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May 23, 1972

THE FEASIBILITY OF REORGANIZATION OF THE SCHOOL DISTRICTS
OF LOGAN, MANHATTAN, THREE FORKS, AND WILLOW CREEK

by

THEODORE CHRISTOPHER MATTOCKS

A professional paper submitted to the Graduate Faculty in
partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree

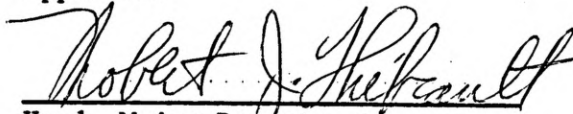
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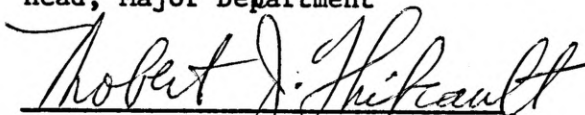
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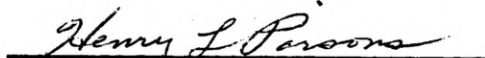
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ABSTRACT

This study investigated the feasibility of school district reorganization in the elementary and high school districts of Logan, Manhattan, Three Forks, and Willow Creek. Its purpose was to delineate objective information about the districts that could lead to conclusions as to whether or not school district reorganization should be accomplished in the districts named above. Five criteria were established by which this was to be judged. They were: (1) cost of operation, (2) enrollment, (3) curriculum, (4) building usefulness and condition, and (5) student transportation. Most of the literature reviewed was found to be favorable to school district reorganization, with emphasis on financial, social, educational, and personal benefits to districts and students in the districts. The procedure involved finding such financial items as: percent of budget for instructional salaries, administration, operation and maintenance of the buildings, and library. Instructional salaries per ANB, taxable valuation per ANB, and the total budget per ANB were calculated. Amounts devoted to debt service were obtained and compared. An eleven year enrollment record with per pupil cost for each of the years was calculated. Amounts devoted to debt service were obtained, and the current bonding capacity of each of the districts was calculated. Teachers in the districts, their starting and average salaries, amounts paid to them for extra-curricular duty, and number on tenure were other data collected. Curricula were studied as they are now offered in the various districts. The buildings in the various districts were visited and inspected in terms of condition at the present time, present use, future use, repairs needed, and modifications that could be made to suit curricular change. Transportation costs were determined, and a per student transported rate was calculated. Bus routes, mileage, riding time of passengers, road surface along the route, and bus capacities were determined.

Conclusions reached by the investigator included the following: the Logan Elementary School should close at the end of the current school term; the Willow Creek Schools should reexamine their reasons for existence with rising costs and high teacher turnover; the Three Forks Elementary School needs a new building, and the Three Forks High School is overcrowded; the Manhattan High School needs a new building.

Recommendations included doing a study on: the feasibility of one centralized high school including Belgrade; the adjustment patterns of rural children coming into the larger schools from country schools; the attitudes of the residents of the area concerning reorganization; the feasibility of one administrative unit with separate attendance units; the pre-school census children in the area; and the proposal that Manhattan and Three Forks consolidate their high schools within the next three to five years.

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Historically, school districts have been set up wherever people have felt the need for educating their youngsters. Just as education was one of the first matters attended to by the Pilgrims, so it was as the wagon trains rolled westward to push back the frontiers of this vast country. Now, however, the people are starting to move toward the urban centers, leaving behind the small farms and villages from which they came. As this movement continues, there develops a need for a critical reappraisal of the vast numbers of school districts still in operation that have a minimal financial base and small student enrollment.

Montana is a good case in point. As of 1970, Montana had six hundred eighty-four school districts in operation in the state, as compared with a nationwide total of 17,498 (U.S. Department of Health, Education and Welfare, 1970:6). This figure represents 3.9 per cent of the total number of school districts in the United States. Montana does have a sparsity factor that would have to be considered in any plan for school district reorganization (Peabody Report, 1958:47,51). The problem of the numerous school districts that operate identical programs only ten to twenty miles apart is one that must be closely examined, however. Does the state really need this many school districts? Are they all doing a good job of education with the finances

available to them? Would district reorganization accomplish the task better than it is now being accomplished?

In the early days of our country, transportation was limited to horse-drawn vehicles. Road conditions were poor. It was impractical for students to travel even ten miles to and from school. For this reason, schools and school districts were numerous by necessity. Today, with paved highways and modern transportation, it is possible for students to travel much greater distances to school. Because of the student's ability to travel greater distances in a shorter time, people throughout the nation, as well as Montana, are being confronted with the idea of school district reorganization and consolidation. This is nothing new to the people in some parts of Montana where district reorganization has been taking place for years. There were 1,201 school districts in the state of Montana during the 1952-1953 school term (Montana Department of Public Instruction, 1954:90), as compared with only six hundred eighty-four districts in operation during the 1971-1972 school year (Montana Department of Public Instruction, 1972:10).

The question of reorganization is also pertinent to Gallatin County. There has been some reorganization in the past, particularly at the level of the elementary districts. There were fifty-two school districts in the county during the 1952-1953 school year (Montana Department of Public Instruction, 1954:90), compared to twenty-two districts in 1966 (Montana Department of Public Instruction, 1968:31), and

eighteen districts in operation during the 1971-1972 school year (Montana Department of Public Instruction, 1972:49-52). There are, however, three high schools and four elementary schools operating within fifteen miles of one another. They are district #1 (Logan), #3 (Manhattan), #15 (Willow Creek), and #24 (Three Forks). In the days of limited transportation this was probably a viable, and perhaps necessary arrangement. But is it necessary in this modern day and age to have this duplication of services within such a close proximity? Would reorganization or consolidation of these districts improve the quality of education being offered in this area to warrant such a move?

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The purpose of this study was to determine the feasibility of reorganization in the elementary and high school districts of Logan, Manhattan, Three Forks, and Willow Creek using the following criteria for evaluative purposes: (1) the cost of operating the school, (2) the enrollment, (3) the curriculum offered to the students, (4) building utilization, and (5) student transportation.

LIMITATIONS

This study was designed to investigate the feasibility of reorganization of the elementary and high school districts of Logan, Manhattan, Three Forks, and Willow Creek. Cost of operation,

enrollment, curriculum, building utilization, and student transportation were the only factors considered in determining this feasibility. The records of the county superintendent of schools, Montana School Laws, buildings and personnel of the districts involved, and available literature were used in this investigation.

The attitudes of the residents or employees of these districts were not considered as a factor in this study.

QUESTIONS TO BE ANSWERED

The following questions were answered for each district that is involved in this study.

1. What is the general fund budget for the district?
2. What is the enrollment?
3. What would the enrollment be if the districts reorganized?
4. How many professional staff members are now employed?
5. How many professional staff members would be needed if the districts reorganized?
6. What is the cost per student in relation to the total general fund budget?
7. What would be the cost per student in relation to the general fund budget if the districts reorganized?
8. What is the cost per student in relation to instructional salaries?

9. What would be the cost per student in relation to instructional salaries if the districts reorganized?

10. What per cent of the total budget is spent for instructional salaries?

11. What is the nature of the curriculum now being offered?

12. What type of curriculum could be offered if the districts reorganized?

13. What is the taxable valuation of the district?

14. What would be the taxable valuation if the districts reorganized?

15. What is the taxable valuation per ANB?

16. What would be the taxable valuation per ANB if the districts reorganized?

17. What is the current tax rate for the district?

18. What would be the tax rate if the districts reorganized?

19. What is the transportation cost?

20. What would be the transportation cost if the districts reorganized?

21. How far do students travel to school?

22. How far would students have to travel to school if the districts reorganized?

23. What is the condition and usefulness of the buildings?

24. What new buildings would be needed if the districts reorganized?

25. What schools would close if the districts reorganized?

DEFINITION OF TERMS

1. ANB: the aggregate days present plus the aggregate days absent divided by the actual number of days school was in session; the average number belonging.

2. Assessed Valuation: the value placed on a building or other piece of real property for purposes of taxation.

3. Curriculum: courses, activities, and other planned experiences which a student is exposed to while under the guidance of the school.

4. Elementary School: a school with curricular offerings to those students in grades one to eight.

5. High School: a school with curricular offerings to those students in grades nine through twelve.

6. Reorganized Districts: any school district that now serves an area that was once made up of two or more school districts.

SUMMARY

The study of school district reorganization is a viable one, not only in Montana, but in Gallatin County. This study determined the

feasibility of reorganization in the elementary and high school districts of Logan, Manhattan, Three Forks, and Willow Creek. The factors considered were: (1) cost of operation, (2) enrollment, (3) curriculum, (4) building utilization, and (5) student transportation.

Sources of information included the office of the county superintendent of schools, Montana School Law, literature on the subject, and buildings and personnel of the districts involved in this study.

There was no attempt to measure, quantify, or determine the attitudes of the personnel employed by the various districts in the study, or of the residents of the districts mentioned in this study.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

INTRODUCTION

School district reorganization and consolidation are terms that are recognized throughout the nation. Some states have made it mandatory that districts reorganize through legislation, while others have left it up to the discretion of the districts involved. Montana is one of the states that has not, as yet, interferred legislatively with schoool district reorganization (Montana School Laws, 1969 Revision:75).

The literature reviewed in this chapter concerning school district reorganization deals with the following major areas: (1) advantages of school district reorganization, (2) resistance to school district reorganization, (3) standards for school district reorganization, (4) laws that pertain to school district reorganization, and (5) history and trends of school district reorganization. At the end of the chapter is a section summarizing the contents of the five areas of review.

ADVANTAGES OF SCHOOL DISTRICT REORGANIZATION

Whether or not finance should be one of the primary reasons behind school district reorganization is a rather moot point, but it is often approached in this manner. Grieder, Pierce, and Rosenstengel (1961:22,23) list several financial advantages that can be accomplished

through district reorganization:

1. Increased pupil-teacher ratio can decrease per pupil cost.
2. School facilities, such as gymnasiums, shops, and laboratories, will be given more use.
3. Special services, such as guidance, art, music, and food service, can be provided more efficiently and economically.
4. Larger schools require less capital investment in heating plants, toilets, and other equipment than an equivalent number of smaller schools.
5. Better management of transportation and less duplication of services is possible in reorganized districts.
6. School district reorganization supports the principle that there should be uniformity of local effort to support a sufficient foundation program, since it is unfair to the taxpayers of one district to pay twice as much per child for their education when compared to a neighboring district.

Grieder (1967) states two additional advantages of school district reorganization: (1) the improvement of educational opportunity, since a larger school would be able to provide a more varied curriculum from which the students could choose their electives, and (2) higher levels of pupil achievement as shown in the larger districts being able to attract and hold more highly-qualified personnel. This, in turn, affects the student's educational growth and maturation as he is

taught with more sophistication and ability.

Kreitlow (1967) reported on a longitudinal study conducted by the University of Wisconsin that started in 1949. The students were selected in that year and followed all the way through to the completion of their high school education. They came from both reorganized and nonreorganized districts in the state. The findings were as follows:

1. There were increased learning opportunities in grades one through twelve for the students in reorganized districts. Teaching aids, library books and special teachers were more available to these students, especially at the secondary level.

2. There was an advantage, in terms of increased ability, to the students in grades one through twelve in the reorganized districts in reading comprehension and vocabulary, arithmetic fundamentals, English mechanics, physical science, and social studies.

3. By grade twelve there was an advantage to the students in the reorganized district in mental measurement, with the girls, especially, having a larger advantage.

4. There was no difference between the girls of the reorganized district and those of the nonreorganized district in the areas of personal and social development. The boys of the nonreorganized district showed an advantage in this area over those of the reorganized district. All pupils of the nonreorganized district participated more

in extra-curricular activities than did the pupils of the reorganized district.

Grieder, Pierce, and Rosenstengel (1961:22,23) state several educational advantages of reorganization:

1. The teachers can be assigned to teach the subjects or grades that they are best prepared to teach.
2. Well-organized districts can provide such valuable extras of a good, modern school as visual aids, libraries, laboratories, well-kept schoolhouses, and attractive well-equipped playgrounds.
3. The larger school or district can offer a more comprehensive program of studies and activities.
4. Improvement of instruction can be done more successfully in larger districts with larger schools.
5. Teaching children to play and work together with others can be accomplished more readily in larger schools.

It would seem that when Kreitlow (1967:45) presented his finding that students in nonreorganized districts scored higher in personal and social development than students in reorganized districts, it is contrary to earlier reports by Grieder, Pierce, and Rosenstengel (1961) that students in reorganized districts can be taught to work and play better with others.

Harrow and Hickey (1968) both found in separate studies that the reorganized districts were better able to attract and hold

highly-qualified administrators and staff, and that curricula were sadly lacking in those districts that were small and nonreorganized.

RESISTANCE TO SCHOOL DISTRICT REORGANIZATION

Grieder, Pierce, and Rosenstengel (1961) found several reasons for local resistance to reorganization:

1. Tradition--"What was good enough for my father (or grandfather), is good enough for me."
2. School board members and superintendents want to keep their jobs.
3. The misunderstanding between the words "reorganization" and "consolidation".
4. The prospect of higher taxes.
5. The lack of appreciation of advantages that larger districts can furnish.
6. The mistaken idea that the small school is the "last bulwark of democracy."
7. The refusal to face facts.
8. The unwillingness to surrender local jurisdiction.

