


7-1936

Reorganization of Meade County's Schools

Raymond Gibson
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1936

REORGANIZATION OF MEADE COUNTY'S SCHOOLS

BY

RAYMOND C. GIBSON

A THESIS

SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT
OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF
MASTER OF ARTS

WESTERN KENTUCKY STATE TEACHERS COLLEGE

JULY, 1936

Approved:-

Major Professor
and
Department of Education
Minor Professor, English
Graduate Committee, Chairman

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PREFACE

For suggestions in the initiation of the subject and his constructive criticism in the treatment of the data, the writer makes his acknowledgments to Dr. Lee Francis Jones of the Department of Education, Western Kentucky State Teachers College. Acknowledgment is made to Dr. Earl A. Moore of the English Department for a critical reading of the study. The writer is indebted to Superintendent R. W. Hamilton of Meade County for helpful suggestions and cooperation in the use of the records found in the office of the superintendent.

The purpose of this study is to help bring about a more economical organization of the schools of Meade County. If this can be accomplished, a great service will have been rendered to the school children of the county, because it will mean a greater return for every dollar used for educational purposes. The study is being made in order that teachers may teach more efficiently and be compensated accordingly. This can be accomplished if the schools are organized in a way that will permit teachers to have an average enrollment of thirty-five children per teacher.

The writer is convinced that the schools exist for the education of the children, and no change is advocated that does not mean a greater opportunity to them. The interests of the parents, teachers, school administrators, and property owners are secondary to the interests of the children from an educational standpoint.

CHAPTER I
INTRODUCTION

The data used in this study were selected from the files in the office of the superintendent of Meade County's schools. The record books of the teachers from 1931 to 1936 were used in determining the average daily attendance in the elementary schools for that period. This material together with the financial records of the superintendent made possible the collection of data on the cost per pupil in average daily attendance. The high school principals furnished data concerning the enrollment in their schools, and they helped to work out the map of the county showing the sections from which the high school children are attending. The very efficient records kept by the attendance officer were used in making the comparison of children attending high school and those belonging.

Meade County is one of the most sparsely settled counties in Kentucky, the population per square mile being twenty-five. There are 2,155 children enrolled in the public schools; these children are taught by eighty teachers. The attendance in 1934-1935, based on the enrollment, was 88.68 per cent, which indicates that the average daily attendance per teacher was 23.9. During the last twenty-five years there has been a constant decrease in the population of Meade County, which accounts for the low pupil-teacher ratio in the rural schools. It is hoped that better roads and schools will cause more of the young people of the county to desire to work at home.

There are only eighty miles of improved roads in Meade County. The map used in this study indicates that there are very few improved roads except the main highways which cross the county. Only a few rural schools are located on roads which would permit any kind of transportation except by carriages drawn by horses. This same condition has made it almost impossible for children from some sections to attend high school, and many of them never go beyond the eighth grade. One of the problems with which this study concerns itself is how to bring a secondary education within reach of every child in Meade County. This is not being accomplished under the present organization, because only about one-third of the children ever finish high school. This condition is inevitable in view of the fact that some of these children live five or six miles from the nearest improved road or bus route. This, however, does not excuse the citizens of Meade County and of Kentucky, because roads and schools should be supplied at whatever cost in order to educate the youth of the county.

In Meade County there is a great need for some means of improving the offering, from an educational standpoint, which is being made to these children living in the remote sections of the county. There is a tendency on the part of administrators to neglect these one-room rural schools with the hope that they will soon be consolidated with other schools. In the meantime the children suffer for lack of their just educational necessities. It will be a long time before all the children of these rural sections can enjoy the type of

school which Rugg describes as follows:¹

"Is this a schoolhouse, this great, sunlit home? These cheerful rooms - walls colorful with children's paintings, floors spotted with bright rugs, light, movable tables and comfortable chairs - are these classrooms? Groups of children engaged in animated conversation - are these classes? Is this the assembly room of a school, or is it a children's theater?"

The child-centered school is certainly the goal of school administrators everywhere; and it is hoped, and certainly the writer believes, that every teacher in Meade County desires to make the school a living organization for the children attending. But the chief problem is to make the best of a situation which is not ideal and can never be ideal until better roads are constructed.

The purpose of this study is to deal with the undesirable conditions of the county which could be corrected. Why should there be three high schools in the eastern half of the county and none in the western half of the county? Why should one-room schools exist with an average daily attendance of less than ten when the same school could be consolidated with other schools without causing any child to walk more than two miles? Why should there be 225 children in Meade County eligible for high school who are not attending school at any place? Why should the elementary teachers of the county work for an average salary of fifty-six dollars per month when an organization could be worked out that would be more efficient for

¹ Harold Rugg and Ann Shumaker, The Child-Centered School (New York, World Book Company, 1928), p. 2.

the children and would increase the salary of the average elementary teacher thirty-five per cent? These are some of the problems which should have the consideration of the thinking people of Meade County who want to make their schools more efficient.

There are objections to consolidation of schools in almost any rural section until the advantages are made obvious. Parents think that it is more expensive to send children away from home; that the moral influence of larger groups is less desirable; and that the one-room school, close to home, is more desirable for the younger children. The same objections are used to prevent centralized high schools. Parents are right, to some extent, in these objections, but the larger schools have advantages which are more important than their disadvantages. If educators and scientific investigators advocate larger groups than ten for these rural schools, all possible consolidation should be made in order to have teachers working up to their capacity. The same thing with regard to the high schools is true. If the same number can be educated in one school at less expense and just as efficiently, this consolidation should take place.

