

The Junior High Schools of Kansas City, Kansas  
R. L. Lyman  
University of Chicago

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Kansas is the leading junior high school state in the Middle West. In 1925-26 eleven Kansas cities of the first class had twenty-six junior high schools; fifty-seven cities of the second class and twenty-six cities of the third class had one junior high school each. The total is 109 intermediate schools with about one thousand teachers and forty thousand pupils. In no other state in the Mississippi Valley has the movement gained such headway, spreading so regularly and uniformly among communities located evenly throughout the commonwealth.

Several cities in the state, quite rightly introducing their intermediate schools gradually, are as yet in the transition period of secondary-school reform. For example, Topeka, a city with a population of 60,000, has four junior high schools; one is still associated in the same building with an elementary school; one other was separated from the lower grades in 1927; two are entirely distinct and separate school units. Moreover, in some cities, as in Topeka, a considerable number of seventh- and eighth-grade pupils remain in elementary schools, a fact which renders difficult even in distinct intermediate schools the introduction of many essential elements of junior high school practice. Always the problem of transfer of pupils is complicated if traditional eight-grade schools and progressive junior high schools are operating in the same school system.

The impossibility of visiting personally all or even many Kansas junior high schools compelled the writer to select one city as representative of the best intermediate-school practices. In 1917 he had witnessed in operation the Central Junior High School of Kansas City, at that time one of the pioneer intermediate schools of the state. In 1927 the entire city, with one or two minor exceptions near the outskirts, was favored with junior high schools. Moreover, a highly industrialized community, in which both the abundant opportunities for employment and the nature of the population tend to accentuate school mortality, seems to offer the best occasion for the junior high school to prove its worth as a holding institution. In other words, both the extensive junior high school experience of Kansas City and the nature of its school constituency – and, one may add, the unbroken continuity of its progressive school leadership under Superintendent M. E. Pearson – led the writer to think that Kansas City might well be selected as representative of the best intermediate-school practices in the banner junior high school state.

*Industries and population* – Kansas City, Kansas, ranks as the twentieth industrial city in the United States, a fact not generally known. The enormous meat-packing establishments usually accredited to Kansas City, Missouri, are on the Kansas side of the state line. This industry annually employs 10,500 men, pays \$12,000,000 in wages, and manufactures \$200,000,000 in products. Second only to Chicago in meat-packing, Kansas City, Kansas, ranks third in the United States in manufacture of soap, third in flour-making, fifth in grain storage, first as a hay market, and, as previously said, twentieth in the annual value of its products. Industrially, it is actually far ahead of its Missouri neighbor. The population, which is 126,000, is growing at the rate of 4,000 a year. Of these, the great bulk is English-Celtic in origin; the exceptions are a more or less residentially segregated block of 13,000 negroes and a very much smaller block of Croatian stock, employees of the meat-packing industries. This population is fairly evenly distributed over an area of twenty-two square miles, wide spaces separating from the parent city Rosedale and Argentine, smaller communities which have been added recently to the corporation.

One additional fact strikes a visitor forcefully. Although Kansas City, Kansas may rightly object to being considered an industrial adjunct of the Missouri metropolis, the proximity of the two communities has almost entirely prevented local merchandising on the Kansas side of the state line. There are no large retail establishments and no hotels of any size. Physically, Kansas City, Kansas, to a casual visitor, greatly belies its basic prosperity and progressive spirit. The dwellings, the homes

(Kansas City ranks sixth in home ownership among the cities of the United States of more than 100,000 population) are indeed ample evidence of such prosperity, but the business district, with the exception of a very few buildings, such as the magnificent new courthouse, which is really a monument of architectural beauty, looks like the center of a former boom town.

