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MIDDLE SCHOOL SURVEY OF NEW YORK STATE.  
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TO GATHER INFORMATION ON THE CONCEPT OF THE MIDDLE SCHOOL, A QUESTIONNAIRE WAS SENT TO 648 SCHOOL DISTRICTS IN NEW YORK STATE, 510 OF WHOM RESPONDED. IT WAS FOUND THAT (1) 60 SCHOOL DISTRICTS HAD A MIDDLE SCHOOL IN OPERATION, (2) 170 SCHOOL DISTRICTS WERE STUDYING REORGANIZATION TO INCLUDE IT, (3) 35 DISTRICTS HAD CONSIDERED AND REJECTED IT, (4) 200 SCHOOL DISTRICTS USED THE JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL PLAN. MAJOR REASONS FOR ADOPTING A MIDDLE SCHOOL WERE A NEED FOR A NEW BUILDING COUPLED WITH A BELIEF THAT IT MIGHT IMPROVE INSTRUCTION AND FORESTALL THE PRESSURE OF THE SENIOR HIGH ENVIRONMENT. OF 387 ADMINISTRATORS, 161 FELT THAT MIDDLE SCHOOL TEACHERS SHOULD BE DRAWN FROM THE JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL, 148 FROM ELEMENTARY SCHOOL, AND 78 FROM A NEW TRAINING PROGRAM. IT WAS CONCLUDED THAT (A) MIDDLE SCHOOLS SHOULD SHOULD OFFER FOREIGN LANGUAGES, SCIENCE, AND MATHEMATICS TO BE OFFERED EARLIER. (B) RESPONSES WERE 4 TO 1 IN FAVOR OF PLACING GRADES 5 AND 6 IN A MIDDLE SCHOOL. (C) THERE IS A DEFINITE NEED FOR TRAINING TEACHERS AND ADMINISTRATORS FOR THE MIDDLE SCHOOL, WHICH IS ON THE VERGE OF REPLACING THE TRADITIONAL JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL IN NEW YORK STATE. THIS PAPER PRESENTED AT 1967 RESEARCH CONVOCATION OF E.R.A. OF N.Y. STATE AND STATE EDUC. DEPT. (NOV. 14, 1967, ALBANY, N.Y.)  
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MIDDLE SCHOOL SURVEY OF NEW YORK STATE

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SURVEY OF MIDDLE SCHOOLS IN NEW YORK STATE

Mid-Hudson School Study Council  
State University College  
New Paltz, New York

George C. Simpson

George J. Smith

In recent years, increased attention has been focused on the concept of how best to make the transition from childhood to pre-adulthood or adolescence. Various patterns of grade organization in school systems have been tried. One innovation which spaces portions of both the elementary and secondary levels is the concept of the middle school. The Mid-Hudson School Study Council therefore was interested in keeping their member school districts abreast in this new development of school organization and funded the survey. The preliminary findings are as follows:

1. Questionnaire was sent out to 648 school districts in New York State; 510 were returned, a 80% response.
2. Sixty school districts or 12% of the schools surveyed stated that they had a middle school in operation.
3. 200 school districts or 40% of the school districts surveyed had the 6-3-3 organizational plan.
4. 170 school districts or 33% of the school districts surveyed said they were studying reorganization to include the middle school.
5. Thirty-five school districts or 7% of the schools surveyed had considered this middle school organization and had rejected it.
6. The three major factors prompting districts to consider adopting a middle school were:
  - a. Belief in a chance to improve instruction.
  - b. Forestall pressure of senior high environment.
  - c. Need for a new building.
7. Organizational modes in operation of the schools surveyed were:

| <u>ELEMENTARY</u> |  | <u>SECONDARY</u> |
|-------------------|--|------------------|
| <u>482</u>        | self-contained classrooms                          | <u>76</u>        |
| <u>131</u>        | team teaching                                      | <u>153</u>       |
| <u>16</u>         | Core (modular scheduling)                          | <u>71</u>        |
| <u>118</u>        | nongraded  | <u>27</u>        |
| <u>115</u>        | departmental                                       | <u>385</u>       |
| <u>64</u>         | Large group instruction<br>(more than 50 students) | <u>162</u>       |

8. The status of middle schools in New York State is as follows: 8 are purely experimental; 52 are reasonably permanent. Of the schools considering a change to middle school organization: 103 are in the planning stages and 56 are uncertain whether their community will approve a middle school.

9a. Expanded facilities available in a middle school:

| <u>Response</u> | <u>Facilities</u>                                 |
|-----------------|---|
| 53              | - Large group instruction (more than 50 students) |
| 51              | - Art Room  |
| 66              | - Industrial Arts Room                            |
| 34              | - Added Gymnasium                                 |
| 33              | - Better Library                                  |
| 40              | - Individual Study Facilities                     |
| 71              | - Science Laboratories                            |
| 31              | - Small Group Teaching facilities (under 10)      |
| 19              | - Little Theatre                                  |
| 49              | - Music Facilities                                |
| 31              | - Auditorium                                      |
| 54              | - Language Laboratory                             |
| 65              | - Home Economics                                  |

b. Would provide specialized teachers as follows:

| <u>Response</u> | <u>Facilities</u>      |
|-----------------|------------------------|
| 68              | - Science              |
| 44              | - Corrective Reading   |
| 47              | - Music                |
| 36              | - Health               |
| 68              | - Home Economics       |
| 45              | - Art                  |
| 32              | - Nurse - Teacher      |
| 23              | - Teacher Aids         |
| 20              | - Drama - Theatre Arts |
| 68              | - Industrial Arts      |
| 41              | - Physical Education   |
| 59              | - Foreign Languages    |
| 28              | - Speech               |
| 4               | - Guidance             |
| 7               | - Typing               |

c. Would provide improved services or activities as follows:

| <u>Response</u> | <u>Service or Activity</u> |
|-----------------|----------------------------|
| 37              | - Corrective Reading       |
| 73              | - Guidance                 |
| 37              | - Speech Correction        |
| 31              | - Psychological Services   |
| 9               | - Visiting Teachers        |
| 46              | - Clubs                    |
| 49              | - Musical Organizations    |
| 42              | - Team sports              |

10. Administrators seeking teachers for a middle school would seek those with certification as follows:

| <u>Response</u> | <u>Certification Area</u>        |
|-----------------|----------------------------------|
| 148             | - Elementary (K-6)               |
| 161             | - Junior High (7-9)              |
| 14              | - Senior High (10-12)            |
| 78              | - New training program is needed |

### CONCLUSIONS

1. This study revealed certain special problems in recruiting teachers for the middle school. They can be grouped as follows:
  - a. Candidates lack special training.
  - b. Teachers who are specialists want an association with the senior high school.
  - c. There is a need for well qualified Negro candidates.
2. Middle school organization has enabled some traditional high school subjects to be offered earlier. In descending order of frequency they are: Foreign Languages, Science, Mathematics and Typing.
3. Responses indicate that placing the ninth grade in a senior high school does not hold to place less emphasis on preparing the student for college and more on learning and exploring. However, some felt that it held potential dropouts longer.
4. However, responses were 4 to 1 in favor of placing grades five and six in a middle school because this helped to prepare them better for high school. The primary reason for this lies in expanded study and research facilities found in existing middle schools.
5. The results of the study indicate that there is a definite need for training teachers and administrators for the middle school. This program should include a broad specialty in one or two academic areas. An emphasis on both child development and adolescent psychology and training in working with large and small groups of students.
6. It is obvious from this study that the emerging middle school organization is on the verge of perhaps replacing the traditional junior high school in New York State.