

AN INVESTIGATION OF THE MAJOR PROBLEMS
INVOLVED IN THE CONSOLIDATION OF
SIX ELEMENTARY SCHOOL DISTRICTS
INTO A SINGLE ATTENDANCE
AND ADMINISTRATIVE UNIT

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INTRODUCTION

By 1951 the small, un-incorporated town of Stanley, Kansas, located about fifteen miles south of Kansas City in a general farming area, became aware that deterioration of the school houses then in use and gradual increases in its school population and that of small neighboring schools made the expansion of existing school plants an acute problem.

In this area many farmers had large dairy herds that supplied the milk for the vast population of Kansas City. The people of this community were either farmers or workers in the various industries of Northeast Johnson and Wyandotte Counties of Kansas and Jackson County of Missouri. During the school year and from one year to another, more than a normal amount of moving of families took place.

This community had six elementary school districts within a radius of three or four miles of Stanley. These schools were: Woodland School District No. 50, Pleasant Valley School District No. 60, Tomahawk School District No. 53, Blue Valley School District No. 94, Burr Ridge School District No. 56, and Stanley School District No. 72. After much discussion and planning by school-minded persons throughout the area, it was decided to bring before the voters in each of these districts a proposition to consolidate and form one elementary school district.

After the petition was presented in each school district, an election was held in July, 1951, and the patrons of the six elementary school districts voted to become a part of Common School District No. 109.

When the six school districts consolidated, it was quite evident that a new school plant was necessary. The board of education, composed of three members, presented an architect's plan and a proposition to the voters of the district to erect a new school building on a plot to be purchased from Stanley Rural High School and located approximately two hundred yards northwest of the high school building. On November 3, 1951, this proposition failed to carry by two votes.

Since the board of education was under the impression that the reason for the failure to carry the election was the site on which the school plant was to be built, another site was selected at the north edge of Stanley. A second proposition, which was presented to the voters for their approval early in 1952, failed to carry by seven votes.

Two defeats failed to stop the efforts of the civic-minded board of education. They appointed a group of eighteen citizens residing in the school district to work with them as an advisory committee. Recognizing the fact that the high school needed a new gymnasium was the inspiration which

finally secured the support of enough voters to win the third election. The new plans for a building site included a passageway joining the high and elementary buildings, a cafeteria, and a large gymnasium to be financed and used jointly by Common School District 109 and Stanley Rural High School. On October 4, 1952, the patrons voted to build a \$300,000 modern elementary school and gymnasium.

For three years District No. 109 operated as a consolidated school with classes being held in each of the six school buildings in the district. With the exception of the Stanley School which had two teachers, one teaching grades one through four and the other acting as principal and teaching grades five through eight, each school had one teacher responsible for the learning in all eight grades.

In September, 1954, Consolidated School District No. 109 completed a new building and all pupils were transported to the same school. In this new building were eight classrooms and eight classroom teachers, with one teacher for each grade and no teacher having more than twenty-five students.

In this thesis it is the intention of the writer to justify the consolidating of the six elementary school districts and the building of a new school plant. Various points of interest such as transportation, finance, housing, food service, health service, curricular improvement, general

CHAPTER I

FINANCE, TRANSPORTATION AND HOUSING

I. FINANCE

In checking the cost of operation of School District No. 109, the expenses were found to be considerably higher during the first two years of operation in the new school plant. The added expense could be attributed to several factors: More teachers were added to the faculty so that no teacher would have more than one grade, degree teachers or those working toward a degree were hired, and many supplies such as new audio-visual equipment, pianos, globes, maps, and athletic equipment were purchased during the first year of operation. These factors and many others increased the cost of operation during the first two years in the new building.

As a matter of comparison, the cost of operation for the school year 1952-1953 was \$19,503.52 and for the school year 1953-1954 was \$21,501.86. These expenses were for the first two years covered by this report prior to moving to the new school plant. The cost of operation for the next two years was as follows: School year 1954-1955, \$43,088.80; School year 1955-1956, \$48,045.09.

In the 1954-1955 and 1955-1956 school years an increase in cost of operation was evident in teachers' salaries, instructional supplies, janitors' salaries and supplies, light, power and fuel, pupil transportation, and social security. Table I gives the total cost of operation and an itemized list of expenditures for the years 1952-1956.

Why was there such an increase in cost of operation for each of the sections of the budget mentioned in the above paragraph? Teachers' salaries were increased because more teachers were hired and salaries were raised. Instructional supplies cost more during this two-year period because teachers were now teaching only one grade, had more time for individual work, and were able to use progressive methods of teaching. The latest teaching aids were made available to teachers. Janitors' salaries and supplies involved increased expenditures. One full-time custodian and a part-time janitor were hired to maintain the new building. Previously the teachers did the janitor work with the help of the children. Lights, power, and fuel cost considerably more. Parents living farther than two and one-half miles from school the first two years were paid to transport their children to school. Since very few people lived beyond that distance, very little was paid out for pupil transportation. Under the plan used for the past two years, any student living

