not affected but who observes what may be happening to fellow group members
- (4) an outside observer of history reconstructing events (Smith, 1982, p. 132).

Not only does the individual perspective play a role in understanding change, but there are several theoretical assumptions and implicit models of the change process. Schein (1985) indicated that change can be viewed as a general evolutionary process; an adaptation, learning, or specific evolutionary process; a therapeutic process; a revolutionary process; or a managed process. The assumption of the general evolutionary process model is that forces for change come from within the group and are natural and inevitable and progress through stages of evolution. The adaptation, learning, or specific evolutionary theory would emphasize environmental manipulations as the keys to change. The assumption of the therapeutic model would state that change is related to the action of a change agent whose intent is to improve the situation. The revolutionary model would argue that power is a key variable in human organizational change. Finally, the managed process model would focus on those forces that can to some degree be controlled (pp. 304-309).

Mauriel (1989) suggested that much of today's thinking about the change process grew out of the work of Kurt Lewin in the 1950s. According to Mauriel, Lewin pointed out that people were most comfortable in a state of equilibrium.

Since change disturbs that equilibrium, two kinds of forces then exist in conflict with each other. Driving forces help bring about change, and restraining forces inhibit action.

Fullan and Stiegelbauer (1991) indicated that the conscientious examination of the educational change process is quite new. They discerned four phases in the youthful evolution of the study and practice of planned educational change. Fullan and Stiegelbauer labeled these four phases as

1. Adoption (1960s)
2. Implementation failure (1970-77)
3. Implementation success (1978-82)
4. Intensification vs. restructuring (1983-90)
(p. 5).

They explained that the adoption era of the 1960s developed as a part of the post-Sputnik crisis in education and was characterized by such large-scale curriculum changes as new math, radical revisions in chemistry and physics, open classrooms, and individualized instruction. This period, incidentally, corresponds with the birth of the middle school concept. In the early 1970s, innovation received a poor reputation as a backlash to the idea of "change for the sake of change." The implementation success stage, from 1978 to 1982, was characterized by

implementation research and practice, school improvement, effective schools, staff development (e.g., coaching), and leadership (e.g., the role of the principal) all more or less independently documented success stories and provided lists of key factors and processes associated with these accomplishments (Fullan & Stiegelbauer, 1991, p. 6).

Perhaps these later changes noted by Fullan and Stiegelbauer were viewed as piecemeal or too small-scale for the public at large because, with A Nation at Risk in 1983, American policymakers embarked upon a new emphasis on high-powered, nationwide educational reform. Fullan and Stiegelbauer (1991) suggested that this new wave of reform can be divided into two segments, one labeled intensification and the other called restructuring, which are currently competing for supporters. "Intensification" is characterized by

increased definition of curriculum, mandated textbooks, standardized tests tightly aligned with curriculum, specification of teaching and administrative methods backed up by evaluation, and monitoring (p.7).

"Restructuring," on the other hand,

usually involves school-based management; enhanced roles for teachers in instruction and decision making; integration of multiple integration of multiple innovations; restructured timetables supporting collaborative work cultures; radical reorganization of teacher education; new roles such as mentors, coaches, and other teacher leadership arrangements; and revamping and developing the shared mission and goals of the school among teachers, administrators, the community and sometimes students (p. 7).

DeBruyn (1992) indicated that there are seven concerns regarding change which can be easily identified by the typical expressions used in each stage.

1. Awareness: I am not concerned about it
2. Informational: I would like to know more about it.
3. Personal: How will it affect me?
4. Management: I seem to be spending all my time getting materials ready.

5. Consequence: How is my position affecting young people?
6. Collaboration: I am concerned about relating what I am doing with what other teachers are doing.
7. Refocusing: I have an idea about something that would work even better (DeBruyn, 1992, p. 3).

Sarason (1990) argued that much of what is referred to as change in education is not fundamental, structural change but, rather is superficial.

Schools today are not what they were twenty or thirty years ago. They have changed but in the spirit of the popular song containing the line 'I am true to you in my fashion', which means that the changes are cosmetic and not fundamental (p. 5).

Educational reformers tend to confuse legislative mandates and policy pronouncements as change (Sarason, 1990). Such a perception reflects only the first and easiest stage in the dynamic of the change process.

Assuming that the goals of change can be achieved by a process that could be called human mechanical engineering, insensitive to what the change will activate in the phenomenology of individuals and their institutional relationships, they confuse a change in policy with a change in practice (p. 101).

Sergiovanni (1992) implied that in today's schools many leaders impede fundamental change by placing process before substance and form before function. As a result, there is an emphasis on doing things right, at the expense of doing the right things. According to Sarason (1990), as long as educational reform is thought of in terms of altering classrooms and schools -- what goes on in them --

educational reform is doomed.

MacPhail-Wilcox, Forbes, and Parramore (1990) explained that changing the structure of a school is not like changing a component part of a production line. More complex means are needed to overcome the inertia of a bureaucratic structure that has endured for a century.

David (1991) proposed that the current effort toward school reform differs from previous reform efforts in two ways: it is driven by a focus on student performance, based on the premise that all students can and must learn at higher levels, and it is a long-term commitment to fundamental, systemic change.

Earlier reform efforts, including the "excellence" movement, emphasized quantitative changes imposed from the top, such as a longer school year, more hours in the school day, more homework, and tougher course requirements for graduation (Payzant, 1989). Payzant contrasted that with the 1990s change movement which works from the bottom up.

It starts where learning is transacted between teachers and students. It acknowledges that the best form for that transaction might be different in different schools and that schools should be able to organize themselves differently. It recognizes that people in every school must decide on a vision of what that school can be, set high expectations, and collaborate on strategies for making sure students learn. School level changes will demand changes in the central bureaucracies of our school systems (p. 19).

Spady (1988) suggested that organizing for results is an inherently attractive concept. It implies a deliberate

attempt to plan and conduct essential activities to accomplish aims. The goal should be to have all students learn well, not just the fastest, the brightest, or the most advantaged. However, Spady lamented that educational systems, schools, and instructional programs are not organized to achieve or to ensure successful results. Instead, they are organized primarily for student custody and administrative convenience. He maintained that, if schools were to be organized for results, "major changes in our philosophy, purpose, operations, and structures" would need to be made (p. 4).

DiegmueLLer (1991) indicated that school change embodies three steps: changes in rules, roles, and relationships. The initial task is to get people talking. She implied that this is not easy since educators are a group of individuals who generally operate in the isolation of their own classrooms or offices.

Payzant (1989) concurred by stating that educators naturally both cherish what they know and fear the unexpected, and possibly unintended, consequences of change. He pointed out, as an example, that learning to collaborate is difficult for teachers who were trained to work self-sufficiently in isolated classrooms. He also suggested that future change needs to involve change on a different order from the change educators have dealt with in the past. This change needs to acknowledge that education can be significantly better and demands that

educators be both patient and persistent.

Vassallo (1990) reported that many middle schools are created to satisfy a school system's budget requirements and shifting enrollment trends, not to meet the children's educational needs. Vassallo asked the following question of school districts contemplating a change to middle schools: Does the board's plan fulfill an educational mandate, or does it merely rearrange students to make best use of building space? He suggested that the "former is good pedagogy; the latter, mediocre housekeeping" (p. 37).

In describing the difficult and traumatic experience of one school's change from a junior high school to a middle school, Shimniok (1992) pointed out that "positive results can obscure the real struggles that schools must be willing to face in order to realize a successful change" (p. 27). She also indicated that teachers, no matter how dedicated or respected, are not anxious to expend an enormous amount of energy merely to satisfy what is perceived as the appetite for educational novelty. In times of change, experience conditions belief and a certain amount of tension among all involved parties can be productive. Shimniok further suggested that "shared leadership should increase power at every level and result in a greater sense of efficacy for all involved -- teachers, parents, and administrators alike" (p. 29). The beneficiaries of such efforts should always be the students, or the crusade will not be supported by those whose support is essential.

CHAPTER III

RESEARCH DESIGN

A current question of concern to many school leaders is focused on the best method by which to deliver academic services to young adolescents in American public schools. Much has been written in the current professional literature about the virtues of the middle school organizational structure as opposed to the traditional junior high school. The purpose of this study was to examine a junior high school which had once been a middle school and to probe a middle school which had previously been a junior high school. The study was then focused by several questions. Is there a best way to provide educational services to young adolescents? How should schools be organized to best serve the middle level student? Is there a real difference between the traditional junior high school and the middle school?

Two schools, one middle school and one junior high school, were studied to see if it could be determined why each school changed from its former organizational structure, what process was used to accomplish this change, what differences occurred as a result of the change, and whether either school achieved its desired goal as a consequence of reorganization.

Population and Sample

While plentiful examples are present in Oklahoma of both the junior high school and the middle school, research for this inquiry concentrated on an examination of only two actual school settings. Selected were one middle school which had previously been organized as a junior high school and one junior high school which had formerly been structured as a middle school.

According to the Educational Directory 1991-92 (Oklahoma State Department of Education, 1991), 166 schools in the state were identified as middle schools. The largest portion of these middle schools, 140 or 84% of the total, were organized for grades six through eight. Grades seven and eight comprised the student population of 20 middle schools. Five middle schools included grades six and seven, while one was structured for grades five through eight.

The Educational Directory 1991-92 contained listings for 158 junior high schools. Of these, 118 (75%) were organized for grades seven through nine. The second most popular organization, used by 30 junior highs 19%, consisted of grades seven and eight. Eight junior highs were composed of grades eight and nine, and only two were made up of grades six through eight.

Alva middle school in Alva, Oklahoma, and West Junior High School in Moore, Oklahoma, were selected to serve as

representative samples for this survey. Selection of these two schools was primarily an arbitrary effort; therefore, it is not the intent of the project to attempt to extrapolate any results of this study to any other schools. While there are many characteristics which make these two schools typical of schools similarly composed, they were not necessarily selected to be representative of a wider population.

Alva Middle School

Alva Middle School was organized for the most common Oklahoma middle school grade configuration, that being grades six through eight. The school was listed as a middle school for the first time in the Educational Directory 1991-92, having previously been listed as a junior high school consisting of grades seven and eight.

Alva Middle School is the only middle school located in a small northwestern Oklahoma community whose school district is composed of one high school consisting of grades 9 through 12 and three elementary schools, each of which houses a different pair of grades, K-1, 2-3, and 4-5. Alva Middle School served 240 students with one administrator and a faculty of 22 teachers.

West Junior High School

West Junior High School represents the majority of Oklahoma junior high schools which are composed of grades

seven through nine. The junior high schools in the Moore school district were last categorized as middle schools in 1987-88, at which time they housed grades seven and eight. The district at that time also operated mid-high schools with grades 9 and 10. In 1992, Moore had 4 junior high schools, all of which had previously been organized as either middle schools or mid-high schools, 2 high schools, and 18 elementary schools. West Junior High served 976 students and was the smallest junior high school in the Moore district. A principal, 2 assistant principals, and 55 teachers comprise the faculty at West.

Both Alva Middle School and West Junior High School now fall within the most common grade classification for their respective categories of school. Neither was organized according to the most common category for its previous classification before changing to its current organizational structure.

Instruments

The Middle School Practices Index (MSPI) (Appendix A) was used in this study to collect data regarding the degree to which such practices had been implemented in the sample schools. The MSPI was administered to the principal of each of the schools involved in the study. Riegle constructed the MSPI in 1971 as part of his doctoral research at Michigan State University. The MSPI has since been used as an instrument in numerous studies to help

measure the degree of implementation of the 18 middle school practices identified by Riegle. Pook (1981) applied the MSPI to the study of middle schools in Colorado. Butler (1983) used a variation of the MSPI to conduct an inquiry into the practices of all of the middle schools in Oklahoma. Jennings (1985) and Thomas (1991) replicated portions of the Butler study. During the 20 years since the MSPI was first created, it has been used in numerous studies but has never been published or formally adopted as a standardized measure of middle school practices. Pook (1981) maintained that the instrument was judged to have a 0.70 point biserial correlation coefficient between school scores and expert judgment. Thomas (1991) cited a report that the Hoyt estimate of reliability for the MSPI was 0.90.

