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The Consolidation of Rural Schools in Waller County

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* THE CONSOLIDATION OF RURAL SCHOOLS IN *
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WALLER COUNTY *
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By *
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Eula Mae Muckleroy *
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A Thesis in Education Submitted in
Partial Fulfillment of the
Requirements for the Degree of *
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Bachelor of Science *
in the *
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Division of Arts and Sciences *
of *
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Prairie View State College *
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Prairie View, Texas *
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-1937 *

DEDICATED

To

My Mother and Father

Who Have Been An

Unfailing Source of Encouragement

And

Inspiration

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P R E F A C E

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The writer of this manuscript wishes to express her appreciation to the instructors and students who have contributed, both directly and indirectly, to the construction of the same. She wishes to acknowledge the aid of all of them, but special acknowledgment is made to the following who have read and criticized the various parts of the manuscript or made valuable contributions which have added to its accuracy, usefulness and completeness: Mr. T.R. Griffith, Jeanes Supervisor of Waller County; Professor B.S. Luter, Principal of Hempstead High School; and Mr. N.T. Archer, assistant professor in the Department of Education, who has read the entire manuscript.

The inspiration and advice of Mr. Griffith were present at every stage of the planning and progress of this study. Prof. Archer was generous with constructive suggestions, and the interest and encouragement of Mr. Bullock led the writer to continue her work.

Finally, to the patrons of the Hempstead High School for their generous response and assistance the author expresses her gratitude.

Eula Mae Muckleroy

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I N T R O D U C T I O N

This manuscript has been written primarily to meet a need arising from the introduction of the consolidated program into the scheme of education.

Only the conviction that there is a need in the schools for a study of the consolidated program induced the writer to undertake its preparation. The subject matter and its arrangement has been selected with regard to the following considerations: First, the history of the consolidated movement can be presented as a great movement with many undercurrents co-existent with civilization itself, and as a part of general education; Second, those facts which explain the existence of the movement or add to the appreciation of the movement are of great value; Third, the study is made in an effort to enlighten the future teachers upon the problem as it exists. It may prove to be of service to teachers looking for reference material, or valuable to those incorporated in such a program.

This is a pioneer study, the first of its kind to be made in Prairie View College, and it is the hope of the writer that it will not end here.

CONSOLIDATION OF RURAL SCHOOLS
IN WALLER COUNTY

The Purpose of the Study:- Perhaps the first essential of an adequate and thorough development of the topic is to state the purpose. This manuscript was written because of the increasing importance of consolidation, and the sole purpose is to analyze the system and suggest an efficient plan whereby consolidation may be used to an advantage.

Definition of Terms as used in the Study:-

"Consolidation", as applied to schools, means the concentrating of school work in fewer places under a more centralized control with a larger unit support; expressed in terms of the subject, it includes the consolidation of two or more districts to form one large district. There is a central school building, and the children of the district are transported to and from this central building daily. The type of consolidation in which we are primarily interested is partial consolidation by territory. This means that not all of the schools of the county under consideration are included in the consolidated district; thus, the term, "partial-consolidated" is applied to the situation.

"A community consists of the social inter-

action of the people and their institutions in the local area in which they live on dispersed farmsteads and in a hamlet or village which forms the center of their common activities".¹ The social interaction is based upon their common interest in education in the locations being studied.

Limitation:- The study is limited to the consolidation of the following four schools: (1) Laneview, (2) Lakeview, (3) Second Corinth, and (4) Yancey.

The Nature and Collection of Data:- The data were collected by obtaining accounts of the consolidation from authorities, by means of personal interview, and by use of the samples of students from the Hempstead School.

Organization and Presentation of Data:- As an approach to the problem, the writer assumes: First, that the consolidation which occurred three years ago had an interesting background; Second, that by an analysis of the consolidation, some principles for further organization and administration of the plan might develop; and Third, that if these principles are incorporated in the educational system and policies of our rural communities, the development of a more effective and cooperative program of rural education will result.

¹Sanderson, Dwight - The Rural Community - p. 481

The objectives in this study are:

1. To make a detailed study of the consolidation of the rural schools and the factors facilitating those conditions.
2. To present a picture of the results and effects of the consolidated plan, and
3. To suggest a plan for improvement which would make for a better system of rural education.

