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A comparative Study of the Evergreen School District Before and After Reorganization

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A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF THE EVERGREEN SCHOOL DISTRICT BEFORE AND AFTER REORGANIZATION

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Most people take their school district for granted. Nearly everyone knows, or thinks he knows, what the schools should teach, how they should teach and what kind of a final product they should turn out. But, for many, their concept stems from an image of the schools as they were when he or she left them, or as things seem to be from reports of his children. Far too few have direct knowledge of what constitutes an effective school district.

The school district, a unit of government created under authority of Washington's legislature, is charged with affording pupils an equal educational opportunity. However, this responsibility cannot be discharged in many school districts today. These school districts were not formed on sound principles of organization.

> The operation of many small and inefficient school districts emphasizes the fact that many organizational units are entirely too small to exercise local initiative in the most constructive manner and for the best interests of the children. Local school administrative units are creatures of the state developed for the express purpose of providing educational opportunities on the various levels. The legislature may at any time enlarge school districts, alter their boundaries, or abolish them altogether. The formation or maintenance of a school district is not an inherent right of the people of a locality. Local district organization results from certain powers and duties granted to a

> community by legislative act for purposes of conducting schools only so long as sound programs of education are maintained. Local boards have no right to offer educational programs of lower standard than those demanded by the people of the state or to manage their local affairs inefficiently.[1]

I. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The problem of this thesis was to examine the Evergreen School District, both before and after its reorganization, to determine whether or not the reorganization of the district resulted in more acceptable educational services and facilities for all school children residing within its boundaries. Further, an attempt was made to compare the cost of education before and after reorganization. The cost comparison was made to discover whether reorganization had been accomplished without waste or unnecessary expenditure of public funds and without unfair financial advantages for its residents.

II. IMPORTANCE OF THE STUDY

Washington's Contitution directs that "It is the paramount duty of the State to make ample provision for the education of all children residing within its borders,

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[1]George D. Strayer, Public Education in Washington (Olympia: State of Washington, 1946), p. 50.

without distinction or preference on account of race, color, cast or sex."[2]

Local control of the schools, of course, is a factor which has been responsible in no small degree for the contribution which public education has made to our way of life. It necessarily follows that if school districts truly function as units of local control they must be capable of providing the scope and quality of educational services that people of the state as a whole desire for their children. If because of changing conditions or other reasons they are no longer capable of performing their educational functions effectively, then the need arises for legislation to change them so that desired services can be performed.

In the official White House Conference on Education report the Committee said (in 1956):

> We recommend that the American people study carefully their systems of schools organization and consider measures to deny funds, other than local, to districts which do not, after reasonable time, organize on an efficient basis. If the American people are asked to make sacrifices for better education, they deserve to have their funds used as efficiently as possible. This cannot be done without a great deal of reorganization in both rural and urban areas.[3]

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[2]Washington State Research Council, What Is A School District (Seattle: The Council, 1957), p. 11.

[3]The Committee For the White House Conference On Education, A Report To The President (Washington, D. C.: April, 1956), pp. 4-5.

In order to give the reader a true understanding of the problem, it will be necessary to present a brief historical background of district organization in Washington State, as well as a summary of the reorganization movement that has already taken place.

The early settlers in Washington Territory set school district boundaries quite arbitrarily. Little concern was given to financial ability or to the boundaries of adjacent districts. The general procedure was for the first districts to reach out for the rich timberlands, and for later districts to resolve themselves to the remaining irregular-shaped, and often valueless, areas.

Because transportation was extremely limited, districts were small and of a multitude of shapes and patterns. As the population increased, more and more districts were formed, until in 1910 there were 2,710 in the State.[4] Many of these districts were very poor while others were extremely wealthy. It was only natural that there was a great variation in the type and quality of education that could be offered by the various districts.

Between the years 1897 and 1937 the people of Washington made several efforts to alleviate the inequities of their education system. The first of these

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[4]Strayer, op. cit., p. 51.

efforts was the passage of legislative acts in 1897, 1899 and 1901 which provided for the development of union high school districts. This was an organization of two or more elementary districts for the purpose of establishing and maintaining a high school. The second major effort was a legislative act in 1903 that provided for the consolidation of school districts. This act was modified several times in the thirty years following 1903 to make consolidation more desirable to school districts, and as a result the number of consolidated districts increased rapidly and the total number of districts decreased accordingly.

