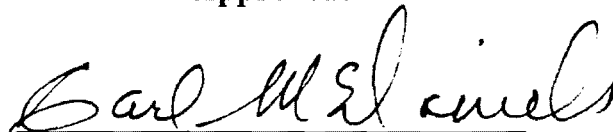


**EXEMPLARY CAREER DEVELOPMENT PRACTICES  
OF  
VIRGINIA'S MIDDLE SCHOOLS  
BY  
DEBBIE WEBB WALLACE**

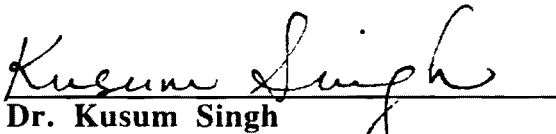
**Dissertation submitted to the Faculty of the  
Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University  
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of  
DOCTOR OF EDUCATION  
in  
Counselor Education**

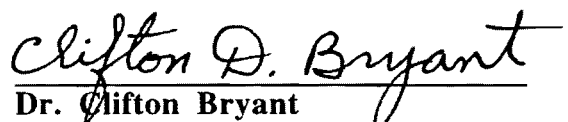
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**February 1997  
Blacksburg, Virginia**

**Key Words: Exemplary, Career Development, Middle School**

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# EXEMPLARY CAREER DEVELOPMENT PRACTICES

OF

## VIRGINIA'S MIDDLE SCHOOLS

by

Debbie Webb Wallace

Committee Chairman: Carl McDaniels

Counselor Education

(Abstract)

The National Occupational Information Coordinating Committee (NOICC) (1989) has defined career development guidelines for all groups from elementary school students through adulthood. These guidelines have been adopted by over 40 states. Virginia has chosen not to adopt them and currently does not have state standards against which to identify or assess exemplary career development practices in middle schools. Such identification procedures would serve to (a) provide guidelines for program development and expansion, (b) provide a means of accountability, (c) provide a standard of performance, (d) provide consistency among middle schools, and (e) showcase exemplary programs.

This study examined exemplary career development practices at 43 middle schools in Virginia during the Fall of 1996. The researcher identified these schools by asking for recommendations from State Department of Education Field Representatives, university faculty with expertise in the fields of counseling, middle school education or both, and current and most recent past officers of the Virginia Counselors Association and the Virginia School Counselor Association.

A survey method was used to identify general curriculum design, physical facilities, technological capabilities, activities and strategies used to incorporate career development into the curricula of the identified middle school. Three site visits and one in-depth

telephone interview were conducted by the researcher to verify exemplary career development practices.

The following common themes were found concerning exemplary career development practices:

- (1) There were teacher-advisory programs in which a variety of career development activities took place in the academic classrooms.
- (2) There were middle school teams in which groups of teachers worked together on career development activities which were integrated into the core curriculum through these teaming efforts.
- (3) There were curriculum design efforts in which career development exploratory classes were offered on either a 6, 9, 12, or 18 week rotation.
- (4) There were special interest clubs, many of which directly related to career development.
- (5) There were classroom guidance activities conducted by counselors related to career development.

Evaluations of the Survey findings, recommendations and conclusions of this study were reported in the hope that middle school career development programs in Virginia's middle schools will strive for exemplary practices for the benefit of their own students.

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

An undertaking such as this is not done alone. It takes many dedicated individuals working in partnerships to accomplish such a feat. Therefore, I have many, many people to thank as I come to the end of this chapter in my life.

My sincerest appreciation goes to Dr. Carl McDaniels. He has challenged me to reach heights I never thought were possible, and his wealth of information and support has sustained me. Also thanks to Dr. Dave Hutchins for his words of encouragement and sense of humor and Dr. Claire Cole Vaught who understood what it was truly like to be a full time student, employee, mother, and wife. Thanks to Dr. Kusum Singh for being so humanistic about something as inhumane as statistics. Finally, a special thank you to Dr. Clifton Bryant, a true southern gentleman who introduced me to the sociological aspects of work.

My special friends cannot go without recognition. To the Super Six, thanks for all of your encouragement and support. We **really are** "the Super Six!" To Vicki, thank you for listening--you're a special person who deserves much credit. Your continued helpfulness and sincere caring are not to be overlooked. Also thanks to Sarah, Brenda, and all of the others in the Tazewell County School System who have had to endure my never ending tales of horror, woe, and finally, who shared my words of relief as I exhaustingly said "I'm finished."

My church family cannot go without mention. They listened when I needed ears to listen, they gave encouragement when I most needed it, and prayed for me when I knew in my heart that it was the source of my strength. I don't know what God has in store for me, but I know that it is only through his power and grace that I've succeeded.

A special appreciation also goes to middle school counselors across Virginia who took the time to participate in this study and talk with me over the telephone. I have made

several new acquaintances and hope to continue the sharing of ideas as we continue our commitment to educating Virginia's youth. Thanks to those who sent extra materials beyond what was asked for in the Survey. I really appreciate it tremendously.

Finally, no words can express my deepest appreciation and love to my husband, Tim, and my children, Wesley and Jillian, for their undying support and words of encouragement. They sacrificed much more than I did, because it was my goal to achieve this, not theirs. They did without so much for so long, I don't ever feel that I can repay them. I only hope that they will be proud and realize that goals worth setting are not always easy to achieve, but giving up is not an option.

## DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to two people and a collective group.

First, I would like to dedicate this work to my father and mother, Gratten and Jackie Webb. Neither were lovers of school, so to understand this endeavor was difficult. Dad always told me when I was growing up, however, “get an education, it’s the only thing others can’t take from you.” He told me this so much, it must have become ingrained in my thoughts, because I love education and (almost) everything associated with it. Now Dad keeps asking me if I’m ever going to finish going to school. Dad, I doubt it!

Mother, I know you don’t understand how any woman could want or need so much education. You were certainly successful without it. Even without this understanding, you supported me in every possible way. You kept and fed my children (you practically raised them) and worried incessantly about me doing too much, traveling at night, being too stressed, etc.--the typical “mother” thing to do. Thanks, thanks, and thanks again. I’m eternally grateful.

Lastly, I would like to dedicate this work to all working women who are wives and mothers. Successes don’t always come easily. Juggling so many things can be almost overwhelming at times but, if you want it, make an attempt. However slow progress may be, don’t give up, keep going. Take one step at a time, not looking at the total picture but each individual accomplishment along the way. It is only through our support of each other that we can be leaders; successful professionals who can make a difference in the world. My advise is to “Go for it!”

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## CHAPTER ONE

### Introduction

The world of work is rapidly changing. The industrial revolution and now the technological evolution have drastically changed the work scene. Economic conditions, immigration, and changing birth and mortality rates all affect job availability and demands. Jobs that didn't even exist 20 or 30 years ago are now emerging as possible career choices. Today's students may not even be able to conceptualize the types of jobs they will eventually hold.

"Many current middle school students will enter the work force by the year 2000. The competitiveness of the workplace dictates that today's students receive appropriate educational training and career guidance" (Mau, 1995, p. 518). "The workforce of tomorrow is in the process of career development today. Through career counseling programs, students (K-12) are learning about themselves and the world of work and making decisions that will influence their futures. Career counseling is a link between education and work and provides direction in assisting students to meet the challenges of a changing world" (American School Counselor Association, n.d.).

With such rapid changes occurring, how do counselors and career educators prepare students for the world of work? Because of rapid technological advancements, should counselors and career educators do nothing, or do they prepare as best they can for future employment trends? How can counselors motivate and educate at-risk students or those who may have had no positive work role models? How do they expose teachers, parents, and students to, and increase their awareness of, this ever-changing world of work?

This study aims to identify what types of exemplary career development activities are occurring in middle schools in Virginia by showcasing such programs.

## **Career Development Movement**

In 1909, Frank Parsons' book Choosing a Vocation was published and he became known as the "father of vocational guidance." Following this movement throughout its evolution has revealed various techniques and theories. E. G. Williamson's publication How to Counsel Students (1939) made a tremendous impact on the career-guidance movement in that he advocated directive counseling. The Great Depression in the 1930s resulted in the establishment of the United States Employment Service as part of the Department of Labor. Through this service, much occupational information was collected and organized into the Dictionary of Occupational Titles (1939), a publication which is revised and up-dated periodically.

After World War II, there were significant increases of enrollment in colleges and universities resulting in the need for more career guidance. Also during this time, the growth of applied psychology contributed significantly to the growth of the measurement movement. These tests had a direct impact on the career-guidance movement and subsequent practices (Zunker, 1990).

In the 1950's Donald Super, Eli Ginzberg, Ann Roe, and others began to examine the psychological variables which might affect career choice (Srebalus, Marinelli, & Messing, 1982). Roe (1956) used the word "occupations" to define "whatever an adult spends most of his life doing." It was during this time frame that Super began to make significant contributions to the area of career development. He (1957) began using the term "career," which is still the most frequently used term to describe one's lifework. In a 1982 report written by Sears, which was reviewed by a panel of career guidance experts, the National Vocational Guidance Association Board of Directors, and the Vocational Guidance Quarterly editorial reviewer, she defined "work" as a "conscious effort, other than having as its primary purposes either coping or relaxation, aimed at producing benefits for oneself and/or for oneself and others" (p. 139).

During the early 1970s, U.S. Commissioner of Education Sidney Marland and others led a thrust to put more emphasis on career education as it relates to public education. Hoyt (1975) stated several criticisms of American education that he believed career education would correct. Among these were:

- Too many students fail to see meaningful relationships between what they are being asked to learn in school and what they will do when they leave the educational system. . .
- American education, as currently structured, best meets the educational needs of that minority of persons who will someday become college graduates. It fails to place equal emphasis on meeting the educational needs of the vast majority of students who will never be college graduates.
- Too many persons leave our educational system at both the secondary and collegiate levels unequipped with the vocational skills, the self-understanding and career decision-making skills, or the work attitudes that are essential for making a successful transition from school to work.

In 1977, a national study of 30,000 13-year-olds was conducted to determine their career development needs in terms of knowledge of occupations, ability to recognize strengths and limitations, knowledge of the relationships between work and school, and other variables (Aubrey, 1977). Selected findings from this study included:

1. Most 13-year-olds could state two things they could do well and two things they could not do well. Males and females were practically equal in their ability to list their strengths.

2. Student interests clustered in the areas of group sports and academics. More males responded to group sports than any other single category, and more females responded to the school and academic area.
3. Interests were analyzed in terms of narrow categories in contrast to total life experiences.
4. In assessing the students' knowledge of characteristics and requirements of different occupations, the study found that they knew more about the duties and physical characteristics of jobs than the specifics of earning power and detailed work.
5. The students had general information about occupations, but insufficient knowledge concerning specific tasks, duties, and benefits of occupations.
6. When asked to list 10 factors to be considered in choosing a job or career, most could list 2, but less than half could list more than 5.
7. When asked how they could get more information about an occupation, an extremely low percentage stated they would go to their counselor or teacher.
8. The first choice for future jobs tended to be occupations generally requiring college degrees or lengthy training periods beyond high school.
9. In identifying skills that are generally useful in the world of work, the study found that 13-year-olds had difficulty with exercises involving numerical skills.
10. In terms of assuming responsibility for their own behavior, the students did not see themselves as ultimately responsible for their own behaviors.

The American School Counselor Association (1985) has recommended that school counselors focus more on career development activities. "Building Career Counseling Programs (1991)," a pamphlet published jointly by the American School Counselor Association and the National Career Development Association states that comprehensive career counseling programs can help meet the challenges of the 1990's and beyond. Wiggins and Moody (1987) found that school counseling programs which were rated as highly effective are also the ones which place an emphasis on career development activities.

In Turning Points (Carnegie, 1989), the authors stated that:

By age 15, millions of American youth are at risk of reaching adulthood unable to meet adequately the requirements of the workplace, the commitments of relationships in families and with peers, and the responsibilities of participation in a multicultural society and of citizenship in a democracy. These young people often suffer from underdeveloped intellectual abilities, indifference to good health, and cynicism about the values that American society embodies. (p. 21)

These findings seem to have some major implications for counselors in the field of middle school career development. Are we meeting those needs or are there more challenges to face and more work to be done?

In a 1991 publication entitled Children Are Our Future: School Counseling 2000, the American School Counselor Association set forth six national goals for counselors to work toward. Goals II and III are directly related to work.

Goal II     The high school graduation rate will increase to at least 90 percent. The counselor works directly with all students, parents, teachers, community members, and employers to

- provide for the continual benefits of a comprehensive developmental school counseling program through life skills training;
- ensure access to the services of other professionals including school social workers, psychologists, and nurses;
- develop a comprehensive educational/career plan for each student which targets high school completion and exploration of post secondary opportunities;
- establish school-to-work transition programs.

Goal III . . .students will. . .demonstrate competency in challenging subject matter. . . ; and every school in America will ensure that all students learn to use their minds well, so they may be prepared for responsible citizenship, further learning, and productive employment in our modern economy. The counselor works directly with students through developmental counseling curriculum to acquire new basic skills to

- learn how to manage, organize information, make decisions, and deal with change;
- develop positive attitudes toward work and encourage work experience activities;
- acquire skills and make a smooth transition from school to work;
- develop skills for planning, monitoring, and managing personal, career, and lifestyle development;

- develop transferable skills to facilitate changes throughout their lifetimes.

The National Occupational Information Coordinating Committee (NOICC) initiated a project to develop the National Career Development Guidelines in an effort to establish national guidelines for state and local organizations to use to strengthen and improve career guidance and counseling programs and enhance individual competence. The development of these guidelines was led by three groups: a Project Leadership Team which set policy direction for the project, a Project Review and Implementation Planning Group which coordinated state and local reviews and provided direction for implementing the guidelines and the Expert Review Panel which provided a conceptual overview and reviewed draft materials. More than 150 career and counseling professionals served in an evaluative capacity during the development of these guidelines.

Upon their development, the guidelines were tested through state and local demonstration models. Four states were selected as initial model sites in 1987. In 1988, six additional states were awarded grants to initiate the guidelines. In 1989, ten more states were funded to initiate the guidelines. They have now been adopted by over forty states and have been endorsed by many professional organizations including the American Association for Counseling and Development (AACD), the American School Counselor Association (ASCA), The American Vocational Association (AVA) Guidance Division, The National Career Development Association (NCDA), and others (Lester, 1989).

Because of the involvement of so many professionals and the extensive field testing and revision, these career development guidelines provide the benchmark by which all states could evaluate and improve their delivery of career development information. They set the standard by which exemplary career development practices can be compared.

“The March 1994 G-7 (Group of Seven) jobs and employment conference of the world’s seven most economically successful countries, passage of the 1994 School-To-

Work Transition legislation, and President Bill Clinton's recent call for one-stop career centers to address this nation's career needs serve to accentuate the abundant evidence of the importance of career development and the need for career counseling in this rapidly changing society and world" (Engels, Minor, Sampson, Jr., & Splete, 1995).

Mau (1995), found that very few students, regardless of sex or racial background, consulted counselors or teachers for educational matters. Counselors should be more aware of cultural barriers that may inhibit minority students from seeking counseling help. "As the largest numbers of entrants to the workforce will continue to be women and ethnic and racial minorities, they, their employers, and their coworkers will need assistance in dealing with career development and transition in general, and discrimination, harassment, and related attitudinal barriers in particular" (Engels, Minor, Sampson, Jr., & Splete, 1995, p. 135).

A recent Gallup survey conducted for the National Career Development Association (1995) indicated that 72% of American adults would seek more information on career options if starting over. Eighty-eight percent who found career information thought it was useful. The survey indicated that high schools should pay more attention to career development, help all students plan their careers, help all students develop job skills, help all students find jobs, and help work-bound students develop work skills. Findings of the survey suggest a need at all ages for comprehensive career development programs, equity in all aspects of career development and career development professionals who will help people acquire and refine good learning skills, learn to make educational plans, and learn about career opportunities.

As research in this area continues, it becomes apparent that career choice is much more encompassing than deciding upon a job. This process has grown to include Super's (1980) life-span, life-space developmental approach, the inclusion of social factors which contribute to career development (Borow, 1964; Krumboltz, 1976), the idea of career as a



total life role or life career development (Gysbers, 1984), to the incorporation of leisure as a component of career (McDaniels, 1989).

Brown (1990) proposed the following trends in career development: (a) technology will both compound and provide assistance with the career development of workers; (b) the impact of employment and unemployment on mental health will be of increasing concern; (c) career development programs will be increasingly available in a greater variety of settings and from a wider range of personnel; (d) there will be increased interest in credentialing career counselors; (e) an increased recognition of the complexity of career counseling will occur; (f) there will be an increasing emphasis on the postmidlife period of career development, including retirement planning; (g) a greater concern for the development and career counseling of special subgroups will emerge; (h) there will be a greater emphasis on work-adjustment factors, particularly as they relate to productivity and quality; (i) there will be an increasing emphasis in research and practice on factors related to the decision-making process; (j) there will be an increasing focus on the relationship of literacy to career development; and (k) theories and research in career development will increasingly reflect the phenomenological philosophical perspective.

### **Exemplary Programs**

As counselors search for exemplary career development programs, the need for such programs is apparent. Kinnier and Krumboltz state that the road to career fulfillment is full of obstacles. Some of the major ones include:

- People acquire inaccurate information or maladaptive beliefs about themselves and the world. They often operate under presuppositions they have never examined.
- People are uncertain about their own priorities. They feel unclear or conflicted about what they really want or value.

- People are unaware of their own abilities and interests and how their skills and preferences are related to the occupational structure in society. They lack a means of obtaining this information.
- Although a wealth of occupational information is available, people find it difficult to ask pertinent questions, to motivate themselves to find answers, to penetrate the overwhelming mass of material, and to distinguish biased information from facts.
- People generally do not have a systematic method for making career-related decisions. They often make decisions haphazardly.
- People find that obtaining a job is a lonely, frustrating task for which they are ill prepared (cited in Gysbers and Associates, 1984, p 311).

New concepts and programs are emerging. Words such as “Tech Prep,” “School-To-Work,” “global economy,” and others are coming into the counseling field indirectly through other sources which may leave counselors unable to guide students appropriately if they do not continue to obtain current information concerning changes in the workplace and trends in future employment needs. This information must be shared with students in order to help them prepare for their careers.

While the identification of exemplary career development programs exists in various other educational areas such as vocational and adult education and the Southern Regional Education Board’s High Schools That Work Programs, there are currently no guidelines provided by Virginia to identify such exemplary career development programs at any educational level. Virginia may consider adoption of the National Occupational Information Coordinating Committee (NOICC) Guidelines as they provide the benchmark for national career development practices as a goal from which schools may be evaluated.

## Middle School Movement

During the latter part of the career development evolution, a parallel movement was being conceptualized in the field of education. In 1963, William Alexander envisioned a “school in the middle” to meet the needs of students in the pre-adolescent and early adolescent stages of development (1963). This newly structured organization would be “(1) a well-articulated 12 to 14 year system of education; (2) preparation for, even transition to, adolescence; (3) continued general education; and (4) abundant opportunities for exploration of interests, individualization of instruction, a flexible curriculum, and emphasis of values” (1963 speech).

Earlier, G. Stanley Hall (1904) had begun to study the emerging field of adolescence and had broken it into two stages: early adolescence and adolescence. Others followed with developmental stages and transitions that they believed a person moves through. Erikson (1963), Piaget and Inhelder (1969), and Havighurst (1972) all examined developmental patterns of growth and development.

In a presentation concerning developmental traits of middle school students, DeMedio (1991) stated that curricular and organizational practices for young adolescents should:

- adapt to the constantly changing physical needs of 10- to 14-year-olds
- emphasize self-understanding and self-acceptance about physical changes
- emphasize hands-on activities and experiences, allowing students to move around the classroom to avoid long periods of passive work
- adapt to the constantly changing social needs of 10- to 14-year-olds
- provide opportunities for students to be autonomous and accepting of responsibility

- provide an art, music, home arts and industrial technology curriculum that emphasize exploratory, hands-on experiences designed to foster creativity and stimulate interest
- adapt to the wide range of cognitive capabilities of students
- enable students to explore their interests and talents and to learn how to study

More recently, Steinberg (1993) stated that the following key points concerning adolescents' growth and development should be remembered: (a) just before puberty, the hypothalamus begins to lose sensitivity to the sex hormone and consequently, permits levels of these hormones to rise, (b) the growth spurt occurs, on average, about two years earlier among girls than among boys, (c) adolescents become better able to think about what is possible, instead of limiting their thoughts to what is real and, (d) adolescents and their parents have similar beliefs about the importance of hard work, about educational and occupational ambitions, and about the personal characteristics and attributes they feel are important and desirable.

These developmental stages, which take place for most students at the middle school level, also have implications for career development during this time period. What are career development tasks for this age? How does learning appropriate masculine and feminine roles effect career exploration? Does learning to get along with others and preparing for an economic career relate to the awareness and exploration stages of career development? Being aware of the developmental stages of early adolescence is vitally important in planning and conducting appropriate career exploration activities for this age group.

## **Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of this study was to examine exemplary career development practices of counselors in selected middle schools throughout Virginia. By examining the developmental needs of early adolescents (transescents) and matching them with appropriate career development practices, one can assess attempts to educate Virginia's youth concerning their career development. What types of career awareness/exploration activities are occurring at the middle school level? Are these activities appropriate for the developmental stages of transescents? How are these practices and programs being evaluated for their effectiveness?

As national programs such as the National Occupational Information Coordinating Committee (NOICC), the National Center for Research in Vocational Education, the American Vocational Association, the School-To-Work Opportunities Office, and others seek to develop and refine instruments to identify and evaluate exemplary career programs under their guidelines, Virginia's counselors must also make attempts to do the same.

The identification of exemplary career development practices at the middle school level serves several purposes. They include:

- providing guidelines for program development and expansion
- providing a means of accountability
- providing a standard of performance
- providing consistency among institutions
- showcasing exemplary programs

The identification of exemplary career development practices may serve as a model for other middle schools to use in the development and/or modification of programs to meet their own specific needs.

## **Research Questions**

This study posed several research questions concerning the career development of early adolescents at the middle school level. These were:

Research Question 1:

- Do Virginia's exemplary middle schools conduct exemplary career development programs as defined by the guidelines set forth by the National Occupational Information Coordinating Committee?

Research Question 2:

- What percentage of the counselor's time is spent in career development activities?

Research Question 3:

- Who were the facilitators of the career development programs in the identified exemplary middle schools?

Research Question 4:

- What school personnel are involved in career development activities in the identified exemplary middle schools?

Research Question 5:

- How are career development programs being evaluated?

## **Significance of the Study**

By examining current career guidance practices of exemplary middle schools in the state, counselors and counselor educators can compare career development practices and programs to the National Occupational Information Coordinating Committee's (NOICC) (1989) guidelines for middle/junior high school. This study highlighted those schools which have exemplary programs and focused on specific practices they used in the delivery of career development information to their students. By showcasing exemplary programs,

other schools in Virginia and elsewhere will have a better understanding and appreciation for those career development practices which are the most effective in the career development of transescents. Exemplary programs can be used as models in developing new programs and improving those currently in existence. “Understandably, school reforms, workplace demands, and the changing economy and workforce demographics dictate new expectations for school counselors in the 1990’s. Many believe school counselors can be a key force in preparing the nation’s diverse student population for the future. With the passage of the School-To-Work Opportunities Act of 1994, school counselors are being entrusted to take the lead in assisting our nation’s young people to smoothly transition from school to work” (Maddy-Bernstein & Cunanan, 1995).

### **Definition of Terms**

**Awareness Stage** - Isaacson (1986) defines career awareness as having five stages.

These include (a) acquiring a broad, basic knowledge of the world of work; (b) developing a healthy attitude toward all forms of work; (c) understanding the individual’s role in vocational choice and how the process of choice proceeds; (d) developing one’s self concept; and (e) helping parents understand and accept their role in their youngster’s career development (p. 316).

**Pre-Adolescent, Early Adolescent** - The developmental stage between childhood and adolescence, roughly ages 10-14 (Arth, Alexander, et al., 1982).

**Career** - Career = Work + Leisure (C = W + L). The totality of work and leisure one does in a lifetime (McDaniels, 1982).

