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# A Study of Population Trends of that Portion of the Omaha Public School District Located in Sarpy County

Margaret E. Fitch

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A STUDY OF POPULATION TRENDS OF THAT PORTION OF THE  
OMAHA PUBLIC SCHOOL DISTRICT LOCATED IN SARPY COUNTY

---

A Field Study

Presented to

The Faculty of the Graduate School  
The University of Nebraska at Omaha

---

In Partial Fulfillment  
of the Requirements for the Degree  
Specialist in Education

---

by

Margaret E. Fitch

February, 1969

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Accepted for the faculty of the Graduate College of the University of Nebraska at Omaha, in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree Specialist in Education.

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## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

Anticipating needs as a regular policy is vital in times of changing conditions. At no time in the history of public education have the schools been subjected by nation, state, and city to more factors calculated to affect change than the present. The changing neighborhoods within a school district and the probability of continuing change will have a far-reaching effect on our schools.

#### I. THE PROBLEM

Statement of the problem. It was the purpose of this survey to study the school population trends in order to determine the classroom needs of the portion of the Omaha Public School District located in Sarpy County. The study was conducted on the assumption that in the next decade, the population growth will necessitate the construction of at least twenty-five additional classrooms in the portion of the Omaha Public School District located in Sarpy County. This belief stemmed from observation and cursory surveys.

Importance of the Study. The right school in the right place at the right time is important in every school system. Often, other substantial benefits accrue from careful planning. Early site acquisition can save substantially

on the cost of a school, and often many tax dollars can be wasted on temporary buildings because of the lack of long range planning. Misplaced buildings with excessive pupil transportation costs or inferior sites with high construction costs can be avoided. Double sessions and crowded classrooms which would reduce the effectiveness of the educational program may be held to a minimum with careful research into future housing requirements.

The population shift from downtown to suburban Omaha has been accelerated by the interstate highway development, the lack of available residential building space in the city, and the concern of people to migrate from urban to suburban areas.

The suburban movement, coupled with a discernible shift from non-public to public schools, emphasizes the need for a continued program of classroom construction in the suburban area south of Harrison Street, which is a portion of the Omaha Public School District in Sarpy County.

## II. THE AREA

Description of the area studied. The area of discussion in this study is that part of the Omaha Public School District that extends into Sarpy County a depth of two miles from 60th Street to Gilmore Road. From this point, the southern boundary follows Child's Road east to the

Missouri River. This area shows much possibility for population growth since a large share of the land is still open space. This is a fast-growing suburban area where young families have purchased homes and realtors are developing large tracts of land at a rapid pace.

This suburban area of ten square miles has grown very rapidly. The population of Sarpy County increased 99 per cent, or 15,000 people, from 1950 to 1960. Of course, only a part of the growth was in that portion of the county under study. However, the indication is that the rate of growth in the area within the School District is at least equal to that of the rest of the county. Because of its nearness to both Omaha and Offutt Air Force Base, this area can continue to grow at a very rapid pace. The potential future population of this suburban area is estimated at approximately 23,000 people.

In June of 1962, there were 828 elementary school-age children in this portion of the Omaha Public Schools, with 313 housed temporarily in cottages and portables. In September, 1968, the school population was 2083 public school students and 487 parochial students. This northern section of the county was experiencing suburban growth resulting in increased school needs and tax problems which became more and more acute. These five small rural school districts, ill-equipped to meet the individual problems, petitioned to

become a part of the Omaha Public School District. The crossing of county lines by this educational merger was done by men and women who put the interests of young people and education first and political identity last. Several new and exciting educational facilities, such as Pawnee, Gilder, and the new Chandler View school have been the outgrowth of this merger, along with the Bryan Junior High school and the proposed Bryan Senior High school.

### III. PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Giles School, 4160 Giles Road. This school consists of a building erected in 1938 with four classrooms, a total capacity of 120. This small building was in an area that was annexed by the Omaha Public School District in April, 1958. Portable units and cottages are now being used to handle the additional membership.

Pleasant Hill, 2920 Chandler Road. This building was erected in 1939 with eight classrooms, which already is a nearly obsolete building educationally, on an inadequate site! This school was annexed by the Omaha Public School District in 1958. Its capacity is 300 students. An additional duplex is now being used for additional enrollment.

Riverview school, 2407 Chandler Road, Riverview

school was erected in 1958 with six classrooms. This was annexed in 1957. It is an excellent school plant in an area that is growing slowly. Its capacity is 280 students.

Chandler School, 1806 Chandler Road. This school was erected in 1909. It has three classrooms and was annexed by Omaha in 1958 and closed, but was reopened in 1961 to handle excess membership in a rapidly growing area. Capacity is 95 students.

Pawnee School, 7310 South 48th Street. Pawnee was opened in September, 1966, and was designed for 450 students. This building is climate-controlled and was part of the 1962 building program of the Omaha Board of Education. The facility was built at a cost of \$580,000.

Gilder School, 3705 Chandler Road. Gilder was erected in 1964 and housed 627 students, which included four cottages located in the Southern Hills housing area. It was paid for by the Board of Education's "pay as we go" funds. Cost of the fourteen-classroom building was \$637,177. Two portable cottages were added to the present site in 1967.

William Jennings Bryan Junior-Senior High School, 8210 South 42nd Street. This school was the first secondary school built in the Sarpy County portion of the Omaha Public School District. It cost \$2,078,216 and was financed by the

1963 bond issue. It covers 138,830 square feet. This completely climate-controlled building was designed to serve 1,200 students but the present enrollment exceeds this number. During the 1968-1969 school year, fourteen portable classrooms are being used to help with the bulging enrollment. A new senior high school is being proposed to join the Bryan Junior High building at 8210 South 42nd Street.

New Construction. Chandler View Elementary School at 7800 South 25th Street is scheduled to be occupied by February 1, 1969, by children who attend the old Chandler School and some pupils attending Marrs Elementary school at 5619 South 19th Street. During the 1968-1969 school year, these children (grades 3 through 6) were bused each day since Chandler did not have the room. Tentative plans include transferring part of Pleasant Hill School to Chandler View in the fall of 1969. The cost of this school of ten rooms was approximately \$555,000 and completely replaces the old Chandler school which was serving kindergarten through second grade.

#### IV. PAROCHIAL SCHOOLS

St. Bernadette School, 7630 South 42nd Street. This elementary school, grades one through eight, was erected in 1965. It has fourteen classrooms and one large library room.

In September, 1968, it had an enrollment of 487 students.

Daniel J. Gross Senior High School, located on the same site as St. Bernadette, was equipped to handle approximately 500 students but opened in September, 1968, with only 155 freshmen. They used buses to transport the students in from ten parishes of the surrounding area.

#### V. COMMUNITY ISSUES

Annexation. Annexation by the City of Omaha was proposed for the portion of Sarpy County south of Harrison Street and north of Highway 370. However, under the laws existent in 1968, the legislature prevents Omaha from annexing an area with more than 10,000 population; therefore, the proposed 1969 legislative session will attempt to raise the figure to 35,000 population. The Nebraska state law also includes a zoning jurisdiction of three miles beyond the city limits to provide for orderly growth and annexation. On October 12, 1966, Douglas County District Judge John C. Burke set down a ruling that a city could not annex across county lines and this ruling was upheld by the State Supreme Court.

Services have been extended into Sarpy County by the Metropolitan Utilities District, Omaha Public Power District, and the Omaha Public School District. This area is largely

a fringe area of the Omaha metropolitan district.

Annexation by Bellevue. Bellevue, too, had ambitious plans to annex the area. The City of Bellevue did annex to the north into the school district in 1967. The annexation included the area from Bellevue city limits to Chandler Road, engulfing Riverview school, one of the Omaha Public Schools. The City of Bellevue proceeded to take the school, but a 1959 State Law (79-801) prevented the school from being made a part of the City of Bellevue. This law provided that all the land within cities ranging in population from one thousand to fifty thousand people be a part of that city's school district. Thus, in effect, when the City of Bellevue annexed this portion of the Omaha School District bounded by Harrison Street, Child's Road, Highway 73-75, and a line approximately along Bellevue Boulevard, the Bellevue School District grew by identical proportions. However, in the summer of 1967, Public Law LB-513 was drafted by the Omaha Senators to protect this area. LB-513 required a vote of the Omaha School Board before its territory could be merged with a Class III District (Bellevue). The fight goes on and each legislative session the issue is brought up again. The destiny of this area cannot be predicted.

