



7-1-1937

## A Study of School District Organization in Kittson County, Minnesota

Erling Kolden

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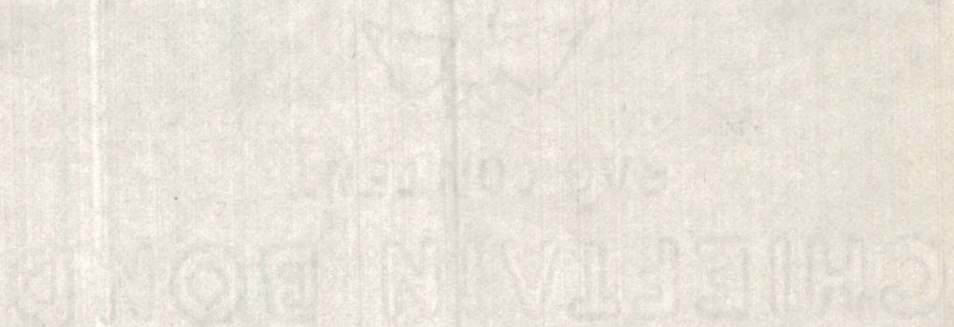
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**A STUDY OF SCHOOL DISTRICT ORGANIZATION IN  
KITSON COUNTY, MINNESOTA**

695/116

**A Thesis  
Submitted to the Graduate Faculty  
of the  
University of North Dakota**



**by  
Erling Kolden  
///  
In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements  
for the Degree of  
Master of Science in Education  
July, 1937**



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K81

This thesis, offered by Erling Kolden in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Degree of Master of Science in Education in the University of North Dakota, is hereby approved by the Committee under whom the work has been done.

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### ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The writer owes a debt of gratitude especially to Dr. A. V. Overn, Professor of Education at North Dakota University for his inspiration and assistance during the planning and completion of the present study.

The kindly cooperative attitude of various officers and assistants at the Kittson County court house is hereby acknowledged. Special mention must be made of Esther Coleman, County Superintendent of Schools; of Mr. Axel Loffgren, County Auditor; and Mr. Alfred Carlson, County Treasurer for the free access to all books and records of the county and for their assistance in untangling intricacies of booking. The friendly and cooperative attitude extended to every department, and thanks are due to the County Engineer's office for maps, to the County Agent and others for the use of adding machines, typewriters, etc.

To all these the writer wishes to express his thanks, as well as to all others who have assisted in any way.



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## CHAPTER 1

### INTRODUCTION

The American school is an institution for fitting the growing child to fill his place effectively in a complex democracy. In order to maintain the good things it has and to improve upon what is faulty, it becomes the prime duty of society to train all its youth in the functions, attitudes, and skills requisite to its efficient management. To fail in this duty becomes a crime against society itself.

In no relation of man to man is inefficiency long tolerated. It piles on others additional burdens, and the co-worker will complain. Inequality and inefficiency are closely related. To point out inefficiencies is to turn the magnifying glass on inequality, and vice versa. On the shoulder of the strong and the shoulder of the weak should be placed the pack proportionate to the strength to bear. That is equality and results in efficiency.

Inequality and inefficiency are relative terms. At no time is infinity reached. What today is regarded as efficient will, on comparison with the better of tomorrow, be adjudged faulty and undesirable. It becomes, then, the duty of today, along the product of the past to lay the measure of the present. As the highest achievement in the knowledge of man is to him that measure, it becomes every man's duty to lay before the eye of the individual both the good practices and the bad.



It is not enough that in one place or two only the measure has been applied. In every community must be the man with the compass, the rule, the square, and the plummet. Every community must know the measure of its social and political efficiency. This becomes the more apparent when it is remembered that in no two places are situations alike. In each place must the contact of a new group be made with a unique set-up. Each place is a problem distinct from every other.

Kittson County, Minnesota is a habitat, and contains a group, distinct in nature from that in any other state or that of any other community in Minnesota. On these alluvial flats, on the site of former Lake Agassiz and along its sandy shores lives mostly the progeny of the pioneer. But, whether pioneer or comer to a settled community; whether hyphenated American or Yankee, to him home is home, child is child, "mine" is "mine" and in that setting he must find his measure of efficiency. And if each one for himself doesn't find it, on the rest falls the duty of discovering it and revealing it to him.

And right there we find the justification and the incentive for repeating what often has been done before. For only as man associates a matter with himself does he become exercised about it. And only as inequality and inefficiency are recognized as waste, a waste not of some



remote thing, but a corrosion on the treasure of the individual, only then will he step in and stop them.

#### The Story of Kittson County, Minnesota

The early beginnings of any community seem more an alluring story than history. A vast mass of incidents cover, as do the sedimentary deposits of Kittson County, the bed-rock of recorded facts. To understand and appreciate the background of a certain region, historic or geographic, one must have an imaginative mind and a mood for placing himself among early beginnings.

If the Kensington Stone is authentic--and there is nothing to indicate that fraud has been practiced except that it seems unbelievable and shatters every tradition about the earliest white man in Minnesota--then the first white men to set foot on northern Minnesota soil were "Eight Goths and 22 Norwegians", who probably came up the Red River Valley, penetrating as far south as Douglas County where they left their inscription after 10 of their party has been killed by Indians. This event in 1362 precedes all others involving white men. But "rhunes" of other description trace the story of man more definitely in Kittson County.

On ancient moraines or esters, later sandy beaches of receding Lake Agassiz near Bronson, Minnesota, mound after mound, nine in a row, hide the secret of man's early activity in this region. Some of these may yet expose



facts which antedate those of 1362 when white men may have crossed those same fields. But far preceding even those times Old Man Nature had prepared the place as a playground and field of the white man later to come. Once depressed to the bottom of an inland sea, the region later rose again and was built up by repeated ice sheets, each adding to and altering the heaps of debris left by the other. The final one receding, melting before the onslaught of warmer times, left a great lake far exceeding any other. Under its 300 to 450 feet deep water Kittson County got its rich soil. The richness of that soil can well be understood when we are told that certain fields produced more than 20 successive crops of wheat without interruption or rotation. That the richness of the soil is not a fond fantasy of a dotting resident has been testified to by witnesses unbiased by quirk of childhood memories. This is what one observer says:<sup>1</sup>

The sandy littoral zone approaches Warren on the east and extends near the railroad north to Argyle. Thence on the broad flat plain extends as far as the eye can reach, save for interruption of lines of trees along the stream courses. The plain presents the monotonous level like that of the sea. The fertility of the soil formed from this fine-grained lake sediment is world renowned. Here has long been one of the great sources of the world's bread supply. Probably nowhere else in the world is there a plain so great in extent, so nearly level in surface, and so fertile in those elements which are needed for the growth of cereal crops.

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<sup>1</sup>D. E. Willard, The Story of the North Star State, p. 239.



The Minnesota Geological Survey Bulletin will probably be accepted by nearly everybody as authoritative in its findings and not inclined to local favoritism. This is what one bulletin says:<sup>2</sup>

Kittson County, of which Hallock is the county seat, lies in the extreme northwestern corner of the state. It has an area of 1,111 square miles. Its surface is smooth, since it is wholly within the basin of Lake Agassiz, and the principal features of relief are merely beach ridges of this former lake. The highest point along the northern boundary of the county is near the northeast corner, where the elevation is about 1,045 feet above sea level, and the lowest is in the northwest corner at about 760 feet. There are elevations of about 1,060 feet near Karlstad, and it is probable that other places in the eastern part of the county stand a little higher. The greatest relief is at least 300 feet. About half of the county, however, is less than 900 feet above sea level. The drainage is toward the west, chiefly by the Two Rivers into the Red River, which flows northward along the western boundary.

. . . .The extreme western part of the county is occupied by a nearly flat plain from twelve to eighteen miles wide, which is composed of lacustrine clay. The lake clay is reported to be about 60 feet thick at Hallock and between 110 and 130 feet thick near the Red River. . . .<sup>3</sup>

To enter much into the early history of Kittson County would lead us too far afield. About the formation of the county I will quote from a historical record worthy of much more publicity than thus far has been given it. To the editor and publisher of the "Kittson County Enterprise", Mr. J. E. Bouvette a tribute of thanks is due, not only

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<sup>2</sup>Ira S. Allison, The Geology and Water Resources of Northwestern Minnesota, Minnesota Geological Survey Bulletin #22, p. 98.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid. p. 98.



for furnishing some historical background for this thesis, but much more for the real contribution to the history of a Minnesota community. From its pages we quote the following:<sup>4</sup>

Kittson County boasts a colorful history as a political division or part of one. Back in territorial days it was embraced by the Pembina district. This Pembina district was a vast domain, embracing northwestern Minnesota and all of North Dakota as far west as the Missouri River. . . .

But in 1851 Norman W. Kittson the fur trader, was elected to the territorial council, which corresponded to the state senate and Joseph Rolette and Antoine Gingras were chosen for the house of representatives. This legislature assembled January 7 and adjourned March 6 in 1852. The Pembina precinct is listed in the legislative manual in 1852 as "Pembina county," but there is little evidence of the existence of a county government.

It is interesting to note that North Dakota once had a Kittson county that embraced a large area and that Pembina county in that state forms but a small part of the former Kittson county, just as Kittson county in Minnesota forms but a small part of the former Pembina county in this state. .

Pembina county in Minnesota was created by the first state legislature in the summer of 1858. The legislative journals show that a bill to create Pembina and Polk counties was introduced in the house as House File No. 303. . . .

Kittson county was created by act of the legislature February 25, 1879, with the following boundaries: . . . .

The listing of boundaries of the county would give us no useful information, especially since maps are

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<sup>4</sup>J. E. Bouvette, Fiftieth Anniversary Number of Kittson County Enterprise, Hallock, Minnesota, September 11, 1935, p. 18.



included in the thesis, which will place it much more definitely for us than a mere verbal recital ever could.

It appears that the first school district to be formed was the Hallock school district organized July 28, 1879. After that St. Vincent organized as District #2 and "Joe River" as #3 the following year. From then on district after district was formed until the number reached 81. Some of these have consolidated and others have ceased to exist, so that the present number of districts is only 68, of which at least half a dozen conduct no school but transport their pupils to larger units. The first county superintendent was Matt Cowan, appointed to the office August 4, 1880.<sup>5</sup> But how those school systems have grown or diminished is a story too long to relate and beyond the purpose of this study. All that has been attempted is to give a short historical and geographical setting to the institution under our scrutiny, the present schools of Kittson County.

#### Problem

There was a time when the county-unit was considered a desirable unit for both school administration and supervision. This theory has of late lost much of its favor with educators. Even with a county unit plan schools would have to be maintained in several places in the county.

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<sup>5</sup>Ibid. p. 21.



Centralized control wouldn't necessarily lead to larger teaching units, and that is considered the next step necessary if education is to make further progress.

The problem involves determining the present status of education in Kittson County and the formulation of a plan whereby more equality in the distribution of the tax burden, equality of opportunity, and improvement of instruction for all may be had with a minimum of effort. This study will, consequently, try to find answers to the following questions:

1. What difference is there in the ability of the three types of districts discussed to maintain schools?
2. What effort is expended in the various types to support education?
3. What opportunities do schools actually offer pupils?
4. How well do patrons of the schools utilize them?
5. Do present trends give any hope of that present organizations ultimately will give satisfactory service?
6. If trends do not seem to justify a hope that present systems will lead to satisfactory outcomes, what can be done to improve upon the situation?
7. Because of the close relation between improvement of schools and the education of its patrons, what can be done to make the findings of the various surveys generally known?



### Limitations

The very statement of the problem naturally limits the area to that of Kittson County, Minnesota. While comparisons have been made with wider fields, it is mainly for the purpose of determining whether ability is wanting and effort lags. The lack of much information regarding certification of teachers, teaching experience, tenure in office, training, etc. limits the value of the findings and the suggestions for improvement. The lack of facilities for publication of findings hinders the region most intimately concerned from deriving much benefit from the considerable effort put forth in the collection and treatment of facts.

### Sources of Data

The data for this study were secured mainly from the records of the county superintendent, the auditor, the treasurer, and the county engineer of Kittson County. Some use was made of masters' theses in the library of North Dakota University, chiefly that of Knut P. B. Reishus.

### Method of Treating Data

The schools of the county have been divided into three groups for better comparison. The high-school group, variously named as consolidated or accredited schools, comprises the schools of Hallock, Humboldt, Kennedy, Karlstad, Lancaster, and Bronson, named in the numerical order of their districts. There is considerable variation



within the group not only in size but also in classification. Hallock is the only Class B high school with a fully graded elementary section. Karlstad, Lancaster, and Bronson had Class A high schools and graded elementary rating. Humboldt and Kennedy had class A high schools but only superior ungraded rating (three elementary teachers) in their elementary grades.

The second group of schools include St. Vincent, Orleans, Halma, and Donaldson. St. Vincent has an un-accredited four-year high school (two teachers) and a superior ungraded elementary-grade school. Connected with it is also a rural school with one teacher. Orleans and Halma have two-teacher elementary schools. Donaldson has a three-teacher elementary department.

In the third group all one-room schools of the county except the one included in the St. Vincent district have been included. Districts number 14, 20, 63, and 64 have two schools and two teachers apiece, but they are only one-room schools nevertheless. District number 81 has three one-room, one-teacher schools.

To simplify terminology these schools will be referred to as A, B, and C schools. A, B, and C will have no reference to high-school classifications in Minnesota unless that fact is specifically stated as in paragraph 1 and 2 of this page.



CHAPTER 2  
THE ABILITY OF KITTSOON COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICTS  
TO SUPPORT EDUCATION

Various plans have been devised for measuring the ability of a given region to support its schools. It has been difficult to find any measure adequate because there are hidden resources or liabilities of which nothing is known. Varying conditions make any measure unreliable. It has been found in fields much more static than education that a measure which seemed valid for one year was worth little in the following year. Not only does the thing to be measured vary but, in so far as our weighting of the value of certain phases of the matter under consideration changes, even our measure changes.

The ability of a country, state, or region to support education has been considered to rest largely upon valuation of property and income.<sup>1</sup> Neither the one nor the other of these can by itself be said to constitute a measure of what a region can do. Incomes might be the closest measurement of ability to support schools; but incomes, too, are a vague expression subject to various interpretations. The use of valuation or wealth as a measure of economic resources is subject to limitations well explained by a research bulletin published by the National Education Association:<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Research Bulletin of the N. E. A., Vol. IV, Nos. 1 & 2, pp. 3-4.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid. pp. 3-4.



Even though the substantial accuracy of the federal estimate of wealth is accepted, it may be objected that under modern economic conditions wealth has serious limitations as an index of tax-paying ability. The full force of this accepted fact holds only when individuals are concerned. The wide discrepancies between property ownership and ability to pay in the case of individuals tend to decrease when as large a unit as a state is being considered.

This last statement makes the use of individual school district valuations of Kittson County a still less acceptable measure of economic ability, but as no other has been devised, it is probably better to use it than to make no measurement whatever. The nicety of the measuring process will affect the value of it as well as the use to which it will be put. We can easily realize that a stick used to measure the amount of gas in the tank of a car may tell quite readily whether or not I have enough to get to town, although no person would rely on it as a measure of the number of miles a car will travel per gallon of gas.

Concerning income as a second or coordinate measure of ability to pay for education the bulletin says:<sup>3</sup>

The difficulties that stand in the way of a wholly accurate estimate of income are comparable to those encountered in the census of wealth. Consequently, a degree of error in the final estimates must be assumed. The character of the executive and advisory staff of the Bureau of Economic Research is such, however, as to justify belief that such error has been reduced to a minimum. One may judge for himself in this matter by consulting the reports of this Bureau.

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<sup>3</sup>Ibid. pp. 5-7.



In the foregoing citations it will be noticed that the application is of national scope. Certain limitations as to accuracy of either wealth or income as a measure of ability are multiplied manifold when applied in small areas.

The need of some correlation of other factors besides the two mentioned will be sensed immediately. If anyone were rash enough to say, "Neighbor John is well off; he has two quarter-sections of land; he has a tractor and full equipment; he had his work done earlier than any of his neighbors, and his income was \$1,500," the questions would arise, What are his liabilities? How much has he paid on his two quarter-sections of land? Are his tractor and farm equipment paid for? How much help does he hire? How large a family has John? Is his wife a good house-keeper?

What applied to John in the above illustration applies also to the state or locality in determining ability to support education. To know how well off John is, we must know how large his family is. Similarly, Norton found it necessary to compare wealth with the number of children of school age in order to get the relative ability of the states.

This has been followed out in the present survey. Not only is total wealth recorded but also wealth per pupil. Both are important. Mass is important even when



qualified by division. There are certain capacities of power inherent in the mass itself that can be readily demonstrated. A valuation per pupil of \$4,500 has not the same potentialities when there are only two pupils as when there are 2,000.

J. K. Norton in discussing the ability of the states to support education correlated wealth and income and later combined with these the per-pupil factor. It is interesting to notice that what is so shocking to us in a survey of the small districts in Minnesota is equally true on a national scale. Variations, differences, and inequalities are just as striking. A wealth of \$35,871,438,000 in New York dwindled down to \$465,269,000 in Nevada. An average annual income of \$20,240,721,000 in New York for the years 1919 to 1921 resolved itself into \$69,267,000 for Nevada.<sup>4</sup>

Looking at these facts from another angle, the percentage that average yearly current income was of average yearly total income was quite a different thing than the mass of either. New York, which was at the top before, was in ninth place when measured in this new way.<sup>5</sup> When wealth was measured by the number of children of school age, New York no longer held its proud position as first, but was eighth. When measured in this way Nevada, at the bottom of the states by the first two measures, stood far in the lead.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>4</sup>Ibid. p. 6 and 11

<sup>5</sup>Ibid. p. 9 and 16

<sup>6</sup>Ibid. p. 31



When still another measure was used, called the average annual current income per child, neither New York nor Nevada leads, but California. But pressing close up behind here were the two claimants for recognition, New York and Nevada. When Norton used as his measuring device the index of economic resources per child by states, Nevada was at the top, but California was a close second and New York trailed them by only a little.

In the small area in Minnesota, which was surveyed for this study, there were inadequacies in financial book-keeping which made it more difficult to study than those met in Norton's survey. There are no records available of local incomes in Kittson County, and there is no economic or educational agency authorized to compile those facts and make them available for studies. What the National Education Association considered the most valid measure of ability to support education must be omitted here.

State aid constitutes one of the large income sources for nearly all districts, especially the poor districts in northern Minnesota. In the following pages, tables will illustrate the relation of total valuation to per-pupil valuation, a frequency graph showing the number of times certain per-pupil valuations occurred, a correlation graph or scattergram, and final conclusions as to ability based on valuation of property as one of the chief measures. The charge of inadequacy of this measure



Table 1

## Valuation of Accredited High School Districts

Name of Town	Number of Districts	Total Valuation	Per-Pupil Valuation
Hallock	1	\$291,429	\$1,235
Humboldt	10	247,321	2,228
Kennedy	13	204,353	1,747
Karlstad	32	154,558	873
Lancaster	74	224,542	940
Bronson	75	135,339	879
Total		1,360,994	
Average		226,832	1,228

## Valuation of Non-Accredited Village Districts

St. Vincent	2	\$163,224	\$1,383
Orleans	12	126,239	3,602
Halma	40	74,343	1,403
Donaldson	56	163,080	2,718
Total		526,886	
Average		131,721	2,026



Table 1 (Continued)

Number of District	Total Valuation	Per-Pupil Valuation
3	\$ 91,358	\$15,226
4	175,528	5,289
5	59,168	5,379
6	66,878	5,144
7	97,246	5,118
8	74,344	6,195
9	75,944	3,452
11	89,715	8,155
14 <sup>#</sup>	90,812	1,611
15	61,830	3,775
16	79,354	3,052
17	14,195	2,839
18	80,390	6,691
19	79,287	4,405
20 <sup>#</sup>	80,223	3,343
21	43,834	4,870
22	65,517	6,552
23	70,463	5,033
24	33,958	1,887
25	54,374	No pupils in five years
26	72,968	4,292
27	31,033	1,478
28	17,424	5,806
29	45,281	1,192
30	75,186	3,133
31	35,440	1,611
33	46,408	1,934
34	47,639	1,906
35	72,236	4,013
36	30,409	1,525
37	30,698	2,558
38	36,160	1,572
39	31,538	1,971
41	24,923	1,558
43	89,824	8,928

<sup>#</sup> Two schools and two teachers.



Table 1 (Continued)

Number of District	Total Valuation	Per-Pupil Valuation
44	\$101,230	\$ 4,401
45	37,959	1,518
50	41,725	3,477
53	16,750	1,395
54	75,500	3,595
55	82,493	4,125
57	81,994	2,827
58	93,169	10,352
59	19,174	6,391
61	79,696	7,970
62	61,551	2,798
63 <sup>#</sup>	48,365	1,860
64 <sup>#</sup>	83,961	2,399
65	24,573	1,505
66	44,812	1,876
68	18,350	2,039
69	36,363	7,252
70	20,234	1,830
71	24,858	1,776
72	19,090	No pupils in six years
76	75,557	18,869
77	45,958	1,436
81 <sup>##</sup>	32,832	513
Total	\$3,269,505	
Average	56,371	3,058

<sup>#</sup> Two school houses and two teachers.

