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Date August 3, 1970

THE ADVISABILITY AND FEASIBILITY OF CONSOLIDATING KESSLER ELEMENTARY SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 2, AND WARREN SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 3, WITH HELENA SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 1

by

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ABSTRACT

The primary purpose of this paper was to determine the advisability and feasibility of reorganizing Kessler School District No. 2 and Warren School District No. 3 with Helena District No. 1.

A review of the literature was undertaken to find the trends in the United States concerning school consolidations. Literature revealed that the trend was to reorganize into larger, more efficient units.

The study showed that consolidation would cost the taxpayer slightly less in the Kessler District, slightly less in the Helena District, and a great deal more for the taxpayer in the Warren School District.

The study concerning the instructional program showed that Helena schools were providing a higher quality instructional program under the criteria shown. The Kessler and Warren schools were considered by the writer to be inadequate in supplying additional specialized personnel and facilities under the criteria used.

The study of teachers salary schedules and benefits showed that the Kessler and Warren School Districts were a great deal lower and provided fewer benefits than did the Helena School District.

A study of the census showed a trend toward growth in the Kessler and Warren School Districts, a fact which suggested additional building needs in the future.

The study includes a summary, conclusions and recommendations.

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

The process of reorganizing local school districts has affected a majority of the communities of nearly every state. In 1940 there were, in the United States, more than 125,000 separate units having a legal responsibility for the operation of schools. In 1970, with a much larger population and many more students in school, there are fewer than 20,000 school districts (1, 1970). In 1950 there were 1,321 elementary school districts and 133 high school districts in the State of Montana. In 1970 there were 612 elementary school districts and 165 high school districts (13, 1970).

The Montana Committee on Public and Elementary and Secondary School Organization appointed in 1946-1947, disclosed in its study, a wide variance of educational opportunity in Montana schools.(11, 1958).

Knowledge of the educational inequalities, the trend towards school consolidation, and the fact that the writer was involved as a teacher and administrator with students from the schools concerned, led to the interest to undertake this study.

Statement of the Problem

The purpose of this study was to determine the advisability and feasibility of consolidating Kessler Elementary School

District No. 2 and Warren Elementary School District No. 3, with Helena School District No. 1.

Procedures

The first procedure was to examine available literature to find the trends of school district reorganization, the advantages, disadvantages and problems of reorganization, and the characteristics of effective school district organization throughout the United States. Secondly, an attempt was made to study and answer the following questions:

1. What was the financial structure and how would reorganization change it?
2. What was the current instructional program and how would it be changed by reorganization?
3. What was the current teachers salary schedule and fringe benefits in the districts compared?
4. What was the comparison of school plant facilities?
5. What effect did the location of school sites have on reorganization?
6. What transportation problems were involved in reorganization?
7. What was the current school census and what was the projected enrollment?

Limitations

The study was limited to educational and financial criteria to determine the advisability and feasibility of reorganization.

The review of literature was limited to books and periodicals obtained from the Montana State University Library, the State Department of Public Instruction Library, Montana Education Association Library, records from the Office of the County Assessor of Lewis and Clark County, and records from the Superintendent of Schools of Lewis and Clark County.

Definitions of Terms

The following terms were used in the development of this study. All definitions were taken from the School Law, Hamilton and Mort, authors (7, 1959), and from Tax and Budget Data 1969-1970 edition, Montana Education Association (10, 1969-1970).

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

Bonded Indebtedness; that portion of indebtedness represented by outstanding bonds.

Consolidated District; a school district formed by uniting small schools for the purpose of providing better school facilities and increased educational opportunities.

Consolidated School; an enlarged school formed by

uniting small schools for the purpose of providing better school facilities and increased educational opportunities.

Debt Capacity; the difference between the net outstanding debt of a school district and the maximum debt permitted by law.

District School Levy, All Funds; the overall local effort being made in property taxes to support the district educational program. Included in the total are district levies for the general fund, transportation, bus reserve, tuition, retirement bonded indebtedness, leased facilities and building reserve budgets.

Foundation Program per Average Number Belonging; the salaries of all professional personnel except administrative staffs figured on a per pupil basis.

School District; the territory that is under the supervision of a given school board regardless of the number of school buildings.

School District Organization; a structures for education which will facilitate the optimual provision of educational programs and services to equitably meet the educational need of all at an acceptable level of quality, with efficiency of organization and economy of operation.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Our public schools began as local institutions. To a great extent they have been maintained as local institutions throughout the various stages of their development to their present stage. The ultimate responsibility for them, however, is not a local function. Under our system of government public education is a state function. It is a responsibility of the people of each state as a whole acting through their legislature.

