

THE PROGRESS OF EDUCATION IN KIOWA COUNTY
DURING THE NINETEEN-HUNDRED THIRTIES

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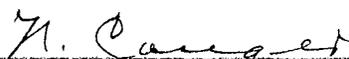
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Dean of School of Education



Dean of Graduate School

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CHAPTER I
INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this study is to determine educational progress in Kiowa County during the nineteen-hundred thirties.

The writer has occupied the office of County Superintendent from October, 1929, up to the present time, and has had ample opportunity to observe conditions throughout the period of depression, which began in October of 1929.

The county chosen (Kiowa) for study is one of the larger counties of Oklahoma, containing more than one thousand square miles of territory and located in the heart of Southwestern Oklahoma. The territory embraced is a part of the "dust bowl" and as such has experienced much that has been common to that great section of the United States.

It is predominantly an agricultural county, one of diversified farming and augmented to some degree by live stock and poultry raising and some quarrying of native granite.

In beginning this study it is well that the reader bear in mind that one decade has passed since the close of the World War and that decade saw many readjustments in almost all lines of human endeavor and was culminated by perhaps America's most fantastic period of investment

gambling. It was during that decade that the great consolidation movement, which had begun in the preceding decade, reached its climax and the school district boundaries were again reaching a state of stability.

School transportation had already been motorized and two main highways had been very lightly surfaced with gravel so that the favored bus routes could be traveled even during mildly wet weather.

Most of the school houses had been built during the period of consolidation either to satisfy the needs of consolidated districts or as in the case of many one and two room schools to forestall any possibility of becoming a part of an adjacent consolidated district. The year of 1929 found these schools in a bad state of repair and public interest in education at a low ebb, as usually seems to be the case at the close of any prolonged period of easy money. During such periods when even the uneducated are making much money and living easily there seems to be an inclination on the part of the public to feel that there is little need of educational preparation and so interest falls in inverse ratio to the length of the period, slowly at first, then more rapidly.

This county has a very small Negro population. Four grade schools were maintained up to 1929 and all of these were located in independent district, but supervised by the County Superintendent by mutual agreement.

The white schools consisted of six independent districts, containing each one four-year high school, two dependent districts each containing a four-year high school, three dependent districts each containing a two-year high school, thirteen dependent two-teacher schools and forty dependent one-teacher schools.

The County was not one that could qualify under the then existing set-up for State Aid in any large amount.

The general financial status of the county in 1929 and all succeeding years was and has been good. There has never been any bonded indebtedness hanging over the County and its government has functioned on a cash basis.

The population of the County is made up of people from all sections of the United States with a heavier proportion of people from the North than is found in most Southwestern counties. There is a very large contingent of German people among its citizenship.

Outside of the racial groups mentioned above, there are no foreign element problems, but the County does have a large group of Plains Indians whose immediate forebears were wild, warlike tribesmen and who did not take readily to civilized ways and whose children do not now receive as much home encouragement as might be hoped for.

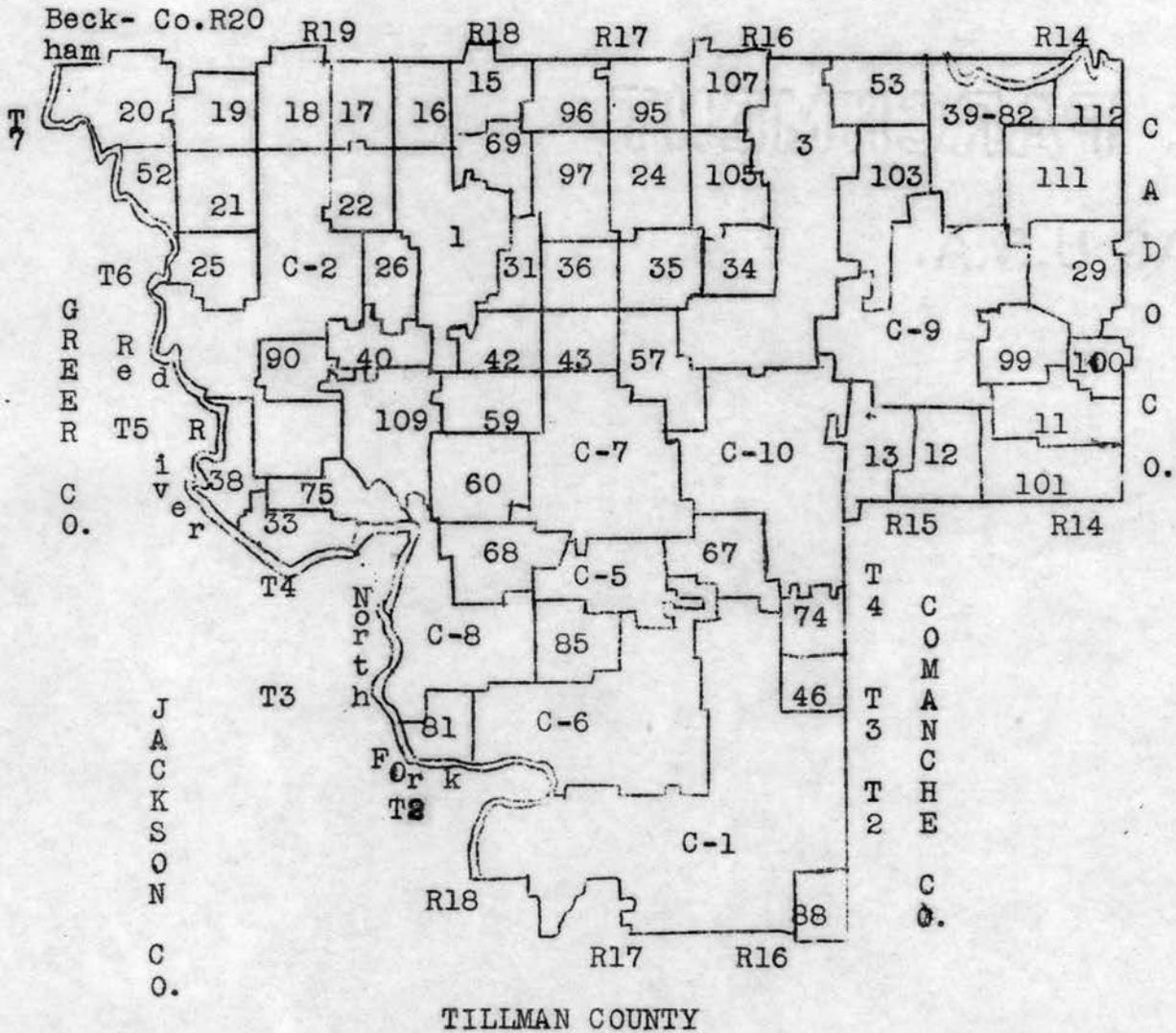
There are no separate Indian schools, no parochial schools and no private schools.

