

This Part of ECIA	Replaces These Programs
Chapter 1—Financial Assistance to Meet Special Educational Needs of Disadvantaged Children	ESEA Title I Basic Grants to Local Districts Special Grants State-Administered Programs for Migratory Children, Handicapped Children, and Neglected and Delinquent Children State Administration
Chapter 2—Consolidation of Federal Programs for Elementary and Secondary Education	
Subchapter A—Basic Skills Development	ESEA Title II—Basic Skills Development (except Part C, Sec. 231), Inexpensive Book Distribution Program
Subchapter B—Educational Improvement and Support Services	ESEA Title IV Part B—Instructional Materials and School Library Resources Part C—Improvement in Local Educational Practices Part D—Guidance, Counseling, and Testing ESEA Title V—State Leadership ESEA Title VI—Emergency School Aid Precollege Science Teacher Training* (Sec. 3(a)(1), NSF Act of 1950) Teacher Corps (Part A, HEA) Teacher Centers (Sec. 532, HEA)

FIGURE 7.2 The Education Consolidation Improvement Act: How Merged Programs Fit into ECIA.

*Separate, fiscal year (FY) 1982; consolidated, FY 1983.

that only 55% of children and youths with disabilities were being served appropriately. Of the 195 acts passed, 61 were passed between March 1970 and November 1975. Public Law 93-380, the Education Consolidation Improvement Act (ECIA), passed in 1974, was the most important of the laws passed; it extended and amended the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) of 1965 and established a national policy on equal educational opportunity. Figure 7.2 notes the changes in ESEA.

The most far-reaching and significant federal act affecting those with disabilities was Public Law 94-142, the Education of All Handicapped Children Act of 1975, which was an amendment to Public Law 93-380. PL 94-142 has been described by many educators as "a bill of rights for those with disabilities." This law sets forth specific procedures that school districts must carry out to establish due process for students with disabilities. The most important feature of the law is that all such students between ages

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3 and 21 must have available to them a free and appropriate public education. The law includes an emphasis on the regular class as the preferred legal decisions and legislation have made it clear that the rights of all children must be respected in our schools. Unfortunately, legal decisions and legislation do not ensure the development of adequate or appropriate programs. Inservice education is necessary to provide teachers with more specialized skills to deal with specific behavioral and academic problems. Mainstreaming can succeed only with a strong partnership of curriculum specialists, teachers, and supervisory personnel working cooperatively to provide the most appropriate education for all children.

EDUCATING DISABLED CHILDREN IN THE REGULAR CLASSROOM

Although the Education of All Handicapped Children Act requires school districts to identify and label children with special needs, it never mandated separate programs. Both federal and state laws have been amended since 1975 to insist on placing special needs students in the least restrictive environment—usually in the regular classroom unless their disabilities are severe.

Labeling also lowers student self-esteem, and moving students out of the regular classroom often limits students' expectation of success. Mainstreaming students with disabilities, even those with severe disabilities, seems to be a better approach. The team approach with regular classroom teachers allows the special needs teacher to work in a more integrated instructional environment.

Two new areas in the education of students with disabilities are (1) the emphasis on preschool identification and services, and (2) the transition from school to the world of work. At the preschool level, federal and state mandates require services for very young children. At present, the mandate is age 3, but it is expected that such service will soon begin at birth. The idea is that early intervention is best when dealing with disabling conditions.

INCLUSION: WHAT DOES IT MEAN?

Inclusion is a term for which few authors can agree on a definition. Some teachers lump inclusion with mainstreaming. Others believe it means keeping all special needs children in the regular classroom while retraining the special staff. Still others believe inclusion means *some* children, and full inclusion means *all* children. The term is also used to include teachers of students with disabilities who accompany their students into regular classrooms. The most common definition of inclusion states that inclusion involves keeping special education students in regular education classrooms and taking support services to the child rather than bringing the child to support services.

A major question on inclusion has been whether placing severely dysfunctional children in a regular classroom without providing adequate training or support for the teacher puts the other students at risk. Without such training and support, teachers take up much instructional time dealing with distractions, disruptions, and sometimes violence.