The Peabody Report (1958:54) realized that there was a problem in Montana of people confusing democracy and school smallness. There was a question in the minds of some in the smaller districts that school district reorganization would wrest from them any voice or

control of the new district that would be formed. It is maintained, however, that under the one man-one vote concept there is no such change in the control over the reorganized district, just more people having a say in its operation. This report went on to state two other reasons why people resist school district reorganization:

1. Parents have little concern for some nearby school and do not care what board controls it.
2. People favor reorganization if other districts are added to theirs, but do not want their district added to any other.

STANDARDS FOR SCHOOL DISTRICT REORGANIZATION

The people of many parts of Montana are facing a problem of two dimensions. If their district cannot, or will not, provide an education of the quality deemed necessary by the state, they must face the problems brought about by mandatory school district reorganization.

There are no set guidelines for reorganization since it can be assumed that most of what would apply in California or New York would generally not apply in Wyoming or Montana.

The Peabody Report (1958:47,51) listed seven factors that should determine sound district reorganization:

1. Simplicity - There is no justification for having independent sets of administrators and trustees who serve the same area.

2. Unity - It is not a good idea to separate the grade school from the high school; communication between all grades is highly desirable.

3. Efficiency - There need only be one local educational authority accountable to the state for the local schools.

4. Economy - Reorganization that is not done correctly ends up with the taxpayer paying needlessly.

5. Effectiveness - The most effective schools are those which operate from kindergarten through grade twelve. Non-operating districts can never be effective.

6. Pupil population - Due to the sparsity of population in the state of Montana, this criterion does not generally apply.

7. School district area - A good school district should include an area that has common social, economic, and cultural ties. County lines are a good beginning place when considering reorganization.

Grieder, Pierce, and Rosenstengel (1961:27) found much the same in their studies, but went further to consider the walking distance and travel time of the pupils, especially if some schools are to be closed and new ones built. The recommended walking distances one way are: elementary students - 3/4 mile; junior high students - 1 1/2 miles; high school students - 2 miles. Travel time should be no longer than forty-five minutes for elementary pupils and one hour for the older pupils.

Conant (1959) states that in areas such as Montana with its sparse population the solution to reorganization may include such devices as correspondence courses, television, and cooperative teaching assignments between schools. With this arrangement, either a student travels to another school for a specific course not offered in his school, or the teachers of special subjects travel from school to school.

LAWS PERTAINING TO SCHOOL DISTRICT REORGANIZATION

Montana has made no attempt to legislate the process of school district reorganization. West Virginia, Florida, and Nevada were legislatively reorganized. The Peabody Report (1958:51,55) stated that it was the state's responsibility to reorganize the districts by legislative fiat, and that the state could do a better job than the local groups could. The Peabody Report (1958:17) further stated that there are three basic steps that could be invoked by the state legislature in reducing the large number of school districts in Montana: (1) all elementary districts should be required by law to merge with their high school districts; (2) all non-operating districts should be immediately abolished, and (3) nonisolated schools should lose state accreditation and financial support if they cannot justify their existence in terms of subjects offered, size of staff and enrollment, and nearness to a larger school.

Conant (1959:174) listed three means to encourage schools to reorganize their districts: (1) compulsion, (2) district-wide voting throughout the proposed district, and (3) state aid for school consolidation or for transporting students to schools in a reorganized district.

North Carolina, New York, and Pennsylvania have used state aid to finance school buildings as an incentive for school district reorganization. Nevada, Idaho, and Texas reorganized their school districts by county boundaries, although most reorganization since 1945 has ignored these limitations. The State of Washington passed a law in 1941 that provided for statewide planning with local adoption for redistricting proposals. By 1945, most of the pupils in the state were in large schools or in reorganized district schools. Idaho, Illinois, and New York have also used the same basic plan as Washington (Fitzwater, 1957:17-19).

Montana law gives the county superintendent and the county commissioners the authority to create and change boundaries of school districts if the people living therein request it by majority vote (Montana School Laws, 1961:159). Districts are not reorganized with any amazing speed under this type of plan, but some administrators feel that legislative action forcing reorganization in the state is not far off.

HISTORY AND TRENDS OF SCHOOL DISTRICT REORGANIZATION

As the American people moved westward to expand the frontiers of our country, the one room schoolhouse was close behind these early pioneers. As the westward movement to the frontier slowed, and, indeed, urbanization began to occur during the last four decades, there were left behind a myriad of school districts that had, at one time, served quite a useful purpose for a small group of people. Grieder (1967) gives some figures that indicate the trend in school district reorganization. There were 120,000 school districts in 1932; 85,000 in 1950; 42,000 in 1960; and 23,000 in 1967. This reorganization trend is still continuing as there were 17,498 school districts in 1970 (U.S. Department of Health, Education and Welfare, 1970:6).

Important in this trend are the percentages of students that are enrolled in school systems of differing sizes. Grieder (1967:6) stated that forty-four per cent of the school districts in the United States had an enrollment of three hundred students or less. The latest information (U.S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, 1970:6) shows that this figure has dropped to thirty-three and one tenth per cent. It should be noted, however, that these districts that comprise one-third of the total enrollment only one and three tenths per cent of the total student population in the United States (U.S. Department of Health, Education and Welfare, 1970:6). It would seem that the small

school district of three hundred students or less is gradually fading from the scene of American education.

Montana is far behind the rest of the country in reorganizing its school districts. At the present time, five hundred eighty-three school districts out of a total of six hundred eighty-four enroll less than three hundred students (U. S. Department of Health, Education and Welfare, 1970:6). There are also fifty-seven districts, all elementary, that are listed as non-operating this current school year (Montana Department of Public Instruction, 1972:10).

While there are many factors that apply to school district reorganization in Montana that would not apply in many other states, such as population density, vast land areas, etc., and there are many cases in the state where reorganization should occur but hasn't, the basic issue seems to be why the state has not kept pace with the rest of the nation in reorganizing its school districts.

Gallatin County school district reorganization is itself lagging behind. In 1918 there were seventy-six elementary districts in Gallatin County, with five of these districts being combined with a local high school district (State Department of Public Instruction, 1918:table 45). The high schools in operation during the 1917-1918 school year were Bozeman, Belgrade, Manhattan, Three Forks, and Willow Creek.

In 1938 the number of school districts had been reduced somewhat to sixty-nine, with the same five high schools still in operation (Montana Department of Public Instruction, 1938:263). During the 1971-1972 school term the number of districts has been reduced to eighteen in Gallatin County, with six of these being unified districts operating both elementary and secondary schools (Montana Department of Public Instruction, 1972:49-52). The additional high school in operation is located at West Yellowstone, and one elementary district north of Manhattan is listed as non-operating.

While there has been over a seventy-five per cent reduction in the total number of districts in operation in Gallatin County, there is still room for further school district reorganization. Before it can be stated that the school districts in Gallatin County are operating at or near maximum efficiency, the districts on the western edge of the county must seriously reexamine their programs and reasons for existing while located close to neighboring districts that are larger.

SUMMARY

Many speak of school district reorganization in terms of financial benefits, but educational, social, and cultural benefits arise from reorganization also. Those who oppose reorganization do so out of ignorance of the benefits that it can bring, or tradition, or the mistaken belief that the small school is the last bastion of democracy.

The Peabody Report (1958:47,51) listed seven criteria that should be used to reorganize school districts. They are simplicity, unity, efficiency, economy, effectiveness, pupil population, and school district area. Grieder, Pierce, and Rosenstengel (1961:27) found much the same as the Peabody Report, but went on to list the factors of walking distance and travel time for students.

There are some states that have used legislative means to reorganize their school districts, while others leave it up to the people involved locally. Montana is in the latter group. The county superintendent of schools and the county commissioners have the power to accomplish school district reorganization if the people request it by majority vote.

The trend toward school district reorganization has been going at a rapid pace for the past forty years, but is slowing somewhat at the present time. Montana has not kept pace with the rest of the nation in reorganizing its school districts, nor has Gallatin County. Both could make greater efforts at school district reorganization with resultant higher quality education for the students of the state and of the county.

This chapter has presented a review of the literature concerning school district reorganization. The overwhelming majority of this literature is favorable toward this end. The general criteria that were used to determine the feasibility of reorganizing the districts concerned in this study are dealt with in the following chapter.

CHAPTER III

GENERAL PROCEDURES

Five criteria were chosen for determining the feasibility of school district reorganization in the elementary and high school districts of Logan, Manhattan, Three Forks, and Willow Creek. The criteria are: (1) the cost of operating each school, (2) the enrollment of each school, (3) the curriculum offered by each school, (4) the utilization of buildings within the district, and (5) the transportation of students. Many other criteria could have been included in this study that concern school district reorganization, but the five chosen are among those standards set forth by Grieder, Pierce, and Rosenstengel (1961: 25,27) and the Peabody Report (1958:47,51) and listed in Chapter II of this paper.

Each of the above criteria were applied to each of the districts in the study in the investigation of the feasibility of school district reorganization.

COST OF OPERATION

The investigation of the cost of operation for each district included overall cost per pupil, as shown by dividing the total general fund budget by the average number of pupils belonging; amount and per cent of the general fund budget spent for instructional salaries; and costs that pertain to the operation and maintenance of the school plant.

Amounts spent for administration of the schools in the district were obtained, as well as costs relating to maintaining adequate library facilities and amounts spent on the hot lunch program.

The school buildings in each district were visited and examined and the records of past and proposed expenditures for capital outlay were studied. These factors were used in determining the cost of operation and maintenance of the school buildings. Amounts currently devoted to debt service of the district were obtained. These amounts could include expenditures for rental of property, insurance, and social security payments made by the district, but mainly deal with sums set aside to pay off outstanding bonds used to build new structures.

In attempting to project a cost of operation of each of the districts in comparison to a reorganized district, the school census and the school district ANB figures were used. By determining the student enrollment for the past ten years and obtaining the cost per pupil for each of these years, a figure on current costs per pupil was compared with those in the near past. This was done to show the trend of inflation on per pupil cost as determined by dividing the ANB into the total general fund budget. It also provides an example of how lower student enrollment does not necessarily mean lower costs.

The assessed and taxable valuations for each district were obtained and these figures were used in computing the district school

tax rates. The amount of taxable valuation per ANB, an indicator of district's ability to support a program of quality education, was compared as the districts are now set up as opposed to a reorganized district. This indicated any net gain in taxable valuation per ANB if reorganization should occur.

The records of the Gallatin County Superintendent of Schools were used to obtain most of the information regarding the cost of operation of each district in the study. The office of the County Assessor was another source of information, especially concerning district tax rates and district assessed and taxable valuation.

The number of teachers on tenure, starting salary for a beginning teacher, and amounts paid to the staff for coaching and supervising extra-curricular activities all contribute to the cost of operation and were a factor in this study.

The size of the staff was used to determine the pupil-teacher ratio within the school, and was used to determine the amount of the instructional salaries per ANB, which is another indicator of the value placed on the education of the pupil. The higher the cost per pupil in terms of instructional salaries, the more the district is, in effect, wasting the taxpayer's money, since an excessive amount of tax dollars are devoted to teacher salaries that could be saved if more efficient operations were realized. This ideal point of cost is not pinned down to any one figure, but can be compared to what schools of

similar size spend in the same area.

SCHOOL ENROLLMENT

As has been previously mentioned, the population and the school census for each district was acquired from the records of the County Superintendent of Schools. School enrollment for the past ten years was established and per pupil costs for each of these years was tabulated. According to Grieder, Pierce, and Rsenstengel (1961:25,27) school population is an important criterion of school district reorganization. In general, a school district should have a large enough enrollment to justify providing for grades one through twelve.

The Peabody Report (1958:47,51) has pointed out that school population in Montana is not a usable criterion for school district reorganization because of the state's sparse population. Since Gallatin County has a relatively dense population in comparison to the rest of the state, a school population was used in this study.

CURRICULUM

The curriculum offered by the school is often a direct result of the amount of money spent by the district to support its schools. Money available to a school district determines whether or not certain courses will be offered or certain services rendered to the students. Special services such as school psychologist, audio-visual experts, hearing

specialists, curriculum coordinators, etc., are particularly tied to the finances of the district. The present curricula offered by each district was compared to the curricula offered by schools in Montana of the size of the district that would result should reorganization occur.

BUILDING UTILIZATION

The investigator visited each of the districts and inspected the condition of the buildings that are located there. This was done in terms of usefulness at the present time, usefulness in the event the districts reorganized, and future usefulness of the buildings should the districts not reorganize. It would seem that, as with curriculum, the condition, use, and maintenance of the buildings would depend to a large part on the amount of local effort being made to support the schools.

The criteria used were: (1) Is the general condition of the building suitable for school use? (2) Is the building large enough for present and anticipated future enrollments? (3) Has the district been notified by the State Department of Public Instruction or the State Department of Public Health of any gross deficiencies that might necessitate closing or radical change? (4) Is the building amenable to curricular change and growth of the curriculum?