It is the purpose of this study to trace the progress of education in Kiowa County during the nineteen-hundred thirties and to make some constructive suggestions as to the formulation of a future program based upon the needs that may be apparent.

The points under consideration will include a study of the scholastic enumeration through the period and any variations that might indicate trends toward or away from any particular group of schools. The physical equipment and teacher training as related to the financial condition of the County is to be considered in their relationship to the standards of education maintained.

(Figure No. 1)

WASHITA COUNTY



SCHOOL DISTRICT MAP OF KIOWA COUNTY 1930

CHAPTER II

PHYSICAL - FINANCIAL

The period of the early nineteen-twenties in Kiowa County had been marked by unusual activity in the field of consolidation. Very definite lines of thought were in evidence in almost every community. The question of whether the district should be consolidated or should not be was the paramount issue and very little attention was given to the actual class-room situation.

The whole situation presented the aspect wherein one group promised that with consolidation would come all of the manifold blessings of an efficient up-to-the-minute school system wherein every child from every walk of life would learn to earn its daily bread as opposed to ignorance, poverty and all the things that accompany them, as the lot of those who were unwilling to consolidate. Whereas, the opposing forces shouted an equally determined challenge to be shown what better instruction could possibly be had than that found in the little one-room district school, wherein the children could be kept close to the hearth side, taught by a teacher with a First, Second or Third Grade Certificate, and who is well known by every parent. In addition to that argument, the ever present thought lingered in the back of their minds that perhaps the purse strings might be loosened. It has long been the observation of the writer that the

patron's heart strings and purse strings dangle very closely together and it is very difficult to pull the latter without disturbing the former.

As stated earlier, the schools had for the most part been repaired or rebuilt by the middle twenties, so that those which had been repaired were for the most part some fifteen or twenty years old by the time they emerged into the thirties, and were of course, in a bad state of repair again. Most of those that had been newly built in the early and middle twenties were then beginning to need repair. Playground equipment was almost non-existent. The idea of libraries had not taken hold. There were numerous sets of reference works, history and similar works which were in most cases far too advanced for any grade school youngster. The idea of an extensive reading program for even children had not yet appeared.

So as the discussion is opened in the school year of 1929-1930 it is found that the geographical situation in the county is as indicated by Figure 1. It will be seen that there were eight independent high schools offering four-year courses, two dependent (consolidated) offering four-year courses and three dependent high schools, two of which were consolidated and all of which offered two years of high school work. There were, in addition to these, thirteen two-room schools and 38 one-room--a total of 62 schools.

None of these schools were offering vocational work of any kind as such. Home economics and commercial work were offered in a very limited degree. The courses offered will be discussed later and suffice it to say at this time that the curriculum was made up of the usual mill run of subjects offered in the small high schools throughout the state.

The physical condition of the high schools of the county was something as follows: All four-year high schools were housed in brick buildings, many of them dating from the very opening of the territory to white settlement. There were only three school gymnasiums in existence in the county at that time. Auditoriums were for the most part either non-existent or of inadequate size to accommodate the needs of the schools in the community. Two high schools, that of Sedan (Consolidated Nine) and Kiowa Flat (Number Fifty-Three) were being conducted in frame buildings. Libraries were very limited and consisted for the most part of sets of books, many of which were not related to the subjects taught in the schools. Since reading was not particularly emphasized at that time, the library naturally followed very closely along the lines of reference works, the classics and factual knowledge with little attention given to those books which might lead toward any comprehensive reading program in the lower grades. Science equipment was of

a limited nature since, with one or two exceptions neither physics nor chemistry was taught in the county. The science program consisted mainly of general science and some specialized courses, such as zoology, botany and allied subjects.

Transportation facilities were motorized, but little attention was given to safety or even comfort. Heated busses were unheard of and were for the most part of home-made wooden construction placed on car chassis (from which the body had been torn) or on old truck frames.

Physical education equipment consisted mainly of the uniforms and actual playing equipment used in the competitive sports. Much of that equipment was owned by the individual player rather than by the schools. Those buildings serving as gymnasiums were for the most part old shed buildings or vacant store buildings. The football fields consisted of any block of vacant lots of sufficient size to meet the needs of the game. The fields were usually thickly sodded with sand burs and other weeds. However, these were speedily removed by sticking them in the various players as it was their misfortune to be on the bottom. Bleachers for the accomodation of the spectators were unknown. Warm shower baths were not to be had in any of the schools of the county and often the only bathing facilities consisted of a length of rubber hose connected to the ordinary cold water hydrant.

Sanitary equipment was not very far in advance of other general school equipment. More than half of the high schools in the county had out-door toilets and almost as many were without any in-door supply of drinking water.

Very few classrooms or study halls were equipped with electric lights.

With conditions as described above, the field was ripe for the ushering in of a building program. Bonds were voted in 1928 for the construction of new buildings in Mountain Park Independent Consolidated No. 6 and actual building was done in the immediately succeeding years. This building program consisted of a new auditorium and gymnasium combined, together with improved class-room conditions and general repair which placed the school plant of that district in excellent condition.

The year 1929, which marked the height of the dizzy advance and final crash in the economic world, also marked considerable activity in the field of bond voting and school improvement in Kiowa County. First of these was a bond voted by Roosevelt Independent Consolidated No. 7 for the erection of a new auditorium-gymnasium combination, which also housed the vocational agriculture shops, classrooms and library. The building was well equipped for academic effort and was thoroughly modern in its equipment for physical education. The building material was of native granite, steel and wood construction. This building,

together with a new high school building, which had recently been completed, adequately housed the Roosevelt school system.

