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Palmer Elvin Anderson

Date

August 5, 1970

FEASIBILITY OF CONSOLIDATING HOGELAND
AND TURNER HIGH SCHOOLS

by

PALMER ELVIN ANDERSON

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

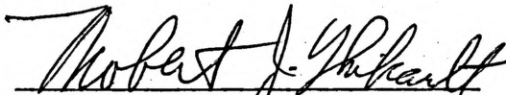
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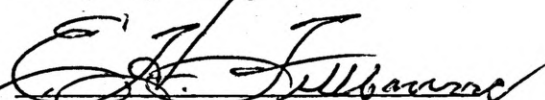
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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to assess the feasibility of consolidating the Hogeland and Turner High Schools. These two schools are located in the northern part of Blaine County in Montana. To do the study the school census records, and the two budget items investigated was made available by the Office of County Superintendent of Schools, Chinook, Montana. The problem of transportation was covered, only inasmuch as transporting the Hogeland High School students to Turner.

It was found that the school attendance trend at Hogeland High School had been decreasing, and by studying the total school census it was plain this condition would not be improved. Turner High School attendance had been increasing, and although the peak had been reached, the inevitable decrease would not be so rapid.

The cost items proved to be of major concern. This study reviewed two cost areas only. The items in the district budgets entitled total cost of instruction and the total cost of operation of plant was studied. The trend in the cost area had been increasing, and over the eleven-year period this increase was quite pronounced. For the school year 1969-1970 the total per-pupil cost for the Hogeland High School was \$3,820, and the corresponding figure for Turner was \$1,525.23. The operation of the plant cost was not as great; however, Hogeland's cost figure of \$368.75, and Turner's cost of \$184.61 per pupil did further emphasize this cost trend.

The transporting of the Hogeland students to Turner, it was felt, could be handled. Turner presently has bus routes of 61, 57, 47, and 37 miles, and a proposed route of 62 miles from Turner could accommodate the Hogeland area.

The comparisons made of the two schools, and considering the unusually high per-pupil costs, it was suggested that they could benefit by consolidating. As a result of consolidation, it was pointed out that three teachers, and one superintendent would no longer be needed. The recommendation, therefore, was to consolidate.

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Statement of the Problem

Recent studies pertaining to school district reorganization and school consolidation have shown some progress in the development of Montana education units. Through the years from 1845, when the missionaries among the Indians constituted the whole of Montana's educational facilities, (Leeson, 1885) up to the present time with its complex organization, there have been many changes. The Montana Committee on Public Elementary and Secondary School Organization and Finance indicated a wide range of educational opportunity in high schools in Montana. The cause for this range is traced back through a system of high school districts which are not equal in their ability to provide for uniform education. (National Association of Secondary School Principals, 1947). According to State Superintendent Biennial Reports for the years 1937-1938 and for the years 1967-1968, it is to be noted that Montana had 198 high schools in 1938 but only 170 high schools in 1968. Over a period of 30 years, Montana discontinued 28 high schools. During this period Blaine County, in which Hogeland and Turner are located, continued on with the same four high schools with which it entered the era even though its population changed drastically.

This study will present an unbiased view of conditions as they exist now and, hopefully, enable the reader to draw certain conclusions

if consolidation of the high schools mentioned would become finalized.

Purpose

The purpose of this study is to investigate and present facts and figures in reference to cost of operation of the two high schools. The specific costs to be dealt with are:

1. Instructional costs
2. Operation of plant costs

Together with the cost areas indicated, transportation will be a very important factor, and the problem of transporting the students from school district #32 (Hogeland) to school district #43 (Turner) will be dealt with.

Montana's school district problem is not now solved nor will its solution be easily obtained. The problem was summed up in a statement included in the Peabody Report (1958).

