ABSTRACT
        This paper outlines, explains, and illustrates the
core block model of scheduling, which allows students to spend more
time with fewer teachers and encourages greater teacher interaction
and ownership in the lives of their students. The core model has been
used effectively with advisory programs, drop schedules, and
exploratory blocks. It serves as an alternative to interdisciplinary
teaming, and provides a workable method for small schools to adopt
many researched-based middle level practices. Appended are 17
references and an 11-item annotated bibliography on middle school
effectiveness. (Author/JAM)

THE WASHINGTON CORE MODEL OF MIDDLE SCHOOL ORGANIZATION

Presented by

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Abstract: The core block model of scheduling allows for students to spend more time with fewer teachers and encourages teacher ownership in the lives of students. The core organization has been used effectively with advisory programs, drop schedules, and exploratory blocks. It serves as an alternative to interdisciplinary teaming, and provides a workable method for small schools to adopt many research-based middle level practices.

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II.   Goodlad, 1983; Caught in the Middle--California, 1987

Core represents a unified course of studies that ALL students undertake. The core is broad-based, focuses on major issues of civilization, and has as a goal the development of skills in writing, reading, calculating, reasoning and thinking critically. Coursework includes cultural literacy, scientific literacy and knowledge of the humanities.

Clarifying Terminology:

This concept is often mentioned under the rubric of "core curriculum". Recent attempts to define specific student learning objectives address this issue.

Comments: Since this idea asks CONTENT related (or "what") questions, the first questions that come to mind are

(1) What will the core curriculum contain?

(2) Who will decide?

III.   Vars, 1987; Wright, 1958

"Core" refers to a multi-period block of time where one teacher shares time with one group of students. Interdisciplinary instruction is encouraged.

Example: A Westward Expansion unit might include engaging in a simulation game on the fur trade rendezvous (history), writing historically accurate letters to relatives. back home from the Oregon Trail (writing), and reading Guthrie's THE BIG SKY (reading), all taught by one teacher.

Historical Precedent: Junior high block programs of the late 1950's and 1960's
7th grade ,(or 6th grade) transition programs in current junior high schools (middle schools)
Elementary (and middle school) self-contained classroom programs
Jefferson Middle School, Olympia, Washington, 1975 - 1988

Commments: This is a PROCESS concept. Any of the inter-disciplinary approaches mentioned can be used within this category.

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THE CONCEPT OF CORE: RELATED DEFINITIONS AND FRAMEWORK

"Core", according to Webster, refers to the innermost or
essential part. In education, the term has been associated
with curriculum, or what is taught, as well as scheduling, or
when, by whom, and to whom lessons are delivered.

KEY DEFINITIONS/INTERDISCIPLINARY APPROACHES

INTERDISCIPLINARY: This refers to teaching that combines two
or more subjects in a single unit or lesson.   Within this
category are at least three sub-definitions:

1. CURRICULUM CORRELATION: This refers to planning lessons
    to correlate various subject matter. For instance, an
    interdisciplinary lesson in social studies and math
    could combine the buying and selling of stocks (social
    studies/economics) with graphing the changes in stock
    prices (math).

2. CURRICULUM FUSION: This refers to labeling courses so
    that two or more subjects are combined under a different
    title. For example, an eighth grade block of language
    arts and social studies could be combined in a two
    period block called American Studies.

3. CORE CURRICULUM (Vars and Lounsberry Definition): This
    refers to interdisciplinary teaching in which the
    main focus is upon analyzing particular social problems.

THE CONCEPT OF CORE: ALTERNATIVE DEFINITIONS

I.   Lounsberry and Vars, 1978; Vars, 1987

     Core is a type of interdisciplinary curriculum in which
     the primary commitment is to help students confront
     problems and issues of significance to society or to
     themselves.

