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## An Evaluation of the Administrative Structure of School Districts in Montgomery County, Iowa

Lula B. Reed

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AN EVALUATION OF THE ADMINISTRATIVE  
STRUCTURE OF SCHOOL DISTRICTS IN  
MONTGOMERY COUNTY, IOWA

by

Lula B. Reed, B.S.

\* \* \* \* \*

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment  
of the requirements for the Degree of

Master of Arts

Municipal University of Omaha

1953

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## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

#### Background

The National Commission on School District Reorganization in making its report to the public in 1950 makes this statement:

School district reorganization is imperative. It is imperative for the simple reason that a large majority of the school districts now operating in this country cannot give people the kind of educational programs they need to deal with the complex problems of present-day life or adequately prepare youth to cope with the problems of the future.<sup>1</sup>

The preface of this same report makes clear the understanding of the Commission in undertaking their study by explaining present day school district organization as follows:

The Commission is clearly aware that the public schools in all our states are largely the product of the work of the citizens of local communities working under grants of privileges and authority from state legislatures. Under such a system of development, it has been inevitable that a wide variety of experiments with different plans of school district organization would have been undertaken. Under this democratic system there is small wonder that there is a wide diversity of local school organization among and within the forty-eight states. But one thing is perfectly clear: school organization in our country has never been static. Scarcely any

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1. Howard A. Dawson, Floyd W. Reeves and Others, Your School District, p. 15. 1201 Sixteenth Street, N.W., Washington 6, D. C.: Department of Rural Education, 1950.

one believes that there is any one kind of local school administrative unit that is clearly superior to all other kinds under varying conditions. School districts have continually been changing in the past; there is imperative need for additional reforms today; and other needed changes may be expected in the future as circumstances change and new conditions arise.<sup>1</sup>

In a 1952 publication entitled, The Modern Rural School, Butterworth and Dawson speak in the same terms:

School district reorganization is necessary if needed educational opportunities are to be made available to rural people, and if economy and efficiency in the use of personnel, money and other resources are to be earmarks of our public schools.<sup>2</sup>

In Iowa, the subject of school district reorganization is not a new one. From the earliest organization of schools by early settlers prior to Iowa's admission to statehood to the present day there has been sporadic shifting of district lines governed always by changing legislation. However, little if any change has been made which makes for more efficient administration of school programs.

As early as 1839 the first Iowa School Code Commission was appointed to study educational problems in the state and to make recommendations for the solution of these problems. In 1941 a second Iowa School Commission was appointed. Upon rejection of their report by the legislature in 1944 a third commission was

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1. Ibid., pp. 13-14.

2. Julian E. Butterworth and Howard A. Dawson, The Modern Rural School, p. 348. New York: McGraw-Hill Company, 1952.

appointed. Recommendations of these commissions have agreed upon the desirability of creating larger units of school administration and attendance.

Opinion of Iowa leaders on reorganization seems to be in agreement with those just quoted. Typical statements are those of Cushman of Iowa State College when he says:

Reorganization of school districts is the most basic, the most fundamental undertaking in which our people can be engaged, for only as they provide for an efficient and adequate local school district and a satisfactory and fair means of financing it can they prepare our children for effective living today and tomorrow.<sup>1</sup>

He continues:

The need for school district reorganization is shown by (1) present high cost, (2) unfair distribution of the tax burden, (3) the need to relate schools more closely to life, and, (4) the desire on the part of the people for a better elementary and secondary program.<sup>2</sup>

The work of the Iowa State Education Association, the Iowa Farm Bureau, the Iowa Parent-Teachers Association, the Iowa Council for Better Education, the League of Women Voters and other civic groups led to the enactment in 1945 of school district reorganization legislation. It is not the purpose of this study to discuss this legislation. It is cited here as part of

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1. H. L. Cushman et al, Improving County School Administration in Iowa, p. 30. Department of Vocational Education, Summary of Workshop. Ames, Iowa: Iowa State College, 1949.

2. Ibid., p. 26.

the abundant evidence that in the nation and in the state of Iowa there is an awareness and a growing concern over the problems which arise from present school district organization.

With all the studies and recommendations made, school districts in Montgomery County have undergone relatively little change and remain quite generally in their original form. This being true, it seems reasonable to assume that the current organization when measured by established criteria does not make it possible to provide at an equitable cost to all an adequate and efficient educational program for all children and youth.

#### Statement of the Problem

The question to be answered in this study, therefore, was:

In terms of generally accepted criteria of good educational practice, does the present administrative structure of school districts in Montgomery County, Iowa, make possible at an equitable cost the provision of an adequate and efficient educational program for all children and youth?

The solution of this problem required that answers be found for the following questions:

1. What are generally accepted criteria of good educational practice?
2. What are the characteristics of the present



administrative organization of school districts in Montgomery County, Iowa?

3. To what degree does present administrative organization in Montgomery County conform to that required for an adequate, efficient program for all children and youth?

#### Methods and Sources

For purposes of this study, criteria as established by recognized authorities in the field of school district reorganization were studied. Present consensus was accepted.

The opinions of leaders in education who have given time and effort to the problem in Iowa were weighted heavily in the selection of such criteria.

To learn the facts about school districts in Montgomery County, school records in the office of the County Superintendent of Schools, particularly those compiled in the reorganization surveys made under the direction of the State Department of Public Instruction, acting under Chapter 275, Code of Iowa, 1946, were used. Farm facts and related data were secured from the Montgomery County Farm Bureau and State Conservation offices. Information concerning road conditions was secured from maps and records in the office of the Montgomery County Engineer.

## Review of Related Literature

A Bibliography of Rural School District Reorganization compiled by Cushman and Peck of Iowa State College in June of 1951 lists 570 distinct studies made throughout the nation dealing with this all important subject. Of these 570 contributions, ninety or more of them come out of the State of Iowa. Some fifty deal with more general aspects; thirty-seven are master's thesis considering possibilities of or attitudes toward past reorganization or consolidations in as many thirty different counties. There is one doctor's dissertation. Except for this bibliography and one master's thesis which deals with the organization of a community school nothing was found concerning the area included in this study.

## Definitions

Because of the varied meanings and understanding given to them, the following terms were defined as indicated. These definitions are most typical of those used in studies of school district reorganization.

administrative unit - "that geographic unit comprising all the area under a single system of school administration; generally constitutes a local taxing or fiscal unit for school purposes; usually controlled by a board of education of which the superintendent of schools is

the executive officer!"<sup>1</sup>

attendance area - "an administrative unit or subdivision of it consisting of the territory from which children legally may attend a given school building or school center."<sup>1</sup>

neighborhood - "that first group outside the family which has social significance, and which has some sense of local unity. It is conditioned both geographically and psychologically. It is an area of local association and it is a group of primary, personal, or face to face contacts."<sup>2</sup>

community - "consists of the people in a local area tributary to the center of their common interests. The community is the smallest geographical unit of organized association of the chief human activities."<sup>3</sup>

community school - "one whose program is designed for useful and effective learning on the part of children, youth, and adults, one which helps to improve the quality of living in the community, one which derives its purposes out of the interests and needs of the people living in the community and one which compensates for local community resources, both material and

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1. Carter V. Good, Editor, Dictionary of Education. New York: McGraw-Hill Company, 1945.
  2. J. H. Kolb and E. de S. Brunner, A Study of Rural Society, p. 44. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1940.
  3. Dwight Sanderson, Locating the Rural Community, p. 417. Lesson 158, Cornell Reading Course for the Farm. Ithaca, New York: New York State College of Agriculture at Cornell University, 1920.

human.<sup>1</sup>

rural - defined in the United States Census as open country area and any town or unincorporated village of 2,500 or less population. The 1950 census defines new classifications, namely, "standard metropolitan areas" and "state economic areas". The "standard metropolitan area" contains one or more cities over 50,000 in population---and certain outlying parts which are densely populated and closely integrated in social and economic matters with the central city or cities. The "state economic areas" are comprised in each case of one or more adjacent counties with relatively homogeneous agricultural, industrial, social and demographic characteristics.<sup>2</sup>

Since there are no cities of more than 6,526 in Montgomery County and since the larger part of all income is derived from agriculture, for purposes of this study the entire county will be spoken of as rural.

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1. M. L. Cushman, Working Together for Better Rural Living, p. 11. The Seventh Midwest Conference on Rural Life and Education. Washington, D. C.: National Education Association, 1950.
  2. National Education Association, Research Division, Schools and the 1950 Census, Volume XXIX, No. 4, 1201 Sixteenth Street, N.W., Washington 6, D. C.

## CHAPTER II

### SCHOOL AND COMMUNITY

#### Sophronia Dean - The Pioneer School

Sophronia Dean was the first public school teacher in Montgomery County, Iowa of whom there is a record. She was born October 3, 1841, in Rhode Island and died at her home in Red Oak, Iowa, December 7, 1935. Her schooling began in the common schools of Rhode Island after which she attended the Latin school where she, in the absence of the teacher, often took charge of the classes. Before graduation in her early teens, in the year 1855, she, with her family, traveled westward by train to Rock Island, Illinois, the western terminal of the Rock Island railroad at that date. From Rock Island the family continued their journey westward by prairie schooner to the farm lands near Griswold in Cass County, Iowa. There after building a home the father engaged in farming for the support of his family.\* Food supplies and equipment of all kinds were hauled over the trail from St. Joseph, Missouri, a distance of approximately one-hundred twenty-five miles, a long, difficult journey in a horse-drawn wagon.

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\*At the age of sixteen years Sophronia Dean was married to Henry Shank and went to live in Red Oak, Iowa. Her husband built and operated a saw mill on the creek which runs through Red Oak.

One evening a stranger came to the Dean home and requested lodging for the night. News of the outside world was scarce and visitors were most welcome. That evening as the family and visitor gathered round the table, the visitor told of his mission as the director of his local school district, to a point further north to interview a prospective teacher. It was his hope that a one-room school could be established in his community. Now only fifteen years old, Sophronia enjoyed and took part in the conversation, recalling with homesick yearning her school days in the Eastern community.

The next morning their newly found friend departed. A few days later he returned and that night as they again talked of the needs of the boys and girls in this strange, new land, he told of his disappointment in failing to find a teacher. He feared that it meant no school for his home community. He proposed to Sophronia's father that Sophronia go home with him and teach the school at a monthly salary of twelve dollars with board and room furnished. He had noticed, he said, that Sophronia showed superior advantages in education and could very well take care of the school needs in his community. Mr. Dean agreed that she would be permitted to go if the director, because of her early age, would furnish her board and room in his own home instead of requiring her to "board around" as was

the custom in that day. And so, the next morning (this was in the summer of 1856) after many misgivings, Sophronia climbed upon the seat of the wagon and started on what seemed a long journey to the new community, located near Climax in West Township.\* On Monday, thrilled, she made her way to the little log hut, a deserted home which was to serve as the schoolhouse. As she approached, she noted that there was no door. Entering, in the dim light she saw only a bedstead and a pile of straw in the corner. Soon, boys and girls from a wide area, thirty-five in number, from tiny beginners to older students, some older and much taller than their new teacher began to arrive. They carried with them whatever books they possessed, treasures of fathers and mothers from their own school days in older communities, McGuffey's readers, blue backed spellers, Ray's arithmetics, slates and slate pencils, the Bible.

Heartsick, young Sophronia told her pupils that she could not have school until seats were provided. She returned to the director's home and explained her difficulty. To him, accustomed as he was to meeting the daily and seasonal demands of life on the prairie, this was no very serious problem. The solution was easy. School was dismissed, the neighborhood families were summoned. All hands to work! Trees were felled,

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\*Miss Dean, later taught several months in the village of Climax.

logs were split. Soon crude benches and tables replaced the emptiness of the room. Parents and neighbors returned home, proud that they were able to share in giving to their children a better educational opportunity than life had afforded many of them, as Enoch Arden had said, "the noble wish to save all earnings to the uttermost and give his child a better bringing up than his had been" had flamed anew.

Life in the little prairie school was novel, interesting, exciting. For three months they labored together, learning to read, to write, to spell, to cipher. Singing, playing, working and living together. At dusk, oft-times, the chores finished early, older members of the community came bringing their supper to join them in the spell-down or in ciphering, returning home as candles burned low and darkness fell, their longing for companionship satisfied. In the evening, Sophronia studied her dictionary. She was adept at finding words and meanings and childlike, enjoyed the thrill of success in what seemed magic to the director who had not enjoyed such superior educational advantages. At the end of the three month's term, Sophronia returned to her home. The needs of one more early day community had been met by its established institution, the school!