TABLE I

COST OF OPERATION 1952-1956
CONSOLIDATED DISTRICT NO. 109
STANLEY, KANSAS

Year	Total Expenditures	General Control	Teacher Salaries	Instructional Supplies	Lights, power Fuel and Water	Fixed Charges
1952-53	\$ 19,503.52	\$ 150.58	\$ 12,660.18	\$ 233.05	\$ 133.42	\$ 250.88
1953-54	21,501.86	177.70	14,963.50	700.68	964.22	1,113.54
1954-55	43,088.80	1,143.44	25,134.90	1,839.68	2,253.32	1,447.14
1955-56	46,045.09	1,234.33	27,655.41	829.41	2,568.82	1,234.83
Auxiliary Agencies	Pupil Transportation	Maintenance of Building and Ground	Capital Outlay	Social Security	Janitor Salary and Supplies	
\$ 39.20	\$ 388.65	\$ 299.96	\$ 5,016.56	\$ None	\$ 333.04	
316.73	332.50	2,172.40	369.61	None	390.98	
347.54	4,416.25	1,034.66	2,452.93	None	3,016.94	
1,150.59	5,803.90	1,149.46	1,241.19	1,621.83	3,555.32	

farther than one-half mile from Stanley has been transported at district expense. The school does not own school buses but has a contract with Crooks Bus Service, Stilwell, Kansas, to furnish transportation at a set rate per mile which may vary from year to year. Social security was not available to teachers the first two years. Since it has become available, the district must pay the same per cent as the teacher into the State Contribution Fund. All of this plus the fact that the cost of merchandise used has advanced in price is evidence as to why the budget was increased after operation began in the new school plant.

II. TRANSPORTATION

In the two years prior to the completion of the new school building at Stanley, Consolidated District No. 109 students had no means of public transportation furnished them. Students either walked to school or their parents drove them to and from school. Buses operated throughout the district for the purpose of transporting high school students. In some instances grade students were allowed to ride to and from school, providing they lived on the route and the driver didn't have to leave his regular route to deliver them.

During the first two years of operation, transportation of students was very unsatisfactory. Students were walking

as far as two miles to school. Since that time a fleet of buses, owned by the Crooks Bus Service, Stilwell, Kansas, has been under contract to transport both grade and high school students. Pupils catch the bus at the nearest point on a public highway. In bad weather, buses travel only on all-weather roads. In the schools' agreement with Mr. Crooks the total number of miles traveled by the school buses during the month is divided equally between the grade and high schools. Each school pays its quota. Rates are ordinarily from twenty-five to thirty cents per mile.

III. HOUSING

In 1954 when the new building was occupied for the first time, the old buildings were emptied of their contents, and their condition became apparent even to the casual observer. Termites had done considerable damage and many of the floor joists and sills showed evidence of dry rot. Even the siding was missing in many instances. The windows were long and narrow, the buildings were inadequately lighted, and sooty walls and gray grime testified that heating arrangements were far from modern. Some of the buildings were fairly well-kept but were in need of repair. All of them showed the advisability of constructing a new school plant that would include many facilities which were missing, such as a

gymnasium-auditorium, cafeteria, health room, central library, indoor plumbing, showers, drinking fountains, etc. The old buildings were constructed of wood and constituted a fire hazard. The board of education wisely decided to sell at public auction the existing buildings and such items of equipment that could not be used in the new building. Action was taken at the annual meeting which gave permission to dispose of the various properties and any district-owned grounds of the six former schools.

Stanley Consolidated School District No. 109 was the name chosen by the school patrons for their district shortly after school opened for the first time in the beautiful new plant adjacent to and joined by a hallway with a ramp to the brick building occupied by Stanley Rural High School.

With its face toward United States Highway No. 69 and the remainder of the six-acre plot to the north and west to provide a spacious play area, the red brick building, the latest in architectural design, attracted the attention of patrons and passersby alike.

The first and second grade rooms with their inlaid circles on tiled floors, small size cupboards complete with wash basins and fountains, clothes racks and attached hangers, green chalkboards, bulletin boards, pint-sized individual desks and chairs, game and book shelves are enough to delight

the eye of any reluctant learner. These rooms, each with one huge wall of glass equipped with lined draw draperies, face the front of the building and the highway. The first and second grades share adjacent restrooms equipped with tiny lavatories and water closets.

The third grade room, which faces the south, has been equipped with venetian blinds to allow the teacher to adjust the natural light in the classroom. The remaining classrooms have draw draperies over their glass walls which bring in the good north light prized by artists. On snowy days these drapes prevent the reflection of too much light into the students' eyes. Plastic domes built into the ceilings of classrooms and hallways add to the available natural light. Indirect electric lighting furnishes additional light when it is needed.

Furnishings and fixtures in grades three to eight include new furniture for students and teachers, book shelves under the window areas, green chalk boards, bulletin boards, closed cupboards for equipment and supplies, clothes racks with attached hangers, new globes, unabridged dictionaries, encyclopedias, etc. Teachers share the three film strip projectors and a 16 m.m. moving picture projector. The 16 m.m. films are rented from film libraries, and the school has its own filmstrip library which is supplemented by rental. Ping

pong tables which double as work tables were installed in grades six to eight by the Parent-Teacher Association. The other rooms have reading tables. The new furnishings and fixtures are superior to most of those found in the old buildings.

Washroom facilities or equipment to serve were located in one and two-room schools of today are usually not adequate to provide a good lunch for the students. Such was the case in each of the six elementary schools covered by this report. No lunches had been served prior to consolidation in 1952.

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CHAPTER II

FOOD SERVICE - HEALTH SERVICE

I. FOOD SERVICE

Lunchroom facilities or equipment to serve warm lunches in one and two-room schools of today are usually not adequate to provide a good lunch for the students. Such was the circumstance in each of the six elementary schools covered by this report. No lunches had been served prior to consolidation in 1952.

