

DESIRABILITY OF ADDITIONAL COMANCHE COUNTY SCHOOL
CONSOLIDATION

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DESIRABILITY OF ADDITIONAL COMANCHE COUNTY SCHOOL
CONSOLIDATION

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
LIST OF TABLES.	iv
Chapter	
I. INTRODUCTION	1
Statement of Problem	
Procedure	
Limitations of the Study	
Sources of Data	
Related Studies	
Organization and Presentation	
II. PRESENTATION OF CRITERIA	10
Size of District	
Specifications of Buildings and Sites	
Transportation	
School Finance	
Social Conditions Affecting Consolidation	
Summary of Criteria	
III. APPLICATION OF CRITERIA TO HYPOTHETICAL GROUPING OF THE SCHOOL DISTRICTS.	26
Criteria 1	
Criteria 2	
Criteria 3	
IV. SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS.	59
Summary	
Conclusions	
BIBLIOGRAPHY.	63

LIST OF TABLES

Table	Page
1. Name of School, Legal Status, Total Average Daily Attendance, Refined Average Daily Attendance, Average Membership, and Teacher Personnel for Comanche County Schools, 1951-1952.	27
2. Teacher Personnel of Each School for the 1951-1952 School Year and Eligibility for the 1952-1953 School Year	31
3. Potential Teacher Personnel for Groups II, III, and IV School Districts, 1952-1953	34
4. Teacher-Pupil-Grade Ratio of Comanche County Schools, 1951-1952	37
5. Affiliated Subjects Approved by the Accrediting Committee and Subjects Offered During the 1951-1952 School Year for Each High School	39
6. State and County Valuations, Local Fund Assignments, and Tax Levy by School Districts for 1952-1953	40
7. Bonded Indebtedness Requirement for Each District, 1952-1953	42
8. Ratio of Average Daily Attendance and Enrichment Fund by School Districts 1952-1953	43
9. Operational Cost Analysis of School Districts, 1952-1953.	44
10. Average Salaries for Teacher Personnel of County	47
11. Operational Cost Analysis of Grouped Districts.	49
12. School Building Survey.	51
13. Business and Social Survey of School Districts.	58

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

The acceleration of school district consolidations during the past few years encourages the prediction that within the next few decades 50 per cent of the school districts now in existence will be abolished. The independent city school districts, previously confined to the corporate boundaries of the city, are becoming fewer because for school purposes cities are being consolidated with their suburban and farm areas. The trend in school district organization in most of the states has been toward community school administrative units or toward a complete county unit of administration.¹

The State of Texas is no exception to this trend. The number of school districts in this State decreased approximately 50 per cent between the school years of 1948-1949 and 1949-1950. The common school districts reduced their number from 3,534 in 1948-1949 to 1,666 in 1949-1950, while the independent school districts increased from 962 in 1948-1949 to 1,066 in 1949-1950, thus reducing the total number of school districts from 4,496 to 2,732.²

¹Howard A. Dawson, "Trends in School District Reorganization," The Phi Delta Kappan, XXXII (March, 1951), 302.

²Research Division, Texas State Teachers Association, "Local District Reorganization," The Texas Outlook, XXV (January, 1951), 36.

This reduction in the number of school districts in this state may be attributed to the enactment of Senate Bills 115, 116, and 117, commonly referred to as the Gilmer-Aikin Bills, during the Fifty-first Legislature in 1949. In Senate Bill 116, the County Boards of Trustees of the several counties were authorized and required to annex school districts not maintaining school for a period of two consecutive years to adjoining school districts having school.³ This action dissolved the small common school districts that were contracting or transferring their students to other school districts.

Another school district study in this state that points toward further consolidation of school districts is the small school survey. Under the direction of the Texas Education Agency and the State Accrediting Committee, a survey is being made of the school districts that have a high school enrollment of fewer than one hundred scholastics. The purpose of this survey is to determine whether or not such school districts should remain as accredited high schools.⁴

Since it is obvious that the trend in school district organization in Texas is toward additional consolidations, the question arises as to the extent that additional consolidation of school districts should be encouraged. The very

³Senate Journal Supplement, Article VIII, Senate Bill Number 116, Fifty-first Legislature, Regular Session, June 2, 1949, p. 24.

⁴Texas Education Agency, "The Small High Schools of Texas--A Study of the Standards for Their Accreditation," November, 1950.

essence of this fact presents the background for the present study.

Statement of the Problem

The purpose of this study is to determine whether additional school consolidations in Comanche County will improve the educational opportunities of all students.

Procedure

Many factors could be considered in determining the advisability of further consolidation of school districts in Comanche County; however, three will be used in this study: (1) financial, (2) educational, and (3) sociological. Criteria will be established from these three points of view and used to evaluate hypothetical groupings of the school districts of Comanche County. From such evaluation, conclusions will be made as to whether or not it is financially, educationally, and sociologically advisable to make additional consolidations.

Limitations of the Study

This study is limited geographically to the school districts of Comanche County. The population, scholastic enrollment, area, industry, and the number as well as the population of the incorporated cities of this county describes an average county of the State of Texas. The availability of school records, in addition to the writer's personal knowledge of the school organization of Comanche County, prompted the selection of this county for this study. The conclusions evolving from

this thesis should not necessarily be assumed to be applicable to other counties and school districts.

A chronological limitation is also placed on this study in that data will be secured on all school districts in existence as of June 1, 1952. This data will be used in studying the potentialities of hypothetical groupings of the school districts. The only variations from this school year will be for the purpose of indicating trends that might or might not have some bearing on further consolidation.

The criteria used in this thesis reflect the findings of several studies of research groups and individuals. There may be some question concerning the validity of some of the criteria, for, as revealed in numerous studies, it may be impossible to validate them. However, this study will use such criteria because they are the best available at the present time.

In addition to the previously mentioned limitations, this study is limited further in that it will not attempt to evaluate the curriculums of the schools to the extent of determining whether they are desirable or undesirable. Rather, this thesis will evaluate the educational opportunities of the potential consolidations, determining which district organization has the greater possibilities.

Sources of Data

The data for this study will be secured from the following sources:

1. Records in the administrative offices of the accredited school districts of Comanche County.
2. Records in the office of the County School Superintendent of Comanche County.
3. Records in the Office of the Texas Education Agency, Austin, Texas.
4. Records in the office of the County Judge of Comanche County.
5. Records in the office of the County Tax Assessor-Collector of Comanche County.
6. Professional books, periodicals, and reports of various studies dealing with consolidations of school districts.

Related Studies

School consolidations present very delicate and troublesome problems to school administrators; because of this fact, many studies have been made in this field. Since the enactment of the Gilmer-Aikin Laws, the administrative personnel of the schools of Texas, especially the County School Superintendents and the County School Boards, have made extensive studies of their school districts in respect to consolidations. However, such studies have been made just for immediate requirements by law and have not been recorded for study.

Studies have been made nationally as well as locally with different approaches endeavoring to solve various problems of school consolidations. In that such studies deal with the consolidation of school districts, they are all related to a

certain extent with this study; however, only those that are closely related are briefly described at this point.

Howell, in his study of the legal principles and practices in the consolidation of school districts in Texas,⁵ sought to do two things: (1) to make clear the fundamental principles underlying the relation of the state and the local school officials to the school district in regard to school district consolidation, and (2) to reduce to a systematic organization the principles derived from cases which are applicable to the problem of consolidation of school districts.

Since he studied the legality of consolidation and pertinent controversies in endeavoring to get a clear view of the methods and procedures of consolidation of schools in Texas, his thesis is related; yet, he did not apply the laws to further consolidation in any county.

Sabastian investigated the Navarro County School Districts to determine if further school consolidation in Navarro County was desirable. From his conclusions and findings the following recommendations were made: (1) consolidation should take place for both elementary and high school purposes, (2) consolidation should continue until the point is reached where there is at least one teacher for each grade, (3) schools of six teachers

⁵Hewell Howard Howell, "Legal Practices in the Consolidation of School Districts in Texas," (Unpublished Master's Thesis, North Texas State College, Department of Education, 1950).

or more should not be further consolidated if it means the community will lose its elementary or high school unless the people of the community favor consolidation, and (4) better roads for school bus routes should be provided in the county.⁶

Apparently Sabastian's study is very closely related. However, his investigation was made in 1948, and since that time the enactment of the Gilmer-Aikin Laws, as previously explained, have made drastic changes in school district organization in Texas. A study of further consolidation as of the school year 1951-1952 would include the effects of the Gilmer-Aikin Laws on school districts.

