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The Junior High School

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THE JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL

by

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Submitted as partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the
degree of Master of Science
in Education at the
Jacksonville State College
Jacksonville, Alabama

1962

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INTRODUCTION

The appearance and growth of the junior high school in the United States reflects one of the most important and significant aspects of this country's attempt to provide the best possible educational program for its teen-agers. Not only has the junior high school proved of high value, but its influence upon school systems in which the junior high school organization is not found has been wide and marked. Among communities in which the eight-four plan of school organization prevails, many earmarks of the junior high school are commonly found.

The junior high school, which emerged from the reorganizational movement of the late nineteenth century and the early twentieth century, is just one phase of our total educational program. It is unique in that it is a school designed for early adolescents.

After fifty years of experimentation, the junior high school has been accepted by educators, by parents, by teachers, and by the public. Though it has not solved all the problems of education for early adolescents, it has made tremendous progress toward this end. Its continued growth is evidence of its importance in our total educational program.

THE PURPOSE OF THIS PAPER

The purpose of this paper is to determine the factors which led to the development of the junior high school; the functions and purposes the junior high school serves; and the advantages and limitations, credited to the junior high school, that are not claimed by other phases of our educational program.

CHAPTER I

THE EMERGENCE OF THE JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL

By the latter part of the nineteenth century the battle for public support and public control of American education had been won. The educational ladder consisted predominately of eight years of elementary education and four years of secondary education. This plan of organization, which was established without serious study or experimentation by the educational leaders, received immediate criticism from representatives of colleges and universities.¹

President Charles W. Eliot of Harvard felt that the program of elementary and secondary education was undesirably long. In 1873 he reported to the National Education Association that the age of entering freshmen had risen until it was over eighteen. He again made reference to this in 1886 when he reported that the age of two-fifths of entering freshmen was slightly over nineteen. In 1888 he made a proposal to the National Education Association to shorten the period of elementary and secondary education so that those seeking higher education could enter the colleges and universities at an earlier age.²

¹William A. Smith, The Junior High School, (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1926), p. 70.

²Ibid., pp. 71-72.

The criticism of President Eliot of the organization of American education received immediate action from the National Council of the National Education Association. In 1892 the council appointed the Committee of Ten on Secondary School Studies with President Eliot as chairman.

The committee was authorized to arrange a conference of school and college teachers in each of the principal subjects entering into the secondary school program. The primary purpose of the conferences was to determine "the proper limits of its subject, the best methods of instruction, the most desirable allotment of time for its subject, and the best methods of testing the pupils' attainment therein."³

When the final report of the Committee of Ten was issued in 1893, many references were made to instruction below the high school level. It was suggested by the committee that "some material from such subjects as English, arithmetic, natural history, and geography be introduced as early as the primary grades; that Latin be introduced at least a year earlier than was then the custom; that German, or French be offered as electives at the age of ten; and that at about the age of ten systematic instruction in concrete or experimental geometry should begin."⁴

³Ibid., p. 73.

⁴William T. Gruba and Harl R. Douglass, The Modern Junior High School, (New York: The Ronald Press Company, 1956), p. 8.

The report of the Committee of Ten played an important part in the reorganization of American education. Although the specific proposals of the committee to introduce secondary school studies earlier were not accepted immediately, it was these proposals which, after 1910, were reflected in the early programs of the junior high school education.⁵

In 1895 the National Education Association appointed the Committee on College Entrance Requirements to consider the question of bringing about a better understanding between the secondary schools and colleges and universities in regard to requirements for admission.⁶

The fourth resolution in the report of the Committee on College Entrance Requirements presented to the National Education Association in 1899 favored a unified six-year high school course of study beginning with the seventh grade. Educators of this committee agreed that the seventh and eighth grades of our schools could be enriched by eliminating non-essential subjects and adding new subjects formerly taught only in the high school. They felt that this problem could be solved more quickly by making the seventh and eighth grades part of the high school, under the direction of the high school principal.

⁵Ibid., p. 9.