During the 1952-1953 school year Parent-Teacher Association groups served lunches in each of the schools. Each child furnished his own dishes. No government commodities were received, and all meals were cooked on an electric plate. Soups, baked potatoes, and sandwiches were served by the mothers.

The first government commodities were issued to the six schools in the fall of 1953. Peaches, cheese, honey, butter, and potatoes were delivered to the schools that year. The potatoes were wrapped in aluminum foil and were baked on the top of the coal stoves. The menus again included soups, sandwiches, baked potatoes, etc., but a little more variety was possible. Mothers and the Parent-Teacher Association helped prepare and serve the lunches.

What a contrast the new cafeteria offered! Huge stoves with four spacious ovens, counter and storage space for the heavy aluminum cooking utensils, large double sinks complete with potato peeler, electric dishwasher, a counter for receiving soiled dishes, and a giant refrigerator and upright freezer were installed in the kitchen. A serving counter containing warming ovens to keep food hot until it could be served, and another built-in sink, and storage shelves for dishes were conveniences the two cooks appreciated. Teachers enjoy the forty cup electric coffeemaker. Another deep freezer, a meat slicer, and an electric in-sinkerator garbage disposal unit have been added to the equipment which was installed when the building was first built.

The lunchroom furniture consists of ten folding tables and benches. The tables have formica tops which are easy to clean, and the benches have masonite tops. An electric milk cooler completes the room's furnishings.

The two cooks, who were hired in 1954 and who had little previous experience in cafeteria management, took advantage of the state department's cooking schools, recipes, and bulletins. Using their native ability, practical experience in cookery, ingenuity, and unbounded energy, they gave the students excellent, well-balanced, attractive meals served in durable, divided plastic plates.

From the small start in 1952 the lunch program increased until in 1955-1956 approximately 28,000 meals were served to the 160 grade students, ninety high school students, and the two faculties.

In addition to the regular lunches many beautiful banquets have been served to students, their parents, and friends. Annual banquets include a high school athletic banquet, junior-senior banquet, grade school banquet for athletes and their parents, and Lion's Club banquet.

Many children who come to school having had little or no breakfast have been benefited by the milk program which allows them to buy two half-pints of milk for a nickel. This milk is available before school in the mornings and during the lunch period. The actual benefits of a good school lunch program are already apparent in the physical well-being of the youngsters served, and it would be difficult to overestimate the long-range values of such a program.

II. HEALTH

Health service in the one and two-room schools was very limited. The county school nurse was overworked, and her visits were usually limited to an annual trip to distribute health records. Children were taken to the County Health Department in Olathe for the various shots for tetanus,

whooping cough, and diphtheria. Health records kept by the teachers were adequate or inadequate depending upon the cooperation received from parents and the initiative of the individual teacher. Students were weighed and measured annually, but little use was made of these facts after their recording on the permanent forms.

Usually a first-aid kit was kept in the teacher's desk, and she used it in case of minor accidents. When a child was seriously injured, an older child was sent to secure adult assistance to get the child to a doctor or hospital since the teacher could not leave the other children without supervision.

When the water supply was secured from wells and cisterns and served from buckets or stone jar drinking fountains, little thought was given to its purity. Wash basins were hard to keep sanitary, and little hands were often grimy with no running water to rinse away the soil.

Unless one is familiar with outdoor toilet facilities, it is difficult to explain the filth, odor, and other objectionable features of those crudely constructed frame buildings which were cleaned out or moved only when absolute necessity demanded it. Flies swarmed from those places, and it was difficult to keep the flies out of the school buildings. Each of the elementary schools mentioned in this report was equipped with the type of facilities mentioned above.

In the new building separate rest-rooms are provided for both boys and girls in grades one and two, grades three through eight share large rest-rooms, shower rooms for boy and girl athletes include water closets, and off the kitchen hallway a small rest-room is shared by the cooks and their helpers. Each of these rooms has covered waste containers, wash basins, soap, and toilet paper and towel dispensers.

These rooms are cleaned and mopped daily. Dispensers are refilled as needed, wash basins are cleaned, and chemicals are used to keep the stools sanitary. Since Stanley had no sewer system, a large septic tank system was constructed to the southwest of the building and away from the playground area. Clean, sanitary toilet facilities fulfilled one of the goals of those who fought so hard for the new building.

Adjoining the principal's office was the location chosen for the health room. It contains a long cabinet composed of drawer and shelf space for supplies. The top of the cabinet has a sink and counter. Furniture for the room includes a plastic-covered couch, two plastic and aluminum chairs and a small formica-topped table. This health room has been in constant use during the past two years.

Supplies for the health room are replenished annually; however, some additional items must be purchased occasionally as the need arises. In cases of serious injury the child's

parent is notified and the principal drives the child to his own doctor if possible. Records are kept of the parent's preference as to doctors, and the child is taken to his family doctor if the parent cannot be contacted. The boys and girls are urged to enrol in a school accident insurance program which is approved by the school principal.