The state of Montana must re-examine its current pattern of school attendance centers. It must weigh the ethical problem of using the State's power to tax citizens in economically and efficiently organized areas in order to subsidize those not so organized. It must evaluate the opportunities being given to youth in a high school of 100 pupils, which enjoys both support and the State's blessing in accreditation, when five miles away along an all-weather highway is a high school of 300 pupils offering twice the number of subjects.

Procedure

The preparation of this study involved the use of documentary material from Montana history books, codes and statutes of Montana since 1864, copies of periodicals, Blaine County records, and files of the State Department of Public Instruction. The investigation includes data on the two school districts involved for a ten-year period for the most part. A five-year period was used, however, for the school census. It will deal with legislative authority given to school districts, county superintendents, and county commissioners in consolidation procedures, and also any acts which effect school district structure.

Limitations

This study will focus only on the two districts of Hogeland and Turner located in northern Blaine County. No investigation will be attempted to determine community ties or the social situations which definitely impede any workable consolidation plan.

Definition of Terms

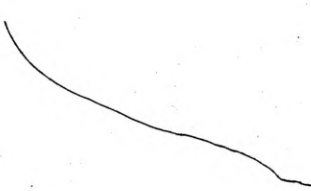
1. A.N.B.; the average number of regularly enrolled, full-time pupils attending a public school, or attending public schools in a school district as a whole; the average number belonging.
2. Assessed Valuation; the value placed on a building

or other piece of real property for purposes of taxation.

3. Consolidated school; an enlarged school formed by uniting small schools for the purpose of providing better school facilities and increased educational opportunities.

Summary

It has been expressed by many writers that a need for further consolidation of high schools and/or high school districts in the United States exists. This need has also been expressed for many areas of Montana. With this in mind, and considering the limitations stated, this study was undertaken.



CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

The Committee on Curriculum Planning and Development of the National Association of Secondary School Principals indicated ten needs in their report of a national survey of curriculum provision and needs. The needs of youth accordingly are:

1. To develop salable skills and those understandings that make the worker an intelligent and productive participant in economic life. To this end, most youth need supervised work experience as well as education in the skills and knowledge of their occupation.
2. To develop and maintain good health and physical fitness.
3. To understand the rights and duties of a citizen of a democratic society and to be dilligent and competent in the performance of their obligations as members of the community and citizens of the state, nation, and world.
4. To understand the significance of the family for the individual and society and the conditions conducive to successful family life.
5. To know how to purchase and use goods and services intelligently, understanding both the values received by the consumer and the economic consequences of their acts.
6. To understand the methods of science, the influence on human life, and the main scientific facts concerning the nature of the world and of man.
7. To develop their capacities to appreciate beauty in literature, art, music, and nature.
8. To be able to use their leisure time well and to budget it wisely, balancing activities that yield satisfaction

to the individual with those that are socially useful.

9. To develop respect for other persons; to grow in their insight into ethical values and principles; and to be able to live and work cooperatively with others.
10. To grow in their ability to think rationally, to express their thoughts clearly, and to read and listen with understanding. (Secondary School Principals, 1947).

A more effective way to meet these educational needs could be offered by school consolidation. In recent years, the national trend has been, according to Fitzwater (1957), in the direction of consolidation.

The Peabody Report on the Public Schools of Montana (1958 p. 44) says:

One of the more significant developments in American education following World War II has been the nationwide attention being given to school district organization. In state after state the number of school districts being maintained have been reduced so sharply that by 1958 fewer than 50,000 districts remained of the 103,000 districts operated in 1945. Montana has not kept pace with this movement.

