

A PROPOSED PLAN FOR CONSOLIDATION
OF THE SCHOOLS OF DELAWARE COUNTY

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OF THE SCHOOLS OF DELAWARE COUNTY

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CHAPTER I

The Problem, Previous Studies and Method of Securing Data

Consolidation or reorganization of rural schools is a question which is being given a great deal of serious consideration by some of the leading educators in the United States. The idea is farther advanced in some states than in Oklahoma. Likewise, some of the counties of Oklahoma are wholly consolidated, while others have no consolidation at all. The purpose of this survey is to determine the possibilities of consolidation and submit a proposed plan for consolidation of the schools in Delaware County.

Delaware County is located in northeastern Oklahoma, bounded by the states of Arkansas and Missouri on the east, the counties of Adair and Cherokee on the south, the counties of Mayes and Craig on the west, and Ottawa County on the north. The population¹ is composed largely of rural people who are pioneer white people, who settled there before statehood, or mixed breed or full blood Indians. Most of the Indians belong to the Cherokee tribe. The area of the county is nearly 800 square miles. The assessed valuation is \$4,123,463.00 (1936), which includes real estate, personal property and public service corporations. This low valuation ranks it about 74th in the

1. John S. Redfield, Mineral Resources of Oklahoma, Bulletin 42, May, 1927.

state.² This is an assessed valuation of less than eight dollars per acre, and this is very unequally distributed as over fifty per cent of the valuation is in the north quarter of the county.

The county is composed of seventy-eight districts, two of which are consolidated, and fifteen that were able to support a school without secondary aid in 1936. There was an average daily attendance of 2,773 grade students in these schools during 1936, and an average daily attendance of 870 high school students in the six high schools in the county. There were 162 teachers employed, making an average of two teachers per school, but the majority of the schools are one-room or one-teacher schools.

In a study of schools in Grady County, Miller³ found that the cost per pupil was less in consolidated schools, including the cost of transportation, than the cost per pupil in one and two teacher schools which did not furnish transportation.

Gaumnitz⁴ found in a study of schools of the United States that large schools could be conducted much more

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2. John Vaughn, Research Bulletin 30, Oklahoma State Department of Education, Feb. 13, 1935.
 3. Marshall Gregory, Statistics Pertaining to Pupil Transportation in Oklahoma, 1931-1932, Oklahoma State Department of Education, Bulletin 136, 1933.
 4. W. H. Gaumnitz, Economies Through Elimination of Very Small Schools, Office of Education Bulletin 3, 1934, p. 18, Table 24, p. 22, Table 30.

cheaply per pupil than in smaller schools.

The opinions of our leading educators seem to be similar, namely that:

"The rural school has lost its earlier importance and finds itself today in a somewhat sorry plight. It has largely ceased to minister, as it once did, to the community needs: its teacher no longer plays the important part in the neighborhood affairs that it used to play; it has lost much of its earlier importance as a community center; its attendance has frequently shrunk to a small fraction of what it once was; it finds itself in a serious financial condition and it has been left far behind, educationally by the progress which the schools of the neighboring towns and cities have made. Furthermore, the rural school problem, tied up as it is with the whole rural-life problem, has now become too complex to be solved by local effort alone, and nothing short of a reorganization of rural education along good educational and administrative lines, will meet the need of the present and the future."⁵

And to add to this,

"Since about 1914, the hard roads idea has made very rapid progress, and in many states and counties today a general state and county system of paved highways has been or is being constructed. These new influences have not only called new attention to the desirability of consolidating schools, but have also shown the possibility and desirability of larger consolidation than had before been thought possible. Using horse drawn wagons to transport the pupils, the area of a township and the union of six to eight one room schools represented about the maximum limit for school consolidation. With good roads and automobiles three to four townships and twenty to twenty-five one room schools may now be consolidated into one institution."⁶

To make a detailed study of Delaware County and apply

5. E. P. Cubberley, Rural Life and Education, p. 102.

6. Ibid., p. 233.

this thesis it was necessary: to make a study of official bulletins sent out by the State Department of Education pertaining to finance and statistics; to interview personally the county officials, including the county assessor, county clerk, and county treasurer, but more especially the county superintendent, where most of the attendance records, district valuations, tax levies, primary and secondary aid received, transfers, number of teachers, and much other valuable information was obtained, (all figures given are from their offices or calculated from their figures unless otherwise stated); and to make a personal tour of the county to inspect all school buildings and roads within the districts. It was then necessary to figure the centers of population within the proposed districts and costs based on the figures and data secured. These figures revealed a rich field for the study of consolidation, as all regions were easily accessible by bus. At the time this survey was made many districts were in need of new buildings. The majority of these districts then were levying the full amount that could be required of them under consolidation or the present system. It was also found that time spent in going to and from school by bus under consolidation would probably be the same as the time used under the present method and that the number of teachers would be decreased. Otherwise, educational possibilities would be greatly increased.

CHAPTER II

The Fiscal Survey and Method of Treating Data

The assessed valuation of Delaware County for 1936 consists of \$426,287 worth of personal property, \$2,944,328 of real estate, and the remainder of the \$4,123,463 total is public service corporations. A complete list of assessed valuation by districts may be found in Appendix II. This low valuation usually causes it to rank about seventy-fourth¹ in the state. This is an average assessed valuation of \$52,877 per district, which varies from \$14,758 to \$361,645. Each of these two contain a high school at the present time. But about sixty-one per cent of the assessed valuation is in the northern third of the county. The district with the \$361,645 valuation is where the town of Grove is located. There are two districts with a valuation of approximately \$250,000 (each); one is the consolidated district at Cleora, and the other is District No. 3, which contains a pump station on the Ajax pipe line, thereby giving it a large corporation valuation. Then there is a \$160,000 valuation of District No. 13, which is crossed by the Gulf pipe line and Frisco railroad. All of these are located in the north end as are most of the other districts with higher assessed valuation. This is due to the fact that the north end has most of the farm land and is crossed by the only two railroads and two pipe lines in the county.

