A DESCRIPTIVE STUDY OF THE CURRENT STATUS

OF MIDDLE SCHOOLS IN VIRGINIA

by

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Educational Administration

(ABSTRACT)

The purpose of this study was to determine the current status of middle schools in Virginia. A questionnaire, validated by a panel of middle school authorities, was mailed to 110 principals of all public school organizations labeled as "middle" or "intermediate" which had at least three grade levels, including grades 6 and 7, but not grades 4 and 9. The response rate for this study was 78 schools (71 percent). Data gathered from the surveys and subsequent telephone interviews were considered representative of middle schools in Virginia. Data were described and reported through the use of frequencies and percentages.

The middle school in Virginia is a recent phenomenon which has gained rapidly in popularity and numbers. According to the responses, over 75 percent of the schools have been organized since 1974. The predominant grade organizational pattern at the time of the study was 6-7-8 (80 percent).

Reasons reported most frequently by principals for establishing middle schools were to provide a program specifically designed for children in this age group, to bridge better the elementary and high schools, and to try out various innovations or employ new curricula. Eliminating crowded conditions, aiding desegregation, and utilizing a staff who desire to be in a middle school were perceived less frequently as reasons for change.

The disciplinary non-team approach or departmentalization was the most popular instructional organization. Only 37 schools had interdisciplinary team planning; and 40 schools had a common team planning period. Flexible and modular scheduling were used infrequently.

Middle schools offered a variety of programs including guidance, career education, reading, volunteer, and orientation; however, teacher-advisor and special interest or mini-course programs were found in only 27 and 36 schools, respectively.

The majority of teachers had no special training or certification in middle school education; only 27 percent had middle school certification. Larger percentages of teachers had either elementary certification (37 percent) or secondary school and/or subject area endorsements (37 percent). In-service programs were used frequently to prepare teachers.

According to the opinions of middle school principals, parent contacts, faculty morale, pupil attendance, and school spirit increased after reorganization to middle schools. Discipline referrals and teacher turnover decreased after reorganization to middle schools.

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CHAPTER I

THE OVERVIEW

Introduction

To meet the needs of the adolescent, educators have, for some time, been attempting to implement a special school organization for the 10 to 15 year old child. Since the early 1900's, educators have recognized the need to establish a school organization to better educate this age group. This search led to the development of schools labeled "middle" (Alexander and George, 1981).

From 1910-1965, the junior high school was recognized as the first innovative educational institution for the adolescent child. The traditional organizational pattern of 6-3-3, which included the junior high school grew rapidly during this time period. The 7, 8, and 9 grade plan became the most common organizational pattern for school age students in America (Alexander, 1984).

Dissatisfaction with the junior high school organizational plan began surfacing in the late 1950's and early 1960's. One of the reasons given for this dissatisfaction was that the junior high schools emulated the high schools so much that they were, in reality, mini-high schools. These concerns, along with other important issues, such as eliminating crowded conditions in schools,

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bridging the gap between the elementary and high schools, providing a program specifically designed for this age group and correcting the perceived weaknesses of the junior high school led to the development of middle schools (Alexander, 1984).

Studies by Alexander (1968) and Brooks and Edwards (1978) defined middle schools as serving at least three grades, no more than five grades, and including grades six and seven. The literature on middle schools and school directories generally refer to organizations including grades 5-8 and grades 6-8, but not grades 4 and 9, as middle schools (Alexander, 1984).

One of the most comprehensive efforts at educational reorganization in the history of American public education has been the rapid growth and development of the middle school movement. School districts in all 50 states have adopted the middle school plan. Each year more school districts are reorganizing their school system to include the middle school as an alternative to grades K-8, 7-9, or other pre-existing organizational plans (George, 1984).

There has been a rapid growth in the number of middle schools in Virginia during a relatively short period of time. Alexander (1968) reported that there were no middle schools in Virginia in 1967. A study completed 10 years

later by Brooks and Edwards (1978) revealed that there were 132 schools in Virginia labeled as middle level schools. Both of these studies defined middle schools as serving at least three grades, no more than five grades, and including grades 6 and 7 (Brooks and Edwards, 1978).

Although the number of schools labeled "middle" has increased over the past two decades, the implementation of the middle school concept as advocated by writers in the field is limited (Lounsbury, 1984). Recent studies continue to demonstrate a low level of implementation of flexible and varied schedules, different instructional groupings, team teaching, and teaching strategies appropriate for the adolescent and consistent with the research for middle schools (Clark, 1981).

According to McEwin (1981), there is a concern that many of the schools labeled as middle may not be based upon what is known about the characteristics and needs of the adolescent. Earlier studies of program characteristics indicated that middle school practices were no better than the junior high school practices they sought to replace (Gatewood, 1973, and Wiles and Thomason, 1975).

While the number of middle schools in Virginia and the nation has increased, there has been a growing interest in the nature of these schools and the programs they provide.

Although many of these schools may not be based on what is known about the characteristics unique to the adolescent, there is a strong interest in determining the current status of these middle schools and in improving the educational opportunities for this most important age group (McEwin, 1981).

Statement of the Problem

The problem studied in this dissertation is contained in the following question:

What is the current status of middle school programs in Virginia?

The main research question then led to the following subquestions:

1. What are the conditions, factors, and programmatic characteristics present in Virginia middle schools?

2. What are the reasons given for adopting the middle school program?

3. What policies and practices existed in Virginia middle schools during the 1985-1986 school year?

4. What are the recommendations for educational administrators, middle school practitioners, and policymakers regarding middle school programs and practices in Virginia?

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to determine the current state of development of the middle school concept in Virginia. The study described and presented an up-to-date view of middle schools in Virginia. A descriptive profile of policies and practices found in Virginia middle schools during the 1985-1986 school year was developed. The reasons for adopting the middle school program as stated by middle school principals were determined. Recommendations for educational administrators, middle school practitioners, and policymakers regarding middle schools in Virginia were presented.

Significance of the Study

At the time this study was being done, there was a limited amount of composite statewide data to indicate the current status of middle schools in Virginia. The last major study to provide an up-to-date view of middle schools in Virginia was completed by Franklin (1973). Therefore, it was believed this study might be useful to the Virginia Middle School Association, Virginia's State Department of Education, local school boards in Virginia, and practitioners in the field of education. The data and findings could be used by the above groups to (a) provide an up-to-date description of important policies and practices

found in Virginia's middle schools; (b) enable these groups to establish or improve middle schools; (c) describe and evaluate the development of middle schools in their particular areas; and (d) provide an up-to-date and comprehensive profile of the current status and direction for the development of middle school programs in Virginia. It was believed that the recommendations concerning the application of the findings and implications for educational administration could be useful to the above groups. The findings of this study should contribute to the development and improvement of middle school programs in Virginia.

Limitations of the Study

The study was restricted to public schools in Virginia labeled as "middle" or "intermediate" that had a minimum of three grade levels, including grades 6 and 7, but not grades 4 and 9. These were the most commonly reported grade levels for the middle school organization as defined by Alexander (1984). Therefore, generalizations or comparisons can be made only as they may apply to similar situations.

Although the terms related to middle school programs and practices were defined clearly, differences in the wide range of backgrounds, experiences, and philosophies of middle school principals may have resulted in a lack of consistency in their responses. Therefore, the study was

limited by the subjective interpretations and the opinions of middle school principals.

The survey instrument and telephone interviews were techniques used to gather data to describe the current status of middle schools in Virginia. An analysis of the non-respondents was also conducted through telephone interviews. Although the survey was validated by middle school authorities and pilot tested with middle school principals from Norfolk, Virginia, no reliability measures were available on the instrument.

Definition of Terms

For purposes of this study, the following definitions apply:

Middle school as identified in this study refers to public schools labeled "middle" or "intermediate" that have a minimum of three grade levels, including grades 6 and 7, but not grades 4 and 9.

Junior high school as applied to this study and differentiated from middle school refers to schools encompassing any combination of grades 7-9.

Essential elements refers to conditions, factors, and program characteristics that would be desirable based upon a review of the middle school literature.

<u>Transescence</u> refers to the stage of development of a child between the ages of 10 to 15 which begins prior to the onset of puberty and extends through the early stages of adolescence.

Organization of the Study

Chapter I states the problem, purpose, significance, and limitations of the study; defines key terms; and outlines the organization. Chapter II presents a review of the related literature and research on the functions of middle schools, a history of the growth and development of the middle school movement, and a rationale for middle schools. Chapter III describes the methodology used for selecting the population, the construction of the instrument used, the methods for collecting the data, and the methods for analyzing the data. Chapter IV includes a presentation of the major findings and an analysis of the data. Chapter V contains a discussion of the findings; an up-to-date profile and description of middle school programs in Virginia; recommendations for educational administrators, middle school practitioners, and policymakers; recommendations for further research; and a concluding statement. A bibliography, appendix, and vita follow Chapter V of the study.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE RELATED

TO MIDDLE SCHOOLS

Introduction

The primary purpose of this chapter was to review the literature on middle schools and identify the desirable functions of middle schools. Research on the current status of middle schools in Virginia is limited. Most previous studies were either from a state other than Virginia or based on national or regional data.

After an introduction, the chapter is divided into four sections. A history of the development and growth of middle level institutions is presented in section one. The rationale for middle schools is presented in section two. Characteristics of the 10 to 15 year old child are presented in section three. The desirable functions of middle schools are presented in section four.

History and Development of the Middle School Movement

The middle school can be described as an outgrowth or modification of the junior high school. The development of the middle school resulted from dissatisfaction with the junior high school. In the closing decade of the nineteenth century, the public schools received criticism of the grade

1-8 and 9-12 plan, hereafter referred to as the 8-4 plan. There were many committee reports that recommended the reorganization and improvement of public schools. These recommendations led to the implementation of the traditional junior high school organizational plan--grades 7-9. From 1918 to 1920, the number of junior high schools grew from 557 to 883. The growth of the junior high schools with grades 7-9 or 7-8 continued until there were more than 7,000 junior high schools (Melton, 1984).

There were, however, problems associated with the junior high school. The traditional junior high school tended to emulate and copy practices of the senior high school, thereby forcing children to experience activities not commensurate with their maturity. The failures of the junior high school included such practices as full departmentalization, interscholastic sports at the expense of intramurals, inappropriate social activities, emphasis on academic requirements at the expense of discovery and exploration, and a lack of public understanding of early adolescents and their needs (Melton, 1984).

Educators began to look for a new organizational design as an alternative to the junior high school. In October, 1965, education editor, Paul Woodring, stated: "It now appears that the 6-3-3 plan, with its junior high school, is

on the way out (1965, 77-78)." Most of the school systems that were undergoing organizational change were planning intermediate schools which incorporated grades 5, 6, 7, and 8 instead of the old 8-4 organizational pattern with eight elementary grades in one building (Woodring, 1965).

The growing interest in the middle school concept was revealed in national surveys by Cuff (1967), Alexander (1968), Kealy (1971), Compton (1976), Brooks (1977), and the National Association of Secondary School Principals (1981). From the time of Alexander's survey in 1967-1968 to the survey completed by Brooks in 1977, the number of middle schools in America grew from 1101 to 4060. The National Association of Secondary School Principals (Valentine, 1981) reported about 12,000 middle level institutions encompassing grades 5-9. Most of the surveys revealed the most common grade organizations to be either grades 5-8 or grades 6-8, with grades 6-8 being the most popular.

According to Alexander (1968), the middle school combined into one organization grades 5-8 or 6-8 which had been previously separated by elementary and junior high school organizations under the 6-3-3 plan. Although there were organizational patterns similar to the middle school prior to 1964, Alexander identified only eleven schools that had been established as middle schools before 1960. Sixty

percent of the 1101 schools surveyed by Alexander in 1967 had a 6-8 organization and 27 percent had a 5-8 plan. By the fall of 1983, the number of middle level schools--11,400--had become significantly greater than the number of traditional junior high schools (Alexander, 1984).

Middle schools grew rapidly in Virginia, too. Although Alexander (1968) reported that there were no middle schools in Virginia in 1967, Brooks and Edwards (1978), 10 years later, identified 132 middle schools. Both of these studies defined middle schools as serving at least three grades, no more than five grades, and including grades 6 and 7. The literature on middle schools and school directories have generally adopted the name "middle" for schools having no fewer than three grades, and encompassing any three year combination of grades 5-8, but not grades 4 and 9 (Alexander, 1984).

The educational literature reports a significant gap between the middle school concept proposed by leading middle school authorities and actual educational practices implemented in many middle schools. Educational research reported that many middle schools have adopted the educational programs and practices characteristic of the traditional junior high school such as a departmentalized organization, interscholastic sports, college and vocational

preparation, and Carnegie units. Gatewood (1973) and Brooks (1978) indicated that the only real differences between many junior high schools and middle schools were in name and grade organization. Dissertations by Flynn (1971), Daniel (1973), Billings (1973), Bloom (1974), Phelps (1975), and Cummings (1975) seem to support the existence of a gap between the "ideal" middle school program and the actual implementation of this program in the states of California, Arkansas, Texas, Wisconsin, Georgia, and Pennsylvania.

The seeds of today's middle schools were an outgrowth of the 8-4 and 6-3-3 organizational plans and the national reports and research of the 1960's. Neither the 8-4 nor the 6-3-3 organizational plans were appropriate or adequate to meet the needs of the transescent according to many writers in the field. Unfortunately, the rapid growth in the number of middle schools in a relatively short period of time has not been accompanied by implementation of middle school practices.

Rationale for the Middle School

There are many reasons for the rapid development and reorganization of a new and innovative school organization. The emergent middle school evolved in the early 1960's due primarily to the growing concern and dissatisfaction with the junior high school program. Among the developments that

contributed to the emergent middle school were the earlier
maturation of boys and girls, concerns about providing a
program specifically designed for children in this age
group, and local problems such as buildings, crowded
conditions, desegregation, and budgeting problems. In a
review of studies by Alexander (1968) and Brooks and Edwards
(1978), the three major reasons given for the establishment
of middle schools were to provide a program specifically
designed for children in this age group, to better bridge
the gap between the elementary and high schools, and to
eliminate crowded conditions in other schools (Alexander,
1984). According to a national study of middle school
principals by the National Association of Secondary School
Principals (Valentine et al, 1981), the most frequently
reported reasons for adopting the middle school concept were
to provide programs suited to the needs of the adolescent,
to provide a better transition from elementary to high
school, and to adjust to enrollment trends.

The rationale for the middle school is derived from the
following definitions given by middle school authorities:

> It is a school providing a program planned
> for a range of older children, preadolescents, and
> early adolescents that builds upon the elementary
> school programs for early childhood and in turn is
> built upon the high school's program for
> adolescence (Alexander et al, 1968, p. 5).

> It is a school of some three to five years
> between the elementary and high school focusing on

the educational needs of students in these in-between years and designed to promote continuous educational progress for all concerned (Alexander and George, 1981).

The middle school is an educational response to the needs and characteristics of youngsters during transescence and, as such, deals with the full range of intellectual and developmental needs (Lounsbury et al, National Middle School Association, 1982).

During the past twenty years, middle school educators felt a great need to develop a better school for the transescent commensurate with the physical, mental, and social characteristics of the learner (Eichorn, 1984). The rationale for middle schools is based on research concerning adolescent human growth and development and the principles of learning. The rationale for the middle school program should be based on the needs and characteristics of the learner.

Characteristics of the Ten to Fifteen Year Old

The physical, social, emotional, and intellectual development of the learner as well as the educational needs must be considered for an effective middle school. During the middle school years, there is a sudden widening of ranges of differences in the human growth and development of the 10 to 15 year old child. There are variations in size, reading levels, and physical coordination. The wide variation in the development of the physical, emotional, and

intellectual tasks makes this a period of stress. Middle school programs must be designed to help the adolescent cope with his individual rate of maturation during these difficult years of transition (Toepfer, 1982).