     Example: A unit entitled "Our Changing Selves" could
     involve studying the biological changes that accompany
     puberty (biology and health), changing interpersonal
     relations (social studies), poems and literature about
     adolescence (literature), adolescence in art, dance and
     drama (arts), and body changes as they impact athletic
     performance (physical education). Core thus involves
     students and teachers devoting a significant share of the
     academic day to studying a central problem. Disciplines
     are used to analyze the problem; not to organize
     instruction.

Historical Precedent: Col. Francis Parker, 1880's
                       John Dewey, U. of Chicago Lab School, 1900

Comments: This is the third, and most sophisticated of the
           interdisciplinary teaching approaches listed on
           page one. This notion of core focuses on PROCESS,

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ALTERNATIVE MIDDLE LEVEL ORGANIZATIONAL ARRANGEMENTS

I. DEPARTMENTALIZATION (see figures 1 through 4)

Historical Precedent: Junior High School (and High School)

Unifying Concept: Courses taught separately; students have
                     separate teachers for each class; school
                     often mapped out by department

Advantages:

1. Ease of scheduling

2. Certification limitations not a problem

3. Assurances of subject matter-competence of staff

4. Departmental meetings and leadership focus
    on curricular/subject matter concerns

5. Teachers have a low number of preparations

Disadvantages:

1. Teachers are likely to focus on content, not kids

2. Teachers see too many students during the day

3. Students (especially entering ones) are
    confused and bewildered by the change from
    one to six or seven teachers

4. Students lack (in the absence of an advisory
    program) one adult to know and confide in

5. Teacher isolation from peers

Additional Considerations:

1. Competition (and cutting) are likely to undergird
    athletic and activity programs

2. High school programs and practices are likely to be
    emulated

SCHEDULE TYPE _Departmentalized_   NO. STUDENTS _150 (6 @ 25)_

NO. TEACHERS _____7_____   NO. PERIODS ___7___

VIEWED FROM PERSPECTIVE OF _Student_   LA = LANGUAGE ARTS,

SS = SOCIAL STUDIES, SC = SCIENCE, M = MATH, PE = PHYSICAL EDUCATION,

EX = EXPLORATORY, R = READING

PER. \ STU GRP	A	B	C	D	E	F
1	LA	SS	SC	M	PE	EX
2	R	LA	SS	SC	M	PE
3	EX	R	LA	SS	SC	M
4	PE	EX	R	LA	SS	SC
5	M	PE	EX	R	LA	SS
6	SC	M	PE	EX	R	LA
7	SS	SC	M	PE	EX	R

FIGURE 1: DEPARTMENTALIZED, STUDENT, NO MIXING

SCHEDULE TYPE <u>Departmentalized</u>   NO. STUDENTS <u>150 (6 @ 25)</u>

NO. TEACHERS <u>7</u>   NO. PERIODS <u>7</u>

VIEWED FROM PERSPECTIVE OF <u>Teacher</u>   LA = LANGUAGE ARTS,

SS = SOCIAL STUDIES, SC = SCIENCE, M = MATH, PE = PHYSICAL EDUCATION,

EX = EXPLORATORY, R = READING

PER.	T_1	T_2	T_3	T_4	T_5	T_6	T_7
1	LA_A	SS_B	SC_C	M_D	PE_E	EX_F	Plan
2	LA_B	SS_C	SC_D	M_E	PE_F	Plan	R_A
3	LA_C	SS_D	SC_E	M_F	Plan	EX_A	R_B
4	LA_D	SS_E	SC_F	Plan	PE_A	EX_B	R_C
5	LA_E	SS_F	Plan	M_A	PE_B	EX_C	R_D
6	LA_F	Plan	SC_A	M_B	PE_C	EX_D	R_E
7	Plan	SS_A	SC_B	M_C	PE_D	EX_E	R_F

FIGURE 2: DEPARTMENTALIZED, TEACHER, NO MIXING

II. INTERDISCIPLINARY TEAMING (see figures 5 through 8)

Historical Precedent: Middle School Movement of 1970-87
                       Team Teaching (1970's)
                       Reference: Alexander and George, 1981

Unifying Concept: A group of students and a group of
                   teachers schooled in various disciplines
                   have responsibility for learning
                   experiences for a block of time
                   For example, four teachers, each
                   schooled in a separate subject (e.g.
                   language arts, social studies, math and
                   science) take responsibility for the
                   instruction of 100 students in a four
                   period block.