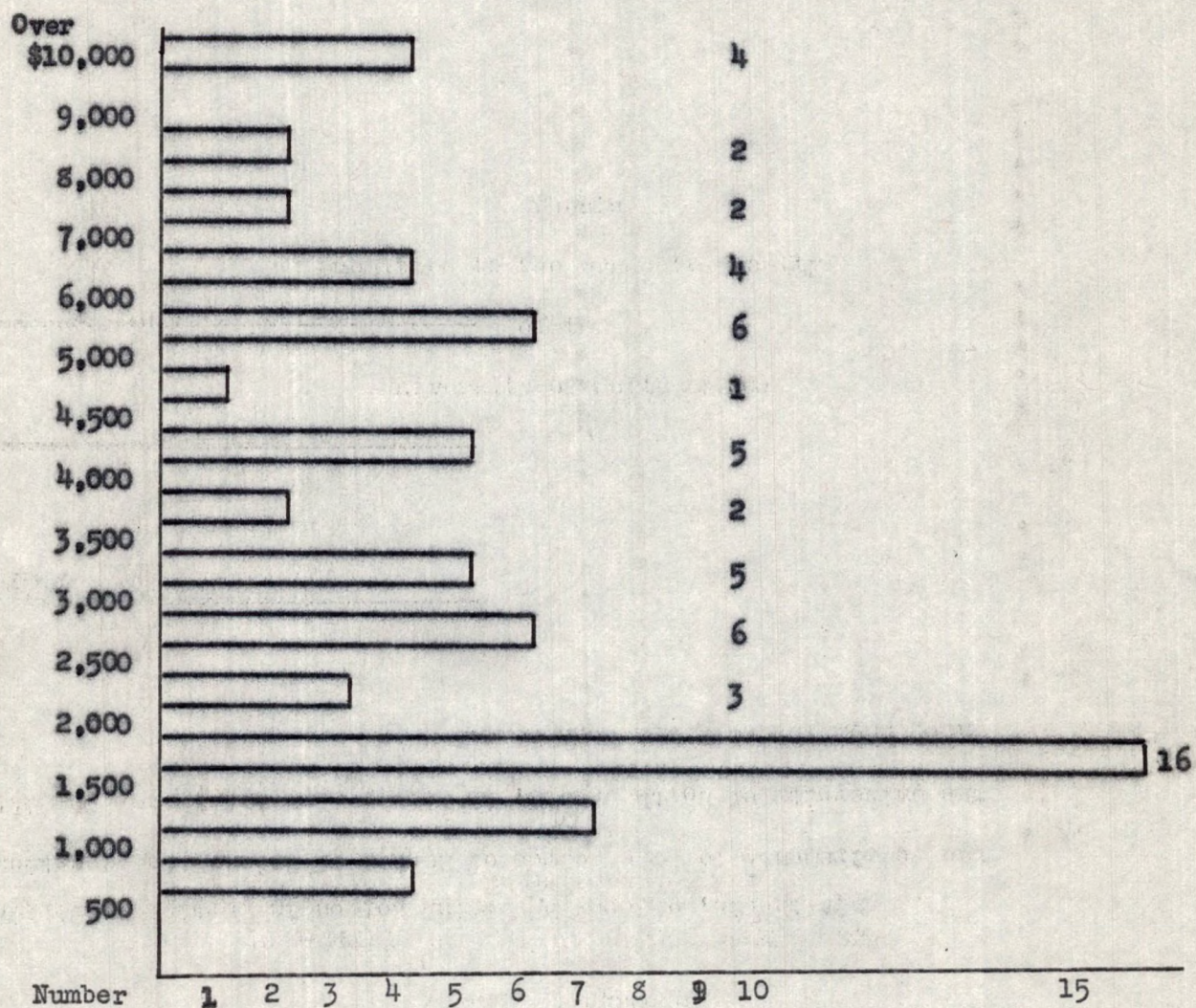
<sup>##</sup> Three school houses and three teachers.



Figure 1

Distribution of Numbers of Kittson County School Districts  
With a Given Per-Pupil Valuation

Per-Pupil  
Valuation  
of District





will to some extent lose its point when it is remembered that most current information about school finance is misinformation pertaining to the economy and efficiency of saving money in running the school instead of getting the most service for the money expended. True inequalities are frequently lost sight of. Inequalities in wealth is a real factor in the problem of school support and a legitimate field of inquiry.

Following this discussion a number of tables and figures present data pertaining to State Aid as a very important resource in every district examined. The value of this source of income is better understood in view of the fact that in no district did this support drop to less than fourteen per cent of the total and that in one case it amounted to seventy-four per cent of total support of the school.

#### Distribution of Wealth in Kittson County

The distribution of valuations and wealth per pupil is an interesting phenomenon. Total wealth in the districts veer off from \$391,429 as the greatest amount found in any school district in Kittson County to \$16,750 as the lowest point. Total wealth distributes itself in a manner which to us seems quite natural. The accredited high schools in the county have the highest valuation, an average of \$226,832. Next after these come the small-town unaccredited schools with an average of \$131,721 per



Table 2  
Total State Aid and Per-Pupil Aid in  
the Accredited High Schools

Name of Village	Number of District	Total State Aid	State Aid Per Pupil
Hallock	1	\$10,759.88	\$33.87
Humboldt	10	4,434.09	36.34
Kennedy	13	2,443.40	20.88
Karlstad	32	10,002.42	56.51
Lancaster	74	11,652.51	51.22
Bronson	75	7,489.49	48.61
Total		46,781.79	
Average		7,796.96	42.22

Total State Aid and Per-Pupil Aid For  
the Non-Accredited Schools

St. Vincent	2	\$2,551.45	\$21.62
Orleans	12	581.17	15.71
Halma	40	1,411.86	27.02
Donaldson	56	1,946.36	21.42
Total		6,490.84	
Average		1,622.71	24.96



Table 2 (Continued)  
 Total State Aid and Per-Pupil Aid  
 for the Rural One-Room Schools of Kittsen County

Number of District	Total State Aid	State Aid Per Pupil
3	\$154.67	\$38.68
4	455.54	13.80
5	234.06	21.46
6	236.81	18.17
7	305.52	16.08
8	234.59	18.05
9	117.11	5.09
11	218.24	18.93
14 <sup>#</sup>	581.17	15.71
15	778.24	13.90
16	338.46	13.02
17	182.78	45.69
18	191.02	15.89
19	273.57	14.39
20 <sup>#</sup>	468.61	13.65
21	179.13	22.39
22	209.18	20.92
23	254.68	18.19
24	286.03	15.89
25	No School	No Aid
26	262.60	16.41
27	343.68	16.37
28	96.63	24.16
29	462.33	12.16
30	353.97	12.85
31	306.84	13.95
33	317.24	12.20
34	381.66	14.68
35	271.79	15.10
36	303.96	15.20
37	240.72	20.06
38	345.61	15.07
39	368.75	15.81
41	300.37	18.77
43	184.46	18.45

<sup>#</sup> Two schools and two teachers.



Table 2 (Continued)  
 Total State Aid and Per-Pupil Aid  
 for the Rural One-Room Schools of Kittson County

Number of District	Total State Aid	State Aid Per Pupil
44	\$448.68	\$18.69
45	346.83	13.34
50	240.24	20.02
53	Not Known	Not Known
54	288.89	13.75
55	312.62	14.89
57	445.58	15.36
58	198.52	22.06
59	142.61	47.52
61	210.78	23.42
62	325.31	14.79
63 <sup>#</sup>	511.31	47.10
64 <sup>#</sup>	311.04	14.81
65	490.43	32.70
66	365.62	15.21
68	328.26	32.83
69	168.57	33.71
70	338.17	30.74
71	275.57	19.68
72	No Pupils	No Aid
76	154.83	38.71
77	429.72	13.43
81 <sup>##</sup>	2,504.45	39.13
Total	\$19,407.45	
Average	334.69	\$18.15

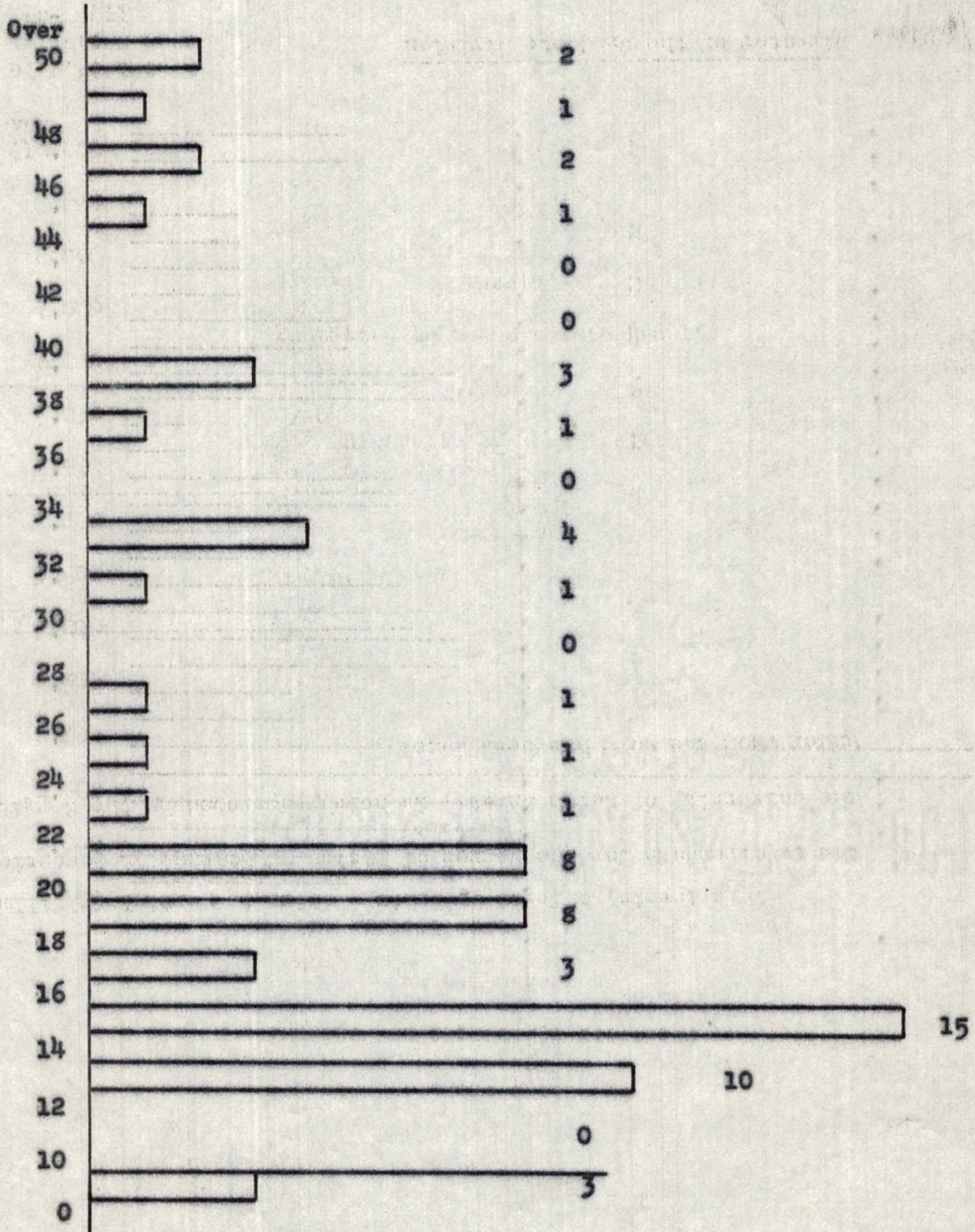
<sup>#</sup> Two school houses and two teachers

<sup>##</sup> Three school houses and three teachers



Distribution of Kittson County Schools Receiving a  
Given Per-pupil State Aid

Number of  
Dollars





school. Then come the 58 rural districts with an average valuation of \$56,371 per school. So far our distribution seems normal. But a sensible progression seems reversed when we turn to the matter of per-pupil wealth.

It is known that high school training costs more per pupil than elementary training. We would therefore think of it as a natural situation that the per-pupil wealth would be higher in the high-school than in the rural and non-high school districts. This is not according to fact. While the lowest per-pupil wealth observed in any district is that of a rural district; viz. \$513 per pupil, yet when averages are computed the high-school districts are far in arrears. The average for high school districts is only \$1,228 per pupil. The non-accredited village schools have an average per-pupil wealth of \$2,926, and the one-room, one-teacher school stands at the top with an average wealth of \$3,058. It will also be noted that three accredited high school systems have a per-pupil wealth of less than \$1,000.

In the following section will be shown whether there is an offsetting influence in the amount of money granted by the state.

#### Distribution of State Aid

Footings of the previous tables divulge the fact that a total of \$46,781.79 is the average annual con-



**Table 3**  
**Comparison of State Aid Per Pupil**  
**and Per Cent State Aid is of All School Support**

<u>Name of Village</u>	<u>Number of District</u>	<u>State Aid Per Pupil</u>	<u>Per Cent of Total Aid</u>
Hallock	1	\$33.87	41%
Humboldt	10	36.34	33
Kennedy	13	20.88	34
Karlstad	32	56.51	62
Lancaster	74	51.22	52
Bronson	75	48.61	42
Average		42.22	42
<b>Non-Accredited Schools</b>			
St. Vincent	2	21.62	31
Orleans	12	15.71	14
Halma	40	27.02	46
Donaldson	56	21.42	36
Average		24.96	30



Table 3 (Continued)

Comparison of State Aid Per Pupil and Per Cent State Aid is  
of all School Support for Rural Schools of Kittson County

Number of District	State Aid Per Pupil	Per Cent of Total Support
3	\$38.68	20%
4	13.80	21
5	21.46	28
6	18.18	25
7	16.08	27
8	18.05	20
9	5.09	27
11	18.93	28
14	13.90	42
15	14.56	31
16	13.02	29
17	45.69	43
18	15.89	23
19	14.39	33
20 <sup>#</sup>	13.65	30
21	22.39	22
22	20.92	29
23	18.19	28
24	15.89	39
25 <sup>1</sup>	Total St. Aid 37.13	37
26	16.41	19
27	16.37	40
28	24.16	45
29	12.16	40
30	12.85	38
31	13.95	38
33	12.20	33
34	14.68	40
35	15.10	29
36	15.20	35

<sup>#</sup>Two school houses and two teachers

<sup>1</sup>No school. Only one pupil in six years



Table 3 (Continued)

Comparison of State Aid Per Pupil and Per Cent State Aid is  
of all School Support for Rural Schools of Kittson County

Number of District	State Aid Per Pupil	Per Cent of Total Support
37	\$20.06	38%
38	15.07	40
39	15.81	30
41	18.77	43
43	18.45	21
44	18.69	34
45	16.52	38
50	20.02	35
53	Not Known	
54	13.76	24
55	14.89	23
57	15.36	19
58	22.06	24
59	47.54	44
61	23.42	23
62	14.79	25
63 <sup>#</sup>	47.10	36
64 <sup>#</sup>	23.42	39
65	32.70	47
66	15.21	57
68	32.83	48
69	33.71	23
70	30.74	56
71	19.68	45
72	Total 28.31	32
76	38.71	24
77	13.43	44
81 <sup>##</sup>	39.31	74
Average	18.15	34

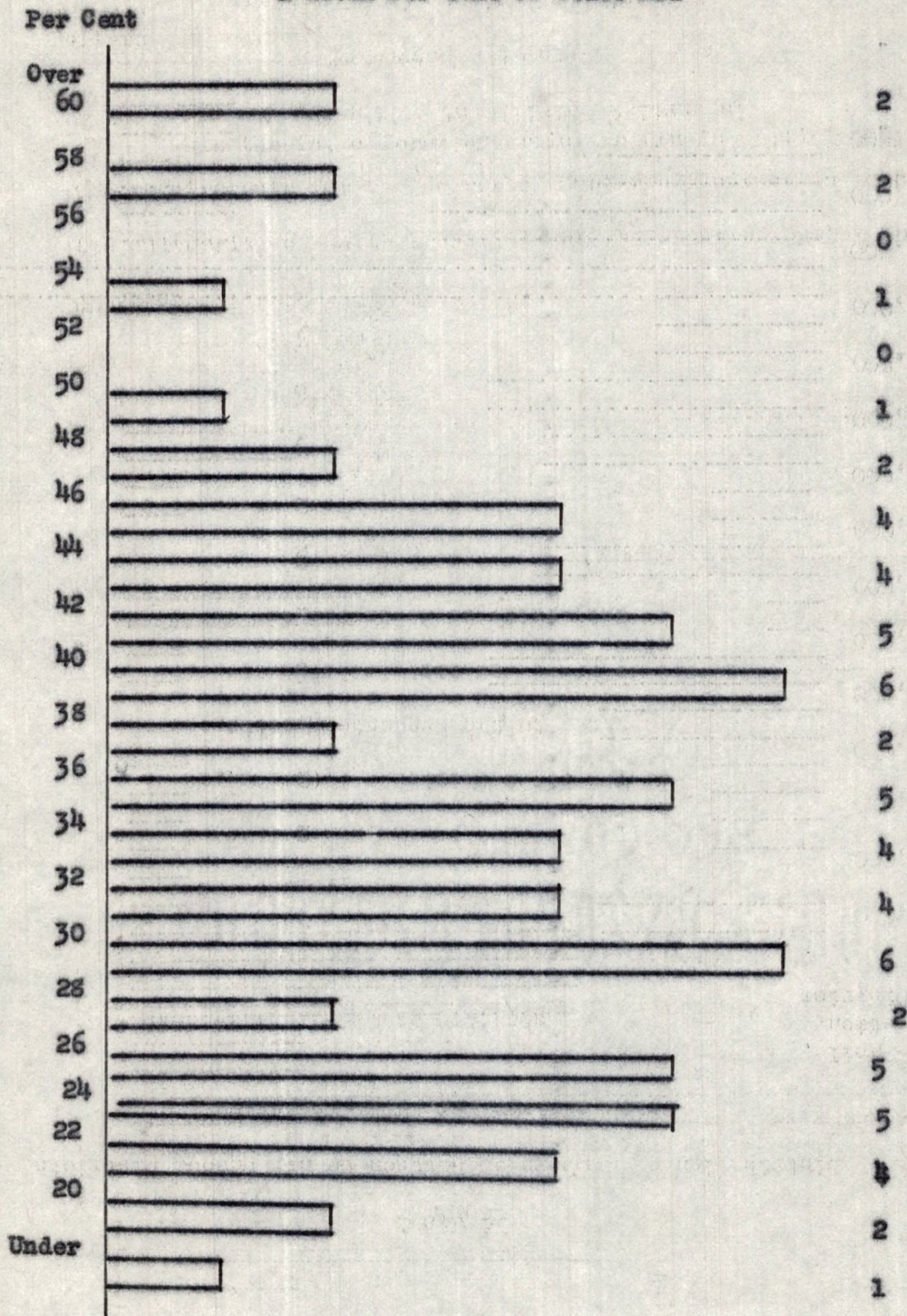
<sup>#</sup> Two school houses and two teachers

<sup>##</sup> Three school houses and three teachers



Figure 3

Number of Kittson County Schools Receiving  
a Given Per Cent of State Aid





tribution of the state to the accredited high school districts of Kittson County in the years 1929-1930 to 1934-1935. During the same period \$6,490.84 were given to the four unaccredited schools, and \$19,407.45 were given to the 58 rural school districts. It should also be noticed that while there are 58 rural school districts there are 6 more school houses than that. Averaging these amounts, it will be seen that each of the six accredited school districts gets an average of \$4,496.96 annually. The unaccredited get \$1,622.71 annually, and the rural school districts receive \$334.69.

The per-pupil incomes in the accredited high school districts from state aids varies from \$20.88 to \$56.51 per pupil, with an average per-pupil contribution to support for the six schools over a period of six years amounting to \$42.22. It will be noted that this is considerable higher than the average state support for other types of institutions. The unaccredited and ungraded small-town schools receive an average of \$24.96 per pupil, and the rural schools \$18.15 per pupil.

From this it may be inferred that the State Department of Education seeks to encourage better schools. But there are hitches to this regulation, which will be noted if the previous tables are referred to again. The school at Kennedy, Minnesota in the first group of schools gets only \$20.88 per pupil while in the second group Halma, with



only two teachers, gets \$27.02 per pupil, and rural district number 3 gets \$38.68 per pupil, and district number 81, with three one-room schools gets \$39.13. In the next section, dealing with the per cent that state aid is of total support, it will be noticed that other features make the encouragement of the larger schools perhaps more apparent than real.

From the comparison of state aid per pupil and per cent of state aid it will be seen that the distribution again favors the larger units. From the favorable averages, however, there are many glaring divergencies. Rural school district number 81 gets 74 per cent of her total support from the state. District number 70 gets 56 per cent. District number 66 gets 57 per cent, while a total of 13 other rural districts get 40 per cent and over.

Compared with the foregoing, only one of the small-town unaccredited schools gets over 40 per cent of its income from the state.

The average is well in favor of the accredited high school districts. Only two of the six schools drop below 40 per cent, and they (as well as district number 1) might have had somewhat more of state aid if they had lived up to certain state regulations.

State aid in Minnesota during the years 1929-1935 was distributed on the following bases: Apportionment,



supplemental aid, income tax, (this was granted only for the last year and amounted to about \$3.50 per pupil for the first year) classification aid, tuition for non-resident high school students, library aid, transportation aid, and special departments.

An aid which might vary greatly from district to district was the supplemental aid. This aid was planned for the support of the poor district, poor on the basis of per-pupil wealth. The law provided that if a mill levy of 20 mills doesn't yield the district an amount equivalent to \$40 per pupil, the state will make up the difference. District number 1 lost more than \$4,000 of aid in 1935 due to the fact that they dropped their tax levy below 20 mills. During the previous year the superintendent had tried to sell the school to the public by comparing his school to others in the county on the basis of tax rates. It was quite effective. While the superintendent was away to summer school the following year, action was taken to lower the tax rate to 16.9 mills. This accounted for a loss to the district of approximately \$4,000.

Three of the schools, Karlstad, Lancaster, and Bronson, get a high per cent of state aid but it is not all such a great aid to the district as it may seem. These three schools have a costly transportation system. Transportation would account for nearly 1/4 of the total state aid. This would lower the benefit of the aid considerably;



for transportation costs considerably more than the aid they received in return. In 1927 it was decided by the State Department of Education to pay only 90 per cent of their promised aids. This applied to classification aid, supplemental aids, transportation aid, and certain others, but did not apply to apportionment and high school tuition. When incomes for the State Department dropped, aids (except the last two mentioned) were prorated to the districts, so that what was actually paid to the districts was from 76 per cent to 91 per cent of the 90 per cent they had established as a base in 1927. This caused the consolidated schools to lose considerable on their transportation system. Instead of getting the \$2,520 it might have cost them for transportation, they would get 76 per cent of 90 per cent of that or \$1,771.72. This affected also the supplemental aid so that a supplemental aid of \$4,000 would dwindle down to \$2,736.

It will be noted from the foregoing, that the ones who would suffer most from the prorating would be the high schools with low per-pupil wealth and costly transportation systems. Another feature to aggravate this situation was the fact that the State of Minnesota had promised the high schools a flat classification aid of \$500 for meeting requirements as to organization, school plant, equipment, length of term, etc. The same schools had been promised \$400 for graded rating, i. e., that they



provide at least four grade rooms and four teachers with at least two years of normal training. The cut of 1927 brought this down to a sum of \$810, which then again was pro-rated as money was available.

These cuts didn't so vitally concern the rural districts. They got their apportionment in full. They had no transportation system. Buildings had cost them very little. Only a few of the districts had a tax rate high enough to entitle them to supplemental aid. The only aid cut to any appreciable extent was their classification aid.

The point to be given due recognition at this point is that the state aid is not what it appears to be. It is a certain amount per person, or a given per cent of total support, but it doesn't divulge the fact that schools had loaded themselves with burdens far in excess of the additional aid granted them.