⁶Addresses and Proceedings of the National Education Association, Los Angeles, California (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1899), p. 632.

It was the opinion of this committee that Latin and German in these grades had not been successful because qualified teachers were hard to obtain. They felt that science and mathematics were also suffering as a result of poorly qualified teachers.⁷

This committee stated in its report that "the seventh grade, rather than the ninth, is the natural turning-point in the pupil's life, as the age of adolescence demands new methods and wiser direction."⁸

The educators on the Committee on College Entrance Requirements felt that the transition from elementary to the secondary school could be made more easily by gradually changing from the one-teacher system to the system of special teachers in the seventh grade. This committee felt that special teachers in language, science, or mathematics would do much to retain desirable students in the high school and would definitely raise the educational standards of American citizenship. It was also expressed by this committee that students in the seventh and eighth grades would gain the inspiration of the high-school life and the desire to go farther in their studies, thus, providing a larger percentage of high school graduates.⁹

⁷Ibid., p. 659.

⁸Ibid., p. 659.

⁹Ibid., pp. 659-660.

In 1905 the Department of Secondary Education of the National Education Association appointed a standing committee on the equal division of time between elementary and secondary education. In its first report issued in 1907, this committee strongly favored a six-six plan of organization. It was the opinion of this committee that the six-six plan of organization would give the pupils the advantage of being taught by specialized teachers in different subject areas, and that daily contact with several personalities would be an advancement from the all-day association with one teacher. This committee felt that by extending the secondary school downward to include grades seven and eight the following could be accomplished: manual training shops could be modified to meet the needs of the students, work in modern languages could be begun earlier and continued longer, and the transition from the secondary school would be less abrupt.¹⁰

The standing committee on the equal division of time between the elementary and secondary education expressed a definite belief that the holding power of the school would be increased "if the influence, the methods, and the spirit of the secondary school could be begun two years earlier."¹¹

¹⁰ Gruhn and Douglass, The Modern Junior High School, p. 12.

¹¹ Addresses and Proceedings of the National Education Association, Los Angeles, California (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1907), p. 709.

Many arguments for a six-six plan of organization were presented by this committee for the first time. Among them were: (1) better trained teachers could be obtained; (2) conditions for better teaching could be developed; and (3) departmentalized instruction could be introduced. These arguments were greatly stressed later by proponents of the junior high school.¹²

During the early part of the twentieth century, many educators expressed the opinion that time was being wasted in the elementary and secondary schools and that two years could be saved without a loss of anything essential in culture, efficiency, or character-making. To explore this possibility the National Education Association appointed the Committee on Economy of Time in 1905. President Baker of the National Education Association was appointed chairman of this committee.¹³

In 1913, after seven years of research, the Committee on Economy of Time issued its final report. The committee agreed that there was much time wasted in the elementary schools and that the elementary period should not extend beyond grade six or age twelve. The following recommendations were made by the committee to end the formal elementary period at the end of six years: "choose the most

¹²Gruhn and Douglass, The Modern Junior High School, p. 12.

¹³Smith, The Junior High School, p. 85.

important subjects and the most important topics; make a distinction between first-rate facts and principles and tenth-rate; prime thoroughly, stick to the elements of a subject; do not try to teach everything that is good; and confine the period of elementary education to mastering the tools of education."¹⁴

Along with the above recommendations, President Baker also recommended that the last two years of the elementary school should be saved for the secondary school. President Suzzallo, the National Education Association president in 1913, went a step further. He, like Baker, recommended a six year elementary school and a six year secondary school divided into two administrative units, a junior high school and a senior high school. He felt that a point of articulation in the middle of a high-school system would lead to the establishment of vocational schools which were badly needed to meet the needs of those who could not obtain a formal education. President Suzzallo felt that the gap between the twelfth and eighteenth year was too large to "suit human nature, economic abilities or social needs."¹⁵

The first attempt to put some of the recommendations of the various committees into practice was made at Richmond, Indiana, in 1896. Grades seven and eight were

¹⁴Ibid., p. 89.