In the December 2, 1965, Sun newspaper, Bellevue Mayor Haworth was alleged to have commented that the area bounded



by Highway 73-75, 36th Street, Highway 370, and Chandler Road is prime territory and an area that should become a part of Bellevue. "The elements are there for industrial growth, something the community can definitely use," the Mayor said. The annexation of this area was definitely in the plans of the Bellevue officials. In fact, the planning commission prepared for final approval, the annexation of the Federal Fertilizer Company, located on Highway 73-75 and Chandler Road and the land west to 25th Street. The Bellevue Chamber of Commerce manager, who also served as Chairman of the Board of the Sarpy County Commissioners, stated that most of this proposed annexation may become effective before 1970. Residents of the Robert Gilder school area were concerned and many expressed the desire to become a part of Omaha in preference to Bellevue.

## VI. ECONOMIC PROBLEMS

The peripheral area of the Omaha School District which lies in Sarpy County has not paid its own way. School records show that the residents of this portion of Sarpy County have paid less than half the cost of educating the students in 1964-1965. Records show that operation and pension expenses in the six schools were \$821,509 in 1965, but taxes paid into these two funds by the residents were \$380,154.

In terms of construction, the District has spent almost two million dollars more than it will receive at current property valuations over a twenty-year amortization period in Sarpy County. These Sarpy area schools received \$4,456,000 of the \$25,000,000 bond issue in 1963. This was in addition to the new Gilder school which was built for \$637,000 with "pay as we go" funds. These were some of the benefits of living in a fast-moving, heavily increasing area. This was a great asset to the area and an opportunity to build new public school buildings without having to raise taxes to insurmountable heights. This area, in 1968, is still in desperate need of additional schools.

The junior-senior high, since it has taken over all of the room planned for the junior high school plant, has required the use of fourteen temporary buildings during the school terms in 1966 through 1969. Pawnee Elementary School had to use the library space and will outgrow the original building in 1969. Gilder school has occupied cottages since its dedication in 1963. Giles was a temporary situation which has had extended school days, temporary buildings and cottages since its annexation in 1959. Pleasant Hill occupies a duplex to extend room and has occupied two cottages in Chandler Acres. Chandler school has had to bus grades four through six to Marrs school during the school terms, 1962-1969.

Population trends and school plant facilities have presented a challenging study for those concerned.

## CHAPTER II

### REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

As of August 12, 1968, the population of the world was 3.4 billion, and is predicted to double by the year 2000.<sup>1</sup> At the same time, the population of the United States was 200 million and is expected to double by the year 2010. These predictions may be altered by imponderables. Among these are the impact of "the pill" and other contraceptives not yet invented, developments in food production, and changing moral viewpoints. Education will play a role in all these imponderables.<sup>2</sup>

About 55,100,000 persons five to thirty-four years old were enrolled in school or college in the United States in the fall of 1968. This represents thirty per cent of the total population. Of these, 32,900,000 were enrolled in grades one through eight, 13,400,000 in grades nine through twelve, 6,100,000 in college, and 2,700,000 in kindergarten. The increase of enrollment between the years 1962-1968 shows a seventy per cent gain in college enrollment, thirty per cent gain in high school (grades nine through twelve), and

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<sup>1</sup>Walter Pitkins, Jr., "Too Many People: Can Education Find An Answer?" Phi Delta Kappan (May, 1968) 473.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid.

an eight per cent gain in elementary schools (grades one through eight). The population shows an increase in the five to seventeen-year-old age groups. In May, 1967, Census Bureau population specialists revised school enrollment projections for 1985 upward from those just a year earlier. College enrollment, according to the new projections, would rise to between 9,700,000 and 11,800,000 by 1985. High School would be 13,800,000 to 17,300,000 and kindergarten through eighth grade, 35,400,000 to 47,700,000. Farm population should decrease at least five per cent.<sup>3</sup>

In 1968, 46,000,000 Americans were enrolled in school. This does not include persons in correspondence classes, adult education classes, nursery schools, business or trade school.<sup>4</sup>

Education in America is an industry involving far more people than those in the fabled auto industry or those in the mammoth defense industry. With more than 50,000,000 students, another 2,500,000 or so teachers and administrators, and millions more involved in school support industries such

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<sup>3</sup>World Almanac, "United States Population," Centennial Edition, (New York: Doubleday and Co., 1968,) 258.

<sup>4</sup>Ben J. Wattenberg, This USA, (Garden City, New York: Doubleday and Co., Inc., 1965) p. 203.

as textbook publishers, construction work, and suppliers, we can easily say that more Americans are involved in learning and teaching than are involved in anything else.<sup>5</sup>

The nation has never seen a time when education has played such a large role in the lives of so many Americans as it does today. This is not only population growth, but more people are attending school than ever before. They are staying longer and there are more young people in the general populace than any other time in recent history.<sup>6</sup>

Education for the early-age students, too, has been a somewhat revolutionary occurrence in the history of American education. Prior to the decade of the fifties, many American children did not attend kindergarten as only about eighteen per cent of the five-year-olds were in school. Ten years later, kindergarten enrollment almost doubled with thirty-four per cent enrolled by April, 1960. October of 1963 found fifty-four per cent of the five-year-olds in school. In 1940, the kindergarten student was a depression baby, about 2.1 million in all, and about 400,000 of these started school with kindergarten. In 1960, there were 3.9 million five-year-olds, of whom 1.7 million were in school. Thus, in twenty years their number has doubled, while the number of five-year-olds in kindergarten has more than quadrupled.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>5</sup>Ibid.    <sup>6</sup>Ibid.    <sup>7</sup>Ibid.

Since the end of World War II, the ratio of public school children enrolled in the first grade has been five to one to those who have enrolled in parochial school. Thus, in 1963, eighty-three per cent of all kindergarten students were in public institutions. For those in elementary school, the figure was eighty-five per cent; in high school, it was ninety per cent. Of 46,000,000 students enrolled in kindergarten through twelfth grade in October of 1963, 39,600,000 were in public school and 6,400,000 in private and parochial schools. There were about 30 million non-Catholic children of school age in 1963. Less than three per cent attended private schools, which included all manner of non-Catholic religious schools, plus military academies, preparatory schools, etc. There is a widely-held belief that most Catholic children attend parochial schools. This is not so; there were about 13 million Catholic children of school age in 1963. Well over half (about fifty-seven per cent) attended public schools.<sup>8</sup>

Fast disappearing from the education scene are the very large and very small Catholic elementary schools, but a corresponding increase is taking place in the middle-sized group. A study just completed by researchers of the National Catholic Educational Association shows that since 1962 the

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<sup>8</sup>Ibid. p.204.

number of Catholic elementary schools enrolling forty or fewer pupils has dwindled from two hundred to sixty-five, and half of those remaining are kindergartens and institutions for atypical children. At the other extreme, the total of schools enrolling 1,200-2,500 pupils is down from 280 to 161, a drop attributed to restrictions on class size and population shifts to the suburbs.<sup>9</sup>

According to the NCEA report, 87 per cent of all Catholic elementary schools now are in the 100-800 pupil range, with 41 per cent in the 200-400 range. There were 10,517 Catholic elementary schools in the 1967-68 school year.<sup>10</sup>

Another new NCEA study involving both elementary and secondary Catholic schools shows that by the end of this year 207 schools will have opened since 1966, while 637 will have closed in the same period. Closings as against school openings have produced a net enrollment loss of 14,886 in a three-year period.<sup>11</sup>

In 1960, of the children of school age seven to thirteen, 97.5 per cent were enrolled in school. It is tantamount to saying that nearly every child in America gets an elementary school education. The 2.5 per cent not enrolled

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<sup>9</sup>Education Briefs, "Catholic Enrollment Down," The Education Digest, XXXIV (November, 1968), pp. 61-62.