Although education is a state function, no state operates its public schools directly. Deep convictions regarding the values of local self-government have always been so strong that the administration of the schools could not easily be far removed from the local people most directly concerned with them. Fitzwater (4, 1957), in a discussion concerning the source of power for exercise of administrative controls, makes the following statements:

> Education being a state function, the responsibility for establishing school administrative units--the State Department of Education, intermediate districts and local districts--is vested in the legislature. Local school districts, therefore, are creatures of the state, derive their powers from it, and in a legal sense, operate as subdivisions of it.
>
> Within constitutional limits, the powers of legislatures with respect to school

> district organization, are full and comprehensive. Representing the people of the state as a whole, the legislature has the power to subdivide the area of the state into local districts of such sizes and types as it sees fit, to alter school district boundaries, or to abolish existing districts and create new ones to replace them.
>
> Thus the legislature's powers include the function of reorganizing school districts. A school district possesses no inherent powers to perpetuate itself, to change its boundaries, or to cease to exist as a school administrative unit. All these changes must be authorized by law.

States have been somewhat reluctant to usurp control from the local district, realizing that local control has kept them adapted to community needs and that local control has been an influencing factor in the contribution which public education has made to our way of life.

Basic Premises

In our society, the basic belief that each child has the right for educational opportunities which will assist him in developing his potentialities to the fullest, has been a dominate factor in shaping educational policy. Purdy (12, 1970), in his discussion of the characteristics of effective school district organization, lists the following basic premises:

1. That education is a function of the state.
2. That equitable educational opportunities must be provided for all youth.

3. That these equitable educational opportunities must be provided regardless of where the child may live in the state and regardless of his socio-economic status.

4. That education is a service of government which is and which shall continue to be of, by and for the people. Local autonomy must be strengthened in an appropriate relationship to equitableness, quality, efficiency, and economy

According to Purdy, these basic premises establish the foundation upon which the structure for school district organization can be built.

Purdy identified the conditions which must be met to achieve a fulfillment of the basic premises. He stated that there are five factors which must be given consideration:

1. Determination of the needs to be met by the educational system.

2. The development of programs to meet the identified needs.

3. The accepted quality of these programs for the achievement of the accepted goals of education.

4. The efficiency of the educational structure to provide the programs to meet the identified needs.

5. The financial factor required to provide the programs at the desired level of comprehensiveness and quality to meet the defined needs, with a major consideration being given to the economic utilization of the tax payers dollar in the achievement of these goals.

The discussion by Purdy points out the fact that edu-

cational needs were based upon our way of life in a fast changing culture and economy, with rapid social and economic changes among the most significant characteristics. These changes, along with increased understanding and acceptance of educational needs, have made it imperative that school districts keep adapted to current conditions.

Trends in School District Organization

The trend in school district organization seems to be to reorganize into larger and more efficient units. A review of current literature indicated the fact that there has been more reform of the governmental structure for public education than has yet taken place at community, county, or state level for any other area of public activity. Isenberg (8, 1958) points this out in his discussion of the national trends in educational reorganization. He lists the following trends as being predominate:

1. A continuing reduction of the total number of school districts. In many states, a major reorganization effort has only recently gotten underway.

2. A trend toward larger reorganized school districts. This is partly a result of higher standards for what constitutes an adequate school district. It is partly a result of improved roads and transportation permitting a local district to include a larger area. It is also a result of a trend in some states to reorganize previously reorganized school districts.

3. Many cities are now becoming involved in reorganization efforts. Reorganization is no longer an exclusively rural phenomenon. In many instances there have been city-county mergers for school purposes.

4. States are exercising a higher level of leadership for reorganization. Many states are developing state plans. Some states have developed criteria which local districts must meet. There is also a trend toward creating financial incentives.

5. A trend toward the establishment of unified school districts (operating grades K-12). Elementary districts and the non-opeating districts are rapidly disappearing. A counter trend for the establishment of regional high schools is taking place in a few states.

There appears to be a trend towards the easing of the opposition to school district reorganization. Except in a few areas, the resistance to reorganization of those anxious to continue to operate small rural schools seems to be changing. According to Grieder (5, 1967), extraordinary progress has been made in reducing the number of basic school districts in the last 37 years.

From a peak of about 128,000 in 1932, the total has fallen to 85,000 in 1950, to 42,000 in 1960, and to approximately 23,000 in 1968--a drop of 105,000. That there is still some need for improvement is attested by the fact that there were in 1967, 1800 districts not operating schools and that 9,000 or 44 per cent enrolled fewer than 300 children.

The size of the original school districts was set when

the areas were new and underdeveloped, population sparse, and the social structure limited in both scope and number of organizations. In the majority of school districts, a great deal of development has taken place since the original district lines were fixes: populations have increased; financial resources have been developed; social organizations have multiplied; social and economic patterns have changed; roads and streets have become an intricate network; new businesses of many kinds have developed; standards of living have gone up; and the needs and wants of people have changed.