In the same year (1929) Consolidated No. 8 voted bonds and constructed a new brick building, which consisted of seven classrooms, superintendent's office, auditorium and a basement. This building replaced a frame structure which had been on the grounds since consolidation. During the same year a small frame teacherage was erected near by. This set-up was sufficient for the needs of that district until the year 1939, when a building levy was voted and an additional classroom was erected early in 1939. During the interval a building levy was voted and a gymnasium (frame building) was erected in 1934.

The year 1929 also marked the passing of the last large frame high school building in Kiowa County, for in that year Sedan Consolidated No. 9 voted bonds for the erection of a new modern brick building and immediately began construction of the new and demolition of the old fire trap. The new building consisted of a combination, superintendent's office, library, basement and seven classrooms. This building adequately housed the Sedan school until the current year (1939) when bonds were voted and erection of a new building commenced similar to that of Roosevelt Consolidated No. 7. The

new Sedan building is to be constructed of native stone and is to house a modern gymnasium and classrooms of sufficient size to take care of a proposed vocational program.

The crash of October 1929 seemed to lay a very heavy hand upon the progress of school plant construction in Kiowa County.

All communities seemed afraid in the face of the financial depression to obligate themselves in any way, and no further building bonds, with one exception, were voted for the high schools of Kiowa County during the next seven-year period, i.e., during the years 1930 to 1936, both inclusive. There even seemed to be a tendency during the depth of the depression about 1932-34 to economize not only by allowing the buildings to fall into disrepair but actually to reduce the amount of insurance on the buildings already constructed.

This wave of pseudo economy proved costly in at least one instance in the county. Late in 1934 the school building in Independent Consolidated District No. 2 was entirely destroyed by fire. The insurance had just been lowered very materially and, of course, the coverage was in no wise sufficient to erect a new building.

When the District sought to vote bonds it was found that one district which had been consolidated with

Lone Wolf was already bonded to capacity. Therefore, no more bonds could be voted and the district was faced with the rather alarming prospect of being without school buildings. At this juncture a petition was circulated and the heavily bonded district was detached from the Lone Wolf District and the remaining territory was then able (in 1934) to vote bonds and erect a modern school plant, which consists of a library room, study hall, superintendent's office, music room, combination auditorium-gymnasium, basement and sufficient classrooms to house the entire school system.

About the middle of the period it became possible to use considerable Federal assistance in building and repairing school buildings. Again there was a very marked advance in the construction program as soon as this became generally known to the public.

The Federal Government's willingness to assist in a program of construction work became apparent and generally understood by the citizenry prior to the year 1938 and the slight upturn in business conditions brought about another general advance in bond voting and building construction. In that year Independent Consolidated District No. 1 voted \$42,000 for the construction of a new grade school building, which included an auditorium-gymnasium combination, a principal's office and sufficient classrooms for the accomodation of the junior high school

TABLE I
BONDS AND BUILDING LEVIES VOTED
IN KIOWA COUNTY 1928-1938¹

	1928	1929	1934	1938
Building	IC-3 \$10,000	IC-7 \$37,000	IC-2 \$21,000	IC-1 \$42,000
Bonds Voted		C-8, 21,000		I-3, 2,800 IC-10, 7,000
Total	\$10,000	\$58,000	\$21,000	\$51,000
Grand Total of Bonds	1928 to 1938			\$161,200
Building Fund Levies	1928 to 1938			
	1928	1929	1934	1938
	None	None	None	9,078.35 IC-6, 2,206.89 C-8, 1,450.00
Total	None	None	None	\$12,735.24
Grand Total of Building Fund Levies 1928-1938				\$12,735.24
Grand Total of Building Funds and Bonds voted 1928 to 1938				\$173,935.24

It will be seen from Table I that the period of the nineteen-thirties was ushered in by a marked increase in school house building from bonds voted in the late twenties and that immediately after the beginning of the depression the building program fell away to nothing until the late thirties when there was a slight upturn in business conditions and the Federal Government had also made its help felt. This also marks the high tide of the movement to the larger centers of population.

¹
Records of the County Treasurer's Office, Kiowa County.

and all grades combined. This building program was badly needed and was sufficient to satisfy the needs of the Snyder City School System up until the current year.

The year 1938 also saw a bond of \$2,800 voted for the construction of a gymnasium-auditorium combination for the Gotebo School System. This building was of native stone construction and had adequate dressing and bathing facilities for athletic teams, a stage and dressing rooms for fine arts and storage space for band instruments and such things.

Early in the year 1938 Independent Consolidated No. 10 set up bonds in the amount of \$7,000 for the construction of a gymnasium and shop building to house vocational agriculture, home economics and allied subjects. This building replaced an old sheet iron structure and reconstructed frame building which had been in use many years.

A complete resume of bonds voted and used for the period of the 1930's will be found in Table I. It will be seen that there were two outstanding periods of activity in that field of endeavor, one at the beginning and one at the close of the period, however, the two periods of activity were occasioned by inadequate room and made possible by actually opposite circumstances.

The first of these periods was a building program brought on by a period of prosperity, easy money and extravagant spending not only in public enterprises, but also by the private citizenry in general.

The second also was brought on because of an actual need for buildings and other things such as was also needed at the beginning of the period but in that instance was made possible by a period of depression and general poverty among the private citizenry of the country in general. The necessity of made work caused the Federal Government to launch an extensive W. P. A. building program in order that the citizenry might not only earn its daily bread but might also construct something of permanent worth to the people, so by the close of the ten-year span there was a pendulum swing entirely from left to right and oddly enough the public profited by a building program at each extreme of the swing, from prosperity to poverty.

In addition to the high school improvements there were four one-room and three two-room frame buildings constructed outright, besides an extensive program of repair work shared by the Federal Government in which 17 one-room schools and seven two-room schools were brought into an excellent state of repair. Several hundred trees were planted and many wells, cisterns and storm caves were dug.

The period saw the general condition of playground equipment brought up to its highest standard and saw the purchase of almost a complete re-establishment of transportation facilities in the form of new buses with safety devices, warmers and other modern fixtures.

The thirties was also a period of expansion in libraries. This was occasioned by the accredited school movement and the special stress which was laid upon a comprehensive reading program which extended down into even the Primary department. More readable books were furnished, old books repaired and much use was made of the State Traveling Library.