The 10 to 15 year old child is trying to discover his own identity and self-image during this difficult and complex period of his life. In order for the 10 to 15 year old child to have an identity of his own, labels such as the in-between ager, transescent, and middle age child were developed and used throughout the middle school literature. Until 1966, when Eichhorn coined the term "transescence," there was no special term to identify the 10 to 15 year old child. Eichhorn defined the term "transescence" to mean

> The stage of development which begins prior to the onset of puberty and extends through the early stages of adolescence. Since puberty does not occur for all precisely at the same chronological age in human development, the transescent designation is based upon the many physical, social, emotional, and intellectual changes that appear prior to the puberty cycle to the time in which the body gains a practical degree of stabilization over these complex pubescent changes (Eichhorn, 1966, p. 3).

The very essence of the middle school program is based on the definition of "transescence." These young people are neither children nor adults. The unique biological, social, intellectual, and emotional needs of this diverse group require a program specifically designed for the 10 to 15

year old child. At no other time in one's life are differences more profound than during transescence (Lounsbury, 1984).

Functions of Middle Schools

Middle schools have many functions designed to meet the needs of the transescent. Most of the writers and authorities, as reported in the literature, agree on the desirable elements and functions of middle schools. According to studies by Riegle (1971), Franklin (1973), and Spiegel (1977), a middle school program is characterized by continuous pupil progress, a multi-materials approach, flexible scheduling, social experiences, intramurals, team teaching, a guidance program, exploratory and enrichment courses, individualized instruction, independent study, and a gradual transition from elementary to secondary education.

A study of middle school practices in Virginia by Franklin (1973) attempted (1) to identify desirable practices as described in the literature; (2) to determine to what extent these practices were being implemented in Virginia middle schools; (3) and to investigate why these desirable practices were not being employed in Virginia middle schools. Franklin (1973) identified 12 desirable practices that were advocated by at least three middle school authorities.

Charles Franklin (1973) visited and interviewed the principals of all 31 public schools in Virginia having grade patterns for 6-8 or 5-8 to determine the extent to which these 12 selected practices were being employed in Virginia middle schools. Exploratory activities, team teaching, intramural activities, multi-materials approach to teaching, and creative activities were the desirable elements being employed in Virginia middle schools. Individualized instruction, independent study, flexible scheduling, teacher-counselor approach to guidance, social activities, planned gradualism, and a personalized approach to student evaluation were generally not employed in Virginia middle schools in 1973. The reasons given most frequently by principals for not implementing these desirable middle school practices were lack of trained personnel, lack of staff time, and lack of local funds (Franklin, 1973).

The National Association of Secondary School Principals in 1980 surveyed a national sample of middle level principals on the following: (1) personal and professional characteristics of the middle level principal; (2) tasks and problems of the middle level principal; (3) staff, students, and community; (4) school programs; (5) and principals views of middle level issues (Valentine, 1981). Middle level schools, as reported in the above study, exhibited an

increase in the size and diversity of staff. Three-fourths
of the schools surveyed had assistant principals and
instructional aides. Nearly all schools had
librarians/media specialists, office secretaries, and
counselors. Forty-one percent of the principals indicated
that teachers had no specific middle level preparation. In-
service programs, student teaching at the middle school
level, and university courses were reported most frequently
for teacher preparation. Instructional organizations
followed the traditional course requirements of English,
math, science, social studies, and physical education.
Three-fourths of instructional time was spent in
conventional classes of 15-35 students with one subject
matter specialist. Ability grouping was used at all grade
levels and in certain subjects with placement based on staff
judgments, standardized tests, and student grades. The top-
ranked personal characteristics of middle school teachers
were the ability to work with students and bring out their
best capabilities, the ability to interact with peers, and
to respect the dignity and worth of the individual.
Positive methods of classroom control, use of varied
learning strategies, and the ability to teach communication
skills were ranked as the most important professional
characteristics of middle level teachers. Principals

supported a 6-7-8 grade organization as the ideal middle school pattern (Valentine et al, NASSP, 1981).

C. Kenneth McEwin's (1981) study of current middle school practices in North Carolina addressed organizational patterns, reasons for establishing middle schools, required and elective courses, instructional organization, scheduling, reporting pupil progress, and special personnel. Although the 7-9 grade junior high school was reported as the most common organizational pattern in North Carolina, the number of middle grade schools had doubled since 1968. The top-ranked reasons given by principals for establishing middle schools were to provide a better instructional program for the 10 to 15 year old and to correct crowded conditions in other buildings. Language arts, social studies, science, math, and physical education were uniformly required at all middle schools. Elective offerings most often included music, art, industrial arts, home economics, and foreign languages. Student government, newspaper, interscholastic and intramural sports were offered as curriculum opportunities. There were, however, few school clubs or interest-based courses. Self-contained classrooms, block scheduling, team teaching, interdisciplinary teaming, large and small group instruction, and mini-courses were reported as part of the

instructional organization. Departmentalization was the most common form of instructional organization (78 percent). Sixty-five percent of the schools used block scheduling and 36 percent reported using self-contained classes. Thirty-one percent of the schools reported the use of team teaching. Pupil progress was reported through a combination of the use of a letter scale and some form of teacher/parent or parent/teacher/student conference. Guidance counselors and assistant principals were the special personnel most often found in middle schools. A large percentage of the teaching staff had no special training in middle or junior high school education. The majority of teachers had either elementary or secondary training (McEwin, 1981).

The middle school concept has been implemented in various ways in this country. Many different statements have been formulated concerning the educational beliefs inherent in the effort to establish a middle level of education. According to the National Middle School Association (Lounsbury, 1982), there was not one comprehensive consensus statement which could be used by middle school practitioners to establish or improve programs. Recognizing this need, the National Middle School Association appointed a committee of middle school "experts" to prepare a position paper which would reflect the

consensus views of the Association regarding the essential elements and functions of middle schools. The Board of Directors adopted the position paper entitled, "This We Believe." The committee identified ten important conditions, factors, and programmatic characteristics of middle schools. The ten elements considered important by a panel of middle school authorities were the following:

1. Educators knowledgeable about and committed to transescents
2. A balanced curriculum based on transescent needs
3. A range of organizational arrangements
4. Varied instructional strategies
5. A full exploratory program
6. Comprehensive advising and counseling
7. Continuous progress for students
8. Evaluation procedures compatible with transescent needs
9. Cooperative planning
10. Positive school climate (Lounsbury et al, National Middle School Association, 1982, p. 19).

Summary

This chapter presented a review of the literature concerning the history and development of the middle school movement, the rationale and purposes for the middle school, the characteristics of the 10 to 15 year old, and the functions of middle schools. Most of the literature and writers on the middle school agree on the desirable functions for middle schools. The middle school should provide an educational program which is designed to meet the needs, interests, and abilities of the adolescent.

Educators must continue to seek the best possible education for youngsters who are passing through these critical in-between years. By determining the nature and status of middle schools as well as the programs they provide, practitioners can make significant efforts to establish better programs and improve existing ones.

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY AND PROCEDURES FOR RESEARCH

Introduction

The purpose of this study was to determine and describe the current status of middle schools in Virginia. Specific objectives were to describe and present an up-to-date view of what middle schools in Virginia look like, to write a descriptive profile of middle school programs and policies currently found in Virginia middle schools, and to determine the more important reasons for adopting the middle school program. Recommendations for educational administrators, middle school practitioners, and policymakers regarding the development and improvement of middle school programs are presented.

This chapter is concerned with procedures used to identify schools in the population, construction of the instrument, validation of the instrument by a panel of middle school authorities, the pilot study, data gathering procedures, and procedures used to analyze the data.

Design of the Study

The study employed descriptive research. Descriptive studies are primarily designed to determine the current status of educational phenomena and to find out "what is."

Important discoveries can be made through the process of describing. A questionnaire (Appendix B) was designed to gather data that provided an up-to-date view of middle schools in Virginia. The study was also designed to provide a descriptive profile of middle school programs in Virginia, to determine the reasons for adopting the middle school concept, and to provide recommendations for educational administrators, middle school practitioners, and policymakers. These recommendations would help to develop and improve middle schools in Virginia. Data were presented in terms of frequencies, percentages, and a narrative description. Tables were used to display the data.

Population

The population included all public school organizations in Virginia labeled "middle" or "intermediate" which had a minimum of three grade levels, including grades 6 and 7, but not grades 4 and 9. These organizational patterns were selected because they were the most commonly reported in the middle school literature and met the grade level definition provided by Alexander (1984). These organizational patterns also met the criteria for middle schools established for this study. The Virginia Educational Directory and the Virginia Middle School Association were consulted to determine all school organizations meeting the criteria for inclusion in the study population.

Instrumentation and Validation

A questionnaire was developed as an instrument designed to gather all the descriptive data needed for this study. A review of the literature revealed middle school programmatic characteristics considered desirable by middle school authorities. These important program characteristics were utilized in developing the questionnaire. The data collected were specific in order to answer the questions in Chapter I.

The instrument was validated by a panel of seven middle school authorities and practitioners. The panel of experts who validated the instrument included Dr. J. Howard Johnston, Dr. John H. Lounsbury, Dr. C. Kenneth McEwin, Dr. Gordon F. Vars, and Dr. Nancy M. Doda. Practitioners who validated the instrument were Billy W. Williams, Director of Instruction and Middle Schools in the Newport News Public School System, and Carol Williams, Director of the Program for Effective Teaching in the Newport News Public School Division. These authorities and practitioners were selected because of their scholarly writing regarding middle schools, their knowledge of the middle school concept and middle school practices, their research on middle schools, and their expertise and experiences in middle school education.

Each of these authorities was sent a cover letter explaining the purpose of the study and seeking their cooperation to validate the survey instrument. A copy of the questionnaire and special validation form (Appendix D) were enclosed. They were requested to critique the instrument (1) to determine if the survey covered the key middle school characteristics; (2) to determine if the questions were clear, unambiguous, and relevant; (3) to determine if the length was appropriate; (4) to determine if the readability, grammar, and format needed improvement; (5) to determine which, if any, questions should be added or deleted; and (6) to make comments that could lead to modifying and improving the instrument. The instrument was revised according to the suggestions received from the panel of experts. Recommendations by the doctoral dissertation committee led to further modifications and improvements of this study. The major recommendation was to shorten the length of the questionnaire by eliminating questions that were evaluative rather than descriptive.

Pilot Study

The pilot study was conducted with the eight middle school principals of the Norfolk Public School System in southeastern Virginia. These middle schools which contained grades 7 and 8 did not meet the defined criteria for

inclusion in the study population. Each of the eight middle school principals was sent a cover letter which explained the purpose of the study and requested their cooperation in completing and returning the survey and a special pilot study form (Appendix E). A copy of the validated questionnaire and special pilot study form were enclosed. They were requested to complete the questionnaire and to critique the survey instrument using a special pilot study form. The survey instrument was further revised according to the recommendations of the six middle school principals who returned their completed surveys and pilot study forms. They suggested shortening the length of the questionnaire, adding questions that were reflective of the key characteristics of middle schools, and eliminating questions that were evaluative rather than descriptive.

Data Gathering Procedures

The survey was mailed to principals of all public schools in Virginia labeled as "middle" or "intermediate" which had a minimum of three grade levels, including grades 6 and 7, but not grades 4 and 9. One-hundred and ten middle and intermediate schools met this criteria. The list of principals was obtained from the 1984-1985 Virginia Educational Directory and the Virginia Middle School Association. Included with the questionnaire was a cover

letter (Appendix A) explaining the purpose of the study, the importance of the study, and the importance of completing and returning the survey. A stamped special delivery envelope was enclosed for return of the survey. Confidentiality was assured for all respondents. A follow-up letter (Appendix C), a second questionnaire, and a stamped, self-addressed envelope were sent if there was no response within two to three weeks. Telephone calls were conducted to further increase the number of surveys returned.

An analysis of the non-respondents was conducted using a stratified sampling of those principals who did not respond to the first two surveys mailed and the follow-up telephone calls. Sixteen of the thirty-two non-responding principals were interviewed by telephone. Principals were selected using a systematic sampling procedure based on the percentage of non-respondents from county or city schools, selected geographical locations in Virginia (i.e., north, south, east, west, central), and student enrollments. They were requested to answer the last five open-ended questions found in the original survey and to give their reason(s) for not responding. The data gathered from the surveys and telephone interviews were representative of the programs, practices, and selected policies found in Virginia middle schools.

Analysis of the Data

The data gathered in this study were reported by means of narrative descriptions and tables of frequencies and percentages. The analysis of the data addressed the questions developed in Chapter I. The data were reported and analyzed according to the following format: (1) the middle school organization; (2) the reasons given by principals for establishing middle schools in Virginia; (3) the middle school curriculum; (4) the middle school personnel; and (5) the responses to the open-ended questions from middle school principals in Virginia. The data from the open-ended questions provided valuable descriptive information regarding the following: (1) the special or unique characteristics of Virginia middle schools; (2) the goals of middle schools in Virginia; (3) the reaction of the community toward middle schools in Virginia; (4) the policies and programs for community and parent involvement; and (5) the principals' recommendations for the improvement of middle schools in Virginia. The data provided information that led to recommendations for those persons--practitioners and policymakers--responsible for establishing new middle school programs and improving existing middle school programs.

CHAPTER IV

PRESENTATION OF THE DATA AND FINDINGS

Introduction

The purpose of this chapter was to present the findings of the study and to provide descriptive data to answer the questions developed in Chapter I. The main research question was to determine the current status of middle school programs in Virginia. The main research question included the following subquestions:

1. What were the conditions, factors, and programmatic characteristics present in Virginia middle schools?

2. What were the reasons given for adopting the middle school program?

3. What policies and practices existed in Virginia middle schools during the 1985-1986 school year?

4. What were the recommendations for educational administrators, middle school practitioners, and policymakers regarding middle school programs and practices in Virginia?

Overview of Procedures Used to Gather and Analyze the Data

The survey instrument and telephone interviews were techniques used to gather descriptive data. In order to

obtain up-to-date information on Virginia middle schools, a questionnaire was mailed to the principals of 110 schools labeled as "middle" or "intermediate." These schools had a minimum of three grade levels, including grades six and seven, but not grades four and nine. A second mailing and telephone calls were conducted to increase the response rate. The 78 principals who responded were considered representative of the total population of middle schools in Virginia. The rate of response for this study was 71 percent (Table 1).

An analysis of the non-respondents was conducted using a stratified sampling of those principals who did not respond to the first two mailed surveys or to the telephone calls. Principals were selected using a systematic sampling procedure based on the percentage of non-respondents from county or city schools, selected geographical locations in Virginia (i.e.--north, south, east west, central) and student enrollments. Sixteen of the 32 non-responding principals were interviewed by telephone. They were requested to answer the last five open-ended questions found in the original survey and to give their reasons for not responding. The answers obtained from the telephone interviews did not vary systematically from those answers obtained from the original mailed surveys. Therefore, the

Table 1

Distribution and Return of the Survey Instrument
by City and County in Virginia Middle Schools
1985-1986

	All Schools		Percentage of Return by Category	
	No.	Percent	No.	Percent
City	33	30	27	82
County	77	70	51	66
All	110	100	78	71

data gathered in this study were considered to be representative of middle schools in Virginia. Based upon the telephone interviews, principals indicated that the time required to complete the survey and the length of the questionnaire were the two main reasons for their not responding. Several principals reported that the local policies discouraging or prohibiting their responses to doctoral surveys further limited the number of returns. First-year principals reported that they had difficulty responding to some of the questions. Several of the non-respondents stated that they did not receive the survey when contacted on the follow-up.