It is that feature of state aid which causes the rural schools to consider themselves fortunate in their rating. They get nearly as high a per cent of total expense as the best schools, and they have gone to no additional costs to get it. Extensive consolidation cannot come under those circumstances. The laws of Minnesota will have to make a great step forward in the encouragement of larger systems to make further consolidation voluntary. It is doubtful whether any district adjoining present consolidated schools in Kittson County can be induced to join



with them and assume the higher tax rates. Improvements cannot be proved commensurate with additional costs.

### Summary and Conclusions of Chapter 2

The measure of ability to support education is more restricted in the district unit than on a national scale.

Inequalities in wealth per district and per pupil are just as great as those among states of the Union, easily exceeding in many instances six to one.

State aid is a real contribution to school support, furnishing no less than 14 per cent and as high as 74 per cent of total support.

The accredited high school districts are favored as to total aid, per pupil aid, and per cent of state aid of total support.

The favoring of better schools is more apparent than real. When consideration is given to what schools must supply to receive higher state aid, it will be found that accredited high school districts have assumed responsibilities entirely out of proportion to the increase in aid granted them.

The State Department of Education has not lived up to its promises of support for improvements made. In 1927 it was decided to pay only 90 per cent of the classification aids promised when schools reorganized. Transportation aid was cut to 90 per cent of actual costs. Several aids especially affecting larger units were pro-rated, at times as low as 76 per cent.



The conclusion is inevitable that present practice does not now further voluntary consolidation.

Present indications are that educational laws and regulations will have to be greatly modified to encourage the larger school unit.



## CHAPTER 3

AN INTERPRETATION OF EFFORT ON THE BASIS OF  
WEALTH AND EXPENDITURES FOR SCHOOLS IN KITTSON COUNTY

"She has given more than they all" was the verdict passed about a woman who had given only a half-penny.

Inequality in ability puts various interpretations on effort. To judge of effort, one must know ability. We must know capacity before we can tell whether a certain input has filled a container, or a given output has emptied it. Effort requires a dual measure.

A driver well acquainted with a car may be able to judge quite accurately whether it will make a certain grade on high, but even there he will often breathe to himself, "I think I can, I think I can," and after the top was reached he whispers, "I thought I could, I thought I could." But very often before he comes to the top certain noises and slowings down tell him that his hope wasn't well founded.

In society many phenomena are so concealed that an opinion based on them may be, and often is, very far off the mark. As an example we might think of the many conjectures of "experts" during the last political campaign. Certain rumblings, there too, may tell us that the machine is being strained, but where the point of maximum capacity lies, it seems safe to say, "no man knoweth."



Correlations are always much more difficult to measure than one factor at a time. Effort is such a correlation, but where education is involved a third factor enters in of which no valid measure has been found, or perhaps ever will be. The factor of willingness is so evasive, so erratic, and so dependent on many other factors that that factor will be left out of consideration.

Effort in this study will be defined as a correlation between wealth and state aid on the one hand and expenditures for school purposes on the other. The only measure of degree of effort will be sought in a correlation of factors which exist, not in what "may be," "might be," or "could be."

Ability was treated of in Chapter 2 of this study. It must again be taken up, but not to demonstrate or define, but to compare. Per-pupil wealth will be correlated with per-pupil expenditures. Current incomes will not be correlated; as it is already a known fact that schools spend on an average the same amount that they take in. Cash balances in Kittson County are large, approximately 29 per cent of the total income, but their value as a resource remains only so long as they aren't spent, and once spent exist no more. Income from the state is a suggestive field of inquiry. Its correlation here is with that of expenditures.

In this chapter therefore, various comparisons between ability and expenditures will be made; salient points



of difference will be noted; undesirable features will be pointed out; and an attempt at interpretation will be made. A plan for the betterment of the situation rightly belongs at a point where all the evidence has been heard, and that will be left for the final chapter.

#### Computations of Per-Pupil Costs

In computing per-pupil costs of schools in Kittson County, the practice was followed of including only what is known as "maintenance costs." Minnesota school business practice includes in this the items of general control, instructional costs, operation, maintenance, auxiliary agencies, and fixed charges, but not capital outlay and debt service. "Total Orders Issued" is an item considerable in excess of "maintenance costs" but have been left out of consideration except as an interesting excursus. Maintenance costs in the county amount to \$161,227.47, and total orders issued \$196,933.45, or approximately 1/4 greater. Per-pupil costs of education based on the latter would amount to \$149.26 for high school students and \$89.45 for elementary pupils in the rural one-room schools. The significance of difference in per-pupil costs based on the different sets of figures will be pointed out in the chapter summary.

In the first tables of this chapter it seems convenient to include total costs of education per district,



Table 4

Averages for the School Years from 1929 to 1935 Valuations  
and Tax Rates in Mills in High School Districts

Number of District	Total Valuations	Tax Rates In Mills
1	\$391,429	24.63
10	247,321	40.55
13	204,353	38.30
32	154,558	76.10
74	224,542	46.58
75	135,339	119.00
Total	\$1,360,994	
Average		56.69
Non-Accredited Urban Schools		
2	\$163,224	42.0
12	126,239	30.4
40	74,343	36.1
56	163,080	24.0
Total	\$526,886	
Average		33.2
Total A & B	\$2,287,880	51.266



Table 4 (Continued)

Averages for the School Years from 1929 to 1935 Valuations  
and Tax Rates in Mills in Rural Districts

Number of District	Total Valuations	Tax Rates in Mills
3	\$91,358	4.8
4	174,528	6.7
5	59,168	8.8
6	66,878	9.0
7	97,246	5.5
8	74,344	10.2
9	76,944	8.9
11	89,716	5.8
14 <sup>#</sup>	90,218	14.9
15	61,830	9.4
16	79,354	9.8
17	14,195	51.0
18	80,390	5.8
19 <sup>#</sup>	79,287	6.3
20 <sup>#</sup>	80,223	13.5
21	43,834	14.0
22	65,517	5.1
23	70,463	8.5
24	33,958	16.6
25	54,373	
26	72,968	18.4
27	31,033	14.1
28	17,424	24.
29	45,281	12.
30	75,186	5.1
31	35,440	12.5
33	46,408	10.1
34	47,639	11.7
35	72,236	5.5
36	30,409	15.1

<sup>#</sup>Two school houses and two teachers



Table 4 (Continued)

Averages for the School Years from 1929 to 1935 Valuations  
and Tax Rates in Mills in Rural Districts

Number of District	Total Valuations	Tax Rates in Mills
37	\$ 30,698	23.7
38	36,160	14.2
39	31,538	22.6
41	24,923	9.5
43	89,824	7.7
44	101,230	13.6
45	37,939	7.0
50	41,725	9.5
53	Not Known	
54	75,500	10.2
55	82,493	8.1
57	81,994	18.9
58	93,169	11.6
59	19,174	15.2
61	79,696	7.0
62	61,551	13.8
63 <sup>#</sup>	43,365	30.9
64 <sup>#</sup>	83,961	10.4
65	34,573	41.2
66	44,812	10.7
68	18,350	24.6
69	36,262	17.7
70	20,234	48.0
71	24,858	27.6
72	19,090	4.8
76	75,557	5.5
77	45,858	18.7
81 <sup>##</sup>	32,832	34.8
Average		14.22
Average Tax Rates A, B, & C		19.3

<sup>#</sup> Two school houses and two teachers

<sup>##</sup> Three school houses and three teachers



number of pupils in high school, number of pupils in elementary grades, and per-pupil costs for each group. It makes for a rather full table, but it facilitates the making of comparisons.

Tax Rates in Kittson County

From the tables on valuations and tax rates, one is forced to conclude that there is no correlation between ability and effort to maintain a school. Among the schools of a given group there is nearly as wide a variation as between groups.

Nine districts have had an average tax rate for a period of six years of less than six mills. Seventeen others have an average of 10 or less. The average for all rural districts is only 14.22 mills. With an average per-pupil wealth of \$3,058, this group would raise \$43.48 per pupil if all taxes were paid, but what about those with a tax rate of five mills?

In the high school group we find one school with a per-pupil valuation of only \$1,235 has a tax rate of only 24.69 mills, despite the fact that it operates the largest grade and high school departments in the county. All this school would realize from that tax rate is \$34.48 per pupil. Another district with a per-pupil wealth of \$879 has a tax rate of 119 mills. This would yield \$104.60 per pupil, a difference between the two districts of over \$80. With an average tax rate of 56.69 mills and per-pupil



Table 5  
Total and Per-Pupil Cost of Education in the  
Accredited Schools of Kittson County

Number of District	Total Cost	No. H.S. Pupils	No. Grade Pupils	Per-Pupil Cost H.S.	Per-Pupil Cost Grades
1	\$21,955.07	127	181	\$ 93.20	\$55.92
10	11,384.24	43	75	129.40	77.64
13	9,268.99	55	60	101.85	61.11
32	17,897.28	58	120	122.50	73.50
74	17,951.45	93	140	101.45	60.45
75	12,845.30	44	111	116.10	69.66
Total	\$88,302.33	420	687		
Average	14,717.05	70	115	\$106.11	\$63.86
Department Costs	\$44,566.20		\$43,736.13		
Small Urban Schools of Kittson County					
2	\$ 8,109.54	19	99	\$93.75	\$56.25
12	4,483.46		37		121.17
40	3,223.73		51		60.82
56	4,706.66		60		94.46
Total	21,523.39	19	247		
Average					\$78.11
Department Costs	\$ 2,229.65		\$19,293.74		
Pupils A & B		439	934		
Averages		62.7	93	\$106.59	\$67.49
Department Costs					
A & B	\$46,796.85		\$63,029.87		



Table 5 (Continued)  
 Total and Per-pupil Cost of Education in the  
 Rural One-Room Schools of Kittson County

Number of District	Maintenance Cost	No. Grade Pupils	Per-Pupil Cost
3	\$ 752.34	5	\$150.47
4	1,810.60	33	45.85
5	839.89	11	76.35
6	888.56	13	68.35
7	999.97	19	51.18
8	931.97	12	77.66
9	1,115.86	22	50.72
11	731.78	11	66.54
14 #	1,733.24	56	30.60
15	1,052.61	23	45.76
16	943.99	26	36.31
17	299.39	5	49.88
18	818.01	12	68.17
19	853.49	18	47.42
20 #	1,656.31	28	69.01
21	762.68	9	84.74
22	663.93	10	66.39
23	794.93	14	56.78
24	78785.50	18	43.64
25	48.63	No Pupils	
26	117.52	17	65.73
27	788.43	21	37.53
28	207.93	3	69.31
29	908.96	38	23.39
30	814.71	24	33.94
31	737.62	22	33.53
33	776.47	24	32.35
34	846.49	25	33.80
35	868.63	18	48.26
36	797.55	20	39.88

#Two school houses and two teachers.



Table 5 (Continued)  
Total and Per-Pupil Cost of Education in the  
Rural One-Room Schools of Kittson County

Number of District	Maintenance Cost	No. Grade Pupils	Per-Pupil Cost
37	\$ 700.03	12	\$58.34
38	899.74	23	39.12
39	820.58	16	51.27
41	787.93	16	49.25
43	838.32	10	83.83
44	1,138.86	24	49.95
45	834.98	26	33.40
50	730.34	12	60.86
53	Not Known	12	
54	949.05	21	45.19
55	1,056.00	20	52.80
57	2,035.16	29	70.18
58	678.23	9	75.35
59	274.23	3	91.41
61	825.62	10	82.56
62	1,079.24	22	49.06
63 <sup>#</sup>	1,523.47	26	48.60
64 <sup>#</sup>	1,813.09	35	51.80
65	749.82	15	49.99
66	722.71	24	30.11
68	681.72	9	75.75
69	658.14	5	131.63
70	601.57	11	54.69
71	523.37	14	37.38
72	43.15	None	
76	646.63	4	162.91
77	864.99	32	24.03
81 <sup>##</sup>	2,591.52	64	40.49
Total	\$51,401.75	1,037	
Average	803.15	17.8	49.62
Total Elementary A, B, & C	114,431.62	1,998	
Averages	1,525.75	26.5	57.22

<sup>#</sup> Two school houses and two teachers

<sup>##</sup> Three school houses and three teachers.



valuation of this group at \$1,228, they can expect at the most only \$69.62 per pupil.

The four small urban school systems seem to have much the more uniform tax rate. The spread is only 18 mills. The average per-pupil wealth of this group is \$2,026. With their average tax rate of 33.2 mills, this group can expect \$66.26 per pupil, and in only one of these schools is there any high school students.

#### Costs of Education

The problem of what schools actually spend for education is an interesting one. Using a correlation graph, it was found that there was a positive correlation of about .22 between the number of pupils and cost per pupil. This tells us that the larger school pays more per pupil than the small one, which of course is unreasonable. We find, though, several exceptions to this rule. One school with only four pupils spent \$646.63, or an average of \$162.91 per pupil. What schools couldn't we have, if large school units could be supported to that extent!

Reports to county superintendents in Minnesota contain no information about how costs are distributed to elementary school and high school. A recent law in Minnesota authorized the Department of Education to distribute aid to schools on the basis of \$60 for elementary pupils and \$100 to high school. This was taken as an indication that a fair distribution might be on the basis



of 3 to 5. Following this clue, the author distributed the costs in all schools where both departments were found on that basis. The following will describe the process.

We take the actual situation of the high school group. There were 420 high school students and 687 elementary, and \$88,302.33 were spent. To arrive at per-pupil costs, the number of elementary pupils was multiplied by .6, as that was the ratio of elementary costs to high school. Adding that product to the 420, number of high school students, we get 832.2. We divide this into the total cost, 88,302.33, and our answer is 106.11, or \$106.11. This is the cost for high school students. To arrive at the cost of elementary training we multiply the high school figure by .6. This gives us \$63.66 as the cost of elementary schooling.

Again in the field of school costs we find the widest of variation. One school paid only \$24.03 per pupil over a period of six years to give children their education. An average of 32 pupils were packed into that one-room school. Year after year this was going on, and presumably taxpayers thought that the situation was quite satisfactory. What seems the more upsetting is that 44 per cent of that expenditure was state aid. But the climax is the school where 38 pupils were in school day after day, and the whole school bill amounted to only \$23.39 per pupil.



Table 6  
 Ratio of Per-Pupil Cost of Elementary Grades  
 to Per-Pupil Valuation

<u>Number of District</u>	<u>Per-Pupil Valuation</u>	<u>Per-Pupil Cost</u>	<u>Ratio of Cost to Valuation</u>
1	\$1,235	\$55.92	.0453
10	2,228	77.64	.0344
13	1,747	61.11	.0349
32	873	73.50	.0842
74	940	60.45	.0642
75	879	69.66	.0792
Average	\$1,228	\$64.44	.0525
Non-Accredited Village Schools			
2	\$1,383	\$56.25	.0416
12	3,602	121.17	.0336
40	1,403	60.82	.0433
56	2,718	94.46	.0348
Average	\$2,026	\$70.41	.0347
Averages Group A & B	\$1,349	\$65.59	.0486



Table 6 (Continued)  
 Ratio of Per-Pupil Cost of Elementary Grades  
 to Per-Pupil Valuation

Number of District	Per-Pupil Valuation	Per-Pupil Cost	Ratio of Cost to Valuation
3	\$15,226	\$150.47	.0099
4	5,289	45.85	.0086
5	5,379	76.35	.0123
6	5,144	68.35	.0113
7	5,118	51.18	.0100
8	6,195	77.66	.0125
9	3,452	60.72	.0149
11	8,155	81.65	.0100
14 <sup>#</sup>	1,611	30.60	.0190
15	2,775	45.76	.0162
16	3,052	36.31	.0119
17	2,839	49.88	.0176
18	6,691	68.17	.0102
19	4,405	47.42	.0108
20 <sup>#</sup>	3,343	69.01	.0206
21	4,870	84.74	.0174
22	6,552	66.39	.0101
23	5,033	56.79	.0113
24	1,887	43.64	.0231
25	No pupils		
26	4,292	65.72	.0153
27	1,478	37.53	.0254
28	5,808	69.31	.0119
29	1,192	23.39	.0196
30	3,133	33.94	.0108
31	1,611	33.53	.0207
33	1,934	32.35	.0167
34	1,906	33.80	.0177
35	4,013	48.26	.012
36	1,525	39.88	.0262

<sup>#</sup>Two school houses and two teachers.



Table 6 (Continued)  
 Ratio of Per-Pupil Cost of Elementary Grades  
 to Per-Pupil Valuation

Number of District	Per-Pupil Valuation	Per-Pupil Cost	Ratio of Cost to Valuation
37	\$2,558	\$58.34	.0227
38	1,572	39.12	.0249
39	1,971	51.27	.026
41	1,558	49.25	.0271
43	8,982	83.83	.0093
44	4,401	49.95	.0113
45	1,518	33.40	.0220
50	3,477	60.86	.0174
53	Not Known		.
54	3,595	45.19	.0127
55	5,125	52.80	.0128
57	2,827	70.18	.0248
58	10,352	75.35	.0072
59	6,391	91.41	.0143
61	7,970	82.56	.0104
62	2,798	49.06	.0175
63 <sup>#</sup>	1,870	58.60	.0315
64 <sup>#</sup>	2,399	51.80	.0215
65	1,505	49.99	.0332
66	1,876	30.11	.0161
68	2,039	75.75	.0371
69	7,252	131.63	.0179
70	1,830	54.69	.0298
71	1,776	37.38	.0211
72	No Pupils	No Aid	
76	18,889	162.91	.0086
77	1,436	27.03	.0188
81 <sup>##</sup>	513	40.49	.0785
Average	3,058	49.57	.0162
All Elementary	2,112	57.22	.0271

<sup>#</sup> Two school houses and two teachers.

<sup>##</sup> Three school houses and three teachers.



By referring to the tables, we notice that the two urban groups vary but little. The high school group pays \$63.66 for each elementary pupil, while the unaccredited group pays \$70.41. The rural schools get education for their 1,037 pupils at the average cost of \$49.62 per pupil.

It seems fair to conclude that no system can compete with the one-room school in being cheap.

Ratio of the Per Pupil Cost of  
Elementary Grades to the Per-Pupil Valuation

The knowledge derived from total valuation and tax rates is a most limited one. All we can say is that a given tax rate will raise a certain amount of money. We can see whether the tax rate is the same, but whether it is adequate we know nothing about until comparison is made between receipts and numbers of pupils.

In the tables just presented we have another presentation of the financial situation. This time we are not told what the board asks their districts for, but what they actually spend. To abbreviate, it has at once been reduced to the per-pupil basis. If reference should be desired to total amounts, they may be found in other tables. Total expenditures and total valuations are given in previous tables in this chapter.

It will undoubtedly be understood that any ratio expressed in decimals presupposes that one of the values



is established as "one" (1). To find the ratio, one need only divide the one factor by the other. In every instance, per-pupil cost is, of course, less than per-pupil valuation, and so per-pupil cost has been divided by per-pupil valuation.

The only field considered was the elementary field. The ratio for the schools conducting high schools would be much higher if high school expenses were included. As the purpose in this study is to compare schools on some equitable basis, only factors obtainable for this purpose have been used. That is the reason why grade and high school costs have been segregated.

Again it will be noticed that the rural group does little to provide education compared with the others. Its ratio is less than one-half of the small urban schools and much less than one-third of the high school group. The ratio of .0162 for the rural schools becomes .0347 for the small urban and .0525 for the high school group. It will be noticed that the average for the high school group and the non-accredited village schools combined is exactly three times as high as for rural schools.

It might have been more suggestive to have converted these decimals to mills. If that is desired, one need only think of the decimal point as three places to the right. Or if per cent is desired, move the point two places to the right. This may seem obvious, but perhaps few would stop to think that a .0525 means an expenditure of 52.5 mills,



or 5.25 per cent of a community's total valuation. We can say that in the entire county, 2.71 per cent is spent for maintenance costs of elementary education.

It will be noticed that these tables, for the first time, deal with the matter of expenditures on the per-pupil basis. These fluctuate between 23.39 as the low point to \$162.63 as the high.

This is not directly comparable to what is reported by a National Education Association Research Bulletin;<sup>1</sup> as their report is based on children of the 6 to 13 age level while this is based on children actually in school. The number of pupils on the Kittson County census, however, is greater, too, than would be by the age limits laid down by the research bulletin. Their age limits were six and 13 years respectively, while in Minnesota the age limits for the census are six and 16. This would make the Kittson County census figures more than 1/4 higher than the figures the research bulletin is based on.

#### The Nation and Kittson County Compared

If Kittson County census figures were used in place of the number enrolled in school, the result would be a much higher figure than the present one. The total number of persons on the census is 1841, while the number of enrolled is 2,437. The difference of nearly one-fourth of a smaller

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<sup>1</sup>Research Bulletin of the National Education Association, Vol. IV, No. 1 and 2: "The Ability of the States to Support Education." pp. 39-60.



number in the census than by enrollment would raise our per-pupil expenditure one-fourth. An average for the county of \$57.22 would become \$61.53 per pupil. If three years were cut off our census lists there would be a further reduction of at least one-fourth, which would raise our per-pupil expenditure to \$76.86. Our average per-pupil expenditure would in that way nearly equal the first quartile of states reported (\$78) in the research bulletin.<sup>2</sup>

When this has been done, our figures are still non-comparable with those in the report. The research bulletin included all moneys spent for education. Ours considers only maintenance costs. Total costs were one-fourth higher than maintenance costs. To compare with the national survey we must therefore add an other fourth to the \$76.86, and the entire figure would far exceed the upper quartile of states. Our average expenditure on the basis of persons 6 to 13 would be \$96.08. Of the first quartile of states in the Union, only three states had a higher; namely, California, Nevada, and Wyoming.<sup>3</sup>

Figuring the same way for our high school group, the average expenditure per pupil would be, not \$64.44 but \$125.86, and for the second group \$137.51 per pupil. When compared on this basis, even our rural schools spend \$77.45 per pupil, and so fall among the upper quartile of states

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<sup>2</sup>(Note) References to a source will be numbered consecutively in the section dealt with. Ibid, pp. 41

<sup>3</sup>Research Bulletin of the National Education Association, Vol. IV, No. 1 and 2, p. 40.



for expenditure.