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CHAPTER III

CURRICULAR IMPROVEMENT - GENERAL ADMINISTRATIVE PROBLEMS

PUBLIC RELATIONS

I. CURRICULAR IMPROVEMENT

According to tradition curriculum was conceived of as a collection of courses of study in different subjects. Anything other than those were considered either "extracurricular" or "noncurricular." The broader concept of curriculum as it is used in the new school includes all the experiences each child has while under the direct influence of the school.¹ While it is difficult to say with complete accuracy that the course of study definition was always used in the one and two-room school, it is a well-known fact that in most of the schools included in this report textbooks were followed religiously. Whether or not state courses of study were used depended upon the individual teacher. Since textbooks were purchased by the parents, conscientious teachers felt that texts must be used and as nearly as possible be completed. Older children often helped the younger children with their

¹Willard S. Elsbree and Harold J. McNally, Elementary School Administration and Supervision, New York: American Book Company, 1951, p. 54.

assignments when the teacher was occupied elsewhere. The one-room school was an ideal place to use broad outlines of work geared to the age and ability of each child; however, teachers had little training in modern educational methods and often tried to divide the school day into small parcels of time for each grade and subject.

In listing the weaknesses of the one and two-room school, the four teachers from Stanley who had taught in them and also in the new graded school agreed that inadequate library facilities, fewer audio-visual aids, less time for planning and for individual help, more textbooks to be read and studied by the teacher, less opportunity to work in co-operative activities with others of the student's own age and grade should be included. Among the strong points of the smaller schools the teachers felt students had more opportunity to share in a closely knit group resembling a family situation. Older children learned consideration for younger children and adults to a greater degree than when they are isolated in their own age group.

Parent-teacher relations were either better in the smaller school or were much worse depending upon the individual teacher. There was a closer relationship between parents and teachers because the school was closer to the home and was nearly always the social center of the community.

Among the changes in curriculum were additions such as organized gymnasium and music classes, added emphasis on arts and crafts, improvements in presenting various phases of the curriculum, training in social skills, remedial work in basic subjects, and an enriched program for students who needed it.

No definite physical education plan was used in the one or two-room school. This phase of the curriculum was limited to playground activities on varying levels. Relay games, folk or square dancing, and an occasional baseball or basketball game for which the practicing was done after school at Stanley were the usual games played. Sometimes these were organized by the teacher, but more often students decided what they wanted to play and made up their rules as the game progressed. In some instances good leadership qualities were developed in those students who took the initiative, but more often aggressive students would rule the others. When the teacher was conscientious about grounds duty, the free periods were well-supervised. Occasionally a teacher would sit at her desk and work while the children engaged in unsupervised play.

With a trained instructor the athletic program has been much improved. Volleyball, basketball, softball, marching tactics, tumbling, calisthenics, folk and square dancing, track events, and other games have been used to develop

gracefulness and bodily strength. Grades six to eight have gymnasium class every day for thirty minutes with the boys and girls in separate classes. When the play period is ended, the students are encouraged to take showers. All students have at least one period per week in the gymnasium. facilities and sports equipment have been improved greatly. There is no comparison between the well-supervised program in the new school and the haphazard arrangements of the one and two-room school.

The musical program of the smaller schools consisted mainly of group singing, preparing numbers for school events, and music appreciation by means of records. A few students were permitted to participate in high school band. Since the new building has been in use, a full music program, including rhythm band, note reading, harmony, creative activities for all, and instrumentation for those who desire it, has been planned. New pianos, phonograph, radio, and a record collection have added much to the musical enjoyment of the students.

Another phase of the curriculum which has received more emphasis in most of the grades is the arts and crafts field. Teachers have taken courses, searched for new projects in magazines, haunted gift and crafts shops, and shared ideas with other teachers in order to enrich the program for all students. Many excellent window and bulletin board displays

have been planned and executed by the children under the guidance of the teachers. Handicraft gifts have been sent to the parents at Christmas and for Mother's Day. Projects have been completed for the American Junior Red Cross to be used on special days at county hospitals. Art exhibits are used for open house, in conjunction with units of work, and at special seasonal events as well as to make the rooms attractive every day.

Teachers in the system feel that the sharing of ideas and methods of teaching, better library facilities, more audio-visual aids, and professional meetings have resulted in many improvements in the presentation of various phases of the curriculum. Each teacher has more time to stress arithmetic fundamentals, reading, dramatics, oral English, spelling and writing skills.

One part of the curriculum which needs more attention in the new system is training in social skills. Respect for public property, proper hall behavior, consideration for the rights of others, respect for adults, good manners in classroom and cafeteria are goals which have not been reached to the complete satisfaction of the faculty. There has been some question as to whether social behavior was better in the smaller schools.

A severe problem which had to be faced by the teachers in the new school was that of remedial work for educable children. A very wide ability span was evident in every room. According to reading tests given, students ranged from non-readers to those with outstanding ability to gain knowledge from the printed page. Many children were poor spellers. Some upper grade students had never mastered the addition, subtraction, and multiplication facts. Many students could not express themselves well in oral or written work. This remedial problem was attacked with vigor by the entire faculty. Through the use of the professional library, college courses, and remedial materials purchased for the library much progress has been made in giving educable students a good elementary background.

The teachers who taught in the one or two-room school and also in the new graded school all felt there was no doubt that the new system provided better for the total growth of each individual. They agreed that being "cock of the walk" in their own school without being compared to or in competition with other teachers was pleasant. Ingenuity, resourcefulness, and ability to cope with emergencies was developed; however, the privilege of unloading difficult decisions on the principal's shoulders was an unqualified relief. Sharing of ideas, more reference material, a better selection of

books and magazines, more art materials, and longer periods with the one grade which the teacher chooses were factors which the teachers enjoyed in the graded school. Weaknesses to be ferreted out were the competitive practices among teachers with each trying to "outshine" the rest, securing pupil co-operation in maintaining orderly conduct in halls and rest-rooms, and planning together for continuity in the growth of each child from year to year.

