

A STUDY OF THE SCHOOL DISTRICTS OF EASTERN WARD COUNTY
NORTH DAKOTA AND VIEWS TOWARD THEIR REORGANIZATION

BY

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This study is a survey of the school districts of eastern Ward County, North Dakota with a view to evolving a plan for reorganizing these schools into a larger administrative unit.

It is the concensus of opinion of the leaders in educational administration that the small district system of school organization is no longer adapted to meeting the needs of the present and future. In this regard the following statement of Dr. Cubberley is quite pertinent.

"As a system of school administration the small district is expensive, inefficient, inconsistent, shortsighted, unprogressive, and penurious; it leads to great and unnecessary multiplication of small and inefficient schools; the trustees frequently assume authority over matters which they are incompetent to handle; leads to marked inequality in schools and educational disadvantages; and it stands today as the most serious obstacle in the way of consolidation of rural schools." (1)

An economical and effectual method of reorganizing the small school districts of an area is to use the county or subdivisions thereof as a unit. By bringing all the schools of an area within a county into one system, the needs of the entire area are cared for under a single organization. A county unit differs little from the city system of education except in the larger amount of territory covered and the greater distance between schools. The administration of all the schools of the county is centralized through a single board; needless duplication of small schools and other expensive practices can be eliminated and the wide differences in educational support, opportunities, and standards equalized. (5)

Problem

The first purpose of this study is to point out the differences which now exist in the educational facilities in the small school districts of eastern Ward County and to show that these differences lead to gross inequalities of opportunity for the children and create unequal tax burdens for the tax-payers.

The second purpose is to determine whether it would be desirable, from an economic and educational standpoint, to do away with the school districts of this area. And, if the present districts are abandoned, would it be better to form one large educational unit utilizing one centralized high school and maintaining the present facilities of each district for elementary schools. Perhaps other solutions will become apparent as the reader examines this study.

In some areas it has been found unadvisable to join school districts into one unit because the parts are too unlike. They may be divided geographically, historically, and industrially so that an attempt to bring the schools of these parts into an administrative unit would not be feasible. (1)

Procedure

The records in the offices of the State Department of Public Instruction and the Ward County Superintendent of Schools were studied to secure data on the financial status, the pupil enrollment, and the transportation of children in the school districts of this area. Much information relating to the organization and administration of the

various schools involved was obtained from Mr. Joe Day, Ward County Superintendent of Schools. The various board members representing the districts involved were also excellent sources of considerable information. They not only pointed out deficiencies in the present system which were not evident from a study of the records, but also lent valuable assistance in formulating a plan of reorganization.

CHAPTER II

THE EDUCATIONAL ORGANIZATION OF EASTERN WARD COUNTY TODAY

Ward County is located in the north central part of North Dakota. Fifty-six townships and twelve incorporated cities and villages make up the county in addition to the city of Minot.

The area encloses 2,016 square miles. It is shaped somewhat like a plucked chicken's profile without the legs. The rear section of this silhouette being the eastern part of the county. The total population of the county in 1960 was 47,072 or about 22 persons per square mile. The city of Minot accounts for 30,604 people by itself. Since 1960 an Air Force base has been established north of Minot and has a population of over 18,000 individuals.

There are few lakes and only one small river, the Souris, or Mouse as it is often called. Thus roadbuilding and school transportation are not hindered to any great extent by these features. The river runs diagonally from northwest to southeast in a relatively straight line through the county's entirety. The Great Northern and Soo Line Railroads parallel this river as does Highway 52.

The river forms a beautiful valley about one mile wide with rolling hills and small ravines or coulees extending from one to fifteen miles or more on either side of the valley. It is in these hills where a large percentage of the county's livestock is produced. Most of the rest of the land is quite level and is farmed. The soil is glacial and is very fertile. The one thing often lacking is moisture. Principal crops raised are wheat, barley, oats, rye, flax, potatoes, and corn.

Most of the corn raised is used as forage for cattle. About 65 per cent of the land is farmed and about 35 per cent is grazed. An increasing number of large modern dairy farms are operating in the area besides the many diversified beef and grain operations. Many of the farms produce only grain. It is interesting to note here that in 1940 31.7 per cent of the county's population was employed in agriculture while in 1960 only 12.7 per cent was employed in agriculture. This decrease is not only typical in the population but also in the number of farms. Consequently, the size and income of the individual farms have increased considerably.

Industrial development in Ward County is quite high as compared to other counties in the state. Mining of the abundant lignite coal is an important business; however it is on the decline. This resource has considerable potential both as a fuel for manufacturing and as a raw material for its many derivatives. The Great Northern Railroad has its main division point located at Minot with about 775 local employees and a monthly payroll in excess of half a million dollars. Minot is the center of an immense trade territory. Over 100,000 persons attended its northwest fair last year. Minot has numerous businesses and banks, and is a livestock and grain marketing center.

There is one state institution in the county and that is Minot State College. Three fine hospitals are found in Minot and another is located at Kenmare. Among the predominant religions represented are Catholic, Presbyterian, Methodist, Babtist, Congregational, and Lutheran. (3)

There are 20 school districts in Ward County at this time. Only six of these districts are being considered in this study. They entail 559.9 square miles. Of these six districts three are operating high schools, but only one of these high schools is accredited. Figure one on page seven shows the position of the school districts and the outline of the area under consideration. Existing schools in the area are also indicated.

Pupil Transportation

The network of high grade and paved roads in Ward County is quite extensive and efficient. Figure number two on page eight indicates the various main routes and their surfaces.

It appears that transportation of pupils in the county is facilitated by the accessibility of all-weather roadways. Ward County is fortunate in having a population which, in comparison with neighboring counties, is quite large. This factor enables a well equipped and staffed highway department to be maintained.

North Dakota school laws relating to pupil transportation indicate that any school board, at its discretion, can provide transportation to pupils in their district living two or more miles from school. These facilities may be in the form of family transportation or vehicle transportation by a public conveyance. The school board may provide equivalent payment for lodging or tuition at some other public school.

The school board may provide transportation or pay a reasonable allowance toward transportation for pupils eligible to attend high

