Curriculum for the middle school

Thomas J. Buttery

Follow this and additional works at: https://newprairiepress.org/edconsiderations

Part of the Higher Education Commons

This work is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-Noncommercial-Share Alike 4.0 License.

Recommended Citation

This Reviews is brought to you for free and open access by New Prairie Press. It has been accepted for inclusion in Educational Considerations by an authorized administrator of New Prairie Press. For more information, please contact cads@k-state.edu.
Review

Curriculum for the middle school


The middle school is an organizational unit designated to serve children as they grow into adolescents. Individuals undergoing this change are called transescents. This period of time in the human growth cycle abounds with growth and change. This text offers a viable curriculum paradigm to meet the needs of transescents while they complete the metamorphasis from elementary pupils to senior high students.

The authors initially develop the stage for their proposal by citing the teachers role in middle schools. Emphasis is given to the changing nature of teaching, the special importance of middle school teaching, and too much teaching can use for self improvement. The schools for the transitional years are then examined. A comparison is drawn from the junior high movement to the middle school phenomenon. The final preparatory dimension examined is curriculum foundations. An overview of the learner, his learning processes, social and cultural environments and organized knowledge are given.

The recommended curriculum organization for middle schools consists of three components: core, continuous progress, and variable exploration. The plan attempts to coordinate an assortment of factors such as time, personnel, materials, and content in order to achieve the objectives of education for a particular school.

The core component suggests that much, however not all, of the content and skills traditionally taught in the academic areas of English, social studies and science classes may be included in core. Additionally subjects such as art and music which have unfortunately in the past been so frequently relegated to auxiliary roles are included. The academic and fine arts skills and content become tools to be utilized in the process of inquiry.

A core curriculum may be structured or unstructured. The particular classification depends upon the degree of planning set in advance by the faculty. In a structured core program, the faculty determines in advance which problem areas or centers of experience the transescents will explore. The text suggests a variety of problem areas for exploration. The unstructured core model permits the teachers and transescents to choose and examine any problem they consider worthwhile. Theoretically trivial topics are minimized when transescents perceive teachers as sincere and realize they will have to make a serious study of their chosen topics.

The question of whether core classes are optimally taught by one teacher or by a team is given careful review. Emphasis is given to the goal of ensuring that all transescents have access to an adult who knows and cares for them personally, and who is responsible for facilitating them to deal with the problems of growing up. No unique instructional techniques are offered as part of the core component. Core teachers do however, tend to make greater use of teacher-student planning, small group work, value clarification, and other methods that tend to stress personal interaction. Finally, the authors recom-