1. John Vaughn, Research Bulletin 30, Oklahoma State Department of Education, Feb. 13, 1935.

In fact, there are only three districts in the central part of the county and one in the southern third which contains an assessed valuation of over \$60,000. There is a total of forty-four districts within the county which are assessed at less than \$40,000. Of this group twenty-five have less than \$25,000 assessed valuation. These valuations are illustrated in Figure 1 (page 7).

These low valuations make a high tax rate necessary, as may be seen in Table 1 (page 8). Forty-four districts voted fifteen mills but this was greatly reduced in most cases by income tax. Only thirteen districts did not vote the limit. Ten of these were in the northern region and three in the central portion. However, some of these would have found it necessary to vote the limit and use secondary aid had they paid the minimum salary schedule. Twenty-two districts did not use secondary aid. For example, District No. 3 has an average daily attendance of twenty-two, and by levying 11.7 mills was able to pay two teachers \$130 and \$115 per month. However, this district has the largest assessed valuation per pupil of any district within the county.

There are no available figures for the year 1936, but a recent survey² revealed that 92.4% of the population and 87.8% of the wealth of the county vote the limit.

2. John Vaughn, Statistical Circular 34, Oklahoma State Department of Education, Feb. 22, 1935.

Figure 1

Assessed Valuation of the Districts of Delaware County

Horizontal figures represent valuation of districts in thousands and vertical figures represent number of districts with these valuations.

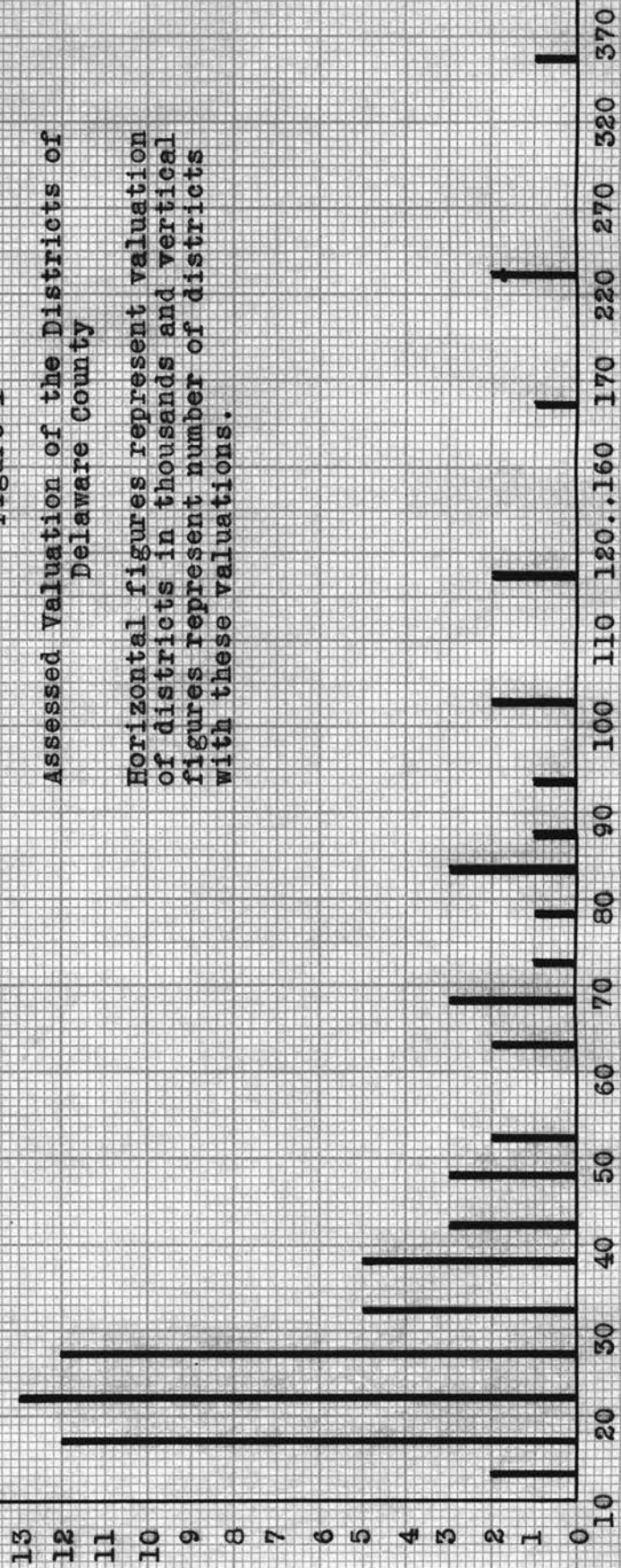


Table I

Corrected Delaware County School District Levies for 1936
Based on Income Tax Under Supreme Court Case No. 27516

Dist. No.	Levy Made	Reduction	Sink. Fund	:	Dist. No.	Levy Made	Reduction	Sink. Fund
1	15.0	2.9	.5	:	40	10.0	8.0	
2	3.4	2.3		:	41	10.0	8.0	
3	12.7	1.0		:	42	15.0	10.0	5.
4	No	No		:	43	15.0	7.0	
6	15.0	1.7	3.	:	44	15.0	8.0	10.
7	1.0	2.2		:	45	15.0	2.3	5.
8	8.6	1.9		:	46	10.0	4.7	2.
9	15.0	3.0	2.	:	47	15.0	5.4	
10	15.0	2.0		:	48	15.0	11.0	6.5
12	10.0	2.4	2.5	:	49	15.0	5.0	
13	7.0	1.3		:	50	10.0	14.3	
14	4.5	0.6		:	51	15.0	5.0	
15	12.3	1.3		:	52	10.0	2.4	
16	11.6	2.6		:	53	15.0	3.0	
17	15.0	3.7	13.	:	54	15.0	1.8	
18	No	No		:	55	No	No	
19	No	No		:	56	10.0	4.0	
20	No	No		:	57	15.0	9.0	2.5
21	15.0	7.0		:	58	10.0	6.0	
22	15.0	7.0		:	59	15.0	12.0	
23	15.0	5.5	7.7	:	60	15.0	10.0	4.5
24	15.0	3.6	4.	:	61	15.0	12.0	10.
25	10.0	4.0		:	62	15.0	4.0	5.
26	No	No	5.	:	63	10.0	5.0	30.
27	15.0	7.0		:	64	15.0	4.8	
28	10.0	5.5		:	65	15.0	3.5	
29	15.0	8.8		:	66	10.0	5.0	
30	15.0	3.5		:	67	15.0	3.5	
31	10.0	13.9		:	68	15.0	8.0	
32	15.0	7.0		:	69	15.0	11.0	
33	15.0	7.0	5.	:	71	15.0	23.6	
34	15.0	8.0		:	74	15.0	6.0	
35	15.0	12.0		:	75	15.0	9.0	
36	6.0	1.4		:	76	15.0	6.0	15.
37	No	No		:	77	15.0	10.0	
38	15.0	16.3		:	78	15.0	7.0	
39	15.0	6.0		:				