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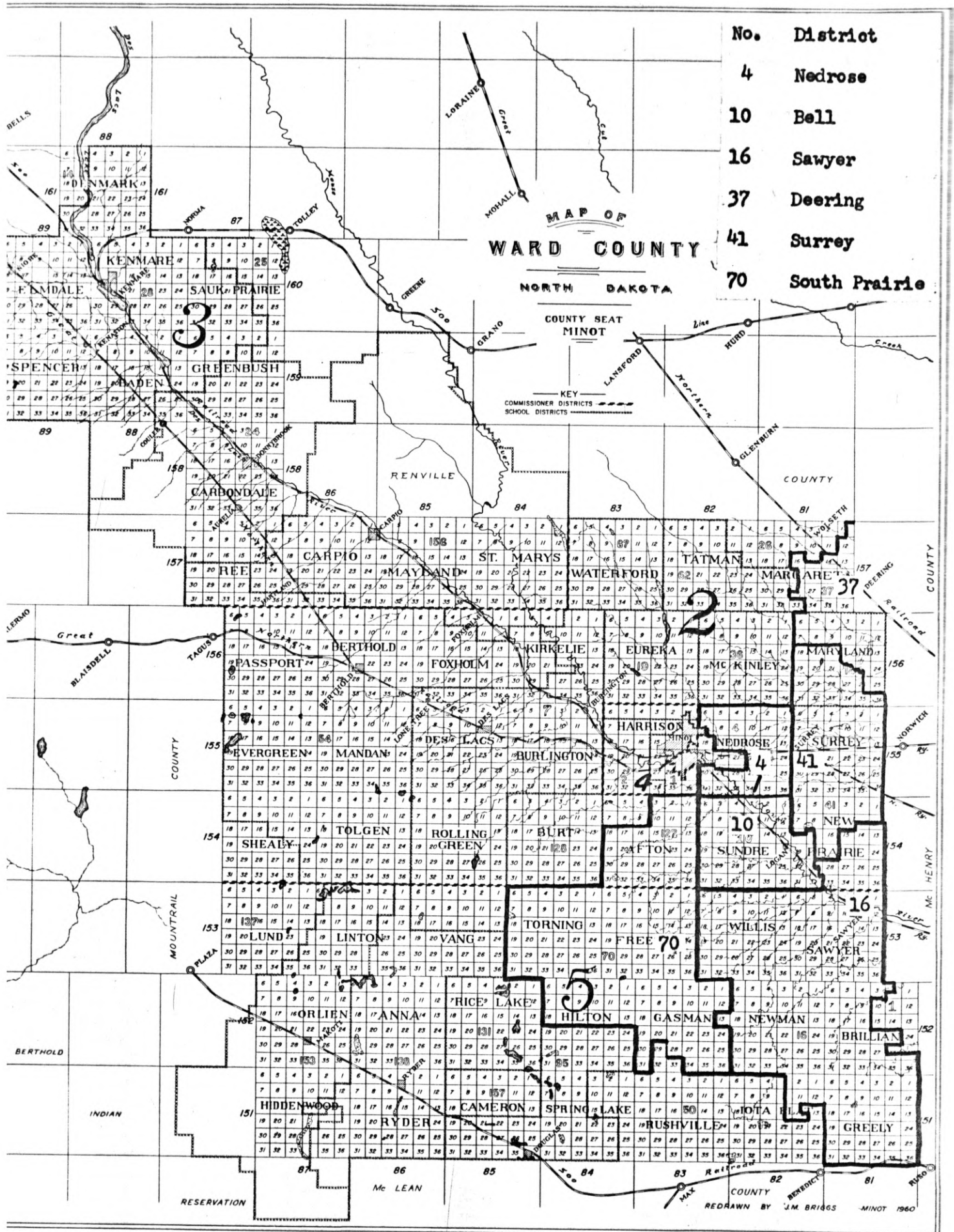
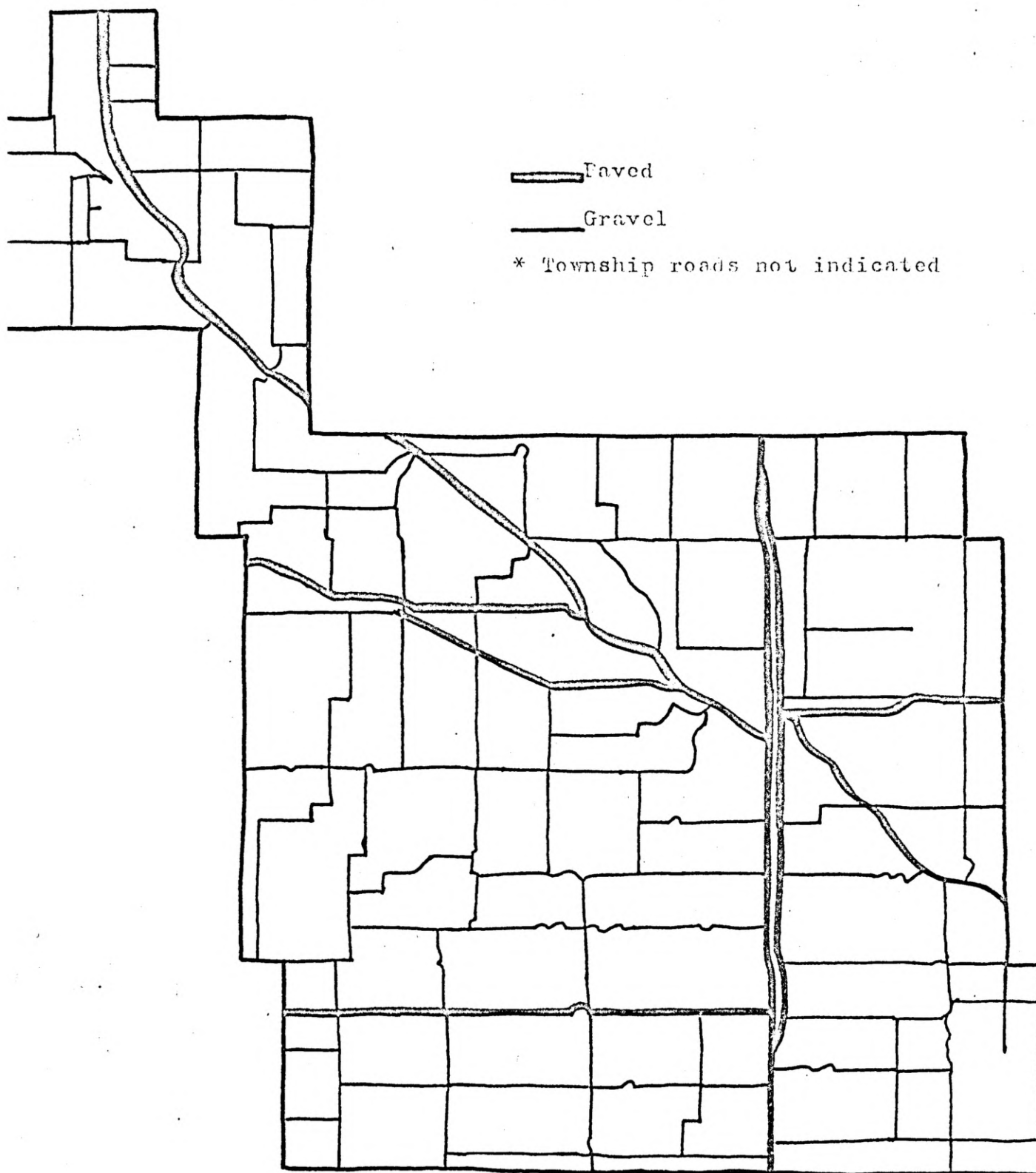


Figure 2. Ward County Highway System



school in another district. The school board is permitted to levy up to five mills in addition to the general fund levy for this purpose. (7)

It is also interesting to note that transportation is mandatory in reorganized districts.

Ward County School Support

If a workable reorganization plan is to be devised for eastern Ward County, it is necessary to know the details concerning the support of the county's public education. The following pages, nine through eighteen, have been taken from the Administrative Manual for North Dakota Schools and paraphrased by the writer.

I. Funds

A. General Fund

As its title implies, the General Fund finances the basic educational services rendered by the school district. It supports the operation and maintenance of the schools. Its receipts are analyzed according to source while its disbursements are classified according to specific purpose. The General Fund is maintained by all operating school districts of the state.

1. General Fund Receipts

a. District Property Tax

The levy for the General Fund is based upon 50 per cent of the assessed valuation of the school district and is also determined by the cash balance the school district has on hand in its General Fund as of June 30 of the previous fiscal year. A school district may vote up to a 75 per cent

increase in its normal maximum levy.

