

AN ABSTRACT OF THE THESIS OF

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In spite of the legislation that has been passed to encourage consolidation in the United States, over one-half of our public schools today are one-room schools.

The rural areas and people living in them will probably receive the greatest help from consolidation; such an area and people are described in this thesis. The industries and vocations which are found in this area naturally bring together a group of people who have a great many problems in common. The level of wages limits the opportunities of the people to participate in many commercialized amusements; therefore, these people must look to their community for most of their recreational and educational activities. The present community centers and schools are almost wholly inadequate to permit the sponsoring of many community activities.

Consolidation is generally understood to mean the joining together of two or more contiguous school districts for the purpose of improving the educational opportunities of the pupils.

New York State was the first state to pass a consolidation law, but not much was done about consolidation until Massachusetts passed a law permitting the use of public money to provide transportation for pupils to and from school. Ohio, Indiana, Maine, Rhode Island, Vermont, and Pennsylvania soon fell into line and passed consolidation and transportation laws; thus, the real beginning of consolidation might be set at about 1890. Oregon passed its first consolidation law in 1903, and since then consolidation has been one of the leading school problems in the state of Oregon. More recent legislation in the form of the School District Reorganization law was passed in 1939.

The values of consolidation are many and might be summarized thus: it provides increased education, social, and recreational opportunities for both students and parents; it makes more adequate supervision and administration of the school possible; it increases

the holding power of the school over both teacher and pupil; and it increases the value of the property in the community and lends added attraction to future settlement.

This thesis was proposed to consolidate twelve districts in southern Polk county, and locate the new school on the present site of the Airlie school. Transportation would be provided for the pupils. The new school could be erected by the use of PWA funds; thereby making it possible to erect a good building for a relatively small cost to the district. The thesis indicated the present status of the districts, proposes a budget with sources of revenue and compares the present teachers' salaries with the proposed salaries.

The many benefits that the consolidation would bring to this community are: (1) An educational, recreational and social center; (2) A means to equalize the present costs and tax burdens; (3) An added attraction for future settlement and better teachers; (4) As a more efficiently-operated institution; (5) As an agency to hold the community together and knit a greater bond of friendship and understanding between it and neighboring towns; (6) Providing healthier, more pleasant teaching and learning atmosphere in the school; (7) By providing greater safety for the children in transit to and from the school.

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CONSOLIDATION OF CERTAIN SCHOOL DISTRICTS  
IN SOUTHERN POLK COUNTY, OREGON

by

CLIFFORD ALVIN STOCKER

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# CONSOLIDATION OF CERTAIN SCHOOL DISTRICTS IN SOUTHERN POLK COUNTY, OREGON

## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

While America was building its present economic system, something was seemingly lost -- an intangible something to which the average American is somewhat oblivious. That something manifests itself most obviously in the rural social institutions.

The one-room schools of the early pioneer days were truly great social institutions rendering an unparalleled service to the community and its pupils. But the one-room school has outlived its usefulness and has now become in most cases a parasitical growth on the modern rural community, thriving on the deprivations of the rural child's opportunity. Although moves have been made to remedy the unfortunate situations arising from the maintenance of the one-room rural school, there were, as late as 1928, 153,306 one-room school buildings out of the 250,961 school buildings in the United States. Cubberley<sup>1</sup> says:

Two general plans have been followed in attempting a solution of the problem. The first, and

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1. Cubberley, Ellwood, P. An Introduction to the Study of Education, (Revised by Walter Crosby Ellis), p. 404.

the earlier, was to try to explain to country and village people how wasteful and ineffective the existing district schools were, and how much better education they might provide for their children were they to abandon some of the many small schools they have and haul the children to some central school where there would be more children and larger possibilities of providing a good school for them, and then to try to induce them to hold an election and vote to make the needed consolidations. This is what has been known as the voluntary transportation and consolidation movement, and much effort has been expended in trying to secure results under it.

The other plan, and in general the later one to be employed, has been to force the abandonment of the district system by law, to replace it with some form of the township, community or county-unit organization, and then to put this larger unit at work at the problem of providing schools suited to the needs of country children.

The first law which permitted the use of public money to transport children to school was enacted in 1869 by Massachusetts, and in 1930 that state spent nearly two million dollars in transporting children to schools. In the entire United States in 1930, forty million dollars were spent to transport two million children to and from school.

The desirability and need of greater efficiency in the operation of the public schools throughout the United States has brought forth a movement of consolidation of school districts for the purpose of operating and maintaining better schools. The trend of our economic society

has rendered the small school district inefficient in the operation and maintenance of our public schools, and the declining birth rate has and will continue to cause declines in our school enrollments, which factors, in themselves, have made the problem of providing adequate and efficient school systems in areas of relatively small populations indeed a pertinent one. Experts in the field of education and social welfare have attempted to work out a solution for this perplexing problem and have found at least a partial answer in consolidation.

In keeping with the findings of these educators and social workers, the states have devised laws and statutes providing an opportunity for the separate school districts to form larger and more adequately suited districts for the purpose of conducting public schools.

The consolidation of rural school districts to form an efficient rural school, unlike the plan followed by many districts for transporting pupils into town schools, does not remove the schools from the communities, but rather it enlarges the community and brings about a greater feeling of unity and true democratic spirit. The rural community as compared with the city unit is made up of people with closely allied interests. The adults are more easily drawn into close contact to the school program. The commercialized centers of amusement present in the city

are not in the rural districts; thus, rural people turn more to their schools for recreation and enlightenment, so a greater bond of genuine interest is formed between the school and the community. The rural school has its laboratories as the city high school does, but in addition the whole community becomes the laboratory for the rural pupil. To use the words of Drummond:

Living in close contact with the earth and growing things, both plants and animals, his varied interests on the farm throw the rural child into constant thinking and testing situations on questions brought up in school. The ordinary home and farm management also give plenty of opportunities to practice the skills.<sup>2</sup>

### Geographical Description of Communities

That part of southern Polk county which this thesis proposes to consolidate would make a district of approximately 176 square miles of land. The area embraced in this proposed district would contain mountainous territories, valley regions, and semi-mountainous areas.

The relative distances from towns which the center of these communities would be, proceeding from the most heavily populated to the least, are: Corvallis, 20 miles, 8 miles over graveled roads; Dallas, 15 miles, 10 miles

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2. Drummond, Glenn. "The Consolidated School's Contribution to Progressive Education" -- Abstract, Proceedings of the National Education Association, Vol. 68, p. 481.

over graveled roads; Independence, 15 miles, 8 miles over graveled roads; and Monmouth, 13 miles, 8 miles over graveled roads. These distances, the reader should remember, are from the geographical center of the district, and not necessarily from the center of population.

The roads enclosed in this area are, with the exception of about ten miles of state highway, only graveled, or, in many cases, only dirt roads. During the winter months, transportation becomes a problem, since some of these roads are, in many cases, used for logging, and they are of course often in a poor state of repair.

There are relatively few streams running through the district all the year around. The Luckiamute river which forms part of the northern and north-eastern boundary is the largest stream in the district. Ritner Creek and Pedee Creek drain the western end of the area.

As has been mentioned previously, much of the area enclosed within this district is mountainous. From these mountainous areas, however, would come a number of pupils. The distances these homes are from town, coupled with the distances the student must walk to a passable road, renders the problem of their transportation into town schools impractical and inadvisable. However, with the prospective consolidated school located in the center of the proposed

district, the problem of getting to and from school for these students would become negligible in comparison with the problem they now face.