The average millage levied was 11.74 but after income tax reduction the average millage levied was 6.65. A personal survey of the school buildings revealed that the average building was a frame building which had served for many years. There were sixteen stone buildings of more recent construction. This is shown more extensively in Table II (page 10). After visiting each school house in the county, this is my personal rating given them.

"Very good" means stone buildings built the last few years. "Good" was given the buildings that were lumber but in good condition and that will probably be usable for fifteen or twenty years. Buildings rated "fair" have probably served their time but will be all right for use the next eight or ten years. "Poor" buildings make a poor appearance and the district should be mapping out future plans for a school building. "Very poor" means that the district is in need of a new building or immediate repairs on the old building.

Twenty-one districts are paying sinking funds; this includes five of the high schools which have had to make late additions. There is an average daily attendance of 2,773 grade students and 870 high school students within the county and 162 teachers are employed. Average daily attendance by districts is given in Appendix II A. This will give an assessed valuation of \$1,134.63 per student and \$25,454.59 per teacher. This would give \$11.35 per

Table II
Condition of School Buildings*

Dist. No. :	Condition	:	Dist. No. :	Condition
1	Very good		40	Poor
2	Poor		41	Poor
3	Very good		42	Poor
4	Fair		43	Poor
5			44	Good
6	Very good		45	Good
7	Very good		46	Fair
8	Poor		47	Very poor
9	Good		48	Poor
10	Fair		49	Fair
11			50	Poor
12	Fair		51	Poor
13	Very poor		52	Poor
14	Very good		53	Poor
15	Poor		54	Poor
16	Very poor		55	Fair
17	Very good		56	Fair
18	Good		57	Very good
19	Poor		58	Very poor
20	Poor		59	Very good
21	Poor		60	Fair
22	Fair		61	Fair
23	Very good		62	Very poor
24	Poor		63	Very good
25	Very good		64	Very good
26	Fair		65	Poor
27	Very poor		66	Very good
28	Poor		67	Poor
29	Very poor		68	Fair
30	Fair		69	Poor
31	Poor		70	
32	Poor		71	Very good
33	Very good		72	
34	Very good		73	
35	Good		74	Poor
36	Very poor		75	Very poor
37	Very poor		76	Poor
38	Burned		77	Poor
39	Poor		78	Poor

*Determined by personal inspection of the buildings.

student and \$254.55 per teacher to provide for an education, based on a ten mill levy. These figures show that as a whole the county is not able to support its schools. Available figures for 1936 show that \$65,338 secondary aid has been received, and then most schools could not have a nine months term of school. Complete figures for 1936 are not available at this time.

From this survey it can be seen that the majority of the districts and the county as a whole does not have a large enough valuation per child or per teacher to support an adequate school without secondary aid either under the present conditions or under consolidation. Then the question within the county is how much the child would gain educationally under consolidation. The financial side of the problem falls upon the state and is a matter of whether the state would get more educational returns from the secondary aid sent in the county as it is at the present time or from the amount of secondary aid which would have to be sent in under the proposed plan of consolidation.

CHAPTER III

Proposed Plan of Consolidation

The school¹ of consolidated districts should be located in rural-minded villages when it is possible, because they have been found more satisfactory for rural children than have the town, city or rural high schools. These centers should also be the trading centers of the community; they should be as near the center of the school population and school area as possible, and accessible to all portions of the district by bus; and natural boundaries, such as rivers, hills, and state lines, which cannot conveniently be crossed must be considered. The proposed plan for consolidation is based on these criteria and will include three districts, the northern, the central, and the southern, composed of approximately twenty-five districts each.

Delaware County has a state highway running north and south through the center and three state highways running east and west, one through the center, one through the northern end and one through the southern end. This makes three locations which are approximately in the center of their respective school populations. All roads of the districts open into these centers, making them the most accessible locations for bus transportation. The

1. L. W. Rapeer, *The Consolidated Rural School*, p. 151.

chief trading centers of the northern and central regions are located at these cross roads, while the chief trading center of the southern region is one mile from the cross roads. The area is divided equally between the districts except where Spavinaw Creek, a natural boundary, makes it more convenient to divide it. High school bus routes are laid out through these regions at the present time, some of them going entirely to the proposed centers, where high schools are located, while in all districts the greater percentage go to the proposed centers.

After the proposed boundaries of each district were determined, the total school population of each proposed district was determined by taking a total of the enrollment of all districts included, and where present districts were divided the same fractional part of the total enrollment was used as the fractional part of the territory included within the proposed district. Then one-half of the total enrollment was taken and sectional lines were taken from the north or south and east or west until it was determined between what sectional lines and what fractional part of the last would contain this amount of population. There is a probable error due to the fact that in divided districts all sections had to be considered equally populated. Where the two lines crossed in each of the three proposed districts it was considered the center of the school population.

To determine the cost of financing a nine months term of school with a minimum program within each proposed district it was necessary to calculate the cost of teachers, maintenance and transportation on the basis of The School Finance Law for 1937 (House Bill No. 6). Teachers' salaries were estimated by taking the average daily attendance for 1936-1937 in all districts, and fractional parts of districts within each proposed district; from this the number of teachers necessary was found and their salaries determined by using a basic salary of 855 dollars which is equivalent to a degree and three years experience.