Identification and Presentation

of the Major Findings

The data and findings were organized, presented, and analyzed according to the following format: (1) the organization; (2) the reasons given by principals for establishing middle schools in Virginia; (3) the middle school curriculum; (4) the middle school personnel; and (4) the responses to the open-ended questions from middle school principals in Virginia. The data from the open-ended questions provided descriptive information regarding the following: (1) the special or unique characteristics of Virginia middle schools; (2) the goals of Virginia middle

schools; (3) the community reaction toward Virginia middle schools; (4) the policies and programs for community and parent involvement; and (5) the principals recommendations for the improvement of Virginia middle schools.

These data also provided information which serve as the basis for recommendations to practitioners and policymakers--those responsible for establishing new middle school programs or improving existing middle school programs. A description of policies and practices found in Virginia middle schools, a discussion of the findings, and the recommendations for educational administrators, practitioners, and policymakers are presented in Chapter V.

Organizational Patterns in Virginia Middle Schools
1985-1986

Principals were requested to report all grades included in their school. Table 2 represents the organizational patterns of Virginia middle schools included in this study. The most common grade level organization found in Virginia middle schools was 6-8, with 80 percent of the principals reporting that organizational pattern. Other typical middle school organizational patterns of 5-7 and 5-8 were reported in only six percent and eight percent of the schools, respectively. Only six percent or five of the schools in the survey had a combined middle school of either 6-12 or

Table 2

Organizational Patterns in Virginia
Middle Schools--1985-1986

Grades	All Schools* N = 110		Survey Schools N = 78	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
5-7	9	8	5	6.4
5-8	6	5	6	7.7
6-8	88	80	62	79.5
Other: (Combined middle schools)	7	7	5	6.4
Totals	110	100	78	100

*Data Source: Fall Membership in Virginia's Public Schools (1985-1986), Commonwealth of Virginia, Department of Education.

other combination such as grades K-2 and 6-8 in one building. Principals reported that these combined schools were treated as separate organizations in one building. These five combined schools were identified as middle schools in the Virginia Educational Directory and met the criteria for inclusion in this study. Four of these combined middle schools were from one school system.

<u>Years of Operation Under the Current Organizational Structure as a Middle School</u>

Principals were asked to report the first year their school operated under the current organizational structure with a middle school program. Table 3 presents and describes the years of operation under the current organizational pattern as a middle school. A review of the data shows that Virginia middle schools are a recent phenomenon which increased rapidly in popularity and numbers. Principals reported that between 1960-1966 there were only two middle schools in Virginia. Forty-five percent of the principals reported that their middle school organization originated between 1974-1980, and 33 percent originated between 1981-1986. Over 75 percent of Virginia middle school organizations have begun since 1974.

Table 3

Years of Implementation As A Middle School
In Virginia

Years	Number N = 76*	Percent
60-66	2	2.6
67-73	15	19.7
74-80	34	44.7
81-86	25	32.9
Totals	76	99.9

* Two principals did not respond to this question.

Pupil Enrollments in Virginia Middle Schools

Table 4 shows the range of student enrollments in schools responding to the survey. Student enrollments in Virginia middle schools ranged from 169 to 1300. Forty-seven percent of the schools had an enrollment between 500-899. The mean number of students enrolled was 658. Only ten of the 78 schools or 13 percent had an enrollment below 299. Twenty-two percent or 17 of the 78 schools reported enrollments over 900.

Reasons for Establishing Middle Schools in Virginia

Many reasons contributed to the development of middle schools after 1960. Principals were requested to rank order the five most important reasons for their school's adoption of the middle school program from a closed list of 13 most commonly listed reasons. Principals were also requested to report other reasons for the change. Reasons for the change to the middle school organizational pattern are presented in Table 5. The actual percentages were calculated on the frequencies reported for the first five choices given by each school divided by the actual number (78) who participated in the survey. The three most frequently reported reasons in this study were (1) to provide a program specifically designed for children in the 10 to 15 year age group (90 percent); (2) to bridge better the gap between

Table 4

Student Enrollments in Virginia Middle Schools*
1985-1986

Enrollments	Number N = 78	Percent
169-299	10	13
300-499	14	18
500-699	19	24
700-899	18	23
900-1099	11	14
1100-1300	6	8
Totals	78	100

* The mean number of students enrolled was 658.

Table 5
Reasons Given by Principals for Establishing
Middle Schools in Virginia
1985-1986

Reason	Number Reporting N = 83	Percent
To provide a program specifically designed for children in this age group	70	89.7
To bridge the elementary and high schools better	62	79.5
To try out various innovations, employ new curriculum, or utilize instructional innovations	42	53.8
To remedy the weaknesses of the junior high school	37	47.4
To provide more specialization in grades 5 and/or 6	27	34.6
To use plans or programs successfully implemented in other schools	22	28.2
To move grade 9 into the high school	21	26.9
To eliminate crowded conditions in other schools	21	26.9
To help with enrollment trends or problems	15	19.0
To utilize a new school facility or building	11	14.0
To help create budget efficiency	6	8.0
To utilize new staff who desire to be in a middle school	5	6.0
To aid desegregation	3	4.0
Other reasons:	7	9.0

   Commitment of school board to
     the importance of the middle
     school philosophy
   To establish a consistent program
     across a large county of 35,000
     students
   To better accommodate consolidation
     of schools
   To separate grade 8 from the high
     school
   To design an alternative middle
     school with career education and
     basic academic skill components
   To utilize funds in vocational
     education for a disadvantaged
     population.
   Do not know

elementary and high schools (80 percent); and (3) to try out various non-instructional innovations, employ new curricula, or utilize instructional innovations (54 percent). An analysis of the responses revealed that trying out various innovations, employing new curricula, utilizing instructional innovations, providing a transitional school and better articulation between the elementary and high schools, and providing a program specifically designed for children in this age group were perceived frequently by principals as reasons for changing to a middle school organization. Further analysis of the responses revealed that addressing enrollment issues or problems, eliminating crowded conditions in other schools, and utilizing a new school facility or building were perceived less frequently by principals as reasons for changing to the middle school. Only six percent of the principals reported the opportunity to utilize a new staff who desired to be in a middle school as a reason. Although most principals selected five reasons from the closed list, only seven principals or nine percent reported other reasons not on the list.

Original Building Design

Principals were asked to report whether their current school building was originally designed to be a middle school, an elementary school, a senior high school, a junior

high school, an intermediate school, a K-12 or 1-12 school, or other type of school. Table 6 shows the number and percent of middle schools reporting certain original building designs. Specifically, 55 schools or 70 percent were not originally constructed as a middle school. However, principals also reported that 30 percent of the schools were originally designed as middle schools, and 24 percent as senior high schools. A further review of the data revealed that 40 schools or 51 percent of the buildings were originally designed as either a middle school, junior high school, or intermediate school.

Organizational and Scheduling Arrangements

The variety of organizational and scheduling arrangements were reasons given by principals in this study for making Virginia middle schools special or unique. The reasons given by principals for making middle schools special or unique were the use of a fixed period or block schedule, the assignment of a group of students to a team of teachers for instruction, and an individual or team planning time for teachers. The following two sections report on the types of scheduling arrangements by grade level and the types of organizational arrangements for the instruction of students at each grade level.

Table 6

Number and Percent of Principals Reporting
Certain Original Building Designs in
Virginia Middle Schools 1985-1986

Type of School	Number	Percent
Middle School	23	30
Elementary School	10	13
Senior High School	19	24
Junior High School	12	15
Intermediate School	5	6
K-12, 1-12 School	7	9
Other	2	3
Totals	78	100

Scheduling Arrangements by Grade Level

Principals were requested to indicate the grade levels in which they used selected scheduling arrangements. The multiple responses that principals could choose from at each grade level included the modular schedule, the block schedule, the flexible schedule, the fixed period schedule, and teaching teams arrange time. Principals were requested to check all that apply at each grade level. Table 7 displays the distribution of schools utilizing certain types of scheduling arrangements by grade levels. The most frequently reported scheduling arrangements were the block and fixed period schedules. The block schedule was the most frequently used scheduling arrangement in grade 5 (82 percent) and grade 6 (60 percent). The most frequently reported scheduling arrangement used in grade 7 (56 percent) and grade 8 (62 percent) was the fixed period schedule. A review of the data revealed that the use of a block schedule decreased as students move from the fifth to the eighth grades; and the use of a fixed period schedule increased as students moved from the fifth to the eighth grades. The flexible schedule was used in only 36 percent of the fifth grades, 36 percent of the sixth grades, 37 percent of the seventh grades, and 30 percent of the eighth grades. The modular schedule was utilized in only eight percent of the

Table 7

Distribution of Schools Utilizing Certain Types
of Scheduling Patterns by Grade Levels
in Virginia Middle Schools 1985-1986

Scheduling Patterns	Grade 5 N = 11		Grade 6 N = 78		Grade 7 N = 78		Grade 8 N = 73	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Modular Schedule	1	9	6	8	5	6	6	8
Block Schedule	9	82	47	60	31	40	26	36
Flexible Schedule	4	36	28	36	29	37	22	30
Fixed Period Schedule	3	27	34	44	44	56	45	62
Teaching Teams Arrange Time	6	55	36	46	28	36	18	25

schools at each grade level. Teaching teams arranged their own time schedule more often in the fifth (55 percent) and sixth grades (46 percent) than in the seventh (36 percent) and eighth (25 percent) grades.

Subject Organization for Instruction

Principals were asked to report the organizational arrangements provided for the instruction of students at each grade level. The four instructional formats selected were the following:

1. Disciplinary Non-Team Approach--Departmentalized (one subject taught by one teacher)

2. Interdisciplinary Non-Team Approach (several subjects taught by one teacher/self-contained class)

3. Disciplinary Team Approach (one subject taught by a team of two or more teachers/subject area teams)

4. Interdisciplinary Teaming and Planning (several subjects taught by two or more teachers)

Table 8 displays the percentage of schools which reported using each of the above instructional formats by grade level. Most principals selected more than one instructional format at each grade level. The departmentalized or disciplinary non-team approach, where one subject is taught by one teacher, was the most frequently reported choice at the eighth (74 percent), seventh (62 percent), and sixth (39 percent) grade levels.

Table 8

Organizational Arrangements for the Instruction
of Students by Grade Levels in Virginia Middle Schools
1985-1986

Instructional Formats	Grade 5 N = 11		Grade 6 N = 78		Grade 7 N = 78		Grade 8 N = 73	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Disciplinary Non-Team Approach-Departmentalized (one subject taught by one teacher)	3	27	30	39	48	62	54	74
Interdisciplinary Non-Team Approach (several subjects taught by one teacher/self-contained)	10	91	28	36	15	19	7	10
Disciplinary Team Approach (one subject taught by a team of two or more teachers/subject area teams)	3	27	10	13	8	10	9	12
Interdisciplinary Teaming and Planning (several subjects taught by two or more teachers)	4	36	27	35	20	26	12	16

The higher the grade level, the greater the use of the departmentalized approach. The interdisciplinary non-team approach or self-contained class, where several subjects are taught by one teacher, was the most frequently reported choice in the fifth (91 percent) grade. The interdisciplinary non-team approach was used infrequently in the seventh (19 percent) and eighth grades (10 percent). Therefore, the lower the grade level, the greater the use of the interdisciplinary non-team approach or self-contained class. Interdisciplinary teaming and planning, key characteristics of middle schools, were utilized more frequently at the fifth (36 percent) and sixth (35 percent) grades than at the seventh (26 percent) and eighth (16 percent) grades. The disciplinary team approach or subject area teams, where one subject is taught by a team of two or more teachers, was not used frequently at any grade level. Middle schools in Virginia appear to use the departmentalized approach more frequently at the seventh and eighth grades, and the interdisciplinary non-team approach, sometimes called the self-contained class, more frequently at the fifth grade. Principals reported the use of interdisciplinary teaming and planning in only about 35 percent of the fifth and sixth grades, and only 16 percent of the eighth grades.

Planning Arrangements for Teachers

An important characteristic of middle schools as reported in the literature on middle schools was a type of planning arrangement for teachers. Principals reported that the planning arrangements of teachers were unique or special characteristics of middle schools in Virginia. Principals were requested to report if teachers in their school had individual planning, common team planning, and across discipline planning. Table 9 displays the data concerning the planning arrangements for teachers. The most frequently reported planning arrangement was the individual planning period (99 percent). The common team planning period, in which a group of teachers plan together during the same time period, was reported in 40 schools (52 percent). When principals were asked if their teachers planned cooperatively, 43 (65 percent) responded in the affirmative. Across discipline planning where teachers from different subject areas plan and implement units of work together was reported in 48 schools (68 percent).

Principals also reported the frequency of interdisciplinary team planning if their teachers were organized as teams in their schools (Table 10). They reported that interdisciplinary team planning was being implemented daily (49 percent), once a week (20 percent),

Table 9

Planning Arrangements for Teachers
in Virginia Middle Schools 1985-1986

Planning Arrangements	Yes		No	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Individual Planning Period	77	99	1	1
Common Team Planning Period	40	52	37	48
Teams Plan Cooperatively	43	65	23	35
Across Discipline Planning	48	68	23	32

Table 10

Frequency of Interdisciplinary Team Planning
for Teachers Arranged by Teams
in Virginia Middle Schools 1985-1986*

Frequency of Interdisciplinary Planning	Number Reporting N = 45	Percent
Daily	22	49
Once a week	9	20
Two-three times a week	6	13
No team planning	8	18

*Principals were requested to respond to this question only
  if their teachers were arranged by teams.

two-three times a week (13 percent), and no team planning (18 percent).

Policies and Criteria for Grouping Pupils

The following section reports on the policies toward ability grouping of pupils for instruction and the criteria employed for grouping pupils for instruction and homeroom. Principals were asked to check the statement that best described their school's policy toward ability grouping of pupils for instruction (Table 11). Seventy percent of the principals reported that grouping took place at all grade levels, but was restricted to selected subjects. Principals also reported that grouping was carried out at all grade levels and in all subjects in only 13 percent of the schools. The other grouping policies were not reported frequently. A further review of the data in Table 11 revealed that the most frequently reported grouping policy found in Virginia middle schools was the practice of ability grouping at all grade levels and in selected subjects.

Principals were also requested to report the criteria that they used in grouping for instruction. Table 12 displays the data through the use of numbers and percentages. Teacher recommendations (94 percent), standardized achievement tests (89 percent), and teacher grades (74 percent) were the most frequently cited criteria

Table 11

Policies Toward Ability Grouping of Students
for Instruction in Virginia Middle Schools
1985-1986

Grouping Policy	Number Reporting	Percent
Grouping--All grade levels, all subjects	10	13
Grouping--All grade levels, selected subjects	55	70
Grouping--Selected grade levels, all subjects	1	1
Grouping--Selected grade levels, selected subjects	5	6
Different grouping system from above	4	5
No ability grouping	4	5

Table 12

Criteria for Grouping Students for Instruction
in Virginia Middle Schools 1985-1986*

Criteria	Number Reporting	Percent
Grades	58	74
I.Q. Test Scores	28	36
Standardized Achievement Tests	69	89
Criterion Reference Tests	41	53
Teacher Recommendations	73	94
Parental Input	49	63
Other	11	14

*Most schools utilized more than one criterion.

used for making decisions about grouping students for instruction. Principals also reported that parental input was a criterion used in 63 percent of the schools. Only 53 percent of the schools reported using criterion referenced tests, and 36 percent reported the use of I.Q. tests.