FINANCIAL

As stated earlier in this chapter the general financial condition of Kiowa County has been satisfactory during the years. The valuation in 1930 was \$19,850,952, but at the close of the period the valuation had dropped to \$11,657,217.00, as shown in Table II. It will be seen from Table II that the second year of the thirties showed a very sharp decline, one which amounted to almost 20 per cent of the total valuation. The valuation dropped steadily with one slight exception from that time on until the year 1937 at which time another sharp decline came, which brought the valuation decrease close to more than 40 per cent. The school and school teachers' salaries suffered severely from the lack of funds during

the middle thirties having reached the point during that time to which it was necessary for the Federal Government to aid in bringing the terms to a satisfactory close.

One point of particular interest during this period was the fact that the teacher teaching inside the school building in many of the one-room schools was drawing only a fraction of the amount per hour drawn by the untrained and unskilled painter who was painting the outside of the building only a few inches away.

TABLE II

Assessed Valuations for Kiowa County in 1930, 1931, 1932, 1933, 1934, 1935, 1936, 1937, 1938 ²	
1930	\$19,850,052
1931	19,639,046
1932	15,853,605
1933	14,130,745
1934	14,234,060
1935	13,550,809
1936	13,497,887
1937	11,944,709
1938	11,657,217

It will be seen from the above table that there was a steady decrease in assessed valuations in Kiowa County from 1930 to and including 1938. This decrease was only slackened in 1934. The total decrease in assessed valuation for the period covered by this study was \$8,193,735, which amount was 41.27 per cent of the original.

2

Records in the office of the County Tax Assessor in Hobart, Oklahoma.

House Bill 212 which appropriated \$8,200,000 for the support of the common school equalization fund as provided by House Bill 241 relieved to a large extent the condition mentioned at the outset of this discussion. Valuations did not fall off as abruptly in the towns as they did in the country districts, however, little fluctuation was noticed even in rural communities. The usual levy on the average did not vary greatly from nine mills. The school year of 1934-1935 was confused somewhat in a financial way by the fact that House Bill 212 was such a radical departure from the old State aid set-up that some districts had expected more aid from the State than they had been willing to qualify for. That condition was soon rectified.

It is worthy of note that there seems to be a very close relationship between the amount of the levy which the patrons of the district are willing to vote and of the amount which they are actually able to vote. The richer the district the more reluctant they are to vote a sufficient levy as shown by the fact that in almost every case in which insufficient levies were voted the district was traversed by a railroad line or some other heavy tax paying corporation.

TABLE III

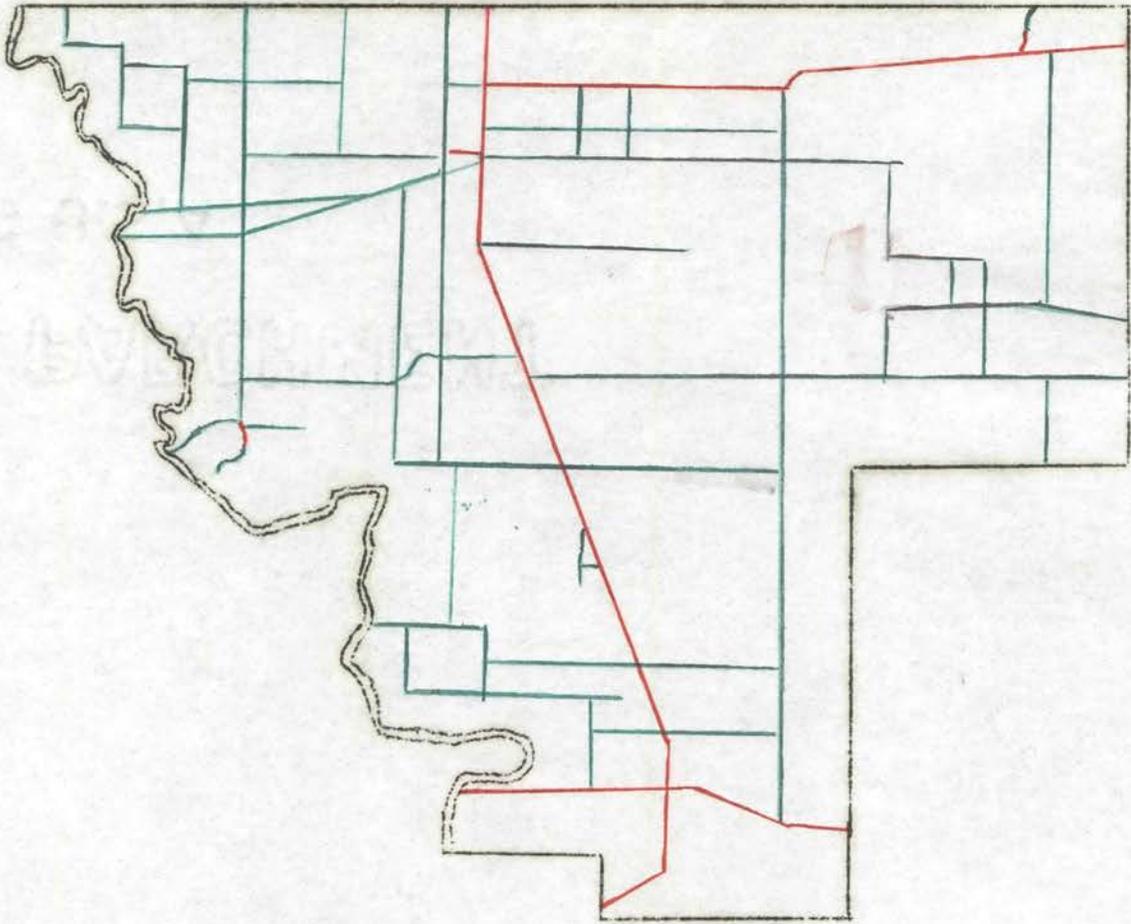
TEACHER SALARY SCHEDULE FOR 1937-1938 AND 1938-1939
AS SET UP BY HOUSE BILL 6, SIXTEENTH LEGISLATURE

Minimum Monthly Salary Schedule Based on Number Years Teaching Experience						
TRAINING	None	1	2	3	4	5
Master's Degree	\$85	\$90	\$95	\$100	\$105	\$110
Bachelor's Degree	80	85	90	95	100	---
90 Semester Hours or more but no Degree	75	80	85	90	---	---
40-59 Semester Hours	65	70	75	80	---	---
60-89 Semester Hours	70	75	80	85	---	---
First Grade Certificate	---	65	80	65	---	---

It will be noted from the above table that there was a premium placed by House Bill 6 upon the amount of college training and the number of years experience possessed by each teacher. It is also worthy of note that there was an implied expectation that the teaching personnel of the State would continue to increase its college training, as evidenced by the fact that three years was the limit of increase for those with less than a degree.