From the standpoint of the total growth of each individual child, which is the ultimate goal of all good educational systems, there is no doubt that the faculty and community agree that the new school is far superior to the one and two-room school of the Stanley community.

II. GENERAL ADMINISTRATIVE PROBLEMS

The problems of administering a consolidated grade school whose building joins a rural high school and whose territory almost duplicates that of the high school might be grouped under the following main headings: Faculty co-operation, sharing of equipment, custodial services, repair and upkeep of building, lunchroom management, school records, and high school and grade school relationships. The writer will attempt to compare these problems with those encountered in administering six separate schools in a consolidated district.

All six schools operated independently until September of 1953 even though they were consolidated into one district in July, 1951. From September, 1953, until September, 1954, the teaching principal was required to teach grades five through eight in the town of Stanley and do the administrative work for all six schools. Adding to the problems of general administration was the fact that the other five teachers were accustomed to dealing directly with their own school boards and making their own decisions as to school policy. When four of the teachers were retained to teach in the new building, this problem was somewhat lessened because of the new teaching situation and a new principal. Faculty co-operation in the new building has been no problem. Small difficulties have been resolved in the monthly faculty meeting, and no more than a normal amount of friction has existed.

Except for picture collections, flannel boards, and gelatin duplicators little audio-visual equipment existed in the one and two-room schools. Several of the small schools contracted for films to be shown weekly. There was no opportunity for the teacher to preview films, and the program served for entertainment more than for educational purposes. In the fall of 1953 the principal recommended the purchase of a spirit duplicator, two 300-Watt film strip projectors, two hanging screens, a number of film strips, and a typewriter.

These were shared by the six schools, but since they were kept in the central school at Stanley and the other schools had to come there to borrow the equipment, its use was limited. Often the extra trouble of scheduling ahead, securing and returning equipment which many of the teachers were not trained to use, and conflicts with the other five teachers' plans kept the equipment from being fully utilized. The Stanley School certainly had the advantage over the other five. Since the principal had a full teaching load in addition to his other duties, it was difficult for him to see that each school received its fair share of the use of the new equipment.

School records show that the only custodial services paid for by the board of education prior to September, 1954, were mowing of school yards and an annual cleaning of buildings before schools convened in September each year. Teachers were held responsible for cleaning the buildings each day. Students helped their teachers with the chores of carrying water and coal, building fires, sweeping floors, and cleaning blackboards and erasers.

When the new building was occupied, a custodian was hired to keep all the building with the exception of the front entrance, the hall joining the high school, and the gymnasium which were the responsibility of the high school.

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custodian. Soon it became evident that one man could not keep the building clean, and a part-time janitor was hired to sweep the eight classrooms daily. The new man also waxed and polished the floors of the classrooms when it became necessary.

The chief administrative problem involved in custodial service included finding experienced personnel who would work for the wages being offered and who would co-operate with the high school custodian in keeping the building clean, keeping equipment in good running condition, and maintaining a cordial relationship with the school faculties and children. The usual trend was that each new custodian was without previous experience and had to be trained for the duties he was assuming.

Since the new building had expensive electrically controlled heating equipment, water system, etc., the custodian found that some knowledge of electrical apparatus and its repair was essential. The building's heating system had not been properly balanced. As a result some rooms were too hot, while others were much too cool for comfort. Four rooms had been placed on the same thermostat with the result that none of the rooms were comfortable. For some reason cold and hot water lines were laid too close to the heat ducts so that the cold water line was always warm by the time the water reached the drinking fountains. Because the custodian had little experience in dealing with such problems, a plumbing

and heating technician had to be consulted frequently during the first two years of operation in the new building.

The value of a good custodian who is well-trained, neat in his habits, trustworthy, close-mouthed, kind but firm in his dealings with children, and diplomatic in his contact with the faculty cannot be overestimated. One of the chief problems of the administrator was to find such good custodial personnel.

In the one and two-room schools upkeep on buildings, furnishings, and grounds amounted to only \$570.02 in the two year period covered by this report. Floors were scrubbed and oiled annually, minor repairs were made as occasion demanded wells and cisterns were cleaned, and grounds were mowed prior to the opening of school. This work was done by local men hired by the board of education for each specific job.

From 1953 until 1956 \$3,894.33 was spent on fencing, landscaping, preparing the new school grounds for use, and repair and upkeep of the new building. Of that amount \$1,992.03 was spent on repair and upkeep of the new building during 1954 to 1956.

Plastic domes which were installed in hallways and classrooms to provide increased amounts of natural lighting presented two specific problems. The type of installation caused the roof to leak around the domes so that ceilings and

floors became stained when rains fell, and the reflection of light from the domes caused a bad glare on desks and chalkboards. Too much light in classrooms was the unusual situation which developed. Part of the problem of too much glare in classrooms was solved by the installation of draw draperies over the plate glass windows. The hallway domes help keep down the cost of artificial lighting during the winter, but the classroom domes did not prove to be successful because of the glare. The problem of painting the domes has not been satisfactorily resolved, and their removal would involve too much expense.

Floors of the classrooms and halls are covered with plastic tile. These must be kept scrubbed, waxed, and polished. Twice each year the floors are thoroughly scrubbed to remove dirt and old wax, new wax is applied, and floors are polished. Equipment purchased for this purpose includes a sixteen-inch polishing and scrubbing machine, a large vacuum cleaner, mops, pails, and other small equipment.