Much progress has been made in the first decade of the 21st century in building successful inclusion programs. When elementary schools have a clear philosophy of inclusion, mission statements that include goals for *all* students, and a curriculum that balances the needs of general and special education students, inclusion can be successful (Holloway, 2001).

Gifted Students

It has been estimated that over 2.5 million, or about 6%, of all young Americans are endowed with academic, artistic, or social talents far beyond those of their peers. These gifted children come from all levels of society, all races, and both sexes.

All 50 states have programs for gifted children, but there are still problems with identifying and providing for talented young students. For instance, many gifted children cannot be identified by IQ tests alone. New yardsticks for identifying gifted children have to be used, including measures of creativity; advanced social skills; and even exceptional physical aptitude such as the type that marks fine surgeons, watch repairers, and engineers.

As a group, talented and gifted children tend to learn faster and retain more than their peers. A gifted child is also a divergent thinker. All these characteristics can be unsettling in a class, and sometimes, gifted and talented children are seen as troublemakers. Other gifted children are bored by their classes and become alienated from school.

The Office of Elementary and Secondary Education of the U.S. Department of Education has adopted the following national definition for giftedness:

Gifted and talented children are those identified by professionally qualified persons who, by virtue of outstanding abilities, are capable of high performance. These are children who require differentiated educational programs in order to realize their contribution to self and society.

The office has also identified the following six specific ability areas included in giftedness:

1. General intellectual ability
2. Specific academic aptitude
3. Creative or productive thinking
4. Leadership ability
5. Ability in the visual or performing arts
6. Psychomotor ability

The debate over how to educate gifted children often centers on the equity-versus-excellence issue. Some question whether it is fair to give special treatment to some children and not to others. Some educators have also seen cooperative learning as a threat to gifted children because it holds such students back. Others say cooperative learning works just as well in a homogeneously grouped gifted class because its real strength is bringing out the potential of each child in class. Tracking, often associated with gifted programs, has come under fire by many educators who see it as discriminating against poor children, who are most often found in low groups.

The gifted and talented remain a group of students who need special attention, whether in separate programs or differentiated instruction in a heterogeneous grouping. The models and research on gifted and talented children help provide a sound basis for differentiating instruction and evaluating programs for them.

Differentiating instruction, fostering creativity, allowing for independent study, and encouraging peer learning are all-important tasks of teaching. They are especially important for nurturing the diverse aptitudes and abilities of gifted and talented

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children. Organizational procedures such as cluster grouping, mainstreaming, and part-day grouping are all used with gifted and talented children.

Other Students with Needs

Between the special education student, who is categorically identified, and the gifted student, who is provided for by a special program, are all other students. Most of these "normal" students have needs, too, particularly during the elementary years. Figure 7.3