They had learned to read, write, spell and cipher, which served them well in the culture of that



day. Other needs were met in daily home and community living. Boys hurried home from school or remained at home to help in the busy corn-planting or harvesting season, to bring the cows from the meadow pasture to care for the stock and their young, to split the wood and renew the fire. Girls aided mother and grandmother in home duties, preparing the food, churning the butter, baking bread and pastries, making soap, weaving cloth for needed clothing, knitting stockings and mittens. All looked forward to the social and religious life of the church, log rollings, house warmings, taffy pullings, holiday guests and the rare visit to an outside community. Life was rugged and demanding. A man must be independent, a girl must be prepared to make a good home for her husband and children.

Thus was life and school in the early history of our country. Members of the community shared in the planning of the school. The school served the social and intellectual needs of all members of the community.<sup>1</sup>

### Changing Rural Life - The Implications for Schools

The 1952 yearbook of the National Society for the

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1. Sophronia Dean Shank (Mrs. Henry Shank) personally related this story of her early day experiences to the writer of this thesis. Details have been checked with a daughter of Mrs. Shank, Mrs. Florence Cunningham, a retired teacher of Omaha Public Schools and Merritt's, History of Montgomery County, published by the Red Oak Express at Red Oak, Iowa in 1906. p. 192

Study of Education is devoted to Education in Rural Communities. Lowry Nelson, Professor of Sociology, University of Minnesota, in this study says:

Every school is established and maintained by and for the community. It is a part of a network of many social institutions and relationships. As a part of the total community it is influenced by changes in rural life and, in turn influences various aspects of community life. The relation of the school to the community is a reciprocal one.

Education should help children, young people and adults to understand observable trends in rural life, to make the most of favorable tendencies and to deflect those tendencies that are moving away from a good life for all the people of a community. Education should help people to see more clearly the forces at work in their lives--to distinguish those which are their allies from those which are their enemies. Often education works "in a vortex of destructive forces". These must be clearly recognized and mastered. In every community there are also unused human and material resources. As soon as the school recognizes these resources it can use them more fully for community betterment. Thus, the school, instead of being submerged in "the wave of the future", may help to direct its currents into constructive channels.<sup>1</sup>

In explaining the changes in rural society from the relatively simple, informal life of early day America to the more formal, more complex, more urbanized life of today, Nelson calls attention to the evidences of change such as, "(a) the rapid mecha-

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1. Lowry Nelson, National Society for the Study of Education, Fifty-first Yearbook, pp. 6, 7. Washington, D.C.: National Education Association, 1952.

nization of agriculture, (b) the emphasis on farming as a business rather than as a way of life, (c) the "democratization" of family relations, i.e., the transition from the patriarchal form of organization and (d) the increased number, variety, and scope of interest groups which are supplementing and, to some extent, supplanting the neighborhood as the units of community organization.<sup>1</sup>

Stated in more concrete terms, life in rural areas is greatly changed since the days when Sophronia Dean taught the first school in Montgomery County. Farms are larger. Use of electricity and modern farm equipment have greatly reduced the number of farm workers needed. It has been estimated that at least one-half of farm youth of today leave the farm and seek employment in urban centers. Those who remain on the farm, as a consequence of modernization of the farm and its methods, are relieved of drudgery finding themselves with time for recreation and diversity of interests. To meet the ever increasing demands of these changing conditions, the farmer finds himself more and more dependent upon the economic conditions of a vastly larger community. He is no longer the self sufficient "lord of his acres", but dependent upon the workers of a wide realm for supplies and services. Radio, telephone, newspapers and television keep him informed on

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1. Ibid., p. 7.

markets and trends, necessary knowledge if he is to successfully compete in his business relations. Along with these changes, the system of transportation has changed from the rugged uncharted trail to a vast network of well maintained, hard surfaced roads. What was the day's journey of yesterday has become only a short run in the automobile. Farm produce and supplies are transported in powerful, efficient trucks, by railroad or plane. Farmers and their families no longer live in isolation but in an ever broadening circle of social relationships. They come and go at will, serving their community organizations and institutions in a wide variety of activities. Father no longer directs family life but shares responsibility with other members of the family group. Indeed, as Nelson points out there are so many interest groups that life in many areas has become complex, burdensome and social planning has become necessary.

The preceding sketch of modern rural life might very well be a description of rural life in Montgomery County, Iowa in 1952. It seems evident, therefore, that the schools which served the needs of the neighborhood in early days of Montgomery County will no longer serve the needs of the larger communities of today.

Studies of school objectives, methods and services offered as they have shifted with each decade reflect changing culture from period to period. Butterworth and

Dawson emphasize this change thus:

A new conception of the function of the school is now held, and the modern rural school, as well as the urban school, is expected to offer opportunities to practice life, to develop useful skills and habits, to create desirable appreciations and attitudes and to train in reflective thinking and analysis.<sup>1</sup>

It is interesting to note the opinions of farm leaders, of the National Grange, the American Farm Bureau Federation, the National Farmers Union and the National Council of Farmer Cooperatives. From 74 to 98 per cent of these agricultural leaders reported that they believed the schools should better prepare their pupils in the following fields of interest or activity listed in the order of the per cent favorable: conservation of natural resources, individual and community health, home and family life, farmers' cooperatives, community recreation, political issues and sex education. They also ranked as "excellent" vocation agriculture, vocational home economics, science and book-keeping; as "good" fine arts, typing, social studies, physical education, and industrial arts; and as "poor" Latin and modern foreign languages.<sup>2</sup>

True, some rural schools have undergone many

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1. Julian E. Butterworth and Howard A. Dawson, The Modern Rural School, p. 6. New York: McGraw-Hill Company, 1952.
  2. American Institute of Cooperation and The Department of Rural Education, Farm Leaders and Teachers Plan Together, p. 25. Washington, D.C.: National Education Association, 1947.

changes. Progress is being made in types of school buildings, increased transportation of pupils, formation of community schools where urban and rural people maintain and manage their schools together, improved leadership in administration, better educated and better paid, more secure teachers, more adequate financial systems, increased equalization funds from broadened sources of taxation, and expansion of state responsibility.

Greatly influential in promoting and bringing about this progress has been the work of commissions and reports of conferences. One of these is the National Commission on School District Reorganization, referred to above.

The Commission reports as follows:

Much of the remarkable progress in the development of the educational program has paralleled developments in industry, transportation and social organization.---The people organize school districts to secure a combination of resources that will provide the kind of educational program they desire.---Perhaps the most important criterion of the ability of people to work together in an educational program is the facility with which they cooperate in other types of activities. The effective school district is organized around community life and draws strength from it in every possible way.-----The rural community---is composed of a number of neighborhoods surrounding a village center. Farm people usually send their children to a high school in the village center. Just as the families of a neighborhood have united to provide for common needs which they could not meet independently, so have services of a broader and less intimate nature been provided by village institutions supported

by the people of a number of neighborhoods.<sup>1</sup>

The 1950 Report of the Executive Secretary of the Department of Rural Education of the National Education Association begins with this significant statement:

The education of rural children and youth is still a major part of the task of the American public schools. About half of the children of school ages, or about 14.6 million, still live in rural areas. In fact over 7.7 million of those children still live on farms. About half of the public school teachers are employed in schools located in rural areas. More than half of the teachers have responsibility for teaching children that live in a rural environment, although many of them attend schools located in urban areas.-----Education has the task of making adjustments to meet the needs of rural children and youth under the new conditions. To find out what these adjustments are and how to make them is a primary obligation and opportunity of professional leadership in the field of rural education.<sup>2</sup>

Edwin R. Embree, president of the Julius Rosenwald

Fund has written:

The function of education has always been to prepare young people for happy and successful living in the communities of which they are a part. We are constantly forgetting this sole and essential purpose. We easily fall into a worship of certain subjects and certain methods of teaching as if these were in themselves the ends of education. If education is

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1. Howard A. Dawson, Floyd W. Reeves and Others, Your School District, pp. 69-70. 1201 Sixteenth Street, N.W., Washington 6, D.C.: Department of Rural Education, 1950.
  2. National Education Association, Report of the Executive Secretary for 1950. Department of Rural Education. 1201 Sixteenth Street, N.W., Washington 6, D.C.

to be of real service to farm life and to rural children, we must cease to be awed by traditional subjects and procedures and build our schools on the essential needs of the countryside and the country child.---We are at the beginning of what bids fair to be a rural renaissance. Country life is receiving attention and interest in the United States unequalled since colonial days. For the first time in one hundred years we are recognizing the desirable qualities of the countryside.<sup>1</sup>

It seems logical to conclude with Nelson that if the school is not to be submerged in "the wave of the future", communities must study and interpret changing influences in present day society as they affect the institutions of that society. Then and then only can schools be planned which will strengthen and sustain the democratic form of government which they serve.

#### Factors Vital in this Study

School districts are organized to serve the communities in which they exist---the relationship between school and community is reciprocal.

Since pioneer days, rural life has changed to a complex, more urbanized form.

Institutions, including schools must conform to the demands of the society which they serve.

The socio-economic area serving other cultural needs can also serve the educational needs of a

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1. Edwin R. Embree, "Farmers in a Changing World", Education for Rural Life, pp. 1033-1035. Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Agriculture, 1940.



community.

The problem of educating rural America is a major problem. If promptly and properly solved rural life may well be entering an era of happiness and prosperity.

## CHAPTER III

### CRITERIA FOR GOOD EDUCATIONAL PRACTICE

#### Some Responsibilities of School Districts

To the extent that a community can provide a satisfactory educational program for its people, to that extent it becomes a satisfactory unit for the administration of the school. Experience also indicates that whenever school districts or administrative units fail to follow the lines of other community living, they fail to serve the educational needs of the community. The National Commission on School District Reorganization says:

The first responsibility of school districts is the provision of an elementary school which will meet the educational needs of children from the kindergarten level through grade six. Such a school should have:

1. Good teachers who understand children and can guide their growth.
2. A building well adapted to the kind of educational opportunities that children need.
3. Attractive school grounds that provide ample playground space.
4. The services of a school nurse and a school physician.
5. A school lunch program organized and financed in a manner which permits every child to have a well balanced noon meal.
6. Textbooks and other instructional materials furnished to all children without cost.
7. A library of well selected books accessible to the children at all times under the direction of a librarian - teacher.
8. Auditory and visual aids to be

used in connection with the instructional program.

9. General supervisory assistance and help of such special teachers as are needed to provide good programs of art and of vocal and instrumental music.<sup>1</sup>

In pointing up the responsibilities of the secondary school in meeting the educational needs of young people from grade seven through twelve, the Commission divides the young people into three general groups. First, those who will continue their educational experiences in college, about one-third of the entire number who enroll in secondary schools; second, the other two-thirds, those who will terminate their formal education on or before graduation and a third group, generally designated as out-of-school youth.

The school which meets the educational needs of these three groups should have:

1. A staff of teachers who are well acquainted with current social problems, who understand young people and the situations confronting them, and who have had experience and professional preparation in the educational fields of interest to the students.
2. An instructional program which offers well organized educational experiences in the various academic fields and in such general fields as homemaking, agriculture, business, industrial arts, trades and industries, mechanics, music, and the fine arts.
3. A building that is constructed and equipped to provide the kind of educa-

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1. Howard A. Dawson, Floyd W. Reeves and Others, Your School District, pp. 74-75. 1201 Sixteenth Street, N.W., Washington 6, D. C.: Department of Rural Education, 1948.

tional services needed. In addition to regular classrooms such a school plant should have:

- a. A well equipped homemaking laboratory which can provide experience in child care, the preparation and preservation of foods, home furnishing and decoration, laundering, making and caring for clothing, and conferences with high school pupils and adults on the problems of family relationships.
  - b. A commercial department which gives pupils an opportunity to become familiar with the equipment commonly used in business offices.
  - c. Agricultural laboratories and a farm shop.
  - d. Shops and equipment for teaching auto mechanics, industrial arts, and trades and industries.
  - e. Equipment and space suitable for teaching instrumental and vocal music.
  - f. Laboratories for teaching the physical and biological sciences.
  - g. A health unit which provides space for physical examinations and personal conferences with pupils, for filing equipment which makes health records readily available for use, and space to give first aid to pupils in case of accident or illness.
  - h. Gymnasiums and athletic fields which make ample provision for the physical education of all pupils.
  - i. A library with a well trained librarian and a collection of well selected books and periodicals accessible to pupils, out-of-school youth, and adults.
  - j. The physical facilities for dramatic productions, music festivals, community gatherings and public forums.
4. A program of group activities including participation in athletic events, clubs, and social affairs which will meet many of the social and recreational needs of youth and provide practice in democratic living.
  5. A diversified part-time educational program in which the school and various industries and business establishments in the community cooperate in meeting the educational needs of out-of-school youth and of pupils regularly enrolled in the school who want the educational advantages

provided thru practical work experiences.<sup>1</sup>

The operation of programs as just described will require many services of a specialized nature. Some of the most important of these are:

1. Guidance service that reaches the child at all stages of his progress thru school and extends into adult life, and that gives assistance in the solving of personal, social, and vocational problems.
2. Services for handicapped children that will help in the correction of defects and that will enable children to utilize their resources as fully as possible for the attainment of a rich and personally satisfying life.
3. Supervision of attendance of a type that seeks to remove the causes of non-attendance and to integrate the activities of the home, the school, and other agencies of the community that contribute to the education of children.
4. Supervision of instruction that will stimulate and coordinate the use of all educational facilities and personnel available in the community.
5. Health services, including school hot lunches, medical and dental inspection, immunization, prevention and control of contagious and infectious disease, and accident prevention.
6. School-community libraries.
7. Community recreation.
8. Specialized vocational education for youth.<sup>2</sup>

Some of the educational activities need to be extended throughout the entire year, just as vocational agriculture and homemaking have been extended. The administrative unit must provide or assist in providing through other community agencies other year round

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1. Ibid., pp. 75-76.