The end of our comparison isn't yet. In the research bulletin, all expenditures were included. We have left out high school expenditures and so to make our figures comparable, we would have to add these. When worked out on this basis, our per-pupil expenditure would average \$127.55 for the county, even slightly exceeding proud California in the matter of effort.<sup>4</sup>

Per Cent of Wealth Spent Annually  
For Schools in Kittson County

Another point of comparison is that of per cent of expenditure to wealth. The same thing happens here, to compare these figures with those of the national survey, we will have to add to ours 3/4 of what they already are. The per cent expenditures of the first quartile of states is .52 per cent, for the second .49 per cent, for the third .54 per cent, and for the fourth .46 per cent. The ranking has followed not expenditures, but ability.<sup>5</sup>

Our averages for group A, B, and C schools are 5.25 per cent, 3.47 per cent, and 1.62 per cent. If these were raised 75 per cent, we would have them 8.19 per cent, 3.47 per cent, and 2.84 per cent respectively.

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<sup>4</sup>Ibid. p. 40.

<sup>5</sup>Research Bulletin of the National Education Association, Vol. IV, No. 1 and 2, p. 40.



**Table 7**  
**Per-Pupil Cost to District When Per-Pupil**  
**State Aid Has Been Subtracted**

<b>Number of District</b>	<b>Per-Pupil Cost</b>	<b>Per-Pupil State Aid</b>	<b>Per-Pupil to District</b>
1	\$55.92	\$33.87	\$22.05
10	77.64	35.34	41.30
13	61.11	20.88	40.23
32	73.50	56.51	16.99
74	60.45	51.22	9.23
75	69.99	48.61	21.05
<b>Average</b>	<b>\$64.44</b>	<b>\$42.22</b>	<b>\$22.22</b>

**Per-Pupil Cost to Non-Accredited Districts**

2	\$56.25	\$21.62	\$34.63
12	121.17	15.71	105.46
40	60.82	27.02	33.80
56	94.46	21.42	73.04
<b>Average</b>	<b>\$70.41</b>	<b>\$24.96</b>	<b>\$45.45</b>
<b>Groups A &amp; B</b>			
<b>Averages</b>	<b>65.99</b>	<b>38.35</b>	<b>27.54</b>



Table 7 (Continued)  
 Per-Pupil Cost to Rural Districts When Per-  
 Pupil State Aid Has Been Subtracted

Number of District	Per-Pupil Cost	Per-Pupil State Aid	Per-Pupil to District
3	\$150.47	\$38.68	\$111.79
4	54.85	13.80	41.05
5	76.35	21.46	54.89
6	68.35	18.17	50.18
7	51.18	16.08	35.10
8	77.66	18.05	59.61
9	50.72	5.09	45.63
11	81.65	18.93	62.72
14 <sup>#</sup>	30.60	13.90	16.70
15	45.76	14.56	31.20
16	36.31	13.02	23.29
17	59.88	45.69	14.19
18	68.17	15.89	52.28
19	46.67	14.39	32.28
20 <sup>#</sup>	69.01	13.65	55.36
21	87.74	22.39	65.35
22	66.39	20.92	45.47
23	56.78	18.19	38.59
24	43.64	15.89	27.75
25	No Children	No Aid	
26	65.73	16.41	49.32
27	37.54	16.37	21.17
28	69.31	24.16	45.15
29	23.30	12.16	11.23
30	33.94	12.85	21.09
31	33.53	13.95	19.58
33	32.35	12.20	20.15
34	33.80	14.68	19.12
35	48.26	15.10	33.16
36	39.88	15.20	24.68

<sup>#</sup>Two school houses and two teachers.



Table 7 (Continued)  
Per-Pupil Cost to Rural Districts When Per-  
Pupil State Aid Has Been Subtracted

Number of District	Per-Pupil Cost	Per-Pupil State Aid	Per-Pupil to District
37	\$58.34	\$20.06	\$38.28
38	39.12	15.07	24.05
39	39.12	15.81	23.31
41	49.25	18.77	30.48
43	83.83	18.45	65.38
44	49.95	18.69	31.26
45	33.40	16.52	16.98
50	60.86	20.02	40.84
53	Not Known		
54	45.19	13.76	31.43
55	52.80	14.89	37.91
57	75.60	15.36	60.24
58	75.36	22.06	53.30
59	91.41	47.54	43.89
61	82.56	23.42	59.14
62	49.06	14.79	34.27
63 <sup>#</sup>	58.60	47.10	11.50
64 <sup>#</sup>	51.80	14.81	36.99
65	49.99	32.70	17.29
66	30.11	15.21	14.90
68	75.75	32.83	42.72
69	131.63	33.71	97.92
70	54.69	30.74	23.95
71	34.38	19.68	14.70
72	No Pupils	No Aid	
76	162.91	38.71	124.20
77	27.03	13.43	13.60
81 <sup>##</sup>	40.49	39.13	1.36
Average	47.86	18.15	29.71
Combined A, B, C Averages	57.22	20.31	26.91

<sup>#</sup> Two school houses and two teachers.

<sup>##</sup> Three school houses and three teachers.



The question arises, how can these figures compare? They are up to 15 times as high as the survey figures. We should remember that valuations given in the national study are not assessed valuations, like ours, but computed on a different basis. It may be that they differ by 60 per cent to 75 per cent and so would decrease the spread between their figures and ours. The method of finding valuations for the bulletin is carefully described.<sup>6</sup> The figures of the previous paragraphs can hardly mean that Kittson County puts forth more than ten times the effort to support education that the best states in the Union do. It may be that further investigation will disclose the cause for the great difference between the national and local figures.

#### Net Local Cost of Education

This section revolves about the point of net local costs. In the previous chapter state aid was dealt with as a phase of ability to support education. Here we must consider it as a determinant of what will be left for the district to pay. Some startling things occur. Who would think that the district which provided education only at the rate of \$23.39 per pupil would get more than half of its bill paid by the state? What incentive would such a district find in improving their school, when the state leaves them only \$11.23 to pay under the present status?

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<sup>6</sup>Ibid. p. 3.



Would they be likely to respond to stimulus toward a larger unit?

A summary of the findings of the tables presented might aid in visualizing the situation. Group A schools refers to classified high schools, group B to non-accredited village schools, and C refers to rural schools.

Pp means per-pupil.

Table 8

Item	Group A	Group B	Group C
1. Pp Total Cost	\$64.44	\$70.41	\$47.86
2. Pp State Aid	42.22	24.96	20.31
3. Pp Net Cost to District	22.22	45.45	29.71
4. Average of 1 for A & B	\$65.99	A,B,& C	\$57.22
5. Average of 2 for A & B	38.95	A,B,& C	20.31
6. Average of 3 for A & B	27.54	A,B,& C	26.91

From the summaries we conclude that the state attempts to encourage the formation of larger units, as shown by final costs to districts of \$22.22, \$45.45, and \$29.71. In the next section the matter will be dealt with in another way.

#### Ratio of Net Costs to Valuation

The previous section led us to infer that the state was making an honest effort to encourage the larger unit. With the perusal of this unit we notice that our measure was inadequate. The measure was desirable, but certain



Table 9  
Ratio of Net Per-Pupil Cost to District of  
Elementary Training to Per-Pupil Valuation

Number of District	Per-Pupil Valuation	Net Cost Per Pupil	Ratio of Net Cost to Per-Pupil Valuation
1	\$1,235	\$22.05	.0178
10	2,228	41.30	.0185
13	1,747	40.23	.0230
32	873	16.99	.0195
74	840	9.23	.0099
75	879	21.05	.0239
Average	\$1,228	\$22.22	.0180

Ratio of Net-Per-Pupil Cost to Non-Accredited Districts  
of Elementary Training to the Per-Pupil Valuation

2	\$1,383	\$34.63	.0250
12	3,602	105.46	.0293
40	1,403	33.80	.0241
56	2,718	73.04	.0268
Average	\$2,026	\$45.45	.0224
Averages for A & B	1,349	27.54	.0204



Table 9 (Continued)  
 Ratio of Net Per-Pupil Cost to Rural Districts  
 of Elementary Training to Per-Pupil Valuation

Number of District	Per-Pupil Valuation	Net Cost Per Pupil	Ratio of Net Cost to District to Per-Pupil Valuation
3	\$15,226	\$111.79	.0073
4	5,289	41.05	.0078
5	5,379	54.89	.0102
6	5,144	50.18	.0097
7	5,118	35.10	.0068
8	6,195	59.61	.0085
9	3,452	45.63	.0132
11	8,155	62.72	.0077
14 <sup>#</sup>	1,611	16.70	.0104
15	2,775	31.20	.0112
16	3,052	23.29	.0076
17	2,839	14.19	.0050
18	6,691	52.28	.0078
19	4,405	32.38	.0073
20 <sup>#</sup>	3,343	56.56	.0168
21	4,870	65.35	.0134
22	6,552	45.47	.0069
23	5,033	38.59	.0076
24	1,887	27.75	.0147
25	No Pupils	No Aid	No Cost
26	4,292	49.32	.0114
27	1,478	21.17	.0143
28	5,808	45.15	.0077
29	1,192	11.23	.0094
30	3,133	21.09	.0067
31	1,611	19.58	.0121
33	1,934	20.15	.0104
34	1,906	19.12	.0100
35	4,013	33.16	.0082
36	1,525	24.68	.0161

<sup>#</sup>Two school houses and two teachers.



Table 9 (Continued)  
 Ratio of Net Per-Pupil Cost to Rural Districts  
 of Elementary Training to Per-Pupil Valuation

Number of District	Per-Pupil Valuation	Net Cost Per Pupil	Ratio of Net Cost to District to Per-Pupil Valuation
c 37	\$2,558	\$38.28	.0149
38	1,572	24.05	.0159
39	1,971	23.31	.0118
41	1,558	30.58	.0195
43	8,982	65.38	.0074
44	4,401	31.26	.0206
45	1,518	16.98	.0112
50	3,477	50.84	.0117
53	Not Known	Not Known	
54	3,595	31.43	.0087
55	4,125	37.91	.0092
57	2,827	50.24	.0213
58	10,352	53.30	.0051
59	6,391	43.89	.0069
61	7,971	59.14	.0074
62	2,798	34.27	.0122
63 <sup>#</sup>	1,860	11.50	.0062
64 <sup>#</sup>	2,399	36.99	.0154
65	1,505	17.29	.0115
66	1,876	14.90	.0079
68	2,039	42.72	.0209
69	7,252	97.92	.0135
70	1,830	23.95	.0131
71	1,776	14.70	.0082
72	No Pupils	No Aid	
76	18,869	124.20	.0065
77	1,436	13.60	.0094
81 <sup>##</sup>	513	1.36	.0026
Average	\$3,058	\$29.71	.0097
Averages for Combined Groups			
A, B, & G	\$2,112	\$26.91	.0127

<sup>#</sup> Two school houses and two teachers

<sup>##</sup> Three school houses and three teachers



weighty matters escaped notice. The preceding set of tables as well as the following set shows that other factors have a tendency to annul or neutralize much of the action of state aid. The ratio of per-pupil cost, net or gross, is in favor of the small unit. The difference is only a few mills, but it is enough to convince most people that nothing need be done. The ratio of new cost to per-pupil wealth is 18 mills in the high school districts, 22.4 in the non-accredited, and only 9.7 in the rural.

What has jiggled the figures of the last section when things seemed so decidedly to favor the large unit? Per-pupil wealth did. Per-pupil wealth of \$1,228 in the high-school unit grew, as noted several times before, to \$3,058 for the rural. Per-pupil net costs were low in the high-school districts but not so low in comparison as per-pupil wealth was, and so division reversed a seemingly very satisfactory set-up. Rural schools are still the favored group. The battle to dislodge them is still on.

#### Cost of Education and Tax Rates

In the following tables some seemingly unexplainable facts occur. How is it that the net cost of education to the high school districts is only 18 mills but that the average tax levy is 56.59 mills? In the non-accredited, the figures are 22.4 and 33.2, and in the rural 9.7 and 14.2. It must be capital outlay, debt service, and tax delinquency. For while these were ruled out of the



Table 10

Ratio of Gross and Net Per-Pupil Costs to Per-Pupil  
Wealth Compared with Tax Rates in Kittson County

<u>Number of District</u>	<u>Ratio of Gross Cost and Wealth</u>	<u>Ratio of Net Cost and Wealth</u>	<u>Rates Tax Levies</u>
1	.0453	.0178	.02463
10	.0344	.0185	.04055
13	.0349	.0230	.03330
32	.0842	.0195	.07610
74	.0642	.0099	.04658
75	.0792	.0239	.11900
Group A Averages	.0525	.0180	.05659
2	.0525	.0250	.04200
12	.0336	.0293	.03040
40	.0433	.0241	.03610
56	.0348	.0268	.02400
Group B Averages	.0347	.0224	.03320
Groups A & B Averages	.0486	.0204	.04927



Table 10

Ratio of Gross and Net Per-Pupil Costs to Per-Pupil  
Wealth Compared with Tax Rates in Kittson County

Number of District	Ratio of Gross Cost and Wealth	Ratio of Net Cost and Wealth	Rates Tax Levies
3	.0099	.0073	.0048
4	.0086	.0078	.0067
5	.0123	.0102	.0088
6	.0003	.0097	.0090
7	.0100	.0068	.0066
8	.0125	.0085	.0102
9	.0149	.0132	.0089
11 <sup>#</sup>	.0100	.0077	.0058
14 <sup>#</sup>	.0190	.0104	.0149
15	.0162	.0112	.0094
16	.0119	.0076	.0098
17	.0176	.0050	.0510
18	.0102	.0078	.0058
19	.0108	.0073	.0063
20 <sup>#</sup>	.0206	.0168	.0135
21	.0174	.0134	.0140
22	.0101	.0069	.0051
23	.0113	.0076	.0085
24	.0341	.0147	.0166
25	No Pupils	No Aid	No Tax Levy
26	.0153	.0114	.0184
27	.0254	.0143	.0151
28	.0119	.0077	.0240
29	.0196	.0067	.0051
30	.0108	.0067	.0051
31	.0207	.0121	.0125
33	.0167	.0104	.0101
34	.0177	.0100	.0117
35	.0262	.0161	.0151
36	.0262	.0161	.0151

<sup>#</sup>Two school houses and two teachers



Table 10 (Continued)

Ratio of Gross and Net Per-Pupil Costs to Per-Pupil  
Wealth Compared with Tax Rates in Kittson County

Number of District	Ratio of Gross Cost and Wealth	Ratio of Net Cost and Wealth	Rates Tax Levies
37	.0227	.0149	.0237
38	.0249	.0159	.0142
39	.0260	.0118	.0226
41	.0271	.0195	.0095
43	.0093	.0074	.0077
44	.0113	.0206	.0136
45	.0220	.0112	.0070
50	.0174	.0117	.0095
53	Not Known	Not Known	Not Known
54	.0126	.0087	.0102
55	.0128	.0092	.0081
57	.0248	.0213	.0189
58	.0072	.0051	.0116
59	.0143	.0069	.0152
61	.0103	.0074	.0070
62	.0175	.0122	.0138
63 <sup>#</sup>	.0315	.0062	.0309
64 <sup>#</sup>	.0215	.0154	.0104
65	.0332	.0115	.0412
66	.0161	.0079	.0107
68	.0371	.0209	.0246
69	.0179	.0135	.0177
70	.0298	.0131	.0480
71	.0211	.0082	.0276
72	No Pupils	No Pupils	.0048
76	.0086	.0065	.0055
77	.0188	.0094	.0187
81 <sup>##</sup>	.0785	.0026	.0348
Averages	.0162	.0097	.0142
Group A, B, & C Averages	.0271	.0127	.0193

<sup>#</sup>Two school houses and two teachers

<sup>##</sup>Three school houses and three teachers



expenditures column, they were not erased from tax lists. That tells us, too, why the most progressive districts are worst hit by the comparison.

#### Summary and Conclusions

There is a wide variation both between groups and within as to the per-pupil expenditure for education. This spread is from \$23.39 in one rural school to \$162.91 in another.

Per-pupil costs are much higher in urban schools than in rural.

No type of school can compete with the rural school in being cheap as to amount of money spent.

The ratio of costs of education to per-pupil wealth is much lower for the rural schools than for urban.

Kittson County stands among the upper group, when compared with states, in per-pupil expenditures for education. When all expenditures are accounted for, it seems that she stands even with California, she state ranking highest in the Union.

When comparisons of the per cent of costs to wealth is made, it seems doubtful that our basis for computing wealth in any way approaches the method of the national survey.<sup>7</sup> The figures of this study are up to 15 times as high as the survey figures.

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<sup>7</sup>The Ability of the States to Support Education,  
N. E. A. Research Bulletin, Vol. IV, No. 1 and 2, p. 49.



State aid to districts leaves the high school districts with the lowest net per-pupil cost, \$22.22, while the rural districts have a net average per-pupil cost of \$29.71. This seems to give the large unit the decided advantage over the small that the Department of Education has intended.

A ratio of net costs to per-pupil wealth shows that the larger unit, due to low per-pupil wealth, is not sufficiently encouraged by state aid. The rural schools find the ratio decidedly to their advantage.

There is a wide difference between the ratio of net cost of education to pupil wealth and local tax rates. There should be a correlation of 1, as both presume to reflect local costs in their relation to wealth. The difference discriminates against progressive districts, which have higher debt service costs and capital outlays.

Following the lead given in the introduction to the chapter, it may be stated here that the cause for the difference between per-pupil costs computed on the basis of maintenance costs and "Total Orders Issued," lies, undoubtedly, in the differences in amount of capital outlay and debt service between groups of districts.

The high-school groups have made large capital outlays on which they still owe substantial amounts. This they are paying interest on, as well as gradually taking



up bonds as they come due. The larger units are still growing. New buildings are being constructed and new equipment is being bought. The larger units are living and growing, while the rural districts ceased to expand probably 20 or 30 years ago. This difference between the two types of schools is reflected in the difference between maintenance costs and "Total Orders Issued" of the two groups.



## CHAPTER 4

## WHAT SCHOOLS OF KITTSON COUNTY OFFER THEIR PUPILS

It is not the wealth of a community or the amount it spends that counts, but what it gets for the money spent. This is especially true of the school. That one school in the county spent \$162.91 per pupil for each of its four pupils is significant only for showing that it is expensive to teach so few.

The importance of the school in the community depends on what it provides. It will be the problem of this chapter to evaluate offerings of individual systems. It will discuss teachers' salaries, because it is believed that the quality of the teacher is largely determined by the salary the district is willing to pay. Other values which will come under our scrutiny will be the length of the school year, the number of library books, and the cost of the plant and physical apparatus.

It is believed that there might be facts more basic in determining the value of school offerings than those presented, but data are not available. It would be interesting to do for Kittson County what Mr. Reishus did for Polk County, Minnesota;<sup>1</sup> namely, to compare programs of study for different types of schools. That is undoubtedly

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<sup>1</sup>Knute P. B. Reishus, A Study of School District Reorganization in Polk County, Minnesota, (Unpublished Master's Thesis, University of North Dakota Library, 1935), pp. 7-36.



Table 11  
Teacher Data for Kittson County Schools

Number of District	Number of Teachers	Pupils Per Teacher	Grades Per Teacher	Teachers' Salaries
1 <sup>a</sup>	13	24.5	.92	\$119.50
10	6	18.5	2.	110.32
13	6	19.2	2.	107.50
32	8	22.3	1.5	103.00
74	8.7	26.6	1.4	116.90
75	7	22	1.7	113.00
Average <sup>a</sup>	8.1	22.5	1.48	114.83
2 <sup>b</sup>	6	19.8	2.	101.00
12	2.3	16.1	3.5	99.13
40	2	26.5	4	86.50
56	3.16	19.3	2.53	93.67
Average <sup>b</sup>	3.36	21.8	2.7	91.09

<sup>a</sup>Group A schools--see explanation in Chapter 1.

<sup>b</sup>Group B schools



Table 11 (Continued)

## Teacher Data for Kittson County Schools

Number of District <sup>c</sup>	Number of Teachers	Pupils Per Teacher	Grades Per Teacher	Teachers' Salaries
3	1	4	4	\$74.00
4	Transported			
5	1	11	6	74.00
6	1	13	7	71.13
7	1	19	8	73.33
8	1	13	7	74.69
9	1	23	7	78.33
11	1	11	7	68.33
14	2	28	7.5	78.36
15	1	23	7	81.33
16	1	26	8	80.00
17	Transported			
18	1	12	7	73.00
19	1	19	8	78.00
20	2	13.5	6	76.50
21	1	8	7	73.00
22	1	10	8	58.00
23	1	14	8	77.00
24	1	18	8	78.00
25	No Pupils			
26	1	16	7	83.00
27	1	21	8	70.00
28	Transported			
29	1	38	8	88.00
30	1	25	7	79.00
31	1	22	8	68.00
33	1	26	7	74.00
34	1	25	7	77.00
35	1	18	7	73.00
36	1	20	8	74.00

<sup>c</sup>See definition of groups of schools in Chapter 1.



Table 11 (Continued)

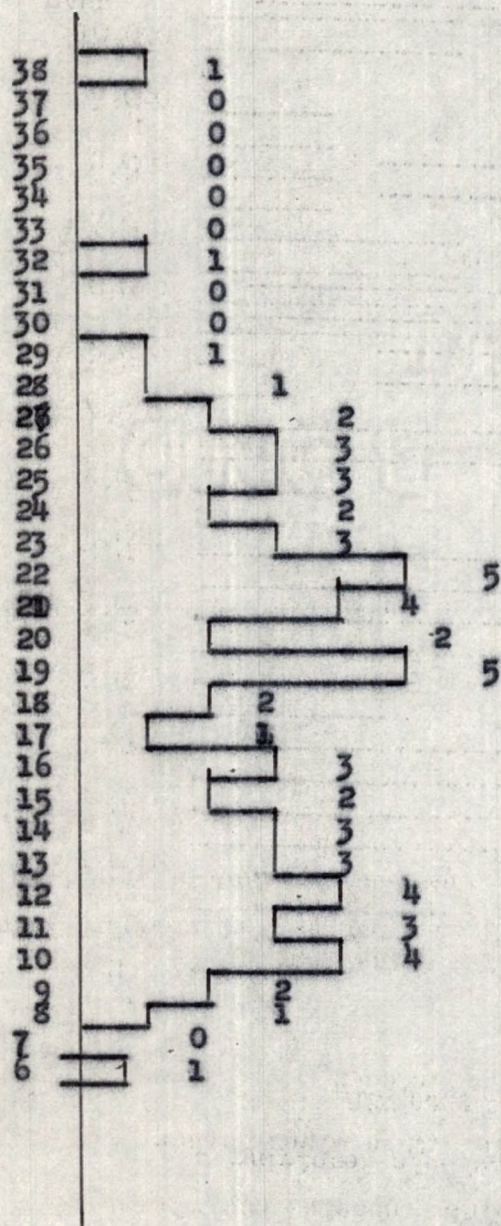
## Teacher Data for Kittson County Schools

Number of District	Number of Teachers	Pupils Per Teacher	Grades Per Teacher	Teachers' Salaries
37	1	12	7	\$71.00
38	1	23	7	75.00
39	1	10	7	75.00
41	1	16	7	73.00
43	1	10	7	72.00
44	1	24	7	78.00
45	1	26	8	78.00
50	1	12	7	59.00
53	1	12	6	68.00
54	1	21	7	78.00
55	1	21	7	78.00
57	1	29	8	89.00
58	1	9	5	72.00
59	1	3	Transported	
61	1	9	5	72.00
62	1	22	7	72.00
63	2	14.5	7	72.50
64	2	17	5.5	75.00
65	1	15	6	73.00
66	1	24	8	70.00
68	1	10	6	68.00
69	1	6	4	60.00
70	1	11	4	64.00
71	1	13	6	62.00
72	No Children			
76	3	Transported to District #1		
77	1	32	8	79.00
81	3	21.3	8	72.66
<b>Average</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>17.8</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>\$70.00</b>



Figure 4  
 Distribution of Schools with a Given Number  
 of Pupils per Teacher

Number  
 of  
 Pupils  
 per  
 Teachers





a most significant feature of school offerings and constitutes, too, one of the most interesting chapters of the thesis submitted to the Graduate Faculty of the University of North Dakota. Because those data are not available to him, the author here takes the liberty to refer you to that work.