A 50 per cent increase in the normal maximum levy of 27 mills is required to be eligible for aid under the provisions of the Emergency Fund (Basis of Need). The normal maximum levies for the general fund of school districts are as follows:

4-Year High School	27 mills
3-Year High School	24 mills
2-Year High School	21 mills
Elementary (two or more teachers)	22 mills
Rural One-Room Schools	19 mills

b. Other Revenue Receipts

These receipts include such income as interest, transportation, and tuition payments from patrons.

c. County Equalization Fund

Payments from the State General Fund, a twenty-one mill county levy, and the per capita tax (\$1.00 tax on adults) supply funds for the Foundation Program in each county and are made to school districts on the basis of Average Daily Membership. Support by state law is placed at 60 per cent of the education cost less expenditures for physical facilities, transportation, and current indebtedness. The present support per pupil in average daily membership is \$150. Compensation to districts with sparse population is weighted to account for their greater educational costs. Payments are weighted to districts with one-room rural school pupils

at 1.5 for each student in Average Daily Membership or \$225.00. Districts with elementary schools with less than 100 A.D.M. receive 1.25 for each student. Weighting is limited to the first 16 pupils in A.D.M. in one-room rural schools, and the first 20 pupils in A.D.M. per teacher in elementary schools with less than 100 A.D.M. Payments are limited to the first 20 pupils with A.D.M. in one-room rural schools. Payments are limited to the first 25 pupils in A.D.M. per teacher in elementary schools with less than 100 pupils in A.D.M. and finally, payments are limited to the first 30 pupils in A.D.M. in other elementary schools.

TABLE I. PER PUPIL PAYMENTS

School type	Number of students in A.D.M.	Payment per pupil
One-room rural	1-16	\$225.00
	17-20	\$150.00
	over 20	none
Elementary with less than 100 A.D.M.	1-20	\$187.50
	21-25	\$150.00
	over 25	none
Elementary with more than 100 A.D.M.	1-30	\$150.00
	over 30	none
High schools		\$198.00

The Foundation Program also includes a reimbursement for bus type transportation. Payment is based on the daily mileage, defined as twice the distance traveled in a single trip by each school bus. The reimbursement is at the rate of seven cents per-mile for vehicles with a capacity of less than twenty pupils and fourteen cents per-mile with a capacity of twenty or more pupils.

d. Apportionment of the State Tuition Fund

This source of revenue is paid quarterly from the interest and income realized on the school lands. This fund includes returns from oil leases and bonuses, and investment made by the Board of University and School Lands which is known as the Permanent School Fund. Fines and penalties are also included, however very little is realized from these sources. The distribution of this money is based upon the school census of each district. The school census in all school districts is taken in odd-numbered years of all persons from birth to twenty-one years of age.

e. State General Fund

Appropriations are made by the legislature from the State General Fund. The payments are as follows:

(1) State Share-County Equalization Fund

Grants to each county are determined each year by subtracting from the County Equalization Fund payment the product of the corrected taxable assessed valuation of the county multiplied by 20.5 mills. The difference is

the amount of aid which the county is entitled to receive from the State General Fund.

(2) Emergency Fund (Basis of Need)

To be eligible for aid on the basis of need, a school district must have made the maximum financial effort as outlined by state law:

- (a) That the district shall vote a 50 per cent increase in the normal maximum mill levy. The district shall submit an affidavit by the county auditor stating that such levy has been or will be spread.
- (b) That revenues from local taxes, state and county sources have been exhausted.
- (c) That the district is unable to sell certificates of indebtedness or issue registered warrants as provided by law
- (d) That its budget must be approved by the Department of Public Instruction
- (e) That the district must show a reasonable teacher-pupil ratio as shown by table two on page fourteen.

TABLE II. TEACHER-PUPIL RATIO

School type	Number of teachers	Number of pupils per-teacher
Rural	1 or more	At least 6
Small	Under 7	20 or more
Large	7 or more	22 or more

(f) That the minimum enrollment shall be as follows:

Four-year high school--25; two-year high school--15

f. Federal Aid

(1) The George Barden Act and Smith-Hughes Act provide aid for schools which participate in these programs.

(2) Indian Education--Johnson O'Malley

School districts with children from tax-exempt land and with at least one-fourth Indian blood may receive payments of tuition.

(3) Public Law 874

School districts which have lost land since 1938 to federal activity have increased enrollments due to federal activity receive assistance for current operating expenses.

(4) School Lunch program

Schools are reimbursed on the basis of a given formula, both in financial aid, and in kind.

(5) Public Law 864

The National Defense Education Act of 1958 provides

federal assistance to school districts for strengthening programs of mathematics, science, modern foreign language, technical skills, adult education, testing, and guidance and counseling.

- (6) The Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (PL 89-10) provides funds for improved instruction to students in both public and non-public schools.

g. Non-Revenue Receipts

These would include money received from the Special Reserve Fund and the sale of certificates of indebtedness.

h. Other Non-Revenue Receipts

These include money received from the sale of equipment, property, insurance, or other incidentals.

i. Payments from School Districts

The amount which a school district must charge for non-resident grade tuition and the amount which a school district must charge for non-resident high school tuition are set by law. The school district shall charge an amount equal to the average cost of education in the county including receipts to the Building Fund and expenditures from the Sinking and Interest Fund, less payments received from county equalization and state funds. Districts not providing high school education which refuse to pay tuition forfeit their right to county equalization fund payments.

B. Special Funds

1. Building Fund

School boards may provide funds for the purpose of erecting new school buildings, additions to old school buildings, teacherages, storage facilities for buses, or major repairs of existing buildings by the establishment of a building fund. The school board in any school district may levy up to ten mills when authorized to do so by a sixty per cent majority of the electors voting upon the question at a regular or special election. The school board in any school district may also create a building fund by appropriating and setting up in its budget an amount not in excess of 20 per cent of the current annual appropriations, if the total amount appropriated does not cause the district to exceed the normal maximum mill levy and the money is not needed for current operating expense.

2. Bond Proceeds Fund

State law in North Dakota permits a school district to issue bonds to purchase, erect, enlarge and improve school buildings and teacherages; to acquire sites therefore, and playgrounds; to furnish the same with heat, light, and ventilation and necessary apparatus; and to purchase school bus equipment. All such borrowed money must be kept in the Bond Proceeds Fund, separate and distinct from all other funds.

3. Construction Proceeds Fund

School districts unable to finance adequate school plants by bonding to the maximum permitted by law may secure additional funds for construction from the State School Construction Revolving Fund. All other capital outlay money to be used for

the construction and equipment of new buildings or additions to old buildings, except those funds acquired through the sale of bonds, or from a building fund levy, should be placed in the Construction Proceeds Fund.

4. Special Reserve Fund

To provide money for teachers' salaries, heat, light, and fuel, prior to receiving collections from the General Fund, a school board may create a Special Reserve Fund upon its own resolution and may levy up to three mills in addition to the levy for the General Fund. The Special Reserve Fund may not become larger than the amount of money which may be realized by the normal maximum levy provided by the district General Fund levy for that year. The money in the Special Reserve Fund must be deposited with the county treasurer and kept by the county treasurer as a separate trust fund. The Special Reserve Fund is not considered in the determination of the budget for the General Fund. General Fund money which is not encumbered and which is not needed for the current budget may be transferred to create a Special Reserve Fund, subject to the limitation mentioned above.

5. High School Tuition Fund

The school board of any school district providing high school education in another district may establish a high school tuition fund and may make a separate levy in an amount sufficient to pay tuition charges for high school students attending a public high school in another district. There is no

limitation on the levy for the High School Tuition Fund.

6. High School Transportation Fund

The school board of any school district not providing high school education within the district may establish a high school transportation fund and may make a separate levy to furnish transportation or reasonable allowance for board and lodging for high school pupils attending a public high school in another district. The school board is limited to a levy of five mills for this purpose.

7. Special Assessment Fund

The school board of any district may establish a special assessment fund and may make a levy for the purpose of paying assessments. There is no limitation on the levy for the Special Assessment Fund.