**Career Development** - The total constellation of psychological, sociological, educational, physical, economic, and chance factors that combine to shape the career of any given individual over the life span (McDaniels & Gysbers, 1992).

**Career Education** - An effort aimed at refocusing American education and the actions of the broader community in ways that will help individuals acquire and utilize the knowledge, skills, and attitudes necessary for each to make work a meaningful, productive, and satisfying part of his/her way of living (Sears, 1982, p. 139).

**Career Portfolio** - A purposeful collection of student work that exhibits to the students and/or others the student's activities, efforts, progress, or achievement in given areas (American School Counselor Association, 1992).

**Exemplary** - Serving as an example, instance, or illustration (Websters, 1986).

**Exploratory Stage** - The second of Super's career development stages. It occurs in people from ages 14-24 and includes the following tasks: (a) recognizing and accepting need to becoming aware of interests and abilities and how they relate to work opportunities, (b) identifying possible fields and levels of work consistent with these abilities and interests, and (c) securing training to develop skills and advance occupational entry and/or enter occupations fulfilling interests and abilities (as cited in Healy, 1982).

**Growth Stage** - The first of Super's career development stages. It occurs in children from the ages of 0-14 and includes the following tasks: (a) trying multiple experiences, (b) forming self-concept, and (c) developing an understanding of the meaning and purpose of work (Healy, 1982).



**Middle School** - A separate school designed to meet the special needs of young adolescents in an organizational structure that encompasses any combination of grades five through nine, wherein developmentally appropriate curricula and programs are used to create learning experiences that are both relevant and interactive (Clark & Clark, 1994, p. 6).

**NOICC** - National Occupational Information Coordinating Committee.

**Occupation** - A group of similar jobs found in various organizations. Occupations are task-, economy-, and society-oriented (Super, 1976).

**Service Learning/Volunteerism** - Initiatives that encourage youth to help their communities through clubs and individual projects. These programs enable youth to develop important social skills, problem solving skills, and an increased sense of self worth and personal meaning (McPherson, 1997).

**Teacher-Advisory** - An organizational structure in which one small group of students identifies with and belongs to one educator, who nurtures, advocates for, and shepherds through school the individuals in that group (Cole, 1992, p. 5).

**Transescence, Transescent** - The period of human development which begins in late childhood prior to the onset of puberty and extends through the early stages of adolescence (Wiles & Bondi, 1981).

## **Summary**

This chapter highlighted some of the changes that are currently taking place in the world of work and moved from there into a brief history of the career development movement. An introduction to exemplary programs was followed by a brief overview of the middle school movement. Concluding the chapter were the purpose and the significance of this study followed by definitions of terms relevant to the research.

## **Overview of Subsequent Chapters**

Chapter Two reviews the literature pertaining to transescent development, middle school design, highlights of historic middle school studies, a brief history of career education, the infusion of career development into the middle school curriculum, and concludes with a discussion of exemplary programs pertaining to career development.

Chapter Three describes the methodology of the research study. Chapter Four reports the findings and results, while Chapter Five summarizes the study and discusses findings and results. Recommendations and implications for further research are also included. References, appendices, and other pertinent information follow Chapter Five.

## **CHAPTER TWO**

### **Review of the Literature**

#### **Overview**

This chapter is divided into several sections which are necessary to understand the relationship of career development to the middle school student. The first section discusses transescent development. The next section briefly describes middle school design. The third section includes several historic career development studies, followed by the background of career education in the schools. The next section discusses career development activities appropriate at the middle school level as indicated from historic studies with respect to middle school design and transescent development. The final section discusses the importance of identifying exemplary programs and their impact on current and future career development practices.

#### **Transescent Development**

In 1963, William Alexander, chairman of the Department of Education at George Peabody College for Teachers, was asked to address the successes of the junior high movement in the United States. Before his presentation to a national conference at Cornell University, he revised his speech from "The Dynamic Junior High School" to "The Junior High School: A Changing View." During this revision, he envisioned a "school in the middle" designed to meet the unique needs of the young adolescent. Following this, many people began to research the area of early adolescence, sometimes referred to as "transescence." Maynard (1986) stated that middle level educators should be aware of the sharp differences in the physical, social, emotional, and intellectual development of the 10 to 15 year old. He described the uneven development of muscles and bones, resulting in lack of coordination and awkwardness; their noticeable increases in height and weight.

Social development varies in the degree of independence from home and family as well as interest in developing relationships with members of the opposite sex. Emotional development may cause feelings of inadequacy, superiority or inferiority, and diverse feelings while intellectual development ranges from concrete level to abstract thinking skills.

Havighurst's (1972) list of developmental stages/tasks of adolescents (ages 12-18) includes the following: (a) learning socially approved feminine and masculine roles and behaviors, (b) achieving emotional independence of parents and other adults, (c) setting vocational goals for economic independence, and (d) selecting and preparing for an occupation, relating interests to abilities and choices.

Muro and Dinkmeyer (1977) stated that the 11-year-old child shows increased self-assertion, curiosity, and sociability. The child is restive, loves to talk, and wiggles a lot. Their physical exuberance is sometimes equaled by the intensity of their emotions. They may laugh quickly and loudly, or they may exhibit sharp outbursts of anger. Their emotions range through a wide variety of phases. They are social and may be frequently frustrated. They are competitive and tend to be somewhat silly as well as being able to engage in "adultlike" conversation. Eleven-year-olds are sensitive to the nature of what happens in the group.

In describing the 12-year old child, Muro & Dinkmeyer (1977) state that this is an age of in-between in which children seem to flow from very childlike behavior to that of mature adulthood. Twelve is a spirited, enthusiastic age accompanied by a growing sense of intuition and insight. They become able to exhibit adult behaviors and attitudes. They are better able to control their vast energy levels than are younger children. Their bodies began to rapidly change. They are beginning to be able to control their ever-changing emotions to a greater degree than before. The 12-year-old becomes increasingly self-reliant, self-centered, and assured of self importance.

Dorman, Lipsitz, and Verner (1985) stated that the developmental needs of young adolescents include (a) diversity, (b) self-exploration and self-definition, (c) meaningful participation in their schools and communities, (d) positive social interaction with peers and adults, (e) physical activity, (f) competence and achievement, and (g) structure and clear limits.

Among the developmental tasks stated by Cole (1988) are (a) transescents begin to develop an identity independent of adults; (b) transescents need to explore their interests and capacities and their relationship to future education, work, and leisure; and (c) emerging adolescents are learning to make decisions and to accept responsibility for self.

Clark & Clark (1994) list many of the developmental changes which occur in early adolescence. Among these are: (a) dramatic and visible biological changes, (b) the preference of additive order passive learning, (c) the transition into formal operations of thinking which results in the ability to better think about what is possible instead of what is real, and (d) the process of acquiring rights, privileges, and responsibilities of adults (p. 64-69).

### **Middle School Design**

Arth, Alexander, et. al., (1982) stated that “no other age level has so clear and legitimate a claim to the designation of unique as does this period of transition between childhood and full-blown adolescence, roughly ages ten to fourteen” (p. 3). They defined the essential elements of a middle school as being: educators knowledgeable about and committed to transescents, a balanced curriculum based on transescent needs, a range of organizational arrangements, varied instructional strategies, a full exploratory program, comprehensive advising and counseling, continuous progress of students, evaluation procedures compatible with the nature of transescents, cooperative planning, positive school climate, and interrelationship of elements.

Alexander and George (1981) stated that middle school features should include guidance, transition/articulation, block time schedule/interdisciplinary teams, appropriate teaching strategies, exploratory, and appropriate core curriculum/learning skills.

Wiles and Bondi (1981) stated that program design for the essential middle school should include basic studies, exploratory studies, environmental studies, career exploration, consumer education, and media study. They state that “career education teachers or occupational specialists are being included as part of many middle school staffs and that exploring the world of work and increasing occupational awareness can provide students with a base of information to make future educational and career decisions” (p. 105).

In a national survey conducted by Gordon Cawelti (1988) for the Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development, he concluded:

The middle school organization of grades 6-8 is most likely to provide the key characteristics or program features commonly advocated as most appropriate to the needs of students aged 10-14 (p. 1). . .and middle schools are much more likely to use a teacher-advisor 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. (p. 12)

Clark and Clark (1994) state that the unique needs of transescence can be identified by the word “exploration.” Exploration at the middle school level had first come to mean a collection of courses which commonly include art, music, shop, and home economics. This exploratory concept has evolved, however, to include exploration at the total school level such as independent study, special projects, advisory programs, special interest clubs, and other activities.

Because young adolescents are undergoing many changes in their lives, a developmentally appropriate curricula should provide them with the opportunity to explore the intellectual, emotional, social, and physical dimensions of those changes. Exploratory programs in the middle school provide for this type of curricula (Clark & Clark, 1994).

In a Carnegie Council on Adolescent Development report issued in 1989, these essential middle school elements were defined:

- large middle grade schools are divided into smaller communities for learning,
- middle grade schools transmit a core of common knowledge to all students,
- middle grade schools are organized to ensure success for all students,
- teachers and principals have the major responsibility and power to transform middle grade schools,
- teachers for the middle grades are specifically prepared to teach young adolescents,
- schools promote good health; the education and health of young adolescents are inextricably linked,
- families are allied with school staff through mutual respect, trust, and communication, and
- schools and communities are partners in educating young adolescents (p. 36).

### **Career Development Studies**

In The Modern Junior High School, Gruhn and Douglas (1947) stated that among the six functions of the junior high school were (a) discovery and exploration opportunities for all pupils that are based on their specialized interests, aptitudes, and abilities; and (b) guidance to assist pupils in making wise choices educationally, vocationally, and in their

personal and social living. In 1951, Ginzberg and others introduced a new theory of career development which stated that occupational choice was a developmental process that occurs over a number of years and one in which people must balance interests, aptitudes, and opportunities. This formulation assumed that occupational choice occurred over a number of years and was completed in early adulthood. Ginzberg (1972) later revised this earlier theory to accommodate his belief that occupational choice continues throughout the life span.

The importance of such beliefs concerning developmental issues including career development activities, has been indicated by several historic studies concerning the career development of middle school age students. In 1950, Super began a longitudinal study of middle class, ninth grade boys to determine their career maturity referred to as the Career Pattern Study. Participants were interviewed at both the 9th grade and the 12th grade level. This study has continued throughout the years, and attempts were still being made to periodically contact the participants of the study at the time of Super's death in 1994 (Super & Overstreet, 1960).

Super concluded from his longitudinal study that there was limited progress regarding the career maturity of 9th and 12th grade males and that few 12th graders had done anything to accomplish their vocational preferences.

Gibbons and Lohnes (1968, 1982) have also conducted a longitudinal study of career development for more than 20 years. Their participants were a much more heterogeneous group of eighth grade students than were Super's. Both male and female students in five eastern Massachusetts communities participated in a group guidance activity and were contacted periodically until they were 34 or 35 years old. Results indicated that vocational maturity increased from grades 8 to 10 and that some 8th graders had already achieved considerable vocational maturity while some 10th graders evidenced a considerable lack of it. More importantly, however, was the implication that vocational



maturity was predictive of educational and occupational planning, educational aspirations, and level of occupational aspirations in the 12th grade.

Among their many findings, Gribbons and Lohnes stated that “career guidance in our schools should begin in the elementary years with curriculum units designed to teach understanding and the value of careers and education as they intertwine in our civilization. In the junior high years, students should begin to interact with a computer measurement system that will help them to assess their personality and project their multipotentiality. Through curriculum units they should continue to broaden their understanding of career psychology and sociology. They should return to the computer interaction periodically to test the consequences of intervening events in their personal development and to make and revise decisions and plans. They should have access to a counselor who can help them with the emotional and subtle intellectual ramifications of self-exploration, especially when discontinuities occur in an otherwise orderly progress through developmental tasks” (p. 128-129).

Aubrey’s 1977 national study of 13-year-olds to determine their career development needs in terms of knowledge of occupations, ability to recognize strengths and weaknesses, knowledge of relationship of school to work, and other variables, resulted in Zunker’s compilation of a list of several implications for career guidance at the middle school/junior high level. These include:

- junior high is a transition from structured classroom settings to more specialized educational programs;
- learning to relate acquired skills to educational/occupational goals promotes exploratory reflection and activities;
- there is a need to increase the ability of junior high students to appraise realistically their own abilities, achievements, and interests;

- junior high students have difficulty in identifying and evaluating their interests in relation to total life experiences;
- limited knowledge of occupations makes it difficult for junior high students to relate to in- and out-of-school activities to future jobs;
- the naiveté and limited knowledge of the factors necessary in evaluating future work roles suggest the desirability of introducing informational resources and teaching the necessary skills for their use;
- physiological development and sexual maturity during junior high school involves individual changes in self-perceptions and social interactions. Opportunities to explore, evaluate, and reflect on values seem to be very desirable activities for promoting a better understanding of self during this stage;
- students will greatly benefit from hands-on experience with skill activities associated with occupations;
- because junior high students should begin to assume responsibility for their own behavior, they would greatly benefit from improved knowledge of planning, decision-making, and problem-solving skills;
- increased awareness of sexual differences among junior high students suggests that emphasis be placed on learning how sex-role stereotyping, bias, and discrimination limit occupational and educational choices; and
- students in junior high who continue the process of awareness initiated in elementary school will recognize the changing nature of career commitment. The skills and knowledge learned to evaluate initial career choices will be used to evaluate others over the life span. (p. 217-219)

## **History of Career Education**

In a speech given by Sidney Marland, U.S. Commissioner of Education, in January 1971, he coined the term "career education." Following that, he and his staff developed the idea of total reform in the Department of Education that would embrace vocational education as well as the concept of relating occupational aspects of human development to all levels of learning and all relevant parts of academic instruction (Marland, 1974). The development of such reforms were based on the many studies conducted by Super during the 1950's.

The early 1960's also posed the problems of high unemployment and poverty. During this time, President Kennedy directed the Secretary of Health, Education, and Welfare to appoint a panel of consultants on vocational education. In 1961, Congress passed the Area Redevelopment Act (ARA), which was concerned with the concentration of unemployment in economically depressed areas, and in 1962, the Manpower Development and Training Act (MDTA) was passed in an effort to provide assistance to those who were actually or potentially victimized by automation (Herr, 1976).

On August 24, 1974, Public Law 93-380, the Education Amendments of 1974, received Congressional approval. Section 406 of PL 93-380 referred directly to Career Education and for the first time authorized monies (\$15,000,000) to support the provisions of the Act with regard to Career Education activities. The specific purposes of Section 406 were to:

- develop information on the needs for Career Education of all children;
- promote a national dialogue on Career Education designed to encourage each State and local educational agency to determine and adopt the approach to Career Education best suited to the needs of the children served by them;

- assess the status of Career Education programs and practices, including a reassessment of the stereotyping of career opportunities by race or by sex;
- provide for the demonstration of the best of the current Career Education programs and practices by the development and testing of exemplary programs and practices using various theories, concepts, and approaches with respect to Career Education;
- provide for the training and retraining of persons for conducting Career Education programs; and
- develop State and local plans for implementing Career Education programs designed to insure that every child has the opportunity to gain the knowledge and skills necessary for gainful or maximum employment and for full participation in our society according to his or her ability (Herr, 1976).

Section 406 then established an Office of Career Education and a Director, Kenneth Hoyt. Following that, much emphasis was placed on career education within the school system and funding was appropriated to infuse career education throughout the curriculum. Hoyt proposed ten concepts about his firm belief of the importance of career education at the middle school/junior high level and his belief of career education as appropriate at all educational levels--a developmental process (Hoyt, 1975). As guidance and counseling evolved, however, emphasis shifted to other areas--from personal growth, to needs of special populations, to developmental issues, to needs of "at-risk," and career education has become only one facet of the total guidance program (Paisley & Borders, 1995).

## **Career Development in the Middle School**

In 1957, Super developed his five life stages of career development. The first two correspond to the ages served by the middle school:

1. The Growth Stage (0 to 14 years)
2. The Exploratory Stage (15 to 25 years)

Super listed the following tasks as comprising the Growth Stage: (a) trying multiple experiences, (b) forming a self-concept, and (c) developing an understanding of the meaning and purpose of work. Tasks to be accomplished during the Exploratory Stage include (a) recognizing and accepting the need to make career decisions and obtaining relevant information, (b) becoming aware of interests and abilities and how they relate to work opportunities, (c) identifying possible fields and levels of work consistent with these abilities and interests, and (d) securing training to develop skills and advance occupational entry and/or entering occupations fulfilling interests and abilities.

Super's Exploration Stage comprised the following tasks: (a) recognition and accepting need to make career decisions and obtain relevant information, (b) becoming aware of interests and abilities and how they relate to work opportunities, (c) identifying possible fields and levels of work consistent with these abilities and interests, and (d) securing training to develop skills and advance occupational entry/and or enter occupations fulfilling interests and abilities.

Goals for career guidance at the junior high level were recommended by Gysbers and Pritchard (1970) at the National Conference on Guidance, Counseling, and Placement in Career Development and Educational Occupational Decision Making. These included:

- the student further differentiates his self-characteristics from those of others;
- the student differentiates between the several broad occupational areas in terms of (a) a potential satisfaction each might offer him, (b) the nature

of work tasks performed, (c) the future impact technology might have on particular occupational areas, (d) the contribution and importance of particular occupational areas to our society, and (e) the future demand for workers in broad occupational areas;

- the student identifies different educational areas that are available both in the immediate and more distant future, the nature and purpose of each, the avenues toward which each can lead, and tentatively assesses what each offers him in terms of his possible vocational choices. . . .;
- the student identifies future decisions he must make in order to reach different goals. . . .;
- the student makes a choice of a broad occupational area to study in greater depth;
- the student can differentiate between the major occupations that make up a broad occupational area and can make some differentiation of these occupations in terms of (a) the amount and type of education needed for entrance; (b) the content, tools, setting, products or services for these occupations; (c) their value to society; (d) their ability to provide him with the life style he desires; (e) to what extent they can satisfy his interests and values; and (f) in what ways they do and do not seem appropriate for him; and
- the student selects education or training in the light of his tentative broad career purposes.

The exploratory stage of career development of adolescents should include tasks such as:

- maintaining and expanding linkages to parents and other adults in the work world, and learn how to interact in an adult manner;

- learning about the spectrum of occupations and work settings, and how to gain access to work and training;
- acquiring knowledge of educational and vocational resources;
- developing competencies in, and sense of responsibility for, career decision making, planning, and problem solving;
- trying out multiple activities to develop and become aware of abilities, interests, and values;
- building self-confidence and a sense of agency;
- strengthening constructive work habits, such as systematic study and time management; and
- developing a desire to participate in work.

Career development tasks would include those in knowledge, information seeking, positive work attitudes, planning and decision-making, and career skills (Healy, 1982).

According to Clements (1977), there are five phases of career development. The career awareness stage is necessary for total self-understanding. This phase occurs in grades K-6 and is comprised of an awareness of self, occupational roles, and the role of work in society, social behavior, and responsible actions. The second phase, career exploration, is where the attainment of decision-making skills and occupational knowledge takes place. The characteristics of the phase, which occur in grades 6-10, include the development of further occupational knowledge, evaluation of the role of work, development of knowledge of social and psychological aspects of work, clarification of self-concept, demonstration of acceptable social behavior, and an understanding of the basic economic needs for career planning.

Because some middle schools and/or intermediate schools contain grade five (and sometimes grade four), it would be beneficial to examine elementary level career development. Healy (1982) suggested that career development at the elementary school

level provide opportunities to experience successes such as building basic academic, social, and self-management skills, to receive assistance with deficiencies in order to keep up with competition, to obtain information about various occupations and required training and to begin recognizing ways to direct time and energy so that one increasingly controls who he/she is becoming.

Goals for the growth/awareness stage would include counseling for self-awareness; consulting with students, parents, and teachers; eliminating stereotypic viewpoints; and tutoring to increase academic skills, self-confidence, and interpersonal skills (Healy, 1982).

Herr and Cramer (1984) stated that the elementary school child is a generalist and interacts with a broad range of stimuli and modes of behavior (p. 214). They have already begun to assimilate perceptions and preferences to aspirations and achievements.

They continue by listing goals for career guidance at this awareness level:

- realize that understanding one's strengths, values, and preferences is the foundation for education and occupational choices;
- understand that it is possible to achieve future goals by planning and preparation in the present;
- achieve a sense of personal competence to choose and to meet the requirements of educational and occupational alternatives;
- consider the implications of change in one's self, in one's options, and in relation to the need for continuing education throughout life;
- understand the similarities between problem-solving and personal decision-making skills;
- develop an unbiased, nonstereotyped base of information from which to plan later educational and occupational decisions;



- understand that schooling is made up of many opportunities to explore and to prepare for life;
- recognize the relationships between academic skills--reading, writing, computation--and other subject matter and how these are used in future educational and work options;
- identify occupations in which people work with others, with ideas, or with things;
- consider the purposes that work serves for different people; and
- consider the importance of effective use of leisure time

Career guidance strategies for the elementary school student could include (a) understanding the environment, (b) understanding the world of work, (c) understanding that people are different, (d) developing self-awareness, and (e) understanding relationships between education and work (Zunker, 1990).

Hoffman and McDaniels (1991) stated that this awareness stage should consist of appropriate developmental tasks as children proceed through childhood. Tasks may include: (a) develop self-understanding and a realistic, positive self-concept; (b) acquire the knowledge, understanding, attitudes, and competencies to function effectively in their current life roles, such as son or daughter, family member, sibling, student, classmate, worker at home and school, friend, peer group member, team member in sports and games, and “leisurite”; and (c) develop an awareness of the career development options available to them in school and the community.

In its publication About the Middle School Years (1985), the Virginia Department of Education devoted an entire chapter to “Learning More About Yourself and Careers.” In addition to a discussion on learning more about oneself, there is a section on learning about careers and a suggested list of activities to aid in career awareness and exploration.

Included in this list of developmentally appropriate activities are:

- talk with parents, teachers, counselors, and friends about occupations which interest you. . . ;
- take part in school clubs and activities related to careers of interest to you;
- do volunteer work related to careers in which you are interested;
- talk with people in jobs which interest you;
- visit businesses, offices, and factories where people have occupations you are exploring;
- attend career fairs;
- join community clubs and activities related to careers of interest to you;
- attend school assemblies and other school and community events about careers;
- attend summer camp or a summer recreation program related to careers of interest; and
- when you become old enough to get a part-time job, try to get one in a career field which interests you. (p. 37)

Restructuring Education in the Middle School Grades (1988; revised, 1989), a Virginia Department of Education publication defined Vanguard Schools as those middle schools in Virginia which meet the criteria set forth by the Department as being exemplary middle schools. Among these goals were (a) emphasis on career assessment and on first-hand experience with those who work; and (b) students' discovery and development, by doing, of interests, abilities, and choices related to their future education, careers, and their lives. While Vanguard Schools are no longer recognized by the State Board of Education, there is a major restructuring effort occurring at that level which will be called "Career Connections." Career Connections is a new service area designed to complement current student preparation for careers and continuing education in a challenging and rapidly

changing workplace. This service area provides connecting links for students in pursuit of career development and related career information resources. Connecting links are pathways, program models, or processes that lead to, or point the way to, career goals. The total concept of Career Connections includes the components of career information resources, career development, and career connecting links.

“Of the entire educational span, the junior high school years have the widest range of maturity levels in the student population. The effects of pubertal changes, differences in the rates of male and female growth, and the general unevenness of physical, emotional, and intellectual development within and between the population of girls and boys contribute to this spectrum of maturational differences” (Herr & Cramer, 1984, p. 239-40). They continue to state that it is important to help students focus on career development prior to these changes so that they can realize the significance of planning for the future.

Cole (1982) stated that while the following ideas are not unique to the middle-junior high school, they are developmentally appropriate for transescents' career development stages:

- exploratory courses;
- advisory program;
- exposure to role models which may address issues of sex-role, handicapped, and/or racial stereotyping;
- career shadowing experiences;
- vocational interest inventories, academic achievement, and ability tests;
- career resource center;
- career fair, career speaker day, or career week;
- addressing career issues of special student populations; and
- emphasizing work done by students: grading papers, caring for classroom plants/animals, assisting in labs, tutors, peer counselors.