HISTORY OF THE CONSOLIDATED PROGRAM
IN WALLER COUNTY

P A R T I

The Problems That Gave Rise to the Consolidated Movement:- What are the facts which lie back of the consolidated movement in Waller County? What problems gave rise to such a movement?

The county of Waller is composed of several, in fact, the majority of one-teacher schools. Scattered among these small schools are those which are rural high schools and which are usually located in the village. The village serves as a connecting link between the small outlying communities which are held together by the existence of the small schools. Hempstead is centrally located among the community schools to be considered in this study.

The four schools of primary importance are:
(1) Lakeview, which is situated two and one-half miles north of Hempstead; (2) Laneview, whose location is approximately four miles southwest of Hempstead; (3) Second Corinth, an outlying community school nine miles northwest of Hempstead; and (4) Yancey, which is three and one-half miles southeast of Hempstead.

Lakeview and Laneview are the two which present

the most grave situation, having a daily attendance of twelve to fifteen. They are the usual type of one-room schools with poor equipment, poor buildings, unkempt school grounds and dilapidated outbuildings. The communities had progressed, leaving the school far behind. Second Corinth and Yancey were in fair condition; the equipment was far from par, but the erection of a new building had improved the situation.

Each school existed apart and separate from the other. Rather than cooperativeness, there existed an undercurrent of rivalry and sometimes hostile competition. Jealousies were predominant, and in an endeavor to increase the size of the school, each small community tried to draw pupils from adjoining districts. This, together with inadequate school buildings and teaching facilities, made arise a grave problem to confront the patrons of the communities. What could be done to remedy the situation? The idea of consolidation came as a relief measure to make for a better system of education.

To say that the idea of consolidation was readily accepted is to create an erroneous impression. This was, by no means, the case. There were those who approved of the plan, and those who favored firm ad-

herence to the old type of one-teacher schools.

Gradually, two bitterly opposing elements were developed, pro and con.

Arguments for the Consolidated Program:- The following arguments were submitted in favor of consolidation, namely, those concerning financial matters and general improvements. If the schools were combined to form a larger area, they would be subject to the Rural Aid Fund which is State Aid for consolidated districts. This Rural Aid Law provided for assistance to schools with not fewer than twenty and not more than four hundred scholastics located in districts having not more than five hundred scholastics. Consolidated districts which had an average of not more than two hundred scholastics in each original district and districts composed of entire counties with less than five thousand scholastics were eligible for aid. Sparsely settled counties having fewer than 1,400 scholastics were not compelled to meet the minimum requirement of twenty scholastics per school. For the year 1934-35, the law stated that no school district was entitled to receive aid if 60% or more of its students were transported from rural districts.

Requirements for participation in aid under

this law were as follows: that the average daily attendance in any school equal 70% of the scholastic census in 1934-35 and 65% in 1935-36. Local school districts should levy a school tax of not less than fifty cents exclusive of the tax for interest and sinking fund, or of not less than seventy-five cents inclusive of the tax for interest and sinking fund (property not to be valued less than for state and county purposes). No school district could receive aid for teacher salaries if the assessed valuation was in excess of \$3,000 per scholastic, but the district levying a tax of one dollar on the hundred dollar valuation was exempt from this provision.

Allotment was made upon the teacher-pupil basis of one teacher for any number of scholastics from 20 to 35 with an added teacher for each additional 30 scholastics or fractional part. Aid was granted on the basis of a teacher salary schedule determined by the State Superintendent with the approval of the State Board of Education for the exclusive purpose of extending the length of the term. If state and county available funds, together with local funds were insufficient to maintain a term not to exceed nine months and approximately eight months, aid was granted. A total salary aid of \$1,995,917 in 1934-35, and \$1,995,997 in 1935-36 was distributed to small districts.

This Rural Aid Law was, therefore, a financial asset to the schools able to meet the requirements.¹

In view of the above data, we can readily understand why the proposed consolidation measures were looked upon as being an asset to the school system as it would provide for improvements which probably would never occur otherwise.

The argument also included the idea that consolidation of the four schools would make for general improvements. These general improvements would include the physical plant, housing conditions, teachers' salaries, recreational activities, school spirit and general attitude.

