

A LOOK AT THE JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL
IN THE
BROOKFIELD SCHOOL SYSTEM

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A study of the history of the town and school system of Brookfield, Connecticut, from early beginnings to modern times was made. Brookfield is presently a suburban town of 6500 residents facing mounting growth problems due to the influx of large families from the cities. These families are attracted to the town by the growth of housing developments in a rural environment, expanding employment opportunities, and an enlightened school system. The educational plant, at present, includes three schools: two elementary schools and a combination junior and senior high school. Brookfield schools have kept pace with the growth in the past, but sensible planning at all levels is essential to provide for the growth of population as it reflects into the schools.

The effect of the changes in the town upon the youth of the town, particularly upon the adolescent, is studied in depth. The responsibility of the educators in preparing students to cope with problems both now and in the future is recognized. Also recognized is the need for deep and keen insight to successfully turn out adults capable of coping with this world. Factors influencing the adolescent and his requirements lead to consideration of the position of the junior high schools in the overall picture. Discussion of

the physical characteristics of the adolescent and his special need for understanding is stressed because it has a bearing on mental health and development. The adolescent must be helped to understand the period he is going through. This help should be given by teachers trained and qualified to understand this age bracket. The future planning for expansion of the educational system involves an understanding of the place of the junior high school in this school system. A study of the adolescent in relation to his school, his environment, and society in general leads to the conclusion that a school adapted to his specific needs is both desirable and necessary.

A look at the middle school for sixth, seventh, and eighth grades results in an evaluation of its history, advantages and disadvantages as applied to various schools in Connecticut. This was done through observations and interviews with administrators and teachers. The ideal middle school is explored with a discussion of possible ways to improve this type of educational division, stressing combining of sixth through eighth grades as an entity. The middle school concept seems to be one that could very well be adapted to solve the growth problems in Brookfield. This system combines under one roof a curriculum especially adapted to the needs of the adolescent taught by teachers who are oriented to this group.