

Junior High School Procedure

by

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Foreword....Many detailed suggestions are presented for organization and for improvement of technic in classroom procedure. The authors show a sympathetic understanding of early adolescent youth, with all its vagaries, its idealism, and its unsettled conditions of body, mind, and soul. There are indicated to teachers concrete ways to meet the needs of these boys and girls, so that at this critical time they may be helped to take the next step in the acquisition of knowledge and in the development of attitudes and ideals that will make them better able to cope with the complexities of modern life, whether it shall be their lot to go on into senior high school or out into the work world.... (**Page xvii**)

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In the early years of our democracy individuals who lived on a relatively low economic level seemed content to allow schools to offer higher educational opportunities to pupils selected on a supposed inherited capacity for leadership. With greater ease of communication, relief from economic pressure, and a general rise in the standard of living, the enrollment in secondary schools increased, and, when studied, revealed a variety of interests, capacities, needs, and demands. Soon it became evident that the traditional curriculum was not equally well suited to the needs of all these pupils. Consciousness of this maladjustment moved the leaders from among the masses to claim educational opportunities suited to the interests and needs of their adolescent children, a phase of readjustment which commands the attention of educational theorists and progressive schoolmen of today.

The fact that satisfaction resulted from a variety of types of educational method and subject offerings in the secondary school, coupled with the dissatisfaction so often seen and felt in the attempt to teach all pupils the single curriculum-content, forced certain leaders of educational thought to experiment with a plan providing diversified courses in the seventh and eighth grades as well. The outcome of this demand is revealed in the establishment of junior high schools, offering an introduction to many types of education to boys and girls of the early adolescent age.... (**Pages 3-4**)

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....In the United States at present many states demand school attendance up to the age of fourteen. Other states require full-time attendance through the sixteenth year. This fact places on educators the responsibility of making the school experience so interesting that pupils will eagerly desire it. Taxpayers and school officers must supply teachers competent to search out individual interests and capacities and to make the success of the pupil probable. With individual differences among pupils clearly established, we can no longer hope to offer equal opportunities through a single curriculum.

The place of the junior high school. The place of the junior high school is that part of the field of education in which the pupil, after gaining a control of the simpler tools whereby knowledge is attained, comes to use these tools in an attempt to discover his own interests, aptitudes, and capacities. Advocates of the junior high school do not claim to fix in the child settled habits of intellect, character, skill, or temperament. They do claim rather that the junior high school should in the seventh, eighth, and ninth grades guide the pupil in an exploration of the fields of human thought, action, and endeavor, thereby to equip him with knowledge of his interests and capabilities.....

To the junior high school is ascribed the task of acquainting the pupil with an ever-broadening environment, thus enriching and socializing his life. The junior high school should provide opportunities for that type of leadership which in a democracy makes for profitable leisure hours as well as for a well-planned vocation.....It is of the utmost importance that the early years of the secondary school be so spent as to develop the power of the child in adjusting his capacities to his ever-widening environment and broadened social and vocational outlook.... **(Pages 5-6)**

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Organization of the curriculum in the junior high school.In general it is agreed that the course shall be equally well suited to the needs of pupils who must leave school at the end of the ninth grade and to the needs of those who plan to complete the work of the secondary school. It is not the plan to develop skills or precision in thought or action, but rather to provide a course of study affording information about many things. Choice of subjects in the seventh grade is not permitted; opportunity for this is given in the latter half of the junior high school period after consultation with the parent. All well-planned curricula for the junior high school make provision for direction of pupils' social activities....

The operations of future democracy are much in evidence in the literary, social, and recreational activities of the junior high school. Each junior-high-school principal is proudly conscious of the distinctiveness of his problem: institution, teachers, pupils, building, questions of discipline, school activities, auditorium, advisory system, social center, and so on. But the work is as yet upon the externals; the objectives, the content, and the instruction methods are just now being critically examined and subjected to scientific evaluation. **(Page 7)**

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Characteristics of a junior high school. During the past fifteen years, the period representing the life span of the junior-high-school movement, schools bearing the name have been established in various cities without an apparent attempt to do anything else than to place in one building grades 7, 8, and 9. Administrative measures alone, such as the construction of a new high school building and the consequent vacating of the old building yet too good to destroy, have been the potent factors in furthering the establishment of junior high schools.

.....the following are listed as commonly accepted characteristics of a junior high school:

1. A small number of subjects in the curriculum.
2. Periods long enough to allow for directed study.
3. Exploratory courses in short-term prevocational subjects.

4. Educational and vocational guidance.
5. Departmental instruction with promotion by subject.
6. Supervised extra-curricular activities.
7. Provision for individual differences in ability, aptitude, and interest by progressive differentiation in subjects.
8. Where numbers permit, grouping together of pupils of approximately similar ability.
9. A home room and a responsible home-room teacher for each group.
10. Physical education and extra-curricular activities deliberately organized as a system for character development.