In 1938 a research committee under the auspices of the United States Office of Education made a survey of the local school unit organization in ten states. This committee established data that will be used in this study. However, their study surveyed the organization from a state level, and not from a local situation.⁷

Another research committee in 1938 studied the principles and procedures in the organization of satisfactory local school units. Although a considerable amount of their findings will be used in this study, their conclusions advised states only

⁶Alfred G. Sebastian, "School Consolidations in Navarro County," (Unpublished Master's Thesis, North Texas State Teachers College, Department of Education, 1948).

⁷United States Department of the Interior, Department of Education, "Local School Unit Organization in Ten States," Research Bulletin 10, 1938.

as to the procedures to use in considering the reorganization of school districts.⁸

Howard A. Dawson, assisted by the George Peabody College for Teachers, conducted a field study of the satisfactory local school units. Dawson drew conclusions as to the size of the satisfactory school unit, and he decided that the consolidated schools had a financial structure more desirable than the smaller schools. Dawson's thesis was a comparison study of various school districts, whereas this one is a direct application of trends and studies to a particular county.⁹

Perhaps the investigation most closely related to this thesis is one made by Dean Skiles in 1950, who studied the efficiency of the system of pupil transportation in Comanche County. Some of the many recommendations and conclusions made by Skiles that are pertinent to this study are as follows: (1) local school districts are too small for economical transportation, (2) the most economical bus routes can be established from the county as a whole rather than by individual districts, and (3) the County School Board should work out a plan to organize Comanche County into one unit of school transportation.

⁸United States Department of Interior, Office of Education, "Principles and Procedures in the Organization of Satisfactory Local School Units," Research Bulletin 11, 1938.

⁹Howard A. Dawson, "Satisfactory Local School Units," (Division of Surveys and Field Studies, George Peabody College for Teachers), Field Study 7, 1934.

Skiles's thesis, however, dealt with transportation problems only, and this study deals with the consolidation of school districts.¹⁰

Organization and Presentation

This study is divided into four chapters. Chapter I gives an introduction to the problem. In it are found a statement of the problem, a brief summary of the purpose of the investigation, the limitations of the thesis, the source of data, a description of related studies, and the organization and presentation of data.

Chapter II is devoted to the establishment of criteria to be used in evaluating the school district organization of Comanche County. The criteria will be determined from previous studies, use being made of the judgments and principles as established by various people making such investigations.

Chapter III presents a survey of the status of the schools of Comanche County under the present organization. Then existing data are combined under hypothetical groupings of the districts in an endeavor to determine the financial and educational value obtained, with due consideration to the sociological view involved in the groupings.

In Chapter IV appear the summary and conclusions.

¹⁰Dean Skiles, "An Evaluation of the System of Pupil Transportation in Comanche County, Texas," (Unpublished Master's Thesis, Department of Education, North Texas State College, 1950).

CHAPTER II

PRESENTATION OF CRITERIA

The purpose of this chapter is to present evolved criteria which may be used to evaluate the school district organization of a political sub-division of a state, although it is impossible to apply uniform standards to every situation.¹

A general investigation of this type of problem was made by an advisory committee on education appointed by the President of the United States in 1938. This committee was geared first to study and advise on Federal aid for vocational education and later to extend research on the entire educational relationship between Federal, State, and local conduct of education. According to its report, citizens of the United States should expect certain standards of their schools.

The following services are among those that should be universally available:

1. A well-planned program of general education for all children and youth, and also suitable preparation for particular vocations in accordance with the needs of the children and youth.

¹United States Department of Interior, Office of Education, "Local School Unit Organization in Ten States," Research Bulletin 10, 1938, p. 11. This research group found a necessity for desirable standards as to size, location, and services rendered by schools and school districts. However, they recognized the fact that standards for schools and school districts could not be predetermined but should be adaptable to particular conditions within the sub-division of a state.

2. Instruction by carefully selected teachers who are competent and well-prepared, and who are interested in the development of community life.

3. Safe and sanitary school buildings adapted to a modern program of instruction and related services.

4. Suitable school equipment and instructional materials, including books and other reading materials adequate for the needs of the children.

5. Student aid when necessary to permit able young people to remain in school at least up to age eighteen.

6. Suitable opportunities for part-time and adult education.

The community facilities for educational and related services should include:

1. Adequate school and community libraries.

2. A broad community program for the protection of the physical and mental health of the children.

3. Adequate provision of educational and related services for handicapped children.

4. Well-organized and competently staffed educational and vocational guidance for all children and youth.

The organization of the local school system should be adapted to democratic methods and needs:

1. The school district or other local administrative unit, whether urban or rural, should be large enough to permit economical organization, effective supervision of schools, and a broad base for local taxation.

2. The board of education should be broadly representative of the entire community.

3. There should be competent supervision of instruction and other services through a staff with supervisory capacity and social vision.

4. Teachers should be encouraged and given opportunity to participate actively and intelligently in the development of educational and administrative policies for the school system; they should also be encouraged to participate in community activities appropriate for public servants.

5. There should be definite cooperative arrangements for the coordination of the work of the schools with that of other community agencies concerned with the health, education, welfare, and guidance areas of children and youth.

6. In rural areas, the school system should be as efficiently organized and as well supported as in urban areas; so far as feasible school attendance areas should follow community lines.

7. Where separate schools are maintained for Negroes, they should be as well adapted to the needs of their pupils as were the schools for White children and youth.²

The advisory committee determining the above criteria after making its survey, has been substantiated in its decisions by individuals and groups of individuals making similar investigations. Inasmuch as all of the criteria presented by this committee are not applicable to this particular thesis, the following three, condensed in suitable form, are used:

1. Will the organization of the local school districts present a well-planned program of general education for all children and youth?

2. Will the local administrative unit be large enough to permit economical organization, effective supervision of schools, and a broad base for local taxation?

3. Will the attendance area follow community lines and present an efficiently organized and well supported school system?

The remainder of this chapter will be devoted to validation as well as clarification of such points as the size of school districts, school building specifications, finance,

²United States Department of Interior, Office of Education, "The Advisory Committee on Education, Report of the Committee," (February, 1938), pp. 17-18.

social conditions, and other pertinent factors that may affect school consolidations financially, educationally, and sociologically. Also, the legal requirements of the State of Texas need to be given due consideration in the light of the selected criteria.

Size of District

What should be the size of a desirable school district? How large an enrollment should be expected in a desirable school? Various situations as well as various school administrators might present a variety of answers to these questions. Yet, many research groups as well as individual school men have accepted the decision of this matter by a conference of school personnel called by the United States Commissioner of Education, which studied the reorganization of school units.³ This group defined an attendance area as one including all children attending or eligible to attend a single school and held that an elementary attendance area should be large enough to have a teacher-pupil ratio of one teacher per thirty pupils with one grade per teacher. The high school attendance area, on the other hand, may comprise several elementary school attendance areas and have a junior high school of at least three hundred pupils and ten teachers, or a junior-senior high school

³United States Department of Interior, Office of Education, "Report of the Proceedings of a Conference on Reorganization of School Units," Bulletin 15, 1935, p. 1.

of three hundred pupils and ten teachers. The conference further emphasized the fact that a school administrative unit does not have to conform with the boundaries of any political sub-division of a state in that it might comprise a part of a county, a county, or two or more counties or cities.⁴

Howard A. Dawson in his survey of the satisfactory local school units concluded that it was possible to have administrative and supervisory services necessary for a complete educational program at a reasonable cost, provided the local unit had at least 1,600 pupils and forty-five teaching units.⁵ His study confirmed the report of the conference committee on the size of the local unit as itemized in the previous paragraph;⁶ however, Cyr, in reporting in the Yearbook of the Department of Rural Education of the National Educational Administration in February, 1945, criticized the conclusions of Dawson, not as to the desirability, but as to the practicability in some instances of having an administrative unit this large. Cyr implies that to meet the requirements of Dawson some of the districts would comprise several counties.⁷

⁴Ibid., pp. 16-17.