The criteria used in grouping students for homeroom at each grade level were reported by principals. Table 13 displays the data regarding the criteria used to group students for homeroom. Some principals checked more than one criterion at each grade level. The most frequently reported criterion at all grade levels was heterogeneous grouping as opposed to strict homogeneous grouping by ability. Homogeneous grouping by ability was employed in less than 18 percent of the schools at each grade level. Grouping by alphabet was used in the fifth grade (18 percent), sixth grade (23 percent), seventh grade (27 percent), and eighth grade (30 percent). Teacher recommendations were used as a criterion for grouping students for homeroom in only five percent of the schools.

Middle School Curriculum

The middle school curriculum, which includes both required and elective courses, special programs, and student activities, was reported by principals as an important and unique characteristic of middle schools in Virginia. To

Table 13

Criteria for Grouping Students for Homeroom
in Virginia Middle Schools 1985-1986*

Criteria	Grade 5 N = 11		Grade 6 N = 78		Grade 7 N = 78		Grade 8 N = 73	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Homogeneous by ability	2	18	14	18	13	17	12	16
Heterogeneously	9	82	40	51	37	47	32	44
Teacher recommendations	1	9	4	5	4	5	3	4
Alphabetically	2	18	18	23	21	27	22	30
No homerooms	1	9	1	1	1	1	1	1
Other	1	9	5	6	6	8	6	8

*Some principals checked more than one criterion at each
grade level.

determine the required and elective course offerings, the various types of middle school programs available, and the activities provided for students, principals were asked questions concerning the curriculum in their schools. Therefore, the curriculum findings of this study are organized and presented according to (1) required and elective courses; (2) middle school programs; (3) description of the middle school guidance program; and (4) student activities.

Required and Elective Courses

Principals were requested to check a selected listing of courses and indicate by grade level if these courses were required, elective, or not offered in their school. Table 14 (Appendix F) displays the data by grade level. The five basic core subjects of English/language arts, math, science, social studies, and health and physical education were reported as being required of students at all grade levels. These five required subjects, except for social studies at the eighth grade, received percentages of 95 percent or higher from all respondents. Principals reported that social studies was a required course in 83 percent of the schools at the eighth grade level. Reading was a required subject in 100 percent of the schools in the fifth grade, 99 percent of the schools in the sixth grade, 86 percent of the

schools in the seventh grade, and only 59 percent of the schools in the eighth grade. Principals also reported that 82 percent of the fifth grades and 40 percent of the sixth grades were required to take music/chorus. Art/crafts were required in 55 percent of the fifth grades and 39 percent of the sixth grades. Career education was a required course in about 27 percent of the schools at each grade level. Computer courses were a required course in 46 percent of the schools with fifth grade. Principals reported that 40 percent of the sixth grades, 31 percent of the seventh grades, and 24 percent of the eighth grades had a required computer course.

The number of electives that students were permitted to take increased as the grade levels increased. Eighth grade students were offered more elective courses than fifth, sixth, or seventh grade students. Art, home economics, industrial arts, music/chorus, and band/orchestra were reported as elective courses at the eighth grade level in over 90 percent of the schools surveyed. With the exception of band/orchestra, music/chorus, and art, fifth and sixth grade students were offered few elective courses. Foreign languages were not offered at all in the fifth grade. However, foreign languages were offered as electives at the seventh and eighth grades in 42 percent and 93 percent of

the schools, respectively. Typing and business electives were not offered at all to fifth grade students, but were available to about 17 percent of the students in grades 6 and 7 and 32 percent of the students in grade 8. Home economics, industrial arts, and speech were not offered as courses for fifth grade students in 89 percent of the schools. At the sixth, seventh, and eighth grade levels, music/chorus were offered as electives in 51 percent, 73 percent and 96 percent of the schools, respectively. Principals reported that band/orchestra were elective courses in 73 percent of the fifth grades, 84 percent of the sixth grades, 85 percent of the seventh grades, and 93 percent of the eighth grades. Computer courses were offered as electives in 41 percent of the seventh grades and 40 percent of the eighth grades; however, they were not offered as an elective in any of the 11 fifth grade schools. A further review of the data revealed that middle schools in Virginia offered a variety of required and elective courses in grades 7 and 8. However, electives in grades 5 and 6 were very limited.

Middle School Programs

Principals were requested to check selected educational and student service programs available at their school. Table 15 displays the numbers and percentages of principals

Table 15

Types of Middle School Programs Available
in Virginia Middle Schools 1985-1986

Type of Program	Number Reporting	Percent
Guidance Program	75	96
Teacher Advisor Program	27	35
Career/Vocational Education Program	57	73
Reading Program	75	96
School and Community Volunteer Program	58	74
Community Awareness and Orientation to Middle School Program	60	77
Other Programs	18	23

reporting selected middle school programs in their school. The most frequently reported programs were the guidance program (96 percent) and the reading program (96 percent). Career/vocational education programs, school and community volunteer programs, and community awareness and orientation to middle school programs were available in over 70 percent of the schools. Principals reported that teacher/advisor programs were available in only 35 percent of the schools. Other programs reported by principals were the special education program, the computer program, the remedial reading program, the exploratory program, the activities program, the summer school program, the gifted and talented program, and special guidance oriented programs such as "Operation Aware" and "Skills for Adolescence."

Description of the Middle School Guidance Program

Principals were requested through the survey instrument to describe their guidance program and to list specific activities in which counselors were involved. The guidance program found in Virginia middle schools was described by principals as being student-centered with an emphasis on providing developmental and crisis counseling for the transescent. Principals reported through the survey instrument that counselors were involved in a variety of guidance activities. The most frequently reported

activities were small group counseling, individual counseling, career exploration, and classroom guidance activities. The small group counseling focused primarily on peer pressure, drugs, students involved in divorce or separation, friendship, nutrition and weight control, decision-making, responsibility, and rap sessions. Classroom guidance activities were concerned with developing a healthy self-concept, good peer relationships, good study habits, decision-making, self-confidence, goal setting, career guidance, and high school planning. Special nationally known and highly rated guidance and counseling programs such as "Operation Aware" and "Skills for Adolescence" were implemented in some schools to help students deal with problems, negative peer pressure, and drugs. Table 16 shows the frequency of classroom guidance sessions conducted by counselors and teachers. Principals reported that 60 percent of their counselors and 46 percent of their teachers conducted classroom guidance sessions either daily, two to three times weekly, or once a week. According to middle school principals, 13 percent of the counselors and 31 percent of the teachers did not conduct classroom guidance sessions. Principals also reported that counselors were involved in other activities which included teacher consultation, parent conferences, test

Table 16

Frequency of Classroom Guidance Sessions Conducted
by Counselors and Teachers in Virginia Middle Schools
1985-1986

Frequency of Guidance Sessions	Counselors (N=75)		Teachers (N=67)	
	No.	%	No.	%
Daily	13	17	11	16.4
Two-three times weekly	12	16	7	10.4
Once a week	20	27	13	19.4
Most do not conduct	10	13	21	31.3
Other	20	27	15	22.4
Totals	75	100	67	99.9

administration and interpretation, student scheduling and
registration, home visits to parents, referrals for special
needs students, and the development of a guidance
newsletter. The articulation, special orientation programs,
and high school planning programs provided for students and
their parents as the students enter and leave middle school
were other counselor activities reported by principals.
Finally, principals indicated that these articulation and
orientation programs for students and their parents helped
to provide a smooth transition for students as they moved
from the elementary school through the middle school and to
the high school.

Student Activities

One of the most frequently reported characteristics
given for making Virginia middle schools special or unique
was that students were allowed to participate in a wide
variety of student activities. Principals were requested to
check the activities that their school provides for
students. Table 17 displays the percentages of middle
schools providing selected student activities. The most
frequently reported students activities were honors and/or
special awards (90 percent), yearbook (90 percent), student
government/S.C.A. (85 percent), school dances (82 percent),
and career exploration (80 percent). Special clubs (78

Table 17

Student Activities Provided by Middle Schools
in Virginia 1985-1986

Activity	Number Reporting	Percent
Special Interest/Mini-Courses	36	46
Career Exploration	62	80
Intramurals	53	68
Interscholastic Sports	50	64
Student Government/S.C.A.	66	85
Independent Study	20	26
Special Clubs	61	78
Honors/Special Awards	70	90
Dramatics	54	69
Newspaper	57	73
Yearbook	70	90
Enrichment Classes	59	76
School Dances	64	82

percent), enrichment classes (76 percent), and student newspaper (73 percent) were also activities reported frequently by principals. Intramural sports were reported as student activities in 68 percent of the schools, and interscholastic sports in 64 percent of the schools. Principals also reported that only 46 percent of the schools offered special interest or mini-courses, and only 26 percent offered independent study.

Frequency of Selected Practices Since
Becoming a Middle School

Principals were requested to report, in their opinion, whether selected practices had increased, decreased, or remained the same in their schools since they became middle schools. These practices were selected because they are indicative of a positive school climate. Table 18 shows the percentages of selected middle school practices which have increased, decreased, or remained the same since becoming a middle school. Principals reported that parent contacts (82 percent), faculty morale (70 percent), pupil attendance (67 percent), student achievement (67 percent), and school spirit (63 percent) were the selected practices that had increased more frequently since reorganization to middle schools. Teacher absenteeism remained the same in 57 percent of the schools and decreased in 29 percent of the

Table 18

Number and Percent of Selected School Practices Which
Have Increased, Decreased, or Remained the Same
Since Becoming a Middle School in Virginia

Practice	Increased No.	%	Decreased No.	%	Same No.	%	Total No. Reporting
Pupil Attendance	51	67	3	4	22	29	76
Teacher Absenteeism	10	14	21	29	42	57	73
Teacher Turnover	6	8	40	54	28	38	74
Discipline Referrals	9	12	48	66	16	22	73
Parent Contacts	61	82	4	5	9	12	74
Student Achievement	49	67	0	0	24	33	73
Faculty Morale	51	70	1	1	21	29	73
School Spirit	45	63	0	0	27	38	72

schools. Teacher turnover decreased in 54 percent of the schools and remained the same in 38 percent of the schools. Principals also reported that discipline referrals had decreased in 66 percent of the schools.

Middle School Personnel

Principals were requested to report any special personnel in their school. The numbers and percentages of middle schools with certain special personnel are reported in Table 19. Principals reported that one or more assistant principals were found in 90 percent of the schools. However, the special personnel reported most frequently by principals were librarians or media specialists (95 percent) and guidance counselors (94 percent). Seventy-two percent of the school principals reported having volunteers, and 64 percent had paraprofessionals. Reading consultants and/or reading specialists were found in 62 percent of the schools. Sixty-two percent of the schools reported having at least one psychologist and/or psychometrist. Team and/or cluster leaders were reported in 33 schools (42 percent), but only 17 schools (22 percent) reported learning and/or resource center coordinators.

Table 19

Number and Percent of Principals
Reporting Certain Special Personnel
in Virginia Middle Schools 1985-1986

Position	Number Reporting	Percent
Assistant Principals	70	90
Counselors	73	94
Psychologist/Psychometrist	48	62
Reading Consultants/Specialists	48	62
Library/Media Specialist	74	95
Team/Cluster Leaders	33	42
Learning/Resource Center Coordinators	17	22
Nurse(s)	49	63
Visiting Teacher/Social Worker	43	55
Paraprofessionals	50	64
Volunteers	56	72
Other	17	22

Professional Certification of Teachers

In recent years, teacher preparation and certification for the middle school have become issues. Principals were requested to estimate the percentage of their teaching staff that have certification at different levels. Table 20 contains data regarding the percentages of teachers certified at the middle school, elementary school, secondary school and/or subject area endorsements, and any other areas of certification. The percentages were averaged together to obtain a mean percent. Principals reported that a larger percentage of their teachers had either elementary school certification (37 percent) or secondary school and/or subject area endorsements (37 percent). Only 27 percent of the teachers have middle school certification. The number of schools reporting the percentage of teachers certified at different levels was analyzed. It was found that only 13 schools had 50 percent or more of their teachers with middle school certification. Finally, 23 percent were certified at other levels, which included grades 4-7, special education, or dual endorsements.

Teacher In-Service for the Middle School

Principals were requested to report the percentage of their teachers who received additional assistance for teaching at the middle school level through either

Table 20

Number and Percent of Middle School Principals
Reporting Teacher Certification
in Virginia Middle Schools 1985-1986*

Type of Certification	Number of Reported Cases	Reported Percentage of Teachers
Middle School	66	27
Elementary School	71	37
Secondary and/or Subject Area Endorsements	72	37
Other: (grades 4-7, special education, and dual endorsements)	27	23

*Most principals reported that their teachers had more than
one form of certification or more than 100 percent.
Percentages were averaged together to obtain a mean
percent.

college/university courses, in-service/staff development, pre-school workshops, middle school visitations, or other methods within the last three years. The percentages were averaged together in order to obtain a mean percent. Table 21 shows different forms of pre-service preparation programs for middle school teachers. The most frequently reported pre-service teacher preparation programs were in-service/staff development (93 percent) and pre-school workshops (90 percent). Principals reported that 46 percent of middle school teachers in Virginia received additional special training to teach at the middle school level through college or university courses. Principals also reported that only 10 percent of middle school teachers in Virginia participated in visitations to other middle schools. Although other forms of teacher preparation were reported, no pattern emerged.

Teacher-Pupil Ratio

Table 22 describes the average teacher-pupil ratio for academic classes in the respondent schools. The majority of the principals, 32 (45 percent), reported having a teacher-pupil ratio of one teacher for 21-25 pupils. A teacher-pupil ratio of one teacher for 16-20 pupils was reported in 29 schools (41 percent). The mean number of pupils per teacher was 21. There were only five schools (7 percent)

Table 21

Number of Principals Reporting the Percentage
of Teachers Receiving Selected Forms of Pre-Service
Preparation Programs in Virginia Middle Schools
1985-1986

Forms of Teacher Pre-Service Programs	Number of Reported Cases	Percent
College/University Courses	69	46
In-Service/Staff Development	72	93
Pre-School Workshops	65	90
Middle School Visitations	55	10
Other	8	19

Table 22

Total Average Teacher-Pupil Ratio for
Academic Classes in Virginia Middle Schools
1985-1986

Teacher : Pupil Ratio	Number (N=71)	Percent
1 : 11 - 15	5	7
1 : 16 - 20	29	41
1 : 21 - 25	32	45
1 : 26 - 30	5	7
Totals	71	100

that fell into each of the extreme ranges of one teacher for
11-15 pupils and one teacher for 26-30 pupils.

Responses to the Open-Ended Questions from
Middle School Principals in Virginia

Principals were requested to respond to five important
questions concerning their middle school. It was believed
that the information derived from these questions would
assist those persons responsible for establishing new
programs and improving existing programs to provide quality
education for middle school students in Virginia. The
questions addressed the characteristics, goals, policies,
issues, and recommendations which are reflective of Virginia
middle schools. The questions addressed the following:

1. The Special or Unique Characteristics of Virginia
    Middle Schools
2. The Goals of Virginia Middle Schools
3. The Community Reaction Toward Virginia Middle
    Schools
4. The Policies and Programs for Community and Parent
    Involvement
5. The Principals' Recommendations for the Improvement
    of Virginia Middle Schools

The Special or Unique Characteristics of Virginia Middle Schools

Principals were requested to identify the key
characteristics which made their middle school special or
unique. Table 23 (Appendix F) presents these

characteristics in rank order. The important characteristics described in this study were (1) characteristics of students and teachers; (2) organizational and scheduling arrangements; (3) curriculum and programs; (4) school climate; (5) middle school guidance program; (6) intramural and/or interscholastic sports program(s); and (7) gradual transition from the elementary school to the high school.