Advantages:

1. Staff support system in place with teams

2. Teachers can still teach in major fields
    (certification problems are minimized)

3. Students have a "home base" in the team

4. Teacher preparations can remain relatively low

5. Modular scheduling/flexible time can be easily employed

6. Field trips/longer activities can be scheduled

Interdisciplinary Team Organization: Disadvantages

1. In absense of separate team planning time, teachers
    resent the use of individual planning time for team
    meetings

2. Team personality clashes can impact effectiveness

3. Students can still have four teachers teaching four
    basic subjects

4. Scheduling common planning times for staff is limiting

5. Departmentalization/subject matter emphasis diminsihes

6. Teachers may still see large numbers of students in a day

7. Small schools have difficulty scheduling

8. Inservice on group process skills is necessary

Additional Considerations:

1. Advisory programs often accompany the team approach;
    however, these periods may interrupt team time

2. Participartory athletic and activity programs
    typically follow

3. Elementary rather than high school emphasis is likely
    after school rather than evening student activities;
    parent conferences in addition to back-to-school nights

SCHEDULE TYPE __Interdisciplinary__   NO. STUDENTS __150 (6@25)__

NO. TEACHERS __10__   NO. PERIODS __7__

VIEWED FROM PERSPECTIVE OF __Student__   LA = LANGUAGE ARTS,

SS = SOCIAL STUDIES, SC = SCIENCE, M = MATH, PE = PHYSICAL EDUCATION,

EX = EXPLORATORY, R = READING

PER.	A ↔ B		C ↔ D		E ↔ F	
1	LA	SS	SC	M	PE	PE
2	M	LA	SS	SC	EX	EX
3	SC	M	LA	SS	LA	SS
4	SS	SC	M	LA	SS	LA
5	EX	EX	PE	PE	R	R
6	PE	PE	R	R	M	SC
7	R	R	EX	EX	SC	M