⁵Howard A. Dawson, "Satisfactory Local School Units," (Division of Surveys and Field Studies, George Peabody College for Teachers), Field Study 7, 1934, p. 178.

⁶United States Department of Interior, Office of Education, "Report of the Proceedings of a Conference on Reorganization of School Units," Bulletin 15, 1935, pp. 16-17.

⁷Frank W. Cyr, "Planning Effective Rural School Administration and Organization," Yearbook of Department of Rural Education, National Education Association, 1945, p. 120.

Again, the fact of establishing minimum standards suitable for every school district is not probable; yet, there is evidence of desirable minimum standards if possible and applicable to a given situation.

The State of Texas makes some minimum standard requirements for attendance of schools which receive financial support and also allows extra advantages to the larger school unit. Senate Bill 16, Acts of the Fifty-first Legislature, 1949, previously referred to in Chapter I of this thesis, outlines the requirements in the pupil attendance of the school before it receives foundation grants.⁸ Article I, Section 1, proposes to guarantee to each child of school age in Texas a minimum of nine full months of school each year. Article III, Section 1, Sub-division (1) allocates the number of teachers for each school in the following manner:

a. School districts having fewer than fifteen pupils in average daily attendance shall not be eligible for any classroom teacher units unless approved in extreme cases by the Commissioner of Education.

b. School districts having from fifteen to twenty-five pupils in average daily attendance--one classroom teacher.

c. School districts having from twenty-six to 109 pupils, inclusive, in average daily attendance are allowed two classroom

⁸Portions of the provisions of Article III, Sections 1-7 are listed on pages 15-17 of this thesis. Senate Journal Supplement, Article III, Senate Bill 116, Fifty-first Legislature, Regular Session, June 2, 1949, pp. 11-15.

teacher units for the first twenty-six pupils and one classroom teacher unit for each additional twenty-one pupils.

d. School districts having from 110 to 156 pupils in average daily attendance receive six classroom teacher units.

3. School districts having from 157 to 444 pupils in average daily attendance receive one class room teacher unit for each twenty-four pupils or fractional part thereof in excess of one-half.

f. School districts having from 445 to 487 pupils in average daily attendance receive nineteen classroom teacher units.

g. School districts having from 488 to 1512 pupils in average daily attendance are entitled to one classroom teacher unit for each twenty-five pupils or fractional part thereof in excess of one-half.

h. School districts having from 1,513 to 1,599 pupils in average daily attendance receive sixty-one classroom teacher units.

i. School districts having 1,600 or more pupils in average daily attendance receive one classroom teacher unit for every twenty-six pupils or major fractional part thereof.

Section 2 authorizes the schools showing sufficient need for vocational teachers to employ same. Small schools may pool together in employment of vocational teachers on a part-time basis for each school.

Section 3 provides for the employment of special service teachers in addition to the regular classroom teachers on the

basis of one for every twenty classroom teacher units in a school. Again the small schools may pool together to employ such teachers.

Section 5 authorizes the employment of supervisors or counselors on the basis of one for every forty classroom teacher units and an additional supervisor or counselor for each additional fifty classroom units. The small schools are authorized to pool their classroom units in the employment of a supervisor or counselor.

Section 6 outlines the requirements for principal units on a graduated basis starting with the small school on a part-time basis to the large school with more than one full-time principal.

Section 7 entitles a district having a four-year accredited high school to have a superintendent.

In addition to the above legal requirements for the schools of Texas, the State Accrediting Committee for schools of Texas demands the following classification of schools to be affiliated or accredited on a grade-teacher basis: one-teacher schools may be classified as six-grade schools; two teachers may teach as high as eight grades; three teachers, eight grades; four teachers, nine grades; five teachers, ten grades; and a school may have an affiliated high school if it employs seven teachers. Schools not meeting this standard of classification are entitled to an eight-months' school year rather than a nine months'.⁹

⁹Texas Education Agency, Handbook for Local School Officials, (September, 1951), p. 39.

From the judgments presented, it may be concluded that schools should be large enough to have a teacher-pupil ratio of thirty pupils per one teacher for each grade in the elementary school and three hundred students with ten teachers in the high school, to meet the desirable minimum standards.

Specifications of Buildings and Sites

Although this study is not an evaluation of school property, there is an apparent need to consider available school property, sites, and buildings should additional consolidation be concluded.

The Research Committee of the United States Department of Education, studying the local school unit organization in ten states in 1938, decided that school buildings should be planned from a functional point of view in that they should be constructed with definite educational services in mind. The buildings should be constructed to be free of physical hazards and should be properly lighted, heated, and ventilated with equipment sufficient to insure the maximum health, safety, and instructional efficiency of both pupils and teachers. Furthermore, the school site should be free from hazards to health and safety, with one acre of land for each fifty pupils.¹⁰

The research committee on principles and procedures of organization of school districts suggested that the location of

¹⁰United States Department of Interior, Office of Education, "Local School Unit Organization in Ten States," Research Bulletin 10, 1938, p. 14.

the schools should be considered on the basis of general topography, including streams, natural barriers, and the future as well as the present possible conditions of roads. This committee further advised that if in the long run the abandonment of usable school houses would be more economical, the present building should be abandoned without regard to the present conditions, and new buildings on new locations provided.¹¹

Apparently, in considering the school buildings and sites, the vital question is always the health and safety of the school and students. This implies that there should be sufficient housing and playground facilities to accommodate the students. The Texas School Laws emphasize the safety and health requirements of buildings and sites for students and teachers in outlining certain building specifications such as ventilation, heating, lighting, and fire hazards.¹²

Transportation

In establishing attendance areas for elementary and high schools, the conference committee, meeting in Washington in June, 1935, agreed that transportation facilities should be furnished to all elementary students living two miles from school and to all high school students living two and one-half miles from school. They further agreed that the elementary

¹¹United States Department of Interior, Office of Education, "Principles and Procedures in the Organization of Satisfactory Local School Units," Research Bulletin 11, 1938, pp. 26-27.

¹²J. C. Hinsley, The Handbook of Texas School Law, pp. 684-86.

students should not be on the school bus more than one hour and high school students not more than one and one-half hours.¹³

These principles of transportation have been generally accepted. On the other hand, the research committee investigating the local school unit organization in ten states attacked the problem of transportation in the broad concept that children who do not live within walking distance of school should be provided transportation at public expense. However, this committee emphasized that the expense of transportation should be kept at a minimum by the location of school buildings to permit the maximum number of children to walk to school.¹⁴

The Fifty-first Legislature of Texas indicated the State's desire to furnish transportation for students. The laws provide for each child residing two miles from school within a school district to be furnished free transportation, the school district being reimbursed on a graduated scale of \$3.50 to \$7.00 per month according to the scholastic population per square mile of the county. The bills do not prevent students that live less than two miles from school from riding the bus. There is the requirement that all bus routes must be approved by the County School Board subject to the approval of the State Commissioner of Education, and they are instructed by law to

¹³United States Department of Interior, Office of Education, "The Advisory Committee on Education, Report of the Committee," February, 1938, pp. 16-17.

¹⁴United States Department of Interior, Office of Education, "Local School Unit Organization in Ten States," Research Bulletin 10, 1938, p. 13.

plan the most economical system of transportation possible. This implies that routing of buses to accomodate children living less than two miles from school will not be permitted. However, students who live less than two miles from school on approved bus routes may ride the bus.¹⁵

The Fifty-second Legislature, meeting in 1951, revised the financial reimbursement to schools, endeavoring to provide transportation on a cost basis; however, no change was made in the distance requirement from school for students eligible to free transportation.¹⁶

School Finance

It is no easy matter to compare cost in education, for costs must be related to the service rendered.¹⁷ However, in the Seventeenth Yearbook of the American Association of School Administration, devoted to describing the basic principles of financing education, the basic issue of all financial structures was applied to school finance in the following question: "Is society getting its money's worth from public schools?"¹⁸

¹⁵Senate Journal Supplement, Article V, Senate Bill 116, Fifty-first Legislature, Regular Session, June 2, 1949, pp. 18-20.