The proper size of school districts is so importantly related to the efficiency of all aspects of the schools work, that it becomes of first consideration in the improvement of any part of the program.

Advantages of Reorganization

There appear to be many advantages of reorganization. Some of the advantages are: (1) a broader and better educational program; a higher quality of professional leadership; (2) more competent supervisors and teachers; (3) better provisions for individual differences; (4) more library and audio-visual facilities; and (5) more pupil provisions for extra-curricular activities. Cocking (2, 1954) suggests the following advantages to reorganization:

> Consolidation can step up provisions to care for individual differences. It can attract a more

> competent staff, better counseling services, more library facilities, and a wide range of educational tools. Condolidation of districts increases the size of the tax base which ordinarily permits increased revenues without increasing the tax effort. Larger districts where they find a wider scope within which to work. This can be one of the most important results of consolidation.

According to Kreitlow (9, 1967) in a study carried on continuously by the University of Wisconsin since 1949, now in its eighteenth year, two groups of youngsters were compared; those attending schools in a reorganized district and those in non-reorganized districts on a number of intellectual, social-personal, and participation variables. The first graders in five reorganized and five non-reorganized communities became a part of a sample. Kreitlow reporting the following findings:

1. The greatest gain in achievement was in the larger reorganized districts. The achievement measured included standardized tests scores on such factors as reading vocabulary, arithmetic fundamentals, English mechanics, physical science, and social studies.

2. The study showed that students participated more in extra-curricular school activities in the reorganized districts.

There is a direct relationship between reorganization and greater educational opportunities at a lower cost per pupil as shown in a study of costs of rural high schools in Kansas by Wright and Pine. This relationship was pointed out by Kreitlow in an article in the Review of Educational Research:

> The analysis was limited to cost of instruction and plant operation in rural high schools of Central Kansas for 1956 and 1957. The detailed cost studies were related specifically to the breadth of curriculum offerings, teacher-pupil ratio, and district valuation. This report verified the inverse relationship between the size of school and cost per pupil, and demonstrated the direct relationship between reorganization and greater educational opportunities at lower cost per pupil.

Grieder (6, 1961) in his book on school administration gave this financial advantage for reorganization:

> The paramount financial consideration probably is the equalization of taxation for school support. As school districts are enlarged, the range among districts in ability to support education becomes smaller. If one studies the financial ability of districts in a small-district state, he finds that equalized assessed valuation per child or per classroom unit is many times as large in some districts as in others. When county data are studied, the range is vastly reduced. The same is true of tax rates.
>
> It is a well established doctrine in school finance that as nearly as possible there should be uniformity in the local effort required to support an adequate information program of education. Except with a very high proportion of state support--higher by far than most experts now recommend--it is impossible to put this doctrine into effect with the small-district system.
>
> Research reports clearly show that reorganization of districts into larger and more efficient units should equalize the tax burden and at the same time provide better educational opportunities.

Disadvantages of Reorganization

In small communities the school is the center of the community. People feel they are losing one more of their rights when they lose their school. They believe they are also losing part of their independence and the unity of community life. Some states have forced reorganization by law, which has created negative attitudes towards reorganization.

Greider (6, 1961) lists the reasons for resistance to reorganization:

1. The attitude that what was good enough for my father is good enough for me.

2. In many small districts, school board members seem to be unwilling to surrender the only public office to which they have been elected.

3. The old term "consolidating", seldom used now except in newspapers, is often confused with district reorganization.

4. A very important cause of resistance in rural areas is the prospect of higher taxes which are to be incorporated into reorganized districts.

5. Lacking experience with really good schools, many persons do not appreciate the educational advantages which larger districts are able to furnish.

6. There is a mistaken idea that the rural, or small school is the last bulwark of democracy.

7. Other reasons which seem to account for resistance to reorganization are a refusal to face facts, sheer inertia, and an unwillingness to surrender one iota of local jurisdiction.

Research indicates that there has been a great deal of resistance to school district reorganization. It is apparent that reorganization is difficult unless the leadership takes great pains to provide information and to interpret facts in order to bring about understanding, participation and support from the people involved.

Characteristics of Effective School District Organization

Size in school district organization may relate to number of pupils or to square miles, or to both. Size, regardless of whether it relates to numbers or to square miles must always be a variable. An effective program for one district may not necessarily be an effective program for another district. Mimimum enrollments for any program will have variability in relation to geography affecting both transportation and communication. According to Purdy (12, 1970), available research and the judgement of knowledgeable educational leaders, indicated that programs of quality, with relative services, can be provided with efficiency and economy as follows:

1. Elementary attendance centers should contain two or more classroom sections per grade. In sparsely populated areas, one section per grade may be necessary and justifiable.