Myrick (1987) stated that the role of career counselors is to:

- develop and organize a comprehensive Career Resource Center;
- collect and disseminate national, state, and local publications; materials; and other career resources;
- provide career development guidance units that can be used during TAP (Teachers as Advisors Program) time;
- co-lead TAP advisory groups with teachers on occasion and when appropriate;
- consult with teachers regarding career interests, skills, and aptitudes of student advisees;
- help identify the vocational interests and needs of students; and
- work with students and parents in terms of career and educational planning. (p. 49)

Longitudinal data have indicated that career aspirations among prepubertal and adolescent girls have undergone marked changes in recent years, whereas those of boys have not. Speculation as to the causes of change among the girls point to the evidence of the changes in women's participation in the labor force and the respective career messages disseminated by parents, teachers, and the media (Sandberg, Ehrhardt, Ince & Meyer-Bahlburg, 1991).

Gottfredson (1981) stated that in early adolescence young women may rule out career options incompatible with an emerging gender identity. She suggested that they may sacrifice talents to remain consistent with how they are coming to understand themselves. She also argued that career development is a progressive process of narrowing occupational alternatives according to emerging self-concepts.

Results of a study by Lapan and Jingeleski (1992) suggest that comprehensive school guidance programs can respond to concern that interventions be developed that

challenge students' negative attitudes about careers for which they have the abilities to be successful.

In a National Middle School Association monograph, Cole (1992) stated that middle school is an ideal time developmentally for career education. As transescents want more material items, begin to understand the need to earn money, and hear their parents emphasize the importance of money, students become more and more interested in career education.

Manning (1993) emphasized the importance of counseling by stating that "effective academic counseling provides young adolescents with timely access to critical information about the school curriculum and its personal implications for career choices. . .during early adolescence, they develop lifelong values and attitudes about the significance of education and their chances of succeeding in upwardly mobile academic and career choices. A strong academic counseling program also includes direct, substantive parental involvement, enabling parents to offer input and also become aware of academic options and career choices" (p. 64).

Other factors have influenced career development during the transescent period. These include parental involvement (Middleton & Loughhead, 1993), the expansion of the career exploratory curriculum at the middle school level (Brown, 1983), and an emphasis on leisure activities (Hong, Milgram, & Whiston, 1993). Volunteerism has also become a factor in career development. McDaniels (1996) notes that volunteerism through local, state, national, and international opportunities, such as the Peace Corps and Americorp (part of the larger Corporation for National Service), has made a tremendous impact on career counseling. Gallup polls indicate that well over 50% of all adults are volunteering at least four hours-per-week in regular on-going leisure activities. In school settings, volunteerism is often referred to as "service learning."

Fouad (1995) stated that one of the educational factors in the underrepresentation of minorities and women in math and science areas is a lack of appropriate career guidance. Boyer (1983) found that most students reported that their parents helped them more than their counselor, which was an obvious problem if their parents were unaware of college opportunities and of math and science careers.

The essential role of the counselor regarding career education has been emphasized since the inception of the middle school philosophy (Mauk & Taylor, 1993; Buttery & Locke, 1990; Miller, 1988; Toepfer, 1994). In a survey conducted by Zachow and Carter (1987), among transescents' top 10 overall concerns were (1) how to earn money and (5) deciding what to do after high school.

Strategies for implementing career education in the middle/junior high school may include (a) learning decision-making and problem-solving skills, (b) relating self-concept to educational and occupational goals, (c) understanding strengths and abilities, (d) exploring occupations, and (e) understanding sex-role stereotyping (Zunker, 1990).

As the work force changes, career educators realize that general knowledge is more important than specific knowledge in preparing for one's career. The development of attitudes, knowledge, and skills that enable an individual to:

- accept the value of work as a necessary condition of success and independence;
- figure out the conditions under which work is performed, and the behaviors which facilitate the accomplishment of that work
- find meaningful work;
- adapt one's occupational competencies to the changing demands of the economy and the workplace, or even develop new competencies; and
- manage one's own resources, including time, work, effort, and money (Irvin, 1992, p. 57).

Through role-playing, special programs and classes, parent's programs, and the involvement of all school personnel, middle school students can become more aware of the world of work (Wilson, Rubinton, & Sandler, 1990).

Career development strategies must also utilize technological advances in order to maintain their utmost effectiveness. McDaniels and Puryear (1991) suggested that career development centers must become increasingly high tech to keep up with the changing workforce and its demands. Print media, visual displays, films and videos, as well as computer technology are needed to disseminate career information adequately.

In the 1994-95 school year, there were 643 schools in the state of Virginia which had some combinations of grades 5 through 12; 166 of those schools had what is typically thought of as middle school grouping of grades 6 through 8 (Virginia Department of Education, 1995). A recent Gallup Poll entitled "Major Problems Teenagers Face" listed "career uncertainties" second only to "grades in school" (The George H. Gallup International Institute, 1994). As counselors in these schools examine students' concerns, it becomes apparent that there are challenges to address.

The National Occupational Information Coordinating Committee has developed career development competencies at both the elementary and middle school level by various areas (self-knowledge, educational and occupational exploration, and career planning). The guidelines, which are used in over forty states, provide the benchmark for exemplary career development programs. In the career planning area of the elementary school level, the following competencies are listed: (a) understanding how to make decisions, (b) awareness of the interrelationship of life roles, (c) awareness of different occupations and changing male/female roles, and (d) awareness of the career planning process. Middle school competencies for career planning include: (a) skills to make decisions, (b) knowledge of the interrelationship of life roles, (c) knowledge of different occupations and changing male/female roles, and (d) understanding the process of career planning.

These National Career Development Guidelines have been developed by over 150 professionals in the field of career development and have been endorsed by every major professional counseling and career association. They are comprehensive and can be incorporated into existing career development programs. Each competency is listed by three major areas: (a) self-knowledge, (b) educational and occupational exploration, and (c) career planning (see Appendix I). By using these Guidelines, counselors could provide a comprehensive, age/level appropriate career development program.

### **Exemplary Programs**

There is a current movement to identify and showcase exemplary programs in various areas of the counseling field at many different levels--state, regional, and national. Blumenthal (1993) researched "school-wide characteristics and offerings, and college planning strategies and activities which exist at distinguished public secondary schools, therefore assessing what other public secondary schools can do to prepare their outstanding students for highly selective college admission" (p. 6).

In 1990, Gerstein and Lichtman conducted research to identify the best elementary guidance programs in the United States. It was their attempt to identify and highlight examples of what were the best and to provide a source for networking among counselors in order to share ideas and resources. Following the research, a national conference was held and 10 of the identified programs were highlighted. As a result of this conference, The Best for Our Kids: Exemplary Elementary Guidance and Counseling Programs (1990) was published which showcased the 10 participating schools/programs.

At the state level, Virginia is also identifying and showcasing exemplary programs. In August of 1995, the Virginia Department of Education and the Virginia Community College System conducted a workshop of "Best Practices--Educational Leadership Through High Schools That Work and Tech Prep." This three-day workshop consisted of



general sessions, best practice sessions, clinics and in-depth workshops for high school teachers and administrators, community college faculty and administrators, and guidance counselors. Such exemplary educational practices are shared in hopes that they become modified to meet local needs. As new and innovative ideas become incorporated into local educational systems, the quality of their programs increase to a higher level of effectiveness.

The Southern Regional Education Board (SREB) is the nation's first interstate compact for education, created in 1948 at the request of Southern governors to help educational and governmental leaders work cooperatively to advance education and improve the social and economic life of the region. The SREB assists state leaders by identifying and directing attention to key issues which include collecting, compiling and analyzing comparable data; conducting studies; and initiating discussions that lead to recommendations for state and institutional long-range planning, actions, and policies. There are currently 15 members of the SREB, one of which is Virginia.

**High Schools That Work (HSTW)** is an effort of the SREB-State Vocational Education Consortium, the National Center for Research in Vocational Education, and the Dewitt Wallace-Reader's Digest Fund to raise the mathematics, science, and reading achievement of students enrolled in general and vocational studies at high schools across these states. Each year the SREB publishes a report of "Outstanding Practices--Effective Strategies from High Schools That Work Sites in Raising the Achievement of Career-Bound High School Students." A brief synopsis of these exemplary practices is described followed by the name and address of the coordinator and/or contact person of the HSTW project. These exemplary practices are tagged by which of the 10 key practices of the HSTW components they meet. By highlighting such practices and their contact person(s), others can network to obtain more information on adapting such practices to their localities.

The Southern Regional Education Board has also published a guideline to assist schools in setting up a HSTW program. Making High Schools Work Through Integration of Academic and Vocational Education (1992) reflects the best practices used by participating high schools in their attempts to meet the needs of students who do not always fit into the college preparatory track.

There is also an effort to showcase exemplary programs at the national level. The National Center for Research in Vocational Education (NCRVE) at the University of California, Berkeley, conducts a national search annually to identify and recognize exemplary career guidance and counseling programs at the secondary and postsecondary levels. Components of exemplary programs include (a) a career guidance and counseling program plan; (b) collaboration, articulation, and communication; and (c) institutional support, leadership, and program evaluation. After an extensive evaluation of submitted application forms, the best programs are chosen and site visits are conducted during which interviews with staff members and a tour of the facilities occur. A publication entitled Exemplary Career Guidance Programs: What Should They Look Like? (August, 1995) is the result of the NCRVE's most current efforts to highlight such programs.

In 1995, the American Association for Career Education (AACE) published its first edition of summaries of programs, practices, and publications that were recognized with AACE Citations for Career Education initiatives in 1992, 1993, 1994, and 1995. The AACE Citations for Career Education Initiatives entitled Career Education That Works: Programs, Practices, and Publications were inaugurated in 1992 to recognize excellence in Career Education. Common characteristics of these exemplary programs include (a) connections of careers, education, and work; (b) shared community-wide responsibility and collaboration; (c) sequential career awareness and continuous cyclical development throughout life; (d) transitions; (e) responsiveness to continuous change; (f) leadership for change; (g) synergy and symbiosis; and (h) results (Wickwire, p. i).

Gallup Polls which are routinely conducted for the National Occupational Information Coordinating Committee and the National Career Development Association show that the majority of adult respondents are not satisfied with the efforts of high schools in preparing students for the workplace, in providing occupational information, and in helping students choose a career. Because this is a developmental process, career preparation should have began at the elementary level and proceeded through middle school into the high school level. A resulting publication, Program Guide--Planning to Meet Career Development Needs--School-to-Work Transition Programs, suggests ways to expand existing career programs to become more comprehensive. The guide explains what is believed to be the best practices at each level of schooling. At the middle level, programs should move from the awareness into the exploration level to allow students the opportunity to discover abilities and interests and formulate tentative career and educational plans.

Planning For Life--A Compendium of Nationally Recognized Career Planning Programs (U.S. Army Recruiting Command and The National Consortium of State Career Guidance Supervisors, 1994) provides abstracts of 10 exemplary career planning programs which were identified by a national review team. One program was a comprehensive guidance and counseling program spanning kindergarten through grade twelve, while six of the remaining nine began at the middle school level in either grades five, six, or seven and continued through high school. Programs were comprehensive in that they involved all students, and their parents, teachers, and community resources. Both commercially developed and locally developed materials were utilized.

Reviews of current literature indicate that there is a great interest in showcasing exemplary programs in guidance as well as in the general area of education. Exemplary programs set a standard for others to work toward and they are also useful in providing accountability in one's program area. By exploring current career development practices,

middle schools can develop new programs or expand existing ones in order to provide a comprehensive career development component within their total guidance program. As programs are refined, students will become better equipped with the knowledge and skills they need in their continuing career development process.

### **Summary**

This chapter began with an examination of developmental issues of the transescent and included a brief overview of childhood development as some middle school configurations begin with grade four or five. The middle school movement was introduced, followed by summations of historic career development studies pertaining to middle school age students. The next focus was on the incorporation of career education in the public schools; much of which was based on studies and writings of Super after World War II. Appropriate career development activities at the middle school level were introduced and the chapter ended with the discussion of exemplary career development programs.

As one reads the review of literature, it should be noted that what is currently being written concerning career development (particularly as it pertains to the middle school) is not coming directly from traditional resources such as journal articles and books, but indirectly from other resources and studies conducted in non-counseling areas. These include the Southern Region Education Board, the American Vocational Association, The National Center for Research in Vocational Education, and others which are indirectly finding their way into the area of counseling.

## **CHAPTER THREE**

### **Methodology**

This study was an effort to examine the career development practices in exemplary middle schools throughout the State of Virginia using a survey design followed by four interviews of school personnel (guidance counselors) with comprehensive career development programs. These interviews occurred through personal visits and in-depth telephone interviews in order to examine what resources were used and how career guidance practices were being implemented and evaluated.

### **Purpose of the Study**

National organizations such as the National Occupational Information Coordinating Committee (NOICC), the American Vocational Association, the National Center for Research in Vocational Education, and others continue to develop and refine instruments and procedures to evaluate exemplary career programs. This research was designed to identify exemplary career development programs and practices in Virginia's middle schools since there is currently no inventory of such practices. The identification of such programs serves to:

- provide guidelines for program development and expansion
- provide a means of accountability
- provide a standard of performance
- provide consistency among middle schools
- showcase exemplary programs

Exemplary program practices and ideas can be modified to meet the needs of schools where more extensive career development programs are needed.

## **Research Questions**

Research questions to be answered in this study include:

Research Question 1:

- Do Virginia's exemplary middle schools conduct exemplary career development programs as defined by the guidelines set forth by the National Occupational Information Coordinating Committee?

Research Question 2:

- What percentage of the counselor's time is spent in career development activities?

Research Question 3:

- Who were the facilitators of the career development programs in the identified exemplary middle schools?

Research Question 4:

- What school personnel are involved in career development activities in the identified exemplary middle schools?

Research Question 5:

- How are career development programs being evaluated?

## **Research Design**

This was a descriptive study. Descriptive studies are widely used within the educational field in order to assess what is currently happening and where changes may set the tone for improvements. The value of descriptive studies was evidenced by The National Center for Educational Statistics which specializes in descriptive studies and its findings were published annually in the Digest of Educational Statistics (Borg and Gall, 1989).

A survey questionnaire was developed by the researcher which included questions pertaining to career development within the general school curriculum as well as those which pertained specifically to guidance. The Survey was designed using information from a publication entitled Choices and Challenges: Career Education in Virginia - Program Management Guide (Dedmond & Duffy, 1989). The researcher also consulted with experts in research and middle school curriculum to develop portions of the Survey. Questions were chosen/developed to correspond with the NOICC Guidelines for career development at the middle school level. A Likert scale was used to determine types of career activities being implemented and the respondent's evaluation of the effectiveness of each activity. Demographic information was also collected for descriptive purposes, although each school's identity was kept anonymous.

### **Identification of Participants**

The first step in the research process was the identification of exemplary middle schools in Virginia. This was done by first examining two documents: Restructuring Education in the Middle School Grades (1988, 1989), and Restructuring Education the Middle School Grades (1991). The first document, Restructuring Education in the Middle School Grades which was published in 1988 and revised in 1989, was an effort by the Virginia Department of Education to identify Vanguard (exemplary) Middle Schools based on findings of a review team which found these schools to be exemplary as evidenced that the school had been exceptionally successful in meeting its students' needs.

In 1989, a Carnegie Council on Adolescent Development publication initiated another process to identify exemplary schools. Its publication entitled Turning Points: Preparing American Youth for the 21st Century (1989) stated that there were eight essential principles for transforming education for young adolescents (See Appendix H). In 1991, the Virginia Department of Education, division of Pre- and Early Adolescent Education

used this document in a second initiative to identify exemplary schools. Virginia's middle schools used a self-assessment instrument to rate themselves on these eight principles. Schools which rated highly in at least three of these eight essential principles were classified as exemplary.

The schools identified in these two documents were combined to generate a list of 130 middle schools which were identified as being exemplary through these two evaluative processes. This list was then sent to the five Virginia State Department of Education Field Services Representatives, three university faculty with expertise in middle level education and/or counseling, and current and most recent past officers of the Virginia Counselors Association and the Virginia School Counselors Association. Participants were asked to make recommendations of exemplary middle schools from this list and to add to the initial list nominations of middle schools within their region which they believed to be exemplary according to their professional judgment (Appendix A).

This identification process closely follows related research which have identified exemplary programs in their particular fields of study. Blumenthal (1993) used a similar design to identify public secondary school guidance programs with the strongest college preparatory programs, Gerstein and Lichtman's (1990) process to identify exemplary elementary school guidance and counseling programs and practices across the United States was also very similar to the approach which was used in this study.

The Survey was sent to the previously mentioned groups: five Virginia State Department of Education Field Services Representatives, three university faculty members, and current and most recent officers of the Virginia Counselors Association and the Virginia School Counselors Association. A two week time period was allowed for responses. Those not responding within two weeks were sent a postcard reminder to return their list of nominations (Appendix B). Those not responding within two weeks after the postcard was sent were contacted by telephone and asked to respond promptly. It



was the researcher's desire to have a pool of nominations of between 50 to 100 schools from which to conduct the research. The nomination process generated a pool of 63 middle schools to which the Career Development Survey was sent.

### **Pilot Study**

At the same time exemplary middle schools were being identified, the researcher chose the names of eight middle school counselors from the roster of all members of the Southwest Counselors Association (a division of Virginia Counselors Association). These counselors were sent The Career Development Practices Survey (Appendices C and D) asking them to make suggestions and comments concerning the clarity and thoroughness of the Survey. Amendments were to be made as needed, based on pilot study recommendations. A two week time frame was used, and those not responding with feedback within two weeks were contacted by telephone and urged to respond promptly. There was a 100 percent return rate on the pilot study and seven of the eight counselors involved in the pilot study felt that no changes needed to be made in the Survey. One counselor expressed a concern about the length of the survey, but the researcher believed that no changes or amendments needed to be made based on the feedback from the other seven respondents.

### **Data Collection**

Upon receipt of nomination forms from State Department of Education Field Services Representatives, university faculty with counseling and/or middle level education expertise, and state leaders in the counseling profession, the Career Development Practices Survey was sent to 63 schools. Those schools not returning the Career Development Practices Survey within two weeks were contacted by telephone and encouraged to respond promptly. Surveys not received within two weeks after the telephone calls were mailed

postcard reminders to return the Survey (Appendix E). Another postcard was mailed two weeks later to nonrespondents (Appendix F). A two week turnover was used for sending and receiving information from various sources. Upon receiving the Career Development Practices Survey, those schools which exhibited the most comprehensive programs in the researcher's geographic area were contacted for an interview and possible visit by the researcher. Anonymity was guaranteed to each school who responded to the Survey. Comprehensiveness was determined by examining responses of each Survey and tagging those which indicated that they used many different techniques/methods to disseminate career information to their students. Three schools within the researcher's geographic area were chosen for site visits and one school with a 6-8 grade configuration from the eastern area of Virginia was chosen for an in-depth telephone interview.

The Career Development Practices Survey was designed to assess various components of exemplary career guidance and counseling programs as defined by the National Occupational Information Coordinating Committee's (NOICC) National Career Development Guidelines (1989) (Appendix I), which have been adopted by over 40 states across the nation. At the middle school level, there are three major areas which include (a) self-knowledge, (b) educational and occupational exploration, and (c) career planning. Each of these main areas have several subdivisions.

Because this was a descriptive study using categorical data, frequency distributions were used as a method of data analysis. Data was reported by the actual number who answered each item by category as well as by the percentage of respondents answering each item. Percentages indicated the most frequently used career development practices at the middle school level as well as those which were least used.

The following list of events indicates the sequence at which each step of the research process took place from July to November 1996:

- Sent out nomination forms to five Virginia Department of Education Field Services Representatives, three university faculty, and current and most recent past officers of Virginia Counselors Association and Virginia School Counselors Association (See Appendix A)
- Sent pilot Survey to eight middle school counselors with membership in Southwest Virginia Counselors Association
- Sent postcard reminders to all those who had not returned nomination forms (See Appendix B)
- Telephoned all those who had not returned nomination forms and pilot surveys
- Compiled list of exemplary schools, prepared Surveys and envelopes
- Sent Career Development Practices Survey to 63 nominated exemplary schools (See Appendix D)
- Called nonrespondents of the Survey and discussed the importance of its return
- Sent first postcard reminder to nonrespondents (See Appendix E)
- Sent second postcard reminder to nonrespondents (see Appendix F)
- Visited exemplary middle schools

### **Summary**

This chapter described the research design used in the study to identify exemplary career development programs in Virginia's middle schools. Schools were identified through a nomination process and a Survey developed by the researcher was used to identify career development practices incorporated throughout the total school curriculum. Frequency counts were used to identify career development practices used most and least in

participating middle schools. Chapter Four will discuss the analysis of findings from this research.

## **CHAPTER FOUR**

### **Research Results**

#### **Introduction**

This chapter reports results of research conducted from the summer to the late fall of 1996. Each phase of the research will be described in sequential order for clarity. Results of the Career Development Programs Survey designed by the researcher will be discussed in the order they were presented with the exception of the demographic data which was found at the end of the Survey form, but will precede discussion of findings from the Survey. Each section of the survey will be discussed as it was sequenced in the Survey, beginning with Part I: "Aspects of the School's Curriculum" relating to career development practices, followed by Part II: "Physical Facilities" relating to where career information is housed, Part III: "Technological Capabilities" relating to career software, Part IV: "School/Department Career Development Activities," Part V: "Career Development/Educational Strategies Used," Part VI: "Career Development Practices Believed to be Most Important by the Respondent," Part VII: "Career Development Practices Best Performed at the Respondent's School," Part VIII: "School Factors Which Contribute Most to Students' Career Development," Part IX: "School Factors Which Most Impede Career Development," and Part X: "Evaluation of Career Development Practices." A summary of findings concludes the section pertaining to the Career Development Programs Survey.

The next section describes site visits and the telephone interview conducted by the researcher of schools with the most comprehensive career development programs. A summary of the visits and interview follow. The chapter ends with a summation of results found in Chapter Four.

## **Identification of Survey Participants**

In the process of identifying exemplary career development practices of Virginia's middle schools, it was first essential to identify exemplary middle schools which would be invited to participate in the Survey. This process was conducted by first examining two documents: Restructuring Education in the Middle School Grades (1988, 1989), which identified Vanguard (exemplary) Middle Schools and Restructuring Education in the Middle School Grades (1991). The schools identified in these two documents were combined to generate a list of 130 middle schools which were identified as being exemplary through these two evaluative processes. This list was then sent to the five Virginia State Department of Education Field Services Representatives, three university faculty with expertise in middle level education and/or counseling, and current and most recent past officers of the Virginia Counselors Association and the Virginia School Counselors Association. There was also an opportunity to nominate middle schools whose names were not included on the list. This nomination process generated a list of 63 schools who were invited to participate in the study. Eighteen of these schools received multiple nominations. The following is a list of schools which were nominated by city or county school division. An asterisk denotes multiple nominations.

## **Development of the Survey**

The Career Development Programs Survey was developed by the researcher in the Spring of 1996. Choices and Challenges: Career Education in Virginia - Program Management Guide (Virginia Department of Education, 1989) was used as a reference in the development of parts of the Survey. This book contained several self assessments pertaining to career development which were designed to be used by school system employees to evaluate their programs and delivery of services. The researcher chose items from these assessments which coordinated with the competencies from the NOICC

Guidelines for middle school career development. A Likert Scale was used to determine how well respondents believed they conducted career development activities at their schools. Items were scaled by 1 (not applicable), 2 (needs improvement), 3 (well), and 4 (very well). Another section of the Survey assessed how often career development strategies were used during the school year. A Likert Scale of 1 (never), 2 (sometimes - 1-2 times per year), 3 (frequently - 2-4 times per year), and 4 (regularly - more than 4 times per year) was used.

Another section of the Survey was developed by the researcher with consultation from an expert in middle level education. This section asked how career development was incorporated into various aspects of the middle school curriculum--teacher-advisory, teams, exploratory classes, special interest clubs, classroom guidance, and programs of service-learning.