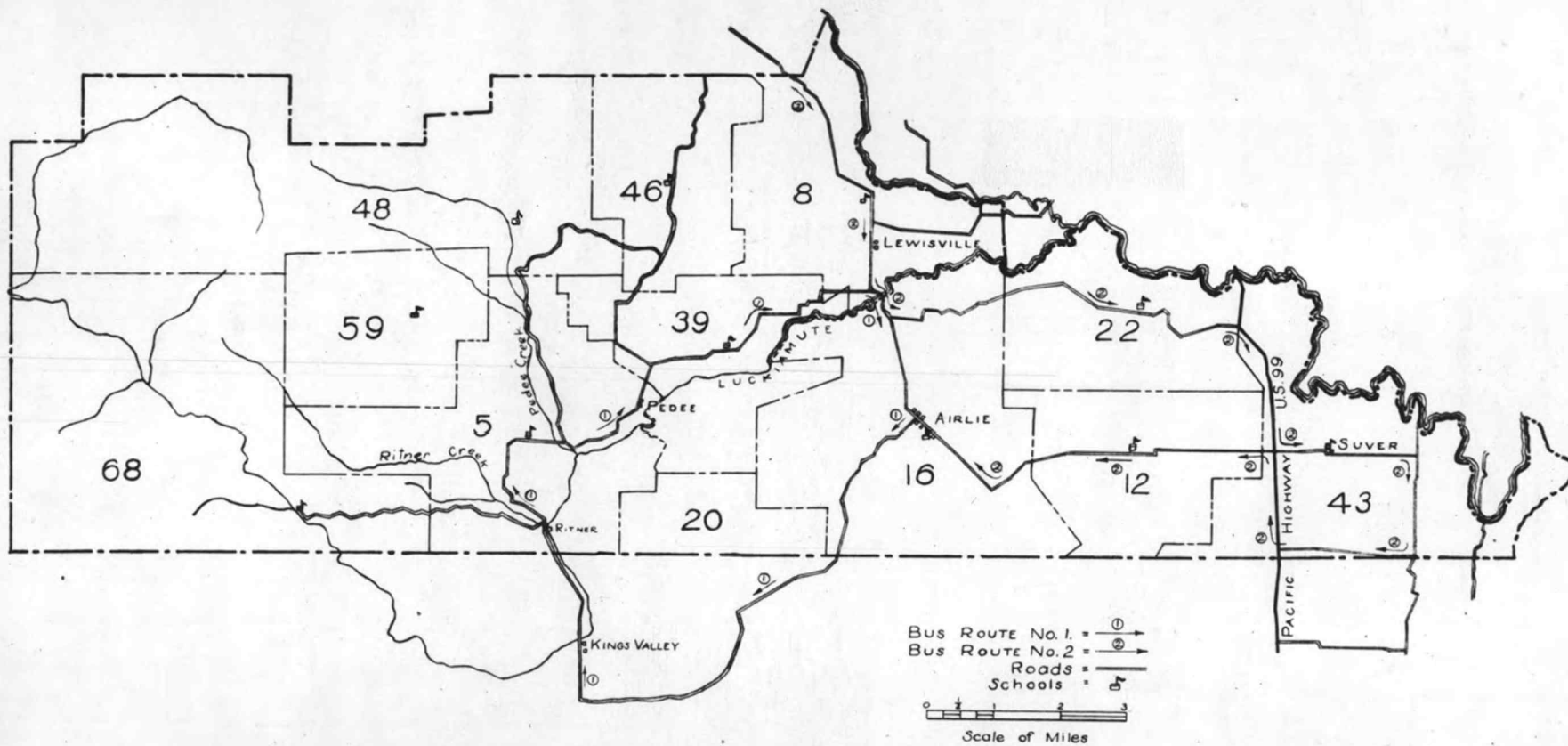
In speaking of population centers, it is rather hard to designate any groupings of population at any special place since the respective centers are so small that they are hard to designate as centers of population. There are certain rather spacious areas which are historically significant as centers of trade and population and to which this thesis refers as population centers. The four centers then in order of their size would be: Airlie, located within a mile of the measured center of the area of the proposed consolidated district. The population of the Airlie community is approximately 150. The second largest center, Pedee, is located near the western boundary of the district. In fact the western boundary of the Pedee district would be the western boundary of the consolidated school district. The population of the Pedee district would be about the same as that of Airlie although at times it would be larger since that district is a center of saw-mill operations and is subject to more shifting of population. The third area of population would be the Lewisville district. The designation of the area as a population center is due to the fact that a community church is located there and a state highway runs through the district

along which five or six families have chosen to build their homes. The fourth population center, Suver, was once a small saw-mill town. It is nothing more now than a few old "typically saw-mill town" shacks, and a couple of good buildings. The probable population of this district could be conservatively put at 150. Other than the centers which were referred to, the population is on the farms.

In the designation of population centers, it has seemed more advisable to locate the districts within which there is still some group organization functioning. In the main, however, the population is scattered about on farms, in logging camps, at saw-mills, and here and there within the area enclosed in the boundaries of this district. These, then, one might better designate as farm centers, or centers of work. The accompanying map, on page 8, will serve to indicate more clearly the location of the centers of population and other pertinent information.

#### Industries and Vocations

The geographical situation and the topography of these districts determine largely their inherent nature in industrial and vocational aspects.



At one time this district might well have been referred to as one of the richest and most fertile farming areas in the state of Oregon. Such a description might also have been given of the timber resources of the district.

Until 1917 Airlie was still considered to be a prospective center of shipping and commerce of this part of Polk County, and, indeed, at that time it merited the hopes and aspirations of its inhabitants. It was then the southwestern terminus of a branch railroad line and boasted a granary, stock yards, a depot, a telephone office, and a hospital. Gradually, however, with the advent of well-kept roads, increased efficiency in transportation facilities, and the growth of the motor truck as a freight vehicle, the prospects of there being a center for shipping established at Airlie were lost. With this loss went the industries which would have benefited the community so much. In discussing the industries and vocations of these communities, then, one must confine himself to a discussion of one or two things.

Primarily the vocational life of the community is agrarian in nature. This, however, does not mean that the possibilities of the agricultural development of these districts need be confined to one, two, or even three types of farming. The general topography of the land

probably lends itself most adeptly to tilling the land in comparatively large tracts and to the raising of seed crops such as oats, wheat, hairy-vetch, clover, and the like. Such crops, as the reader knows, provide only seasonal employment for those seeking work. Another recourse in the agricultural development of these districts is the raising of sheep, which has been growing in impetus in the last few years. This type of agriculture, as the reader may readily see, would and does provide a more steady means of employment for workers. A third type of agricultural development possible for these communities is the raising of prunes, hops, potatoes, and other similar crops. Here we find again the opportunities for employment are seasonal, but the season of harvesting these crops follows that of the grain crops, thereby offering continued employment for the laborers. These crops exert an influence upon the schools in localities where children are going, in that many schools do not open in the fall until the hop and prune harvests are completed. The opening date for the majority of the schools in Polk County was October 25 in the fall of 1939 and only a week earlier in the fall of 1938. This fact is a further argument pointing to the need of a centralized school for these districts. As all schoolmen will readily admit, there are few things so disconcerting as to begin school in

the fall, only to find that two or three weeks after the school has started, there is a sudden increase in enrollment; and it is necessary to adjust classes, equipment, and other school facilities to meet this sudden increase.

A fourth possibility of agricultural pursuit in these districts lies in dairying. The large harvesting of hay crops provides the needed feed for winter feeding. The mild climate permits almost year round pasturing. The land which the farmers are attempting to build up provides the needed pasture.

Although only four major types of agricultural pursuits have been presented here, even though brief, they should serve to give the reader a somewhat clearer picture of the agricultural activities which exist in these communities.

Turning to the second major line of vocations found in these areas, one finds another representative industry, that of lumbering and saw-mill work. There are several small mills in this district in operation practically the year around. These mills with their necessary logging and shipping operations provide employment for saw-mill hands, loggers, truck-drivers, carpenters, and other allied tradesmen. Although the major portion of the lumber is shipped out of the district, the cheapness of the lumber lends encouragement to the farmers to erect new

buildings and to keep their old buildings in a good state of repair. Such building operations provide some limited opportunities for work.

Of course there are a few scattered employment opportunities which are not taken up in these two major divisions, but the small number of people employed by such work does not warrant more than passing mention. There is, of course, road repair work, a few opportunities in the small rural stores which are generally owned and operated by the same family. Some families do employ girls to assist with the house work, but such cases are infrequent. There are two or three garages, but these are owned and operated by one or two men, thereby offering only occasional employment to outside workers.

The generally low wage level of the jobs available in the district does not permit the workers a great many opportunities for recreation, but in many cases does well to provide the bare necessities for the family living. This level of wages then is in itself a point in favor of the centralized community center which a consolidated school would provide since it would provide recreational and educational facilities which the people could not have otherwise.

The relatively few employment opportunities and the limited industrial development does not permit the com-

munity to offer possibilities for the pupils to become acquainted with many lines of work. It remains then a problem for the school to acquaint its students with vocational possibilities as best they can. The consolidated school with its increased facilities and larger teacher personnel could do this job much more adequately than small districts.

Surely the similarity of work, the common problems of employment and unemployment, would tend to bring these people more closely into a common group; a group whose thinking, whose interests, whose homes and whose diversions, hobbies and recreations are, through circumstances and necessity, indeed similar.

### The People of the Communities

The people of these communities are rather conservative. They are perhaps better described as being rural in interests, living, tastes, and recreational life. They are hard-working, sincere folk whose lives have been filled primarily with agricultural activities. They are home-loving folk who still find recreation and amusement in their families. Their friendliness, their helpfulness, and their slow, somewhat laissez-faire philosophy of living places them in a group to whom the towns offer little attraction. These people take pride in their com-

munity and homes. They want their schools and churches, but above all else they desire to provide for their children the best schools and opportunities they can.

Many of the people, owning farms in this district, were born and raised in the community in which they now live. Frequently they are still farming the land originally owned by their fathers. In fact, there are a few farms which have been owned and cultivated by the same family since 1845. These are in part the reasons for their desire to keep their community intact. There is probably a deeper, more sincere reason which one seems to understand as he becomes more thoroughly acquainted with these people -- that is, the more or less general feeling that they are farmers and do not fit into the town groups.

Generally speaking, there is no foreign element in the communities, although many families are of foreign descent. The most representative group is of German and Dutch extraction with a fairly large "sprinkling" of Swedish and other Scandinavian people. The English language is the spoken language in all the homes, although some of the older folk do converse at their homes in German. The character of these people, then, is largely handed down from generation to generation. The nature of their living and thinking naturally makes these people less conscious of the social problems and questions outside

their communities. Usually the community's problem families are taken care of by donations, county aid, and other well-known and long-used plans.