1. Characteristics of Students and Teachers:

The characteristics of students and teachers were cited as reasons for middle schools being special or unique. Several principals reported that their schools had teachers who were either specially trained and/or specially selected to work with 10 to 15 year old students. In-service training programs were conducted in most schools to prepare teachers for their responsibilities. Teachers were viewed by their principals as being more child-centered and concerned about the total child's development rather than about academics alone. Principals reported that teachers and staff were committed to the middle school philosophy and to working with the adolescent. The support staff, which included such persons as the counselor, the librarian, the nurse, and the reading consultant, were utilized to maximize student growth and to assist students and teachers. Principals reported

that 10 to 15 year old students found in the middle school were characteristically different from other age children; therefore, the primary focus was to meet the endless variety of student needs that exist among 10 to 15 year old children.

2. Organizational and Scheduling Arrangements:

The organizational and scheduling arrangements were reasons given for making Virginia middle schools special or unique. The most frequently reported reasons were the use of flexible and/or block scheduling, the assignment of a group of students to a team of teachers for instruction, an individual and/or team planning time for teachers, the separation of grades 6-8 into a unique organizational pattern, the movement of grade 9 into the high school and grade 6 into the middle school, and no bells. Several principals reported having a seven period day.

3. Curriculum and Programs:

Middle school principals indicated that their schools were special or unique because of the curriculum and/or the programs. The curriculum and programs were specifically designed to meet the diverse needs of 10 to 15 year old students. The middle school curriculum and programs allowed children to make academic progress while achieving the basic skills. Students were allowed to participate in a variety

of school activities through either elective or exploratory classes which included music, band, industrial arts, mini-courses, and computers. The computer program and special clubs were also listed by principals as being unique. One school provided hands on learning activities and job related instruction where students studied different non-traditional careers such as horticulture, commercial art, and small engine repair. Several schools had been recognized by the United Stated Department of Education as being among the best in the nation.

4. School Climate:

A positive school climate was another reason given by principals for making Virginia middle schools special or unique. Principals reported a caring, non-threatening environment in which personal or close relationships could be found among students and teachers. Principals again reported that teachers helped to improve the school climate by being more child-centered and concerned about the total child's development rather than about academics alone. In some schools, students were given many opportunities to achieve success and receive special recognition and awards. Principals reported the use of a special school climate project, a shared decision-making model, and an instructional sharing mode. Other reasons relative to a

positive school climate were good teacher morale, good school spirit, high teacher expectations of students, the use of team names, and increased parent involvement and support.

5. Middle School Guidance Program:

Middle school guidance programs were also considered special or unique because of the variety of guidance and counseling services provided for students. Several principals reported the use of a teacher-advisor or homeroom guidance program. According to middle school principals, the focus of the middle school guidance program was on counseling students, classroom guidance, career guidance activities, and teacher consultation.

6. Intramural and Interscholastic Sports Programs:

Principals reported that their school was special or unique because of the intramural program and/or the variety of interscholastic sports programs available to students. Intramural programs were reported more frequently than interscholastic sports programs. Most principals favored an intramural program during the school day with less emphasis on competitive sports.

7. Gradual Transition from Elementary to Secondary School:

The gradual transition from elementary to secondary school was another key characteristic which made Virginia

middle schools special or unique. Principals reported a
gradual transition of students from a self-contained
classroom or two teacher team at the sixth grade level to
more subject specialist classrooms at the seventh and eighth
grade levels. Students were permitted to change to different
teachers each period and to take more elective classes as
they moved into a higher grade. Principals reported that the
gradual transition from the elementary school through the
middle school better prepared students for the high school.

The Goals of Virginia Middle Schools

Principals were requested to identify the two most
important goals of their middle school. Table 24 (Appendix
F) presents these goals in rank order. The goals cited most
often by middle school principals were to (1) improve the
instructional program and curriculum; (2) meet student
needs; (3) provide opportunities for student success and
achievement; (4) bridge the gap and provide a smooth
transition as students move from the elementary school
through the middle school and to the high school; (5)
improve communication with parent and community groups; and
(6) improve school climate and discipline.

Improving the instructional program and curriculum by
providing a quality educational program where each child can
acquire the basic skills and achieve success before entering

high school were goals mentioned frequently by principals. The effective use of academic learning time, time on task, the organization of the instructional program around student needs, and the need to increase the percentage of students performing at or above grade level in the academic subject areas were other goals relative to improving instruction and curriculum.

Principals reported that meeting the academic, physical, personal-social, emotional, and cultural needs of the adolescent were also important goals of middle schools. Goals relative to meeting student needs included assisting students to develop desirable social attitudes and emotional stability, encouraging students to act independently and accept responsibility, and developing the whole child to his maximum mental, physical, social, and moral capabilities. Developing skills for further educational and life time experiences such as problem solving skills, critical thinking skills, socialization skills, basic skills, and creative thinking skills were other important goals that principals felt should be met by Virginia middle schools.

The third most important goal reported by middle school principals related to providing opportunities for student success and achievement. The goals reported more frequently were to help each child reach his maximum potential; to

prepare students who can be successful in high school; and to help students develop self-confidence, a positive self-image, responsibility, and good human relations skills. One of the goals of middle schools that principals reported frequently was to provide opportunities for all children to achieve success.

Bridging the gap between the elementary school and the high school as well as providing a smooth transition between the elementary school and high school were other important goals. The smooth and gradual transition from the self-contained or two teacher team at the sixth grade level to the individual subject matter teacher at the eighth grade level was an important goal of middle schools. Principals reported that students were permitted to take more electives and/or exploratory classes as they moved into a higher grade. Principals also reported that these organizational arrangements helped to provide a successful transition for students as they moved from the elementary school through the middle school and to the high school.

Another important goal of middle schools as reported by principals was to improve communication with different groups such as parents, various business groups and organizations, and the community at large. Fostering a positive image of the school in the community and support of

educational experiences for students were viewed by principals as important goals for middle schools in Virginia.

Principals reported that the improvement of school climate and school discipline were important goals of middle schools. They reported that the school climate should be safe, pleasant, and conducive to learning. Other goals of middle schools as reported by principals were to instill responsibility, self-discipline, and good citizenship upon students. Principals also reported that improving teacher morale and improving relationships among faculty, staff, and students were important goals of middle schools.

The Community Reaction Toward Virginia Middle Schools

Principals were requested to comment on their perception of the community reaction toward their middle school. Table 25 (Appendix F) describes the reactions of the communities toward the middle school as reported by principals. Reactions of the community given by middle school principals ranged from very positive support for the development of the middle school to more passive reaction. However, most principals indicated that the reaction from the community was very supportive of their middle school. Parent involvement and community support increased during the years of existence as a middle school. According to

comments by middle school principals, the community perceived the middle school as a positive environment in which students can and do achieve. Principals indicated that some communities were excited and pleased about the school's ability to meet the needs of the transescent. According to the principals, parents indicated that the problems which had been associated previously with ninth grade students had disappeared in most schools. Principals reported that middle schools were perceived by the communities and secondary personnel as better preparing students for the high school. Students who may have previously dropped out were now completing high school.

In some schools, however, principals reported that parents of rising sixth grade students were apprehensive or concerned about sending their child to a new school where they had to adjust with older seventh and eighth grade students. However, principals indicated that once parents understood the purpose of the middle school, parents were less apprehensive and showed support for the middle school concept through public forums and increased parent involvement. Although a few principals reported little or no community reaction toward the middle school, most principals indicated that the reaction of the community toward middle schools in Virginia had been positive and supportive.

The Policies and Programs for Community and Parent Involvement

The policies and programs of the middle schools for community and parent involvement were examined. Table 26 (Appendix F) presents these policies and programs in rank order. Most principals reported an open door policy toward parent and community involvement. The programs employed most frequently for parent and community involvement in Virginia middle schools were the school volunteer program, the PTA/PTO, and the principals advisory and/or planning council. The more common forms of parent or community involvement reported by principals were (1) participating in the school volunteer program; (2) attending school conferences; (3) attending PTA/PTO meetings; (4) serving in a planning or advisory capacity; (5) attending special orientation programs for rising sixth and ninth grade parents; (6) receiving phone calls from teachers; (7) participating as a career or business resource person ; (8) serving as a resource person in the instructional program; and (9) attending conferences related to working with the 10 to 15 year old child.

Principals reported the use of various methods to facilitate parent communication. Teachers were encouraged or required by their principals to initiate parent

communication usually through phone calls or conferences. In some schools, parents and students were called and invited by their teachers to participate in school-wide activities. Parent teacher conferences were held on a regular basis or as needed in most schools. Several principals reported that teachers were required to keep records on the number of phone calls, conferences, and home visits. Most principals utilized a school newsletter to inform parents of school-wide activities. Principals reported that community and parent involvement were encouraged and facilitated through volunteer activities such as parents tutoring students, serving as a resource to teachers, and assisting with special projects, school functions, and special student activities.

The Principals' Recommendations for the Improvement of Virginia Middle Schools

Principals were requested to list three things that they would like to do to improve their middle school. Table 27 (Appendix F) presents the most frequently reported recommendations in rank order. Principals recommended the improvement, addition, and/or expansion of the following programs:

1. The Electives or Exploratory Program
2. The Activities Program
3. The Teacher Advisory Program
4. The Intramural and/or Interscholastic Sports Program(s)

5. The Guidance Program
6. The Computer Program
7. The Special Education Program
8. The Remedial Program
9. The Gifted Program

Alternative programs such as those for the potential dropout or the student with discipline problems were also advocated by principals.

Staff development and in-service programs for teachers were recommended by principals. Principals reported that they wanted to improve teacher effectiveness and efficiency by offering more college or university courses; better teacher preparation or training; and improved staff development programs relevant to the middle school, the special needs of the 10 to 15 year old student, and the research on effective schools. Principals advocated employing more teachers with middle school certification, middle school experience, and middle school preparation and/or training.

There were recommendations by principals to improve and/or change the organizational and scheduling arrangements by providing flexible scheduling for students and teachers, opportunities for more interdisciplinary team planning and teaching, and a common team planning time for teams of teachers. Increasing parent involvement as well as community awareness and support for the middle school were

advocated by principals. Principals also reported a need to increase the opportunities for student success, special awards for students, and special recognition for student achievements. Promoting student achievement, good work-study habits, and positive attitudes of students toward the academics were other recommendations.

Principals also reported that they wanted to develop and improve the curriculum; basic skill development, reading in the content area, writing skills, and better instructional materials were advocated. Principals indicated a need to have additional funding for the improvement and/or addition of programs, staff development, in-service for teachers, better facilities, field trips, quality instructional materials, and more teachers trained and certified for the middle school.

There were recommendations to improve school climate and school discipline by increasing student participation in school activities, decreasing the number of discipline referrals, and improving school spirit, staff relations, and teacher morale. Principals reported that they wanted to improve the intramural and/or interscholastic sports program(s) through increased student participation. Recommendations were made to improve standardized test scores of students, to develop a school within a school concept, and to lower the pupil-teacher ratio.

CHAPTER V

SUMMARY, DISCUSSION, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Introduction

The major purpose of this study was to determine the current status of middle schools in Virginia. The specific problems investigated in this study were (1) to determine the conditions, factors, and programmatic characteristics present in Virginia middle schools; (2) to determine the reasons given for adopting the middle school program; (3) to determine the programs, policies, and practices found in Virginia middle schools during the 1985-1986 school year; and (4) to present recommendations for educational administrators, middle school practitioners, and policymakers.

The objectives of this chapter were (1) to describe the programs, policies, and practices found in Virginia middle schools through a descriptive profile; (2) to present a discussion of the major findings; (3) to present conclusions and recommendations for educational administrators, practitioners, and policymakers; and (4) to present recommendations for further research.

A Descriptive Profile of the Programs, Policies, and

Practices Found in the Typical Virginia Middle School

The typical middle school serves grades 6-7-8 and enrolls about 658 students. The current middle school organization and program began since 1974, with 45 percent of the school organizations originating between 1974-1980, and 33 percent between 1981-1986. The reasons given for adopting the middle school program were to provide a program specifically designed for children in the 10 to 15 year old age group, to bridge or provide a better transition for students as they move from the elementary school to the high school, and to try out various innovations or employ new curricula. The majority of the school school buildings, 70 percent, were not originally constructed as middle schools.

Middle schools in Virginia used a variety of scheduling arrangements by grade level. The scheduling arrangements used most frequently were the block schedule and fixed period schedule. The block schedule was used more frequently at the fifth and sixth grade levels, while the fixed period schedule was used more frequently at the seventh and eighth grades. Flexible and modular scheduling were used infrequently in this study. The departmentalized approach, where one subject is taught by one teacher, was the most frequently reported organizational arrangement for

instruction in grades 6-8.   The higher the grade level, the greater the use of the departmentalized approach.   The interdisciplinary non-team approach, where several subjects are taught by one teacher (self-contained class), was used more frequently at the fifth grade.   Interdisciplinary teaming and planning were not frequently used in the majority of the schools.

The individual planning period was the most frequently reported planning arrangement for teachers.   However, 40 schools reported using a common team planning period, and only 37 schools reported using interdisciplinary planning either daily, once a week, or two-three times a week.

Ability grouping of pupils for instruction was used at all grade levels, but was restricted to selected subjects in 70 percent of the schools.   The three criteria used most frequently to group pupils for instruction were teacher recommendations, standardized achievement tests, and teacher grades.   Students were grouped heterogeneously for homeroom.

Students were required to take English/language arts, math, science, social studies, and health and physical education at all grade levels in all schools.   Reading was a required course more often in the fifth (100 percent) and sixth (99 percent) grades than in the seventh (86 percent) and eighth (59 percent) grades.   The elective courses

offered most frequently in grades 6-8 were art, home economics, industrial arts, music/chorus, and band/orchestra. With the exception of band/orchestra, music/chorus, art, and computer courses, fifth grade students were offered few electives. The number of electives that students were permitted to take increased as the grade levels increased.

The school programs offered most frequently were the guidance and reading programs. The guidance program was described as being student-centered with an emphasis on providing individual counseling, small group counseling, classroom guidance, and career guidance and/or career exploration. Career and vocational education programs, school and community volunteer programs, and community awareness about the middle school programs were available in over 70 percent of the schools. However, only 35 percent of the schools had a teacher-advisor program for students.

The student activities offered most frequently were honors/special awards, yearbook, student government/S.C.A., school dances, and career exploration. Both intramural and interscholastic sports were available in some schools; 68 percent of the schools offered intramurals and 64 percent offered interscholastic sports.

The personnel found most often were the principal, assistant principal(s), counselor(s), librarian(s)/media specialist(s), and teachers. Volunteers, nurse(s), reading consultant(s)/specialist(s), and psychologist(s)/ psychometrist(s) were found in most middle schools. The mean number of full and part-time teachers was 45 per school. The mean pupil-teacher ratio for academic classes was 21 pupils to one teacher.

The majority of the teaching staff had received additional assistance for teaching at the middle school either through in-service, staff development, or pre-school workshops. Forty-six percent of the teachers took additional college or university courses to prepare them for teaching at the middle school. The majority of the teachers in Virginia middle schools had either elementary, secondary, subject area, grades 4-7, and/or dual endorsements. Moreover, only 27 percent of the teaching staff had middle school certification.

According to the opinions of middle school principals, parent contacts, faculty morale, pupil attendance, student achievement, and school spirit were the selected practices that increased after reorganization to middle schools. Principals believed that discipline referrals and teacher turnover decreased since becoming a middle school; however,

teacher absenteeism remained the same in 57 percent of the schools and decreased in only 29 percent of the schools.