A final section of the Survey consisted of five questions which asked for the respondents' beliefs concerning career development in their schools. These questions asked respondents to convey their beliefs about what career development practices are most important at the middle school level, what practices they do best in their school, what most contributes to students' career development in their school, what most impedes career development in their school, and how they evaluate career development at their school.

## Nominated Schools

### **Augusta County**

Beverly Manor  
Stuarts Draft

### **Bedford County**

Bedford

### **Campbell County**

Brookville\*

### **Charlotte County**

Central

### **Charlottesville City**

Buford

### **Chesterfield County**

Midlothian

### **Covington City**

Jeter-Watson

### **Fairfax County**

Frost  
Homes\*  
Walt Whitman  
Washington Irving

### **Fauquier County**

Cedar Lee

### **Franklin County**

Ben Franklin

### **Hampton City**

Benjamin Syms\*\*\*  
C. Vernon Spratley\*\*

### **Hanover County**

Chickahominy

### **Henrico County**

Harry Flood Byrd  
Short Pump  
Tuckahoe

### **Henry County**

John D. Bassett

### **Montgomery County**

Blacksburg\*\*

### **Newport News City**

Booker T. Washington  
Gildersleeve\*\*  
Homer L. Hines\*\*\*  
Newsome Park (now Crittenden)

### **Norfolk City**

Northside  
Ruffner

### **Orange County**

Prospect Heights\*

### **Prince Edward County**

Prince Edward County

### **Prince William County**

Fred M. Lynn  
Graham Park  
Herbert J. Saunders  
Lake Ridge  
Woodbridge

### **Pulaski County**

Dublin  
Pulaski\*

### **Richmond City**

Albert H. Hill  
Binford  
Bouchall  
Henderson

### **Roanoke City**

William Ruffner



**Roanoke County**  
Cave Spring\*  
Hidden Valley  
Northside  
William Byrd\*\*\*

**Rockbridge County**  
John C. Myers

**Salem City**  
Andrew Lewis

**Stafford County**  
Edward E. Drew, Jr.  
Stafford

**Suffolk City**  
Forest Glen  
John F. Kennedy  
John Yeates

**Tazewell County**  
Graham\*  
Richlands\*

**Washington County**  
E. B. Stanley\*  
Damascus  
Wallace\*

**Wise County**  
L. F. Addington

**York County**  
Queens Lake\*  
Tabb\*\*  
Yorktown\*

Of the 63 schools who were invited to participate in the Study, seventy one percent (45 schools) responded to the Career Development Program Survey.

### **Pilot Study**

During the same time frame that the researcher was identifying exemplary middle schools in Virginia, a pilot study was also being conducted. Eight middle school guidance counselors in the researcher's geographic region were sent the Career Development Programs Survey and asked to complete it and make suggestions and comments concerning the clarity and thoroughness of the instrument. All eight counselors responded to the survey, and each was contacted personally to discuss the Survey's format and any recommendations for improvements. Seven of the eight respondents felt that the Survey was adequate and that no changes needed to be made. One respondent expressed concern about the length of the Survey, but the researcher believed that no changes or amendments were needed based on feedback from the other seven respondents.

In the identification of exemplary schools, one school from the pilot study received a nomination. Because no changes were made to the Survey document from the pilot study to the actual study, that school's Survey was moved from the pilot study and was included as one of the 45 respondents to the Survey.

## **Career Development Programs Survey Findings**

### **Description of the Respondents**

Of the 45 respondents to the survey, 12 of those (26.7 percent) were city schools with 33 (73.3 percent) being county schools. The researcher divided the state in order to designate eastern schools from western schools. The eastern division included the counties of Fairfax, Fauquier, Prince William, and Stafford in northern Virginia; the counties of Hanover, Henrico, and Chesterfield in central Virginia and all the city schools nominated in those areas as well as school divisions to the east of these counties. All other respondents were in the western division of the state. Respondents from the eastern part of Virginia numbered 14 county and 9 city schools (51.1 percent). Respondents in the western part of the state included 19 county schools and 3 city schools (48.9 percent) (Illustration 1). Of those schools which received multiple nominations, 14 of the 19 schools responded.

### **Grade Configurations**

While the grade configurations of the respondents varied, 37 schools (82.2 percent) were middle schools with grades six, seven, and eight. One school (2.2 percent) had a grade six through nine configuration, 1 school (2.2 percent) had a grade five through eight configuration, and 6 schools (13.3 percent) had another configuration (Table 1).

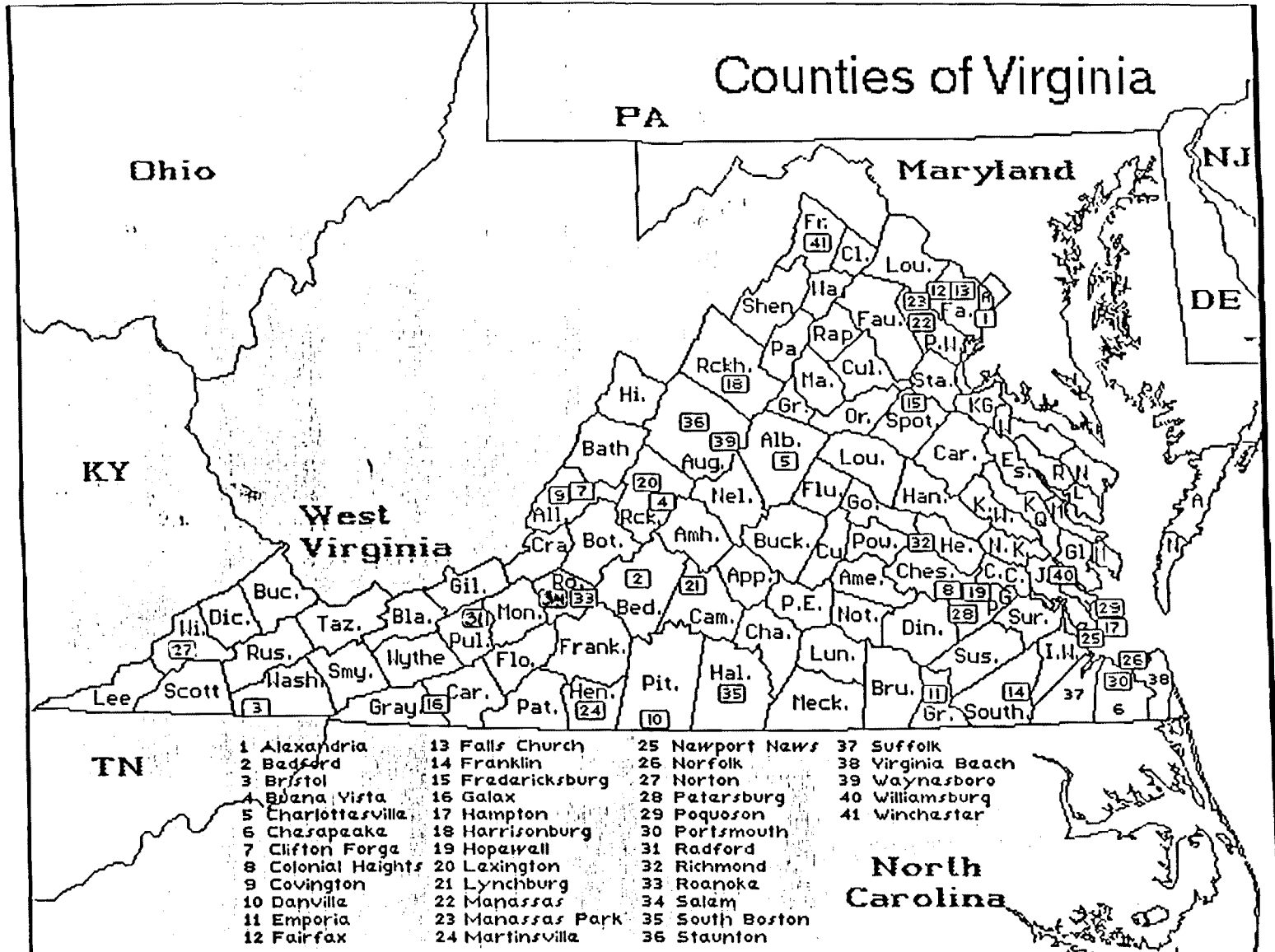


Figure 1. Nominated Cities/Counties

**Table 1**

Grade Configuration of Respondent Middle Schools

	Number	Percent
Grades 6 - 8	37	82.2
Grades 6 - 9	1	2.2
Grades 5 - 8	1	2.2
Other (Grades 7-8 = 4 schools; Grades 4-7 = 2 schools)	6	13.3

## **School Enrollments**

School enrollments varied considerably. The middle school respondent with the largest enrollment was 1,564 which was a county school in the western part of Virginia. Two schools had the smallest enrollment of 285 each, both in the western part of Virginia, one a county school and the other one a city school (See Table 2).

## **Counselor:Student Ratio**

Counselor per student ratio also varied greatly. The largest counselor:student ratio was 1:563 in a county school in the western part of Virginia while the smallest counselor:student ratio was 1:250 in a city school in the eastern part of the state (See Table 2). The mean counselor:student ratio was 1:368. The current counselor:student ratio mandated by the Virginia Department of Education at the middle school level is 1:400 for the first 400 students and one period of counseling for each additional 80 or major fraction (Virginia Department of Education, 1988).

## **Guidance Budget**

While several respondents (20) chose not to answer the questions relating to guidance budgets and amount of budget spent on career development, those who did had a variety of answers. The smallest guidance budget was \$100.00 while the largest was \$2,000.00. One school had received a \$6,800.00 grant for the 1996-97 school year for career development and study skills for at-risk students. The mean budget for guidance was \$641.16. Budgets did not appear to be based on the amount of students enrolled in the school. One school whose enrollment was listed as 285 students indicated that their guidance budget varied from \$900.00 - \$1,000.00. Another school whose enrollment was listed as 915 had a guidance budget of \$100.00. Several respondents who chose not to

**Table 2**Middle School Enrollments - Counselor: Student Ratios

School	East/West	Number of Students	Number of Counselors	Ratio
County	W	915	2.0	1:458
County	W	927	2.0	1:464
County	W	465	1.0	1:465
City	W	692	2.0	1:346
County	E	1400	5.0	1:280
City	W	285	1.0	1:285
County	E	892	3.0	1:297
City	E	868	3.0	1:289
County	E	1200	4.0	1:300
County	E	530	1.0	1:530
County	W	1564	6.0	1:260
County	E	1249	3.0	1:416
County	E	1435	4.5	1:319
County	E	1200	4.0	1:300
County	W	933	2.5	1:373
City	E	450	1.5	1:300
City	E	1387	3.5	1:396
City	E	1450	3.5	1:414
City	E	1030	3.5	1:294
County	W	730	2.0	1:365
County	E	1135	3.0	1:378
County	E	1235	3.0	1:412
County	E	1175	3.0	1:391
County	W	600	1.75	1:343
County	W	580	1.5	1:386
City	E	512	1.0	1:512
City	E	990	3.0	1:330
City	E	750	3.0	1:250

**Table 2** (continued)Middle School Enrollments - Counselor: Student Ratios

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School	East/West	Number of Students	Number of Counselors	Ratio
County	W	870	2.5	1:348
County	W	836	3.0	1:279
County	W	908	3.0	1:303
City	W	700	2.0	1:350
County	W	285	1.0	1:285
County	W	710	2.0	1:355
County	E	1060	3.0	1:353
City	E	861	2.0	1:431
County	W	475	1.1	1:432
County	W	758	2.0	1:379
County	W	650	1.5	1:433
County	W	345	1.0	1:345
County	W	465	1.5	1:310
County	W	675	1.2	1:563
County	E	450	1.0	1:450
County	E	770	2.0	1:385
County	E	575	1.5	1:383

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give dollar figures for this question responded with answers such as "it varies," "as needed," "our principal considers our requests individually," "We don't have a budget. I have always gotten any resources I needed."

### **Career Development Budget**

Twenty four counselors responded to this question. The mean amount of money spent on career development was \$358.75 with a range from \$0.00 to \$2,000.00. Twenty-one counselors either didn't respond to this question or gave nonspecific answers such as "it varies," "as needed," or "mostly donated."

### **Other Monies/Resources**

Five respondents stated that they received money or resources as needed or that each request was considered individually. One counselor said that his/her boss was very generous! Resources provided included Virginia VIEW, CHOICES (career software), Occupational Outlook Handbook, a computer, and many videos and career materials furnished by the county. This year, one respondent's school was the recipient of a \$6,828.00 grant for career development and study skills for at-risk students. The mean amount of money received from other sources was \$337.93. Schools indicated that Parent-Teacher Organizations (PTO's) were the most common donor of additional monies.

### **Time Spent on Career Development**

Thirty one of the 45 respondents answered this question (69 percent). The amount of time spent on career development in the participating middle schools ranged from 4% to 80% with a mean of 23.13 percent.



## **Respondent Answers to Individual Survey Questions**

This section indicates answers on each item of the Survey. The question is presented first with responses following.

### **Do You Have a Teacher-Advisory or Advisor-Advisee Program? If so, what kinds of career development practices occur during TA/AA?**

Twenty four (53.3 percent) of the respondent schools had a teacher-advisory program in which a variety of career development activities took place. These activities included information relating to study skills, decision-making, organization, self-exploration and goal setting in addition to a host of activities directly related to career preparation such as the administration of career inventories, discussions concerning job applications and interviews, and worker traits as well as previewing videos which highlighted specific careers (Appendix J). One school had an entire section in the Teacher Advisory Manual devoted to career education activities and another school had a commercially published career development book for each student which was used during Advisory. In the 21 schools where no Teacher-Advisory programs existed, many counselors listed classroom guidance activities which they conducted pertaining to career development.

### **Do You Have Teams or Teaming? If so, what kinds of career development activities occur during this time?**

Teaming is a middle school concept in which ". . .two or more teachers from different subject areas working together to plan, instruct, and evaluate groups of students in two or more classrooms while making use of a wide variety of instructional strategies and learning resources in large group, small group, and directed study settings" (Clark & Clark, 1987). Thirty nine (86.7 percent) of the respondents had teaming in their middle

school. Career development activities were integrated within the core curriculum by discussing jobs related to specific school subjects, by having guest speakers visit classes to discuss their specific career and by having counselors facilitate class sessions pertaining to career development. Counselors indicated that they conducted (Appendix K) many career development classroom guidance activities in schools where no teams existed.

**Does Your School Have Exploratory Classes or Activities? For example, Technology Education, Art, Teen Living, etc. If so, please list classes which are directly related to career development.**

Forty four schools (97.8 percent) had some type of class or activity related to career development. Those most frequently named were Technology Education, Art, Drama, Band, Chorus, Computers, Life Skills, or Work and Family Studies, Agriscience, and various foreign languages. Exploratory classes and activities were almost equally distributed among grades six, seven, and eight with an average of 29 offerings being named for each grade. Larger schools had many more exploratory classes than did the smaller schools (Appendix L).

**Does Your School Have Special Interest Clubs? For example, 4-H, Health Careers Club, etc. If so, please list those clubs which directly relate to career development.**

A total of 33 schools (73.3 percent) answered affirmatively to this question. Many clubs directly relating to career development were named as being offered in their schools. These clubs included Health Careers Club, Art, Backstage Players (Drama), Computer Club, Future Farmers of America (FFA), Future Homemakers of America (FHA), Future Teachers of America (FTA), Future Business Leaders of America (FBLA), Architects and Builders Club and WTHH closed circuit television station operated by students. Several

others were also named with less frequency than those previously mentioned (Appendix M).

**Do You Provide Classroom Guidance Activities? If so, list all activities which are directly related to career development.**

Forty (90.0 percent) of the respondents were providing classroom guidance activities directly related to career development. Many counselors listed the administration of specific career development inventories and assessments (Virginia VIEW, JOB-O, JOB-O-E, The Career Game, Harrington-O'Shea Career Decision Making System, IDEAS Interest Inventory, COPS II Interest Inventory, Differential Aptitude Test, Self-Directed Search, Career Exploration Inventory) as well as the usage of several computer programs-- Virginia VIEW, CHOICES, DISCOVER. Other activities included a visit to the career center/guidance department and a preview of available career information housed there. The sharing of information concerning specific programs such as Tech Prep and the use of career videos were frequently mentioned. Many counselors also listed activities related to the development of career portfolios as a major component of classroom guidance activities (Appendix N).

**Does Your School Have a Program of Service-Learning/Student Volunteerism? If so, please indicate how this relates to career development.**

There were 25 schools (59.9 percent) which had some type of service learning or volunteering activities. One middle school indicated that all eighth grade students were required to do four hours of community service as a part of their Civics grade. Several others stated that volunteerism and service-learning occurred on a more informal basis. Activities listed included the collection of money for a community playground, the

volunteer efforts of students in building a community playground, a food drive for the needy and monetary donations for the pediatric floor of a local hospital, tutoring elementary students, Candy-Strippers, office workers, teacher assistants, and out-to-work experiences (Appendix O). As service learning and volunteerism are avenues of career exploration they contribute to one's career development.

### **Does Your School Have Other Special Programs Which Involve Career Development or Career Education Activities?**

Frequent answers to this question involved individual counseling sessions concerning future planning and goal-setting, career fairs, career days, field trips, school-business partnerships, and job-shadowing programs. One respondent school has a Special Populations Counselor and a Special Education Vocational Planner who worked one day a week with special populations at the middle school. Another school indicated that their eighth grade class did a complete unit entitled "Taking Care of Business" on file with the Virginia Council of Economic Education at Virginia Commonwealth University. This program involved the completion of job applications, catalog orders, driver license forms, budgets, grocery shopping, role-playing career/job situations, touring local businesses, and other activities. This school won first place in Virginia participating in this project (Appendix P).

### **Where is Career Development Information Housed in Your School?**

Eleven schools (24.4 percent) had career information materials housed in a Career Development Center/Career Lab, 36 schools (80 percent) had career materials housed in the school library or media center, 36 schools (80 percent) had career information housed in the guidance office/suite, and 6 schools (13.3 percent) had career information housed in

other areas (See Table 3). Many schools indicated that they had career information housed in several different areas of the school.

### **What Type of Technological Capabilities Does Your School Have?**

Forty (88.9 percent) of the surveyed middle schools had Virginia VIEW available to all students. Others indicated that they had CHOICES (17.8 percent), CIS - Career Information System (4.4 percent), DISCOVER (13.3 percent), GIS - Guidance Information Systems (13.3 percent), and no school indicated that they had SIGI or SIGI Plus - System of Interactive Guidance and Information (see Table 4). One school had internet access which was used by teachers to have students explore a career as a research project in Language Arts classes. Several career videos were mentioned as well as Planning Your Future software. These programs were used by teams and by counselors during classroom guidance activities and by special interest clubs related to career development (i.e., Health Careers Club, Career Club).

### **Assessment of How Well You Believe Your School/Department Conducts Career Development Activities.**

The results of means for each item in this section are shown in Table 5 with the means in rank order from least to greatest, but respondents also added additional comments. One school indicated that they had a strong developmental guidance approach to career development while another one said that they acquainted students to career research resources available to them. Educational planning including the student's class rank as well as how to read college catalogues were listed by another middle school. Activities such as "Take Our Daughters to Work," and the teaching of computer skills were

**Table 3**

Where is Career Information Housed?

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	Number	Percent
Career Development Center/ Career Lab	11	24.4
Library/Media Center	36	80.0
Guidance Office/Suite	36	80.0
Other	6	13.3

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**Table 4**Technological Capabilities - Career Software

	Number	Percent
Virginia VIEW (Vital Information for Education & Work)	40	88.9
CHOICES	8	17.8
CIS (Career Information System)	2	4.4
DISCOVER	6	13.3
GIS (Guidance Information Systems)	6	13.3
SIGI or SIGI Plus (System of Interactive Guidance & Information)	0	0.0
Others ("Planning My Future" software; "Widen Your Choices" career video; CAIC Career Interest Checklist; CDM Career Decision-Making System; COPS-R Interest Inventory; JOB-O; Internet)	18	40.0

**Table 5**

Mean Table - Assess How Well You Believe Your School/Department Conducts Career Development Activities

1 Not Applicable	2 Needs Improvement	3 Well	4 Very Well	
				<b>Mean</b>
				2.56
				2.70
				2.79
				2.81
				2.82
				2.88
				2.90
				2.95
				3.00
				3.00
				3.02
				3.07
				3.14
				3.14
				3.21



**Table 5**

Mean Table - Assess How Well You Believe Your School/Department Conducts Career Development Activities

---

<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>
Not Applicable	Needs Improvement	Well	Very Well
			<b>Mean</b>
* Teach social and communication skills that enhance employability			3.30
* Help students acquire and utilize good work habits while helping them see the relationship between these habits and the world of work			3.32
* Acquaint students with career development information areas and programs within my school			3.33
* Assist students in locating and using occupational information			3.34
* Teach study skills and their relationship to career goals and life-long learning			3.34
* Provide information on problem solving and goal setting			3.43
* Discuss the relationship of academic learning to future career and life roles			3.48

---

indicated as enhancing a student's employability. Other career development activities listed included the discussion of organization skills (each student is given an assignment notebook/planner for the year which is used by the teachers to teach students how to plan, set goals, manage their time wisely, etc.) and providing problem solving strategies to help facilitate cohesiveness in the workplace.

The five lowest means on this section pertained to the dissemination of career/job information to parents ( $M = 2.56$ ), the utilization of leisure time in productive and self-fulfilling activities ( $M = 2.70$ ), the participation in field trips ( $M = 2.79$ ), the discussion of leisure as a part of a career development ( $M = 2.81$ ), and the provision of career development services to potential drop-outs and high risk students ( $M = 2.82$ ).

The five highest means on this section pertained to the discussion of the relationship of academic learning to future career and life roles ( $M = 3.48$ ), the provision of information on problem solving and goal setting ( $M = 3.43$ ), the teaching of study skills and their relationship to career goals and life-long learning ( $M = 3.34$ ), the assistance to students in locating and using occupational information ( $M = 3.34$ ), and the acquaintance of students with career development information areas and programs within the school ( $M = 3.33$ ).

Of the 45 schools surveyed, they believed that they did a better than average job in performing the following activities:

- work with teachers in an attempt to blend guidance practices and classroom instruction with career development goals
- provide current information on occupational trends
- support the school division career implementation plan in working with parents and community members
- provide career development services to students with disabilities
- provide information concerning pursuing educational skills beyond graduation from high school

- provide instructional strategies for enhancing self-esteem
- act as a resource to help teachers secure materials appropriate to the delivery of career development activities in the classroom setting
- teach social and communication skills that enhance employability
- help students acquire and utilize good work habits while helping them see the relationship between these habits and the world of work
- acquaint students with career development information areas and programs within the school
- assist students in locating and using occupational information
- teach study skills and their relationship to career goals and life-long learning
- provide information on problem solving and goal setting
- discuss the relationship of academic learning to future career and life roles

**Assessment of How Often You Use Career Development/Education Strategies During the School Year.**

Means of these questionnaire items are shown in Table 6 with the means in rank order from least to highest. Additional comments included the use of services of the Virginia Employment Commission in planning and implementing a career fair, the provision of a mentor program, a mediation program with businesses and the community, the use of services provided from a local community college and resources provided by the Virginia Tech Prep Consortium.