<sup>10</sup>Ibid.      <sup>11</sup>Ibid.



are temporarily out of school for reasons of health (chronic illness or physical and mental handicaps), or in the process of changing residence. Many who attack American education may do it qualitatively but not quantitatively. Elementary education has also been on the upsurge since 1910 when only fourteen per cent, or one of every seven age 7-13, were not enrolled in public school. More than likely, many were working. In 1916 and 1919 Congress attempted to legislate against child labor but achieved little success until the 1930's. Today's school children are going to school many more days per year than they did in the past. This information is shown in Table I.<sup>12</sup>

Elementary school population has made other changes. In 1950, twenty-two per cent of America's twelve-year-olds were "educationally retarded" but by 1960, only half of that percentage, or eleven per cent, were educationally retarded. With the many special education areas and remedial practices, these percentages can be cut even more drastically.<sup>13</sup>

High School, too, has a high percentage of enrollment for the total population. In 1963, the age-group of 14-15 shows ninety-eight per cent. However, the drop-out rate runs

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<sup>12</sup>Wattenberg, op. cit., p.205

<sup>13</sup>Ibid. p.206

TABLE I  
PUBLIC SCHOOL ATTENDANCE IN UNITED STATES, 1876-1960

Year	Average length of school term	Average number of days attended per enrolled pupil
1876	133 days	80 days
1896	140 days	95 days
1916	160 days	121 days
1936	173 days	146 days
1956	178 days	158 days
1960	178 days	160 days

about one in five for children age sixteen and seventeen. Over eighteen, it will run two in five. Table II indicates how our school population has changed.<sup>14</sup>

A current world problem that calls for enlightenment, understanding, compassion, and responsibility is the population explosion. Although the United States and other highly industrialized countries are solving their own internal population problems, all the world is affected by the overpopulation in India, Latin America and the Far East.<sup>15</sup>

Some authors such as Hauser, Huxley, Osborn and Thompson believe the population problem to be the single, most important, crucial area affecting mankind today. Most authorities believe the schools must begin to deal with the problems of population explosion now. One must assume that a fundamental purpose of education in a democratic society is to create critically-thinking individuals who are willing and able to deal with crucial problems of our times, and develop an attitude of moral commitment about them.

When one discusses the population problem in the classroom, a good place to start would be to analyze those problems facing large cities today, where a population explosion on a minor, but no less crucial, scale is occurring. Essentially, one finds the metropolitan city is expanding so

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<sup>14</sup>Ibid. p.207.    <sup>15</sup>Ibid.

TABLE II  
PERCENTAGE OF POPULATION GRADUATED FROM HIGH SCHOOL

Year	Per cent of population who are graduates (age 25-29)
1964	69%
1960	61%
1950	53%
1940	38%
1930	27%
1920	21%
1910	17%

rapidly that it cannot build fast enough to provide adequate services to take care of its people. Over-crowding, whether local, national, or international, multiplies and compounds the problems of space and facilities.

Hauser states that the population problem seems so dire in its consequences that "world population at the present growth rate would, well within 800 years, produce one person for every square foot of land surface on the globe."<sup>16</sup>

Brodbelt indicates that the study of the population explosion has currently been a neglected aspect in the social studies program and that the curriculum should include this problem in its broad objectives.<sup>17</sup>

The population problem in the suburbs shows that thousands of city families have packed up and journeyed there to make a new life. They wanted room to spread out--a place to park the car (or cars), a garden, a bedroom for each child. They wanted to own their own house rather than to rent a small apartment. They sought less-crowded schools, a yard for their pre-schoolers to play in.<sup>18</sup>

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<sup>16</sup>Philip Hauser, "Population Gap in the Curriculum", Teacher's College Record (March, 1962), p.428.

<sup>17</sup>Samuel S. Brodbelt, "Population Crisis: Education's Challenge and Moral Commitment", The Social Studies, LVIII No. 2, (February, 1967) University of Colorado, Boulder, Colo.

<sup>18</sup>Junior Scholastic, "Our Suburbs...Are They Becoming Slurbs?", Vol. 63, No. 11, (November, 1968), pp. 12-13.

Some suburbanites were also finding some unbargained-for problems. Many suburbs were facing big growing pains.<sup>19</sup> So many thousands of families moved from the cities that many suburban public services couldn't keep up with the demands made on them. Local governments, geared to serve 3,000 residents in 1966-67, creaked and groaned under the strain of handling 70,000. Many police and fire departments for example, weren't big enough to take care of the needs of such a rapidly expanding population.<sup>20</sup>

Local planning lagged, too. New houses seemed to have eaten up land before there was time to plan space for parks or to save historical buildings from the wreckers. Suburban housing developments usually came equipped with houses (by the hundred) and streets. The houses were occupied long before enough schools were built. New suburbanites found themselves taxed for the new schools and highways, and for city water mains and sewers (which development builders sometimes failed to install).<sup>21</sup>

Not all suburbs suffered from these problems, of course. But many homes in tree-shaded, well-planned areas were high-priced. And even expensive suburbs have had their share of woes.<sup>22</sup>

In recent years, more and more industries have also

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<sup>19</sup>Ibid.    <sup>20</sup>Ibid.    <sup>21</sup>Ibid.    <sup>22</sup>Ibid.

moved to suburban areas where land was cheaper and greater numbers of skilled workers were available. Industries paid taxes which helped pay for up-to-date schools, better streets, more police equipment.<sup>23</sup>

By the year 2000, twice as many Americans are expected to live in suburbs. City planners foresee the day when the east coast from Boston to Washington would be a continuous strip of urban and suburban communities. Similar urban sprawl is predicted between Chicago and Pittsburgh and between San Francisco and San Diego.<sup>24</sup>

Many city planners have called for the development of "new towns"--suburban communities designed in detail before any building starts. "New town" would provide areas for houses, apartments, industries and business--as well as for recreational and cultural centers, schools, hospitals, etc. One solution that takes less long-range planning is "cluster zoning". Under this system, houses are laid out on looping roads instead of straight ones.<sup>25</sup>

Most critics of suburbs agree that the biggest need is careful planning. Private groups lack the authority to make planning stick. Most suburban governments are understaffed and lack the necessary funds to handle major studies or draw up long-range plans.<sup>26</sup>

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<sup>23</sup>Ibid.    <sup>24</sup>Ibid.    <sup>25</sup>Ibid.    <sup>26</sup>Ibid.

## CHAPTER III

### GENERAL POPULATION TRENDS

All available population data indicate clearly that America's population is spiraling upward. The full impact of this upward trend has not yet been entirely felt. Before it is absorbed by the schools, there will be, theoretically at least, a second upsurge in the number of children of school age. Because of the phenomenal increase in the birth-rate beginning about 1941, the number of young people of marriageable age increases rather sharply during the next two or three decades.

Mobility in the United States has made considerable changes in the past ten years. Population shifts and migrant flow among regions make predictions difficult. See Figures 1, 2, and 3.

When families are small, demographers project low future populations. See Figure 4. From the 30's until the late 40's, it was believed that our numbers would stabilize by 1960, or perhaps a little later; many expected the population to go into a slow decline at some later date. When family sizes grow, most projections are high. The projections are not altogether wrong, of course. Growth cycles tend to last for years; what happens in 1968 is more or less likely to be repeated, with modifications, in 1970 and 1972.



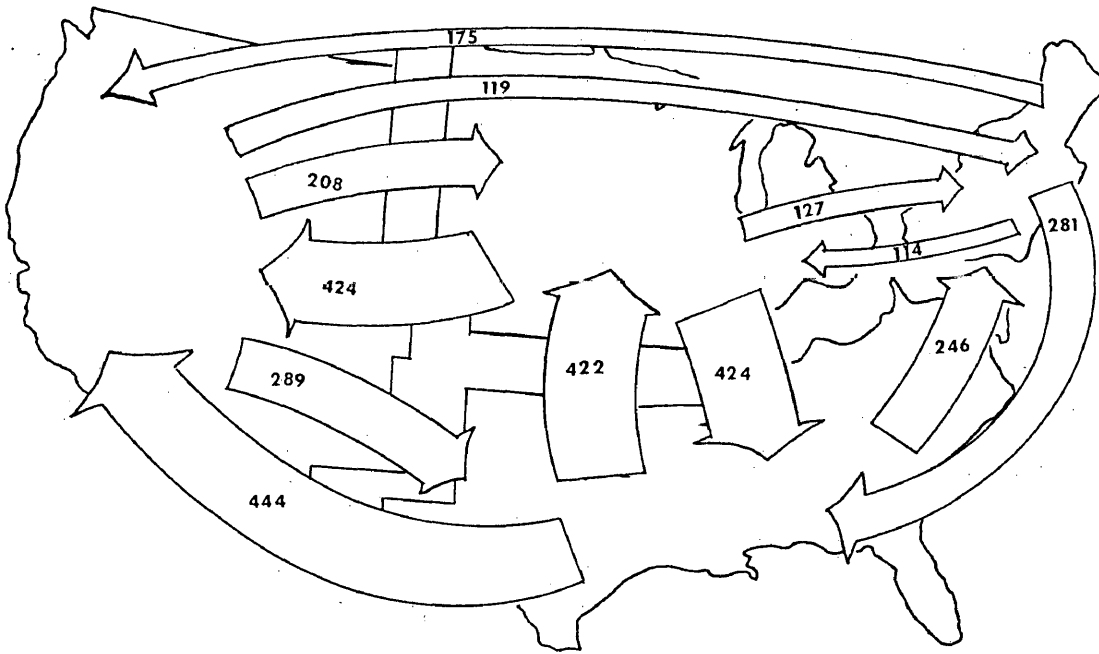


FIGURE 1

FLOW OF MIGRANTS BETWEEN REGIONS, 1960-1965  
(Annual Average-Thousands)