Discussion of the Major Findings

The findings of this study present an up-to-date view of middle schools in Virginia during the 1985-1986 school year. These findings were organized and discussed according to the middle school organization, the reasons given by principals for establishing middle schools in Virginia, the middle school curriculum, the middle school personnel, and the responses to the open-ended questions from middle school principals.

According to Franklin (1973) who completed a study of middle school practices in Virginia in 1973, there were only 31 middle schools in Virginia at that time. Of these 31 schools, there were 29 schools with grades 6-8, and two schools with grades 5-8. In this current study, 110 middle schools were identified. Of these 110 middle schools, there were 88 schools with grades 6-8, and six schools with grades 5-8. Over 75 percent of the middle schools have begun since 1974. Middle schools in Virginia, a recent phenomenon, gained rapidly in popularity and numbers since the Franklin study in 1973.   The most common organizational pattern in both of these studies was grades 6-8.   These findings are similar to those reported in the literature on middle

schools.   Studies by Alexander (1967), Brooks (1977), and McEwin (1981) also found the grades 6-8 organizational pattern the most popular.

Student enrollments in Virginia middle schools ranged from 169 to 1300 students.   Forty-seven percent of the schools in this study had enrollments between 500-899.   The mean number of students enrolled was 658.   Franklin (1973) reported that 48 percent of the middle schools enrolled between 901 and 1200 students. Twenty-two of the 31 schools surveyed in the Franklin (1973) study had enrollments of over 900 students.   It appears that the number of students enrolled per school was larger in the Franklin (1973) study than in this study.   Brooks (1977), in a national study of middle schools, reported that the median number of students enrolled was between 601 and 700.   In a national study of middle level principals by the National Association of Secondary School Principals (Valentine et al, 1981), the ideal student enrollment reported for middle schools ranged from 600-799 students.   Student enrollments in Virginia middle schools were similar to those found in more recent studies.

Of the 78 schools that participated in this study, 55 schools or 70 percent were not originally constructed as middle schools.   Although 23 schools (30 percent)   were

originally designed as middle schools, most of the school buildings were converted from either senior high schools (24 percent), junior high schools (12 percent), or elementary schools (10 percent). It appears that some of these converted middle schools may have taken on some of the characteristics of the programs for which they were designed rather than the characteristics of middle schools. The practice of building new senior high schools and moving the middle schools into the former senior high schools was evident in 19 schools (24 percent).

The departmentalized approach, where one subject is taught by one teacher, was the most frequently reported in grade 6-8. The higher the grade level, the greater the use of the departmentalized approach. According to the literature on middle schools (Alexander and George, 1981), the departmentalized approach is more characteristic of high schools than middle schools. Middle schools in Virginia frequently used the departmentalized approach, especially in grades 7 and 8. The interdisciplinary, non-team approach or self-contained class was used most frequently in the fifth grade. The lower the grade level, the greater the use of the interdisciplinary, non-team approach or self-contained class. The literature on middle schools seems to support the fact that students should make a gradual transition from

a more self-contained approach in the fifth and sixth grades to a more departmentalized approach in the seventh and eighth grades (Alexander and George, 1981). It can be concluded from the findings of this study that students move from a more self-contained approach to a more departmentalized approach as they progress from one grade to the next. According to a study of middle school practices in Virginia by Franklin (1973), the departmentalized approach was the most frequently used at all grade levels in 1973. Franklin (1973) did not gather data on the self-contained approach. Middle schools in Virginia continue to use the departmentalized approach frequently in the seventh and eighth grades.

According to the literature on middle schools, a variety of scheduling arrangements should be used such as flexible scheduling, block scheduling, and modular scheduling (Alexander, 1968 and Alexander and George, 1981). The most frequently reported scheduling arrangements were the block and fixed period schedules. The use of the block schedule decreased as students moved from the fifth to the eighth grades; and the fixed period schedule increased as students moved from the fifth to the eighth grades. The block schedule was used more frequently in the fifth and sixth grades than in the seventh and eighth grades. The

fixed period schedule was used more frequently in schools with grades 6-8 than schools with grade 5. Franklin (1973) also reported the frequent use of the fixed period schedule. McEwin and Clay (1983), in a national study of middle level schools, reported that the daily uniform period or fixed period schedule was used in 80 percent of the schools, and the modular schedule in only four percent of the schools. According to the literature on middle schools (Alexander and George, 1981), the fixed period schedule is more characteristic of the high school. In this current study, flexible and modular scheduling were used infrequently at all grade levels. Flexible scheduling was used infrequently in middle schools with fifth grade as well as middle schools with grades 6-8. Franklin (1973) reported also that flexible scheduling was used infrequently in Virginia middle schools in 1973.

The individual planning period was the most frequently reported planning arrangements for teachers. According to the literature on middle schools (Alexander and George, 1981), the common team planning period and interdisciplinary team planning are distinguishing features of middle schools. In national studies of middle schools by Brooks (1977) and Alexander (1967), the percentage of schools using interdisciplinary team teaching arrangements varied from

only 10 to 21 percent. McEwin and Clay (1983), in a national study of middle level schools, reported that only 17 percent of the schools used interdisciplinary team teaching. In this current study, 40 schools (52 percent) used a common team planning period for teams of teachers. Interdisciplinary team planning was used in 37 schools (47 percent). In order for teachers to implement interdisciplinary team planning, they need to have a common team planning period. However, the percentage of middle schools in this study that used a common team planning period (52 percent) and interdisciplinary team planning (47 percent) was higher than percentages found in other studies by Alexander (1967), Brooks (1977), and McEwin and Clay (1983).

Ability grouping of pupils for instruction was used at all grade levels, but was restricted to selected subjects in 70 percent of the schools. According to a national study of middle level principals by the National Association of Secondary School Principals (Valentine et al, 1981), 88 percent of the schools used ability grouping at all grade levels and in selected subjects. The three most frequently cited criteria used to group students for instruction in this study and the NASSP (Valentine et al, 1981) study were teacher recommendations, standardized achievement tests, and

teacher grades. In this study, teacher recommendations were used in 94 percent of the schools, standardized achievement tests in 89 percent of the schools, and teacher grades in 74 percent of the schools. Students were grouped heterogeneously for homerooms in 82 percent of the fifth grades, 51 percent of the sixth grades, 47 percent of the seventh grades, and 44 percent of the eighth grades.

Many reasons contributed to the reorganization of the middle school after 1960. Table 28 (Appendix F) presents comparative data on the reasons given by principals for establishing middle schools from previous studies by the National Association of Secondary School Principals (1981), McEwin (1981), Brooks (1977), Franklin (1973), and Alexander (1967). The reasons given most frequently by principals for establishing middle schools in this study were to (1) provide a program specifically designed for children in this age group (90 percent); (2) bridge better the elementary and high schools (80 percent); and (3) try out various innovations, employ new curricula, or utilize instructional innovations (54 percent). Some of the reasons given by principals for establishing middle schools in Virginia have changed since the Franklin (1973) study on middle school practices in Virginia. The three reasons reported most frequently in the Franklin (1973) study were to (1) provide

a program specifically designed for early adolescents; (2) aid desegregation; and (3) eliminate crowded conditions in other schools. In this current study, eliminating crowded conditions in other schools and aiding desegregation were reported in only 27 percent and 4 percent of the schools, respectively. A further review of the comparative data also revealed that trying out various innovations, employing new curricula, utilizing instructional innovations, bridging better the elementary and high schools, and correcting the weaknesses of the junior high schools were cited more frequently as reasons in this study than in the earlier studies. Eliminating crowded conditions in other schools and helping with enrollment trends or issues were reported less frequently as reasons in this study than in previous studies. The reasons for establishing middle schools in Virginia have changed in the last 10 to 15 years.

The five basic subjects, which include English/language arts, math, science, social studies, and health and physical education, were required subjects at all grade levels. Reading was required at the fifth grade (100 percent), sixth grade (99 percent), seventh grade (86 percent), and eighth grade (59 percent). Art, home economics, industrial arts, music/chorus, and band/orchestra were the electives offered more frequently in grades 6-8. With the exception of

band/orchestra, music/chorus, art, and computers, fifth grade students were offered few electives. The number of electives that students were permitted to take increased as the grade levels increased. There were more elective courses available to eighth grade students than to students in other grades. The pattern of offering more elective or exploratory courses as students progress from one grade level to the next was consistent with the literature on middle schools and the findings from other studies. Other studies by the NASSP (Valentine et al, 1981), McEwin and Clay (1983) found a similar pattern. According to the literature on middle schools (Alexander and George, 1981), students should be given an opportunity to explore a wide variety of elective and exploratory courses.

Middle schools in Virginia offered a wide variety of educational programs. Guidance and reading programs were reported in 96 percent of the schools. Career and vocational education programs, school and community volunteer programs, and community awareness about the middle school program were available in over 70 percent of the schools. The teacher-advisor program for students was reported in only 27 schools (35 percent). According to the literature on middle schools (Alexander and George, 1981), the teacher-advisor program is an important middle school

component. Franklin (1973) reported that only eight middle schools in Virginia used the teacher-counselor approach. In a national study of middle schools by McEwin and Clay (1983), only 35 percent of the middle schools had a teacher-advisor program. Although the teacher-advisor program is valued as an important characteristic of middle schools, it was found infrequently in this study as well as in the studies by Franklin (1973) and McEwin and Clay (1983).

The most frequently reported guidance activities were small group counseling, individual counseling, classroom guidance, and career guidance/exploration. Principals reported that 60 percent of the counselors and 46 percent of the teachers conducted classroom guidance sessions either daily or weekly. Principals described their guidance program as being child-centered with an emphasis on providing developmental, preventive, and crisis counseling.

The most frequently reported student activities were honors/special awards, yearbook, student government, school dances, and career exploration. Special interest or mini-courses are considered an important characteristic of middle schools (Alexander and George, 1981). Special interest activities or mini-courses were offered in 36 schools (46 percent). In a national study of middle level education by McEwin and Clay (1983), only 34 percent of the schools had

special interest activities or mini-courses for students. According to the literature on middle schools (Alexander and George, 1981), independent study was considered an important characteristic of middle schools. In this current study, independent study was used in only 20 schools. Franklin (1973) found that 13 of the 31 schools surveyed used independent study.

Intramural sports were available in 68 percent of the schools, and interscholastic sports were offered in 64 percent of the schools. Franklin (1973) reported that 28 schools out of the 31 schools surveyed had an intramural program usually after school. According to Franklin (1973), interscholastic sports were very limited in Virginia middle schools. Although interscholastic sports were offered in 64 percent of the schools in this study, the practice is controversial and vigorously opposed by educators and parents. Many middle school authorities such as Alexander and George (1981) and McEwin (1982) consider competitive contact athletic sports inappropriate for 10 to 15 year old students. Middle schools should not emphasize competitive athletic sports as modeled in the high schools. Middle school students need to have experiences in sports appropriate for their physical development. Many 10 to 15 year old children are not physically or developmentally

ready for interscholastic sports. The possible physical damage of inappropriate activities should be avoided. The literature on middle schools is strongly against interscholastic sports and for intramurals in the middle school (Alexander and George, 1981 and McEwin, 1982).

Parent contacts, faculty morale, pupil attendance, student achievement, and school spirit were the selected practices that principals believe had increased more frequently after reorganization to middle schools. According to the opinions of principals, teacher absenteeism remained the same in 57 percent of the schools and decreased in 29 percent of the schools. The fact that a teacher was in a middle school did not appear to have any effect upon absentee rates. Discipline referrals decreased in 66 percent of the schools and remained the same in 22 percent of the schools. According to Johnston (1984), the grade level configuration of middle schools appears to have little or no effect on academic achievement of students, school climate, student behavior, or teacher performance; however, the quality of the school program is more important than the grade level configuration. According to the opinions of middle school principals, the selected practices above, except for teacher absenteeism, were affected in a positive way after reorganization to middle schools.

A variety of personnel are needed to conduct a middle school program. Support personnel such as counselors, librarians, reading consultants/specialists, volunteers, and nurses provide valuable services for students, teachers, and parents (NASSP, Valentine et al, 1981 and Alexander and George, 1981). The personnel found most frequently were librarians/media specialists (95 percent) and guidance counselors (94 percent). At least one assistant principal was found in over 90 percent of the schools. Seventy-two percent of the schools used volunteers; and 62 percent used reading specialists/consultants. Team or cluster leaders and learning/resource center coordinators were reported in 42 percent and 22 percent of the schools, respectively. Other studies by the NASSP (Valentine et al, 1981), McEwin (1981), and Brooks (1977) found similar personnel used in middle schools.

Middle schools in Virginia have been staffed primarily by teachers who received certification and training at the elementary, junior high, and senior high schools. Therefore, the most common methods of preparing and training teachers to teach in middle schools have come from in-service/staff development (93 percent) and pre-school workshops (90 percent) that they received after they had become middle school teachers. Principals reported that 46

percent of the teachers received additional training to teach at the middle school through college or university courses. Only 10 percent of the teachers had visited other middle schools; and only 27 percent of the teaching staff had middle school certification. Moreover, only 13 schools reported having 50 percent or more of their teachers with middle school certification. Other studies by Brooks (1977) and the NASSP (Valentine et al, 1981) also found that the majority of teachers did not have middle school certification. According to McEwin (1984), middle school teachers with specialized training are not readily available because few states have mandatory requirements for middle school certification or training programs.

While the number of middle schools had increased in this country and Virginia, the growth in teacher preparation programs had not grown as rapidly (McEwin, 1984). In a national survey of over 1400 middle level principals by the National Association of Secondary School Principals (Valentine et al, 1981), 41 percent of the principals reported that their teachers had no specific middle level preparation. The most frequent cited methods to prepare middle level teachers in this national study were in-service programs (72 percent), student teaching (58 percent), and university courses (44 percent). Only 24 percent of the

principals listed pre-school workshops as forms of teacher preparation in the national survey. According to another national study of middle schools by Brooks (1977), 63 percent of the teachers had participated in in-service workshops, 42 percent in pre-service workshops, and 41 percent in university or college course work. McEwin (1981) reported that large percentages of the teachers in North Carolina middle schools had no special training. McEwin (1981) reported that the majority of middle school teachers in North Carolina had either elementary (44 percent) or secondary (33 percent) training. Only 23 percent of the middle school teachers in North Carolina had specialized training in the area of middle level education. The results of this study as well as the studies above clearly demonstrate that teacher preparation programs have not kept pace with the demand for middle school teachers. Lack of specialized training and certification for middle school teachers is apparent. The findings of this study were similar to the findings found in the studies above.

Principals were requested to comment on the reaction of the community toward their middle school. Reactions ranged from very positive support of the middle school to more passive reactions. Principals reported that the reactions of the community toward their middle school had been very

positive (44 percent), positive (27 percent), favorable (23 percent), or passive (6 percent). According to the opinions of middle school principals, parent involvement and community support have increased since reorganization to middle schools.

Middle schools in Virginia used a variety of methods for community and parent involvement. The policies and programs for community and parent involvement were described by principals. The majority of the principals, 58 percent, reported an open-door policy toward community and parent involvement. The most frequently reported forms of parent and community involvement were the school volunteer program, parent conferences, the PTA/PTO, the principal's advisory and/or planning council, and resource personnel and/or speakers. It appears that parents and the community have become involved in Virginia middle schools.