2. Ibid., pp. 76-77.

activities such as:

1. Community health programs extending thruout the calendar year.
2. Summer library services that meet the needs of small children, youth, and adults.
3. Leadership and direction of summer activities in home crafts, art, and dramatics.
4. Community forums and discussion groups during summer months.
5. A summer physical education and recreation program.
6. A summer music program.
7. Summer camps.<sup>1</sup>

The foregoing program for rural education may seem pretentious to those who have known only the limited services provided by many present day rural schools. But to others who have lived and shared in the atmosphere of a modern community school the program as outlined may seem very modest. Judged in the light of progress made in other areas of farm life, the suggestions made are entirely within the realm of possibility if only rural leaders keep ever before them the function of education in a democracy and the kind of rural America which they envision for tomorrow. Attainment of a community school which will meet all the needs of the modern, progressive rural community should be no more difficult than has been the development of other community projects and institutions.

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1. Ibid., p. 77.

## General Standards for School Districts

Opinions differ on the type of administrative unit which can furnish such an enriched program of education.

Bicknell and Cushman of Iowa State College state that:

The problem is complicated by local factors such as diversity of population, topography, educational and cultural level of the people and diversity of natural resources.

Students of the problem of the reorganized school unit seem to be coming more and more to the conclusion that there is no one best type of local school district.<sup>1</sup>

Usually writers on reorganization, they explain, first determine what constitutes the most satisfactory program for the area in question and in the light of that decision determine the type of organization needed to secure that program. This procedure, they point out, is supported by Moehlman in his text on School Administration when he says:

The desirable future school district should be based on the functions to be performed. Educational, social, and economic considerations must predominate with arbitrary or academic concepts of size, numbers, and financial ability as contributing but distinctly recessive and secondary factors. The development of the local school district to meet the child and adult educational needs and to serve as an impartial, non-partisan, non-sectarian, classless agency for the development of adult social

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1. J. E. Bicknell and M. L. Cushman, Principles Pertaining to Standards of Reorganized Units, pp. 14-15. Proceedings of The Third Annual Iowa State College Conference on Problems and Procedures of School District Organization. Ames, Iowa: Iowa State College, June, 1947.

and political competency is of much greater importance than mere statistical standards of mechanical efficiency. From the functional standpoint, administrative and organizational practice must adjust to the more important social needs.<sup>1</sup>

Dawson points out that:

The administrative structure for the support and control of public schools should be adjusted to the natural processes of community living in order to have the spirit and vigor essential to providing a good educational program. Experience in many states indicates that:

1. Basic administrative units should not be smaller than the area included within the boundaries of the natural sociological community. In many parts of the country there is much evidence to indicate that the administrative unit and the natural community should be coterminous. In areas where the county exerts strong influence on the lives of the people and where the county seat town serves as a trading and social center for a large part of the people, the county may well be the most satisfactory local administrative unit.
2. The most satisfactory attendance area for the high school is an area coterminous with the natural community; sometimes it may be both desirable and practicable to include two or more such communities in order that the enrolment may be large enough to justify a good program. In states that adopt the county unit type of organization there may be several high school attendance areas in one administrative unit.
3. The difficulties of transporting small children a relatively long distance to and from school frequently justify the establishment of several elementary attendance areas within a large community district. Such attendance areas should serve well recognized neighborhoods and the school should be located

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1. Arthur B. Moehlman, School Administration, p. 182.  
Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1940.



- in the hamlet which is the neighborhood center.
4. The attendance areas of schools which provide a formally organized educational program that extends a year or two beyond grade twelve should usually include two or more communities. The extent of such attendance areas may be determined on the basis of the trade and service areas of smaller cities. Large local administrative units such as those in the county unit states will be able in many instances to support effective schools of this type, but in some states such schools will need to be supported by an intermediate district type of organization.<sup>1</sup>

### Standards for Administrative Units

To determine the optimum size of an administrative unit necessary if programs are to be adjusted to meet the needs of the community is a most difficult question. If school districts are organized which conform to the socio-economic patterns of rural community life, they are often too small to furnish essential services. Witness the Intermediate District Study of New York State which found that only fourteen per cent of the central rural schools could economically provide the services of a full time nurse-teacher; fewer than six per cent had enough pupils to justify the employment of a full-time guidance director; none was large enough to justify employment of a guidance counselor, a school

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1. Howard A. Dawson, Floyd W. Reeves, and Others, Your School District, p. 72. 1201 Sixteenth Street, N.W., Washington 6, D.C.: Department of Rural Education, 1948.

psychologist or a dental hygienist; only eighteen out of thirty-two had enrollments sufficiently large to justify employment of a teacher for the mentally handicapped. Many other desirable services were denied.<sup>1</sup>

If, on the other hand, the local administrative unit is made large enough to provide a desirable educational program, there is danger that the organization will be so far removed from the people that effective participation and control will be destroyed. It should also be pointed out that any school district failing to meet the social-economic needs of its people, may eventually forfeit this privilege to the state and thus remove the opportunity to share in planning and operating schools still farther from the local community.

Cushman of Iowa State College summarizes the desirable characteristics of reorganized school districts as recommended by competent authorities as follows:

1. Local school units should be organized or reorganized in terms of the functions to be performed.
2. Since one set of functions is to provide an adequate education for the boys and girls to the area served, it should conform to the minimum size necessary for efficiency.
3. The minimum size necessary for efficiency includes the following standards:
  - a. Grades 1 to 6--220 pupils and 6 teachers
  - b. Grades 7 to 12--240 pupils and 10 teachers, or
  - c. Grades 7 to 9--260 pupils and 8 teachers

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1. New York University, Improving Educational Opportunities in Rural Areas, pp. 78-79. A Progress Report on the Intermediate School District in New York State, 1946.

- d. Grades 10 to 12--250 pupils and 8 teachers.
- 4. Since one set of functions is social, it should conform to the area of the natural sociological rural community.
- 5. Where the density of population is too small and hence the natural sociological rural communities are too small to provide for a school meeting the minimum standards of size, communities should be combined with the central school or high school located in the strongest of the communities.

He also summarizes the essential characteristics of effective local school districts as described by the National Commission on School District Reorganization, thus:

- 1. A comprehensive program of elementary education, high school education, post-high school education, and adult education.
- 2. A competent staff of teachers, administrators, supervisors, and other workers.
- 3. Schools properly located to:
  - a. meet community needs,
  - b. be convenient to children, and
  - c. bring together enough pupils for good instruction at reasonable cost.
- 4. A sound way of financing and administering its program.

By way of implementing these general characteristics, the commission concluded that a satisfactory district should have at least 1,200 pupils between ages six and eighteen, and if possible as many as ten thousand pupils. Also it should have a satisfactory corps of teachers with the addition of such specialists as necessary for remedial reading, health education, music, art, vocational education, guidance, and attendance supervision. The satisfactory district also has one or more elementary schools, at least one high school and, if possible, a junior college, the location of the schools being determined by the density of population, the number of pupils and teachers needed for an adequate program, the travel time of the pupils and the identifiable groups of people in the natural

community. The commission recommended that each elementary school bring together enough pupils so that there would be at least one teacher for each grade; three hundred or more elementary pupils would be desirable. The high school ought to have between three hundred and four hundred fifty pupils. However, elementary pupils should not be required to travel more than forty-five minutes and high school pupils more than sixty minutes each way between home and school. Community values should be retained by locating elementary schools in the larger neighborhoods or smaller community centers; each high school should serve a larger community or group of communities; and every community, if it were a real community, would have some kind of school. A school district able to provide such schools might be considered a satisfactory school district. For a good many areas of the United States it might even be an ideal school district.<sup>1</sup>

After completing this summary, Cushman summarizes the characteristics of the ideal school district thus:

1. The ideal school district is coterminous with the ideal community.
2. It produces a community school or schools.
3. It can provide for certain specified educational services.
4. It has a desirable balance between lay and professional leadership.
5. It has an adequate local tax base.

Note: approximately 1,500 to 1,600 pupils  
four units of grade organization,  
each corresponding to certain  
specified social, psychological  
and physical growth periods of the  
boys and girls.

In many areas of the country where such communities do not exist and thus such programs are impossible, it will be necessary to develop adequate intermediate

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1. M. L. Cushman, "The Ideal School District", Phi Delta Kappan, p. 19. 2034 Ridge Road, Homewood, Illinois: Phi Delta Kappa, March, 1951.

school districts. He explains:

The intermediate district would---have such responsibilities as the administration of attendance, the education of handicapped children, supplementary vocational education, the ownership and operation of the transportation system, adult education, provision of specialized guidance techniques, health services and business management. The intermediate district governed by a board elected by the people to determine the educational policies of the district would appoint a superintendent as its executive officer and would have a clear-cut definition of the specific functions assigned to it. Primarily it would operate as a service agency for the basic community administrative units within its area rather than to operate schools of its own.<sup>1</sup>

### Standards for Attendance Units

After citing suggested standards for size of school attendance units from studies made by a number of competent authorities (Dawson<sup>2</sup> in 1935, by Gulick<sup>3</sup> in 1938, The United States Office of Education<sup>4</sup>, 1935-37, and the Wisconsin Committee on Rural Community High Schools<sup>5</sup> in

1. Ibid., pp. 20-22.
2. Howard A. Dawson, Satisfactory Local School Units, p. 39. Division of Surveys and Field Studies, Field Study No. 7. Nashville, Tennessee: George Peabody College for Teachers, 1934.
3. Luther Gulick, Samuel P. Capen, and Sterling Sanders, Education for American Life, pp. 47-49. Report of the Regents' Inquiry into the Character and Cost of the Public Education in the State of New York. New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, Inc., 1938.
4. Henry F. Alves, Archibald W. Anderson, and John Guy Fowlkes, Local School Unit Project-Local School Unit Organization in Ten States, pp. 12. 1938 Bulletin No. 10, U.S. Office of Education, U.S. Office of Interior, and U.S. Government Printing Office. Washington, D.C.: 1939.
5. Wisconsin, Education for Rural Wisconsin's Tomorrow, pp. 16-17. Madison, Wisconsin: The Committee of Rural Community High Schools, August, 1946.

1946, the New York State Research Committee of the Regents Inquiry, and others<sup>1</sup>) the National Commission on School District Reorganization concludes that regardless of the type of organization adopted, the educational interests of children will be best served if:

1. The enrolment in the kindergarten and grades one to six is not fewer than 175 pupils with at least seven full-time teachers employed, a more desirable minimum being three hundred or more pupils with twelve or more teachers.
2. The enrolment in junior and senior high school grades is not fewer than three hundred or seventy-five pupils of each age group, with a minimum of twelve full-time teachers.
3. The enrolment in schools which have been organized to provide educational opportunities for persons who have completed grade twelve is not fewer than two hundred pupils with ten full-time teachers.<sup>2</sup>

In more sparsely settled areas where transportation becomes a problem, these standards for attendance areas may need to be modified for the best information available indicates that:

1. The time spent by elementary children in going to and from school should not exceed forty-five minutes each way.
2. The time spent by high school pupils in going to and from school should not exceed an hour each way.
3. The distance walked by high school

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1. New York University, Improving Educational Opportunities in Rural Areas, pp. 78-79. A Progress Report on the Study of the Intermediate School District in New York State, 1946.
  2. Howard A. Dawson, Floyd W. Reeves and Others, Your School District, p. 81. 1201 Sixteenth Street, N.W., Washington 6, D.C.: Department of Rural Education, 1950.

pupils should not exceed two miles each way. Elementary children should not be required to walk more than one and one-half miles to or from school.<sup>1</sup>

The Commission recognizes that neighborhoods may wish to maintain primary schools in hamlets near the children's homes. A desirable minimum of one hundred pupils with four teachers is suggested with services in art, music, health, physical education, practical arts and crafts being furnished through the superintendent's office of the administrative area.

