

P/ E 12.34

3526

1951

LEGISLATIVE REFERENCE LIBRARY



3 0307 00019 3444

Code XXXII-A-3a

SEVENTH REPORT
of the
STATE ADVISORY COMMISSION ON
SCHOOL REORGANIZATION



To the
SIXTY-SECOND LEGISLATURE
of the
STATE OF MINNESOTA

January 1961

LB
2826
.M6
A33
1959/60

LEGISLATIVE REFERENCE LIBRARY
STATE OF MINNESOTA

LETTER OF TRANSMITTAL

To the Senators and Representatives
of the 1961 State Legislature
State of Minnesota

We submit to you our seventh report on school district reorganization. Because of inadequate funds it is necessary to submit this report in manuscript form in anticipation of printing of the report when funds are made available at some later date.*

This report covers the 1959-1961 biennium and is made pursuant to provisions of Extra Session Laws of 1959, Chapter 71, Article III, Section 8, Subdivision 1. Information and data from the Twenty-year Report to the State Board of Education relating to school district enlargement covering the period from 1940 to 1960 is included in this report. Also included is a more detailed and comprehensive report for the period from July 1, 1947 to the present time. This report will indicate comparative gains in school district enlargement before and after the passage of the reorganization act in 1947.

State Advisory Commission
on School Reorganization

**At its meeting January 18, 1961, the Commission approved the use of any unexpended funds available at the close of the biennium in the present budget for printing the Seventh Report. There is now available funds for printing a very limited number of copies.*

LEGISLATIVE REFERENCE LIBRARY
STATE OF MINNESOTA

STATE ADVISORY COMMISSION ON SCHOOL REORGANIZATION

Term Expires
July 1

Mrs. C. A. Rohrer, Chairman	Winona	1965
Representative for Minnesota Congress of Parents and Teachers; Former Grade, High School, and College Teacher; Member of Commission since 1947.		
Honorable Donald E. Swenson	Mankato	1963
State Representative, Eighth District; Committee on Education; Former Chairman, Mankato School Board; Former Chairman, Minnesota Citizens Committee on Public Education.		
Honorable A. Harold Peterson	Chisago City	1961
State Representative, 56th District; Attorney at Law; Former Chairman of School Board, Chisago City; Chairman, Board of Directors, Chisago Lake Hospital; Commanding Officer Naval Reserve Law Company 9-17, Minneapolis; Captain U.S. Naval Reserve.		
Honorable Karl F. Grittner	St. Paul	1965
State Senator, 39th District; Committee on Education; Former member House Committee on Education; Assistant Principal, Wilson High School, St. Paul.		
K. W. Fawcett	Minneapolis	1963
Businessman; Member Board of Directors, Minneapolis Citizens Committee on Public Education; Chairman, Community School Building Committee.		
J. A. Sater	Brainerd	1961
District Superintendent of Schools; Chairman, Legislative Committee, Minnesota Association of School Administrators; President, Central Minnesota School Superintendents.		

Term Expires
July 1

Mrs. Virgil E. Weitgenant	Worthington	1965
Nobles County Superintendent of Schools; President, Minnesota Association of County Superintendents.		
Herbert C. Latvala	Nashwauk	1963
Member, School Board Independent School District 319, Nashwauk-Keewatin; Past President, Minnesota School Board Association		
Clarence Mikkelsen	Glyndon	1961
Farmer; Member School Board, Independent School District 155, Glyndon; Chairman, Clay County School Survey Committee; President, District 23 School Boards Association.		
Dr. Dean M. Schweickhard	Commissioner of Education	
Secretary and Executive Officer of The State Advisory Commission on School Reorganization		

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
Introduction	1
Chapter I State Advisory Commission on School Reorganization.	3
Chapter II County School Survey Committees	8
Chart I Organization of County Survey Committees	9
Chapter III The Organization of Districts and Classification of Schools	16
Chapter IV School District Enlargement Has Gone Forward.	27
Chart II Number of School Districts, Year by Year Since 1947	28
Map of School District Enlargement.	31
Chart III Number of School Districts by Counties	32
Chart IV Percentage Reduction in Number of School Districts by Counties.	33
Chart V Average Size of School Districts in Square Miles	35
Chapter V Problems Relating to Districts with Small Secondary Schools and Non-operating Elementary Schools.	36
Chart A. Size of High School by Enrollment Intervals.	39
Chart VI Counties with Closed Schools.	42
Chapter VI Recommendations	44
Conclusion	49
APPENDIX	
Table I Report of Vote on Reorganization of County School Survey Committees	53
Table II Summary Report on School District Enlargement by Counties from July 1, 1947 to July 1, 1960.	54
Table III Reduction of School Districts Year by Year since 1947	55
Table IV Counties with 25 Districts or Less.	56
Table V Percent of Decrease in Number of School Districts by Counties.	57
Table VI Counties with 60 or more School Districts.	58

INTRODUCTION

The need for the establishment of larger school districts has for many years been very apparent in the mid-western states. This area of the United States had not progressed as rapidly as other sections in studying the needs for larger units of administration. Minnesota along with its neighboring states of Iowa, Wisconsin, North Dakota, South Dakota, Nebraska, Missouri, Kansas and Illinois, saw the need for sound school district planning and as a result enacted laws whereby the people would be encouraged to form larger school districts which could provide for a comprehensive educational program from grades one through twelve. Minnesota ranks near the national average in the reduction of the number of small districts and compares with its neighboring states as indicated in the following table:

Trends in Number of School Districts
1931-32 to 1959-60

State	1931-32	1959-60	Per Cent of Decrease 1931-32 to 1959-60
Illinois	12,070	1,700	85.9%
Missouri	8,764	1,960	77.6%
Kansas	8,748	2,585	70.5%
Minnesota	7,773	2,579	66.6%
Wisconsin	7,662	2,800	63.5%
Iowa	4,870	2,052	57.9%
Nebraska	7,244	3,800	47.5%
North Dakota	2,228	1,600	28.2%
South Dakota	3,433	3,100	9.7%
United States	127,422	40,605	68.1%

In the year of 1947 the legislature saw the need for the development of stronger school districts that could support an adequate program of education and as a result passed the school district reorganization law. The new procedure provided for a county committee to make a complete study of the local school systems. The people soon recognized the need for larger school districts and established districts with sufficient area, pupils, and financial resources to sustain an effective and efficient school program.

Communities throughout Minnesota which have enlarged their school districts on the basis of providing for the educational

STATE ADVISORY COMMISSION ON SCHOOL REORGANIZATION

needs of all children from grades one through twelve have discovered that their districts have gained the following advantages, among others:

1. Enrollments have become more stabilized, and because pupils are residents of the district it is easier for the school administration to plan for the number of classes and teachers that will be needed.
2. There no longer exists a cleavage between town and country students, and each group has been able to make the necessary adjustments for a better school life.
3. Transportation has become available to more students over shorter and better planned routes, and has made it possible for more youngsters to attend school.
4. They have been able to expand the curriculum, thus making more subjects available to the students.
5. They are in a position to attract better teachers and assign them to their areas of specialization.
6. Modern school plant facilities have become available to the entire community.
7. The holding power of the school has become stronger, and as a result a greater number have graduated from high school.
8. The tax base has been broadened so that the district can better support a comprehensive program of education.

The administration of the school district reorganization law is under the jurisdiction of the State Advisory Commission and the State Department of Education. The county school survey committees are responsible for the surveys and studies of their local school districts and recommendations for the strengthening of the school organization. County superintendents and district superintendents work closely with the survey committees in bringing information for sound school district planning to the people in their respective communities. Local school board members and other citizens are giving of their time to serve on study or advisory committees in bringing a better understanding of the school district enlargement program. The success that Minnesota has had in building stronger school districts has come about because of the close working relationship between the state, county and local community groups.

The authority to form or create school districts was given to the legislature under the provisions of the State Constitution, Article VIII. Since its adoption the succeeding legislatures have enacted laws which permit the people at the local level to organize school districts to provide for the education of the children. In contrast to the many small districts established during the pioneer period, there is the current need for larger districts to provide a more comprehensive program to meet the needs of today and the future.

The reorganization of school districts moved forward when the 1947 legislature enacted Chapter 421. The reorganization procedure in its most recent form may be found in the Extra Session Laws of 1959, Chapter 71, Article III, Section 8. A State Advisory Commission on School Reorganization was established to guide the county school survey committees in their studies and recommendations for strengthening the school districts.

Commission Membership

The State Advisory Commission on School Reorganization consists of nine members. The present members were appointed by the State Board of Education at its meeting on August 3, 1959 when, under a 1957 law, the terms of the former members had expired.

Former members of the Commission whose terms expired on July 1, 1959, were as follows:

A. L. Almen, St. Peter; C. E. Campton, Two Harbors; Charles Christianson, Roseau; Edwin Christianson, St. Paul; Joseph Daun, St. Peter; William B. Pearson, Ogilvie; Mrs. C. A. Rohrer, Winona; A. G. Seifert, Redwood Falls; the late Mrs. F. H. Stevens, Alexandria. Seven of these had served continuously since the Commission was established in 1947. Others who had served prior to July 1, 1959 were Dr. A. E. Jacobson, Thief River Falls; H. R. Kurth, Hutchinson; and the late J. S. Jones, St. Paul.

The above members gave of their time and energy in fostering sound school district reorganization. It was their privilege to see the program of school district reorganization grow from its

meager beginning in 1947 to its present status. During their tenure in office they saw the number of districts decreased from 7606 to 2814 as of July 1, 1959.

The Commissioner of Education serves as the ex-officio secretary and executive officer of the State Commission. The responsibility of directing the program of school district enlargement has been assigned to the Section Chief of Elementary and Secondary Education. Under his supervision consultant service is made available to the county school survey committees and local planning groups.

Duties and Activities of the Commission

The duties of the State Advisory Commission are defined in Extra Session Laws of 1959, Chapter 71, Article III, Section 8, Subdivision 1, as follows:

"The State Commission shall formulate aims, goals, principles, procedures of public school organization in Minnesota. The commission shall review the tentative reports of the several county school survey committees, and within 90 days after receipt thereof shall make suggestions to the respective committees concerning their reports as may seem appropriate, giving due consideration to the educational needs of local communities and economical transportation and administration, to the future use of satisfactory school buildings and sites, to the convenience and welfare of the pupils, to the ability of the several communities to support adequate schools, to equalization of educational opportunity and to any other matters which, in their judgment, seem to be advisable. On or before January 15, of each odd numbered year, the commission shall report its activities and recommendations concerning school reorganization to the legislature."

The State Advisory Commission has held seven official meetings during this biennium, of which three were held by the former commission and four by members of the newly appointed commission. The Commission approved the printing of two four-leaf annual reports on the progress of school district reorganization for general distribution. A new revised manual for county school survey committees was approved and is now ready for use by members of the county committees. Survey forms and bulletins

relating to the program of school district enlargement were approved by the commission and made available to the public. The annual quarterly budgets have been reviewed and recommendations made to the State Board of Education regarding the distribution of funds granted by the Legislature for the conduct of the activities in connection with all phases of school district enlargement.

During this past biennium the commission received the following tentative reports on reorganization proposals: (1) Hanska proposal presented by the Brown County Survey Committee, (2) Glyndon proposal presented by the Clay County Survey Committee, (3) Jordan proposal presented by the Scott County Survey Committee, (4) proposal to merge six entire and parts of two common districts into one large district outside of Shakopee presented by the Scott County Committee. The Glyndon and Jordan proposals were reviewed by the commission and approved as being sound school district reorganization. The Hanska proposal was given very careful study by the commission. Because of limitations in the proposal, the commission withheld its approval for reorganization of the area unless the plan be strengthened by the inclusion of more territory, thus increasing the assessed valuation and enrollment potential.

The tentative recommendations of the Scott County Survey Committee proposing to reorganize common school districts Nos. 1871, 1872, 1873, 1876, 1891, and 1897, and parts of districts Nos. 1870 and 1875 into one district was considered by the Commission. This proposal was referred back to the Scott County Survey Committee for further study because it did not meet the essential criteria for a good school district.