Lest the reader be misled into thinking these people are unprogressive, it should be said that such is not the case, as general farming methods and living conditions are quite comparable to the methods employed by other farming communities. They are, however, frugal enough to be inclined to get along with most of the facilities at their disposal. If the advantages of something can be fully demonstrated to them, they will accept it quite readily and use it. They are people who seldom hurry or want to be hurried. They are quite comparable to the early pioneers who needed a wider area for "breathing space" and, as a result, migrated westward. These people as a whole enjoy their spacious fields and generally dislike the confining town life.

The character of these peoples' occupations and sources of income naturally cause the average income to be smaller than in the urban areas. This relatively small income will naturally cause the people of the district to spend less money for commercialized amusements. As a result they are forced to look to their community for their recreation, and here the consolidated school could offer much in providing a place where "A man might go," so to

speak, "without a necktie." These communities naturally attract a group which is not as progressive as it might be. Such groups are quite common in rural areas because the competition is less keen, and these communities have not been slighted in their proportionment of this group. As a general rule the members of the group just described are usually very poor and dependent on the help of others in order to maintain an existence, and, unfortunately, they have the largest families. There are at the present eight such families within the boundaries of this proposed district, and the average number of children in these families is eight.

#### Pupils in These Communities

The pupils living in this district generally come from larger families than the pupils in the urban areas of the county. The size of these large families naturally brings about a lower standard of living, which will, of course, work somewhat of a hardship on the members of the family in many respects. The pupils coming from these families often have a number of duties and chores to perform at home which definitely limit their opportunities for participating in school activities. One needs but to consider the daily program of activities of the average rural pupil to get a more complete and understandable

picture of how the school can serve efficiently in his life. Generally speaking, the rural boy arises at from 5:30 a. m. to 6:30 a.m., helps with the milking, does a few odd chores about the ranch, and then dons his school clothes. He is usually ready to leave for school by 8:00 a. m. After a day at school the pupil will get home between 5:00 and 6:00 in the evening. Then, after doing chores for an hour or so, he is ready for dinner. After dinner the student may still have from one-half to one hour of work to do before he finds time for activities of his own choice. The reader may readily see that such a schedule permits but little time for outside activities. Certainly, then, the school should provide possibilities for the student to get some constructive types of recreation. The urban school, trying to serve the rural child, cannot provide these opportunities because the student is usually unable to return to the school in the evening.

There are in these twelve districts which this thesis proposes to consolidate about 180 elementary pupils and about 90 high school students. Besides this number of high school students, there are 10 students of high school age who have indicated their desire to attend high school, but who feel they cannot profit a great deal by the present offerings. These districts, then, gather their school

population from a group of normal rural American children who are desirous of getting the most they can out of their school training and who, with a little encouragement and opportunity, would continue their formal education.

### Community Centers

Under the present set-up in this community, the problem of a community center is indeed a pressing one. The only centers are, as has been indicated earlier in the thesis, located in four areas. The public meeting places are, generally speaking, inadequate and inappropriate in which to hold public meetings. There are three small churches which were built in earlier days to serve only the people very near them; the school houses are small, inadequately seated, and mostly devoid of auditoriums. If plays or school entertainments are held, stages must be built temporarily in the main study hall. Certainly such inadequate facilities to hold community gatherings in are not conducive to the sponsoring of such activities and, under the present conditions, it is almost impossible to hold any school entertainments or public meetings. Few students of community life and social problems will deny the need for adequately equipped buildings or places to hold public gatherings in for the best interests of the community and its people.

Certainly the district population with its many things in common, coupled with geographical area and location, would merit its being called a community, and if this proposed school is to serve its purpose well and efficiently, it might well become the community center of this consolidated district. There are many examples of schools serving in the capacity of the community center, and probably in the future the schools are going to become more community centered. People are generally concerned with their schools, and certainly the school should be concerned with the people. Thompson<sup>3</sup> describes vividly the spontaneous enthusiasm one community had for the erection of its new school building. For the people of that community, like the people in the average American community, realized as Thompson<sup>4</sup> puts it:

. . . that what in any way concerns the life preparation of children must be the adults' immediate concern. Not dutifully, nor dolefully, but gladly and jointly, they work out the problems that occur in their children's learning years, be they wall-painting, or health programs, or richer library facilities, or personality kinks -- problems worthy of their fullest and best efforts.

Such a community interest in the school as pictured by Thompson could only be possible in a community whose people, interest, and problems are alike. It is rather

3. Thompson, Alice. "A Community Centered School," Progressive Education, Vol. IX, No. 5, p. 379-80.

4. Ibid., p. 80.

doubtful if such interest would be taken by a group of urban dwellers whose interests are satiated with many diversified commercialized means.

In this era of centralization of government, it is imperative that the schools be used for greater community ends. If local governments cannot succeed, certainly state and national governments are doomed to failure, and the task of rebuilding the local units of government should be given to the school. In this respect the community-centered school might well become the educational center if the community school becomes the center for fashioning a better local governmental and social unit. It would provide a place for the people of the community to get together and discuss their problems and views; for it is thus that a social order is built in a community, and this socialization is essential to the proper functioning of the primary units of American life. For as Johnston<sup>5</sup> says:

The rebuilding of local government and the education of the individual to meet the duties and responsibilities incident thereto is fundamentally necessary. The destiny of our nation lies here, not in some highly centralized form of government.

The tendency to turn our faces towards some highly centralized form of government may

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5. Johnston, L. R. "High Schools as Community Educational Centers," The Clearing House, Vol. VIII, No. 8, April 1934, p. 497-98.

be necessary under existing conditions, but in the long run, if the democratic tradition is to be maintained, it is not the solution.

Not only would the community centered school provide educational opportunities for the people of the community in governmental aspects, but it also provides a chance for the people to see what the schools are doing or trying to do, and gradually many of the now termed "fads" and "frills" of modern-day education would become essential fundamentals. Furthermore, when these people see the school functioning as a creative force in meeting the educational needs of their own lives as well as those of their children, they will have a great deal more faith in their schools and will be far more willing to assume the financial support required.

Some data taken from a study by the Rural Education Division of the New York State Department of Education<sup>6</sup> will reveal, to a certain extent, the uses made of the rural school in that state during the year:

Replies from 105 schools on the general use of school buildings showed 37 schools used the buildings for dramatics, 37 for dinners, 32 for dances, 30 for games, 21 for musical programs, 15 for motion pictures and smaller numbers for other forms of entertainment. Assemblages, not classified as entertainment, included 22 for lectures, 12 for study groups,

6. N. Y. State Department of Education, Rural Education Division, "Central Rural Schools Used As Community Centers," School and Society, Vol. 45, No. 1164, April 17, 1937, p. 536.

8 for educational films, and slides, 3 for home bureau demonstrations, 4 for music study and appreciation and 20 for miscellaneous gatherings. A number of the schools reported the use of school building for health services, 20 schools having held clinics, 11 having used the buildings for diphtheria inoculations and smaller numbers reporting gatherings for other health purposes.

As this study would indicate, a school need not be confined to increasing the more formal educational opportunities of the community. Kolb<sup>7</sup> gives an example of schools in California arranging for classes which meet unreserved needs of the people and carry on a very successful work. These schools are functioning more to coordinate the activities of the group, and as Sanderson and Polson<sup>8</sup> say, ". . . the coordination of group activities is the heart of social organization in so far as it is related to community welfare, and the importance of community organization in the everyday life of its people is apparent."

The extent to which the people of these districts have organized into clubs and other groups will serve to illustrate further the community spirit which exists there. In the small area of Airlie there is now an active women's organization, the ladies' aid, which meets regularly. There is also a group not organized, but banded to-

7. Kolb, J. H., Brunner, Edmund de S., and Ogburn, William F. A Study of Rural Society, Its Organization and Changes, p. 446.

8. Sanderson, Dwight and Polson, Robert A. Rural Community Organization, p. 5.

gether who take turns giving card parties at the homes of its various members. There are also several members of the Farmers' Union living in or near Airlie. The other districts are somewhat similarly organized. Although they do try to form worthwhile organizations, the lack of places in which to meet have prohibited the people of these districts from doing so. If these districts could join together and be assured of an adequate meeting hall, there would probably be study groups, a parent-teachers group, athletic groups, and many other such stimulating and admirable groups. Sanderson and Polson<sup>9</sup> have devoted a chapter in their book to describing types of community organizations and their advantages to the people and the community. The schools now in existence in the areas which this thesis proposes to consolidate cannot offer their people the advantages they should.

The schools now operated in these districts cannot provide much more than classroom instruction. The new community school which would be made possible if all these districts would join together would be truly a community school which, to quote Sanchez<sup>10</sup> ". . . is a syndicate in which mutually interdependent agencies, school service,

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9. Sanderson, Dwight and Polson, Robert A. Rural Community Organization, p. 87-150.

10. Sanchez, George I. "The Community School in the Rural Scene," in Everett, Samuel, "The Community School", p. 192.

health service, agricultural service, teacher-education service, and similar public services operate for the growth and development of a social group in terms of its culture." Such a school surely merits being called a community center, but such a school would be almost an impossibility under the present conditions, as the reader will readily see upon reading the description of the school buildings and their facilities.

### Types of School Buildings

The school buildings now in operation in these districts are very poorly equipped to meet the standards of health and safety necessary in a school building. The buildings are constructed almost entirely of wood with only concrete foundations or basements.