The average school aid guaranteed by the State during the period of discussion was increased approximately 700 per cent by House Bill 212 and its related measures. In spite of the improved conditions brought about by House Bill 212 it was still not satisfactory in as much as it did not guarantee more than an eight months term of school to those districts which met all of its requirements. It remained the burden of the Sixteenth Legislature to enact legislation which would guarantee to all the schools of the State of Oklahoma which were willing to meet with the reasonable requirements of House Bill 6 with a salary schedule as set out in Table III. This also marked the beginning of a definite move from the one and two-room schools toward the larger centers of population by way of transferring many of the one and two-room schools which were unable to continue on their own resources. Two schools moved the first year and this was followed by the moving of eight more the second year, making a total of ten, and four more were added the third year, bringing the total of one and two-room schools to 14 out of a total of 50 which had moved into town schools.

(Figure No. 2)



ROAD MAP OF KIOWA COUNTY 1939

PAVEMENT THUS: ———

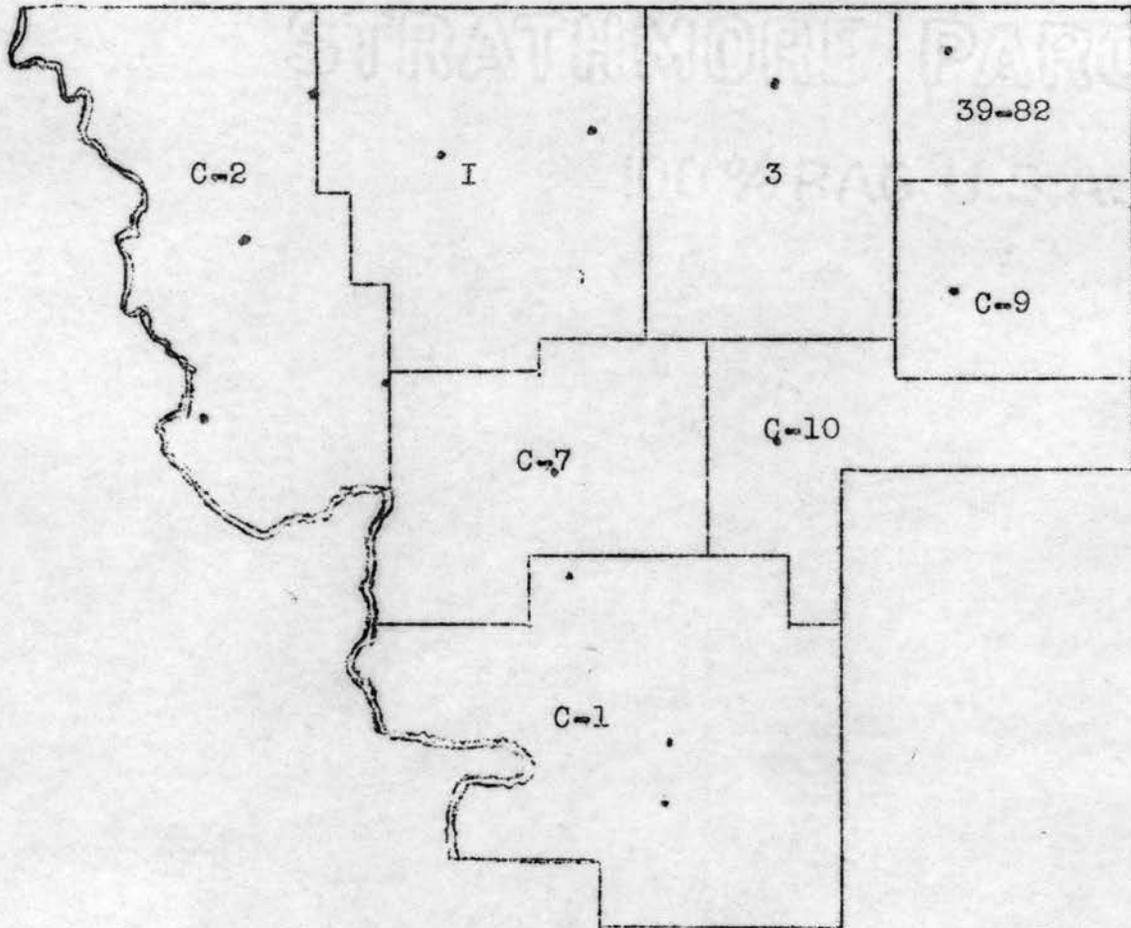
HARD SURFACED THUS: ———

The facts as shown in the preceding paragraph indicated a definite trend toward the moving from the smaller units to the larger ones. In some cases, however, some of the smaller schools have stubbornly held out against any surrender of their rights and in the case of at least one school the actual per capita cost is now \$299.00 as against a transfer fee of \$36.00 per capita. It is the opinion of the writer that the tax payers will not long be willing to bear a burden of anywhere from two to eight times as much per capita as the transfers will cost and it is therefore only reasonable to expect that there will be a continued move from the smaller districts to the larger ones.

Due to road improvements as shown in Figure 2 it is possible for, not to exceed eight, school centers to now serve the entire county. The county might easily be divided as shown in Figure 3.

It will be seen after examining Table I that a building program in Kiowa County, during the period under discussion, created sufficient room, that even though, the valuations as shown in Table II fell rapidly there was still many changes in the teaching personnel which would be a natural outgrowth of that program and made possible by the salary schedule as shown in Table III. These changes will be shown in the following chapter and it will be necessary to refer to the above mentioned tables from time to time in order to comprehend the relationship existing between them.

(Figure No. 3)



PROPOSED MAP OF KIOWA COUNTY
(Eight Districts)

CHAPTER III
TEACHER PERSONNEL

In the preceding chapters we indicated two distinct periods of building expansion and one distinct period of financial depression. Even though these conditions existed the number of persons involved as members of the teaching personnel of the county under consideration did not vary greatly, there being 212 teachers in the beginning of the period and 226 at the close.