*Distribution of school plants and school population* – However, the disappointing appearance of the retail district entirely misrepresents the real nature of the community, and no element of healthy city life is more clearly manifest than the admirably conceived and excellently managed school system. The school population – 670 teachers and 24,000 pupils – is housed in fifty-six schools. Of these, forty-nine are elementary schools, Grades I-VI, inclusive; seven are secondary schools; one of the latter includes a junior college, whose work articulates with the curriculum of the University of Kansas and other colleges. With the minor exception noted, the entire city is on the 6-3-3- plan. In the municipal center is the Central High School and Junior College, which has 1,550 tenth-, eleventh-, and twelfth-grade pupils and 300 junior-college students. Temporarily housed with them are 250 ninth-grade pupils who live inconveniently far from the outlying junior high schools. However, a plot of twenty-seven acres has been purchased a few blocks from the present central location, upon which will be erected soon a new senior high school and a new and separate junior college. When this is done – it is hoped about 1931 – the present senior high school plant will become a sixth junior high school. Also centrally located is a senior high school caring for 461 colored pupils and a group of 77 junior-college students. This is indicative of the city-wide educational segregation between the two races that extends from the first grade through the junior college, the only example in the state of Kansas and made possible by legislation for this city alone. Such segregation is carried out with no discrimination in favor of the whites in buildings, equipment, or salary schedule.

In addition to the small junior high school group just mentioned, Kansas City has five other intermediate schools. Toward the north is the Northwest Junior High School and three miles to the right, the Northeast Junior High School. These are twin buildings, each costing \$300,000 and erected from the same blue prints, the first for white pupils exclusively, the second for colored pupils. In the former are 1,234 pupils; in the latter 999. About one mile south of the municipal center is the earliest Kansas City junior high school, started in 1916, the parent of the others, still the largest, and on the whole the best housed. Southward to the left and right from the municipal center are the Rosedale and Argentine school, which are as yet, against the time of population growth and additional buildings, six-year high schools, each, however, maintaining fairly distinct faculties for the junior and the senior high schools.

*Pay-as-you-go school financing* – To the many municipalities which are building their schools by means of a heavy bonding program, Kansas City may stand as a moral lesson. Her objective, not entirely realized, is to pay for school improvements and expansion out of current assets. In 1926 the new Rosedale Junior Senior High School, costing \$300,000, was paid for immediately without one dollar of indebtedness. In spite of new buildings and other purchases, such as the tract of twenty-seven acres just mentioned, approximately \$2,000,000 in the last five years, the present bonded indebtedness for school purposes is only \$2,600,000. This achievement has been made possible by the allocation each year of \$250,000 out of current income for building purposes, repairs, and new construction. In 1929 the bonded indebtedness will be reduced to \$2,137,000 and all the remaining bonds are serial, with approximately \$90,000 maturing annually. The new building projects may wait two years for the annual building appropriation to accumulate. Finally, the new million-dollar senior high school on the spacious plot already purchased, already subjected to suitable landscape gardening and already dedicated, will be built and paid for with cash accumulated through two sources, namely, money furnished to pay off heavy maturing bonds and the quarter million set aside each year for capital outlay and maintenance of the school plants.

All this is accomplished under a fairly moderate tax rate. At the present the taxes on \$100 valuation are \$1.60 for school purposes out of a possible legal maximum of \$2.00. Kansas City school costs exclusive of debt charges averaged \$70 per pupil in 1924, \$72 in 1925, and \$75 in 1926. One feels certain that in the coming twenty-five or fifty years Kansas City will not have her pressing educational needs inadequately met because of the necessity of paying off bonds on buildings which

may then have become obsolete. Even to approximate keeping pace with expanding educational necessities out of current assets makes Kansas City almost unique among American cities. It indicates a sense of business foresight altogether too rare on the part of school authorities.

*The physical equipment of the junior high schools* – On the whole, the Central, Northeast, and Northwest junior high schools are suitably housed. The classrooms are adequate in size to accommodate forty pupils, are well lighted, and have excellently designed locker spaces concealed behind blackboards, which open on pivots under the teacher's control. Unfortunately, the seats are regularly screwed to the floor, and the aisles are somewhat narrow; unfortunately, too, appropriations did not permit of ample filing cabinets and class-library spaces. Moreover, an observer is struck by the absence in each building of a generous space for library purposes, an especially perplexing oversight in view of the fact that the city library is under the control of the board of education, and nowhere has the writer witnessed such an opportunity to co-ordinate library and school services. The fact is that even without adequate school space excellent co-operation exists in Kansas City; each junior high school has about five thousand library books in the various classrooms, and plans are being made to establish city branch libraries open in the evening for the public in the several junior high schools. The junior high schools do not have enough well-equipped science rooms. Still further, the plan, quite inadequate even if it is economical and generally practiced, of having a combination stage and gymnasium at the front of the school auditorium is followed. This must accommodate both sexes. There are no swimming pools, and the playgrounds adjoining some of the junior high schools are not in keeping with the plot of twenty-seven acres purchased for the Central High School. In spite of these limitations, the school plants are fairly satisfactory; they are certainly far superior to transformed elementary-school buildings or to the obsolete senior high school buildings too often passed down to the young children. The part of wisdom in any city is to wait for a new intermediate-school plant, if at all possible, until building and grounds can approximate the best. Thirty teams playing indoor baseball during the noon hour on a Kansas City playground large enough for perhaps five games seems an anomaly in a relatively small city spread over twenty-two square miles.

