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A COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF SCHOOL REORGANIZATION
OF BEAR LAKE COUNTY IDAHO

by

Morris B. Athay

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

of

MASTER OF SCIENCE

in

Education

UTAH STATE AGRICULTURAL COLLEGE
Logan, Utah

1957

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CHAPTER I

Review of Literature

Education, always important, is today more essential than ever if we are to perpetuate and improve our democratic way of life. The recognition of the importance of education in our society has resulted in planning at the national, state and local levels.

Various studies have been made to determine the most desirable type of organization for schools in the United States. One survey made by the World Book Company in Tennessee has given some indication that the size of communities was probably related to educational achievement. The data does not prove any causal relation between educational outcome and community size, but it is possible that community size may contain many of the factors that contribute to these differences.¹

Clarence C. Martens, reporting in *The Elementary School Journal* on the educational achievements of eighth grade pupils in one-room rural and graded town schools, reports that in general the academic achievement of town pupils over rural pupils is higher with the town groups. The results of this study showed that pupils who had received all their elementary education in one teacher per grade town schools had higher achievement in relation to their mental ability than did a comparable group of pupils who

1. William Coleman, and others, "Community Size and Educational Outcome", The High School Journal, January 1955, pp. 138-141.

had received all their elementary education in one room rural schools.

. . . the American people made a wise decision early in their history not only when they allowed forty-eight state systems of education, but also when they retained within the community, close to parental observation, the actual direction and control of the education program.²

Griscom Morgan, in writing on the value of school reorganization, expresses the opinion that local communities have an inherent right to normal human living, or a natural right to autonomous action within the general pattern of national well-being. No matter how fine a plant, how adequate the curriculum, or how high the salaries, unless the school and the community live and work together the school will kill the community by failing to share and nurture the spirit which gave it life. Once family and communities were fundamental and sacred. The school should be an inherent part of the community, for the relationship of children to each other within the community is normally the heart of the community, it is the strongest force drawing parents into relation with each other. ³

The Peabody Survey conducted in the State of Idaho in 1945 revealed many things that could be done to improve the educational structure within the state. The survey group from George Peabody College for Teachers, Nashville, Tennessee, worked with P. T. A. groups, the I. E. A., service

2. Arthur B. Moehlman, School Administration. pp. 79-80.
3. Griscom Morgan, "The Values of School Reorganization", Phi Delta Kappan, October, 1954. pp. 11-14.

groups, organizations, parents and patrons from every section of the state to correct the weaknesses in the educational system as revealed by the survey. As a result of this work, the School Reorganization Act was passed by the 1947 State Legislature which organized a plan for the reorganization of schools within the state.

The electors of each school district of the state elect trustees who elect a county reorganization committee. This committee prepares, initiates and submits plans to the State Reorganization Committee. The State Reorganization Committee receives, reviews and approves the plans of the various districts and returns them to the people of the district for their rejection or approval.

Upon the recommendation of the State Committee for Reorganization, a county committee was elected for the purpose of reorganizing the schools of Bear Lake County, Idaho.

CHAPTER II

History of School Reorganization in
Bear Lake County

Bear Lake Valley was settled by members of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints in 1863, the first settlement being made at Paris. Later the other small towns of the valley were settled, with Paris being the headquarters of the Stake which included all of Bear Lake County, parts of Utah, Wyoming and extending to Soda Springs in Idaho.

With the coming of the railroad the shift of population in the valley was to the section bordering along this route. The rivalry between the "East" and "West" sides as they were called has increased through the years and probably reached its height in 1922 when the attempt was made to move the county seat from Paris to Montpelier.

As community life developed it centered principally around the school and church, which continued to foster the feeling of rivalry between the east and west sides of the valley. With the passage of the school reorganization act of 1947 whereby it was proposed to reorganize the public school system of the state of Idaho, it became necessary to overcome some of this feeling and tradition that had been developed during the history of the valley.

Bear Lake County is essentially an agricultural area. A varied pattern of agriculture exists. There are many intensive farm units as well as many large wheat and cattle ranches. Most farming units are occupied, giving little opportunity for the communities to absorb or hold their young people. A small number do remain to operate subdivisions of the farms, but generally the young people of the county must find employment elsewhere. Town life in the county is dependent upon the farms for support. Main-line tracks of the Union Pacific Railroad pass through the district and offer a limited amount of employment. Phosphate developments have recently become a part of the economic life of the county. Major changes in economic conditions of the county are not anticipated.

It is proposed to study the period immediately preceding the school reorganization act of 1947 and make comparison of the school problems of Bear Lake County from the years 1946 to 1955. During this period the county was reorganized after several attempts had failed. Wherever records are available, a comparison will be made of the following points, before and after reorganization:

1. History of Reorganization
2. Tax Structure
3. Average Daily Attendance and Course of Study
4. Organization of Attendance Units
5. Trustee Distribution and Length of School Term

6. Transportation

7. Teacher Certification

In presenting the history of school reorganization in Bear Lake County, the only source of information was the minutes of the county board appointed to effect the reorganization. In order not to leave any misunderstanding, it has been necessary to quote complete sections of these minutes to show the sectional feeling that had existed and was necessary to overcome before the county could be reorganized according to state law. A majority vote of the people of the county was necessary to bring this about.

The State of Idaho has a population of 500,000. There are forty-four counties, and in the years 1944-45, it was divided into 1,110 school districts. These districts were divided into the following groups:

937 common districts, 112 independent districts, 31 independent class A districts, 30 rural high school districts, several unorganized areas, and three special chartered districts.⁴

There were certain requirements which had been established by state law which determined the type of district organization.

For a common school district there must be fifteen people between the ages of 6-21 living within the area. A petition signed by at least fifteen qualified persons who may vote at school election, and be presented to the board of County Commissioners. The general policies, tax levies and the general plan of operating the schools are determined by the vote of the people in the annual school election.