#### Teachers' Salaries

No person is much surprised at the outcome when averages of teachers' salaries for the various groups are computed. It has been known for a long time that not only were positions in urban schools sought because of better working conditions, but equally as much for the better salaries offered. The tables show the condition to be at least as bad as surmised. Group A schools paid an average salary of \$114.83 per teacher during the six school years (1929-1935) included in the study. Group B schools paid \$91.09, while the rural group paid only \$70.

At first it seemed puzzling that figures of the list sent to the county superintendent by the teachers didn't agree with the financial report of the clerks. It was noticed at once that the former reported higher teachers' salaries than amounts allowed for that purpose in the clerks' annual report. The conclusion the author came to may be wrong, but at present he can think of no other. It must be that teachers were ashamed to report the low monthly salaries they were getting and raised the figure a trifle.



The discrepancy amounts to about \$5.00 per month.

It will be noted that the lowest average salary in any school was \$58 while the highest for any school was \$119.50. Though high salaries may not always bring the best teacher into a system, it is quite certain that the schools paying the better salaries can get what teacher they choose, and the poorer will take what is left.

#### Teachers' Subject-Load

There are very few good teachers but feel that the amount of time allowed them for study and for planning is all too limited. Those of us who have tried to teach in rural schools know the terrible rush it was to hear probably 30 different groups during the day. Few of the better teachers consider it difficult to handle a pupil-load of 25 to 30, but to handle that number of persons when nearly every elementary grade is represented, that is quite a different problem.

From the preceding tables it will be noted that the teachers' pupil-load did not vary greatly. One will notice that a pupil load of 17.8 for group C increases only to 21.8 in group B and to 22.5 in group A. The difference in favor of the rural group is not significant. If the rural teacher had only 1 pupil in each class, the burden of 8 grades would be nearly as great. The only difference for her would be in the amount of work required for cor-



Table 12  
 Various Library Facilities Offered  
 in Kittson County Schools

Number of District	Number of Library Books	Number of Library Books Per Pupil	Number of Library Books Per Grade	Value of Library Books Per Pupil
1	2,017	6	148	\$9.30
10	1,233	11	103	5.03
13	1,633	14	136	8.50
32	1,610	9	134	8.50
74	2,131	9	177	6.60
75	1,261	8	105	5.40
Average	1,646	8.9	134	7.22

Libraries in Class B Schools

2	520	4	65	4.00
12	296	16	74.3	11.70
40	399	7	50	3.64
56	922	16	115	12.02
Average	539	7	76	7.84



Table 12 (Continued)  
Library Facilities Offered

Number of District	Number of Library Books	Number of Library Books Per Pupil	Number of Library Books Per Grade	Value of Library Books Per Pupil
3	236	47	29.5	\$27.00
4	402	12	50	9.85
5	212	19	26	9.92
6	300	24	37.5	16.90
7	303	16	38	20.16
8	113	9	14	8.12
9	420	19	52	8.44
11	331	30	42	28.00
14	331	6	20	4.82
15	286	12	36	6.90
16	368	14	46	9.30
17	59	12	12	18.00
18	178	15	22	15.16
19	348	19	43.5	14.55
20	458	16	57	8.50
21	221	24.6	47.8	9.11
22	238	23.8	29.8	18.00
23	329	23	41	37.57
24	219	12	27	9.28
25	131	No pupils in system		
26	287	18	36	14.00
27	287	13.8	36	9.20
28	23	Transporting Pupils to Dist. 75		
29	250	6.7	31	4.40
30	236	9.4	29.5	6.64
31	147	6.7	18	5.32
33	158	6.6	20	5.21
34	184	7.4	23	8.02
35	262	15	33	11.00
36	230	11	26	5.92



Table 12 (Continued)  
Library Facilities Offered

Number of District	Number of Library Books	Number of Library Books Per Pupil	Number of Library Books Per Grade	Value of Library Books Per Pupil
37	214	16	27	\$13.50
38	208	9	26	8.52
39	196	12.5	22.5	8.60
41	215	13.5	17	10.50
43	261	26	33	24.90
44	285	11.8	36	6.08
45	131	5	16	4.12
50	225	18.7	28	10.25
53		No Record		
54	155	7.4	19.4	6.00
55	222	11	25	12.00
57	438	15	55	22.00
58	162	18	20	15.55
59	Transporting to District #75			
61	255	25.5	32	19.50
62	293	14	28	7.91
63	448	15.4	24	9.57
64	474	13	12	17.00
65	147	9.8	18	7.00
66	205	8.5	26	5.62
68	212	20	27	18.12
69	217	43	26	36.20
70	186	17	23	13.00
71	117	18.3	15	7.40
72	31	No Pupils in Six Years		
76	283	70	40	41.00
77	142	3.5	18	2.80
81	427	7	18	6.23
<b>Average</b>	<b>243</b>	<b>13.6</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>10.68</b>



**Figure 5**  
**Distribution of Schools Paying Teachers**  
**a Given Salary per Month**

Number  
of  
Dollars

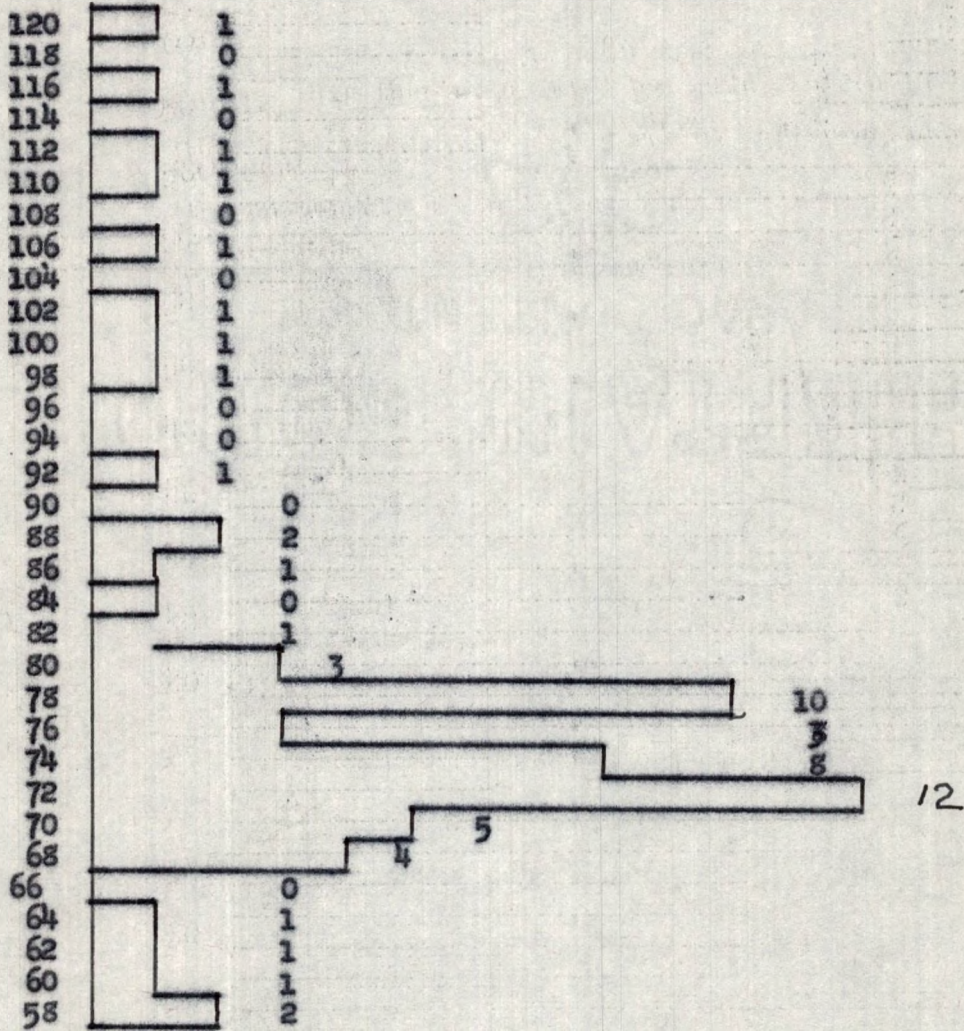
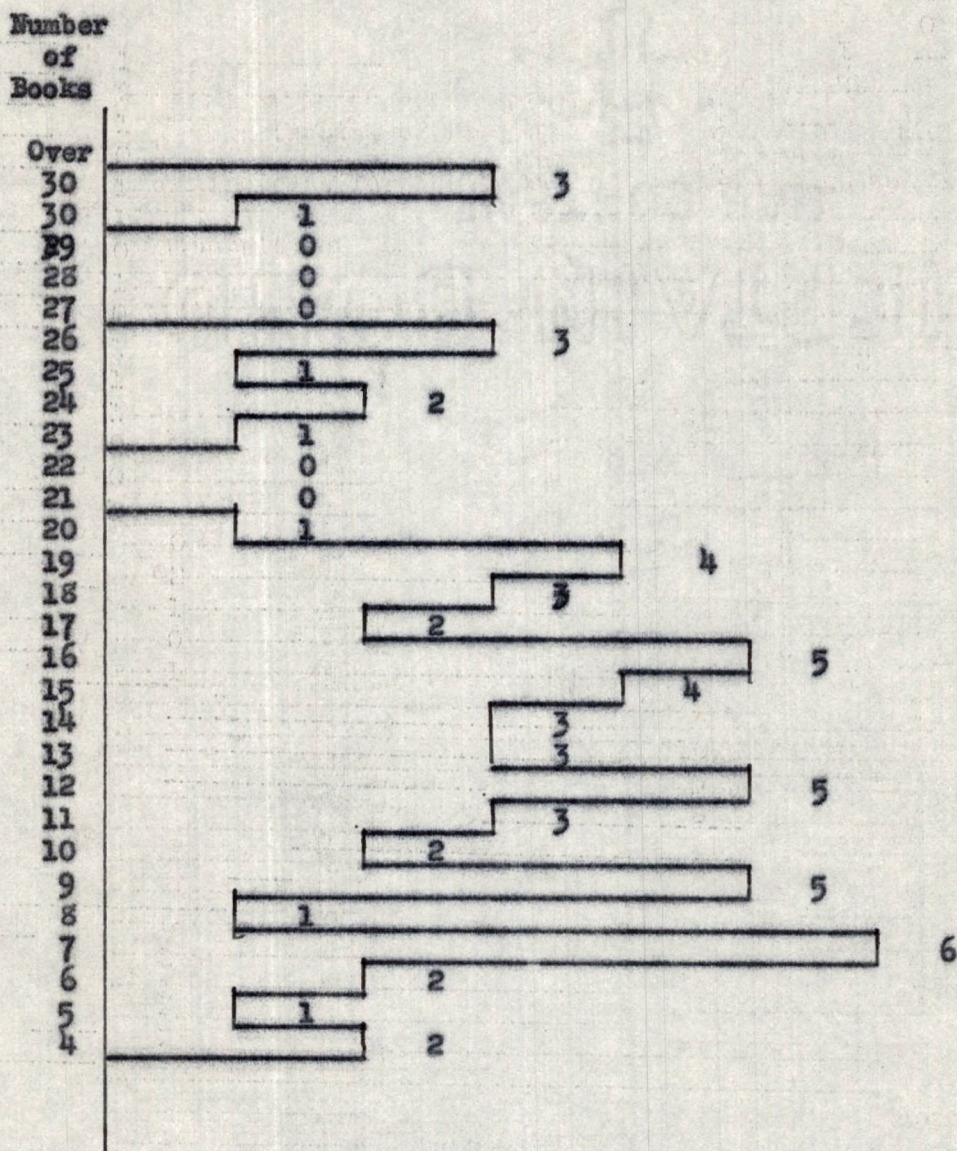


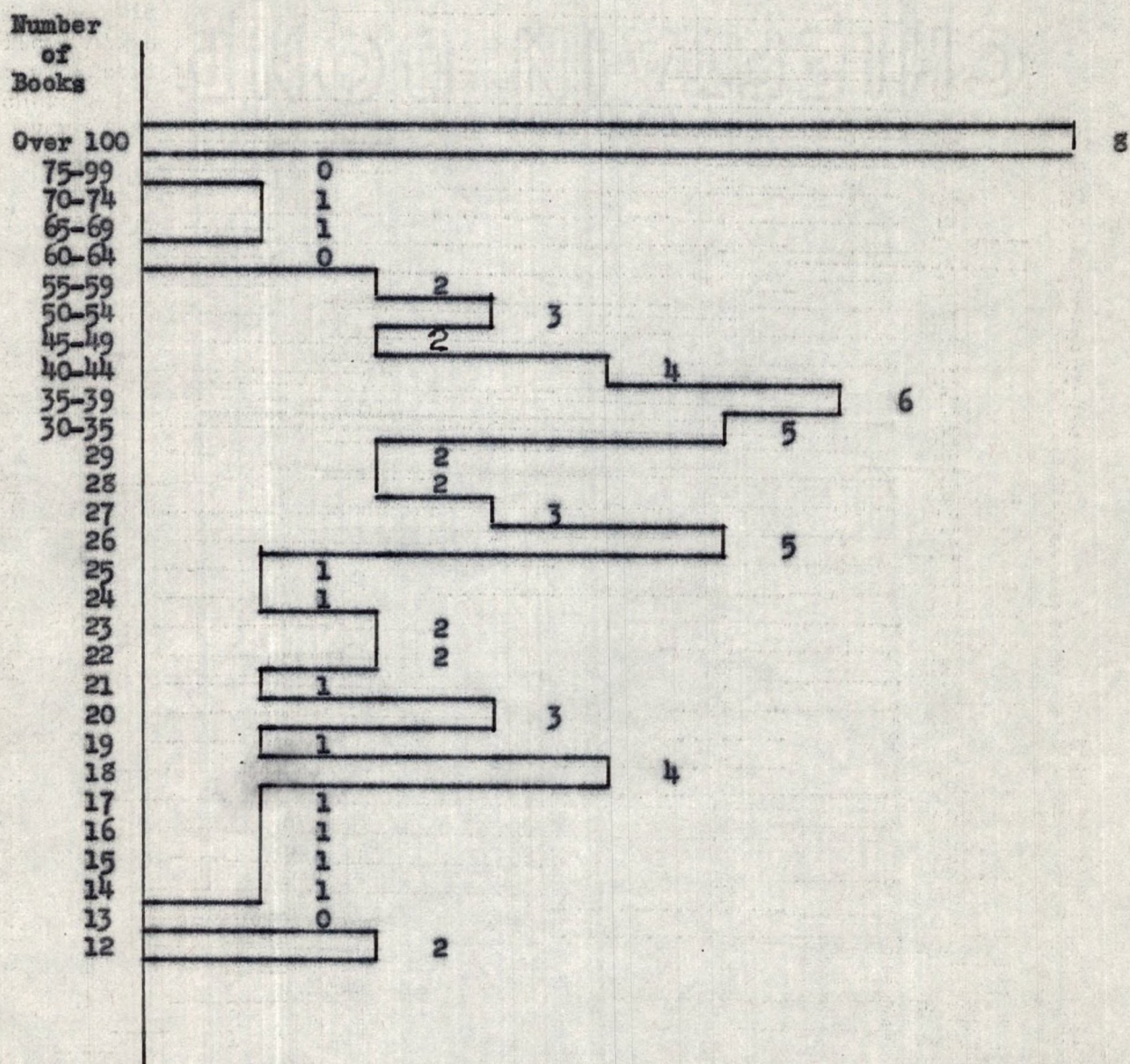


Figure 6  
 Distribution of Schools with a Given  
 Number of Books per Pupil





D **Figure 7**  
**Distribution of Schools with a Given**  
**Number of Books per Grade**





recting papers and preparing study sheets. The same amount of planning would be necessary for 8 pupils as for 16, 24, or 32. The bearing of this will be plain when one marks that in District #3 there were only four pupils, but that there were also four classes.

Between the rural school and graded urban school there is a distinct difference. The teacher-subject load varies from less than one class to a teacher to seven and eight. What a teacher can offer to pupils under these circumstances vary as much as the difference in number of subjects taught. No other conclusion seems possible than that the larger unit offers far more than the smaller unit.

#### Library Facilities Offered in

#### Schools of Kittson County

An ample school library is an absolute necessity where good reading habits and interest in reading are to be acquired. The up-to-date library furnishes the versatile teacher the tool with which he stimulates a desire after a widened horizon. The easy-going teacher probably uses it for little else than to keep his pupils occupied so that they may not bother him, and in probably one-half of teacher planning there is no place for the library, but with the increasing stress placed on library training by educational institutions we may yet entertain hopes that the library will come into its own.



Trained librarians are possible in only the larger institutions. Even there training seems to run in the direction of a capacity for tabulating, classifying, and finding. It becomes an art practiced for vocation's sake. That is legitimate, to be sure, but it does not inspire the thought of the child. The boy or girl in school will read when the interesting is placed before him. The stimulating librarian is the one who knows the child interest and repeatedly passes those off-hand remarks about a book which sends the child scurrying to find it. The chief purpose of the library is to make those books available.

The problem of this library study is to find how ample the various school libraries in the county are. The value of the library lies, to be sure, not only in the number of books in the library, the number of books or the value per-pupil but rather in the stimulating character of the books themselves, the way in which they are catalogued and kept, and the use made of them. These features are more difficult of measurement and, having been left out, limit the value of the inquiry.

The size of libraries varies from 23 books in one to 2131 in another. The average number of books in group A schools is 1646, in group B 539, and in group C 243. The second column compares the number of books per pupil.



Table 13  
Average Offerings in Accredited Schools  
in Kittson County

Number of District	Value of Plant Per Pupil	Value of Equipment Per Pupil	Cost of Transportation Per Pupil	Number of Days School
1	\$188.60	\$18.86	\$ 2.83	180
10	270.00	28.83	18.22	180
13	293.00	19.80	6.26	180
32	264.03	13.25	16.55	180
74	261.00	26.42	12.13	180
75	474.00	13.19	17.09	180
Average	276.27	21.70	10.14	180
Offerings of Small Urban Schools				
2	64.45	9.67	3.19	180
12	129.00	19.13	9.45	180
40	124.00	8.03	12.63	167
56	184.50	9.16	25.34	180
Average	110.11	10.52	11.34	177



Table 13 (Continued)  
 Average Offerings in Rural Schools  
 of Kittson County

Number of District	Value of Plant Per Pupil	Value of Equipment Per Pupil	Cost of Transportation Per Pupil	Number of Days School
3	\$246.60	\$56.60	\$ 2.33	180
4	Transporting to Dist.1		23.87	180
5	113.64	9.45	none	170
6	145.00	13.70	none	160
7	200.00	9.40	none	160
8	131.92	11.08	none	160
9	166.70	10.60	none	160
11	145.55	29.27	none	160
14	80.36	11.50	none	160
15	113.00	14.35	none	160
16	57.70	16.00	none	160
17	Transporting to Dist.32		43.76	180
18	57.00	6.92	none	160
19	146.05	17.11	none	160
20	118.47	18.75	none	160
21	70.33	9.66	1.01	160
22	111.70	15.20	4.50	163
23	184.57	8.93		160
24	55.55	14.17		160
25	No Pupils	No School		
26	284.30	6.02		173
27	97.00	9.48		160
28	Transporting to Dist.75		28.07	180
29	34.21	5.45		163
30	41.32	6.20		160
31	39.40	6.84		160
33	24.04	5.04		150
34	58.68	12.52		160
35	72.72	20.03		160
36	64.45	6.65		160



Table 13 (Continued)  
Average Offerings in Rural Schools  
of Kittson County

Number of District	Value of Plant Per Pupil	Value of Equipment Per Pupil	Cost of Transportation Per Pupil	Number of Days School
37	\$ 86.10	\$17.65		160
38	48.56	13.40		170
39	95.80	6.50		160
41	79.20	9.50		160
43	120.00	11.70		173
44	209.00	12.00		160
45	34.62	5.08		153
50	216.16	13.75		160
53	Not Known	Not Known		160
54	60.00	9.00		180
55	139.65	23.52		180
57	132.00	17.35		180
58	129.06	16.22		163
59	Transporting to Dist 75		70.72	180
61	155.00	32.50		160
62	92.43	11.58		180
63	115.00	19.40		163
64	78.10	9.37	1.05	160
65	87.93	5.00		160
66	47.20	7.12		160
68	214.55	14.90		160
69	233.30	29.40		160
70	91.53	10.00	6.61	140
71	80.35	9.00		143
72	No Pupils	No School		
76	250.00	31.75	63.44	180
77	52.30	9.75		160
81	91.14	14.10		173
<b>Average</b>	<b>123.98</b>	<b>10.05</b>	<b>1.89</b>	<b>167</b>