#### Summary of Acceptable Criteria

The State Department of Public Instruction of Iowa in a recent report to the people on Problems in Reorganization of School Districts sets up the following goals which were in this study accepted as reasonable criteria for measurement of the present school administrative structure in Montgomery County:

#### Equal and Adequate Educational Opportunities for All Children

YOUR CHILD IS ENTITLED-

- To a high school education.
- To have well-trained teachers.
- To study in a modern, well-equipped school.
- To have good educational equipment.
- To an opportunity to develop his individual aptitudes and abilities.
- To learn by using the basic skills.
- To take part in recreational and cultural activities.
- To have access to basic health services.

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1. Ibid., p. 82.

To transportation, if he has too far to walk.  
 To good training in citizenship.  
 To a good moral environment in school.  
 To have access to a school lunch program.  
 To have a chance to explore some vocations.

### Good Schools for All...

#### BIG ENOUGH-

In elementary or grade schools enough pupils to justify one teacher per grade whenever at all possible. There is evidence that children learn more and learn better in a one-teacher-per-grade school than in those where a teacher must divide her attention among several grades.

In high school enough pupils to require and employ a minimum of ten teachers... full-time teachers in each of the following fields of study:

English	Trades and Industries
Mathematics	(Vocational)
Physical Science	Business or Commercial
Social Science	Music and Fine Arts
Agriculture	Physical Education and
(Vocational)	Health
Home Economics	
(Vocational)	

And in any case, enough pupils for good instruction at reasonable cost.

ADEQUATELY STAFFED well-trained teachers, supervisory and administrative persons, sufficient in number to offer a complete and well-rounded program.

ADEQUATELY EQUIPPED with play areas, visual aids, shops, health and athletic equipment, sanitation, etc.

AND EASY TO REACH with transportation provided for pupils who live too far to walk.

### Good School Districts...

#### 1. HUMAN RESOURCES

(a) boys and girls



(b) teachers in sufficient number to provide a well-rounded program at a reasonable cost.

## 2. FINANCIAL RESOURCES

(a) from local sources

(b) from state and federal sources but primarily from local sources.

This means a good sound tax base in terms of assessed valuation. Assessed valuation should range from \$7,000 to \$10,000 per child to be educated, as a minimum.

A school district is an administrative unit, with one school board, one superintendent, one staff of teachers, one tax base. But--with one or a number of school attendance centers.

### To Assure The Greatest Return for Your Tax Dollars...

More equality in teacher pupil ratio.

More equal distribution of costs.

TO ASSURE YOUR RIGHT TO VOTE ON SCHOOL PROBLEMS AFFECTING YOUR CHILDREN...!

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1. Iowa, Department of Public Instruction, A Report to the People of Iowa on the Present Problems and Future Goals of Reorganization in Your School District, pp. 1-4. Des Moines, Iowa.

## CHAPTER IV

### CHARACTERISTICS OF MONTGOMERY COUNTY

#### Physical Features

**Location and Size.** Montgomery County as shown in Figure 1 is located in Southwest Iowa in the second tier of counties north from the Missouri state line and separated by only one county from the Missouri river and the Nebraska state line on the west.

An area of twelve townships, it consists of 432 square miles with, according to the 1950 United States Census, a population of 15,685. The county seat is Red Oak, a town of 6,526 population. Other incorporated towns and populations taken from the same census are Villisca, 1,838; Stanton, 570; Elliott, 482; and Grant, 237; Coburg, 83. Stennett and Wales are small unincorporated villages.

**Topography and Soil.** The upland of Montgomery County is, in general, a gently undulating plain cut by rather shallow valleys of the larger streams and their tributaries. The drainage of the county is brought about by the East Nishnabotna, West Nodaway and Middle Nodaway rivers, Seven Mile, Tarkio, Walnut and Indian creeks and their tributaries. The larger streams have channels not more than 200 or 250 feet in width and their banks rise from ten to twenty feet above the low water. The flood plains of these rivers lie 100 to 200

feet below the general level of the uplands. Numerous intermittent drainage ways branch throughout all parts of the county. The drainage of the county in general is, therefore, quite satisfactory and only in a few instances is it necessary to resort to the use of tile drains and ditches.<sup>1</sup>

It lies in the area covered by a rich "wind-blown soil" known as Missouri Loess. Consequently, a large percentage of the acreage is devoted to agriculture.

Road Conditions. Road conditions in Montgomery County pictured in Figure 1, are excellent. United States highway 34 running east and west crosses the county near the center, intersecting United States highway 71, which runs north and south near the east border. State highway 48 crosses the county near the center of the west half in a north-south direction. Between these main highways a network of gravel roads is rapidly increasing. Table I shows the total mileage for each type of road.\*

TABLE I.  
SURFACED ROADS IN MONTGOMERY COUNTY

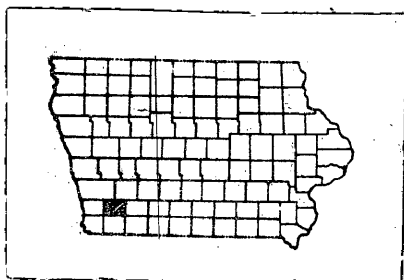
Type of Road	Number of Miles
Concrete	68
Gravel	356
Total	424

1. Iowa, Soil Survey of Iowa, Montgomery County, pp. 6-7.  
Ames, Iowa: Iowa State College of Agriculture, 1920.

\*Data from office of County Engineer of Montgomery County, Iowa, 1952.

















































FIGURE 1  
MONTGOMERY COUNTY MAP OF ROADS



# LEGEND

COUNTY LINE	-----
TOWNSHIP LINE	-----
CORPORATION LINE	-----
SECTION LINE	-----
INTERMITTENT STREAM	-----
STREAM	-----
HIGHWAY BRIDGE	-----
RAILROAD STATION	-----
RAILROAD BELOW OVERHEAD	-----
RAILROAD ABOVE SUBWAY	-----
RAILROAD SINGLE OPERATING CO.	-----
PIPE LINE (GAS)	-----
CENTER OF CITIES	-----
CENTER OF COUNTY SEAT	-----
RAILROAD GRADE CROSSING	-----
DELIMITING AREA (GENERALIZED)	-----
UNIMPROVED ROAD (RURAL)	-----
GRADED AND DRAINED ROAD	-----
METAL SURFACED ROAD	-----
BITUMINOUS SURFACED ROAD	-----
PAVED ROAD	-----
PIPE LINE (OIL)	-----

## LEGEND

	IN USE	NOT IN USE
FARM UNIT		
DWELLINGS OTHER THAN FARM		
ROWS OR GROUPS OF DWELLINGS		
TOWNHALL OR COMMUNITY HALL		
STORE OR SMALL BUSINESS ESTABLISHMENT		
POST OFFICE		
SCHOOLHOUSE OR OTHER EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS		
CHURCH OR OTHER RELIGIOUS INSTITUTIONS		
HIGHWAY GARAGE		
GOLF GROUNDS OR COUNTRY CLUB		
CEMETERY		
TRIANGULATION STATION		
CAMP OR LODGE		
ROCK QUARRY		
GAUGING OR PUMPING STATION		
GRAVEL PIT		
COUNTY HOME		
UNITED STATES HIGHWAY		
STATE HIGHWAY SYSTEM		
COUNTY TRUNK SYSTEM		
FEDERAL AID HIGHWAY SYSTEM		
POINTS BETWEEN WHICH DISTANCES ARE MEASURED		
GRAVEL PIT		

G.C.

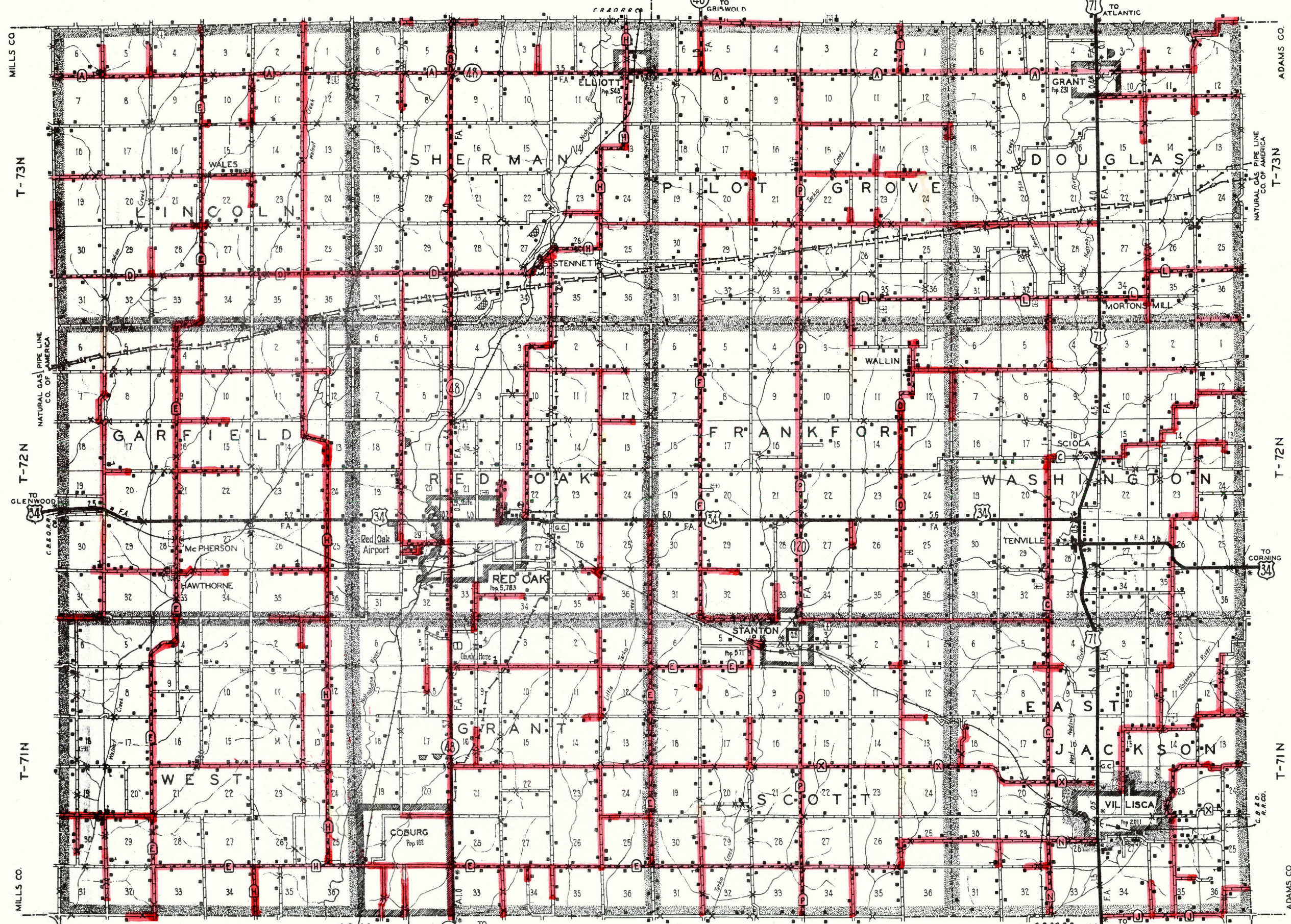
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B

F.A.

3.0







While there remain many miles of dirt road, these are for the most part up-to-grade and well maintained. It has been estimated that only slightly more than one hundred additional miles of gravel are needed to place every farmstead in the county on a surfaced road. It seems safe to conclude that roads in the county lend no insurmountable difficulty in providing transportation for pupils who live at such distance as to require that service.

### Economic and Human Resources

Sources of Revenue. The 1950 Iowa Farm Census<sup>1</sup> shows that the average size of farms in the county is 182 acres as compared with an average of 173 for the entire state. The chief crop is corn with an average yield per acre in 1950 of 56.2 bushels as compared with 48.2 bushels for the state. For that year this same report shows 1,643 tractors, 506 grain combines, 688 corn pickers, 66 pick-up hay balers and 243 motor trucks.<sup>2</sup>

Table II shows the percentage of various sources of income in the county as compared with the state, again emphasizing that Montgomery County is chiefly an agricultural area.

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1. Iowa, Annual Farm Census, p. 13. State of Iowa, Table 5. Des Moines, Iowa: Iowa Department of Agriculture, 1950.
  2. Ibid., Table 6, p. 15-Table 16, p. 35.