**Table 6**Mean Table: Assess How Often You Use Career Development/Education StrategiesDuring A School Year

<b>1</b> <b>Never</b>	<b>2</b> <b>Sometimes</b> <b>1-2 times</b> <b>per year</b>	<b>3</b> <b>Frequently</b> <b>2-4 times</b> <b>per year</b>	<b>4</b> <b>Regularly</b> <b>more than</b> <b>4 per year</b>	
				<b>Mean</b>
* College Fair				1.40
* Career Development Newsletters				1.47
* Career Information Workshops for Faculty/Staff				1.62
* Job Shadowing Programs				1.75
* Career Fair				1.98
* Vocational/Technical School Orientation				2.09
* Sex Equity Instruction				2.10
* Community Service/Volunteer Projects				2.15
* Career Games/Simulations				2.18
* School/Business Partnership Activities Related to Career Development/Education				2.22
* Parent Involvement in Career Development/Education Activities				2.23
* Field Trips Related to Career Development/Education				2.29
* Tech Prep Programs				2.33
* College Exposure Related Activities				2.35
* Career Information Videos				2.47
* Employability Skills Activities				2.54
* Individual Career Plan/Career Portfolios				2.54

**Table 6** (continued)

Mean Table: Assess How Often You Use Career Development/Education Strategies  
During A School Year

<b>1</b> <b>Never</b>	<b>2</b> <b>Sometimes</b> <b>1-2 times</b> <b>per year</b>	<b>3</b> <b>Frequently</b> <b>2-4 times</b> <b>per year</b>	<b>4</b> <b>Regularly</b> <b>more than</b> <b>4 per year</b>	
				<b>Mean</b>
				* Bulletin Boards/Showcase Display Related to Career Development 2.56
				* Occupational Information Instruction 2.71
				* Education and Training Instruction 2.73
				* Computer Programs Related to Career Development 2.93
				* Career Information Through Print Materials 3.07
				* Classroom Speakers Related to Career Development/Education 3.11

The five lowest means in this group included having a college fair (M = 1.40), providing a career development newsletter (M = 1.47), providing career information workshops for faculty and staff (M = 1.62), providing job shadowing opportunities (M = 1.75), and having a career fair (M = 1.98).

The five highest means for this section included having classroom speakers related to career development (M = 3.11), providing career information through print material (M = 3.07), providing computer programs related to career development (M = 2.93), providing instruction on education and training of specific jobs (M = 2.73), and instructing on how to use occupational information (M = 2.71).

The ten most frequently used career development strategies used by Survey participants in the incorporation of career information to the students included:

- college exposure related activities
- career information videos
- employability skills activities
- individual career plan/career portfolio
- bulletin boards/showcase display related to career development
- occupational information instruction
- educational and training instruction
- computer programs related to career development
- career information through print materials
- classroom speakers related to career development education

**Please Explain Career Development Practices Which You Believe Are Most Important at the Middle School Level.**

This question generated many answers; however there were two basic themes to all of them. Those were the themes of exposure/acquaintance/awareness and of exploration.

Almost all comments were related to these two themes in some way. Many counselors mentioned the integration of career development into the classroom setting and the incorporation of many varied activities such as career fairs, guest speakers, field trips, and the development of skills such as decision-making, organization, goal-setting, study skills, and responsibility (Appendix Q)

### **Please Explain Career Development Practices Which You Believe That Your School Does Best.**

Eleven of the schools who answered this question believed that they did best in using career assessments such as Virginia VIEW, JOB-O and JOB-O-E, Differential Aptitude Test, and the Career Exploration Inventory as well as using career related computer programs. Eight schools indicated that they have expertise in planning and coordinating career fairs, career related field trips and having guest speakers visit classes. Other counselors mentioned their exploratory programs and the career awareness/exploration activities completed during Teacher/Advisory or through classroom guidance (Appendix R).

### **What Factors in Your School Contribute Most to Students' Career Development?**

Ten schools responded that it was the support of the teachers and their efforts to incorporate career information into the classroom that were the most important factors which contributed to career development. Seven schools indicated that the counselors' commitment to give career development a priority contributed to success. Three schools said that administrative support was the major factor in career development. Most schools mentioned the importance of involvement of many people--teachers, counselors,

administrators, parents, and members of the community. This integrative approach was consistently listed as important.

### **What Factors in Your School Most Impede Career Development?**

With the exception of two respondents to this question, all answers included either "time," "money," or both. Seventy-five percent of the respondents discussed the critical matter of having enough time to do what they wanted or felt that they needed to do concerning career development. Twenty-one percent of the counselors mentioned money or lack of materials as being an impediment to career development. One school said that they did not have a career center and another counselor commented that there wasn't enough space available for career materials. One respondent said that what most impeded career development was the lack of teachers incorporating career development into their specific curriculum areas.

### **Do You Evaluate Your Career Development Practices? If so, how?**

Of the 29 respondents to this question, 14 indicated that they either don't evaluate career development practices, or that they don't conduct a formal evaluation. Other counselors said that career development evaluation was not a separate entity, but a part of the total guidance program evaluation. Others indicated that feedback was from either students, teachers, guest speakers, administrators, or directors of guidance. Two counselors responded that they did their own evaluation of activities by how students responded to them and updated resources as needed to improve the delivery of guidance services.



### **Summary of Major Practices**

1. Fifty three percent of the respondents had a teacher-advisory program in which a variety of career development activities took place.
2. Almost 87 percent of the respondents had teaming in their schools. Career development activities were integrated within the core curriculum through these teaming efforts.
3. Forty four schools (97.8 percent) had some type of class or activity related to career development. Many of these were though exploratory classes such as technology education, art, drama, band, chorus, computers, life skills, agriscience, and foreign language.
4. Thirty three schools (73.3 percent) had special interest clubs, many of which directly related to career development.
5. Forty respondents (90.0 percent) provided classroom guidance activities directly relating to career development.
6. Factors which most impeded career development were time, money, or both.
7. Most respondents (29) did not conduct a formal evaluation of their career development practices.

### **Visits and Interviews of Exemplary Programs**

Upon return of the Surveys, the researcher chose those which had the most comprehensive career development programs in their schools. This was determined by examining each Survey and assessing how many specific practices were being conducted at each school. Those which had teacher-advisory, teaming, classroom guidance, etc. and indicated that career development activities were occurring in these areas were believed to

be comprehensive programs. The two sections using the Likert Scale ratings were also examined by the researcher, and those who had more practices rated as either "3" or "4" were also considered exemplary. The researcher then chose four schools in which to conduct in-depth interviews--three were conducted on site, while the fourth was conducted by telephone.

### **Site Visit Number One**

The first site visit was to a suburban middle school located in Southwest Virginia. This school received multiple nominations as being an exemplary middle school. The total school enrollment was 758 students in grades six, seven, and eight. Two full time guidance counselors were employed resulting in a counselor:student counselor ratio of 1:379. There was a full time guidance secretary who was responsible for much of the guidance paperwork and much of the test coordination. One counselor's office was located on the second floor of the building while the other counselor's office was on the third floor. Both offices were small, but well lighted and each was equipped with a computer and a telephone. Bulletin boards were located in the hallways outside of each office and both offices had a place where students could leave messages if the counselor was unavailable.

All career information was housed in a special section of the library which had been designated as the Career Center. This section was located in the main section of the library but was partitioned off by shelves housing two rows of career information. This section was very well equipped with posters (printed by the school's art department through a grant they received), a VCR and television, many reference books and much printed material relating to careers. College catalogs were available as were pamphlets concerning special schools and programs (Tech Prep, military academies, preparatory schools, etc.).

Commercially prepared career videos were available as were videos made by school faculty and counselors of people in the community working on their jobs. Pamphlets, booklets, and computer printouts of various careers were filed in portable storage boxes which could be taken to classrooms for research purposes. There was a mailbox on the top of the bookshelf for students to leave messages or to make appointments with a counselor.

Career resources in this area were plentiful and up-to-date. These included several series of books on specific careers, the Dictionary of Occupational Titles, The Occupational Outlook Handbook, computer printouts of all occupations listed in the Virginia VIEW computer software and many, many others. Books pertaining to medical and health related careers were acquired through a grant which the school received from the Southwest Virginia Area Health Education Center (AHEC).

Career development activities were infused throughout the curriculum. The Teacher-Advisory Program Book had an entire section of career education activities and the sixth grade teams had career development activities during classroom guidance time. Activities covered topics such as self-assessments, types of jobs (indoor vs. outdoor, working with people vs. working alone, etc.) and work values (prestige, money, job security contribution to society, etc.). There were four exploratory classes through which all sixth graders rotate. This did not include Band which could also be chosen at the sixth grade level. Seventh graders had a required semester computer class and a choice of five other exploratory classes in addition to Band. Eighth grade students had nine classes (including Band) from which to choose. Two of these were high school credit classes. Foreign language was also offered, but students must meet certain criteria in order to enroll. There were at least 12 clubs from which the student could choose, most of which were career oriented (Health Careers Club, Backstage Players, Art, Architecture).

Many career oriented activities occurred through classroom guidance. These were different for each grade, but included activities such as JOB-O-E, introduction to the Career

Center, decision-making skills, Virginia VIEW, Differential Aptitude Test (DAT), interest inventories, and career units involving writing a paper on a specific career. Selected eighth grade students (those who indicated an interest in Tech Prep) were taken to the local community college for a visit and a tour of the facilities. Speakers from various college programs addressed the students and took them for tours.

Service learning took place on a periodic basis. Recent activities have involved students with the building of a local community playground, collecting money for the needy, sponsoring a canned food drive, and collecting donations for the pediatric floor of the local hospital. Service-learning is important in that it gives students an opportunity to feel needed and to make a contribution to the community. It is also an avenue to explore possible work and/or leisure activities.

An eighth period was added to the class schedule each Friday for specific activities which included intramural sports activities, STAR (Sit Tight and Read), clubs, and career awareness activities. These activities rotated from grade-to-grade each Friday. One of the activities included in the career awareness rotation was a career video program which was shown through the media center of the library. Videos were both commercially and locally made. Locally made videos featured workers in the community performing specific tasks and describing what was entailed in their jobs.

This school met all of the NOICC Guidelines for career development competencies at the middle school level. There was much career information available and accessible to students. The counselors were constantly working to infuse career development into the curriculum and faculty and administration were very supportive of this effort. Career development activities were infused throughout the curriculum at all grade levels and many times during the academic year. This school's career development program was much more extensive than was indicated in the Survey. The researcher was very impressed with the Career Center located in the Library. It was extremely well supplied with current career

information on the middle school reading level. While much of this material was purchased through monies received from a grant, there were also many materials which were almost cost free. This Center was very attractive and inviting and was used weekly by various groups of students.

The most outstanding practices found at this school were:

- a counselor who was committed to career development of middle school students
- a strong teacher-advisory/advisor-advisee program
- a large variety of exploratory classes and special interest clubs
- classroom guidance activities which emphasized many topics including study skills, self-esteem, decision making skills, and others directly relating to career development
- the use of several career development assessments, spanning all grade levels
- the use of career portfolios with information added at each grade level
- a strong link to community resource persons who were dedicated to career development
- a connection to the local community college and the use of its resources
- a faculty who was willing to infuse career development throughout the curriculum and work closely with the counselors to provide such opportunities for their students

### **Site Visit Number Two**

Site number two was also located in Southwest Virginia. This middle school had approximately 600 students and 1 and three fourths guidance counselors for a

counselor:student ratio of 1:343. Grades six through eight were housed there. There was no guidance secretary and all paperwork was performed by the guidance counselors.

The school was designed and built as a high school and later became a middle school. The guidance department was located down the hall from the main office and partitions were placed in an old classroom to form the guidance office. There was a small waiting area, a room for storage, a small room for guidance activities, and two offices. Each office was equipped with a computer and a telephone. All of the office space was very small but well kept and inviting.

A tour of the building indicated that the school incorporated many middle school concepts into its curriculum. Sections of the school housed various teams of students (Emerald Team, Sapphire Team, Ruby Team), there was a Teacher/Advisory program, no bells ring during the day, bulletin boards indicated that there were many community speakers involved in the education of the students. The counselors stated that the seventh and eighth grades had two teams each with four academic members; the sixth grade was self-contained but had two and four member teams for special activities.

Sixth grade students had ten weeks of classroom guidance, one time per week. Counselors alternated these activities so that they could get to know the new students. Career awareness activities were integrated into classroom guidance.

The Teacher/Advisory program had a theme for each month with a different focus each day. The counselors coordinated the T/A program and gave each teacher suggested activities to use in class. The notebook previewed by the researcher was very extensive and the activities were appropriate for middle schoolers. A variety of activities were provided. One month was devoted to career awareness. All students used Virginia VIEW, and eighth grade students took the COPS-R (Career Occupational Preference System - Revised). Many of these assessments occurred in the computer lab which was located

down the hallway from the guidance office. The computer teacher coordinated the computerized career assessments.

Each grade level had exploratory classes. Sixth grade students rotated through music, art, technology education, and teen living, or band or choir. Seventh and eighth grade students chose two exploratory classes or band or choir.

While a great variety of career resources were lacking, the researcher believed that counselors did a good job of providing career awareness and exploration activities at this middle school. Career day is held each year and is a school-wide project. There are a large number of participants; sometimes as many as 50 to 75. Teachers also integrate career awareness throughout the curriculum and often invite guest speakers to their classes to enhance curriculum information. Career portfolios are created at the middle school level and are sent to the high school when eighth grade students matriculate. NOICC Guidelines appear to be followed. There were many self-knowledge activities as well as educational and occupational exploration. Career planning was also incorporated into each students' portfolio.

Strengths of this school's career development program included:

- a strong teacher-advisory/advisor-advisee program where many career development activities occurred
- a strong link to the community in providing guest speakers
- faculty infusion of career development within their curriculums
- a computer teacher who used her facilities to provide career development activities and assessments for all students
- the use of career portfolios
- extensive use of classroom guidance activities, many which pertained to career development

- a large career day activity with as many as 50 to 75 guest speakers

### **Site Visit Number Three**

Site visit number three occurred in another middle school in Southwest Virginia. This middle school was relatively new--it had been in existence for less than ten years. It was housed in a very old building--one in which parts of the building were over 100 years old. The building was once a high school, then an elementary school, and was developed into a middle school very recently. It was located in a rural community on the edge of a fairly large city. Total school enrollment was 465 students grades six through eight with one and one half guidance counselors. This was a counselor:student ratio of 1:310. There were no guidance secretaries. The guidance suite was designed by the full time guidance counselor who worked in the building when it was an elementary school. The suite was very large and very pleasant. There was a large reception area with two computer terminals, screens, and a printer. Corkboard walls displayed many types of career information and there were several shelves which housed career books. Chairs and a table were available--the table contained several pamphlets on Tech Prep. There were two offices each with a computer and a telephone. A large conference room which would be appropriate for group counseling was also available. All areas were carpeted, bright, and well kept.

This middle school had teams, each housed in different wings of the building. There was also an Advisor/Advisee (A/A) program in which career activities were integrated. The sixth grade students took a learning styles inventory which was placed in their career portfolios that were designed by the county and used at all middle and high schools. The seventh grade students took the Harrington O'Shea Career Decision Making Inventory (CDM) and also watched career videos one day per week during A/A. These videos were commercially made and were bought by the county. There were several



videos in the set which was divided into three groups and rotated to each of the three middle schools on a 12 week basis. Eighth grade students spend 12 days in the computer lab during the A/A period working on career activities. These activities are conducted by the guidance counselor and the computer teacher. Virginia VIEW and the Career Area Interest Checklist (CAIC) are given and results are placed in the students' portfolios.

It was evident to the researcher that this school was meeting NOICC guidelines for career development at the middle school level. Through integration of career information within the curriculum, the incorporation of materials within the A/A program and the guidance activities provided by the counselors, students seem to be getting much career exploration which would be appropriate for middle school level students.

Outstanding career development practices at this middle school included:

- a counselor who was committed to career development of middle school students
- a guidance office well organized and well supplied with up-to-date career development materials
- the use of career assessments at all grade levels
- the use of career portfolios with information added at each grade level
- the incorporation of career development through the teacher-advisory/advisor-advisory program
- an eighth grade career unit coordinated by the counselor and the computer teacher
- an extensive library of career videos
- several exploratory classes and special interest clubs
- the infusion of career development information within the classroom setting

## **Interview Four**

The final in-depth interview was conducted by telephone with an eastern school which had grades six through eight. Total school enrollment was 770 with two full time guidance counselors for a counselor:student ratio of 1:385. There were no guidance secretaries; therefore, counselors were responsible for all paperwork conducted within the department. The school was located in a building which was approximately 35 years old and the guidance department was down the hall from the main office. There was a reception area with two guidance offices off from it. Each office was equipped with a computer and a telephone. There were also seven computers in the library with career information on them, as well as a trailer located outside the main building which was used for group guidance. Micro-fiche readers were located in the trailer as were computers with DISCOVER career software which is updated annually.

While guidance groups were conducted on various topics common to counselors (communication skills, conflict mediation, anger, and bullying), there were many groups conducted specifically for career information. Sixth grade students had classroom guidance, took the Career Exploration Inventory (CEI), Career Game, and Red Hot Jobs. Seventh and eighth grade students who showed an interest (usually 100 or more) were split into groups of 10 students and had career activities one period a week for four weeks. These activities were conducted during different class periods each week so that the students missed only once in each class period for these career guidance sessions.

During these career guidance groups, several different activities occurred. Seventh grade students learned how to use the resources and information available to them and then researched a job of their choice. An oral report about this job was given to the group during the last class meeting. Seventh grade students also took the COPS-II (Career Occupational Preference System) Interest Inventory and discussed the results. Eighth

grade students did the same types of activities while expanding their research to types of college, military, or vocational/technical training needed for their selected job. They also discussed educational planning and the types of diplomas offered at their high school. They took the IDEAS (Interest Determination, Exploration, and Assessment System) Interest Survey.

Exploratory classes offered at this middle school included World Cultures, Teen Living, Art, Technology, Computer Solutions, Technological Systems, Keyboarding I and II, Expressive Art, and others. There was not a teacher/advisory program in the school, but the counselor indicated that there was much integration of career awareness and exploration in the classroom. Many teachers secure speakers to do presentations for their classes. There are also many special interest clubs which enhance career development including the media club, newspaper and yearbook staffs, Future Homemakers of America, and others.

Two activities which the school conducts specifically target career development of middle school youth. The ATOMS program (**A**dventures in **T**echnology = **O**ptions in **M**ath and **S**cience) is designed to target middle ability students to become more interested in math and science. Criteria for participation in this program include having standardized test scores in math and science of between 30-75 percent, having passed two of the three parts of the Virginia Literacy Passport Tests, and having not participated in the gifted/talented program at the school. The ATOMS program is a partnership with several businesses and industries near the school and includes NASA Langley, Newport News Shipbuilding, Canon and others. Employees come to school to talk about their jobs and the types of training required. They also stress the importance of math and science and how it is integrated into their job performance. Students also take field trips to the participating businesses and industries to see firsthand what occurs on these jobs.

The Youth Foundation is the second activity which addresses career development in depth. It consists of a committee of citizens/businesses in the area which donate money to provide transportation to the local community college to visit their career laboratory. These eighth grade students and their parents visit the college at night and go through a packet of career development information which must be completed. This is done in conjunction with students and parents from the other two middle schools in the county who also participate in this program.

Because these activities and others are so involved and time-consuming, the counselor stated that they did not have a career fair at this school. They felt that students benefited more from these and other activities than from a one day career fair.

Without an actual visit to this school, it was more difficult to assess activities which meet the NOICC Guidelines for career development at the middle school level. It appeared from the researcher's conversation with the counselor that all areas were being met, particularly in the area of educational and occupational exploration.

From the telephone interview, it was determined that this school's strengths in career development include:

- a counselor and school system who were committed to career development of middle school students
- many exploratory classes and special interest clubs
- career assessments at all grade levels
- infusion of career development activities throughout the total school curriculum
- classroom guidance activities with an in-depth focus on career development
- extensive collection of career development materials for students' use housed in many areas of the school

- a very strong link to community resources committed to the career development of middle school students
- a link to the local community college whose career resources are used
- two comprehensive career development programs for eighth grade students (Youth Foundation and ATOMS) and their parents

### **Summary of Site Visits**

The researcher visited three schools and conducted an in depth telephone interview with one school which seemed to have comprehensive career development programs as evidenced by responses to the Career Development Programs Survey developed by the researcher. All four schools performed many functions which met the NOICC Guidelines for career development competencies at the middle school level. These three areas consisted of self-knowledge, educational and occupational exploration, and career planning. There are subdivisions under each area of career development (see Appendix I). All four schools had more comprehensive career development practices than evidenced by the Survey. Each school had mentioned particular practices, but the interviews revealed the extensiveness of these practices more fully. All schools had integrated career development throughout the entire curriculum to a great extent.

There were common themes found in all of the exemplary middle schools visited and interviewed by the researcher. These themes consisted of:

- counselors who were committed to career development of middle school students
- curricula which offered a variety of exploratory classes and special interest clubs
- a strong teacher-advisory/advisor-advisee program

- faculty infusion of career development activities within the classroom setting
- computer technology, and often the support of a computer teacher willing to assist counselors with computerized career development activities
- the use of career portfolios at all grade levels
- some type of career assessment/inventory at each grade level to be placed in the career portfolio
- an extensive collection of career development materials--books, videos, computer software, etc.
- comprehensive classroom guidance programs which incorporated career development activities
- a link to the local community college which provided career development support
- a strong link to community resources committed to providing/supporting career development activities for middle school students

### **Research Questions**

What follows is a description of findings of the five research questions posed at the beginning of this study. Each question will be addressed with findings of the research.

#### **Research Question 1:**

**Do Virginia's exemplary middle schools conduct exemplary career development programs as defined by the guidelines set forth by the National Occupational Information Coordinating Committee?**

The National Occupational Information Coordinating Committee (NOICC) has developed national career development guidelines for all levels of education: elementary, middle/junior high school, high school, and adult (1989). These guidelines are divided into three areas: self-knowledge, educational and occupational exploration, and career planning. There are subdivisions under each area. These guidelines have been adopted by over 40 states, however, Virginia has chosen not to use them as state guidelines. Many currently published career development materials now indicate which NOICC competencies are met by their materials.

It was evidenced from the returned Surveys that all of the identified exemplary schools were attempting to infuse career development into their curriculum in some way. Some of these attempts were evidenced by:

### **Self-Knowledge**

- counselors and/or teachers were providing activities throughout the curriculum to aid in self-awareness/self-knowledge. These activities occurred in classroom guidance sessions and in teacher-advisory/advisor-advisee programs
- assessments and/or career development inventories which were designed to reveal information about oneself

### **Educational and Occupational Exploration**

- emphasis on study skills, the relationship of school to work, learning to get along with others, etc.
- career day activities
- participation in job shadowing activities
- incorporation of guest speakers into the classroom
- research of various jobs

- interviews with adults concerning their jobs

### **Career Planning**

- use of career portfolios
- planning of high school curriculum
- participation in special programs designed to provide career development information (Candy Strippers, job shadowing, ATOMS, Youth Foundation, etc.)

Many of the surveyed Virginia middle schools have demonstrated exemplary career development programs. Others were in the process of developing programs, and one respondent said that she had just moved to her school and that she had much work yet to do. Many respondents knew what their programs needed to be and were attempting to improve them as time permitted. Therefore, based on all the data available to the researcher, it appeared that all of the surveyed exemplary middle schools had or were working toward a more comprehensive career development program based on comparisons to the NOICC Guidelines.

### **Research Question II:**

#### **What percentage of the counselor's time is spent in career development activities?**

There were 31 respondents to this question. They indicated that they spent a mean of 23.13 percent of their time with career development activities. Respondents also spent a good deal of their time with classroom guidance activities which were related to career development. These included topics such as developing good study skills, setting goals, developing a positive self-concept, learning to interact with others, and learning how to make good decisions. While these may not be thought of as directly related to career development, these skills certainly enhance the developmental process.



### **Research Question III:**

**Who were the facilitators of the career development programs in the identified exemplary middle schools?**

Respondents indicated that they (counselors) were the major facilitators of career development programs within their schools. They also indicated that teachers played a major role in such initiatives as obtaining guest speakers for their classrooms, conducting self-awareness and career exploration activities through teacher-advisory or advisor-advisee programs, and assisting with special projects such as career days, career fairs, job shadowing, and volunteering or service projects. Many counselors indicated that the school's computer teacher was instrumental in assisting with career software activities such as Virginia VIEW, DISCOVER, CHOICES, and others. Therefore, while the counselors were the major facilitators of career development activities in the surveyed middle schools, this effort was enhanced by faculty and staff members.

### **Research Question IV:**

**What school personnel are involved in career development activities in the identified exemplary middle schools?**

As indicated in the previous question, teachers were instrumental in the integration of career development in the total school curriculum. Several counselors also mentioned the continuing support of their principals or directors of guidance (where there were such positions) as important in the continued development of their programs. Support from principals and directors of guidance was more indirect, however, in that they provided funding, and obtained materials to enhance the career development efforts of counselors.