The State Advisory Commission being interested in problems relating to sound school district organization and finance has been called upon by various groups for guidance and suggestions regarding local school problems. During this past biennium the Commission met with representatives from Minnetonka Beach in Hennepin County regarding their problem of merging with Wayzata. A group from Anoka County composed of school administrators, school board members and county commissioners appeared before the Commission for the purpose of discussing the tax problem in the suburban area.

A conference with district and county school administrators on legislation and problems in district enlargement was held by the Commission. Fifteen representative school administrators appeared before the Commission and discussed various aspects of school district enlargement.

The Commission considered several requests from county school survey committees to be dissolved. Such requests from the survey committees of Pope and St. Louis counties were denied by the Commission until the major problems relating to school district reorganization had been solved. The Commission approved the request of the Goodhue County Survey Committee to be disbanded, as the work on school district enlargement has been completed.

Appeal Board Hearings

The reorganization law has an unusual feature not found in the legal procedures of other states in that it provides for a hearing before an appeal board. The school board of any district affected by recommendations of any final report may by resolution appeal to the State Advisory Commission by filing a written brief of its grievances. The school board of an aggrieved district has 70 days in which to file an appeal. When an appeal has been filed with the State Advisory Commission an appeal board consisting of five impartial members is appointed to hear the appeal. It is the duty of this board to consider all facts of the case at the hearing and to render a decision. The law provides that legal counsel may be retained by the school district and by the county survey committee. During this past biennium the Commission appointed one appeal board which heard the grievances of Common Districts Nos. 2764, 2765, and 2767 of Brown County which were included in the proposed Hanska reorganization. The appeal board granted the request of these districts to be removed from the proposal because of its apparent limitations. At the present time there are no appeals pending.

Activities of Department Personnel

The Section Chief of Elementary and Secondary Education in the Division of Instruction, and the Consultants on District Reorganization have been assigned the responsibility of providing information and guidance to the survey committees, county and

district superintendents, and local citizens groups, interested in school district enlargement. Bulletins have been prepared and circulars containing information and data and reports have been made available to the public. The Consultants have assisted in conducting hearings on proposed district enlargements, and in leading small discussion groups in the evaluation of data relating to proposed enlargements. Members of the staff have been called upon by county commissioners to assist them with problems relating to the dissolution of school districts. Staff members during this biennium have not been able to meet all of the requests nor to adequately carry on the field work required of them in the area of school district enlargement because of restricted travel funds. Many requests for assistance have been deferred due to these limitations. As a consequence, conferences and hearings have been held in the office of the State Department of Education for representative delegations seeking help in bringing information to the local people. Consultants have attended a limited number of meetings in local communities and have participated in county school officers meetings, regional workshops and conferences whenever possible.

Because the several procedures relating to school district enlargement were revised by Extra Session Laws of 1959, Chapter 71, Article III, it became necessary for members of the staff to prepare bulletins and supplements containing information regarding the changes. In some cases the forms used for the several procedures had to be changed to harmonize with the revised law. Members of the staff have been asked to explain and clarify the revised procedures at meetings and conferences with the people during the biennium.

CHAPTER II

COUNTY SCHOOL SURVEY COMMITTEES

The year 1947 saw the passage by the Legislature of the optional school district reorganization law as set forth in Chapter 421. This law provided for an election on the establishment of a survey committee by the school board members of the county at a meeting called for that purpose by the county superintendent of schools. The school boards in 62 counties voted to establish a survey committee in their respective counties while 21 voted against forming a committee. The counties which chose not to have a survey committee were given a second opportunity to vote on the establishment of a committee by the 1949 legislature and one additional committee was established. Under the provisions of a 1953 law, which was repealed in 1955, counties were authorized to abolish the survey committee by a vote of the school boards. As a result eleven committees were voted out of existence. Provision is made in the present reorganization law for the State Advisory Commission to disband a survey committee when requested by the committee upon the completion of its work. As of the present time the Commission has taken action to disband five county survey committees. There are 47 counties which now have survey committees in existence. Chart I on page 9 indicates the counties in which survey committees were organized. Table I of the Appendix lists the counties which have functioning survey committees together with those in which the committees have been disbanded by the Commission, those which were terminated by vote of the school boards, those with special committees, and counties to which this statute does not apply.

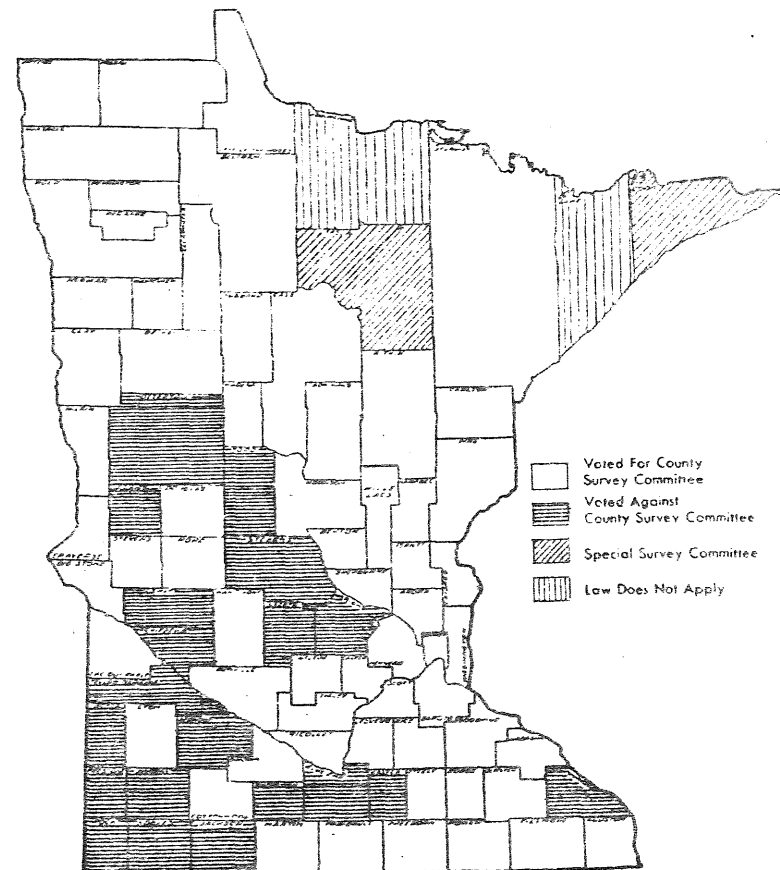
Survey Committee Membership

The reorganization law provides that county school survey committees shall be composed of nine members, five persons elected from the rural school district and four from the urban districts. Survey committees established prior to July 1, 1959, will continue to function until their terms expire on July 1, 1961. The school boards in the 47 counties which have functioning survey committees must elect new committees prior to July 1, 1961, with terms staggered as follows: (1) Rural members (five to be elected) two members for a one-year term, two members for

CHART I

ORGANIZATION OF COUNTY SURVEY COMMITTEE

State of Minnesota



State Department of Education
and
State Advisory Commission on School Reorganization

a two-year term, and one member for a three-year term; (2) Urban members (four to be elected) one member for a one-year term, one member for a two-year term and two members for a three-year term. The law provides that no district shall have more than one member on the survey committee, which may result in a committee of less than nine members in some counties.

Establishment of New Committees

The law provides for an election for the establishment of a new survey committee in those counties which do not have such Committees. Upon the receipt of a petition signed by 15 percent of the school board members of the county and presented to the county superintendent of schools a meeting of the school board members shall be called for the purpose of voting on establishing a survey committee. If the vote is favorable the members are elected to staggered terms as provided.

Duties of County School Survey Committee

The 1959 Education Code adopted by the legislature defined the powers, duties and objectives of the county school survey committee as follows:

"The committee shall have power and it shall be its duty; (1) to study the school districts and unorganized territory of the county and their organization for the purpose of recommending desirable reorganization which in the judgment of the committee will afford better educational opportunities for the pupils and inhabitants of the county, a more equitable, efficient and economical administration of public schools and a more equitable distribution of public school revenues; in the course of its study, with the aid of the county superintendent, it shall assemble and keep current data relating to the schools of the county and their financial status, boundaries, organization, and other matters affecting their proposals and (2) to confer with school authorities and residents of the districts of the county, hold public hearings, and furnish to the board members and to the public, information concerning reorganization of districts in the county; and (3) to make reports of its study and recommendations, including a map or maps showing existing boundaries of districts and the boundaries of proposed or recommended districts concerning the reorganization and financing of the districts of the county."

Tentative and Final Reports

The survey committees in 63 counties made extensive studies of their school districts in 1948. Copies of the tentative and final reports have been placed on file with the Commission and with the respective county superintendent. Some of the county survey committees have since re-evaluated their present school district organization in light of present day educational needs and have prepared supplemental reports to keep the people informed so that they can make the vital decisions that are necessary for sound school district planning.

Under the provisions of the Education Code of 1959, the procedure of reorganizing school districts into one large school district requires first that the survey committee prepare a tentative report with recommendations for the proposed reorganization. Copies of such tentative reports are filed with the county superintendent and with the Commissioner of Education. Each member of the Commission receives a copy for study and evaluation. The county superintendent furnishes a copy of the tentative report to each school board member in the county and a summary is published in the official newspaper of the county. The survey committee is required to hold public hearings at which time the residents or taxpayers are heard relative to the advantages or disadvantages of the proposal made in the tentative report. The committee also receives suggestions made by the State Advisory Commission.

The final report of the committee with recommendations and with a map or maps showing the boundaries of the present school districts in the county and the boundaries of the proposed school district is filed within six months after the filing of the tentative report and a summary published in the official newspaper of the county. Copies of the final report are filed with the county superintendent, commissioner of education, and each school board member of the county.

Election on Recommendations

The county superintendent is required to call an election on proposals as recommended by the survey committee upon the expiration of 75 days of the filing of a final report, unless an appeal has been taken by an aggrieved district. The law permits

the calling of subsequent elections on the same proposal as recommended in the final report if the survey committee considers it advisable.

During this past biennium the survey committees of Brown, Clay, and Scott counties presented reorganization proposals to the people through elections. The Brown County Committee proposed the reorganization of seven common school districts with Hanska. Three of the districts brought an appeal requesting to be released from the proposal and their request was granted by the appeal board. The four districts voted to become a part of the Hanska district. However, the new district has an assessed valuation well below \$1,000,000 and a pupil enrollment far below the recommended number for sound educational planning.

The Clay County Committee recommended that four districts in the Glyndon area be merged. This proposal had an assessed valuation of about \$1,500,000 with approximately 300 elementary and 200 secondary pupils enrolled. The people of this area voted favorably upon this recommendation.

The Scott County Committee proposed that seven entire districts and parts of three others be reorganized with Jordan to form one large district. This proposal had an assessed valuation of about \$1,675,000 with an enrollment of 282 pupils in high school and 279 pupils in the elementary grades. An election was held but failed to get a favorable vote in the rural area.

The Crow Wing County Committee together with the county superintendent and district superintendent worked very closely with a local citizens group in the Brainerd area in bringing about the successful consolidation of 26 common districts with Brainerd. This proposal covers over 236 square miles and has an assessed valuation of about \$5,400,000. There are approximately 1800 elementary and 1600 secondary pupils enrolled from this district. In addition the students in the district have a junior college available to them. The Brainerd enlarged district meets all of the requirements of a sound school district which can provide a good comprehensive program of education to its students.

Committee Responsibility and Function

Reorganization proposals which have been submitted by survey committees have in most cases followed the boundary lines of existing high school areas. Indications are that some of the districts that were enlarged according to their high school area do not now possess a large enough tax base nor do they have an enrollment which will permit the proper upgrading of their educational program. As a result survey committees have the responsibility of making further studies in district reorganization and, in some cases, of making recommendations relative to the combining of districts which maintain secondary schools with low enrollments.