The cost of maintenance was calculated by taking the average daily attendance times 170 days to get the total days attendance, times six and one-half cents per day. Transportation costs were found by determining the area of each proposed district and the number of pupils within the area. From this it was shown that the densities would allow each district eighteen dollars per student living over one mile from school.

Their ability to support a school could be partially determined by taking ten-elevenths of a ten mill levy on the valuation, approximately three and one-half months teacher salary from primary aid, and what the county received this year (when 1936 figures are not available 1935 figures are used), other than these two and secondary aid. This would include state and county apportionments,

gross production and beverage tax, Indian tuition and other revenues.

The northern district would be bounded by county lines on the north, east, and west and the southern boundary would be determined by the present approved bus territory which almost forms a straight line east and west, half the distance between the present and proposed high school centers, except where it was necessary to shift a short distance for better transportation routes. The school would be located at Grove, because it has a population of 800 inhabitants. It is by far the most densely populated district, and is on the cross roads. It is also the principal trading center, has the largest school of that area, and has most of the high school students at the present time. The center of the district and the center of population would be two miles west of Grove, but with a wing school for grade students at Cleora on the west side of the river, the center of the remaining population would shift to Grove. The entire district would be a rectangle twelve by twenty-one miles, making an area of 260 square miles. This is more clearly pictured in Figure 2 on page 16.

There would be an average ride of nine miles per student if only one school were maintained, or with a wing school at Cleora the average ride would be seven miles. One bus would have a twenty-three mile route for

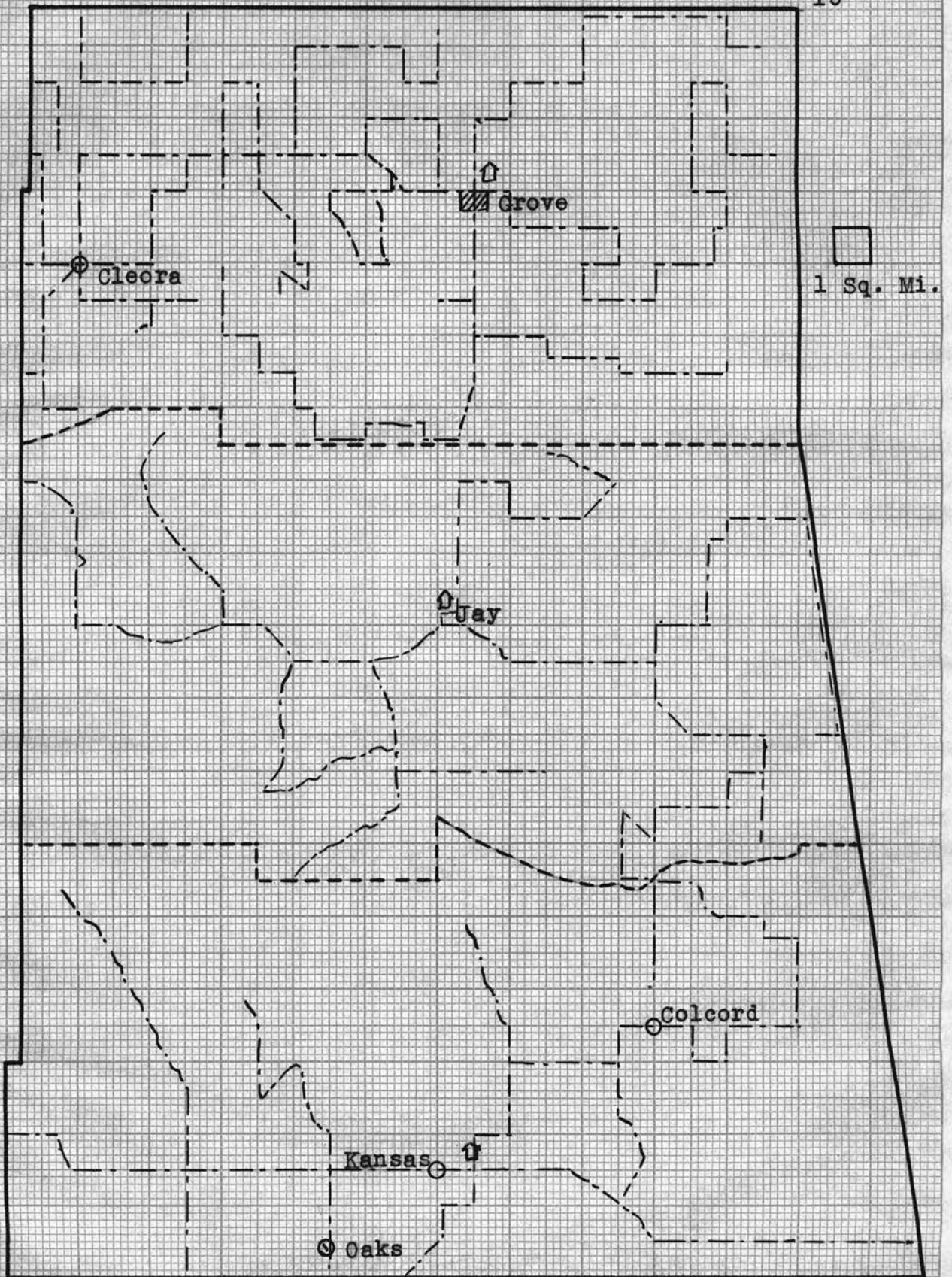


Figure 2. The Proposed Districts and the Present Bus Routes.

◻ Proposed High Schools ○ Proposed Wing Schools

high school students only, which would be from the far corner of the wing school area. There would be two routes fourteen miles in length, each, and the remaining routes would be much shorter. This area has a valuation of \$2,522,204 and an average daily attendance of 957 in the grades and 418 in high school. This attendance would require thirty grade teachers and seventeen high school teachers. The cost of a minimum school program would be $(95 \times 47 \times 9)$ \$40,185 for teachers' salaries, (1175×18) \$19,150 for transportation, and $(1375 \times 170 \times 1.5\text{¢})$ \$15,093.75 for maintenance, or a total of \$74,428.75. They could raise $(2,522,204 \times .01 \times 10/11)$ \$22,929.10 by a ten mill levy and get approximately $(47 \times 95 \times 3.5)$ \$15,627.50 primary aid. Then this would leave \$35,872.15 to be obtained from other sources, including secondary aid.