Concerning the possibility of efficiency through consolidation,² Brim has the following to say:

"Within the local school area provision for these

² Orville G. Brim, Rural Education (New York, The Macmillan Company, 1923), pp. 258-259.

evident rural needs can be best made by a consolidation of small units. The larger resources thus made available, libraries, scientific laboratories, shops, and auditoriums, and physical equipment are much needed for the educative process. The added social contacts, the variety of points of view, the opportunities for recreation and games, the possible addition to the curricula not only in music, art and industrial studies, but in the basic school subjects as well, all serve still further to supply the needs of the rural child.

"Since we are primarily interested in the child's fullest growth and in introducing him into a larger social membership, consolidation in the open country or in the rural-minded villages has obvious limitations and handicaps. A consideration of all the factors in the case may sometimes attest the wisdom of open-country consolidation, but to seek such a result for the express purpose of keeping boys and girls on the farm, of freeing them from the evil influences of the city, of maintaining a class solidarity against the inroads of the city's attractions is entirely contrary to the principles of education. The transportation of the country children to town for their schooling may have some detrimental results upon food resources. It may further deplete the farming population. But for the child himself such a policy involves little that is harmful and much that is good."

It has long been the opinion of some people that a teacher can do better work if she has just a few children under her control. If it is true that Meade County's teachers are doing a much better job of their work by having about twenty-four children per teacher, one could not justify increasing the teaching load of these teachers. Educators and scientific investigators do not say or prove that a teacher can do better work with less than thirty-five children than with that many or more. About the first data on this subject were collected by Stevenson and are based on the replies of superintendents in cities of 25,000 and up.

These superintendents indicate that classes should contain not more than thirty-one to thirty-three pupils in grades one to nine, and twenty-five or twenty-six is an ideal class size in the senior high school.³

Neither the tendency of prevailing enrollments nor the opinions of school officers should be used as a dependable basis for determining the most efficient size for classes. This should be determined by scientific investigations. One of the first studies of this kind was conducted by Cornman whose findings are given in Breed's book on organization of classes.⁴ His study was based on the results found in the classes of one district of Philadelphia. Among Cornman's conclusions were the following: that size of class is not very important in the determination of rate of progress or retardation of the pupils of the class; that medium-size classes (forty to forty-nine) make somewhat the best showing.

Boyer, who was inspired by Cornman's study, undertook a similar investigation of wider scope, in which he gathered data for the whole city of Philadelphia. He used promotion rate as the principal criterion of school progress, assuming that that size of class is best which is accompanied by the largest promotion percentage. Up to forty-four the size of

3

P. R. Stevenson, Relation of Size of Class to School Efficiency, Bureau of Educational Research Bulletin No. 10 (University of Illinois, Urbana, Illinois, 1922).

4

Frederick S. Breed, Classroom-Organization and Management (New York, World Book Company, 1933), p. 175.

the class had very little influence upon the percentage of promotion. As soon, however, as the class membership rose above forty-five, there was a perceptible drop in promotion rate. The result of this study and of the one conducted by Cornman indicated that, in general, size of class is not responsible for any adverse effects on elementary school progress until the number of pupils exceeds forty-five.

⁵ "It should be noted, at the same time, that this conclusion depends upon the validity of promotion rate as a criterion of school success, and since promotion rate can be affected by many factors besides the quality of the pupils work, one should hold his decision regarding the effect of class size in reserve until the problem is studied in the light of a better criterion."

⁶ Breed made a study of eighty-two classes in the state of Michigan. Fifty-eight of these classes that qualified for the study consisted of twenty-nine pairs, each pair containing a large and a small class. The experiment was confined entirely to spelling, on account of the accuracy with which results in this study may be measured. Within a given grade all classes had the same list of words, the same method of instruction, the same length of period, and the same final and preliminary tests. The ability of teachers in paired classes was controlled statistically, the assumption being that neither the large nor the small classes would be

⁵ Breed, op. cit., p. 180.

⁶ Frederick S. Breed and Grace D. McCarthy, Size of Class and Efficiency of Teaching, School and Society, Vol. IV, pp. 965-971 (December 23, 1916).

appreciably favored if fifty-eight teachers were distributed among them at random. The results of this study indicate that in seventeen of the twenty-nine pairs the large classes surpassed the small, and in three of five grades the average improvement of the pupils in the large was greater than the average improvement of the students in the small classes. When improvement in the fifty-eight classes was examined in relation to their size, it was found that up to an enrollment of forty-five there was no indication that achievement was adversely affected by the size of the class.⁷

Stevenson made a study of four Chicago high schools.⁸ Records were secured for sixty-seven pairs of classes enrolling 3,821 pupils. Each pair consisted of a large and a small class in the same subject, and was taught by the same teacher. On the basis of scores in the Terman Group Intelligence Test, the pupils in each pair of classes were organized so that the average ability of the pupils in the large class was equal to the average ability of the pupils in the small class. The large classes were at least twice the size of the small ones. The average size of the large classes was 38.9, and that of the small, 17.7. The work of the pupils in the large classes was as satisfactory as the work of the pupils in the small classes.

7

Loc. cit.

8

Breed, op. cit., p. 185.

C. O. Davis made a study of class size and teaching load in which approximately one hundred high schools of the North Central Association cooperated. He used teachers' grading system for comparison. His conclusions were as follows:

"There is no necessary connection between size of class and efficiency of instruction as measured by pupils' grades. The North Central Association is not justified in demanding that for all teachers, in all types of work, the maximum size of class shall be no greater than thirty pupils, or that the maximum number of pupil-hours of instruction per day shall not exceed 150"

10

"That the trend in secondary schools is toward larger classes is clearly shown by the following: (1) the findings of objective studies, (2) the growth in the size of classes in high schools, regardless of the standards of the North Central Association, and (3) the modification of the Association's standards to permit a considerable increase in the size of classes. There seems to be no valid reason for a smaller enrollment in the high school than in the elementary."