Arguments Against the Consolidated Program:-

The negative argument was based upon the following: First, the consolidation of the schools would combine grades, and thus would eliminate many of the teachers already employed. This reduction of the number of teachers was not looked upon with favor, but dissatisfaction was expressed at the thought of decrease in those already engaged in the profession.

In the second place, the proposed plan would provide for the displacement of colored trustees by

¹ Hubbock of Procedures for Planning the Reorganization of Local School Units-Circular No. 156

whites. Opposition on this basis was strong; those objecting to the consolidation believed that the white trustees would neglect the school, not only from the point of view of teacher salaries, but from the standpoint of equipment, length of school term and interest in the progress of the entire plant as well.

+ Third, the opposing element objected on the grounds that consolidation measures would facilitate difficulty of transportation. Whereas, as individual units, each child could gain access to the school easily, as a consolidated unit, the child would be farther removed from school with no provisions made for transportation.

The last argument submitted in opposition to the consolidated program was advanced by the property owners, including both land owners and home owners. They opposed the school tax which was imposed, the tax rate being seventy-five cents per one hundred dollar evaluation. The law provided that the property owners vote for or against consolidation, and the superintendent employed every means possible to increase the number of affirmative voters. Much sentiment was built up by the spreading of propaganda and the publication of articles in the newspapers. Some of the voters were greatly influenced by the white land owners.

Decisions Made:- On the day of election, the Negroes came to Hempstead and by the process of balloting, voted for or against annexation of the schools. The affirmative won by an overwhelming majority.

This marked the termination of the third attempt to bring about consolidation of the districts. The first attempt resulted in failure because the land-owners did not favor the measure. They were influenced greatly by the teachers who thought that they would lose their jobs if the schools were consolidated.

Heretofore, the Hempstead School District covered only Hempstead proper; now it was extended to include four other one-teacher schools, only two of which, however, were incorporated with the Hempstead High School, namely, Lakeview and Laneview. Yancey and Second Corinth are considered as being in the consolidated district which now covers 105 square miles of territory.



THE OPERATION OF THE CONSOLIDATED PROGRAM

P A R T II

Transportation Facilities:- The problem of transportation has been successfully worked out. Children have been transported to and from the Hempstead School for three years, and as yet, none have been injured. There are two busses used for transportation purposes. The first was bought in 1934 when approximately 75 students were transported from Laneview. The year of 1935 brought about the incorporation of the second school, Lakeview, and consequently another bus was added. At present there are two vehicles operating providing adequate means for one hundred and fifty-two students.

An interesting occurrence of the first morning serves to illustrate the attitude of the patrons towards the method of transportation. When the driver reached the point where he was to contact the students, instead of a group of boys and girls, he was met by an assembly of angry fathers and mothers who proceeded to state their objections to the method of transportation. Fear for the safety of their children was uppermost in the minds of many; however, persuasion and

tactful explanations overuled their doubts, and they permitted their children to ride in the vehicle provided for this purpose.

Responsible persons are employed to drive these vehicles. They must not use tobacco on the school bus nor permit its use, either coming to or going from school. They report to the principal each morning as to the attendance, causes of delay and the deportment of children. The 152 children that are transported daily are much more easily looked after than those who walk to school. It is very seldom that any difficulty occurs on the bus. Children are transported from one-half to six and one-half miles away. For the most part, they are in transit not over thirty to forty-five minutes. The busses carry about twenty-five to thirty each load, and both make double trips.

Time Schedule:- The importance of this phase of the transportation set-up is evident. For every consolidated school, a schedule should be kept which gives the time of departure and arrival of the bus along the route which it covers. This eliminates all delay which is so often the result when a time schedule is not followed.

The following table gives an approximation

FORM I

of the time schedule which is used by the Hempstead High School. This is the schedule of the bus going to Laneview; that of the bus covering the route to Lakeview is similar:

TIME SCHEDULE OF BUS

LEAVES	LEAVES	ARRIVES	ARRIVES
PLACE	TIME	PLACE	TIME
Hempstead	7:00 A.M.	Laneview	7:20 A.M.
Laneview	7:30 A.M.	Hempstead	7:45 A.M.
Hempstead	7:50 A.M.	Laneview	8:05 A.M.
Laneview	8:15 A.M.	Hempstead	8:30 A.M.
Hempstead	3:15 P.M.	Laneview	3:35 P.M.
Laneview	3:40 P.M.	Hempstead	3:55 P.M.
Hempstead	4:00 P.M.	Laneview	4:25 P.M.
Laneview	4:35 P.M.	Hempstead	5:00 P.M.