## **Research Question V:**

### **How are career development programs being evaluated?**

No respondent indicated that they had a formal written evaluation process of their career development program. Many indicated that the evaluation took place from their director of guidance or principal only as a part of the evaluation of the total guidance program. Some respondents stated that there was no formal evaluation at all, only an informal means of evaluation by teachers, students, and staff. One counselor stated that she continually evaluated her own program to determine where changes needed to be made. Clearly this research indicated that no formal evaluations were occurring as related to the career development programs at the surveyed middle schools in Virginia.

## **Summary**

This chapter described the results of research which was conducted in the early to late fall of 1996. A Career Development Programs Survey was sent to 63 exemplary middle schools throughout Virginia in order to assess their career development programs. Forty five schools responded to the Survey for a 71 percent return rate. Responding schools were varied in many areas: geographic location, rural vs. urban, city vs. county, large populations v. small populations. After the Surveys were returned, the researcher visited three schools and conducted one in-depth telephone interview of schools which seemed to have exceptional career development programs as compared to the guidelines set forth by the National Occupational Information Coordinating Committee (NOICC). Findings were reported in this chapter.

## **CHAPTER FIVE**

### **Summary, Conclusions, and Recommendations**

#### **Introduction and Purpose**

In the late fall of 1996, the United States Congress approved the \$600 billion Omnibus spending bill and President Clinton signed the measure which will be favorable to education and employment and training programs in 1997. Funding increased from fiscal year 1996 in the areas of vocational education, total school-to-work initiatives, one stop career centers, and several others (Kososki, 1996). President Clinton has emphasized his support of career initiatives many times during his presidency (U.S. News & World Report, September 30, 1996).

At the same time, efforts to showcase exemplary career guidance programs continue. The National Center for Research in Vocational Education's (NCRVE) Office of Student Services (OSS) has just released the names of the 1996 Exemplary Career Guidance and Counseling Programs recipients (Maddy-Bernstein, 1996). These schools were highlighted in a nationwide search for exemplary career guidance and counseling programs which are aimed at assisting all students in making the transition from school to work and further education.

The 1996 National Honorees of the Planning for Life Program have also been announced. The Planning for Life National Awards Recognition Program, in its fourth year of operation, is sponsored by the United States Army Recruiting Command and Administered by the National Consortium of State Career Guidance supervisors. The program recognizes systematic, comprehensive career planning programs which involve students, parents, businesses, labor, educators, and the community (Starr, Fall, 1996).

The United States Department of Education has also initiated a similar program by honoring ten schools at its "New American High School" conference last year (1996) in

Washington, D.C. These programs shared the common threads of high academic standards, preparation of students for both college and careers, the teaching of career skills in a real-life context, use of hands-on methods, a schools-within-school approach, use of adult mentors, access to a wide range of career and college information, strong links between secondary and postsecondary institutions and use of technology to enhance learning (Techniques, September, 1996).

A current trend in public education is the incorporation of career development into middle school and high school curricula. There are also more efforts to recognize and showcase exemplary career guidance programs as evidenced by reviews of current literature. The purpose of this research was to identify, at the state level, middle schools which have exemplary career development programs. The relevance of such a project would serve several purposes. They include:

- providing guidelines for program development and expansion
- providing a means of accountability
- providing a standard of performance
- providing consistency among institutions
- showcasing exemplary programs

It is hoped that the identification of exemplary programs may result in the self-evaluation of middle school counseling programs to identify areas where the incorporation of more comprehensive career development activities would result in the improved delivery of services to students.

### **Research Procedures**

This study was conducted in the late summer and fall of 1996. It was a descriptive study with the purpose of identifying exemplary middle school career development programs in Virginia which meet NOICC Guidelines (National Occupational Information

Coordinating Committee, 1989). The first step in the research process was to collect nominations of Virginia's exemplary middle schools. This was done through a nomination process by Virginia State Department of Education Field Representatives, university faculty with expertise in the area of counseling, middle level education or both, and state leaders in the counseling profession. This identification process closely follows other research whose purpose was to identify exemplary programs (Gerstein & Lichtman, 1990; Blumenthal, 1993). This identification process resulted in the nomination of 63 middle schools in Virginia.

A pilot study was conducted with eight middle school counselors in Southwest Virginia and no revisions were made in the Career Development Programs Survey designed by the researcher. It was sent to the 63 nominated schools of which 45 returned the Survey for a return rate of 71 percent.

After receiving the 45 returned Surveys, the researcher chose four schools which seemed to have the most comprehensive career development practices for follow up contacts. These contacts were made by conducting three site visits and one in-depth telephone interview.

### **Summary of Findings**

Results revealed that 12 city schools and 33 county schools completed the Survey. Of those, 23 respondents were from the eastern part of Virginia and 22 were from the western part. Thirty seven respondents had grades six, seven, and eight housed in their schools. School enrollments varied from 285 to 1,564 students and the mean counselor:student ratio was 1:368. The mean guidance budget was \$641.16 while the mean amount of money spent on career development was \$358.75. Other resources also contributed monies and materials to guidance departments. Counselors indicated that they spent almost one fourth of their time on career development practices.

There were several common themes that most contributed to career development in each of the schools surveyed. They were those of:

- teacher-advisory programs where many career development activities took place
- teaming of teachers who shared a common group of students. Career development activities were integrated into their core curriculums.
- exploratory classes were an integral part of the curriculum
- special interest clubs offered a variety of career exploration opportunities
- counselors provided many classroom guidance activities which related to career development
- factors that most impeded career development were those of time, money, or both
- there were no formal evaluation procedures of career development practices

Four site visits resulted in several findings with common themes. These were:

- counselors who were committed to career development of middle school students
- curriculums which offered a variety of exploratory classes and special interest clubs
- a strong teacher-advisory program
- faculty infusion of career development activities within the classroom setting
- computer technology, and often the support of a computer teacher willing to assist counselors with computerized career development activities

- the use of career portfolios at all grade levels
- some type of career assessment/inventory at each grade level to be placed in the career portfolio
- an extensive collection of career development materials--books, videos, computer software, etc.
- comprehensive classroom guidance programs which incorporated career development activities
- a link to the local community college which provided career development support
- a strong link to community resources committed to providing/supporting career development activities for middle school students

### **Research Questions**

What follows is a summary of findings of the five research questions posed at the beginning of this study. Each question will be addressed with findings of the research.

#### **Summary of Findings: Research Question I**

**Do Virginia's exemplary middle schools conduct exemplary career development programs as defined by the guidelines set forth by the National Occupational Information Coordinating Committee?**

The National Occupational Information Coordinating Committee (NOICC) (1989) has developed national career development guidelines for all levels of education: elementary, middle/junior high school, high school, and adult. These guidelines are divided into three areas: self-knowledge, educational and occupational exploration, and career planning with subdivisions in each area. These guidelines have been adopted by over 40 states; however, Virginia has chosen not to use them as state guidelines. Research

findings from this study indicated that all of the exemplary middle schools surveyed are attempting to infuse career development into their curriculum in some way. These competencies were being met through teacher-advisory/advisor-advisee programs which focused on self-knowledge, through classroom guidance activities which incorporated information on study skills, decision making, goal setting, and the ideas of the connectedness of school to work, or through other processes which infused career development awareness and exploration into the curriculum.

While many of the surveyed exemplary schools had exemplary career development programs, others were in the process of developing programs, and one respondent said that she had just moved to her school and that she had much work yet to do. Many respondents knew that their programs needed to be more comprehensive and were attempting to improve them as time permitted. Based on the data available to the researcher, the exemplary schools surveyed were working toward more comprehensive career development programs based on NOICC Guidelines.

## **Summary of Research Findings: Research Question II**

### **What percentage of the counselor's time is spent in career development activities?**

There were 31 respondents to this question. Counselors indicated that they spent approximately one fourth (25 percent) of their time with career development activities. In addition to that, counselors also indicated that they spent a good deal of their time with classroom guidance activities which were related to career development. These included topics such as developing good study skills, setting goals, developing a positive self-concept, learning to interact with others, and learning how to make good decisions. While these may not be thought of as directly related to career development, these skills enhance the developmental process.



### **Summary of Findings: Research Questions III & IV**

**Who were the facilitators of the career development programs in the identified exemplary middle schools?**

**What school personnel are involved in career development activities in the identified exemplary middle schools?**

Respondents indicated that they (counselors) were the major facilitators of career development programs within their schools. They also indicated that teachers played a major role in such initiatives as obtaining guest speakers for their classrooms, conducting self-awareness and career exploration activities through teacher-advisory or advisor-advisee programs, and assisting with special projects such as career days, career fairs, job shadowing, and volunteering or service projects. Many counselors indicated that the school's computer teacher was instrumental in assisting with career software activities such as Virginia VIEW, DISCOVER, CHOICES, and others.

Teachers were also instrumental in the integration of career development in the total school curriculum. Several counselors also mentioned the continuing support of their principals or directors of guidance (where there were such positions) as important in the continued development of their programs through providing monies or other career development resource materials.

### **Summary of Findings: Research Question V**

**How are career development programs being evaluated?**

No respondent indicated that they had a formal written evaluation process for their career development program. Many indicated that the evaluation took place from their director of guidance or principal only as a part of the evaluation of the total guidance program. Some respondents stated that there was no formal evaluation at all, only an

informal means of evaluation by teachers, students, and staff. One counselor stated that she continually evaluated her own program to determine where changes needed to be made.

### **Discussion of Research Questions**

Five questions were posed during this research process. From responses of counselors on the Career Development Programs Survey and from follow up visits and an in depth telephone interview with middle school counselors across the state, it appeared that exemplary middle schools were meeting (in varying degrees) the national guidelines set forth by the National Occupational Information Coordinating Committee (NOICC), therefore, one could conclude that exemplary middle schools in Virginia do have exemplary career development programs.

While counselors indicated that they spent almost 25 percent of their time in career development activities, they also indicated that they conducted many classroom guidance activities indirectly related to career development, such as discussing topics pertaining to study skills, goal setting, time management, getting along with others, and many more. Most counselors also indicated that career development was integrated into the total school curriculum so that teachers and other staff members were incorporating career development activities into the classroom. Teacher-advisory/advisor-advisee programs were an integral way to disseminate career development information as were exploratory classes and special interest clubs.

While counselors were the main facilitators of career development information in the middle school, teachers also played a major role in the dissemination of career information. In some schools, counselors did more coordination while teachers worked directly with the students. Several respondents mentioned the role of their principals as avid supporters of career development activities.

Career development programs were not simply the responsibility of one person or one school department. Counselors and teachers were working together, with administrative support, for career development programs to be comprehensive and successful.

In the surveyed middle schools, career development programs were not being evaluated formally through a written evaluation instrument. Students may complete an evaluative survey or administrators or directors of guidance may complete an evaluation form for the total guidance program, but career development wasn't a separate entity or often even a notable part of another larger comprehensive evaluation activity. Many counselors did, however, indicate that such an evaluation was not a bad idea.

### **Conclusions**

Based on research conducted in late summer and early fall of 1996 with counselors in guidance departments of 45 exemplary middle schools in Virginia, the following conclusions were drawn.

1. Several middle school concepts were used as avenues to incorporate career development into the curriculum. Those included teacher-advisory, teaming of teachers, exploratory classes, special interest clubs, and the concept of service learning or volunteerism.

2. Almost all classroom guidance activities included information pertaining to career development.

3. Technology was important in providing career development information. Computer software, internet links, videos, books, and other career information sources were housed in many areas of the school in order to be as accessible as possible to students.

4. A total school commitment to career development was important in the integration of information and ideas. Counselors, teachers, administrators, and other staff all contributed to this total commitment.

5. The involvement of outside resources contributed greatly to career development practices. Businesses, industries, local community colleges, and others in the world of work enhanced the school's efforts.

6. Time, money, or both, provide the biggest impetus to comprehensive career development.

7. The lack of a formal system to evaluate career development practices needs to be addressed. Evaluative techniques form a basis of accountability and a standard of performance.

### **Recommendations for Best Practices**

The purpose of this study was to gather as much information as possible concerning exemplary career development practices of Virginia's middle schools. Findings generated several recommendations upon which an expenditure of monies may be contingent. While it may be impossible to incorporate every item into an existing guidance program immediately, it may be possible to develop a timeline and introduce new practices slowly. Developmental practices such as those recommended may take several years before total infusion occurs.

1. It was evident immediately upon the sending of the Survey that counselors were overwhelmed with their workloads. Telephone calls from the researcher prompted several responses indicated that counselors would be glad to participate in the study, but the Survey instrument would be completed when they had time. As a direct result of this, it is recommended that all middle schools follow the guidelines mandated by the State Department of Education of one full-time counselor for the first 400 middle school students

and one period of counseling for each additional 80 or major fraction. The demographic information also indicated that state mandates were not being followed in at least 13 of the 45 schools surveyed. The most exemplary career development programs visited and interviewed by the researcher all had counselor:student ratios less than that which is mandated by Virginia. Counselors' time should not be impeded by tasks which are not guidance related. Administrators should look carefully at protecting counselors' time so that they perform counselor functions. A counselor's personal commitment to career development of students seems to be the most important factor in a school's having an exemplary program.

2. Teacher-advisory/advisor-advisee programs provide a viable way to disseminate career development information.

3. Exploratory classes, special interest clubs, and a program of service-learning or volunteerism should be incorporated and/or expanded if at all possible. Again, these are often incorporated into the middle school design, and are excellent avenues of disseminating career development information.

4. Monies should be allocated to expand career development materials. Computer software, internet links, printed materials, career videos, career speakers, career fairs, field trips, and other community information services should all be expanded through the expenditure of monies.

5. The linking of middle schools with outside sources should also be incorporated or expanded. Links with the Virginia Employment Commission, local community colleges and businesses and industries are excellent ways to expand the career development information available to students.

6. As the National Occupational Information Coordinating Committee (NOICC) Guidelines pertaining to middle/junior high school students are national standards being

used in over 40 states, it would be advisable for Virginia to adopt them as a standard by which their career development programs could be compared.

As a result of these findings, it is evident that all middle schools should be challenged to provide more career development activities for their students. In the development/expansion of such programs, the following recommendations may be incorporated into beginning or existing programs:

- a total school commitment, led by the counselor, to the career development of all middle school students
- a curriculum which provides a variety of exploratory classes and as many special interest clubs as possible
- a faculty and staff willing to infuse career development activities into their curriculums and classrooms
- a teacher-advisory/advisor-advisee program which incorporates career development activities into its curriculum
- a comprehensive classroom guidance program which focuses on career development activities
- the use of career portfolios at all grade levels
- career assessment/inventories at each grade level to be kept in the career portfolio
- computer technology and computer software pertaining to career development
- a collection of career development materials made accessible to students and instruction on what they are, where they are housed, and how to use them
- a link to the local community college and the use of their resources

- a link to community resources who are committed to providing/supporting career development activities for middle school students

As these themes were found in all of the most comprehensive career development programs in the schools surveyed, it would be recommended to incorporate them into all of Virginia's middle schools. These basic themes seem to provide the core of what is essential for a comprehensive career development program at the middle school level.

### **Implications for Further Research**

Research conducted to identify exemplary career development programs in Virginia's middle schools has resulted in implications for further research. Such research and findings could provide information to improve career development programs as they exist in middle schools across the state.

1. **Counselor:student ratios** - While the Virginia Department of Education has mandates concerning counselor:student ratios at each level of education, it was apparent from this study that all schools are not adhering to these mandates. Further research concerning this matter may result in all middle schools following mandates set forth by the State. From this research, it was apparent that those schools with the most exemplary programs were those with the lowest ratio of students per counselor. Counselors also stated that time was the factor that most impeded career development practices at their respective schools.

2. **Middle school curriculum design** - Further research may also indicate the degree that Virginia's middle schools are following middle school curriculum design. Teacher-advisory/advisor-advisee programs, exploratory classes, special interest clubs, teaming, volunteerism and service learning are all integral parts of the middle school design and this research also indicates that it is integral to the career development of middle school

students. Those schools which are not designed to appropriately meet the needs of middle school students may consider curriculum redesign in order to better meet the needs of their specific population as well as provide more opportunities for career development programs/practices at this educational level.

**3. Formal evaluation** - In their book Developing and Managing Your School Guidance Program, Gysbers and Henderson (1994) stated that the four phases of developing comprehensive guidance program were: (a) planning, (b) designing, (c) implementing, and (d) evaluating. This research revealed that one vital part of a comprehensive guidance program was missing. No respondent in the Survey indicated that there was a formal evaluation of their career development program. Many also indicated that there was no evaluative technique for their guidance program in general. It is recommended that an evaluation be designed to assess career development practices in Virginia's middle schools. This could be a subdivision of an overall evaluative technique as it is one of the three major areas of counseling adopted by the Virginia State Board of Education in 1996 (Regulations of the Virginia State Board of Education, Revised 1996).

**4. Career information/occupational trends** - An effort may be needed to assist counselors expand and update their awareness/knowledge of current occupational and career trends. A project entitled "Counseling for High Skills," funded by the DeWitt Wallace - Reader's Digest Fund (1996) and conducted through the American School Counselors Association, under the direction of Dr. Kenneth Hoyt, is a national initiative to inform counselors of national labor trends and needs. State professional organizations and institutions such as the State Department of Education, the Virginia Counselors Association, the Virginia School Counselors Association, and state college and university counseling programs may consider adding or expanding such informational resources for preparing and/or practicing counselors.



## Summary

This chapter gave a brief description of research conducted in the fall of 1996 to identify the most exemplary career development programs of nominated middle schools in Virginia. This process to highlight such programs/practices follows national efforts to do the same.

Results of research questions found that the surveyed middle schools did have, or were attempting to provide, exemplary career development programs in their schools as evidenced by activities which followed guidelines of the National Occupational Information Coordinating Committee (NOICC). Counselors spent approximately one fourth of their time in efforts to incorporate career development activities into the curriculum. This was enhanced by support from faculty and administration to also infuse such information. No formal evaluative techniques/efforts were used to evaluate these programs and activities.

Findings from the research provided the following common themes of exemplary career development practices in Virginia's middle schools:

- (1) There were teacher-advisory programs in which a variety of career development activities took place in the academic classrooms.
- (2) There were middle school teams in which groups of teachers worked together on career development activities which were integrated into the core curriculum through these teaming efforts.
- (3) There were curriculum design efforts in which career development exploratory classes were offered on either a 6, 9, 12, or 18 week rotation.
- (4) There were special interest clubs, many of which directly related to career development.
- (5) There were classroom guidance activities conducted by counselors related to career development.

Included in this chapter were the introduction and purpose of the study, a description of research procedures and a summary of findings. These were followed by a brief synopsis of findings which pertained to the research questions. Conclusions of the research findings and recommendations for best practices were followed by implications for further research.

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## **Appendix A**

Letter to Middle Level Education Experts

Middle Level Education Expert  
XXXX  
XXXX, VA

Dear \_\_\_\_\_:

I am a doctoral candidate at Virginia Tech under the supervision of Professor Carl McDaniels in the College of Education, School Counselor Program. I am interested in conducting research concerning exemplary career development programs in Virginia's middle schools.

I would like to ask your assistance in identifying and recommending the names of middle schools within the state which you believe to have exemplary career development programs or which you believe to be generally exemplary schools. I am hoping to identify from 25 to 50 schools to survey. Guidance counselors in these schools will be contacted to participate in my gathering of research for this project.

In defining what is an exemplary career development program, I am using the National Occupational Career Coordinator Committee's (NOICC) Guidelines. These are national career development guidelines which have been adopted in over forty states. The three main competencies identified as being essential for exemplary career development programs include: self-knowledge, educational and occupational exploration, and career planning.

A form is attached for your convenience in submitting names and a stamped envelope is also enclosed. I hope to hear from you no later than September 13th. While your nominations will remain anonymous, I do need to track those who have not returned forms. If you wish to discuss the nominating process, please contact me at Tazewell Middle School (540/988-6513), or at home in the evenings (540/963-0525).

Thank you in advance for your cooperation and prompt response by September 13th concerning research which will, hopefully, benefit all middle schools in our state.

Sincerely,

Debbie Wallace, Doctoral Candidate  
Counselor Education, Virginia Tech

Carl McDaniels, Professor  
Counselor Education, Virginia Tech

Enclosures

Nomination Form of Exemplary Career Development Programs  
in Virginia's Middle Schools

During 1988 and again in 1991, there were two initiatives in Virginia to identify exemplary middle schools. These included the identification of Vanguard Middle Schools, and schools which met the criteria for the Virginia's Middle School Restructuring Network. The following list of schools were identified during that time as being exemplary. While I am specifically hoping to identify exemplary career development programs, I felt that a list such as this would assist you in helping me identify such programs and/or schools. This list is arranged alphabetically by region, but feel free to mark schools outside of your region if you are familiar with their career development program and believe it to be exemplary. Please mark only those schools which you believe to still maintain their exemplary status. If you aren't familiar with the school, please leave the space blank. There is also an opportunity to recommend other schools which may not appear on the list. All nominations will be kept in strict confidence, however, I must track my non-responses, therefore, I ask that you please sign the bottom of the form of nominations. I ask that you return your responses to me no later than September 13th. A stamped, self-addressed envelope has been enclosed for your convenience. Thank you for your cooperation and quick response.