It would seem from the foregoing statements that there was little justification for an increase in expenditures and in an expansion in the program of building in view of the fact that there was a steady decrease in the number of schools and in the number of children actually enrolled (see Table V) however, as shown in Table IV, this may be accounted for on the grounds that there was a noticeable increase in the amount of college training possessed by the teachers in the elementary grades. The college training in the high schools did not increase relatively as much as in the grades because more teachers in the high schools were already in possession of degrees and their training tended toward a smaller amount and turned toward specialized fields.

It will be seen from Table IV that the college training of elementary teachers went steadily forward throughout the period. The writer believes that this

TABLE IV

A COMPARISON OF THE COLLEGE TRAINING OF ELEMENTARY
TEACHERS IN KIOWA COUNTY IN 1931-32 AND 1938-39

High School Work				College Training								1931-1932 ¹		
1yr	2yr	3yr	4yr	$\frac{1}{2}$ yr	$\frac{3}{4}$ yr	1yr	$1\frac{1}{2}$ yr	2yr	$2\frac{1}{2}$ yr	3yr	$3\frac{1}{2}$ yr	4yr	DEG	MS
0	1	0	1	0	2	5	21	31	41	19	9	3	7	0
0	0	0	0	1	0	0	2	15	3	20	20	20	74	1 ²

¹

Fourteenth Biennial Report of the State Superintendent of Public Instruction of the State of Oklahoma, p. 42, Table 37.

²

Teachers' transcripts on file in the Office of the County Superintendent of Kiowa County and in the offices of the Superintendents of Schools in Districts 1, C-1, C-2, 3, C-6, C-7, C-10, and 39-82 of Kiowa County.

increase in preparation is due in a large measure to two primary causes: First, during the depth of the financial depression it became easier to employ persons with more advanced college training because there had been a greater number of them that had been successful teachers in previous years and had branched out into other fields of endeavor. When the economic stress became generally felt those teachers rushed back into the profession and in many cases crowded out those with less professional training. Second: The enactment of House Bill 6 by the Sixteenth Legislature put a financial premium on better trained teachers and through the assistance of the State Government made it possible for the very poor districts in the State to employ teachers with qualifications equal to those employed by the richer districts and at the same time involving no local tax burden. This, of course, was an incentive to the teachers to better prepare themselves and they in turn were, of course, able to force out of the profession many of those less qualified by an extensive college preparation.

The curriculum during the formative period of the 1920's had been made up very largely of those subjects which had commonly become thought of as standard subjects. We mean by the foregoing statement that there was offered in most of the high schools four years of

history, four years of English, two years of mathematics, two years of Latin, and some form of science. These courses, were, of course, supplemented by several one-half year subjects.

There was no rigid adherence to any particular standard of qualification for teachers but it was rather assumed that any teacher with a life certificate might be justifiably employed to teach almost any subject which he or she, as the case might be, was willing to attempt in the smaller high school.

In the very early 1930's an expansive high school inspection program, launched by the State Department, began to make itself felt and the teaching personnel was more and more restricted to those fields in which they had had the most college training.

In view of the program set up in the foregoing paragraph and which was brought to its present status by 1936, most of those teachers who were engaged in high school teaching had turned from the field of general education and had begun to prepare themselves in their special fields as, for example, a chemistry teacher must have a minimum of sixteen college hours credit in that field in addition to half as much in closely related fields. Those teaching English were required to have thirty hours in that field, and those teaching a foreign language were required to have twenty-eight hours, and

those teaching general science were required to have twenty-four hours of college credit well distributed among the various fields of scientific endeavor.

In addition to specialized fields as shown in the foregoing paragraph, teachers were required to have twenty hours of college training made up from the following group:

- Educational Psychology
- Psychology of Adolescence
- Philosophy of Education and/or History of Education
- General Methods and Management, including Oklahoma School Law
- Educational Measurements
- Principles of Secondary Education
- Apprentice Teaching in Secondary Schools

It does not require a close scrutiny of those subjects listed in the field of education to tell us that most teachers had already for the most part prepared themselves in those fields. Hence, it was the natural process for them to devote their college training more and more to specialized fields in preparation for meeting the requirements as set up by the State Department of Education and the North Central Association of Secondary Schools and Colleges.

In view of this move on the part of the State Department of Education a greater number of teachers who were trained in specialized fields began to appear and this in its turn led to an expansion of the high school curriculum.

Among those subjects which rapidly gained in popularity were vocational agriculture, which was taken up by six of the high schools. Eight high schools added commercial departments and one high school added diversified occupational training and one Junior College was established in the mid-thirties and has continued on to the present. The field of fine arts saw increasing popularity during this period.

The N. Y. A. Program began to assume major proportions during the middle of the period and as it increased, its aid made possible the attendance of many high school pupils who could not have otherwise attended high school and that in turn, of course, had considerable bearing upon the program of high school curricular expansion and on the distribution of teacher personnel.

It will be seen from Table V that the enumeration dropped steadily from 1930 on to the present time with two rather unimportant exceptions, that of 1933 and 1936. The first of these may have been caused by the Government Made Work Program which gave temporary employment to many families and the second to improved agriculture conditions.

It will be seen from Table V that the scholastic enumeration loss was most keenly felt by the small rural one and two-teacher schools. The total scholastic enumeration loss for the county was approximately thirty per cent.

TABLE V
SCHOLASTIC ENUMERATION, 1930-1939³

1929-30	1930-31	1931-32	1932-33	1933-34	
9692	9105	8628	8665	8607	TOTALS
5958	5616	6371	5239	5586	Ind. Dists.
3734	3489	3257	3426	3021	Dept. Dists
1934-35	1935-36	1936-37	1937-38	1938-39	
8040	8278	7519	6863	6720	TOTALS
5198	5206	4870	4552	4479	Ind. Dists.
2842	3072	2649	2309	2247	Dept. Dists.

It will be noted from Table V that the first general exodus from the small centers came with the first year of the depression and thereafter declined very slowly or quit entirely until after the middle-thirties at which time the Federal Government's Made Work Program became most extensive. At that time there was an even greater drift away from the smaller centers than had here-to-fore been noticed.

It is also significant that there was a relatively smaller loss among those larger centers at such times as the smaller ones suffered their greatest losses.

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Scholastic Enumeration Records for Kiowa County, in the State Department of Education, Oklahoma City.

The loss of the independent districts was approximately 24 per cent, while that of the dependent districts was approximately 40 per cent.