Counties which have functioning survey committees have available the services of this local school group whenever needed to study problems and to make recommendations for the improvement of school organization. Committee members have become informed relative to the procedures of dissolution-attachment and consolidation and as a result are in a position to recommend the procedure which will best meet the local needs. In some counties the survey committee has had requests from county boards to assist them in matters pertaining to the dissolution and attachment of school districts and in the detachment of lands from one school district and attachment to another. Committees have on many occasions also worked with local citizens and school administrators in developing plans for school districts enlargement through consolidation.

The formation of stronger school districts at the local level has very often come about as the result of the work done by the county survey committees during this past twelve year period. Some district enlargement has likewise taken place in the counties that do not have survey committees, due in part to the influence of the committees from the surrounding counties and by the use of the procedures of consolidation and dissolution-attachment.

Status of the Office of County Superintendent

Because of extensive reorganization of school districts important changes are taking place relative to the future role of the county superintendent in the area of school administration.

In counties where the number of common school districts has been reduced to twelve or less operating schools, and with no unorganized territory, authority is given to the county board to discontinue the office of the county superintendent in Extra Session Laws of 1959, Chapter 71, Article II, Section 35. The county board may then contract for the services of the county superintendent in an adjoining county, or appoint a district superintendent within the county to serve as county school administrator.

Since the passage of this law the office of county superintendent has been discontinued by action of the county boards in the following counties:

Anoka	Faribault	Le Sueur	Norman	Traverse
Chisago	Goodhue	Lincoln	Renville	Waseca
Dodge	Itasca	Lyon	Sibley	Washington

In Kittson and Ramsey Counties, the office of county superintendent was discontinued by special law. Lake and Cook Counties are county school districts with the district superintendents serving the county as a whole. Of the eighty-seven counties in the state, sixty-eight have elected county superintendents. Sixteen are served by appointed county school administrators, including two which have the joint services of another county superintendent. Two counties have county school districts. The law which discontinued the office in Ramsey County assigned the duties to the Commissioner of Education.

An Attorney General's Opinion has been rendered relative to the status of the county superintendent's office in Le Sueur County. The opinion interprets the law by counting the districts which operate schools rather than the organized school districts in the application of the law. Le Sueur County has thirty-one districts with closed schools and two that are open and operating schools. The opinion held that there were less than twelve districts operating schools, and that when the present county superintendent resigned from office the county board had authority to abolish the office.

The Intermediate Unit of School Administration

Since the status of the county superintendent as a school administrator is in the process of change as a result of school district enlargement, studies are being conducted to determine if another type of administrative unit should be set up as the intermediate unit between the local school district and the state department. Careful study needs to be made relative to the intermediate unit to determine if it fits into the administrative pattern in Minnesota. Under no circumstance should the intermediate unit be a deterrent to sound school district reorganization. The auxiliary services which might be performed by such a unit of administration should not be the justification for perpetuating the small secondary school. The prime objective should be the organization of school districts that are large enough to provide directly the essential services that might otherwise be made available through some intermediate unit.

LEGISLATIVE REFERENCE LIBRARY
STATE OF MINNESOTA

CHAPTER III

The Organization of Districts and Classification of Schools

The State Constitution in Article VIII, Section 1, assigns to the Legislature the responsibility of establishing a uniform system of public schools. "The stability of a republican form of government depending mainly upon the intelligence of the people, it shall be the duty of the Legislature to establish a general and uniform system of public schools." Section 3 provides, "The legislature shall make provisions, by taxation or otherwise, as with the income arising from the school fund, will secure a thorough and efficient system of public schools in each township in the State."

From the beginning of statehood in 1858, the legislature has enacted laws which provide for the formation of various types of school districts, among which have been the following: common, special, independent, ten or more township, consolidated, county and associated. The area not included in an organized district has been administered through a unit known as "unorganized territory".

Chronological Development of School Districts

Year

- 1849 Territorial Assembly authorized the formation of school districts. School districts at first were organized on a township basis.
- 1851 County Commissioners were authorized to divide the inhabited portions of their counties into convenient districts.
- 1854 Many school districts were created by special charters issued by the legislature.
- 1868 County Commissioners were given additional powers in the formation of districts by authorizing them to create new districts, change boundary lines, and unite two or more districts whenever a petition was presented signed by a majority of the legal voters.

- 1877 Legislature provided for the classification of districts into three groups -- common, special, and independent.
- 1880 State Superintendent of Public Instruction reported that 4165 common school districts had been organized.
- 1895 The legislature authorized the establishment of independent districts in any city, town, and village.
- 1896 There were 6145 common districts and 182 independent districts.
- 1901 First law authorizing consolidation of districts enacted.
- 1905 Law for organizing districts of ten or more townships authorized.
- 1907 Territory not assigned to any school district was created into unorganized territory.
- 1911 Law on consolidation liberalized by granting special aids.
- 1927 Law enacted authorizing formation of County School Districts.
- 1929 First County School District established in Lake County.
- 1947 Reorganization Law passed by the legislature providing another procedure for the merger of school districts for the purpose of forming larger and stronger school districts.
- 1948-1960 Number of school districts reduced from 7606 districts to 2579.

School District Classification

Under Extra Session Laws of 1959, Chapter 71, Article I, the following types of districts are provided and defined by the Legislature: Common, Independent, Special, Associated and Unorganized Territory.

1. Common District

"A common district is any school district validly created and existing as a common school district or joint common school district as of July 1, 1957, or pursuant to the terms of the education code."

Citizens of the common school districts meet annually in June to establish educational policies, decide on specific school matters including the amount of the tax levy, and to elect the school officers of the district. During the year the three-member school boards administer the schools, under supervision of the county superintendent.

For the school year of 1959-60 there were 1974 organized common school districts governed by school boards totaling 5922 members.

2. Independent District

"An independent district is any school district validly created and existing as an independent, consolidated, joint independent, county or ten or more township district as of July 1, 1957, or pursuant to the education code."

In the independent school districts the elected school board is empowered to fix the school tax levy and to employ a district superintendent to oversee the educational program. Board members are elected at the annual election in May.

In 1959-60 there were 586 organized independent school districts with a six or seven member school board. There are approximately 3660 school board members in these districts.

3. Special Districts

"A special district is a district established by a charter granted by the legislature or by a home rule charter including any district which is designated a special independent school district by the legislature."

There are six special districts, namely, Duluth, Minneapolis, Rochester, St. Paul, South St. Paul, and Winona. The board membership depends upon the number specified in the home rule charter and ranges from six to nine members.

4. Associated Districts

"An associated district is any school district validly created and existing as an associated school district at the effective date of Laws 1957, Chapter 947, or any two or more school districts which are hereafter organized into an associated school district as herein provided for the purpose of providing secondary education."

There are no associated school districts in the state.

5. Unorganized Territory

"Unorganized Territory" is the portion of a county not included in organized districts, and includes territory heretofore coded to the government of the United States. Unorganized territory is a public corporation. Thirteen counties of the state have unorganized territory and are as follows: Aitkin, Becker, Beltrami, Cass, Clearwater, Hennepin, Hubbard, Koochiching, Lake of the Woods, Mahanomen, Marshall, Redwood, and St. Louis.

The school board for the unorganized territory is an ex-officio one consisting of three members. The county superintendent serves as the clerk, the county treasurer as the treasurer, and the chairman of the county board as the chairman. In Cass County the board consists of the county superintendent as clerk, county treasurer, and three directors elected at large.

SUMMARY OF TYPES OF SCHOOL DISTRICTS 1960

TYPE OF DISTRICT	NUMBER OF DISTRICTS
Common	1974
Independent	586
Special	6
Associated	0
Unorganized Territory	13
Total Number of Districts	2579

Following the usual pattern, the common school districts maintain ungraded elementary schools only, and the independent districts maintain graded elementary and secondary schools. In reality, however, there is considerable variance in the kind of schools which a district of a particular classification might maintain. The following summary illustrates the various schools maintained in the districts as specified.

KINDS OF CLASSIFIED SCHOOLS MAINTAINED IN TYPES OF ORGANIZED SCHOOL DISTRICTS 1959-1960

Number of Districts	Type of School District	Classified School Maintained
445	Independent	Graded Elementary and Secondary Schools
22	Independent	Graded Elementary Schools only
119	Independent	Ungraded Elementary Schools only
6	Special	Graded Elementary and Secondary Schools
3	Unorganized Territory	Graded Elementary and Secondary Schools
10	Unorganized Territory	Ungraded Elementary Schools only
4	Common Districts	Graded Elementary Schools
1211	Common	Ungraded Elementary Schools only
759	Common	Maintained No School in their district

Classification of Schools

The providing of free public education for all the children of Minnesota is the responsibility of the people through their elected representatives. To insure a uniform system of public schools the legislature has authorized the State Board of Education to classify the schools of the state according to the regulations or standards as approved by them. The following table shows the number of public schools for each type so classified.

TYPES OF CLASSIFIED PUBLIC SCHOOLS IN MINNESOTA 1959-1960

Classification	Number of Schools
1. Elementary Schools	
a. Ungraded Elementary Schools	2,270
Open Schools	1,565
Closed Schools	705
b. Graded Elementary Schools	890
Six year	815
Eight year	75
2. Secondary Schools, Total	677
a. Department	2
b. Four year	42
c. Six year	284
d. Junior	189
e. Senior	160
3. Junior Colleges	9
4. Area Vocational Technical Schools	8

Graded Elementary Schools

"A graded elementary school is one organized and administered as such, in which each school grade is taught by one certified teacher, or in which no more than two grades in sequence are taught by one certified teacher, as such part of the school system of a district giving a full course of instruction in the first six years of the public school and employing at least three teachers devoting their full time to elementary school work, or giving a full course of instruction in the first eight years of the public school and employing at least four teachers devoting their entire time to elementary school work."

A school seeking classification as a graded elementary school must meet the following minimum enrollments as set forth in "Minnesota Regulations Relating to Education."

BASIS FOR CLASSIFICATION OF PUBLIC GRADED ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS Minimum Enrollment Required

Type of Elementary School	For Schools Presently Classified (Effective 1962-63)	For new Schools Seeking Classification (Effective 1959-60)	Minimum Number of Teachers Required
6-year Graded	60	80	3
8-year Graded	80	100	4

For the school year of 1959-60 there were 890 schools classified as graded elementary schools. Thirty one graded elementary schools were in districts which maintained no secondary schools. Districts which maintained secondary schools had 859 graded elementary schools as a part of their systems.

Ungraded Elementary Schools

"An ungraded elementary school is a school giving a full course of elementary school instruction and employing one or more teachers but not having the rank of a graded school." In most of the ungraded schools all of the grades and classes are taught by the one teacher.

For the school year of 1959-60, there were 2,270 schools classified as ungraded elementary schools. Of this group, 1,565 schools were open and operating, and 705 schools were closed, and the children transported to other nearby open schools.

Secondary schools

Secondary schools are those which maintain classes above the elementary level of instruction with buildings, equipment, courses of study, class schedules, enrollment and staff meeting the standards established by the State Board of Education. Most common are those in which the secondary courses begin with Grade 7. These are either six-year secondary schools or schools organized as junior secondary schools and senior secondary schools divided into three years each. Courses in the four-year secondary schools begin at the ninth grade level and follow an elementary school of eight grades.

Regulations of the State Board of Education prescribe the following minimum enrollments as they relate to the classification of secondary schools:

BASIS FOR CLASSIFICATION OF PUBLIC SECONDARY SCHOOLS*

Minimum Enrollment Required

Type of Secondary School	For Schools Presently Classified (Effective 1962-63)	For new Schools Seeking Classification (Effective 1959-60)	Minimum Number of Teachers Required
Secondary Department	50	75	3
4-year Secondary	75	125	4
6-year Secondary	150	200	7
Junior Secondary	100	150	5
Senior Secondary	100	150	5
Vocational Secondary	100	100	4

*When any school district presently classified cannot meet a new and higher minimum enrollment standard due to location in an area of sparse population, such district upon application, may be permitted by the State Board of Education to retain its present classification.

The 677 secondary schools are distributed among 445 independent districts, six special districts, and in three counties with unorganized territory.

The first public secondary school in the state was established in St. Paul in 1852.