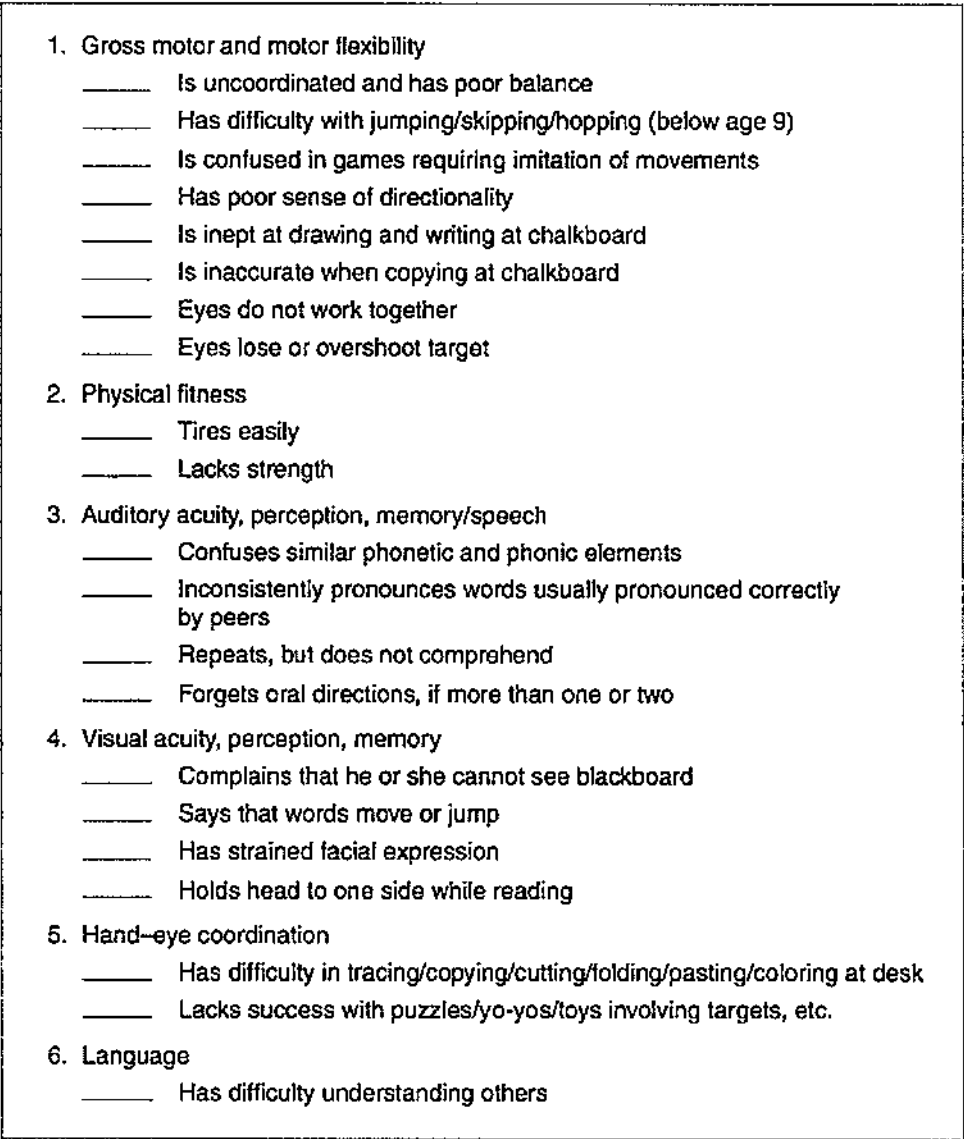
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1. Gross motor and motor flexibility
 - _____ Is uncoordinated and has poor balance
 - _____ Has difficulty with jumping/skipping/hopping (below age 9)
 - _____ Is confused in games requiring imitation of movements
 - _____ Has poor sense of directionality
 - _____ Is inept at drawing and writing at chalkboard
 - _____ Is inaccurate when copying at chalkboard
 - _____ Eyes do not work together
 - _____ Eyes lose or overshoot target
 2. Physical fitness
 - _____ Tires easily
 - _____ Lacks strength
 3. Auditory acuity, perception, memory/speech
 - _____ Confuses similar phonetic and phonic elements
 - _____ Inconsistently pronounces words usually pronounced correctly by peers
 - _____ Repeats, but does not comprehend
 - _____ Forgets oral directions, if more than one or two
 4. Visual acuity, perception, memory
 - _____ Complains that he or she cannot see blackboard
 - _____ Says that words move or jump
 - _____ Has strained facial expression
 - _____ Holds head to one side while reading
 5. Hand-eye coordination
 - _____ Has difficulty in tracing/copying/cutting/folding/pasting/coloring at desk
 - _____ Lacks success with puzzles/yo-yos/toys involving targets, etc.
 6. Language
 - _____ Has difficulty understanding others

FIGURE 7.3 Checklist for Identifying Students Who May Need Educational Therapy.