STUDENT TRANSPORTATION

The total transportation costs and per pupil transportation costs were calculated. These costs were compared with those in the event of school district reorganization. Bus routes of the various districts were studied with emphasis on amount of time that students must ride to get to their present school versus the amount of time necessary to get to school if the district reorganized. Mileage was considered in the same light as the time factor mentioned above. Also considered were factors involving the passenger rating of the current buses versus the passenger ratings needed if the district reorganized, and factors taking into account the type of road surface each bus must travel on in each situation. Since bus depreciation is figured differently if the bus travels on a graveled surface as opposed to a paved surface, this factor again brings about discussion on finances, purchasing of new buses, amount of depreciation allowed in the budget each year, and so on.

The five standards chosen when considering the feasibility of school district reorganization in the elementary and high school districts of Logan, Manhattan, Three Forks, and Willow Creek are all important. The criteria chosen are interrelated to one another in many ways, with the topic of finances coming to the surface in each area. While it has been mentioned before that many think in terms of money

when reorganization is planned, this study hopefully presents data that will transcend the financial aspect and dwell upon the educational benefits of those most apt to gain from reorganization--the students.

CHAPTER IV

ANALYSIS OF FINDINGS

Five criteria were chosen for determining the feasibility of school district reorganization in the elementary and high school districts of Logan, Manhattan, Three Forks, and Willow Creek. They were: (1) cost of operation, (2) enrollment, (3) curriculum, (4) building utilization, and (5) transportation of students.

These general criteria are further subdivided by items within each of the categories to delineate to what extent the school district is fulfilling the broad topic covered by the major criterion.

The investigation into the cost of operation for each district is shown in many ways. One method used involved determining the overall cost per pupil, as found by dividing the ANB into the total general fund budget. The results of this analysis for each of the districts are summarized in Figure I, page 30. From this it can be determined that the Manhattan and Three Forks Elementary school districts are the lowest in terms of per pupil cost, spending \$555 and \$557 per pupil, respectively. Willow Creek High School, however, spends \$1,635 per pupil. The other four districts fall about midway in-between the two extremes, with Three Forks High School district spending \$981 per pupil, Logan Elementary district \$987 per pupil, Willow Creek Elementary district \$1,026, and Manhattan High School district \$1,054.

The current nationwide average spent per pupil for their education is about \$896 (Changing Times, 26:25-29).

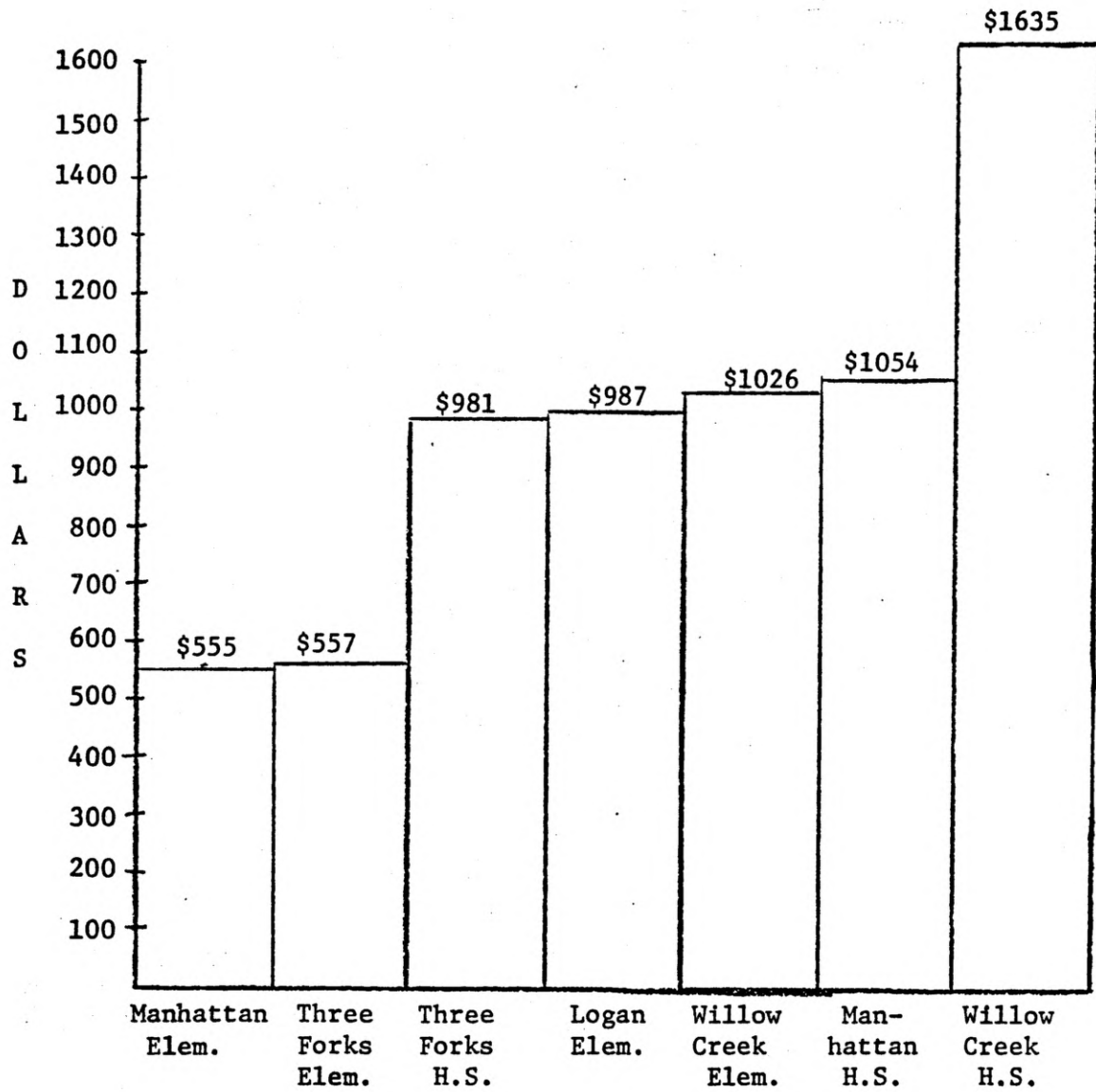


Figure 1

Total General Fund Cost Per Pupil

Another indicator of cost of operation for the school district may be found in the per cent of the general fund budget spent for the instructional salaries. As of December, 1967, schools across the country averaged 72.6 per cent of their general fund budget for instructional salaries (Nation's Schools, 80:41). As seen in Figure 2, page 32, the districts involved in this study ranged from a low percentage of 56.5 in the Willow Creek High School district to a high of 74.6 per cent in the Three Forks Elementary district. The other districts ranged within ten per cent of each other with the Logan Elementary district spending 59.3 per cent of the budget for instructional salaries, Three Forks High School district spent 63.3 per cent of its budget for instructional salaries, the Manhattan High School district 67.8 per cent, Willow Creek Elementary district 68.5 per cent, and the Manhattan Elementary district 69.8 per cent of its budget for instructional salaries.

Operation and maintenance costs for the schools in the study, which include the custodial salaries, utilities, supplies, and amounts set aside for outside help to come into the district to solve problems beyond the skills and capabilities of the janitorial staff, were all fairly much the same. They ranged from a low of 9.5 per cent of the total general fund budget in the Three Forks Elementary district, to a high of 16.5 per cent of the general fund budget for the Logan Elementary district. The other schools and their percentages were as follows:

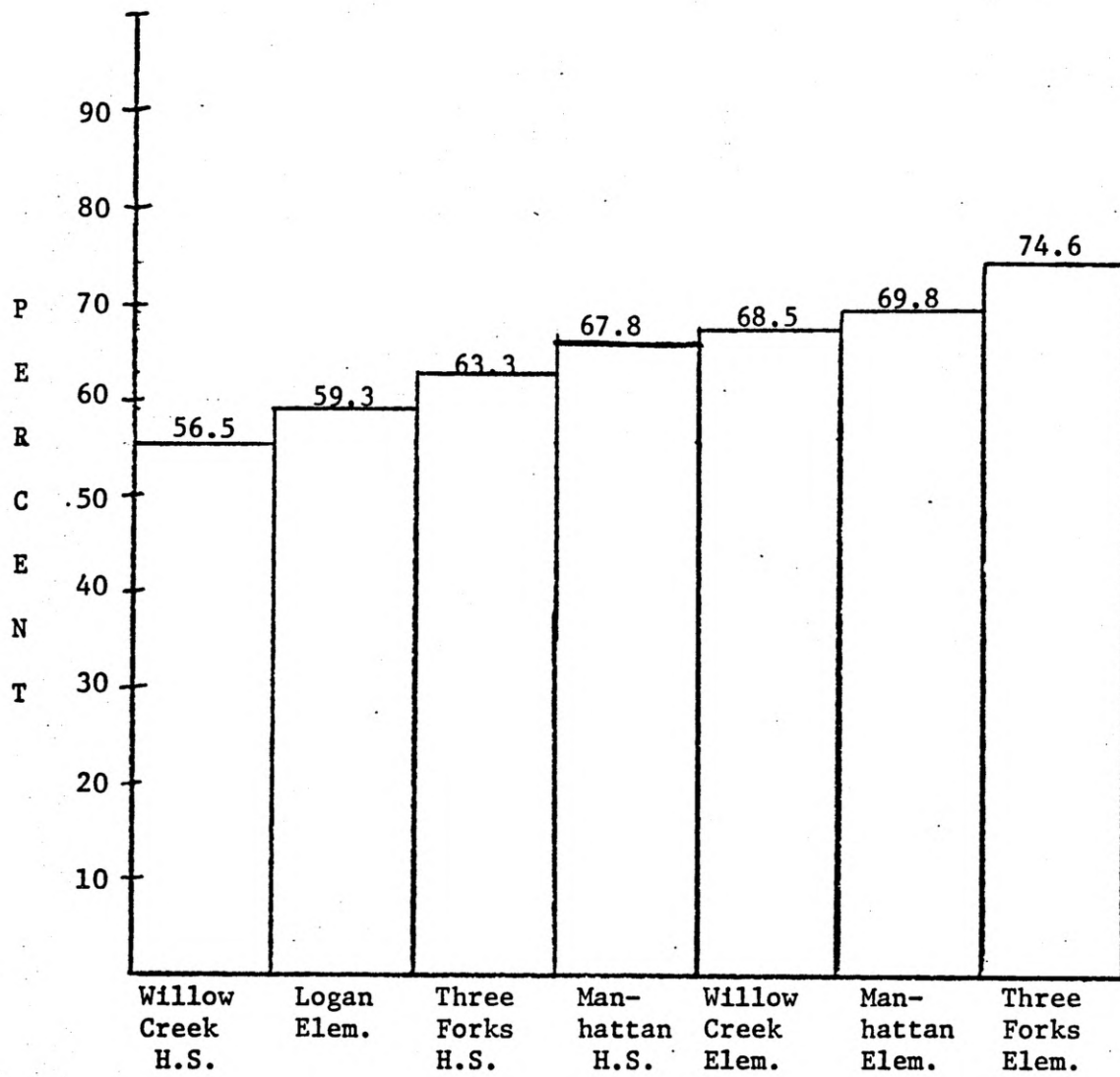


Figure 2

Percent of General Fund Budget
for Instructional Salaries

Willow Creek Elementary, 11.4 per cent; Three Forks High School, 13.5 per cent; Willow Creek High School, 14.9 per cent; Manhattan Elementary, 15.1 per cent; and Manhattan High School, 15.2 per cent.

The amounts that each of the districts in the study spent for the Administration of their schools differed considerably, not only in amounts, but also in percentage of the total general fund budget. As can be seen in Figure 3, page 34, the four highest salaries, paid to the administrators in the elementary and high school districts of Three Forks and Manhattan, range from 6.7 per cent of the total budget to 8.2 per cent of the total budget. On the other hand, the two lowest salaries paid to full-time administrators, which occurred in the Willow Creek Elementary and High School districts, consumed 11.1 per cent of the total budget in the first instance, and 14.7 per cent in the latter.

Amounts currently devoted to debt service in the budget were obtained and vary from zero in the Logan Elementary district and the Willow Creek High School district to \$32,489 in the Three Forks High School district. Other amounts included \$4,011.88 in the Willow Creek Elementary district, \$8,800.00 in the Manhattan High School district, \$9,016.50 in the Three Forks Elementary district, and \$23,312.29 in the Manhattan Elementary district. These amounts were largely for retirement of outstanding bonds which were let for the building of new structures or renovations to existing ones.

