

Advantages and Disadvantages*

Configuration	Advantages	Disadvantages
7-8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> 7th and 8th grade pupils are given special attention <input type="checkbox"/> Immature 6th graders have an additional year of elementary school <input type="checkbox"/> Makes for less gradual transition for pre-adolescents 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Makes for less gradual transition for pre-adolescents <input type="checkbox"/> The “revolving door” effect does not allow students to identify with the school or staff <input type="checkbox"/> The largest number of students’ adjustment problems occur in this combination <input type="checkbox"/> The 7-8 combination continues the perception of a junior high school with all of its drawbacks: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hull wrote that ... Junior highs mimic the educational programs of high schools for a population that is not able to deal with these approaches <input type="checkbox"/> Rather than providing a bridge between elementary and high school, junior highs adopt the high school programs, methodologies, etc., resulting in a more difficult transition. <input type="checkbox"/> The emphasis on subject matter (as opposed to student centered program) is inappropriate for the developmental needs of the students <input type="checkbox"/> District/teachers must adapt curriculum that is designed for 6-8 grade bands to fit
6-8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Supports the research findings which show that the youngster today enters adolescence much earlier than 50 years ago <input type="checkbox"/> The students’ ages more nearly parallel the period of human growth and development between childhood and adolescence - ages 11-13 = grades 6-8 <input type="checkbox"/> Pupils are grouped who are more alike than either elementary or secondary pupils. <input type="checkbox"/> More appropriately meets the academic needs of students. <input type="checkbox"/> Increased time to build relationships with families and students <input type="checkbox"/> Increased leadership opportunities for 8th grade students - more effective with wider age difference 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Some 6th graders might still need the protective environment <input type="checkbox"/> 6th graders would not be able to participate in some elementary programs (safety patrol, etc.) <input type="checkbox"/> The elementary school challenge to teachers working with children at 6th grade would be missing <input type="checkbox"/> Some elementary programs might be impacted if 6th grade is no longer there

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> 5th graders would have greater opportunity for leadership in elementary school <input type="checkbox"/> Exposure to application skills; these pupils are at an age where they need reinforcement and extension of skills through application <input type="checkbox"/> Opportunity for specialization <input type="checkbox"/> Standards shift in curriculum between 5th and 6th grade can be addressed <input type="checkbox"/> Access to guidance counseling <input type="checkbox"/> Availability of labs... technology <input type="checkbox"/> More stimulation through departmentalization, special facilities and equipment <input type="checkbox"/> Availability of broader curriculum <input type="checkbox"/> More orderly transition (materials, instruction, expectations) <input type="checkbox"/> Allows students to develop identity with the school and for the faculty to get to know and work with students <input type="checkbox"/> Participation in after school activities - clubs, sports <input type="checkbox"/> Students could have a "fresh start" a year earlier 	
<p>5-8</p>	<p>The advantages and disadvantages are virtually the same as those for the 6-8 plan. Specifically, advantages of 5-8 configuration:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Supports many research findings which show that today youngsters enter adolescence at an earlier age <input type="checkbox"/> Groups pupils who are more alike than either elementary or secondary pupils <input type="checkbox"/> These pupils are at an age where they need reinforcement and extension of skills through application <input type="checkbox"/> Facilitates a flexibility in grouping students for instructional purposes and affords even broader curriculum offerings than the 6-8 model <input type="checkbox"/> Provides for more orderly transition <input type="checkbox"/> The middle school would have an identity of its own. <input type="checkbox"/> Participation in after school activities - clubs, sports 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Some younger students might be better off in the more protective elementary environment <input type="checkbox"/> The leadership role of 5th and 6th graders would be lost to elementary schools <input type="checkbox"/> The 5-8 plan assumes ... that the maturation patterns of 5th grade pupils are more like those of 6th, 7th, and 8th grade students than they are like 3rd and 4th graders

*adapted from Combs, H.J (2005, 2011)