¹⁵Ibid., p. 91.

placed in a separate building. This was not merely a housing reorganization, but it included some significant program changes as well. Included in the curriculum were modifications in English, mathematics, social studies, music, and art. Practical arts and a foreign language were introduced in the curriculum. Departmentalized teaching, elective courses, promotion by subjects, and homerooms with faculty advisors were also a part of the program.¹⁶

Though Richmond is credited with having the first junior high school, the year 1909-10 is generally accepted as the time when the junior high school movement actually began. During this school year Columbus, Ohio, and Berkeley, California, adopted the six-three-three plan of organization. In both cities there were attempts to incorporate into the junior high school the best recommendations that had been made by educational leaders during the previous twenty-year period. As a result of the favorable attention given to those schools, the movement rapidly gained momentum. The number of junior high schools increased rapidly. By 1926 there were more than 1,100. Nearly a thousand more were added in the next eight years. In 1952 there were 3,227 separate schools and 10,351 combined junior-senior high schools. New junior high schools are being built all

¹⁶Gruhn and Douglass, The Modern Junior High School, p. 17.

over the country in an effort to keep up with the swelling tide of pupils. Even in the consolidated districts, the junior high school, which is a part of a six-year organization, is usually housed in a separate wing of the school, with specially selected teachers.¹⁷

We may conclude, after a half century of experimentation, that the junior high school has become a separate part of our public school organization. Its functions, advantages, and limitations are quite different from those of the elementary and senior high schools.

¹⁷Gertrude Moar, "A Movement Emerges," Educational Leadership, XIV, No. 8 (May, 1957), pp. 469-470.

CHAPTER II

THE FUNCTIONS OF THE JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL

William T. Gruhn defines the junior high school as "an educational program which is designed particularly to meet the needs, the interests, and the abilities of boys and girls during early adolescence."¹⁸ With this definition it is necessary to consider the basic needs and characteristics of early adolescence in order to understand fully the purpose and the function of the junior high school. Following is a brief statement of the basic needs of early adolescence and the role that the junior high school plays in meeting these needs:

1. To continue to acquire and maintain fundamental knowledge, attitudes, appreciations, and skills begun in elementary school. A continuing program in the language arts, in social studies, and in arithmetic, must be provided in junior high school to maintain the basic skills and to acquire the new ones that the pupil is capable of developing.¹⁹

As early adolescents develop and mature, instruction in the fundamentals can be given in greater depth than is appropriate in the elementary school. Because

¹⁸Gruhn and Douglass, The Modern Junior High School, p. 4.

¹⁹Clayton W. Buell. "Functions of the Junior High," The Clearing House, XXXIII, No. 2 (October, 1957). p. 99.

classroom activities tend to be rather formal, extraclass activities in the junior high school are especially appropriate for this purpose. In these activities, pupils can extend the skills and knowledge acquired in the classroom through such functional learning situations as participation in assemblies and clubs, the preparation of school publications, membership in the student council, and numerous other activities. These extraclass activities in the junior high school make it possible to continue instruction in the fundamental skills and basic knowledge in a functional setting and in depth appropriate for early adolescence.²⁰

2. To attain the social skills required for living in a democracy. Pupils tend to learn skills through repeated practice while trying to improve. They are given many chances to practice social skills in the junior high school while associating with pupils of their own age. Because of their desire to be accepted by their classmates, they are highly motivated to acquire social skills that will make them acceptable. This practice in social skills must take place at this age. When sufficient opportunities are given in the junior high school, students can be directed

²⁰William T. Gruhn. "Guidelines for Junior High School Education," The Bulletin of the National Association of Secondary-School Principals, VII, No. 271 (February, 1962).. p. 6.

into worth-while avenues. If the school cannot provide an answer to this basic need, early adolescents will create situations that will enable them to prove their worth in a group.²¹

3. To adjust to physical, emotional, and social changes and growth. For many, adolescence is a time of uneven and uncertain growth. These changes in the physical, mental, emotional, and social characteristics are new and often cause tension and conflict. The boy may wonder if he is normal or if he will be a freak. According to Buell, "the junior high school provides guidance, physical activity, knowledge concerning what is to be expected at this time, physical examination, health information, and reassurance that the pupil will develop to be a normal adult."²²

The pupil with problems of social, emotional, and physical growth may fall short in his academic achievement. The junior high school shares with the elementary school and the senior high school this concern for the child's growth as a total person; therefore, the total program of the junior high school is devoted to all aspects of the growth of early adolescence.²³

²¹Clayton E. Buell. "Functions of the Junior High," p. 99.