If the elementary and high schools of Meade County can be reorganized on a more economical basis, providing more efficient teachers at better pay, and greater equality of opportunity to the 2,155 children concerned, the people should welcome such a program at any time. "Taxpayers, boards of education, parents, and teachers are all active in the interest of the child; and all school legislation, to be important, must have the child as its prime objective."

9

Ibid., p. 187.

10

Ibid., pp. 188-189.

11

Francis B. Pearson, The Vitalized School (New York, The Macmillan Company, 1917), p. 351.

CHAPTER II
ANALYSIS AND TREATMENT OF DATA

Considering the number of students that Meade County has in the eighth grade, one is inclined to think that the enrollment in high school, especially in the ninth grade, is very satisfactory. In the school year 1934-1935, the average daily attendance in the eighth grade was 105. At the end of that year 114 students graduated from that grade, and ninety-six of these enrolled in the three high schools of the county in 1935. This would indicate that eighteen of the eighth grade graduates of 1935 did not enter any high school. That would be 13.4 per cent of those who graduated.

There are several reasons for the wide difference in the average daily attendance in the first grade compared with the other seven. Some children enter school at the age of five and do not attend regularly enough to complete the first grade in one year. A few teachers think it is necessary to keep children in the primer for one whole year and in the first reader the second year. Most teachers in the rural schools have not been trained to teach the primary grades and have more difficulty with the first grade than any other.

Children are finishing the first eight grades in about eight years, which is the proper time according to current practice. If the curricula can be properly enriched, there does not seem to be any reason why a child should complete more than one grade per year.

TABLE I
 AVERAGE DAILY ATTENDANCE PER YEAR IN THE ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS
 OF MEADE COUNTY FOR THE FIVE-YEAR PERIOD
 1931-1935*

Year	Grade							
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
1931	329	143	136	150	156	112	164	117
1932	298	177	153	170	136	140	118	158
1933	345	184	181	151	150	130	126	168
1934	319	163	196	191	142	120	119	123
1935	314	169	192	212	171	110	130	105
Total	1605	836	858	874	755	612	657	671
Ave.	321	167.2	171.6	174.8	151	122.4	131.4	134.2

A study of this table shows that the first grade is 192 per cent of the second, 181 per cent of the third, 183 per cent of the fourth, 212 per cent of the fifth, 262 per cent of the sixth, 244 per cent of the seventh, and 239 per cent of the eighth.

The high school enrollment for the whole county for the year 1935-1936 was 250. There were ninety-six in the ninth grade, sixty-two in the tenth grade, fifty-one in the eleventh, and forty-one in the twelfth.

In the year 1935, 114 students graduated from the eighth grade. Their ages averaged fourteen years and three months.

* Teachers' Record Books (Office of County Superintendent, 1931-1935).

The greatest disparity found in Table I is that which exists in the high schools of the county. In the school year ending in 1936 there were about forty-one students in the twelfth grade. The average daily attendance in the eighth grade in 1932 was 158, and the enrollment was 175. Only forty-one of that number finished high school in 1936, which seems to indicate that only 23 per cent of the children in Meade County are finishing the four-year course offered by the high schools. The geographical conditions of the county as well as the location of the high schools determine, to some extent, the number attending high school.

Most people think that their children have passed the school age when they complete the eight grades usually called the common school. The Kentucky school law says:

12

"Any child between the ages of seven and sixteen, not exempted under the provisions of this act, shall be required to attend a public day school for the full term for which the school is in session, of the district in which the child resides, or the public school for which the board of education of the district makes provision for the child to attend."

"Any child of compulsory school age who is a graduate from an accredited or an approved four-year high school is exempted from the compulsory school law."

The above quotations seem to make it compulsory for children to attend high school until they are sixteen years of age, provided a high school is provided for them.

12

Sec. 4434-1, Kentucky Statutes (1934 c. 65, p.278).

13

Loc. cit.