Middle Schools Identified as Exemplary in 1988/1991 through  
Vanguard Middle Schools or Virginia's Middle School Restructuring Network

Has an Exemplary  
Career Development  
Program in 1996

**Region I**

Clintwood Elementary . . . . .	_____
Dungannon Elementary . . . . .	_____
L. F. Addington Middle . . . . .	_____
Powell Valley Middle . . . . .	_____

**Region II**

Damascus Middle . . . . .	_____
E. B. Stanley . . . . .	_____
Graham Middle . . . . .	_____
Richlands Middle . . . . .	_____
Virginia Middle . . . . .	_____
Wallace Middle . . . . .	_____
Whitewood Elementary . . . . .	_____

**Region III**

Andrew Lewis Middle . . . . .	_____
Blacksburg Middle . . . . .	_____
Cave Spring Junior . . . . .	_____



Has an Exemplary  
Career Development  
Program in 1996

**Region III (continued)**

Dublin Middle. . . . .	_____
Hidden Valley Junior. . . . .	_____
Madison Middle. . . . .	_____
Northside Junior. . . . .	_____
Pulaski Middle. . . . .	_____
William Byrd Middle. . . . .	_____
William Ruffner Middle. . . . .	_____
Willis Elementary. . . . .	_____

**Region IV**

Amherst Middle. . . . .	_____
Bedford Middle. . . . .	_____
Blairs Middle. . . . .	_____
Brookville Middle. . . . .	_____
Central Middle (Pittsylvania County). . . . .	_____
Drewry Mason Middle. . . . .	_____
Dunbar Middle. . . . .	_____
G. W. Carver Middle. . . . .	_____
I. W. Taylor Middle. . . . .	_____
John D. Bassett Middle. . . . .	_____
Monelison Middle. . . . .	_____
Staunton River Middle. . . . .	_____
Westmoreland Middle. . . . .	_____
William Campbell Middle. . . . .	_____

**Region V**

Central Middle (Charlotte County). . . . .	_____
Lunenburg Junior. . . . .	_____
Nottoway Middle. . . . .	_____
Park View Middle. . . . .	_____
Prince Edward County Middle. . . . .	_____
Victoria Elementary. . . . .	_____

**Region VI**

Carver Middle. . . . .	_____
Chester Middle. . . . .	_____
Chicakahominy Middle. . . . .	_____
Dinwiddie Middle. . . . .	_____
Edward E. Drew, Jr. Middle. . . . .	_____
Fairfied Middle. . . . .	_____
Harry Flood Byrd Middle. . . . .	_____
Liberty Middle. . . . .	_____
Louisa Middle. . . . .	_____

Has an Exemplary  
Career Development  
Program in 1996

**Region VI (continued)**

Midlothian Middle . . . . .	_____
Tuckahoe Middle . . . . .	_____
Walton Elementary . . . . .	_____

**Region VII**

Azalea Gardens Middle . . . . .	_____
Blair Middle . . . . .	_____
B. T. Washington Middle . . . . .	_____
Central Middle . . . . .	_____
Chincoteague Combined . . . . .	_____
C. Vernon Spratley Middle . . . . .	_____
Davis Middle . . . . .	_____
Gildersleeve Middle . . . . .	_____
Great Neck Junior . . . . .	_____
Hodges Manor Elementary . . . . .	_____
Homer L. Hines Middle . . . . .	_____
Hunt Junior . . . . .	_____
Huntington Middle . . . . .	_____
Jeter-Watson Intermediate . . . . .	_____
John Yeates Middle . . . . .	_____
Lafayette-Winona . . . . .	_____
Lindsay Middle . . . . .	_____
Newsome Park Middle . . . . .	_____
Northside Middle . . . . .	_____
Queens Lake Intermediate . . . . .	_____
Reservoir Middle . . . . .	_____
Rosemont Middle . . . . .	_____
Ruffner Middle . . . . .	_____
Shea Terrace Elementary . . . . .	_____
Southampton Middle . . . . .	_____
S. P. Morton Middle . . . . .	_____
Surry County Middle . . . . .	_____
Surry Elementary . . . . .	_____
Syms Middle . . . . .	_____
Tabb Intermediate . . . . .	_____
W. E. Waters Junior . . . . .	_____
Yorktown Intermediate . . . . .	_____

Has an Exemplary  
Career Development  
Program in 1996

**Region VIII**

Albert H. Hill Middle . . . . .	_____
A. T. Johnson. Middle. . . . .	_____
Binford Middle . . . . .	_____
Boushall Middle. . . . .	_____
Chancellor Middle. . . . .	_____
Henderson Middle . . . . .	_____
J. J. White Middle . . . . .	_____
King George Middle . . . . .	_____
King & Queen Elementary . . . . .	_____
Lake Taylor Middle . . . . .	_____
Northampton Middle. . . . .	_____
Northside Middle. . . . .	_____
Norview Middle. . . . .	_____
Stafford Middle. . . . .	_____
West Point Elementary. . . . .	_____

**Region IX**

Brentsville Middle. . . . .	_____
Culpeper Jr. High . . . . .	_____
Fred M. Lynn Middle . . . . .	_____
Graham Park Middle. . . . .	_____
Hayfield Secondary. . . . .	_____
Herbert J. Saunders Middle. . . . .	_____
Holmes Middle . . . . .	_____
Lake Ridge Middle . . . . .	_____
Mary Walter Elementary . . . . .	_____
Navy Elementary. . . . .	_____
Oak View Elementary . . . . .	_____
Patrick Henry . . . . .	_____
Prospect Heights Middle . . . . .	_____
Shrevewood Elementary . . . . .	_____
Sterling Middle . . . . .	_____
Walt Whitman . . . . .	_____
Washington Irving Intermediate. . . . .	_____
Woodbridge Middle. . . . .	_____

**Region X**

Beverley Manor Middle. . . . .	_____
Brownsburg Middle. . . . .	_____
Buford Middle. . . . .	_____
Highland Belle Middle. . . . .	_____
John C. Myers Middle . . . . .	_____

Has an Exemplary  
 Career Development  
 Program in 1996

**Region X (continued)**

Kate Collins. . . . .	_____
Montevideo Middle. . . . .	_____
S. G. Stewart Middle . . . . .	_____
Stuart's Draft Middle. . . . .	_____
Thomas Harrison Middle. . . . .	_____
Wilbur S. Pence. . . . .	_____

Return Form No Later Than September 13th to:   Debbie Wallace  
   PO Box 483  
   Doran, VA 24512

Nomination Form for Exemplary Career  
Development Programs in Virginia's Middle Schools

Name of School: \_\_\_\_\_  
School Address: \_\_\_\_\_

School Division: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of School: \_\_\_\_\_  
School Address: \_\_\_\_\_

School Division: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of School: \_\_\_\_\_  
School Address: \_\_\_\_\_

School Division: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of School: \_\_\_\_\_  
School Address: \_\_\_\_\_

School Division: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of School: \_\_\_\_\_  
School Address: \_\_\_\_\_

School Division: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of School: \_\_\_\_\_  
School Address: \_\_\_\_\_

School Division: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of School: \_\_\_\_\_  
School Address: \_\_\_\_\_

School Division: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of School: \_\_\_\_\_  
School Address: \_\_\_\_\_

School Division: \_\_\_\_\_

\*Please continue on the back of the form as needed.

Person Completing Form: \_\_\_\_\_

Date Completed: \_\_\_\_\_

Prepared by: Debbie Wallace  
P. O. Box 483  
Doran, VA 24612

Day Phone: (540) 988-6513  
Night Phone: (540) 963-0525

## **Appendix B**

Post-Card Reminder - Nomination Form

You were recently mailed a form in which you were asked to nominate those middle schools in Virginia which you believe to have exemplary career development programs. If you have already completed and returned your nomination sheet, let me thank you for your promptness.

If you have not had the opportunity to complete and return the form, please do so at your earliest convenience. I am depending upon your expertise in the field to assist me in producing as worthwhile a study as possible. I would not want to overlook any middle school which may have a meritorious career development program.

Thank you for your promptness in this matter. If you need another nomination form or have questions, please call me at work at (540) 988-6513 or at home in the evenings at (540) 963-0525.

Sincerely,

Debbie Wallace  
Doctoral Candidate  
Virginia Tech



## **Appendix C**

Date

Pilot Study Participant  
XXXX  
XXXX, VA

Dear Counselor:

I am a doctoral candidate at Virginia Tech under the supervision of Professor Carl McDaniels in the College of Education, School Counselor Program. I am interested in conducting research concerning exemplary career development programs in Virginia's middle schools.

In defining what is an exemplary career development program, I am using the National Occupational Career Coordinating Committee's (NOICC) Guidelines. These are national career development guidelines which have been adopted in over forty states. The three main competencies identified as being essential for exemplary career development programs include: self-knowledge, educational and occupational exploration, and career planning.

I would like to ask your assistance as I conduct a pilot study of the Career Development Programs Survey which I have designed. Would you please assist me in this matter by answering the Survey and returning it to me no later than August 5th with any comments or recommendations for changing or improving the Survey? Your feedback is of the utmost importance in the development of this instrument. It is only with your prompt response and assistance that I can conduct my research with thoroughness and efficiency.

Thank you in advance for your prompt response and feedback on the Survey design. Comments can be made at the end of the Survey, and I assure you that all comments and recommendations will be discussed and taken into consideration. A stamped, self-addressed envelope has been included for your convenience in returning the survey no later than August 5th.

Sincerely,

Debbie Wallace, Doctoral Candidate  
Counselor Education, Virginia Tech

Carl McDaniels, Professor  
Counselor Education, Virginia Tech

Enclosures

## **Appendix D**

Date

Nominated Exemplary Middle School  
XXXX  
XXXX, VA

Dear Counselor:

I am a doctoral candidate at Virginia Tech under the supervision of Professor Carl McDaniels in the College of Education, School Counselor Program. I am interested in conducting research concerning exemplary career development programs in Virginia's middle schools.

In defining what is an exemplary career development program, I am using the National Occupational Career Coordinating Committee's (NOICC) Guidelines. These are national career development guidelines which have been adopted in over forty states. The three main competencies identified as being essential for exemplary career development programs include: self-knowledge, educational and occupational exploration, and career planning.

I would like to ask your assistance as I conduct a study of various types of middle school career development programs as assessed by the Career Development Programs Survey which I have designed. Would you please assist me in this matter by answering the Survey and returning it to me no later than September 30? It is only with your prompt response and assistance that I can conduct my research with thoroughness and efficiency.

Thank you in advance for your prompt responses. A stamped, self-addressed envelope has been included for your convenience in returning the survey no later than September 30.

Sincerely,

Debbie Wallace, Doctoral Candidate  
Counselor Education, Virginia Tech

Carl McDaniels, Professor  
Counselor Education, Virginia Tech

Enclosures

## Career Development Programs Survey

**Part I. This section will identify certain aspects of your school's curriculum.**

Do you have the following:

Teacher-Advisory or Advisor-Advisee Program..... YES NO

If so, what kinds of career development practices occur during TA/AA?

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Teaming or Teams..... YES NO

If so, what kinds of career development practices occur during team time?

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---

Exploratory Classes or Activities..... YES NO

For example, Technology Education, Art, Teen Living, etc. If so, please list classes which are directly related to career development.

6th Grade \_\_\_\_\_

---

7th Grade \_\_\_\_\_

---

8th Grade \_\_\_\_\_

---

Special Interest Clubs..... YES NO

For example, 4-H, Health Careers Club, etc. If so, please list those clubs which are directly related to career development.

6th Grade \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

7th Grade \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

8th Grade \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Classroom Guidance..... YES NO

If so, please list all activities which are directly related to career development.

6th Grade \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

7th Grade \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

8th Grade \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Program of service-learning/student volunteerism..... YES NO

If so, please indicate how this relates to career development.

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_ Other special programs which involve career development or career education activities.

Please explain: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Part II: This section will identify physical facilities.**

Is your school equipped with any of the following: (Please check all that apply)

- \_\_\_ Career Development Center/Career Lab
- \_\_\_ Career information housed in the library or media center
- \_\_\_ Career information housed in guidance office/suite
- \_\_\_ Other, please explain: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Part III: This section will assess technological capabilities of your program.**

Do you use any of the following: (Please check all that apply)

- \_\_\_ Virginia VIEW (Vital Information for Education and Work)
- \_\_\_ CHOICES
- \_\_\_ CIS (Career Information Systems)
- \_\_\_ DISCOVER
- \_\_\_ GIS (Guidance Information Systems)
- \_\_\_ SIGI or SIGI Plus (System of Interactive Guidance and Information)
- \_\_\_ Others, please list: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Part IV: This section will assess how well you believe your school/department conducts career development activities.**

	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>
	Not Applicable	Needs Improvement	Well	Very Well
* Act as a resource to help teachers secure materials appropriate to the delivery of career development activities in the classroom setting	1	2	3	4
* Work with teachers in an attempt to blend guidance practices and classroom instruction with career development goals	1	2	3	4
* Provide career development services to students with disabilities	1	2	3	4
* Acquaint students with career development information areas and programs within my school	1	2	3	4
* Assist students in locating and using occupational information	1	2	3	4
* Discuss the importance of leisure as part of career development	1	2	3	4
* Disseminate information to parents related to jobs/occupations	1	2	3	4
* Support the school division career implementation plan in working with parents and community members	1	2	3	4
* Assist middle school students with the development of an Individualized Career Plan (ICP)/Career Portfolio	1	2	3	4
* Help students acquire and utilize good work habits while helping them see the relationship between these habits and the world of work	1	2	3	4
* Coordinate/conduct career-oriented field trips	1	2	3	4
* Expose students to occupational opportunities within the community	1	2	3	4
* Expose students to career choices in non-traditional fields	1	2	3	4



	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>
	Not Applicable	Needs Improvement	Well	Very Well
* Provide information on problem solving and goal setting	1	2	3	4
* Discuss utilizing leisure time in productive and self-fulfilling activities	1	2	3	4
* Teach social and communication skills that enhance employability	1	2	3	4
* Provide information concerning pursuing educational skills beyond graduation from high school	1	2	3	4
* Discuss the relationship of academic learning to future career and life roles	1	2	3	4
* Teach study skills and their relationship to career goals and life-long learning	1	2	3	4
* Provide instructional strategies for enhancing self-esteem	1	2	3	4
* Provide current information on occupational trends	1	2	3	4
* Provide career development services to potential drop-outs and high risk students	1	2	3	4
* Others which you think merit a place in the listing:	1	2	3	4
_____	1	2	3	4
_____	1	2	3	4
_____	1	2	3	4
_____	1	2	3	4
_____	1	2	3	4

**Part V: This section will assess how often you use career development/education strategies during a school year.**

	<b>1</b> Never	<b>2</b> Sometimes 1-2 times per year	<b>3</b> Frequently 2-4 times per year	<b>4</b> Regularly more than 4 times per year
* Field Trips Related to Career Development/Education	1	2	3	4
* Classroom Speakers Related to Career Development/Education	1	2	3	4
* Career Games/Simulations	1	2	3	4
* Career Fair	1	2	3	4
* College Fair	1	2	3	4
* Parent Involvement in Career Development/Education Activities	1	2	3	4
* Computer Programs Related to Career Development	1	2	3	4
* Bulletin Boards/Showcase Display Related to Career Development	1	2	3	4
* Career Information Through Print Materials	1	2	3	4
* Occupational Information Instruction	1	2	3	4
* Education and Training Instruction	1	2	3	4
* Employability Skills Activities	1	2	3	4
* Community Service/Volunteer Projects	1	2	3	4
* Career Development Newsletters	1	2	3	4
* Vocational/Technical School Orientation	1	2	3	4
* Sex Equity Instruction	1	2	3	4
* Individual Career Plan/Career Portfolios	1	2	3	4

1 Never	2 Sometimes 1-2 times per year	3 Frequently 2-4 times per year	4 Regularly more than 4 times per year
------------	---	--	--

* Tech Prep Programs	1	2	3	4
* College Exposure Related Activities	1	2	3	4
* School/Business Partnership Activities Related to Career Development/Education	1	2	3	4
* Career Information Workshops for Faculty/Staff	1	2	3	4
* Career Information Videos	1	2	3	4
* Job Shadowing Programs	1	2	3	4
* Others which you think merit a place in the listing:				
_____	1	2	3	4
_____	1	2	3	4
_____	1	2	3	4
_____	1	2	3	4
_____	1	2	3	4
_____	1	2	3	4

Comments:

**Part VI: Please explain career development practices which you believe are most important at the middle school level.**

**Part VII: Please explain career development practices which you believe that your school does best.**

**Part VIII: What factors in your school contribute most to students' career development?**

**Part IX: What factors in your school most impede career development?**

**Part X: Do you evaluate your career development practices? If so, how?**

**Part XI: Please answer the following:**

Name of School: \_\_\_\_\_

School Address: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Guidance Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_

School/Guidance FAX: \_\_\_\_\_

School Division: \_\_\_\_\_

Guidance Director: \_\_\_\_\_

Person Completing Survey: \_\_\_\_\_

School Grade Configuration:

_____ 6 - 8	_____ 6 - 9
_____ 5 - 8	_____ 5 - 9
_____ 5 - 7	_____ 7 - 9
_____ Other, please specify _____	

Total School Enrollment: \_\_\_\_\_

Number of Guidance Counselors: Full time \_\_\_\_ Half time \_\_\_\_ Less than half time \_\_\_\_

Number of Secretaries: \_\_\_\_\_ Paraprofessionals: \_\_\_\_\_

Number of Registrars: \_\_\_\_\_ Volunteers: \_\_\_\_\_

Amount of Guidance Budget: \_\_\_\_\_

Amount of Budget Spent on Career Development: \_\_\_\_\_

Amount and/or type of other monies/resources provided to the guidance department:  
\_\_\_\_\_

What percentage of your time as a counselor do you spend in career development/education activities? \_\_\_\_\_

Counselors employed for eleven months: \_\_\_\_\_ twelve months: \_\_\_\_\_

Secretaries employed for eleven months: \_\_\_\_\_ twelve months: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ I give permission for our school's name to be used in any written or oral presentations which the researcher may engage in which will highlight exemplary career development practices.

\_\_\_\_\_ I do not give permission for our school's name to be used. Our participation in this project is based on the anonymity which has been assured by the researcher.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Title

Prepared by: Debbie Wallace  
PO Box 483  
Doran, VA 24612

Day Phone: 540/988-6513  
Night Phone: 540/963-0525

## **Appendix E**

Dear Counselor:

You were recently sent a Career Development Programs Survey which you were asked to complete and return to me as soon as possible. I realize that you are very busy and that this is a demanding time of the year, but I hope that you will take the time to complete this Survey as soon as possible.

Your school was recommended as an exemplary middle school in Virginia, and I really want your Survey to be included in my study. If you need to contact me or need for me to FAX you another Survey, please contact me at work at (540) 988-6513 or at home at night at (540) 963-0525.

Thank you for all of your time and efforts as you share your programs with me. Have a great year!

Sincerely,

Debbie Wallace  
Doctoral Candidate



## **Appendix F**

Dear Counselor:

I recently talked with someone in your office concerning the Career Development Programs Survey which I sent you last month, and they assured me that it would be returned to me immediately. I have still not received it and wondered if you needed for me to send you another Survey. Because your school was nominated as being an exemplary middle school in Virginia, I do want you to participate in the Survey. If you have any questions or need another Survey, please contact me at work at (540) 988-6513 or at home at (540) 963-0525.

Thank you for your immediate response and participation in this research.

Sincerely,

Debbie Wallace  
Doctoral Candidate

## **Appendix G**

Dear Counselor,

Thank you so much for responding so quickly to the Career Development Programs Survey I sent you last month. I have enjoyed reading all of the responses and I would like to assure your anonymity as I have decided not to use any school names in the reporting of my data. I hope that my dissertation will be one that will be useful to all middle school counselors across the state as I identify exemplary career development practices. I really appreciate your sharing of information with me. Thanks again.

Debbie Wallace

## **Appendix H**

Many middle grade schools today fall far short of meeting the critical educational, health, and social needs of millions of young adolescents. Many youth now leave the middle grades unprepared for what lies ahead of them. A fundamental transformation of the education of young adolescents is urgently required.

Young adolescents have a great need for intimacy, yet we put them in large, impersonal schools. Young adolescents need increased autonomy and they need to make their own decisions, yet we put them in environments of review and rote learning. Young adolescents show great variability among themselves and within themselves, yet we put them in classrooms where we ignore their variability and need for flexibility.

In reading its vision of transformed middle grade schools, the Task Force visited or examined sites of middle grades innovation, and met with talented and committed individuals throughout the country who are deeply engaged in making middle grade schools work for young adolescents. Integrating the most current research knowledge with considered and wise practice, the Task Force found that the transformation of education for young adolescents involves eight essential principles:

- Large middle grade schools are divided into smaller communities for learning.
- Middle grade schools transmit a core of common knowledge to all students.
- Middle grade schools are organized to ensure success for all students.
- Teachers and principals have the major responsibility and power to transform middle grade schools.
- Teachers for the middle grades are specifically prepared to teach young adolescents.
- Schools promote good health; the education and health of young adolescents are inextricably linked.
- Families are allied with school staff through mutual respect, trust, and communication.
- Schools and communities are partners in educating young adolescents.

The middle grade school proposed here is profoundly different from many schools today. It focuses squarely on the characteristics and needs of young adolescents. It creates a community of adults and young people embedded in networks of support and responsibility that enhance the commitment of students to learning. In partnership with youth-serving and community organizations, it offers multiple sites and multiple methods for fostering the learning and health of adolescents. The combined efforts create a community of shared purpose among those concerned that all young adolescents are prepared for productive adult lives, especially those at risk of being left behind.

Carnegie Council on Adolescent Development's Task Force on Education of Young Adolescents. (1989). Turning points: Preparing American youth for the 21st century. Washington, DC: Carnegie Council on Adolescent Development, A Program of Carnegie Corporation of New York.

## **Appendix I**

CAREER DEVELOPMENT COMPETENCIES BY AREA AND LEVEL

	<b>ELEMENTARY</b>	<b>MIDDLE/JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL</b>	<b>HIGH SCHOOL</b>	<b>ADULT</b>
<i>Self-Knowledge</i>	Knowledge of the importance of self-concept.	Knowledge of the influence of a positive self-concept.	Understanding the influence of a positive self-concept.	Skills to maintain a positive self-concept.
	Skills to interact with others.	Skills to interact with others.	Skills to interact positively with others.	Skills to maintain effective behaviors.
	Awareness of the importance of growth and change.	Knowledge of the importance of growth and change.	Understanding the impact of growth and development.	Understanding developmental changes and transitions.
	Awareness of the benefits of educational achievement.	Knowledge of the benefits of educational achievement to career opportunities.	Understanding the relationship between educational achievement and career planning.	Skills to enter and participate in education and training.
	Awareness of the relationship between work and learning.	Understanding the relationship between work and learning.	Understanding the need for positive attitudes toward work and learning.	Skills to participate in work and lifelong learning.
	Skills to understand and use career information.	Skills to locate, understand, and use career information.	Skills to locate, evaluate, and interpret career information.	Skills to locate, evaluate, and interpret career information.
	Awareness of the importance of personal responsibility and good work habits.	Knowledge of skills necessary to seek and obtain jobs.	Skills to prepare to seek, obtain, maintain, and change jobs.	Skills to prepare to seek, obtain, maintain, and change jobs.
<i>Educational and Occupational Exploration</i>	Awareness of how work relates to the needs and functions of society.	Understanding how work relates to the needs and functions of the economy and society.	Understanding how societal needs and functions influence the nature and structure of work.	Understanding how the needs and functions of society influence the nature and structure of work.
	Understanding how to make decisions.	Skills to make decisions.	Skills to make decisions.	Skills to make decisions.
	Awareness of the interrelationship of life roles.	Knowledge of the interrelationship of life roles.	Understanding the interrelationship of life roles.	Understanding the impact of work on individual and family life.
	Awareness of different occupations and changing male/female roles.	Knowledge of different occupations and changing male/female roles.	Understanding the continuous changes in male/female roles.	Understanding the continuing changes in male/female roles.
	Awareness of the career planning process.	Understanding the process of career planning.	Skills in career planning.	Skills to make career transitions.
<i>Career Planning</i>				

National Occupational Information Coordinating Committee. (1989).  
The National Career Development Guidelines.



## **Appendix J**

## Teacher-Advisory

- Study skills
- Varies with teachers
- No, but principal and teachers very much want it back
- Decision-making, organization skills, self-exploration
- Group guidance - dissemination of occupational and career information
- Resource person talk to students about their careers
- Extensive sets of career videos for 7th and 8th grades
- 8th grade uses a series called "Dream Catchers"
- We do a 12 day computer career lab
- Trips/career fair
- Career inventory
- Goal setting
- Job interviews
- Worker traits
- Job applications
- Career dreams
- Classroom/career connection
- Career's Dream Catchers (8th Grade)
- Career Video's (7th Grade)
- The TSA Activity Book contains an entire section of Career Education activities
- There are several career activities presented on Channel 1 that our students watch
- Understanding self, understanding others, making decisions, life planning
- One month is devoted to career awareness material
- We focus on career development one month a year
- Development of social skills, problem solving, working as a team, etc.
- Career center exploration - individual and small groups, career development videos
- Career awareness, information sharing, interest inventories

## **Appendix K**

## Teaming or Teams

- Classroom/subject matter/career connection
- Interest inventory administration & interpretation
- DAT administration
- 6 week career unit
- Counselor explains to teachers classroom guidance activities centering around careers
- Teams are not as concerned with career education as we attend more career related activities in Advisory. Career Education is, however, to be integrated into core curriculum.
- Guest speakers
- Career awareness activities scheduled through core
- Developed by individual teams as pertained to subject units
- Group guidance - Career Interest Survey
- 6th - Career Game
- 7th COPS II - with follow-up
- 8th IDEAS - activities/educational planning
- Provided by counselors - self-knowledge, occupational exploration, educational/career planning
- 7th and 8th grade units - 7th deals with self-awareness, 8th deals with occupational exploration and career planning -- also 8th grade career speaker program done through departments, Out-to-Work Day - done through civics classes, but is an interdisciplinary activity
- Counselors facilitate 3 days each semester for each team. Career education also involves technology
- Visit Career Resource Center
- Have speakers come in to discuss careers
- Infusion of career information into the subject matter; personal inventories; group guidance, guest speakers, field experiences, career interest inventories
- Varied activities in the curriculum
- Occasional speakers, students research career(s), career units
- 6th and 7th grades - guest speakers on certain careers
- 8th grade career day with community guests representing careers
- Careers are explored minimally during classroom instruction
- One 6th grade (2 teacher) team introduces students to 10 or more distinct professional careers
- An 8th grade math teacher has everyone do a research paper on a math career
- The Employment Training Program (8th graders) students are on one small team and work in the test Occumatics which describes in story form a career
- Speakers, field trips
- Sixth grade teams have career development activities during classroom guidance time
- Parents asked to come in to talk to students about their specific occupation
- Each homeroom has adopted a business. Activities vary but may include guest speakers to actual visits to the business. This is a school-wide activity.
- Career awareness information is integrated into all textbooks, curriculum offerings
- Exploring careers, interpreting career information, researching/using community resources
- Science teachers assign a paper that researches a science related career. Our 8th grade English class is devoted to exploring career related books, i.e.: DOT, GOE, OOH
- Parent-teacher conferences, teacher-student conferences, conferences with special needs advisor for LD/EMH students

- Research, guest speakers
- Virginia VIEW access for all students through the CAI lab with follow up for teams.  
Career Day - a school wide project. Teams plan various activities throughout the year related to instructional needs. This involves speakers from the "World of Work" as well as other activities.
- Teams plan career units
- 6th grade - career unit - career center orientation exploration; 7th grade - JOB-O and career center orientation; 8th grade - 6 day career unit (civics classes, individual planning, etc.)
- Working on the GIS program in the computer lab
- Periodically career development is incorporated across the spectrum of our academic/elective courses. As counselors, we bring in persons to speak and we provide group guidance programs.