In 1937 there were 1,609 districts of all types in the State classified according to three basic types. There were fifteen first-class districts, 315 second-class districts and 1,279 third-class districts.[5]

Although much progress was realized through the consolidation movement, it became apparent to many educators and laymen that something more was needed before any real equalization of educational opportunity could be achieved in the State of Washington. Out of this obvious need grew a great number of studies which eventually led

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[5] Ibid., pp. 51-52.

to the passage of the School District Reorganization Law in 1941. Outstanding among these studies was the survey conducted by the Washington State Planning Council, published in 1938. The recommendation of this group was that school districts should be reorganized to form larger units of administration and areas of attendance as a means of equalizing educational opportunities, and that future alterations of school district boundaries should be made less difficult than under the methods then prevailing.[6]

> Under Washington's reorganization law, the number of school districts was reduced from 1,323 to 672 during 1941-1946. Another public education survey was begun in 1945 under legislative authorization and Dr. George D. Strayer, survey director, recommended if Washington's program of school district reorganization were fully consummated, the school population could be served by 210 unified districts (offering elementary and high school instruction). An additional number of remote or isolated school districts could be included in unified districts.
>
> However, in 1957, Washington still has 481 districts, or more than twice the number then considered adequate.[7]

Although there has been general acceptance to the law which provides for participation by elementary school

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[6]Washington State Planning Council, A Survey of the Common School System of Washington (Olympia: State of Washington, 1938), p. 9.

[7]Washington State Research Council, What Is A School District (Seattle: The Council, 1957), pp. 6-7.

districts in financing new high school facilities in the high schools that serve them, the process is more cumbersome and less expeditious than it is in high school or unified districts. This fact together with the limited attendance, meager educational program, and high per-capita cost in many elementary school districts has focused attention on the need for completion of the reorganization program. This matter has been emphasized by the Legislative Council, the Legislative Budget Committee, the Washington Research Council, and the Allied School Council. In brief, there appears to be an increasing demand for changes in the existing school district reorganization law which will expedite the extension of high school districts that they serve.

Many reasons for reorganization of school districts have been advanced by educators and laymen, but they can all be grouped under two heads: (1) educational advantages, and (2) financial advantages. It is hoped that this study will show conclusively that the educational effectiveness and financial efficiency of the Evergreen School District did actually improve as the size of the school district increased following reorganization.

The principal value of a study of this nature will lie in its use by other districts not yet reorganized, but

in need of reorganization. It may serve as a tool for administrators who must give the taxpayers concrete evidence that they and their children will benefit by a well planned reorganization program.

III. LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

It became evident early in this study that many problems would be encountered in gathering sufficient data to present a strong thesis. The many small districts involved in this study kept few records, and many that were kept were incomplete. The problem was further encumbered by the absence of any persons familiar with the operation of the districts prior to reorganization. Therefore, many factors which might have enhanced this study were necessarily eliminated.

The analysis of the physical facilities of the component districts, which are described in Chapter III, was made from records available in the Evergreen District Superintendent's office. Because most of the old buildings have long since been razed, no personal observations could be made; therefore, no studies of classroom lighting or building equipment were possible.

Probably the greatest limitation to the study was imposed by the advent of World War II during the period

under study. An attempt has been made to account for the effect of the war years on the schools, however, some of the factors that have been considered in the study are undoubtedly somewhat distorted. It will be noted that in comparing yearly costs the use of adjusted figures, computed from index numbers based on the base-years 1947-1949, have been employed to compensate for the fluctuations in dollar values.

A study of teacher preparation, or professional training, which is usually found in a study involving the educational effectiveness of a school, was impossible in this study. Records of teachers' names were available in the office of the Clark County Superintendent of Schools, however, no information as to their professional training was given.

IV. DEFINITION OF TERMS

Misunderstandings of the precise meanings of certain terms used in a discussion of school district reorganization have frequently been reported. To clarify the definition of terms as used in this thesis, the following meanings will be strictly adhered to:

Component districts. The small individual school districts, once independent, that after reorganization

comprised the Evergreen School District Number 114.

Adjusted figures. When money values are compared for purchasing power over a number of years an adjustment must be made to compensate for the fluctuations in the national economy. Throughout this study references are made to adjusted figures. These figures are computed by using the years 1947 and 1949 as base years, with an index number of 100. The index numbers for all other years of the study are taken from the Federal Reserve Bulletin.[8]

Below is an example showing how any expenditure for the year 1943 would be converted to a base-year figure.