To obtain data from the teachers at each of the schools in the study, a revised questionnaire was constructed which included only questions for which the teachers should have personal knowledge. This instrument was entitled the Middle Level Practices Index (MLPI) (Appendix B). The MLPI originated as a result of consultation with a panel of experts associated with research conducted at Oklahoma State University. This panel had been familiar with the use of the MSPI for research with principals in Oklahoma to obtain data concerning the implementation of certain middle school practices in the state. The reliability of the MLPI was projected to remain

consistent with that of the MSPI. An additional feature of the MLPI was the inclusion of spaces within which teachers could respond to questionnaire items as they pertained to the school both before and after the change had occurred in grade level organization.

Data Collection and Analysis

The initial investigation began with a telephone conversation with the principal of each of the respective schools. These calls were followed by personal visits to the campuses of the schools being studied. Each principal was subsequently interviewed using the interview protocol found in Appendix C. A tour of the building was conducted at each site and introductions were made to various members of the faculties of the buildings. A copy of the MSPI was left with each principal to be completed and returned at a later time.

Later additional interviews were conducted with the superintendents of the two school districts using a separate interview protocol with each individual (See Appendix D and Appendix E). Meanwhile, several teachers who had experienced the change from one organization to the other at each school were questioned informally. No interview protocol was utilized with these teachers.

The MLPI was given to a group of Moore teachers who had been teaching in that school system before it was converted from the middle school organization to the junior

high school configuration. In Alva, the MLPI was administered to the sixth grade team members since it was later discovered that they were the only faculty members in that district to have experienced the change from the junior high school to the middle school. The teachers were asked to respond to each questionnaire item as to the degree of implementation of middle school practices before and after the change in grade level organization had occurred in their respective buildings.

Additional data were gathered at each school site as a result of direct observation in an effort to establish a case study. Interviews were held at each school with involved personnel. While the MSPI and MLPI questionnaires provided the basic data, the observations conducted during the site visits and the interviews with school leaders in each district served to validate that information through triangulation.

CHAPTER IV

PRESENTATION OF FINDINGS

This study was conducted to investigate the change of organization from a junior high school to a middle school in Alva, Oklahoma and the change of organization from a middle school to a junior high school in Moore, Oklahoma. Data reported were collected by conducting observations, performing interviews, and administering questionnaires. The findings which follow were obtained in this manner.

Alva Middle School

Physical Description

Alva Middle School exemplifies a school with a new building, a new principal, and a new philosophy. Located in the northwest region of Oklahoma, Alva is the largest community in a predominately rural section of the state. While the population has a primarily agrarian focus, Alva is home for a regional state university which is perceived to heighten the educational expectations of the community as well as to make it somewhat more cosmopolitan. The entire student population of the Alva public school system in 1991-1992 totaled 1,025. These students are enrolled in five units including one high school composed of grades

9-12; three elementary schools, consisting of grades K-1, 2-3, and 4-5; and one middle school serving grades 6-8 which is included in the sample for this study.

Approximately 240 students are enrolled in Alva Middle School which is staffed by 22 faculty members, a counselor, and a principal. The Alva school board initiated the transition to the middle school organization during the 1990-1991 school term with 1991-1992 as the first year of implementation.

The new Alva Middle School building emerged as a result of a need to rebuild the old junior high school which had been damaged by fire and had deteriorated with age. When the condition of the old facility was investigated, it was learned that it had extensive asbestos problems which proved easier and more economical to eliminate by demolition of the old building and building a new structure. The new facade is attached to the old industrial arts building which is connected to the district's gymnasium, giving the building a campus appearance. The ancillary facilities expanded the variety of educational services which can be offered in the middle school. The focal point of the campus revolves around the library/media center which sits at the front of the property and allows access to the remainder of the school in three directions. The central architectural appointment on the south wall of the library is an oval window which allows the sun to shine into the open space and illuminate

book shelves and study tables. In the floor under the window is an engraved marble replica of the old junior high school symbolizing the connection between the new middle school and the former structure.

The main entrance doors at the south end of the building lead into two corridors, one on either side of the library. The majority of the classrooms are located along these hallways. The principal's office is located to the west of the library with a student center/commons area in between. To the north of the library is the home economics room which is adjacent to the cafeteria and school kitchen. The band and chorus rooms are located at the northeast end of the building while the technology education area is found at the northwest corner.

The center section of the building, which begins on the south with the library and ends on the north with the kitchen, forms more than a physical barrier between the classrooms on either side; it also delineates the philosophical division which exists in the school. The classrooms to the east of the central core are for the seventh and eighth grades, while the classrooms to the west of the central core house the sixth grade.

Change Process

The change to the middle school in Alva was initially planned to be a gradual transition with conversion of one grade per year to the new concept. Since the sixth grade

had previously not been housed with the seventh and eighth grades, the district decided to begin with the lower grade and work up one grade each year over a period of three years until the entire school was operating as a middle school. Therefore, the seventh and eighth grades are still operating as they always have, as a junior high school, and only the sixth grade is conducted as a middle school.

The sixth grade organization in Alva consists of a team of four teachers, one for each academic area of English, mathematics, social studies, and science. In addition to their individual planning periods, they also have a team planning time each day. The team concept is one of the middle school concepts most strongly accepted by the Alva sixth grade teachers. They meet daily to discuss student progress, student placement, curriculum, and scheduling of allotted time. When asked for a copy of the sixth grade teachers' class schedule, the principal replied that he did not have one; the teachers scheduled their own time within blocks set aside for their academic subjects. Only the students' exploratory courses such as band, chorus, or technical education were assigned to regular time segments, the period during which the academic teachers met for planning.

In an observed team meeting, the sixth grade teachers indicated that their relations with the other teachers were less than desirable. One team member indicated that an upper grade teacher had once made the comment, "Oh, you are

one of the teachers with two planning periods." Another member of the team, the only male, explained that he had been moved to the sixth grade just prior to the beginning of the school year and that he had more difficulty adjusting to the new organization and concept than had his colleagues. He had previously been an eighth grade science teacher, devoted to departmentalization, while the women members of the team had all originally served as elementary teachers who he perceived to be more open to teaching across the curriculum. The principal suggested that teachers trained for elementary schools seemed to be better prepared to assume the role of a middle school teacher than those who were certified and experienced in secondary education.

According to both the superintendent and the principal, the decision in Alva to convert from the junior high school organization to the middle school concept came from the top down. The superintendent, along with several members of the board of education, had attended workshops at National School Boards Association conventions during which the virtues of the middle school philosophy were extolled. Once the superintendent accepted the idea, with the endorsement of the school board, the decision was made to change to the middle school. Apparently, teachers, students, and patrons were excluded from the decision making process. The decision to establish a school encompassing the middle school concept developed

concurrently with the need to construct a new facility.

Once the board adopted the superintendent's proposal to build a new school and to change its instructional philosophy, a national search was conducted to hire a principal with experience in creating a middle school. John Edelemann, from northern Indiana, was hired to become the principal of the new Alva Middle School. Mr. Edelemann had been serving as a middle school principal near Geary, Indiana, and had previous experience opening a new middle school. He had a young family and desired to move from an urban to a rural setting to provide a more wholesome environment for raising his own children. Possessing a genuinely warm smile and a teddy bear personality, one can easily ascertain his professional concern for the the students in his care and his devotion to the middle school philosophy. These qualities and this experience led the Alva school board to choose Mr. Edelemann as the change agent to lead its district in establishing a middle school.

The teachers were involved only after the decision to change the school organization had been made and a new principal had been hired to implement the change. The teachers were given in-service training in the middle school concept at workshops conducted by faculty members from Northwestern Oklahoma State University. Teams of teachers were sent out to visit various school districts in the state, such as Edmond, that already had operational middle schools. Even after the staff development training

and on site observations, many of the teachers were opposed to the change. However, the superintendent, Mr. Lynn Hoskins, remained committed to the change and enjoyed the backing of the board of education. Mr. Hoskins is a man with a dynamic voice who speaks in a folksy manner. A former vocational agriculture teacher, he rose to the rank of superintendent after serving as the high school principal. Once committed to the middle school concept, Mr. Hoskins was able to exert his leadership skills to gain the support of the members of the board of education.

The superintendent pointed out that the creation of a middle school was imperative if the district wanted to serve the needs of students he described as being "too old to play with toys and too young to drive cars." The principal and superintendent both cited the same research findings about the physiological development of seventh graders, which cited the growth patterns of the tail bone for twelve year old youngsters as an explanation of their restlessness. Both men expressed a firm belief in and commitment to establishing a successful middle school for the students in the Alva district.

The superintendent conveyed a desire to provide middle level students with as many exploratory opportunities as possible as one of the fundamental motivations behind the shift to the middle school. He stressed that the technology education program was an excellent example of how the students were provided with such exploratory

ventures. However, the same technology education program is provided at the junior high schools in Moore.

The principal emphasized the value of the team teaching concept and the merit of flexible scheduling as reasons supporting the change to the middle school. He pointed to the daily teacher team meetings as evidence of the efforts to improve the effectiveness of the school as a result of moving to the middle school format.

The superintendent and the principal expressed agreement regarding the many similarities between the junior high schools they had once administered and the current middle school. They each listed several programs that were common to both school organizations. An instrumental marching band, a vocal music program, group physical education classes, interscholastic athletic sports competition, and a basic academic curriculum were provided in both settings.

Data from the Principal

Mr. Edelemann provided the subsequent information as a result of his answers to the questions on the MSPI. Continuous progress programs were not used at the Alva Middle School. The multi-textbook approach to learning is currently used in only a few courses.

The instructional materials center in the building houses more than 5,000 books and is directed by a certified librarian. According to the principal, audio-visual

materials other than films and videos are used for classroom instruction very frequently by a few of the staff and only occasionally by the others. General library books, current newspapers, below grade level reading material, current magazines, files of past issues of newspapers, above grade level reading materials, a card catalogue of material housed, and files of past issues of magazines are housed in the instructional materials center as are filmstrips, motion pictures (films and videos), overhead transparencies, phonograph records, photo and/or thermal copy machines, maps, globes, and charts.

The principal disclosed that the basic time block used to build the class schedule is a 45-minute module. The Alva Middle School schedule at the present time could best be described as traditional, modified by "block-time." The master class schedule can be changed for the sixth grade only by the teachers when a need is identified in their daily planning with other teachers. For the seventh and eighth grades, the master class time schedule can be changed by seeking administrative approval for a special change or by requesting a change for the next semester.

A team teaching program is operated in only the sixth grade at the time of this study. Between 30 and 60 percent of the staff is involved in the team teaching programs. A student in the sixth grade averages 180 minutes or more per day in a team teaching program. A student in grades seven or eight averages less than forty minutes per day in a team

taught situation. Teaching teams are organized to include fully certified teachers and student teachers.

While a modified departmentalized approach is used in the Alva Middle School program, the actual structure changes as students advance from initial enrollment as sixth graders to completion of the eighth grade. The amount of time provided in the classroom for instruction in basic learning skills varies greatly due to the individualized program in which teachers operate. It is estimated that the average sixth grade student spends approximately 15 minutes per day in independent study while the average seventh and eighth grader spends around 30 minutes per day in independent study. Students working in independent study situations work on topics assigned to them by the teacher. Students with poor basic skills can get special help in the areas of reading, spelling, grammar, mathematics, and physical education instead of working on independent study.

Instruction in art is required for all students for one nine week period each year. Instruction in vocal music is required for one year and is referred to as an exploratory course rather than an elective class. The amount of time set aside for elective courses increases with each successive grade. Students are allowed to select courses of interest from a range of electives in grades seven and eight but not in grade six. Elective classes currently offered at the Alva Middle school are vocal

music, art, band, home economics, technology education, and Quest.