Junior Colleges

The school board of any independent or special school district may make application to the state board of education to establish and maintain a department of junior college work, to consist of not more than two years' work beyond the twelfth year of the public school curriculum.

The first junior college was established in 1915, at Rochester.

For the school year of 1959-60 there were nine approved junior colleges with locations and enrollments as follows:

JUNIOR COLLEGES LOCATED IN INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICTS

1959-1960

Place	County	Enrollment
Austin	Mower	432
Brainerd	Crow Wing	198
Coleraine	Itasca	306
Ely	St. Louis	149
Eveleth	St. Louis	113
Hibbing	St. Louis	498
Rochester	Olmsted	746
Virginia	St. Louis	394
Worthington	Nobles	241
Total Enrollment		3,077

Fergus Falls has a junior college in operation for the first time in the school year 1960-61.

Area Vocational-Technical Schools

The purpose of establishing area vocational schools is to more nearly equalize the educational opportunities in certain phases of vocational-technical education to persons of the state who are of the age and maturity to profitably pursue training for a specific occupation.

The area assigned to an area vocational school is made by the commissioner of education with the approval of the state board for vocational education. The district which has the area vocational school is assigned the administrative authority to operate the school.

The location of these eight approved area vocational schools and the enrollment totals for 1959-60 are shown below:

AREA VOCATIONAL TECHNICAL SCHOOLS

Place	Enrollment	Place	Enrollment
Austin	1,025	St. Cloud	721
Duluth	1,268	St. Paul	5,599
Mankato	649	Thief River Falls	900
Minneapolis	6,842	Winona	486

These schools enrolled a total of 17,490 day students.

Staples has been approved for an area vocational school for the school year of 1960-61. The first area vocational school was organized at Mankato in 1947.

APPROVED SPECIAL DEPARTMENTS AND CLASSES 1959-1960

Special Departments	Number
Agriculture	299
Business	354
Industrial Arts	377
Home Economics	506
	Number of Centers
Special Classes for Handicapped Children	
Blind	10
Crippled (Classes in school)	7
Crippled (Instruction in the Home, Hospital or Sanatorium)	228
Deaf	3
Defective Speech	67
Mentally Handicapped or Subnormal	130

The above special departments and classes are operated in Independent school districts maintaining Graded Elementary and Secondary Schools.

Total Public School Enrollments

The summary table below gives the total enrollment for all public schools for the year 1959-60, and the distribution of the enrollment between districts maintaining graded elementary or secondary schools and districts maintaining ungraded elementary schools.

ENROLLMENTS

Year	Total State Enrollment	DISTRICTS MAINTAINING	
		Graded Elementary or Secondary Schools	Ungraded Elementary Schools
1959-1960	684,998	642,327	42,671

In the enrollment it is to be noted that 93.8% of the pupils are enrolled in districts which maintain graded elementary or secondary schools as compared to 6.2% enrolled in districts maintaining ungraded elementary schools.

The total enrollment of 684,998 is distributed among the secondary, graded elementary and ungraded elementary schools as follows:

Type of School	Enrollment	Percent of Enrollment
Secondary	274,891	40.1
Graded Elementary	367,436	53.7
Ungraded Elementary	42,671	6.2

ENROLLMENTS OF SECONDARY PUPILS BY CLASSIFICATION OF SCHOOL 1959-1960

Classification of Secondary School	Number of Pupils Enrolled	Percent Enrolled
Junior and Senior	188,804	68.68
Six-Year	71,823	26.13
Four-Year	14,097	5.13
H. S. Department	167	.06
Total	274,891	

There are 274,891 pupils enrolled in secondary schools of which 30,332 pupils are classed as nonresident secondary pupils for whom county tuition is claimed. The nonresident secondary school enrollment is 11.03% of the total enrollment in secondary schools.

Public School Transportation

The transportation of pupils to and from school is a service which has grown over the years. Transportation has made education available to rural children who reside in areas outside of the villages and cities of the state. Through the process of school district enlargement more pupils are being furnished transportation to schools which provide graded elementary and secondary school instruction.

Transportation became available to pupils in the rural area when the legislature passed a law in 1911 permitting the merger

of two or more districts. For the school year of 1911-12 the state paid transportation aid for 932 pupils. When the reorganization law was passed by the 1947 legislature which stressed the need for the formation of larger and stronger school districts there were 42,158 pupils transported. For the school year 1959-60 there were 281,051 pupils transported in districts in accordance with provisions of 1959 Education Code.

The following table gives data relating to the transportation and board of pupils for the school year of 1959-60.

DATA ON TRANSPORTATION OF PUBLIC SCHOOL PUPILS
1959-60

Kinds of Transportation Aid	Number of Districts Aided	Number of Eligible Pupils	Amount Spent by Districts	Average Cost Per Pupil	Total Transportation Aid
Consolidation	528	218,051	13,864,751	63.58	9,773,834
Nonresident Secondary	2,279	28,961	2,411,451	83.27	1,256,314
Closed	701	5,647	450,665	79.81	92,604
Isolated Pupil	66	581	56,180	96.70	31,627
Handicapped Pupils	353	3,436	527,394	153.49	3337,737
Totals	3,927	256,676	17,310,444	67.44	11,492,118

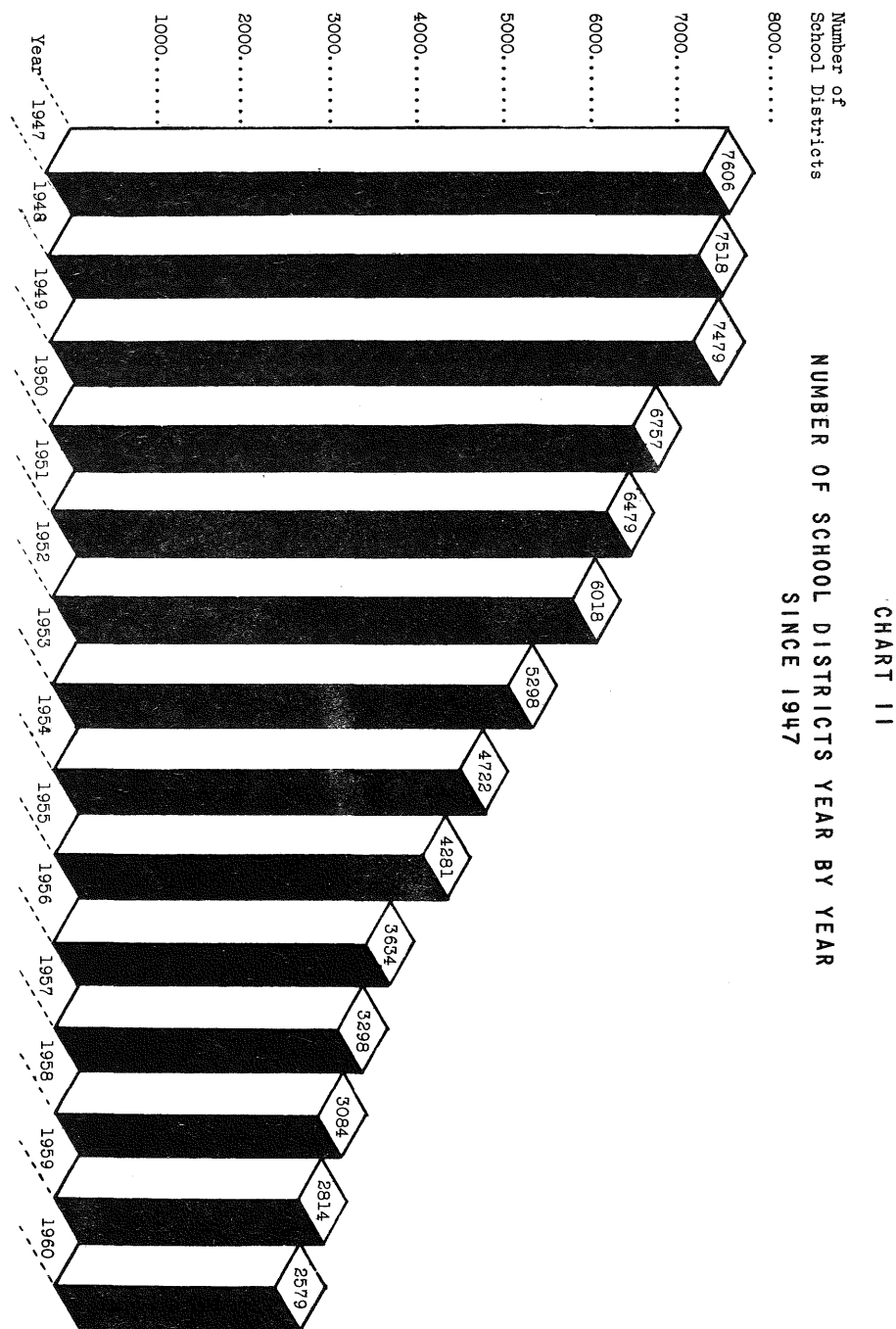
CHAPTER IV

SCHOOL DISTRICT ENLARGEMENT HAS GONE FORWARD

The formation of larger and stronger school districts in Minnedota has gone forward each year since 1947. One of the requirements of the reorganization law is that the State Advisory Commission shall report to the legislature on the progress of school district enlargement. The first official report by the Commission to the legislature was submitted in January, 1949 and each report thereafter has indicated a steady downward trend in the number of school districts in the State as the larger school district with its comprehensive educational program replaces the smaller districts. Chart II on page 28 shows the progress that has been made from July 1, 1947 to July 1, 1960 with their corresponding year by year reduction in the number of school districts.

Since the last biennial report 505 school districts were merged with other existing districts. These districts, along with others, have seen the advantages of belonging to a school district which has been organized on a community basis and which offers a comprehensive program of education for their elementary and secondary pupils as well as an expansion of its services to include the adults of the district.

The success that Minnesota has had in its program of school district enlargement can be attributed to the fact that the legislature has made available the optional procedures of dissolution-attachment, consolidation, and reorganization. The reorganization law came into being in 1947 when the legislature passed Chapter 421. This law has been amended by succeeding legislatures and is now a permanent procedure as set forth in the Extra Session Laws of 1959, Chapter 71, Article III. Of the three procedures, the reorganization procedure had the greatest influence relative to school district mergers. The reorganization act enabled the people at the local level through their county survey committee to make a thorough study of their school districts. These studies brought to the attention of the people the need for establishing stronger school districts. The reorganization procedure has been responsible for activating the use of the dissolution-attachment, and consolidation procedures in the formation of larger school districts.



The downward trend is significant as evidenced by the fact that Minnesota had 7685 organized school districts in 1940 as compared to 2579 school districts in 1960. This represents a total reduction of 5106 school districts during this twenty year period. It is to be noted in the following table that there was very little done in the way of school district enlargement prior to 1947 in that only 79 districts had been merged for a percentage reduction of a little over one percent. From 1947 to 1960 the number of districts had been reduced down to 2579. During this period of time 5027 school districts had been merged with other existing districts. As of July 1, 1960 Minnesota had reduced the number of school districts by 66 percent. These districts in the main have been made a part of districts which maintain graded elementary and secondary schools.

Table I shows the progress that has been made in school district enlargement from 1940 to 1960. It indicates the number of school districts in existence by five year intervals.

TABLE I
Number of School Districts by Five Year Intervals
1940 to 1960

Year	1940	1945	*1947	1950	1955	1960
Number of Districts In Existence	7685	7679	7606	6757	4261	2579

*The year that the school district reorganization act was passed.