Year	Index Number	Actual Number of Dollars Expended	Adjusted Value Of Expenditure Using 1947-1949=100
1943	74.0	$100.00	$74.00

V. PROCEDURE

The data used in this thesis were gathered from two major sources. The data regarding school attendance, pupil-teacher ratios, transportation, taxation, teacher

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[8]Board of Governors of The Federal Reserve System, Federal Reserve Bulletin (Washington, D. C.: December, 1955), p. 1384.

salaries, instructional materials and most of the other financial data were gathered from records in the office of the Clark County Superintendent of Schools. The description of the school facilities and information regarding pupil drop-outs was gathered from files in the office of the Superintendent of the Evergreen School District, Number 114.

Other miscellaneous information was gathered from the Clark County Assessor's office and from several individuals who had a first-hand knowledge of some of the functions of the component districts prior to reorganization.

CHAPTER II

SURVEY OF RELATED LITERATURE

With America's long established tradition of local control over education, the problem of school district reorganization is very complex. This tradition makes it necessary to investigate rather comprehensively conditions at the local level to develop an understanding of the complex factors involved in school district reorganization. This chapter will attempt to present the pattern of thought and study that the literature of the past few years has contributed to the area of school district reorganization.

I. PROBLEMS AND LIMITATIONS OF SMALL DISTRICTS

Construction of school buildings has been traditionally the responsibility of local districts. Although in the majority of states school buildings are still financed entirely from local funds, in Washington, state school construction aid was granted as early as 1933.

The large number of school districts in Washington (total of 482 in December of 1956)[1], by reason of their

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[1]State of Washington Board of Education, Report and Recommendations to the 1957 Legislature: School District Organization Under Chapter 395, Laws of 1955, School District Organization Act (Olympia: State of Washington, 1957), p. 6.

differences in present sizes of enrollment, geographical area and shapes, local wealth, proximity to other districts, enrollment growth patterns and other factors present an impossible basis for accurately computing future school construction requirements.

The Washington State Research Council in a recent publication made the following statement in regard to Washington's schools:

> By generally recognized national standards Washington has far too many school districts for each to be properly equipped to perform its assigned function and handle problems on both a current and long-range basis. Desirable minimums are at least: a minimum of 1,200 students; a competent staff; one or more elementary schools and at least one high school; sufficient financial resources to enable capable professional administrators to provide essential services on a sound basis.[2]

Fitzwater gives us further evidence that the problem of too many, and too small, school districts is a problem over the entire nation. He said:

> School districts -- like the wood-burning kitchen range and the bull-tongued plow -- may become outmoded. This happens when they no longer make it possible for local people to provide school programs for their children in keeping with the times. There is abundant evidence that this condition is widely recognized. Since 1945 the number of school districts in the Nation has been cut nearly in half. During that time the great

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[2]Washington State Research Council, More Classrooms, Their Planning and Financing (Seattle: The Council, 1954), p. 8.

> majority of States reduced the number of their school districts -- several of them by three-fourths or more. The formation of larger districts to replace those which have become outmoded is nothing new or revolutionary. It has happened in literally thousands of communities, and in State after State.
>
> But even so, there is widespread recognition that many localities still do not have adequate districts. In 1954-55 only one-eighth of all districts in the Nation employed forty or more teachers. More than two-thirds of all operating districts maintained elementary schools only. One out of every seven districts did not even operate a school.[3]

If our way of life were static -- its needs unchanging, with no changes in our culture and economy, and without population growth or mobility -- then perhaps there would be no need for making changes or adaptations in school district organization. But, of course, this is not the case. The unprecedented number of births during the war years and the probable increase in the number of families of child-bearing age must be reckoned with realistically and planned for if educational disaster is to be averted in this state.

Numerous advantages are to be had by strengthening local school districts through reorganization into larger, more competent units. To these advantages may be added others through the planning and construction of school

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[3] C. O. Fitzwater, Local Planning for Better School Districts (Washington, D. C.: U. S. Government Printing Office, 1957), p. 1.

buildings on a strong district basis.[4]

The Washington State Research Council seems to have summed up the situation in a single statement. They stated that:

> A strong district with an adequate number of students can plan its facilities to provide the maximum educational opportunity for its children. Schools can be located to serve population areas rather than arbitrary areas within small district boundaries. Sufficient students can be brought together to allow a diversified course of study and a social experience necessary to meet the needs of our youth in a highly competitive economy.[5]

Ranked high among the criticisms of the small poorly organized districts is the recognized fact that the educational programs of these schools is decidedly meager. As early as 1939, the Washington State Planning Council realized the many inequities that existed among Washington school districts. In a detailed report to the Legislature they stated that:

> Equalization of educational opportunity is impossible in a system comprising approximately 1500 separate and independent administrative units, with marked variations in size and in per-capita valuation. For the most part, attempts have been made thus far to equalize support for education rather than educational opportunity. But serious

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[4]Washington State Research Council, More Classrooms, Their Planning and Financing (Seattle: The Council, 1954), p. 15.