The school building at Airlie is a four-room, two-story building, which houses the grade school on the ground floor and the high school on the second floor. The present second floor of the building was built in 1908-1909, and then with the increased demands for a high school, a contract was let to jack up the building and build a new ground floor and basement under it, so the building which now houses the pupils of the Airlie district was constructed and ready for complete occupation in 1911. In these thirty years, this building has served the pupils

and people of the Airlie area. It has become quite dilapidated and in some respects unsafe and unsanitary. The windows are loose in their casings, and many of them cannot be opened, making proper ventilation practically an impossibility. There are two possible means of entering and exiting from the second story. One way is by a narrow stairway built inside in the front part of the building, and the other way is by a sloping "ramp" built on the outside at the back side of the building. The original purpose of the ramp was for use in case of fire. It is now used for a regular entrance from the gymnasium and athletic field by the high school students, thus avoiding a great deal of confusion. There is no fire escape exit provided other than the main entrance for the elementary school. The floors are old and have been oiled at frequent intervals to preserve them and increase their lives. The outside light comes from two sides of each classroom through windows at the left and the back of the students. Although the Airlie school does have electricity in it, the lights were put in after the erection of the school, and are so located as to be very inadequate for study, or "black board" work. The equipment of the building is in a very bad state of repair and is not at all conducive to proper instruction or study. There is no

running water in the building, and the source of drinking water comes from a "deep-well pump" in front of the building.

The gymnasium is even more inadequate than the main building, although Airlie is the only school in these areas with a building that might be called a gymnasium. The building is an old, long, low structure which has been converted as well as it can be into a place for the students to play in during stormy weather. Although it is used by the high school for basketball and volleyball games, the low rafters, lack of showers, and heating make it a detriment to skillful or healthful athletic competition. The building has never been painted, sealed, nor completely floored. A large part of it was put together by the high school students some years ago, and dressing rooms were added by the high school students of recent years. The building is cold, damp, dirty, and unkempt, and probably harmful to the students.

The grounds at Airlie which are used for playgrounds by the students are very good. Although these grounds are undeveloped save for a baseball diamond, their general smoothness and spaciousness would make it possible for the school to construct on them, with very little work or expense, excellent athletic fields.

Pedee, the only other district of the twelve districts being proposed for consolidation in this thesis which has a high school, has a more recently constructed modern building. The same building houses both the elementary pupils and the high school pupils, but both schools are on the ground floor. There is a good deal of confusion caused by the recess periods of the grade school, and by the high school class movement. The Pedee building does not have electricity, but is equipped with "flamo" gas for lights and science work. The school district has recently done some remodeling work on the building, but the building is still quite inadequate to meet the needs of modern instruction. The main study hall of the building is used for auditorium purposes. It has a stage constructed at the front end of it and sliding doors to close the stage off from the study hall during regular school hours. There is a small room provided for science and one for typing and other work. The outside lighting is made possible by windows on one side of the main study hall, but there is no outside lighting for the science room. Two sides of the other room have windows, and both elementary rooms are lighted by windows on two sides.

There is no gymnasium or play shed on the grounds at Pedee; thus students must either play outside or remain in the school house during recreation periods.

The building is so located that it is down in somewhat of a depression with wooded hills on three sides of it; thus, any provisions which might be made for adequate playgrounds at the present location would necessitate a great deal of leveling, filling, and draining. The building and grounds are located about a mile and one-half from the town of Pedee, it therefore is removed from the center of population of the district.

The high school at Pedee is a union high school, but the elementary school is a district school, although one of the districts considered in this proposed consolidation now transports its pupils to the Pedee elementary school.

Of the other ten districts involved in this proposed district, six are transporting their elementary pupils, one district to Pedee mentioned above and five districts to Monmouth. These districts are no longer maintaining their elementary schools, and are non-high school districts; therefore, the school has been literally removed from the district. The school buildings thus left vacant are small one-room buildings unsuitable for practical use under the present conditions. The four remaining districts are still maintaining their small one-room schools with no play sheds and have few or no modern conveniences.

The photographs on pages 29-32 will serve to give the reader a clearer picture of the existing buildings.



Pedee  
Dist. No. 5

Lewisville  
Dist. No. 8



Valley View  
Dist. No. 12



Airlie  
Dist. No. 16



Ward  
Dist. No. 20



Fairview  
Dist. No. 22



Montgomery  
Dist. No. 39

Suver  
Dist. No. 43



McTimmonds Valley  
Dist. No. 46



Fir Grove  
Dist. No. 48

Cherry Grove  
Dist. No. 59



Wildwood  
Dist. No. 68

## CHAPTER II

## GENERAL DISCUSSION OF CONSOLIDATION

There is still a good deal of confusion as to the meaning and significance of the term consolidation, although it is quite generally accepted among educators to mean the joining together of two or more school districts for purposes of providing schools. Hoffman and Booth<sup>12</sup> have defined the consolidated school as:

. . . the union of two or more school districts into one district for the purpose of having a better schools. The union of the territory of the districts and the bringing of the school children to a central building make it possible to have a better school. Usually several districts should be united to form a consolidated district. The territory should not be too small. It should be large enough to make it possible to secure adequate revenue. There should be a sufficient number of children in the consolidated district to form a good elementary school and a good high school. A real consolidated school takes care of all the children through the twelve years of work. A consolidated school carries with it the idea of transportation of all children, living at a distance from the school . . .

The Joint and Consolidated Schools Survey Commission of Indiana<sup>13</sup> in its report of January, 1931, defined consolidated and joint schools collectively thus:

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12. Hoffman, U. J. and Booth, W. S. "Consolidation of Schools in Illinois and Data from Other States." Circular no. 152, p. 6.
  13. Report of the Joint and Consolidated Schools Survey Commission of Indiana, January 1931, p. 8.

Consolidated and joint schools are therefore defined to include those that are formed on the initiative of the corporations; each finally passing on the question as an undivided and separate unit, to establish attendance districts and maintain schools that shall serve all or part of the combining corporations. The plan in general, recognizes the integrity of the present corporations and proposes to abandon, combine, or otherwise change their functions only by their own consent.

Rapeer<sup>14</sup> has defined a consolidated rural school as

. . . a school produced by bringing together the pupils of two or more single-room or other schools in a graded school of at least two rooms and two teachers for the purpose of better educational advantages.

The Oregon School Law<sup>15</sup> does not set up any standard definition as to the meaning of a consolidated district nor does it explain the extent of it, but it merely provides that two or more contiguous districts may consolidate for the purpose of forming one district and that no district may be consolidated against its will. An opinion of the Attorney General<sup>16</sup> of June 27, 1922 does, however, say ". . . when the districts under discussion are consolidated they are consolidated for all purposes. . ."

To sum up the definitions of consolidation then one may conclude, that in general, consolidation applies to the whole twelve years of school, is primarily concerned

14. Rapeer, Louis W. The Consolidated Rural School, p. 7.

15. More recent legislation in the State of Oregon on consolidation will be explained later in the thesis.

16. Biennial Report and Opinions of the Attorney General of the State of Oregon, 1920-1922, (June 27, 1922).

with improving the schools, and intends to equalize some of the existing inequalities of the schools. Consolidation as used in this thesis will be considered to mean that legal process whereby two or more contiguous districts may, after a vote of the legally qualified voters in the districts involved, form into one district for the purpose of providing twelve years of instruction in the elementary and high school and may or may not provide transportation to and from home for the pupils attending these schools thus formed. The purposes of the district thus formed is to alleviate the inequalities now existing in schools, and to improve as much as possible the educational advantages offered to the students and people of the newly formed consolidated district.

A community school, which phrase is used many times in this thesis, may be considered to mean, as defined previously by Sanchez,<sup>17</sup>

a syndicate in which mutually interdependent agencies--school service, health service, agricultural service, teacher-education service, and similar public services--operate for the growth and development of a social group in terms of its culture.

More simply stated, the community school may be considered to be a school located in a community, and so organized

17. Sanchez, George I. "The Community School in the Rural Scene," in Samuel Everett, The Community School, p. 192

and operated as to exert every effort to coordinate the community and school life into one whole function which shall work towards the improvement of educational, recreational, cultural, and other desirable opportunities of the pupils and people of the community.

We proceed with these definitions in mind and with an understanding that consolidation signifies, to a large degree, the growing knowledge that our small schools must, in order to keep pace with our dynamic society, join together into larger, more efficiently organized and operated units of educational organizations. That consolidation further signifies a necessary trend to equalize the tax burdens of the patrons who support our public educational institutions, can be demonstrated fully.

### History and Historical Studies

The first law permitting consolidation was passed in New York State in 1853. This law, however, was not very effective and was, therefore, amended in 1864, but it was still not much of a stimulus to the consolidation movement. It remained then for Massachusetts to take the lead in providing the necessary stimulus to get the consolidation movement under way. In 1869 Massachusetts passed the first law permitting the use of public money for the transportation of pupils to and from school, but

consolidation did not actually gain much headway even in Massachusetts until about twenty years after the passage of this first transportation law. By 1890 Connecticut had been added to the states which had passed laws providing for consolidation of school districts, and soon thereafter, Indiana, Maine, Rhode Island, Vermont, and Pennsylvania passed laws providing for consolidation and transportation. The real beginning of the consolidation movement might, then, be set roughly at about 1890, and since that time or in about 50 years the movement has grown rapidly.