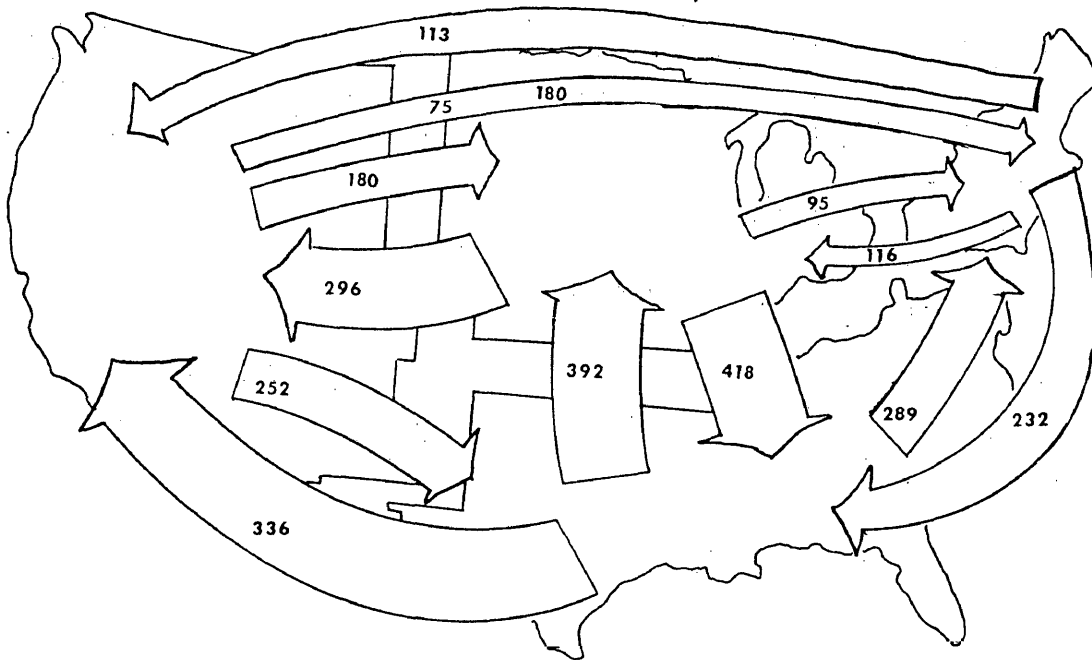
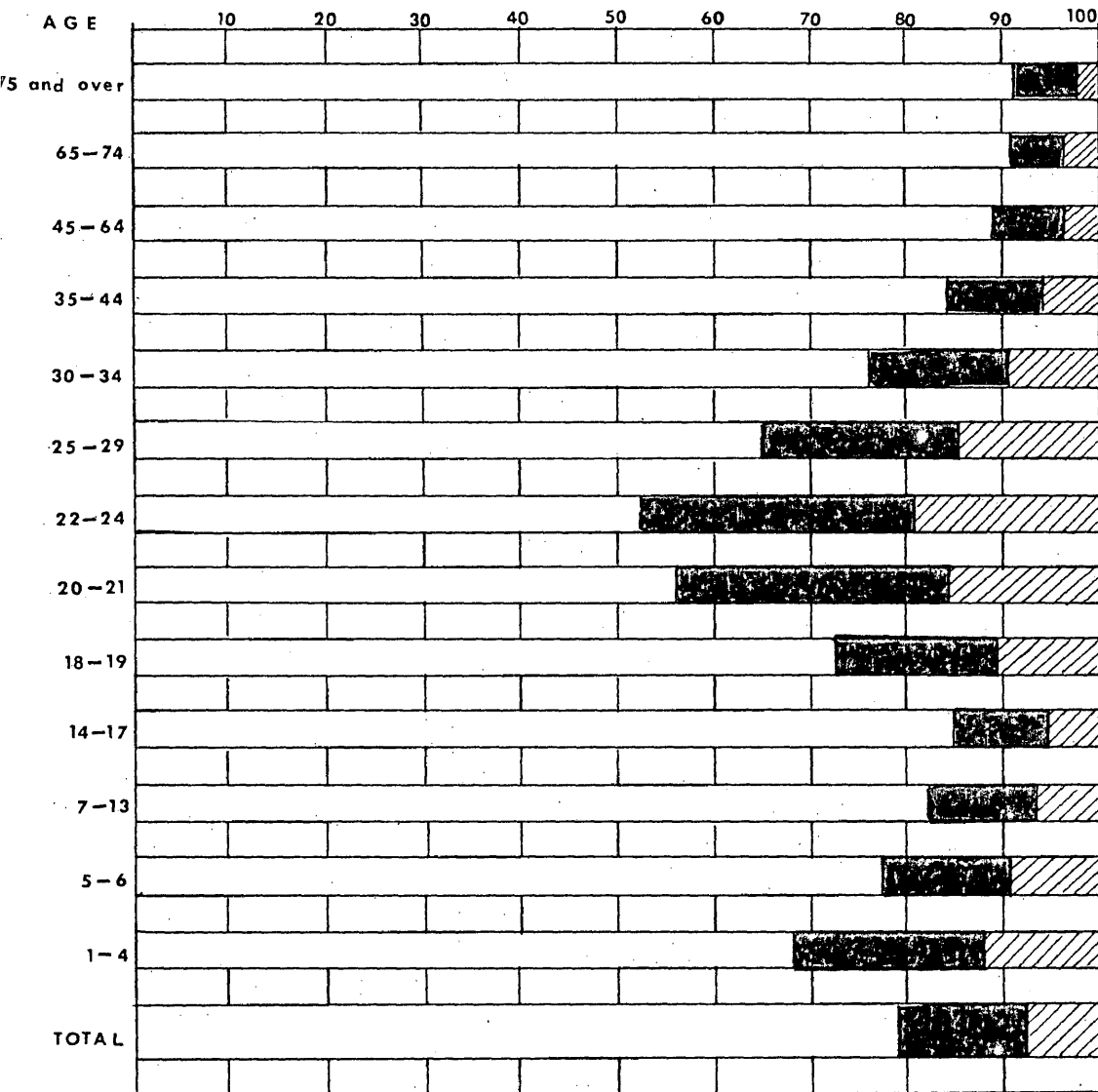


FIGURE 2

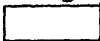
FLOW OF MIGRANTS BETWEEN REGIONS, 1955-1960  
(Annual Average-Thousands)

PERCENT



NOTE: "Different County" includes persons abroad a year ago.

Residence A Year Ago.