[5]Ibid.

> educational inequalities still exist, even in districts where support has been equalized, and will continue to exist so long as the present district organization is maintained, because a very large percentage of school districts are too small to provide adequately, without prohibitive per-capita expenditure, (a) for necessary administrative and supervisory services, (b) for an educational program adapted to the interests of the present day, and (c) for the special services demanded of public education.[6]

The study further revealed that the small districts, with few exceptions, were unable to provide vocational education, visual aids, libraries, music and health education, services for the handicapped, or a supervisory program for teachers.[7]

Although the need for comprehensive school programs becomes increasingly greater, it cannot be met under existing conditions and the chief stumbling block is the present school district structure.

In 1954 the Washington State Research Council struck another blow at the structure of Washington's district organization in the following statement:

> Many of the State's high schools are too small to offer a satisfactory program except at great cost to local patrons. Educational authorities in the field recommend a minimum of 75 students for each grade

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[6]Washington State Planning Council, Equalization of Educational Opportunity in Washington: Appendix H (Olympia: State of Washington, 1939), pp. 92-93.

[7]Ibid., pp. 91-94.

> level in a high school before the operation is considered satisfactory. In Washington, almost one-third of the high schools have total enrollments less than this minimum recommendation for a single grade. Thirty-two high schools have forty or less students with five of these having twenty or less. Only 114 of the State's 266 high schools meet these minimum enrollment requirements.[8]

Another significant limitation of the small, poorly organized school district is found when one examines the extreme variability in district wealth that exists in Washington.

That great variations do exist in local ability to finance education, as measured in terms of assessed valuation per pupil, is evidenced by the fact that in 1954 in one county in Washington the per pupil valuation ranged from $1,000 in one district to $69,000 in another. Another county had a range of from $524 to $20,600; in another county the range was from $1,800 to $52,000.[9]

The Washington plan of state aid for general purposes allows great freedom to local school administrative units. A school district is free to spend its funds very much as it sees fit. However, the very high level of the Washington plan of support creates a threat to efficient

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[8]Washington State Research Council, Goal for Washington: Strong Local School Districts (Seattle: The Council, 1954), p. 6.

[9]Ibid.

reorganization of local administrative units. Just as soon as the State guarantees that no matter whether there is any local support for the school or not, ample support for the maintenance of the school will be provided, there is a great temptation to the patrons of the small school to insist on its maintenance in spite of its inordinately high per-pupil cost.[10]

Another aspect of the problem of local support of education is brought out in the following quotation:

> Local tax sources authorized by law are "frozen" in nearly every county of the State by the district organization pattern now in effect. In twelve counties, had there been one school district rather than the existing pattern, there would have been no need for excess levies in 1954. The total amount of money raised for operational purposes from the various regular and special excess levies was approximately the same as the yield would have been had the statutory maximum been levied uniformly on all property throughout the county. Some districts which are "rich" need not levy the maximum, or if they do, their program can be enriched considerably when compared with "poor" neighboring districts which must struggle with high excess levies to provide a minimum program. Considerable local property tax resources, set aside for the exclusive benefit of the schools, cannot now be used because of the present pattern of local school districts.[11]

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[10]George D. Strayer, Public Education in Washington (Olympia: State of Washington, 1946), p. 197.

[11]Washington State Research Council, Goal for Washington: Strong Local School Districts (Seattle: The Council, 1954), p. 10.

Since present school districts vary widely in their wealth, the tax burden necessary to conduct the school program varies accordingly. This is true of building funds as it is of current operating funds. Districts with low assessed valuations find it necessary to have a higher percentage of bonded indebtedness, and with urgent building requirements, soon reach their constitutional bonding limit. More wealthy districts do not have to bond so heavily, and the tax burden is lighter for people in such districts.

In 1944, the State Committee for the Reorganization of School Districts included the following statement in their report to the State Board of Education:

> There is conclusive evidence that the reorganization of school districts has operated to further equalization of local district tax rates through (a) the merging of high valuation districts with other districts to form new units, and (b) the extension of the boundaries of high school districts to include their tributary non-high school districts. As a result of this latter change, the residents of former non-high school districts will be required, for the first time, to assist in providing capital outlay funds for the construction of the high school buildings used by their children.[12]

Not to be considered a minor financial problem in

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[12]State Committee for Reorganization of School Districts, School District Reorganization in the State of Washington Under Chapter 248, Laws of 1941: The School District Reorganization Act (Olympia: State of Washington, 1944), p. 10.