TABLE II  
REVENUE OF MONTGOMERY COUNTY\*

	Montgomery County	State
Agriculture	33.7%	26.4%
Trade	18.1%	19.0%
Mining and Manufacturing	7.9%	14.7%
Utilities	8.3%	6.4%
Government	5.5%	5.3%
Property	11.0%	9.5%
Other	15.5%	18.7%
Totals	100.0%	100.0%

\*Bureau of Business and Economic Research, Retail Trading Area Analysis of Villisca, Iowa City, Iowa, State University of Iowa, 1950.

The value of the land per acre in 1945<sup>1</sup> was \$102.93 as compared with the following valuations per acre in adjoining counties: Adams \$77.38; Page \$99.84, Cass \$96.99 and Mills \$95.20. The level of living index for the area was 169 with one hundred being the average index for all counties in the United States and 162 the average index for the state of Iowa. An Analysis of Iowa Income Payments\*by Counties in 1947 showed the average payment in Montgomery County as \$1,068, as compared with a regional average (16 Southwest Iowa counties) of \$961 and a state average of \$1,148.2

1. Iowa, Census of Agriculture, An Analysis of Iowa Income Payments by Counties, 1945.
2. Iowa, An Analysis of Iowa Income Payments by Counties. Iowa City, Iowa: State University of Iowa, Department of Publications.

\*Federal

Judging from these comparisons, Montgomery County appears to be financially able to provide an adequate education for all youth.

Population Trends. A study made of the 1950 United States Census by the National Education Association reveals a people who are mobile, shifting from place to place; a people migrating from rural to urban areas, crowding in sub-urban centers; an expanding population. This study indicates that within the present decade a twenty to thirty per cent expansion will be necessary in the nation's elementary school facilities and that following closely will come the increased influx of high school students which will require a twenty-five to forty per cent increase in high school facilities.

Children transferring from open country to town or village school centers, children moving into crowded sub-urban areas, children in crowded grade and high schools, farm boys and girls expecting to earn their livelihood in non-farm occupations, all these must be served by the school district. The question of the ability of present school districts adequately and efficiently meeting their needs is a serious one.

A study of population data, school census and enrollments will reveal whether or not Montgomery County follows these national trends. Table III presents figures showing trends in urban and rural population.

TABLE III  
TRENDS IN URBAN AND RURAL POPULATION\*  
MONTGOMERY COUNTY

Year (1)	Rural (2)	Incor- porat- ed (3) Places	Total (4)	Rural (% of Total) (5)	Incorporated Places (% of Total) (6)
1900	10,153	7,650	17,803	57.0	43.0
1905	8,694	8,327	17,021	51.1	48.9
1910	7,891	8,713	16,604	47.5	52.5
1915	7,811	9,486	17,297	45.2	54.8
1920	7,572	9,476	17,048	44.4	55.6
1925	7,181	9,391	16,572	43.3	56.7
1930	7,337	9,415	16,752	43.8	56.2
1935		Not available			
1940	6,411	9,286	15,697	40.8	59.2
1945		Not available			
1950	5,858	9,736	15,594	37.6	62.4

\*Data were taken from the Iowa Census, Federal Census and Iowa Official Register. The term "urban" as used in these surveys is synonymous with "incorporated places".

The reader will note that over a period of fifty years, 1900-1950, the percentage of rural population in Montgomery County has decreased from 57% to approximately 38% while in the same period urban population has increased from 43% to approximately 62%. This fact is highly significant in educational planning. With vision it is not difficult to foresee a time when all lines dividing the culture of town and country people will have disappeared, when the school and other institutions will be built to strengthen and serve that new emerging culture.

Figures in Table IV indicate that from 1944 to 1952 the per cent of children from five to twenty-one in towns increased less than three per cent while within

the county system which includes all non-high school districts with the noted exception, the increase was about 13 per cent. For the county as a whole the per cent of increase was slightly more than  $5\frac{1}{2}$  per cent. These figures make it appear that Montgomery County does not follow the national trends quoted above. However, the pre-school census from 1948 to 1952 as shown in Table V shows a very definite upswing in that age group.

TABLE IV  
MONTGOMERY COUNTY - SCHOOL CENSUS FIGURES  
CHILDREN BETWEEN 5 AND 21-AS OF JUNE 1\*

	1944	1948	1952	% of Increase
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
Town and Consolidated County System	2616	2653	2685	2.6 +
(non-high school area)	1008	1090	1140	13.0 +
Total	3624	3743	3825	5.5 +

\*Figures include territory in entire school districts. Elliott Consolidated and Coburg Consolidated include some area from adjacent counties. Grant Town is included in the town and consolidated group even though since 1948, it has been included with the rural group known as the "county system" because of discontinuance of the high school.

Referring again to Table V, it is evident that in town and consolidated school districts there was, in 1952 an increase of slightly more than 32 per cent over 1948 while in the county system (non-high school area) there was an increase of only slightly more than  $11\frac{1}{2}$  per cent. The increase for the entire area was approximately 25 per cent.

TABLE V  
MONTGOMERY COUNTY PRE-SCHOOL CENSUS FIGURES\*  
CHILDREN BETWEEN 0 AND 6-AS OF JUNE 1

	1948	1952	% of Increase
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
Town and Consolidated County System (non-high school area)	1001 588	1326 657	32.4 11.7
Totals	1589	1983	24.8

\*The pre-school census includes all children from date of birth to six years of age, as of June 1, 1948 and 1952, respectively. Figures for earlier years were not available.

A study of enrollment figures for the same years, may help school authorities to more accurately estimate future needs. Table VI offers these data.

TABLE VI  
COUNTY ENROLLMENT TRENDS BY GRADES\*  
(TOTAL ELEMENTARY)

Grade	1944	1948	1952
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
I*	396	427	512
II	296	325	298
III	266	297	298
IV	261	299	297
V	233	283	260
VI	260	259	280
VII	289	244	268
VIII	261	250	267
Totals	2262	2384	2480

\*Since entrance ages varied and not all schools have pre-first grades, kindergarten and pre-first enrollments were included with grade one. Enrollment figures are for entire school years.

The reader will observe that there was an increase of almost 10 per cent. in total enrollment from 1944 to 1952. However, when one considers first grade enroll-

ments only, there is an increase of slightly more than 22 per cent for the same period, which may indicate that the large increase shown in the pre-school census is beginning to be evident in lower grade enrollments.

Finally, indications are that in the decade ahead Montgomery County schools will show increased enrollments. Even though extreme mobility and the tendency for rural population to migrate to urban locations, may make this increase lower than that shown in national surveys, those who plan for future education in Montgomery County most surely should consider well the possibility of increased enrollments in schools.

#### Summary

1. Montgomery County is a rich, well developed, agricultural area.
2. Compared with national and state averages income in Montgomery County is at a high level.
3. Road conditions are excellent with a net work of surfaced highways. Miles of dirt road are rapidly decreasing. There are no barriers to the free flow of transportation.
4. From 1900 to 1950 the per cent of rural population has decreased from 57 per cent to approximately 38 per cent; the per cent of population in incorporated places has increased from 43 per cent to approximately 62 per cent.

5. School census figures from 1944 to 1952 (ages 5 to 21) show an increase of approximately 3 per cent in town and consolidated school districts; an increase of 13 per cent in non-high school areas with an increase of  $5\frac{1}{2}$  per cent for the entire county.

6. Pre-school census figures for 1948 and 1952 (ages 0 to 6) reflect increased birth rates, showing an increase of over 32 per cent in town and consolidated areas; an increase of only slightly more than  $11\frac{1}{2}$  per cent in non-high school areas; an increase of almost 25 per cent for the entire area.

7. From 1944 to 1952 total school enrollments show an increase of approximately 10 per cent; first grade enrollments show an increase of approximately 22 per cent.



## CHAPTER V

### SCHOOL DISTRICTS IN MONTGOMERY COUNTY, IOWA

#### History of Development

Early settlers in Iowa prior to the establishment of the state in 1846 had organized school districts. The form and number of such districts varied little from the original except for the change to township units and the establishment of the rural independent and town independent units, until 1900 when the movement to provide better school through consolidation began. Significant was the establishment of the public high school in 1851. Starrak points out that the organization of the rural independent districts in Iowa led to the formation of over nine thousand school districts by 1889. Followed by the organization of town independent districts, the education of rural and town youth became more and more divorced. There was later a brief attempt to organize township high schools, but few such districts were ever completed. Gradually town and village high schools took over the task of furnishing high school education for rural youth. This was mostly done through payment of tuition by the rural districts to the town.<sup>1</sup>

In the state of Iowa today according to the 1950

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1. J. A. Starrak, School District Organization in Iowa, Your School District, pp. 168-169. 1201 Sixteenth Street, N.W., Washington 6, D.C.: Department of Rural Education, National Education Association, 1948.

report of the Superintendent of Public Instruction there are 424 consolidated districts, 954 school townships, 622 independent city, town, and village districts not consolidated, 2,652 rural independent districts, a total of 4,652 school districts.<sup>1</sup>

In Montgomery County, the 1952 Annual Report of the County Superintendent of Schools lists thirty school districts with forty-two elementary and seven secondary schools in operation. Of the four types of school districts represented in the total of thirty, six are school townships, fourteen are rural independent, six are consolidated and four are town or village independent.<sup>2</sup>

In the study of Figure 2, the reader may better understand the different types of school districts by making use of the descriptive definitions offered below:

- a. School Township--usually in the open country, providing two or more one-teacher elementary schools; embraces the territory of a civil township or less; usually divided into sub-districts, each containing a school; managed by a board of directors, one from each sub-district and one at large if the number of sub-districts is even (three if not divided into sub-districts) who are elected for one year.
- b. Town or Village Independent--territory including a town or village providing elementary or both elemen-

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1. Iowa, Department of Public Instruction, Fifty-fifth Biennial Report, p. 214. Des Moines, Iowa: 1950.
2. Montgomery County, Iowa, Annual Report of the County Superintendent of Schools, 1952.

tary and secondary schools; managed by a board of five directors (three if the population of the district is five hundred or less), elected for a three year term.

- c. Consolidated--not less than sixteen government sections of contiguous territory; transports children living outside an incorporated town, or who live more than one mile from the school, at public expense; generally includes both elementary and secondary grades; formed by the union of several one-teacher rural schools and may or may not include an incorporated town; voters of the district elect a board of five members at large for three year terms.
- d. Rural Independent--usually in the open country, providing a one-teacher elementary school; generally with four square miles of territory; managed by a board of three directors (five if the population of the district is over five hundred), elected by the voters of the district for a term of three years.<sup>1</sup>

### Data on Present School Districts

Organization of School Districts. For the administration of the thirty school districts in Montgomery County, there are one hundred forty elected board members, thirty secretaries and thirty treasurers. Forty-eight of the elected board members are elected for a term of only one year. This in addition to the fact that many serve in districts or sub-districts where the school is closed results in sparseness of information about school affairs and their management

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1. R. C. Williams, Public School Finance in Iowa, pp. 16-17. Research Bulletin No. 6. Des Moines, Iowa: The Department of Public Instruction, 1930.

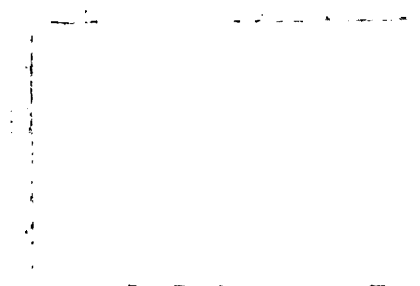
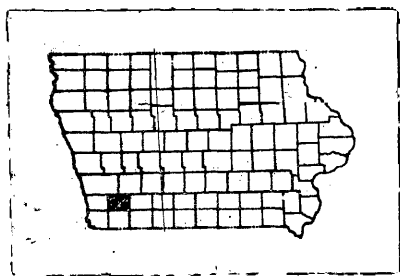

































FIGURE 2  
MONTGOMERY COUNTY MAP OF SCHOOL DISTRICTS



# LEGEND

COUNTY LINE	
TOWNSHIP LINE	
CORPORATION LINE	
SECTION LINE	
INTERMITTENT STREAM	
STREAM	
HIGHWAY BRIDGE	
RAILROAD STATION	
RAILROAD BELOW OVERHEAD	
RAILROAD ABOVE SUBWAY	
RAILROAD SINGLE OPERATING CO.	
PIPE LINE (GAS)	
CENTER OF CITIES	
CENTER OF COUNTY SEAT	
RAILROAD GRADE CROSSING	
DELIMITING AREA (GENERALIZED)	
UNIMPROVED ROAD (RURAL)	
GRADED AND DRAINED ROAD	
METAL SURFACED ROAD	
BITUMINOUS SURFACED ROAD	
PAVED ROAD	
PIPE LINE (OIL)	

# LEGEND

	IN USE	NOT IN USE
FARM UNIT		
DWELLINGS OTHER THAN FARM		
ROWS OR GROUPS OF DWELLINGS		
TOWNHALL OR COMMUNITY HALL		
STORE OR SMALL BUSINESS ESTABLISHMENT		
POST OFFICE		
SCHOOLHOUSE OR OTHER EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS		
CHURCH OR OTHER RELIGIOUS INSTITUTIONS		
HIGHWAY GARAGE		
GOLF GROUNDS OR COUNTRY CLUB		
CEMETERY		
TRIANGULATION STATION		
CAMP OR LODGE		
ROCK QUARRY		
GAUGING OR PUMPING STATION		
GRAVEL PIT		
COUNTY HOME		
UNITED STATES HIGHWAY		
STATE HIGHWAY SYSTEM		
COUNTY TRUNK SYSTEM		
FEDERAL AID HIGHWAY SYSTEM		
POINTS BETWEEN WHICH DISTANCES ARE MEASURED		
GRAVEL PIT		







consequent lack of interest. Secretaries in such districts report that it is difficult, often almost impossible, to secure a quorum to transact necessary business. Table VII lists the school districts of Montgomery County as of July 1, 1952, showing the number of both elementary and high school teachers in each. The ten school districts offering no school facilities are not listed.