The following pages give samples of the reports which the school is required to keep. Form I is the report for transportation of pupils by private conveyance. Form II is the report on transportation by bus within one district only.

Thus, we can see that the matter of transportation is logically planned, in fact, the success of

FORM I

REPORT ON TRANSPORTATION OF PUPILS BY PRIVATE CONVEYANCE

For _____ County

(Such transportation aid can be granted only for high school pupils whose grades are not taught in the home district.)

Arrange districts according to numerical order, listing all pupils of the same district in a group.

Districts & Pupils	Age	Grade	Attendance	Home District	Classification	School Att'd	Amount Due
:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:
:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:
:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:
:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:
:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:
:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:
:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:
:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:
:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:
:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:

FORM II

REPORT ON TRANSPORTATION BY BUS WITHIN ONE DISTRICT ONLY

Put all high school pupils who are transported across an old district line together as nearly as possible to assist in rapid counting. All grade children and all children transported within the original district are allowed not to exceed \$1.00 per month, unless the district has more than 100 sq. miles of territory.

Name of District: _____

Names	Age	Grade	Days Attended	Was this pupil transported across old district line?	Rate per month	Remarks
:	:	:	:	:	:	:
:	:	:	:	:	:	:
:	:	:	:	:	:	:
:	:	:	:	:	:	:

66

the consolidated school will depend largely upon the success with which the children are transported to and from school. The type of transportation best adapted to the community, the routing of the vehicles, the selection of the driver, the length of time children spend on the road, and the general management of the transportation system were carefully considered and planned, and is now operating successfully.

Housing-Before Consolidation:- The housing facilities were very poor. All of the schools were the usual one-room type with poor equipment, poor buildings, unkempt school grounds and dilapidated outbuildings. Mud roads made access difficult, and the schools were far behind the spirit of progress which has been seen since consolidation. Wood heaters were used, oil lamps, and no provisions were made for sanitary drinking fountains or for toilets. The arrangement of the windows prevented proper ventilation and distribution of light. No provisions were made for differentiated courses because space and equipment would not permit. The absence of playground apparatus served to strengthen the conviction that these institutions of learning were not desirable for the education of boys and girls.

After Consolidation:- The central building

in Hempstead has accommodations for more students than the separate schools combined. It has a playground consisting of approximately three acres. While there is yet much room for improvement, the building is much more modern in every respect than the one-room schools. It has the proper amount of light correctly located, gas heat, electric lights, sanitary drinking fountains, flush system of toilets and running water for Domestic Science laboratory use. There is a kitchen and a room for sewing. The central building has eight classrooms, a library, an office for the principal and an auditorium with a seating capacity of 440. A Home Economics building is now in the process of construction which will do much towards strengthening the Home Economics Department.

An increase in the housing facilities after consolidation also brought about an increase in these things:

(1) The function of the school in the community. The school building offers accommodations for all kinds of legitimate community meetings, such as Farmers' Clubs, Community Clubs, school plays and concerts. The commencements are also held in the schoolbuilding whereas, they were formerly held in the church.

(2) An increase in the size of the school made possible the purchase of a piano, and through the influence of the school, the level of music in the home has been raised. Several of the children have been induced to take lessons in instrumental music.

Teaching Facilities- Equipment:- That there has been an increase in teaching equipment is plainly evident. An increase in the size of the school made for an increase in equipment. In the one-teacher schools, very little was done in the way of motivation, but in the consolidated school, laboratories and other agencies of motivation tend to make the courses more interesting. An increased enrollment, differentiated courses and higher standards of education are some of the factors contributing to make for more and better equipment.

Instructors:- Consolidation has brought about an increase in the number as well as the salaries of teachers. In the old schools, the salaries ranged from \$45 to \$60 per month. The poorest type of teachers were employed to work in these very inadequate systems because they would work for small salaries. The educational status averaged Freshman college standing.

Before consolidation there were six teachers working in the Hempstead school system. The first year brought about an increase of 5 teachers, 2 of whom were working part-time. During the second year, those working part-time were dropped, and one teacher was added making a total of 10 instructors. There are 15 teachers in the entire district, 10 of whom are working in the Hempstead system.