4. Public Education in Idaho, A Report of the Idaho Education Survey Commission, Division of Surveys and Field Services, George Peabody College for Teachers, Nashville, Tennessee, 1945. pp. 7-76.

The tax levy is limited to 17 mills, which is divided into the following - ten mills for current operation, two mills for additional operation during an emergency, transportation. The County Superintendent to keep a record of all expenditures and countersign all warrants. The district must follow state course of study and must use state adopted textbooks.

Independent districts are formed from one or more previously organized districts on the petition of fifty voters when the area to be encompassed by the proposed independent district has an assessed valuation of \$150,000. The district is governed by six trustees who manage all problems within the district. The tax levy is limited to 22 mills.

Independent Class A districts are formed from any independent district employing twenty or more teachers and having an assessed valuation of \$2,500,000 on the petition of one hundred voters. It is governed by six trustees, employs a superintendent, provides its own course of study and selects its own textbooks. It may bond up to 10% of the assessed valuation, may levy up to 22 mills for current operation, elect its own treasurer, and is exempt from supervision of the County Superintendent.

A Rural High School District may be formed when a petition by the majority of the heads of families in each of two or more districts not having an incorporated town, when the area of the proposed district has a minimum assessed valuation of \$500,000 and when the radius from the center of the district is not over six miles, unless approved by the County Commissioners.

It is governed by a board of six trustees, two of whom are elected for three year terms, for high schools only. They may levy up to 20 mills for current operations and bond to 4% of the assessed valuation and may manage their own funds through their own treasurer.

Idaho has three special chartered districts, Boise, Emmett, and Lewiston, which enjoy all the privileges of independent Class A districts and are usually classed with them.

The law provided that any school district shall lapse when it does not maintain a school for at least four months, fails to keep up its organization of officers, or does not maintain an average daily attendance for six consecutive months of more than five pupils. Such lapsed district becomes unorganized territory under control of the County Commissioners with the County Superintendent in charge of any school property in the area. The Commissioners may levy a tax for tuition only of any pupils residing in the area to attend schools in an organized district, the district does not pay its share of taxes.⁵

With the large geographical area, sparse population, and the widely separated settlements such as prevail in many sections of Idaho, the county-district plan seemed better adapted than any other type. So with this in mind the following recommendations were made by the George Peabody Survey Group to the State of Idaho:

The County should be recognized as an intermediate unit in the state school system and its function should be clearly defined by law. Provisions should be made for two or more Counties to join in the formation of an intermediate unit. A county board of education of five members should be elected by the trustees of the school districts of the county for a term of three years. The powers and duties of the County Board of Education should be defined by law.

The law should be amended to provide for the appointment of the County Superintendent of Education by the County Board of Education. Minimum qualifications for the office should be determined by the County Board of Education.

A comprehensive school district law should be enacted to replace the present statutes covering the organization, consolidation, and dissolution of school districts. The law

5. Ibid. pp. 50-54.

should provide for improved district organization by extending the territory of presently organized independent Class A districts to form community school districts, and the formation of county administered districts. The law should provide for a vote of the people for the formation of a newly organized district, except that when no plans are submitted or when plans are rejected within a certain period of time all presently organized districts except independent Class A districts should be formed into a County administered district. Class C or County administered school districts should be permitted to organize unified community districts if they meet all other requirements for such districts. All school districts in the State should be classified into three classes: Class A, Class B and Class C. Junior College districts should be coterminous with Class A districts to prevent overlapping tax jurisdiction. They should have an assessed valuation of \$10,000,000 and a minimum of 800 students enrolled in the high school.

School districts of Class B should be governed by five trustees elected by the people of the district for three year terms. Class C districts should be governed by three trustees elected by the people for three year terms.

All territory in a county should be encompassed in either a Class A, Class B, or Class C District to prevent overlapping of tax jurisdictions.

As a result of the report of the Education Survey Commission and the desire for better schools in Idaho, the School Reorganization Act was passed in 1947 by the Idaho State Legislature, which act set up the machinery for reorganization in the various school districts of the state.

Under the direction of the State Board of Education, a committee for reorganization was appointed to take charge or reorganize the school districts in Bear Lake County.

The majority of the people live in towns and small cities. Strong community consciousness exists. In most cases church organizations conform to the civil community lines, which contributes to even stronger community solidarity. Two Latter-Day Saint Stakes are organized within the boundaries of the district. Each stake conforms to a natural social and geographic division. The residents of the area are predominantly of the middle class. Wealth is not highly concentrated but a major balance centers around the east side of the county where the railroad and most of the public utilities are concentrated. Similarities of various interests contribute to a high degree of homogeneity; such interests as vocational, religious affiliations and race origins are contributing factors. Educational attainments of the adult population are relatively high.⁶

As a result of the instruction contained in the School Reorganization Act passed in 1947, it became necessary for Bear Lake County to organize a committee for the reorganization of the schools within the county.

At this time there were twenty-two school districts within the county, consisting of the two independent districts, one rural high school district and nineteen common school districts.

According to law, the electors selected by the twenty school boards met at the County seat at Paris for the

6. E. A. Jacobson, J. N. Eastmond, Melvin Gruwell, Organizational Survey of Bear Lake County School District, 1956.

purpose of electing the county committee for the reorganization of the school districts within the county. This group met with the County Superintendent, Walter E. Clark, on June 7, 1947. Thirteen of the nineteen districts were represented at this meeting.

LaVell Ward was elected chairman of the meeting. Upon a motion by Darwin E. Haddock, the electors divided according to existing commissioner districts to nominate two or more candidates from each district which were followed by nominations from the body as a whole. The following men were nominated according to this procedure: Alfred W. Shepherd, Arlin Pugmire, Sidney Burgoyne, James Olsen, Milton Smith, Ernest Bartschi, Jesse Matthews, Vern Dunn and Warren SIRRINE. The voting was done by secret ballot and the following men were elected: Alfred W. Shepherd, Arlin Pugmire, Sidney Burgoyne, Warren SIRRINE, James Olsen and Milton Smith.