Montana has been operating under a permissible plan of consolidation. (Montana School Laws, 1961, p. 156). This plan was a type of enabling legislation which made it possible to consolidate but set no time limit and did not force districts to comply. Harriet Miller, former State Superintendent of Public Instruction, in her Biennial Report (1964) recommended "that the laws pertaining to school district consolidation be simplified to encourage acceleration of the rate of voluntary consolidation". This possibility of

voluntarily consolidating certain schools would be the ideal situation. Proper organization of districts lays the foundation for the solution of the small-school problem in all except isolated and sparsely populated areas where small schools may have to be continued regardless of cost. However, the continued existence of small districts usually means that the small school in each district is likely to be perpetuated even when it should be consolidated. (Morphet, Johns, and Reller, 1967). A statement such as the one just presented is quite easily agreed with; however, to be understood and acted upon as a solution to education neglect, a more specific benefit approach seems to be required. The Encyclopedia of Modern Education (1943) indicates that school consolidation generally leads to one or more of the following benefits:

1. A reduction of per-class or per-capita costs.
2. A greater equalization of local tax burdens.
3. A decrease in the number of teachers needed.
4. An increase in the preparation, experience, and tenure of teachers.
5. Better educational achievement by pupils.
6. An increase in the instructional time for each pupil or each class.
7. A longer school term.
8. Improved attendance.
9. Better school plant and equipment.

10. Greater economy and efficiency of the administration and supervision of schools.

The purpose for this particular chapter was to give emphasis to the need for more thorough research. Many areas of student betterment, because of consolidation, have been indicated, and an attempt will be made to elaborate on some of them. In like manner there will be physical problems to overcome, but the study should show decidedly beneficial results.

CHAPTER III

FINDINGS AND INTERPRETATIONS

In order to adequately investigate this problem, it was necessary to locate the data and materials; then by comparative analysis, reach a conclusion and make recommendations.

Data Collection

The initial phase of data collection was to locate the material necessary with which to compare the school census of Hogeland and Turner. This was made available through the County Superintendent's office. A chart was made listing each family and the number and age of the children was indicated thereon, and thus enabled the investigator to identify the exact number in any age group in both the Hogeland and Turner school districts as well as a combined figure for both districts.

The A.N.B. count was taken from the Montana Educational Directory issued annually by the State Department of Public Instruction.

The cost areas referred to in Chapter I were investigated through the use of the budgets for the Hogeland and Turner high schools. The County Superintendent supplied the budgets for a ten-year period and the costs of concern for this research were obtained.

The instruction costs for the two schools were arranged so as to enable the reader to more easily recognize the differences, and to add emphasis to the variation within each school system.

A similar procedure was used to show the relationship of costs for the operation of the plant in each school. These studies indicated the trend and pointed out variations for both schools investigated.

Transportation of the students was investigated. Bus routes, mileage and student loads was obtained from charts from the superintendent's office of each school. These routes were carefully studied and a possible route or routes to bus the Hogeland students were considered.

A first approach to the problem of the high school enrollments for Hogeland and Turner was found in the school census reports obtained from the Blaine County Superintendent of Schools office. These reports covered the years from 1965 to 1969 inclusive, and for each community did show a definite trend.

Table 1

Number of Children on the School Census, Ages 1 Through 19
in Hogeland and Turner During the 1965-1969 Period

School	Year				
	1965	1966	1967	1968	1969
Hogeland	117	113	106	99	91
Turner	234	233	228	218	214

The figures for Table 1 include all the children in each community from birth through 19, and indicate that in 1965 the Hogeland community had 117 children while Turner's numbered 234. In the year 1969 it is noted that Hogeland totaled 91, showing a five-year decrease of 22%, while Turner showed 214, representing a five-year decrease of 8.5%. Following this a comparison was made of the number of children of high school age in the two communities.

Table 2 shows the school census figures for the Hogeland district.

In exploring the needs for a high school at Hogeland it was interesting to note the decrease in the numbers of children in the age brackets usually associated with high school attendance. The Hogeland district had 45 children in the 14 through 19 age group in 1965, and 34 children in that age group in 1969, a decrease of 24%.

Table 3 shows the school census population of the Turner school district.