FIGURE 5: INTERDISCIPLINARY TEAM, STUDENT, SUBJECT ORIENTATION

SCHEDULE TYPE _Interdisciplinary_   NO. STUDENTS _150 (6 @ 25)_

NO. TEACHERS _10_   NO. PERIODS _7_

VIEWED FROM PERSPECTIVE OF _Student_   LA = LANGUAGE ARTS,

SS = SOCIAL STUDIES, SC = SCIENCE, M = MATH, PE = PHYSICAL EDUCATION,

EX = EXPLORATORY, R = READING, TM1 = LA, SS, M & SC, TM2 = LA, SS & R,

TM3 = M & SC

FIGURE 6:   INTERDISCIPLINARY TEAM, STUDENT, TEAM ORIENTATION

SCHEDULE TYPE _Interdisciplinary_   NO. STUDENTS _150 (6 @ 25)_

NO. TEACHERS _10_   NO. PERIODS _7_

VIEWED FROM PERSPECTIVE OF _Teacher_   LA = LANGUAGE ARTS,

SS = SOCIAL STUDIES, SC = SCIENCE, M = MATH, PE = PHYSICAL EDUCATION,

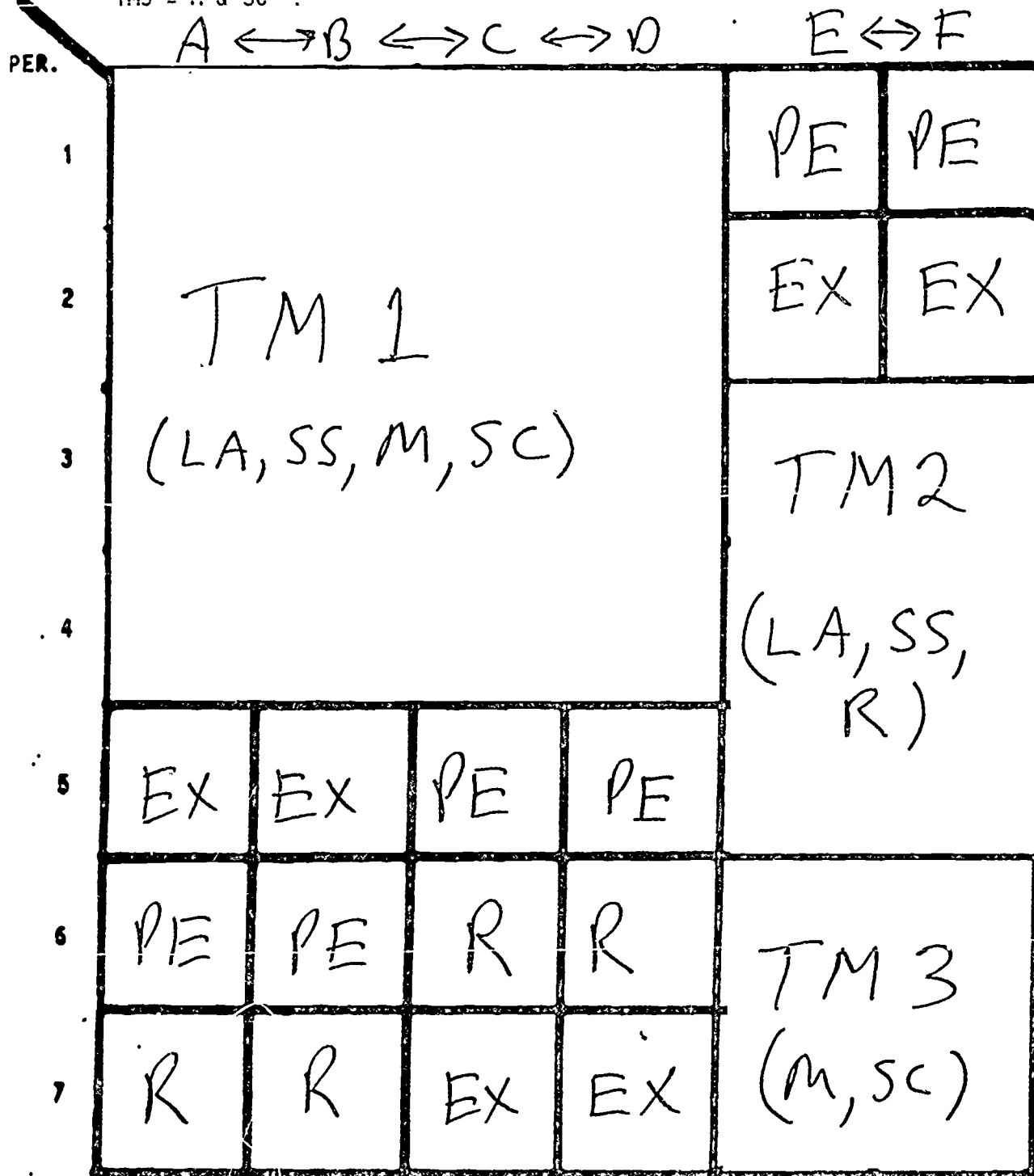EX = EXPLORATORY, R = READING, TM1 = LA, SS, SC & M, TM2 = LA, SS & R,

TM3 = SC & M, OA = OTHER ASSIGNMENT OR PLANNING

PER. TCH	T₁	T₂	T₃	T₄	T₅	T₆	T₇	T₈	T₉	T₁₀
1	TM 1 (LA, SS, M, SC) (Group A, B, C, D)				OA	OA	PE E	PE F	OA	OA
2					OA	OA	OA	OA	EX E	EX F
3					TM2 (LA, SS, R) (Group E+F)		OA	OA	OA	OA
4							OA	OA	OA	OA
5	Plan	Plan	Plan	Plan			PE C	PE D	EX A	EX B
6	R_C	R_D	TM 3 (M, SC) (Group E+F)		OA	OA	PE A	PE B	OA	A
7	R_A	R_B			OA	OA	OA	OA	EX C	EX D