8. Social Security Fund

The governing body of any political subdivision is authorized to levy taxes to meet its obligations in participating in the State Old Age and Survivors Insurance or Federal Social Security. There are no levy limitations.

9. Other funds are available; however, the writer feels they have no direct bearing on this study. They include the Sinking and Interest Fund, Recreation Fund, and Junior College Fund.

Finance Data

The title of this paper suggests the six school districts, namely, Thursby Butte (Deering) Number 37, South Prairie Number 70, Bell Number 10, Nedroso Number 4, Surrey Number 41, and Sawyer Number 16 be reorganized forming one centrally located high school and maintaining the present facilities as elementary schools. Figure one on page seven indicates the areas involved and their position with relation to one another. There are 560 square miles incorporated in these districts with 341 high school students, and 789 elementary students according to the 1965-66 annual reports. Taxable valuation for the area in 1964 was \$5,331,337.00. See table seven on page twenty-six. During the school year 1964-65 these districts spent \$542,652.00 collectively.

There were ten school districts in North Dakota in 1965 that had enrollments comparable to the combined enrollments of the six schools considered in this plan. Budgets were requested from each of these schools. Six complied with the request. The average amount spent by these six districts was \$406,082.86 in 1964-65. The largest budget being from a school in the northwestern corner of the state in a sparsely populated area whose budget was \$477,555.64. This indicates that roughly twenty-five per cent or about \$135,000.00 of what the six eastern Ward County school districts included in this plan are spending for education could be used in some other manner than it is now being spent or could be saved.

Table number three on page twenty shows an average pupil-teacher ratio of 21 to 1 for Bell, Nedrose, and South Prairie which are graded elementary schools. Deering, Sawyer, and Surrey, the other

schools in the proposed plan which also operate high schools have an average pupil teacher ratio of 18 to 1. These six districts show an average of 19.5 to 1. The six districts in the state of a comparable size that supplied a current year budget are Bottineau, Carrington, Cavalier, Crosby, Larimore, and Lisbon. These schools have an average pupil teacher ratio of 23 to 1. Table number three also indicates the amount each school spent or planned to spend for teachers' salaries during the 1965-66 school year. The amount for the proposed plan schools being \$203,700.00 while the average for the comparison schools was \$211,395.61. The difference being \$7,695.61. Three of the schools in the proposed plan send their high school students to nearby high schools and do not have to pay secondary school teacher wages directly. North Dakota high school teachers wages are usually considerably more than elementary teachers. This fact appears to be a very unjust practice.

Two other important facts are the cost per pupil for teachers salaries and the amount spent per teacher. The proposed area schools show an average cost per pupil of \$200.84 compared with an average of \$216.44. The average salary per teacher compared to the proposed plan schools is \$5,013.33 to \$3,909.17.

Transportation costs appear to be one of the major reasons a potential twenty-per cent decrease in expenditures could be attained.. The schools in the proposed plan show a cost on table number five on page twenty three of \$84,326.15 collectively and an average per-pupil cost of \$74.88. In contrast the six comparison schools show an average of \$45,081.63 and an average per-pupil cost of \$46.15.

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Two other important facts are the cost per-pupil for teachers salaries and the amount spent per-teacher. The proposed area schools show an average cost per-pupil of \$200.84 compared with an average of \$216.44 in the comparable sized schools. The average salary per-teacher in the proposed plan schools is \$3,909.17 compared to \$5,013.33 in the comparison schools.

Transportation costs appear to be one of the major reasons a potential twenty-five per cent decrease in expenditures could be attained. The schools in the proposed plan show a cost on table number five on page twenty-three of \$84,326.15 collectively and an average per-pupil cost of \$74.88. In contrast the six comparison schools show an average of \$45,081.63 and an average per-pupil cost of \$46.15.

TABLE IV. TEACHER'S SALARIES

School district	Amount spent or appropriated for teachers' salaries	Cost per- pupil	Cost per teacher
Bell	\$ 20,000.00	\$162.60	\$4,000.00
Nedrose	\$ 27,500.00	\$231.09	\$3,437.50
South Prairie	\$ 26,200.00	\$170.12	\$4,366.66
Totals Average	\$ 73,700.00	\$186.11	\$3,878.94
Deering	\$ 23,100.00	\$231.00	\$3,849.99
Sawyer	\$ 73,900.00	\$259.66	\$4,347.05
Surrey	\$ 33,000.00	\$159.42	\$3,300.00
Totals Average	\$ 130,000.00	\$215.58	\$3,939.39
Totals for above six districts Average	\$ 203,700.00	\$200.84	\$3,909.17
Bottineau	\$ 262,000.00	\$257.11	\$5,822.22
Carrington	\$ 159,762.33	\$159.28	\$4,204.26
Cavalier	\$ 154,264.48	\$181.91	\$4,169.31
Crosby	\$ 293,875.85	\$261.68	\$6,122.41
Larimore	\$ 215,545.58	\$215.54	\$4,585.91
Lisbon	\$ 182,925.41	\$210.98	\$4,787.51
Totals Average	\$1,268,373.65 \$ 211,395.61	\$216.44	\$5,013.33

TABLE IV. TRANSPORTATION COSTS

School district	Amount spent or appropriated	Cost per pupil
Bell	\$ 12,000.00	\$75.94
Nedrose	\$ 14,000.00	\$88.05
South Prairie	\$ 15,500.00	\$73.80
Total Average	\$ 41,500.00	\$78.74
Deering	\$ 8,175.15	\$81.75
Sawyer	\$ 26,170.00	\$88.41
Surrey	\$ 8,481.00	\$40.91
Total Average	\$ 42,826.15	\$71.02
Total for above six districts Average	\$ 84,326.15	\$74.88
Bottineau	\$ 30,950.00	\$30.37
Carrington	\$ 45,127.44	\$44.99
Cavalier	\$ 59,115.59	\$69.71
Crosby	\$ 59,310.71	\$52.81
Larimore	\$ 34,738.86	\$34.73
Lisbon	\$ 41,247.16	\$47.57
Total Average	\$270,489.76 \$ 45,081.63	\$46.15

TABLE VI. OPERATION OF PLANT AND EQUIPMENT

School district	Amount spent or appropriated	Cost per pupil
Bell	\$ 7,600.00	\$61.78
Nedrose	\$ 7,900.00	\$66.38
South Prairie	\$ 5,000.00	\$32.46
Total Average	\$ 20,500.00	\$51.76
Deering	\$ 7,650.00	\$76.50
Sawyer	\$ 12,000.00	\$43.88
Surrey	\$ 8,800.00	\$42.51
Total Average	\$ 28,450.00	\$47.18
Total for above six districts Average	\$ 48,950.00	\$49.47
Bottineau	\$ 32,050.00	\$31.45
Carrington	\$ 21,273.64	\$21.21
Cavalier	\$ 43,328.29	\$51.09
Crosby	\$ 49,700.00	\$44.25
Larimore	\$ 38,250.00	\$38.25
Lisbon	\$ 34,368.25	\$39.64
Total Average	\$218,970.18 \$ 36,990.03	\$37.36

Another area which indicates a substantial decrease in expenditures is the operation of plant and equipment. This area of a school's budget includes custodian salaries, heat for buildings, utilities other than heat, and miscellaneous operational expenses. The total amount spent by schools in the proposed plan as shown by table number six on page twenty-four is \$48,950.00 with a per-pupil cost of \$49.47. Figures for the comparison schools show an average of \$36,990.03 and an average per-pupil cost of \$37.36.