2. Three to five sections per grade are recommended in more densley populated areas.

3. An elementary school of satisfactory minimum size should provide at least 20-25 children per teacher.

4. A desirable maximum size should be between 500 and 600 pupils.

5. A district should have a tax base large enough to provide education from grades one through twelve.

Farley (3, 1969) states that an optimum program for elementary schools should include the following:

1. A balanced, flexible, and articulated educational program from the kindergarten through the twelfth grade under the leadership of one superintendent of schools, a local board of education, and an elementary school principal.

2. Those educational services which are needed by a sufficient number of students in the local elementary school to justify the expenditure.

3. Arrangements for additional educational services from another attendance unit or administrative level whenever specific services are not offered locally.

4. A pupil-teacher ratio of approximately 25 to 1 and arrangements for grouping students in large or small groups and for individual instruction.

5. Provisions for physical facilities for library services, educational television, physical education, health services, conference room, teachers' lounge and workroom, arrangement and space for academic specialisits, special education, bus transportation, lunch room facilities when necessary, after school and community activities, and arrangments and facilities for individual studies and research projects by professionally prepared educators.

Isenberg (8, 1958) in a discussion concerning the effectiveness of school organization makes the following assumptions:

1. The minimal instructional staff requirement in an elementary school is a fully certified teacher for each classroom unit, kindergarten through grade six. The instructional staff is not wholly complete until the resources of the regular teachers are strengthened by the provision of special educators, supervisors, co-ordinators, principals, and other administrative personnel as needed.

2. Each elementary school should bring together enough pupils so that there could be one teacher to a grade, an enrollment of 300 in each elementary school would be preferred.

This information will be analyzed in comparison with the findings of the writer in a later chapter.

CHAPTER III

Status of Present District Organization of Kessler Elementary School District No. 2, Warren Elementary School District No. 3, and Helena School District No. 1

Helena School District No. 1 consists of approximately 46 square miles located in the southeast corner of Lewis and Clark County. It contains three outlying attached districts; one operating an elementary school, grades one through six, and two non-operating districts that have been consolidated into the principal Helena District. The Helena School District operates twelve elementary schools with an enrollment of 4,516 students in grades one through six. The Rossiter Elementary School is an attached, operating district located 3.3 miles north of Helena. Helena has an elementary teaching staff consisting of 241 teachers.

Kessler School District No. 2 consists of approximately 21 square miles located west of Helena. It has one operating elementary school, grades one through six, and is located .8 of a mile west of the city limits of Helena. Kessler school has an enrollment of 253 elementary students with a teaching staff consisting of 11 teachers.

The Warren School District No. 3 consists of approximately 145 square miles, bordering Helena School District No. 1, and is located north of Helena in the Helena Valley. The Warren School District has two operating schools, the

Warren school located 3.7 miles north of the Helena City limits, and the Jim Darcy school located 6.3 miles north of the Helena city limits.

The Warren school has a teaching staff of six teachers and a student enrollment of 98, grades one through six. The Jim Darcy school has a teaching staff of six with a student enrollement of 82, grades one through six.

Students from the Kessler, Warren, and Jim Darcy schools that are entering the seventh grade, are transported by bus to the Helena Jr. High Schools.

Finances

The average per pupil cost was about $658 in Montana and $600 in the United States in 1969-1970. The average per pupil cost was $552.38 for the Kessler School District No. 2, $757.03 for the Warren School District No. 3, and $595.34 for Helena Elementary School District No. 1, in 1969-1970. This shows that the per pupil cost for the Kessler District was less than both the Montana and United States averages, and slightly less than the Helena average. The Warren School District was $99.30 more than the Montana average, $157.03 more than the United States average, and $161.69 more than the Helena School District average.

The total school taxes for Helena School District No. 1, were $2,805,708.34 as compared to $144,597.90, for Kessler School District No. 2, and $343,475.82, for Warren School

School District No. 3. The taxable valuation for Helena was $18, 552.591, $970,977 for Kessler and $2,535.064 for Warren. A mill levy of 151.23 provided for an enrollment of 4,516 pupils in Helena, a 148.92 levy provided for 253 pupils in Kessler and a mill levy of 135.41 provided for 180 students in the Warren School District.

A comparison of the total school taxes, taxable valuation, mill levy, enrollment and per pupil costs of the three school districts is given in Table 1.

TABLE I

Total School Taxes, Taxable Valuation
Mill Levy, Enrollment and Per Pupil Costs
of the Schools Compared, 1969-1970

School District	Total School Taxes	Taxable Valuation	Mill Levy	Enrollment	Per Pupil Cost
No. 1	$2,805,708.34	$18,552.591	151.23	4,516	$595.34
No. 3	$ 343,475.82	$ 2,535,064	135.41	180	$757.03
No. 2	$ 144,597.90	$ 970,977	148.92	253	$552.38

School taxes were figured for an average priced home of $15,000 for each of the school districts compared. The formula set by the State Board of Equalization was used to figure the school taxes. These figures showed that property in the three districts with a value of $15,000, an assessed valuation of $1,800 multiplied by the respective levies given in Table 1, produced $272.22 in school taxes for Helena, $268.06 for Kessler, and $243.88 for Warren. The figures are given in Table 2.