FIGURE 8: INTERDISCIPLINARY TEAM, TEACHER, TEAM ORIENTATION

III. BLOCK TIME (CORE) (see figures 9 through 13)

Hiscorical Precedent: Junior high block programs (1950's)
                       Self-contained elementary program
                       (K-5, K-6 aor K-8)
                       Jefferson Middle School, Olympia,
                       Washington, 1975

Unifying Concept: A single teacher and a single class of
                   students are assigned a number of courses
                   over a multi-period block of time

Advantages:

1. Teachers are assigned relatively small numbers of students

2. Teachers "own" students (like elementary school)

3. Parent conferences are easier to arrange (as are
    progress notes, make-up assignment requests, etc.)

4. Interdisciplinary units are possible without team
    collaboration

5. Issues of planning time for team meetings are defused

6. Curricular decisions are made by one person (efficiency)

7. Modular scheduling/flexible time possible

8. Field trips/longer activities possible

9. Smaller schools can employ more easily than teaming

Block Time Organization: Disadvantages:

1. Certification restrictions may not allow a multi-period
    block

2. Content-competence of some teachers may be questioned

3. Teacher isolation may become (remain?) a problem

4. Interdisciplinary units may be less rich without collabor-
    ation

5. Parent conference fairness is an issue for block vs.
    non-block teachers

6. Multiple teacher preparations

7. Discipline/subject matter staff collaboration is minimized

8. Lack ᴄᶜ teaming removes peer support system

Additional Considerations:

1. As with teaming, elementary (participation) philosophy on
    athletics, activities, and parent relationships with the
    school are likely

2. With lunch and advisory periods within the schedule, some
    core blocks will have to be interrupted

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SCHEDULE TYPE **Block-Time (Core)**   NO. STUDENTS **150 (6 @ 25)**

NO. TEACHERS **9**   NO. PERIODS **7**

VIEWED FROM PERSPECTIVE OF **Student**   LA = LANGUAGE ARTS,

SS = SOCIAL STUDIES, SC = SCIENCE, M = MATH, PE = PHYSICAL EDUCATION,

EX = EXPLORATORY, R = READING

PER.	A	B	C	D	E	F
1	LA	LA	LA	M	PE	PE
2	SS	SS	SS	SC	M	EX
3	R	R	R	EX	SC	M
4	M	EX	PE	PE	EX	SC
5	SC	M	EX	LA	LA	LA
6	EX	SC	M	SS	SS	SS
7	PE	PE	SC	R	R	R

FIGURE 9: BLOCK-TIME, STUDENT, SUBJECT ORIENTATION

SCHEDULE TYPE __Block-Time (Core)__ NO. STUDENTS __150 (6@25)__

NO. TEACHERS __9__   NO. PERIODS __7__   PAGE 14

VIEWED FROM PERSPECTIVE OF __Student__   LA = LANGUAGE ARTS,

SS = SOCIAL STUDIES, SC = SCIENCE, M = MATH, PE = PHYSICAL EDUCATION,

EX = EXPLORATORY, R = READING, B1 = LA, SS & R, B2 = M & SC

PER.	A	B	C	D	E	F
1	B1 LA, SS, R	B1 LA, SS, R	B1 LA, SS, R	B2 M, SC	PE	PE
2					B2 M, SC	EX
3				EX		B2 M, SC
4	B2 M, S	EX	PE	PE	EX	
5		B2 M, SC	EX	B1 LA, SS, R	B1 LA, SS, R	B1 LA, SS, R
6	EX		B2 M, SC			
7	PE	PE				

