

STUDY REFERENCE	MAIN FINDINGS/IMPLICATIONS
<p>Burkham, D.T., Michaels, D.L. & Lee, V.E. (2007). School grade span and kindergarten learning. <i>The Elementary School Journal</i>, 107(3), 287-303.</p>	<p>Kindergarteners attending preprimary schools (schools with just preschool and kindergarten) exhibit less growth or learning during the school year than kindergarteners attending primary/elementary schools (a deficit between 1 and 2 months in reading and math).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 12,000 students in 750 schools • in spite of these Prek-K being largely affluent, smaller, non-pulic
<p>Cook, P.J., MacCoun, R., Muschkin, R., & Vigdor, J. (2006). <i>Should sixth grade be in elementary or middle school?: An analysis of grade configuration and student behavior</i>. NBER Working Paper Series. National Bureau of Economic Research.</p>	<p>Sixth graders attending middle school had significantly more disciplinary infractions than sixth graders attending elementary schools—including violent and drug infractions.</p>
<p>Erb, T.O. (2006). Middle school models are working in many grade configurations to boost student performance. <i>American Secondary Education</i>, 34(3), 4-13.</p>	<p>Although middle school models (schools containing just grades 6-8) have faced harsh criticism, the “failure” of the model has been shown to be due to confounding factors such as school organizational health, school size, and student SES.</p>
<p>Seller, W. (2004). <i>Configuring schools: A review of the literature</i>. OISE/UT Northwestern Centre.</p>	<p>Literature on grade span and school configuration informs us that there is no single model to achieve all desired goals (i.e., academic achievement, social and psychological development) and any chosen model will have strengths and weakness which are explained by the author.</p>
<p>Schmitt, V. L. (2004). The relationship between middle level and grade span configuration, professional development and student achievement. <i>Research In Middle Level Education Online</i>, 27(2), 1-13.</p>	<p>Middle level schools that had grade configurations containing grades 6-8 were receiving higher levels of professional development than middle level schools of different grade configurations. Schools receiving higher levels of professional development scored higher on state assessments than did those schools receiving low levels of professional development.</p>
<p>Wren, S.D. (2003). The effect of grade span configuration and school-to-school transition on student achievement. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED479332)</p>	<p>The more grade levels a school services, the better students perform and the more school transitions a student makes, the worse the student performs.</p>
<p>Coldarci, T. & Hancock, J. (2002). Grade-span configuration. <i>Journal of Research in Rural Education</i>, 17, (3), 189-192.</p>	<p>The configuration of grades itself does not influence student outcomes as much as school environment and school-to-school transitions.</p>

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<p>Coladarci, T. & Hancock, J. (2002). The (limited) evidence regarding effects of grade-span configurations on academic achievement: What rural educators should know. (ERIC Reproductive Service No. ED467714).</p>	<p>In general, achievement in the middle grades is higher in schools having an elementary-wide configuration than a middle-grade configuration although there are doubtless other contextual factors, which if considered might change these results.</p>
<p>Bickel, R., Howley, C., Williams, T. & Glascock, C. (2001). High school size, achievement equity and cost: Robust interaction effects and tentative results. <i>Education Policy Analysis Archives</i>, 9(40). Retrieved October 19, 2009 from http://epaa.asu.edu/epaa/v9n40.html.</p>	<p>In general, as school size increases, school performance decreases for economically disadvantaged students Wider bands are better</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • not all students suffer equally, as schools get bigger • 7-12 schools • in 7 states (initially in CA, expanded, 1000 schools in TX, most of which were small, rural schools) • school size by economic status • single unit schools correspond to a reduction in expenditure of \$1017 per pupil, when compared to grade-specialized high schools. • 6th graders in K-6 schools did better and acted out more than those in middle school, and the same for 8th graders (when the oldest, not the youngest in the school)
<p>Renchler, R. (2000). Grade span. <i>Research Roundup</i>, 16(3).</p>	<p>The current trend is to align the philosophies of middle schools more closely with elementary schools (as opposed to traditional junior-high structures).</p>
<p>Tucker, C.G. & Andrada, G.N. (1997). Accountability works: Analysis of performance by grade span of school. (ERIC Reproduction Service No. ED411278).</p>	<p>Schools that expected to be accountable for 6th grade results (i.e., elementary schools that continue to grade 6) produced better performing 6th graders (as measured by achievement scores).</p>
<p>Paglin, C. & Fager, J. (1997). <i>Grade configuration: Who goes where?</i> Office of Educational Improvement and Research, Washington. D.C.</p>	<p>Not one grade configuration is ideal for all so educators should have an awareness of the myriad of issues surrounding grade span. This booklet offers examples, suggestions, and references for educators to use in order further this understanding.</p>
<p>Franklin, B. J. & Glascock, C. H. (1996). The relationship between grade configuration and student performance in rural schools. (ERIC Reproductive Service No. ED403083).</p>	<p>Sixth and seventh grade students performed better in elementary schools than in middle or secondary schools.</p>

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Iver, D.M. & Epstein, J. L. (1993). Middle grades research: Not yet mature, but no longer a child. <i>The Elementary School Journal</i> , 93(5), 519-533.	The examined research on the influence of grade configuration on student outcomes suggests that success in middle grades is accomplished not by changing grade span but by implementing practices that support the development of early adolescents. Some of these practices are included by the authors.
Wihry, D. F., Coladarci, T. & Meadow, C. (1992). Grade span and eighth-grade academic achievement: Evidence from a predominantly rural state. <i>Journal of Research in Rural Education</i> , 8(2), 58-70.	The elementary setting appeared to be the most favorable for eighth graders even when community SES and school and teacher attributes were controlled.
Epstein, J. L. (1990). What matters in the middle grades?: Grade span or practices?	Rather than focus on optimal grade configuration, administrators must attend to practices that are responsive to the needs of early adolescents such as creating communities for learning and setting goals that stress the development of positive self-esteem.

Overall Findings:

Seems to say that wider grade-bands are better. Schools that have wider grade-bands:

- reduce number of transitions
- are generally smaller
- reduce the size of any grade
- small size generally boosts student achievement

Focus of most of the research is on 10-14 years old

The fewer transitions, the greater the chances of completing high school

- each transition seems to decrease the chances of students academically and socially succeeding and decreases chance of graduation

As school size increases, school performance generally decreases

Size-related benefits (efficiencies) do not reach all students equally

No configuration will serve all purposes

No one, best model (obviously, or we'd all have it!)

Current practice still in the state of flux

7-12 seem to be Charter and private and out-state (no one could think of any)

- South St. Paul – 7-12 and two K-6s

Notes added at the Nov. 13, 2009 CAREI Assembly, Tim Sheldon presenter/1st