TABLE 2

1969 - 1970
School Property Taxes
on a $15,000 Home
Compared in the
Three Districts Studied

School & District	Property	Assessed Valuation	Taxable Valuation	Levy	School Tax
Helena School District No. 1	$ 15,000	$ 6,000	$1,800	151.23	$272.22
Kessler School District No. 2	$ 15,000	$ 6,000	$1,800	148.92	$268.06
Warren School District No. 3	$ 15,000	$ 6,000	$1,800	135.41	$243.88

The school taxes paid by an average home owner on property with an assessed valuation of $15,000 was $4.16 less in the Kessler District than school taxes paid in the Helena School District on property with the same assessed valuation. A home owner in the Warren School District paid $28.34 less than the home owner in Helena paid on property, with the same assessed valuation. The average home owner in Helena, with property assessed at $25,000, paid $185.64 more in school taxes than the average home owner in the Kessler School District and $209.82 more than the average home owner in the Warren School District.

The taxable valuations, and mill levies were added together to show representative school taxes if the three school districts were combined. The formula set by the State Board of Equalization was used to figure the combined taxes. These figures showed that an average priced home in the three school districts studied would have an assessed valuation of $20,000. The total taxes were $3,293,782.06, and the total taxable valuation was $22,058.632. The average school mill levy was 145.31 and the average school taxes were $348.74. If the school districts were combined, the average home owner in the Kessler and Warren School Districts, who owned property with an assessed valuation of $15,000 would pay $261.57 in school taxes. This would be a decrease of $6.50

in school taxes for the Kessler School District, an increase of $17.68 for the Warren School District, and a decrease of $10.66 for the Helena School District. These results are shown in Table 3.

TABLE 3

1969 - 1970
Effect on School Taxes
Resulting from Combined Taxable Valuations
and Levies of the Three School Districts Studied

School	Total School Tax	Taxable Valuation	Levy	Property	Assessed Valuation	Taxable Valuation	School Tax
Helena District 1	$2,805.708.34	$18,552.591	151.23	$15,000	$6,000	$1,800	272.22
Kessler District 2	$ 144.597.90	$ 970.977	148.92	$15,000	$6,000	$1,800	268.06
Warren District 3	$ 343.475.82	$ 2,535.064	135.41	$15,000	$6,000	$1,800	243.88
TOTAL	$3,293.782.06	$22,058.632	145.31 (average Levy)				
Combined District Taxable Valuations and Average Mill Levies			145.3	$15,000	$6,000	$1,800	$261.56

The enrollment, general fund budget, district taxable valuation per average number belonging and the per pupil cost were compared in the three districts studied. These figures showed that Helena Elementary had an enrollment of 4,516 pupils, a general fund budget of $268,856.54, a taxable valuation of $4,214, and a per pupil cost of $595.34. Kessler had an enrollment of 253, a general fund budget of $128,704.54, a taxable valuation of $5,752, and a per pupil cost of $552.38. Warren had an enrollment of 180, a general fund budget of $136.265.40, a taxable valuation of $16,017, and a per pupil cost of $757.03.

The per pupil costs of the three schools that were studied are compared in Table 4.

TABLE 4

1969 - 1970
Per Pupil Costs of Schools Compared
and District Taxable Valuation
per Average Number Belonging

School	Enrol-lment	General Fund Budget	Per Pupil Cost	District Taxable Valuation Per A.N.B.
Helena Elementary	4,516	$268,856.54	$595.34	$ 4,214
Kessler Elementary	253	$128,704.54	$552.38	$ 5,752
Warren Elementary	180	$136.265.40	$757.03	$16,017

Figures obtained from the Lewis and Clark County Assessor show the amount from the tax dollar that goes for schools in Lewis and Clark County. In 1968, 56.78% of the tax dollar went for support of the Helena Schools. In 1969, this figure had risen to 59.07%, a gain of 2.29%. The average rural percentage of the tax dollar that went for rural schools was 65.51% in 1968, and 69.91% in 1969, an increase of 4.40%. These figures showed that more of the tax dollars went for rural schools in 1968 and 1969, than the tax dollar spent in the urban area in the same county. These figures also showed that the gain was 2.29% from 1968 to 1969 in Helena, while the gain was 4.40% from 1968 to 1969 in the Kessler and Warren School districts. These figures are shown in Table 5.