Unlike Hogeland, which had a 24% drop in census children of high school age, Turner actually had an increase in the number of high school age children. It showed 57 children in this age group in 1965 and 66 in 1969, or an increase of 15.8%. Although school census figures give the reader a fairly good idea of high school needs in these communities, a much clearer picture can be obtained from a study of actual high school enrollments.

Table 2

Hogeland Census

Years of age	Year				
	1965	1966	1967	1968	1969
Under 1	5	4	2	1	3
1	4	6	4	4	3
2	2	2	6	4	2
3	7	2	3	6	4
4	5	7	3	3	7
5	11	4	8	2	3
6	5	11	4	7	2
7	1	5	9	4	7
8	2	1	5	9	4
9	4	2	2	4	9
10	7	4	3	1	5
11	6	7	3	3	2
12	5	6	6	4	3
13	8	5	7	7	3
14	12	8	6	6	5
15	5	13	7	4	6
16	7	5	11	8	4
17	8	7	5	11	6
18	8	6	7	4	10
19	5	8	5	7	3

Table 3

Turner Census

Years of age	Year				
	1965	1966	1967	1968	1969
Under 1	5	5	8	8	7
1	12	12	12	7	8
2	11	14	5	12	8
3	12	17	14	5	11
4	13	12	9	14	5
5	9	5	12	7	15
6	14	11	10	10	6
7	12	13	11	12	10
8	18	11	13	10	11
9	20	16	11	13	11
10	16	20	16	10	13
11	12	14	18	15	10
12	13	13	14	17	15
13	10	13	12	17	18
14	17	12	11	11	15
15	11	14	12	10	11
16	8	11	14	10	11
17	8	8	8	15	9
18	5	8	10	6	15
19	8	4	8	9	5

Tables 4 and 5 represent the number of students from each community actually attending high school as shown by A.N.B. figures over an eleven-year period.

Table 4
Average Number Belonging in the
Hogeland High School 1959-1969

Year	Number
1959	13
1960	21
1961	21
1962	23
1963	23
1964	23
1965	27
1966	28
1967	24
1968	20
1969	13

Although a comparison of the Hogeland High School figures for 1959 and 1969 indicated a rather stable condition in that for the academic year 1959-1960 thirteen students were enrolled and again eleven years later, during the 1969-1970 academic year, 13 students

were enrolled. However, a study of the intervening years showed a rather drastic drop from a high of 28 students in 1966 to 13 in 1969. Of the 13 students listed for 1969, one transferred to Chinook High School early in the year leaving only 12 students remaining. For comparative purposes 12 students was used as the figure for 1969-1970.

An even clearer view of how dark the future enrollment picture in Hogeland is can be obtained from an investigation of the elementary school enrollment in grades 5 through 8.

Table 5

Enrollment in Grades Five Through Eight
for Hogeland Public 1969-1970

Grade	Number Attending
5	6
6	0
7	4
8	1

As shown in Table 5 there will not be growth of the high school because of elementary graduates and in four years there would probably be only 11 enrolled in high school.

Turner High School has been reflecting a somewhat different image as shown in Table 6.

Table 6

Average Number Belonging in the
Turner High School 1959-1969

Year	Number
1959	33
1960	34
1961	34
1962	36
1963	31
1964	35
1965	40
1966	46
1967	55
1968	50
1969	52

Turner High School had 33 students enrolled during the 1959-1960 academic year, and over an eleven-year period the number enrolled showed a rather steady increase until in the 1969-1970 academic year there were 52 students in attendance. This shows an increase of 57.5%. This, however, was due to the movement of a higher percentage of students from the elementary school into high school rather than to a general increase in population of the community.

The elementary A.N.B. of the Turner Public School indicates an opposite trend, at least for the years 1959-1967, as shown in Table 7. However, Table 7 also shows a drastic reduction in the A.N.B.