On June 14, 1947, the committee met and elected the following officers: Warren SIRRINE, Chairman, and James Olsen, Vice Chairman. Three proposed plans for reorganization were formulated by the committee. They were:

1. The organization of a 'B' district with Fielding High School at Paris as the center and comprising the territory now in the Rural High School District.
2. The organization of an 'A' district with the Montpelier High School as the center and to include the rest of the county.

3. The organization of the entire county into one Class A district.⁷

After much discussion and many meetings throughout the county, it was decided by the unanimous vote of the committee to submit the following proposal to the State Committee for their approval:

"Proposal For School District Reorganization Submitted to the State Committee for the Reorganization of School Districts in Accordance with the Provisions of Chapter III, Session Laws of 1947".

To the State Committee for the Reorganization of School Districts:

In accordance with the provisions of Chapter III, Session Laws, 1947, the county committee of Bear Lake County hereby submit to the State Committee for approval the following proposals adopted by said County Board, December 8, 1947.

Proposal No. 1

A proposal for the formation of a new school district comprising the entire area of Bear Lake County, State of Idaho.

Proposal No. 2

A proposal for the disposition of all property of all the districts involved as follows:

All property shall be invested in the new district but proceeds from the sale of bonded property shall apply on the payment of the bonded indebtedness and shall be added to the general fund of the new district. Furthermore, the County Committee recommends that where ever possible, presently constructed buildings that are closed or may be closed shall be sold to the community where they are located for the recreation centers to be owned and used by the entire community. If building is removed or use as Community Center is discontinued, the land shall revert to the new district.

7. Minutes of the County Committee for School Re-organization of Bear Lake County, Idaho, June 14, 1947.

Proposal No. 3

A proposal for the equitable adjustment of all debts and liabilities of the district concerned as follows:

Each district as now constructed shall retain and pay its bonded and warrant indebtedness.

Proposal No. 4

Proposal for the establishment of elementary attendance units as follows:

Three at Montpelier including grades 1 to 8 with approximate enrollment of 530.

One at Paris including grades 1 to 8 with approximate enrollment of 240.

One at Georgetown including grades 1 to 8 with approximate enrollment of 112.

One at St. Charles including grades 1 to 8 with approximate enrollment of 100.

One at Dingle including grades 1 to 8 with approximate enrollment of 92.

One at Geneva including grades 1 to 8 with approximate enrollment of 46.

One at Ovid including grades 1 to 6 with approximate enrollment of 88.

And proposing the establishment of high school attendance units as follows:

One at Montpelier including grades 9 to 12 with approximate enrollment of 320.

One at Paris including grades 9 to 12 with approximate enrollment of 200.

The new administrative center of this new district shall be at _____.

Proposal No. 5

A proposal for the establishment of transportation routes as follows:

That elementary students attending but residing outside of Georgetown, St. Charles, Dingle,

Geneva and Ovid be transported in busses independently of busses transporting high school students.

Proposal No. 6

A proposal for the establishment of school districts for the proposed new district is as follows:

Trustee District Number I to include the present districts of Fish Haven, #1; St. Charles, #2; Dingle, #8; Alton, #25; Pegram, #5; Raymond, #16; Geneva, #20.

Trustee District Number II to include the present districts of Bloomington, #3; Paris Independent District, #2; Lanark, #21.

Trustee District Number III to include Bern, #12; and that part of Montpelier, Independent District 1A, east of Eighth Street; South Montpelier, #17; and Wardboro, #9.

Trustee District Number IV to include Ovid, #6; Liberty, #7; Sharon, #24; Nounan, #14; Eight Mile, #23; Georgetown, #24; and Bennington, #11.⁸

The Reorganization Committee called a meeting for December 29, 1947, to be held in the City Hall at Montpelier, Idaho, for the purpose of reviewing and discussing the reorganization plan. A meeting of the committee was held prior to the public hearing. The minutes of the committee meeting follow:

Minutes of meeting of the Bear Lake County Committee on School Reorganization, held December 29, 1947, at Montpelier City Hall, Montpelier, Idaho. Present were Warren Serrine, James Olsen, Alfred W. Shepherd, Sidney E. Burgoyne, Arlin Pugmire and the Secretary. Absent, G. Milton Smith.

The chairman stated that he had called the meeting to consider changing Proposal No. 4, which established elementary school units. He reported that State Chairman, Andrew Johnson,

8. Ibid.

had stated in a public meeting, December 26, 1947, that we cannot determine policies of the trustees elected before any new district is created.⁹

The term of the first committee for school reorganization having expired, a meeting was called for the election of a new committee. A special meeting was called by the County Superintendent, Amos B. Hulme, for July 15, 1949. According to the minutes of this meeting, the following men were elected to the county board: Paul J. Haddock, Darwin E. Haddock, J. Rodney Ream, Eldon Cook, Frank Hayes, Jesse Matthews, Cyril Budge.

It was decided that the committee should try to determine the sentiment of the people of the county by holding public hearings to guide them in their efforts to effect a reorganization plan for the county. Several such meetings were held, the committee formulated a plan based upon the opinions discussed by the various groups throughout the county. The plan was to divide the county into two Class A districts.

The next meeting called on October 6, 1950, was for the purpose of trying to work out some feasible plan for the division of the wealth of the county so that each child would receive a proportionate share of the educational opportunity without crippling any district to a point where it could not operate its school or schools. It was found by the committee that it was impossible to divide the county so that an equal adjustment of wealth could be

9. Ibid.

maintained in each proposed district. After much study and deliberation by the committee it was again proposed that the County Unit plan be adopted by the committee. This was done by a vote of five for the plan and two against it.

This plan was presented to the voters of the county and was defeated by a vote of 457 against school reorganization and 267 in favor of reorganization.