Washington is the transporting of children to and from the public schools. Transportation is a major service, and a major problem. The problem in city districts is often a simple one; they may spend practically all of their revenues on instruction and plant operations. On the other hand, some districts in rural areas are forced to spend a high percentage of their total revenues on pupil transportation.

The 1939 study by the Washington State Planning Council shows several examples of how unsound district organization can lead to duplication of transportation routes and excessive costs. One example is cited below:

> A number of high school pupils residing only a few miles from a high school with an average daily attendance of 380 pupils are transported approximately fifteen miles to a small high school with an average daily attendance of 64 pupils. En route the bus passes within two miles of the larger high school. During winter months when road conditions are bad, these pupils are actually transported through the outskirts of the larger community to the smaller school, twelve miles beyond. The larger school is superior to the smaller in housing facilities and equipment. Its educational offerings are more varied. Not only is it impossible to equalize educational opportunity under these conditions, but it is equally impossible to secure the most effective use of school funds.[13]

It is evident that an unplanned district system

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[13]Washington State Planning Council, Equalization of Educational Opportunity in Washington: Appendix H (Olympia: State of Washington, 1939), pp. 87-89.

necessitates the operation of many uneconomic units, excessive transportation, and the unnecessary duplication of facilities and services.

II. ADVANTAGES OF LARGER SCHOOL DISTRICTS

Many advantages have been advanced by educators and laymen for reorganization of school districts into larger administrative units. Grieder and Rosenstengel, in their study of school districts, reported that:

> Larger districts, with their larger schools, in general have longer terms, better attendance, more comprehensive curriculums, better qualified and better paid teachers, better administrative and supervisory services, and better physical facilities, than districts with small schools which fall far below the recommended sizes. It is granted that in some reorganized districts small schools must be operated in isolated or sparsely settled areas. As units in larger administrative districts, they can be made better schools than if they go it alone.[14]

The improvement of school district organization permits more adequate local funds and more readily available state assistance for school building construction. More local revenue for financing buildings is possible when the responsibility rests on all property owners of an enlarged administrative unit. Not only are more

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[14]Calvin Grieder and William Rosenstengel, Public School Administration (New York: Ronald Press Company, 1954), p. 21.

adequate buildings possible under the increased bonding capacity, but a larger percentage of the cost can be raised locally by spreading the levy on all property in the area served by the district.[15]

Although the primary purpose of school district reorganization is not to reduce the total cost of education, nevertheless it has been found that in most instances educational opportunity equal to that offered in numerous small units can be obtained for less expense under reorganization. In some wealthy areas reorganization may even make possible better and more extensive educational opportunities for smaller expenditures. However, it has generally been found that reorganized districts require somewhat increased expenditures for the simple reason that more and better educational services are needed and wanted.[16]

Cubberley's study, in 1920, of the school system of the State of Washington lead him to make the following statement in regard to equalizing educational opportunity:

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[15]George D. Strayer, A Digest of a Report of a Survey of Public Education in the State of Washington (Olympia: State of Washington, 1946), p. 45.

[16]National Commission on School District Reorganization, Your School District (Washington, D. C.: National Education Association, 1948), p. 90.

> The most far-reaching and fundamental and important change in organization proposed in your new code is the plan to substitute the county unit for town and rural-school administration for the long-outgrown district system. . . .Everywhere it has resulted both in economy in operation and an increase in efficiency, and it offers the only plan under which boys and girls living in rural communities may be given a square deal in the matter of education. It equalizes both the opportunity for and the cost of education as can no other administrative plan; gradually eliminates small and unnecessary and expensive schools, and builds up large and better schools; and would soon save your state educational funds now wasted that could be spent in improving the education of country boys and girls.[17]

Strayer, in his 1946 report to the Washington State Legislature, brought out that the larger, better planned districts permit the standardization of teaching materials and textbooks, and the supervision of instruction under one group of school officials who can plan for the education of children of the various grade levels. He found also that to the extent that districts lack proper organization, there is great diversity of program instruction, facilities, and administration in the non-high school districts.[18]

In Strayer's own words:

Perhaps the greatest advantage of a unified or

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[17] Report of the Public School Administrative Code Commission of the State of Washington (Olympia: Frank M. Lamborn, 1921), p. 32.