During this past biennium 452 districts maintained graded elementary and secondary schools within their respective districts. Of this number 394 districts had received the benefits of consolidation compared to 226 districts in 1947. This means that 168 districts with graded elementary and secondary schools gained the status of consolidation from 1947 to 1960. There are certain trends developing relative to the combining of districts which maintained graded elementary and secondary schools. Since 1940 twenty-six communities have closed their high schools. Of this group, twelve districts have been merged with other nearby districts that maintain secondary schools. The most recent merger involved the communities of Pemberton and Waldorf. For the school year of 1959-1960 Pemberton had 90 pupils enrolled in high school and Waldorf had 146 enrolled and as a result of the merger they will have a high school with an enrollment in excess

of 236 pupils. They will eventually have a high school enrollment of over 300 pupils. By pooling their pupil resources they will be able to give a broader program of education at the secondary level. Likewise the tax base for this new district will be over \$2,000,000 which means that they will be in a position to do a better job at more reasonable costs. Other communities with small high schools are now beginning to study their local situation with the possibility of joining forces with their neighbors in strengthening their overall educational needs. It is noteworthy that the program of school district enlargement has been centered around the community that provides a complete program of education from kindergarten through grade twelve, and thus town and country become one with the school becoming the core for most of the community activities.

As of July 1, 1960 some of the interesting facts relating to school districts enlargement are as follows:

1. The summary of school districts enlargement given by counties is listed in Table II of the APPENDIX. See map on page 31.
2. The number of school districts as of July 1, 1960 by counties is shown in Chart III on page 32. There are 19 counties that have less than 10 districts and 9 counties have 60 or more districts remaining.
3. The State of Minnesota has reduced the number of districts by more than 66 percent. Chart IV on page 33 gives the percent of reduction of school districts county by county. The five counties of Lake, St. Louis, Koochiching, Itasca, and Lake of the Woods made very substantial reductions prior to July 1, 1947 and are not coded on the map. Since July 1, 1947, 29 counties have made a percentage reduction of 80 percent or more in the number of school districts. Nine counties had reductions of less than 40 percent.
4. The year by year reduction in the number of school districts is given in Table III of the APPENDIX. See Chart II on page 28.

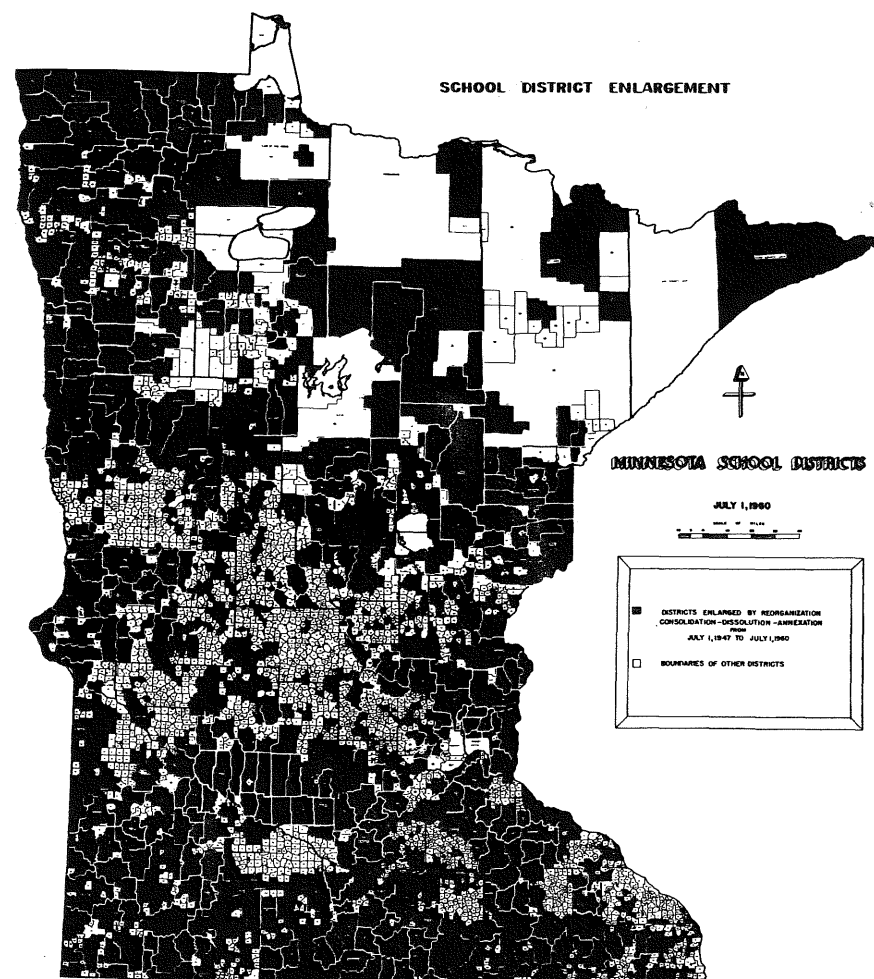


CHART III

NUMBER OF SCHOOL DISTRICTS
July 1, 1960

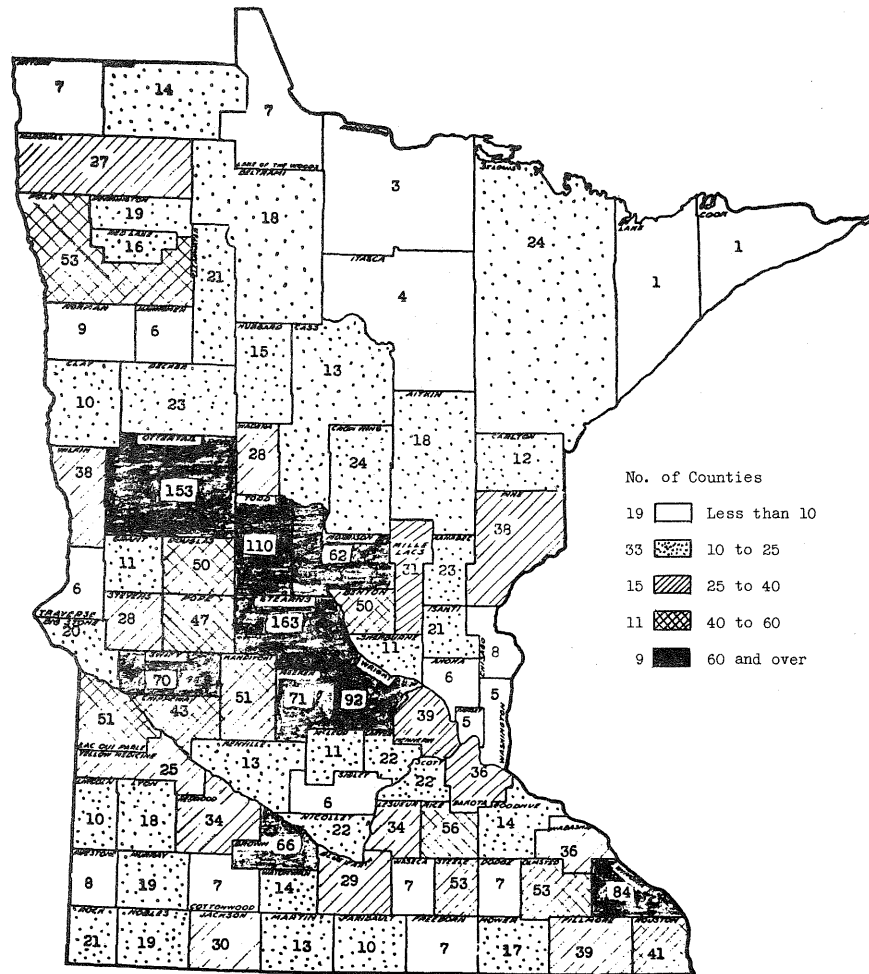
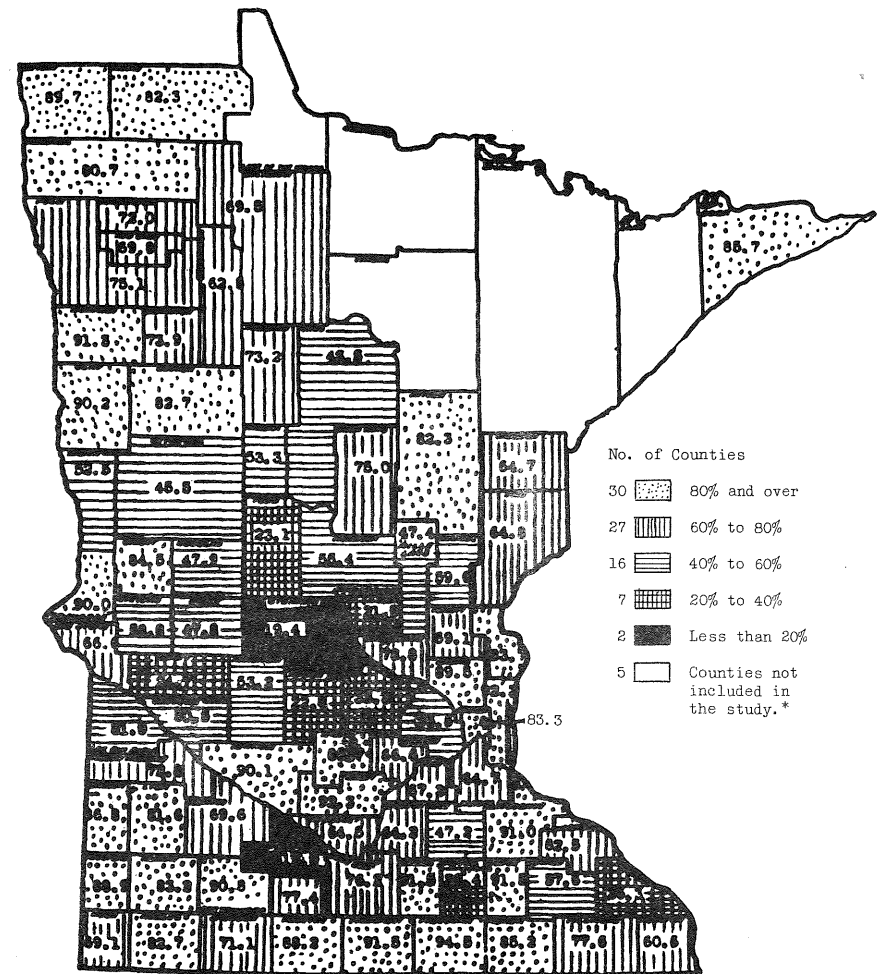


CHART IV

PERCENTAGE REDUCTION IN NUMBER OF
SCHOOL DISTRICTS BY COUNTIES
July 1, 1960



*The five counties not included in this study made substantial reductions prior to July 1, 1947.

5. The average size of school districts in square miles on July 1, 1960, was 32 square miles compared to 10.9 square miles in 1940. See Chart V on page 35 which shows the average size of school districts by counties..

6. In 1940 the districts maintaining graded elementary and secondary schools had about 67.8 percent of the total taxable valuation, while districts with ungraded elementary schools had about 32.2 percent of the valuation. By 1960 the percent of the taxable valuation had gone up to 89.5 percent in districts with graded elementary and secondary schools while the taxable valuation had decreased to 10.5 percent in the districts with ungraded elementary schools. This change has come about as the result of the extensive merger of ungraded schools with districts that have graded elementary and secondary schools.

7. Changes have taken place relative to where pupils are enrolled. Three-fourths of the pupils in 1940 were enrolled in districts with graded elementary and secondary schools and one-fourth were enrolled in ungraded elementary schools. By 1960 the graded elementary and secondary schools enrolled over 92 percent of the pupils, while the ungraded elementary schools accounted for a little over 7 percent of the total enrollment.

EXHIBIT 1.