The first consolidated school in Massachusetts and probably the first in the United States was at Montague, Massachusetts. Three district schools were joined together by this consolidation in 1875 and a high school was soon added, graduating its first four-year class in 1884. Rapeer<sup>18</sup> writing in 1920 says: "This school is still in a flourishing condition. It serves a territory of approximately twenty square miles." The second consolidated school was in Concord, Massachusetts. Here a central school was erected in 1879 replacing several one-teacher schools and embracing an area of about twenty-five square miles. For school administration purposes, the area was divided into five rural districts and two

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18. Rapeer, Louis W. The Consolidated Rural School, p.109.

village districts. Prior to consolidation, there were twelve common schools occupying eleven school buildings. Both the above consolidations provided transportation to the students and thereby set a new precedent in school policy.

Ohio and Indiana were the next two states to take up the consolidation movement in their schools, for like Massachusetts these states were also organized on the township basis, although of a different type.

The first consolidated school in Ohio appeared at the Kingsville school in 1897. The consolidation movement was given greater impetus in Ohio by the passage of a law in 1904 authorizing the board of education to suspend schools in any or all sub-districts in the township and transport the pupils of these suspended schools to a centralized school. The "teeth" in the law set a minimum average daily attendance of twelve\* or more and provided that, if the average daily attendance of a school should drop below this minimum for a prescribed time, the school could be abolished even against the opposition of the majority of the voters of the district.

Indiana was third in line to take up consolidation. Although Caleb Mills urged and advocated consolidation as

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\*A district will not be abandoned in Oregon until the district ceases to contain for two years at least six children of school age.

early as 1856, nothing much was done about it until 1889 when the legislature passed an act recognizing the right of trustees of a township to pay for transportation of pupils to and from consolidated schools.

The State of Oregon<sup>19</sup> passed its first consolidation law in 1903 upon the suggestions of many county school superintendents. One law provided that a district might suspend its school by a majority vote of the legal voters of the district present and voting, and transport the pupils of the suspended school to another school. This is known as the school suspension law. It provided the opportunity for suspending the school, but did not suspend the school district. The consolidation law, however, did provide that the districts would be suspended and consolidated. Thus, we have two ways for joining school facilities: (1) the joining of schools, but not districts, and (2) the consolidation of districts.

Superintendent Ackerman<sup>20</sup> said in 1904:

. . . No district has, to my knowledge, been consolidated in accordance with the act authorizing consolidation of school districts . . .

19. Reports and Suggestions of County School Superintendents in Fifteenth Biennial Report of the Superintendent of Public Instruction of the State of Oregon, to the Legislative Assembly, Regular Session, 1903. p. 191-229.
20. Sixteenth Biennial Report of the Superintendent of Public Instruction of the State of Oregon to the Legislative Assembly, Regular Session, 1905. p. 221.

While the people have been very much interested, it seems very hard for them to give up the idea that there must be a schoolhouse at every cross road and as near the individual homes of the children as possible. But centralization is in the air, and it is bound to come. A few districts have suspended their schools, and transferred their children to adjoining districts. So far as I have heard, with but one exception, the people have approved the suspension of the school and would not go back to the smaller school . . .

One of the first schools in Oregon to take in the pupils of a suspended district was Independence in Polk County. The results of this experiment were very encouraging since attendance was increased, costs were cut down, school year was lengthened, rural pupils were enabled to attend high school, and generally speaking, the people were enthusiastic and anxious to have the plan continue.

A second rural school near Sheridan in Yamhill County took advantage of the district suspension plan soon after the experiment was begun at Independence. In this case the Sheridan district had 200 children of school age, and the rural district about 20, but not nearly all were attending school. The rural district turned over its funds amounting to \$100 to the Sheridan district and in turn received the advantages of an eight-month, well-graded system. The results were as encouraging as those found at Independence, and, although the children had a little farther to go to attend the new school, the ad-

vantages they gained compensated for the extra travel.

The roads of Oregon were such as to make the transporting of children to and from school a real problem and was at that time one of the greatest hindrances to the consolidation movement, but the movement to consolidate and transport the children was definitely on in spite of the difficulties.

The general conclusions relative to the advantages of consolidation at that time are summarized very well by R. A. Kirk, principal of Newberg school, in an article written for Superintendent Ackerman. Ackerman<sup>21</sup> quoted it thus:

. . . to summarize, the advantages are, more months of a better school, having more efficient teachers, better equipment, more thoroughly graded, closer supervision, and more carefully guarded on the road to and from school . . . .

Consolidation progressed quite slowly in Oregon through the next twenty years to the 1920's when once more this movement began to be talked about and acted upon. The slowness of the growth in the consolidation movement might be attributed to several causes: (1) poor roads, (2) topography of country, (3) new settlements, (4) the World War, (5) lack of encouragement from State Depart-

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21. Seventeenth Biennial Report of the Superintendent of Public Instruction of the State of Oregon, to the Twenty-Fourth Legislative Assembly, Regular Session, 1907, p. 185.

ment, (6) the prejudices and animosities of the different communities, and (7) the high cost of transportation.

The growing tendency towards consolidation during the 1920's is reflected, however, in the biennial reports of the State Superintendent of Public Instruction.

Superintendent Churchill reports that in 1923, there were 77 consolidated elementary schools in Oregon with an enrollment of 5,585 pupils and employing 348 teachers.

Superintendent Churchill<sup>22</sup> says:

. . . Nearly every county in the state now has its problem of consolidation under way and we have the assurance that consolidation will be an outstanding feature in rural school progress during the next biennium.

Consolidation seemed to hold its place as one of the most talked of school movements in Oregon until 1929 when again it dropped in its position of importance in school discussions. One sees, however, a new rise in 1933 and once more school officials were looking to consolidation as the factor most likely to reduce the existing inequalities among the various districts. Finally in 1939, the Fortieth Legislative Assembly passed what is known as the School District Reorganization Law. This law should lend a great deal of encouragement to the school

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22. Twenty-fifth Biennial Report of the Superintendent of Public Instruction of the State of Oregon, to the Thirty-Second Legislative Assembly, Regular Session, 1923. p. 12.

districts to consolidate. A summary of the law will be presented at this point with a more complete analysis of the law in a later chapter of the thesis.

The School District Reorganization Law<sup>23</sup> creates a county reorganization committee which conducts an analysis of its county and makes recommendations as to what districts should be consolidated and where, taking into consideration certain criteria established by the state commission. This report of proposed consolidations is to be filed with the state commission which may accept or reject the plan upon examination. If the plan is accepted, the state commission will order its adoption and the new consolidated district is thus formed. Any district involved may, however, present a petition signed by 10 per cent of the legal voters of the district and the question of consolidation will be brought to a vote in such district. If the consolidation is voted down, such district remains as it was prior to the recommendations and the other districts consolidate. The law does not propose to consolidate forcefully any school districts, but rather it proposes to demonstrate what could be done by way of consolidation, and it is up to the districts whether or not the consolidation really becomes effective. It is hoped that the law will do away with a large number

23. Oregon Laws, Statutes, 35-5501-35-5519. p. 30-34.

of one-room schools and in a large measure alleviate some of the existing inequalities of school support.

### Values of Consolidation

As one studies the consolidation movement in our schools, he become more and more convinced of the value of centralization of schools, not only to the pupils, people and teachers, but also the community and school itself.

Hoffman<sup>24</sup> quotes Hines, the state superintendent of public instruction of the state of Indiana, as saying in 1920:

The consolidated school has come to Indiana to stay. We have almost 1000 of these institutions and we want the day to come when the last one-room school will have disappeared. Indiana will soon have three or four counties with complete consolidation.

This testimony coupled with the fact that Indiana had 8,853 one-room schools in 1890 and in 1920, she had cut this number down to 4,800, or about 55 per cent of the original number, would seem to indicate that consolidation had been accepted quite enthusiastically in that state.

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24. Hoffman, U. J. and Booth, W. S. "Consolidation of Schools in Illinois and Data from Other States." Illinois Dept. of Education, Circular No. 152, 1920, p. 6.

A study<sup>25</sup> which was made of the comparative efficiency of one-room and consolidated schools reported by a committee of the Department of Rural Education of the National Education Association in 1923 reveals some interesting facts. The committee used 42 points of comparison covering the subject of reading, arithmetic, language, spelling and handwriting. The results of the study showed the consolidated schools to have the advantage in annual progress in 41 of the 42 points and the median amount of superiority of the consolidated schools was valued at 27 per cent of a year's work. The single exception was in quality of handwriting for the fourth grade in which instance there was no difference at all. There is further evidence that the superiority of the consolidated school increases in the upper grades and that it also exerts a greater holding power over the students and teachers. The teachers of the consolidated school remained in the same school about .88 years longer than in the one-teacher school. These advantages, annual progress of the student and the longer stay of the teacher, result in part from the fact that the consolidated school attracts better teachers and has more finances with which

25. Foote, John M. "A Comparative Study of Instruction in Consolidated and One-Teacher Schools." National Education Association, Addresses and Proceedings, Department of Rural Education, Vol. 61, 1923, p. 812-826.

to promote better instruction.