Increased enrollment from 254 before consolidation, to 396 after consolidation, accounts for the increase in instructors. Larger salaries resulted from increased efficiency in the school system.

Improvement of Instruction:- In education, professional training, successful teaching experience, and maturity the teachers are vastly superior to those that were in the old schools. There is a trained, experienced principal to supervise, assist, encourage and inspire the teachers, parents and pupils.

The standards of the consolidated school are such that poor and inexperienced teachers are not employed. This was one of the reasons why the teachers in the old school objected to consolidation. They knew that because of low educational status, securing a position in the consolidated school would be practically impossible. Only those teachers who are effi-

ciently prepared are employed.

Attitudes-Before Consolidation:- The attitude of the patrons before the consolidation was decidedly unfavorable. There were two classes of believers; one who thought the consolidation a wise measure, and another who was strongly opposed to it. The best thinking people took the attitude of the former group while others, influenced by teachers who were afraid of losing their positions, thought differently.

After Consolidation:- Although the general consensus of opinion before consolidation was that it was unfavorable and undesirable, the undeniably effective results, the improvement of general conditions and the efficient educational system was so marked, that in a short while, those opposing the measure saw the benefits accruing and became reconciled. They were finally awakened to a realization of the advantages of such a system and cooperated with the advocates of the program.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

P A R T III

Advantages Found:- The advantages of the consolidated program as applied to Waller County are numerous. It transformed the small, inadequately supported schools into a large school with adequate financial support, and a large enough number of pupils to permit proper organization and administration and adequate curriculum provisions. In the following paragraphs, the major advantages which have resulted from the consolidated program are given.

Organization and Administration:- (1) More effective organization is provided for. Pupils are now able to be graded and classified better because there are more of them, thus making it possible to form regular "grades" in charge of grade teachers.

(2) It made for better teaching. With all of the schools brought together in Hempstead, each teacher is in charge of a minimum number of grades instead of all eight as was the case in the one-room schools, and much better work can be done. It is simply the application of the principle of specialization. Too, the

scholastic standing of teachers was improved. Heretofore, the average scholastic status of the teacher was Freshman college. In the system now, all of the teachers are well qualified with degrees in the field of their work. This tends to produce more efficiently prepared instructors who will be fully able to cope with the situation. At least 90% of the teachers have had experience in their field of work, and those who are beginning are rapidly adjusting themselves to the program.

Continuous and Improved Education:-(1) It provides for high school training at home. The fusion of the schools increased the size of the district so that it was large enough to offer a four year high school course. Hempstead, of course, already offered high school instruction, but consolidation made it possible that those children confined, heretofore, to immediate schooling, avail themselves of the opportunity of a high school education without the heavy expense of going away to high school. Very few of these children ever attained any education beyond the eight grades taught in the community school.

(2) Provisions were made available for differentiated courses. Agriculture and domestic science are

offered in the Hempstead High School, whereas, this was impossible in the one-teacher schools.

(3) It gave each child an opportunity for education regardless of the family circumstances or distance from school. All have equal length of school term, nine months, whereas the average length of the term for the schools as individual units was seven months.

(4) It has a greater holding power on the child. This, perhaps, is psychic, but inquiries revealed that more children complete the eighth grade and high school in the Hempstead school than formerly in the one-teacher schools.

(5) Better attendance is one result of consolidation. Before the plan was put into effect, the attendance of the pupils was far below par; weather conditions and distance from the school made for increased tardiness and absences. The purchase of a school bus has eliminated many defects in the situation. When the bus calls at the house of the child in the morning, and returns him safely at night, the problem of tardiness and absences vanishes.

Citizenship:- (1) Better health and morals are facilitated. The Hempstead school bus, while not being sufficiently well equipped for complete protect-

ien, does much toward the preservation of health. The bus is operated by a competent and upright driver, and it serves to protect the students from exposure to weather and any indecencies which might occur on the road.

(2) The morale of the student is improved.

The driver does not permit the use of tobacco or profane words on the bus. Degrading contacts which the student might make on the road are eliminated by transportation in the bus. Fighting, which is a common occurrence on the road, is reduced to a minimum.