The Alva Middle School has no official student school newspaper. Most students do not get experience in creative dramatics while enrolled in the Alva Middle School and no dramatic productions are presented. Oratorical activities such as debate and public address are provided only for the gifted and talented students. Talent shows are not in the school program.

Supervision of club activities is done by staff members who are paid extra for those sponsorships for which they volunteer. At present, the principal estimated that 25% or less of the students regularly participate in at least one club activity. School dances are held jointly for all three grades. A club program for all students is offered in each grade but only a math club and a chess club currently exist. School social functions are held at the school both during the afternoon and the evening for all three grades.

Inter-scholastic competition is currently offered in several sports. The physical education program serves all students in the six and seventh grades but only some of the students in the eighth grade. The competitive aspects of the physical education program are emphasized to a high degree for both boys and girls while the emphasis on the developmental aspects is low. Intramural activities are not scheduled for any of the students in any of the grades.

Specialized areas in which services are available to students include guidance counseling, speech therapy, special reading programs, clinic services for emotionally disturbed students, and special education programs for mentally handicapped students. Auxiliary helpers who act as teacher assistants, clerical aides, and resource personnel in the building are also present. They include volunteers from the community, volunteers from the student body, and student teachers and interns.

Guidance services are available upon request by the student or the teacher for all students every day. Guidance staff members work closely with the teachers of the student for whom they have concern. Guidance counselors are not expected to help teachers build their own guidance skills.

The role of the teacher in guidance is not important in the school's guidance plan and therefore not encouraged. No formal provisions are made for the teacher to provide specific guidance services in the teacher-pupil relationship. Group guidance sessions are held by the guidance counselors only on special occasions.

A student's academic progress is formally reported to parents four times per year. Parent-teacher-student conferences are held on a school-wide basis twice per year and evaluation of students' work is reported by use of a standard report card with letter grades twice per year. The school currently sends out a parents' newsletter on a

regular basis as well as special issues when the need arises. The community newspaper is also used as part of the school's public relations program. The staff presents informational programs related to the school's functions at open house programs and regularly scheduled "seminar type" meetings planned for parents in conjunction with the parents' organization. The school currently has a parents' organization that is active.

Data from the Teachers

A questionnaire known as the Middle Level Practices Index was administered to teachers who had experienced the change to the middle school philosophy at the Alva Middle School. Data from the teachers was obtained from this source and the teachers responses to the MLPI presented the basis for the following information. The teachers were asked to indicate how things were before the change and how things were after the change. Only responses which indicated a difference before and after were included in this section.

The teachers indicated that the basic time block used to build the schedule is now a 45 minute module while it had previously been a 30 minute module. The former school schedule is described as traditional, and the new schedule is identified as flexible to the degree that students and teachers control the daily time usage, and changes occur regularly according to the teachers. Teaching teams did

not exist at the junior high but are an integral part of the sixth grade at the middle school and are made up of fully certified teachers only. Students with poor basic skills can get individual special help provided by special staff members trained to treat such situations in reading and mathematics. Previously, students could get such help in reading and spelling in addition to reading and mathematics.

Instruction in vocal music is now required of all students in the sixth grade, but previously it was not required at any grade level. Students are now allowed to select courses of interest from a range of electives in the seventh and eighth grades; before they were not allowed to choose electives in any grade. Electives offered in the building as a middle school include vocal music, art, and band while as a junior high school technical education was the only elective course provided. Sixth grade elective courses are no longer called electives. The new term used for such classes is exploratory.

Many of the specialized services available to students in the junior high school were also available in the middle school setting. Personnel and programs available in both settings include guidance counselors, speech therapists, and special education programs for the mentally handicapped. A special reading teacher was provided in the junior high but is no longer available in the middle school.

In regard to public relations and extra curricular programs only two differences were indicated by the teachers. Community service projects by the students are now carried out occasionally for a special purpose but were previously not a part of the school program. School dances are now held for each grade, but previously none were held at all by the school.

Conclusion

There was little or no disagreement between the principal's responses to the MSPI and those of the teachers to corresponding items on the MLPI. The superintendent, the principal, and the team member teachers were all in accord with the belief that the middle school is a better way to organize a school for early adolescents than is the junior high school. Much commitment to the middle school philosophy was expressed by the superintendent, the principal, and the sixth grade teachers. While some resistance to the middle school was apparent among several of the upper grade teachers, the principal and the superintendent verbalized a dedication to the concept and a determination to see the change process through to a successful conclusion.

West Junior High School

Physical Description

Located in a large metropolitan suburb populated primarily by middle and upper middle income families, West Junior High School is one of four junior highs in the school district. Situated between Oklahoma City and Norman, Moore is close to the University of Oklahoma and includes within its boundary Oklahoma City Community College, one of the two largest community colleges in the state. Major shopping areas and medical facilities are close at hand. As a cosmopolitan community, Moore has grown significantly over the last decade. Moore, a sprawling district, geographically, encompasses 177 square miles of territory. The district boasts an enrollment of 16,850 students and employs 1,102 certified staff and 565 classified support personnel. The Moore school district currently has 2 high schools (10-12), 4 junior high schools (7-9), and 17 elementary schools (K-6).

Brink, Highland East, Highland West, and West Junior High Schools constitute the middle level organization of the Moore public schools. Until 1988, the Moore district had three middle schools, two mid-high schools, and one high school within its secondary grade organization. The middle schools housed grades 7 and 8, while the mid-highs were composed of grades 9 and 10. The former senior high school encompassed only grades 11 and 12.

West Junior High, the smallest middle level school in Moore, has an enrollment of 976 students with a staff of 55 teachers, 3 counselors, 1 librarian, and 3 administrators. One guidance counselor is assigned to each grade within the school. The principal has two assistant principals to support the administrative functions of the building. The school is housed in a large red brick structure of contemporary architectural design located off a major north/south thoroughfare, Pennsylvania Avenue. Centered on a large tract of land, acres of grass surround the attractive campus. A large parking lot, play ground/practice field space, and a tennis complex are all provided on the site. Within one mile of the school, a large municipal public park, Earlywine, contains a running/jogging track, two 18-hole golf courses, and an 18-court tennis complex, all of which are available for use by the school.

The administrative offices are found just inside the main entrance, across the hall from the library/media center. The counselors' offices are housed in an annex which has been added to the building within the last 10 to 11 years. Specialized rooms are provided for industrial arts and home economics classes, as well as for computer and foreign language laboratories. The classroom space appeared to be sufficient in size, colorful, and well-appointed and equipped.

Change Process

The size of the student population was the overriding issue which compelled the change in Moore from the previous grade organization pattern to the present structure. As the district had grown, the one senior high school had become especially overcrowded, and action was needed to address this situation. At its peak, the high school had over 2,000 students in only two grades.

The superintendent, Dr. Jerry Rippetoe, suggested that the proposal to realign the grade distribution in the district's schools was an administrative initiative. When asked why Moore changed its organizational structure, he reported that, "in a nut shell," it involved the size of the high school. The principal of West Junior High School, Mr. Joed Savage, indicated that once the decision to reorganize the district was announced committees were organized to look into the possibilities. The committees were composed of both administrators and teachers. Dr. Rippetoe said that the teachers did not object to the plan he proposed to the board. One central factor which he credited for the acceptance of Moore's reorganization plan by the teachers is the fact that the middle schools which had existed were middle schools "in name only." Dr. Rippetoe reported that none of the middle school philosophy was in use in Moore when middle schools consisted of grades six and seven.

According to the superintendent, the teachers realized that student over-crowding was a significant problem, and they were "hungry for change." No differences in how the teachers would teach were required by the proposal. No distinction in the programs offered the students would be undertaken. No curricular changes were suggested. The important element of the proposal involved the opening of a new high school and the placement of three grades of students in each of two levels of secondary school rather than two grades in each of three levels.

The main changes therefore were the transfer of 6th grade students to the elementary schools, the shift of 9th graders to the junior high schools, and the move of 10th graders to the high schools. No fundamental changes in curriculum or school climate were anticipated and none have occurred, according to the superintendent. He characterized the Moore junior high schools as traditional. They are departmentalized, have no team teaching, and no flexible scheduling. Interscholastic athletic competition is supported and vocal and instrumental music programs are offered.

Data from the Principal

Mr. Savage reported that continuous progress programs are used only by some students, only in special education classes, for all three calendar years at West Junior High. The multi-textbook approach to learning is currently used

in only a few courses. The basic time block used to build the schedule is a 55-minute module. Mr. Savage described the present schedule as traditional. The master class time schedule can be changed by teachers when need arises by seeking administrative approval for a special change, by requesting a change for the next semester, or by requesting a change for the next year.

The instructional materials center in the building houses more than 5,000 books and is staffed with one certified librarian. According to the principal, audio-visual materials other than films and videos are used for classroom instruction very frequently by a few of the staff and only occasionally by the others. General library books, current newspapers, below-level reading material, current magazines, files of past issues of newspapers, above-grade-level reading materials, a card catalogue of material, student publications, and files of past issues of magazines are housed in the instructional materials center. Also housed in the instructional materials center are filmstrips, motion pictures (film or videos), overhead transparencies, phonograph records, ditto and/or mimeo machines, maps, globes, charts, and display cases or areas.

Team teaching programs operate for students enrolled only in special education classes. Therefore, less than 30% of the staff is involved in a team teaching situation. No ninth grade students participate in team teaching programs, and the special education students in the seventh

and eighth grades average less than 40 minutes per day in such programs. The school program as it evolves from enrollment to completion of the last grade can best be described as completely departmentalized for the entire grade span. Daily instruction in a developmental reading program is provided for all students in the seventh and eighth grades and for poor readers in the ninth grade. Clinics or special classes to treat the problems of students with poor basic learning skills are available only to the most critically disabled learners. The amount of time provided in the classroom for instruction in basic learning skills remains constant with each successive grade.

Sponsorships for club activities are handled by staff members who either volunteer to sponsor club activities without pay or are paid for sponsorships that they volunteer to assume. At present, between 25% and 50% of the students regularly participate in at least one club activity. Social functions for all grades at the school are held during the evening.

The principal reported that the physical education program is only slightly individualized. Interscholastic athletic competition currently exists in several sports. The degree of emphasis given to competitive aspects of sports by the physical education faculty is ranked by the principal at medium for both boys and girls. Likewise, the degree of emphasis on the developmental aspects of the

physical education program is also gauged as medium for both boys and girls. No intramural activities are provided at the school for any of the students.

According to the principal instruction in art and music is required of all students for nine weeks each. The amount of time set aside for elective courses, which students may select, increases with each successive grade. No official student school newspaper exists at West Junior High School. Most students do not get experience in creative dramatics while enrolled in the building and dramatic productions that are presented are produced from materials written by students only. Such dramatic presentations by students are done as a part of certain class activities planned by the teachers. The school has oratorical activities such as debate and public address as a part of its planned program of instruction. Talent shows are produced once a year on an all-school basis.

Students are allowed to select courses of interest from a range of electives in each grade. Electives currently offered include vocal music, art, band, speech, typing, unified arts, journalism, drama, wood shop, family living, foreign language, computer literacy, technology education, and home economics. No independent study time is included in the schedule. Students with poor basic skills can get special help in the areas of reading, spelling, grammar, and mathematics.

Specialized service is provided to students in the

building by guidance counselors, school psychologists, speech therapists, special reading teachers, school nurses, and clinic services for emotionally disturbed students. Auxiliary helpers available in the building include paid paraprofessionals, volunteers from the community, volunteers from the student body, and student teachers or interns. Guidance services are available upon request for all students every day according to the principal. Guidance staff members work closely with teachers of students concerned. Guidance counselors are expected to help teachers build their guidance skills. In the operational design of the school, the role of the teacher as a guidance person is encouraged. However, as a general policy in the teacher-pupil relationship, no formal provisions are made for the teacher to provide specific guidance services. The guidance counselors handle group guidance sessions on a regular basis several times per year with all three grades.