Objectives for junior high school education. The junior high school should direct the thinking, activities, and experiences of its student body in developing *abilities* in the following ten spheres:

1. *Healthful living....*
2. *Application of fundamental processes to simple scientific and social phenomena...*
3. *Discovery of interests and aptitudes....*
4. *Maximum use of native capacities....*
5. *Participation in a variety of aesthetic and recreational activities....*
6. *Membership in the school group....*
7. *Establishing and maintaining high standards of conduct in personal and group life....*
8. *Contributing to worthy home life....*
9. *Evaluating the past and determining its contributions to the present....*
10. *Understanding the significance of larger group relationships of the world today....*

(Pages 7-10)

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Selection of subjects. In his report on curriculum practices in the junior high school, Glass states that “two principles in the construction of the program of students must control, first, the principle of variety and, secondly, the principle of continuity.” To guarantee that these principles shall find application in the program of studies for the school and for all pupils, he proposes [a] program of studies [that articulates] the Programs of Social Activities and Guidance with the Six General Units (Health, English, General Mathematics, Social Studies, Natural Science, Fine and Practical Arts) in the Construction of a Continuous and Progressive Core Curriculum in the Seventh, Eighth, and Ninth Years..... In a school where such a program is operative, pupils study a list of subjects so broad in scope as to bring them in contact with a wide range of human interests. Under such a plan pupils may not elect to omit important studies from their programs as is sometimes found to be permitted where certain constants are not prescribed.... **(Pages 27-29)**

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Important considerations in making a school schedule. The policy of a school is expressed in its schedule, which serves as the blue print and specifications of the school organization and the time-table of the system. It makes definite provisions for the successful realization of the educational aims of the school and arranges opportunities for furthering these aims. It is evident that the one in charge of making the schedule must have a clear understanding of the policy and

the educational aims of the school....The needs of the pupils become the center of interest, and the school plant, teaching staff, program of subjects, method of teaching, school calendar, length of day, special activities, attendance system, etc, are main supplementary features that require serious study on the part of the administrator in order to make an economical, nonconflicting, well-balanced, socialized school schedule....

The location of rooms, the size of rooms, their equipment and accommodations, must all be familiar to the one who is to schedule classes so as to avoid confusion, disorder, disrespect for organization, "cutting" of classes, idleness, and other evils that result from a lack of adjustment between accommodation and equipment and between the nature of the subject and the number of pupils enrolled.... (Pages 120-121)

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The educational aims, purposes, and plans of all teachers – including those of special rooms, such as opportunity, adjustment, or development rooms, and those that deal with social problems, prevocational work, retarded pupils, and other specialties – should be clearly understood. The assignments of the teachers who are given a special type of work should have a very definite and positive place in the schedule for its first inception and should never be inserted as an afterthought. Many times special teachers are shelved or considered apart from the regular scheme of the whole. For satisfactory results their schedules should be as carefully worked out as are those of regular departments, or even more carefully.... (Page 122)

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In order for the junior high school to realize the most efficient expression of its many and varied features and functions a longer day is required than is needed for the elementary school. The length of day has not yet become uniformly established, nor is the number of periods the same in different schools. The number of periods is not a matter to be settled arbitrarily by the one arranging the schedule, but it should be determined by the required number of periods of work specified in the program of subjects, by the accommodations, by the enrollment, and by special local conditions. More and more the progressive schools are adopting the sixty-minute period and appreciating its worth, for more than forty or forty-five minutes is needed with the reorganized recitation....in the sixty-minute period the first thirty minutes may be given to material assigned for the work of the day. This includes a brief test or checking up of home work, instruction based on test results or on errors observed in home work, and drill on processes and topics under consideration on days immediately preceding. The second thirty minutes is spent on assignment of new subject matter and early work with it. This involves a lesson assignment and group work directed by the teacher, together with study of advance lessons continued by pupils in the classroom with the teacher present to give individual assistance.

A sixty-minute period does away with the need of double periods for science and vocational work. Physical education can be better administered under this plan. The hour in class and thirty minutes of additional study outside of class are sufficient for all one-unit subjects in the ninth grade.....However, for those who wish to stress the social program it is well to have an extra period of thirty or thirty-five minutes for the special activities of the study body. Some have found that the six-period day with subject requirements of thirty hours per week does not

permit much flexibility for individual adjustment and therefore advise a day of seven fifty-minute periods.... (Pages 126-127)

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The time allowed for the passing of classes affects the discipline of the school. The passing should be checked so that pupils may be given time enough to reach their respective classes promptly without too great hurry and yet without loss of time. Junior-high-school pupils go to extremes, and often freedom takes the form of license and irresponsibility; therefore they need to be guided and directed in the formation of habits of self-control. The time for passing should be a period of freedom, but not of irresponsibility or lack of order and control. It is evident that if the time is too short, pupils will be tardy to classes, the lax pupils becoming more lax and careless and the conscientious being greatly disturbed in their ineffectual efforts to be prompt; the result will be disturbing interruptions during the first few minutes of the recitation period. On the other hand, too long a time for passing is equally bad; for the time is lost, or worse than lost, since it may be spent in idle gossip, loafing, or in the formation of other bad habits.

Halls and toilet rooms should be under supervision while classes are passing. Supervision of the halls by teachers at this time is really economy of effort and time; for the problems that would otherwise develop are avoided, an orderly and businesslike attitude is maintained, and the effort put forth in getting attention and an attitude of work at the beginning of the recitation is greatly decreased..... (Page 128)

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It should be emphasized that the schedule is made with the idea that pupils remain with the same home-room teachers throughout the junior-high-school course, if the placement is happy, congenial, and advantageous to the pupils, and with the same recitation teachers as far as the complexity of the program of subjects will permit and as long as the best progress of the pupils is evidenced. This means that the schedule must be made with a far-sighted vision for continuity and at the same time with an appreciation of immediate flexibility. The problems of the group and the needs of the individual in the group must be met in the schedule of classes in a junior high school. The scheduling of classes should be considered one of the most important phases of administration, and the schedule should be an instrument that makes possible the realization of the educational objectives of the junior high school..... (Pages 145-146)

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