TABLE VII  
SCHOOLS AND NUMBER OF TEACHERS\*  
MONTGOMERY COUNTY - SCHOOL YEAR 1951-52

Name of District	Type	No. of Elem. Schools	No. of Elem. Teachers	No. of High Schools	No. of H. S. Teachers
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
Coburg	Consolidated	1	4	1	4
Elliott	Consolidated	1	8	1	7
Red Oak	Independent	5	31	1	20
Stanton	Independent	1	5	1	5
Stennett	Consolidated	1	4	1	4
Villisca	Independent	2	14	1	15
Wales-Lincoln	Consolidated	1	5	1	4
Grant	Independent	1	3		
Garfield	Consolidated	2	2		
Pilot Grove	Consolidated	2	2		
Douglas	Township	5	6		
East	Township	2	2		
Frankfort	Township	2	2		
Red Oak	Township	3	3		
Scott	Township	4	4		
Washington	Township	5	5		
Garfield # 7	Rural Ind.	1	1		
Grant # 4	Rural Ind.	1	1		
Grant # 8	Rural Ind.	1	1		
West # 4	Rural Ind.	1	1		
Totals		42	104	7	59

\*Read as follows: Coburg, is consolidated school district which in the 1951-52 school year had one elementary school with four teachers and one high school with four teachers. In the entire county there were forty-two elementary schools with a total of one hundred four teachers; there were seven high schools with a total of fifty-nine teachers.

It should be observed that of these thirty school districts only seven, all of which are in town or village centers, maintain secondary as well as elementary schools. One village school, Grant Independent, provides elementary school only. The remaining twenty-two districts are all in open country or very small hamlets. Further study revealed that in these twenty-two districts there are sixty-nine school buildings, but that only twenty-nine schools were open in the 1951-52 school year. Reasons for closing these schools were lack of the required legal number of pupils to operate, inability to employ a qualified teacher or the desire of parents to send their children to a "better" school. It was further found that of the 2,480 pupils (See Table VIII.) attending elementary schools, four hundred sixteen were enrolled in schools outside their own school district and that of the eight hundred nine pupils attending high school, three hundred two pupils were enrolled outside their own school district. Parents of all these non-resident pupils, 21.8 per cent of the total enrollment, 16.8 per cent in elementary and 37.3 per cent in high school, could not cast a vote at school election in the school district where their children attended. This area where parents and school officers no longer share in school planning is comprised of more than one hundred eighty sections out of a total of 432 sections in the entire county. Expressed in

terms of townships, residents in five townships out of twelve no longer are participating in planning the schools which their children attend. After contracts for attendance in other districts are completed their only part becomes one of paying bills. They are outsiders, dependent upon the will and the vote of residents of some other school district. With no more than this numerical statement of the facts one is prompted to raise the question of just how close the administration of these schools is to the people who are most critically concerned. How many generations of control so far removed will be needed before residents of the local school district will cease to know or care about that most vital of all public institutions in a free land? Will rural Iowa through neglect or indifference forfeit the rights so richly prized by their forefathers?

More information concerning schools in Montgomery County and a comparison of the figures and facts with those standards previously described may help in consideration of the problem with which this thesis is concerned. Table VIII offers data on both elementary and high school enrollments for the 1951-52 school year.

School Enrollments by Classes. An analysis of the data shows that only two districts maintain kindergartens in which only 51.7 per cent of all children of kindergarten age were enrolled. In an age when kindergarten is a generally accepted part of a child's school life, such a situation is one to challenge and one to

which every patron should give serious consideration. Table VIII studied in connection with Table VII, which lists the number of teachers per grade, shows that 37.3 per cent of all elementary pupils are enrolled in schools\* where teachers must teach more than one grade and that 43.3 per cent of all elementary teachers are teaching more than the desirable twenty-five pupils per grade.

In this same table, one may observe five high schools with an enrollment of less than one hundred pupils; one with two hundred and one with more than three hundred. If non-resident pupils were subtracted from these figures, enrollments by districts would be much reduced.

While considering enrollments it may be well to note the holding power of Iowa schools. A recent study made by the Iowa Department of Public Instruction indicates that in Iowa schools in the 1948-49 school year from second to eighth grades there was a loss of 22.9 per cent in pupils; from second to twelfth grades a loss of 42.2 per cent and from eighth to twelfth grades a loss of 23.7 per cent. A loss too great to be ignored!

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\*A school is defined as a one-room school employing only one teacher, or a school of two or more rooms usually housed in the same building. An elementary school and a high school housed in the same building are counted as two separate schools.

TABLE VIII  
SCHOOL ENROLLMENT BY GRADES\*  
SCHOOL YEAR 1951-52 - MONTGOMERY COUNTY

Name of School (1)	Number in Each Grade-Including Non-Resident												Total H. S. (16)		
	K (2)	1 (3)	2 (4)	3 (5)	4 (6)	5 (7)	6 (8)	7 (9)	8 (10)	Total Elem. (11)	9 (12)	10 (13)		11 (14)	12 (15)
Coburg Consolidated		8	13	17	15	10	11	13	12	99	7	12	6	10	35
Elliott Consolidated		29	31	21	23	20	34	17	21	196	36	24	16	19	95
Red Oak Independent	133	116	115	108	94	108	100	102	109	985	78	100	81	71	330
Stanton Independent		28	20	11	26	18	12	17	12	144	19	18	9	17	63
Stennett Consolidated		8	9	4	15	7	8	8	10	69	8	8	5	10	31
Villisca Independent	51	44	38	54	25	40	40	41	40	373	54	52	46	48	200
Wales-Lincoln Cons.		11	13	14	26	16	14	10	15	119	19	15	11	10	55
Grant Independent		23	3	10	10	7	7	8	6	74					
Garfield Consolidated		7	7	2	3	4	4	1	2	30					
Pilot Grove Cons.		7	3	3	4	6	5	11	4	31					
Douglas Township		3	10	8	14	6	6	11	9	67					
East Township		7	1	4	4	3	2	3	1	25					
Frankfort Township		5	5	3	4	4	6	3	3	31					
Red Oak Township		6	4	10	6	3	6	6	1	43					
Scott Township		8	10	11	9	3	10	10	3	64					
Washington Township		12	8	12	13	5	9	18	9	76					
Garfield # 7		3	11	12	1	3	1	3	1	13					
Grant # 4		1	4	3	3	1	2	2	5	16					
Grant # 8			1	3	2	1	2	2	2	16					
West # 4		2	2	3	2	1	1	1	2	9					
Totals	184	328	298	298	297	260	280	268	267	2480	221	229	174	185	809

\*Read as follows: Coburg Consolidated had no kindergarten; there were a total of ninety-nine elementary pupils; eight in grade one, thirteen in grade two,-----. There were a total of thirty-five high school pupils; seven in grade nine,-----. In the entire county there were a total of 2480 elementary and eight hundred nine high school pupils.

### Comparative Data on Offerings and Costs

Here the skeptic may well conclude that numbers are neither significant nor conclusive. Consideration of the average quality of program offered in high schools of varying size in Iowa may be more impressive.

Evidence in Figure 3, which was compiled by the Iowa State Department of Public Instruction indicates that in Iowa high schools there is a positive relationship between the size of the high school and the number of semesters of academic and vocational subjects offered by the school. There is no evident reason why, on the whole, high schools in Montgomery County should vary greatly from averages in the state. It therefore, seems valid to assume that Stennett Consolidated, Coburg Consolidated, Wales-Lincoln Consolidated, Elliott Consolidated and Stanton Independent with near seventy-four pupils enrolled would offer, on the average, about twenty-four semesters of academic and vocational work; Villisca Independent with near one hundred ninety-nine pupils about forty semesters and Red Oak Independent with near three hundred seventy-four pupils about fifty semesters.

Furthermore, as revealed in Figure 4 from the same source, there is a distinctly inverse relationship between the number of pupils enrolled in each high school and the per pupil cost. Again, averages for Montgomery County are assumed to be comparable to those of the entire state, size of school being common. Accordingly,

per pupil costs in Stennett Consolidated and Coburg Consolidated with enrollments of less than fifty may be as high as \$400; in Stanton Independent, Wales-Lincoln Consolidated and Elliott Consolidated with less than one hundred pupils, \$300; in Villisca Independent with near two hundred pupils, \$240 and in Red Oak Independent with near three hundred seventy-five pupil, \$225.<sup>1</sup>

These comparisons are based on 1947-48 reports. However, while costs have advanced in succeeding years, figures bear out like proportionate differences.

#### Training, Experience and Tenure of Teachers

Since the adequacy of any school program is greatly dependent upon the quality of the faculty, Tables IX, X and XI are presented to show the years of professional preparation, experience and tenure of teachers for each high school and each elementary school. It seems consistent to maintain that other qualifications being equal the quality of a teacher's service to a school and community is directly in proportion to the amount of professional preparation, experience and security which that teacher has.

It is noteworthy (See Table IX.) that in the school year 1951-52 no high school teacher with one exception had less than four years of professional and academic

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1. Iowa, Department of Public Instruction, op. cit.

5. 1947



FIGURE 3

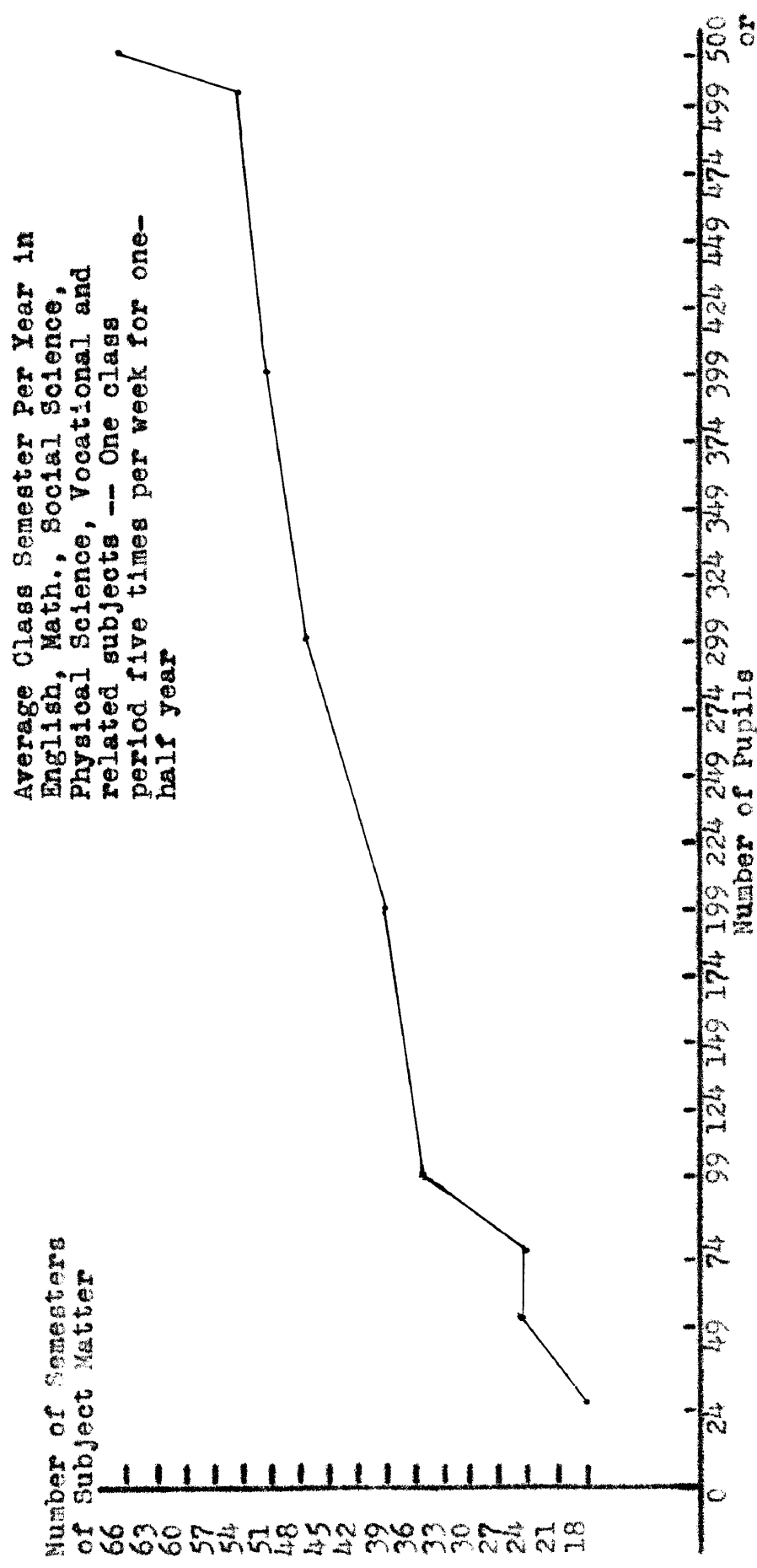


FIGURE 3. RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN SIZE OF SCHOOL AND NUMBER OF SEMESTERS OF ACADEMIC AND VOCATIONAL SUBJECTS