A student's academic progress is formally reported to parents four times per year. Parent-teacher or parent-teacher-student conferences are held on a school wide basis once each year. Formal evaluation of students' work is reported by use of a standard report card with letter grades, teacher comments written on a reporting form, parent-teacher conferences, parent-teacher-student conferences, and weekly grade checks which are distributed to the parents. West currently has a parent's organization

that is very active.

Community service projects by the students are carried out only occasionally for a special purpose. In regard to community relations, the school currently sends out a parents' newsletter on a regular basis, provides material for a district-wide newsletter, and uses the commercial newspaper to send out information related to the school and its activities. The staff presents informational programs related to the school's functions once or twice a year at regular parents' meetings and/or at open house programs.

Data from the Teachers

Only teachers who had previously taught in one of the Moore middle schools and who were currently teaching in the Moore junior high system were included in the survey. The following data were derived from the responses of these teachers to the MLPI. As in Alva, the Moore teachers were asked to indicate answers to the questionnaire items designating first which choice best described the previous school program and then the current school setting. In the case of Moore, the previous program was the middle school and current program was the junior high school.

Continuous progress programs were either not used or used only with special groups in both the junior high school and the middle school setting. 75% of the teachers characterized their school's schedule as being traditional both before and after the change in grade composition.

Considerable differences of opinion were evident in relation to the question concerning sponsorships of club activities. 25% of the teachers responding to the questionnaire thought that teachers were paid to assume assigned club sponsorships under both systems; 25% of the teachers perceived that teachers volunteered to sponsor club activities with pay before and after the change in organization; 50% of the teachers indicated that teachers volunteered for club sponsorships but without pay in the middle school and with pay in the junior high school.

The average length of time for both middle school and junior high school classes was 55 minutes. No team teaching was provided in either organization. All of the teachers described their school program as being totally departmentalized for the entire grade span in both settings.

A variety of responses were provided to the item concerning clinics or special classes to treat the problems of students with poor basic learning skills. One teacher indicated that such services were not available in the middle school or the junior high school. Another teacher pointed out that free tutoring was provided by a federal grant for students experiencing these problems in both school organizations. A third teacher understood that such services had been available only to the most critically handicapped learners in the middle school but that they were available to all students needing such help in the

junior high. The amount of time provided in the classroom for instruction in basic learning skills remains constant with each successive grade but varies greatly within each grade due to the individualized programs teachers operate. In response to the question concerned with audio-visual materials other than films and videos being used for classroom instruction, a variety of answers appeared. Responses ranged from very rarely by any of the staff to very frequently by most of the staff. Agreement did exist that a variety of audio-visual materials was more frequently used in the middle school system than in the junior high.

75% of the teachers believed that physical education was not individualized under either system. 25% of the teachers, however, indicated that the physical education program was more individualized in the middle school than it was in the current junior high school. Two out of three teachers understood that competitive interscholastic athletics was provided in several sports under both the old and the new system.

Instruction in art and music was provided to the students in both settings but was not required in either the middle school or the junior high school. All of the teachers agreed that the amount of time set aside for elective courses students could select increased with each successive grade in both organizations.

Students have been allowed to select courses of

interest from a range of electives in the school regardless of grade level. One teacher reported that the elective courses of speech, typing, journalism, drama, and foreign language had not been available in the middle school but are now available in the junior high school. The other teachers indicated, however, that these courses were provided in both school settings. Other elective classes offered at both types of school include vocal music, art, band, drawing, wood shop, and family living. One teacher included several elective courses not listed on the questionnaire nor mentioned by the other teachers. These additional courses include computer literacy, key-boarding, office aide, media aide, and counselor aide.

An official student newspaper that was published either four or five times per year was provided in both the middle school and the junior high school. Most students did not get experience in creative dramatics while enrolled in the middle school and still do not in the junior high school. Those dramatic productions both at the middle school and the junior high school were produced from materials written by students and from purchased scripts. Dramatic presentations by students were not a part of the overall school program but rather were a part of certain class activities planned by the teachers.

Two thirds of the respondents said that the school has no oratorical activities such as debate and public address, but one third said that such programs were part of its

planned program of instruction. Talent shows were produced once a year on an all-school basis both under the middle school and the junior high school configuration.

Subtle changes in the guidance services provided at the schools were indicated. One teacher indicated that 10 teachers had been provided 40 hours of training in a student assistance program for at-risk-students. Another teacher reported that, in the middle school system, guidance staff members seldom involved the teachers in their work with the students and were not expected to help teachers build their guidance skills. However, under the junior high school organization, the guidance staff members had worked closely with the teachers who are concerned about a certain student, and the counselors are now expected to help teachers build their guidance skills, and they are regularly encouraged to work in this area.

One of the respondents indicated in a written comment on the survey that the individual either was now or had been a guidance counselor. This person's answers were somewhat different from the other teachers' responses. While the others implied that the school, the role of the teacher as a guidance person was mentioned but not emphasized and that no formal provisions were made for the teachers to provide specific guidance services in either the middle school or the junior high school, this one individual stated that the role of the teacher as a guidance person was given a strong emphasis and that

teachers were expected to provide guidance services for all of their students. Written in the margin of this survey was the comment that "we would like teachers to be involved but they don't like it."

Once again, no difference was noted between the middle school and the junior high school with regard to the area of specialized services provided and the types of auxiliary helpers available in the building. Specialized services are provided by guidance counselors, school psychologists, speech therapists, special reading teachers, school nurses, visiting teachers, diagnosticians, clinic services for emotionally disturbed students, and special education programs for mentally handicapped students. Auxiliary helpers were listed as paraprofessionals, volunteers from the community, volunteers from the student body, student teachers, and interns.

Student's academic progress is formally reported to parents four times per year, and a parent-teacher or a parent-teacher-student conference is held on a school wide basis once per year. Formal evaluation of students' work is reported by use of a standard report card with letter grades. No difference between middle school and junior high school was indicated as far as the reporting of grades was concerned. When the Moore middle schools were in operation parents' organizations became very active. These parents' organizations continue today with the junior high schools and remain very active.

Community service projects were either not a part of the school program or were carried out occasionally for a special purpose in both the middle school and the junior high school. School dances and club programs for students were offered to grades seven and eight while the schools were middle schools. Since the junior high schools were developed, the school dances and club programs have included grades seven, eight, and nine.

No distinction was indicated between the community relation efforts of the middle school and those of the junior high school. The school sends out a newsletter or information letter periodically. The teachers appeared not to know if the letter is sent on a regular basis or as the need arises. The staff members present informational programs related to the school's functions when requested by the parents, once or twice a year at regular parents' meetings, and at open house programs.

Conclusion

The superintendent of the Moore public schools and the principal of West Junior High both have a long personal involvement in the history of the middle school movement in Oklahoma, and both reaffirmed their belief that the middle school philosophy was the appropriate basis for organizing middle level education. They also readily admitted that the "so called" middle schools which Moore had once operated had not utilized any of the accepted middle school

concepts. Therefore, the middle schools which once existed and the junior highs that now persist have very few differences in terms of organizational philosophy. The only significant difference involves the addition of the ninth grade. Both of the administrators as well as the teachers answering the questionnaire indicated little or no essential change in the school's approach to the educational mission.

Comparison of the Two Schools

Moore has more than one certified librarian per building while Alva has only one. The basic block of time used to build the schedule in Alva is a 45 minute module, but in Moore it is a 55 minute module. Both schools have a traditional schedule but Alva's is also modified by the use of a "block time," a "revolving period," or other such regularly occurring modifications. Although Moore has a much larger enrollment than Alva, it also has a greater percentage of its students participating in club activities. Students in Alva's sixth grade average 180 minutes per day in a team-teaching program, which is not available to the students in Moore. West Junior High School is completely departmentalized for the entire grade span of the school whereas Alva's school program is characterized as modified departmentalization using block time and core programs especially in the sixth grade where the middle school concept is currently being applied.

In Moore, clinics or special classes to treat the problems of students with poor basic learning skills are available only to the most critically handicapped, but in Alva these services are available to all students needing such help. Moore produces an all-school talent show once per year, however, talent shows are not a part of the program at Alva. The two schools appear to be exact opposites of each other in a myriad of ways.

In actual practice, however, the two schools share many similarities. Both, for example, maintain interscholastic sports teams and participate in competitive athletics. Principals at both schools implied that the competitive sports teams are popular with the patrons of the schools and, in the prevailing atmosphere, athletics in Oklahoma would be extremely difficult to eliminate. Neither school provides an intramural program for its students. The physical education program at the two schools is only slightly individualized.

Instrumental and vocal music elective courses are offered at both schools. At least one nine-week period of instruction in art and music is required of all students at each of the schools. The amount of time set aside for elective courses students may select increases with each successive grade at both Alva and Moore. Each school boasts of a successful technical education program which is reported to be popular with the teachers and the students. Neither Alva nor Moore operates an official

student newspaper. Most students do not get experience in creative dramatics while enrolled in either building.

The multi-textbook approach to learning is used in only a few courses at each school. Both schools have large modern library/media centers which are extensively stocked with books, audiovisual materials, and computer technology. The faculties of both schools have a few members who frequently use audio visual materials other than films and videos and other members who use such materials on an occasional basis.

Both schools provide guidance services which are available upon request for all students every day. Guidance staff members work closely with the teachers at each of the schools. As a general policy, in the teacher-pupil relationship, no formal provisions are made for the teacher to provide specific guidance services at either school.

Both schools formally report a student's academic progress to parents four times per year. Each school uses parent-teacher or parent-teacher-student conferences on a school-wide basis at least once per year. School dances are held for each grade at each school. Both schools offer a club program for students in all grades.

The change process in each school district was initiated by the superintendent who presented his views to the board of education and received its support and encouragement to accomplish the reorganization of the grade

arrangement. The building principals and teachers in Moore were informed of the change and allowed to participate in committees to help finalize the proposal for change. In Alva, the principal was hired after the decision to change had already been reached. He was chosen because of his experience in conducting the type of change that had been proposed. Teachers in neither district were actively involved in the decision making process. Consequently, in Alva some resistance from several faculty members has been experienced. Since the change in Moore was not philosophical in nature but merely organizational, the teachers appear to be in more agreement with the change and no opposition is evident.

Additional Information

The following serendipitous information was obtained as a result of conducting this research study. While not a stated objective of the inquiry, this information is noteworthy. A relationship between the data included in this section and the data which was gathered as a consequence of answering the research questions is evident, and is discussed in the final chapter of this work.

During an interview, Mr. Joed Savage, the principal of Moore's West Junior High School, mentioned that in 1969 he had been the counselor at Rogers Middle School in Oklahoma City, the first middle school established in the state of Oklahoma. He noted further that Dr. Jerry Rippetoe, the

Moore superintendent, had served as the principal at Rogers when it was established as a middle school. In the summer of 1968, both men had participated in a pilot program concerning the implementation of the middle school concept at Harding School before the prototype was created at Rogers.

When Dr. Rippetoe was selected to establish the state's first middle school, he was allowed to select his entire faculty. He related that he found former elementary school teachers better equipped to incorporate the middle school philosophy than teachers who had taught in the secondary school. Mr. Savage pointed out that some of the faculty members selected for Rogers were allowed to visit middle schools in Texas, Missouri, Florida, Indiana, California, and Ohio. Rogers Middle School faculty were organized into eight interdisciplinary teams each of which was comprised of four teachers from the areas of English, mathematics, reading, and social studies plus a teacher's aide. According to Mr. Savage, the school utilized a flexible modular schedule.

Dr. Rippetoe indicated that Rogers was started as an experiment not only in educational philosophy but in racial integration as well, since the late 1960s was a very volatile time as the Oklahoma City schools dealt with court-ordered desegregation. Rogers was somewhat racially balanced with 30% of the students being Black, most of whom were bused to the school to establish the balance. As for

the instructional organization, Dr. Rippetoe pointed out that Rogers was characterized by the use of flexible scheduling, team teaching, and exploratory classes.