Same House 

Different House Same County 

Different County 

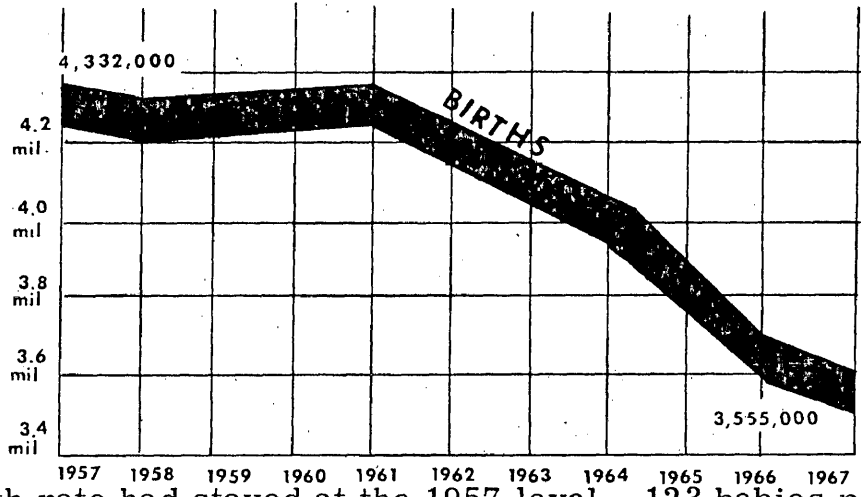
FIGURE 3

MOBILITY STATUS OF UNITED STATES

RESIDENTS AGED ONE YEAR AND OVER

1965

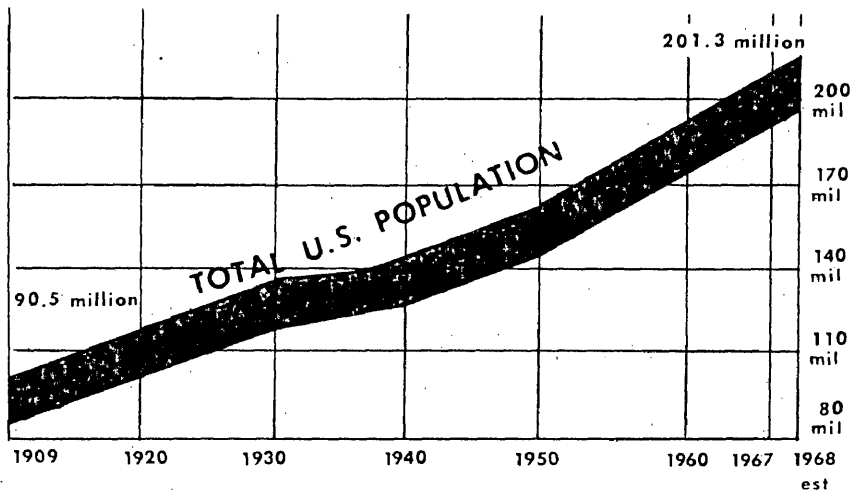
# SLOWDOWN IN THE BABY BOOM —



If the birth rate had stayed at the 1957 level - 123 babies per 1,000 women of childbearing age - the U.S. would have had 5.6 million more babies born in the 1957-67 period. Actually the birthrate has fallen every year since 1959.



# FEWER BABIES, BUT MORE PEOPLE



Total U.S. population still is increasing every year, as it has in all 177 years since the first census in 1790 - and it's expected to continue to rise. But the sharp drop in the birthrate since 1957 has slowed population growth much below some earlier predictions.

FIGURE 4

SLOWDOWN IN THE BABY BOOM

FEWER BABIES, BUT MORE PEOPLE

Researchers have found that the number of households established affects the population growth. See Table III. In 1966, the United States had 25 million females in the age-group 16-35. Since the youngest of these was born in 1950, the total was not greatly affected by the post-war baby boom and by 1980 we will see the effects in earnest. The Census Bureau projects 37 million in this age-group (up fifty per cent in fourteen years).

Fertility rates have been declining, revealed when we check the number of children in the 5-9 age-group in 1975. Also, the number of those age 15-19 will have increased sharply. See Table IV. The children in this age-group (15-19) are from the bumper baby crop years of 1956-60. See Table V. The rise in the 5-9 age-group for 1985 compared against 1975 results not from increased fertility, but from low rates applied to a much-increased population of females who before 1980 will be old enough to add to the population. The reduced number of those age 10-14 in 1985 compared to those in 1975 is explained by their origin in the expected low fertility of the years 1971-75. The 1975 figures prove quite reliable since above eighty per cent are living today. Interstate migration, state-wide disaster may have a significant impact on school-age populations.

TABLE III

## FORMATION OF HOUSEHOLDS IN THE UNITED STATES

Year	Number of Existing Households	Percent of 1957 Households
1956	44,902,000	90.4
1957	49,673,000	--
1958	50,474,000	101.6
1959	51,435,000	103.5
1960	52,799,000	106.3
1961	53,464,000	107.6
1962	54,652,000	110.0
1963	55,189,000	111.1
1964	55,991,000	112.7
1965	57,251,000	115.2
1966	58,543,000	117.8
	Estimated Number of Households	
1967	59,587,000	119.9
1968	60,664,000	122.1
1969	61,750,000	124.3
1970	62,863,000	126.5
1975	69,115,000	139.1
1980	76,018,000	153.0
1985	82,814,000	166.7

Source: U. S. Census Bureau Report

TABLE IV

## ESTIMATED AND PROJECTED POPULATION OF UNITED STATES -- 1950-1980

SERIES II ASSUMPTION: 1955-1957--FERTILITY LEVEL CONTINUED TO 1980

Year	All Ages	Under 5 Years	5 to 9 Years	10 to 14 Years	15 to 19 Years	20 to 24 Years
1950	151,683,000	16,320,000	13,299,000	11,144,000	10,680,000	11,620,000
1955	165,270,000	18,305,000	17,151,000	13,342,000	11,191,000	10,775,000
1957	171,229,000	19,144,000	17,993,000	14,988,000	11,830,000	10,753,000
1960	180,126,000	19,991,000	19,159,000	17,217,000	13,406,000	11,311,000
1965	195,747,000	21,243,000	20,837,000	19,216,000	17,207,000	13,502,000
1970	213,810,000	24,190,000	22,089,000	20,893,000	19,262,000	17,343,000
1975	235,246,000	28,190,000	25,029,000	22,145,000	20,936,000	19,331,000
1980	259,981,000	31,991,000	28,940,000	25,080,000	22,186,000	21,001,000

Source: U. S. Bureau of the Census, Illustrative Projections of the Population of the United States, by Age and Sex, 1960 to 1980, Series P-25, No. 187

TABLE V  
 ACTUAL NUMBER OF BIRTHS IN THE UNITED STATES  
 1955 - 1966

Year	Number of Births	Per cent of 1957 Births	Birth Rate Per 1000	Fertility Rate <sup>(a)</sup>
1966	3,670,000(Est.)	84.7	18.5	91.8
1965	3,806,000	87.9	19.4	96.6
1964	4,070,000	94.0	21.0	104.8
1963	4,142,000	95.6	21.7	108.4
1962	4,213,000	97.3	22.4	112.1
1961	4,317,000	99.7	23.3	117.2
1960	4,307,000	99.4	23.7	118.0
1959	4,313,000	99.6	24.0	118.8
1958	4,279,000	98.8	24.6	120.1
1957	4,332,000	--	25.3	122.7
1956	4,244,000	98.0	25.2	120.8
1955	4,128,000	95.3	25.0	118.0

Sources: U. S. News and World Report, Vol. LXII, No. 16 April 17, 1967, U. S. Census Bureau Data; National Industrial Conference Board, Economics Almanac, 1967-68, Paul Biederman, Editor, p.16.

(a) Rate per 100 female population, aged 15-44

Note: The number of 1966 births is the lowest since 1950, when 3,645,000 live births were recorded. This was 84.1 per cent of the 1957 figure.

Birthrates in the United States and the City of Omaha from 1955 to 1967 have gone below estimated predictions. See Figure 5.