FIGURE 10: BLOCK-TIME, STUDENT, CORE ORIENTATION, NO MIXING

SCHEDULE TYPE **Block-Time (Core)**   NO. STUDENTS **150 (6 @ 25)**

NO. TEACHERS **9**   NO. PERIODS **7**

VIEWED FROM PERSPECTIVE OF **Teacher**   LA = LANGUAGE ARTS,

SS = SOCIAL STUDIES, SC = SCIENCE, M = MATH, PE = PHYSICAL EDUCATION,

EX = EXPLORATORY, R = READING, B1 = LA, SS & R, B2 = M & SC, OA = OTHER

ASSIGNMENT OR PLANNING

PER.	T1	T2	T3	T4	T5	T6	T7	T8	T9
1	B1_A (LA, SS, R)	B1_B (LA, SS, R)	B1_C (LA, SS, R)	B2_D (M, SC)	Plan	PE_E	PE_F	OA	OA
2				B2_D (M, SC)	B2_E (M, SC)	OA	OA	EX_F	OA
3				B2_F (M, SC)	B2_E (M, SC)	OA	OA	EX_D	OA
4	Plan	Plan	Plan	B2_F (M, SC)	B2_A (M, SC)	PE_C	PE_D	EX_B	EX_E
5	B1_D (LA, SS, R)	B1_E (LA, SS, R)	B1_F (LA, SS, R)	B2_B (M, SC)	B2_A (M, SC)	OA	OA	EX_C	OA
6	B1_D (LA, SS, R)	B1_E (LA, SS, R)	B1_F (LA, SS, R)	B2_B (M, SC)	B2_C (M, SC)	OA	OA	EX_A	OA
7				Plan	B2_C (M, SC)	PE_A	PE_B	OA	OA

FIGURE 11: BLOCK-TIME, TEACHER, CORE ORIENTATION, NO MIXING

ADDITIONAL FACTORS FOR CONSIDERATION IN CHOOSING A
MIDDLE LEVEL ORGANIZATIONAL FRAMEWORK

I. INTERDISCIPLINARIT"

The extent to which a school believes in interdisciplinarity
will in large measure determine its optimium organization. A
high need for interdisciplianry teaching will result in the
choice of teaming or block scheduling. If teaming is chosen,
inservice in group process, team management and interpersonal
communications is necessary, as is some solution of the team
planning time issue.

II. CERTIFICATION

States with permissive or middle school specific certification
requirements will enable the establishment of block schedules
more easily than those without either. 27 states now have
some form of middle level certification, some permissive and
others mandatory. States which demand high school-like
transcripts for middle school teachers will undoubtedly have
to adopt teaming or departmentalization as their model.

Washington recently has changed from rather permissive
certification (K-12 likely), to divisions between K-8
generalist and 4-12 specialist effective in August of 1S87.
Those with certificates issued before that time will be
grandfathered. The K-8 limit is scheduled to be further
reduced to K-6 in 1992. Block-time programs are therefore
likely to be dropped or modified in the next decade.

III. DROP SCHEDULE

Many schools which make middle school transitions from junior
high to middle school programs also increase the school day
from six to seven periods. In addition, many simultaneously
add advisory programs. The change to an eight period day can
be overwhelming for staff. The alternative plan has been to
employ a drop schedule (see figures 14 and 15). In this case
period lengths can be maintained at approximately 55 minutes,
a length which typically is popular with activity (PE,
industrial arts, science, art) teachers.