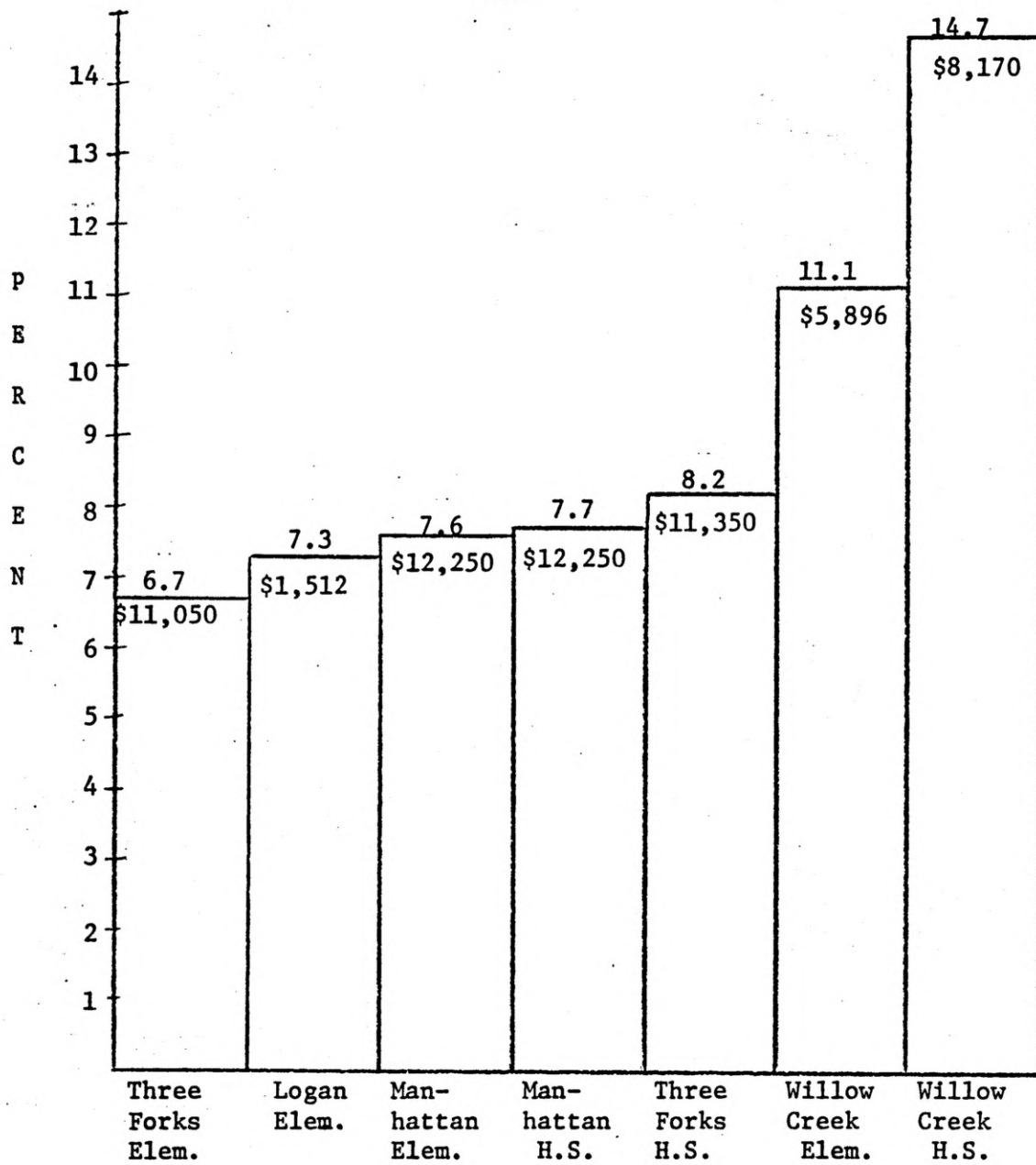


Figure 3

Percentages of the Total General Fund Budget
Spent for Administrative Salaries

Most schools in the study spent in the neighborhood of one per cent of their total budget for the library, and no significant findings could be obtained from this category of cost analysis.

Another factor involved in cost analysis of the districts was the amount devoted to food services and the operation of a hot lunch program. However, since all schools did not offer a hot lunch program, thus making comparisons between all districts impossible, this item was deleted from the study.

Table I, page 36, provides the number of teachers in each district, the number of teachers on tenure, the starting salary for a beginning teacher in the district, the average salary for all teachers, and the amount of extra-curricular pay that the district pays to its staff for supervising, coaching, and chaperoning students when school is not in session. The figures are self-explanatory, except for the average salary category. It will be noted that the average salary for those teachers in the elementary district is unusually high when considering the number of teachers on tenure, which generally causes a higher average salary. This is especially true in the Three Forks Elementary District, where the average salary is computed to be \$10,208, but only four of the twelve teachers are on tenure. This is explained by the fact that many of the High School district staff provide services to the Elementary district, and draw part of their salary from this source, but remain categorized as High School personnel.

TABLE 1. TEACHERS, SALARIES, and EXTRA-CURRICULAR PAY IN THE LOGAN, MANHATTAN, THREE FORKS, and WILLOW CREEK SCHOOL DISTRICTS FOR THE 1971-72 SCHOOL YEAR.

	Number of Teachers	Number on Tenure	Starting Salary	Average Salary	Extra-curricular pay
Logan Elementary	2	1	\$5,500	\$6,150	None
Manhattan Elementary	13	8	6,405	8,605	None
Manhattan High School	12	6	6,405	9,000	\$2,900
Willow Creek Elementary	4	2	6,500	9,142	None
Willow Creek High School	4	1	6,500	7,850	1,450
Three Forks Elementary	12	4	6,405	10,208	None
Three Forks High School	11	10	6,405	8,009	4,700

The amount spent for instructional salaries per ANB is shown in Figure 4, page 37, and indicates a high degree of variance between the districts involved in this study. This figure is obtained by dividing the ANB into the total amount of the general fund budget devoted to instructional salaries. As can be seen, Manhattan Elementary (\$387) is spending less per student for its teachers than any of the other districts, and Willow Creek High School (\$927) is spending more for its teachers than any other of the districts in the study. The other districts vary within the broad range with Three Forks Elementary spending \$415 per student, Logan Elementary \$586 per student, Three Forks High

School \$620 per student, Willow Creek Elementary \$703 per student, and Manhattan High School \$715 per student for instructional salaries.

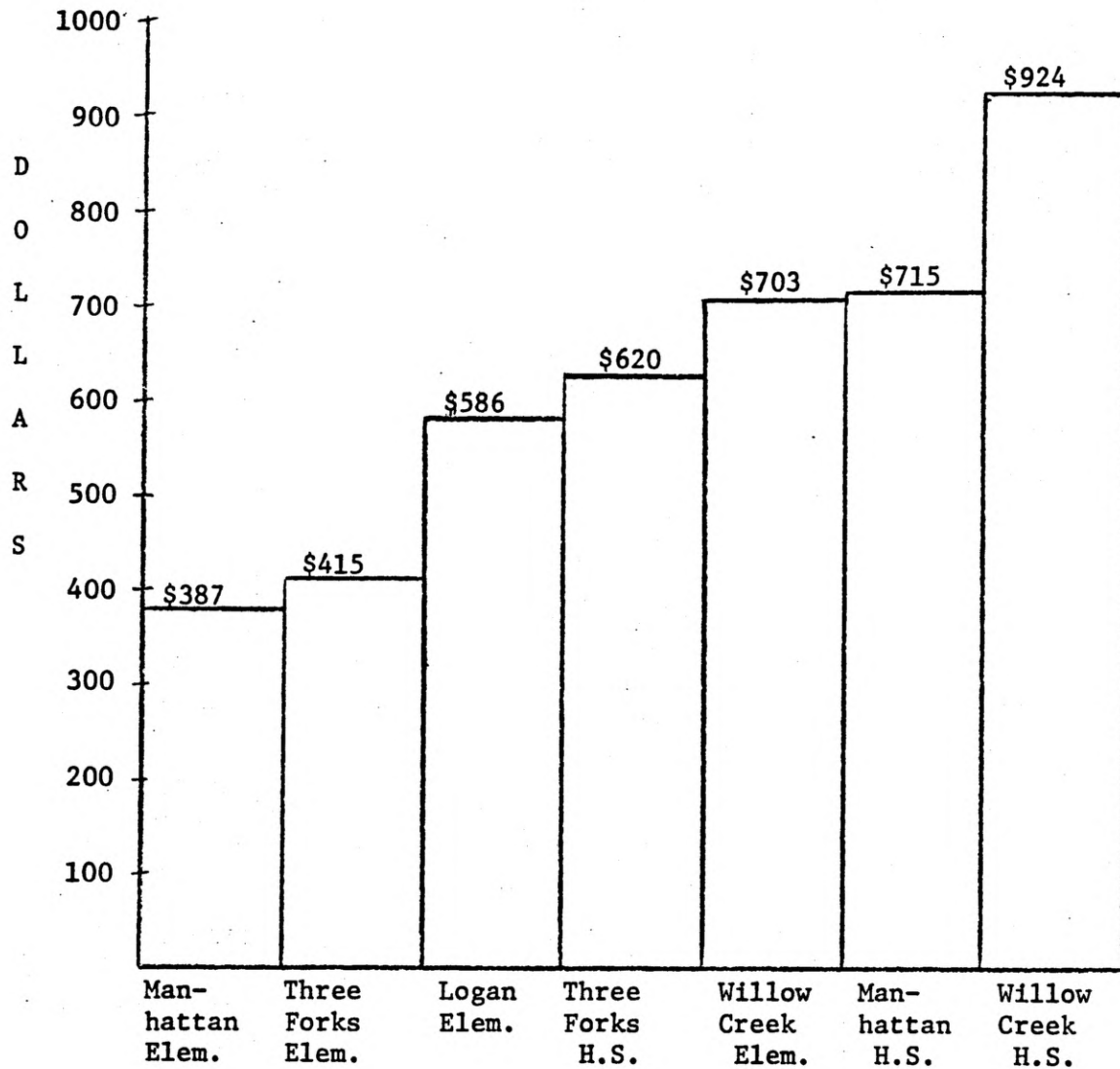


Figure 4

Amount Spent for Instructional
Salaries per ANB

Per pupil costs for each of the past ten years were obtained and show that most schools have experienced a two-fold increase in these costs, regardless of enrollment. Table II, page 39, shows that none of the districts in the study have been able to hold down the per pupil costs. The Willow Creek Elementary district has experienced the greatest per cent of increase in per pupil costs, going from a 1961-62 low of \$293 to \$801 for the current year, or an increase of 173 per cent. Other districts in the study and their per cent of increase over the eleven year period are: Willow Creek High School district, 46 per cent; Three Forks Elementary district, 73 per cent; Manhattan High School district, 74 per cent; Three Forks Elementary district 77 per cent; Manhattan Elementary district, 80 per cent, and Logan Elementary district, 97 per cent.

It will be noted that some schools have experienced per pupil costs that were higher or lower than those on the terminal points of the analysis. From this it could be calculated that their percentage of increase would be even greater than established, but the calculations were made using the first and last years as referent points.

TABLE II... ELEVEN YEAR SUMMARY OF PER PUPIL COSTS IN THE LOGAN,
MANHATTAN, THREE FORKS, AND WILLOW CREEK SCHOOL DISTRICTS

Year	Logan Elem.	Man- hattan Elem.	Willow Creek Elem.	Three Forks Elem.	Man- hattan H.S.	Willow Creek H.S.	Three Forks H.S.
1961-62	502	309	293	315	606	1,121	566
1962-63	567	310	451	320	524	968	612
1963-64	577	337	408	334	580	971	615
1964-65	709	335	452	331	586	755	697
1965-66	756	252	506	357	731	962	770
1966-67	618	368	527	372	651	972	701
1967-68	764	423	568	421	690	1,117	776
1968-69	655	451	618	424	772	1,167	884
1969-70	1,056	520	685	478	918	1,330	938
1970-71	880	545	838	484	1,190	1,593	1,047
1971-72	987	555	801	557	1,054	1,635	981
per cent of increase	97	80	173	77	74	46	73

The assessed and taxable valuations for each of the districts were obtained and the bonding capacity of each was determined by finding five percent of the taxable valuation, which is the legal limit set by the State. The total bonding capacity was affected by the amount of outstanding bonds now in effect, so that only the Logan Elementary district and the Willow Creek High School district had their full bonding capacity available. Table III, page 41, shows each of the elementary districts and Table IV, page 42, shows each of the high school districts.

The amount of taxable valuation per ANB, which is an indicator of a district's ability to support a quality education program, is shown in Figure 5, page 43. It can be seen that there is a great amount of variance between the districts in the study. Manhattan Elementary District has the least amount of taxable valuation per ANB with \$5,596, and the Logan Elementary district has the highest amount of taxable valuation per ANB with \$28,797. The other districts are scattered between these two as follows: Three Forks Elementary district, \$9,193; Willow Creek Elementary district, \$10,387; Willow Creek High School district, \$14,933; Three Forks High School district, \$20,303; and Manhattan High School district, \$21,131.