Only minor repairs on the building have been necessary during the two years of operation in it. Most of the repair was due to vandalism at sports events.

Repair and upkeep of one large building has far exceeded the expenditures on the six small buildings. Since this is a modern school and is kept in good condition, the

upkeep has been higher than that on older buildings which the board of education knew were shortly to be replaced. Many major repairs which were needed on the older buildings were not made for that reason.

Lunchroom management in the rural consolidated schools of the district presented no great problem since the individual teachers and parents assumed all responsibility for serving meals in the one and two-room schools. The principal's only problems were to secure and deliver the few government commodities which the schools could use at that time and to make reports to the state department on lunches served and commodities used.

The problems of lunchroom management in the new building were simplified from the beginning when two excellent cooks were hired. Even though lacking in experience, they were cooperative, imaginative, and adept at meal planning and serving. The head cook had experience in managing a grocery store which aided her in buying for the lunchroom. From the beginning the lunchroom has paid its own way; however, the board of education spent \$650 on groceries and supplies for the first month's operation. The principal has been responsible for receiving and delivering government commodities, encouraging their use in menus, and providing extra cold storage space when deep freezers at the school were full. He also enrolled

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the school in the state milk program which made available at school milk for all children who desired it.

The Lunch money collection has been a problem since it is difficult to distinguish between those who will not and those who cannot pay their bills. No child is refused a meal in the lunchroom because of inability to pay for it. Keeping the lunchroom on a sound financial basis is the chief worry of the administrator.

Connected with any lunchroom program which receives financial aid and commodities from government sources, there is the necessity for a certain amount of record keeping and systematic reporting. Monthly reports are compiled from lunchroom records and sent to the State Department of Education. The cafeteria is inspected regularly by the County Health Department and state lunchroom officials. Annual reports of commodities used, money and assistance received, cash balances, and commodities on hand are sent to the proper officials. Since the principal has no secretary, he must take the inventories, keep the records, and do the reporting himself. The grade school principal is in complete charge of lunchroom management even though the high school students are also served in the cafeteria.

Serving of the meals requires detailed planning and co-operation between grade and high school principals. At t

beginning of each year a lunchroom time schedule must be adopted, provisions should be made in advance for any changes in the routine of serving, and special events which add to or subtract from the number served must be scheduled so that buying, cooking, and serving of meals can proceed in an orderly fashion.

Since the cafeteria facilities are also used for special events such as ball games, banquets, meetings, etc., these must be scheduled with the co-operation of the principal in charge in order to avoid conflicts.

Nearly one-third of the time of the grade school principal is consumed in resolving the problems relating to school lunchroom management. The value of a well-balanced meal for children at the lunch period easily justifies the time and money spent on a school lunch program.

A major difficulty faced by both grade and high school principals was the need to promote understanding, build good will, and acquaint the two faculties with mutual problems. Joint faculty meetings with comments by both principals and introductions of new faculty members were held in the early fall. A Christmas breakfast was served in the cafeteria to members of both faculties. Teachers and principals all felt a need to establish friendly relations between the schools.

The principals met with both boards to discuss scheduling of the gymnasium, rules for its use, and the sharing of cafeteria facilities. Since the high school coach also served the grade school in that capacity during the first year of occupation of the new gymnasium, few difficulties in scheduling were evident.

The coach discovered that the entire sports program was too strenuous, and he suggested that the grade school hire its own coach. With two coaches and two separate athletic programs to be scheduled more difficulties arose. Because the gymnasium was also a combination auditorium, other events had to be practiced and staged there. This added to the conflicts between the schools. The majority of the differences between the two schools has been a result of conflicts in scheduling the use of the gymnasium.

It is the opinion of the writer that it is inadvisable for two separate schools to build a gymnasium-auditorium which the two schools must share. High School athletic, music, and dramatic activities require more than their fair share of the time and leave only the less desirable hours of the school day for the grade school activity program, even though in this instance the grade school serves nearly twice as many students.

If the schools were consolidated, fewer conflicts would arise, but the possibility exists that again the grade school program would suffer because of the pressure on the high school coach to produce winning athletic teams. In the final analysis the extent of such difficulties depends upon the quality of leadership exhibited by principals and coaches. Another administrative problem to be faced by the principal of the six small schools or by the principal of the graded school was the matter of school records. Under the former set-up in the 1952-1953 school year each teacher kept all the records of her school, and these records were then sent to the county superintendent or were checked by her. When a principal was designated in 1953-1954, he took over the responsibility of checking and storing all permanent records. He then made six week's and annual reports to the county superintendent. Permanent folders were made for each student which included a health, scholastic, testing, school attendance, and personality adjustment record. Standard intelligence, achievement, and spelling tests were given and recorded on the permanent folder. Copies of these permanent records were made to be sent to another grade or school if the pupil were transferred. All available permanent records of the six schools were brought to the new building in the fall of 1954. These were

stored in the principal's office, and those of students enrolling in the new school were made available to their teachers. Many of these reports were incomplete or needed to be checked for accuracy. They were brought up-to-date by the teachers who needed to use them. Health records had not been carefully kept in many instances and personal data was missing when some parents had refused to co-operate with the teachers in filling out the forms. Enrollment cards gave some of the information, but much remained to be checked by the principal when he had need of information which was supposed to be on the permanent folder. Accurate permanent records were very helpful to school personnel and the board of education. Often in the hustle and bustle of daily routine teachers were not as careful as they should have been in record keeping. This presented a problem to the administrator who was held responsible for the accuracy of the reports.

