

**Caught in the Middle:
The Task of Educational Reform
for Young Adolescents in
California Schools**

**Middle Grade
Task Force Report
California State Department of Education**

Draft

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Revised – October, 1986

*Excerpts
(Language - pg 78)*

Middle Grade Task Force Report

This report emphasizes the uniqueness of middle grade education. It makes the case for the urgency of major educational reform for students in grades 6 through 8. The concept of academic integrity is heavily emphasized as is the need for attention to the personal and social development of early adolescents. The tension between these two issues is squarely faced. They are shown to be directly related and complementary to each other in contrast to being the basis for bitter and divisive professional arguments.

Middle grade students need to experience the meaning of high standards of academic excellence in a school setting which recognizes the vital meaning of personal connectedness. This concept conveys a special sense of belonging, of being accepted by teachers and peers. The personal connection is critical for students of all ages. It is of special urgency in early adolescence. It is in the middle grades that lifelong values begin to be shaped including those that relate to academic purpose and personal commitment to educational goals.

The urgency of middle grade reform is accentuated by the gravity of dropout statistics. Unless dramatic changes occur which capture the intellects and emotions of young adolescents, the massive dropout count will continue to mount. At present, the middle grades represent the last substantive educational experience for hundreds of thousands of students. Nationwide data indicate that 700,000 students drop out of school annually. The numbers rapidly accelerate following the end of the middle grade years. If students fail to achieve the integration of their personalities and the motivation required to make a commitment to academic values by the end of the middle grades, many will never do so.

For all middle grade students there is the urgency of insuring an intellectually stimulating school environment. This concept is repeatedly emphasized throughout this report. Special stress is given to the unfolding intellectual power of the minds of young adolescents and the critical need for new instructional strategies and organizational models which have the capacity to translate the ideal of academic integrity into the real world of students.

The report represents a year-long effort of thirty-five Middle Grade Task Force members aided by nine Regional Panels comprised of nearly one hundred additional persons. This draft is prepared for the critique of Regional Panel members and a select list of other reviewers throughout California and the nation. The final Task Force report will be issued in January, 1987.

Contents

Introduction

| Chapter | | Page |
|---------|---|------|
| 1 | Core Curriculum | 1 |
| 2 | Scheduling | 5 |
| 3 | Knowledge | 11 |
| 4 | Character Development | 17 |
| 5 | Academic Counseling | 21 |
| 6 | Student Accountability | 29 |
| 7 | Learning to Learn | 35 |
| 8 | Thinking and Communication | 47 |
| 9 | Instructional Practice | 55 |
| 10 | Equal Access | 67 |
| 11 | Student Diversity and Underrepresented Minorities | 73 |
| 12 | At-Risk Students | 81 |
| 13 | Physical and Emotional Development | 87 |
| 14 | School Culture | 95 |
| 15 | Transition | 101 |
| 16 | Structure | 109 |
| 17 | Professional Preparation | 117 |
| 18 | Staff Development | 125 |
| 19 | Parents, Communities, and School Boards | 133 |
| 20 | Assessment | 139 |
| 21 | Networking and Partnership | 145 |
| | Appendix | 149 |

1.1 Student Diversity and Underrepresented Minorities

Every underrepresented minority middle grade student should receive encouragement and incentives to pursue upwardly mobile academic and occupational goals.

The American sense of justice, contemporary law, and social norms protect the rights of diverse racial groups, both genders, the handicapped, and the socio-economically disadvantaged. These varied expressions of legal and moral commitment profoundly impact the socialization process and the psychological character of teacher-student interaction in the middle grades. They support cultural diversity among students and encourage knowledge and appreciation of differences in cultures and value systems. They also enhance the participation of all individuals in a unified society.

One of the most critical issues posed by a culturally diverse population is the manner in which we pay attention to each student. Educational practices that differentiate the core curriculum on the basis of ethnic, linguistic, or any other educationally superficial criteria are fundamentally wrong. Any practice which keeps Blacks, Hispanics, and other minorities outside the strong academic mainstream of the middle grades must be stopped. Such actions thwart the academic growth of minority students and severely limit their access to higher-level secondary curricula and to post secondary education.

All students must be challenged to achieve cultural, scientific, and mathematical literacy through core

curriculum studies. This is the key that has the potential to unlock unlimited futures for students irrespective of ethnic and linguistic differences, handicapping conditions, gender, or socio-economic factors.