The central region would be bounded on the east and west by county lines. It would be equally divided with the northern region as to area and distance between the two schools, and Spavinaw Creek would be a natural boundary on the south except where good roads and good bridges make it more convenient and economical to cross into the regions just south of the creek. Jay would be the school location because it is situated at the place where the highways cross. Jay is in the center of the area and school population, it is the county seat and only town in

this region. It has a population of 500 inhabitants. It contains the present high school system and only system within this area that runs busses into all of the proposed area to transport high school students. There are no large rural schools and no other concentrated rural center so there are no adequate buildings at the present time for suitable wing schools, nor any outstanding locations for one. The district would be a rectangle eleven by twenty-two miles or an area of 242 square miles. This is more clearly illustrated in Figure 2 on page 16. The average bus trip would be eight miles; three routes would be sixteen miles in length and the other much shorter. This area would have a valuation of \$846,493 and an average daily attendance of 779 in the grades and 205 in high school. This would require twenty-five grade teachers and nine high school teachers. Then, in order to run a nine months term of school they would need $(34 \times 9 \times 95)$ \$29,070 for teachers' salaries, $(984 \times 170 \times 6.5\phi)$ or \$10,807.50 for maintenance, (850×18) or \$15,300 for transportation. This gives a total of \$55,177.50. This district could raise \$7,695.40 $(846,493 \times .01 \times 10/11)$ by a ten mill levy and could get approximately $(34 \times 95 \times 3.5)$ \$11,305 primary aid. This would leave \$36,179.10 to be raised by other revenues and secondary aid.

The southern district would be bounded by county lines on the east, south, and west and the north boundary

would be determined as the southern boundary of the central district. This area has three small village trading centers with populations of less than one hundred each. None of these villages is located at the center of the area, center of population, or at the intersection of the highways; nor is the highway intersection located at either center. The central school system would be located at the highway intersection because it is accessible by bus to all of the territory for students. This would be three miles south of the center of the area, two miles south of the center of school population, and one mile east of Kansas, Oklahoma, which is the largest village and trading center in the area. However, a trading center is growing up at the highway intersection at the present time. The district would be a rectangle twelve by twenty-four miles, or an area of 288 square miles. Figure 2 on page 16 will illustrate this. This would make an average ride of nine miles for the entire region, but this would be greatly reduced by three wing schools for grade students to be located at Kansas, Colcord, and Oaks where there are sufficient buildings which are being used for high school and grades at the present time. The three longest routes would be eighteen miles, which would be largely high school students for the central school, and all other routes would be considerably shorter.

This area has a valuation of \$754,765 and an average

daily attendance of 1049 in the grades and 246 in high school. This would require thirty-three grade teachers and ten high school teachers. It would require $(43 \times 95 \times 9)$ \$36,765 for teachers' salaries, $(1295 \times 170 \times 6.5)$ \$14,309.75 for maintenance and (1195×1800) or \$21,510 for transportation. This is a total of \$72,584.75. The district could raise \$6,861.50 $(754,765 \times 10/11 \times .01)$ by a ten mill levy and $(43 \times 9500 \times 35)$ \$14,297.50 for primary aid. This would leave \$51,415.75 to be raised from other revenues and secondary aid.

These districts would require 124 teachers instead of 162 who taught this average daily attendance the past year. The bus routes would be large enough that all buses could drive in from the rural territory, thus eliminating circuits and doubling of routes, as is done in smaller districts. This would also make transportation more economical.¹ The longest bus routes would include one twenty-three mile route for high school students, three sixteen mile routes, and the others much shorter, making an average length of nine miles. This is much shorter than the average for the state, which is 18.4² miles. The districts would need \$202,191 to operate their schools; they could raise \$37,486 of this by a ten

1. Haskell Pruett, Appendix I.

2. A. L. Crable, State Board of Education, Transportation Bulletin for 1936-1937 School Term.

mill general levy and get approximately \$41,230 primary aid. This would leave \$123,475 to come from other sources, including state and county apportionment, beverage tax, secondary aid, Indian money and other revenue. All figures are not available for the school year 1936-37. They have received \$65,338 secondary aid and \$18,266.97 Indian money. Figures for 1935-36 reveal the cost of education was \$177,342 which included \$59,746.08 secondary aid for 155 teachers and eight and one half months of school or less. Based on 162 teachers and nine months school this would amount to \$196,255.38 or \$5,935.62 less than the cost of the proposed schools. These figures would not be correct due to the changes in method of figuring finance and the separation of beverage tax from primary aid. We could also get a comparison of cost by considering the cost of maintenance the same for either method then under consolidation. There would be a saving of \$32,490, the salary of thirty-eight teachers, but an additional cost of \$43,200 the transportation of 2,400 grade students at \$18 each. This would mean \$10,710 more for consolidation which would come from secondary aid. But at the same time secondary aid probably would not have to care for all this increase because what are present districts would have to levy eight mills to qualify for primary aid. This would be an increase of 1.44 mills over 1936 or 2.8 mills over 1935. This would mean an increase of \$5,312 or \$10,496

which would be raised by general levy. These figures would not be exact because some of the self-supporting districts are paying more than the minimum salaries. Also, this is allowing \$55,960, for transportation, when the average cost of transportation in 1931-1932 was \$0.0717,³ per pupil per day. This would require \$39,248.58.

After all is summed up it can be seen that on a consolidated basis, education would cost no more. This would include transportation of all students who live more than one mile from school.

It would be necessary to erect new buildings in all three districts, in order that there would be at least a classroom for each teacher. The northern district would need forty-seven, or twenty in addition to twenty-seven already provided. The central region would need twenty in addition to the present fourteen, and the southern region would need twenty-four in addition to the nineteen now available.

In order to finance these plans it would be necessary to vote bonds, or secure Federal aid in helping to construct a building in each of the proposed districts.

3. Marshall Gregory, Statistics Pertaining to Pupil Transportation in Oklahoma, 1931-1932, Oklahoma State Department of Education, 1933, Bulletin No. 136.