*Relation between senior and junior high schools* – One principle of school articulation rigorously insisted upon in Kansas City is as commendable as is the financial principle of pay-as-you-go. The junior high schools are free from the domination of the senior high schools. Too often the various units of a system are built from the top down; the college with its traditional curriculum dominates the senior high school; this in turn makes demands on the intermediate school, and so downward. Unquestionably, the domination of the college over the senior high school has done much to prevent that institution from sensibly shaping its curriculum for the two-thirds of its pupils who will not go to college. In many cities – probably there are some in Kansas – the senior high school faculty, almost as reluctant to part from tradition as a college faculty, has hampered seriously the junior high schools in adjusting their curriculums to the vocational, avocational, and cultural needs of the children. On the contrary, Kansas City believes in giving all children “a new deal,” as they call it, a chance to start over at the seventh grade, trying to keep them free from the common grade-school “brand.” For each pupil still another new opportunity comes at the tenth-grade level, and the senior high school is instructed to take junior high school graduates *as they are*, regardless of any tradition of a set requirement for all pupils, is instructed to refrain from criticizing the lower school and to make the necessary curricular adjustments, if any seem imperative, in the tenth grade. Interesting indeed, and pertinent very, is the attitude of the senior high school; it finds the tenth-grade pupils satisfactory and this in spite of the fact that a junior high school may send a pupil forward to the senior high school with a conditional diploma provided he has completed thirteen of the fifteen normal credits. This does not mean that continuity of schooling is broken between the lower and higher secondary levels. A cumulative record card covering the entire six years of secondary education goes forward with each pupil from the seventh grade through the twelfth.

*Ability grouping and differentiated instruction* – The principle of ability grouping is carried to the extreme in the Kansas City system, beginning in the first grade and extending through the senior high school. Even in the two or three one-room schools still necessary in the outskirts of the widely dispersed community, the teacher divides each class for instructional purposes into ability groups. In

the junior high school proper each grade is divided on the basis of abilities for the academic subjects only into X, Y, and Z classifications, and these in turn are separated into class- or home-room groups of decreasing ability levels. For example, the Central Junior High School has Sections 1, 2, and 3 of the X group, Sections 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, and 6 of the Y group, and Sections 1, 2, and 3 of the Z group in the 1928 seventh grade. The Z sections are generally smaller than the X and Y sections, the difference in size often being due to the normal dropping out of inferior pupils at or about sixteen years of age. The relatively smaller size of the slow-moving groups is fortunate, because they especially need careful individual attention. It must always be borne in mind that large classes militate decidedly against individual teaching.

Grouping is determined by weighting several measurements; the estimate of the pupil's work by the sixth-grade teacher, the intelligence quotient, the reading score, and other marks of scholastic achievement are weighted somewhat arbitrarily, and a total ranking is determined. The composite scores are arranged in numerical order, and the pupils are allocated to classes more or less automatically. An occasional pupil who proves to have been wrongly placed by this program is transferred to a more appropriate section. Thus, from the lowest grade to the highest, the Kansas City pupils are separated by seemingly adequate tests into ability groups suitable for differentiated instruction. As previously noted, the grouping is not practiced in the non-academic work, such as art, music, physical training, and shop activities, except in so far as the grouping in the academic classes indirectly determines the makeup of instructional sections in the non-academic classes.