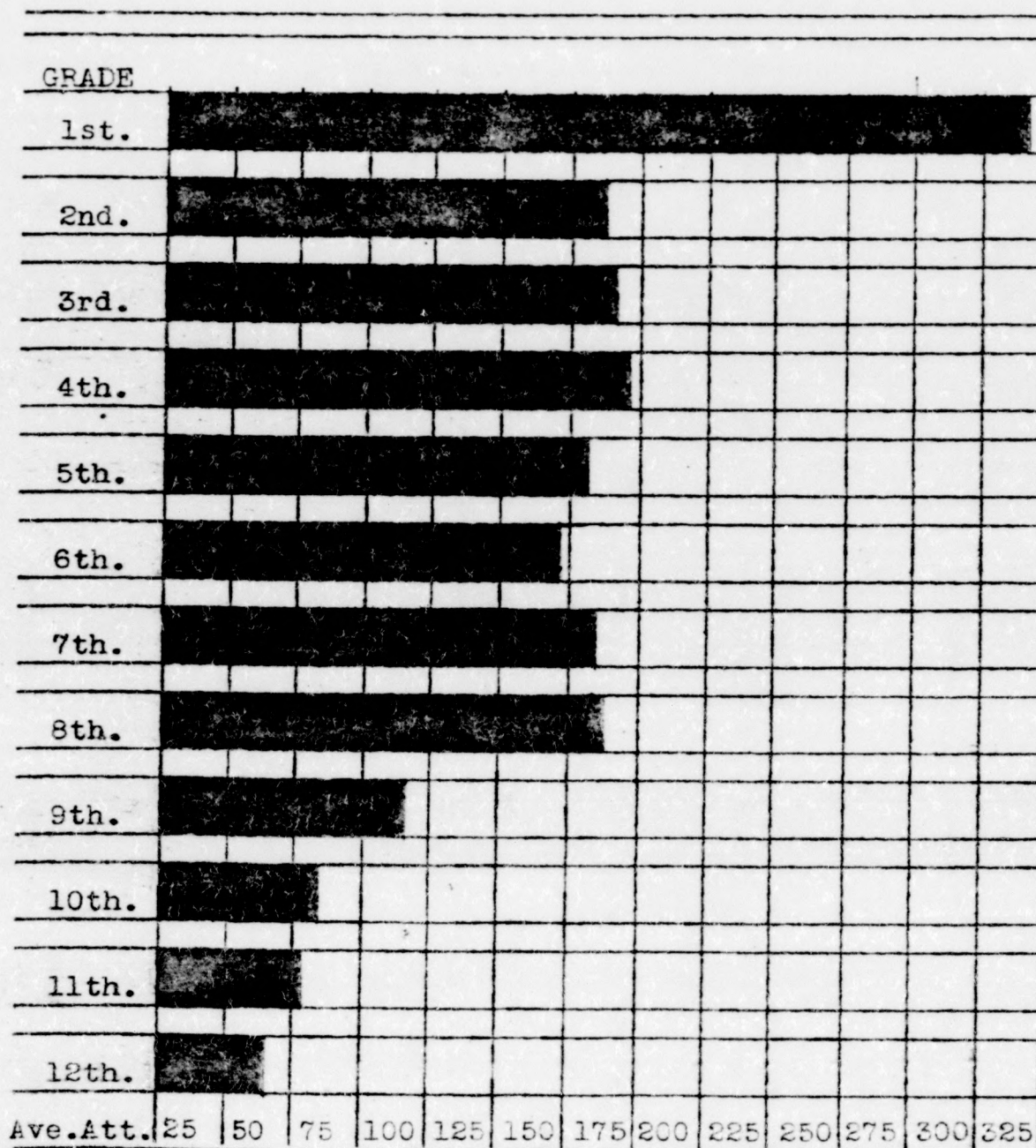


FIGURE 1.
 AVERAGE DAILY ATTENDANCE PER GRADE IN THE FIRST EIGHT GRADES
 FOR THE FIVE-YEAR PERIOD, 1931-1935, AND THE ENROLLMENT IN
 HIGH SCHOOL FOR 1935

This figure gives more clearly the disparity between attendance in the different grades as brought out in Table I.

Because of the age at which our Meade County children finish the eighth grade, and due to the fact that most of them go to high school for one year and become sixteen years of age before they start to high school for the second year, the indication seems to be that our great loss in number during the last two years of high school is due, at least to some extent, to the inadequacy of the compulsory school law to reach children above sixteen years of age. However, the new attendance law has caused 407 students to be placed on the census list of Meade County who had not been on the list before, and who were of school age. This number does not include beginners. The financial gain from this law has been several times as great as the cost of administering the law in Meade County.

Students are promoted from the eighth grade on the basis of the teachers' recommendations instead of the formal tests which were given annually at about three places in the county until 1935. As the table shows, this has caused children to get out of the eighth grade and enter high school at the proper time. The eighth grade is no longer larger than the other grades, as it was in 1934, but it is smaller than any other grade, which is the proper relation.

The holding power of the high school is influenced by the courses offered. The old academic courses are the only ones that have been offered in these high schools until the year 1935-1936. Commercial education was offered in two of the high schools that year. For the year 1936-1937 the three

high schools will offer vocational agriculture, and Meade County High School will still have commercial education.

Another problem which has been giving the board of education trouble is the small rural school which has such a small enrollment that its existence is not justified. In the spring of 1936 the board passed an order which was intended to reorganize the elementary schools of Meade County on a more economical basis, both from the standpoint of the children and the teachers. There was no doubt concerning the seriousness of the board of education, for there was absolutely no personal motive on their part in the reorganization. The State Department of Education had recommended that certain one-room schools be discontinued. Only a few people live in some of these sub-districts, and the average daily attendance in the schools of these communities is very low compared with what it is in other rural schools of the county. The shift in population toward the cities is responsible for this condition, but the thing that makes the existence of these schools almost impossible is the fact that the instructional cost per pupil is several times as great as the school revenue per pupil living in the county. The result is that there are not enough children in the schools to justify the expenditure of the school funds for equipment, and children are suffering as a result. Another result is that the salary of the average elementary teacher is only fifty-six dollars per month.

Investigators have proved, as stated in Chapter I of this study, that any competent teacher can teach up to forty-five

without causing any adverse results in the efficiency of the school.

The facts mentioned above caused the board of education to eliminate eighteen teaching positions at one time. At a later meeting of the board of education this act was reconsidered, and the positions were restored as they are shown in Table I. It is not the purpose of this thesis to defend or condemn the county board of education. Neither is it the purpose here to justify the means used by the public to get the schools restored. It is the opinion of the writer that all the people concerned as well as the board of education and the superintendent were sincere in their acts, and they probably had the interests of the children as a motive for their actions. The purpose here, however, is to give the facts concerning the schools, as found in the office of the county superintendent.