TABLE 5

1968 - 1969
Percentage of the Urban
and Rural Tax Dollar Spent for
Education in Lewis and Clark County

School	Per Cent 1968	Per Cent 1969	Increase
Helena	$56.78	$59.07	2.29
Kessler	$65.51	$69.91	4.40
Warren	$65.51	$69.91	4.40

Instructional Program

The Instructional program in each of the districts was evaluated and compared in terms of special personnel,

programs and facilities, amounts budgeted for textbooks, library books, teaching supplies and salaries. These aspects were considered to be advantageous to a fully founded, effective educational program.

Special personnel and facilities were listed on separate Tables that showed the aspect to be considered, its adequacy, inadequacy, and wehther the inadequacy could be eliminated in the present organization or by reorganization. Special personnel considered to be advantageous were counselors, remedial reading specialists, special education teachers, athletic director, health educator, physical education director, playground supervisors, music teachers, school nurse and instructional aids director.

The study showed that under the heading of inadequate, Helena schools had one aspect checked "no"; Kessler School had ten checked "no"; and Warren School had nine checked "no". Under the heading "Inadequacies can be removed," Helena schools had one "yes" under present organization and no marks under the reorganization column. Kessler School had four items checked "Yes" under the reorganization column. Warren School had two items checked "yes" under the adequate column, seven items marked "unfeasible" under the present organization column, and seven items marked "yes" under the reorganization column.

These figures showed that the aspects considered were generally adequate in the Helena School and generally inadequate in the Kessler and Warren Schools. The study also showed that

many of these aspects were not feasible in the Kessler and Warren Schools under the present organization, but would be made available to these schools through reorganization. This information is shown in Table 6 and Table 7.

TABLE 6

Aspects Evaluated for Comparison
of the Instructional Programs
of the Three Schools Studied

Aspect of the Area Under Consideration	School	Adequate?	Nature of Inadequacies?	Inadequacies can be removed	
				In present Organization	By reorganization
Counselors	Helena	No	Not available	yes	
	Kessler	No	Not available	yes	
	Warren	No	Not available	yes	
Remedial Reading Specialist	Helena	Yes			
	Kessler	No	Not available	yes	
	Warren	no	Not available	yes	
Speech Therapist	Helena	Yes			
	Kessler	No	Not available	Unfeasible	Yes
	Warren	No	Not available	Unfeasible	Yes
School Psychometrist	Helena	Yes			
	Kessler	No	Not available	Unfeasible	Yes
	Warren	No	Not available	Unfeasible	Yes
Special Education Teachers	Helena	Yes			
	Kessler	No	Not available	Unfeasible	Yes
	Warren	No	Not available	Unfeasible	Yes
Athletic Director	Helena	Yes			
	Kessler	No	Not available	Unfeasible	Yes
	Warren	No	Not available	Unfeasible	Yes

TABLE 7

Aspects Evaluated for Comparison
of the Instructional Programs
of the Three Schools Studied

Aspect of the Area Under Consideration	School	Adequate?	Nature of Inadequacies?	Inadequacies can be removed	
				In present Organization	By reorganization
Health Educator	Helena	Yes			
	Kessler	No	Not available	Unfeasible	Yes
	Warren	No	Not available	Unfeasible	Yes
Physical Education Director	Helena	Yes			
	Kessler	No	Not available	Unfeasible	Yes
	Warren	No	Not available	Unfeasible	Yes
Playground Supervisors (other than teachers)	Helena	Yes			
	Kessler	Yes			
	Warren	Yes			
Music Teacher	Helena	Yes			
	Kessler	No	Not available		
	Warren	Yes			
School Nurse	Helena	Yes			
	Kessler	Yes	County nurse	Yes	
	Warren	Yes	County nurse	Yes	
Instructional Aids Director	Helena	Yes			
	Kessler	No	Not available	Unfeasible	Yes
	Warren	No	Not available	Unfeasible	Yes

Programs and facilities that were compared and considered to be advantageous to an elementary school were: hot lunch program, athletic program, adequate pupil transportation, Jr. high school, high school, band and orchestra, playground equipment, and classroom instructional materials.

The study showed that under the heading of "adequate", Helena schools had one aspect checked "no."; Kessler school had four checked "no"; and Warren shcool had four checked "no". Under the heading "Inadequacies can be Removed", Helena schools had one aspect checked "yes" under "Present Organization". Kessler school had three check "yes" and one checked "no"; Warren school had three checked "yes" and one checked "no". Under the "Reorganization column", both Kessler and Warren schools had one item checked "yes".

These figures showed that the aspects considered were generally adequate in the Helena schools, generally inadequate in the Kessler and Warren schools, and that many of these inadequacies in the Kessler and Warren schools could be corrected in the present organization. This information is shown in Table 8.