*Deliberate reduction of retardation* – With this program of universal ability grouping another experiment has kept pace, namely, a systematic effort to prevent retardation, especially in the lower and middle grades. Concrete evidence of the results is available. In 1921 the percentage of pupils failing of promotion at the end of each year (Kansas City promotions are annual) was 14.9; by 1926 this percentage had been reduced almost by main strength to 4.3. Such reduction in retardation preventing grade repetition of about 10 pupils in every hundred represents a very material saving in salaries. A somewhat amusing fact is that in certain middle-grade rooms thus freed from over-age laggards some of the desks are too large for the normal-age pupils who now occupy them. The Kansas City officials frankly admit that such forced reduction of retardation means that some pupils are advancing beyond their mastery of the prescribed curriculum. However, the deliberately determined advance is quite in keeping with the conviction that democratic schools must give pupils what they can take and profit by, must adapt the curriculum to individuals, and must not expose children to repeated and habitual failure. Laggards almost universally drop out of school at the end of the compulsory-attendance age. So long as they remain in school, they may be wisely kept in the line of advance with pupils of their own chronological age. Many a child finds valuable experiences in a junior high school which would have been denied him if he had been made to repeat arithmetic and geography in the sixth grade a number of times.

Such deliberate reduction of retardation is especially justifiable in a school system which specializes in ability grouping. At any grade level, especially in a junior high school with from seven to ten ability sections per grade, the laggards find themselves in Z sections, who function is, or ought to be, specifically remedial, and this not merely in the negative sense of more intensive drill on minimalists but in the positive sense of curriculum adaptation. For example, the pupils in one VII-Z<sub>3</sub> English class who were observed reading materials easy enough for a normal fourth-grade group were apparently working at the top of their capacities. The principle is to guide such pupils wisely into activities that they can perform satisfactorily. Relatively inferior pupils deliberately lifted forward by grades beyond their actual curriculum achievements do not and cannot clog up the educational programs of normal and superior pupils in the same grade. The slower pupils are segregated in groups to get the best they can; they are not retarding classes capable of accomplishments appropriate to their grade level.

*Differentiated instruction* – The courses of study, the departmental programs, and the actual school practices with respect to differentiated instruction indicate that the theory is better than the practice. This is stated as a fact and in no sense as an unsympathetic criticism. "What are you actually doing with a VII-X<sub>1</sub> group that differs from your work with a VII-Z<sub>3</sub> group?? Such a question

elicits some satisfactory replies. The VII-X<sub>-1</sub> group (superior children) is accelerated, completing in two years the three years of junior high school work, and that with a decidedly enlarged and enriched course. In general, Kansas City favors enrichment of school experiences far more than acceleration. However, a city which maintains a junior college is especially justified in saving one or more years of school time for its most capable pupils. The course in general mathematics shows a very satisfactory attempt to block out instruction for sections of varying ability. Certain items of instruction, such as "addition of polynomials," are followed by the symbols X, Y, and Z, indicating that all ability groups must take them; other items, such as "binomialXpolynomial," are followed by X and Y only; and still others, such as "trinomialXpolynomial," by X only. The obvious implication is minimal for all, supplementary work for average groups, and greatly enriched work for superior groups. Other departments have attempted somewhat less efficaciously to map out differentiated instruction for varying ability groups.

Admittedly, the problem of differentiating instruction for groups of varying ability is more perplexing in such a subject as English or social science. One is inclined to think, however, that a departmental program is avoiding a responsibility if, at the beginning of what appears to be a uniform course of study for all groups, it contents itself with saying: "This outline by its very nature can be adapted to any group – high, middle, or low. The aims or problems of each six weeks are within the ability of any class, but the method of attaining the desired results and the amount of work accomplished along prescribed lines each six weeks depend entirely on the mental rating of the class." The obligation of a department to block out minimal, to suggest appropriate supplementary and enriching additions to such minimal, certainly ought not to be dismissed with such generalities and uncertainties.

Moreover, the actual remedial work with subnormals is in Kansas City, as elsewhere, admittedly scattering and unsystematic. Does an expert teacher of remedial reading give personal instruction to a VII-Z<sub>-3</sub> group, pupils who obviously need that more than any other one line of instruction? The answer is negative. That ability grouping pushed administratively to the extreme carries with it a supreme responsibility for individualized instruction is fully realized by the leaders in Kansas City. They are doing more in this direction than the writer has observed elsewhere, but they frankly admit that actual accomplishment of the junior high school theory of individualization is as yet far from satisfactory. A school population of twenty-four thousand probably has two hundred subnormals for whom provision should be made in specially graded "opportunity" rooms; three such rooms are in operation at present in Kansas City.