SEVEN PERIOD DROP SCHEDULE

8:00	8:51	2	1	1	1	1	1	1	
8:55	9:46	3	3	2	2	2	2	2	
9:50	10:16	ADVISORY							
10:16	10:26	BREAK							
10:26	11:17	4	4	4	3	3	3	3	1st Lunch 11:17 - 11:47
11:21 / 11:51	12:11 / 12:41	5	5	5	5	4	4	4	2nd Lunch 12:11 - 12:41
12:46	1:36	6	6	6	6	6	5	5	
1:40	2:30	7	7	7	7	7	7	6	
DROP DAY		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	

FIGURE 14: SEVEN PERIOD DROP SCHEDULE

.FLOATING PERIOD DROP SCHEDULE

PERIOD	TIME	
1.	8:00 to 8:51	
2.	8:55 to 9:46	
Advisory	9:50 to 10:16	
Break	10:16 to 10:26	
3.	10:26 to 11:17	
First 4th `	11:21 to 12:11	(Lunch 12:11 to 12:41)
Second 4th	11:51 to 12:41	(Lunch 11:17 to 11:47)
5.	12:46 to 1:36	
6.	1:40 to 2:30	
7.	Rotates into the schedule on drop days. For instance, on "Drop 2" the 7th period class meets from 8:55 to 9:46, time normally assigned to 2nd period.	

FIGURE 15: SEVEN PERIOD DAY FLOATING DROP SCHEDULE

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Alan Burke
University of Washington
October, 1987

MIDDLE SCHOOL EFFECTIVENESS: A SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY

Alexander, W. M. (1968). THE EMERGENT MIDDLE SCHOOL. New York: Holt
    Rinehart and Winston, Inc.

William Alexander's classic study has been a benchmark for middle level
research and development since its publication. Although intended as a
text for beginning middle school teachers, the thrust of the book goes far
beyond a methods textbook. Chapters on human growth and development,
curriculum, staffing and organization outline what has become the dominant
organizational model for today's middle schools. Alexander borrows
heavily from real-world school situations to illustrate his points and
support his thesis.

Alexander, W. M. and George, P. S. (1981). THE EXEMPLARY MIDDLE SCHOOL.
    New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, Inc.

Picking up where THE EMERGENT MIDDLE SCHOOL left off, this book is often
cited as the authortative source of information on the nuts and bolts of
establishing a successful middle school. Theory, research and school
examples are used to explain such concepts as advisor-advisee,
interdisciplinary teams, block scheduling and intramural athletics. This
is probably the one book that successfully combines theory and practice in
a format that everyone interested in middle schools can use productively.

AN AGENDA FOR EXCELLENCE AT THE MIDDLE LEVEL (1986). Reston, Va:
    National Association of Secondary School Principals.

Middle level experts Al Arth, J. Howard Johnston, John Lounsbury, Conrad
Toepfer, and George Melton collaborate on a statement outlining the
components which successful middle level schools should maintain. This
agenda is painted with a broad brush: the general outline of success is
articulated, but specifics are omitted. However, this document provides
the student with a brief and succinct list of what ought to be present in
good middle level schools.

CAUGHT IN THE MIDDLE: EDUCATIONAL REFORM FOR YOUNG ADOLESCENTS IN
    CALIFORNIA PUBLIC SCHOOLS (1987). Sacramento: California State
    Department of Education.

This report, written chiefly by James Fenwick and carried out through the
work of a task force of middle level educators led by California
Superintendent of Public Instruction Bill Honig, reviews the current state
of middle level education in California and suggests a number of reforms,
all of which are designed to create schools which better meet the needs of
middle level students. The report focuses on an analysis of twenty-two
principles for successful middle level education and makes recommendations
for district and building level implementation of each principle.

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Eichorn, D. H. (1966). THE MIDDLE SCHOOL. New York: Center for Applied Research in Education, Inc.

The publication of this book often has been cited as the launching point of the "new" middle school movement. In the mid-1960's the dominant form of middle level organization was the 6-3-3 plan. Eichorn argued that the rapid physical and social/psychological maturation of adolescents in the 1960's pointed to the need for a grade 6-8 plan to most appropriately serve students in the middle. He coined the term "transescent" to describe children in the 10 to 14 age range, and called for a new school organization designed to meet the needs of this particular age group. This book has been recently (1987) reprinted under the auspices of NMSA and NASSP.