We are alarmed about our prospects for achieving this goal. The recent report of the California Commission on the Teaching Profession *"Who Will Teach Our Children"* (The *"Commons Report"*) indicates that Hispanics represent about one-fourth of the state's K-12 population but only about one-tenth of the students in The California State University (CSU) system. Only 4.9 percent of Hispanic high school graduates, and 3.6 percent of Black high school graduates are academically eligible for the University of California. For The California State University, the comparable figures are 15.3 percent and 10.1 percent.¹

Middle grade students should learn together in a school environment which honors ethnic, linguistic, and cultural diversity. This involves several major conditions which must exist if the goal is to be realized:

- A strong academic program must be provided for minority students; any educational practice that prevents the exposure of minority students to a strong academic mainstream leading to

¹ California Commission on the Teaching Profession *Who Will Teach Our Children* (1985)

2 The California State University
(CSU) *Hispanics and Higher
Education: Final Report of the
Commission on Hispanic
Underrepresentation* (1985)

- college and the professions must be abandoned;
- The heritage and cultural contributions of all ethnic groups must be reflected in the core curriculum;
 - Textbooks and related instructional materials must portray positive images and high expectations for boys and girls in a multi-cultural society which respects and values individual and group diversity;
 - Linguistic differences must be honored; the goal of English literacy must be paralleled by efforts to encourage continued fluency in the primary language of non-native speakers of English.

We must go far beyond these considerations, however, if our culturally diverse student population is to become more evenly represented in college and university enrollments.

It is in the middle grades that new and heroic efforts must be made to shape the hopes, aspirations, and educational goals of underrepresented minorities. As an example, recent findings suggest that an outreach by college and university personnel to Hispanic students in grades six through nine is absolutely essential for substantial changes to occur in the college-going rate of this group. Significant numbers of Hispanic students do not take appropriate courses during these critical years in order to be able to undertake

college preparatory studies in high school.²

The Secondary School Program Quality Criteria published in 1985 by the California State Department of Education are helpful at this point. These criteria are highly pertinent for middle grade students as they prepare for their high school academic experiences.

Parents, teachers, and counselors help students set a path that aims toward their highest, most realistic goals. Students are able to discuss their program of studies, life goals, and career ambitions with their teachers and counselors. A schoolwide system of guidance facilitates such interaction and emphasizes the collaborative nature of the processes of course selection. Parents are actively encouraged to participate in the processes of course selection as part of the established procedures. The timeliness of taking certain critical courses is emphasized in the counseling of students and is known to the parents. Teachers, counselors, and students regularly evaluate each student's path to ensure that it is both comprehensive and balanced. Information gained from these evaluations is used to make needed changes in course offerings and scheduling. Students' placement is based on standard criteria and not just on personal judgments.

Students and parents are given timely, accurate, and clear assessments and advice concerning the students' learning progress. These evaluations are given to improve performance and encourage each student to attain his or her highest potential.

Students are encouraged to develop a four-year perspective and to clarify their goals accordingly. They understand and experience how what they are learning is interrelated. They feel that what they are learning is important to their lives now and in the future.³

In order for these criteria to be realized, it is urgent that English be

3 CASDE *Secondary School
Program Quality Criteria* (1985)

taught more efficiently to California's large and growing population of limited-English-proficient students. Students with limited literacy, irrespective of whether or not English is their native language, must be provided with more powerful reading programs tied to the core curriculum. Too often, students with limited literacy are relegated to a barren curriculum of remedial skills which does not prepare them for high school course work in literature, science, history, and mathematics.

The middle grades represent the critical juncture. Ways must be found to interest, excite, challenge, and reward young adolescents who need to focus their attention on positive academic values and their corollaries of higher education and upwardly mobile careers.

Underrepresented minority students must also be mentored in many instances if they are to learn to believe in themselves, their capabilities, and their futures. Mentoring must begin as early as the middle grades and continue throughout high school.

Businesses, industries, the professions, and colleges and universities must help in this task. There are many exciting examples of where this is now happening but countless thousands of other students desperately need the same level of personal attention. Public and private sector entities should expand their efforts to help schools which are seeking to develop a more even participation by underrepresented minorities in upwardly

mobile academic and occupational pursuits.

The educational challenge posed by differences in cultures and value systems is summarized in the recent Carnegie Report, "A Nation Prepared: Teachers for the 21st Century":

Yet another factor has widespread educational implications: growing numbers of disadvantaged students - from low-income families, non-English speaking backgrounds, and single-parent households. All youngsters need teachers with a much more sophisticated and complete understanding of their subjects, but the need of these children is greatest. These generations of poverty, find little in their environment outside of school that matches the affluent youngsters' push for academic success and the belief that it will pay off.⁴

⁴ Carnegie Corporation A Nation Prepared: Teaching for the 21st Century (1986)

Disadvantaged Students May Soon Be Majority in Public Schools

Disadvantaged students "are about to become the majority in our public schools", and "the country's ability to survive as a competitive nation depends on the education system's capacity to provide them an effective education". The Council for Educational Development and Research (CEDaR) said in a recent preview of new educational research.

Citing new research from Stanford University researcher Henry Levin, CEDaR said the proportion of such students is likely to increase dramatically, since the disadvantaged student population is growing "much faster than the population as a whole."