²²Ibid., p. 99

²³William T. Gruhn. "Guidelines for Junior High School Education," p. 8.

4. To establish satisfying relationships with boys and girls of his own age group. The junior high school recognizes that in adolescence the urge to be accepted by others of their own age has been increased. Junior high students must be accepted and must belong to the group if they are to develop normally. The school-wide activities and small group organizations and committees of the junior high school give pupils opportunities to work together and to play together. It is in these activities that the junior high pupil learns to do his share in an important job and becomes one of the group.²⁴

5. To grow in understanding of self. At the adolescent age the pupil is becoming more realistic about evaluating and recognizing his own strengths and weaknesses, his achievements and potentials. Tests and wide opportunities for trying out new things both help him to know himself. The junior high school guarantees a variety of activities, which makes self-discovery possible.²⁵

6. To establish new relationships with family and other adults. The shift from childhood to adulthood is a gradual process. Sometimes the adolescent wants and needs direction; sometimes he will have no part of it. He wants to be an adult, even though he cannot carry

²⁴Clayton E. Buell. "Functions of the Junior High," p. 99.

²⁵Ibid., p. 100.

out the responsibilities of adulthood. The junior high schools provide many opportunities where pupils may stand on their own feet. They learn to make decisions and to accept the responsibility for the decisions made. In health, homemaking, social studies, homeroom, mathematics, industrial arts, commerce, and other areas, pupils discuss and try out activities that relate to adult life.²⁶

7. To plan and prepare for a career. In the junior high school pupils approach the time when they must begin to make plans and decisions which have a significant bearing on their success and happiness in adult life. They approach the end of compulsory education and must soon decide whether to continue in school; they must plan a curriculum and activities for the senior high school; and they should begin to formulate educational and vocational goals beyond the secondary school.²⁷

In junior high school, pupils learn about careers, explore their capabilities and interests through varied activities provided in the school, learn how their abilities relate to the world of work and preparation for it, discover what abilities they have, and make educational choices that are dependent upon broad areas of work. Both exploration and guidance are important aspects of the junior high school program.²⁸

²⁶Ibid., p. 100.

²⁷William T. Gruhn. "Guidelines for Junior High School Education," p. 9.

²⁸Clayton E. Buell. "Functions of the Junior High," p. 100.

8. To build a personal system of standards and values. During the adolescent period, pupils become more sensitive to ideals and ethical values. Pupils begin to disregard the answers given to them by adults; they search for answers themselves. They build up their own values by questioning, by testing, by arguing, by rebelling, and by selecting. The junior high school provides a healthy atmosphere wherein this growth process can take place. Teachers in junior high schools realize that the process is important and provide sympathetic and understanding guidance in the development of a personal code of behavior and socially acceptable standards in each pupil.²⁹

Although the primary function of the junior high school is to provide an educational program which is designed to meet the needs, interests, and abilities of early adolescence, it possesses other characteristics which are quite different from the senior high school and the elementary school. Following is an outline of the special characteristics of the junior high school:

1. The junior high school is primarily a transitional school. In the elementary school, the instructional program is largely child-centered. Children have common educational objectives; therefore, the program is essentially the same for all pupils. The pupils' relations

²⁹Ibid., p. 100.

with the teacher, the principal, and other staff members are usually direct. This is not the case in the senior high school. The educational program becomes subject-centered. Individuals seek different educational and vocational goals; they participate in a variety of extra-class activities; they have contact with several teachers. The contact that the senior high pupil has with the principal, supervisory personnel, and other administrative personnel is indirect.