Proposed Area Statistics

Dr. Conant, a well known educator, says a high school of 500 pupils is an excellent size. In eastern Ward County it seems this size could soon be met if a centralized plant were to be built. Such an administrative unit would be large enough to provide all essential administrative and supervisory services. The statutory provisions for these units should be flexible to meet any changes in population shifts, depreciation of taxable wealth, or other socio-economic changes. The boundaries of these units need not be coterminous with political units, nor should they be too large to forfeit local interest, initiative and effort on the part of members of the community.

Table number seven on page twenty-six conveys to the reader an overview of the six schools in the proposed plan area. One sees the total taxable valuation of the combined area is in excess of five million dollars. The total indebtedness in 1964-65 was about one half million dollars. An average of the mill levies required to operate these schools

TABLE VII. PROPOSED AREA STATISTICS (1964-65)

School	Taxable valuation	Bonded debt	State school construction fund	1964 mill levy	High school cost including transportation	High school students	High school levy	Area square miles
Sawyer	\$1,264,841	\$ 36,000	\$24,600	57.53	\$ 78,659.93	97	--	195.52
Surrey	\$ 783,105	\$ 81,000	\$50,000	65.96	\$ 29,656.70	58	--	69.19
Nedrose	\$ 767,864	\$ 99,000	--	91.90	\$ 15,092.96	40	26.05	32.18
Bell	\$1,111,544	\$160,000	--	52.70	\$ 18,224.76	35	16.19	42.37
South Prairie	\$ 886,104	\$123,000	--	68.58	\$ 24,845.73	56	22.56	152.00
Thursby Butte (Deering)	\$ 517,899	--	--	40.50	\$ 37,000.00	55	--	69.00
Totals	\$5,331,337	\$499,000	\$75,160		\$203,480.08	341	--	559.99
Average				62.86				
County average per-pupil cost 1964-65								
County average per-pupil cost 1964-65								
Cost per-pupil for the above six schools based on 1965-66 appropriations								
County average high school per-pupil cost 1964-65								
Prospective cost for 340 high school students								
Bonding capacity at 10 per cent of valuation								

in 1964 was 62.86. The county average per-pupil cost for high schools in 1964-65 was \$634.65. Multiplying this figure times 340, the approximate number of high school students in the area, we get \$215,786.00 or the prospective cost of operating one high school for the entire area.

The bonding capacity of a North Dakota school district is ten per cent of its valuation less its indebtedness. Ten per cent of the proposed area's valuation less its indebtedness leaves \$492,107.00. There is a State School Construction Fund, however, which ordinarily loans a school district as much as it can bond for.

School Buildings

When a centralized high school is mentioned one begins to wonder if there would be enough money for such a building. Mr. Robert W. Anderson, an architect from Minot, states in a letter dated January 25, 1966.

In your request for information on an approximate cost of a high school, grades 9-12, of approximately 350 pupils, the following is information that should be helpful.

You will need eight classrooms, four math, English, social studies, and commercial. You will need a science room and a biology room with adequate storage and laboratory facilities, a vocational agriculture shop and classroom to the state specifications, a combination band and chorus room with practice rooms, an office and storage for these facilities, a physical education department with a divided curtain so that two classes may use this area at the same time, a stage to be at one end of this, updated lockers off the physical education department, and a home economics department that would have spaces for both cooking and sewing.

Perhaps the most important part of the whole school would be a learning center which is really the heart of the modern educational program. The center includes such functions as commonly associated and

ascribed to the library, audio-visual center, instructional materials center, student-teacher research area, and listening areas. To serve well, it must contain the tools and equipment necessary for all types of student and teacher learning and teaching.

A language laboratory near the learning center would be desirable if the budget would afford it as also would an art department. Of course, adequate administration area and teachers areas and other facilities are basic requirements.

The Stanley High School, Stanley, North Dakota has basically the same teaching stations as prescribed in the above, however, their classrooms do not afford any flexibility nor do they provide for any independent studies. They do not have a language laboratory or art department and their library and study hall are past dated as far as being effective in the contemporary teaching methods.

The new learning center as discussed above would afford the proper heart for the school.

The reason I am relating back to the Stanley School is because I do have cost on this and I know that now they do have 274 enrolled. Superintendent Norberg told me that their facilities could hold a maximum of 325, therefore, with the addition of a classroom that would be used for a language laboratory, etc., and an art room, I believe that this would provide very ample quarters for 350 students.

To replace Stanley High School today with equipment and landscaping, the cost would probably be approximately \$825,000.00 to \$850,000.00. With the additional facilities as prescribed in this letter, I would estimate this total plant for you would run in the neighborhood of \$900,000.00 to \$1,000,000.00, including equipment and landscaping.

Of course, any deletions from these facilities would cut this cost, but I think that schools built today regardless of the fact that school construction has gone up approximately 8 per cent in the last two years, that we are building a better school, with improved construction as far as durability of materials, acoustical qualities of flooring and ceiling, improved lighting, and better insulation for exterior walls.

It appears that the amount of money available for building would be about adequate to meet the needs.

It is felt the present facilities each school has would make very adequate elementary schools for grades one through eight. Bell, Nedrose, and South Prairie are graded elementary schools. Each of these districts

has one building, of a modern, masonry and brick construction and not over five years old. The school building at Deering is built of masonry and brick and therefore the building would still serve well as an elementary school. It is an older style building. Deering runs an unaccredited high school. Sawyer has its old, original, masonry and brick schoolhouse and an addition of the same material which is about ten years old where the high school and upper grades are housed. Sawyer operates an accredited high school. Surrey has a new building of a modern, masonry and brick construction about three years old. It has an unaccredited high school.

School Course Offerings

Actual courses which students are required to take and those which they have elected to take are a most important part of any school. Young people must be educated to meet the needs of an ever-changing world. To do this they must receive a variety of courses which they find interesting and useful. Education should be the force that develops within the pupil those attitudes, skills, ideals, and appreciations which make him a useful and intelligent citizen. It is our responsibility as adults to see that every child develops and discovers his own potentialities to the fullest extent. It is further our responsibility that every child becomes a reasonably happy, self-reliant, productive citizen in our society, loyal to the idea of freedom and democracy in this country.

A comparison of the courses offered in the three eastern Ward County high schools involved in this study has been made. These offerings have been further compared to Bottineau, one of the schools involved in the comparison study, and Gallatin County High School, Bozeman, Montana.

Enrollments, as can be seen on table eight, page thirty-one are Deering 40, Surrey 55, Sawyer 89, and Bottineau 350. Each of the figures for these schools are for grades 9-12. Bozeman's enrollment is 847 for grades 10-12 for the 1965-66 school year.

The approximate, total number of courses offered are Deering 20, Surrey 21, Sawyer 30, Bottineau 35, and Bozeman 53. It appears the size of the school has a direct bearing on the number and variety of course offerings.