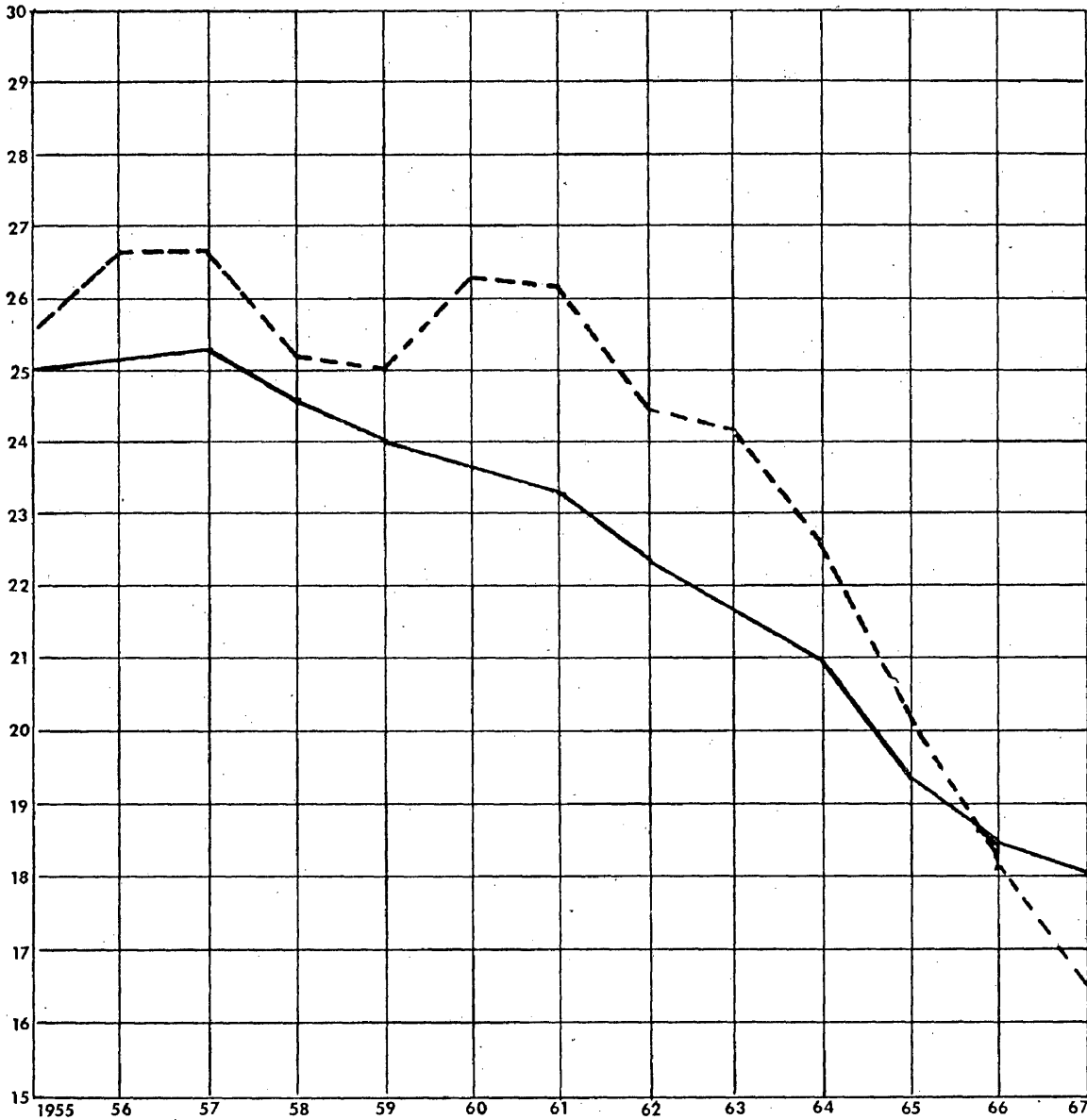
In working with population trends, it was helpful to use national, regional and state trends and to relate them to the local situation. Figures 6 and 7 show that the Omaha Public School Census has proven more valuable and accurate than the United States Bureau of Census.

When projecting elementary school enrollment, it was logical and sound to set up a five-year study where students were already born (births five years previous to kindergarten enrollment). Also, numbers of households make a good indication (using 3.8 persons per household). See Table III. This table shows a 17.8 per cent increase in the number of households from 1956 through 1966.

There were many variables that make population difficult to predict. Some of these were growth of a city, fluctuation of births, non-public school attendance, and the Vietnam War. We did conclude that planning in likely growth areas should be flexible enough to include relatively painless options for a very large increase in school population now envisioned. Reserve school sites and modular construction were two types of hedge against such growth. It should not be forgotten that population-restrictive



Birth per 1000 persons



National ———  
 Omaha - - - - -

FIGURE 5  
 BIRTHRATES: UNITED STATES  
 AND CITY OF OMAHA

Source: U.S. Bureau of Census Reports and Omaha-Douglas County,  
 Division of Vital Statistics