Dr. Rippetoe and Mr. Savage both expressed support for the middle school philosophy. They each expressed good memories of their experiences at the first middle school in the state and both believe that the experiment was a success. Both men also indicated their belief that the middle school is the best means to deliver an educational opportunity to the early adolescent. They appeared to regret that Moore did not currently have middle schools, but indicated that public support was lacking to incorporate the middle school philosophy. While they reported that patrons demand interscholastic sports competition, marching bands, and vocal music programs, which are certainly expensive, Dr. Rippetoe and Mr. Savage perceived that the extra expense required to establish and maintain middle schools would not be accepted by the public. By extra expense they referred to costs associated with smaller class size, more planning time for team meetings, and teachers' aides to assist the teams with clerical support.

CHAPTER V
SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, RECOMMENDATIONS,
AND COMMENTARY

This final chapter of the study includes a summary of the project investigated, why it was studied, how the study was conducted, and what results were obtained as a consequence of the inquiry. Conclusions which can be extrapolated from the findings of this study are presented. Recommendations for future consideration, action, and research are proposed. Finally, an opinion about the study and its meaning is offered for consideration.

Summary

A prevalent question which has been asked over the years concerns "which educational organization best serves the needs of early adolescents, the middle school or the junior high school?" This study attempted to investigate, on a limited scale, why and how two schools in the State of Oklahoma changed from one grade level organization to another. Several general research questions were examined in this study. Is there a best way to provide educational services to young adolescents? How should schools be organized to best serve the middle level student? Is there a real difference between the traditional junior high

school and the middle school?

Two school systems were chosen specifically for this study. The only criterion used was that one district had to have changed from the use of the middle school to the junior high school and the other district must have formerly used the junior high school and changed to the use of the middle school.

Moore was discovered to be the only school district in the state to have changed from the middle school format to the junior high school format in recent years, thus requiring one of its junior high schools to be included in the study. Alva had recently undergone a well-publicized conversion to the middle school with the construction of a new building and was found through study of the Educational Directory 1991-92 (Oklahoma State Department of Education, 1991) to be the most recent middle school conversion in the state. The principals of Moore's West Junior High School and Alva's Middle School were contacted for permission to study the two schools. Both principals were extremely cooperative and encouraged that the study be undertaken.

The research for this study involved visits to the buildings concerned. Personal interviews with the school building principals and district superintendents were conducted. The school principals completed the MSPI questionnaire to provide information regarding the level of implementation of middle school practices in each school. Selected teachers who had experienced the change from one

form of educational organization to another were surveyed with the MLPI questionnaire, which was constructed for this study. The teachers were asked to answer two sets of questions, one set concerning the school before the change and another set concerning the school after the change.

All four of the administrators interviewed expressed a belief in the middle school concept as being the best way to educate young adolescents. Team teaching, flexible scheduling, and providing more exploratory courses were consistently cited as advantages of the middle school philosophy.

Leaders in either school, however, have implemented a number of middle school practices. Neither supports a continuous progress program. No intramural program has been organized at either school. Interscholastic athletic competition is present for both schools. Dramatic productions, talent shows, and student newspapers are not encouraged at either school.

The change process for both school districts utilized the "trickle down" approach. Change was initiated in each case by the superintendent of schools with the support of the board of education. Teachers and patrons were involved in the process only after the initial decision was already made. The amount of input from assorted constituent groups varied but usually only involved an information process.

Conclusions

1. Little difference exists between the middle school and the junior high school studied in this project. In addition, little difference is currently apparent at either school compared to its previous organization. Many similarities exist between Alva Middle School and West Junior High School in Moore, just as similarities likely exist between other middle schools and junior high schools as well. It is difficult to identify any distinctive characteristics of the middle school, in comparison with the junior high school. It is very possible to operate a junior high school which exhibits many characteristics associated with the middle school concept. It is likewise feasible for a middle school to manifest few of the differentiating notions peculiar to the middle school philosophy. Many changes which occur at this level appear to be more structural than philosophical in nature.

The Moore junior high schools were not middle schools, in practice or in philosophy, before they were named as junior high schools. The change in grade organization in Moore resulted from a need to better distribute the student population in the district rather than to meet a conceptual goal.

While it is difficult to distinguish between middle schools and junior high schools, the middle school has become the prominent model for organizing middle level

schools in Oklahoma. More schools have continued to convert to the middle school organizational pattern each year since the first middle school was organized in 1969. Today, 51.2% of all middle level schools in Oklahoma are classified as middle schools while only 48.8% are listed as junior high schools. Even though these classifications are present, no clear cut criteria exist for distinguishing between middle schools and junior high schools. School boards are allowed to use whichever terminology they choose to describe middle level schools. As a result, a considerable divergence exists among schools listed under the same heading.

2. The change processes utilized at these two schools have not lead to real fundamental change occurring at either setting. However, leaders of Alva Middle School have undertaken a purposeful effort toward implementation of a middle school concept. Their goal of establishing a middle school is deliberate, with efforts planned to be phased in gradually over a three-year period. The most obvious consequences of this move are apparent in the creation of interdisciplinary team teaching, the establishment of flexible scheduling, and the emphasis upon exploratory course offerings in the sixth grade. Until the seventh and eighth grades are included in the process, however, it is doubtful if Alva Middle School will ever exhibit characteristics of a real middle school.

No systematic scheme for bringing about educational

and organizational change was implemented by leaders of either school district. No strategy was established or employed previous to the decision to change. An effort to gain consensus among the administration, the board of education, the teachers, and the public was undertaken only after the initial decision making process was completed.

The decision to change the grade configuration in each school district was initiated by the superintendent with little or no input from other constituencies which might have been involved. The superintendents quickly gained the support of their respective boards of education and then presented their plan to the faculties and patrons of their districts. Teacher support and involvement was perceived to have been neither encouraged nor solicited in the decision making process.

In Moore, some teachers were involved in committee discussions on how best to implement the decision to redistribute the grade organization within the schools, a decision which had already been reached administratively. In Alva, the teachers were trained in college workshops to implement the middle school philosophy, a decision which had, likewise, been arrived at without their participation.

3. All of the administrators interviewed in the two districts were unanimous in their support for the middle school philosophy as best meeting the needs of early adolescent students. However, this purported belief on the part of the administrators has led to little

implementation of middle school practices in either of the school districts. Neither superintendent has initiated an attempt to create a school system which fully incorporates the middle school philosophy because of a perceived lack of support by the community for such change.

Recommendations

1. Additional inquiries should be conducted to reveal the best methods for educating middle level students. The best practices of successful middle schools and of successful junior high schools need to be enumerated. The question as to which system is best, the middle school or the junior high school, should continue to be asked.

2. Research into the psychology and physiology of learning ought to be continued so that the needs of early adolescents can be more clearly understood and addressed. It is difficult enough to educate young people if the educators are knowledgeable and informed. It is impossible if they are not.

3. A proposal to develop standardized criteria for classifying middle schools and junior high schools in the state should be considered. Today it is impossible to tell much about a particular school merely by knowing what name is ascribed to it. Several grade configurations and many organizational orientations are now classified by the use of the same terminology. Without conducting an on-site investigation, an interested individual cannot know much

about a particular school from its classification as a middle school or a junior high school.

4. New state certification standards should be adopted for middle level educators. The effort to better address the certification needs of teachers has recently led to the new category of early childhood certification. Perhaps a similar distinction should be created to require middle level teachers and administrators to have training in the particular needs of early adolescents and appropriate instructional methods to meet those needs. Today's confusion between elementary and secondary certification requires some faculty members to be limited to certain grade levels within their own school.

5. The preservice preparation of prospective middle level teachers ought to be improved. Colleges of education should provide future middle level teachers with the theoretical basis for understanding their students, including how they learn as well as deterrents which may impede their learning. Practical experience should be provided to these prospective teachers in the methods best suited for middle level students.

6. Superintendents should be exposed to the various methods for bringing about change. Most superintendents appear to gravitate to the rational model of decision making assuming that they possess all the knowledge necessary to determine the proper course of action. While much responsibility is placed upon them, superintendents

need to learn that people are both rational and irrational beings and that no one individual possesses complete knowledge about any topic.

7. The new emphasis upon teacher empowerment requires that the feelings and input of teachers must be considered in the decision making process. When any change is being contemplated, a concerted effort should be made to include as many affected people as possible in the decision making process. Flexible scheduling, as advocated by the proponents of the middle school philosophy, is an example of how teachers can be treated as the experts who are responsible to make daily decisions concerning the necessary blocks of time required for certain educational endeavors. This same involvement seems necessary when contemplating large-scale change. The superintendent, while responsible for maintaining the "big picture," must rely on the building principals and the classroom teachers as the professional authorities who will be required to implement any plan of change. Therefore, all possible groups, including parents and students themselves, must be involved in the change process from the beginning to ensure successful implementation of any proposed change.

8. The precepts included in the Middle School Practices Index need to be continually reviewed as to their degree of implementation by middle level schools in the state. According to past studies, some items have never been implemented to any significant degree. The reasons

why they have been ignored should be assessed. Perhaps other criteria established by more recent publications could be included in a revised instrument to determine more accurately what practices should be and are being utilized by effective middle schools.

9. An interesting study for future consideration might involve the perception of the public toward educational change, especially as it relates to the middle school movement. A tremendous national mobilization has propelled the debate over school reform to the forefront of public interest. What role the public sees for itself, the government, and the schools should be constantly scrutinized and studied in an ongoing and organized manner.

Commentary

No clear agreement exists as to what comprises a middle school and what contrasts it with a junior high school. The state allows much discretion in the use of the terms, to the point of making comparisons nearly impossible. The belief emerges that neither the middle school nor the junior high school provides the best organizational pattern to address the needs of the early adolescent student. Many effective techniques called for in the middle school concept are used in both middle schools and junior high schools. Some of the suggestions proposed by the middle school philosophy are not being implemented in any school setting. When all things are

considered, it is not the name of the school nor the number of middle school principles which are being implemented that make a school a success or failure. The underlying source of success seems to be the accepted belief that the schools are in existence to help students. There are abundant ways to have a student-centered school.

Much of the current literature extols efforts to reform education. One of the gravest problems with the reform movement of today seems to be that it has been controlled by functionalists who come from a paradigm which opposes change. Therefore, what they promote is not change at all but extensions of what is already in existence. They call for more requirements for high school graduation, higher standards for college admission, longer school days, longer school years, and competency tests prior to graduation from high school. None of these amounts to any real structural change. They simply call for more of the same. If what we have today is so bad, why will more of it be better?

This is one of the most appealing aspects of the middle school movement and its philosophy. What the middle school concept calls for, and has been calling for during the last 25 years, is real change. The middle school philosophy suggests that educators must change the approach they have been using to deliver educational services. Rather than trying to teach everyone as if each student can learn by the same methods, different methods should be used

with different students. Traditional departmental educational responsibilities should be merged by having interdisciplinary team teaching. Courses should be taught for various lengths of time depending upon what subject is being studied and what students are studying it. Students, especially in the early adolescent years, should be exposed to as large a variety of educational experiences as possible to arouse their interest as broadly as practical. Specialization can wait until later. Too much knowledge has been accumulated for students to memorize; rather, they need to be taught how to learn and how to investigate various phenomena. This is the advantage of the middle school philosophy. It appears that its growth will continue.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Alexander, W. M. (1964). The junior high school: A changing view. NASSP Bulletin, 48 (301), 15-24.
- Alexander, W. M. (1968). The middle school movement. Theory into Practice, 7 (3), 114-117.
- Alexander, W. M. (1968). A survey of organizational patterns of reorganized middle schools (Final Report No. 7-D-026). Gainesville, FL: University of Florida. ERIC Document Reproduction Service Number ED 024 121.
- Alexander, W. M. (1982). Reflections of William Alexander: A journal interview. Middle School Journal, 13 (2), 3-7.
- Alexander, W. M. (1984). The middle school emerges and flourishes. In J. E. Lounsbury (Ed.), Perspectives: Middle School Education, 1964-1984, pp. 14-29. Columbus, OH: National Middle School Association.
- Alexander, W. M. (1988). Schools in the middle: Rhetoric and reality. Social Education, 52 (2), 107-109.
- Alexander, W. M., & George, P. S. (1981). The exemplary middle school. New York: Holt, Rinehart, Winston.
- Arhar, J. M. (1991). The effects of interdisciplinary teaming on social bonding of middle level students. Paper presented to the Middle Level Research Symposium, Orlando, FL.
- Barth, R. S. (1990). Improving schools from within. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.
- Barth, R. S. (1991). Restructuring schools: Some questions for teachers and principals. Phi Delta Kappan, 73 (2), 123-128.
- Butler, J. J. (1983). Teacher attitude, classroom climate, and the level of implementation of recommended middle school practices in Oklahoma (Doctoral dissertation, Oklahoma State University, 1982). Dissertation Abstracts International, 43/02 (1725-A).