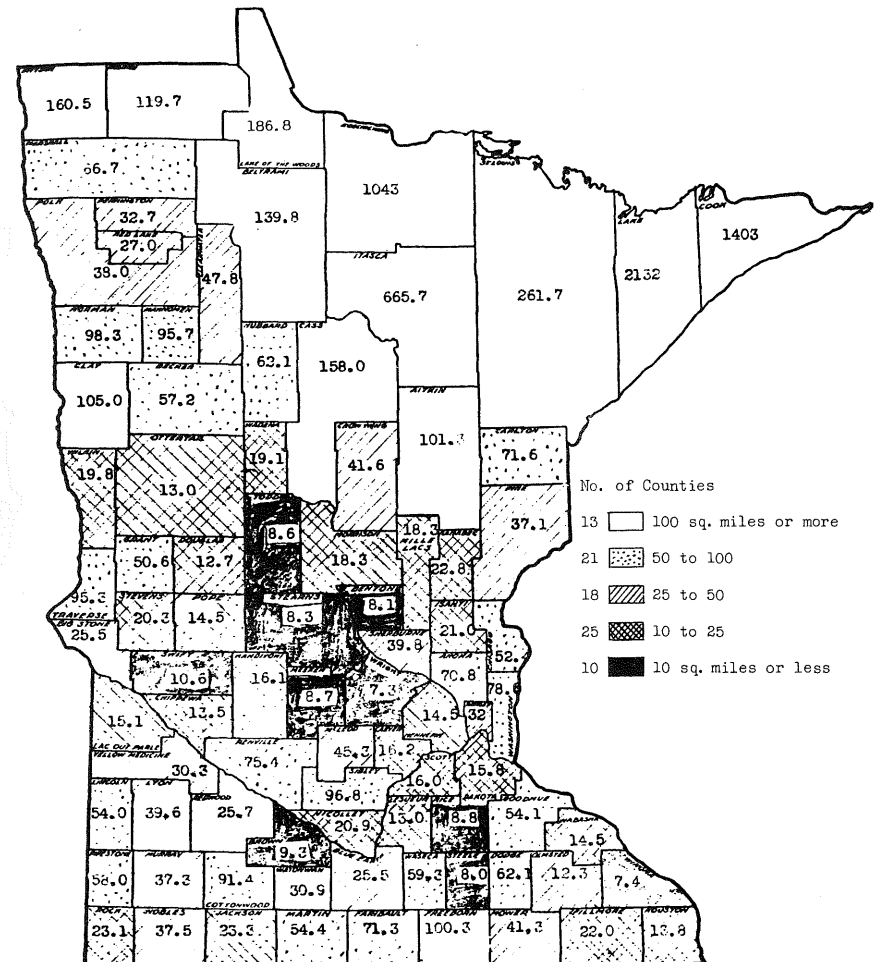
Summary of School District Enlargement

July 1, 1960

Number of School Districts - July 1, 1947	7606
Number of School Districts - July 1, 1960	2579
Total number of districts merged	5027
Number of Districts Merged by Reorganization.	1414
Number of Districts Merged by Consolidation and by Dissolution-Attachment	3613

CHART V

AVERAGE SIZE OF SCHOOL DISTRICTS IN SQUARE MILES July 1, 1960



CHAPTER V

PROBLEMS RELATING TO DISTRICTS WITH SMALL SECONDARY SCHOOLS AND NON-OPERATING ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS

During the past two decades several changes have taken place in the classification of the secondary schools in Minnesota. The increase in pupil enrollment, the shift in population from the rural areas to the urban centers, the increased cost of erecting new buildings and additions, the increase of operating costs, the demands for expanded school and community services, the desire for an expanded curriculum to meet the modern educational needs, the necessity of securing greater state financial assistance and the reorganization of school districts are some of the factors which have influenced the changes in the types of secondary schools.

Six-Year Secondary School is Favored.

It is to be noted in Table I that the number of six-year secondary schools increased from 260 to 281 schools and the junior-senior type increased from 171 schools to 207 while the four-year secondary school dropped from 95 schools to 85 in this twenty year period. Many schools have been able to attain a higher classification which is an indication of the upgrading of their educational programs. These trends indicate that the small four-year type of high school cannot offer the kind of educational program provided in the larger six-year and junior-senior secondary schools and accounts for their decline, because the public demands the type of school that can offer an expanded program.

Minimum Enrollment of 200.

Districts which maintain a secondary school with small enrollments are restricted in their ability to provide a well rounded program of education. Approximately thirty percent of the secondary schools of the state cannot meet the suggested recommendations for a "minimum foundation program" as set forth in the research study by the State Department of Education entitled, "A Foundation Program for Minnesota Public Schools". This study reveals that while a secondary school with an enrollment of 200 might be able to offer the basic foundation

TABLE I
COMPARISON OF ENROLLMENTS IN SECONDARY SCHOOLS
BY TYPE OF SCHOOL 1940-41, 1950-51, 1958-59

	NUMBER OF SECONDARY SCHOOLS												Secondary School Department		
	Total			Junior-Senior			Six-Year			Four-Year					
	1940	1950	1958	1940	1950	1958	1940	1950	1958	1940	1950	1958			
1941	1951	1959	1941	1951	1959	1941	1951	1959	1941	1951	1959	1941	1951	1959	
Less than 50	12	11	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	8	1	8	3	-
50-74	31	40	19	2	1	-	4	-	1	18	39	18	2	-	-
75-99	40	35	14	2	1	-	21	3	2	16	29	10	1	-	1
100-124	61	35	17	1	1	-	47	19	12	13	15	3	-	-	-
125-149	53	35	36	2	-	1	45	25	31	6	10	4	-	-	-
150-174	39	33	35	-	-	-	35	27	35	4	6	-	-	-	-
175-199	32	43	37	2	2	-	26	35	35	4	2	-	-	-	-
200-249	60	55	55	9	8	3	48	44	52	3	3	-	-	-	-
250-299	46	45	53	20	14	6	25	30	47	1	1	-	-	-	-
300-399	42	50	57	29	24	22	8	19	45	5	6	-	-	-	-
400-499	25	29	41	21	28	26	1	1	15	2	-	-	1	-	-
500-749	26	42	52	24	36	46	-	2	6	2	4	-	-	-	-
750-999	31	29	45	25	26	40	-	-	1	4	3	3	-	-	1
1,000-1,999	35	31	53	29	26	48	-	-	-	6	5	5	-	-	-
2,000 & over	7	3	11	5	2	10	-	-	-	2	1	1	-	-	-
Total	540	516	536	171	175	207	260	205	281	95	132	46	14	4	2
Median Enrollment	202	224	301	488	517	720	159	195	224	109	91	85	-	-	-

program with a staff of 12 to 14 teachers, a more desirable school situation would be one with a minimum secondary school enrollment of 300 pupils or more, and with a teaching staff of 18 to 21 teachers. The fact that a secondary school with an enrollment of less than 200 pupils might be in a position to offer a "Basic Foundation Program" does not mean that it can offer a "comprehensive program" as do schools with larger secondary enrollments. There is a close relationship between the enrollment factor and the quality of the educational program that can be offered.

Trend is Toward Larger School.

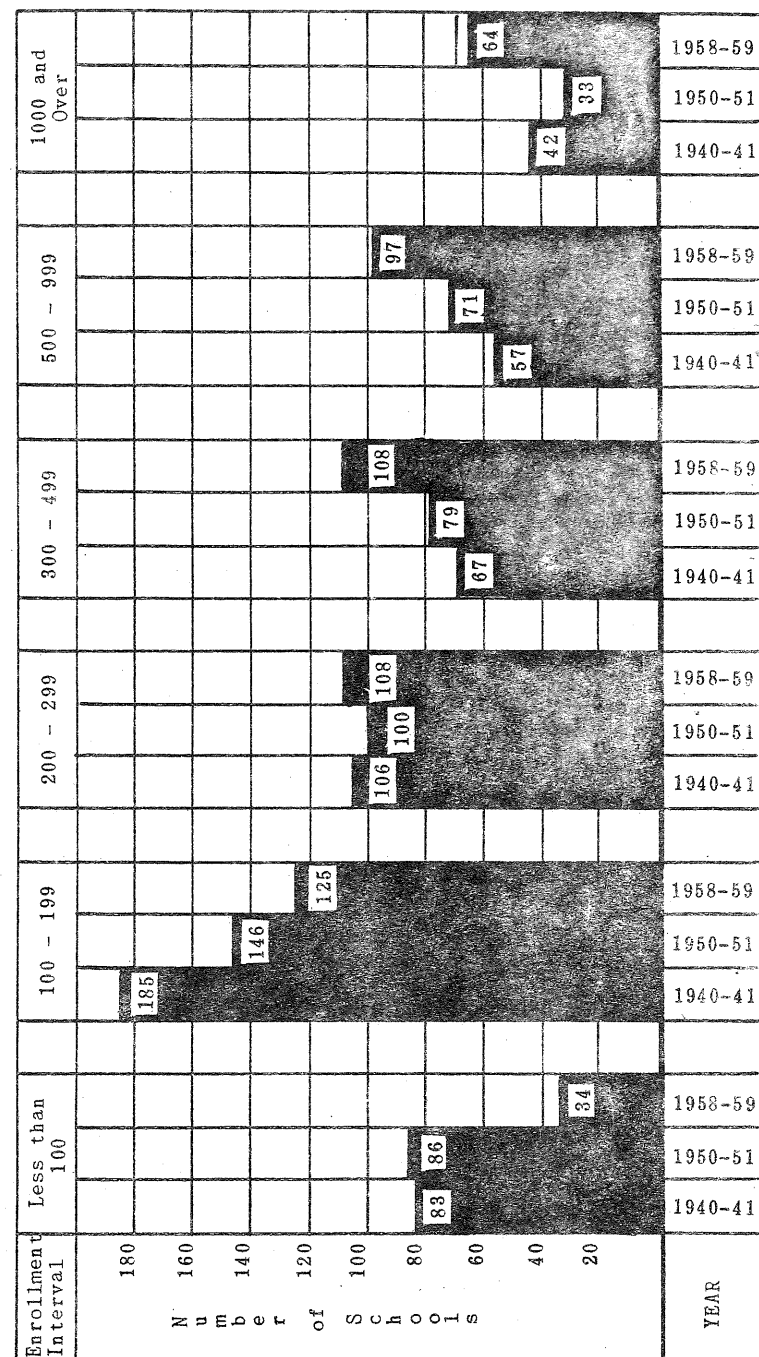
During the past twenty years there has been a definite trend toward the six-year or junior-senior type of high school, while the four-year high school has been on the decline. Table I indicates some definite trends as to the median enrollments in these three types of schools. The median enrollment for the six-year secondary school showed an increase from 159 pupils to 224. Schools that have an enrollment at the median of 224 are in a position to offer an acceptable program of education. The junior-senior median increased from 486 pupils to 720 which is well above the national recommendation of 300 pupils. The median enrollment of the four-year secondary school dropped from 109 pupils to 85 which is far below the recommended number of pupils for a satisfactory secondary school.

Referring to Table I on page 36 and Chart A on page 39, it is to be noted that for the year 1958-59 there were 159 secondary schools with enrollments below 200 pupils. A breakdown of the 159 schools reveals that there were: 36 four-year; 116 six-year; six junior-senior and one high school department that did not come up to the minimum goal of 200 pupils.

Large Schools Have More Special Departments.

As schools increase in size, relative to enrollment, studies show that more vocational subjects become available to the student. In a study made of the three types of schools outside of the cities of the first class it was found that of the 37 four-year schools so classified in 1958-59, 22 schools had no vocational departments. Of the 15 remaining, five had only one approved vocational department, six had two departments, three

CHART A
SIZE OF HIGH SCHOOL BY ENROLLMENT INTERVALS
1940 - 1959



had three departments and only one school had all four departments. These 37 schools accounted for only two percent of the total number of approved vocational departments. In 1958-59 there were 281 schools classified as six-year high schools. Since a majority of the schools in this group have larger enrollments more vocational departments are available as indicated: 73 schools had two departments; 115 had three approved departments, and 85 had four departments. In 1958-59 there were 143 classified junior-senior secondary schools and these schools maintained 568 approved vocational departments and 88 of them had all four departments.

Small Schools Have High Costs.