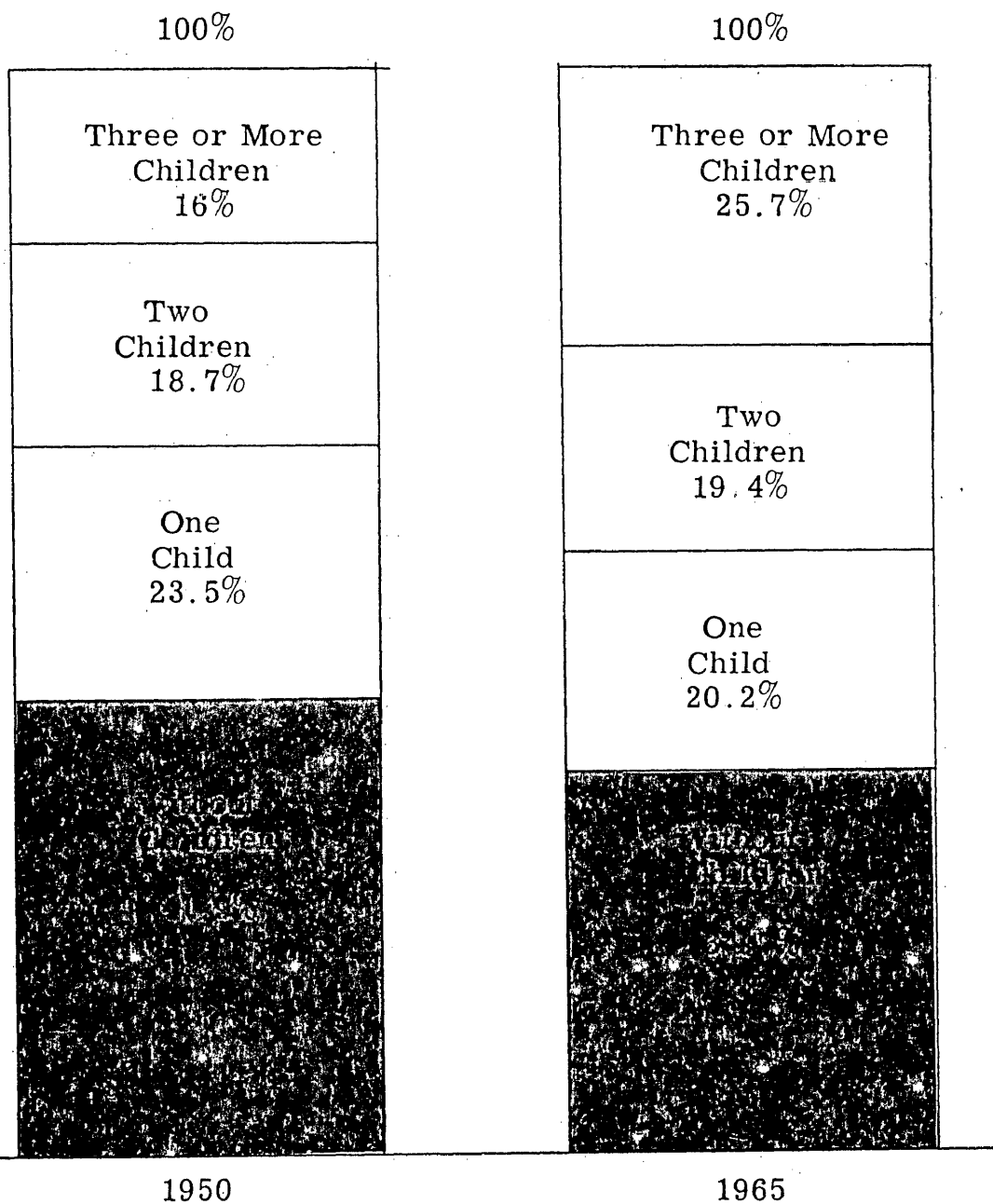


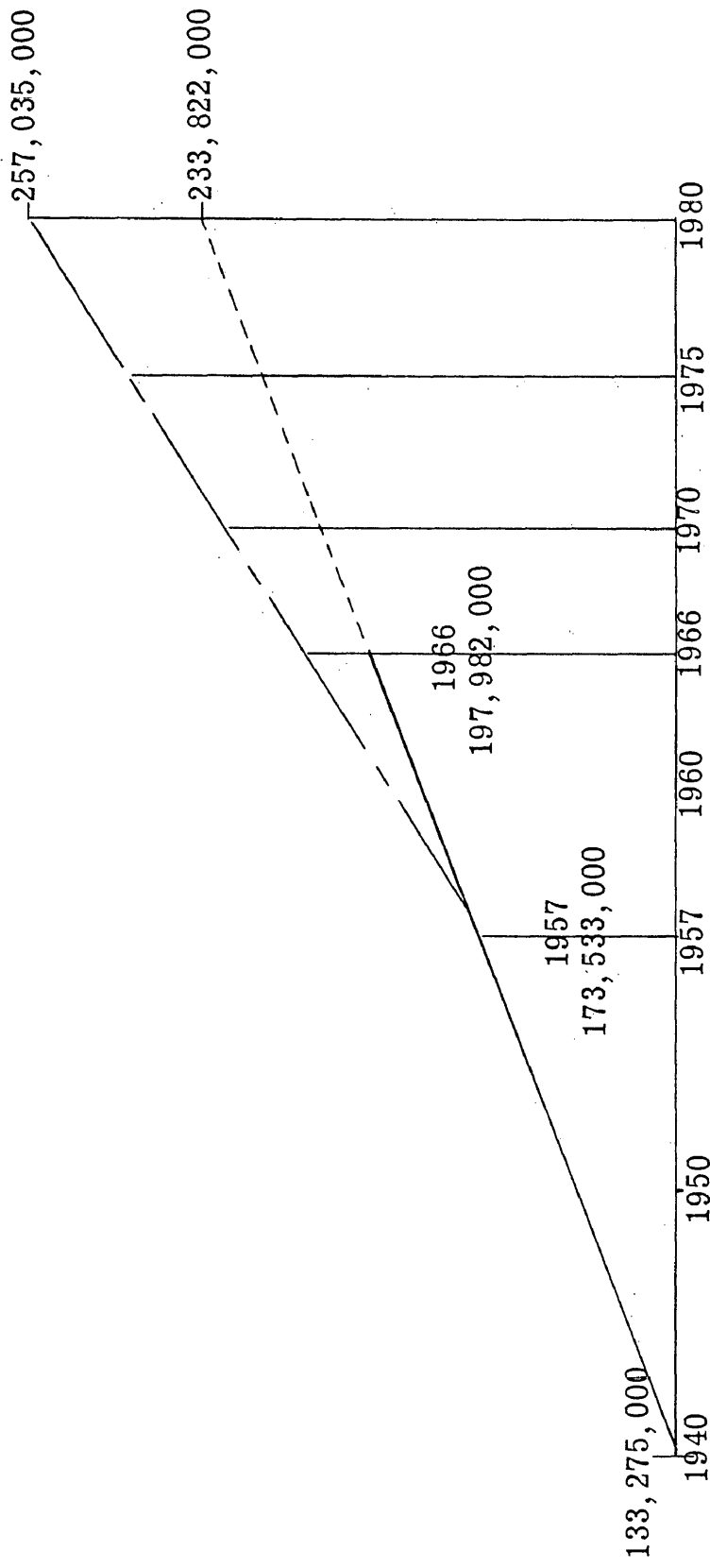
FIGURE 6

FAMILY SIZE:

NUMBER OF CHILDREN UNDER AGE 18

1950 and 1965

Source: Current Population Reports, Series P-20, Forthcoming Report and 1950 Census of Population, Volume IV, Part 2, Chapter A



Actual Increase: ———

Projection based upon 1957 Rate: - - - - -

Revised Projection based upon 1957-1966 Rate: . . . . .

FIGURE 7

UNITED STATES POPULATION GROWTH REVISED, 1966

Source: U.S. News and World Report, Vol. LXII, No. 16, April 17, 1967; U.S. Bureau of Census

zoning laws may tend to give way and collapse in areas that have felt the pressure of rapid population growth.

Walter Pitkins, Jr., foresees that fertility rates in the United States will continue to fluctuate as they have done throughout the twentieth century. The fertility rates of the 1960's, and perhaps lower ones, may be the rule during most of the 1970's.<sup>(1)</sup> In 1980, the head count may, therefore, show 227.7 million Americans; possibly 333.3 million Americans in the year 2000.

Once more, as in the 1930's and 1960's, we could stand eye to eye with fear. Pessimism could rule and baby production could slip so drastically that we would not hit the magical figure of 444.4 million until the year 2022, a full decade later than in the highest census projection.<sup>(2)</sup>

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(1) Pitkins, op. cit. p.478. (2) Ibid.

## CHAPTER IV

### ANALYSIS AND FORECASTS OF SCHOOL POPULATION TRENDS

The primary statistics which underlie projections of enrollments were population estimates in a given area. The fact that the total number of children born annually in the United States has been decreasing steadily since 1961 has attracted little public comment from professional educators. It may, however, have a major effect on school building construction, on school financing, on teacher education, on textbook publishing, and on districting in the late 1960's and the early 1970's.

Regardless of what happens in the 1970's to the birth rate, statistics about babies already born in the middle '60's deserved considerable study by educators. Already in 1968, a slight decrease was shown in total first-grade enrollment. By 1975, there will be a projected 750,000 fewer second-graders in the nation's classrooms than there were in 1965. <sup>(1)</sup>

Impact of the decreasing number of births varied widely in the nation's school districts. Schools in the paths of migrating south to north, or rural to urban families would continue to be crowded and short-staffed. So are those in suburban areas where population rises fast. The experience

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(1) Nebr. State Dept. release, Omaha World Herald, Sunday, Febr. 2, 1969, p.3B.

of a previous survey indicates the relative accuracy of projection of the school population when actual school memberships were used, as in Table VI.

The area of concern of this survey is primarily a suburban area which lies entirely within Sarpy County. Recent court action and subsequent legislation with respect to annexation by adjacent school districts has resolved the status of the area so that essential plans may proceed without interruption. Four public elementary schools presently serve kindergarten through grade six pupils residing within this sector.

Total school-age population has shown a pattern of increase which is expected to continue at least through 1970. This area is affected to a significant degree by personnel stationed at nearby military installations, a factor which contributes somewhat to the mobility of the population and accounts in part for the high proportion of young children evident. Examination of Figure 8 reveals that approximately 47 per cent of the total school age population residing in this area is enrolled in public elementary (K-6) schools. The kindergarten in itself comprises over 10 per cent of the total. This proportion is relatively high even for a developing suburban area having a young population.

In spite of the presence of two large parochial schools,

TABLE VI

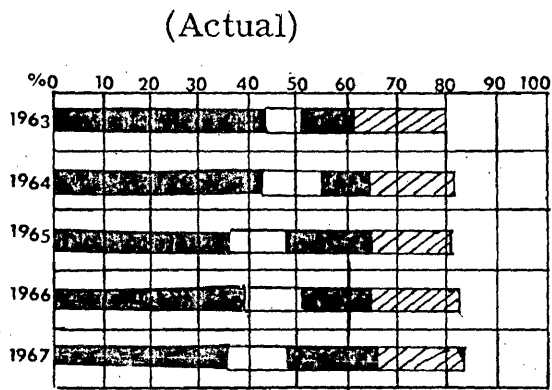
ACTUAL<sup>(a)</sup> AND PROJECTED MEMBERSHIPS

FOR INDIVIDUAL ELEMENTARY SCHOOL BUILDINGS FOR THAT  
PORTION OF THE OMAHA PUBLIC SCHOOL DISTRICT IN SARPY CO.

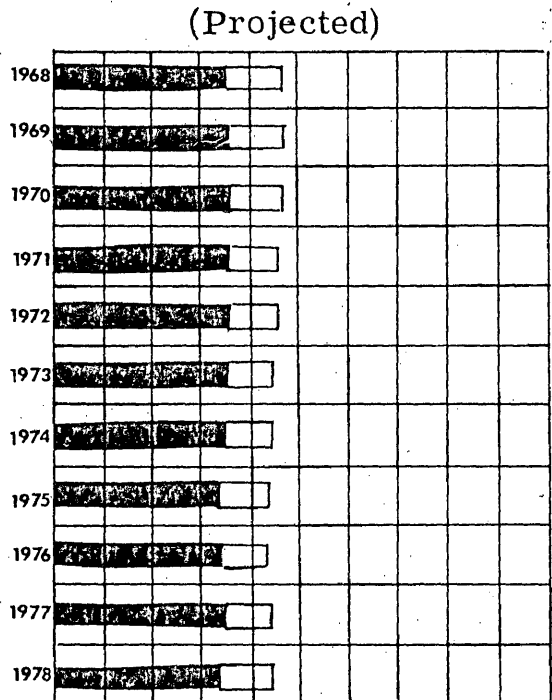
Year	Gilder	Giles	Pawnee	Pleasant Hill	Group Total
1963	283 <sup>(b)</sup>	406	---	414	1,103
1964	624	441	---	311	1,376
1965	680	406	---	300	1,386
1966	560	298	386	317	1,561
1967	577	308	418	347	1,650
PROJECTED					
1968	605	284	468	365	1,722
1969	640	301	508	388	1,837
1970	665	312	531	402	1,910
1971	686	325	551	393	1,955
1972	672	318	538	403	1,931
1973	665	308	529	395	1,897
1974	651	304	521	389	1,865
1975	643	300	513	385	1,841
1976	638	299	513	385	1,835
1977	650	304	517	389	1,860
1978	652	308	527	393	1,880

(a) Based upon October, 1968, figures

(b) Southern Hills (Gilder annex)