The above figure which indicates a rural loss of 40 per cent as against an urban loss of only 24 per cent and a total loss of only 30 per cent would indicate over a period of ten years that there is a definite drift away from the rural community and into the urban centers. This belief is further proved by the fact that at the beginning of the period in question every one and two-teacher school in Kiowa County maintained its own home school, but by the end of the period, 16 one and two-teacher schools had actually discontinued school in the home district and had moved their pupils into the larger centers. This number constituted more than 30 per cent of the original number of districts at the beginning of the period.

In addition to the 16 districts which actually made the change, 14 other districts made more or less determined efforts to discontinue their own schools, but failed to do so for some reason or other, usually some technicality, such as, ineligible persons signing petitions, elections that were held in default or by failure to obtain quite enough signers. It will therefore be seen that more than half of the rural districts actually made attempts during the period to move from rural to urban centers.

NOV 20 1939 This general movement was not a part of the great consolidation movement which had had its inception and culmination in the decade immediately preceding that under consideration, but was a movement of its own, born of an economic situation which had never before existed in the history of the County considered.

There are many contributing factors which should be considered in any study made of this question. The first of these, of course, would be that of the national depression which has through the Made Work Program of the Government necessitated the gathering of all indigent persons into focal points where they may more easily be gathered for their respective labor assignments.

A second contributing factor is that of land ownership. In the County under consideration approximately 12 per cent⁴ of all land is non-taxable Indian leases held in trust by the United States Government for members of the non-civilized Plains Indians. A considerable amount of land is occupied by former captives of these Indians and the United States Government still owns a percentage of unassigned lands.

A third factor for consideration is the fact that the county is traversed diagonally by the main range of the Witchita Mountains which are made up of

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non-productive bald granite knobs and the longest side of the county is washed by the sandy wastes of the North Fork of Red River which, of course, adds considerable sub-marginal land.

A fourth and in the writer's opinion, the most serious factor to be considered in the light of land ownership, lies in the fact that 63 per cent of the farm land is tenant cultivated.⁵ This means a moving population which does not have the home ties and property ownership ties which go into the stabilization of rural communities, such as those in some sections of the Eastern United States where families own and farm their homesteads for many generations. This percent of tenant ownership is not only due to present economic conditions but is due in large measure to the fact that many adventurers settled the County less than a generation ago and remained only long enough to gain possession of the land and then turned it via mortgages, loans and outright sales to real estate companies and wealthy individuals.

There is almost always some evils attendant upon any system of tribal leases and one of the most serious of these is the fact that during periods of economic stress the lessee is unable to enter into competitive bidding with individuals who have considerable financial

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Kiowa County Agent

resources at their disposal, hence, they must evacuate the land and move toward labor centers.

In view of the foregoing conditions the writer has found that a very large percentage of the farm land in the County is controlled either in fee or by rentals, or by lease by a very few families.

The agriculture products of the county are chiefly small grains and cotton. Only on rare occasions are the seasons such that both of these produce heavily in the same year, and since the grains are raised on the uplands chiefly and the cotton in the river bottoms, we find a shifting of the population from one section of the County to the other, thus making a stabilized school situation difficult to obtain.⁶ It then is only natural that small schools which are unable to stabilize their condition to any degree of certainty would naturally drift toward permanently stabilized centers. Most of the larger schools have been not only willing but anxious to receive transfers from the smaller centers due to the fact that they are then able to share more heavily the distribution of State money.

It then follows that the school condition of the County has become one of an accelerated evolutionary

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Consolidated No. 2, Separate School of Kiowa County, had to be Dismissed for Lack of Students to Attend and the Following Year Found Eighty Students Enrolled in the Same School.

nature, in which we see the passing of the small rural community and the focalizing of school life in well defined and larger centers as indicated in Figure 3.

With the trend in this direction and sufficient State money available to take care of the situation it has become possible for school planning to be done with more regard for future activity. It has become possible to employ teachers with better professional training as was indicated by Table IV, and a better program of education is now possible and actually being conducted than was possible during preceding periods of economic plenty.

The writer believes that the fact that all teachers have been placed on an equable salary basis has had a tendency to cause teachers to go into elementary teaching rather than to hold to the idea of obtaining high school positions in order to receive more pay. Hence, we have more well-trained elementary teachers than ever before as shown in Table IV. It will be noticed that whereas the largest single group in 1932 was the two and a half-year group and in 1939 it had moved to the right and was the four-year group.

CHAPTER IV

CONCLUSION

In the preceding chapters the writer traced the progress of education in Kiowa County through a ten-year period, from 1929 to 1939. This period included the beginning of the nationwide financial depression and included the period of its greatest depth and the period of upward trend.

It is worthy of note that at the close of a period of unusual prosperity that the school plants of Kiowa County were in a very bad state of repair and with inadequate room to supply the then existing needs. The libraries were little more than a collection of books, and playground equipment was very limited.

In opposition to this condition the close of the ten-year period of financial stress found the school plants in a much improved condition. The libraries planned to fit the needs of the curriculum as set up and the playground equipment in an excellent condition as compared with its former state.

The first period of building expansion came in the very beginning of the period under consideration and was the result of a carry-over in the form of bonds and levies voted in the immediate preceding years. Then came the nationwide financial crash which temporarily slowed down school activity in all of its phases even

to the point of shortening terms and almost to a cessation of the purchase of material and equipment which had before been considered necessary to the operation of a successful school.

An upward trend in the building program began with the very depth of the depression. For at that time the Federal Government in its attempt to relieve labor conditions of the country inaugurated a made-work program which included the OERA, PWA, and WPA, and in setting up these programs a liberal attitude was assumed in the matter of construction of public buildings.

In agricultural communities such as Kiowa County the demand for public buildings is not great beyond the sphere of local government and school plant construction. It would, therefore, be the natural thing that the Federal Government program would include a considerable number of school buildings. As proof of the foregoing statement all of the ten high schools of the County launched a building program of some kind.

This program included the construction of five modern school plants complete, four auditorium-gymnasium combinations and two substantial additions to school plants already completed.

Among the one and two-teacher rural schools a program of general school repair and building was inaugurated through a program sponsored by the County Superintendent. This program included the construction of six

school plants, the repair and reconditioning of 42 school houses and grounds. The building of a large number of storm caves, the digging of several wells and cisterns, the grading and leveling of school grounds, the planting of several hundred shade trees and the erection of new and repair of old playground equipment. This program included also the repair of furniture and fixtures.