Table 7

Average Number Belonging in the Turner
Elementary School 1959-1969

Year	Number
1959	88
1960	92
1961	105
1962	113
1963	144
1964	152
1965	157
1966	145
1967	144
1968	108
1969	91

figures between the year 1967 and 1968. This condition was the result of the action taken by the Turner Hutterite Colony when that colony opened its own elementary school. Neither did the figures for 1969 show any reversal of the trend.

For closer observation of the enrollment per high school class, Table 8 shows the Hogeland condition.

Table 8

Distribution of the Hogeland High School
Enrollment by Grades 1969-1970

Grade	Number
Senior	4
Junior	3
Sophomore	3
Freshman	2

The trend as shown in Table 8 is a continuation of what had been happening in the elementary grades as pointed out in Table 5.

Turner High School class enrollment is illustrated in Table 9.

Table 9

Distribution of the Turner High School
Enrollment by Grades 1969-1970

Grade	Number
Senior	14
Junior	11
Sophomore	10
Freshman	17

Table 9 would indicate a continued similarity in the class enrollment for Turner High School. Prospective entrants from the elementary grades would maintain this condition.

Table 10

Enrollment in Grades Five Through Eight
for Turner Public School 1969-1970

Grade	Number Attending
5	12
6	11
7	15
8	11

Curriculum Offered

The curriculum offered by the Hogeland High School is one designed to barely meet the state requirements with very little else being considered. Below are the subjects offered during 1969-1970.

Advanced Mathematics

Algebra I

Biology

Chemistry

English I

English II

English III

English IV

Geometry

Shorthand I

Typing I

Typing II

U. S. Government

World History

Very few elective subjects have been offered because of the enrollment situation, and because of the minimum number of teachers employed in order to meet the requirements. Often student choice would help determine the curriculum offering if the subject suggested was at all feasible.

The curriculum offered by the Turner High School is one which also meets state requirements but it has a few additional subjects from which a student may choose. Listed below are the subjects which were offered in 1969-1970.

Advanced Mathematics

Algebra I

American History

Biology

Bookkeeping I

Business Law

Business Mathematics

Chemistry

English I

English II

English III

English IV

General Mathematics

General Science

Government

Physics

Shop I

Shop II

Shop Lab

Shorthand I

Shorthand II

Typing I

Typing II

World History

This does not show all of the subjects offered as in alternate years substitutions are made. This means for example that general math would be offered in one year, then geometry might be offered the next.

The pupil-teacher ratio for the two school systems is very low.

For the year 1969-1970 the pupil-teacher ratio for Hogeland High School was four to one. Turner High School showed some improvement but was still low with a pupil-teacher ratio of 8.66 to 1.

Financing the Educational Program

The matter of financing Montana schools for either current operation or for any long term indebtedness has been meeting with increased opposition. As of April 4, 1970, of 140 Montana elementary school districts voting on special levies 14 rejected them while in 117 of the Montana high school districts voting on special levies the levies were defeated in 16 districts.

It is interesting to note that the per-pupil costs of operating the Hogeland High School in the year 1969-1970 were not only more than double those of the Turner High School but also more than four times the figure for the average Montana school.

Financing the two schools has been a very real problem, and the per-pupil cost has been increasing year after year. The total authorized general budget figures for the 1969-1970 school term was obtained from the Office of the County Superintendent at Chinook, Montana for the Hogeland and Turner High School Districts. Then from Table 4 the A.N.B. figure for the Hogeland High School enrollment for 1969-1970 academic year was divided into the authorized general budget amount of \$45,840 and the per-pupil cost was \$3,820.00. A similar procedure was used in computing the cost per-pupil for the Turner High

School. Table 6 indicates the number attending for the 1969-1970 school year, and by dividing this number into the authorized general budget figure of \$79,312.22 the per-pupil cost was \$1,525.23.

During the period from the school year of 1959-1960 to and including the school year of 1969-1970 all school costs were on the increase, however, instruction costs were the greatest.