Apparently the commonly heard criticism of ability grouping, namely, that by it some children may be publicly humiliated and some parents may be incensed, and the other objection that slow-moving pupils will miss the stimulus obtained by association with brighter classmates, have little weight with Kansas City school authorities. Concerning the first objection they say that few parental complaints are registered; concerning the second they say that every group of medium or low ability gives opportunities of leadership to many pupils who would always remain submerged in mixed classes. Moreover, an ingenious device of marking or grading pupils may be commented upon here. Each child carries home a monthly report card showing for each subject a rank of 1, 2, 3, 4, or 5. A rank of 1 indicates that he has been in the front rank of achievement in his own class group, in comparison *with his peers*. A rank of 1 in English, for example, given to a child in a VII-X<sub>-1</sub> group may represent achievement intrinsically far in advance of that represented by a rank of 1 given to a child in a VII-Z<sub>-3</sub> group, but both are 1 and carry the same connotation of achievement with reference to the pupil's individual potentialities. Kansas City principals recount conversations with parents who testify that the feeling of achievement which their children have under this plan has been in large measure the cause of actual improvement in their work as well as a cause of their increased happiness. Rightly or wrongly, Kansas City practices the principle: enable children to succeed; they grow by successes, not by failures.

The following are the junior high school courses of study for 1927-28. All subjects are given five periods a week. Pupils whose previous standing in English averages 2 may elect the combination language courses. Pupils wishing to be excused from physical training must file a

doctor's certificate in the office. Those taking home decoration and costume design the first half of the year are required to take domestic art the last half. Two years of work are offered in chorus, orchestra, sewing, cooking, manual training, and typewriting.

First year	Second Year	Third Year
<p>Required:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. English or English-Latin I</li> <li>2. Arithmetic</li> <li>3. History</li> <li>4. Geography</li> </ol> <p>Elective (choose one):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Chorus I</li> <li>• Orchestra I</li> <li>• Freehand Drawing I</li> <li>• Woodworking I</li> <li>• Domestic Art I</li> <li>• Commercial Art I</li> </ul>	<p>Required:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. English or English-Latin II</li> <li>2. History</li> <li>3. Arithmetic</li> <li>4. Physical training and elementary science</li> </ol> <p>Elective (choose one):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Chorus I or II</li> <li>• Orchestra I or II</li> <li>• Commercial Art</li> <li>• Trades Information</li> <li>• Home Decoration and Costume Design (1/2 year)</li> <li>• Domestic Art II (1/2 year)</li> <li>• Domestic Science I</li> <li>• Typewriting I</li> <li>• Freehand Drawing I</li> </ul>	<p>Required;</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. English or English-Latin III</li> <li>2. Physical training and community civics</li> </ol> <p>Elective (choose three):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Algebra</li> <li>• Ancient History</li> <li>• Business Arithmetic</li> <li>• General Science</li> <li>• Bookkeeping</li> <li>• Shorthand</li> <li>• Typewriting</li> <li>• Domestic Art II (1/2 year)</li> <li>• Cafeteria Cooking</li> <li>• Woodworking I or II</li> <li>• Freehand Drawing I</li> <li>• Commercial Art I</li> <li>• Latin</li> <li>• Spanish</li> </ul>

Kansas City refuses to consider the curriculum as in any sense static and constantly makes changes as various needs arise and as financial allowances increase. The curriculum itself is an example of the constants and variables type. The constants or core subjects constituting the "common integrating education" – English, social studies, mathematics, and physical training – are required through two years. The only ninth-grade constants are English and physical training, the latter alternating by days with community civics, an arrangement made necessary by limited gymnasium facilities. Electives are of two types – the "broadening or enriching courses" in art and music and the "finding courses," such as mechanical drawing, manual training, and domestic science. Even the so-called "constants" of the curriculum are never considered rigid. A principal can and does disregard all uniform requirements if a child needs readjustment; the offerings of the school are adapted to individual needs.