Tape<sup>26</sup> says: "There are many educational experiences which require materials of instruction, special facilities, and educational leaders which can be provided economically only where numbers justify the demands." The broader curriculum which is made possible by consolidation enables the well-trained teacher to provide an educational program in terms of the integrated needs of the pupils and community. O'Brien<sup>27</sup> says: "There is vital importance in training youth for wholesome recreation and the safe use of leisure, also in utilizing varied interests and personality-developing activities, as well as in emphasizing mental achievement in the prevailing subjects."

The decreased expenditure made possible by increasing the size of the school unit is further argument in favor of consolidation. O'Brien<sup>28</sup> estimating economies possible in Kansas says:

Without considering what economies due to better organization might be made in cities of the first and second class, it appears that a saving of \$1,210,000 may be possible in smaller graded schools and as much as \$4,250,000 more may be saved by displacing one teacher units by larger school centers. These two items make a total

26. Tape, H. A. "The Consolidated Laboratory School" in Everett, Samuel, The Community School, p. 340.

27. O'Brien, F. P. "Economies Possible in Larger School Units" in Kansas Studies in Education, p. 28.

28. Ibid., p. 17.

possible saving per year in the elementary schools of Kansas of \$5,460,000.

O'Brien further estimates that the state of Kansas by combining several of the small high schools in that state could make a saving of \$2,100,000 in that branch of the public schools which would be a grand total of \$7,560,000 per year made possible by centralization. Although not every state could make this saving nor could its consolidation be as extensive, still the fact remains that where two or more schools are existing within relatively easy transportation limits of each other a saving can usually be made by centralizing the schools and consolidating the districts.

From an administrative standpoint, the centralization of schools provides one of the best means of giving the rural school administrator an opportunity to plan efficiently and execute his program. The average rural school administrator is kept so busy with his full-time teaching load that he has little or no time to give to the professional tasks of improving his school. Such circumstances have resulted in inefficient planning and budget making which are costly indeed to the patrons and supporters of the school. Any successful business depends to a large extent upon the efficiency of its executive, and the management of a school is enough like the manage-

ment of a business to enable a comparison to be made. The efficiently-operated business tries to cut down on the number of administrative units by bringing several branches of the business under one head. Cutting down on administrative units is one of the many values of consolidation -- it cuts down on the administrative costs and centralizes the authority, thus making for greater efficiency and ease of operation.

Not only is the administrative work facilitated by consolidation, but the possibilities for more adequate supervision are enhanced. In the one-teacher school, supervision may come from three sources: (1) The county superintendent who calls once or twice a year and checks a few relatively unimportant things about the school, (2) the district school board members, community organizations or parents, who are relatively uninformed as to the problems of teaching, and (3) the state department which lends aid by sending out pamphlets, etc., and perhaps visits the school once every two or three years. Such inadequate supervision is not at all conducive to the improvement of our schools or teachers. In consolidated schools, where there would be a person trained in administration and supervision, the school would function as an efficiently operated institution striving to further the opportunities of its pupils and patrons, and

certainly it would make for a more congenial atmosphere.

Jaggers<sup>28</sup>, commenting on the wastes which result from the maintenance of the small one-teacher school, says:

"One of the greatest sources of waste in education is found in the operation of a system of small, inadequate school enterprises in rural areas." In writing of consolidation, Jaggers<sup>30</sup> observes:

In view of the limitations of the small school from the standpoint of the program, and in view of the high pupil cost, it is a point of good business administration if the superintendent emphasizes a program of eliminating the smaller school enterprise as rapidly as road conditions and public sentiment will permit.

Economy and efficiency will result when a program of consolidation of schools takes place.

If inadequate administration and supervision is provided in a school system, much of the waste inherent in haphazard planning and executing of expenditures can be eliminated. The schools, like other vast institutions of our society, must become more centralized and the inefficiencies of unwarranted duplication must be eliminated.

As our society becomes more complicated, so will the adjustments that the individual must make to this society

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29. Jaggers, Richard E. Administrating the County School System, p. 172.

30. Ibid., p. 173.

become more perplexing, and the school must necessarily assume more advisory duties. In the average rural one-teacher school, the possibilities of providing adequate advisory services are rendered almost negligible. The records and files of the students are too ineptly kept to render much practical aid to the teacher in advising students, and the changing of teachers from year to year does not permit any teacher to become very well acquainted with her pupils or the community. In the larger, centralized school with its more stable, and more thoroughly-trained teaching personnel, these advisory functions can be delegated to trained workers who are guided by measured results. Guidance is a necessary service in a well-planned, educational program, but can scarcely be made available in the small inefficient school units. If the school is to serve its community well, it must provide the best information, relative to its pupils, which can be obtained through the application of scientific educational procedure. Certainly the consolidated school is more in a position to apply these scientific educational principles than the small one-room school.

The fact that today there are nearly 18,000 consolidated schools in the United States whereas 50 years ago there were less than 100 is a fact in itself which points

to the approval and enthusiasm which has greeted this centralization movement.

## CHAPTER III

## THE PROPOSED CONSOLIDATED DISTRICT

The values and advantages of consolidation of school units as demonstrated by other studies need not be confined solely to districts in other states, but equal values and advantages can be gained by consolidations in the state of Oregon. Although there were 61 consolidations involving 150 schools in Oregon from 1930-1938, there still remain a great many more small schools which are far outgrown by the society which they propose to serve. The faith which the educational leaders of the state of Oregon have in the consolidation movement is evidenced by their endorsement of the recent School District Reorganization Law passed by the Fortieth Legislative Assembly in 1939. Certainly, the consensus of opinion of those who have studied our schools favors more and greater centralization.

The districts which profit to the greatest extent by consolidation are obviously the small rural districts which have in many cases been unable to keep pace with the needed educational changes and requirements. There are a number of such districts in Polk county in Oregon, and this thesis proposes to consolidate twelve of these rural districts.

The twelve districts mentioned above would be Airlie, district 16; Cherry Grove, district 59; Fairview, district 22; Fir Grove, district 48; Lewisville, district 8; McTimmonds Valley, district 46; Montgomery, district 39; Pedee, district 5; Suver, district 43; Valley View, district 12; Ward, district 20 (joint with district 81 of Benton county); and Wildwood, district 68. This thesis proposes, then, that the above twelve districts should be consolidated, and that there be a new school building constructed on the site of the present Airlie school, and that transportation be provided for the pupils of the districts entering into the consolidation.

There are two laws in the state of Oregon under which the districts could join together for school purposes, but it would be advisable to consolidate under the "old" Consolidation law rather than the new School District Reorganization Law, since the new consolidated district thus formed would receive a larger apportionment of county and state funds for the support of the new school. The following summary of the two laws will indicate the procedure of consolidation under each law.

The "old" Consolidation law<sup>30</sup> provides that if two or more contiguous districts in the state of Oregon wish to consolidate for school purposes, they must present to the

30. Oregon, Laws, Statutes, 35-908.

district boundary board a petition from each district involved, and this petition if from a first class district must contain the signatures of 100 legal school voters; if from a second class district, 50 legal school voters, and if from a third class district, 5 legal school voters. (In this proposed consolidation, all petitions would be from third class districts.) When the district boundary board receives these petitions, it shall within 10 days notify the school board of each of the districts involved, and shall fix a date at which time the legal school voters of each district shall vote upon the question. The ballot for this vote shall have written or printed on it, "For consolidation--yes," "For considation--no." After the election has been held as prescribed by law, the clerk shall take the ballots together with a tally sheet which he has kept of the vote and put them in a sealed envelope and either deliver or cause them to be delivered to the district boundary board, directed to the county superintendent as a member of said board. If the majority of votes cast in each district is determined by the district boundary board to be in favor of the consolidation, the district school board of each district shall be notified of the results and the district boundary board shall, within 10 days from the notification of the boards, consolidate all the districts into one. If, however the

district boundary board finds that the majority of votes cast in any one or all the districts involved are not in favor of the consolidation, then the district boundary board shall notify the districts that the consolidation has failed. The law further provides that each year for a term of five years the county superintendent shall apportion to the consolidated district an amount equal to \$100 for every district consolidated.

The location of the school site and building may be decided at this same election, but it does not have to be. If the building and site is not located, then the new consolidated district board, which shall be the present board of the most heavily populated district, shall decide for the first year only where the school will be located for the coming year. This board, after the first year, will naturally have a retiring member and this member's position shall be filled by an election of a member at large from any part of the newly-formed district. Any and all board members thereafter shall be replaced at the time of their retirement by an election of a member at large from the district. ~~at large.~~

Whether the newly consolidated district is to provide transportation for the pupils can also be decided upon at the same meeting at which the consolidation is decided, and the provisions for transportation shall also fix a distance

from the school which a student must live in order to be entitled to transportation.

The School District Reorganization law<sup>31</sup> provides for the creation of a county reorganization committee to be composed of the county school superintendent, county judge, the chairman of the non-high school district board, the county assessor, and three members of boards of education within the county who are chosen by the four designated members of the committee. It shall be the duty of this county reorganization committee to submit a plan for the reorganization of the school districts within the county to the state reorganization commission which shall be composed of the state board of education and such employees and assistants as have been duly selected by the commission. This plan would consist of a description of boundaries, a statement showing recommended adjustments of assets and liabilities, a statement of the county committee relative to building utilization, present and future construction needs, transportation needs, and attendance areas. After the state commission receives the report of the county committee, it may either accept or reject the plan, and in the case of acceptance, the county committee will be dissolved by the commission, and in the case of rejection, the state commission may on the

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31. Oregon, Laws, Statutes, 35-5501.

request of the county committee aid in revising the plan or the state commission may take over the work of the county committee. In any event, the county committee becomes automatically dissolved on March 1, 1940. After an acceptable plan has been approved by the state commission, the school districts affected by the reorganization shall be notified through the county superintendent by an order of the state commission.