TABLE VIII. SIZE OF SCHOOL AND COURSE OFFERINGS

School	Deering	Surrey	Sawyer	Bottineau	Bozeman
Enrollment and grades included	40 9-12	55 9-12	89 9-12	350 9-12	847 10-12
COURSE					
Art		X			X
Typing I		X	X	X	X
Typing II		X			X
Shorthand I			*X	X	X
Shorthand II					X
Bookkeeping					
Personal typing		X	X	X	X
Business law			*X		X
Business office education				X	X
Office practice			*X	X	
Drafting I					X
Drafting II					X
Drafting III and IV					X
English I	X	*X	X	X	
English II	X	*X	X	X	X
English III	*X	*X	X	X	X
English IV	*X	*X	X	X	X
Journalism				X	
Speech				X	X
Latin I				X	X

* means offered alternate years

TABLE VIII. (Continued)

School	Deering	Surrey	Sawyer	Bottineau	Bozeman
COURSE					
Latin II				X	X
German I					X
German II					X
French I					X
French II					X
French III and IV					X
Spanish I				X	
Home Economics I			X	X	X
Home Economics II			X	X	X
Home Economics III					X
Industrial science I			X		X
Industrial science II			X		X
Library science					X
General math I			X	X	X
General math II					X
Algebra I	*X	X	X	X	X
Algebra II		*X	X	X	X
Geometry	*X	*X	X	X	X
Advanced math and trigonometry			X		X
College math					X
Orchestra					X
Chorus	X	X	X	X	X
Band	X	X	X	X	X
Physical education (4 years)	X	X	X		X
Gymnastics					X

TABLE VIII. (Continued)

School	Deering	Surrey	Sawyer	Bottineau	Bozeman
COURSE					
Physical science	*X	*X	X	X	X
Biology	*X	*X	X	X	X
Advanced biology					X
Chemistry	X	X	*X	X	X
Physics			*X	X	X
World history	*X	*X	X	X	X
American history	*X	*X	X	X	X
American government					X
Geography	*X	*X	X	X	
Present day problems	*X	*X	X	X	
Economics					X
Orientation and citizenship			X		
**Current problems					X
**Psychology				X	X
Sociology					X
Russian history					X
Vocational agriculture I				X	
Vocational agriculture II				X	
Vocational agriculture III and IV				X	
Totals	20	21	30	35	53

** means offered one semester

CHAPTER III

WARD COUNTY COMPARISONS AND APPARENT NEEDS

The Ward County schools are an integral part of the public school system of the state. Supervision is provided by the State Superintendent of Public Instruction and his assistants. There are 603 school districts in North Dakota. Districts operating high schools number 280. There are 81 graded elementary districts, 168 one-room rural districts, and 74 districts not operating schools as can be seen on the following chart.

TABLE IX. NUMBER AND KIND OF PUBLIC SCHOOL DISTRICTS

Number of high school districts	Number of graded elementary districts	Number of one-room rural districts	Number of districts not operating schools	Total number of districts
280	81	168	74	603

There are three types of public schools in Ward County. Although the one-room rural school is disappearing there are still two in operation. There are five graded elementary schools and eleven districts operating both elementary and high schools. Of the 3,026 high school students attending public schools, Minot High School accounts for 2,181 of them. The other 845 high school students are distributed among the other ten small high schools. Educational authorities consider a high school small if it contains less than 500 students.

McKinley Number 36 and Rice Lake Number 131 are the one-room

rural schools in Ward County. McKinley has eighteen students in grades one through eight and pays tuition to neighboring high schools for its eight students in grades nine through twelve. Rice Lake has eight students enrolled and pays tuition to neighboring districts for its seven students in grades nine through twelve. Their appropriated 1966-67 budgets are \$11,560.00 and \$6,006.00

Tatman Number 62 and Waterford Number 67 are districts which do not operate schools. Their appropriated 1966-67 budgets are \$10,690.00 and \$7,303.40.

Tables number ten and eleven on pages thirty-seven and thirty-eight show the amount of monies appropriated for all the schools in Ward County for 1966-67 with the exception of those mentioned above. The average, anticipated cost per-pupil based on 1965-66 enrollments is \$370.87 for the graded elementary schools and \$441.41 for those districts operating both elementary and secondary schools.

With the exception of four of the graded elementary schools and one unaccredited high school, Minot has the lowest cost per-pupil at \$425.82. Minot in turn accounts for roughly three-fourths of all the students in the county. Interesting here is the fact that Minot has the highest salary schedule for teachers and other personnel of any school in the county. This fact is mentioned because teachers salaries should consist of about 70 per cent of a school's budget. Surrey, whose cost per-pupil is \$414.49 or slightly less than Minot, has an average teacher salary of \$3,300.00 including administration. By comparison, Minot has a base salary for teachers of \$5000.00 plus. Comparing their curriculums would be ludicrous. Table eight on page thirty-one is a comparison

of the course offerings of five high schools. One can see the variety of courses Gallatin County High School offers to about one-half the enrollment Minot has.

Figure three on page thirty-nine shows the location of the various school districts in Ward County with relation to one another.

There appears to be a definite need in Ward County for a consolidation of high school districts. Accomplishing the consolidation requires either annexation of one district to the next or reorganizing an entire area. The area to be consolidated includes two or more districts or parts thereof. At this point it is appropriate to list the procedures involved for initiating a plan. Mr. James F. Slocum, Superintendent of the Minot School System, presented the following in the February 5, 1966 issue of The Minot Daily News. The writer has paraphrased his article.

Procedure for Initiating a Reorganization Plan

General procedures for initiating such a plan are as follows:

1. Education meetings for patrons to become acquainted with the information concerning the situation.
2. Committee selection--the members are selected by the county superintendent and confirmed by the county commissioners.
3. Public hearings--this is conducted by the county reorganization committee at which time any or all patrons may express their views pro and con on the issues.
4. The recommendations of the county committee are then sent to the state reorganization committee which decides whether or not an election is to be held.
5. Election by the patrons in the area involved.

TABLE X. WARD COUNTY GRADED ELEMENTARY SCHOOL APPROPRIATIONS 1966-67

District number	District	Enrollment Grades 1-8	Grades *9-12	Valuation	Budget	Cost Per- pupil
2	Harrison	102	49	\$ 961,680.00	\$ 51,180.00	\$338.94
4	Nedrose	119	40	\$ 680,722.00	\$ 68,700.00	\$425.78
10	Bell	123	35	\$ 940,665.00	\$ 57,200.00	\$362.02
19	Eureka	19	8	\$ 303,397.00	\$ 16,870.00	\$624.81
70	South Prairie	154	56	\$ 857,395.00	\$ 68,250.00	\$326.28
Totals		517	188	\$3,743,859.00	\$261,470.00	
Average						\$370.87