Outstanding in curricular offerings is the experiment in English-Latin. Capable pupils who expect to continue their education through the senior high school and beyond are placed in a course which, if carried through their eighth and ninth grades, credits them with English and one year of high-school Latin. Naturally, only one or two class groups in each junior high school avail themselves of this opportunity. It is a worthy experiment in correlation between related subjects, a field in which all true intermediate schools are certain to pioneer in the coming decade. Similar correlation ought to be extended to English and the social sciences. To be commended are the choruses and orchestras, from two to five of which are maintained in each school. The pupils are required to furnish their own instruments although measures are taken to supply instruments in worthy cases. Competent teachers who give all their time to music conduct the practice sessions in business-like fashion. Community singing is prevalent everywhere; a generation of music-lovers and a large number of performers are being trained in these city schools.

One serious curriculum shortcoming, in the winter's opinion, is the lack of attention paid to nature-study and general science. The surroundings of one new building are beautifully laid out with most attractive landscape gardening, all done by the children themselves and guarded by them with

zealous pride against their own depredations at playtime. Coming in after the noon our, five-hundred children *walk on the walks in surprisingly good order*, by their own volition protecting their own shrubbery against themselves or any other despoilers, and woe to the pupil who breaks a branch or snatches a leaf. All this indicates that these children are science conscious as well as socially conscientious. Where, then, are the laboratories and science apparatus? Conspicuously inadequate; only a modicum of demonstration can be performed by the teachers of science. Children who can affectionately plant and protect shrubs ought to be given abundant privileges of handling many other objects of nature and of performing many experiments in well-equipped laboratories.

Another serious weakness in the curriculum in well-equipped laboratories, slight emphasis placed on social studies other than history. This is distinctly not in line with the recommendations of educational leaders, nor with the practices of many other junior high schools. IN all probability, social studies ought to be considered the one subject and should be required in some form throughout the three years. At the very least, community civics should be added as an elective in the eighth grade and vocational civics in the ninth grade if education is truly "to go hand in hand with citizenship."

*Prevocational try-outs* – The much-mooted issue as to the relation between trade training and prevocational enlightenment and try-out has been decided positively and correctly by Kansas City in favor of the latter emphasis. The junior high school grades at least are not the place for trade training of the Smith-Hughes order; the children are too young; the school's major purpose in all vocational work is prevocational information and guidance. Domestic-science and manual-training laboratories in all the Kansas City schools swarm with seemingly absorbed pupils and this in spite of very modest equipment. The city has made a study of the occupational objectives of girls, finding that more than 94 per cent of them become home-makers. One might expect, therefore, that the work in domestic science would more nearly approximate trade training than the work in manual training. And this is true; courses called "home management" offer sewing and home-decorating in the seventh grade, foods and diet in the eighth grade, and millinery and dress-making in the ninth grade. Many of the girls who must drop out of school at the age of sixteen, elect typewriting throughout the eighth and ninth grades and specialize during the ninth grade in stenography and office practice. For both boys and girls are offered survey courses in the seventh grade, gradually increasing specialization in the eighth grade, and a full year of work in one or two special lines during the ninth grade.

Prevocational work for boys is more elaborately outlined. The plan in operation at present provides the following schedule: Seventh grade: 18 weeks of mechanical drawing; 18 weeks of general manual training. Eighth grade: 9 weeks of try-out in each of four lines – woodworking, automobile repairing, sheet metal, and electricity. Ninth grade: specialization – half year in mechanical drawing or half year in woodworking and carpentry. Changes now being made in this schedule are indicative of curriculum adaptations quite commonly practiced in all departments. The foregoing program is considered to be open to two criticisms: half-year periods in the seventh grade are too long; specialization in the ninth grade is too limited. With this in mind, a committee of principals and vocational teachers has planned a modified program, now being tried out in the Central Junior High School: Seventh grade: 9 weeks of beginning mechanical drawing, 9 weeks of beginning electricity, 18 weeks of beginning woodworking. These are general exploratory courses, preceded by mechanical aptitude tests, required of all boys, and intended to give them a taste of the different lines of work. Eighth grade: 9 weeks of beginning metal-work, 0 weeks of beginning plumbing, 9 weeks of beginning automobile repairing, 9 weeks of beginning carpentry and cement-work. These are high-pressure courses dealing with tool processes to enable the boys to see whether they like the work and have skill in it. Ninth-grade electives: 36 weeks of advanced mechanical drawing, 36 weeks of woodworking and carpentry, 18 weeks of advanced automobile work or 9 weeks of advanced electricity and 9 weeks of advanced metal-work. These courses specialize in applied projects both inside and outside the shop themselves.