Distribution of Schools with a Given  
Per-Pupil Plant Value

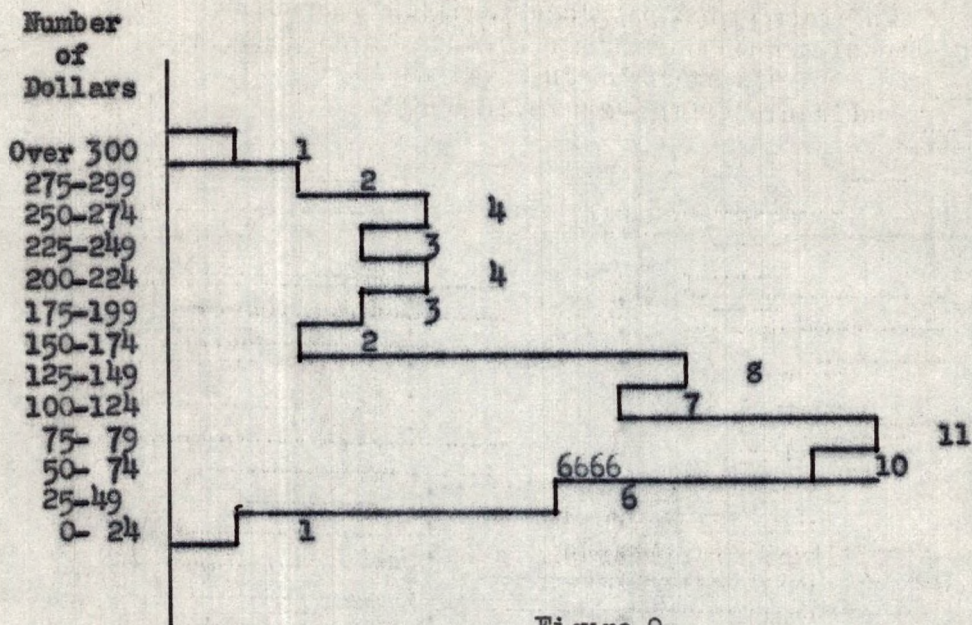
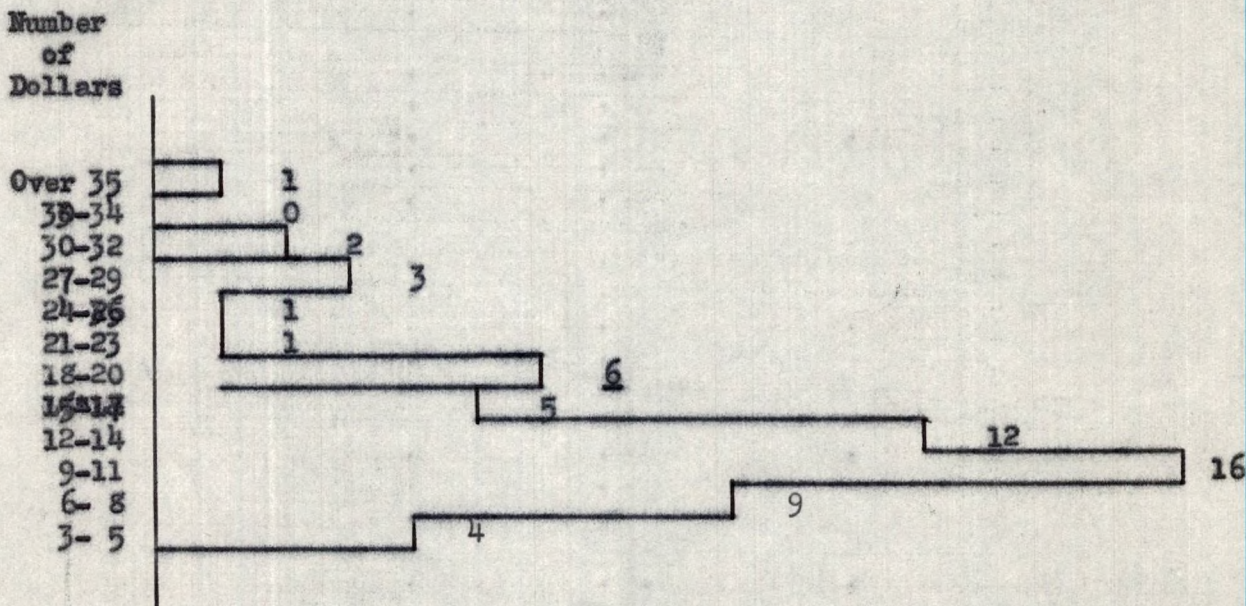


Figure 9

Distribution of Schools with a Given  
Per-Pupil Equipment Value





In that comparison the rural group is favored. The figures are of some significance in showing what effort is made in comparison to the size of the school.

It is feared that the validity of estimates of values may be questioned. Little credence can possibly be placed on such variations as divulged by four books in District #2 being valued at \$4.00 and 7 books in District #40 being valued at \$3.64. There is a noticeably smaller variation in the larger schools. We can arrive at no other conclusion than that the larger unit is far better equipped with libraries than the smaller. In group A the least number of books available at one time for every person in school is six. This means that the number per pupil is ample and that the total number is so much larger that a pupil can more easily be accommodated as to choice than in the small libraries, though the number of books per pupil is far greater in the latter.

#### School Plant, Equipment, and Number of School Days Offered

It would be a great mistake to indicate that the present school plant and equipment in even the largest schools in Kittson County are what they should be. Very little has been thought of in an artistic direction to make buildings, grounds, and equipment inspirational. Very few good prints of master pieces are found, not to



speak of canvases and murals. Sites were not selected for their natural beauty, nor have they been improved to any extent to please the eye. Little has been done with shrubbery to beautify the grounds. But even at that, larger play grounds, a considerable number of gymnasiums, fair auditoriums with stages have been provided in at least some instances, and some of this is found in every larger school.

The provision for cleanliness and sanitation is common in every urban school. Good drinking water, untouched by hand or drinking cup is supplied at all times. Janitorial service is something unheard of in nearly all rural schools. When these features are compared with what the rural school supplies, it becomes apparent at once how far the urban school out-strips the rural in every way.

It is nearly beyond a point of decency to put into even the most modest language many things found in many rural schools especially in the winter. It would not be fair to the conscientious teacher to say that the following description is common to all. There are those who with great pains to themselves do everything in their power to hinder the thing from becoming what it is in many. The average child is not a thoughtful person about most things. What that leads to in a boys' toilet is a matter of



imagination rather than verbal expression. It is not always thoughtlessness that doors are left open. Snow gradually blows into the hinge side of the door, and soon the door will not close properly. With the first snowstorm the structure is blown full of snow. Often this is not shoveled out. The result is a place fit to frighten off all but the most hardy. Any child feels a natural revulsion at approaching the place and does so only under the compulsion of natural need. It is hoped that what Ralph Waldo Emerson speaks of as "compensation" may enter in to level out a few of the inequalities which tax human nature in the rural school.<sup>2</sup>

It can hardly be thought of as improper to mention what is one of the reminiscences of most children brought up in the rural schools. It seems one of the true advantages of the better school plant to have done away with these. The outlay of \$276.27 per pupil as compared with \$123.98 would perhaps be high if not other advantage could be pointed to, but what the money-value is of a remedied condition is hard to tell. The per-pupil value of the school plant fluctuates between \$24.04 as the lowest to \$474 as the highest. The averages for the different types of systems are seen to be \$276.27, \$110.11, and \$123.98 for groups A, B, and C, respectively.

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<sup>2</sup>Ralph Waldo Emerson, "Compensation."



The amount of equipment, we know, is limited in most rural schools. That the highest per-pupil valuation of equipment is found in a rural school doesn't mean that it is well equipped. It only tells us that the small value has been divided by the very small enrollment. When averages are resorted to, it will be noted that the accredited high school group furnishes more than twice as much equipment per pupil as the other groups.

It is natural that the consolidated schools should supply transportation, and it will be noticed that that item amounts to \$10.14 and \$11.34 per pupil in the two urban groups, while in the rural schools only an average of \$1.89 has been spent for transportation. That amount is spent by the schools which transport their pupils to one of the larger systems. This does not tell the whole story. We know that many children walk one or two miles every morning and evening. This undoubtedly accounts for the lower percentage of attendance we will discover as the attendance rates of rural children.

That the attendance is poorer is perhaps the fault of the climate, but what interests us here is that the consolidated schools have overcome climate and brought the pupils in. What cannot be accounted for that way is the smaller number of days of school offered to the rural school. The average number of days of school offered per year fluctuates



between 140 and 180 days in rural districts, 167 and 180 in the unaccredited urban, and in the classified high schools there is no school offering less than 180 days of school. The averages for the three types of systems are 180, 177, and 167 days of school for the A, B, and C groups, respectively.

As an interesting illustration we might compare results in this way. We think of 180 days of school as standard. The lowest number of days of school offered in any district in the county is 140, or 78 per cent. In that school district attendance is only 65 per cent of perfect. If we combine those, we arrive at an index of perfection as 50.7 per cent of the standard. What would be the result if combined with that we could invent valid standards for the other offerings and find the per cent that this school is of the combined standards? Is it not conceivable, probably likely, that the result would be that this school would offer 78 per cent of 65 per cent of 50 per cent of 60 per cent of 40 per cent of what another school is offering its pupils? For not only is the school year shorter, but attendance is poorer, equipment and plant are poorer, teaching is poorer, so that the final outcome for the two schools would be as 1 is to the product of the product of the fractions, the product each time growing smaller, or as Hendrick Ibsen says,<sup>3</sup>"The fraction

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<sup>3</sup>Hendrick Ibsen in "Brand"



doing the fraction to death."

#### Chapter Summary and Conclusions

It is not the wealth of a community or the amount it spends that counts, but what it gets for the money spent.

The importance of the school in the community depends on what it provides.

The larger school units pay a much higher average teachers' salary than the smaller ones.

Though high salaries may not always bring the best teacher into a system, it is quite certain that the advantages of choice rest with them, and that the poor payer will have to take what is left over.

What discriminates against the rural school is not the teacher-pupil load but the teacher-subject load, which makes it impossible for the smaller unit to give proper service.

The teacher-pupil load did not vary much in different types of schools, and what variation there was was to the advantage of the rural units. Uniform library instruction for teachers gives hope that in time library service may come into its own. The inspirational librarian is the one who is most likely to give the pupil a real liking for extensive reading. Total numbers of books in school libraries vary between 23 and 2,131. Per-pupil numbers are lower in high schools, but it was discovered that the total



number gave much greater choice to pupils in the larger unit, when the per-pupil minimum didn't fall below the lowest of the accredited high school group.

Not even the largest school systems in the county can be said to have done much to inspire the pupil with its beauty and symmetry. Facilities for cleanliness, comfort, and sanitation are far more advanced in the urban schools. Conditions pertaining to comfort, sanitation, and hygiene in rural schools are such as to tax the most hardy. The higher costs of buildings found in the accredited school systems are largely justified by the many advantages over rural schools provided in the aforementioned fields. The per-pupil value of equipment is more than twice as high in the accredited high schools as in the two other types of systems. Transportation is probably the key to better average attendance in the consolidated group. The average number of days of school offered in the rural schools is only 89 per cent of that offered in the high school units.

If values offered by different types of schools could be compared on a percentage basis, it might be that many rural schools would find that the fraction of a fraction of a fraction of what they offer as compared to the larger units would show them up in a very bad light.

We are forced into the conclusion that the offerings of the rural one-room school in very few instances approach in any way, in any field, what is offered by the larger unit,



and that when the whole field of offerings is taken into consideration the value of the larger urban systems far outweighs that of the rural.



## CHAPTER 5

## HOW KITTSON COUNTY UTILIZES HER SCHOOLS

The opening remark of this study states that the American school is an institution for fitting the growing child to fill his place effectively in a complex democracy. Nothing was said there about the way in which that should or might be achieved, except that it was indicated as a duty of the school. Supposing that the aims, objectives, and offerings of the schools of Kittson County are adequate, we still have the question to answer, are the schools accomplishing what they set out to do, or how far are they reaching their objectives? This is a very intricate problem, which would require a much more far-flung survey than the very limited one at hand.

The previous chapter dealt with the offerings of the schools. This one will inquire into whether those offerings are made use of, or to what extent they are utilized. It is self evident that a school can accomplish nothing unless the child is in school. There may still be a question whether anything is accomplished, but a matter of first importance is that he is there. With data available, it would not be possible to trace the progress of the child through school. We can tell how many are in each grade, but this study has no information telling how long it took the pupil to get there. For that very reason,



too, it can not be determined how many fell out along the way. Only at one point can this study state this definitely, at eighth graduation time.

By the Minnesota census it has been determined that 10.3 per cent of the pupils would be in eighth grade if they passed along one year at the time. Of the actual number of children in school the figure would be 12.5 per cent. This tells us nothing about where they actually are. If the systems of Kittson County hold their pupils back, then there would be a tendency for numbers to pile up in the upper grades unless they quit school. But if there are more than 10.3 per cent in the eighth grade, then retardation has been taking place especially in the eighth grade. If retardation were uniform in all grades, then the percentage plan would tell us nothing. This method will be used as a check to determine whether there is a greater amount of non-promotion in eighth grade than in the rest of the school system.

The success of the school is very definitely reflected by the per cent of pupils in eighth grade who graduate. If they do not graduate, then we know that only one out of two procedures is possible. They either take the grade over again or they drop out. If the per cent of pupils in eighth grade is too high, then a considerable



Table 14

Average Number of Days of School, Average Number of Days Attended, and Per Cent Attendance

No. of District	Number of D School Days	Average Days Attendance	Per Cent of Attendance
1	180	161	89.1
10	180	160	88.8
13	180	160	88.8
32	180	157	87.2
74	180	163	91.1
75.6	<u>180</u>	<u>156</u>	<u>86.6</u>
Average	180	159.5	88.6
Non-accredited Units			
2*	180	153	85
12	180	149	82.8
40	167	144	86.2
56	<u>180</u>	<u>151</u>	<u>83.9</u>
Average	177	149.25	84.3

\* Two schools, one one-room rural, and six teachers.



Table 14 (Continued)

No. of District	Number of School Days	Average Days Attendance	Per Cent Attendance
3	180	137	76
4	180	152	84.4
5	170	148	87
6	160	138	86
7	160	128	80
8	160	127	79
9	160	126	79
11	160	126	79
14*	160	126	79
15	160	132	82.5
16	160	147	91.9
17	180	127	69
18	160	149	93
19	160	120	75
20*	160	136	85
21	160	125	78
22	163	142	87
23	160	140	88
24	160	123	77
25	No pupils and no school		
26	173	139	80
27	160	124	78
28	180	130	72
29	163	140	86
30	160	125	78
31	160	228	80
33	150	107	71
34	160	122	74
35	160	123	77
36	160	126	79

\* Two school houses and two teachers.



Table 14 (Continued)

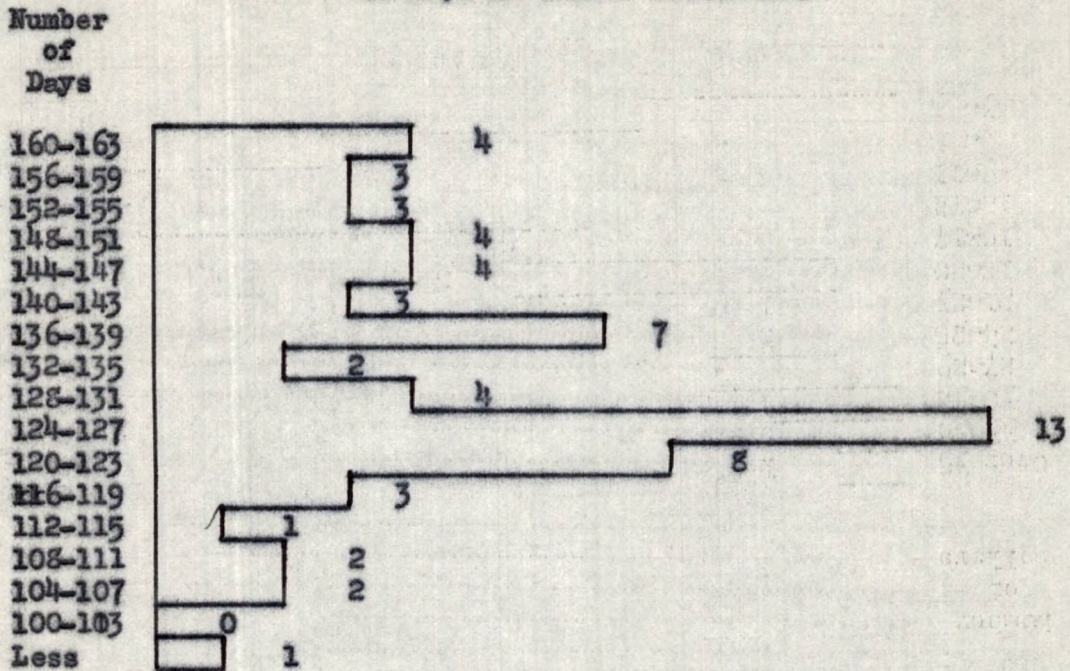
No. of District	Number School Days	Average Days Attendance	Per Cent Attendance
37	160	126	79
38	170	135	79
39	160	122	74
41	160	117	73
43	173	121	70
44	160	137	86
45	153	121	79
50	160	125	78
53	160	131	82
54	180	124	78
55	180	156	87
57	180	144	80
58	163	121	74
59	180	144	80
61	160	127	79
62	180	155	86
62 *	163	137	84
63 *	160	123	75
65	160	110	69
66	160	117	73
68	160	122	71
69	160	119	74
70	140	109	78
71	143	93	65
72	No Pupils and no School		
76	180	139	77
77	160	106	66
81 **	173	113	67
<b>Average</b>	<b>167</b>	<b>127</b>	<b>76</b>

\* Two school houses and two teachers

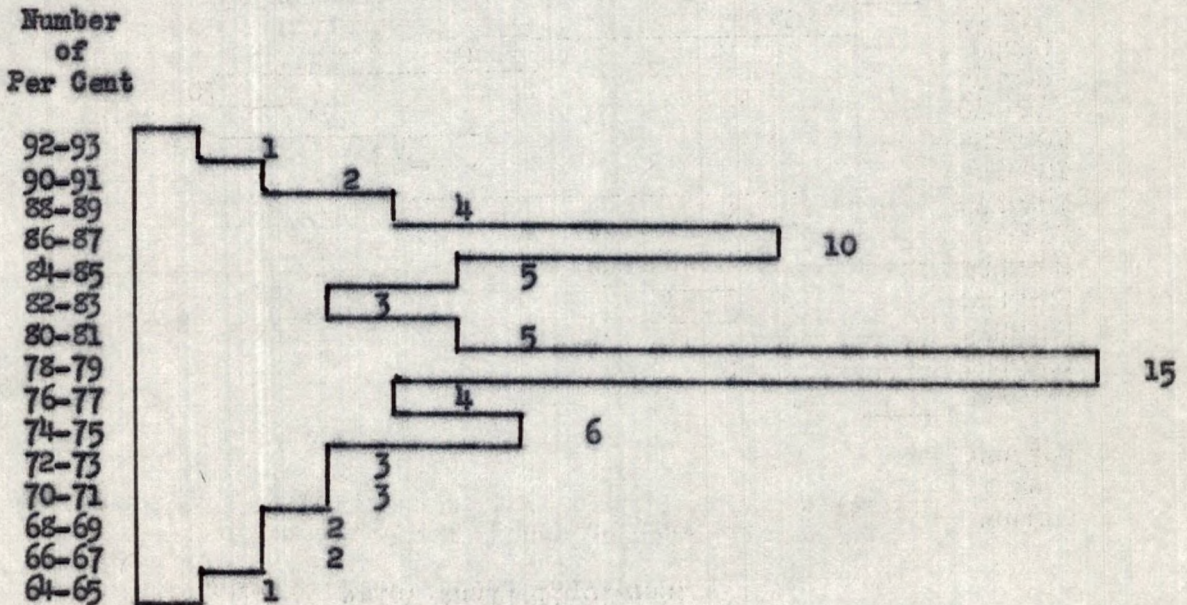
\*\* Three school houses and three teachers



**Figure 10**  
**Distribution of Schools According to Average Number**  
**of Days of School Attendance**



**Figure 11**  
**Distribution of Schools According to the**  
**Per Cent of Average Attendance**





number take eighth grade work over again. If the per cent of those who fail agrees with the per cent of pupils to numerous in eighth grade, then we infer that none drop out; but if the former is greater, then they drop out. An interpretation will be attempted after the presentation of each table.

#### What Attendance Tables Show Us

We found in the previous chapter that there was a great variation in the number of days of school offered in the various districts. The tables just previous to this show us that not only is there a comparative drop in the number of days in which a pupil attends but that the number of days varies even more than the number of days of school offered. In the six accredited high schools group, the average number of days attendance is 159.5 days. In group B the attendance is 149.25 days, and in the rural schools the average number of days attended over a period of six years is only 127.

Turning to the last column of the tables we find an interpretation which ought to startle us. The argument could be made that the rural pupils made up for what the district offered by being more regular in attendance. In that way it could be that the one would off-set the other. What the pupil gets out of school we know is not determined by the number of school days offered but the number he



Table 15

## Number of Pupils in Eighth Grade

In Comparison to Total Number in Elementary Grades

M No. of District	Total No. Grade Pupils 1932 - 1935			Total No. in Eighth Grade 1932 - 1935		
	Boys	Girls	Total	Boys	Girls	Total
	1	289	264	553	40	42
10	97	128	225	8	16	24
13	66	100	166	10	10	20
32	164	155	319	30	28	58
74	242	169	411	37	19	56
75	<u>177</u>	<u>156</u>	<u>333</u>	<u>19</u>	<u>20</u>	<u>39</u>
Totals <sup>A</sup>	1035	972	2007	144	130	274
Unaccredited Schools						
2*	143	127	270	18	16	34
14	50	55	104	4	4	8
40	74	94	168	9	7	16
56	<u>96</u>	<u>70</u>	<u>166</u>	<u>11</u>	<u>9</u>	<u>20</u>
Totals <sup>B</sup>	363	346	709	42	36	78

<sup>A</sup> High School Group<sup>B</sup> Non-accredited urban group

\* Two school houses and six teachers. One a one-room school.