THE MIDDLE SCHOOL TEACHER

The middle school teacher, more than any other factor, holds the key to the realization of the type of effective middle school required for emerging adolescents. The middle school teacher must have all those characteristics that research indicates are necessary for teachers of all age groups; however, because of the ages encompassed in the middle school, the middle school teacher is responsible for children who are striking in their diversity. A teacher in the middle school is confronted with a rapidly changing group of children in different stages of development. A number of key competencies have been identified for teachers in the middle school; see Figure 8.3 for a list.

1. Possesses knowledge of preadolescent and early adolescent physical development, including knowledge of physical activity needs and the diversity and variety of physical growth rates.
2. Understands the socioemotional development, including the need to adjust to a changing body.
3. Possesses the necessary skills to allow interaction between individual students as well as the opportunity to work in groups of varying sizes.
4. Understands the cultural forces and community relationships that affect the total school curriculum.
5. Can organize the curriculum to facilitate the developmental tasks of preadolescence and early adolescence.
6. Understands the transitional nature of grades 5 through 8 as they bridge the gap between the children of the lower elementary grades and late adolescents and early adults of the upper grades.
7. Possesses the skills needed to work with other teachers and school professionals in team teaching.
8. Can plan multidisciplinary lessons and/or units and teach them personally or with other professionals.
9. Commands a broad academic background, with specialization in at least two allied areas of the curriculum.
10. Possesses the skill to integrate appropriate media and concrete demonstrations into presentations.
11. Can develop and conduct learning situations that promote independent learning and maximize student choice and responsibility for follow-through.
12. Possesses the knowledge and skills that allow students to sort information, set priorities, and budget time and energy.
13. Can teach problem-solving skills and develop lessons that are inquiry-oriented.
14. Has the ability to teach students how to discover knowledge and use both inductive and deductive methods in the discovery of knowledge.
15. Possesses the knowledge and skills necessary to use role playing, simulation, instructional games, and creative dramatics in teaching the content as well as the affective domain in a middle-grade classroom.
16. Commands the knowledge and skill needed to organize and manage a classroom, which allows individuals to learn at a rate commensurate with their ability.
17. Possesses verbal behaviors that promote student input in a variety of group settings.
18. Has the knowledge and skills needed to diagnose strengths and weaknesses, to determine learning levels of individuals, to prescribe courses of action, and to evaluate the outcomes.
19. Has experience in innovation and possesses the skill to experiment with teaching techniques to find the ones that are most effective in given situations.
20. Can teach the communication skills of reading, writing, and speaking in all subject areas.
21. Commands knowledge of reading techniques that enable students to progress and improve their reading in the subject areas.
22. Has knowledge of the techniques necessary to promote positive self-concepts and self-reliance.

FIGURE 8.3 Key Competencies for Teachers in the Middle School.

Source: Wiles & Bondi, *The New American Middle School*, "Key Competencies for Teachers in the Middle School," pp. 55–58, © 2001. Reproduced by permission of Wiles, Bondi and Associates.

23. Possesses a knowledge of group dynamics and the ability to organize groups that will make decisions and provide their own leadership.
24. Has knowledge of careers and the ability to help students explore career options.
25. Possesses the skills necessary to effectively manage groups of students in activity settings.
26. Possesses the ability to recognize difficulties that may be emotional and/or physically based.
27. Works with extracurricular activities in the school.
28. Gathers appropriate personal information on students using questionnaires, interviews, and observation.
29. Provides frequent feedback to students on learning progress.
30. Functions calmly in a high-activity environment.
31. Handles disruptive behavior positively and consistently.
32. Builds learning experiences for students based on learning skills (reading, math) obtained in elementary grades.
33. Works cooperatively with peers, consultants, resource persons, and paraprofessionals.
34. Exhibits concern for students by listening and/or empathizing with them.
35. Selects evaluation techniques appropriate to curricular objectives in the affective domain.
36. Utilizes values clarification and other affective teaching techniques to help students develop personal value systems.
37. Provides an informal, flexible classroom environment.
38. Cooperates in curricular planning and revision.
39. Evaluates the teaching situation and selects the grouping techniques most appropriate for the situation: large-group instruction (100+ students), small-group instruction (15–25 students), or independent study.