The committee again met to discuss school reorganization and the two district plan was again considered. The plan formulated was to divide the county into two Class A districts, and that the suggestion of Mr. Denman of the State Department of Education be followed which would give approximately \$5,000 to each pupil on the west side of the county and \$5,200 to each pupil on the east side of the county. This plan was accepted by the committee and was to be presented to the people of the county for their acceptance or rejection.

It was the wish of the committee that all people of the county have an opportunity to hear and discuss the proposed plan; therefore, public meetings were held in Dingle, Montpelier, Paris and Georgetown. After the meetings were held, the proposed plan was submitted to the voters of the county with the following results:

	<u>For 2 Unit Plan</u>	<u>Against 2 Unit Plan</u>	<u>For County Unit</u>
Dingle	0	24	24
Paris	44	1 (3 did not vote)	0
Montpelier	0	46	38
Georgetown	0	97	96

After the public hearing on the proposed plan, the county committee resigned.

On May 7, 1952, the trustees of all districts of Bear Lake County met to select four members from each County Commissioner District to elect a committee for school reorganization.

The following members were selected: Arlin Pugmire, Alfred B. Hart, Loraine Wallentine, Warren Passey, Cecil Quayle, Wesley Baker, Jack Crane, Z. George Nelson, Walter E. Clark, William Gaskins, James Olsen, Lester Skinner, Lewis Munk and Eldon Cook were nominated from the floor. From this group the State Committee on School Reorganization selected the following as the County Board of Education: Arlin Pugmire, Warren Passey, Wesley Baker, Z. George Nelson, William Gaskins, James Olsen, Eldon W. Cook.

The new County Board of Education proposed that an election be held on October 21, 1952, and that the following plan be submitted to the voters of the County:

Shall all school districts of Bear Lake County be reorganized into one Class A school district, under the following plan?

1. That all school districts of Bear Lake County be reorganized into one Class A district

to be known as Class A School District Number Thirty-three, Bear Lake, Idaho; that the legal description of said Class A School District shall be coterminous with the present county boundary lines of Bear Lake County, Idaho. The committee does not recommend as a part of this proposal the closure of any of the schools now operating or which operated during the 1951-1953 school term.

2. That debt settlement liabilities and disposition of property shall be as follows:

(a). All property now belonging to the several districts at the time of reorganization shall become the property of the proposed newly organized district. If the election shows a majority of the votes cast in favor of reorganization of school districts, no property shall be disposed of by any presently organized district between the days of election and the time the County Commissioners declare the school districts to be reorganized into one Class A School District. In so far as it is within the authority of the Committee to make recommendations it is hereby recommended by the Committee on School Reorganization that wherein schools are now closed or may be closed in the future, that buildings be sold or offered for sale to the community for recreational purposes by due process of law.

(b). All unpaid claims and warrant indebtedness shall be assumed and paid by each district as at present organized and that any reserve funds of such organized district or districts shall be used for the payment of such unpaid claims and warrant indebtedness.

(c). That all bonded indebtedness consisting of the following and totaling \$258,064.69 shall be assumed and paid by the proposed newly organized district, if created by this election: Montpelier Independent 1A, \$175,370.00, which represents the unpaid balance on the High School, the new gymnasium and heating plant; Bern District, No. 13, \$2,500.00,

unpaid balance on a school bus; Geneva District, No. 20, \$7,000.00 recently bonded for new school bus and for school building repairs; Rural High School No. 1, (Paris), \$43,482.00 which represents unpaid balance on remodeling of gymnasium and agricultural shop.

3. That the proposed newly organized district be divided into the following Trustee Districts:

Trustee District No. 1: That part of Bear Lake County now comprising school district No. 1 (Fish Haven), school district No. 2 (St. Charles), school district No. 3 (Bloomington), and that part of Independent School District No. 2 (Paris), south of the Center Street in the city of Paris and extending in a straight line south, west and east district boundary lines.

Trustee District No. 2: That part of Independent School District No. 2 (Paris) north of the Center Street in the city of Paris and extending to north, west and east district boundary lines, together with school district No. 6 (Ovid), school district No. 7 (Liberty), school district No. 21 (Lanark), and school district No. 24 (Sharon).

Trustee District No. 3: That part of Independent School District No. 1A (Montpelier) west of the center of Eighth Street in the city of Montpelier, and extending to district boundary lines north and south of city limits.

Trustee District No. 4: That part of Independent School District No. 1A (Montpelier) east of the center of Eighth Street in the city of Montpelier, and extending to district No. 17 (South Montpelier), school district No. 8 (Dingle), school district No. 25 (Alton), school district No. 16 (Raymond), and school district No. 20 (Geneva).

Trustee District No. 5: That Part of Independent School District No. 1A (Montpelier) east of the center of Eighth Street and north of the center of Washington Street in the city of Montpelier and extending to district boundary

lines east and north of city limits together with school district No. 13 (Bern), school district No. 14 (Nounan), school district No. 11 (Bennington), and school district No. 12 (Georgetown).

4. That schools be allowed to operate for the 1952-53 school term as presently planned and that they be administered by present district Boards of Education, that the new Board of Education provided for in the Reorganization of School Districts shall assume full responsibility for the planning and operation of all schools at the close of the 1952-53 school term; that such board shall be elected as provided by law but shall not assume responsibility for the operation of the schools until the close of schools in the Spring of 1953.¹⁰

The voters of the county approved the single unit plan, reorganizing all school districts of the county into one Class A school district.

10. Ibid.

CHAPTER III

Tax Structure of Bear Lake County Schools 1946-1955

With the reorganization of schools in Bear Lake County from a county with twenty-two districts to a single district covering the entire county came the problem of financing the new district. With the equalizing of school taxes over the new district some old districts or communities found that the new school tax would be much higher than that paid before while others found that a reduction would be possible.