Any school district involved may call for a vote on the acceptance of the reorganization providing a petition of 10 per cent of the legal school voters is filed within 60 days after the state commission's order of adoption. This election is conducted similarly to the election on consolidation except the ballots shall have written or printed on them "For reorganization--yes," "For reorganization--no." If the majority of the legal school voters present and voting vote in favor of the reorganization the plan becomes effective. If the majority of the legal school voters present and voting vote against the reorganization, then that district in which the reorganization plan is defeated retains its original status and all the districts in which the plan has been favorably voted upon are reorganized. Thus, no one district can prohibit the reorganization of the others if the reorganized territory is contiguous. The conduct, count and checking of

the election and voting is handled in the same manner as the consolidation election previously described.

The "old" Consolidation law then gives the people more to say about how their schools shall be consolidated, and it permits a more adequate consolidation, for the people of the districts should be more familiar with the problems of their respective districts and better able to judge the kind of centralization most suitable for their districts. The "old" law furthermore provides an opportunity for the new district to secure more money. It is for these reasons that the "old" consolidation law seems to provide the most advisable plan for this consolidation.

Before going into a further discussion of buildings, transportation, uses of school, etc., Table I on page 59 should be studied to see the present status and millage levies of these districts.

As the reader can see in the table, the districts now operating and maintaining schools are doing so under the handicaps of a small valuation and a small enrollment. The consolidated district created by the joining of these districts would increase the size of the taxable unit and the number of pupils to such an extent that a very good rural school could be built up and maintained with a small millage rate of from 9.5 to 10 mills, which is a

TABLE I

Data on Districts of the Proposed Consolidated District

| Dist.<br>No. | Dist.<br>Census | Elem.<br>Enrol.       | Elem.<br>Teachers | Spec.<br>School | Non-High | Valuation   | Total School<br>Millage |
|--------------|-----------------|-----------------------|-------------------|-----------------|----------|-------------|-------------------------|
| 68           | 20              | 9                     | 1                 | 7.9             | 10.2     | \$ 90,585   | 18.1                    |
| 48 UH        | 18              | 10                    | 1                 | 3.0             | UH 8.9   | 113,440     | 11.9                    |
| 59 UH        | 12              | Transporting Pedee    |                   | 1.6             | UH 8.9   | 34,570      | 10.5                    |
| 5 UH         | 64              | 34                    | 2                 | 2.7             | UH 8.9   | 105,815     | 11.6                    |
| 46           | 9               | Transporting Monmouth |                   |                 | 10.2     | 37,960      | 10.2                    |
| 39           | 27              | 14                    | 1                 | 4.4             | 10.2     | 91,465      | 14.6                    |
| 20 J         | 10              | 10                    | 1                 | 7.0             |          | 18,025      | 7.0                     |
| 8            | 22              | Transporting Monmouth |                   |                 | 10.2     | 110,555     | 10.2                    |
| 16           | 69              | 38                    | 2                 | 10.9            |          | 204,770     | 10.9                    |
| 22           | 37              | Transporting Monmouth |                   | 1.2             | 10.2     | 117,855     | 11.4                    |
| 12           | 18              | Transporting Monmouth |                   |                 | 10.2     | 133,045     | 10.2                    |
| 43           | 54              | Transporting Monmouth |                   | 1.4             | 10.2     | 222,410     | 11.6                    |
| TOTALS       | 360             |                       | 8                 |                 |          | \$1,289,495 |                         |

lower millage rate than that being paid by 11 of the districts at the present. The increased valuation would enable the new consolidated district to raise the salaries of the teachers from 15 per cent to 25 per cent with this millage, thus attracting and keeping better teachers for the schools. Table II on this page shows a comparison of present teachers' salaries with the proposed teachers' salaries, and the per cent of increase that would result if the proposed salary was paid by the new consolidated district.

TABLE II

Comparison of Present and Proposed Teachers' Salaries

| Teachers*             | Present<br>Annual<br>Salary | Proposed<br>Annual<br>Salary | Per cent of<br>Increase |
|-----------------------|-----------------------------|------------------------------|-------------------------|
| Elementary teachers*  | \$ 765                      | \$ 900                       | 17.68                   |
| High school teachers* | 810                         | 1000                         | 23.45                   |
| Principals            | 1080                        | 1500                         | 38.88                   |

\*The salaries are uniform throughout the 12 districts.

Table III, page 61, shows a proposed budget and sources of revenue with figures showing the amount that would be raised by the proposed millage levy of 9.5 to 10 mills.

TABLE III

Proposed Budget and Sources of Revenue  
for Consolidated District

|  | Per<br>Cent  | Amount             | State Av. %<br>1937-38 |
|--|--------------|--------------------|------------------------|
| <b>EXPENDITURES:</b>   |              |                    |                        |
| 1. General Control   | 3.1          | \$ 620.00          | 3.1                    |
| 2. Instruction--Super-<br>vision & Teaching  | 58.5         | 11,700.00          | 59.9                   |
| 3. Operation of plant  | 8.6          | 1,720.00           | 9.4                    |
| 4. Maintenance & repair  | 3.8          | 760.00             | 3.8                    |
| 5. Auxiliary agencies  | 9.0          | 1,800.00           | 7.2                    |
| 6. Fixed charges   | 2.0          | 400.00             | 2.0                    |
| 7. Capital outlay, debt<br>service & interest<br>payments                          | 15.0         | 3,000.00           | 14.0                   |
| <b>TOTALS</b>  | <b>100.0</b> | <b>\$20,000.00</b> |                        |
| <b>#SOURCES OF REVENUE</b>   |              |                    |                        |
| 1. Irreducible school<br>fund  | 3.1          | \$ 657.20          |                        |
| 2. County school fund  | 21.0         | 4,452.00           |                        |
| 3. Two-mill elementary<br>school fund  | 13.5         | 2,862.00           |                        |
| 4. Local district tax*   | 54.5         | 11,554.00          |                        |
| 5. High school tuition<br>fund   | 7.9          | 1,674.80           |                        |
| 6. Consolidation ap-<br>portion**  |              | 1,200.00           |                        |
| 7. Transportation appor-<br>tionment @\$250 per<br>teacher in elementary<br>school |              | 5,000.00           |                        |
| <b>TOTALS</b>  | <b>100.0</b> | <b>\$21,200.00</b> |                        |

#These figures are the average for Polk county for 1937-38.

\*2 millage levy of 9.5 mills would raise \$12,250.19; a levy of 10 mills would raise \$12,894.95 under present valuation.

\*\*This apportionment would only continue for the first five years after the consolidation.

Of course it would be necessary to construct a new school building on a suitable and fairly centralized site. The building could be constructed by the use of WPA funds, thereby costing the district only about one-third the actual cost of the building. If the district should take advantage of these WPA funds, a \$75,000 school building could be constructed for an approximate cost of \$25,000 to the district. This cost could be paid up in about 15 years by the district with the proposed millage of 9.5 to 10 mills. (See Table IV below and Table III on page 61.)

TABLE IV  
Indebtedness and Plan of Payment

| Item                                 | Cost               | How Paid                           | Annual Payment   |
|--------------------------------------|--------------------|------------------------------------|------------------|
| School building and equipment        | \$25,000.00        | Int. bearing bonds<br>4% per annum |                  |
| Two large school busses<br>@ \$2,750 | 5,000.00           | Int. bearing bonds or warrants     | \$2699.13        |
|                                      | <u>\$30,000.00</u> |                                    | <u>\$2699.13</u> |

The WPA prefers to wreck a building and use the good lumber and material in the construction of the new building; thus, the problem of what to do with the present buildings would be solved. The district would not be losing the value of these buildings for the WPA would give them credit for the materials salvaged, and the equipment that is used in the new building is also credited to the district. The WPA funds could be obtained through Mr. Boatwright, who is in charge of WPA projects in this district. He has indicated the desire of the WPA to get a project started in or around this district.

The type of building would depend upon the voters, but a building similar to the present school building at Harrisburg, Oregon, would be very appropriate. This building is a U-shaped building with the high school on one side, and the elementary school on the other. The school levels are separated by an auditorium. Thus, the cost of providing and operating two heating units is eliminated since the whole building is heated very adequately by one heating system which is placed under the auditorium. Construction of one building also cuts the initial cost down a great deal, and it is decidedly easier to maintain and operate. Such a type of building as has been proposed could be added to easily if expansion is necessary.

The present site of the Airlie school is proposed because this is the most centrally located school, and because the playgrounds and athletic fields at Airlie are the most adequate ones of all the districts mentioned. The Airlie school has at its disposal from five to six acres of level, cleared ground, and if it were necessary three more acres could be added very easily to the present grounds. This ground is now being used for pasture land and would either be given to the school by its present owner or sold for a very nominal sum.