¹⁶Vernon's Texas Session Law Service, Vol. 3, Senate Bill No. 90, Acts of the Fifty-second Legislature, 1951, p. 325.

¹⁷National Education Association of the United States, Seventeenth Yearbook of the American Association of School Administration, "Schools in Small Communities," 1939, pp. 349-50.

¹⁸Fred Englehardt, Report of the Superior Wisconsin School Survey, p. 26.

Therefore, a school district reorganization program must be financially sound in order that society will receive a better educational system and financial structure.

In several of the research studies on reorganization of school districts, reference was made to the requirements of financial support of schools as outlined in the Fifteenth Yearbook of the Department of Superintendence of the National Educational Association, which are as follows:

1. Tax units for public schools should be organized for the support of all public education for people up through 20 years of age. In other words, every local section of a state should be required to participate in the financial support of public education through what is now recognized as the secondary school period.

2. School tax units should be independent of all other municipal and quasi-municipal organizations.

3. School tax units should be so organized as to guarantee the exertion of a minimum financial effort toward the support of public education by every local area of the state.

4. In determining the reasonable normal financial effort that is to be required of local areas in the support of public schools, the total tax burden of the area included in the school tax unit should be considered.

5. In the establishment of school tax units, governing legislation should differentiate between taxes for current expense and taxes for programs of capital outlay.¹⁹

In so far as financial support of schools is considered, the State of Texas endeavors to equalize the opportunities of each school by supplementing the foundation program from state funds after the local district support of the school program

¹⁹National Education Association of the United States, The Improvement of Education, Fifteenth Yearbook of the Department of Superintendence, 1937, p. 135.

has been determined by an economic index of the financial ability of each county. This method of determining the financial requirement of the local district makes possible the equalization of taxation in all local districts according to their ability to pay. The State requires a certain amount of money raised from the local level to meet the minimum requirements of the required school program and allows an opportunity for the local district to enrich its school program if it so desires.²⁰

Social Conditions Affecting Consolidation

Many factors enter into the efforts of school administrators to consolidate school districts. One of the most important factors to be considered is the sociological viewpoint. Arthur Moehlman, a leading authority in educational sociology, presented what is probably one of the most outstanding aspects of social-economic growth affecting rural schools in the following statement:

Each power machine changed the overall pattern of living. The internal combustion engine, when applied to the automobile, facilitated the growth of a new network of roads, expansion of city suburbs, consolidated schools, dietary changes, and revised moral standards.²¹

²⁰Senate Journal Supplement, Article VI, Senate Bill 116, Fifty-first Legislature, Regular Session, June 2, 1949, pp. 20-23.

²¹Arthur Henry Moehlman, "Social Change and District Reorganization," The Phi Delta Kappan, XXII (March, 1951), 301.

It is probably impossible to analyze all the factors involved in effecting present social changes. However, the research committee surveying the organization of local school districts in ten states observed the following sociological factors influencing consolidation of schools: (1) racial and national origin, (2) religions, (3) cultural background, (4) social philosophy toward education, (5) local traditions, and (6) local prejudices and community rivalries. They also observed that sociological factors affecting the organization of local school units are often closely allied with topographical factors.²²

In addition to the above mentioned factors, the committee that studied the principles and procedures for organization of school districts made the following two observations which should be considered in studying the consolidation of school districts: (1) where the removal of the school would do great violence to certain well established community enterprises and attitudes, a school should not be removed, although it may not meet the standards of the minimum size of the school, and (2) schools should be located in relatively permanent centers of population. The permanency of population should not be determined only by growth in the past; a study should be made of present factors that will influence the stability of growth or decline of population in the future. As a matter of fact,

²²United States Department of Interior, Office of Education, "Local School Unit Organization in Ten States," Research Bulletin 10, 1938, p. 281.

it frequently happens that the presence of some particular factor, such as a local industry and the likelihood of its removal, will point to a more reliable index of the future population than any statistical formula or trend.²³

Summary of Criteria

From the data and information secured and presented above, the following criteria will be used to evaluate the present and potential school district organization:

1. Will the organization of the local school districts present a well planned program of general education for all children and youth?
2. Will the local administrative unit be large enough to permit economical organization, effective supervision of schools, and a broad base for local taxation?
3. Will the attendance area follow community lines and present an efficiently organized and well supported school system?

²³United States Department of Interior, Office of Education, "Principles and Procedures in the Organization of Satisfactory Local School Units," Research Bulletin 11, 1938, pp. 26-27.

CHAPTER III

APPLICATION OF CRITERIA TO HYPOTHETICAL GROUPINGS OF THE SCHOOL DISTRICTS

During the 1951-1952 school year, Comanche County contained eleven school districts. Of these eleven districts,¹ four were legally recognized as independent school districts under the direction and administration of their own superintendents, and seven were common school districts supervised by a County School Superintendent who was selected by popular vote of the people of Comanche County.

Two of the school districts, Fairview and Sipe Springs, did not maintain a school during the 1951-1952 school year, the second year that they have not operated a school within their district, and prior to the beginning of the 1952-1953 school year the County School Board will be required to annex these districts to some district or districts maintaining school, such action being mandatory upon the part of the County School Board under the provision of Senate Bill 116, Acts of the Fifty-first Legislature, 1949.² Due to the location of the

¹For general information such as the names of the districts, legal status, classification, average daily attendance, average membership, and number of teachers, see Table 1.

²Senate Journal Supplement, Article VIII, Senate Bill 116, Fifty-first Legislature, Regular Session, June 2, 1949, p. 24.

TABLE 1

NAME OF SCHOOL, LEGAL STATUS, TOTAL AVERAGE DAILY ATTENDANCE,
REFINED AVERAGE DAILY ATTENDANCE, AVERAGE
MEMBERSHIP, AND TEACHER PERSONNEL
FOR COMANCHE COUNTY SCHOOLS
1951-1952

Name of School	Legal Status	Average Daily Attendance	
		Total	Refined
Comanche	Independent	956.39	947.7
De Leon	Independent	677.18	654.02
Gustine	Independent	240.24	240.24
Sideny	Independent	167.21	164.21
Comyn	Common	111.54	
Proctor	Common	57.50	55.55
Beattie	Common	32.21	31.42
Van Dyke	Common	36.76	36.76
Hasse	Common	27.88	27.88
Sipe Springs	Common	0.00	0.00
Fairview	Common	0.00	0.00
County Super- intendent's Office	XXXX	XXXX	XXXX
Totals	11	2,306.91	2,262.97

TABLE 1 (continued)

Average Membership	Number of Teachers	Classification
1008.2	46	12
711.64	34	12
248.75	13	12
174.47	10	12
119.71	8	12
60.41	3	8
33.59	2	7
38.56	2	7
29.71	2	7
0.00	0	0
0.00	0	0
xxxx	1	0
2,425.04	123	xx

districts, to the transferring of students of the district during the past school year, and to the anticipated action of the

County School Board, the Fairview District should be considered as being annexed to the Comanche Independent School District; and the Sipe Springs District, divided equally between the De Leon Independent District and the Sidney Independent District.

The common school districts of less than twelve grade classification, Proctor, Beattie, Van Dyke, and Hasse, transferred their high school students to the Comanche Independent School for the 1951-1952 school year.³

For practical purposes, the districts are grouped into four potential school district organizations. Group I contains the anticipated 1952-1953 organization of school districts, Comanche, De Leon, Gustine, Sidney, Comyn, Proctor, Beattie, Van Dyke, and Hasse. Group II is composed of four districts, namely, Comanche, De Leon, Gustine, and Sidney. The smaller districts under this group are dissolved in the following manner: Comyn, annexed to De Leon; Proctor, Beattie, Van Dyke, and Hasse, to Comanche. Group III contains the two larger districts, De Leon and Comanche, and differs from Group II in that Gustine and Sidney are considered as annexed to Comanche. The final group, Group IV, is composed of only one school district, known as the Comanche County School. By way of summary, the number of districts for each group is as follows:

³There is one exception in that a few of the Beattie High School students who lived near the Sidney School District line were transferred to Sidney.