Under the old system of twenty-two school districts, there was a levy ranging from 2 mills in school district No. 23 to one of 48 mills in Independent School District No. 2 where there was an overlapping of the Independent and the Rural High School districts. In this district the levy was 25 mills for the Independent District and 23 mills for the Rural High School District. After reorganization, the levy was changed to 32 mills for the entire district. This is as high as it is possible to levy under the present Idaho state law.

The following tables show the valuation and levy for the different school districts of Bear Lake County for the years 1946-1955.

Table 1. Valuation of School Districts, Bear Lake County, 1946-1955.¹¹

Year	Valuation Before Reorganization (1946-1952)	Valuation After Reorganization (1953-1955)
1946	\$ 9,398,440.99	
1947	9,681,067.83	
1948	9,800,414.65	
1949	10,073,842.01	
1950	10,013,509.63	
1951	10,334,731.06	
1952	10,745,798.75	
1953		\$8,704,817.63
1954		8,660,688.74
1955		8,697,267.54

The valuation of property in Bear Lake County has shown an increase from the years of 1946 to 1952, with an increase each year. In 1952 the Utah Power and Light Company and the Union Pacific Railroad met with the Idaho State Tax Commission and received a reduction in the valuation of their property in Bear Lake County which lowered the total valuation for the County from \$10,745,798.75 to \$8,704,817.63. Due to this lowering of valuation it was necessary to raise the levy for schools to \$3.20 per \$100 of valuation in order to carry on the school program. With this increase in the levy

¹¹ Annual Financial Report of Bear Lake County, Idaho
For the years 1946-1955.

the schools received more money than with the higher valuation and the lower levy.

Table 2. Tax Levy per \$100 of School Districts, Bear Lake County, 1946-1955.¹²

Year	Tax Levy per \$100
1946	\$.25 - \$2.55
1947	.45 - 2.85
1948	.40 - 2.95
1949	.40 - 3.25
1950	.20 - 3.25
1951	.20 - 3.70
1952	.10 - 3.55
1953	3.20
1954	3.20
1955	3.20

Bear Lake County is now levying all that is possible under the present laws of the State of Idaho.

The tax for school purposes in Bear Lake County has steadily increased for the years 1946-1955. The school tax levy in Bear Lake County is as high as the state law will permit. Unless the property valuation of the county increases, it will be necessary to keep school expenditures within this limit.

^{12.} Ibid.

There is considerable pressure from the local Farm Bureau groups to cut the tax levy for schools. If this is done, school services will have to be cut at the same time. When the overall tax load for the county is examined, the larger part of the school taxes is paid by the utility groups and urban centers rather than by the agricultural sections of the county.

With the reorganization of the school districts of the county, the cost of maintaining the schools has been equalized throughout the county. The valuation has been equalized so that each student has the same amount of valuation to support his education. This has helped to bring the same educational opportunity to all students of the county.

Table 3. Bonded Indebtedness of the School Districts of Bear Lake County, 1946-1955.¹³

1946 --- \$138,000.00	1951 --- \$255,132.00
1947 --- 153,656.00	1952 --- 240,594.00
1948 --- 135,368.00	1953 --- 219,760.00
1949 --- 102,388.00	1954 --- 200,224.00
1950 --- 243,368.00	1955 --- 173,132.20

The bonded indebtedness of the county has been helped by the reorganization of the school system. Some districts of the county, particularly Independent District No. 1A, had reached the limit to which it could bond. By combining all

13. Ibid.

districts into one, the county can now bond for \$1,305,000 with the present bonded indebtedness of \$173,132, which leaves a bonding margin of \$1,131,868 for the district.

CHAPTER IV

Average Daily Enrollment and Course of Study
for Bear Lake County Schools 1946-1955

During the period of this study the enrollment has increased approximately 14% during the ten year period of 1946 to 1955. Montpelier High School with an increase of 30% has shown the largest gain. This gain is partly due to the closing of the Georgetown High School and the addition of small attendance units from the east side of the county. Where the Montpelier High School has shown a steady increase in enrollment, with the exception of the years 1949 and 1950, the other High School attendance unit in the county has shown a more varied enrollment pattern. The enrollment for Fielding High School ranged from a high of 202 in 1949 to a low of 159 in 1954, with an average enrollment of 185, while the Montpelier High School had an average attendance of 301.

The average daily attendance in all county schools has shown a steady increase, except for the years of 1947 and 1948, when a decrease was shown. The increase for the county during the ten year period is 244 students or a 14% increase in enrollment.

The following table shows the average daily attendance, number of teachers employed, and the average teacher load for the years 1946-1955.

Table 4. Average Daily Attendance, Teachers Employed and Teacher Load for Bear Lake County.

Year	A. D. A.	Teachers Employed	Pupil-Teacher Ratio
1945-46	1451.21	77	18.8
1946-47	1619.50	78	21.5
1947-48	1580.35	81	19.5
1948-49	1601.66	78	20.5
1949-50	1634.17	81	20.1
1950-51	1608.56	77	21.8
1951-52	1609.44	73	22.03
1952-53	1622.87	76	21.3
1953-54	1687.07	75	22.5
1954-55	1693.70	75	22.5

The district, in 1955, had 244.5 more students in average daily attendance than in 1946, with two less teachers to handle the increase in enrollment.¹⁴

The curriculum of the elementary schools is set by the State Board of Education and is the same for all the districts in the county. In the smaller schools where a teacher has more than one grade to the room, there is a shortening of class periods or the teaching of certain classes on alternate years.

During the years of 1946 to 1955 there were a number of schools which ran for a period of eight months instead

14. Idaho State A. D. A. Report for 1946-1955.

of nine. After school reorganization all schools were operated on a nine month school term.