CHAPTER IV

Conclusion

There is no doubt but that this is a radical¹ change for rural-minded people, but we should keep in mind that prejudices against the consolidation of schools is just the same sort of thing that has always stood in the way of progress of any kind. Nearly all new inventions and discoveries have been scoffed at at first.

The fundamental problems² of consolidation are (1) conservatism and prejudices of the people, (2) the transportation problem, (3) the added expense, and (4) character of teaching in the new type of public school. In the beginning we must not think of economy³ necessarily in terms of money spent. Often such economy is of a short-sighted nature. In education as in business, economy often consists in spending more money, as the ultimate measure is the increased amount and quality of the product sought. It is sheer waste to put the dollar before the child. It is also waste not to get the highest return for the dollar spent. The wise expenditure of the funds at hand is the chief factor in the efficiency of a school system. Many studies reveal that the cost of education

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1. L. W. Rapeer, *The Consolidated Rural School*, p. 480.
 2. *Ibid.*, p. 476.
 3. A. D. Mueller, *Progressive Trends in Rural Education*, p. 15.

would not increase but would decrease in many ways. At the present time the average grade school has an average daily attendance of thirty-seven students, and the average daily attendance per high school is one hundred and forty-five. Under the proposed plan the average daily attendance would be nine hundred twenty-four per grade school and two hundred ninety per high school. Gaumnitz, Senior specialist in Rural Education Problems, in a study of 99,575 elementary schools and 11,180 high schools of the United States found that schools of the size represented by the proposed districts would mean saving twenty-one per cent in the cost of education per grade pupil and ten per cent per high school pupil.⁴ In a study of the cost of education in Grady County schools,⁵ Miller found that the cost per pupil in average daily attendance in consolidated high schools, including cost of transportation, was less than the cost in the one and two room schools which did not furnish transportation. There were twenty-two schools (2,3, 4, 7, 8, 13, 14, 15, 16, 18, 19, 20, 23, 26, 31, 36, 37, 45, 47, 52, and 55) which did not use secondary aid. Three of this group (23, 47 and 52)

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4. W. H. Gaumnitz, Economies Through the Elimination of Very Small Schools, Office of Education, Bulletin No. 3, 1934, p. 18, Table 24; and p. 22, Table 30.
 5. M. Miller, Statistics Pertaining to Pupil Transportation in Oklahoma, 1931-1932, Bulletin 136, 1936, State Department of Education.

applied and would have used it had they had nine months school. Three others (3,15, and 45) levied more than ten mills general levy, and some of the others of this group (7,13, and 14) might have used it had they paid as much as the minimum salary schedule. Therefore, in most cases, economy is not a question for the districts but for the state. Especially is this true in the southern proposed district, where only one is self supporting by a twelve and seven-tenths mill levy. In the northern region where it is more of a local question the general levy for the proposed district had an average of 9.27 mills, and was 6.6 mills after the income reduction. Then their increased cost for a minimum school program of nine months would be at the most the difference between this and a ten mill levy.

Busses are going into all regions at present and into all proposed school centers. The average route would be much shorter than the average for the state. The time to and from school would be an average motor bus ride for nine miles as compared to an average walk of one mile at the present time. The longest route would be a single route of twenty-three miles, but at the present time in three districts (28, 40 and 63) the building is located five or six miles from part of the territory.

Construction of new buildings would be a big item of expense as each proposed district would have to provide a

building of twenty-five or thirty additional rooms. However, this would not be added expense in all instances as thirty-nine of the present districts need new buildings, and nine others have buildings of only fair condition, (Table II) which would not mean a great loss. The buildings of the six largest schools of the county would be utilized for central or wing schools. Other added expenses would include the annual expenses of transportation and supervision. Transportation was considered in the decreased cost of larger systems. Also, it is financed by the state in weak schools. Supervision is increased but it practically does away with the duties of a county superintendent. It also reduced the number of teachers, which was 162 this year, to 124 which would be necessary for a minimum program with the present average daily attendance.

As to the character of the teaching in the proposed districts we can only take the opinions of some of the leading educators. Almack and Bursch say,

"The old one-room school of colonial days is as unsuited to the new conditions as the antiquated one-horse shay is unsuited for transportation. For the enlarged and revitalized rural community there is needed a strong and enterprising educational institution. This need is met by the modern village consolidated schools."⁶

6. John C. Almack and James F. Bursch, *The Administration of Consolidated and Village Schools*, P. 4.

One teacher cannot teach thirty-five classes,⁷ as teachers have to in most rural schools.⁸ Even if they are excellent teachers and have a good education, they cannot acquire the skill and facility that the teacher can who has but one or two grades. At least, the large central school⁹ would most certainly save the children from one grave risk, that of spending their whole school life under the guidance of a teacher who is a misfit.

Then in addition to having a school with a large enough number of pupils to permit proper organization and administration and adequate curriculum provisions, we would have the following advantages:¹⁰

(1) Better organization. Pupils could be graded and classified more easily because there would be more of them, thus making it possible to form regular "grades in charge of grade teachers.

(2) Better teaching. With a teacher in charge of only one or two grades instead of all eight, as is often the case in the one-room school, much better work could be done. It is simply the application of the principle of specialization.

(3) Better teachers. The consolidated school can

7. A. D. Mueller, op. cit., p. 16.

8. L. W. Rapeer, op. cit., p. 4.

9. M. K. Ashby, *The Country School*, p. 137.

10. A. D. Mueller, loc. cit.

attract and hold the better qualified teachers, just as the city does at the present.

(4) Better attendance. When the bus calls at the home of the child in the morning and safely returns him at night, the problem of tardiness and absence vanishes.

(5) Better health and morals. The modern sanitary school bus operated by a competent, upright driver, protects the children against exposure to weather and indecencies on the road.

(6) Better school buildings. The modern consolidated school building can be the last thing in school house planning and construction.

(7) Better equipment and apparatus, with less duplication.

(8) Better library facilities. The larger district makes it possible to have more books and apparatus at a much lower cost than can be had at small schools.

(9) Better supervision of instruction. The consolidated school could have a supervisor on the ground all the time, thus making it possible to have better and closer supervision and to have it when and where it is needed.