In addition to the permanent records kept at the school, each child was given a report card at six-week intervals. These cards were furnished by the county superintendent. They had space for a letter grade of A, B, C, D, or F. Some teachers used an S or U in the first and second grade or for special subjects such as music, art, and conduct. During the four year period of this report the problem remained the same. How could a teacher give the parent a satisfactory

progress report when limited to such a report card? In both the one and two-room and graded situations these meager reports were supplemented with parent-teacher conferences, notes included in the report card, and parental school visits. Still the need was felt for a better reporting device.

In 1954 the principal learned that the consolidated district was eligible for federal aid funds which were made available to those districts who had in average daily attendance ten students whose parents or guardians were federally employed. This involved detailed reports on those students and their parents' employment records. Since the school needed the money, the principal compiled the reports, and the district qualified for and received federal assistance of approximately one thousand dollars per year.

Administration of six separate schools in a consolidated district was made difficult because of the extra distance to be travelled between schools and to faculty meetings. Faculty relationships suffered because the teachers did not become as well acquainted with each other, could not talk over mutual problems as easily, and often felt that others might be getting more than their fair share of the use of equipment. The teaching principal was severely handicapped because of lack of time to attend to his duties. Since the new building was under construction at the time, many conferences were

held with the school board, architect, and contractors. Often the group had differences to iron out which added to the mental and emotional stress placed upon the principal who did not return for the 1954-1955 school year.

After school opened in the new building, it soon became evident that a teaching principal could never hope to cope adequately with the administration of the cafeteria, keep the school operating smoothly, do the necessary school reports, and supervise the teaching by a faculty one-half of whom were accustomed to teaching in one or two-room schools.

Added to those important administrative difficulties were the 176 students who had to adjust to a larger school situation. The added competition proved a stimulus to some and caused in others emotional upheavals. Coming from smaller schools where a few students made no great amount of noise even when discipline was lax, most students failed to realize that increasing numbers would multiply noise. The discipline necessary to keep the halls and rest-rooms orderly was hard to attain.

After several weeks the ninth teacher was added to the faculty, so that the principal might be released to execute his principal's duties more efficiently. This resulted in a more relaxed atmosphere. Teachers and students with problems found the principal available for counseling without his

having to sacrifice the time of the eighth grade class for it. The school continued to operate more smoothly with a non-teaching principal.

III. PUBLIC RELATIONS

When a teacher was hired in a one or two-room school, she was her own public relations agent among the members of the board and the whole community. Experienced teachers and those who were extroverts enjoyed direct contact with the school board and parents, while those teachers of a more retiring nature often failed to finish out the school year. Teacher tenure was extremely short in some of the schools. Substitute teachers had to be hired to complete the term. One school had three teachers in one nine month's period. Various other factors also contributed to the changes in faculty, among which were low wages, inability to qualify for a certificate, no sick leave, discipline problems, movement of those whose husbands were in service, and proximity to Northeast Johnson County where salaries were much higher. Many teachers were hired who had little college training and who were ill-equipped to cope with the problems of managing to teach all eight grades to the satisfaction of the adults involved.

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After consolidation of the districts was effected in 1952, a Parent-Teacher Association was organized. This group did not affiliate with the national organization until November, 1953, and served as a community get-together. Fund raising campaigns were successful, and some of the objectives of the Parent-Teacher Association were realized. No study groups were organized at first, and children accompanied their parents to every meeting. Some even came without their parents. As a social group designed to promote good will and co-operation among parents, the organization was a success. In interpreting the aims of the schools to the parents the early Parent-Teacher Association was less successful.

In the fall of 1954 room mothers were appointed for each of the eight rooms by the president of the Parent-Teacher Association. Monthly afternoon meetings of the association's executive officers, room mothers, and committee chairmen were held in the school cafeteria. Speakers from civic groups, county library, and other parent-teacher organizations taught the mothers how to plan better meetings, to outline projects, and to discuss school problems objectively.

Room mothers planned monthly birthday parties with refreshments being served by a committee of mothers. Many mothers came early to visit classes and get acquainted with the teachers and their children's playmates. The various

grades were called upon to present thirty minute programs at monthly meetings of the Parent-Teacher Association. It was felt by teachers and parents alike that birthday parties and programs were overemphasized during the 1954-1955 school year. During the 1955-1956 school year the number of parties was reduced to four and grades one to three, grades four to six, and grades seven and eight presented joint programs. This lightened the program load for teachers, and at the same time gave the adults a chance to plan programs on their level which would better fulfill the actual objectives of the organization.

The high school was invited to combine with the grade school Parent-Teacher Association in the hopes of bettering the relations between the two schools. Naturally with two separate boards and two distinct faculties sharing gymnasium, auditorium, and cafeteria facilities there was some friction between high and grade schools. In 1955-1956 it was rather difficult for the officers to secure co-operation from the high school faculty in the work of the organization since some feeling remained that it was a grade school group. Among the small number of high school parents who attended the meetings, interest was high. Since the monthly meetings were held at night, many fathers came with their families and inter-school relations were improved.