Thus, with the school located, the next problem would be that of transportation. The Oregon School law provides that a school district board may, when authorized by the legal voters at any legally called school meeting, provide transportation to and from schools. The law\* pertaining to the apportionment of funds in a consolidated district further provides that if the district formed by consolidation provides transportation for the pupils of the annexed district the county superintendent shall apportion to the consolidated district that portion of the state elementary school fund which the annexed districts were entitled to receive at the time of consolidation. This apportionment is to continue as long as transportation is provided. It would amount to about \$250 per elementary

\* Oregon, Laws, Statutes, 35-919 and 35-922.

teacher in the new school, plus the same amount per teacher for each of the present elementary teachers now employed by the various districts. There would be about 20 x \$250 or \$5,000 apportioned to the new consolidated district each year as long as transportation was provided for the pupils.

Transportation could easily be provided and would of necessity have to be provided. The map on page 8 shows the two proposed bus routes which would pass within a mile and one-half of the farthest home, except some of those in McTimmonds Valley, Wildwood, and the Fir Grove districts. The small number of pupils from these homes could be hauled down to the main bus route by "pick-up" busses, thus eliminating that problem. The two most suitable bus routes would be:

Bus route number 1: This route would start at the Airlie store, proceed down the road to Kings Valley; then upon reaching the main state highway at Kings Valley, the bus would turn north and proceed back up the state highway through the town of Pedee for a distance of seven miles to Maple Grove, thence over to the school, two miles distant. The total distance traveled would be between 16 and 17 miles as checked by an automobile over the proposed route.

Bus route number 2: This route would begin at the northern end of the present Louisville district, proceed down the state highway to Maple Grove, thence over to Simpsons' road, then north to the junction of this road with highway 99-W about a quarter of a mile below Helmick Park, thence down highway 99-W to the Suver Service Station, thence over to the town of Suver, then south for one-half mile then over to highway 99-W, north to the Suver Service Station, thence west along the Airlie road to the school. The total distance of this route would be 19 or 20 miles.

As has been mentioned before, these bus routes would go within easy walking distance of practically every home. The school board could set the distance which a student must live from the school at one and one-half miles before the student would be entitled to ride on the bus. This would not overload the busses; and student living that distance from the bus route, of which there are a few, could not object to walking a mile and one-half or less to catch the bus.

The initial cost of the busses would be from \$2500-\$3000 each, depending on the body style selected. This amount could be made up by the \$100 per year apportionment per district for consolidation, for within the five years the consolidated district would get the apportion-

ment; this sum would amount to \$6,000. These would be first quality busses and of ample size for conveying the pupils safely and comfortably. Such busses would probably be good for at least ten years of service, thus, the district would have an investment which would last ~~it~~ a long time.

In time when some of the present roads are improved, and the country becomes more settled, these proposed bus routes could be revised in such a way that a bus would pass within at least a quarter of a mile of each home in the district. The improved roads and increased settlement would probably be a natural result of the improved school and community.

The advantages which this consolidated school would give to these areas are many, and, by way of summary, they are cited here.

1. The consolidated school would increase the educational, recreational and social advantages of the pupils and people in the community.

2. The consolidated school would eliminate many of the administrative units now in existence and increase the size of the unit of support thus reducing the cost of supporting the school and equalizing the burden of taxation.

3. The larger, more efficiently managed school would attract better teachers, and enable the school board to pay higher salaries to the teachers and provide needed equipment for more efficient instruction.

4. The consolidated school would serve as an added attraction of the community for future settlement.

5. The consolidated school would enlarge the community to make it conform more with the development of roads and transportation facilities, yet it would keep the school within the community. It would provide a rural school for rural people.

6. The consolidated school would make it possible to have better and more adequate supervision in the school.

7. The consolidated school would do away gradually with some of the animosities existing between this rural community and the towns, and it would serve to build up the self-confidence of many of the rural pupils and people.

8. The consolidated school would serve as an agency to hold the community together.

9. The consolidated school, with its modern busses, sanitary building and equipment would increase the safety of the pupils who attend school and assure the pupils of a more healthful school atmosphere.

## CHAPTER IV

## SUMMARY

As the United States has become more densely settled and its frontiers have become civilized and firmly established as communities, villages, and towns, it has been necessary from time to time to centralize the institutions serving these frontiers. The one-room school has been one of the last of these institutions to become centralized, as the presence of approximately 150,000 one-room schools in the United States today illustrates. Although legislation has been passed in all the states of the United States to encourage the consolidation of the one-room schools, the fact remains that over one-half of our public schools are still one-room schools.

The people who are most likely to benefit from a consolidation of schools are those who are located in the rural areas. Such a group of people was described earlier in this thesis. These people are perhaps a little more conservative than the urban people, but they are anxious to provide the best opportunities they can for their children. They feel, however, that there is a need for a rural school for rural people, and certainly their common problems and interests would justify a school which is located and operated to serve this community of rural

folk and pupils, not only as an institution of learning, but also as a center of recreation and community activity.

Geographically, these areas are quite representative of rural Oregon since they have their mountains, their valleys, and their "rolling" land. The population centers of the community are more significant from an historical standpoint than from the standpoint of population centers. There are, however, four centers in the community which might be referred to as centers of population. On the whole, however, these areas might be referred to more as farming districts with their rural stores and gasoline stations. The population is subject to very little change since the basic occupation is agriculture, and this occupation demands the establishment of more permanent homes.

The pupils of the community are fairly representative of rural American youth. They have a certain number of chores and duties around home which exert quite an influence on their school activities. The number of pupils in this community is adequate to permit the community to have a very good rural school which would contribute more to the educational opportunities of these rural pupils than an urban school located outside the community.

The industries and vocations of these areas are primarily agrarian, but there is also quite a little timber and saw-mill work located here and there in these areas.

The types of agriculture carried on within the community might be broken up into four major divisions, but these divisions need not be the only possibilities of agricultural pursuits. As the land builds up and newer farming methods are applied, the agricultural pursuits of the community may follow many channels. The timber and saw-mill development of the district is confined, in the main, to the operation of small mills employing only a few men. The scale of wages and the type of work serve to bring these people together into a more common group, but their possibilities for recreational and educational opportunities are hampered by the lack of the necessary finances. The community-centered school could do much in the way of enriching these opportunities.

The present community centers of the areas are almost wholly inadequate and not at all conducive to community gatherings, for, as the community has enlarged the community buildings have decreased in number and adequacy. These people need the type of community center which the new consolidated school might well provide.

The present existing school buildings are so inaptly constructed and equipped as to be harmful to the physical well-being and health of the pupils who attend them. These buildings were constructed during an earlier period of school architecture and are now outmoded and unsatis-

factory. The provision for play sheds and gymnasiums has not been very liberal, yet the physical well-being of a child is quite as important as his accumulation of factual materials. These schools are typical of many schools in existence in the United States, and it is this type of school, this kind of community and people to whom consolidation has and should continue to mean so much.

The many definitions of consolidation agree that consolidation means the joining together of two or more school districts for the purpose of providing better educational opportunities for the children within the district, and also that consolidation should be considered to be for both high school and elementary school purposes.

New York State probably passed the first law permitting consolidation, but it remained for Massachusetts really to get the consolidation movement started. Massachusetts passed the first law permitting the use of public money to provide transportation for the pupils of the public schools, and established at Montague, Massachusetts in 1875 what is probably the first consolidated school in the United States. Ohio, Indiana, Maine, Rhode Island, Vermont, and Pennsylvania soon fell into line and passed consolidation and transportation laws. By 1890 the consolidation movement was beginning to be recognized. The state of Oregon passed its first consolidation law in

1903, and, by 1906, Oregon had three schools operating under the school suspension plan of consolidation. The consolidation movement has been one of the leading school problems in Oregon. It has frequently been given encouragement by the passage of legislation and should be benefited a great deal by the passage in 1939 of the most recent centralization law, the School District Reorganization law.

The twelve districts which this thesis has proposed to consolidate make up a community which is tied together by many common problems and interests. There are two laws under which the districts might consolidate, the "old" Consolidation law or the new School District Reorganization law. It would be advisable to consolidate under the old law as this would provide more money for the newly-formed, consolidated district. Airlie is proposed as the most likely site for the new building, since it is near the geographical center of these areas and since the available school grounds are more adequately situated than the grounds of any other school. The newly-formed district would have more than five times the assessed valuation of any of its present existing districts. This new valuation would permit the provision for a modern, well-equipped school building for the community. It would

permit the district to raise the teachers' salaries from 15 per cent to 25 per cent, thus attracting a better, more thoroughly-trained teacher. The new school would further provide opportunities for several young people who have graduated, or have not attended high school to return to school and profit by the increased offerings and an enriched curriculum.

The consolidated school would serve this community in many respects, such as:

1. An educational, recreational and social center.
2. A means to equalize the present costs and tax burdens.
3. An added attraction for future settlement and better teachers.
4. As a more efficiently-operated institution.
5. As an agency to hold the community together and knit a greater bond of friendship and understanding between it and neighboring towns.
6. Providing healthier, more pleasant teaching and learning atmosphere in the school.
7. By providing greater safety for the children in transit to and from the school.

To summarize briefly, the most obvious values of consolidation are: it provides an adequate community center for education, recreation and amusement, thus increasing the opportunity for students and parents to share in these. It permits more adequate supervision and administration of the school, and increases the holding power of the school for both teacher and pupil. The larger taxable unit and the smaller tax millage tend to equalize the burden of supporting the school.

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