The curriculum of the two high school units show a wide variation of subjects taught. The Montpelier High School offers a more varied choice of subjects in the area of mathematics, especially in the more advanced classes, as well as refresher arithmetic. In the field of science a more consistent course of study is offered. In the field of foreign languages none is offered in Fielding High School while Spanish is taught in the Montpelier High School. During the years 1946-1955 the following courses in mathematics were offered in the two High Schools:

Montpelier High School

Algebra

Algebra II

Geometry

Solid Geometry

Trigonometry

Advanced Mathematics

High School Arithmetic

General Mathematics

Fielding High School

Algebra

Geometry

Advanced Mathematics

General Mathematics

Some of the above subjects were taught only on alternate years.

The following subjects were taught in Montpelier High School but not in Fielding High School during the ten year period:

Spanish I
Spanish II
Orientation - Guidance
Piano
Driver Training
Library

The average teacher load in the two high schools of the county was as follows for the years 1946-1955: Montpelier High School, nineteen students per teacher; Fielding High School, 17.5 students per teacher.¹⁵ The course of study offered in the county has not been changed to any extent in the period of this study. No great change could be expected because the course of study was set by law and the need of change has not been made by the communities the schools serve.

15. Daily Course of Study for Montpelier and Fielding High Schools, 1946-1955.

CHAPTER V

Organization of Attendance Units

The school population of Bear Lake County has shown some increase during the past ten years. This is due, primarily, to the increased birth rate of the early forties rather than an influx of population. There is some indication of new industrial developments, particularly in the development of the phosphate industry that might lead to an increase in the school population in the future.

The school population is scattered in thirteen elementary units and two secondary units.

During this period there were students from the community of Raymond attending school in Cokeville, Wyoming, and students from Eight-Mile attending school at Soda Springs, Idaho.

The grade enrollment from grades one to nine show no steady indication of increase while grades from ten to twelve show the influence of discontinuance in school.

Due to the type of attendance units maintained in Bear Lake County, the cost per pupil varies considerably among the attendance units of the county. The following table shows the enrollment by attendance units for the period 1949-1955.

Table 5. Enrollment by Attendance Units, 1949-1955¹⁶

Attendance Unit	1949	1950	1951	1952	1953	1954	1955
Fish Haven	30	26	23	22	16	12	15
St. Charles	72	88	72	81	86	88	86
Bloomington	45	44	44	39	38	32	36
Emerson	196	241	249	249	235	249	242
Ovid	29	32	25	24	30	27	20
Bern	18	19	14	17	16	10	10
Georgetown	78	85	87	98	107	141	130
Lincoln	195	214	219	211	233	*	*
Central	122	111	113	117	133		
Dingle	47	52	53	49	55	56	54
Geneva	51	46	45	47	47	42	36
Pegram	14	11	10	10	11	11	7
Bennington	<u>30</u>	<u>24</u>	<u>25</u>	<u>24</u>	<u>23</u>	<u>13</u>	<u>18</u>
Total Elementary	927	993	979	988	1030		
Montpelier H. S.	278	279	313	316	301	311	352
Fielding H. S.	<u>201</u>	<u>202</u>	<u>201</u>	<u>179</u>	<u>176</u>	<u>181</u>	<u>160</u>
Total High School	479	411	514	495	477	492	512
GRAND TOTAL	1406	1404	1493	1483	1507		

* Data for Lincoln and Central Schools incomplete for the years 1954 and 1955

16. E. A. Jacobson, Jefferson N. Eastmond, Melvin Gruwell, Organizational Survey of Bear Lake County School District, February 1957.
p. 30.

To provide an equalized educational opportunity in larger and smaller schools involves a considerably larger expenditure of money per pupil for operation of the smaller schools. It has been proven in American education that the very small schools are expensive to operate. This appears to have been the case in Bear Lake County.

Table 6. Size and Cost of Attendance Units, 1954-1955¹⁷

Attendance Unit	Rank	Enrollment	Cost Per Pupil A.D.A.
Pegram	1	11	\$724.68
Bern	2	11	391.20
Bennington	3	13	382.42
Ovid	4	8	371.24
Dingle	5	53	320.39
Fish Haven	6	16	287.72
Bloomington	7	41	247.54
Geneva	8	36	245.47
St. Charles	9	83	214.87
Georgetown	10	130	202.92
Emerson	11	261	180.75
Central	12	409	147.74
Lincoln	13	193	132.53
Montpelier H. S.	1	344	302.17
Fielding H. S.	2	170	387.70

17. Ibid. p. 37.

The problem in Bear Lake County at the time of this study is to consolidate the smaller units with the larger ones and to provide a suitable Junior High School plan for the county. The following table shows the enrollment, grades and number of teachers in each unit at the end of the ten year period, 1955.

Table 7. Distribution of Grades, Pupils and Teachers under Present Plan of Organization¹⁸

School	Grades	Enrollment	Teachers	Pupils Per Teacher
Fish Haven	1-4	16	1	16
St. Charles	1-8	83	4	20.7
Bloomington	1-6	41	2	20.5
Emerson	1-8	261	9	29
Ovid	1-6	8	1	8
Georgetown	1-8	130	5	26
Dingle	1-8	53	3	17.6
Bern	1-6	11	1	11
Geneva	1-8	36	2	18
Pegram	1-4	11	1	11
Bennington *				
Lincoln	1-6	193	7	27.5
Central	1-8	409	12	34
Montpelier H. S.	9-12	344	16	21.5
Fielding H. S.	9-12	170	10	17

* Bennington has 13 students. Distribution not shown.

18. Ibid. p. 50.

CHAPTER VI

Trustee Distribution

Trustee distribution in Bear Lake County during the years 1946-1952 has been one of gradually decreasing the number for the county by consolidating some of the smaller districts. From 1946 to 1953 there were nineteen common districts with a board of three trustees, with one trustee serving as clerk and treasurer for each such common district.

There were two independent districts with a board of six trustees each and one member served as clerk and treasurer. There was also one Rural High School board of six trustees, one serving as clerk with an independent treasurer. This made a total of seventy-five trustees and one independent treasurer controlling the twenty-two school districts in the county.