- Cawelti, G. (1988). Middle schools a better match with early adolescent needs. ASCD Curriculum Update, 11 (4), 1-12.
- Clark, S. N., & Clark, D. C. (1990). Restructuring middle schools: Strategies for using *Turning Points*. Schools in the Middle: Theory into Practice, 1 (4), 12-14. ✓
- Cross, C. T. (1990). Issues in education: Who is the American eighth grader? Washington, DC: Office of Educational Research and Improvement, U.S. Department of Education.
- David, J. L. (1991). What it takes to restructure education. Educational Leadership, 48 (8), 11-15.
- DeBruyn, R. L. (1992). Overcoming a big fear: Change. Master Teacher, 23 (31), 3.
- Diegmuller, K. (1991). Staff development is essential in school restructuring. Journal of Staff Development, 12 (3), 10-14.
- Eisner, E. W. (1988). The ecology of school improvement. Educational Leadership, 45 (5), 24-29.
- Etzioni, A. (1991). A responsive society: Collected essays on guiding deliberate social change. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.
- Fullan, M. G., & Stiegelbauer, S. (1991). The new meaning of educational change. New York: Teachers College Press.
- Glasser, W. (1990). The Quality School. New York: Harper Perennial
- Glatthorn, A. A., & Spencer, N. K. (1986). Middle school/junior high principal's handbook: A practical guide for developing better schools. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall.
- Harrington-Lueker, D. (1991). All aboard the engine of reform. The American School Board Journal, 178 (7), 12-17.
- Harris, L. (1991). A cautionary tale: What we don't know about reform can hurt us. Agenda: America's Schools for the 21st Century, 1 (3) 25-27. ✓
- Haskeu, L. D., & McLendon, J. C. (1962). This is teaching: An introduction to education in America. Chicago: Scott, Foresman.

- Hoover, K. H. (1977). Secondary/middle school teaching: A handbook for beginning teachers and teacher self-renewal. Boston, MA: Allyn & Bacon.
- Hough, D. L. (1991). Middle level organization: A curriculum policy analysis. Paper presented to the Middle Level Research Symposium, Orlando, FL.
- Jennings, M. A. (1985). The current level of implementation of eighteen basic middle school characteristics in Oklahoma middle school programs (Doctoral dissertation, University of Oklahoma).
- Joyce, B. (Ed.). (1990). Changing school culture through staff development. Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.
- Keefe, J. W., Clark, D. C., Nickerson, N. C., Jr., & Valentine, J. (1983). The middle level principalship. Volume II: The effective middle level principal. Reston, VA: National Association of Secondary School Principals.
- Kanthak, L. M. (1992). 10 principles of successful middle level schools. Reston, VA: National Association of Secondary School Principals.
- Kindred, L., Wolotkiewicz, R. J., Mickelson, J. M., & Coplein, L. E. (1981). The middle school curriculum: A practitioner's handbook. Boston, MA: Allyn & Bacon.
- Lackey, G. H., Jr., & Rowls, M. D. (1989). Wisdom in education: The views of Ralph Tyler. Columbia, SC: University of South Carolina.
- Lauerma, K. D. (1991). Perceptions of change: Superintendents' views of Oklahoma House Bill 1017 (Doctoral dissertation, Oklahoma State University).
- Lounsbury, J. H., & Clark, D. C. (1990). Inside grade eight: From apathy to excitement. Reston, VA: National Association of Secondary School Principals.
- Lounsbury, J. H. (Ed.). (1984). Perspectives: Middle school education, 1964-1984. Columbus, OH: National Middle Schools Association.
- Lounsbury, J. H., & Vars, G. E. (1978). A curriculum for the middle school. New York: Harper & Row.
- Margolis, H. (1991). Understanding, facing resistance to change. NASSP Bulletin, 775 (573), 1-9.

- MacPhail-Wilcox, B., Forbes, R., & Parramore, B. (1990). ✓
Project design: Reforming structure and process.
Educational Leadership, 47 (7), 22-25.
- Mauriel, J. J. (1989). Strategic leadership for schools:
Creating and sustaining productive change. San
Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.
- Michaels, K. (1988). Caution: Second-wave reform taking
place. Educational Leadership, 45 (5), 3.
- Molitor, J. A., & Dentler, R. A. (1982). Reorganizing
the middle grades: Guidelines for administrators and
practioners. Cambridge, MA: ABT Associates.
- National Middle School Association. (1977). Report on the
NMSA committee on future goals and directions. Middle
School Journal, 8 (4), 16.
- National Middle School Association. (1982). This we
believe. Columbus, OH: Author.
- NASSP Commission on Restructuring. (1992). A leader's
guide to school restructuring. Reston, VA: National
Association of Secondary School Principals.
- Oklahoma State Department of Education. (1991). Oklahoma
Educational Directory, 1991-92. Oklahoma City, OK:
Author.
- Payzant, T. W. (1989). Restructuring means changing the
bureaucracy. American School Board Journal, 176
(10), 19-20.
- Pook, M. E. P. (1981). A study of the relationship of
teacher job satisfaction and level of implementation
of recommended middle school practices (Doctoral
dissertation, University of Colorado).
- Raebeck, B. S. (1990). Transformation of a middle school.
Educational Leadership, 47 (7), 18-21.
- Riegle, J. D. (1971). A study of middle school programs to
determine the current level of implementation of
eighteen basic middle school principles (Doctoral
dissertation, Michigan State University).
- Sarason, S. B. (1982). The culture of the school and the
problem of change (2nd ed.). Boston: MA. Allyn &
Bacon.
- Sarason, S. B. (1990). The predictable failure of
educational reform: Can we change before it's too
late? San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

- Schein, E. H. (1985). Organizational cultural and leadership. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.
- Sergiovanni, T. J. (1992). Moral leadership: Getting to the heart of school improvement. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.
- Sizer, T. R. (1984). Horaces's compromise. Boston, MA: Houghton-Mifflin.
- Sizer, T. R. (1991). No pain, no gain. Educational Leadership, 48 (8), 32-34.
- Smith, M. E. (1982). The process of sociocultural continuity. Current Anthropology, 23 (2), 127-142.
- Spady, W. G. (1988). Organizing for results: The basis of authentic restructuring and reform. Educational Leadership, 46 (2), 4-8.
- Stephens, D. M. (1991). Transition from junior high to middle school: A principal's perspective on reorganization. Schools in the Middle: Theory into Practice, 1 (2), 17-21.
- Strahan, D. B., & Strahan, J. D. (1988). Revitalizing remediation in the middle grades: An invitational approach. Reston, VA: National Association of Secondary School Principals.
- Tewel, K. J. (1991). Promoting change in secondary schools. NASSP Bulletin, 75 (537), 10-18.
- Thomas, D. D. (1991). The implementation of recommended practices and school culture in Oklahoma middle schools (Doctoral dissertation, Oklahoma State University).
- Toepfer, C. F., Jr., Lounsbury, J. H., Arth, A. A., & Johnston, J. H. (1986). What we wish people knew about middle level education. Clearing House, 60 (1), 6-10. ✓
- Carnegie Council on Adolescent Development. (1989). Turning points: Preparing American youth for the 21st century. Washington, DC: Author.
- Valentine, J., Clark, D. C., Nickerson, N. C. Jr., & Keefe, J. W. (1981). The middle level principalship. Volume I: A survey of middle level principals and programs. Reston, VA: National Association of Secondary School Principals.
- Vassallo, P. (1990). Muddle in the middle. American School Board Journal, 177 (9), 26-37. ✓

Walberg, H. J., & Lane, J. J. (1989). Organizing for learning: Toward the 21st century. Reston, VA: National Association of Secondary School Principals.

Williamson, R., & Johnston, J. H. (1991). Planning for success: Successful implementation of middle level reorganization. Reston, VA: National Association of Secondary School Principals. ✓

APPENDIXES

APPENDIX A
MIDDLE SCHOOL PRACTICES INDEX

MIDDLE SCHOOL PRACTICES INDEX

Part I: Place a mark before the answer that seems best to explain your current program as it relates to the question or statement.

1. Continuous progress programs are:
 not used at this time.
 used only with special groups.
 used only for the first two years.
 used only by some students for all their years at the school.
 used by all of the students for their entire program.
2. Continuous progress programs are planned for a student over a span of:
 1 calendar year.
 2 calendar years.
 3 calendar years.
 Not applicable.
3. The multi-textbook approach to learning is currently:
 used in all or nearly all courses.
 used in most courses.
 used in a few courses.
 not used in any course.
4. The instructional materials center in the building houses:
 more than 5000 books.
 between 4000 and 3000 books.
 between 3000 and 2000 books.
 between 2000 and 1000 books.
 less than 1000 books.
5. The materials center has a paid staff of:
 more than 1 certified librarian.
 one certified librarian.
 a part-time librarian.
 no certified librarian.
6. For classroom instruction, audio visual materials other than films and videos are used:
 very frequently by most of the staff.
 very frequently by a few of the staff and occasionally by the others.
 very rarely by most of the staff.
 very rarely by any of the staff.

7. The basic time block used to build the schedule is:
 10 to 20 minute module
 a 30 minute module.
 a 45 minute module.
 a 60 minute module.
 a diversified combination of time in which no module is defined.
8. Which of the below best describes your schedule at present:
 traditional.
 traditional, modified by "block-time", "revolving period", or other such regularly occurring modifications.
 flexible to the degree that all periods are scheduled but not identified in length.
 flexible to the degree that changes occur within designed time limits.
 flexible to the degree that students and teachers control the daily time usage and changes occur regularly.
 other _____
(Attach a copy of the master schedule if possible)
9. Sponsorships for club activities are handled by staff members who:
 are assigned sponsorships without additional pay.
 are paid to assume club sponsorships that are assigned.
 volunteer to sponsor club activities without pay.
 are paid for sponsorships that they volunteer to assume.
 staff members do not work with club activities.
10. At present approximately what percent of your student body regularly participate in at least one club activity?
 75 to 100 percent
 50 to 75 percent
 25 to 50 percent
 25 percent or less
 none, as we have no club program
11. The physical education program is:
 highly individualized.
 moderately individualized.
 slightly individualized.
 not individualized at all.

12. Inter-scholastic competition is currently:
 not offered at this school.
 offered in one sport only.
 offered in two sports.
 offered in several sports.
13. Intramural activities often use the same facilities as interscholastic activities. When this causes a time conflict, how do you schedule?
 this does not happen because we have no intramural programs.
 this does not happen because we have no interscholastic programs.
 intramural activities take first priority and others schedule around their needs.
 interscholastic activities take first priority and others must schedule around their needs.
 other _____
14. Team teaching programs operate for:
 all students.
 nearly all students.
 about half of the students.
 only a few students.
 none of the students.
15. What percentage of your staff is involved in team teaching programs?
 over 90 percent
 between 60 and 90 percent
 between 30 and 60 percent
 less than 30 percent
 none.
16. A student in grade six averages about how many minutes per day in a team teaching program?
 180 minutes or more.
 between 130 and 180 minutes.
 between 90 and 130 minutes.
 between 40 and 90 minutes.
 less than 40 minutes.