TABLE III. ELEMENTARY DISTRICT VALUATIONS

School District	Assessed Valuation	Taxable Valuation	Bond Capacity
<u>Three Forks</u>			
24 in	\$ 2,757,832	\$ 724,410	\$ 137,891.60
24 out	2,486,055	759,628	124,302.75
24/64	1,765,772	761,867	88,288.60
24J/B.C.	946,770	267,213	44,338.50
24J/J.C.	650,236	198,858	32,511.80
	<u>\$ 8,606,665</u>	<u>\$ 2,711,977</u>	<u>\$ 430,333.25</u>
			<u>-86,400.00</u>
			\$ 343,933.25
<u>Manhattan</u>			
3 in	\$ 2,127,721	\$ 558,629	\$ 106,386.05
3 out	2,613,592	817,891	130,679.60
3 out new	824,924	240,846	41,246.20
	<u>\$ 5,566,237</u>	<u>\$ 1,617,366</u>	<u>\$ 278,311.85</u>
			<u>- 199,408.00</u>
			\$ 78,903.85
<u>Willow Creek</u>			
15	\$ 1,644,612	\$ 507,729	\$ 82,230.60
15 new	108,497	32,409	5,424.85
	<u>\$ 1,753,109</u>	<u>\$ 540,138</u>	<u>\$ 87,655.60</u>
			<u>-11,000.00</u>
			\$ 76,655.45
<u>Logan</u>			
1	\$ 1,723,358	\$ 604,733	\$ 86,167.90

TABLE IV. 1971 HIGH SCHOOL DISTRICT VALUATION

School District	Assessed Valuation	Taxable Valuation	Bond Capacity
<u>Three Forks</u>			
1	\$ 1,723,358	\$ 604,733	\$ 86,167.90
15 new	108,497	32,409	5,424.85
24 in	2,757,832	724,410	137,891.60
24 out	2,486,055	759,628	124,302.75
24/64	<u>1,765,772</u>	<u>761,867</u>	<u>82,288.60</u>
	\$ 8,851,514	\$ 2,883,047	\$ 442,575.70
			<u>-315,000.00</u>
			\$ 127,575.70
<u>Manhattan</u>			
3 in	\$ 2,127,721	\$ 558,629	\$ 106,386.05
3 out	2,613,592	817,891	130,679.60
3 out new	824,924	240,846	41,246.20
21	1,220,867	364,126	61,043.35
25 new	303,561	85,652	15,178.05
75	<u>4,115,931</u>	<u>1,123,697</u>	<u>205,796.55</u>
	\$11,206,596	\$ 3,190,841	\$ 560,329.80
			<u>- 32,000.00</u>
			\$ 528,329.80
<u>Willow Creek</u>			
15	\$ 1,644,612	\$ 507,729	\$ 82,230.60

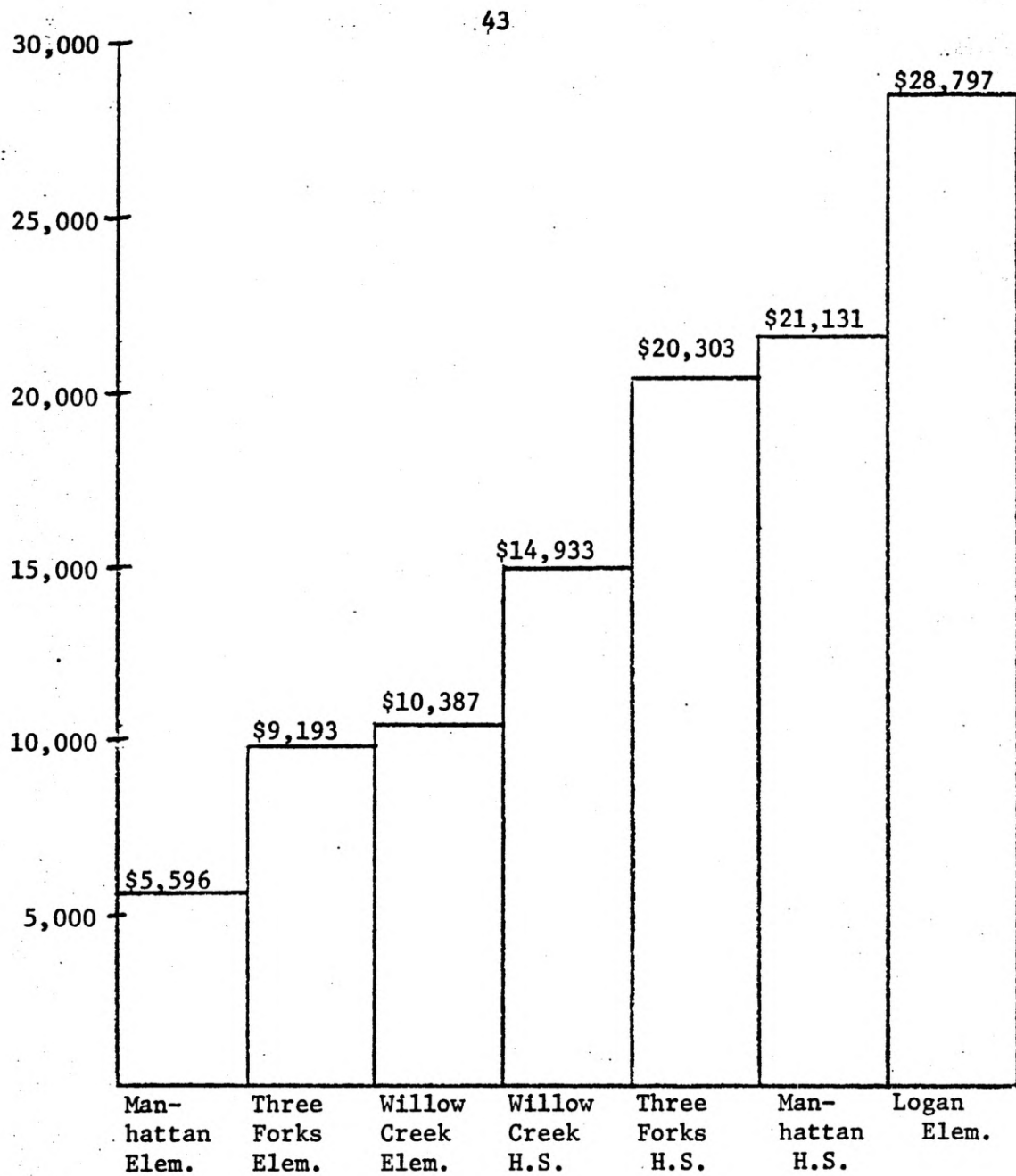


Figure 5

Taxable Valuation Per ANB

The buildings of the districts involved in this study were all visited and inspected with the superintendent or other supervisory staff. The inspection was made in terms of condition of the buildings, repairs needed, renovations possible to suit curricular changes, and ability to meet present and anticipated future student needs.

The buildings ranged in condition from "deteriorating" in the Logan Elementary district, where the gym is now unusable due to a collapsing ceiling, to "new" and "modern", as was the case with Manhattan Elementary district. To some extent, the latter category also fit the Three Forks High School district, as will be explained later. The Manhattan High School building, the Three Forks Elementary building, and the building in Willow Creek were all built about the same time during the first quarter of this century. The building used by the Manhattan High school has noisy floors to walk on, inadequate locker space for students, inadequate and, in one instance, poorly planned classroom space. The Three Forks Elementary School was considered to be in poor shape. Besides being old and having poor facilities, the State has noted deficiencies in the building in terms of health standards. The Willow Creek building has very small office space, poor faculty lounge and work space, and small classrooms in some secondary areas.

The Logan Elementary building is in serious danger of collapsing due to recent weather conditions and general old age. The Three Forks

High School building is overcrowded at the present time, even though it is only about eight years old, and barely is able to meet the needs of the present enrollment. Future usefulness of the buildings in the study varies in terms of what one wishes to think of them being used. The Manhattan High School would not be useful if, for instance, Manhattan Christian High School were closed due to recent severe reprimands by the State Superintendent of Public Instruction concerning the qualifications of its teaching staff. The Three Forks High School would not be useful in terms of serving the students if the community follows a pattern of natural growth one would expect.

Figures 6 and 7 on pages 46 and 47 show very graphically the way that the enrollment figures for the districts in the study have fluctuated. The Logan Elementary district, the Willow Creek Elementary district, and the Willow Creek High School district have all had their peak enrollments and are now on the decline. The Three Forks Elementary district and the Manhattan High School district have both shown great increases from the initial year included in the survey, but have peaked and now leveled off at a somewhat lower figure than the highest ever achieved. The Three Forks High School district and the Manhattan Elementary district both show steady and continuous growth over the eleven year span.

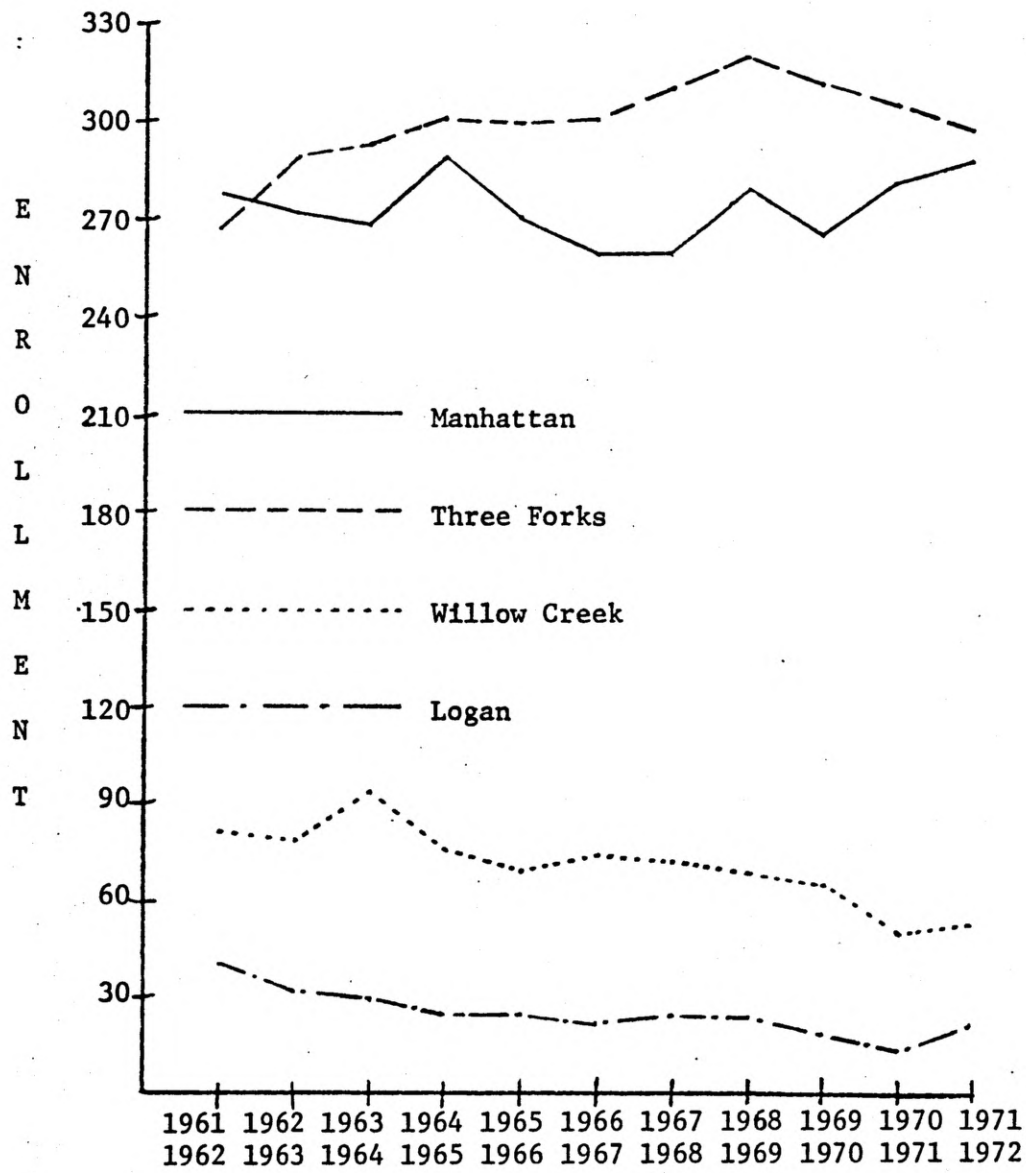


Figure 6
 Elementary Enrollments in the Logan, Manhattan,
 Three Forks, and Willow Creek Districts
 From 1961 to 1972