Group I, nine schools; Group II, four schools; Group III, two schools, and Group IV, one school.

The intent of this chapter, as previously mentioned, is to apply the criteria established in Chapter II to the hypothetical groupings of the school districts. Each criteria is presented with pertinent data.

Criterion 1

Will the organization of the local school districts present a well planned program of general education for all children and youth?

All of the schools of Comanche County qualify for a foundation program grant from the Texas Education Agency. The financial program limitations of the districts make it imperative that monetary assistance from the State be received in order to meet the minimum foundation school requirements. Hence, each school employs the number of teachers for which it qualifies under the foundation program.

The attained average daily attendance of a school district during a school year determines the number of teachers the district may employ for the following school year. During the 1950-1951 school year, as can be seen in Table 2, the average daily attendance of the schools of Comanche County was sufficient to permit the employment of 123 teachers for the 1951-1952 school year. Yet, as Table 2 indicates, during the 1951-1952 school year, the average daily attendance of the schools

TABLE 2

TEACHER PERSONNEL OF EACH SCHOOL FOR THE 1951-1952 SCHOOL YEAR AND ELIGIBILITY FOR THE 1952-1953 SCHOOL YEAR

School	Years	Class. Teachers	Vocational		Teachers D. E.
			Ag.	H.M.	
Comanche	1951-52	39	2	2	1
	1952-53	38	2	2	1
De Leon	1951-52	28	2	1	0
	1952-53	27	2	1	0
Gustine	1951-52	10	1	1	0
	1952-53	10	1	1	0
Sidney	1951-52	7	1	1	0
	1952-53	7	1	1	0
Comyn	1951-52	6	1	0	0
	1952-53	4	0	0	0
Proctor	1951-52	3	0	0	0
	1952-53	3	0	0	0
Beattie	1951-52	2	0	0	0
	1952-53	2	0	0	0
Hasse	1951-52	2	0	0	0
	1952-53	2	0	0	0
Van Dyke	1951-52	2	0	0	0
	1952-53	2	0	0	0
Totals	1951-52	99	7	5	1
	1952-53	95	6	5	1

TABLE 2 (continued)

Spec. Serv. Teachers	Excep. Child Teachers	Super- visor	Prin.	Supt.	Total
1	1	0	1	1	48
1	1	0	1	1	47
1	0	0	1	1	34
1	0	0	1	1	33
0	0	0	0	1	13
0	0	0	0	1	13
Coop.	0	0	0	1	10
Coop.	0	0	0	1	10
Coop.	0	0	0	1	8
Coop.	0	0	0	0	4
Coop.	0	0	0	0	3
Coop.	0	0	0	0	3
Coop.	0	0	0	0	2
Coop.	0	0	0	0	2
Coop.	0	0	0	0	2
Coop.	0	0	0	0	2
Coop. 1*	0	0	0	0	2
3	1	0	2	5	123
3	1	0	2	4	117

*The schools designating "Coop." under the special service teacher column add their classroom teacher units in order to employ one special service teacher.

decreased from the mark attained during the 1950-1951 school year, thus authorizing the employment of only 117 teachers.⁴

Table 3 contains the same information for the hypothetical groupings of the school districts. For the 1952-1953 school year, Group I has a total of 117 teacher positions, and Group II, reducing this number by three, totals 114 teachers. The reduction is in the number of classroom teacher units which decreased four, but Group II added a supervisor because the Comanche School District exceeds forty classroom teacher units. Supervisors are allotted to school districts having forty classroom teacher units; each additional supervisor in excess of the first requires fifty classroom units.⁵ Schools may pool their units in order to qualify for a supervisor, but this policy has not been put into effect by the schools of Comanche County.

The total teacher personnel of the districts in Group III is two less than that of Group II. The classroom teacher units are reduced by one; the superintendents, by two. Yet, Group III adds one special service teacher because twenty additional classroom teacher units are attained by the Comanche School.

⁴The marked decrease is attributed to the inability of Comyn to maintain a high school for the 1952-1953 school year and to a drought, causing farmers to leave temporarily to seek employment until another crop year. Comyn's average daily attendance qualifies them for five teachers. It is the desire of the Comyn School to maintain an elementary school for eight grades, with four teachers for the 1952-1953 school year, and transfer their high school students to De Leon.

⁵Senate Journal Supplement, Section 5, Article III, Senate Bill 116, Fifty-first Legislature, Regular Session, June 2, 1949, p. 15.

TABLE 3

POTENTIAL TEACHER PERSONNEL FOR GROUPS II, III,
AND IV SCHOOL DISTRICTS, 1952-1953

School	A. D. A.	Class. Teachers	Vocational		Teachers D. E.
			Ag.	H. M.	
Group II					
Comanche	1099.31	44	2	2	1
De Leon	759.21	30	2	1	0
Gustine	240.24	10	1	1	0
Sidney	164.21	7	1	1	0
Totals	2262.97	91	6	5	1
Group III					
Comanche	1503.76	60	4	4	1
De Leon	759.21	30	2	1	0
Totals	2262.97	90	6	5	1
Group IV					
Comanche County	2262.97	91	6	5	1

TABLE 3 (continued)

Special Service Teachers	Exceptional Child Teachers	Superintendents	Principal	Supervisor	Total
Group II					
2	1	1	1	1	55
1	0	0	1	1	36
0	0	0	0	1	13
0	0	0	0	0	10
3	1	1	2	4	114
Group III					
3	1	1	1	1	76
1	0	0	1	1	36
4	1	1	2	2	112
Group IV					
4	1	2	1	1	112

In the same comparison, the one school system, Group IV, retains the same number of personnel as Group III. However, in Group IV one classroom unit is added along with another supervisor, although the superintendents and principals are reduced by one each.

The complete loss of personnel from Group I to Group IV is five: four classroom teachers, one principal, and three superintendents; the gains are one special service teacher and two supervisors.

Another comparison can be made of the schools in a study of the teacher-pupil ratio. Although a definite assignment of elementary or high school teachers cannot be made for the Groups II, III, and IV, a comparison can be shown of the teacher-pupil ratio of the schools in Group I. This information is presented in Table 4.⁶ The average daily attendance used in this investigation possibly will not give as clear a picture as does enrollment, but the schools of Comanche County had a percentage of attendance of 90 per cent during the 1951-1952 school year. Hence, the comparison would be practically the same by using average daily attendance.

Furthermore, Table 4 reflects a variation in the teacher-pupil ratio from one teacher for fourteen children at the Hasse School to one teacher for twenty-six pupils in the Comanche School. Yet the teacher with fourteen children is teaching three and one-half grades, and the teacher at the Comanche School with twenty-six pupils is teaching only one grade. The schools with the smaller ratios are providing from 1.1 grades per teacher to three and one-half grades, whereas the schools

⁶In Table 4, the elementary principals are included in the count of elementary teachers, but the special service teachers are excluded. The high school teachers include all teachers and administrative personnel.

TABLE 4

TEACHER-PUPIL-GRADE RATIO OF COMANCHE COUNTY SCHOOLS
1951-1952

Name of School	Average Daily Attendance		No. of Teachers and Teacher-Pupil Ratio				No. Grades Per Teacher
	Elem.	High School	Elem. H. S.				
			T	R	T	R	
Comanche	660.58	287.12	25	26	22	13	1
De Leon	482.38	171.64	20	24	13	13	1
Gustine	162.68	77.56	7	23	6	13	1.1
Sidney	114.86	49.53	5	23	5	10	1.6
Comyn	78.53	26.66	4	20	4	6	2
Beattie	31.42	0.00	2	16	0	0	3.5
Proctor	55.55	0.00	3	18	0	0	2.6
Van Dyke	36.76	0.00	2	18	0	0	3.5
Hasse	27.88	0.00	2	14	0	0	3.5

with the larger ratio are providing only one grade per teacher. The same ratio exists in the high school teacher-pupil comparison.