The most frequently reported recommendations given by principals for the improvement of middle schools in Virginia were to (1) improve, add, or expand the electives or exploratory program, the activities program, the gifted program, the teacher-advisor program, the computer program, and the intramural and/or interscholastic sports programs; (2) improve teacher effectiveness and efficiency by offering more college or university courses; better teacher

preparation or training; and improved staff development/in-service programs relevant to the middle school, the special needs of the 10 to 15 year old child, and the research on effective schools; (3) provide a more flexible schedule for students and teachers, opportunities for more interdisciplinary team planning and teaching, and a common team planning time for teachers; (4) increase parent involvement, community awareness, and support for the middle school; and (5) increase the opportunities for student success and special recognition of their achievements. Although some of these recommendations may be limited because of the budget or local school policies, many of these recommendations could be implemented by principals within their own school without additional resources.

Conclusions and Recommendations for Educational
Administrators, Practitioners, and Policymakers

An objective of this study was to provide conclusions and recommendations that could be used by educational administrators, practitioners, and policymakers to establish new middle school programs and improve existing middle school programs. The following conclusions and recommendations were based on the middle school literature and findings of the study.

Conclusions

The study presents an up-to-date view of the status of middle schools in Virginia. The number of middle schools in Virginia has increased rapidly since the Franklin (1973) study. Although the middle school movement in Virginia has expanded and made some progress during the last decade, the lack of a unique identity for many middle schools, especially in the areas of teacher certification and training, remains a problem. The rapid increase in the number of middle schools has not been accompanied by the frequent use of several desirable programs and practices advocated by middle school authorities, such as a variety of organizational and scheduling arrangements, flexible scheduling, a common team planning period for teachers, interdisciplinary teaming and planning, teacher-advisor programs, and special interest activity or mini-course programs.

However, the percentages of middle schools which use these desirable programs and practices were found to be greater in this study than those percentages found in the Franklin (1973) study of middle school practices in Virginia and in many other state and national studies. Many middle schools in Virginia are guilty of some of the same practices that long plagued the state's junior high schools;

departmentalization, fixed period schedules, and interscholastic sports are still found frequently.

There have been, additionally, some improvements in the quality and number of educational programs for students and parents, curricular and elective offerings, student activities, in-service/staff development and pre-school workshops for teachers, use of a variety of middle school personnel, policies and criteria used to group students for instruction and homeroom, and the reactions of the communities toward middle schools in Virginia. Parent contacts, faculty morale, pupil attendance, student achievement, and discipline are improved by reorganization to middle schools. Despite some indications that several of the characteristics of middle schools advocated by middle school authorities are used infrequently, middle schools in Virginia appear to be viable in number and concept, and represent an important transition between the elementary and secondary schools of the state.

Middle school education in Virginia has not achieved its full potential. Although it may be difficult to change established programs and practices, the data gathered in this study reveal that some progress has been made and that middle school education has become an important part of the educational system in Virginia, a system which neglected for

so many years to design a program for the early adolescent. It has now become evident how very important it is to provide an education based on the diverse needs, characteristics, and interests of the 10 to 15 year old student. This knowledge should lead the way in the development of a program which meets effectively and efficiently the needs of the middle school child.

Recommendations

1. Administrators, middle school practitioners, and policymakers need to convince their constituents that middle schools in Virginia provide an improved educational program based on the characteristics, needs, and interests of 10 to 15 year old students. Middle schools have not received the recognition they deserve as a unique school for the adolescent. The Virginia Middle School Association and the State Department of Education should disseminate information promoting middle schools to parents, community groups, and school board members through conferences and written publications. Public forums, P.T.A. meetings, and informal parent and community meetings could be held to promote middle schools.

2. Various organizational arrangements should be employed. The rigidity of the fixed period schedule used in the

majority of middle schools makes it difficult to provide for the diverse needs of early adolescents. Middle schools should provide students and teachers with more flexible schedules which allow teachers to make some grouping decisions. The transitional nature of grouping as students move from one grade level to the next should be examined to determine if they help students make a smooth transition from the self-contained elementary school to the departmentalized high school.

3. The disciplinary non-team approach or departmentalization was the predominant organizational arrangement for instruction. Middle schools should be organized so that teachers can have a common team planning period during the school day in order to provide for more interdisciplinary teaming and planning. Interdisciplinary teaming and planning were advocated by middle school authorities as important characteristics of middle schools.

4. The teacher-advisory program for students, reported in only 27 schools, is an important one and should be expanded. The program could provide (1) a means by which each student may be known personally by at least one staff member; (2) personal assistance to each

child; (3) a caring atmosphere for each student; and (4) a program of preventative guidance dealing with adolescent problems. The teacher-advisor is the most likely person to be aware of the conditions in a student's life which may influence his behavior and learning. The teacher-advisor program could help the child make a smooth and successful transition between the elementary school and the high school.

5. The activities program should be expanded and improved. Special interest or mini-courses, reported in only 36 schools, should be included in the middle school. These courses could be implemented through an activity period one or two days a week for 40 minutes. In addition to the teaching staff; support personnel, administrators, other staff members, and volunteers could teach mini-courses, thereby reducing class size.

6. A majority of teachers have had no special training or certification to teach at the middle school. It is recommended that more colleges and universities offer specialized programs for middle school personnel which include well-developed courses and practica emphasizing program design, effective teaching strategies, child development of the 10 to 15 year old, and other essential elements of the middle school. A coalition

of representatives from colleges and universities, the Virginia State Department of Education, and the profession should work together to establish and promote high quality programs for training and certifying middle school personnel. Middle schools need dedicated professionals who have the special expertise required for successfully teaching the 10 to 15 year old child. The Virginia State Department of Education should provide leadership and implement these changes. Certification at the middle school level should be required of all middle school educators.

Recommendations for Further Research

The following recommendations for further research were based on the findings of this study, a review of the literature, and the conclusions of the researcher.

1. Various teacher teaming and planning arrangements used in the middle schools are areas that need further study. Although the individual planning period is used in 99 percent of the schools, the common team planning period and interdisciplinary teaming and planning are limited. It would be useful for middle school practitioners to know the various types of teaming and planning arrangements that work best with this age group.

2. There is a need to study the qualities and practices of middle schools to determine those which have a beneficial impact on students. Research on the effectiveness of middle school education has been inconclusive and limited. It would be important to find out if there are any common middle school components such as flexible use of time, interdisciplinary teaming, and interdisciplinary planning among effective or exemplary middle schools. Comprehensive surveys and on-site visitations would be appropriate techniques to gather data on the practices common to effective or exemplary middle schools.

Epilogue

Although the middle school movement in Virginia has expanded and shown some improvement during the last decade, middle schools still do not meet their potential. There is a need to improve and expand desirable middle school components such as a common team planning period for teachers, interdisciplinary teaming and planning, teacher-advisor programs, and special interest activity or mini-course programs. It appears that those who planned and developed middle schools may not have been committed to implementing these practices and programs.

Middle schools in Virginia have adopted some of the practices of the high school such as departmentalization, the individual planning period, the fixed period schedule, the seven period day, the infrequent use of flexible scheduling, and interscholastic sports. Reasons for the adoption of these practices may be partly due to the impact of recent national reports regarding secondary education, the impact of the high school upon the middle school, and the lack of understanding by the general public and legislators of middle school education. Although middle schools were not specified in these national reports, which were aimed primarily at secondary education, many of the proposed reforms have trickled down to the middle level. Other reforms, such as additional programs and courses, and high school credits for eighth grade courses, are inappropriate for the middle school. It appears that many educators and the general public are more concerned about meeting the demands of these reports than implementing desirable middle school practices which have proved to be educationally sound for 10 to 15 year old children. Another reason may be that the majority of middle school teachers and principals came from other organizations, such as the elementary, junior high, and senior high schools, in which they had become accustomed to using programs and practices

characteristic of these organizations rather than desirable middle school practices. The majority of middle schools were established in buildings which were constructed originally to accommodate either elementary, junior high, or senior high school programs. Unfortunately, the middle school program sometimes took on the characteristics of the program for which the building was originally intended.

Although many middle school authorities and educators consider competitive athletic sports inappropriate for 10 to 15 year old students, interscholastic sports are offered frequently in Virginia middle schools. Public pressure is often the impetus for the continuation of such programs.

It is disappointing to find that only 27 percent of the teaching staff have middle school certification. It appears that the majority of middle school teachers were drafted from the elementary, junior high, or senior high school. Principals frequently used staff development/in-service and pre-school workshops to prepare their staff for teaching in the middle school. Lack of specialized training and certification for middle school teachers is apparent. Although more colleges and universities are offering middle school courses, the results of this study as well as other studies clearly demonstrate that teacher preparation programs have not kept pace with the demand for middle school teachers.

Middle schools will become more effective if educators implement programs which are in response to the nature of the 10 to 15 year old student.   This researcher hopes that the information derived from this study will assist educational administrators, middle school practitioners, and policymakers in improving the educational opportunities, practices, and programs designed for middle school students in Virginia.

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Robert B. Jewell, Ed.D.   Former State Director of Middle
     Schools in Virginia.   Secondary Supervisor of School
     Accreditation, State Department of Education, Richmond,
     Virginia, July 25, 1985.

APPENDIX A

Cover Letter for Questionnaire

Dear

The enclosed survey concerned with middle level programs and practices as reported by principals is part of a statewide study. Mr. Robert C. James, president of the Virginia Middle School Association, and Dr. Thomas E. Gatewood, a middle school authority at V.P.I. and State University, are both endorsing the study. The director of the study is Dr. Glen I. Earthman of V.P.I. and State University. The research is concerned specifically with determining the current status of the middle school movement in Virginia and the implications for educational administration. A descriptive profile of middle schools in Virginia during the 1985-1986 school year will be presented.

The study is relevant to improving middle schools in Virginia. The findings of this study will provide information indicative of the current status and direction for the development of middle grade education in Virginia.

In an effort for this study to be successful, your participation and knowledge as a middle level principal are most valuable. Please respond if your school is labeled middle or intermediate. The enclosed survey has been validated by a panel of middle school "experts."

It will be appreciated if you will complete the enclosed survey, preferably before _____, and return it in the stamped, special delivery envelope enclosed. Other phases of this research cannot be completed until I receive your survey for an analysis of the data.

The information gathered from this questionnaire will be held in strictest confidence. There will not be a comparison or evaluation of schools, but rather an attempt to describe the current status of middle schools in Virginia.

I will be pleased to send you a summary of the survey results if you wish. Thank you in advance for your cooperation and participation in this worthwhile endeavor.

Sincerely,

Jesse C. Zedd

APPENDIX B

Questionnaire/Instrument for Principals

STATE OF VIRGINIA
MIDDLE SCHOOL SURVEY 1985-1986

Name of Principal _____ Phone Number (___)_____

Name of School _____

Address of School _____

Name of City___   County___   _____, <u>Va.</u>   _____
                                                          Zip Code
_____

_____ Check here if you wish a summary of the results.

1. Please check all grades included   5___   6___   7___   8___
    in this school.   Other: _____

2. When was the first year this school operated under the current
    organizational structure(6-8, 5-7, 5-8)with a middle school
    program? _____

3. Please indicate any special personnel in this school(5-8):

    ___a. Assistant Principal/Equivalent   ___h. Nurse
    ___b. Counselors   ___i. Visiting Teacher/
    ___c. Psychologist/Psychometrist   Social Worker
    ___d. Reading Consultant/Specialist   ___j. Paraprofessionals
    ___e. Library/Media Specialist   ___k. Volunteers
    ___f. Team/Cluster Leader
    ___g. Learning/Resource Center Coordinators
    ___l. Others: _____

    _____

4. Please indicate the number of persons that fall into the
    following categories:
    a. Total number of students enrolled(5-8): _____
    b. Total number of teachers(5-8): Full-Time_____ Part-Time_____
    c. Total number of faculty and staff:F-Time_____ Part-Time_____
    d. Total average teacher/pupil ratio for academic classes: _____
    e. Total student population of school division: _____

5. Please estimate the percent of the teaching staff(5-8) that
    has certification at the following levels:
                                        <u>Percent with Certification</u>
    a. % of teachers with middle school(4-8):   _____

    b. % of teachers with elementary school(K-7):   _____

    c. % of teachers with secondary school/
        subject area endorsements: _____

    d. % of teachers with other--   _____
        Please describe or explain: 100%

    _____

    _____

    _____

6. The following are some methods by which teachers receive additional assistance for teaching at the middle school level. Please list the approximate percent of teachers in this school(5-8) receiving training under any of these methods within the last three years. List all that apply.

                                                    Percent of Teachers

   a. College/University Courses   _____

   b. In-Service/Staff Development   _____

   c. Pre-School Workshops   _____

   d. Middle School Visitations   _____

   e. Other, Please describe: _____

   _____

   _____

7. Please rank in order the five more important reasons for this school's adoption of the middle school program/concept. Place a "1" beside your first reason, a "2" beside your second reason, etc. Please rank order all that apply.

   _____a. To move grade 9 into the high school
   _____b. To provide more specialization in grades 5 and/or 6
   _____c. To bridge the elementary and high schools better
   _____d. To remedy the weaknesses of the junior high school
   _____e. To aid desegregation
   _____f. To eliminate crowded conditions in other schools
   _____g. To provide a program specifically designed for
          children in this age group
   _____h. To utilize a new school facility or building
   _____i. To try out various innovations, employ new
          curriculum, or utilize instructional innovations
   _____j. To use plans or programs successfully implemented
          in other schools
   _____k. To help create budget efficiency/to cut costs
   _____l. To help with enrollment trends or problems
   _____m. To utilize new staff who desire to be in a
          middle school situation
   _____n. Other, Please describe: _____

   _____

   _____

8. Was this school originally designed to be a(n):

   _____a. Middle School   _____e. Intermediate School
   _____b. Elementary School   _____f. K-12 or 1-12 School
   _____c. Senior High School   _____g. Other: _____
   _____d. Junior High School   _____

9. Listed below are the content courses often associated with middle level curriculum. Use the following letters to check the appropriate course offerings at each grade level.