CEDaR noted that the proportion of children living in poverty rose from 16 percent in 1979 to 22 percent in 1983. According to Levin, schools soon will have to cope with greater numbers of disadvantaged students, and their needs will become harder to address.

CEDaR said Levin's studies project that failing to meet the needs of those disadvantaged students will lead to a "severe disruption of higher education", requiring colleges to either refuse to admit or "undertake massive remedial functions".

Levin, Henry, *An Emerging Crisis*: National Education Association Professional Library (1986)

The California State University, the University of California, and private universities and colleges should make long range financial aid commitments to underrepresented minorities contingent upon solid academic achievement throughout high school. These commitments should be provided as early as the middle grades and should be integral to the mentoring process discussed earlier.

The need for public school teachers drawn from the ranks of

underrepresented minorities is especially acute. Again, the Carnegie Report pinpoints the urgency of this need:

Leaving aside for the moment the need to improve school performance greatly, the demographic realities just described alone pose an impressive problem for educational policymakers. Taken together, a steep increase in demand for teachers, a particularly acute need for minority teachers, and a declining supply of well-educated applicants constitute a challenge without precedent - an environment very different from the one in which the advances of the last three years have been made.⁵

5 Carnegie Corporation *A Nation Prepared: Teaching for the 21st Century* (1986)

6 *Education USA* (May 5, 1986)

HISTORY'S SHADOW

The fact of racial differences in America has placed a greater strain on the myth of the melting pot than any other of the factors that occasionally divide our people. And the same fact has created a dilemma for the concept of pluralism which to be workable at all must assume that groups seeking to preserve their identity will have equal opportunity, not only for group status, but also for the individual standing of group members in the larger society.

During most of our history, we have denied equality and status both to racially identifiable groups and to individuals from these groups. It was the "Brown" decision that pulled us up short by asserting that race was unacceptable as a basis for decisions by government about Americans.

This past history casts its shadow over all of us every day of our lives. We cannot escape it. It tests our moral fiber, our idealism, and our commitment to what we say we believe. When we hold up a mirror and look at ourselves honestly, that shadow dominates our reflection.

Nowhere is the strain and stress of living in this shadow more evident than in those institutions which serve the coming generation and to which we commit a large proportion of our hopes for the future, the schools. We depend fundamentally on the schools, both to pass on to our children the civilization we have inherited, as well as to create in them the wit and will to continually reshape that civilization closer to our ideals than we have been able to do ourselves.

Harold Howe II
Ford Foundation

The situation described by the Carnegie Report reflects particularly acute needs in California. Our public schools will soon be 43% minority; by the year 2000 that figure will be more than 50%.⁶

We believe that our schools must be staffed by teachers who reflect the diversity of the state's racial and cultural heritage. This means that we must do a dramatically better job of insuring that underrepresented minority students in the middle grades are prepared academically for high school and subsequent entry into institutions of higher learning. We must provide a vastly increased pool of candidates available to consider teaching as a career as well as other professions which require higher education as a prerequisite for entry.

The identification of potential minority teachers should occur as early as the middle grades and should be accompanied by intensive mentoring primarily provided by members of the teaching

profession. Mentors should be recruited from the public schools and from the ranks of college and university professors.

The State Legislature should provide scholarship funds for minority individuals who choose to enter the teaching profession and who maintain their academic standing to the point of certification.

It is a hollow charade to laud

student diversity as a reflection of the richness of our cultural heritage, when multitudes of underrepresented minority students fall far short of realizing their intellectual and occupational potential. It is imperative to reverse this condition and we call upon varied sources of individual and institutional support to assist in the task.

TASK FORCE RECOMMENDATIONS

- ① **Local school boards and superintendents should review and redefine middle grade policies and administrative directives in order to deliberately and affirmatively expose minority students to a strong academic mainstream leading to higher education and the professions. Districts are encouraged to:**
 - a. **Establish successively higher annual targets leading to substantive increases in the percentages of minority middle grade students who are prepared for and actually enroll in high school courses which meet college/university admissions requirements;**
 - b. **Establish a program at each middle grade school with an underrepresented minority enrollment which provides students with extra help in mastering skills and subject matter content needed to perform well in a college preparatory curriculum. This help should include:**
 - **study skills techniques (including small group and "study-buddy" approaches to learning)**

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RECOMMENDATIONS *Continued*

- communication skills (particularly those which emphasize written expression)
 - test-taking skills
 - academic counseling
 - problem-solving strategies in mathematics
- c. Utilize instructional materials which portray positive images and high expectations for students in a multi-cultural society which honors individual and group diversity;
- d. Encourage students with limited literacy, irrespective of whether or not English is their native language, to enroll in standard core curriculum courses which emphasize the development of higher order intellectual skills;
- e. Establish volunteer mentoring and tutorial programs for students in order to provide affirmation, counsel, and encouragement, and to otherwise seek to help underrepresented minorities reach their highest academic potential; local districts should provide financial support for mentor and tutor recruitment, training, and coordination.
- ② The State Department of Education, research institutions, and local districts with research and evaluation units should seek to develop new measures of academic potential to identify students whose intellectual promise is obscured by

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RECOMMENDATIONS *Continued*

linguistic barriers or other factors which cause them to do poorly on standardized tests.