The teacher's salary represents the major part of the cost in any rural school, and in the case of these eighteen elementary positions the salaries of the eighteen teachers is used as the basis for determining the cost per pupil in average daily attendance. Taking the elementary schools as a whole the cost per pupil in average daily attendance for the last school year was \$17.85. The instructional cost of the pupils in the eighteen teaching positions studied in Table I was \$24.11, which is considerably above the average for the county. In all other elementary schools the cost was \$14.89, which is \$9.22 less than in the schools mentioned above.

TABLE II

INSTRUCTIONAL COST PER PUPIL IN AVERAGE DAILY ATTENDANCE
IN THE ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS OF MEADE COUNTY
1935-1936

School	No. Rooms	Ave. Daily Attendance	Teacher's Salary	Cost per pupil Ave. Daily Att.
Hall	1	10	\$392.00	\$39.20
Flat Rock	1	11	338.80	30.80
Sand Hill	1	11.3	348.60	30.85
Stony Point	1	14	337.40	24.10
Black Jack	1	9.8	315.00	32.14
Black Warrior	1	9	490.00	54.45
Woodland	1	9.7	399.00	41.15
Long Branch	1	9	392.00	43.55
Buck Grove	1	9.9	358.40	36.20
Big Spring	1	5	441.00	88.20
Payneville	2	44.7	772.80	14.28
Wolf Creek	2	34	786.80	23.14
Muldraugh	2	43	792.25	18.42
Garnetsville	2	40	698.60	16.96
Guston	2	37.7	855.40	22.65
Cold Spring	2	30.8	867.60	28.17
Brandenburg	8	185.1	3,423.00	18.49
Total	30	500	\$12,005.60	\$24.11
All Other El. Schools of Co.	39	1,038	15,457.68	14.89
Total For Co.	69	1,538	27,463.28	17.85
Saving Through Reorganization	18	--	7,056.00	--
New Ave. Cost	51	1,538	\$20,407.28	\$18.26

If this program of consolidation of the one-room schools, and reducing the number of teachers in certain other schools had been carried out, the instructional cost per pupil in average daily attendance would have been reduced from \$17.85 to \$13.26; the average daily attendance per teacher would have been increased to thirty with an enrollment of thirty-five. This would have meant a saving on teachers' salaries of \$7,056.00, and about \$1,500.00 on fuel, repairs, and service to the schools eliminated. The salary of the average elementary teacher could have been increased from fifty-six to seventy-five dollars per month. This should have meant better trained teachers and a better school system for the children of Meade County. Good libraries could have been placed in every school during the next five years, because there would have been just fifty-one elementary teachers, and the saving of \$1,500.00 on fuel and repairs per year would have been about thirty dollars per school for the ones left in the county.

Such a program would have resulted in certain handicaps and disadvantages to some children in the county. Transportation could not have been furnished, because the roads would not be suitable for transportation in the communities where the rural schools are located. Some children would have been required to walk at least two and one-half miles in order to get to school or to catch a bus going to a school farther away than this. There are some reasonable arguments, as brought out in Chapter I, against such a system. However, it seems that for the county as a whole the benefits derived from the

reorganization would have been greater than the disadvantages. The chief question is whether or not two and one-half miles is too far to send children to school when they have to walk.

Since there are so many children of high school age in Meade County who do not attend, it is considered important that we know where the students attending high school are living in the county. Figure 2 gives this information as well as the location of highways and bus routes. This map is very significant for three reasons: first, it indicates that the three high schools of the county are located in the eastern half of the county; secondly, it shows that some sections of the county are not participating in the high school program of the school system; and thirdly, it reveals the fact that the bus routes are located in the same part of the county that the high schools serve. There is naturally a close correlation between the location of the high schools, bus routes, and the children attending high school. With these conditions existing as they are, there is no doubt that more children from the eastern half of the county will attend high school than from the western half of the county. This is not equality of educational opportunity in any sense of the term.

Forty-four to fifty students from the western half of the county attend high school. There are 200 students from the other part of the county attending high school. Part of this great difference is due to the fact that the western half of Meade County is not so densely populated as the eastern half. However, the percentage of children attending high school from