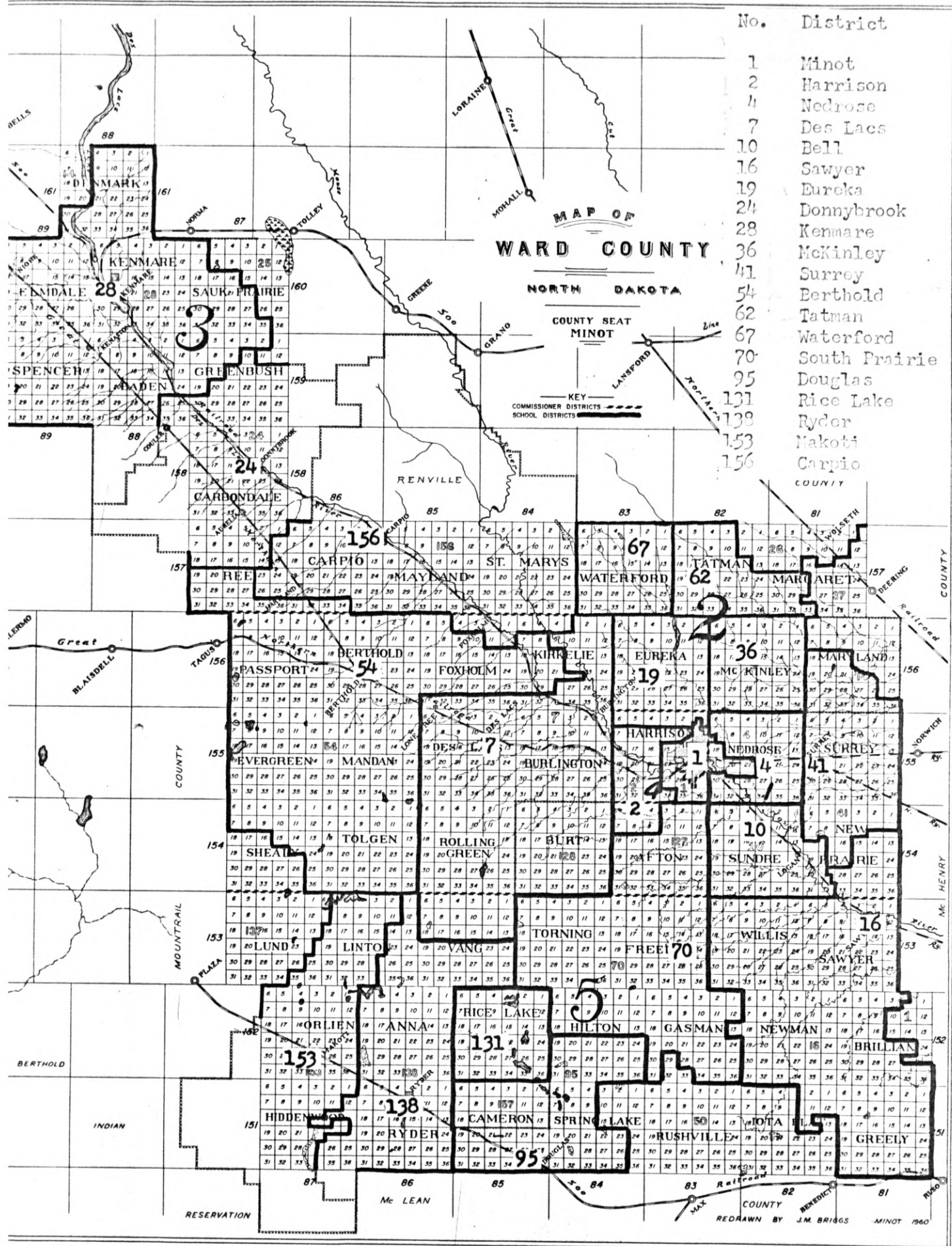
* Grades 9-12 attend neighboring districts high schools. The graded elementary district pays tuition to these high school districts.

TABLE XI. WARD COUNTY SCHOOL APPROPRIATIONS FOR
DISTRICTS OPERATING BOTH ELEMENTARY AND HIGH SCHOOLS

District number	District	Enrollment Grades 1-8	Grades 9-12	Valuation	Budget	Cost per- pupil
1	Minot	7,412	2,181	\$24,582,822.00	\$4,084,921.00	\$425.82
7	Des Lacs	311	125	\$ 1,383,397.00	\$ 202,600.00	\$464.67
16	Sawyer	207	89	\$ 1,191,432.00	\$ 146,362.39	\$495.07
*24	Donnybrook	95	26	\$ 841,737.00	\$ 77,050.00	\$636.77
28	Kenmare	462	220	\$ 2,995,858.00	\$ 348,897.00	\$511.58
*41	Surrey	152	55	\$ 757,362.00	\$ 86,800.00	\$414.49
54	Berthold	165	87	\$ 1,552,323.00	\$ 135,225.00	\$536.60
*95	Douglas	60	39	\$ 326,683.00	\$ 58,530.00	\$590.20
138	Ryder	103	61	\$ 571,465.00	\$ 78,170.00	\$623.78
153	Makoti	91	57	\$ 754,126.00	\$ 75,212.00	\$508.19
156	Carpio	193	86	\$ 1,305,348.00	\$ 125,438.00	\$449.59
Totals		9,251	3,026	\$36,262,553.00	\$5,419,205.39	
Average						\$441.41

* means non-accredited

Figure 3. Ward County School Districts



The mechanics of the election for the six districts involved would be as follows:

The districts with villages would be combined into one voting unit and the other districts would be combined into one voting unit. The results would be counted in each of the two voting areas separately.

A simple majority is required for passage. The proposal must pass in both voting areas. If the proposal is defeated in either one of the areas, it does not pass.

The wish of the majority of the patrons in the election is the final decision for the proposal.

Advantages of the Reorganization Plan

Practically all of the advantages of reorganized districts can be seen as possible advantages of a reorganization plan or plans for Ward County. Greater assessed valuations of the districts would make possible better school buildings. Likewise it also makes possible more and better school equipment.

Improvements in the teaching staff would be just as certain to follow. Higher wages in the town schools have been as much the rule in Ward County as in other parts of the country. What is perhaps still more important, however, is the greater possibility of teachers teaching in the fields of their major preparation and strength.

Instructional and curriculum advantages are much more evident in the larger schools which can offer a wider range of subjects and add special departments.

Financial advantages also accrue as a result of the higher pupil-teacher ratios in the larger schools which reduce the costs per pupil. Through the reorganization plan here outlined the number of teachers in the proposed area as a whole could be reduced. The saving of their salaries would be an item in itself. It must also be remembered that even if some of the costs of maintaining the new school system are increased, the increased costs are less than the increased value of the additional education obtained, and the net result is still an economy.

Of still greater consideration, perhaps, are some of the intangibles. The benefits which a pupil derives from contacts with other pupils are of very definite value. If one of the fundamental purposes of public education is to teach pupils how to live in a democracy, it is necessary to produce conditions like those existing in a democracy.

And last among the chief advantages of a reorganization plan would be the provision for adequate and efficient school planning in years to come. The schools of Ward County, or of any county, will not remain static. Through the provision of adequate supervision, there would come more able administration and greater coordination of effort among the various districts of the county. From it all there would be destined to evolve a better and more efficient school system. (2)

Ward County schools should have a reorganization plan formulated to place educational privileges for the rural areas on a par with those of city schools. With this purpose in mind a plan should provide for the following:

1. Schools located to serve the communities of which they are the respective centers with transportation for elementary and high school pupils who live beyond walking distances from their respective schools.
2. Greater facilities for educational training, to include the availability of secondary education to all qualified students of the county, offering opportunities for greater pupil progress and achievement through improved instruction assured by higher standards for both teachers and equipment.
3. Nearer uniform state and local support of education secured through this planned reorganization with very little or no additional cost for the added values.
4. Centralized administration to make for better equalization of educational opportunities offered by all schools of the area. (5)

Disadvantages of a Reorganization Plan

Naturally, when there are people involved, there are problems and so it is with school districts. Currently any one of the schools in Ward County has problems of one kind or another. If any of these districts should consolidate they would have to share one another's problems. Many times, however, these problems are the same or similar and therefore the existing problem would only be larger.

Location of the school or schools would be a very important factor. It is certain the distance to the school will be increased for some patrons. This doesn't necessarily mean children will have to ride buses longer; however, in some instances this will be the case.

School board representation from each area involved would be less. In some cases there may not be any. This is one phase of the preliminary planning where a policy should be included as to how the representation is to be established.

Another major disadvantage in some cases is the adjustment of assets and liabilities. Ordinarily any cash assets in any fund in any district or any portion of a district included in the reorganization plan shall be paid to the treasurer of the new school district. All the physical assets such as buildings, sites, furniture, fixtures, books, and supplies of a district shall become the property of the new district. The indebtedness of a district shall also become the responsibility of the new district. (8)

It is too much to hope that any reorganization plan will work perfectly; however, it will be possible to make adaptations of it wherever changes seem necessary as time progresses. It is too much to hope, too, that the reorganization of the Ward County school system may be accomplished within a short period of time. Voters need to be fully informed about the values of the reorganized school system as well as the economies to be gained by the use of such a plan. The county needs to continue to improve its roads to facilitate continuous bus service for the schools even in the severest weather and the most adverse climatic conditions. Also, the state as a whole needs to provide support necessary for the life of the reorganized unit. The satisfying of each of these needs is bound to be time consuming; adoption of a reorganization plan for the Ward County school may well be dependent upon the doing of well-ordered preparatory work. (5)

It remains to be seen what progress will be made along these lines.