(10) Provides for differentiated courses. Vocational agriculture and home economics, music, commercial work, drawing, etc., could be taught by special teachers, whereas this is impossible in scattered one-room schools.

(11) It would give every child within the county an

equal opportunity for education regardless of wealth or distance from school.

(12) It would have a greater holding power on the child. Many more children complete the eighth grade and the high school in consolidated districts, than those who go to the one-room districts do.

(13) It will make it possible to have better school officials.

(14) It will eliminate petty jealousies among parents because narrow neighborhood interests are lessened, if not entirely eliminated, by the wider community interests.

(15) The circle of acquaintance of children will be widened, thus developing initiative, self-reliance, and individuality.

(16) It will make the farm an ideal place on which to live and bring up the children; and it creates an interest in country life.

There are many other advantages as civic, social, and so forth, but of lesser importance.

The proposed plan of consolidation is not a final solution to the school problem of Delaware County but it is an advancement over the present situation. All students would be privileged to attend an equal and much improved educational institution; transportation would be furnished for all residing one mile or more from school. There would be no increase in general tax levy to the

people of the central and southern region and the increase levy in the northern district would be less than one mill, considering the proposed district as a whole. The actual cost of education for the county including transportation would increase only \$10,710, but actual studies have revealed that the cost of transportation can be cut more than this; and this would fall upon the state. This increase would probably be greater, due to the fact, Brewer found, in a study of Oklahoma schools,¹¹ that the average daily attendance of consolidated schools was 70.6% of the total enrollment, while the average for the state was 50.5%. This means an increase of 40%. However, the attendance of Delaware County could not increase this much as the average daily attendance for this year, 1936-1937, was 73.2% in the grades and 84.4% in the high school of the total enrollment. This is also one of the assets of consolidation. Time involved to and from school would not be increased with the use of motor busses. Busses make good roads a necessity,¹² which usually results in much permanent road improvement. The good roads are not only a help to the school but a valuable asset to the farmer in making frequent trips to his trading center and in marketing crops.

11. Statistics Pertaining to Pupil Transportation in Oklahoma, 1931-1932, Oklahoma State Department of Education, Bulletin 136, 1933, p. 1.

12. A. D. Mueller, op. cit., p. 65.

It is possible that a more progressive school program could be initiated by disregarding county lines and shifting parts of the proposed districts to similar school centers in other counties. Then some areas could be added to these proposed regions where distance and more or less natural barriers make it more convenient to do so. This would require further research within the adjoining counties. Also there is further research needed on several other problems related to this study including a study of the actual increase in tax levy that would be brought about in each individual district. This would include a study of how much the approximate income tax would reduce a ten mill levy within each proposed district and the sinking fund levy which would be necessary to construct the necessary school buildings. Or the possibilities of getting these buildings as Federal Aid Projects or getting aid from the state for consolidating. It would also be possible to make a survey of those who would prefer consolidation. But before it would make much progress there would have to be some definite method of selecting board members.

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Appendix I

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33

Oklahoma
Agricultural and Mechanical College
Office of the Business Manager
Stillwater

May 25, 1936

Mr. Ramon Reno
Afton, Oklahoma

Dear Mr. Reno:

The history of consolidation of schools in Oklahoma has been very interesting to me because I was one of the promoters of consolidated schools during the years in which most of them were organized. I was county superintendent of the first county (Greer) to be completely consolidated to the extent that all rural children had access to a high school education without leaving their own school districts. There were fifteen consolidated schools organized in Greer County in the days of the horse and wagon. These districts ranged in areas from 25 to 54 square miles. Good roads and motor transportation has made these districts entirely too small. In fact, six of the consolidated districts abandoned high schools beginning with the school year 1935-36.

In thinking of most people, consolidation had its greatest period of organization in Oklahoma from about 1914 to 1921. It is true that more newly organized consolidated districts were established during that period but the greatest period of consolidation of schools in reality came about three or four years ago. New districts were not organized as consolidated districts, but hundreds of the school districts were disorganized and attached to other districts which is the most practical and best form of consolidation under our present laws.

Take the case of Greer County with its fifteen consolidated schools. A study shows that children would actually ride less distance on a bus, and transportation could be more efficiently operated with only four schools instead of fifteen. The reason for this is obvious. In a small school district the bus starts from the school

AGRICULTURE & MECHANICAL COLLEGE
LIBRARY
OCT 27 1937

Page 2 - Mr. Ramon Reno
Afton, Oklahoma

house, begins picking up children a mile or more from the school house and hauls them ten or twelve miles to school. A child may live two miles from the school house and yet ride ten miles on a bus every morning and every evening. Such waste in our organization of consolidated schools must be abandoned under the present plan of state support which includes more than 90 per cent of the school districts furnishing transportation. Such a plan of consolidating schools in Oklahoma is the only practical solution for guaranteeing to rural children the privilege and opportunity of twelve years of free public education. High school transportation from small elementary school districts has become such a racket between superintendents of schools that it will rapidly break down of its own weight, and small districts in order to express a choice must of necessity become attached to a larger district which is the modern form of consolidation.

I hope the day will hasten when such organization in Oklahoma is completed to operate under maximum efficiency and optimum conditions.

Very truly yours,

(Signed)
Haskell Pruett
Business Manager

HP:ps

School Enumeration by Districts

Dist. No.	Enroll- ment	Ave. Attend.	Dist. No.	Enroll- ment	Ave. Attend.
1	74	65	39	18	11
2	31	23	40	50	40
3	28	22	41	73	59
4	19	18	42	56	32
6	88	76	43	65	25
7	28	23	44	152	123
8	13	12	45	32	23
9	76	67	46	37	32
10	15	12	47	37	20
12	43	38	48	68	50
13	48	40	49	64	52
14	19	14	50	59	36
15	19	18	51	69	44
16	39	36	52	31	20
17	232	193	53	39	33
18	34	24	54	27	23
19	52	40	55	20	18
20	47	32	56	29	23
20	15	11	57	60	47
21	55	33	58	34	22
22	22	9	59	50	31
23	44	19	60	59	37
24	22	17	61	55	32
25	75	62	62	41	31
26	41	25	63	37	26
27	29	19	64	48	36
28	40	20	65	20	15
29	75	46	66	29	23
30	33	20	67	41	29
31	21	17	68	53	45
31	35	27	69	30	24
32	41	25	71	145	99
33	270	194	74	29	21
34	61	40	75	22	15
35	47	34	76	30	21
36	19	13	77	43	27
37	23	17	78	14	9
38	86	63			
39	71	57	Totals	3796	2773