Equipment:- (1) Better equipment and apparatus were outcomes of consolidation. Opportunities in the consolidated program provided for increased and improved tools with which to work; materials to motivate the classwork, and more space in which to use them effectively.

(2) Better school buildings were provided.

The marked improvement of the Hempstead school over either or all four of the schools incorporated, is evidence enough that consolidation succeeded in providing better buildings from the point of view of school-house planning as well as construction.

Athletic Improvement:- The consolidated school offers an opportunity for participation in athletics.

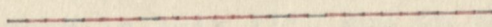
Basket-ball, foot-ball, base-ball, and even tennis in miniature form is available for every child. In the old schools, there was no playground apparatus or athletic equipment, and recreation existed in as much as it was improvised by the students themselves.

Social Improvement:- Consolidation brought about a more extensive social contact because of increase in students as well as the increase in extra-curricula activities which was facilitated. Clubs were organized which served to intensify the relations between the pupils.

Disadvantages Found:- Perhaps the nearest approach to an enumeration of the disadvantages of such a system lies in these things: (1) The consolidated school system created crowded conditions. Although the enrollment increased more than 35% in two years, there were no additions to the building. The teaching staff increased, and the number of students increased, yet there was no addition to the teaching materials and tools with which to work. As a result, there is not enough space to accomodate the large number of children who attend.

(2) The consolidated school brought about increased cost. The school patrons had been accustomed

to paying a low school tax, and this consolidated measure which increased the tax rate was not submitted to without opposition. When measured in pure cash outlay, the consolidated school costs more to operate than did the one-teacher schools. But when we consider the increased advantages of the present system over the old type one-teacher schools, the consolidated school is the cheaper of the two.



SUGGESTED PROGRAM OF IMPROVEMENT

Analysis of Conditions:- The floor plan of the school gives us an indication of the location of the rooms. In the central building there are 8 classrooms, a library, an auditorium and the principal's office. The Seventh Grade Room is very small with seating accommodations for 26 persons. The desks are crowded closely together, and they are rather large for the seventh grade students who use them. The room is 18'x 11', and on the day of my observation, there were 17 students present.

The library is 11'x 9' which indicates that it is very small. There is space for only the librarian who takes care of the books and issues them.

There are 19 seats in the science room which is 28'x 21'. There are lockers, tables for experiments and cabinets. This room seems to be the most adequate in regards to size and equipment.

The room in which History and English are taught is 21'x 11'. The equipment includes seating accommodations for 20, a teachers' desk and a stove.

The room in which Mathematics is taught has 24 seats, and is 21'x 11' in size. 18 students were

present. The prime need is for more equipment.

The primary room is the one in which grades from the pre-primer through the first grade are taught. It is 34'x 21'. On the day of my observation, 43 students were present and there are seats for 48 persons. The second and third grade room has a seating capacity of 55 seats, and is 30'x 21' in size. The curtains are dropped on the stage and the platform constitutes a room in which the fourth and fifth grades are taught. It is 21'x 29'. Adjoining this room is a tiny supply room 11'x 9', in which materials are stored.

The Home Economics Room in which the girls are given instruction in Domestic Art is 22'x 22'. Adjoining the main classroom is a supply room, 11'x 9' in which materials for work are kept. In the main classroom there are 21 seats, 6 machines, 3 stoves and 2 work tables.

The principal's office, perhaps, is the most crowded room. It has two desks, a filing cabinet, an incubator and a place where the young chicks are kept until they are large enough to be carried to the farm shop.

In the auditorium, the 6th grade classwork is carried on amid the noise and distraction which

detracts considerably from the benefits which the child should receive.

The exterior plan of the school campus serves to locate all of the buildings and objects which constitute part of the immediate campus occupying approximately three acres. The Home Economics building is situated on the right of the central building. It is 60'x 24' in size. It is divided into four rooms. There are two tiny pantries 8'x 8', a dining room 16'x 20', and the laboratory which combines cooking and sewing, 40'x 24'.

Problems and Suggested Solutions:- Discipline:

The discipline problem is one which requires more attention than is devoted to it. When the survey was made, practice for commencement had begun and disorder was constant. However, crowded conditions seemed to be the reason for most of the noise. The teacher who has charge of the 6th grade also has charge of the study periods, and she meets with little success in attempting to manage both. This means that the high school students are in the auditorium at the same time with the 6th grade, and they prove to be a source of distraction for the younger children. Lack of interest on the part of the teachers is another reason for poor discipline.