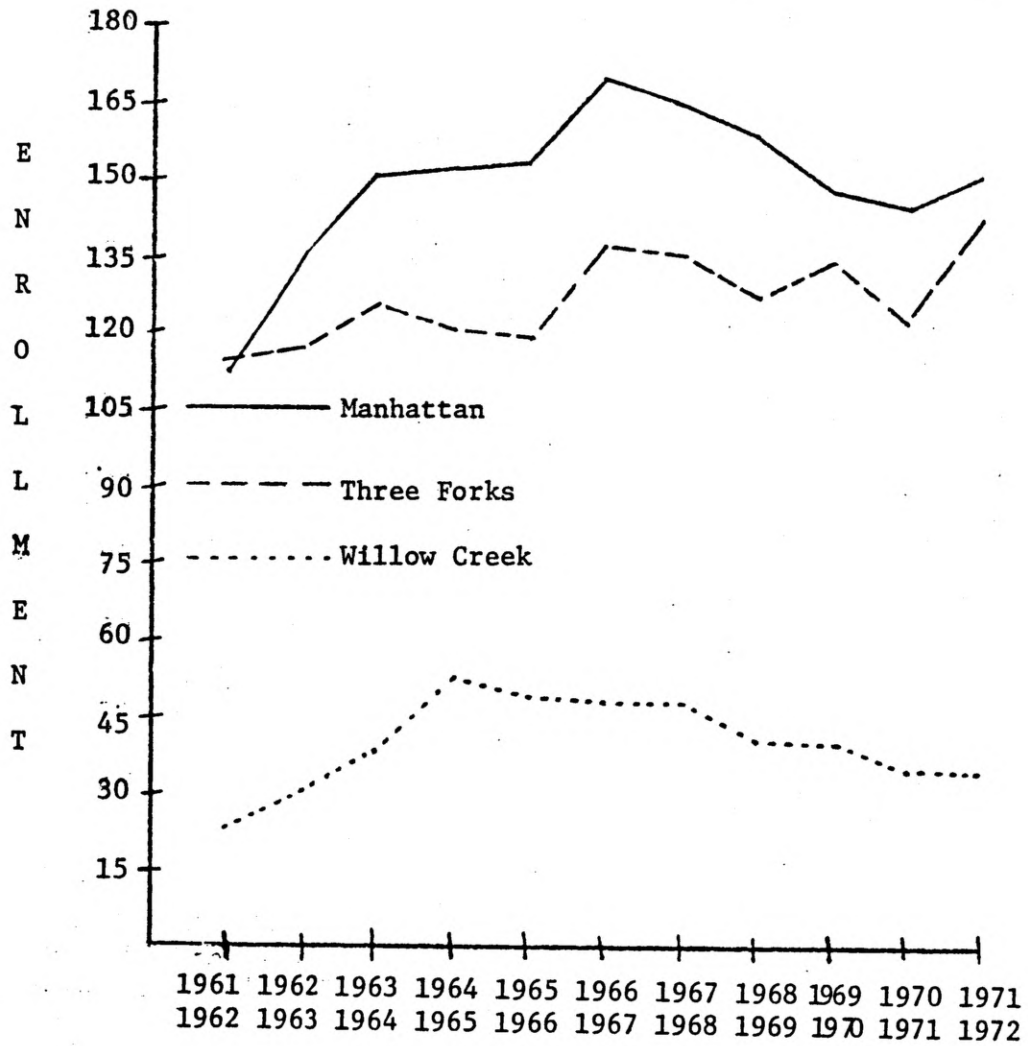


Figure 7

High School Enrollments in the Manhattan,
Three Forks, and Willow Creek Districts
From 1961 to 1972

On page 48 is Table V, indicating the pupil teacher ratio within each school which ranges from a low of 8.5:1 in the Willow Creek High School to a high of 24.6:1 in the Three Forks Elementary School. The other districts fall in between these extremes with Logan Elementary having a ratio of 10.5:1, Manhattan High School 12.6:1, Three Forks High School 12.9:1, Willow Creek Elementary 13:1, and Manhattan Elementary 22.2:1.

TABLE V. PUPIL-TEACHER RATIOS WITHIN THE LOGAN, MANHATTAN, THREE FORKS, and WILLOWCREEK SCHOOL DISTRICTS DURING THE 1971-1972 SCHOOL YEAR

Willow Creek High School	8.5 to 1
Logan Elementary School	10.5 to 1
Manhattan High School	12.6 to 1
Three Forks High School	12.9 to 1
Willow Creek Elementary School	13.1 to 1
Manhattan Elementary School	22.2 to 1
Three Forks Elementary School	24.6 to 1

Transportation costs showed some significant results, as indicated in Table VI, page 49. Manhattan Elementary transported the most students for the least amount per student of any of the schools, spending \$110 per student. Logan Elementary transported only one student, but at the highest cost of any of the districts (\$700).

TABLE VI. 1971-72 TRANSPORTATION COSTS IN THE LOGAN, MANHATTAN, THREE FORKS, and WILLOW CREEK SCHOOL DISTRICTS

School	Total Transportation Cost	Number students Transported	Per pupil Cost
Manhattan Elementary	\$11,488.40	104	\$110.47
Three Forks High School	5,950.00	41	145.12
Three Forks Elementary	11,650.00	78	149.36
Willow Creek Elementary	4,282.00	25	171.28
Manhattan High School	11,607.20	64	181.36
Willow Creek High School	1,846.00	10	184.60
Logan Elementary	700.00	1	700.00

The other districts are all grouped within \$40 of one another on per pupil costs for transportation. Three Forks High School district transported its students at an average cost of \$149, Willow Creek Elementary district averaged \$171 per pupil transported, Manhattan High School district \$181, and Willow Creek High School averaged \$184 for each pupil transported.

The bus routes of the various districts were studied and are pictorially represented in the Appendix, pages 76 to 86. Table VII, page 51, details some of the salient information gained by studying the bus routes of the districts involved. Manhattan's Maudlow Route bus has

the longest distance to travel, and consumes the most passenger riding time in doing so. The shortest route was the one involving the one child riding the bus to the Logan Elementary School. He spent only about seven minutes per trip in the bus in riding the three miles to and from school. The route is also the most interesting in that the child is riding a bus sent out from Manhattan, the Logan Route, and his brother continues on with the bus into the schools at Manhattan, rather than getting off in Logan.

Since four of the seven districts involved in the study contracted through private individuals for the bus service and did not claim any bus depreciation on their budget, this item was not included in this study. Also, since comparisons could not be made between all districts in the study concerning the purchase of new buses, this item was deleted from further consideration.

TABLE VII. DISTANCES, RIDING TIMES, BUS CAPACITIES, and ROAD SURFACE of the BUS ROUTES for the LOGAN, MANHATTAN, THREE FORKS, and WILLOW CREEK SCHOOL DISTRICTS DURING the 1971-72 SCHOOL YEAR.

School	Route	Total Daily Mileage	No. Miles Paved Road	Bus Capacity	Shortest Riding Time (minutes)	Longest Riding Time (minutes)
Logan	1	6	6	42	7	7
Manhattan	Maudlow	120	36	54	15	90
	Churchill	82	28	54	15	60
	Wooden Shoe	45	16	54	10	45
	Logan	36	36	42	10	30
Willow Creek	I	54	12	36	5	30
Willow Creek	II	52	10	36	5	40
Three Forks	Old Town	62	24	54	10	40
	Eureka	68	52	12	30	45
	Lower Madison	82	16	42	10	60
	Lane	58	20	36	10	40

The various curricula offered by the schools in this study were all basically the same on the Elementary level, and no further analysis of them is planned. On the High School level, Three Forks and Manhattan offered about the same curricula to their students and, with minor exceptions, the courses were offered yearly. Willow Creek High School, however, was not able to offer anywhere near the quantity of courses from which the students could select. Several courses had to be offered on alternate years, due to lack of staff to adequately teach all subjects and lack of enough students to justify each course being taught every year. Typing I alternated with Typing II, Bookkeeping alternated with General Business, Physics alternated with Chemistry, Biology alternated with Earth Science, Advanced Math alternated with Algebra II, Shorthand I alternated with Shorthand II, and United States History alternated with a half semester of Government and a half semester of Sociology. In addition, Home Economics was offered every other year.

Three Forks and Manhattan were able to offer courses beyond that normally expected to be found on the secondary level. Manhattan High School had modular scheduling in the English and Vocational Agriculture departments, and offered a course in Family Living.

Three Forks High School also offered a course in Family Living, as well as special interest courses in English and Vocational Agriculture areas.

SUMMARY

Five areas were dealt with in this chapter with the main focus being on the feasibility of school district reorganization in the Logan, Manhattan, Three Forks, and Willow Creek School districts. Cost of operation was studied, including overall cost per pupil, taxable valuation per ANB, instructional salaries per ANB, per cent of the general fund spent for instructional salaries, per cent of the general fund spent for administrative salaries, operation and maintenance costs, and library costs.

Building usefulness at the present time, its adaptability to curricular changes, its condition, and usefulness in the future were some of the topics of research done into the general area of building utilization.

Enrollment in the districts has changed greatly, as was shown in the eleven-year study of enrollment, cost per student, and current enrollment and cost per student.

Teacher's salaries, their starting salary in the district, and the amount of pay the district gives its staff for extra-curricular supervision were discussed. Pupil-teacher ratios were also determined for each of the schools in this study.

Transportation and curricula were the final two items taken into account in the study and provided some new insights in the districts involved.

CHAPTER V

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

SUMMARY

This paper began as an investigation into the feasibility of the reorganization of the elementary and high school districts of Logan, Manhattan, Three Forks, and Willow Creek. Five criteria were established to help in this process. They were (1) cost of operating the school, (2) enrollment of each school, (3) curriculum offered in the school, (4) building condition and usefulness, and (5) student transportation. The study did not attempt to measure or concern itself with the attitudes of the area residents concerning reorganization. Several questions were posed to be answered by this study, and most of them were. Sources of information for the study came from the Office of the County Superintendent of Schools, Montana School Law, literature previously written on the subject, and the buildings and personnel of the districts concerned.

Various writers have alluded to school district reorganization and have made several conclusions on how it should be accomplished. Several states were reorganized by the legislature, and the Peabody Report (1958:51,55) suggests that it is the state's responsibility to reorganize the school districts if they show no inclination to do so themselves.

School district reorganization has been going on for at least

the past forty years in our country. There were a staggering 128,000 school districts in the United States in 1928 (Grieder, 1967), but the number of school districts by 1970 was reduced to 17,498 (U.S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, 1970:6).

Montana has been reorganizing its schools, but at a slower rate than the rest of the country. There were 1201 districts in the state in the 1952-1953 school term (Montana Department of Public Instruction, 1954:90), but the number is now down to 684 districts as of this year (Montana Department of Public Instruction, 1972:10). Gallatin County was the special focus in this study. During the 1952-1953 school year there were fifty-two districts in the county (Montana Department of Public Instruction, 1954:90), but this number has been reduced to eighteen for the current year (Montana Department of Public Instruction, 1972:10). There are, however, three high schools and four elementary schools operating within fifteen miles of each other on the western edge of the county. Before it can be stated that the school districts in Gallatin County are operating at or near maximum efficiency, the districts on the western edge of the county must seriously re-examine their programs and reasons for existing while located close to a large neighboring district.

The Peabody Report (1958:47,51) listed seven criteria that should be used to reorganize school districts. They are simplicity, unity, efficiency, economy, effectiveness, pupil population, and school

district area. Grieder, Pierce, and Rosenstengel (1961:27) also listed factors such as walking distance and travel time for the students.

There are several advantages to school district reorganization, many of them financial, but there are others that are of educational benefit, social benefit, and personal benefit. The overwhelming majority of the literature in this area is favorable to school district reorganization.

CONCLUSIONS

The Logan Elementary School district, even though it was the first one in the Gallatin Valley, should be closed at the end of the current school year, and its students bused into either Manhattan or Three Forks. The Manhattan bus comes through Logan at the present time, and the Three Forks bus comes north to the interchange on the Interstate before heading west to Three Forks. Busing should present no problems in this area.

The building at Logan is in such poor shape that the gymnasium can no longer be used due to danger of the roof collapsing. Students should not have to attend schools under such conditions as this. What do they do for recess when the weather outside is inclement? Also, the building itself offers no opportunity for remodeling or renovation to react to curricular change.

The Logan Elementary district is one of the lowest in amount spent for instructional salaries, both in amount and per cent of the total general fund budget. They have, in fact, asked and been granted an emergency budget for this year to hire another teacher, which they assumed last spring they would not need. This district is also the highest of those studied in per pupil costs of the general fund budget on the elementary level. Enrollment at Logan is on the decline, and has been for many years. While the residents of the Logan Elementary district do enjoy lower tax rates than surrounding districts, the educational needs of their children are not being adequately met when building conditions are so poor.

The Logan Elementary budget is excessively high in the amounts spent for operation and maintenance of the building, and from the inspection made of the structure, nothing short of a new building will serve the needs of the district. There is no indebtedness in the district as far as new buildings, or renovations to existing structures. One must assume that they are merely passing the time until the State forces closure on them due to building hazards.

The Logan Elementary district also has the highest transportation cost per student of any of the schools in the study. It costs the district an astronomical \$700 to transport one student six miles per day to and from school. Of all the districts in this study the closest to

this amount was a seemingly trivial cost of \$185 per student in the Willow Creek High School district.

The Willow Creek High School district spends an exorbitant amount per student for their education (\$1,635), and something must be done soon to correct this situation. The amount that the districts, both Elementary and High School, spend for Administration is the highest of any of the schools in the study. The High School district is one of the lowest in amounts devoted from the general fund budget to teachers' salaries. Enrollment in both of the Willow Creek Schools is on the decline, and the peak years have all been realized and gone. Out of eight teachers in the entire system, only three are on tenure. This must mean that it is difficult to keep teachers in the community, which also means that the students get the worst of the deal when they get used to new teachers every other year, thus not allowing any continuity to be established among the instructional staff.