11

12

FIGURE 4

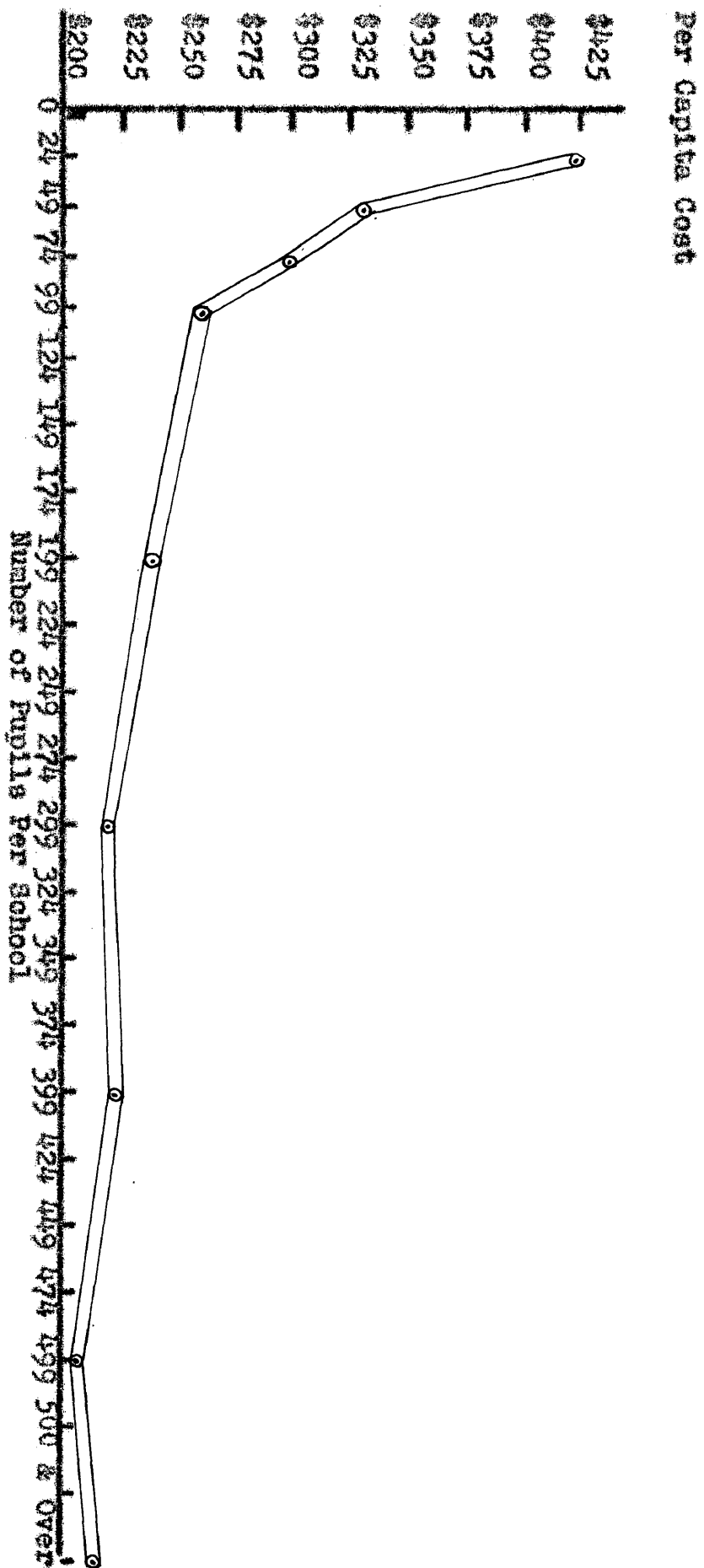


FIGURE 4. RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN SIZE OF HIGH SCHOOL AND PER CAPITA COST

education beyond the high school level. Every high school had at least one faculty member with a master's degree or more. The larger the high school the greater the number of teachers with such advanced preparation. In the entire county twenty high school teachers out of a total of fifty-nine had less than two years of experience; twelve had from three to five years; six had from six to ten years and twenty-one had over ten years. The number of relatively inexperienced teachers was almost as large as the number with more than ten years of experience. In the same group thirty-five teachers had under two years of tenure; only nine had ten or more years.

Preparation of elementary teachers for the 1951-52 school year as shown in Table X, indicates that by far the largest percentage of the group had two years of professional and academic preparation; fifteen out of a total of sixty-five teachers, almost one-fourth of the group had only one year; none had less than one year; twelve had bachelor's degrees, that is, four years of academic preparation beyond high school. Comparing these figures with Table IX, the conclusion must be that teachers in the elementary grades of town and consolidated schools of Montgomery County, in 1951-52 were academically, only about one-half as well prepared for their teaching assignment as were high school teachers; the elementary group contained a lower percentage of teachers with less than two years experience and a

higher percentage with over ten years experience; in the matter of tenure the elementary group also showed a longer period of time in one position.

Table XI pictures a group of teachers with little preparation, often less than one year above high school, experience not too different from the elementary and high school groups, but a very high percentage, almost three-fourths with less than two years of tenure.

These are teachers employed in small, rural elementary schools, not maintaining high schools.

### School Plants

The quality of buildings, school sites, heating and ventilating, lighting and sanitation in all school districts of the county might well be evaluated in any study such as this. After detailed inspection of all school plants in the county it seems fair to make this statement: There are in 1952, ninety-two school buildings in Montgomery County. In the one-room rural area most buildings (seventy in number) are very old and entirely inadequate for a complete elementary program.

At the elementary level in towns and villages, with the exception of Red Oak Independent, Stennett Consolidated, and Coburg Consolidated, buildings are old and outdated. However, it should be added that so long as both elementary and high school are housed in the same buildings at Stennett Consolidated and Coburg Consolidated the space

TABLE IX  
TRAINING, EXPERIENCE AND TENURE OF TEACHERS\*  
MONTGOMERY COUNTY - TOWNS (HIGH SCHOOL) 1951-52

District Name	H. S. Grad. Only	Number of Teachers																		
		Years of College					Total Yrs. Experience					Total Years Tenure								
		M.A. or B.S. or More					Under 3-5					Under 3-5					6-10		Over 10	
		1	2	3	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)	(11)	(12)	(13)	(14)	(15)						
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)	(11)	(12)	(13)	(14)	(15)						
Coburg Consolidated					2	2	1	1	2	2	3	1	4	5						
Elliott Consolidated					6	1	11	3	1	2	3	1	4	1						
Red Oak Independent					15	6				9	11	1		3						
Stanton Independent					4	1	3		1	2	4	1	1	1						
Stennett Consolidated				1 <sup>a</sup>	1	2	4	1	1	1	2	1	1	1						
Villisca Independent				1 <sup>a</sup>	13	2	1	6	1	4	10	1	1	1						
Wales-Lincoln Cons.					3	1	1	1	1	1	2	1	1	1						
Totals				1 <sup>a</sup>	44	15	20	12	6	21	35	9	6	9						

a. Same person

\*Read as follows: Coburg Consolidated had on the high school faculty in the 1951-52 school year, two teachers with a bachelor's degree and two with a master's degree or more; one of the four teachers had under two years experience, one had between three and five years and two had over ten years; three had under two years of tenure and one had from three to five years tenure. In the entire county only one high school teacher had less than a bachelor's degree; ---twenty teachers under two years experience; ----thirty-five teachers had under two years tenure; ----.



TABLE X  
TRAINING, EXPERIENCE AND TENURE OF TEACHERS\*  
(ELEMENTARY)

MONTGOMERY COUNTY - TOWN AND CONSOLIDATED															1951-52	
District Name	H. S. Grad. Only	Number of Teachers													Totals	
		Years of College			Total Yrs. Experience			Total Years Tenure								
		1	2	3	B.A. M.A. or B.S. More	Under 3	3-5	6-10	Over 10	Under 2		2-5	6-10	Over 10		
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)	(11)	(12)	(13)	(14)	(15)	(16)	
Ceburg Consolidated		2	2							4	3	4	1	1		
Elliott Consolidated		6	2		7		2	1	3	18	12	3	4	10		
Red Oak Independent		1	18	1	2		2	1	2	1	2	2	1			
Stanton Independent		3	1				1	2	1	8	3	3	3	2		
Stennett Cons.		3	5	2	2		1	1	2	1	3	3				
Villicsa Independent					1											
Wales-Lincoln Cons.																
Totals		15	32	6	12		15	6	13	34	32	15	8	13		

Read as follows: In the 1951-52 school year, Ceburg Consolidated had in the elementary school, two teachers with one year of college and two with two years of college; all four of these teachers had ten or more years of experience; three had under two years of tenure and one had over ten. In the entire county fifteen elementary teachers of town and consolidated schools had one year of college; ---- fifteen teachers had under two years of experience; ---- thirty-two teachers had under two years of tenure; ----.

TABLE XI  
TRAINING, EXPERIENCE AND TENURE OF TEACHERS\*  
MONTGOMERY COUNTY - RURAL - NON-HIGH SCHOOL AREA

1951-52

District Name	Number of Teachers									
	Years of College			Total Yrs. Experience			Total Years Tenure			
	Less Than 1	2	3	B.A. or B.S. (6)	M.A. or More (7)	Under 2	3-5	6-10	Over 10	Under 2
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)	(11)
Grant Independent	1	2						1	2	1
Garfield Consolidated	2							1	1	2
Pilot Grove Cons.	2							1	1	1
Douglas Township	4	1						2	1	4
East Township	2							1	1	2
Frankfort Township								1	1	2
Red Oak Township	1	1	1					2	1	2
Scott Township	1	3						1	1	2
Washington Township	3	1						1	1	2
Garfield # 7							2	1	1	1
Grant # 4	1						1	1	1	1
Grant # 8		1					1	1	1	1
West # 4	1								1	1
Totals	18	12	2	1			7	8	10	24

\*Read as follows: Of the three teachers in Grant Independent, one has less than one year of college; two have one year or more. One teacher has from three to five years experience; two have over ten years. One teacher has under two years tenure; one has from three to five years. In the entire county group of elementary schools in the non-high school area eighteen had less than one year of college; seven teachers had under two years experience; twenty-four teachers had under two years tenure;-----

is too limited. At the high school level Red Oak Independent and Villisca Independent have fairly good housing facilities but both are old. School sites are entirely inadequate in Red Oak Independent, Villisca Independent and Stanton Independent. In other schools sites are larger and permit more readily extension of the areas involved. The communities of Red Oak Independent, Villisca Independent, Stanton Independent, Wales-Lincoln Consolidated, Elliott Consolidated and Stennett Consolidated, of recent years, have built or are in process of building gymnasiums. These added facilities provide fine space for community and co-curricular activities. Whether these activities will be so planned and executed that they will enrich the educational program for all students, is a question beyond the scope of this discussion. In justice to present effort it should be said that some buildings with remodeling might serve temporarily and quite adequately the needs of an adjusted program of education.

#### Transportation Data

Table XII furnishes data on school bus transportation as of June, 1952. The variation in per pupil costs per year from \$53.94 in Grant Independent to \$85.20 in Stennett Consolidated may be due to failure of the different schools to report all costs or to actual differences, such as road conditions, age of equipment, and number of pupils transported.