There is a close correlation between the enrollment size of the secondary school and the per pupil costs. Table 2 shows the median maintenance cost per pupil unit for 1958-59. It is to be noted that the state median for graded and secondary schools is \$279. Schools in the lower enrollment group from 50 to 149 pupils have high maintenance costs ranging from \$293 to \$348 which is well above the state median of \$279. These schools offer a very limited educational program at the secondary level as shown by the fact that not many of these schools have approved vocational departments. The teaching of Modern Foreign Languages is almost non-existent among these smaller schools. In the area of Science and Mathematics the offerings are not as extensive as in schools with larger enrollments. Schools that are in the enrollment groupings from 250 to 999 have maintenance costs ranging from \$258 to \$271 which is below the state median. These schools are in a position to provide a rather comprehensive program at a reasonable cost per pupil unit. As the enrollment reaches 1,000 and over the costs tend to go upward and these costs range from \$304 to \$326. The larger schools offer their students a very broad program of education, which includes three or more vocational departments, courses in Modern Foreign Languages, many varied offerings in the academic subject fields, special classes for handicapped children, guidance programs as well as other related services.

Districts which maintain secondary schools with small enrollments should be encouraged to merge with other nearby schools for the purpose of strengthening the educational offering

for all pupils. These districts should evaluate their educational needs for the purpose of finding ways and means whereby they can provide better education at a reasonable cost.

TABLE II
Median Maintenance Cost Per Pupil Unit 1958-59
for Districts Maintaining Secondary Schools

Enrollment Interval	Number of School Districts	Maintenance Cost Per Pupil Unit	Extremes	
			Low	High
0-49	1	\$348		
50-74	12	314	\$256	\$345
75-99	13	289	246	328
100-124	15	301	260	358
125-149	34	293	250	351
150-174	35	285	257	343
175-199	31	275	233	298
200-249	50	281	226	517
250-299	53	271	215	492
300-399	62	266	213	481
400-499	34	258	235	458
500-749	43	270	207	542
750-999	19	271	231	431
1,000-1,999	29	304	244	458
2,000 and over	18	326	257	418

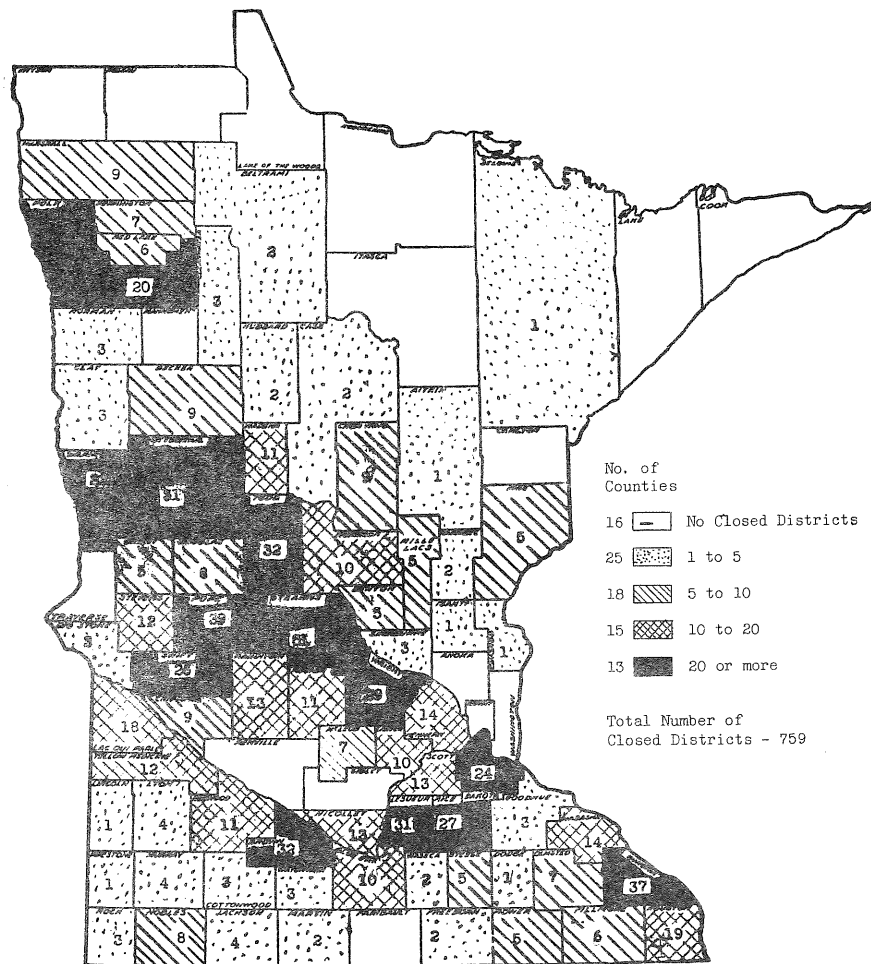
State Median for graded and secondary schools for 1958-59 is \$279.

The Non-Operating District

Districts that have non-operating or closed schools are not carrying out the functions of a school district in the true sense and are giving only partial support to the full cost of education.

For the school year 1959-1960 there were 759 districts with closed schools in Minnesota. These districts account for one third of the common school districts in the State. Chart VI on page 42 shows the number of closed school districts by counties. A recent study of the non-operating school indicates that for 1959-60 there were 8007 pupils from non-operating districts enrolled in other elementary public schools. This is approximately one fifth of the total enrollment in districts maintaining ungraded schools. The average closed school district is sending about 10.5 pupils to other districts for their education. The study further shows that there were sixteen districts that had no pupils enrolled in public school and 92 districts with enrollments of from one to five pupils.

CHART VI
COUNTIES WITH CLOSED DISTRICTS
School Year 1959 - 1960



These districts spent \$1,606,308 for maintenance, exclusive of transportation. Tuition payments for instruction in other schools accounts for a major share of the maintenance costs. Another sizeable item in the maintenance costs is the amount spent for administration as expressed in the salaries of school board members. The average cost per pupil unit in average daily attendance is \$356, which is well above the state median.

The assessed valuation of the 759 districts with closed schools amounts to \$52,557,799. This valuation is not available as a part of the tax base for bonding purposes by the districts where pupils from closed districts attend. The host district that maintains a graded elementary and secondary school which accepts these pupils on a tuition basis are now finding it difficult to provide the needed facilities to take care of their own pupils plus those from closed schools because they do not have a sufficient tax base for bonding purposes to erect new buildings or additions.

The tax levy for school purposes in these 759 closed school districts averages to about 30.6 mills which is way below the average levy made by districts that maintain graded elementary and secondary schools.

Since the district which does not operate a school and has shifted the burden of the education of its children to another district, there seems to be no valid reason why they should exist as organized school districts when the state is striving toward the goal that all children of the state should be a resident of a district with a graded elementary and secondary school that can provide for a comprehensive program of education.

CHAPTER VI

RECOMMENDATIONS

The State Advisory Commission on School Reorganization during this biennium has made an extensive study of the Extra Session Laws of 1959, Chapter 71, Article III as it relates to the over-all program of school district enlargement. Suggestions and recommendations have been submitted to the Commission by county and district superintendents, county school survey committees, school boards, and others interested in education relative to the enactment of new laws and amendments to existing laws as they pertain to the program of strengthening local school districts.

The following recommendations are submitted by the State Advisory Commission for the consideration of the Minnesota Legislature at its 1961 sessions:

1. Merging of All Territory in the State into Districts Maintaining Graded Elementary and Secondary Schools.

The Commission strongly recommends that the legislature establish a policy through legislation providing for the inclusion of all territory in school districts maintaining graded elementary and secondary schools by July 1, 1965.

2. Redefine Common and Independent Districts.

The classification of school districts and the type of schools maintained are often confused. Laws designed for one kind of district are impractical in some districts of a specified classification because of the type of schools maintained therein.

The Commission recommends that the Extra Session Laws of 1959, Chapter 71, Article I, Section 2, Subdivision 13 be amended so as to define common school districts as those which maintain only ungraded elementary schools.

It is further recommended that Section 2, Subdivision 14, be amended so as to define independent districts as those which maintain graded elementary or secondary schools.

3. Conflict in Application - Priority of Procedures.

An apparent conflict arises in the application and interpretation of the various procedures involving boundary changes. There is a need for establishing a priority when the same territory is involved in more than one procedure at the same time.

It is the recommendation of the Commission that Article III, Section 5, Subdivision 4 and 5, and Section 6, Subdivision 7, be amended so as to clarify and remove the conflict in the language of those sections as compared with Section 7, Subdivision 5.

4. Dissolution and Attachment.

The procedure of holding an election on debt assumption after the interlocutory order has been issued confuses the voters, and they frequently vote down the debt assumption which voids the interlocutory order. The Commission recommends that Article III, Section 6, Subdivision 10, be amended so that when an entire district is attached to a district which has a bonded debt, debt assumption be automatic, and that a separate vote on debt assumption be held only when a district is to be divided.

5. Consolidation.

The Commission recommends that Article III, Section 7, Subdivision 6, be amended so as to eliminate the filing by the Commissioner of an additional plat and supporting statement with the county auditor since the plat and supporting statement have already been filed by the county superintendent. It is difficult to determine how many resident freeholders there are in a given district because some freeholders may not be on record. To clarify this the Commission recommends that Article III, Section 7, Subdivision 10, be amended to read: "resident freeholders of record."

6. Division of Assets and Liabilities of Divided Districts.

The Commission recommends that Section 7, Subdivision 15 be amended to specify which county board has jurisdiction in making the division of the assets and liabilities when a district divided by consolidation lies in two or more counties.

7. Composition of Districts.

Districts should be made up of contiguous territory. The Commission recommends that the repealed provisions of M.S. 1953, Section 122.03 as amended in 1955, Chapter 223, be restored to the Education Code.

8. Status Quo Until Effective Date of Orders.

It is recommended that the following statement be included in the Education Code:

"No change shall be made in the boundaries, and no property or other assets shall be disposed of in any manner or in any district or portion of a district included in proceedings of boundary change under any law after the final or interlocutory orders of the county board, or the orders of consolidation or reorganization of the county superintendent, have been issued and prior to the effective date of such orders."

9. Claims Against Merging Districts.

Districts having outstanding warrants or bills, and which are considering dissolution or consolidation, have in some cases made no levies in anticipation of being merged with other districts. Under present law, the enlarged district has to assume all such debts. Former statutes provided for a tax levy against the territory of the discontinued district.

It is recommended that the former statutes be included in the Education Code, as follows: M.S. 1957, Section 122.11, Claims Against Districts; Section 122.27, Subdivision 3, Tax Levy for Other Indebtedness; and Section 122.27, Subdivision 4, Verified Claims.

10. Parts of Districts.

To eliminate the need of using the consolidation procedure to merge only small portions of districts, it is recommended that the former procedure as set forth in M.S. 1953, Section 122.09 be revised or modified, and included in the Education Code.

11. General Transportation Aid.

The Commission recommends that transportation aid under the 1959 Education Code, Article V, Section 22, Subdivision 1, formerly known as consolidated school district transportation aid, be paid only to independent districts maintaining graded elementary or secondary schools.

12. Secondary School Transportation Levy For Non-Resident Pupils.

The Commission recommends that the 1959 Education Code, Article V, Section 39, Subdivision 5, be amended so that the county levy for secondary school transportation be applied only to districts not maintaining secondary schools, and which receive the benefit of such transportation.

13. Closed School Transportation.

The Commission recommends that the 1959 Education Code, Article V, Section 22, Subdivision 5, relating to closed school transportation aid be repealed.

14. Isolated Pupil Transportation Aid.

The Commission recommends that the 1959 Education Code, Article V, Section 22, Subdivision 2, pertaining to isolated pupil transportation aid be repealed.

The Commission recommends that the following items be given further study by the legislature for remedial action. These recommendations have been referred to the Interim Commission on Education during this biennium for consideration.

1. Transfer of Land Which Has a Bonded Debt.

Laws of 1959, Chapter 672

The matter regarding the transfer of farms from one district to another after consolidation or other merger procedures without the land being taxed for bond levies of two districts was brought before the Commission.

2. Foundation Aid to Schools.

Extra Session Laws of 1959, Chapter 71, Article V, Section 22.

It is recommended by the Commission that the capital outlay charges as a part of tuition costs should be clarified to eliminate any transportation costs and that some minor changes should be made in the foundation aid formula so as to encourage the formation of more efficient school districts.

3. Agricultural Land Tax Differential Ratio.

Extra Session Laws of 1959, Chapter 71, Article V, Section 3.