As a public relations agency the Parent-Teacher Association was successful in bringing together a large number of parents, teachers, and children. A visitation period after the meeting as light refreshments were being served encouraged free interchange of ideas as parents and teachers became better acquainted. Fund raising continued to be one of the main objectives, and a public address system for the school auditorium was purchased in the fall of 1955. Leaders of the group attended county and district meetings and were striving to improve the meetings of the local association. There was a feeling within the group, however, that more emphasis should be placed on other objectives. While fund raising and programs are important, they should not overshadow the more important studies of the relationships among children, parents, and their teachers.

School programs prior to 1954 followed the usual pattern of those ordinarily found in one and two-room schools. Recitations, musical numbers, and short plays emphasizing performance by individual children were almost always included. Entire families came and stayed to visit with friends and neighbors after the program.

Among the many special events which were planned from 1954 to 1956 to bring parents into closer contact with their school were: A Mother's Day tea, an art exhibit of children's

work, an open house and program in conjunction with National Education Week, field trips to parent's homes to view conservation practices and dairy barns, a music achievement program, an annual all-school Christmas pageant including all students in grade school and many high school students, and arts and crafts gifts for parents at Christmas and on other special days. When planning for the annual Mother's Day tea, the third grade teacher included on the program an actual reading lesson, exhibits of writing and art work, and a gift of a planter woven by the children for their mothers. The fifth grade teacher's art exhibit was comprised of work done during the school year. Children's committees planned the show, and they took turns explaining the various art projects and serving refreshments to the parents who attended. Many worthwhile field trips have been planned by the other teachers each year. The seventh and eighth grade students visited a museum in nearby Kansas City or Lawrence. Educational tours to Denver and Chicago were made by train by students in grades five through eight. Other groups visited farms, ponds, a radio station, and a horticultural project in Stanley. All students in grade school enjoyed a bus trip to the Shrine Circus. Many of these special events were a novelty to students who were enjoying for the first time a room full of companions of their own age. It was felt that the learnings

from these situations could never be measured adequately but were certainly worth the time and effort expended.

All of the teachers were encouraged to visit the homes of their students, particularly those who presented scholastic or disciplinary problems. Emphasis was placed upon the development of the child physically, mentally, and socially. Parents were invited to school to visit classrooms and for private conferences with teacher and principal. Special reading classes were held for eighth grade students who were virtually non-readers. Many parents seemed to appreciate the increased amount of individual attention each child received in the new school.

Whether in a one-room, two-room or a graded school, the best public relations agents a school can have are happy children who are learning to their utmost capacity and in teachers who are pleasant, well-educated, and mature in their dealings with children and parents. In the opinion of the writer these factors are more likely to be present in the graded school, though they are possible in either situation.

which is highly satisfactory. There are changes which
 if made in other schools would be of great value, such
 as providing more

CHAPTER V

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

For those who worked so hard for the new building, the supreme satisfaction comes when persons who had opposed it say proudly, "This is our fine new school." Many times statements similar to that have been made. Few people of the community say anything about the increase in expenditures when the budget is voted at the annual meeting, and the budget usually carries unanimously. When patrons feel their children are getting a good education, they indicate they are willing to pay for it. Expenditures for schools have gone up with the rising cost of living, but the school budget at Stanley doubled in the first year of operation in the new school. It was two and one-half times as great in 1955-1956 as it was in 1952-1953. Largest increases were made in teachers' salaries, instructional supplies, library, lights, power, fuel, water, and pupil transportation.

The new school building at Stanley has provided housing which is highly satisfactory. There are changes which might be made if another new building were to be built, such as omitting plastic domes in the classrooms, providing more cabinet space in the cafeteria kitchen, adding a music practice room and a kindergarten, and making provisions for

adequate science equipment. Since the building is expandable, perhaps these goals can be reached eventually.

Not all of the administrative problems of a consolidated school can be resolved as easily as those of a teacher in a one or two-room school; however, the satisfaction which comes from the smooth functioning of a good school where children are learning to their full capacity cannot be measured in terms of the work involved. On the whole the administrative load is less in the new school than it was when there were six separate schools under the supervision of a teaching principal.

Serving of 28,000 meals, many fine banquets, and light refreshments at Parent-Teacher Association meetings kept the cafeteria in constant use. This food service has provided students with balanced meals for twenty-five cents a day. There have been a few disgruntled mothers who thought they were not getting enough for their money, but the majority of parents have been glad for their children to have a good, hot lunch.

Changes in the curriculum which have given added advantages to students are the organized gymnasium classes, school room newspapers, musical program, increased learnings in arts and crafts, lyceum programs sponsored by universities, and progressive methods of presenting material.

Many events are planned by the school and community each year which assist in promoting good public relations. Programs at Thanksgiving, Christmas, May Day, Parent-Teacher Association meetings, basketball banquets for parents and athletes, and on many other occasions were given. The elementary school also co-operates with the Parent-Teacher association by helping with paper drives, planning programs, and working with room mothers to plan special parties for the students. Parents are invited to visit school, and teachers really seem to enjoy them when they come. If the parent visits in the forenoon, he is invited to eat in the lunchroom so that he knows firsthand the type of meals being served to the children. Room mothers are the most frequent visitors and are usually very helpful allies of the teacher.

In the opinion of the writer the consolidation of the six elementary school districts and the building of a new school plant was justified. The educational value of consolidation has been apparent from the first, and the testing program indicates that it increases in value as the years pass. The school program costs more under consolidation, but faculty, parents, and administrators concur that it is well worth the added expense when the total growth of children is the deciding factor.

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