- ③ Businesses, industries, and the professions, as well as colleges and universities – public and private – should assist school districts in developing mentoring programs designed to insure a more even participation by underrepresented minorities in upwardly mobile academic and occupational pursuits.
- ④ The California State University, the University of California, and private colleges and universities should recruit and mentor (and ultimately fund through varied financial assistance programs) underrepresented minority students in the middle grades.
- ⑤ The California State Legislature should authorize and fund a teacher recruitment program directed to underrepresented minorities. Identification of students with potential interest in becoming teachers should begin as early as the middle grades. Higher education scholarships should be provided for underrepresented minority students who successfully complete professional teacher preparation programs.

17 Professional Preparation

Middle grade teachers and principals should be prepared to teach/administer grades 6-8; specialized preparation should address the content areas of the core curriculum, instructional strategies which emphasize active learning, and the developmental characteristics of young adolescents.

The professional preparation of middle grade teachers must include specialized knowledge of the core curriculum, the acquisition of a broad repertoire of instructional strategies which relate directly to active learning and a comprehensive knowledge of the developmental characteristics of young adolescents.

Teaching young adolescents requires substantially more than a sterile, theoretical grasp of the knowledge and skills inherent in the specialized preparation which we propose. It is urgent that middle grade students experience exemplary teaching. The American Association of School Administrators (AASA), in its recent publication, *Profiling Excellence in America's Schools*,¹ provides a comprehensive analysis of the qualities which most frequently accompany exemplary teaching (see box). In essence, exemplary teachers are highly motivated, skilled in interpersonal relationships, know their subject matter, and have a broad repertoire of effective instructional strategies which deeply involves them with *every* student, irrespective of individual differences.

The research just cited used the best seller, *In Search of Excellence*, as the basis for studying 154 schools previously identified by the U.S. Department of Education as

"The best in America". The authors, in commenting about the findings of their research, emphasize an underlying theme which is pervasive wherever exemplary teaching is present. They characterize this factor as "human skills" which include the involvement of teachers in effective management practices and leadership roles.

¹ AASA *Profiling Excellence in American Schools* (1986)

The Qualities of Exemplary Teachers

Motivation: The teachers have a strong *commitment to their work and to their students*. "These teachers not only demand achievement, but they provide opportunities for it.... They select appropriate materials, teach the material thoroughly, monitor frequently, provide much feedback to each student, reteach if necessary, and are especially careful to ensure student success on new material or individual work." They express expectations verbally and clearly.

The teachers are *committed to students outside of class*. Not only do they get involved in student activities, but they "sacrifice their personal time in order to be accessible to their students who need more guided instruction."

The teachers establish *personal goals* and determine a course of action for attaining them. They hold role models to be very important to them.

The teachers have what the researchers call an "*integrated perception*" of students – they view them as "whole individuals operating in a broader context beyond the classroom."

Also, the teachers stay professionally enthusiastic through a "*reward orientation*". They are rewarded when students exhibit understanding and achieve their goals. "It appears", say the researchers, "that great teaching is inspired by the simple, yet beautiful act of one human being touching another through the learning process."

Interpersonal Skills: The teachers' routines are *carefully patterned* to prevent disruptions; they have a variety of "preventive maintenance" behaviors. The researchers noticed "withitness", or constant awareness of what was going on in the

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classroom; and "overlappingness", the ability to do more than one thing at a time. When disruptions do occur, "these teachers approach the problem objectively and methodically".

The teachers are "active listeners". The most common technique is paraphrasing, restating student responses with phrases like "Are you saying that ...?" The teachers also "listen" on paper, sensitive to nuances in student writing. And they are sensitive to the mood of a class or individual.

Teachers build *rapport* with students by showing them respect, treating them fairly and trusting them. They show *empathy* by being able to "perceive the thoughts and emotions of their young, teenage students" They are warm and caring and set high expectations "by laying well-planned paths to success for their students".

Cognitive Skills: The teachers have *individualized perceptions* of their students. They try to find out about them as individuals, "diagnose their needs and learning styles, and then incorporate that knowledge into planned instructional activities."

The *effective teaching strategies* used by the teachers include skillful and enthusiastic teaching; well-organized courses; student-centered style; careful monitoring and evaluating; a structured, yet flexible, approach; and active involvement of students. The teachers are deeply involved with their classes. To win over students, good teachers use a combination of techniques, and for them, "no two days are alike".