CHAPTER IV

SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS

As a background for considering problems of the present, this study has traced briefly the public education system in Ward County, North Dakota, up to the present time. It must be remembered that the purposes of a school system in a democracy are determined by the people. This involves the making of choices based upon some scale of values concerning what the people consider best both for present and for oncoming generations. From practical experience in coming to grips with the problems and issues confronting them, the American people have found that there are essential qualities required for effective citizenship. They have established the public school as an institution specifically designed for developing those qualities. With us, then, the purposes of our schools are chosen in terms of the ideals and values we hold, the interests and purposes in life we pursue, and the faith and reliance we place in the processes of education. Under such a system of free choices, these purposes are deeply rooted in our needs as a free people--needs that develop from the conditions and requirements for effective living in a democracy.

Every public school, regardless of size or location, has the responsibility for developing in the young people it serves certain knowledges, skills, attitudes, and understandings. These are the educational needs that are common to all people--young people and adults, rich and poor, regardless of their race, creed, or station in life.

In planning a program of reorganization, it is necessary to consider the educational background of Ward County which has so greatly

influenced the present organization. As a background for considering the lines along which educational progress may be made the present situation in Ward County has been described. This description may be reviewed briefly as follows. (4)

The primary concern of this paper is the six school districts of eastern Ward County, North Dakota. Pertinent facts about their structure and organization are well worth repeating at this point.

In 1965 the collective, assessed valuation of these districts was \$5,331,337.00. Their total indebtedness was \$574,160.00. The total area in square miles is 559.99.

High school students in the six districts in 1965 numbered 341. Elementary students numbered 789 for a total of 1,130 pupils.

An inspection of the school buildings accounts for the indebtedness of the area. All but one of the districts have new, modern facilities. The largest district has the next oldest buildings. About half of its plant is ten years old and the rest older.

Three of the six districts are operating high schools. Two of those schools are unaccredited.

It has been shown by comparison that the larger the school the more economically they can operate. Teachers salaries and course offerings also increase with the size of the school.

There is a comparison of budgets from six schools in the state of a size comparable to the six eastern Ward County schools. This reveals a large percentage of what is now being spent could be either saved or rechanneled.

The question of cost is only secondary, however, for the first consideration is the greater educational advantage to be had in a larger school. (4)

The procedure for the reorganization of school districts must be provided by law so as to place the authority in the hands of the State Superintendent of Public Instruction. He in turn works with a planning committee chosen by the county superintendent and confirmed by the county commissioners. Public hearings are then held by the county reorganization committee. And finally, an election is held for the patrons in the area involved.

Educating the public to the need for reorganization is a very important part in planning a new program, for all changes must come through the people and with their knowledge and consent.

Recommendations

In the light of the historical background and present situation of the schools of eastern Ward County the question arises as to what should be done? There are several possibilities for improving education in eastern Ward County.

The first suggestion has been the consolidation of Bell, Nedrose, South Prairie, Deering, Sawyer, and Surrey all into one district. Utilization of the present facilities for the elementary pupils would be a must. Building of a centralized high school for the 341 students in grades nine through twelve appears to be a solution for the secondary division.

Deering, as seen on figure one, page seven, would be the farthest from any central point. This district was included in the study because it is adjacent to the larger block of area under consideration. Deering has a small enrollment, an unaccredited high school, and older facilities. The writer has assumed the Deering District would be interested in a plan that might improve the education for their children. This paper has been intended to serve as a non-biased informational study to aid public education in Ward County.

Another idea for the involved districts might be for the Sawyer District to join or annex to the Velva District which lies parallel to it on the east. The two towns are five and one-half miles apart on the same paved highway. Velva has a new school with an enrollment of six hundred fifteen students. One hundred eighty-two of these are high school. Their valuation is about three million dollars.

Perhaps some or all of the Surrey District would also be interested in this plan. The part of Surrey that wasn't interested would probably go to Minot. At any rate, an elementary school would be operated at Surrey.

The southern part of the Sawyer District might prefer to join the Max School System. The Max School is about ten miles by road from the Sawyer District. The Max District operates a new school with an enrollment of three hundred twenty-five in grades one through twelve. Max is located about twenty-six miles south of Minot.

Considering this second suggestion further, the Deering District might annex to Glenburn. Glenburn operates a school with an enrollment of three hundred eleven students in grades one through twelve. The

school is about twelve miles by road northwest of the Deering District.

The Deering District might also consider going to Granville which lies to the east. They might also be interested in Surrey to the south. What might satisfy the highest percentage of people in the Deering District is for them to split. By doing this the areas interested could annex to each of the three, adjacent schools mentioned.

If the above pattern were followed Bell, Nedrose, and South Prairie would continue operating as they are now doing. Each one is now sending the majority of its high school students to Minot and operating new, graded elementary schools.

One more proposition that needs considering is the annexation of all six districts to the Minot district. This plan would keep the present schools of each district for elementary purposes. All high school students would be bussed to Minot.

Bus routes would be the main factor in this idea. The farthest point from Minot would be the southwestern corner of Sawyer's District which is about forty miles away. That area could choose to go to Max, however. It is entirely feasible here to design bus routes whereby no student would have to ride more than one hour one way. In many cases these same people ride that long or nearly that long now.

The transportation facilities in Ward County lend themselves well to this idea. There are paved highways leading to the city from every direction as can be seen by figure two on page eight.

In order to comprehend the significance of the problem of re-districting, it is essential to consider the more important of these problems. They are as follows: equalization of educational opportunity,

more uniform units of administration and educational management, more definite and well planned district boundaries, effective attendance areas, and equitable organization of school districts on the basis of actual valuation.

Larger attendance areas are essential if existing educational inequalities are to be eliminated. The following general criteria are suggested: elementary attendance areas large enough to make possible at least one grade and thirty pupils per-teacher, secondary school areas of not less than three hundred pupils in grades seven to twelve inclusive. Pupils should not be forced to ride on a school bus for more than one hour per trip. The school program should be so scheduled that a maximum utilization of school buildings and transportation systems of the area may be secured. The attendance area should be so located with reference to the general population that it may become the center of community activities.

There are certain handicaps to reorganization, some of which are based on personal prejudice or misapprehension. In some instances the preservation of small units may be based on selfish desires of local commercial interests; however these "submarginal" areas might soon disappear anyway and are certainly no justification for maintaining an inefficient school unit. There is a general feeling that consolidation of districts would result in a loss of local control; however in this plan the board of education is still to be selected by the people of the area. The loss of the school as a social center might lessen community relationships, but it would at the same time broaden the social contacts of the parents as they would associate themselves with the social life

of the larger school. In the past, poor roads and poor methods of travel made the small school imperative; however with improving road conditions and transportation facilities this major objection has been removed.

It is hoped, therefore, that this study may awaken the people of this county to the need for reorganization, and present them with a study of the situation in Ward County at the present time. Another goal of this study has been to develop an understanding of how the present situation came about and how it must be remedied if Ward County is to keep abreast of the times. It is also hoped that with the awakening of interest in the subject, this study will provide a basis for planning and considering ways and means toward establishing a study of reorganization that will plan for the future an educational program which will provide better physical equipment and greater educational advantages for the children of Ward County.

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