MEADE COUNTY, KENTUCKY

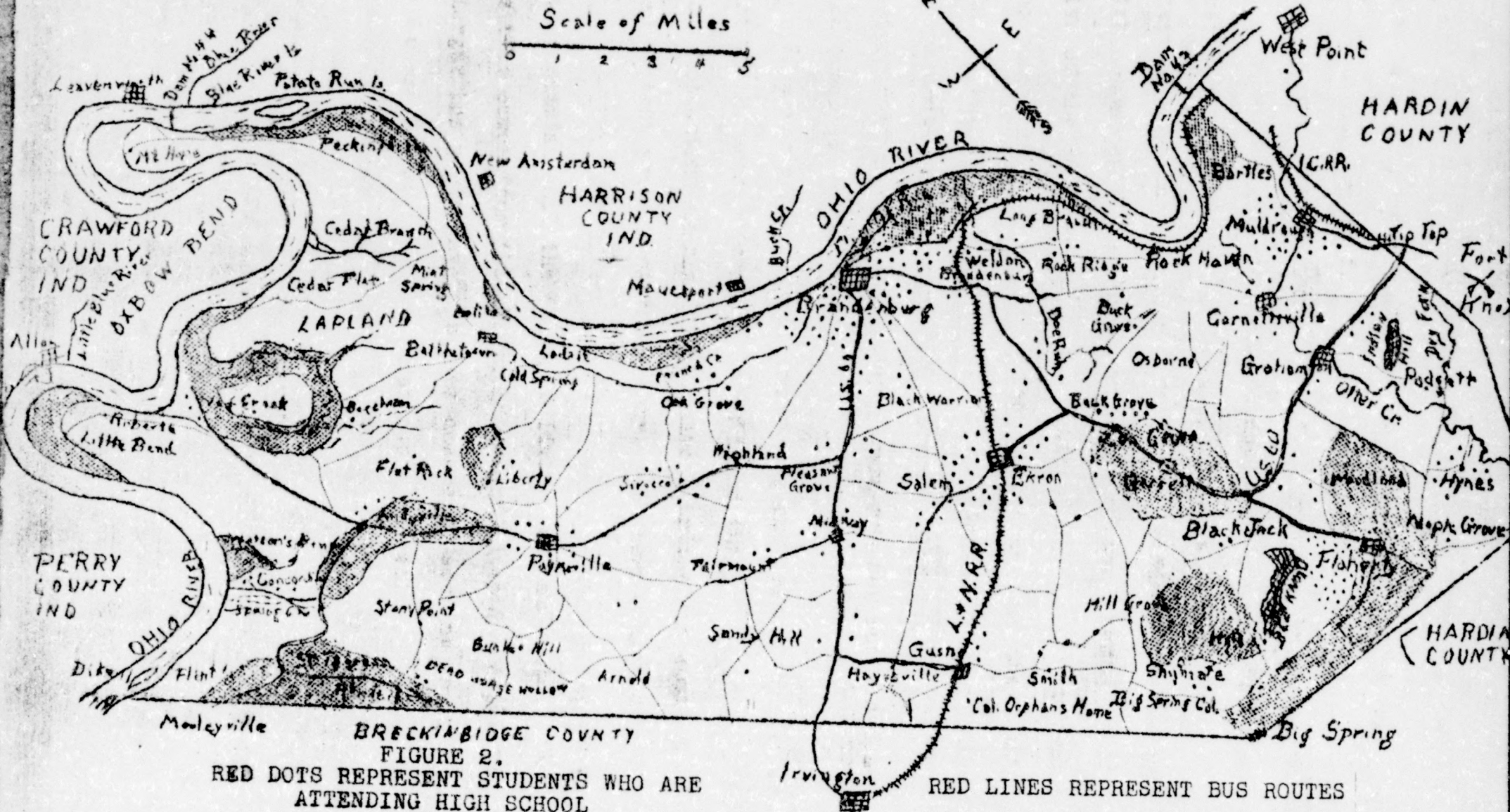


FIGURE 2.
RED DOTS REPRESENT STUDENTS WHO ARE ATTENDING HIGH SCHOOL

RED LINES REPRESENT BUS ROUTES

the western half of the county is much less than the percentage from the eastern half.

If one studies Figure 3, which gives the number of pupils belonging in high school who do not attend, he finds that there are 224 of these students compared with the 250 who do attend high school. About fifty of the students enrolled in high school are from the western half of the county; ninety-five of the children who are not attending high school and who belong in school live in the western part of the county. Thus we see that 20 per cent of the students attending high school and 42 per cent of the students belonging live in the western half of the county where there are few roads and no high schools.

If a study of the location of the children in the western part of the county is made, it is found that at least half of those not attending high school live near the bus route that goes to that section of the county. The reason that these pupils do not come on the bus is the fact that one bus will not accommodate all the children living on that route. The bus that comes from that section is crowded to its capacity. A larger bus would have a better chance of serving these people and correcting this undesirable situation.