High schools may be compared by the courses offered to the students. A high school may have certain approved affiliated subjects⁷ and teach them every other year. Table 5 reveals the affiliated subjects of each high school for the 1951-1952 school year and the subjects taught by each high school during that year. The largest high school by average daily attendance has thirty-five and one-half affiliated credits and offered thirty-five and one-half credits to its students during the 1951-1952 school year, whereas the smallest high school has an approval of twenty-three and one-half affiliated credits by the State Accrediting Committee and offered seventeen credits to its students during the 1951-1952 school year. The students in the Comanche High School had an opportunity of selecting courses from seventeen and one-half more subjects than did the student in the Comyn High School.

Applying this comparison to the potential groupings of the school districts, the opportunity of the students for a wider selection of subjects in Groups III and IV would be enriched by such arrangement or rearrangement.

⁷The State Accrediting Committee annually approves each high school and its courses offered to the students.

TABLE 5

AFFILIATED SUBJECTS APPROVED BY THE ACCREDITING
COMMITTEE AND SUBJECTS OFFERED DURING
THE 1951-1952 SCHOOL YEAR FOR
EACH HIGH SCHOOL

Subjects	Units	Comanche	De Leon	Gustine	Sidney	Comyn
English	4	x*	x*	x*	x*	x*
American hist.	1	x*	x*	x*	x*	x*
World history	1	x*	x*	x*	x*	x*
Texas history	$\frac{1}{2}$	x*	x*	x*	x*	x*
Civics	$\frac{1}{2}$	x*	x*	x*	x*	x*
Economics	$\frac{1}{2}$	x*	x*	x*	x*	
Algebra I	1	x*	x*	x*	x*	x*
Algebra II	1	x*	x*	x*	x*	x*
Plane geometry	1	x*	x*	x*	x*	x*
General math.	1	x*	x*	x*	x*	x*
Spanish	1	x*				
Commercial arith.	$\frac{1}{2}$	x*	x	x	x	
General science	1	x*	x	x	x	x
Biology	1	x*	x*			
Chemistry	1	x*				
Voc. agri.	4	x*	x*	x*	x ^a	x ^b
Homemaking	4	x*	x*	x ^v	x ^v	x ^v
Bookkeeping	1	x*	x*	x*	x	
Typing I	1	x*	x*	x*	x*	x*
Typing II	1		x*	x		
Stenography	1	x*	x*	x		
Jr. Bus. Trng.	1	x*	x*	x	x	x
Music	4	x*	x*			
Safety ed. and driver trng.	$\frac{1}{2}$	x*	x*		x*	x
Dist. education	2	x*				
Home ec. gen.	1	x*				
Public speaking	1		x	x	x ^b	
Journalism	1		x			
Commercial law	$\frac{1}{2}$		x			
Health	1		x			
Physical ed.	1					x
Totals		35 $\frac{1}{2}$ -35 $\frac{1}{2}$	35-28	27-21 $\frac{1}{2}$	26-20 $\frac{1}{2}$	23 $\frac{1}{2}$ -17

x denotes affiliated subject

* offered in 1951-52

v not offered as a full-time program with a Smith-Hughes teachers.

a offered in 3 $\frac{1}{2}$ units

b offered in 2 units

TABLE 6

STATE AND COUNTY VALUATIONS, LOCAL FUND ASSIGNMENTS, AND TAX LEVY
BY SCHOOL DISTRICTS FOR 1952-1953

School District	State and County Valuation	Local Fund Assignment	Tax Rate	
			Local	Bond
Comanche	\$3,702,051.00	\$24,351.52	\$1.00	.50
De Leon	2,571,166.00	16,912.48	1.15	.35
Gustine	945,612.00	6,220.37	1.30	.20
Sidney	657,565.00	4,325.08	1.25	.25
Comyn	758,884.00	4,991.87	1.50	.00
Proctor	383,578.00	2,522.77	1.30	.20
Beattie	232,149.00	1,527.12	1.35	.15
Van Dyke	124,541.00	619.50	1.35	.15
Hasse	151,366.00	995.65	1.30	.20
Sipe Springs*	304,080.00	2,000.38		
Fairview**	111,888.00	736.34		

* To be included in the Sidney and De Leon valuations for the 1952-1953 school year.

** To be included in the Comanche valuations for the 1952-1953 school year.

Criterion 2

Will the local administrative unit be large enough to permit economical organization, effective supervision of schools, and a broad base for local taxation?

The independent school districts as well as the common school districts of Comanche County use the County Tax Assessor-Collector for assessing and collecting taxes. Therefore, all schools are financed on the State and County renditions, the assessment used by the Texas Education Agency in determining the amount of local support of the foundation school program each district is expected to raise.

In preparation for a cost analysis certain pertinent data must be compiled. Table 6 contains some of this information as to the valuation of each district, the local fund assignment by the Texas Education Agency, and the tax levy for the 1952-1953 school year.

All of the school districts have voted the maximum tax rate of \$1.50 and all are assessing this amount each school year, as can be seen in Table 6. Based upon 100 per cent tax collections, each school district will require the amount of money shown in Table 7 to meet the 1952-1953 indebtedness requirement.⁸

The Texas Education Agency, administering the Gilmer-Aikin School Laws, offers each school district an opportunity

⁸Prior to each school year, the local school board is required to make or levy a tax sufficient to meet the current year's bonded indebtedness requirement.

TABLE 7
 BONDED INDEBTEDNESS REQUIREMENT FOR EACH DISTRICT
 1952-1953

School District	Indebtedness Requirement
Comanche	\$18,510.25
De Leon	9,538.41
Gustine	1,891.22
Sidney	2,018.91
Comyn	0.00
Proctor	767.15
Beattie	348.22
Van Dyke	186.81
Hasse	302.73

to enrich their school program. The total tax collection, less the local fund assignment made by the Texas Education Agency, shown in Table 6, and less the money necessary for the bonded indebtedness, shown in Table 7, determines the enrichment fund of each district. This money may be used in any way deemed advisable by the local school board and is frequently used for (1) the employment of additional teachers, (2) supplementing the salaries of teachers, (3) repair of school plants, and (4) payment on excess transportation costs.

Table 8 shows the enrichment fund for the Group I school districts, based on 100 per cent tax collection, and also the

TABLE 8

RATIO OF AVERAGE DAILY ATTENDANCE AND ENRICHMENT FUND BY
SCHOOL DISTRICTS 1952-1953

School District	Average Daily Attendance	Total Enrichment Fund	Per Capita Enrichment Fund
Comanche	947.7	\$13,610.97	\$14.00
De Leon	654.02	13,427.42	20.00
Gustine	240.24	6,072.59	25.00
Sidney	164.21	4,769.48	29.00
Comyn	105.19	6,391.39	60.00
Proctor	55.55	2,463.75	44.00
Beattie	31.42	1,606.89	51.00
Van Dyke	36.76	861.80	23.00
Hasse	27.88	972.11	35.00
Totals	2263.97	50,176.42	xxxxx

TABLE 9
OPERATIONAL COST ANALYSIS OF SCHOOL DISTRICTS
1952-1953

School	A. D. A.	Bonded Indebtedness		Local Maintenance	
		Total	Per Cap.	Total	Per Cap.
Comanche	947.7	\$18510.24	\$19.00	\$38985.61	\$41.00
De Leon	654.02	9538.41	14.00	31527.78	49.00
Gustine	240.24	1891.22	8.00	12360.56	51.00
Sidney	164.21	2018.91	12.00	10142.96	62.00
Comyn	105.19	0.00	0.00	11405.36	108.00
Beattie	31.42	348.22	11.00	3143.11	100.00
Proctor	55.55	767.15	14.00	5014.20	90.00
Hasse	27.88	302.73	11.00	1978.16	71.00
Van Dyke	36.76	186.81	5.00	1671.18	46.00
Totals	2263.97	33563.70	xxxxx	116228.92	xxxxx

TABLE 9 (continued)

State Cost		Grand Total	
Total	Per Capita	Total	Per Capita
\$135792.36	\$143.00	\$193288.22	\$203.00
97877.40	149.00	138943.59	212.00
42360.03	176.00	56611.81	235.00
32080.67	195.00	44242.54	269.00
8333.83	79.00	19739.19	187.00
5374.68	171.00	8866.01	282.00
7457.90	134.00	13239.25	238.00
6719.85	241.00	9000.74	323.00
5389.52	146.00	7247.51	197.00
341386.24	xxxxxx	491178.86	xxxxxx

per capita average daily attendance ratio of the enrichment fund. The Comanche School District has the lowest per capita enrichment fund, with each student in average daily attendance receiving \$14.00, and the Comyn School has the highest per capita enrich fund, \$60.00 for each student in average daily attendance. The enrichment fund of the smaller schools is greater on a per capita basis than the larger schools.