    R - Required   E - Elective   NO - Not Offered

Content Areas

	Grade 5			Grade 6			Grade 7			Grade 8		
	R	E	NO	R	E	NO	R	E	NO	R	E	NO
English/Lang. Arts	___	___	___	___	___	___	___	___	___	___	___	___
Reading	___	___	___	___	___	___	___	___	___	___	___	___
Mathematics	___	___	___	___	___	___	___	___	___	___	___	___
Science	___	___	___	___	___	___	___	___	___	___	___	___
Social Studies	___	___	___	___	___	___	___	___	___	___	___	___
Physical Education	___	___	___	___	___	___	___	___	___	___	___	___
Health	___	___	___	___	___	___	___	___	___	___	___	___
Foreign Language	___	___	___	___	___	___	___	___	___	___	___	___
Typing	___	___	___	___	___	___	___	___	___	___	___	___
Business	___	___	___	___	___	___	___	___	___	___	___	___
Art/Crafts	___	___	___	___	___	___	___	___	___	___	___	___
Home Economics	___	___	___	___	___	___	___	___	___	___	___	___
Industrial Arts	___	___	___	___	___	___	___	___	___	___	___	___
Speech	___	___	___	___	___	___	___	___	___	___	___	___
Drama	___	___	___	___	___	___	___	___	___	___	___	___
Music/Chorus	___	___	___	___	___	___	___	___	___	___	___	___
Band/Orchestra	___	___	___	___	___	___	___	___	___	___	___	___
Career Education	___	___	___	___	___	___	___	___	___	___	___	___
Computer Course	___	___	___	___	___	___	___	___	___	___	___	___

Other, Please list:

_____ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___

_____ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___

10. Please check all programs available at this school:

    ____a. Guidance Program   ____e. School and Community
    ____b. Teacher Advisor Program   Volunteer Program
    ____c. Career/Voc. Ed. Program   ____f. Community Awareness
    ____d. Reading Program   and Orientation to
                                                    Middle School Program

    ____g. Other, Please describe:

    _____

    _____

    _____

    _____

11. Please check the activities that this school provides for students.

___a. Special Interest/   ___g. Special Clubs
      Mini-Courses   ___h. Honors/Special Awards
___b. Career Exploration   ___i. Dramatics
___c. Intramurals   ___j. Newspaper
___d. Interscholastic Sports   ___k. Yearbook
___e. Student Gov't./S.C.A.   ___l. Enrichment Classes
___f. Independent Study   ___m. School Dances
___n. Other, Please list:

12. Please check the grade levels for which you provide any of the following scheduling arrangements. Check all that apply.

a. Modular Schedule   5___   6___   7___   8___
b. Block Schedule   5___   6___   7___   8___
c. Flexible Schedule   5___   6___   7___   8___
d. Fixed Period Schedule   5___   6___   7___   8___
e. Teaching Teams Arrange
    Time   5___   6___   7___   8___
f. Other, Please describe: 5___   6___   7___   8___

13. Which of the following organizational arrangements does this school provide for students at each grade level? Check all that apply at each grade level.

a. Disciplinary Non-Team Approach-
    Departmentalized(one subject
    taught by one teacher)   5___   6___   7___   8___

b. Interdisciplinary Non-Team
    Approach(several subjects
    taught by one teacher/self-
    contained class)   5___   6___   7___   8___

c. Disciplinary Team Approach
    (one subject taught by a
    team of two or more teachers/
    subject area teams)   5___   6___   7___   8___

d. Interdisciplinary Teaming and
    Planning(several subjects
    taught by two or more teachers)   5___   6___   7___   8___

e. Other, Please describe: 5___   6___   7___   8___

14. <u>Planning Arrangements</u>
    a. Do teachers have an individual planning period? Yes__ No__
    b. Do teachers have a common team planning period? Yes__ No__
    c. If your teachers are organized as teams, do the
       teams(group of teachers) plan cooperatively?   Yes__ No__
    d. Do teachers from across disciplines plan and
       implement units of work together?   Yes__ No__
    e. If you have interdisciplinary team planning,
       how often do the teams plan together?

       ___(1) Daily   ___(2) Once a week   ___(3) Two-three

       times weekly   ___(4) Teachers do not have team planning.

    f. What other planning arrangements does this school provide?

    _____

    _____

15A. Check the <u>one</u> statement below that best describes this school's
policy toward "ability" grouping of pupils for instruction.

    ___a. Grouping is carried out at all grade levels and in
         all subject areas.

    ___b. Grouping is carried out at all grade levels, but is
         restricted to selected subject areas.
         Indicate which subjects: _____

         _____

    ___c. Grouping is carried out at only selected grade levels,
         but the grouping is done in all subject areas at
         those levels. Indicate which grade levels:

         _____

    ___d. Grouping is carried out at certain grade levels, and
         is restricted to selected subjects at those levels.
         Indicate which subjects and grade levels:

         _____

    ___e. Grouping system is different from the choices above.
         Please describe: _____

         _____

    ___f. There is no ability grouping.

15B. What criteria are used in grouping for instruction?
    ___a. Grades   ___d. Criterion Reference
    ___b. I. Q. Test Scores   Tests
    ___c. Standardized Achievement   ___e. Teacher Recommendations
         Tests   ___f. Parental Input

    ___g. Other: _____

         _____

         _____

15C. How are students grouped for homeroom at each grade level?
- ___a. Homogeneous by ability   5___   6___   7___   8___
- ___b. Heterogeneously   5___   6___   7___   8___
- ___c. Teacher recommendations   5___   6___   7___   8___
- ___d. Alphabetically   5___   6___   7___   8___
- ___e. No homerooms   5___   6___   7___   8___
- ___f. Other, Please describe: 5___   6___   7___   8___

_____

_____

16A. Briefly describe this school's guidance and counseling program. List some of the activities in which counselors are involved. Include anything that is special or unique about the middle school guidance program(i.e., teacher/advisor program, small group counseling, career activities).

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

16B. Please indicate how often classroom guidance sessions are conducted by counselors and teachers.

	Counselors	Teachers
a. Daily	_____	_____
b. Two-three times weekly	_____	_____
c. Once a week	_____	_____
d. Most do not conduct	_____	_____
e. Other, Please describe:	_____	_____

17. Indicate, in your opinion, whether the following practices have increased, decreased, or remained the same since becoming a middle level school.

	Increased	Decreased	Same
a. Pupil Attendance	___	___	___
b. Teacher Absenteeism	___	___	___
c. Teacher Turnover	___	___	___
d. Discipline Referrals	___	___	___
e. Parent Contacts	___	___	___
f. Student Achievement	___	___	___
g. Faculty Morale	___	___	___
h. School Spirit	___	___	___

18. What is special, unique, or different about this middle
    school that sets it apart from the traditional junior
    high school or intermediate school?

    _____
    _____
    _____
    _____
    _____

19. What are the two most important goals of this school?

    _____
    _____
    _____
    _____

20. Please list three things that you would like to do to
    improve this middle level school:

    a. _____
       _____

    b. _____
       _____

    c. _____
       _____

21. What has been the reaction of the community since this
    school became a middle level institution?

    _____
    _____
    _____
    _____
    _____

22. Briefly describe the school's policies and programs
    regarding community and parent involvement.

    _____
    _____
    _____
    _____
    _____

APPENDIX C

Follow-up Letter

Newport News, Virginia   23602
Office Phone:
Home Phone:

Dear

I am concluding the data collection phase of the study
concerning middle school programs and practices in Virginia.
Please complete the survey and return it to me before
_____.

Your urgent response is most important in gathering
sufficient data for this study.   Other phases of this
research cannot be completed until I receive your survey for
an analysis of the data.

Your knowledge of middle school programs and practices is
valuable as I attempt to determine the descriptive profile
and status of middle level institutions in Virginia.

The Virginia Middle School Association and Dr.   Thomas E.
Gatewood, a middle school authority at V.P.I.   and State
University, are both endorsing the study.   The study is
under the direction of Dr.   Glen I.   Earthman of V.P.I.   and
State University.

Please take time from your schedule to answer the questions.
Enclosed you will find another questionnaire and stamped,
special delivery envelope for return of the survey.

If you have any concerns or questions regarding the study,
please contact me at the above address or phone numbers.

Thank you for your cooperation and participation in this
worthwhile endeavor.

Very truly yours,

Jesse C. Zedd

APPENDIX D

Validation Form for Panel Review of Survey

VALIDATION FORM FOR SURVEY/INSTRUMENT

VIRGINIA MIDDLE SCHOOL STUDY

Name of Reviewer _____ Title _____

Please check and comment where appropriate.

A. Readability

    1. Ambiguity of questions/responses:

        Clear _____   Needs Improvement _____

        Comments: _____

        _____

    2. Grammar:

        Satisfactory _____   Needs Improvement _____

        Comments: _____

        _____

    3. Sufficient writing/white space:

        Satisfactory _____   Needs Improvement _____

        Comments: _____

        _____

B. Validity

    1. Appears to cover the topic:

        Satisfactory _____   Needs Improvement _____

        Comments: _____

        _____

2. Likelihood that the answers will be truthful:

Satisfactory _____   Needs Improvement _____

Comments: _____

_____

C. Reliability--Likelihood that all respondents will interpret the survey alike:

Satisfactory _____   Needs Improvement _____

Comments: _____

_____

D. Type and amount of data is sufficient to make conclusions:

Satisfactory _____   Needs Improvement _____

Comments: _____

_____

E. Length is appropriate and will not adversely affect response/return rate:

Satisfactory _____   Needs Improvement _____

Comments: _____

_____

F. Format

1. Ease of completion:

Satisfactory _____   Needs Improvement _____

Comments: _____

_____

2. Instructions are clear, adequate, and not subject to misinterpretation:

   Satisfactory _____   Needs Improvement _____

   Comments: _____

   _____

3. Logical sequence of presentation:

   Satisfactory _____   Needs Improvement _____

   Comments: _____

   _____

4. The questions are interesting and challenging:

   Satisfactory _____   Needs Improvement _____

   Comments: _____

   _____

5. Professional appearance:

   Satisfactory _____   Needs Improvement _____

   Comments: _____

   _____

G. Please comment concerning how the survey can be improved--any questions that upset you, any questions that should be added, and any questions that should be deleted.

APPENDIX E

Validation Form for Pilot Study

PILOT STUDY FORM - - SURVEY/INSTRUMENT

VIRGINIA MIDDLE SCHOOL STUDY

Name of Reviewer _____ Title _____

Please check and comment where appropriate.

A. Readability

   1. Ambiguity of questions/responses:

       Clear _____   Needs Improvement _____

       Comments: _____

       _____

   2. Grammar:

       Satisfactory _____   Needs Improvement _____

       Comments: _____

       _____

   3. Sufficient writing/white space:

       Satisfactory _____   Needs Improvement _____

       Comments: _____

       _____

B. Validity

   1. Appears to cover the topic:

       Satisfactory _____   Needs Improvement _____

       Comments: _____

       _____

2. Likelihood that the answers will be truthful:

Satisfactory _____   Needs Improvement _____

Comments: _____

_____

C. Reliability--Likelihood that all respondents will interpret the survey alike:

Satisfactory _____   Needs Improvement _____

Comments: _____

_____

D. Type and amount of data are sufficient to make conclusions:

Satisfactory _____   Needs Improvement _____

Comments: _____

_____

E. Length is appropriate and will not adversely affect response/return rate:

Satisfactory _____   Needs Improvement _____

Comments: _____

_____

F. Format

1. Ease of completion:

Satisfactory _____   Needs Improvement _____

Comments: _____

_____

2. Instructions are clear, adequate, and not subject to misinterpretation:

   Satisfactory _____   Needs Improvement _____

   Comments: _____

   _____

3. Logical sequence of presentation:

   Satisfactory _____   Needs Improvement _____

   Comments: _____

   _____

4. The questions are clear, relevant, and reflective of the key middle school characteristics:

   Satisfactory _____   Needs Improvement _____

   Comments: _____

   _____

5. Professional appearance:

   Satisfactory _____   Needs Improvement _____

   Comments: _____

   _____

G. Please comment concerning how the survey can be improved. Include in your comments any questions that upset you, any questions that should be deleted, and any questions that should be added.

H. Please indicate about how long it took you to complete
    the questionnaire. Time to complete _____

    How long did the following questions take?

    Question #3 _____   Question #8 _____

APPENDIX F

Tables

Table 14

Middle School Curriculum in Virginia
Total Percent Reporting Required,
Elective, and Not Offered Courses

R - Required　　　　E - Elective　　　　NO - Not Offered

Content Areas	Grade 5 N=11			Grade 6 N=78			Grade 7 N=78			Grade 8 N=73		
	R	E	NO	R	E	NO	R	E	NO	R	E	NO
English/Lang. Arts	100	0	0	100	0	0	100	0	0	100	0	0
Reading	100	0	0	99	1	0	86	10	4	59	25	17
Mathematics	100	0	0	100	0	0	100	0	0	100	0	0
Science	100	0	0	99	1	0	99	1	0	97	3	0
Social Studies	100	0	0	97	3	0	97	3	0	83	17	0
Physical Education	100	0	0	96	3	1	97	3	0	99	1	0
Health	100	0	0	92	3	5	96	4	0	96	4	0
Foreign Language	0	0	100	0	12	88	0	42	58	0	93	7
Typing	0	0	100	0	8	92	3	16	81	0	32	68
Business	0	0	100	3	15	82	3	17	80	2	30	69
Arts/Crafts	55	18	27	39	44	17	23	71	6	3	93	4
Home Economics	11	0	89	34	37	29	22	69	9	1	99	0
Industrial Arts	11	0	89	33.3	33.3	33.3	23	63.5	13.5	1	93	6
Speech	0	11	89.	1	8	91	2	19	79	1	25	74
Drama	0	0	100	5	26	69	0	47	53	0	57	43
Music/Chorus	82	9	9	40	51	9	23	73	4	1	96	3
Band/Orchestra	0	73	27	9	84	7	8	85	7	1	93	6
Career Education	27	9	64	28	24	48	27	28	45	23.4	31.3	45.3
Computer Course	45.5	0	54.5	40	15	45	31.4	41.4	27.1	24	40	36
Other, please list:	1	0	99	5	4	91	3	6	91	3	9	88

Table 23

Number and Percent of Principals Reporting the Special
or Unique Characteristics of Middle Schools in Virginia

Characteristics	Number Reporting N = 79	Percent
Student/Teacher Characteristics	39	49
Organizational and Scheduling Arrangements	37	47
Curriculum and Programs	30	38
School Climate	15	19
Guidance Program	15	19
Intramural/Interscholastic Sports	15	19
Transition Between Elementary and Secondary School	14	18
Other:	15	19

Table 24

Number and Percent of Principals Reporting the Goals
of Virginia Middle Schools

Goals	Number Reporting N = 83	Percent
To improve the instructional program and/or the curriculum	45	54
To meet student needs	40	48
To provide opportunities for student success and achievement	38	46
To provide a gradual transition between the elementary and secondary schools	21	25
To improve communication with parent and community groups	15	18
To improve school climate and/or school discipline	12	14
Other	13	16

Table 25

Principals' Opinions Regarding the Reactions of
the Communities Toward Middle Schools in Virginia

Community Reaction	Number Reporting N = 82	Percent
Very Positive	36	44
Positive	22	27
Favorable	19	23
Passive	5	6
Totals	82	100

Table 26

Principals' Opinions Regarding the Policies and Programs
for Community and Parent Involvement
in Virginia Middle Schools

Policies and Program	Number Reporting N = 83	Percent
Open Door Policy	48	58
Volunteer Program	46	55
Parent Conferences	45	54
PTA/PTO	41	49
Principal's Advisory/Planning Council	39	47
Resource Personnel/Speakers	31	37
Other	20	24

Table 27

Principals' Recommendations for the Improvement
of Middle Schools in Virginia

Recommendations	Number Reporting N = 83	Percent
Improvement/Addition/Expansion of Middle School Programs	50	60
Staff Development/In-Service	35	42
Organizational and Scheduling Arrangements	29	35
Parent Involvement	20	24
Student Achievement/Recognition	20	24
Curriculum Development/Improvement	18	22
Additional Funding	13	16
School Climate/Discipline	10	12
Other	18	22

Table 28

Comparative Reasons Given by Principals for Establishing Middle Schools*

Reasons	Zedd 1986	NASSP 1981	McEwin 1981	Brooks 1977	Franklin 1973	Alexander 1967
To provide a program specifically designed for children in this age group	89.7	61	39	68	39	45
To bridge the elementary and high schools better	79.5	57	__*	63	__	40
To try out various innovations, employ new curricula, or utilize instructional innovations	53.8	31	6	23	__	24
To remedy the weaknesses of the junior high school	47.4	24	6	36	__	25
To provide more specialization in grades 5 and/or 6	34.6	26	__	20	__	30
To use plans or programs successfully implemented in other schools	28.2	17	__	13	__	13
To move grade 9 into the high school	26.9	19	__	29	__	25
To eliminate crowded conditions in other schools	26.9	__	19	48	29	58
To help with enrollment trends or problems	19	46	__	__	__	__
To utilize a new school facility or building	14	28	14	18	__	21
To help create budget efficiency	7	__	__	__	__	__
To utilize a new staff who desire to be in a middle school	6	__	__	__	__	__
To aid desegregation	4	__	6	14	32	7

* __ means that the data were not reported in other studies.

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