MEADE COUNTY, KENTUCKY

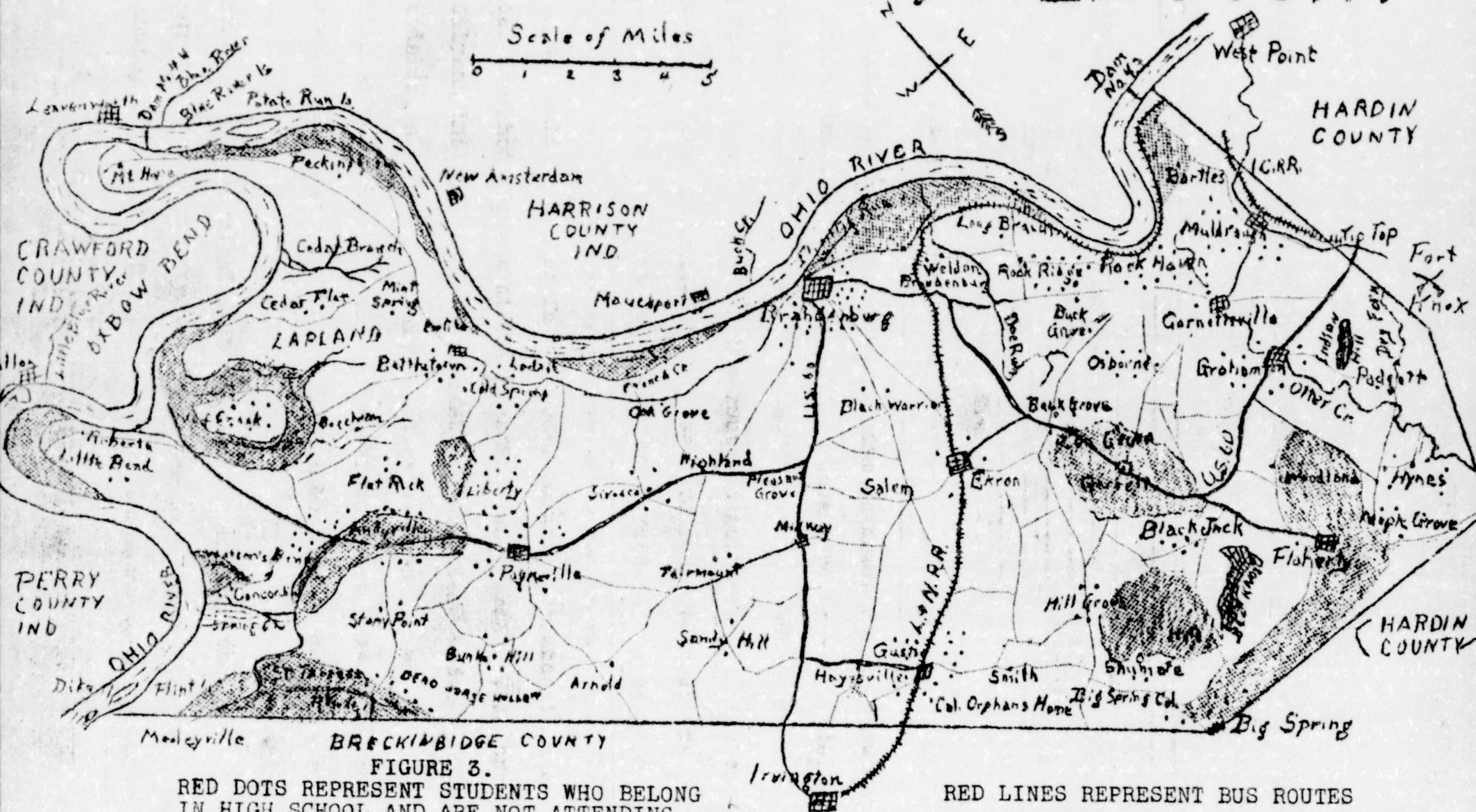


FIGURE 3.
RED DOTS REPRESENT STUDENTS WHO BELONG
IN HIGH SCHOOL AND ARE NOT ATTENDING

RED LINES REPRESENT BUS ROUTES

TABLE III

DISTANCES BETWEEN TOWNS LOCATED IN DIFFERENT SECTIONS OF
MEADE COUNTY

Brandenburg to Ekron-----	10 miles
Brandenburg to Flaherty-----	14 "
Brandenburg to Muldraugh-----	20 "
Brandenburg to Guston-----	11 "
Brandenburg to Concordia-----	19 "
Brandenburg to Rhodelia-----	21 "
Brandenburg to Wolf Creek-----	20 "
Ekron to Flaherty-----	10 "
Ekron to Muldraugh-----	16 "

This table shows that any point in Meade County to which a school bus goes is as close to Brandenburg as are Rhodelia and Wolf Creek. Buses from these two places come to Brandenburg as there is only one bus route to this section of the county. These conditions would seem to indicate that the children from all parts of the county could be transported to high school at Brandenburg for their secondary school work. No bus would travel as far in order to get to Brandenburg as does the Rhodelia bus at the present time. However, if one analyzes the conditions connected with the long bus route to Rhodelia, he finds the chief handicaps of such a plan. Some children walk several miles in order to catch this bus, which makes it necessary for them to leave home early in the morning and return late in the afternoon. The writer has heard some of the patrons of this section say that in the winter months their children were never home except at night, meaning that they left before it was light in the morning

and returned after dark at night. It is generally agreed that this bus route is too long for the condition of the road.

Assuming that all children are as conveniently located with reference to a Brandenburg bus route as are the ones living in the western part of the county, there are still other objections to having but one high school in Meade County. Some of the objections were given in Chapter I of this study. It would be necessary to put on a building program in Brandenburg, which would work a hardship on the county because of the already heavy indebtedness on the Brandenburg and Ekron buildings. Ekron and Flaherty have good school buildings which were finished in 1935. To discard these buildings for high school purposes would mean an essential loss to the communities. A school in a small town or rural community creates a community and school spirit which cannot be had through any other organization. The citizens of both communities would object to any proposal doing away with their high schools. One cannot, however, disregard the fact that the people living at Wolf Creek had a four-year high school until 1935. They gave their school up because of the insufficient number of pupils attending.

If all the students who belong in high school would enter in the fall of 1936, every high school in the county, including an additional one in the western half, would be crowded to its capacity. This would be the ideal situation, because all the people would be benefiting from the taxes that they are paying. It would take a compulsory school law that

included children up to the age of eighteen in order to accomplish this ideal situation.

The Ekron and Flaherty High Schools had an enrollment of about sixty each at the end of the school year in 1936. At the same time Brandenburg had an enrollment of 130. The building at Brandenburg would take care of the tenth, eleventh, and twelfth grades from Ekron and Flaherty in addition to the 130 who are now attending. This would not be an expensive transportation program, and junior high schools could be maintained at Flaherty, Ekron, and at some place in the western part of the county. The enrollment at Brandenburg would be about 210. With the six teachers now employed these children could be taught, and four teachers' salaries could be saved in the other two high schools. The salaries of two teachers would pay the transportation, and there would be a saving of two teachers' salaries to be invested in equipment for all of these schools. Such a program, if carried out as it should be, would not only be a saving from a financial standpoint, but it would make possible an enriched curriculum at Meade County High School for every boy and girl in the county. It is believed that one or two junior high schools in the western part of the county would do much to create more interest in school work beyond the eighth grade in that section. The students from these schools could be transported to the county high school for the last three years of their work. This would make it possible for them to take the vocational subjects offered to the other children of the county.

It would be possible to offer a good academic program in the four junior high schools of the county, and in the county's senior high school could be offered such vocational courses as commercial education, music, vocational agriculture, home economics, and industrial arts. The arguments for and against such a program have been given in another chapter. This program can never be realized in any school of Meade County so long as the present organization is continued.