Fenwick, J. J. (1986). THE MIDDLE SCHOOL YEARS. San Diego: Fenwick and Associates.

Fenwick analyses middle level education in terms of intellectual, psychological, social, and ethical issues. He calls for the establishment of middle level schools which adhere to six unifying principles: (1) assisting students to develop integrated personalities; (2) providing a curriculum designed to meets needs of students with varying abilities; (3) establishing courses which allow exploration of a wide variety of subject matter; (4) providing strong guidance and counseling opportunities; (5) assuring students of positive socialization experiences, including considering differences in ethnicity, language and national origin; and (6) providing informed guidance as the children search to estaablish positive sex role norms.

George, P. S. & Lawrence, G. (1982). HANDBOOK FOR MIDDLE SCHOOL TEACHING. Glenville, IL: Scott, Foresman and Company.

For the teacher-practitioner this book fills the void between theory and reality. George and Lawrence go through middle school teaching from philosophical and social/developmental background to content-based teaching strategies. Unlike other books on middle school education, this book is meant to be used rather than read. It belongs on the shelf of any middle level practitioner as a ready reference tool.

George, P. S. & Oldaker, L. L. (1986). EVIDENCE FOR THE MIDDLE SCHOOL. Columbus: National Middle School Association.

George and Oldaker summarize research on effective middle schools and report on survey results from a study of 130 exemplary middle schools. They conclude that schools which successfully move from junior high to middle school organization report (1) unaffected or modest gains in academic achievement; (2) improvements in discipline and attendance; (3) improvements in school climate and school spirit; (4) enhanced personal and social development of students; (5) higher faculty morale and more positive feelings toward staff development activities; and (6) increased parent involvement and support.

Lipsitz, J. (1984). SUCCESSFUL SCHOOLS FOR YOUNG ADOLESCENTS. New
    Brunswick, NJ: Transaction Books, Inc.

Lipsitz' case study of four exceptional middle schools is quickly becoming
a classic in the middle school effectiveness literature and a testament to
the value of qualitative research as a tool to foster understanding about
the nature of schooling. The reader quickly becomes immursed in the lives
of the staff and students of her four schools, each of which was chosen to
represent success in different situations regarding location,
socio-economic status and ethnic balance. The book is extremely well
written, and her conclusions, stated in Part III, Recurrent Themes in
Successful Middle Schools, are convincing.

Merenbloom, E. Y. (1986). THE TEAM PROCESS IN THE MIDDLE SCHOOL: A
    HANDBOOK FOR TEACHERS. Columbus: National Middle School Association.

Merembloom lays out the rationale for establishing interdisciplinary teams
in the middle school and gives a wealth of practical information about
starting and maintaining a successful team organization. He uses his
experience as a principal of a large middle school to outline methods to
develop a schedule which allows teams the flexibility to plan
instructional activities around the needs of the students. Hints on block
time, flexible scheduling, effective use of planning periods and grouping
by ability for instructional purposes are also given.

Tye, K. A. (1985). THE JUNIOR HIGH: A SCHOOL IN SEARCH OF A MISSION.
    Lanham, MD: University Press of America.

This book is often excluded from middle level reference lists, probably
because its title misleads middle school researchers and practitioners.
However, it represents a summary of probably the most thorough study ever
undertaken about the activities of middle level schooling. Tye was a head
researcher in John Goodlad's Study of Schooling which involved an
exhaustive study of 39 schools from the mid-1970's to the early 1980's.
Goodlad's work, of course, is synthesized in A PLACE CALLED SCHOOL
(McGraw-Hill, 1984). Tye's efforts focus on the analysis of a voluminous
amount of survey findings, on-site visitations, and interviews of staff,
students and parents in 12 junior high schools chosen for variety in size,
location, socio-economic status and ethnicity. Tye's conclusions and
recommendations are interesting, but the main value of the book lies in
the specific description of the classroom and non-classroom activities of
middle level schools, especially those involving instructional concerns.