Table 11
Hogeland High School Cost of Instruction
for the Eleven-Year Period from 1959-1960

Year	Amount
1959-1960	\$13,535.57
1960-1961	11,361.82
1961-1962	17,008.83
1962-1963	17,678.10
1963-1964	19,266.99
1964-1965	24,800.00
1965-1966	25,031.85
1966-1967	26,573.67
1967-1968	27,642.31
1968-1969	29,600.00
1969-1970	33,830.00

The total cost figures as given in Table 11 presents an expressive example of trends, but does not tell the per-pupil cost.

Table 12

Hogeland High School Cost of Instruction Per Pupil

Year	Cost
1959-1960	\$1,041.19
1960-1961	541.04
1961-1962	809.94
1962-1963	769.04
1963-1964	837.69
1964-1965	1,078.26
1965-1966	927.10
1966-1967	949.05
1967-1968	1,151.76
1968-1969	1,480.00
1969-1970	2,602.30

From Table 12 it should be noted that the per-pupil cost of instruction for Hogeland High School increased 497.8% between 1960-61 and 1969-70.

Table 13 shows the instructional costs of the Turner High School for the same eleven-year period.

Table 13

Turner High School Cost of Instruction for
the Eleven-Year Period from 1959-1960

Year	Amount
1959-1960	\$19,708.02
1960-1961	20,471.49
1961-1962	21,164.69
1962-1963	20,443.78
1963-1964	24,408.80
1964-1965	21,467.92
1965-1966	24,449.03
1966-1967	24,276.66
1967-1968	38,557.52
1968-1969	46,750.00
1969-1970	51,134.75

Table 13 shows an increase in instruction cost of Turner High School of \$31,426.73. This amount represents an increase of 159% over the 11 years, but the per-pupil costs are not as pronounced as shown in Table 14.

Table 14

Turner High School Cost of Instruction Per Pupil

Year	Cost
1959-1960	\$ 597.21
1960-1961	602.10
1961-1962	622.49
1962-1963	567.88
1963-1964	787.38
1964-1965	613.37
1965-1966	611.25
1966-1967	527.75
1967-1968	701.04
1968-1969	935.00
1969-1970	938.36

From Table 14 it is to be noted that the per-pupil cost of instruction for Turner High School increased by 57%.

Operation of the school plant costs have been used in this study as an area for comparison. The cost of educating young people has been increasing, and this particular item, although not as great as instructional cost, is shown to be on the increase over the years.

Table 15

Cost of Operation of Plant for Hogeland High School
for Eleven-Year Period from 1959

Year	Amount
1959-1960	\$2,392.32
1960-1961	2,351.88
1961-1962	2,039.93
1962-1963	2,259.79
1963-1964	2,408.36
1964-1965	2,929.02
1965-1966	3,121.99
1966-1967	2,243.27
1967-1968	4,150.00
1968-1969	4,225.00
1969-1970	4,425.00

Table 15 does show the trend as stated earlier. Although the amounts do fluctuate somewhat from year to year, over the eleven-year period it has increased 84%.

Per-pupil costs might be more readily grasped, and using the school term 1969-1970 this has been computed to be \$368.75 for Hogeland. The A.N.B. figure was taken from Table 4, and the cost figure was from Table 15. As has been stated earlier the average enrollment

will probably not increase, therefore, it is safe to assume the per-pupil cost of operation of plant will not decrease.

Turner High School presented a pattern of operation of plant costs similar to that shown by the Hogeland system, and Table 16 below illustrates this fact.

Table 16

Cost of Operation of Plant for Turner High School
Over an Eleven-Year Period from 1959

Year	Amount
1959-1960	\$4,404.06
1960-1961	3,706.79
1961-1962	4,550.00
1962-1963	4,537.68
1963-1964	4,310.33
1964-1965	5,329.80
1965-1966	4,729.55
1966-1967	4,994.84
1967-1968	7,596.63
1968-1969	8,800.00
1969-1970	9,600.00

For Turner the cost has increased by \$5,195.94 or expressed in percent it would represent an increase of 118%. The per-pupil

cost, however, for the year 1969-1970 was \$184.61. The A.N.B. figure was taken from Table 6, and the cost figure was from Table 16.