It will be seen that the close of the ten-year period found the physical condition of the school plants of Kiowa County in a much improved condition over that which had existed at the beginning of the period and that with little local expenditures of funds as compared with a like improvement in preceding years.

It is therefore the writers opinion that a program of Federal participation, the direction of which may be shared with local authority should be continued in operation.

Transportation in Kiowa County in 1929 was limited to eight schools participating with approximately 25 motorized vehicles all of which were of make-shift design in the form of home-made wooden bodies fastened upon old truck and car chassis. None of these were constructed with a view to either safety or comfort. None were equipped with fire-extinguishers, heaters, safety glass nor double exits.

The roads traveled by these busses were with the exception of two lightly graveled high ways, all of dirt

construction, many of which were not even brought to grade and drainage. Much school time was of necessity lost because the vehicles could not be operated under adverse weather conditions. Again the influence of the Federal Government was felt in the matter of transportation for with the coming of the Government program of public works there was a decided increase in the construction of hard surfaced high ways throughout the County as is shown in Figure 2.

There were several contributing factors in the improvement of pupil transportation some of which should be noted here by way of explanation of statements made in preceding chapters. One of these factors was, of course, the improved road construction, mentioned in the preceding paragraph. Another factor worthy of notice is the fact that the Federal Government's participation in the building and improvement program lessened the local financial strain to the extent that some local funds were made available for the improvement of transportation. Another factor was state participation as set up in House Bill 6 of the regular session of the Sixteenth Legislature. Still another factor was the inauguration of a high way safety program by the State which provided for rigid inspection and supervision for safety purposes of vehicles transporting school children.

Again the writer is of the opinion that a continuation of State and Federal participation has and would continue to show an improvement in school conditions. Transportation, as left entirely under the control of local units of government, was not safe nor adequate nor dependable as compared to that which exists at the close of the period in which a large percentage of the children enrolled in Kiowa County is serviced over all weather roads by modern safety busses warmed and ventilated and driven by licensed drivers. This fleet of busses now serves all of the ten high schools, the Junior College, and one two-teacher dependent district. There are approximately 40 motorized vehicles in operation.

The fifteenth session of the Oklahoma Legislature passed an act which was known as House Bill 212. The provisions of the act included a much wider State participation in the fiscal matters of school districts. This act proved to be far reaching in its effect upon the school situation in the state as a whole and particularly so was its influence felt by the smaller agricultural communities, but the bill fell short of an ideal set-up in as much as there was not sufficient revenue available to insure a full term of school throughout the State.

There seemed to be a general feeling among the citizenry that with some improvement which would include greater State participation that there might be an almost

ideal fiscal situation made possible. This attitude on the part of the citizenry and a liberal administration bore fruit in the regular session of the Sixteenth Legislature in the form of House Bill 6.

It will be seen from Table III that the teachers salary situation was placed on a rather substantial basis which was a decided improvement over that of preceding years. The act was liberal enough in its provision that it made possible any extra expenditure that a district might wish to make in the form of local initiative, yet it was rigid enough that no teacher might be denied a living wage scale.

It must be borne in mind that with State and Federal participation in fiscal matters must always come a degree of restraint imposed upon local administrations. This was typified in the Federal program by some restraint as to kind of building, architecture and needs and in the case of the State's participation in House Bill 6, a rather elaborate program of local administrative restraint was imposed.

Under this act as shown in Table III a definite minimum salary schedule and length of term was made mandatory. Certain conditions had to be met in the matter of transportation as well as of maintenance.

This bill lifted much of the local burden and substituted state funds in their stead and made it possible for an expansion of the school program.

This expansion came in the form of an enriched curriculum administered by a better trained teacher personnel as shown in Table IV.

This enriched program included an expansion of the already established Vocational Agriculture department until at the close of the period six of the ten high schools had well established programs of this kind. It also brought about the establishment of Vocational Home Economics in two of these schools, and Trades and Industry courses were offered as a part of the vocational program of another. The program also was emphasized in the establishment and maintenance of a Junior College.

In addition to these departmental changes noted in the preceding paragraph, there was a general broadening of the curriculum to include more foreign language and more fine arts.

With curriculum expansion came the increase in teacher training as noted in Table IV. Whereas, in the early years of the period the largest number of any single group of teachers, teaching in the County was that group which had two and a half years of college preparation and at the close of the period the largest single group teaching in the County was that group which held college degrees. This group included 48 per cent of all the teachers in 1939, whereas in 1932 it included but 5 per cent, an increase of 43 per cent over a period of seven years.

A study of Table V will show that the first year of the depression showed a sharp decline in the scholastic population of the County. The second year showed an even greater decline but by the third year the Federal Government's Farm Program had begun to make itself felt and the decline was stopped temporarily but set in the next year and continued until 1936, which year marked the high tide of Federal Made-Work. From 1936 on the decline has continued.

It is significant that the decline in scholastic population in the rural districts for the period under consideration was approximately 59 per cent, while the urban districts suffered a loss of but 24 per cent and the County as a whole lost approximately 30 per cent. It would therefore seem that there is a drift of the population away from the small centers and toward the larger ones.

This belief is further strengthened by the fact that more than 50 per cent of the one and two-teacher schools of the County have sought to transfer their entire scholastic population to larger centers and further by the fact that there are now many vacant farm homes in evidence throughout the County.

Disregarding the question of home ownership and home dispersion of the general population of the County, the writer is of the opinion that a program of concentration

of school administration would be valuable to that end. Figure 2 shows a network of modern highways which could be used to transport pupils from all over the County to eight focal points as shown in Figure 3. The irregularity in shape of some of these proposed districts is governed by the topography of the territory in question but all of the territory assigned to each of the districts could be serviced by motor transportation with no point more than fifteen miles from its focus.

In view of the situation as pointed out in this and preceding chapters the writer must conclude: (1) That the schools of Kiowa County ended the period in better physical condition than that in which they began it. (2) That the end of the period found better trained teachers. (3) That the curriculum was expanded to better fit the needs of the population. (4) That there is a definite drift in scholastic population away from the smaller centers and toward the larger centers. (5) That a concentration of administrative centers would be justified for economic reasons. (6) That State and Federal participation should be continued.

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