Having *knowledge* of a subject area and teaching techniques is basic, but the exemplary teachers, "continually engage in professional development, thus presenting and considering themselves as lifelong learners who value the learning process itself." They discuss their "perpetual renewal of knowledge" with enthusiasm.

The teachers actively *seek innovation*. "Our teachers talk animatedly about change to improve student learning and about taking risks in an attempt to find and adopt new approaches to enhance teaching effectiveness," according to the researchers. In addition, the teachers "take time to reflect on the changes they propose and avoid change for the sake of change."

These findings convey a significant set of expectations for the professional preparation of teachers – expectations that are poorly articulated in too many teacher preparation programs.

The American Association of School Administrators (AASA),
Profiling Excellence in America's Schools (1986)

2 Roueche, J., and Baker, G.,
Proceedings of the Annual
Convention of the American
Association of School
Administrators (AASA); San
Francisco, CA (February, 1986)

The human skills that make good teachers are often overlooked in the rush to reform America's public schools.... There is not enough preparation of teachers... in management skills and leadership skills... These

are the qualities that almost all of the reform efforts are ignoring.... If you can start with good human skills you're light years down the road....²

These skills are particularly important in the middle grades. Young adolescents need teachers who are well organized and who know how to manage an active learning environment with its multiple instructional demands. Students want teachers who give leadership and who enjoy their function as role models, advisors, and mentors. They want and need warm, caring relationships with their teachers. These bonds of understanding and friendship have special significance during the critical, formative middle grade years.

The predominant emphasis in current teacher and administrator professional training for the middle grades does not square with either the research findings related to the general qualities associated with teacher and administrator excellence or the particularized educational needs of young adolescents. This imbalance must be redressed if renewal and reform are to occur in middle grade education.

Based upon the growing body of research related to teaching excellence in general and the equally compelling findings which underly our convictions about the necessary conditions for exemplary middle grade education, we believe that the professional preparation of middle grade teachers should require either K-8 or 9-12 certification plus eight additional semester hours of

professional concentration leading to a middle grade teaching endorsement or other appropriate credentialing requirement.

This special concentration should address the content of the middle grade core curriculum, the full range of developmental characteristics found in early adolescence, and a broad range of instructional strategies which emphasize active learning.

We propose that middle grade teachers receive:

1. Graduate level preparation which focuses upon the developmental characteristics of early adolescence and the professional skills required to plan and implement successful educational programs for middle grade students.

Concepts which should receive special attention include those related to "human skills" including group dynamics, motivation, the sociology of change, systems of reward and affirmation, group cohesion, collaborative planning, the dynamics of innovation, multicultural and linguistic influences, conflict resolution, peer group relationships, and a comprehensive knowledge of the intellectual, psychological, social, and physical development of young adolescents.

Teachers should develop a broad repertoire of strategies related to the management of complex human relationships appropriate to individual classrooms as well as to an entire student body. Special

emphases should be given to the development of knowledge and skills essential for teacher leadership in advisor-advisee programs and group guidance activities of various kinds.

2. Graduate level preparation in pedagogical studies specifically related to middle grade curriculum and instructional issues.

Major emphasis should be given to the mastery of a repertoire of instructional strategies which involve active learning on the part of all students. The middle grade core-curriculum framework should receive special attention with particular focus given to the study of issues and recommendations found elsewhere in this report.

Teachers should demonstrate proficiency in the use of cooperative learning techniques, and be able to recognize and respond to individual learning difficulties.

The emerging capacity for abstract thought and higher order cognitive skill development, characteristic of young adolescence, should be thoroughly defined. The implications for instructional priorities in specific subjects should be understood at a practical level of implementation.

Teachers must have the capability to teach reading and writing skills as a logical extension of their specialist or generalist teaching assignments. The philosophy of a school-wide reading and writing program throughout the middle grades should become a

professional commitment that is translated into daily instructional activities at the classroom level.

The tension between intellectual and academic priorities and the emotional and social dimensions of adolescence should be thoroughly explored. Teachers must emerge from their pedagogical studies with a clear sense of the middle grade philosophy and a strong commitment to its principles.

Special Considerations:

1. Principal endorsement.

A parallel need exists to strengthen the professional preparation of principals assigned to the middle grades. We believe that they should also be required to complete eight additional semester

hours of professional concentration leading to a middle grade administrative endorsement or other appropriate credentialing requirement. The academic emphasis for principals should include the same priorities as defined for teachers but with additional stress on planning, organizing, implementing (including master scheduling), and evaluating middle grade educational programs.