The manual arts show several interesting side lights. The heavier and more expensive machines rotate by nine-week periods among four junior high schools, resulting in a large saving. The employment of tradesmen as instructors to supplement the work of the regular teachers in trades-finding classes, tried first in Kansas City, although very satisfactory, was found to be difficult to

administer in the work of the school in this line was extended. The tradesmen always offered help which the teachers could not give. Since the teachers were always present with the tradesmen, the courses proved expensive.

*Contacts between the home and the school* – This topic leads to the home-room organization and to the program of educational, vocational, and moral guidance. Every child is a member of a homeroom, a socially organized, self-governing, democratic unit, electing a representative to the Student Council, which participates in the government of the school under faculty guidance. One teacher acts as sponsor for one group throughout the entire three years, retaining under her personal direction approximately the same thirty-five to forty pupils. Thus, one teacher comes to know each pupil intimately and in many instances establishes close contacts with the pupil's home. If a parent comes to the school, the child's homeroom counselor takes her place with the principal for the interview in all except extremely rare cases. Moreover, she tabulates all the periodic report cards that are sent to the homes; she consults with other teachers about her pupils at least once and often many times a year; she summons parents to interviews on occasion. In her charge also are the mimeographed sheets and preliminary enrollment cards for the succeeding year. These are sent to the homes, discussed by parents and children, and signed by both the parents and the teacher. Thus, without any elaborate machinery, the school counselors and the parents are able to effect seemingly admirable cooperation.

*Holding Power* – The effectiveness of the junior high school in holding power is always difficult to demonstrate statistically because many factors, some making for retention and some for elimination, are operative at the same time. When the Central High School enrolls 591 Sophomores, 538 Juniors, and 421 Seniors and the junior college has 309 students, the evidence is indicative of holding power. That about the same proportions of membership exist among the three junior high school grades, however, must not be accepted as proof of similar holding power in the middle schools. The compulsory-attendance law, prescribing a lower limit at sixteen years, is operative. The fact is that the period of largest school mortality in Kansas City is now at the end of the ninth grade, which usually coincides with the sixteen-year limit. Another pertinent fact is that generally throughout the country the conspicuous decline in school attendance occurs at the end of the eighth grade wherever the 8-4 plan is followed. The 6-3-3 plan generally retains a portion of the pupils for at least one additional year. This is especially likely to be true in a school system which, like Kansas City, keeps almost all the pupils going forward grade by grade in accordance with their advancing chronological ages.

Kansas City thinks it has evidence that indicates the holding power of its intermediate schools even beyond the minimum school-age limit. The Northwest Junior High School, which may be used as an example of holding power, was organized in September, 1924, enrolling 933 pupils – 333 in the seventh grade, 310 in the eighth grade, and 290 in the ninth grade. The school has made a considerable growth and in September, 1927, enrolled 1,246 pupils on the opening day. During the three years the seventh grade had an average percentage of loss amounting to 7.7; the eighth grade, 7.3; and the ninth grade, 7.8, showing that the ninth-grade loss was about the same as the seventh- and eighth-grade losses. During the last three years this school has been in operation, counting the present year, the number of pupils enrolled in the ninth grade has been greater than the number of pupils completing the eighth grade the previous year. This is caused by pupils in the accelerated groups completing the three years in two.

The supreme tests of a junior high school are the degree to which adolescent children are appraising their own vocational and avocational aptitudes, the degree to which they are experiencing many phases of life in social groups, and the degree to which they are mastering certain basic habits and skills and acquiring useful knowledge. Exploration, socialization, and command of fundamental processes are the major objectives of the junior high school. The Kansas City intermediate schools are accomplishing these objectives, not perfectly, to be sure, but in general so satisfactorily that the city as a whole would not consent to the abandonment of the schools. The intermediate schools have become indispensable units in the school system, articulating readily with the lower and the higher

units, and, above all, offering to boys and girls between twelve and sixteen years of age a normal, wholesome, happy school life.