With the reorganization of the county into a Class A district, the county was divided into five trustee districts. These were so arranged that the voting power was taken away from the two major centers of population, thereby making it possible for the smaller centers to control the election of trustees. Each trustee district voted only for the trustee representing that district. This made a board of five trustees to manage the reorganized district. This board employed a district superintendent, a clerk of the board and the other office personnel.

Prior to reorganization the county had a county superintendent of schools who managed all common districts. The bills were made out by the County Superintendent and presented to the County Auditor who made out all warrants. The independent districts handled their own warrants as did the Rural High School District.

Prior to 1953, and reorganization, it was costing \$2,225.00 per year to pay for the clerks of the different boards of trustees in the twenty-two school districts, plus \$4000 salary for the County Superintendent. Since school reorganization, the expense for doing the same work is costing the county more than twice as much as before. The county officers, including the Auditor, have received a raise in salary and are now doing less work than before reorganization. To summarize the above account, it was costing the county \$4,425 for administration of schools before reorganization and \$13,600 after school reorganization.

Since reorganization, some changes in administrative policy have been put into effect. All purchases are made by the central office instead of each school purchasing its own supplies. A central film strip library, some audio visual aid equipment has been provided for county use. With the formation of the county into a Class A district it is no longer mandatory that 4% of the budget, as in common school districts, be spent for library supplies. As a result the fund available for library supplies has now

been reduced. Transportation for the district is now supervised by the central office.

During the years 1946-1953, in Bear Lake County the school term varied from a nine-month term for fifteen of the districts to an eight-month term for seven of the districts. After school reorganization, a standard term of nine months was established. The short term was held in the small schools of the county where only a small percentage of the students attended.

The cost per student has increased in the county for the ten year period of 1946-1955. The total cost for each year from funds furnished by the district for the ten year period is as follows:

1946	---	\$104.13	per student
1947	---	113.08	" "
1948	---	110.96	" "
1949	---	123.28	" "
1950	---	121.92	" "
1951	---	142.07	" "
1952	---	134.33	" "
1953	---	171.63	" "
1954	---	170.19	" "
1955	---	164.39	" "

This increase in cost is due to many factors, such as the increase in cost of school materials and plant operation, increase in teacher salaries and the increase in administrative costs. This cost would have been greater if an equal number of teachers had not taken care of the 242 increase in average daily attendance over the ten year period.

CHAPTER VII

School District Transportation

The transportation problem of the Bear Lake school district is a large one due to the state law which says anyone living more than one and one-half miles from school shall be furnished transportation. The population is scattered in small towns and on farms throughout the county; some of the county roads are oiled while others are improved graveled type of construction. Maintenance of county roads is hampered in the winter by heavy snows.

Of the 1769 students enrolled in the schools of Bear Lake County, an average of 635 are transported to and from school each day. This is 35.9% of the student enrollment.

Transportation is supplied through fifteen district owned busses, supplemented by nine private contracts with individuals for very small groups hauling students to school and to or from highway connections with regular busses. In addition to this hauling, there are regular trips during each week for activity groups. Rural students are transported into the high school centers for special events, games, dances, parties, plays, etc. In addition busses haul students to district meets of various kinds, such as PFA, FHA, athletic games and meets, music clinics and festivals, tournaments, etc.

An itemized account of the number of students hauled on the various bus routes is as follows:

To the highway to Fish Haven, 2; to the highway at St. Charles, 17; Fish Haven to St. Charles, 4; Fish Haven to Paris, 25; St. Charles to Paris, 29; to highway at Bloomington, 2; Bloomington to Paris, 20; Liberty to Paris, 35; Sharon to Paris, 15; Lanark to Paris, 27; Paris highway to Paris, 31; Ovid and highway to Paris, 56; Wardboro to Bennington, 2; South Montpelier to Montpelier, 10; South Montpelier to Bennington, 4; Wardboro to Montpelier, 6; Dingle to Montpelier, 21; Nounan to Georgetown, 23; highway to Georgetown to Montpelier, 39; Bennington to Montpelier, 22; Montpelier to Georgetown, 2; highway to Montpelier, 12; Bennington to Georgetown, 8; Nounan to Montpelier, 17; Alton to Montpelier, 10; Pegram to Montpelier, 8; Montpelier to Bennington, 57; Bern to Montpelier, 11; from farms to Pegram, 7; Raymond to Cokeville, 24; Eight-Mile to Soda Springs, 6; private transportation to Georgetown, 4; private transportation from Camp Lifton to St. Charles, 1; private transportation to Paris highway, 1; private transportation to Dingle, 3; private transportation to Montpelier, 7. A total daily transportation of 680.1 miles.

The original investment for the fifteen district owned busses at the present time amounts to \$79,526.70. For the year 1955-1956, the cost of the transportation program in the district included the following items:

Gas and oil	\$ 5,178.78
Repairs and minor replacements . .	4,575.05
Salary of drivers	18,828.96
Insurance	846.40
Other miscellaneous	261.88
Contract transportation	1,314.39
One new bus purchased	6,009.42

TOTAL	<u>\$37,014.88</u>
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The cost per pupil transported in the county for the year was \$58.29.

The problem of transportation has increased in Bear Lake County since the school districts were reorganized. This has been caused by the burning of the Washington school at Montpelier. The district now runs two bus trips daily - one from each high school for students participating in athletics. The children from the first and second grades from Emerson School at Paris and from the first and second grades at Montpelier are taken home at 2:30 p. m. each afternoon. There are more uses of busses for extra-curricular activities than was formerly permitted in the county. The bus routes have been enlarged and more students are now being transported to and from school.