2. Reassignment of teachers and principals from K-5 or 9-12 to middle grade instruction.

The reassignment of teachers and principals to grades 6-8 from either grades K-5 or 9-12 should occur on the basis of interest, expertise, and commitment. Middle grade professionals should understand and enjoy young adolescents. Their training should specifically prepare them for this level of education. Those who are reassigned should either have or seek the middle grade endorsement or other appropriate credentialing requirement. Tuition assistance by local districts to reassigned personnel is encouraged.

3. Undergraduate field experience.

Early field experiences should be provided for undergraduate students considering middle grade teaching as a career option. This should be a focused, supervised experience which develops awareness of middle grade educational philosophy, knowledge of student

Effective Principals

Effective principals have a vision of what a good school is and systematically strive to bring that vision to life in their schools. School improvement is their constant theme. They scrutinize existing practices to assure that all activities and procedures contribute to the quality of the time available for learning. They make sure teachers participate actively in this process. Effective principals, for example, make opportunities available for faculty to improve teaching and classroom management skills.

Good school leaders protect the school day for teaching and learning. They do this by keeping teachers' administrative chores and classroom interruptions to a minimum.

Effective principals visibly and actively support learning. Their practices create an orderly environment. Good principals make sure teachers have the necessary materials and the kind of assistance they need to teach well.

Effective principals also build morale in their teachers. They help teachers create a climate of achievement by encouraging new ideas; they also encourage teachers to help formulate school teaching policies and select textbooks. They try to develop community support for the school, its faculty, and its goals.

US Department of Education *What Works* (1986)

State University (CSU) is prepared for this change. We believe that other public as well as private colleges and universities in California which prepare teachers will be equally supportive.

TASK FORCE RECOMMENDATIONS

- ① The State Superintendent should initiate appropriate action to facilitate collaboration among institutions of higher education which have professional teacher and administrator training programs, the Commission on Teacher Credentialing, and the State Department of Education in order to plan and implement the steps necessary for establishing a middle grade endorsement or other appropriate credentialing requirement for teachers and principals. This requirement should be based upon:
 - a. satisfaction of the prerequisites for either a K-8 or 9-12 teaching and/or administrative certificate;
 - b. completion of eight semester hours of graduate study in middle grade education with professional emphasis on the developmental characteristics of early adolescence, "human skills" essential for planning effective teacher/counselor/principal interaction with students, teaching strategies appropriate to "active learning", and comprehensive understanding of the middle grade core-curriculum framework; completion by principals of administrative emphases which include planning, organizing, implementing (including mastery of

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RECOMMENDATIONS *Continued*

scheduling strategies) and evaluating middle grade educational programs.

- ② Local school boards should amend personnel policies in order to give preference in the assignment of teachers and principals to grades 6-8 based upon those who hold the proposed middle grade endorsement or other appropriate credentialing requirement.
- ③ Superintendents should initiate local district cooperation with institutions of higher education in order to provide staff development for teachers, counselors, and principals presently assigned to grades 6-8 which emphasizes the academic content required for middle grade endorsement or other appropriate credentialing requirement.
- ④ Institutions of higher education should provide early field experience options for undergraduate students with potential interest in middle grade education.
- ⑤ Institutions of higher education should more intensively recruit underrepresented minority students for the teaching profession. New and innovative efforts must occur including attractive financial aid options for those who pursue professional training to the level of certification. The identification of potential minority teachers should begin as early as the middle grades. (see chapter on Student Diversity and Underrepresented Minorities.)

Continued Next Page

RECOMMENDATIONS *Continued*

- ⑥ The Commission on Teacher Credentialing should review and revise credentialing restrictions related to both elementary and secondary certificates which currently preclude the use of instructional strategies appropriate for the middle grades. In particular, since instructional configurations which are designed to provide transition between self-contained classrooms of the early elementary grades and the single subject departmentalized structure of high schools are strongly recommended for grades 6-8, the Commission should allow local districts the flexibility required to assign either elementary or secondary teachers to such transitional classes.**

An Invitation to Attend the
**California Middle Grade Education
Symposium**

January 23-24, 1987
Holiday Inn, Foster City

Co-sponsored by:

Bill Honig, State Superintendent of Public Instruction
The California League of Middle Schools
The Association of California School Administrators
The California State University
The University of the Pacific

**“Caught in the Middle:
The Task of Educational Reform
for Young Adolescents in
California Schools”**

Invitational

The Symposium is invitational. Team registrations are particularly encouraged. The Task Force Report specifically recommends that every school district define a process for reviewing and redefining middle grade policies and practices. Superintendents are especially urged to invite those expected to play key roles in this process including legislators, board members, central office personnel, principals, teachers, and others. Colleges and universities are also encouraged to send teams.

ABOUT THE SYMPOSIUM

The Symposium will address the report of the Middle Grade Task Force commissioned by Bill Honig, State Superintendent of Public Instruction. This report is based upon a full year of research and analysis by thirty-five Task Force members who were supported in their efforts by six Regional Review Panels located throughout California.