FIGURE 8.3 (Continued)

MANAGING MIDDLE SCHOOL PROGRAMS

A well-designed middle school features a balanced program focusing on personal development, basic skills for continuous learners, and use of knowledge to foster competence. Thus, the curriculum of a middle school closely follows the developmental stages represented in the students that it serves.

There has been much progress in recent years in developing new and exciting programs for emerging adolescent learners, yet much still needs to be done. New pressures brought on by the call for a return to basics have narrowed the curriculum of the middle school to the teaching of rote skills and the transmission of knowledge. Exploratory programs, guidance services, and health and physical education programs have been cut back in many schools. Thus, the curriculum area of personal development has been changed in many middle schools. This development has forced an imbalance in the middle school program and a return to the more content-centered junior high or imitation high school model in many middle schools. With sixth graders being housed in many middle schools, the result has been the thrusting down of a high school program to an even younger group of students. Combined with a six- or seven-period departmentalized organizational model, the lack of emphasis on personal development has signaled a return to a secondary emphasis in the middle grades.

The gains in program development won in the 1960s, 1970s, and 1980s by middle school educators were swept away in the 1990s in many places by a return to the high school or secondary model, which was believed to be more academic and was easier to

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schedule and administer. The lessons learned by the failure of the junior high school were lost in the face of doing what was easier and less costly.

A period of great activity in the middle school movement occurred during the 1980s. Organizations such as the Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development (ASCD), local and state leagues of middle schools, the National Middle School Association, the National Education Association, the National Association of Secondary School Principals, the National Association of Elementary School Principals, and the National School Boards Association all began presenting conferences, publications, and position papers advocating the original purposes of the middle school as proposed in the national position document *The Middle School We Need* (Bondi, 1960). Legislation encouraging middle school development and teacher training was passed in Florida, California, Ohio, and other states that were active in the early middle school movement. The Carnegie Corporation report *Turning Points* (1989) was the culmination of an active decade of middle school support.

A milestone in the middle school movement occurred with the publication of the best-selling ASCD publication *Making Middle Schools Work* (Wiles & Bondi, 1986). That publication addressed the major difficulty in getting middle schools to remain middle schools in program and organization as initially developed. The “shining light” syndrome with middle schools reflected the often-repeated situation in which a new middle school would be developed that would draw hundreds of visitors. That school would be a model for a year or two until the principal left or the staff changed. It would then revert to a junior high school type of program while a new shining light popped up somewhere else.

Seeing the frustration, and recognizing that there was an Achilles heel in the middle school success story (evaluation) throughout the United States, Wiles and Bondi introduced the curriculum management plan (CMP) model for development of middle schools.¹ The CMP model recognized that at the very heart of implementing true middle schools is solid, traditional curriculum development. The Wiles-Bondi CMP model drew from the previous work of Ralph Tyler and Hilda Taba and superimposed management techniques on a widely used accreditation format. Put simply, the CMP introduced regularity into the change process (by managing it). Without such logic, a complex design such as the middle school faced multiple pitfalls. Both then and now, the key to successful implementation of middle school programs remains successful planning.

THE MIDDLE SCHOOL PROGRAM: OVERVIEW

Successful middle schools using the CMP model conduct an analysis and then develop a design document that outlines program objectives and standards in detail.² Each design, or blueprint, is based on an extensive needs assessment outlining the academic, social, and physical needs of middle school students.

¹The CMP model has been used successfully in the transition to true middle schools in districts such as St. Louis (MO), Denver (CO), Dallas (TX), Orange County (Orlando, FL), Dade County (Miami, FL), Duval County (Jacksonville, FL), Baton Rouge (LA), Long Beach (CA), and hundreds of large and small school districts in the United States. The process has also been used by the Kellogg Foundation in developing a national model middle school program in Michigan.

²Design documents found in Dade County, FL; Duval County, FL; St. Louis, MO; San Bernardino, CA; and other school districts. See also Wiles and Bondi, *Making Middle Schools Work* for Orange County, FL, model.