Table 15 (Continued)

No. of District	Total No. Grade Pupils			Total No. in Eighth Gr.		
	1932 - 1935			1932 - 1935		
	Boys	Girls	Total	Boys	Girls	Total
3	5	9	135		2	2
4	40	44	84	4	7	11
5	13	99	112	2		2
6	26	21	47	2		2
7	21	23	44	3	4	7
8	20	15	35	5	1	6
9	27	34	61	4	3	7
11	21	17	38	3	2	5
14*	113	62	175	15	14	29
15	42	28	70	7	3	10
16	49	36	85	6	1	7
17	7	3	10	2		2
18	17	7	24	2	1	3
19	39	19	58	1	3	4
20*	46	33	79	1	3	4
21	19	13	32	2	1	3
22	23	16	39	2	2	4
23	34	13	47	4	2	6
24	38	21	59	5	1	6
25	No Pupils in six years					
26	28	15	43	3	2	5
27	31	29	50	7	4	11
28	10	3	13			
29	70	54	124	11	5	16
30	42	26	68	10	5	15
31	43	29	71	8	5	13
33	52	39	91	5	9	14
34	35	33	68	6	5	11
35	31	27	58	2	2	4
36	36	24	60	8	4	12

\* Two school houses and two teachers



Table 15 (Continued)

No. of District	Total No. Grade Pupils 1932 - 1935			Total No. in Eighth Gr. 1932 - 1935		
	Boys	Girls	Total	Boys	Girls	Total
37	17	20	37	5	3	8
38	32	29	61	7	4	11
39	18	24	42		4	4
41	27	18	45	3	3	6
43	20	8	28	2		2
44	52	23	75	7	5	12
45	37	34	71	2	8	10
50	9	23	32	2	2	4
53	18	25	43	2	3	5
54	24	35	59	2	6	8
55	30	32	62	5	4	9
57	51	34	85	7	8	15
58	10	8	18			
59	3	3	6		2	2
61	14	8	22	2	2	4
62	33	35	68	5	7	12
63*	46	38	84	8	2	10
64*	34	44	78	4	9	13
65	17	21	38	3	7	10
66	49	25	74	4	5	9
68	22	9	31	7	3	10
69	8	4	12	3		3
70	17	13	30	3	1	4
71	17	16	33	1	1	2
72	No pupils in six years					
76	7	2	9		1	1
77	49	52	101	8	8	16
81**	88	118	206	12	7	19

\* Two school houses and two teachers

\*\* Three school houses and three teachers



attends. If the average number of days a child attends in the Group A schools is only 159.5 days, and the rural schools offer 167 days, then it could be possible for the pupil to go to school as many days in the rural schools as they do in the larger units.

That this is not so we see from the fact that they attend only 127 days per year, or 32 days less than in accredited schools. But what is much worse, while accredited school pupils attend 88.6 per cent of the time, rural children attend only 76 per cent of the much shorter period offered them. They miss more in every way.

#### The Number of Pupils in Eighth Grade

In the table just presented the number of pupils in school over a period of three years have been compared with number of pupils in eighth grade. It has not been pointed to earlier that there is a considerable greater number of boys attending school in Kittson County than there are girls. Of a total of 2,007 children in graded schools, 1,035 are boys and 972 are girls. The ratio holds good also in eighth grade, so we see that boys do not drop out of school more than girls do.

From this we see that of the total number attending, 51.5695 per cent are boys, and that in the eighth grade 52.92 per cent are boys. That there is a little over one per cent more of boys in eighth grade than there are in school would indicate that a larger per cent of boys



Table 16

Number of Pupils in Eighth Grade from 1932 to 1935  
Compared to Number of Pupils Graduating

No. of District	Total No. in Eighth Gr.			Total No. 8th Gr. Graduates		
	Boys	Girls	Total	Boys	Girls	Total
1	40	42	82	43	40	83
10	8	16	24	7	16	23
13	10	10	20	8	9	17
32	30	23	53	20	22	42
74	57	19	56	30	19	49
75	<u>19</u>	<u>20</u>	<u>39</u>	<u>16</u>	<u>20</u>	<u>36</u>
Total	144	130	274	133	127	260
2*	18	16	34	10	6	16
12	4	4	8	2	4	6
40	9	7	16	7	4	11
56	<u>11</u>	<u>9</u>	<u>20</u>	<u>6</u>	<u>8</u>	<u>14</u>
Total	42	36	78	25	22	47

\* Two school houses and 6 teachers. One rural one-room school



Table 16 (Continued)

No. of District	Total No. in Eighth Gr.			Total No. 8th Graduates		
	Boys	Girls	Total	Boys	Girls	Total
3		2	2		2	2
4	4	6	10	4	6	10
5	2		2	1		1
6	2		2	1		1
7	3	4	7	2	3	5
8	5	1	6	5	1	6
9	4	3	7	4	2	6
11	4	3	7	3	1	4
14*	15	14	29	9	12	21
15	7	3	10	4	3	7
16	6	1	7	2	1	3
17	2		2			
18	2	1	3	2	1	3
19	1	3	4		1	1
20*	1	3	4	1	3	4
21	2	1	3	1	1	2
22	2	2	4	2	1	3
23	4	2	6	2	2	4
24	5	1	6	2	2	4
25	No pupils					
26	3	2	5	3	2	5
27	7	4	11	5	4	9
28	No pupils in eighth grade					
29	10	5	15	6	3	9
30	10	5	15	10	3	13
31	8	5	13	4	2	6
33	5	9	14	1	1	2
34	5	9	14	1	1	2
35	2	2	4		1	1
36	8	4	12	2	1	3

\* Two school houses and two teachers.



Table 16 (Continued)

No. of District	Total No. in Eighth Gr.			Total No. 8th Graduates		
	Boys	Girls	Total	Boys	Girls	Total
37	5	3	8	1	1	2
38	7	4	11	5	2	7
39		4	4	1	2	3
41	3	3	6	1	2	3
43	2		2	3	1	4
44	7	5	12	3	3	6
45	2	8	10	1	6	7
50	2	2	4	2	2	4
53	2	3	5	1	3	4
54	2	6	8	1	5	6
55	5	4	9	3	2	5
57	7	8	15	2	6	8
58	No eighth grade pupils					
59		2	2	No Graduates		
61	2	2	4		1	1
62	5	7	12	4	3	7
63*	8	2	10	4	2	6
64*	4	9	13	3	6	9
65	3	7	10	3	3	6
66	4	5	9	1	2	3
68	7	3	10	1	1	2
69	3		3	No Graduates		
71	1	1	2	1		1
72	No pupils					
70	3	1	4	1		1
76		1	1	No Graduates		
77	8	8	16		1	1
81**	12	7	19	3	2	5
<b>Total</b>	<b>234</b>	<b>197</b>	<b>431</b>	<b>123</b>	<b>119</b>	<b>242</b>

\* Two school houses and two teachers

\*\* Three school houses and three teachers



than girls fail to graduate. The figures for the unaccredited group are 51.06 and 53.9 per cent respectively for boys attending and boys in eighth grade showing that boys pile up in eighth grade more than do the girls. In the rural schools 54.3 and 50.8 represent the percentages for boys in school and in eighth grade, respectively, showing that in the rural schools the boys do drop out considerable more than the girls.

#### Comparison of Number in Eight Grade and Number Graduating

From the previous section we noted that the larger per cent of boys in school had a tendency to increase into the eighth grade in all schools except the rural. In the rural schools there was a decided drop. When this is combined with the fact that a smaller per cent of boys graduate than girls (and that holds good in all types of schools) then there has been a decided drop-out of rural boys out of school. For not only has the per cent of boys in the group decreased by nearly four per cent, but the number being graduated is nearly eight per cent less than the girls. If they didn't graduate, they would be retained in eighth grade. This should have increased the percentage of boys over girls in the eighth grade to over 12 per cent. These twelve per cent, plus the four per cent they now are fewer than they are in entire school enrollment, is the number of per cent that boys in rural



Table 17  
 Per Cent of Elementary Pupils in Eighth Grade and  
 Per Cent of Eighth Grade Graduating

Number of District	Per Cent of Pupils in Eighth			Per Cent of Eighth Graduating		
	Boys	Girls	Total	Boys	Girls	Total
1	14	16	15	100	103	101
10	8	12.7	10.7	87.5	100	96
13	15	10	12	80	90	85
32	18	15	16.6	76.7	95.7	90
74	15.3	11	13.4	81.1	100	87.5
75	10.7	13	11.7	84.2	100	92.3
Average	13.8	13.4	13.6	92.4	95.3	94.9
2	12.6	12.6	12.6	55.5	37.5	47.1
12	8	7.3	7.6	50.6	100	75
40	12.2	7.4	9.5	77.7	57.1	68.8
56	11.6	10.4	11.0	54.5	88.8	70
Average	11.6	10.4	11	59.5	61.1	60.3
Rural Average	13	14.1	13.8	52.6	60.4	56.2



schools have dropped out of school more than the girls. In rural schools, 16 per cent more boys drop out of school than girls. What per cent of the girls drop out of school this study has no way of determining.

The table of percentages following puts into a more readily understandable form what already has been presented in numbers of individual cases. If the number of pupils of eighth-grade age are only 10.3 per cent of the total enrollment, then there is not much of over-ageness in spite of the number who has dropped out.

#### Chapter Summary

The number of days a pupil attends is more important to him than the number of days of school offered. This only makes specific the thought that what a school accomplishes is more important than what it proposes to do.

Not only do accredited schools and larger units of other types offer a longer school year but the attendance too is of a higher average. While pupils in accredited high schools attend 88.6 per cent of the 180 days offered, rural pupils attended only 76 per cent of the 167 days offered. Both figures for the non-accredited urban group fell between those of the other two mentioned.

The number of pupils in eighth grade is too high compared with the number enrolled in all grades. This tells us that in spite of numerous persons dropping out,



that the piling up of pupils in the upper grade is even greater. A comparison of percentages of boys in school, boys in eighth grade, and boys graduating from eighth grade indicates that boys in rural schools drop out to the extent of 16 per cent more than the girls. The per cent of girls or boys actually dropping out can not be determined from data available in this study. While 92.3 per cent of eighth grade pupils graduate in the high school units, only 56.2 per cent do so in the rural schools.

There is no escape from the conclusion that, though the offerings of rural schools are very much below those of the accredited high school units, yet the per cent that they drop behind their own offerings is far greater than is true of the former unit.



## CHAPTER 6

### TRENDS IN KITTSON COUNTY SCHOOL DEVELOPMENT

In the last chapter of this study a specific indictment was filed against the rural schools of Kittson County. For each chapter of the book, the case has grown steadily worse. In no case has it been considered a cause for complaint that ability is lacking. When it has been determined that a person lacks mental ability, that becomes a matter not of complaint but of excuse. This is the only factor in which the larger units was found lacking when compared with the rural districts. In every other respect we find the rural schools most wanting. Their deficiencies are the most glaring and have steadily grown worse with every comparison. There seems to be only one point left to determine, and that is trends. Averages have all pointed to the position of the rural school as bad. What we want to know definitely is whether the condition is getting better.

We have already compared the schools on the basis of ability, effort, offerings, and use made of school opportunities. The following table will show trends in those fields.

Wealth per pupil has dropped steadily in all types of schools. The number of pupils in school can be said to be about stationary. The number of teachers in the various systems has made no significant change. Teachers' salaries in independent schools the last year reported is lower than the mean for the six years by about 18 per cent, but in the rural schools it is 28.4 per cent. The lowest per-pupil cost of



of education in the independent schools is 25 per cent below the mean, while the rural school costs dropped only 14 per cent below the mean of the group. This is not strange, seeing that the latter schools were already so low that a further reduction approached so much closer to an absolute zero.

There is a slight fluctuation in average number of schools attended in both systems, but there is nothing to indicate a trend. There is a gradual reduction in the number of pupils in the eighth grade in the independent schools, indicating that there is a tendency toward less rigid classification and more of consideration of individual difference. In the rural schools exactly the opposite is true. As the years go by the tendency among rural teachers is to be more rigid in enforcing arbitrary standards on the eighth grade, and so greater and greater numbers pile up there in spite of the fact that a considerable number drops out each year.

In the matter of eighth grade graduations, figures do not indicate that there is any well defined trend. While there seems to be a mild tendency to graduate a higher per cent of eighth grade pupils in the independent systems, there seems to be an aimless, chance fluctuation in rural schools. This is not hard to give some explanation of. Pupils have been graduated from eighth grade in rural schools on the basis of State Board Tests. Some years these tests failed more in Kittson County than in others. It can be said to be entirely a matter of chance; though, if the whole school situation in Kittson County were improved, improvement would show also in the field of rural graduates.



Table 18

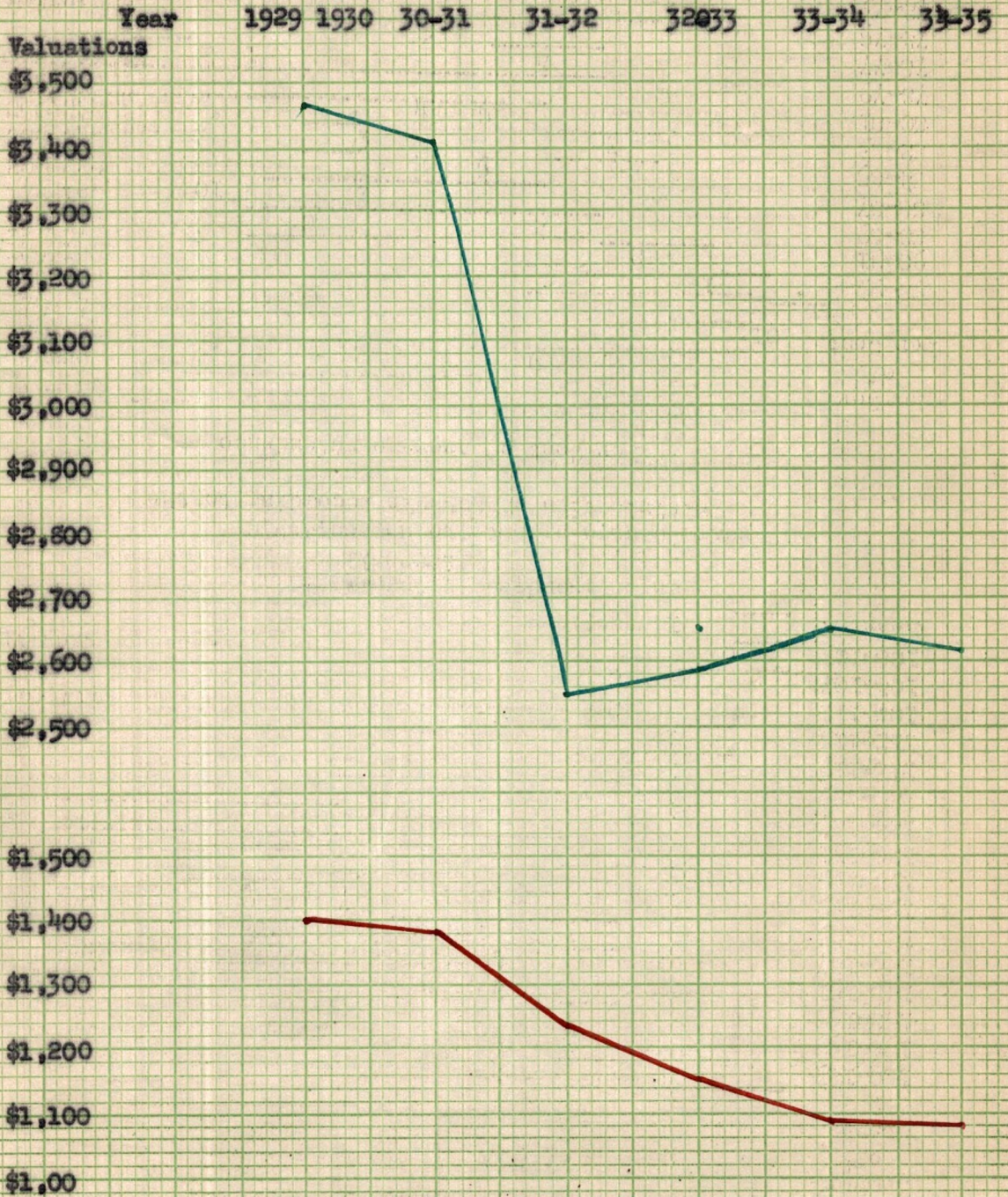
## Trends in Rural and Independent Schools Compared

	29-30	30-31	31-32	32-33	33-34	34-35	Averages
<b>Per Pupil Valuations</b>							
Independent	\$1404	\$1378	\$1230	\$1155	\$1088	\$1083	\$1228
Common Schools	3469	3417	2545	2592	2652	2613	2856
<b>Number of Pupils</b>							
Independent	1211	1133	1084	1096	1086	1112	1120
Common Schools	1259	1331	1360	1349	1305	1294	1316
<b>Number of Teachers</b>							
Independent	50	50	50	50	47		49
Common Schools	69	72	68	68	70		70
<b>Teachers' Monthly Salaries</b>							
Independent	\$133	\$126	\$120	\$112	\$ 96		\$117
Common Schools	\$ 89	\$ 93	\$ 89	\$ 73	\$ 58		\$ 81
<b>Per Pupil Costs, Combined High School and Grades</b>							
Independent	\$96.02	\$89.08	\$89.80	\$76.45	\$62.27	\$68.97	\$81.25
Common Schools	59.77	64.19	54.24	45.62	45.86	51.33	53.55
<b>Days of School Offered</b>							
Independent	180	180	180	180	180	180	180
Common Schools	164	165	165	166	162	165	165
<b>Average Number of Days Attendance</b>							
Independent	162	161	162	160	162	150	160
Common Schools	140	154	132	130	152	130	140
<b>Number of Pupils in Eighth Grade</b>							
Independent	119	58	83	97	92	80	90
Common Schools	141	156	179	189	168	162	159
<b>Number of Eighth Grade Graduates</b>							
Independent Schools	82	99	59	81	88	92	70 82
Common Schools	81	60	81	101	99	88	87
<b>Per Cent of Eighth Grade Graduating</b>							
Independent Schools	87.5	83	86.8	97.5	90.7	100	91
Common Schools	57.4	44.1	45.2	53.4	58.9	54.3	54.7



Figure 12

Trends in Per-pupil Valuations in Rural and Independent Schools of Kittson County





### Chapter Summary

Educational trends in Kittson County do not point toward an improvement in the condition of the rural schools. During the years of depression there was a steady decline in per-pupil wealth, teachers' monthly salaries, and per-pupil costs of education. There was a greater percentage drop in teachers' salaries in rural schools than in the larger units. It cannot be said that rural schools now have a better chance of getting good teachers than formerly. The larger units have every advantage in picking the teachers they want.

Attendance and promotion show no trend in any direction. The number of days of school offered in the various types of districts remains about stationary. There is a twelve-day variation in average days attended in the independent systems and a twenty-four-day variation in the rural averages, but they do not constitute a trend.

Pupils seem to tend toward freer promotion out of eighth grade in independent school units, but rather towards more rigid retention in rural districts.

There is no ameliorating trend or tendency to justify a hope that rural schools can become a satisfactory unit of school organization.



## CHAPTER 7

## POSSIBILITIES OF RE-DISTRICTING IN KITTSOON COUNTY

A thing once put has a tendency to become established. The law of inertia is active not only in the physical but also in the spiritual fields. Flux is not in itself a desirable condition. When we put a book aside, we desire that it stay put. Flux or shifting of position is valuable only as it is controlled, and then we call it progress. When a condition becomes so set that it becomes a hindrance to what we define as progress, the epithet "tradition" is applied to it, but this derogatory sense is not the only valid one. A matter passed on by oral repetition is traditional. That it is so passed on certainly doesn't tell whether it is good or bad. Established society couldn't exist without tradition. The very fact that all the world isn't in a state of flux and change is due to certain stability, inertia, or tradition.

There is no doubt but that there was a time when the small rural district was a distinct and valuable aid to education. Even that we can show that it falls far behind the larger unit does not mean that it didn't serve a useful purpose and does not now do so. If a better cannot be given in return, then it is still valid. What must be proved in this chapter is that a change can be made for the better, or could under certain conditions be made.



### The One-Room Unit a Tribute to the Pioneer

One of the first considerations establishing the intrinsic value of the small school system was the active desire for an education which caused it to be established. It was a convenient tool within the grasp of a few scattered individuals. The son and the daughter of the farmer could get what they otherwise would be excluded from. The nation was being built, and a frugality of wants had to go with living under primitive conditions. A satisfaction with little is a basic qualification in the pioneer. It is a great tribute to them that their wants were not so primitive that education was left out of consideration.

Pioneer conditions can best be described by their lacks. Lack of money, lack of roads, lack of conveyances, lack of ability in every sense but that of a sturdy willingness to bear up under the load, that describes primitive beginnings. The school district couldn't be larger than that the child could walk to school, for neither roads, time, nor methods of transportation were available for transporting them. If children of rural sections were to get an education, the only solution was the rural district.

It can be seen at a glance that this is no longer true. Money is so plentiful that every form of luxury is being bought for it. Roads are being built from nearly every farm door. The automobile travels in one hour the



distance a child could walk in two days. It seems safe to say that the rural one-room school has passed its period of usefulness. By this we do not mean that there are not places where it doesn't yet serve as the only possible unit of school organization. It may be necessary at least for a number of years to retain a number of them. Far-outlying districts poorly served with roads will have to wait for those, but present indications are that in no place fit for making a living will the lack of roads very long be a hindrance to school bus transportation.