There is always the question of economy when making any financial study. A cost analysis of the schools of Group I for the school year 1952-53 is shown in Table 9. The financial support of the schools from the local district level reveals that the schools with the larger average daily attendance has the least per capita maintenance cost. The variation on the local level is from \$41.00 per student in the Comanche Schools to \$108.00 per student in the Comyn Schools. With one or two exceptions, the same trend is true in the finance received from the State. In considering the total cost of the students' schooling for the 1952-1953 year, again, the schools with the larger enrollments have the smaller per capita cost. The total expense for all of the schools for the 1952-1953 school year is anticipated to be \$491,178.86.

To determine the most economical grouping of the school districts, the same type of cost analysis must be made for Groups II, III, and IV of the school districts. However, before it is possible to make such a cost analysis, a uniform

salary schedule for the different types of teacher personnel must be established. The average salaries of the teachers for the 1951-1952 school year are furnished in Table 10.

TABLE 10
AVERAGE SALARIES FOR TEACHER PERSONNEL
OF COUNTY

Position	Annual Salary
Classroom Teacher	\$3037.00
Special Service Teacher	2636.00
Homemaking Teacher	3246.00
Vocational Agriculture	4321.00
Superintendents	5149.00
Principals	4290.00
Distributive Education	2790.00
Exceptional Children	3051.00

Group I of the school district organization has a total cost of \$491,178.86 for the 1952-1953 school year; Group II, \$487,829.26; Group III, \$474,489.42; and Group IV, \$472,485.62. Table 11, which furnishes the cost information on Groups II, III, and IV, also reveals that the smaller districts in average daily attendance require a higher per capita expenditure to maintain their school. In that all the property owners in the entire county are paying the same school tax of \$1.50, the question to be decided is whether or not the larger amount

of money being expended per capita in the smaller schools is producing a better school program, in a proportionate basis of expenditures, than the larger schools. From the financial standpoint, one school system for the entire county requires less monetary support than the other proposed organizations.

The possibility of school consolidation requires another financial consideration, the school plant. If further consolidation is deemed advisable, it is possible to accommodate the pupils in the present school facilities, or will new buildings be required? The major clue to this problem lies in the Superintendent's Annual Report for the 1951-1952 school year in that the following schools report facilities sufficient to accommodate the number of additional students as indicated: Comanche, 150; De Leon, 150; Custine, seventy-five; and Sidney, 150.

Most of the cited criteria regarding school plants and facilities point to the safety of the children, the lighting, ventilation, and sanitary conditions, as shown in Table 12.

The financial cost of consolidation is increased if additional buildings must be erected. Yet, Groups II, III, and IV can be completed and still use the present facilities. More specifically, the administration and supervision might be included under one unit and schools maintained in different school sites.

TABLE 11
OPERATIONAL ANALYSIS OF GROUPED DISTRICTS

School	A. D. A.	Bond Indebtedness		Local Maintenance	
		Total	Per Cap.	Total	Per Cap.
Group II					
Comanche	1099.31	\$20115.16	\$18.00	\$50468.43	\$45.00
De Leon	759.21	9538.41	14.00	42723.54	56.00
Gustine	240.24	1891.22	8.00	12360.56	51.00
Sidney	164.21	2018.91	12.00	10142.96	62.00
Totals	2262.97	33563.70	xxxxx	115695.49	xxxxx
Group III					
Comanche	1503.76	\$24025.29	\$16.00	\$72856.26	\$48.00
De Leon	759.21	9538.41	14.00	42723.54	56.00
Totals	2262.97	33563.70	xxxxx	115579.80	xxxxx
Group IV					
Comanche	2262.97	\$33563.70	\$15.00	\$115578.00	\$51.00

TABLE 11 (continued)

State Cost		Grand Total		Enrichment Fund	
Total	Per Cap.	Total	Per Cap.	Total	Per Cap.
Group II					
\$159961.10	\$145	\$230544.69	\$208	\$19515	\$19
104168.27	137	156430.22	207	19818	26
42360.03	176	56611.81	235	6072	25
32080.67	195	44242.54	269	4769	29
\$338570.07	xxx	\$487829.26	xxx	\$50174	xx
Group III					
\$221177.65	\$147	\$318959.20	211	\$30356	\$20
104168.27	137	156430.22	207	19818	26
\$325345.92	xxx	\$474489.42	xxx	\$50174	xx
Group IV					
\$323345.92	\$143	\$472485.62	\$209	\$50174	\$22

TABLE 12
SCHOOL BUILDING SURVEY

School	Lighting	Heating	Toilets	Drinking Water	Type of Construction	No. of Stories	New Classrooms
Comanche	electricity	natural gas	indoor sewerage	city water	brick & stucco	H. S. 3	8
De Leon	electricity	natural gas	indoor sewerage	city water	brick	one	8
Gustine	electricity	steam	indoor sewerage	wells	brick	one	0
Sidney	electricity	butane gas	indoor septic tank	wells	frame	Aud. 2	0
Proctor	electricity	butane gas	indoor septic tank	wells	rock	one	0
Beattie	electricity	wood	open pit	wells	frame	Aud. 2	0
Hasse	electricity	butane gas	open pit	wells	stucco	one	0
Van Dyke	electricity	butane gas	open pit	wells	frame	one	0

Additional transportation costs and additional miles traveled by students must be considered when studying the possibility of further consolidation of school districts. As it may be recalled, in discussion of studies related to this thesis, reference was made to the study made by Dean Skiles in 1950 of the transportation facilities of Comanche County Schools.⁹ Although one of his conclusions was the fact that the local school districts were too small for economical transportation, and although this satisfies the financial question of this thesis, there is still the question of distance and time of students' travel to be considered.

Bus route Number 11 of the Comanche Schools serves the Proctor School District and then brings the Proctor High School students to Comanche. This route is 44.4 miles in length and requires one and one-half hours travel time.

The longest bus route of the Gustine district is 65.2 miles in length and requires one hour and twenty minutes travel time. It is twelve miles from Gustine to Comanche that this bus would be required to travel, provided the Gustine School were annexed to the Comanche School.

The Sidney School bus, traveling 62.8 miles in one and one-half hours, makes the longest run of the Sidney District, Sidney being eleven miles from Comanche.

⁹Dean Skiles, "An Evaluation of the System of Pupil Transportation in Comanche County, Texas," (Unpublished Master's Thesis, Department of Education, North Texas State College, 1950.)

The Van Dyke School bus travels forty-eight miles in an hour and a half, carrying the Van Dyke Grammar School students to Van Dyke and then the high school students to Comanche. The Beattie bus that travels fifty miles in one hour and twenty minutes transports Beattie students to grammar school and high school students to Comanche. The route of the Hasse District is seventy-five miles long and is traveled in one hour and forty-five minutes. The Hasse bus unloads the grammar school students at Hasse School and carries high school students to Comanche. The longest bus route of the Comyn School is 42.8 miles, requiring a driving time of one hour and twenty minutes. Comyn is seven miles from the De Leon School.

De Leon and Comanche are sixteen miles apart. Therefore, from the distance and time allotment of travel, Group II organization of the school districts would not require any additional travel time or distance from Group I with the exception that the grammar school students of the school districts annexed would travel the same distance as the high school students. Group III would require the additional twelve miles for the Gustine students and the eleven miles from the Sidney students. Group IV differs from Group III in the additional sixteen miles from De Leon to Comanche.¹⁰

¹⁰Other pertinent hypothetical transportation problems due consideration in the study under consideration have already been solved by Skiles.