CHAPTER III

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Summary

The shift of the population toward urban centers has resulted in sparsely settled rural sections in many parts of Kentucky. This is especially true in Meade County. If a county has good roads, the school problem growing out of such a situation is easily solved. The problems of consolidation and transportation are not difficult when the roads are improved to meet the needs of a community. To anticipate that the pressing need of larger schools in these rural sections can be met in the absence of roads is seemingly folly; however, there are cases where two or more of these rural schools could be consolidated without any form of transportation being necessary.

There is no doubt, on the part of authorities, that a teacher can teach as many as forty-five children successfully. This has been proved by scientific investigations. The results of most of these studies would seem to indicate that teachers do better work when teaching thirty-five to forty children. If this is true, the teachers of Meade County cannot be expected to do their best possible work, because the average daily attendance per teacher is about twenty-four. Every indication seems to be that children are being kept in the first grade too long for their good. This study shows that

the average daily attendance in the first grade is almost twice as large as that of any other grade. This condition has existed for years, because the figures used covered a period of five years.

The reorganization proposed by the superintendent of Meade County would have corrected some of the evils existing in the present system of rural schools. There would have been some undesirable characteristics in such a program. Children would have been required to walk farther to school than at present. Some of them would have been as far as two and one-half miles from school. This would be a rather long distance for the younger children to walk, but it will be a long time before the rural child can have an ideal situation for attending school. It is the honest opinion of the writer that the teaching in these larger schools would have been more efficient than it is in the present schools having an average daily attendance of nine or ten. The average attendance per teacher in the county would have been increased, under the reorganization, from twenty-four to thirty. According to the data found in the first chapter of this study, larger schools would have meant greater efficiency.

Another item which cannot be disregarded in this proposed reorganization is the saving to the county board of education and the taxpayers in the expense of maintaining these schools. The average cost per pupil in average daily attendance would have been lowered from \$17.85 to \$13.26. This would have been the saving on instructional cost. The salary of the

elementary teachers could have been raised from fifty-six to seventy-five dollars per month. This would have caused more teachers to secure higher training, and the result again would have been greater efficiency. The writer is, without any apology, taking the attitude that better pay and higher professional standards for teachers is economically a safe policy for boards of education.

This thesis reveals the fact that one-half of Meade County is receiving very little benefit from the present organization of high schools. Twenty per cent of the pupils attending high school come from the western half of the county, and forty-two per cent of the children who belong in high school and are not attending are in this same section of the county. This seems to be due to the fact that no high schools are located in that part of the county, and transportation is limited to one bus that travels but one road in that part of the county. Three high schools are located in the other half of the county, which is also served by better roads. A better system, it seems, would be to maintain one or two junior high schools in the western part of the county in order to create interest in secondary education. This would cause more children in that section to attend high school, and such an advantage to the children could not be measured in terms of dollars and cents.

Conclusions

1. An average daily attendance of twenty-four in elementary schools is not as efficient as would be an average daily attendance of thirty.
2. Children are not being promoted from the first grade as they should be, because the average daily attendance in that grade for the five-year period, 1931-1935, was over twice as large as some of the other grades and was 182 per cent of the grade closest to it.
3. The roads of Meade County are not improved to the extent that a program of consolidation involving transportation can take place in the rural schools.
4. About eighteen teaching positions in the elementary schools could be eliminated at a saving on instructional costs that would be sufficient to increase the salary of the other elementary teachers from fifty-six to seventy-five dollars per month.
5. The above reorganization would not require any transportation involving additional cost.
6. The three high schools of Meade County are located in such a way that they serve only one-half of the county.
7. There are 250 children attending high school and 225 others who belong in high school but are not attending.
8. The western half of the county furnishes 20 per cent of those attending high school and 42 per cent of those belonging but not attending.

9. The eastern half of the county has more improved roads, the three high schools, and about five times as much school transportation as the western part of the county has.
10. If all children were transported to Brandenburg for their high school work, no bus would travel any farther than the one which comes from the western half of the county at the present time.
11. Such a program, maintaining one senior high school, would offer greater opportunities to the children through more vocational subjects, better trained teachers, and better libraries and laboratory equipment.
12. The people of some sections of Meade County would not favor such a plan, because they prefer to have their children attend school nearer home than one high school in the county would permit.

Recommendations

1. Teachers should be encouraged to remedy the congested situation existing in the first grade of the elementary schools.
2. Rural schools should be consolidated as rapidly as the local geographical and economic conditions will permit.
3. There are approximately eighteen teaching positions in the county which could be eliminated without any detriment to the children. Most authorities are agreed that such an act would be beneficial to the children, and since the schools exist for the children, it seems that the county board of education would be justified in eliminating these

- schools at the present time.
4. The elementary teachers of Meade County are not paid a living wage, and something should be done to raise their average salary above fifty-six dollars per month. To eliminate the schools mentioned above would increase the salary of the elementary teacher to seventy-five dollars per month.
 5. The elementary and high school teachers should be paid on the basis of a single salary schedule.
 6. More efficient records should be kept in the high schools. It was not possible in this study to ascertain the average daily attendance in the high schools. This record should be kept by grades in order that comparisons may be made in the future concerning the attendance in the different grades of the common schools of the county.
 7. Meade County is not ready for a system of schools maintaining but one senior high school, and such a program is not desired at the present time.
 8. Either high schools or transportation should be provided for the children of the western part of the county in order that more of them may take advantage of the same opportunities being offered to the other children of the county now. It is believed that one or two junior high schools located in that part of the county would do much to create an interest in high school work. These children could be transported to the county seat for their senior high school work.

9. It is believed that not fewer but more high schools are necessary if all the children of Meade County are to share alike in the educational opportunities of secondary schools.

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