#### Hindrances to Re-districting

From what has been said about the shortcomings of the one-room, one-teacher school it is apparent that the only solution is to build larger units. We all know that this isn't easily done. Local boards get considerable satisfaction out of prerogatives they enjoy as members. Jealousy of whatever power individuals enjoy in the small district seems to constitute a powerful lever for opposition to reorganization into larger districts. The present distribution of state aid in Kittson County is on such basis that rural schools can continue to levy a much lower tax rate than the larger units can exist under. Many pupils whose parents object but weakly to having their children walk two miles to school would oppose very strenuously having them walk one mile to a bus route. The



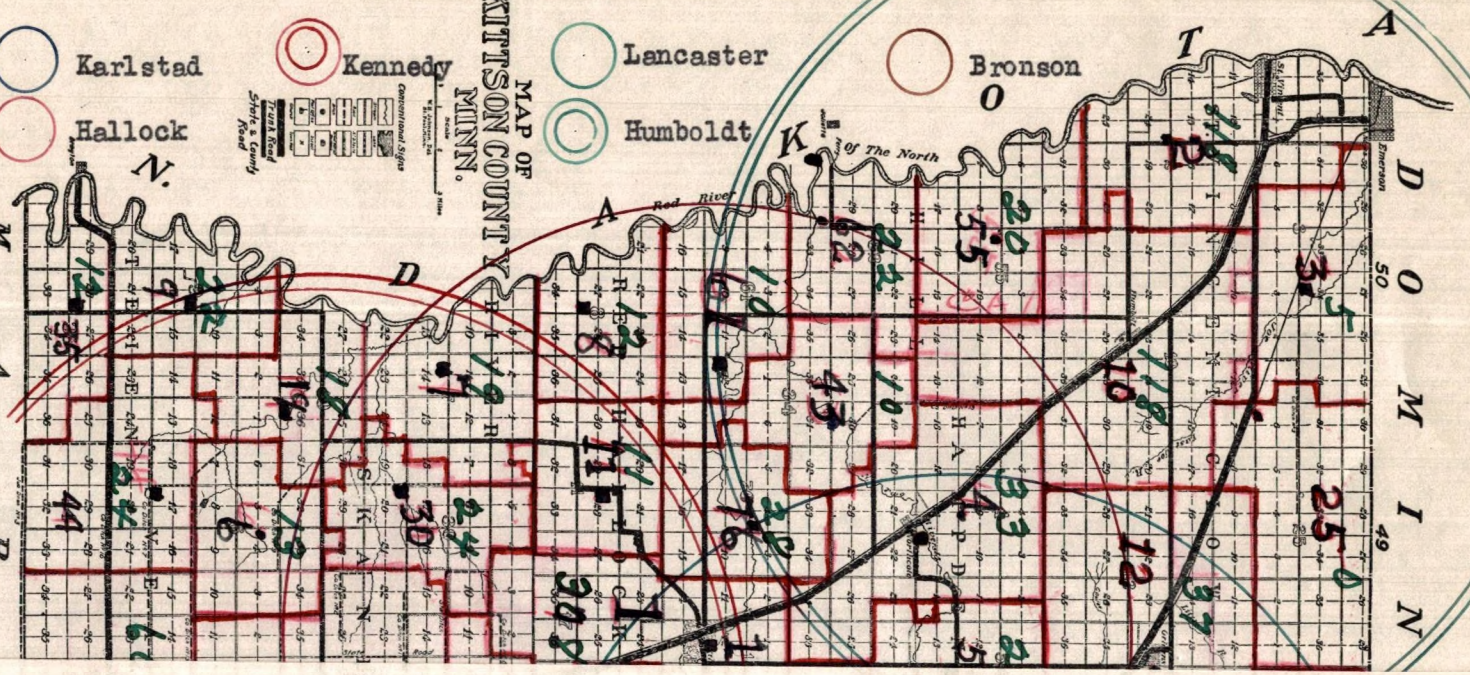
CENTERS OF CIRCLES WITH A TEN-MILE RADIUS

- Karlstad
- Hallock
- School Houses, "144" Dist.

 Kennedy  
 Lancaster  
 Humboldt

MAP OF  
KITTSOPON COUNTY  
MINN.

- Bronson
- Humboldt



M  
A  
R  
"144" Dist.



argument is quite prevalent that it is quite a hazard to walk to a bus stop and get chilled by waiting probably ten minutes for the bus to arrive. That a small margin of safety must be allowed between the time of the arrival of the child and bus seems certain.

#### Factors Encouraging Redistricting

It is a well-known sociological fact that minorities find great difficulty with controlling majorities, and that attendant results are likely to be dangerous in the end. To pass a law that small districts must unite is neither possible nor practical. There are, however, urges within the power of legislatures to use which will cause districts to choose to combine. These have been resorted to and must be used more widely.

State classification aid, transportation aid, and supplemental aid are such devices. When these are applied in such a way that the small district will find it to their advantage to consolidate, then the majority will do so. The experience of the consolidated schools has been that though state aid has come to them much more freely, yet their expenditures have far out-run their state aid and has resulted in a higher tax rate. It was found in Chapters 2 and 3 that while the per cent that state aid was <sup>of</sup> total expenditures was 42 and 34 for the accredited high schools and rural schools respectively, the aid was supplemented by a 56.69 mill tax in the high school districts



and only 14.22 mills in the rural. These ratios would have to be reversed to encourage further consolidation.

Roads built by the state or by counties have covered nearly all parts of Kittson County. Districts not so covered have a very small number of pupils. To educate those is at present a costly matter when per pupil rates are taken into consideration. These could probably be more easily boarded in town than transported, and state aid is permitted on the same basis as transportation aid. The state of Minnesota has, furthermore, routed a large per cent of automobile taxes back to the counties to be used for highway construction and maintenance. These factors in the highway policies of Minnesota distinctly favored the travel to larger centers. Incidentally this encourages going to larger centers for schooling too. There are now many instances where this is done, some on a large scale. District #4 transports all of their pupils to Hallock and get the best of schooling for less than it would have cost them in their own district.

Maps connected with this chapter will show both as to districting and as to highways how convenient routing of busses might be carried out without a great deal more of highway construction. Only about 100 pupils lie outside circles with ten-mile radii drawn from existing high school centers. The problem of transportation could soon be



looked after. There are well maintained roads 2, 3, 4, or 5 miles apart running east and west nearly across the county. In some regions road development is still a problem. But at the present rate of road building by county and townships, it will be question of only a few years when pupils may be transported from nearly every school district to one of the six high school centers.

The longest bus route would extend from Lancaster, Minnesota into District #81. County Aid Highway number Four would make traffic by motor bus possible that distance. Twenty-four miles is not an excessive distance for a bus to travel. There are bus routes out from Grand Rapids, Minnesota forty-two miles long. In the winter feeder-lines are operated in many parts of the state. This would be necessary also in Kittson County.

Proposed redistricting would have to consider not only the length of bus routes but also the density of the population. Maps are included to illustrate also this point. The following table of facts gathered from the U. S. Census Abstract of 1930 will show us the variation in population density and what it might mean in the event of district reorganization.

The number of persons residing in the various townships has been written in green on the map just above the name of the township. Two unorganized townships, 162 R 45,



and 161 R 45 have no population reported though possibly no less than 100 persons live there.

Table 19  
Populations of Townships and Villages  
in Kittson County

Name of Township	1930 Pop.	Name of Township	1930 Pop.	Name of Villages	1930 Pop.
Arveson	176	Cannon	93	Bronson	239
Caribou	247	Glowe	189	Donaldson	133
Davis	297	Deerwood	265	Hallock	869
Granville	295	Hallock	215	Halma	92
Hampden	233	Hazelton	304	Humboldt	189
Hill	189	Jupiter	472	Karlstad	394
McKinley	104	Norway	360	Kennedy	279
Pelan	100	Percy	102	Karlstad	394
Poppleton	306	Red River	272	St. Vincent	304
Richardville	319	St. Joseph	208	Total	2955
St. Vincent	394	Skane	203		
Springbrook	308	Svea	183	Age Grouping	
Tegner	298	Teien	439	Under 5	1014
Thompson	490			5-14	2262
Total	3756		3305	15-24	1762
Total for all Townships in County			7061 <sup>#</sup>	25-34	1243
Total Rural Population		6733 <sup>#</sup>		35-44	1234
Total Village Population	2955			45-64	1503
Total Population in County		9688		65 & Over	670

<sup>#</sup>There is a discrepancy of 328 between the totals reported for the townships and the number given as rural population.

#### Probable Results of Reorganization

From data recorded in Chapter 6 of the present study we gather that there are each year an average of 251 eighth grade pupils in the county. The present condition is that only 56.2 per cent of these graduate. Modern educational philosophy knows no reason why promotion from eighth grade





**KITTSOON COUNTY**  
MINNESOTA

JOHN S. SCHMIDT County Engineer  
 ELMER O. PEARSON Surveyor  
 LYMAN BRINK County Attorney  
 ESTHER O. CULMAN Judge of Probate  
 ANDY E. LARSON Treasurer  
 STANLEY ERICSON Chief of Police  
 J.A. SALISBURY County Clerk

APPROVED APRIL 1 1936  
 RICHARD EDWARDS County Clerk  
 WILLIAM RUGDEN Auditor  
 ED FITZGERALD Health Officer

- M A R S H A L L C O U N T Y
- 1 Clay Lake Bed - West of Line
  - C.A. = County Aided Roads
  - S.A. = State Aided County Roads
  - M.T.H. = Minnesota Trunk Highways
  - U.S.T. = United States Aided Trunk Highways
- CENTERS OF TEN-MILE CIRCLES
- Hallowell
  - Kennedy
  - Lancaster
  - Humbolt
  - Karleton
  - Bronson

STATE OF MINNESOTA  
Department of Highways

**KITTSOON COUNTY** COPYRIGHTED - 1936

TYPE	SYMBOL	DESCRIPTION
County Aided Road	Red line with arrows	County Aided Road
State Aided Road	Red line with dots	State Aided Road
Minnesota Trunk Highway	Blue line with 'M.T.H.' label	Minnesota Trunk Highway
United States Aided Trunk Highway	Blue line with 'U.S.T.' label	United States Aided Trunk Highway
Clay Lake Bed	Blue shaded area	Clay Lake Bed
Center of Ten-Mile Circle	Circle with center dot	Center of Ten-Mile Circle
Hallowell	Circle with 'H'	Hallowell
Kennedy	Circle with 'K'	Kennedy
Lancaster	Circle with 'L'	Lancaster
Humbolt	Circle with 'H'	Humbolt
Karleton	Circle with 'K'	Karleton
Bronson	Circle with 'B'	Bronson



shouldn't be 100 per cent. If this would come about, and all eighth grade pupils entered high school, we should soon have, not 439 pupils in high school, but four times 251 or roughly 1000 high school pupils. This added to our 2000 elementary school pupils would give us a student body of 3000 in place of our 2437.

Chapter 4 indicates that there is an average of 119 teachers in Kittson County. These are paid an average of \$91.44 per month. The county spends an average of \$98,026 for teachers. If all pupils were promoted out of eighth grade, thus raising the number of pupils in the county to 3000 we would need roughly 100 teachers. If these were paid an average salary the same as that paid by the accredited high school units, there would be an expenditure for salaries amounting to \$103,347 as compared with \$98,000, but if the number of pupils were not increased and 30 pupils were given to each teacher, only 81 teachers would be required reducing the salary schedule to \$83,711. With good educational facilities and a sound philosophy of promotion operating, it is not likely that school enrollment in the county would fall far short of 3000.

#### Approximate Costs of Transportation

A report of costs of transportation in Minnesota schools states that the median per-pupil cost is 16 cents per day.<sup>1</sup> At that rate 478 pupils of the 1107 pupils in

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<sup>1</sup>Knute P. B. Reishus, A Study of School District Reorganization in Polk County, Minnesota, (Unpublished Master's Thesis, University of North Dakota Library, 1935), p. 84.



the accredited units rode to school. It is to be expected that if all rural pupils were to be transported, it might rise to somewhat above 16 cents per pupil, as the average length of ride would be considerably greater when outside districts are hauled in than when only the district's own pupils ride. If the average cost of transportation should rise to 25 cents per pupil and all that were not transported were the 629 in the accredited schools which are not now transported, then the total cost of transportation for the 1808 children now attending school would be \$45,200. If the total number of pupils as a result of better service and advanced ideas of promotion rose to 3000, then the cost of transportation would be \$75,000.

#### Approximate Maintenance Costs of Kittson County Schools

Figures in Chapter 3 show us that the total maintenance costs of schools in Kittson County was \$161,227.47. Of this the state paid \$73,867. During the last few years, the state has born about 68 to 70 per cent of transportation. In the \$73,867 were included \$12,847.50 in transportation aid, leaving other aids at \$61,014.50. If we add to this approximately \$50,000 transportation aid the state would pay on a \$75,000 expenditure, the total aid for the county would be a little over \$110,000. This would have to be subtracted from total maintenance costs of \$219,000 arrived



Table 20<sup>a</sup>Per Child-Day Costs of Transporting Pupils With District-owned Motor Busses, 1929-30<sup>b</sup>

Per Child-Day Costs	Classification of School System						of District-Owned Buses	Iron Range	Grand Total
	Ungraded	Graded	Class of High School Department	A	B	C			
\$.01-\$.05			1	1	2	1	5		5
-.06-.10			2	5	5	6	18	1	19
.11-.15	1	2	1	7	18	3	32	8	40
.16-.20	4	1	3	9	18	5	41	19	60
.21-.25	1	1		2	3	2	9	1	10
.26-.30				3	2	3	7	2	9
.31-.35		1	1	1	1		4	1	5
.36-.40					1	1	2	1	3
Over .40								3	3
Total	6	5	8	28	50	21	118	36	154
Q 1	\$.15	\$.15	\$.08	\$.11	\$.13	\$.09	\$.11	\$.15	\$.12
Median	.18	.17	.15	.16	.15	.16	.16	.16	.16
Q 3	.20	.25	.18	.19	.19	.23	.20	.25	.19

<sup>a</sup> Adapted from A Study of School District Reorganization in Polk County, Minnesota by Knut P. B. Reishus, (Unpublished Master's Thesis in North Dakota University Library 1935) p. 84

<sup>b</sup> These costs do not include Depreciation.



at by adding to the previous maintenance costs the difference between previous and the proposed transportation costs.

From the previous it will be noted that the net cost to the local community of maintaining schools would under the proposed plan be approximately \$100,000. Or if the per-pupil costs of the accredited schools of \$106.11 for high school training and \$63.66 for the elementary grades are maintained, then the total costs of school maintenance to the county would be \$229,430. Subtracting from this the \$110,000 state aid would leave a net cost to the districts of about \$120,000.

From previous chapters we know that the average tax rates in Kittson County are 56.69 mills for the A group of schools, 33.2 mills for the B group, and 14.22 mills for the C, or rural group. The combined tax rates for the county for school purposes amounted to 19.3 mills. If the total proposed maintenance cost of \$120,000 were spread equally on the entire property valuation of \$5,156,933, then the tax rate would be a trifle higher than the present rates; namely, 23.3 as compared with 19.3 mills, the actual average rate.

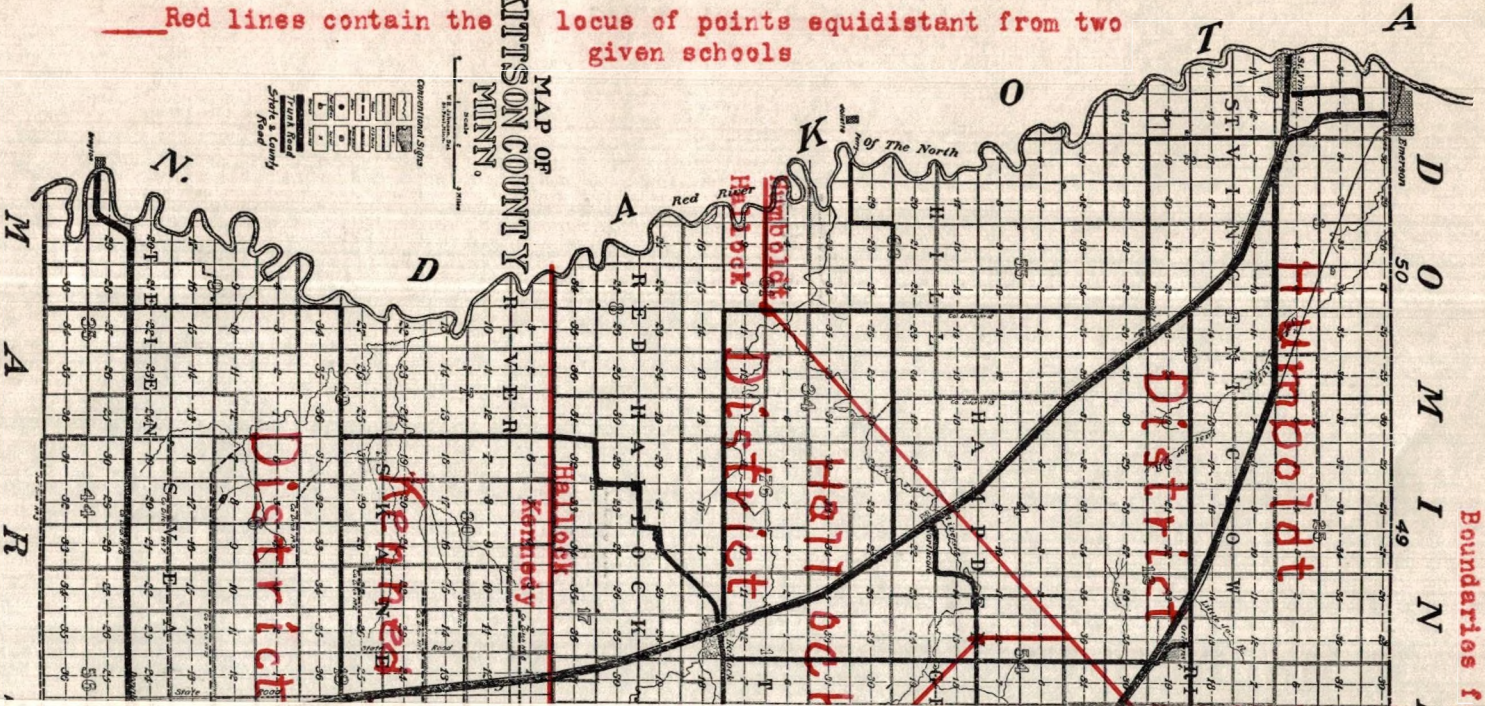
Accredited schools are found only in villages served by rail roads. On the Great Northern Railway, Kennedy lies nearest the Marshall County boundary, about seven miles north. Next to it on the north is Hallock, the county



Red lines contain the locus of points equidistant from two given schools

MAP OF  
KITSON COUNTY  
MINN.

Open School  
 Closed School  
 City  
 Town  
 Village  
 Unincorporated Place  
 Main Road  
 Other Road  
 State & County Road  
 Railroad



Boundaries of



seat, ten miles farther on. From there on the railroad angles much more, and we find Humboldt ten miles north and seven miles west, leaving it well in reach of the Canadian and the North Dakota boundaries.

The Soo Line enters the county near the southeast corner but angles so that it leaves it in the northwest. This causes the two railroads to converge and leave the northeast corner 24 miles away from a village having an accredited school. The villages on this railway with accredited schools are Karlstad, two miles north of the Marshall County boundary, Bronson seven miles farther west and eleven north, but in a straight line only a little over twelve miles away. Nine miles north and six miles west of the latter, but only a little over 10 miles distant lies Lancaster, the village nearest the northeast corner of the county. On the smaller map found in this chapter circles have been drawn with radii ten miles long and converging at each of the villages mentioned.

To give some clue as to what might serve for boundaries between districts a map has been included with lines drawn containing the locus of points equidistant from two given villages. These lines are not proposed as ideal but as a basis for negotiation only. Redistricting on the basis of these would make Hallock and Karlstad districts unduly small. The locus of points equidistant from the



two given towns has not been computed in direct line but on the basis of section lines a bus would have to travel to get there.

#### Chapter Summary

Pioneer conditions necessitated the rural one-room school. In those times lack of money, lack of roads, lack of conveyances, and lack of time made larger units impossible. Conditions causing the need of rural districts no longer exists and reorganization is desirable.

Redistricting is hindered by inertia, jealousy of prerogative, and state aid policies satisfying the small school. The wide scattering of pupils especially in the eastern part of the county would make transportation costly. School costs would rise if larger units were organized and it is to be feared that considerable opposition would be met with because of it.

Highway construction has progressed to a point where very little more would have to be done to make large units practicable. No bus route would be of prohibitive length. Proposals for reorganization of districts must consider density of population as well as length of routes. It is believed that a combination of locus of points of equidistance from two schools and the density of population should guide those who work out definite plans for reorganization. Present school district boundaries should be given no consideration except as established routes influence transportation.



## CHAPTER 5

## SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

Inequalities in ability to support education was found to be as great in Kittson County as those found by Norton<sup>1</sup> to exist between the various states of the nation. Inequalities in per-pupil wealth were to a considerable degree offset by the amount of state aid granted a district. There was a distinctly negative correlation between the number of pupils in the district and the per-pupil wealth. To this might be added that increase in state aid had been much more than balanced by improvements made in more progressive systems. Present educational laws and regulations will have to be greatly modified to encourage further consolidation.

Per-pupil expenditures for schools in Kittson County are high, perhaps exceeded by averages of no state in the union. While state aid causes net per-pupil costs to drop much lower in accredited districts than either type, yet the ratio of wealth and expenditure per pupil discriminates against progressive schools. This is especially true when "Total Orders Issued" is used as the basis of comparison instead of "Maintenance Costs", the reason for this being that most rural schools, organized 20 to 50 years ago, built lower priced schools on which there is no indebtedness and have made few capital outlays since, while the opposite of this is true for accredited units.

Because better salaries are paid in group A schools, the advantage rests with them in choosing teachers. Coupled with this we find that a longer school year, better equipment, larger libraries, a lower teacher-subject load, comforts and sanitation, and transportation all focus our Research Bulletin of the N. E. A. Vol. IV, Nos. 1 & 2



attention on the accredited high school units of Kittson County as highly superior to either of the other two groups. Regarding what schools offered their pupils the conclusion was inevitable that rural schools were out-classed in every way.

Rural schools not only offered a shorter school year but the per cent of attendance was far lower than in urban districts. Not only does eighth grade enrollment drop off much more, especially for boys, but the number graduating in rural schools was only 56.2 per cent as compared with 92.3 in the accredited high schools. Chapter five proves that what rural schools utilize of their offerings is even lower than the per cent they offer in comparison with the larger units.

Chapter six of the present study found that over a period of years there had been no well defined trend pointing towards improvement in the rural systems. The trend in per cent graduated seemed to tend towards a policy of more rigid retention rather than freer promotion. No ameliorating tendency justified a hope that rural schools might become a satisfactory unit of school organization.

Chapter seven concludes that the rural one-room school is no longer necessary but that inertia, jealousy of prerogative, and fear of higher tax rates stand in the way of reorganization. Highways and conveyances are obtainable for the longest bus route required in the county and the technique of determining boundaries could be developed to make the outcome successful.

The conviction has deepened as the work has progressed that the lowest estimates the writer had placed upon the present value of the rural unit as an educational institution were high when placed alongside of the findings disclosed by this study. A certain fear is enter-



tained that because of the comparison a higher value has been placed upon the present inadequate high school units than they merit. Only occasionally has an attempt been made to relate to larger fields, and when that comparison proved quite favorable to Kittson County, it might result in a self-satisfaction which would destroy initiative. What was true of many comparisons in the local field; namely, that while one set of figures would show the rural field at an advantage the next might upset it, this would certainly be true also when the local field was compared in different ways to the national.

The present study seems to justify the following generalizations:

1. In the established school organizations in Kittson County there is no equality in ability, in effort, or in opportunities offered.
2. The uniform discrimination against the child in the rural school cries out for determined effort on the part of educational leaders to re-style the entire system.
3. Ever so much improvement in administration cannot efface inequalities. A thoroughgoing reorganization into larger units is the only proved remedy.
4. Reorganization will come most easily as a result of encouragement in the form of state aids much more distinctly favoring large units with better educational facilities.
5. To hasten the demand for this and public support of it, plans should be formulated for making the findings of educational studies available to everybody in a form suitable to the varied educational levels of society.