Summarizing, the consolidated district organizations have a smaller total operational cost, as well as no increase in other important financial factors considered.

Criterion 3

Will the attendance area follow community lines¹¹ and present an efficiently organized and well supported school system?

Comanche County is one of the older Middle-West counties, with diversified land ranging from deep sand in the North to deep black soil in the South. The principle vocation is agriculture. The County was organized in 1856, being originally a part of Coryell County.

The topography of the County reveals rolling to hilly terrain with part prairie and part woods, and it is drained by the North and South Leon Rivers. The altitude of the county varies from 1200 feet to 1800 feet, the annual anticipated rainfall being 29.49 inches, which aids in the agricultural production.

¹¹The information basic for this particular portion of the study now under consideration was secured from the Texas Almanac. The information presented constitutes an historical and occupational description of the County. No attempt has been made to go into great detail, but it was felt that at least a brief history and description of the County being studied was necessary and advisable.

During the last ten years the principle crop has been peanuts, and at the present time the county is recognized as the leading peanut county in the State of Texas. Other crops are corn, grain sorghums, watermelons, cantalopes, peaches, and general truck farming. Due to the amount of food value of the refuse of the peanuts normally left in the field after harvesting, the county has become one of the leading hog-raising counties of the State. Other livestock, beef cattle, turkeys, chickens, and dairy cattle are raised, but not on as an extensive scale as the hogs.

Since Comanche is an agricultural county, most of the population in the incorporate cities of the county are either farmers and ranchers or are private business men serving the agricultural population of the county. There are a few industries, such as fertilizer, pecan and peanut, and poultry dressing plants found in the cities. In general, there are no large industrial establishments in Comanche County.

The incorporated cities are Comanche, the county seat, De Leon, and Gustine. The non-incorporated cities are Sipe Springs, Sidney, Lamkin, Proctor, and Comyn. In that each city mentioned above is within a school district, with the exception of Lamkin, information as to the size, population, and so forth will be presented later.

Another feature of Comanche County that should be mentioned is that no colored people reside in the county. A few

Latin-Americans live there, but the question of racial segregation within the schools does not exist.

The population of the county has decreased during the past thirty years, the same decrease occurring in the scholastic population. The population during the past few years is as follows: 1920, 25,748; 1930, 18,430; 1940, 19,245; and in 1950, 15,265. The scholastic population followed the same downward trend: 1930-31, 5,141; 1940-41, 4,581; and in 1948-49, 3,284. Although the county has shown a decrease in population, the cities at the same time have shown an increase in population. This can be attributed to the decrease in farm population.¹²

Generally, the patrons of a school district oppose consolidation with another school district due to the fact they do not wish either to lose their school or to have increased taxes. Actually, consolidation in Comanche County would not affect the taxes because each school district has the same school tax rate and the same type of rendition.

The loss of the high school students of a district is often the first step in dissolving a school district and causes the most resentment from the patrons of the school. Four of the schools of Comanche County already have experienced the loss of their high school. Also, the Comyn School will maintain only eight grades during the 1952-53 school year. This leaves four schools, Comanche, De Leon, Sidney, and Gustine,

¹²The agricultural census in 1935 gave the average farm as being 172.4 acres, and in 1945 an average farm contained 185.3 acres.

that have yet to lose their high school should further consolidation be considered.

In the business and social survey of Table 12, all the churches listed are Protestant. There are a few Catholics residing in the county, but they attend their services at Dublin, in Erath County, or at Brownwood, in Brown County. Hence, there are no parochial schools in Comanche County.

As in any other county, there has been strong rivalry among the schools created for athletic and interscholastic league events. The schools not maintaining a high school do not experience the competitive spirit as the schools with a high school. Comanche and De Leon have been strong rivals, but there is a stronger rivalry between Gustine and Comanche than between Sidney and Gustine. Comanche, being the larger of the school districts as well as the county seat town, receives the strongest competition in any contest from the smaller schools.

Other social-economic points might be considered. However, those presented are the major ones to be investigated. As previously mentioned and verified, Comanche County is an average county with no particular social or economic conditions that would affect further consolidation other than those presented in this thesis.

Chapter IV presents a summary of Chapters I, II, and III, as well as setting forth the conclusions of this study.

TABLE 13
BUSINESS AND SOCIAL SURVEY OF SCHOOL DISTRICTS

District	Population of City	Number of Churches	Number of Businesses	Commercial Entertainment	Number of Civic Clubs
Comanche	3,823	7	200	3 movies	2
De Leon	2,239	9	115	2 movies	2
Gustine	420	3	25	1 movie	1
Sidney	200	3	6	none	0
Proctor	190	3	6	none	0
Comyn	30	2	1	none	0
Beattie	30	3	2	none	0
Van Dyke	10	1	1	none	0
Hasse	40	2	1	none	0

CHAPTER IV

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

Summary

Since it is obvious that the trend in school district organization in Texas is toward additional consolidations, the question arises as to the extent that additional consolidation of school districts should be encouraged in Comanche County. Certain limitations had to be made in developing this investigation, namely, (1) geographical limitation to the school districts of Comanche County, (2) chronological limitation to district organization as of June 1, 1952, and (3) an educational limitation regarding acceptance of the present curriculums of the schools, but considering the opportunities for enrichment of the educational program under the redistricting organization.

The problem was attacked by evaluating the hypothetical groupings of the districts financially, educationally, and sociologically. The criteria selected as a measuring-stick were (1) Will the organization of the local school districts present a well planned program of general education for all children and youth, (2) Will the local administrative unit be large enough to permit economical organization, effective supervision of schools, and a broad base for local taxation, and (3)

Will the attendance area follow community lines and present an efficiently organized and well supported school system.

Five important factors desired in a sound educational program with due consideration of school consolidation were discovered.

1. Schools should be large enough to have a teacher-pupil ratio of thirty pupils for one teacher for each grade in the elementary school and three hundred students with ten teachers in the high school.

2. School buildings and sites should conform to the best health and safety standards possible.

3. Free transportation should be furnished students residing in excess of two to two and one-half miles from school.

4. School districts should be large enough to assure a sound financial program to substantiate the educational program.

5. Sociological factors influencing consolidation of school districts are (a) racial and national origin, (b) religions, (c) cultural background, (d) social philosophy toward education, (3) local traditions, and (f) local prejudices and community rivalries.

The school districts were grouped in the following manner: Group I contained nine school districts; Group II, four; Group III, two; and Group IV, one school district. Upon applying the standards to the above planned school district organization, the following findings emerged:

1. The number of teachers for each proposed organization of districts varied, with Group I eligible for 117 teachers;

Group II, 114 teachers; Group III, 112 teachers; and Group IV, 112 teachers.

2. The elementary school with smaller average daily attendance had a smaller teacher-pupil ratio; yet it was required to have from two to three and one-half grades per teacher. The larger elementary schools had a teacher-pupil ratio not in excess of thirty for one grade per teacher.

3. The selection of subjects of the high school students was enriched in the schools with larger average daily attendance.

4. The annual operational cost of the proposed reorganization of districts varied in the following manner: Group I, \$491,178.86; Group II, \$487,829.26; Group III, \$474,489.42; and Group IV, \$472,485.62.

5. Additional building facilities would not necessarily be required if further consolidations were promoted.

6. Further consolidation would not increase the cost of transportation, nor would the increase in distance and travel time be beyond servicability.

7. Comanche County, an average county, did not possess peculiar social or economic qualities that would surpass normal objections to further consolidation.

Conclusions

The general conclusion, that additional consolidation of school districts should be encouraged, evolved from this study under the following considerations and to the extent that:

1. Elementary schools should have one teacher per grade, with an average teacher-pupil ratio of approximately thirty pupils.

2. High school students receive better opportunities for subject selection in the larger high schools.

3. Although the number of teachers for the county was reduced as well as the total cost, the districts should be consolidated toward a two- or one-district organization for the county upon the voted approval of the school patrons.

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