It was brought to the attention of the Commission that there are certain irregularities in the agricultural land tax differential ratio and it is recommended that the present tax differential between agricultural and non-agricultural properties be reviewed.

CONCLUSION

The national and state trend toward fewer and larger school districts continues. For many decades, the weakness of small school districts has been recognized but over this span of time small school districts continued to be the typical type of organization. School district organization over the years has not kept pace with industry, business and agriculture when it comes to reorganization toward greater efficiency and economy.

In Minnesota the common district for many years was the typical type of school district organization and as a result a large number of small school districts were organized. The small common districts relinquish their educational responsibility at the sixth or eighth grade level. Pupils from these districts are dependent upon some other district to furnish facilities and instruction at the secondary level. This kind of planning is not conducive toward the establishment of a comprehensive program of education from grades one through twelve.

The formation of stronger and larger school districts in Minnesota since 1947 has come about by the elimination of over 5,000 small ineffective districts most of which are common districts. Most of these districts were merged with Independent districts that maintained graded elementary and secondary schools in their respective communities.

For the school year of 1959-60 there were 759 districts which did not operate or maintain elementary schools within their respective borders. The non-operating districts in Minnesota account for about one-third of the existing districts in the state. Nationally there were 7029 non-operating districts, and 11 percent of these concentrated in Minnesota. The non-operating school districts should not exist as organized school districts since they have ceased to carry out their educational functions. The educational program of the schools must now be considered in its totality.

As a unified program from grade one through twelve, the State Advisory Commission recommends legislation under which all territory of the state, not maintaining a secondary school would be made part of an independent school district with its complete elementary and secondary school programs. Iowa and Wisconsin

have enacted laws whereby all territories in their respective state shall become a part of a district with secondary schools by July 1, 1962.

It is recognized too, that there are many districts in the state that maintain secondary schools which are costly and cannot provide a minimum quality educational program. Districts that have secondary enrollment below 200 should evaluate their present limited educational programs, enrollments and ability to finance a good comprehensive program of education and to study ways and means of strengthening their local situations by merging with other nearby districts. Twenty-nine small high schools have been eliminated since 1940 and many of these are now a part of a stronger school district. Other districts could well follow their lead.

Minnesota has gone forward in developing stronger school districts. On July 1, 1960 there were 2,579 organized school districts of which 450 maintained graded elementary and secondary schools. The final objective of the remaining 2,129 school districts should be to provide their children a comprehensive educational program by becoming a part of a district which will have adequate enrollments and assessed valuation so as to provide the very best we have to offer educationally.

A P P E N D I X

REPORT OF VOTE ON ORGANIZATION OF COUNTY SCHOOL SURVEY COMMITTEES

Counties in which School Survey Committees are Organized

* Committees abolished by vote of school boards.
** Committees disbanded by action of State
Advisory Commission upon request.

Counties with Special School Survey Committees

Cook Itasca

Counties Voting Against Organization of School Survey Committees

Blue Earth	Meeker	Redwood	Waseca
Chippewa	Murray	Rock	Watonwan
Grant	Nobles	Stearns	Winona
Jackson	Otter Tail	Swift	Wright
Lincoln	Pipestone	Todd	Yellow
			Medicine

Counties to which the Statute is not Applicable

Koochiching Lake

TABLE II

SUMMARY REPORT ON SCHOOL DISTRICT ENLARGEMENT
July 1, 1947 to July 1, 1960

County	No. of Dists.		Total Reduc- tion	County	No. of Dists.		Total Reduc- tion
	7-1-47	7-1-60 S E			7-1-47	7-1-60 S E	
Aitkin	102	4 14	84	Martin	110	8 5	97
Anoka	57	6 0	51	Meeker	92	5 66	21
Becker	133	4 19	110	Mille Lacs	59	4 27	28
Beltrami	59	4 14	41	Morrison	139	5 57	77
Benton	64	2 48	14	Mower	115	7 10	98
Big Stone	60	5 15	40	Murray	113	4 15	94
Blue Earth	122	8 21	93	Nicollet	62	2 20	40
Brown	82	5 61	16	Nobles	110	5 14	91
Carlton	34	7 5	22	Norman	103	6 3	94
Carver	66	4 18	44	Olmsted	125	5 48	72
Cass	23	7 6	10	Otter Tail	281	9 144	128
Chippewa	87	4 39	44	Pennington	68	2 17	49
Chisago	49	5 3	41	Pine	108	6 32	70
Clay	102	8 2	92	Pipestone	72	4 4	64
Clearwater	56	3 18	35	Polk	213	9 44	160
Cook	7	1 0	6	Pope	90	4 43	43
Cottonwood	76	5 2	69	Ramsey	30	5 0	25
Crow Wing	96	3 21	72	Red Lake	53	3 13	37
Dakota	102	8 28	66	Redwood	112	8 26	78
Dodge	82	5 2	75	Renville	131	10 3	118
Douglas	96	5 45	46	Rice	106	3 53	50
Faribault	118	10 0	108	Rock	68	4 17	47
Fillmore	174	9 30	135	Roseau	79	4 10	65
Freeborn	128	5 2	121	St. Louis	29	17 7	5
Goodhue	155	7 7	141	Scott	67	5 17	45
Grant	71	5 6	60	Sherburne	52	3 8	41
Hennepin	90	14 25	51	Sibley	78	5 1	72
Houston	104	3 38	63	Stearns	203	9 154	40
Hubbard	56	4 11	41	Steele	86	4 49	33
Isanti	68	2 19	47	Stevens	68	4 24	40
Itasca	6	4 0	2	Swift	93	5 65	23
Jackson	104	5 25	74	Todd	143	7 103	33
Kanabec	57	2 21	34	Traverse	60	3 3	54
Kandiyohi	109	4 47	58	Wabasha	96	5 31	60
Kittson	68	6 1	61	Wadena	60	4 24	32
Koochiching	4	3 0	1	Waseca	83	4 3	76
Lac qui Parle	104	5 46	53	Washington	65	4 1	60
Lake	1	1 0	0	Watsonwan	62	3 11	48
Lake of Woods	11	2 5	4	Wilkin	80	3 35	42
Le Sueur	95	5 29	61	Winona	114	3 81	30
Lincoln	76	5 5	66	Wright	138	8 84	46
Lyon	98	7 11	80	Yellow Medicine	92	6 19	67
McLeod	83	6 5	72				
Mahnomen	23	2 4	17				
Marshall	140	8 19	113	Totals	7,606	451 2,123	5,027

(S) Districts with Elementary & Secondary Schools
(E) Districts with Elementary Schools only

TABLE III

REDUCTION OF SCHOOL DISTRICTS
YEAR BY YEAR SINCE 1947

Date	Total Number of Districts	Reduction During the Year	Total Reduction Since 1947
July 1, 1947	7,606		
July 1, 1948	6,518	88	88
July 1, 1949	7,479	39	127
July 1, 1950	6,757	722	849
July 1, 1951	6,479	278	1,127
July 1, 1952	6,018	461	1,588
July 1, 1953	5,298	720	2,308
July 1, 1954	4,722	576	2,884
July 1, 1956	3,634	627	3,972
July 1, 1957	3,298	336	4,308
July 1, 1958	3,084	214	4,522
July 1, 1959	2,814	270	4,792
July 1, 1960	2,579	235	5,027

See chart on page 28.

TABLE IV

COUNTIES WITH 25 DISTRICTS OR LESS
July 1, 1960

County	Number of Districts	County	Number of Districts
Aitkin	18	Lincoln	10
Anoka	6	Lyon	18
Becker	23	McLeod	11
Beltrami	18	Mahnomen	6
Big Stone	20	Martin	13
Carlton	12	Mower	17
Carver	22	Murray	19
Cass	13	Nicollet	22
Chisago	8	Nobles	19
Clay	10	Norman	9
Clearwater	21	Pennington	19
Cook	1	Pipestone	8
Cottonwood	7	Ramsey	5
Crow Wing	24	Red Lake	16
Dodge	7	Renville	13
Faribault	10	Rock	21
Freeborn	7	Roseau	14
Goodhue	14	St. Louis	24
Grant	11	Scott	22
Hubbard	15	Sherburne	11
Isanti	21	Sibley	6
Itasca	4	Traverse	6
Kanabec	23	Waseca	7
Kittson	7	Washington	5
Koochiching	3	Watsonwan	14
Lake	1	Yellow Medicine	25
Lake of Woods	7		

Number of counties - 53
Gain of Nine counties since July 1, 1958
Number of Districts - 693
Percent of the total - 26.8

60.9% of the counties are in this group
Square Miles 52,336 - or 65.4% of the total land area of the State
Average size of district in these counties - 75.5 square miles
New counties added to the group - Becker, Carver, Crow Wing, Isanti, McLeod, Martin, Nobles, Scott, and Yellow Medicine.

TABLE V

PERCENT OF DECREASE IN NUMBER OF SCHOOL DISTRICTS
BY COUNTIES
July 1, 1947 to July 1, 1960

County	Percentage Decrease	County	Percentage Decrease
Freeborn	94.5%	Red Lake	69.8
Sibley	92.3	Redwood	69.6
Washington	92.3	Beltrami	69.5
Dodge	91.5	Isanti	69.1
Faribault	91.5	Rock	69.1
Waseca	91.5	Scott	67.2
Norman	91.3	Big Stone	66.6
Goodhue	91.0	Carver	66.6
Cottonwood	90.8	State of Minnesota	66.1
Clay	90.2	Pine	64.8
Renville	90.1	Carlton	64.7
Traverse	90.0	Dakota	64.7
Kittson	89.7	Nicollet	64.5
Anoka	89.5	Le Sueur	64.2
Pipestone	88.9	Clearwater	62.5
Martin	88.2	Wabasha	62.5
Lincoln	86.8	Houston	60.6
McLeod	86.7	Kanabec	59.6
Cook	85.7	Stevens	58.8
Mower	85.2	Olmsted	57.6
Grant	84.5	Hennepin	56.6
Chisago	83.7	Morrison	55.4
Ramsey	83.3	Wadena	53.3
Murray	83.2	Kandiyohi	53.2
Becker	82.7	Wilkin	52.5
Nobles	82.7	Lac qui Parle	51.0
Aitkin	82.3	Chippewa	50.6
Roseau	82.3	Douglas	47.9
Lyon	81.6	Pope	47.8
Marshall	80.7	Mille Lacs	47.4
Sherburne	78.8	Rice	47.2
Fillmore	77.6	Otter Tail	45.5
Watsonwan	77.4	Cass	43.5
Blue Earth	76.2	Steele	38.4
Polk	75.1	Wright	33.3
Crow Wing	75.0	Winona	26.3
Mahnomen	73.9	Swift	24.7
Hubbard	73.2	Todd	23.1
Yellow Medicine	72.8	Meeker	22.8
Pennington	72.0	Benton	21.9
Jackson	71.1	Brown	19.5
		Stearns	19.4

Itasca, Koochiching, Lake, Lake of Woods, St. Louis, made substantial reductions in the number of school districts prior to July 1, 1947 and are not included in the above list of counties.

Forty-nine counties have experienced a decrease in the number of school districts in excess of 66.1% since 1947.

Thirty-three counties are below the state average in the reduction of school districts. See Chart IV on page 33.

TABLE VI

COUNTIES WITH 60 OR MORE SCHOOL DISTRICTS

July 1, 1960

County	Number of School Districts	County	Number of School Districts
Brown	66	Swift	70
Meeker	71	Todd	110
Morrison	62	Winona	84
Otter Tail	153	Wright	92
Stearns	163		

The above 9 counties have over one-third of the remaining school districts, or 871 school districts. About 10% of the land area of the State lies in these counties. The average size of the school districts in this area is approximately 10 square miles. These counties have decreased the number of school districts by about 30 percent compared with the state average of 66 percent.

LB 2826 .M6 A33 1959/60
Minnesota. State Advisory
Commission on School Reorg.
Report of the State Advisory

LEGISLATIVE REFERENCE LIBRARY
645 State Office Building
Saint Paul, Minnesota 55155