Perhaps the key to the whole situation would be to construct another building adjacent to the central building. Then the grammar school, or all the grades under the 7th grade, could be moved out. This would leave the present building available for the high school only. In this event, the auditorium would be the nucleus for the high school students, and the classrooms could be so apportioned that no overlapping of classes would result.

Crowded Conditions:- From the foregoing information, it is readily seen that we are confronted with a crowded situation which is, indirectly, the cause of other defects. The fact that the enrollment has increased, that the staff has increased without a proportional increase in the buildings is an index to the situation.

To add another building would be the most effective method of taking care of the situation. The fact that the Home Economics building is being constructed does much towards solving the problem. The Home Economics classes will then be removed from the main building, and the 6th grade can be transferred from the auditorium to the present Home Economics room.

As a suggestion for the improvement of the

school, I would recommend that the office of the principal be cleared of some of the debris, that the incubator and chicken coops be removed and installed in the farm shop. This move would make for more space in which to carry out the duties of his office.

Instead of having the crowded conditions in the study hall, the classes could be taken outside for recreation, or it may be avoided by using the period as a physical education period in which free and creative activities are carried on. In the event of bad weather, it may be used as an orientation period in which the children are brought lectures, and in which the children are brought educationally beneficial topics for discussion. Various members of the student body may make contributions.

The primary rooms are too confining. Small children need room in which to move about, yet the present system offers nothing in the way of motivation. The room should be enlarged and sand tables installed, space for special units and projects allowed, and seats adjusted to the size of the child should be placed in the rooms.

If the above mentioned suggestions could be carried out, the Hempstead school would be a more

effective and efficient system for the education of the boys and girls of today.

Obstacles to be Overcome in the Consummation of the Plan:- There is no doubt that there are a number of traditional ideas prevalent in the entire state of Texas with reference to the public school system. The present educational organization in many respects is a relic of the days when more complete and more adequate organization was not possible. "Some authorities in rural education still look with favor on the establishment of elementary schools having one or two teachers and two to four grades of work. Their chief interest is to form attendance areas which will have a sufficient number of pupils to constitute full teaching units, and to keep the schools for small children near their homes. They hold that the formation of school units large enough to provide a complete program of education is either undesirable or unattainable in rural areas".¹ On the other hand, intelligent thinking people will convince the most skeptical that the one-teacher school as an institution has served its day. Some educators

¹ Hubbock of Procedures for Planning the Reorganization of Local School Units, Circular No. 156- 1936

continue to support the one-teacher school as an institution on the theory that the breakdown of local communities means the breakdown of the social order. The proposal set forth in this study, however, entertains no idea of breaking down the local communities, but by an effective and workable method of consolidation of schools, to bring them closer together and to create a unity of purpose which will be beneficial to all.

It is more than probable that the public schools are the only remaining tie that distinguishes rural centers from urban centers. The trend is to draw rural pupils into urban centers for school purposes. Thus, a unity of schools would increase the trend of migration to the small town where more efficient methods of instruction are provided.

Even though the facts presented are convincing and even though existing inadequacies are plainly evident, sympathetic and persuasive argument must yet have their place in order to assure a try-out of any new program of consolidation. There is a distinct tendency among the patrons to allow a few to do all the thinking with respect to measures of this sort involving growth and progress. This program would be of such vital interest to every citizen of Waller County that

it must not be left to a few to decide on the application of the program suggested. In order to inaugurate the proposed program, there must be mass meetings of the patrons of all the communities where the issues can be intelligently discussed, pro and con.

Many jealousies also arise in the above situation. There has been a practice to increase the size of each small school by drawing pupils from adjoining districts. It is probably all too true that, rather than being proud of their schools, each community is unwilling to be outdone by the other. Consolidation would eliminate this false pride which tends to degenerate communities.

The greatest difficulty to be overcome in establishing a school organization of the nature proposed lies in the matter of establishing responsibility for initiative. An enthusiastic leader, a cooperativeness of effort and ability could put the plan in operation, and the county of Waller would have a more effective system of education for the benefit of all concerned.

B I B L I O G R A P H Y

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