Because of its unique position in the school system, the junior high school has the responsibility of helping pupils make the transition from the program of the elementary school to that of the senior high school. Junior high teachers must maintain a knowledge of new studies, materials, and instructional practices of the elementary and the senior high schools in order to maintain satisfactory articulation in the total school program.³⁰

2. The junior high school should provide a program which is primarily one of general education rather than specialized learnings for specific educational and vocational goals. In recent years the concept of exploration has been broadened and the practices modified. The junior high school provides many experiences for the children to know more about the world, job opportunities,

³⁰William T. Gruhn. "Guidelines for Junior High School Education," p. 5.

the social order, and themselves.³¹ A program which emphasizes general education rather than specialized curricula is consistent with the exploratory purpose, the attention to fundamental skills and knowledge, and the concern for all aspects of child growth and development. The practical arts offered in the junior high school provide the pupils with much information concerning the problems of human relations; they give them the opportunity to improve their family life and to discover new leisure-time activities. According to Noar, "the experiences in the shops, kitchens, and living rooms also make a significant contribution to mental health and the development of balanced personalities."³²

3. The junior high school should provide for the guidance and counseling of early adolescents in their success in school, their plans for further education, their vocational plans, and their growth toward adulthood. There are certain personal, social, and citizenship problems of early adolescence which require increased guidance and counseling in the junior high school. The social activities of adolescents are becoming more complex, with youth participating in them much earlier than in the past. The boy-girl relationships in the junior high school have been changing,

³¹Gertrude Noar, The Junior High School--Today and Tomorrow, (New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1961) p. 6.

³²Ibid., p. 6.

with dating common at an earlier age. Supervision by parents is more relaxed as more mothers are employed away from home. Neighborhood and community influences in both urban and rural areas frequently lead to problems of delinquency among early adolescents.³³

4. The junior high school should provide an educational program which will meet the many different backgrounds, interests, aptitudes, abilities, and needs of individual pupils. There are wide differences among early adolescents in their social, emotional and psychological development. They have a wide range of interests in academic, cultural, and avocational pursuits; motivation in academic studies varies greatly among individuals; and as pupils continue in school, they differ more and more in their achievement in basic skills and knowledge. The junior high school program should provide for these differences among pupils in the curriculum, in the extra-class activities, in the guidance and counseling program, and in the administrative practices and organization of the school.³⁴

5. The junior high school should challenge the increasingly mature abilities and interests of early adolescents by introducing them to new studies and by offering greater depth in studies which they have

³³William T. Gruhn. "Guidelines for Junior High School Education," p. 11.

³⁴Ibid., pp. 11-12.

previously begun in the elementary school. The studies offered at the turn of the century in grades seven and eight of the elementary school were often considered by pupils as largely a review of work previously covered in the lower and intermediate elementary grades. By concentrating grades seven, eight, and nine in the junior high school, pupil enrollment in these grades are sufficiently large to employ teachers who are specialists in their subjects and to provide the specialized facilities and equipment needed for certain new studies. It is possible in the junior high school to provide laboratories for science and foreign languages; more adequate instructional materials in a school library; shops for industrial arts; special facilities for music, art, and physical education; an auditorium for experiences in oral expression; and equipment for typing instruction. The junior high school with its specialized teaching staff, its departmentalized organization, and its special facilities can provide an educational program which presents a significant challenge to the more mature abilities and broad interests of early adolescents.³⁵

³⁵Ibid., pp. 6-7.

CHAPTER III

ADVANTAGES AND LIMITATIONS OF THE JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL

From the beginning of the junior high school movement, many claims have been made concerning the advantages of the junior high school, and at the same time, some disadvantages have been claimed.

There are four major areas in which advantages and disadvantages have been claimed by the junior high school. These are: "(1) the curriculum, the teaching staff, and other aspects of instruction; (2) achievement of pupils; (3) provisions for guidance, meeting pupil needs, and retention of pupils; and (4) housing, equipment, and cost."³⁶ On the following pages there will be presented a discussion of the advantages and limitations of the junior high school in reference to the above areas.