## **Appendix L**

## Exploratory Classes or Activities

### 6th Grade

- Tech Ed
- Art
- Life Skills
- Drama
- Band
- Orchestra
- Computer Exploration and Programming
- Intro to Agriscience
- Intro to Technology
- Keyboarding
- Graphic Arts
- Work and Family Studies
- Girls Find Your Future
- Photography
- Communications
- Chorus
- Health Occupations
- Media Utilization
- Spanish
- French
- World Cultures
- Study Skills
- Health & Physical Education
- Forensics
- Structured Science Research
- Wise Kids Care
- Skills for Adolescence
- Careers Exploratory
- Home Arts - students prepare resumes, actual interviews with the guidance counselor, and applications
- Creative Writing
- Careers and You
- Exploratory Foreign Language

### 7th Grade

- Tech Ed
- Art
- Life Skills
- Drama
- Band
- Orchestra
- Computer Exploration and Programming
- Agriscience
- Technology
- Computers

- Work and Family Studies
- Graphic Arts
- Girls Find Your Future
- Photography
- Communications
- Chorus
- Creative Writing
- Health Occupations
- Media Utilization
- Spanish
- French
- Technology Occupational Search
- VIP
- Virginia VIEW/Interactive VIEW
- Intro to Journalism
- Inventions and Innovations
- Study Skills
- Wise Kids Care
- Skills for Adolescence
- Careers are discussed in all vocational/related arts classes
- Careers and You
- Careers Exploratory
- Make It Your Business
- Home Arts - students prepare resumes, actual interviews with the guidance counselor, and applications
- Russian
- German
- Exploratory Foreign Language
- Funtime Literature

### 8th Grade

- Tech Ed
- Art
- Life Skills
- Drama
- Band
- Orchestra
- Computer Exploration and Programming
- Work and Family Studies
- Computer Magic
- Technology
- Agriscience
- Chorus
- Career Exploration
- Creative Writing
- Health Occupations
- Media Utilization
- Spanish
- French



- Technology Occupational Search
- VIP
- Virginia VIEW/Interactive VIEW
- Intro to Journalism
- Advanced Theater Arts
- Work Awareness and Transitions
- Tech Systems - Computer Tech Systems, Wood and Metal
- Business Partner - students shadow employers in our community
- Youth Foundation - selected 8th graders and parents visit Thomas Nelson Career Lab in evening
- Atoms Field Trip to Industry
- Study Skills
- Skills for Adolescence
- Careers are discussed in all vocational/related arts classes
- Careers and You
- Make It Your Business
- TV Broadcasting
- How Things Work
- Inventions
- Careers and You
- Exploratory Foreign Language
- Science Lab
- Math Discovery
- Conversational Spanish

## **Appendix M**

## Special Interest Clubs

### 6th Grade

- Tech Ed
- Health Careers Club
- Art
- Comedy
- Search (archeology)
- Rockets
- Computer Club
- Adventure Club
- Literary Magazine
- Drama Club
- 4-H
- SCA
- FTA
- Horticulture
- Chess
- Christian
- Stock Market
- Yearbook
- Builders Club (Kiwanis)
- FBLA
- Science/Ecology Club
- WTHH - closed circuit student television station
- Foreign Language Club
- CHROME (Cooperating Hampton Roads Organization for Minorities in Engineering)
- ATOMS
- World Cultures
- Yearbook
- Media Club
- Newspaper
- Help Club
- Future Teachers of America
- Architects and Builders
- Garden Club
- Clubs are indirectly related to career development
- OM
- Gifted/Talented
- Careers and You Club
- National Honor Society
- FHA
- Junior American Red Cross
- Project Discovery

## 7th Grade

- Tech Ed
- Health Careers Club
- Architecture
- Art
- Backstage Players
- Comedy
- Math Counts
- Debate
- FFA
- FHA
- Computer Club
- Adventure Club
- Literary Magazine
- Drama Club
- 4-H
- SCA
- FTA
- Horticulture
- Chess
- Christian
- Stock Market
- Builders Club (Kiwanis)
- FBLA
- Science/Ecology Club
- WTHH - closed circuit student television station
- Foreign Language Club
- CHROME (Cooperating Hampton Roads Organization for Minorities in Engineering)
- ATOMS
- Newspaper
- Media Club
- Yearbook
- Help Club
- Future Teachers of America
- Architects and Builders
- Garden Club
- Our clubs are indirectly related to career development
- OM
- Gifted/Talented
- Intramural Basketball
- Careers and You Club
- National Honor Society
- Junior American Red Cross
- Project Discovery

## 8th Grade

- Tech Ed
- Health Careers Club
- Architecture
- Art
- Backstage Players
- Sports Club
- Comedy Club
- Math Counts
- Science Club
- Stock Market
- Rocket Club
- FFA
- FHA
- TSA
- Computer Club
- Adventure Club
- Literary Magazine
- Drama Club
- FTA
- Horticulture
- Chess
- Christian
- Builders Club (Kiwanis)
- FBLA
- Science/Ecology Club
- WTHH - closed circuit student television station
- Foreign Language Club
- CHROME (Cooperating Hampton Roads Organization for Minorities in Engineering)
- ATOMS
- Media Club
- Newspaper
- Yearbook
- Help Club
- Future Teachers of America
- Garden Club
- Architects and Builders
- Our clubs are indirectly related to career development
- OM
- Gifted/Talented
- Intramural Basketball
- Careers and You Club
- SCA
- National Honor Society
- Junior American Red Cross
- Project Discovery

## **Appendix N**

## Classroom Guidance

### 6th Grade

- Learning Styles Inventory
- The Career Game (Inventory)
- TAPS
- Virginia VIEW
- Career videos
- MAGIC - Mid-Atlantic Guide to Information on Careers
- GrO - Going Right On
- Now is the Time Booklet
- Video - "You Can Afford College"
- EWOW Interest Inventory
- Hanover Career and Educational Folders
- DISCOVER
- Planning program of study
- Career awareness is developed in each 6th grade classroom
- Red Hot Jobs
- JOB-O
- Guest speakers
- Study skills
- Orientation to career center
- Career portfolios
- Goal-setting
- Career World
- Dream Weavers
- Values clarification
- Decision-making
- JOB-O-E
- A new K-12 career awareness/development curriculum is currently being finalized in our County. In December, 1996, it is expected that the school board will approve enactment of this curriculum plan.
- Activities to identify abilities, interests, and attitudes
- Career exploration activities, career day, K-12 Guidance Curriculum
- Goal setting, interpersonal skills, educational and career planning portfolios - this is passed to the 7th and 8th grade teacher and finally to the high school. Conflict resolution - classroom/work responsibilities
- GIS System
- Introduction to the Career Center
- Peer Relations
- College Exploration

### 7th Grade

- Harrington-O'Shea Career Decision Making System
- JOB-O
- Virginia VIEW
- Career videos
- MAGIC - Mid-Atlantic Guide to Information on Careers

- GrO - Going Right On
- Now is the Time Booklet
- Video - "You Can Afford College"
- Class placement
- Career Day
- Researching careers
- IDEAS Interest Inventory
- Hanover Career and Educational Folders
- DISCOVER
- Program of study
- COPS II Interest Inventory and Discussion
- Self-awareness
- Orientation to career center
- Career portfolios
- Goal-setting
- CHOICES
- Activities focusing on career clusters, career day program, acquiring work skills
- Career Interest Inventory
- Career exploration activities, career day, K-12 Guidance Curriculum
- CAPS results
- Goal setting and educational and career planning portfolios
- Science teachers give list of 80-90 science careers, students choose to write a paper.  
They use Virginia VIEW and other library resources. Language teacher has students fill out applications, resumes, interviews, essays, etc. Also students write essay on how technology will affect their chosen career in the next 10-15 years.
- GIS System and the CAPS Test (Career Ability and Placement Survey)
- JOB-O and follow-up activity in the Career Center, Career Day
- Peer Relations
- College exploration

### 8th Grade

- Virginia VIEW
- High School Career Course Planner (Inventory)
- Career related videos
- Virginia Health Careers Book
- MAGIC - Mid-Atlantic Guide to Information on Careers
- GrO - Going Right On
- Now is the Time Booklet
- Video - "You Can Afford College"
- DAT
- Program planning
- Community field trips
- Career Day
- "Careers of the Future" unit
- Scheduling for 9th grade
- SDS Career Program
- DISCOVER
- Desirable work habits/job skills video
- Hanover Career and Educational Folder



- COPS administered and reviewed in each class
- Guest speakers
- Study skills
- Self-awareness
- Orientation to career center
- Career portfolios
- Software programs
- Work, attitudes, career issues
- Goal-setting
- Intro to OOH
- Visit to Valley Vocational Technical Center
- Visit to the Science-Technology Governors School in Fishersville
- College orientation
- Tech Prep
- Career planning Questionnaire
- Job applications
- Resumes
- Interviews
- Career term paper
- Administer Career Interest Inventory and interpret results to all students, choosing your high school program of studies, acquiring work skills
- Full week unit using the CEI Career Exploration Inventory
- Use of career information books - students are walked through process of using books
- Career Interest Inventory
- Career exploration activities, career day, K-12 Guidance Curriculum
- Goal setting and educational and career planning portfolio
- Comprehensive team effort called "Careers and Educational Awareness" is done through the 8th grade team, the community, the parents, and the administration
- 8th grade gifted explores college and careers
- Six day career unit through civics with follow-up in Career Center
- Peer relations
- College exploration
- Tech Prep
- Career Day orientation

## **Appendix O**

### Program of Service-Learning/Student Volunteerism

- 6th grade worked on Clinch Critterville playground
- 6th-8th grades collected money for the playground
- Skills for Adolescence classes do service projects of their choosing
- SCA promotes a food drive for needy and donations to pediatric floor of local hospital
- Candy strippers
- Student teacher assistants
- Student tutors in middle and elementary schools
- Wise Kids Care - work with hospital/nursing homes
- Students are required in civics classes to do a minimum of 4 hours of community service
- We encourage students to look for opportunities in the community that would be related to their interests and abilities
- Through Advisory - may or may not relate to career education - flexible
- Office workers
- 8th grade community service requirement, out-to-work day experience
- County Library
- Science Museum
- Need Team - recycles products
- Magic Me - goes to a nursing home once a week
- This is coordinated by teams and/or advisory groups
- We have a community service day in which students spend one day volunteering to shadow for a specific community agency
- Conflict Mediation
- 8th grade civics classes visit and volunteer at a local nursing home

## **Appendix P**

Other Special Programs Which Involve Career Development  
Or Career Education Activities

- Individual counseling sessions - future planning, goal-setting, establishing a vision
- Special Populations Counselor and a Special Education Vocational Planner work 1 day each week at middle school
- Career Day for all students held each year
- Job shadowing with 8th grade
- School participates in many community mentoring programs
- ATOMS, business partnership and youth foundation
- College Fair
- Out-to-Work Day - 8th grade interdisciplinary units
- Career speaker program
- Small "counseling groups" offered on career exploration
- Sports teams - teach discipline, organization, team work
- One 8th grade does a complete unit on "Taking Care of Business" on file with Virginia Council of Economic Education at VCU (it won first place in state of Virginia).  
Involves job applications, catalog orders, driver licenses forms, budgets, grocery shopping, role playing career/job situations, touring local businesses, etc.)
- Field trips
- School-business alliance
- PULSAR
- Summer youth employment program for those students age 14 or older
- School wide career day, careers in science, art, math, language arts, etc., month
- Career Day - involves professionals from throughout the community spending a day at our school. Students relate to chosen career groups.
- Career event for 8th graders - students select two presentations offered by local people about their careers in law, musician, artist, engineer, etc.
- Career Day
- Health Fair for 7th and 8th grades - speakers make presentations about their jobs
- An 8th grade unit in Appalachian Life has connected career information
- Various speakers discuss their careers

## **Appendix Q**

### Career Development Practices You Believe to be Most Important at Middle School

- It's important to have career development activities incorporated into a curricular area such as Language Arts or Social Studies. That way, counselors may impart career information via the classroom. Our county is currently developing such a plan in grades K-12.
- Exposing students to the various types of jobs available to them. Soliciting speakers to visit and discuss their jobs.
- Exploration - through offering a variety of exploratory courses to students and providing students with opportunities to find out information about various jobs.
- Exposure - through watching videos of people at work and listening to guest speakers talk about the work they do.
- To acquaint each student with location of materials, how to use Virginia VIEW. Students do not necessarily need to choose a career, just be able to locate information.
- Interest inventory, exploration
- Study skills/habits and how they relate to work - making schedules. Goal-setting and decision-making. Make students aware of the jobs and their availability. Save for future - learning responsibility. Career day/career fair/college fair
- Frequent speakers from the community in the Vocational Education classes
- Developing good work, study skills. Learn what affects career decisions (abilities, values, interests). Work ethic - rewards of high achievement. Goal setting, curriculum planning, exploration through related arts classes
- Activities which create awareness of job-related skills, attitudes, behaviors
- Exploring different options through classes - speakers, films, research
- Building skills including decision making, goal-setting, organization and communication. Developing awareness, learning likes/dislikes, exposure to a variety of activities for experimentation
- At the middle school level, I believe the student should gain an awareness of his/her aptitudes, interests, and values as they relate to the world of work. The emphasis should be on abilities and motivations applicable to occupations and the identification of careers with the student's occupational interests.
- Exploration of skills and abilities as relates to certain careers
- Career development practices which I believe are most important at the middle school level are: getting students on the right career track and having a career focus that prepares students for the 21st Century
- Self-awareness activities, exposure to and utilization of career materials available in school, introduction and definition of key career terms, administration of interests/abilities inventories, examination of career decision-making model
- High impact/short duration activities, career speakers in their work clothes, field trips/site visits especially as follow-up to a speaker, elective seminars on various careers, self-scoring inventories - immediate feedback, creating portfolios - students seem to like tracking and changes in their ideas, goals, etc.
- Stressing responsibility, good work habits, through study skills, helping students set realistic, obtainable goals, opportunities, study skills
- 6th grade - awareness of careers, interests, goals, subject related careers; 7th grade - career exploration, values, interests, career versus job, leisure time, research using career resources; 8th grade - extension of career exploration utilizing choices, goals, college requirements, salary, in addition to basic facts.
- Awareness, relating work habits to job skills, difficult to have students research focus where their skills may lead - most are interested in athletic or movie careers

- Decision making, values clarification, career planning, career exploration, interest evaluations
- Identifying interests and abilities, relating these to job clusters, goal-setting - directly relating educational goals to vocational goals
- Our program revolves around interest exploration and career research. We are adding the more direct approach to visiting businesses. We have always included career fair activities and speakers
- When career information is integrated in with the curriculum, it probably is more meaningful to students
- Advisory program with career-related activities, goal-setting and vision planning, classroom guidance
- Relating student interests to a possible career choice (a realistic career choice)
- Elective and exploratory classes that give students exposure to different career paths. Also, exposure to the process of finding career information
- There should be a time for exploration and finding out interests, career days and interests inventories, etc.
- Community-business-school partnerships, volunteer service (required), out-to-work experiences, planning high school program of studies
- Job shadowing programs, exposure to computer programs related to job opportunities such as Virginia VIEW, writing letters to businesses to gain information related to jobs, career interest inventories, guest speakers, career fairs
- Career exploration
- CAPS administration/interpretation
- EFE - Education For Employment
- Classroom guidance - program planning
- Exploration of careers, self-assessment, goal-setting
- Basic Responsibilities: attendance, completing work on time and thoroughly, dependability, team work, academic skills (reading, writing math), leadership, doing your best
- Exploration activities
- In middle school it is very important to allow students to explore the different careers, see a direct correlation to ability in certain subject areas and achievement. I believe middle school is a time when the students become more aware of their strengths and weaknesses. It is important to build on their strengths and allow them to see what they can do with it.
- Career education is infused across the curriculum. Many classes use a thematic approach which encourages a variety of resources. There are division-wide initiatives that specifically target careers such as Advancement Via Individual Determination and Adventures and Technology equals Opportunity in Mathematics and Science. The high schools have magnet programs with career oriented foci - Engineering and Technology, the Arts, Aviation, International Baccalaureate Diploma and Traditional. In preparing students for high school registration, these programs are discussed with students and their parents.
- Understanding the changing nature of society and future trends. Also understanding that learning is a life-long process. Accepting responsibility for educational achievement and career development.
- Find out student interest, direct in their interest field.



## **Appendix R**

### Career Development Practices Which Your School Does Best

- Exposure to different career choices and how they are attainable. Also how to develop good work and study habits.
- Through using many resources through classroom guidance
- Career Day exposes students to occupations that they may have never thought about
- We have a great Career Lab or 8th grade TA's. Twelve days (TA periods) working on personal assessments and exploring careers
- Interest inventories and DISCOVER
- Career planing/scheduling, career work in teacher advisory periods, 7th grade videos, interest inventories
- Career awareness, try to show how academic success leads to job success, use of COPS test to point out interest areas
- Group guidance activities and small group career research on-going activities - coordination for ATOMS career activities, business partnership and Youth Foundation career activities
- Career fair, stressing responsibility, good work habits through study skills, helping students set realistic, obtainable goals, dispensing information on educational and career opportunities, study skills
- High impact/short duration activities, career speakers in their work clothes, field trips/site visits especially as follow-up to a speaker, self-scoring inventories for immediate feedback, creating portfolios - students seem to like tracking any changes in their ideas, goals, etc.
- We attempt to do self-awareness activities, exposure to and utilization of career materials available in school, introduction and definition of key career terms, administration of interest/ability inventories, examination of a career decision-making model
- Career development practices that Frost does best are: JOB-O, Career Day program and Interactive VIEW
- Blend career information into total subject curriculum
- At Thomas H. Henderson Middle School all children participate in career trips, career fairs, interest inventories, and individual career plans. We seek to provide a program which exposes students to occupational opportunities. Approximately ninety career speakers visited our school last year. Counselors assisted students with interest inventories and individual career plans during group guidance sessions
- Skills development through modeling and encouraging students to use the skills listed above in their daily lives (decision-making, goal-setting, organization and communication, developing self-awareness, learning likes/dislikes, exposure to a variety of activities for experimentation)
- Career exploratory class (8th grade), vocational classes (6 weeks long) for most 6th graders
- Interest inventories, awareness of skills behaviors, ed. needed in world of work
- The eighth grade Taking Care of Business unit and the Virginia VIEW careers IDEAS unit
- I enjoy our career fair/college fair because students must bring parents. We have a scavenger hunt and give prizes - students and parents work together. All our students have assignment books to begin the school year with study skills related to work skills, followed by problem-solving, goal-setting, decision-making, then work especially with showing a career then citizenship in the community
- Use of Virginia VIEW and problem-solving

- Exploration of various careers, job shadowing, volunteerism, summer youth, career day
- Locating info and talking with each student individually about careers
- A survey of classroom teachers showed that most are exposing students to careers related to their subject area. Topics such as goal-setting, decision-making, and self-awareness are adequately addressed through Skills for Adolescence, D.A.R.E., and classroom guidance activities. A career center, with available materials on careers and post-secondary educational opportunities, is maintained in the Library. Students may make appointments to see a counselor in the career center. Videos of community workers are viewed by students throughout the year and guest speakers share career information with students. JOB-O-E, JOB-O, Virginia VIEW, and the DAT are used to assess interests and aptitudes.
- Our career day (for 8th grade) gets rave reviews from participants and students. We invite members of the community from a variety of careers (government, lawyer, politician, FBI agent, etc. to talk to the students about their job.
- Out-to-work experiences, required community service, career days, assisting in planning program of studies
- CEI interest inventory, career day
- We have an excellent elective/exploratory program
- Career interest inventory
- Career portfolio and course selection for high school
- Individual meetings with students to discuss career interests and program planning
- Self-assessment, goal-setting
- Intense team-wide career plans in 7th and 8th grade include: 3 day career fair in which 30 or more adults from the community come and share their careers. Students rotate to each person! Also career shadow day plus community service shadow day, field trip to Dabney Lancaster--all students do through a day long orientation to college and careers. Our use of talent Search - Anita Claytor from Dabney Lancaster does a wonderful job educating students on job trends, college requirements, college financing, etc., and even conducts an evening session for parents. Career research projects, career computer searches, etc.
- Infusion activities
- The school stresses the relationship between academic success and success in careers. I believe the school does an excellent job meeting the needs of most students at the school. Counselors meet with all students to talk about the course selection process. As part of the process, students need to identify careers they are interested in pursuing. We had a career day, county offers the CAPS survey to all 7th graders, and we do a number of classroom guidance activities relating to careers - GIS computer system for all students.
- We have a very successful Career Day Program annually. Over one hundred parents and volunteers from the community come to share with our students. Other activities are woven throughout the curriculum.
- Career interest inventories - follow-up with DOT research
- Guest speakers who share their job cluster, requirements, etc.
- Group (homeroom) activities that provide hands-one information relating to vocational trends
- Career day, tech prep, individual career portfolio
- Expose students to various careers, college field trip, professional speakers, career development activities

## VITA

Debra Carleen Webb Wallace (Debbie) was born on October 21, 1955, in Richlands, Virginia to Gratten and Jacqueline Boyd Webb. She has one sister, Betsy Jane Shlager of Blacksburg, Virginia.

In 1974, Debbie graduated from Richlands High School as one of the top students in her class. She entered Southwest Virginia Community College and graduated Summa Cum Laude in 1976 with an Associate of Science Degree in Science. In 1978, Debbie received a Bachelor of Science Degree from the College of Home Economics in Management, Housing, Family Development from Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University.

Debbie taught Teen Living at Tazewell Middle School from 1979 until 1985. During this time, she began working on her Master of Arts Degree in Student Personnel from Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University which she received in 1981.

From 1985 until 1994, Debbie worked as a guidance counselor and Director of Guidance at Richlands High School. In 1992, she began working on her Certificate of Advanced Graduate Studies in Student Personnel Services which was awarded from Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University in December of 1995.

Debbie transferred back to the Tazewell Middle School as Director of Guidance in the Spring of 1994. She presently maintains this position in addition to teaching one class per day entitled Skills for Adolescence. She became a National Certified Counselor in 1996.

Debbie is very active in her church where she is the church treasurer and sings in the choir. Her professional involvement includes membership and active participation in the following organizations:

Southwest Virginia Counselors Association

Virginia Counselors Association

American Counseling Association

Virginia School Counselor Association

American School Counselor Association

Chi Sigma Iota National Counseling Honor Society - Tau Eta Kappa Chapter,

Virginia Tech

National Career Development Association

Virginia Middle School Association

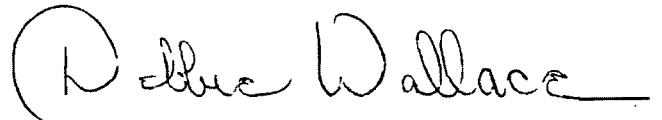
National Middle School Association

American Vocational Association - Guidance Division

Delta Kappa Gamma Society International - Key Women Educators, Iota State

(Virginia), Xi Chapter

In 1977, Debbie married Timothy H. Wallace. They have two children, both in middle school--Wesley Ryan, 14, and Jillian Brett, 12. Tim, Wesley, and Jillian along with her father and mother, have been Debbie's greatest supporters.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Debbie Wallace". The signature is written in black ink on a white background.