General sessions, overview sessions, and table-talks will be action oriented. An intense focus will be given to the educational principles and recommendations contained in the Task Force Report. Ample opportunity will be provided for depth discussions of critical issues related to middle grade educational reform.

The Report is destined to become the basis for major reform efforts in middle grade education throughout California and the nation. It has direct implications for:

- Legislative Initiatives
- Curriculum Designs
- Instructional Practices
- Organizational Structures
- Support Services
- Teacher and Administrator Preparation
- State of the Art Middle Grade Schools

The goal of the Symposium is to create a strong professional commitment to the task of educational reform for young adolescents in California schools.

EVENTS

January 23, 1987
Friday

- | | |
|-------------|---|
| 10:00 a.m. | Registration |
| 11:00 | Keynote Address <i>Bill Honig</i> Luncheon "The Task Force Report" <i>Gail Anderson and Bob Martin</i> (Co-chairpersons) |
| 1:30 - 5:00 | Overview and Table-talk Sessions No Host Reception |
| 6:30 | Buffet Dinner |
| 8:00 | Forum "The Dynamics of Middle Grade Educational Reform" |

January 24, 1987
Saturday

- | | |
|---------------|--|
| 8:00 a.m. | Continental Breakfast |
| 8:30 - 11:00 | Overview and Table-talk Sessions |
| 11:00 - 12:00 | Concluding General Session "Moving Forward" |

Symposium Sessions Preference Form

The Symposium will involve participants in three types of sessions:

- General sessions are designed and prescheduled for all participants.
- Overview sessions are planned to provide an introduction to each of the five major divisions of the Task Force Report including presentation of findings and recommendations.
- Table-talk sessions are designed to allow small-group discussions of issues grouped in relation to each of the five major divisions of the Report.

Instructions:

Please choose your top five priorities plus two alternatives from the following list. Participants will receive an individualized schedule during registration which reflects the sessions of their choice.

Please write the numbers 1-7 showing your top seven priorities in order of preference in the boxes next to your choices:

- | | | | |
|---------------------------|--|---------------------------|--|
| <i>Overview Session</i> | <input type="checkbox"/> Curriculum and Instruction: Achieving Academic Excellence | <i>Overview Session</i> | <input type="checkbox"/> Student Potential: Realizing the "Highest and Best" Intellectual, Social, Emotional and Physical Development |
| <i>Table-talk Session</i> | <input type="checkbox"/> Core Curriculum Knowledge Character Development | <i>Table-talk Session</i> | <input type="checkbox"/> Academic Counseling Equal Access Student Diversity and Underrepresented Minorities |
| <i>Table-talk Session</i> | <input type="checkbox"/> Thinking and Communication Learning to Learn Instructional Practice | <i>Table-talk Session</i> | <input type="checkbox"/> At-Risk Students Physical and Emotional Development |
| <i>Overview Session</i> | <input type="checkbox"/> Organization and Structure: Creating New Learning Environments | <i>Overview Session</i> | <input type="checkbox"/> Teaching and Administration: Preparing for Exemplary Performance |
| <i>Table-talk Session</i> | <input type="checkbox"/> School Culture Extracurricular and Intramural Activities Student Accountability | <i>Table-talk Session</i> | <input type="checkbox"/> Professional Preparation Staff Development |
| <i>Table-talk Session</i> | <input type="checkbox"/> Transition Structure Scheduling Assessment | <i>Overview Session</i> | <input type="checkbox"/> Leadership and Partnership: Defining the Catalysts for Middle Grade Educational Reform |
| | | <i>Table-talk Session</i> | <input type="checkbox"/> Parents, Communities, and School Boards State of the Art Middle Grade Schools |

Name _____ District/Institution/Other _____

Position _____ County _____

I am attending the Symposium as a member of a team. My schedule must match those of the following persons:

I am attending the Symposium as a member of a team but team members are attending different sessions; therefore, our schedules do not need to match. **A separate Symposium Sessions Preference Form is attached for each team member.**

I am not a team member.

Hotel Reservation

California Middle Grade Education Symposium

Reservations must be received by or before January 1, 1987

Telephone reservations are accepted: (415) 570-5700

or

Hotel reservation form should be sent directly to: **Holiday Inn, Foster City**
P O Box 4933
1221 Chess Drive
Foster City, CA 94404

Please reserve accommodations for:

Name: _____

Address: _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Telephone _____

Arriving via: air automobile

Arrival Date _____ Departure Date _____

Name(s) of person(s) sharing room: _____

Rates: The special Symposium rate of \$52.00 (plus tax) per night (single/double occupancy) is valid for January 22, 23, and 24, 1987.

(\$12.00 extra per person for three or more occupants per room; children under 12 free)

First night's deposit or major credit card number and expiration date required; 48 hour cancellation notice required for refund.