Table 8. An Itemized Account of Transportation¹⁹

School	No. Enrolled	No. Transported	% Transported
Fish Haven	10	2	20
St. Charles	63	24	38
Bloomington	53	2	3.7
Emerson	252	127	50.3
Fielding H. S.	168	112	66.6
Ovid	10	none	
Bern	12	none	
Georgetown	120	54	45
Washington (Montpelier to Bennington)	61	61	100
Lincoln	187	6	3.2
Central	340	46	13.5
Montpelier H. S.	354	135	38.1
Dingle	45	3	6.6
Geneva	35	26	74.2
Pegram	12	7	58.3
Raymond to Cokeville	24	24	100
Eight-Mile to Soda Springs	6	6	100

19. Annual Transportation Report of Class A District 33, 1956.

CHAPTER VIII

Teacher Certification

The teachers of Bear Lake County may be roughly divided into two classes. There is one group who is making teaching a profession and another that is teaching for a short period of time to supplement the family income. These teachers are the wives of farmers or men who have private businesses in the county. At one time it was the policy of most of the school boards of the county, then functioning, not to hire married women as teachers, but with the shortage of teachers it became necessary to hire married women to take care of the shortage.

Until September, 1955, in the State of Idaho, it was possible to have the following types of certificates:

- Life Certificates
- Emergency Permits
- Pre-Professional Certificates
- Provisional Certificates
- Standard Elementary Certificates
- Standard Secondary Certificates

Because of the ease in obtaining a teacher's certificate in the State of Idaho, training among the teachers varied greatly. With the reorganization of Bear Lake County schools and the formation of a county teachers' association and the adoption of a salary schedule based on training and experience, there has been some advancement of the teachers in preparing for certification. At the present time we have the following classes of teachers, based on years of training, in Bear Lake County.

Table 9. Certification of Teachers

Years of Training	Number of Teachers	Per cent of Teachers
2 years or less	19	24%
3 years	10	12%
4 years	39	50%
5 years	11	14.1%

The desire to get into the higher brackets of the salary schedule has caused some of the teachers to go to school. It is estimated that approximately half of the teachers of the county would not leave to accept employment outside of the county because of reasons not pertaining to the profession. These people are obligated in the county because of property holdings, businesses, farms and employment of spouse.

With the additional training and the higher levels of certification being met has brought a steady increase in salary for the teachers of the county. While the salary schedule for Bear Lake County is lower than most states surrounding Idaho, the schedule in the county is near the average for the state.

The following table is the salary schedule adopted by the Bear Lake County Teachers' Association in comparison to the approved schedule adopted by the Idaho Education Association for the State:

Table 10.

IEA Teacher Welfare Committee

1955 Recommendation for a "Recommended Salary Schedule"

For Idaho Schools

Adopted by the Delegate Assembly without amendment.

Years Service	2 years 6 steps	3 years 9 steps	Bachelor's Degree 15 steps	30 Hrs. of Grad. Credit or Master's Degree
1	\$2700	\$3000	\$3600	\$4000
2	2850	3150	3750	4150
3	3000	3300	3900	4300
4	3150	3450	4050	4450
5	3300	3600	4200	4600
6	3450	3750	4350	4750
7	3600	3900	4500	4900
8		4050	4650	5050
9		4200	4800	5200
10		4350	4950	5350
11			5100	5500
12			5350	5650
13			5400	5800
14			5550	5950
15			5700	6100
16			5850	6250

All increments \$150 per year

The preceding schedule was modified and the following schedule was recommended by Bear Lake County Teacher Welfare Committee to the Bear Lake County Teachers' Association, March, 1957, and approved by board of trustees.

Table 11. Salary Schedule, District 33A

Years Service	2 years 8 steps	3 years 10 steps	4 years 13 steps	5 years 13 steps
1	\$2700	\$3000	\$3600	\$4000
2	2800	3100	3700	4100
3	2900	3200	3800	4200
4	3000	3300	3900	4300
5	3100	3400	4000	4400
6	3200	3500	4100	4500
7	3300	3600	4200	4600
8	3400	3700	4300	4700
9		3800	4400	4800
10		3900	4500	4900
11			4600	5000
12			4700	5100
13			4800	5200

All increments \$100 per year

Teacher salaries have increased 90-100% in the county since reorganization.

SUMMARY

During the ten year period from 1946 to 1955 some changes have taken place in the schools of Bear Lake County. The county has been reorganized from twenty-two districts to one district which includes all school units of the county. The major changes have been made in the administrative policy governing the schools. The twenty-two boards of trustees with a county superintendent and superintendents of the independent districts have been replaced with one board of trustees and one superintendent.

Reorganization should make a more efficient organization for administration. Central purchase of all supplies and equipment should save the district money. One person, the County Superintendent, is now responsible for all school property. It is now possible to insure all buildings now in use and to dispose of surplus buildings and equipment. All transportation is supervised by the district rather than by local units. There is now one salary schedule for all teachers of the county with a county teacher organization.

The school tax levy for the county has been equalized making equal educational opportunities for all children. The bonding position of the district has improved, and it is now possible to plan a long range building program.

There are five small attendance units of the district which could be closed and the students transported on busses, now operating, to larger attendance units. This would save the district approximately \$30,000 annually. It is proposed to close three such schools the current year.

One of the educational needs of the district is an adequate junior high school program. Some consolidation could make this possible.

The professional feeling among teachers and the administrative staff has definitely grown during the period of this study. This was very evident after the county was reorganized when the Bear Lake County Teachers' Association was organized. Prior to reorganization, there were three separate organizations of teachers. The in-service training program has been developed to meet the needs of teachers who are trying to improve their training for certification and for improved methods of teaching.

The cost of the educational program for Bear Lake County has increased during the period of this study, but this cannot be held to be the result of reorganization, but a combination of many factors. The rise in cost is the result of increased teacher salaries, increased operating costs, new insurance for all buildings, increased costs of transportation, textbooks, increased office personnel.

School patrons and tax payers have shown greater interest in school problems since reorganization and have

shown their desire to help solve them. This is one of the most important gains made during the period of this study.

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