1. The curriculum, the teaching staff, and other aspects of instruction. An adequate program of instruction in home economics, industrial arts, music, art, and physical education can be provided at a reasonable cost more easily in a junior high school than in an elementary school. In grades seven, eight, and nine, these subjects demand special facilities and specialized teachers, which are not easily provided in the elementary school.

³⁶Grubm and Douglass, The Modern Junior High School, p. 45.

The small number of pupils in grades seven and eight in the typical elementary school does not justify the staff or facilities for these subjects and activities. However, the junior high school, which draws its students from several elementary schools, is large enough to provide the facilities and the staff for this broader curriculum.³⁷ When large groups of junior high students are in one building, it is possible to offer instruction in one or more foreign languages.³⁸

In addition to a broader curriculum, it is evident that curriculum changes for pupils in grades seven, eight, and nine are made more easily in junior high schools than in schools under the eight-four plan. A number of factors account for this greater flexibility. First, with grades seven to nine in a separate school, it is easier to study the needs of pupils in this age group and to develop a program to meet these needs. Second, a faculty is provided which has a wider variety of backgrounds and experiences. Third, the fact that the junior high school is a new institution, which is free from the limitations of tradition, encourages curriculum change.

³⁷Ibid., p. 46.

³⁸Leslie J. Chamberlin. "Advantages of the Junior High School," School and Community, XLVII, No. 7 (March, 1961), p. 21.

Fourth, a junior high school, with a new building and new leadership, creates a situation which is conducive to curriculum changes.

One of the most important advantages of the junior high school is that it can provide a broad program of extraclass activities suitable for young adolescents. The opportunity to participate in an activity of their choice is available to all pupils. Provision is made for all teachers to contribute to the activity period through sponsorship of a group or club. The activity period stresses the value of extraclass activities by giving them a status equal with that of the curriculum.³⁹

As a result of higher salaries, greater prestige, departmentalized teaching, and better opportunities for promotion, the junior high school attracts better qualified teachers than grades seven and eight of the elementary school. Also, the junior high school attracts more men than the elementary school, giving pupils more contact with men teachers.⁴⁰

In spite of the apparent advantages of the junior high school instructional program, it has been subjected to some criticism. Many educators feel that it is

³⁹ Leonard V. Koos, Junior High School Trends, (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1955), pp. 88-89.

⁴⁰ Gruhn and Douglass, The Modern Junior High School, p. 47.

undemocratic and educationally unsound to introduce pupils so early to specialized education through vocational courses and differentiated curriculums. This practice, however, has been virtually dismissed in our education. There are some schools that offer a differentiated curriculum in the ninth grade, but the single curriculum is rapidly becoming the prevailing practice.⁴¹

Another criticism of the instructional program has been directed to the high degree of departmentalization in the junior high school. Departmentalization, which is an imitation of the practice of the four-year high school, is frowned upon by elementary school educators, who favor keeping pupils with one teacher.

A deficiency of teachers available who are well prepared in the philosophy, the program, and the organization of the junior high school is another criticism of the instructional program. Teachers for a new junior high school are usually drawn from the four-year high school and grades seven and eight of the elementary school. Instead of developing new methods and practices, they often continue the practices to which they are accustomed.

2. Achievement of pupils. Many educators and parents feel that the achievement of pupils will suffer in the junior high school. Several studies have been conducted

⁴¹W. V. Til, G. F. Vars, and J. H. Lounsbury, Modern Education for the Junior High School Years, (New York: The Bobbs-Merrill Company, Inc, 1961), p. 56.

to compare pupil achievement in the junior high schools with schools on the eight-four plan. It was found that there was no significant differences in achievement between the pupils in grades seven and eight in the eight-four schools and those in the junior high schools. The same results were found when graduates of the eight-four plan were compared with graduates of the junior high school after they entered senior high school.⁴²

3. Provisions for guidance, meeting pupil needs, and retention of pupils. Another advantage of bringing together a fairly large group of children is that it makes a guidance program more feasible. In most junior high schools guidance specialists, who devote much of their time to the guidance program, are employed. This is not possible under the eight-four system.