Pupil Transportation

Because of the sparsity of the population in the area involved in this study, pupil transportation has been a major problem and would continue to be so even with district reorganization.

The Turner School District presently uses four bus routes to handle the transportation of students attending. On Chart I these routes are designated A, B, C, and D. The mileage and bus load in each case was as shown in Table 17.

Table 17

Turner Bus Routes, Mileage, and Student Load

Bus Route	Mileage	Students Hauled
A	47 miles	6
B	57	11
C	61	9
D	34	13

Because of distance of each existing route, and the direction each travel, it would not be practical to alter these.

As indicated in Table 17 two of these routes cover 57, and 61 miles, respectively. On a dotted line west from Turner a possible

route for the Hogeland High School students is suggested. This route would be the most practical, and would cover an area presently served by three buses from Hogeland. It would cover a total of 62 miles, and carry nine students to the high school in Turner.

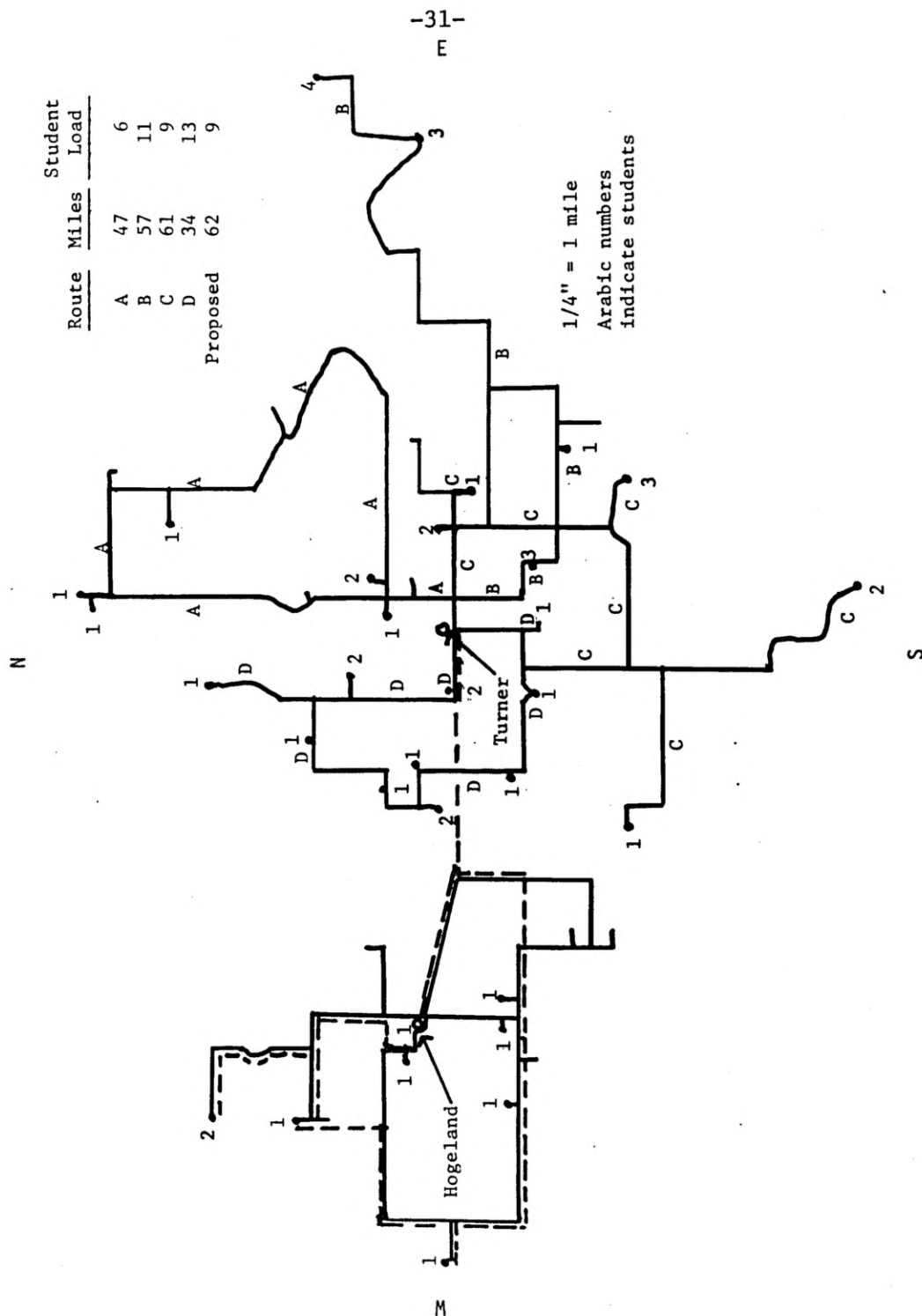


Chart I. The Proposed Hogeland to Turner Bus Route.

CHAPTER IV

SUMMARY

This study has shown the trend of school census population in both the Hogeland and Turner Districts. While the population ages one through 14 in the Turner District has dropped from 234 to 214, the corresponding age population in the Hogeland District has taken an even more drastic drop, falling from 117 to 91.

A clearer picture of the small school population picture is obtained from the high school enrollment figures. While the Turner High School A.N.B. figures rose from 34 to 52 during the ten-year period between 1960 and 1969, the corresponding Hogeland High School A.N.B. figures dropped from 21 to 13 during the same ten-year period.

Because of the limited size of both of the high schools involved in this study, the curricular offering in both high schools has been extremely limited. The curriculum of the Hogeland High School has been barely meeting minimum accreditation standards. While the subject offering in the Turner High School has been slightly better, it, too, falls far short of meeting the needs of present day students.