TABLE 8

Aspects Evaluated for Comparison
of the Instructional Programs
of the Three Schools Studied

Aspect of the Area Under Consideration	School	Adequate?	Nature of Inadequacies	Inadequacies can be removed	
				In Present Organization	By Reorganization
Hot Lunch Program	Helena	No	Available in some schools	Yes	
	Kessler	No	Not available	Yes	
	Warren	No	Not available	Yes	
Athletic Program	Helena	Yes			
	Kessler	No	Not available	Yes	
	Warren	No	Not available	Yes	
Pupil Transportation	Helena	Yes			
	Kessler	Yes			
	Warren	Yes			
Jr. High School	Helena	Yes			
	Kessler	No	Not available	No	Yes
	Warren	No	Not available	No	Yes
High School	Helena	Yes			
	Kessler	No	Not available	No	Yes
	Warren	No	Not available	No	Yes

continued on page 33

TABLE 8
(continued)

Aspects Evaluated for Comparison
of the Instructional Programs
of the Three Schools Studied

Aspect of the Area Under Consideration	School	Adequate?	Nature of Inadequacies	Inadequacies can be removed In Present Organization	Inadequacies can be removed By Reorganization
Band & Orchestra Program	Helena	Yes			
	Kessler	No	Not available	Yes	
	Warren	No	Not available	Yes	
Playground Equipment	Helena	Yes			
	Kessler	Yes			
	Warren	Yes			
Classroom Instructional Materials	Helena	Yes			
	Kessler	Yes			
	Warren	Yes			

The amounts budgeted and spent for textbooks, library books and teaching supplies were compared in order to evaluate the financial effort made in these areas for the 1969-1970 school year. Helena schools budgeted and spent: $27,300 for text books, an average of about $6.00 per child; $20,400 for library books, about $4.50 per child; and $81,500 for teaching supplies, about $18.00 per child and about $335.00 per teacher. Kessler school budgeted and spent: $3,200 for text books, about $12.70 per child; $8.35 for library books, about $3.30 per child; and $2,500 for teaching supplies, about $9.80 per child and about $230.00 per teacher. Warren school budgeted and spent; $1,000 for text books, about $5.50 per child; $1,250 for library books, about $7.00 per child; and $2,500 for instructional materials, about $14.00 per child and about $230.00 per teacher.

These figures showed that the Kessler School spent almost twice as much per child as Helena or Warren schools for text books in 1969-1970. The Warren School spent more for library books per child than the Helena and Kessler schools and shows the additional effort in expense a small district needs to make in order to provide adequate library books for a small school population. The Helena school system spent more for teaching supplies than the Warren School spend and almost twice as much as Kessler School spent. These figures were representatiave of budget figures for the past three year per-

iod and indicated the effort each school made to provide materials in these areas. These figures are shown in Table 9.

TABLE 9

1969 - 1970
Amounts Budgeted and Spent for
Text Books, Library Books, and Instructional Supplies
in the Three Schools Studied

Item	School	Budget	Amount Per Pupil	Amount Per Teacher
Text Books	Helena	$ 27,300	$ 6.00	
	Kessler	$ 3,200	$12.70	
	Warren	$ 1,000	$ 5.50	
Library Books	Helena	$ 20,400	$ 4.50	
	Kessler	$ 835	$ 3.30	
	Warren	$ 1,250	$ 7.00	
Teaching Supplies	Helena	$ 81,500	$18.00	$335.00
	Kessler	$ 2,500	$ 9.80	$230.00
	Warren	$ 2,500	$14.00	$230.00

Teachers salaries and benefits were compared as an indication of each school districts ability to attract and keep teachers. Figures compared were for the 1969-1970 school year.

The Helena salary schedule started with a beginning B.A. base of $6,200 and a top of $8,370 at the B.A. level. The schedule increased with each additional quarter of training to an M.A. maximum base of $6,780 and a top of $10,970. Credit for prior outside experience was given for a maximum of eight years.

The sick leave plan provided for 15 days per year with 5 days of unused leave per year cumulative to 45 days. Ten days were allowed per year for emergency leave, with a maximum of five days for any one emergency. Social Security coverage and a school district health insurance plan for major medical-hospital benefits was provided. The district also provided a sabbatical leave of one year for professional study after seven years service in the system. A stipend of $3,000 was paid to a maximum of three teachers per year.

The Kessler salary schedule started with a B.A. base of $5,800 and a top of $7,770 at the B.A. level The schedule increased with each additional quarter of training to an M.A. base of $6,330 and a top of $8,820. Credit for prior outside experience was given for a maximum of four years. The

sick leave plan provided for 15 days per year with unused leave cumulative to 30 days. Social Security coverage was provided.

The Warren School District did not have an adopted salary schedule. Teachers employed in the Warren District received salaries ranging from $5,700 to a top of $6,700. Social Security coverage was provided.

These figures showed that the Helena School District provided a salary schedule and benefits more in line with the Montana Education Association recommended salary schedule. This study indicated that the Helena school system was more attractive to teachers in regards to salary and salary benefits.