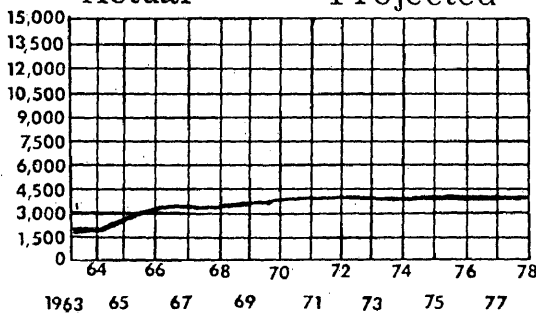
	PUBLIC SCHOOL			NON-PUBLIC	NOT IN SCHOOL	TOTAL CENSUS
	1-6	K	7-12	1-12		
1963	938	165	208	406	423	2140
%	43.8	7.7	9.7	19.0	19.8	
1964	1059	317	262	419	457	2154
%	42.0	12.6	10.4	16.8	18.2	
1965	1034	352	546	388	530	2850
%	36.3	12.3	19.2	13.6	18.6	
1966	1224	337	480	538	541	3120
%	39.2	10.8	15.4	17.3	17.3	
1967	1285	365	659	629	583	3521
%	36.4	10.3	18.8	17.9	16.6	



1968	1340	382				3667
%	36.5	10.4				
1969	1440	397				3850
%	37.4	10.3				
1970	1520	390				4050
%	37.5	9.6				
1971	1575	380				4220
%	37.3	9.0				
1972	1561	370				4220
%	37.0	8.8				
1973	1527	370				4220
%	36.2	8.8				
1974	1480	385				4200
%	35.2	9.1				
1975	1950	391				4200
%	34.5	9.3				
1976	1435	400				4200
%	34.2	9.5				
1977	1440	420				4200
%	34.3	10.0				
1978	1450	430				4200
%	34.5	10.2				

(-Based upon total census of combined attendance areas)

TOTAL CENSUS BY YEAR  
Actual      Projected



- key:
- 1-6 (Public School)
  - K (Public School)
  - 7-12 (Public School)
  - 1-12 (Non-Public School)

FIGURE 8

ACTUAL AND PROJECTED MEMBERSHIP PATTERNS FOR  
COMPOSITE GROUPS OF SCHOOLS

AS SHOWN ON TABLE VI



St. Bernadette Elementary School (grades 1-8) and Gross High School (grades 9-12), the proportion of the total school-age population enrolled in non-public schools remains comparatively low at 17 to 18 per cent. It is noted, however, that these parochial schools draw many pupils from outside the area under study.

The projected membership and census figures contained in Table VI and Figure 9 take into account estimates of continued new residential development. The construction of new residences is not presently confined to any large single development. In addition, large multi-family dwelling units have not materialized to any extent within this area. The composite information of this field study may be summed up as shown in Table VII.

Since membership prediction depends on where the children are living and what age they are, the computer in data processing may be a useful enrollment predictor. This may be done by dividing school districts into areas or sections. A quarter-mile grid could be used to locate students tying all of this data to the census material. Also, an accurate weekly census where the number of students in each area in the 5-20 age-group could be known might be utilized. In predicting enrollment or population, we must ask ourselves "how good is the base", since as the base keeps changing, so does the projection.

TABLE VII

SURVEY OF ACTUAL AND ANTICIPATED MEMBERSHIPS AND PUPIL CAPACITIES  
FOR INDIVIDUAL BUILDINGS

School	1967 Membership	Pupil Capacity	Projected Membership to 1973	Maximum Projected Membership to 1973	Excess Membership
Gilder	577	560(a)	686	686	126
Giles	308	120(a)	325	325	205
Pawnee	418	455	551	551	96
Pleasant Hill	347	300(a)	404	404	104
Totals	1,650	1,435	1,966	1,966	531

(a) Temporary classrooms used to house present excess membership.

## CHAPTER V

### SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

The purpose of this study was to review the school population trends in order to determine the classroom needs of the portion of the Omaha Public School District located in Sarpy County. The survey was designed to solve the problems in making a series of key decisions involving tax money and service to thousands of school children. Existing facilities in the area which was merged with the Omaha Public School District were inadequate. The sudden population growth made it necessary to first determine where the elementary children were and what classroom space was already available.

In the light of all statistics gathered for this study, (Table III and Table V) we can predict a resurgence in population based on the present birthrate which will affect the nation's schools in mid- or late 1970's, and the next older group in the early 1980's. The information as shown in Table IV and Figure 4 indicated the number of households were on the increase, consequently elementary school membership would rise. Table IV shows a decided growth in the actual and projected memberships for individual elementary school buildings for the area under study. There is also evidence of the need for additional space. Table VII indicates an excess

membership of 531 students in regard to the capacity of classroom space available as of 1969.

In 1969, and in the next ten years, the junior and senior highs will feel a real squeeze in space. However, the elementary school may have a breathing spell where buildings can be restored or replaced, and also regrouped.

In view of the findings, the hypothesis was supported. Within the next decade it will be necessary to construct twenty-six additional classrooms in the portion of the Omaha Public School District located in Sarpy County. Ten of these classrooms are included in the newly constructed Chandler View school which was opened in January, 1969.

## I. RECOMMENDATIONS

Gilder, Giles - A combined membership in excess of capacity of both the Gilder and Giles facilities was expected to continue, with a maximum of 1,056 pupils anticipated for both schools. Both schools have used temporary facilities to house excess membership. It does not appear that any appreciable relief could be obtained through adjustment of attendance area boundaries. While population density in this area should evidence an increase, this is expected to be confined primarily to the sector which is immediately adjacent to the Gilder building. The duration of such a

density increase is difficult to predict with accuracy, and if construction were undertaken to accommodate the maximum, a definite possibility of overbuilding would exist. Therefore, it is recommended an eight classroom addition be constructed as an extension of the existing Gilder building. It is also recommended that the Giles facility be maintained as a primary unit. Excess membership beyond this total permanent capacity of 960 in both facilities may be provided for by the use of temporary classrooms. Developments occurring in the southern sectors of the Pawnee, Gilder and Pleasant Hill attendance areas should be carefully assessed during the survey period beginning in 1973.

Pawnee - Annual projected memberships for Pawnee could be accommodated through use of portable facilities. However, this building is located very near to Harrison street which constitutes the present north attendance area boundary. To insure that this building is located near the center of population to be served for the foreseeable future, it is recommended that (a) boundaries be adjusted northward approximately to "Y" Street to aid in relieving excess membership at Ashland Park and Corrigan schools, and (b) an eight classroom addition be constructed as an extension of the Pawnee building. It does not appear that extensive residential development will occur in the southern sector of

the existing Pawnee area due to non-residential zoning and the proximity to Big Papillion Creek. Presently, a high percentage of the Pawnee membership originates in the Sun Valley addition which lies south of Harrison Street west of the school. Neither is extensive immediate development anticipated in the nearby portion of the present Ashland Park attendance area bounded by Harrison Street, 48th Street, "Y" Street, and the Ralston School District. With existing residential patterns, the boundary adjustment indicated, i.e.: assignment of all territory south of "Y" Street and west of 42nd Street to Pawnee, would add some 190 pupils to the membership. Of these, 110 would be removed from Ashland Park and 80 from Corrigan. The maximum membership thus occurring at Pawnee should approximate the total plant capacity of 735 pupils.

Pleasant Hill - Excess membership problems at Pleasant Hill were relieved by adjustment of boundaries in 1969 when the new Chandler View School was opened. These adjustments placed approximately 150 pupils who attended Pleasant Hill within the confines of the Chandler View attendance area. It was recommended that the Pleasant Hill facility be maintained as a K-6 unit for the duration of the survey period, (1968-1973).

## II. FUTURE PROBLEMS

It might be interesting to note that a new school building may be needed in the area of 42nd Street and Giles Road where the present Giles school is located. Much depends on the population growth in that part of the school district since the building is more than thirty years old, and, as Table VII shows, that the capacity of the building was 120 students. Even a different location within that area might help alleviate the problem.

Much school planning is being done on the assumption that birth totals would continue to rise indefinitely in the future and school boards have been hard-pressed for years to provide a desk for every child and a teacher for every classroom. Educators hope for a short respite to have a chance to catch up. Hopefully, there will be time with money for innovation, for more individual instruction, for enrichment, and certainly for more quality education. A school with an empty classroom may be able to turn it into an exciting science resource center, full-time kindergarten, a Head Start, a pre-school, or other worthwhile educational venture.

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