The building at Willow Creek was in seemingly good repair and serving present needs adequately, even though the building is old. The building would not lend itself to remodeling or renovation if such were desired to implement any of the new curricular ideas in education today. The curricula is not a varied one, and students must choose from a restricted list of offerings each year. It may be argued, and perhaps reasonably so, that the smaller class size found in Willow Creek, along with the chance to get to know the teachers more personally, may be

better than going to a school with larger class size where one does not get the personal attention afforded in the smaller community.

From the analysis of the data on overall cost per pupil it is apparent that the Manhattan and Three Forks Elementary districts are far more efficient in the use of tax dollars in terms of per pupil cost, spending \$555 and \$557 per pupil, respectively.

The Three Forks Elementary School district is facing some problems in the very near future. The building that is currently being used will not serve much longer, and the replacement of it with a new building is, or should be, a topic of discussion at the present time. The Three Forks High School building is barely big enough for the student load that it has now, and it is only about eight years old. It remains a distinct possibility that, if reorganization were to occur, the Elementary district could take over the High School building with the High School district building a newer, and more complete, building for that segment of the student body. Even if reorganization does not occur, a new building must be built for either the Elementary students, or for the High School students, if the Elementary district moves into the current High School building.

The schools at Manhattan are not without their problems, either. The Elementary School is adequate for the present and any future events that can be foreseen with any clarity. The High School building, however,

is old, and will last less than twenty years. Remodeling is taking place on the High School building, but not all things can be repaired. The floors are noisy to walk on, and the general construction of the building, with the Shop area located underneath, creates a real potential fire hazard. If the High School at Amsterdam closes in the near future, Manhattan could not handle the approximately 150 students that would come there in the event of closure. With the serious inadequacies noted by the State Superintendent of Public Instruction, Delores Colburg, Manhattan Christian High School may soon be forced to close due to inadequate teacher qualifications. If discussions are not already underway in Manhattan involving contingency planning, they should start immediately. The hours spent in this endeavor will not be wasted, even if Manhattan Christian High School can manage to keep its doors open.

Logan should close. Willow Creek should take a long, hard look at itself, and its programs. Three Forks needs a new building soon, and should be prepared to take on Willow Creek students should that event occur. Manhattan should do some serious thinking about building, and about what to do if Manhattan Christian closes.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. A study should be done on the same school districts involving the attitudes of those living therein. It may well be that we have all been fighting a "paper tiger" when it comes to the attitudes of these

people in the area regarding school district reorganization. Armed with salient financial data, of which we have much, and educational know-how, the people may be in favor of reorganization. We should find out what they think, so we don't have to keep guessing.

2. A study should be done on the feasibility of one administrative unit being used for all schools involved in this study. This idea has been batted around for a long time. A study on the feasibility of having one superintendent, one board of trustees, etc., over the entire western edge of the county would make fascinating reading. If it is feasible, and the people are willing to go for it, why not be the first to try it?

3. A study should be done of the pre-school census children in this area. The pre-school census that is normally used at the County Superintendent's Office is one that regards all children from the age of birth to six years. An in-depth study of the number of people moving into the area, the number moving out, and the live births that occur in the area should be of much benefit when it comes to school plant planning. Trends could be established in this area of study that would be valuable to school people for years to come.

4. A study should be done on the adjustment patterns of those children coming into the larger school from a smaller, isolated school. How does one join in with a group when he was the only one in his class in the country school? How can there be such things as Christmas plays,

team games, boy-to-boy talk, lasting friendships, etc., when you are the only boy in a group of seven children in the country school?

5. A study should be done that would include Belgrade in the feasibility of one centralized high school for the western edge of Gallatin County. It always seems that Belgrade is left out when we do a study on school district reorganization in this area of the state, presumably due to its proximity to Bozeman. Perhaps they have many important traits and ideas that could accomplish what has gone undone for over 70 years. At any rate, they should be involved in all future discussions regarding reorganization in Gallatin County.

6. Manhattan High School district and Three Forks High School district should consider consolidating their high schools within the next three to five years. As this study has indicated, the Manhattan building could be a veritable firetrap with the shop area located underneath part of a building as old as this one is. Three Forks High School is bulging at its seams, and the Three Forks Elementary is going to have to find a new home soon. There could never be a better time for these districts to enter into meaningful discussions on the feasibility of building one new high school to serve both student bodies, and also taking into consideration the fact that students from Amsterdam may soon be looking for their education other than where they are now being educated. The combined districts would have a bonding capacity of

over \$700,000 when current indebtedness is considered, which is more than adequate to build a structure to meet the needs of a student body that current enrollment figures indicate.

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REFERENCES

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APPENDIX

GENERAL BUDGET REVIEW

Logan Elementary

Section 100 Administration	\$ 1,512.00
Section 200 Instruction	12,300.00
Section 300 Library	150.00
Section 400 Health Services	-
Section 500 Attendance Service	-
Section 600 Operation of Plant	2,770.00
Section 700 Maintenance of Plant	650.00
Section 800 Food Service	1,150.00
Section 900 Auxiliary Services	-
Section 1000 Current Charges	2,200.00
Section 1100 Capital Outlay	<u>-</u>
Total	\$ 20,723.00
divided by ANB	<u>21</u>
COST PER PUPIL	\$ 986.81
Number of teachers	2

GENERAL BUDGET REVIEW

Manhattan Elementary

Section 100 Administration	\$ 12,250.00
Section 200 Instruction	111,870.65
Section 300 Library	1,550.00
Section 400 Health Service	25.00
Section 500 Attendance Service	-
Section 600 Operation of Plant	12,740.00
Section 700 Maintenance of Plant	11,450.00
Section 800 Food Service	50.00
Section 900 Auxiliary Services	-
Section 1000 Current Charges	9,145.00
Section 1100 Capital Outlay	<u>1,688.09</u>
Total	\$ 160,303.38
divided by ANB	<u>292</u>
COST PER PUPIL	554.98
Number of teachers	13

GENERAL BUDGET REVIEW

Willow Creek Elementary

Section 100 Administration	\$ 5,896.00
Section 200 Instruction	36,567.04
Section 300 Library	400.00
Section 400 Health Service	-
Section 500 Attendance Service	-
Section 600 Operation of Plant	4,247.00
Section 700 Maintenance of Plant	1,850.00
Section 800 Food Service	1,500.00
Section 900 Auxiliary Services	230.00
Section 1000 Current Charges	2,160.00
Section 1100 Capital Outlay	<u>500.00</u>
Total	\$ 53,350.04
divided by ANB	<u>49</u>
COST PER PUPIL	\$ 1,026.69
Number of teachers	4

GENERAL BUDGET REVIEW

Three Forks Elementary

Section 100 Administration	\$ 11,050.00
Section 200 Instruction	122,500.00
Section 300 Library	1,500.00
Section 400 Health Service	-
Section 500 Attendance Service	-
Section 600 Operation of Plant	12,600.00
Section 700 Maintenance of Plant	3,000.00
Section 800 Food Service	-
Section 900 Auxiliary Services	500.00
Section 1000 Current Charges	9,700.00
Section 1100 Captial Outlay	<u>3,346.00</u>
Total	\$ 164,196.00
divided by ANB	<u>297</u>
COST PER PUPIL	\$ 556.85
Number of teachers	12

GENERAL BUDGET REVIEW

Manhattan High School

Section 100 Administration	\$ 12,250.00
Section 200 Instruction	107,995.02
Section 300 Library	1,550.00
Section 400 Health Services	25.00
Section 500 Attendance Service	-
Section 600 Operation of Plant	13,435.00
Section 700 Maintenance of Plant	10,827.12
Section 800 Food Service	1,500.00
Section 900 Auxiliary Services	-
Section 1000 Current Charges	9,025.00
Section 1100 Capital Outlay	<u>2,612.94</u>
Total	\$ 159,220.16
divided by ANB	<u>162</u>
COST PER PUPIL	1,054.00
Number of teachers	12

GENERAL BUDGET REVIEW

Three Forks High School

Section 100 Administration	11,350.00
Section 200 Instruction	88,100.00
Section 300 Library	9,500.00
Section 400 Health Services	-
Section 500 Attendance Service	-
Section 600 Operation of Plant	14,600.00
Section 700 Maintenance of Plant	4,200.00
Section 800 Food Service	-
Section 900 Auxiliary Services	1,000.00
Section 1000 Current Charges	8,200.00
Section 1100 Capital Outlay	<u>2,290.70</u>
Total	\$ 139,240.70
divided by ANB	<u>147</u>
COST PER PUPIL	981.00
Number of teachers	11

GENERAL BUDGET REVIEW

Willow Creek High School

Section 100 Administration	\$ 8,170.00
Section 200 Instruction	31,400.00
Section 300 Library	450.00
Section 400 Health Services	150.00
Section 500 Attendance Service	-
Section 600 Operation of Plant	5,303.00
Section 700 Maintenance of Plant	2,990.00
Section 800 Food Service	1,500.00
Section 900 Auxiliary Services	1,580.00
Section 1000 Current Charges	3,620.00
Section 1100 Capital Outlay	<u>421.50</u>
Total	\$ 55,584.50
divided by ANB	<u>30</u>
COST PER PUPIL	1,635.00
Number of teachers	4

ELEMENTARY SCHOOL DISTRICT BONDS OUTSTANDING

Manhattan

Year of Issue	1955	1968
Year of Retirement	1975	1988
Amount of Bond(s)	\$ 77,000.00	\$ 215,775.00
Amount Outstanding	\$ 16,000.00	\$ 183,408.00
Interest Rate(s)	2.4%	4.79%
Principle due this year	\$ 4,000.00	\$ 10,788.75
Interest due this year	\$ 432.00	\$ 8,095.54
Total Payment due this year	\$ 4,432.00	\$ 18,880.29

Willow Creek

Year of Issue	1954
Year of Retirement	1974
Amount of Bond	\$ 43,500.00
Amount Outstanding	\$ 11,100.00
Interest Rate	2.75%
Principle due this year	\$ 3,700.00
Interest due this year	\$ 311.88
Total Payment due this year	\$ 4,011.88

Three Forks

Year of Issue	1969
Year of Retirement	1989
Amount of Bond	\$ 96,000.00
Amount Outstanding	\$ 86,400.00
Interest Rate	5.0%
Principle due this year	\$ 4,800.00
Interest due this year	\$ 4,216.50
Total Payment due this year	\$ 9,016.50

HIGH SCHOOL DISTRICT BONDS OUTSTANDING

Manhattan

Year of Issue	1955
Year of Retirement	1975
Amount of Bond	\$ 155,000.00
Amount Outstanding	\$ 32,000.00
Interest Rate	2.5%
Principle due this year	\$ 8,000.00
Interest due this year	\$ 800.00
Total Payment due this year	\$ 8,800.00

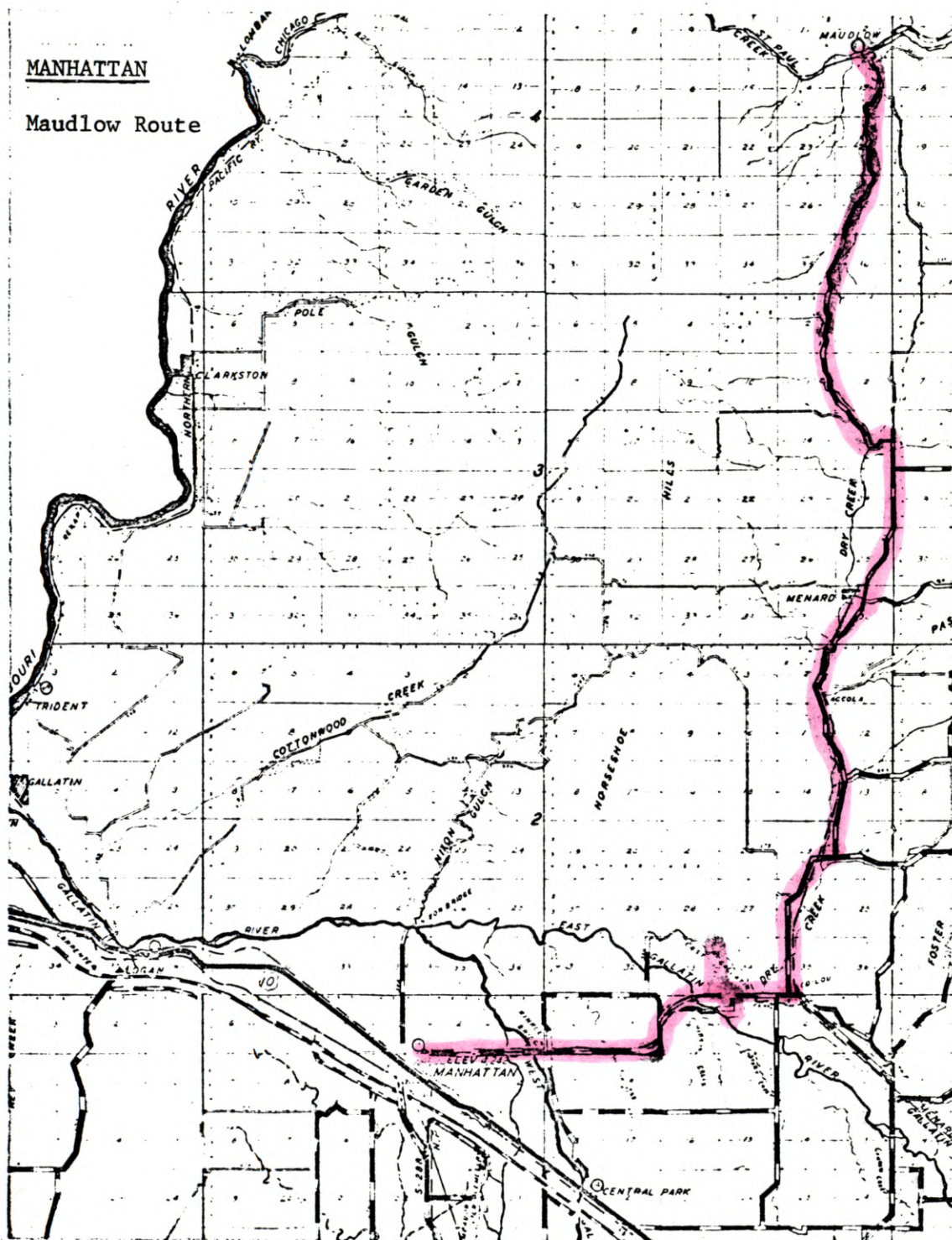
Three Forks

Year of Issue	1969
Year of Retirement	1989
Amount of Bond	\$ 350,000.00
Amount Outstanding	\$ 315,000.00
Interest Rate	5.0%
Principle due this year	\$ 17,500.00
Interest due this year	\$ 14,989.00
Total Payment due this year	\$ 32,489.00

