

# 1 *Middle Start's Impact on Comprehensive Middle School Reform*

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## **ABSTRACT**

*This article examines the implementation and effectiveness of Middle Start, a regional, comprehensive school reform design, focused specifically on middle-grade schools and young adolescents. Utilizing individual school self-study data and employing a quasi-experimental design, factors such as the implementation of interdisciplinary teaming organizations, teaming practices, and classroom practices are examined to provide contextual information for an analysis of standardized student achievement data. The results are quite promising. First, schools engaged in high levels of middle school practices, such as teaming, demonstrate greater student achievement gains. Second, compared to a more affluent sample of schools, higher poverty schools engaged in the Middle Start comprehensive school reform model exhibited greater student achievement gains over time. Third, two years after their grants expired, Middle Start schools were able to demonstrate continued gains in student achievement; however, their gains in team and classroom practices were only minimal.*