The really glaring results of the continuously dropping enrollments become obvious in the increasing per-pupil costs until during the 1969-1970 school year the per-pupil cost of operating the Turner High School was \$1,525.23 and the corresponding per-pupil cost

of operating the Hogeland High School during the 1969-1970 school year was \$3,820.00.

CONCLUSIONS

Reorganization and consolidation is a national trend, and in some areas of Montana it has been successfully completed. As was indicated in Chapter I, Montana high schools have decreased in number from 198 in 1937-1938 school term to 170 as reported for the 1967-1968 school term. Surely this is in the right direction, but even yet much more could be done. Legislation has been attempted in the past and is very likely to be tried again, therefore, it would seem that communities will want to settle their differences and cooperate rather than be ordered to either close the doors to their schools or to join another school district.

Consolidation, whenever it shall appear to the board of county commissioners to be for the best interests of any two or more high schools in the county and for the high school system in the county as a whole to effect a consolidation of such high schools it shall have the power and authority to effect such consolidation and to determine all questions involved in effecting such consolidation, provided, however, that before such consolidation shall become effective it shall be approved by the state superintendent of public instruction. (School Laws State of Montana).

In this study it has been made very clear that the cost of operation of the schools in Hogeland and Turner is very high and it is quite definitely noted that the schools could combine without any additional teachers being hired. In fact, it is indicated that

the cost of three teachers could be eliminated, and that at least one bus contract could be eliminated.

The comparison of the high schools indicated that while both of the schools are conducting inefficient programs, the school with the greater enrollment was able to make more efficient use of the resources available.

The writer recommends that because of the benefits that could evolve, action be started which would result in the closing of the Hogeland High School and combining its high school facilities with those of the Turner High School.

APPENDIX

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