The junior high school provides greater flexibility in caring for the gifted child and the slow learner. A semi-departmentalized junior high school program provides this flexibility for the gifted child, and the slow learner benefits by having materials and instruction more suitable to his ability level.⁴³

⁴²Ibid., pp. 49-50.

⁴³Leslie J. Chamberlin. "Advantages of the Junior High School," p. 22.

By offering an educational program that is attractive to young adolescents, the junior high school has fewer withdrawals and less retardation in the ninth grade than the schools under the eight-four system. Ninth-grade teachers in four-year high schools tend to have a more severe attitude concerning the promotion and failure of pupils than do teachers in the junior high schools.

The junior high school provides for better articulation in the contents of subjects taught and a gradual transition in the methods of teaching from the elementary school to the high school. Gradual departmentalization produces less serious effects in the junior high school than the sudden changes to departmentalization in the eight-four plan.⁴⁴

Many educators believe that the disciplinary situation, both in the elementary school and in grades seven and eight of the junior high school, is better when the older pupils are separated from the younger ones.

4. Housing, equipment, and cost. As compared with the eight-grade elementary schools, the junior high schools usually have better libraries, gymnasiums, auditoriums, science rooms, and arts and crafts rooms. This is made possible when large numbers of pupils are housed in one building.

⁴⁴Ibid., p. 22.

Educators generally agree that a program that is suitable for young adolescents can be provided at less cost in a junior high school than in schools under the eight-four plan. This is also due to the larger number of pupils in the junior high schools.

The cost of providing appropriate staff for the special services and activities of the junior high school is usually less than in schools under the eight-four plan. It is expensive to provide the services of teachers for band, orchestra, and glee club; for industrial arts, home economics, and arts and crafts; a school librarian; and guidance specialists for seventh and eighth-grade pupils in the elementary school. In the elementary schools such staff members would have to serve several schools. With a larger number of students in the junior high schools, it is possible to secure competent personnel for these special activities and services.⁴⁵

⁴⁵Gruhn and Douglass, The Modern Junior High School, pp. 54-55.

SUMMARY

The junior high school emerged as a separate educational program about fifty years ago. It was hoped by many educators that it would solve many of the problems that existed in education. Among these problems were:

(1) the large number of pupils who dropped out of school at the end of the sixth and eighth years; (2) the transition from the elementary school to the senior high school was too abrupt; (3) the inability of the elementary school to make adequate provisions for the increased size of so many of the boys and girls and for the needs which grew out of the nature of developmental changes in the early teens; and (4) the inability of the elementary school to provide for the needs, the interests, and the abilities of early adolescents.

The functions and the purposes of the junior high school are primarily aimed at meeting the needs, the interests, and the abilities of early adolescents. Among the needs of early adolescents are: (1) to continue to acquire and maintain knowledge, attitudes, appreciations, and skills begun in elementary school; (2) to attain the social skills required for living in a democracy; (3) to adjust to physical, emotional, social changes and growth; (4) to establish satisfying relationships with other .

adolescence; (5) to grow in understanding of self; (6) to establish new relationships with family and other adults; (7) to plan and prepare for a career; and (8) to build a personal system of standards and values.

The junior high school has definite advantages over the elementary school under the eight-four plan. Among the advantages are: (1) broader curriculum; (2) more flexible curriculum; (3) more extraclass activities; (4) better provisions for guidance; (5) better provisions for meeting pupil needs; (6) longer retention of pupils; (7) better discipline; and (8) greater economy.

Criticism has been directed toward the specialized education of the junior high school. Departmentalization of the junior high school has been criticized by elementary educators. It is also the belief of many that there is a shortage of teachers who are prepared in the philosophy, the program, and the organization of the junior high school. The continued growth of the junior high school is evidence that the advantages of the junior high school greatly exceed the disadvantages credited to it.

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