My check # _____ in the amount of \$ _____ payable to Holiday Inn is enclosed.

My credit card is to be charged for this reservation

Visa
 Mastercard
 American Express

My card # is _____ Expiration Date _____

Signature _____

Reservations must be made directly with the hotel!

Individual/Team Registration Form

California Middle Grade Education Symposium
January 23-24, 1987
Participation is limited; early registrations are essential!

Name _____ Position _____
District/Institution/Other _____
Address _____ County _____
City _____ State _____ Zip _____
Business phone () _____ Home phone () _____

Please check box if this is a team registration and complete the following information:

Names of team members

Position

| | |
|-------|-------|
| _____ | _____ |
| _____ | _____ |
| _____ | _____ |

Please attach a separate Symposium Sessions Preference Form (see opposite side) for each team member unless all team members are attending the same workshops.

Registration Fee: \$80.00 per person

This is a comprehensive fee for all Symposium expenses including meals and workshop materials. (Lodging and transportation are separate.)

Registration

Payment: Check # _____ in the amount of \$ _____ for _____ person(s) is enclosed.

Purchase order for _____ person(s) is enclosed; please invoice as shown.

Purchase order # _____ for _____ person(s) is to be invoiced as shown below:

Authorized Signature _____
Name Position

Note: checks/purchase orders are to be made out to
California League of Middle Schools

Please mail registration form and payment to: **Middle Grade Symposium**
California League of Middle Schools
3838 Orange Avenue
San Diego, CA 92105

Sorry, we are unable to accept telephone reservations!

**The new Holiday Inn at Foster City
is host site for the
California Middle Grade Education Symposium
January 23-24, 1987**

You'll enjoy staying at the Holiday Inn, Foster City – the unique hotel that has it all! A breathtaking atrium lobby with skybridges connecting the upper-level floors; interior waterscapes; glass elevators; and a meandering lagoon with exotic Japanese Koi create an exciting environment for the Symposium.

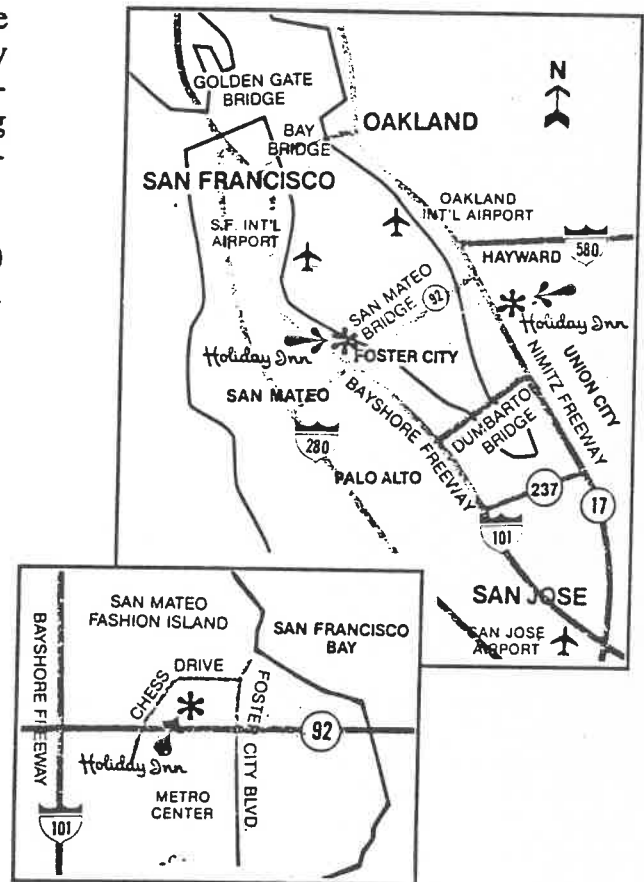
- Those who are flying-in will enjoy being just 10 minutes south of the San Francisco Airport with shuttle service available to the hotel.
- Those who are driving-in will find the San Francisco mid-peninsula location to be easily accessible from any direction in the Bay Area! (See map.) Parking is available for 500 automobiles.

Excellent Accommodations

- A flat rate of \$52.00 plus tax is guaranteed to participants for single or double occupancy. (\$12.00 extra per person for three or more occupants; children under 12 free)
- For those who wish to arrive early and/or stay over, the special Symposium rates apply for January 22, 23, and 24, 1987.
- Ample accommodations are available for those with special needs.
- Amenities include enclosed swimming pool, jacuzzi, and sauna.

Backup Accommodations

The equally beautiful and brand new Holiday Inn at Union City (east end of the San Mateo Bridge – see map) will provide backup accommodations, if required, at the same rate. Van service will be provided between the two hotels.



**Reservation Form is provided on the reverse side
for you to complete and mail directly to hotel.**