Assessed Valuation of Delaware County by Districts

Dist. No.	Personal Property	Real Estate	Total
1	\$ 10,120	\$ 66,552	\$100,936
2	8,365	54,040	84,749
3	3,810	40,939	235,597
4	7,695	71,015	124,556
5	6,985	80,050	120,074
6	11,155	86,681	123,869
7	5,050	50,902	69,961
8	4,230	43,376	73,635
9	11,865	90,274	128,602
10	5,695	36,985	43,051
11	1,855	26,135	27,990
12	7,920	58,100	66,020
13	8,870	85,510	166,934
14	7,750	95,720	125,925
15	3,580	42,070	45,650
16	6,385	50,868	59,797
17	51,835	256,451	361,645
18	9,050	56,705	87,631
19	7,225	54,168	82,160
20	4,385	35,327	62,222
21	4,965	28,830	34,684
22	3,205	17,414	20,619
23	3,000	19,222	41,704
24	1,320	22,700	24,020
25	8,215	40,775	80,985
26	21,545	46,557	91,810
27	2,135	14,399	17,736
28	2,225	37,756	39,981
29	4,120	29,895	34,348
30	1,835	26,441	30,487
31	2,890	19,468	22,356
32	2,930	16,288	19,403
33	23,652	70,157	102,142
34	1,785	19,468	21,253
35	2,630	14,327	16,957
36	7,475	60,669	68,144
37	9,400	67,087	76,487
38	2,250	13,289	15,539
39	8,015	46,374	54,443
40	2,410	21,320	23,730
41	5,185	32,605	37,988
42	2,525	23,691	26,216
43	4,590	24,558	29,148

Assessed Valuation of Delaware County by Districts

Dist. No.	Personal Property	Real Estate	Total
44	9,705	54,952	64,747
45	1,250	35,271	36,521
46	4,820	31,597	36,477
47	2,575	24,860	27,477
48	4,785	26,254	31,039
49	7,590	42,225	49,815
50	1,985	20,465	22,450
51	8,570	32,992	41,562
52	2,300	28,396	30,744
53	8,075	49,141	57,486
54	2,215	22,965	25,180
55	4,240	41,670	45,910
56	3,405	35,123	38,686
57	2,725	21,572	24,327
58	2,445	15,726	24,484
59	1,520	18,315	19,835
60	3,845	16,943	20,788
61	2,860	20,549	23,676
62	2,435	24,383	26,818
63	1,310	26,030	27,376
64	2,435	24,827	51,646
65	3,140	22,075	25,215
66	2,725	22,506	25,231
67	3,265	24,042	27,307
68	2,680	19,009	21,689
69	2,070	17,531	20,714
70	5,920	20,205	26,125
71	1,275	13,483	14,758
72	1,410	12,450	13,860
73	770	6,970	15,612
74	2,915	15,146	18,061
75	2,430	16,063	18,493
76	1,890	13,640	15,530
77	1,025	16,411	17,436
78	1,555	13,685	15,240
Total	\$426,287	\$2,944,328	\$4,123,463

Northern Proposed District

Dist. No.	Average Daily Attendance	Assessed Valuation	Levy Made
1	65	\$ 100,936	15
2	23	84,749	3.4
3	22	235,597	12.7
4	18	124,556	0
5		120,074	15
6	76	123,869	15
7	23	69,961	1
8	12	73,635	8.6
9	67	128,602	15
10	12	43,051	15
11		27,990	
12	38	66,020	10
13	40	166,934	7
14	14	125,925	4.5
15	18	45,650	12.3
16	36	59,797	11.6
17	193	361,645	15
18	24	87,631	0
19	40	82,160	0
20	43	62,222	0
21	33	34,684	15
53	33	57,486	15
54	23	25,180	15
55	18	45,910	0
22 7/10	8	14,434	15
25 15/32	30	37,958	10
64 15/21	25	36,890	15
56	23	38,686	10
70		26,125	
72		13,860	
	<u>957</u>	<u>\$2,522,217</u>	

Central Proposed District

Dist. No.	Average Daily Attendance	Assessed Valuation	Levy Made
22 3/10	1	6,185	15
25 17/32	32	43,027	10
64 6/21	11	14,758	15
23	19	41,704	15
24	17	24,020	15
26	25	91,810	0
27	19	17,736	15
28	20	39,981	10
29	46	34,348	15
30	20	30,487	15
31	44	22,356	10
32	25	19,403	15
33	194	102,142	15
34	40	21,253	15
35	34	16,957	15
36	13	68,144	6
37	17	76,487	0
58	22	24,484	10
60	37	20,788	15
65	15	25,215	15
69	24	20,714	15
73		15,612	
74	21	18,061	15
76	21	15,530	15
77	27	17,436	15
59 2/15	4	2,649	15
61 9/14	21	15,219	15
	<u>779</u>	<u>\$346,506</u>	

Southern Proposed District

Dist. No.	Average Daily Attendance	Assessed Valuation	Levy Made
59 13/15	27	17,186	15
61 5/14	11	8,457	15
38	63	15,539	15
39	68	54,443	15
40	40	23,730	10
41	59	37,988	10
42	32	26,216	15
43	25	29,148	15
44	123	64,747	15
45	23	36,521	15
46	32	36,477	10
47	20	27,477	15
48	50	31,039	15
49	52	49,815	15
50	36	22,450	10
51	44	41,562	15
52	20	30,744	10
57	47	24,327	15
62	31	26,818	15
63	26	27,376	10
66	23	25,231	10
67	29	27,307	15
68	45	21,689	15
71	99	14,758	15
75	15	18,493	15
78	9	15,240	15
	<u>1,049</u>	<u>\$754,778</u>	

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