17. A student in grades seven or eight averages about how many minutes per day in a team taught situation?
- 180 minutes or more.
 - between 130 and 180 minutes.
 - between 90 and 130 minutes.
 - between 40 and 90 minutes.
 - less than 40 minutes.
18. Which of the following best describes your school program as it evolves from enrollment to completion of the last grade?
- completely self-contained program for the entire grade span.
 - completely departmentalized for the entire grade span.
 - modified departmentalized (block-time, core programs, etc.)
 - program moves from largely self-contained to departmentalized.
 - program moves from largely self-contained to partially departmentalized.
 - other _____
19. Instruction in art is required for all students for:
- one year.
 - two years.
 - three years.
 - not at all.
20. Instruction in music is required:
- for one year.
 - for two years.
 - for three years.
 - not at all.
21. The amount of time set aside for elective courses students may select:
- decreases with each successive grade.
 - is the same for all grades.
 - increases with each successive grade.
 - varies by grade level but not in any systematic manner.
 - does not exist at any grade level.
22. Guidance services are available upon request for:
- all students every day.
 - all students nearly every day.
 - most of the students on a regular basis.
 - a limited number of students on a limited basis.
 - other _____

23. Guidance staff members:
___ always work closely with the teachers concerning a student.
___ often work closely with the teachers concerning a student.
___ seldom involve the teachers in their work with the students.
___ always work independently of the teachers.
24. Guidance counselors are:
___ not expected to help teachers build their guidance skills.
___ expected to help teachers build their guidance skills.
___ expected to help teachers build their guidance skills and they are regularly encouraged to work in this area.
___ other _____
25. Clinics or special classes to treat the problems of students with poor basic learning skills are:
___ not available at this time.
___ available to all students needing such help.
___ available only to the most critically handicapped learners.
___ others _____
26. The amount of time provided in the classroom for instruction in basic learning skills:
___ increases with each successive grade.
___ remains constant with each successive grade.
___ decreases with each successive grade.
___ varies greatly due to the individualized program teachers operate.
27. Concerning a school newspaper, our school has:
___ no official student school paper.
___ an official student paper with no more than 4 issues per year.
___ an official student paper that publishes 5 or more issues per year.
___ other _____
28. Concerning school dramatical activities, most students:
___ do not get experience in creative dramatics while enrolled in this building.
___ get at least one or two opportunitites to use their acting skills while enrolled in this building.

29. Dramatic productions at this school are produced from:
 _____ purchased scripts only.
 _____ materials written by students only.
 _____ materials written by students and purchased scripts.
 _____ other _____
30. This school has oratorical activities such as debate, public address, etc. :
 _____ as a part of its planned program of instruction.
 _____ as a part of its enrichment program.
 _____ not included in school activities.
 _____ other _____
31. Talents shows are:
 _____ not a part of our program.
 _____ produced by students at each grade level.
 _____ produced once a year on an all-school basis.
 _____ produced at each grade level with some of the acts entering an all-school talent show.
 _____ acts entering an all-school talent show.
 _____ other _____
32. In the operational design of this school the role of the teacher as a guidance person is:
 _____ given a very strong emphasis.
 _____ encouraged.
 _____ mentioned to the staff but not emphasized.
 _____ left strictly to the individual teacher's personal motivation.
 _____ not important in our guidance plan and therefore not encouraged.
 _____ other _____
33. As a general policy, in the teacher-pupil relationship:
 _____ no formal provisions are made for the teacher to provide specific guidance services.
 _____ teachers are expected to provide guidance services for all of their pupils.
 _____ teachers are expected to provide guidance services for only a limited number of pupils.
 _____ other _____
34. A student's academic progress is formally reported to parents:
 _____ two times per year
 _____ four times per year
 _____ six times per year
 _____ other _____

35. Parent-teacher or parent-teacher-student conferences are held on a school-wide basis:
- not at all.
 - once per year.
 - twice per year.
 - three times per year.
 - four times per year.
 - five or more times per year.
36. Community service projects by the students are:
- not a part of our program.
 - carried out occasionally for a special purpose.
 - an important part of the planned experiences for all students while enrolled in this building.
37. This school currently has:
- no parent's organization.
 - a parent's organization that is relatively inactive.
 - a parent's organization that is active.
 - a parent's organization that is very active.

Part II: For each question in this section check all the answers that apply.

38. Which of the following types of materials are housed in your instructional materials center?
- general library books.
 - current newspapers.
 - below grade level reading material.
 - current magazines.
 - files of past issues of newspapers.
 - above grade level reading materials.
 - card catalogue of materials housed.
 - student publications.
 - files of past issues of magazines.
39. Which of the following types of materials are housed in your instructional materials center?
- filmstrips.
 - collections (coins, insects, art, etc.)
 - motion pictures (films or videos.)
 - microfilms.
 - overhead transparencies.
 - phonograph records.
 - ditto and/or mimeo machines.
 - photo and/or thermal copy machines.
 - maps, globes, and charts.
 - display cases or areas.
40. The master class time schedule can be changed by teachers when need arises:
- by planning with other teachers on a daily basis.
 - by planning with other teachers on a weekly basis.
 - by seeking administrative approval for a special change.
 - by requesting a change for next semester.
 - by requesting a change for next year.
 - other _____
41. School dances are held for:
- grade six. grade seven. grade eight.
42. A club program for students is offered for:
- grade six. grade seven. grade eight.
43. The intramural program includes:
- team games.
 - individual sports.
 - various club activities.
 - other _____

44. Students are allowed to select courses of interest from a range of electives:
 ___ in grade six. ___ in grade seven. ___ in grade eight.
45. Electives currently offered in this building are:
 (add any not listed)
- | | | |
|------------------|-------------------|-----------------------|
| ___ vocal music | ___ journalism | ___ foreign language |
| ___ art | ___ drawing | ___ natural resources |
| ___ band | ___ drama | ___ creative writing |
| ___ speech | ___ orchestra | ___ other _____ |
| ___ typing | ___ wood shop | ___ other _____ |
| ___ unified arts | ___ family living | ___ other _____ |
46. How much time would you estimate the average student spend in independent study for each grade level listed below?
 ___ minutes per day in grade six.
 ___ minutes per day in grade seven.
 ___ minutes per day in grade eight.
47. Students working in independent study situations work on topics?
 ___ we have no independent study programs.
 ___ assigned to them by the teacher.
 ___ of personal interest and approved by the teacher.
 ___ of personal interest and unrelated to classroom work.
 ___ other _____
48. Students with poor basic skills can get special help in the following areas: (Check only those areas where special help on an individual basis is provided by special staff members trained to treat such situations.)
- | | |
|--------------|------------------------|
| ___ reading | ___ mathematics |
| ___ spelling | ___ physical education |
| ___ grammar | ___ other _____ |
49. Dramatic presentations by students are:
 ___ not a part of the school program.
 ___ a part of the activities program.
 ___ a part of certain class activities planned by the teachers.
 ___ other _____
50. Formal evaluation of students' work is reported by use of:
 ___ a standard report card with letter grades.
 ___ teacher comments, written on a reporting form.
 ___ parent-teacher conferences.
 ___ standard report card with number grades.
 ___ parent-teacher-student conferences.
 ___ other _____

51. In regard to community relations, this school currently:
- does not send out a parents' newsletter.
 - sends out a parents' newsletter when need arises.
 - sends out a parents' newsletter on a scheduled basis.
 - used a district-wide newsletter to send out information related to this school.
 - uses commerical newspaper.
 - other _____
52. The staff presents informational programs related to the school's functions:
- when requested by the parents.
 - once or twice a year at regular parents' meetings.
 - at open house programs.
 - at regularly scheduled "seminar type" meetings planned for parents.
 - other _____
53. From the specialized areas listed below, check each service which is available to students in your building.
- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> guidance counselors | <input type="checkbox"/> school nurse |
| <input type="checkbox"/> school psychologist | <input type="checkbox"/> visiting teacher |
| <input type="checkbox"/> speech therapists | <input type="checkbox"/> diagnostician |
| <input type="checkbox"/> special reading teacher | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> clinic services for emotional disturbed | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> special education programs for mentally handicapped. | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> other _____ | |
54. Teaching teams are organized to include:
- fully certified teachers.
 - paraprofessionals.
 - clerical helpers.
 - student teachers.
 - others _____
55. From the following list, check those types of auxiliary helpers available in your building.
- paid paraprofessionals.
 - volunteers from the community.
 - volunteers from the student body.
 - students teachers and interns.
 - high school "future teachers" students.
 - others _____

Part III. For each question in this section please check the box or boxes that best describe your program.

56. School social functions are held at this school:

	During the afternoon	During the evening
Grade Six		
Grade Seven		
Grade Eight		

57. The physical education program serves:

	All Students	Some Students	No Students
Grade Six			
Grade Seven			
Grade Eight			

58. What degree of emphasis does the physical education program give to the competitive and developmental aspects of the program for boys and girls?

	Boys	Girls
Competitive Aspects	<input type="checkbox"/> High	<input type="checkbox"/> High
	<input type="checkbox"/> Medium	<input type="checkbox"/> Medium
	<input type="checkbox"/> Low	<input type="checkbox"/> Low
Developmental Aspects	<input type="checkbox"/> High	<input type="checkbox"/> High
	<input type="checkbox"/> Medium	<input type="checkbox"/> Medium
	<input type="checkbox"/> Low	<input type="checkbox"/> Low

59. Intramural activities are scheduled for:

	All Students	Boys Only	Girls Only	No Students
Grade Six				
Grade Seven				
Grade Eight				

60. How do your guidance counselors handle group guidance sessions?

	Regular sessions several times per year	Special sessions are only	None
Grade Six			
Grade Seven			
Grade Eight			

61. Independent study opportunities are provided for:

	All Students	Some Students	No Students
Regular class time			
Time scheduled for Independent Study			

62. Daily instruction in a developmental reading program is provided for:

	All Students	Poor Readers	Not At All
Grade Six			
Grade Seven			
Grade Eight			

APPENDIX B
MIDDLE LEVEL PRACTICES INDEX

MIDDLE LEVEL PRACTICES INDEX

Part I: Place a mark in the CIRCLE before the answer that seems best to explain your CURRENT program as it relates to the question or statement.

Place a mark in the SQUARE before the answer that seems best to explain your PREVIOUS program as it relates to the question or statement.

1. Continuous progress programs are/were:
 - not used.
 - used only with special groups.
 - used only for the first two years.
 - used only by some students for all their years at the school.
 - used by all of the students for their entire program.
2. Continuous progress programs are/were planned for a student over a span of:
 - 1 calendar year.
 - 2 calendar years.
 - 3 calendar years.
 - Not applicable.
3. The multi-textbook approach to learning is/was:
 - used in all or nearly all courses.
 - used in most courses.
 - used in a few courses.
 - not used in any course.
4. For classroom instruction, audio visual materials other than films and videos are/were used:
 - very frequently by most of the staff.
 - very frequently by a few of the staff and occasionally by the others.
 - very rarely by most of the staff.
 - very rarely by any of the staff.
5. The basic time block used to build the schedule is/was:
 - a 10 to 20 minute module
 - a 30 minute module.
 - a 45 minute module.
 - a 60 minute module.
 - a diversified combination of time in which no module is defined.