Physical Plants

The physical plants for each school were studied to determine their adequacy. The Smith and Rossiter Elementary Schools in the Helena District were less than four years old. The Broadwater and Jefferson schools were remodeled in 1969-1970. The C.R. Anderson and Ray Bjork Schools were relatively new and modern. The remaining five Helena elementary schools were in good condition and were considered to be adequate.

The two schools in the Warren School District were both new. The Jim Darcy School was less than five years old and was remodeled in 1969-1970 with additional classrooms being added. The Warren School was completed in 1970 and was considered to be adequate.

Examination of the school plants in the study showed that all the elementary schools were adequate physical plants.

Transportation

The examination of the school plants showed that the Kessler and Warren schools were both adequate modern plants and were located in central populated areas in the Helena Valley. The Warren school served elementary children from the north-east section of the Valley, while the Jim Darcy served the elementary students from the northwest section of the Helena Valley. The Rossiter school, which was already in the Helena School District, served the elementary children in the Helena Valley who lived between the Warren and Jim Darcy schools. Kessler Elementary school served children who lived west of Helena.

It was determined from this study that it would be unfeasible to transport children in these areas to the existing Helena schools, in the event of school district reorganization.

Census

In 1969-70 the elementary school census in the Kessler District was 260. The elementary school census in the Warren District was 180. A 1970-1990 projected census worked out by the Helena school system and based on neighborhood

population for ten year periods, showed an elementary school population of 385 students in the Kessler District in 1980, and 495 in 1990. The Warren School Districted showed a projected increase from 180 in 1970 to 288 in 1980, and 400 in 1990. These projections were based on approximately 70 per cent increases for each ten-year period. A projected growth pattern for a representative school located in the City of Helena, showed only a 15 per cent growth increase for the ten year periods. This indicated that the major growth taking place is outside the city limits of Helena. The implicatio s were, that in the near future, additional school plants and facilities would be needed in the school districts studied and that the need for additional buildings and facilities, would have a direct effect on the consideration of school district reorganization.

These figures used in the projected growth, were based on stable growth patterns and were considered to be only indications, providing that population growth patterns remained stable. This information is summarized further in the next chapter.

CHAPTER IV

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The primary purpose of this paper was to determine the advisability and feasibility of reorganizing Kessler School District No. 2 and Warren School District No. 3, with Helena District No. 1. A review of literature and an investigation of the statistical records of the County Superintendent of Schools of Lewis and Clark County, the County Assessor of Lewis and Clark County, the Montana Education Association and the Montana State Department of Public Instruction was conducted to gain the necessary information.

Summary

From the review of literature it was learned that the trend in school district organization was to reorganize into larger units. The advantages of reorganization outweighed the disadvantages and the larger districts provided more and better facilities for educating children. Literature revealed the basic criteria for a satisfactory educational program. They are: (1) to meet better individual needs, elementary schools should contain two or more classroom sections per grade. In sparsely populated areas one section per grade may be necessary and justifiable; (2) three to five sections per grade are recommended in more densely populated areas; (3) to accomplish economic efficiency, an elementary school

children per teacher; (4) to guarantee better learning, educational services are needed by a sufficient number of students in the elementary school to justify expenditure; (5) to improve education experiences generally, a balanced, flexible and articulated educational program are needed from the kindergarten through the twelfth grade under the leadership of one superintendent of schools, a local school board of education, and an elementary school principal; (6) resources of the regular teachers must be strengthened by the provision of special educators, supervisors, co-ordinators, principal, and other personnel as needed; and (7) a tax base is needed large enough to provide education from grades one through twelve.

The study showed that consolidation would cost the taxpayer slightly less in the Kessler District, slightly less in the Helena District and a great deal more for the taxpayer in the Warren School District.

The study concerning the instructional program showed that Helena schools were providing a higher quality instructional program under the criteria shown. The Kessler and Warren schools were considered, by the writer, to be inadequate in supplying additional specialized personnel and facilities under the criteria used.

The study of teachers salary schedules and benefits showed that the Kessler and Warren School Districts were a

great deal lower and provided fewer benefits than did the Helena School District.

The physical plants were all considered to be adequate to provide for the needs of an efficient elementary school program.

The study showed that it would be unfeasible to transport children to the Helena schools, since the physical plants were adequate and located in centralized areas.

Conclusions

As a result of this study, the following conclusions were drawn: Consolidation would cost the Warren School District more in taxes, Kessler School District less in taxes, and the Helena School system slightly less in taxes. It would be an educational advantage to the Warren School District and the Kessler School District to consolidate with the Helena School District.

Recommendations

As a result of this study, the following recommendations are made: (1) Serious consideration should be given to the consolidation of the school districts studied; (2) Regardless of action taken concerning district consolidation, Kessler and Warren School Districts should make every effort possible to provide the educational benefits that were found to be insufficient or lacking.

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