Willow Creek

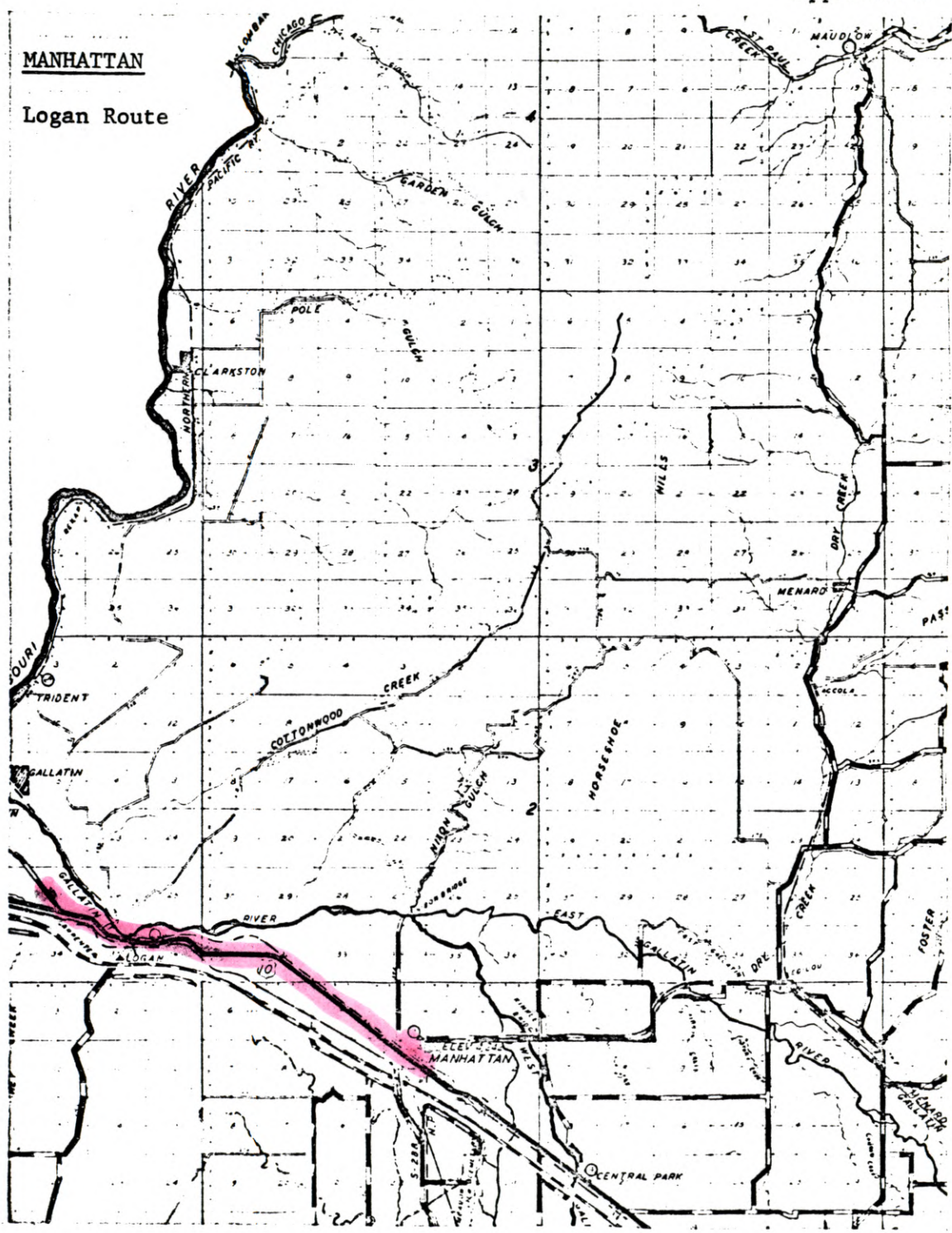
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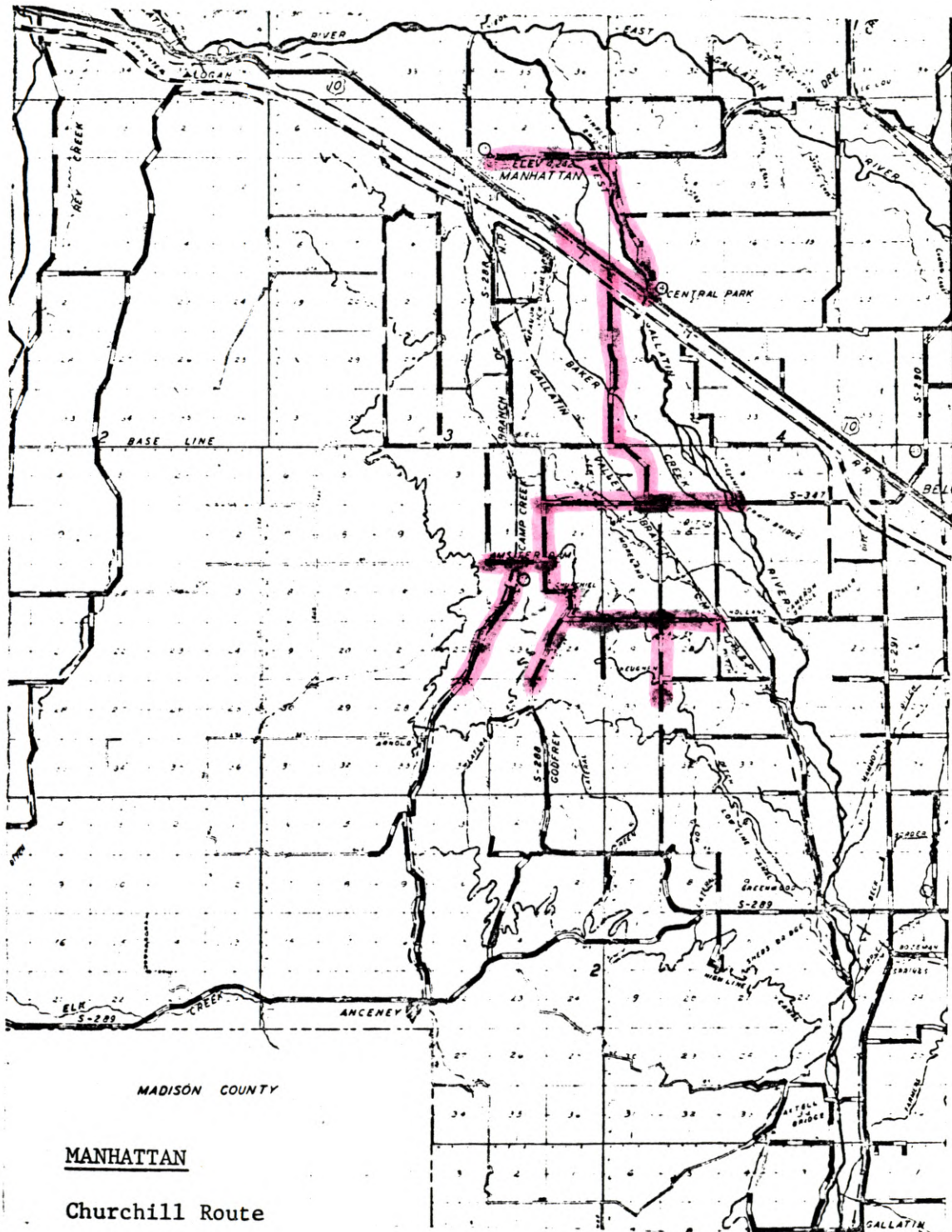
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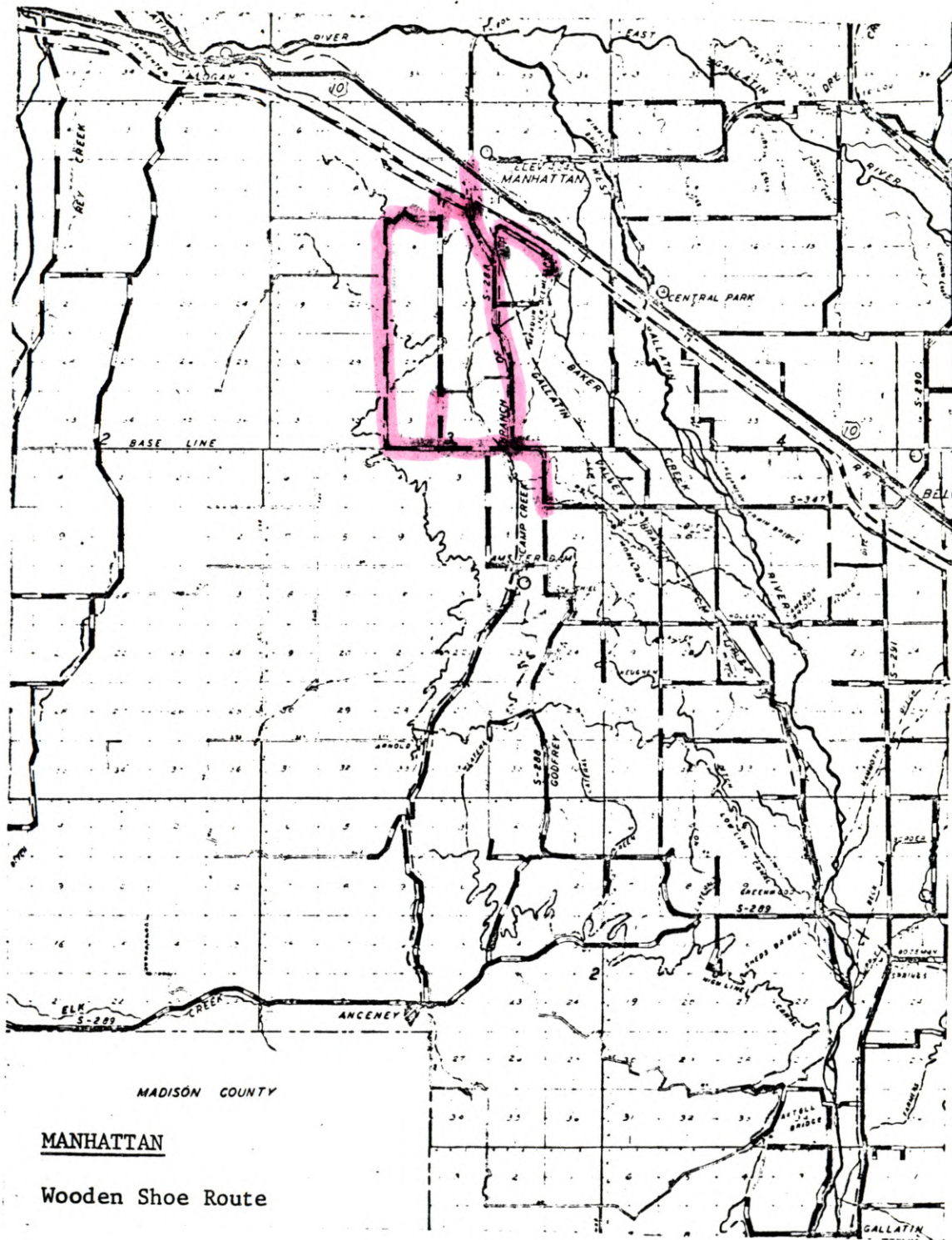


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Logan Route







LOGAN

Route I