6. Which of the following best described/describes your school's schedule:
- traditional.
 - traditional, modified by "block-time", "revolving period", or other such regularly occurring modifications.
 - flexible to the degree that all periods are scheduled but not identified in length.
 - flexible to the degree that changes occur within designed time limits.
 - flexible to the degree that students and teachers control the daily time usage and changes occur regularly.
 - other _____
7. Sponsorships for club activities are/were handled by staff members who:
- are/were assigned sponsorships without additional pay.
 - are/were paid to assume assigned club sponsorships.
 - volunteer to sponsor club activities without pay.
 - volunteer to sponsor club activities with pay.
 - staff members do/did not work with club activities.
8. The physical education program is/was:
- highly individualized.
 - moderately individualized.
 - slightly individualized.
 - not individualized at all.
9. Inter-scholastic competition is/was:
- not offered at this school.
 - offered in one sport only.
 - offered in two sports.
 - offered in several sports.
10. Team teaching programs operate/operated for:
- all students.
 - nearly all students.
 - about half of the students.
 - only a few students.
 - none of the students.
11. What percentage of your staff is/was involved in team teaching programs?
- over 90 percent.
 - between 60 and 90 percent.
 - between 30 and 60 percent.
 - less than 30 percent.
 - none.

12. A student in your school's lowest grade averages/averaged about how many minutes per day in a team teaching program?
- 180 minutes or more.
 - between 130 and 180 minutes.
 - between 90 and 130 minutes.
 - between 40 and 90 minutes.
 - less than 40 minutes.
13. A student in your school's highest grade averages/averaged how many minutes per day in a team taught situation?
- 180 minutes or more.
 - between 130 and 180 minutes.
 - between 90 and 130 minutes.
 - between 40 and 90 minutes.
 - less than 40 minutes.
14. Which of the following best describes/described your school program as it evolves from enrollment to completion of the last grade?
- completely self-contained program for the entire grade span.
 - completely departmentalized for the entire grade span.
 - modified departmentalized (block-time, core programs, etc.)
 - program moves from largely self-contained to departmentalized.
 - program moves from largely self-contained to partially departmentalized.
 - other _____
15. Instruction in art is/was required for all students for:
- one year.
 - two years.
 - three years.
 - not at all.
16. Instruction in music is/was required:
- for one year.
 - for two years.
 - for three years.
 - not at all.
17. The amount of time set aside for elective courses students may select:
- decreases with each successive grade.
 - is the same for all grades.
 - increases with each successive grade.
 - varies by grade level but not in any systematic manner.
 - does not exist at any grade level.

18. Guidance services are/were available upon request for:
- all students every day.
 - all students nearly every day.
 - most of the students on a regular basis.
 - a limited number of students on a limited basis.
 - other _____
19. Guidance staff members:
- always work/worked closely with the teachers concerning a student.
 - often work/worked closely with the teachers concerning a student.
 - seldom involve/involved the teachers in their work with the students.
 - always work/worked independently of the teachers.
20. Guidance counselors are/were:
- not expected to help teachers build their guidance skills.
 - expected to help teachers build their guidance skills.
 - expected to help teachers build their guidance skills and they are regularly encouraged to work in this area.
 - other _____
21. Clinics or special classes to treat the problems of students with poor basic learning skills are/were:
- not available.
 - available to all students needing such help.
 - available only to the most critically handicapped learners.
 - others _____
22. The amount of time provided in the classroom for instruction in basic learning skills:
- increases/increased with each successive grade.
 - remains/remained constant with each successive grade.
 - decreases/decreased with each successive grade.
 - varies/varied greatly due to the individualized program teachers operate.
23. Concerning a school newspaper, our school has/had:
- no official student school paper.
 - an official student paper with no more than 4 issues per year.
 - an official student paper that publishes 5 or more issues per year.
 - other _____
24. Concerning school dramatic activities, most students:
- do/did not get experience in creative dramatics while enrolled in this building.
 - get/got at least one or two opportunities to use their acting skills while enrolled in this building.

25. Dramatic productions at this school are/were produced from:

- purchased scripts only.
 materials written by students only.
 materials written by students and purchased scripts.
 other _____

26. This school has/had oratorical activities such as debate, public address, etc.:

- as a part of its planned program of instruction.
 as a part of its enrichment program.
 not included in school activities.
 other _____

27. Talents shows are/were:

- not a part of our program.
 produced by students at each grade level.
 produced once a year on an all-school basis.
 produced at each grade level with some of the acts entering an all-school talent show.
 acts entering an all-school talent show.
 other _____

28. In the operational design of this school the role of the teacher as a guidance person is/was:

- given a very strong emphasis.
 encouraged.
 mentioned to the staff but not emphasized.
 left strictly to the individual teacher's personal motivation.
 not important in our guidance plan and therefore not encouraged.
 other _____

29. As a general policy, in the teacher-pupil relationship:

- no formal provisions are/were made for the teacher to provide specific guidance services.
 teachers are/were expected to provide guidance services for all of their pupils.
 teachers are/were expected to provide guidance services for only a limited number of pupils.
 other _____

30. A student's academic progress is/was formally reported to parents:

- two times per year
 four times per year
 six times per year
 other _____

31. Parent-teacher or parent-teacher-student conferences are/were held on a school-wide basis:

- not at all.
- once per year.
- twice per year.
- three times per year.
- four times per year.
- five or more times per year.

32. Community service projects by the students are/were:

- not a part of our program.
- carried out occasionally for a special purpose.
- an important part of the planned experiences for all students while enrolled in this building.

33. This school has/had:

- no parent's organization.
- a parent's organization that is relatively inactive.
- a parent's organization that is active.
- a parent's organization that is very active.

Part II: For each question in this section check all the answers that apply. (Circle = Current, Square = Previous.)

34. School dances are/were held for:

- grade six.
- grade seven.
- grade eight.
- grade nine.

35. A club program for students is/was offered for:

- grade six.
- grade seven.
- grade eight.
- grade nine.

36. The intramural program includes/included:

- team games.
- individual sports.
- various club activities.
- other _____

37. Students are/were allowed to select courses of interest from a range of electives:

- in grade six.
- in grade seven.
- in grade eight.
- in grade nine.

38. Electives currently offered in this building are/were:
(add any not listed)

- | | | | | | | | | |
|-----------------------|--------------------------|--------------|-----------------------|--------------------------|---------------|-----------------------|--------------------------|-------------------|
| <input type="radio"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | vocal music | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | journalism | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | foreign language |
| <input type="radio"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | art | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | drawing | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | natural resources |
| <input type="radio"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | band | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | drama | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | creative writing |
| <input type="radio"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | speech | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | orchestra | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | other _____ |
| <input type="radio"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | typing | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | wood shop | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | other _____ |
| <input type="radio"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | unified arts | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | family living | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | other _____ |

39. Students working in independent study situations work on topics?

- we have/had no independent study programs.
- assigned to them by the teacher.
- of personal interest and approved by the teacher.
- of personal interest and unrelated to classroom work.
- other _____

40. Students with poor basic skills can/could get special help in the following areas: (Check only those areas where special help on an individual basis is/was provided by special staff members trained to treat such situations.)

- | | | | | | |
|-----------------------|--------------------------|----------|-----------------------|--------------------------|--------------------|
| <input type="radio"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | reading | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | mathematics |
| <input type="radio"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | spelling | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | physical education |
| <input type="radio"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | grammar | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | other _____ |

41. Dramatic presentations by students are/were:

- not a part of the school program.
- a part of the activities program.
- a part of certain class activities planned by the teachers.
- other _____

42. Formal evaluation of students' work is/was reported by use of:

- a standard report card with letter grades.
- teacher comments, written on a reporting form.
- parent-teacher conferences.
- standard report card with number grades.
- parent-teacher-student conferences.
- other _____

43. In regard to community relations, this school:

- does/did not send out a parents' newsletter.
- sends/sent out a parents' newsletter when need arises.
- sends/sent out a parents' newsletter on a scheduled basis.
- uses/used a district-wide newsletter to send out information related to this school.
- uses/used commercial newspaper.
- other _____

44. The staff presents/presented informational programs related to the school's functions:

- when requested by the parents.
- once or twice a year at regular parents' meetings.
- at open house programs.
- at regularly scheduled "seminar type" meetings planned for parents.
- other _____

45. From the specialized areas listed below, check each service which is/was available to students in your building.

- guidance counselors school nurse
- school psychologist visiting teacher
- speech therapists diagnostician
- special reading teacher
- clinic services for emotional disturbed
- special education programs for mentally handicapped.
- other _____

46. Teaching teams are/were organized to include:

- fully certified teachers.
- paraprofessionals.
- clerical helpers.
- student teachers.
- others _____

47. From the following list, check those types of auxiliary helpers that are/were available in your building.

- paid paraprofessionals.
- volunteers from the community.
- volunteers from the student body.
- students teachers and interns.
- high school "future teachers" students.
- others _____

APPENDIX C
PRINCIPAL INTERVIEW PROTOCOL

Principal
Interview Protocol

1. What is the student population for your district (K-12)?
2. What grades are included in your school?
3. What is the student population of your school?
4. What is the number of teachers in your school?
5. What is the number of administrators in your school?
6. What is the number of counselors in your school?
7. Why did your district change to your current method? (Junior High School or Middle School)
8. How was the process of change undertaken?
 - a. How was the change initiated?
 - b. What process was used to establish change?
 - c. Who was involved in the process?
9. What differences have occurred as a result of your change?
10. Is the middle school or the junior high school better in your opinion? Why?

APPENDIX D
ALVA SUPERINTENDENT INTERVIEW PROTOCOL

Interview Protocol
for
Dr. Jerry Rippetoe
Superintendent
Moore Public Schools

1. Tell me about the change from Middle School to Junior High School in Moore.
 - a. Why did you change?
 - b. What were the main areas of change?
 - c. How was the change initiated?
 - d. What process was used to establish change?
 - e. Who was involved in the change process?
 - f. What problems did you see?

2. Tell me about the Moore Junior High Schools.
 - a. How would you characterize them?
 - b. How are they different from before?
 - c. What is the biggest improvement?
 - d. What is the biggest problem?

3. Compare the Middle School and the Junior High School.
 - a. How are they the same?
 - b. How are they different?
 - c. Is one better than the other? How?

4. Tell me about the first middle school in Oklahoma.
 - a. Why was it established?
 - b. How was it created?
 - c. Who was involved?
 - d. How did it work?
characteristics?
successful or not?

APPENDIX E
MOORE SUPERINTENDENT INTERVIEW PROTOCOL

Interview Protocol
for
Mr. Lynn Hoskins
Superintendent
Alva Public Schools

1. Tell me about the change from Junior High School to Middle School in Alva.
 - a. Why did you change?
 - b. What were the main areas of change?
 - c. How was change initiated?
 - d. What process was used to establish change?
 - e. Who was involved in the change process?
 - f. What problems did you see?

2. Tell me about the Alva Middle School.
 - a. How would you characterize it?
 - b. How is it different from before?
 - c. What is the biggest improvement?
 - d. What is the biggest problem?

3. Compare the Junior High School to the Middle School.
 - a. How are they the same?
 - b. How are they different?
 - d. Is one better than the other? How?

VITA^y

Milton Thomas Worley

Candidate for the Degree of

Doctor of Education

Thesis: A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF CHANGE IN MIDDLE LEVEL
SCHOOL ORGANIZATION: MIDDLE SCHOOL OR JUNIOR
HIGH SCHOOL?

Major Field: Educational Administration

Biographical:

Personal Data: Born in West Palm Beach, Florida,
September 6, 1943, the son of Milton Dayton
Worley and Della Ross Worley.

Education: Graduated from Palm Beach High School, West
Palm Beach, Florida in June 1961; received an
Associate of Arts Degree from Palm Beach Junior
College, Lake Worth, Florida in June 1963;
earned a Bachelor of Science Degree from
Phillips University, Enid, Oklahoma in August
1965; acquired a Master of Education Degree from
Phillips University, Enid, Oklahoma in May 1969;
completed the requirements for the Doctor of
Education Degree in Educational Administration
from Oklahoma State University, Stillwater,
Oklahoma in July 1992.

Professional Experience: Social Studies Teacher, Enid
High School, Enid, Oklahoma, 1965-1981;
Secondary Social Studies Curriculum Consultant
for the Enid Public Schools, 1978-1981;
Assistant Principal, Waller Junior High School,
Enid, Oklahoma, 1981-1987; Principal, Waller
Junior High School, Enid, Oklahoma 1987-1992.