Before now, the thoughtful reader must be asking the reason for all this difference in educational opportunity for the children of so limited an area as Montgomery County. It seems safe to assume that there is little if any difference in the desires of individual parents for their children. All, even those who have had very little formal schooling covet for their own the best in education believing that the degree of their success and happiness in the world of tomorrow is dependent upon the kind and quality of the preparation afforded them in today's schools.

#### Financial Data

A survey of the financial ability of school districts may help the student of this problem. These figures are offered in Table XIII. Such wide variation, undoubtedly, represents very great differences in distribution of costs for educational purposes. Districts of low valuation find it necessary to burden themselves with a high assessment per dollar while others assess themselves at lower rates. But even with extreme effort and sacrifice often not even a minimum quality of program can be offered. As a result boys and girls may be denied an adequate education with ultimate loss to not only the community in which they attend school but also to the larger communities of which they become a part.

TABLE XII  
TRANSPORTATION DATA\*

## MONTGOMERY COUNTY

TAKEN FROM TR 20-R-1 JUNE 1952

District (1)	No. Routes (2)	Total Miles One Way Trip (3)	Total Salaries (4)	Vehicle Ownership (5)	Total Pupils Conveyed- Average (6)	Cost Per Pupil (Per Year) (7)
Coburg Consolidated	5	80.3	\$3600.00	d	109.81	83.07
Elliot Consolidated	5	118.0	5440.00	d	184.9	69.83
Stanton Independent	3	79.0	3088.80	d	110.36	63.00
Stennett Cons.	3	57.0	3170.00	d	74.9	85.20
Villisca Independent	6	195.0	5670.00	d	187.4	80.53
Wales-Lincoln Cons.	5	93.5	3150.00	d	148.5	60.37
Grant Independent	1	25.0	450.00	d	27.6	53.94
County Totals	28	647.8	\$24568.80		843.47	

\*Read as follows: In 1952, Coburg Consolidated maintained five bus routes, traveled a total of 80.3 miles one way; total salaries were \$3,600.; the buses were owned by the school district; 109.81 pupils were transported at an average per pupil cost of \$83.07 per year. Note that Red Oak Independent does not provide transportation services.

TABLE XIII  
DISTRICT TAX LEVIES\*  
GENERAL FUND  
(DOES NOT INCLUDE MONEYS AND CREDITS)  
MONTGOMERY COUNTY

1952

District (1)	Tax Levy in \$ (2)	Tax Levy in Mills (3)	Assessed Valuation (4)
Coburg Consolidated	18,471	12.740	1,449,868
Elliott Consolidated	55,422	32.752	1,692,169
Red Oak Independent	169,714	37.272	4,553,405
Stanton Independent	26,230	40.907	641,205
Stennett Consolidated	35,504	29.963	1,184,953
Villisca Independent	71,430	60.791	1,175,023
Wales-Lincoln Cons.	37,106	26.093	1,422,096
Grant Independent	12,249	31.992	382,880
Garfield Consolidated	14,797	8.147	1,816,298
Pilot Grove Cons.	21,980	14.140	1,554,505
Douglas Township	32,156	26.179	1,233,037
East Township	31,986	20.246	1,579,906
Frankfort Township	19,372	12.465	1,554,082
Red Oak Township	20,111	16.654	1,207,570
Scott Township	19,978	13.471	1,483,072
Washington Township	29,927	21.414	1,397,549
Garfield # 7	4,700	14.589	322,148
Grant # 9	1,994	10.966	181,838
Grant # 5	1,600	9.057	176,663
Grant # 7	4,000	19.988	200,120
Grant # 4	3,546	21.725	163,204
Grant # 3	1,192	6.092	195,681
Grant # 8	3,999	21.810	183,353
Lincoln # 1	3,000	15.991	187,611
Lincoln # 3	1,995	12.344	161,621
West # 5	3,500	20.176	173,477
West # 9	2,676	14.438	185,339
West # 4	3,300	18.516	178,222
West # 1	none	none	176,905
West # 3	3,780	22.444	168,422
County Totals	655,715		26,982,222

\*In 1952, Coburg levied a tax of 12.740 mills on an assessed valuation of \$1,449,868. The tax produced \$18,471 for use in the general school fund. Assessed valuations in school districts varied from \$161,621 in Lincoln # 3 to \$4,553,405 in Red Oak Independent. The levy in mills varied from no mills in West # 1 to 60.791 mills in Villisca Independent. Total tax levy in dollars was 655,715 and total assessed valuation was \$26,982,222.

Comparing the assessed valuation of school districts as shown in Table XIV, the reader will find that the dollars per census child in Montgomery County in 1952 varied from \$2,858 in Villisca Independent to \$58,968 in West # 1. If a student of the taxing problem he may well raise these questions: Does this represent equality in educational opportunity? What factors, if any, other than the size of the school district operate to cause such seeming inequalities?

#### Summary

1. School districts in Montgomery County have undergone very little significant change since their original organization.

2. There has been much informal reorganization for school attendance purposes but little affecting the basic administrative structure of the schools concerned.

3. Such informal reorganization quite definitely seems to be removing the control of educational facilities from the local community.

4. In 1952, there were 2,480 elementary pupils and 809 high school pupils enrolled in Montgomery County schools.

5. Only two schools provided kindergarten facilities, namely, Red Oak Independent and Villisca Independent.

6. Only three schools, namely, Red Oak Independent

TABLE XIV  
ABILITY TO SUPPORT\*  
DOLLARS PER CENSUS CHILD  
MONTGOMERY COUNTY 1952

District (1)	Assessed Valuation (2)	Census 5-21 Years (3)	\$ Per Census Child (4)
Coburg Cons. <sup>a</sup>	1,449,868	144	10,068
Elliott Cons. <sup>a</sup>	1,692,169	246	6,878
Red Oak Ind. <sup>b</sup>	4,553,405	1431	3,181
Stanton Ind. <sup>b</sup>	641,205	133	4,821
Stennett Cons. <sup>a</sup>	1,184,953	102	11,161
Villisca Ind. <sup>b</sup>	1,175,023	411	2,858
Wales-Lincoln Cons. <sup>a</sup>	1,422,096	148	9,608
Grant Ind. <sup>b</sup>	382,880	70	5,469
Garfield Cons. <sup>a</sup>	1,816,298	103	17,633
Pilot Grove Cons. <sup>a</sup>	1,554,505	127	12,240
Douglas Township	1,233,037	110	11,209
East Township	1,579,906	117	13,503
Frankfort Township	1,554,082	121	12,843
Red Oak Township	1,207,570	99	12,197
Scott Township	1,483,072	136	10,904
Washington Township	1,397,549	133	10,507
Garfield # 7	322,148	25	12,885
Grant # 9	181,838	9	20,204
Grant # 5	176,663	12	14,721
Grant # 7	200,120	11	18,192
Grant # 4	163,204	14	11,657
Grant # 3	195,681	5	39,136
Grant # 8	183,353	24	7,639
Lincoln # 1	187,611	14	13,400
Lincoln # 3	161,621	12	13,468
West # 5	173,477	16	10,842
West # 9	185,339	18	10,296
West # 4	178,222	14	12,730
West # 1	176,905	3	58,968
West # 3	168,422	17	9,907
County Totals	26,982,222	3825	7,054

a. Consolidated    b. Independent

\*Read as follows: In 1952, the assessed valuation in Coburg Consolidated was \$1,449,868. There were 144 census pupils, therefore \$10,068 of assessed valuation per census child.----Total assessed valuation of all school districts was \$26,982,222 and a total of 3825 census pupils which means an average of \$7,054 per child.



Villisca Independent and Elliott Consolidated provided one teacher per elementary grade. Enrollment per grade often exceeded the desirable minimum of twenty-five pupils.

7. Only one high school, Red Oak Independent with an enrollment of three hundred thirty met the generally accepted minimum recommendation of three hundred to four hundred pupils.

8. There is a positive relationship between the number of academic and professional semesters of work offered in high school and the number of pupils enrolled, that is, the smaller the enrollment, the fewer semesters of work offered. Amount of work offered in the different high schools varied on the average from twenty-four semesters to fifty semesters.

9. The per capita costs in high school vary inversely with the number of pupils enrolled, that is, the fewer the number of pupils enrolled, the larger the per capita costs. Costs in the different high schools varied on the average from \$225 to \$400, per pupil.

10. The amount of professional preparation was greater for high school than for elementary teachers. Elementary teachers in non-high school districts rated lowest of all groups.

11. Elementary buildings, except for the new elementary schools in Red Oak Independent are outmoded and quite generally in need of remodeling or rebuilding; the Coburg Consolidated and Sennett Consolidated are

good buildings perhaps adequate for either an elementary or a high school program but too limited in space for both.

12. Red Oak Independent and Villisca Independent have high school buildings which are adequate for present district organization. It is extremely doubtful whether these buildings could provide facilities for an educational program which meets criteria accepted in this study.

13. Red Oak Independent, Elliott Consolidated, Stennett Consolidated, Wales-Lincoln Consolidated, Stanton Independent and Coburg Consolidated have relatively new gymnasiums for use in physical education and other co-curricular activities.

14. School sites are limited and often located where extension would be difficult. This is particularly true in more populous centers.

15. Transportation costs varied widely.

16. District tax levies, assessed valuations and dollars per census child in school districts varied greatly, indicating much inequality of educational opportunity.

## CHAPTER VI

### SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

In initiating this study it seemed reasonable to assume that since school districts in Montgomery County had changed relatively little since their organization during the early history of Iowa, it would logically follow that if measured by criteria established by competent authorities, these school districts would be found wanting in their capacity to provide at an equitable cost an educational program which would adequately and efficiently serve the needs of all children and youth of the county.

An answer was sought for the following question: In terms of generally accepted criteria of good educational practice, does the present administrative structure of schools in Montgomery County, Iowa make possible at an equitable cost to all the provision of an adequate and efficient educational program for all children and youth?

In seeking the answer, general criteria for good educational administrative practices were determined and the characteristics of the administrative structure of schools in Montgomery County, Iowa were presented. The extent to which educational practices in administration of Montgomery County schools conform to generally accepted criteria of good educational practice was

noted.

As a summary of the evidence is presented the words of Alfred Simpson of Harvard University may well be quoted:

The greatest historical and sociological characteristic of public education in the United States is the lowness of the level of quality when measured in terms of what it might become.\*

### Nature of Satisfactory School Districts

Testimony and evidence were presented to show that the most satisfactory school district will be one in which:

1. community lines become the basis for the school district. The quality of the community will usually determine the quality of the school.

2. the school program is developed to meet the needs of all children and youth of the district.

3. adequate school buildings and needed supplementary services can be furnished without undue economic strain. In the event this is impossible plans are developed to secure some supplementary services through an intermediate unit.

4. professional and lay leadership are attracted and held.

5. school finance is able to meet whatever costs are needed to provide for the educational needs of its

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\*By permission of the author.

children and youth.

Nature of Inadequacies in Montgomery County Schools

It seems evident that school districts as currently organized in Montgomery County when measured against recognized criteria established by competent authorities fail to meet the test in the ways listed below:

1. Boundary lines of school districts in Montgomery County have failed to change with socio-economic conditions as indicated by present-day characteristics of the county.

2. Enrollment figures fall short of standards generally accepted for the operation of an adequate and efficient educational program.

3. Building facilities are in most instances inadequate for an acceptable elementary or secondary program.

4. Finance as now available to school districts often does not permit the organization of an adequate and efficient program which meets the needs of all children and youth.

5. Great inequality of educational opportunity exists seemingly because of unequal distribution of school finance in different school districts of the county.

6. Professional standards vary greatly in different districts and schools.

7. Conditions are not such as to attract and hold in education the most able leadership.

Conditions in Montgomery County Favorable to Good Schools

Certain other factors point up conditions in Montgomery County which indicate a situation favorable to an adequate educational program, namely:

1. Montgomery County is endowed with a better than average amount of natural wealth.

2. From early day[s] the county has been prosperous. Its citizens by financial support have indicated their abiding faith in schools and education.

3. There are no natural barriers which prohibit broad community organization. A network of good roads bids fair to improve from year to year and minimize the transportation problem.

Conclusions

1. The conclusion therefore, inevitably must be that current school district organization in Montgomery County fails to conform to accepted standards of good educational practice. The measure of this failure is the measure of the importance of the educational problem before the county, today.

2. The evidence is clear that conditions in Montgomery County are favorable for the development of an adequate and efficient educational system to accom-

modate all children and youth.

The challenge to educational and lay leaders is to study the problem and together find a way to build improved schools.

-----"schools which will help to maintain and better our social and economic systems--schools which will contribute to the realization of abundant life in as large as possible a percentage of each generation."<sup>1</sup>

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