[18] Strayer, op. cit., p. 44.

> reorganized district lies in the fact that one board of directors is in control of the schools that formerly were under many separate boards. A superintendent of schools who is the executive officer of the board exercises professional leadership for all the schools. Financial and business administration, transportation, and public interpretation are usually vastly improved over those prevailing in one-, two-, and three-room school districts.[19]

Chisholm in a recent study of reorganized and non-reorganized districts in Illinois, Missouri, and Nebraska, indicated several positive gains which may be ascribed, at least in part, to school district reorganization. Among the gains made by reorganized districts, the following are mentioned:

> 1. Schools in reorganized districts were clearly superior in the number of new class and extra-class additions to the curriculum and in the number of renovations and building additions which were made to the physical plant.
>
> 2. In reorganized districts, teachers were better prepared academically and were receiving higher average salaries than were those in non-reorganized districts.
>
> 3. After reorganization, the operating millage was reduced in Nebraska, but it remained reasonably constant in Illinois and Missouri. The higher per pupil costs in the reorganized districts of all three states was traced to the increased services which were offered.[20]

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[19] Ibid., p. 32.

[20] Leslie L. Chisholm, School District Reorganization (Chicago: Midwest Administration Center, University of Chicago, 1957), pp. 95-96.

Studies made in State after State either before or during the course of their reorganization programs have shown that small schools were more expensive to operate than those of larger size.[21] The financial handicaps created by these small districts are obvious. Wherever they exist, small districts make it impossible to use school funds economically and to derive the maximum educational benefits from them.

Under the statutory formula governing the distribution of Washington State funds the inequalities in ability to provide funds at the local level are equalized to a high degree through State allotments to the poorer districts to bring their revenue up to the "equalization level" established by law, and through a reduction in State allotments to districts with local revenue in excess of the equalization level. However, if the biennial appropriation for current operations of the public schools is inadequate, the State allotment on the educational unit basis is reduced and many districts are forced to resort to excess levies or to curtail school services or

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[21] C. O. Fitzwater, School District Reorganization, Policies and Procedures (Washington, D. C.: U. S. Government Printing Office, 1957), p. 84.

both.[22]

That there is presently a heavy reliance on State funds to support education is evidenced by the fact that in 1957 approximately sixty-two per cent of local school districts' operating funds were received from State sources.[23]

Reorganization of school districts seems to be the best method of reducing the need for heavy reliance on State financial support. "The reorganized district, states the Washington Research Council, offers numerous advantages over the system found in most of the State's counties today."[24] Some of these advantages are listed below:

> 1. Reorganization would guarantee a more uniform level of local financial support. While there would still be a range between the wealth of districts according to the number of students residing there, the variations would be far less then at present and the mechanics of equalization would be greatly simplified.

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[22]State of Washington Superintendent of Public Instruction, Financing Public Schools of the State of Washington (Olympia: State of Washington, 1957), p. 17.

[23]Washington State Research Council, What Is A School District (Seattle: The Council, 1957), p. 12.

[24]Washington State Research Council, Goal for Washington: Strong Local School Districts (Seattle: The Council, 1954), p. 11.

> 2. Reorganization places the burden of school support equally on the patrons of the area. In some districts the operational mill levy would be reduced from as much as 42 mills to a level less than half that amount. . . .A broader organizational pattern captures revenue not now obtainable and in addition spreads the responsibility for education equally throughout the area.[25]

The study by Fitzwater found also that when a community or locality was served by a single district instead of by numerous small ones, all of its wealth subject to the property tax became available for support of the total school program. This created additional tax base for school support which was important not only for current operational costs but also for bonding capacity.[26]

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[25] Ibid., pp. 11-12.

[26] C. O. Fitzwater, School District Reorganization, Policies and Procedures (Washington, D. C.: U. S. Government Printing Office, 1957), pp. 88-89.

CHAPTER III

SELECTION OF A DISTRICT FOR THE STUDY

The selection of a single school district for this study involved the setting-up of certain criteria to determine whether or not the district selected could be considered as being fairly representative of a typical reorganized school district. The criteria applied in the selection were those that educational authorities throughout the country agree are basic factors found in a satisfactory school district:

1. A strong school district educates all pupils residing within its boundaries from kindergarten (or first grade) through high school and, in certain cases, through junior college.[1]

2. A strong school district has at least 1,200 pupils between ages six and eighteen. If the district has a much smaller number, a good program can be offered only at great cost per pupil.[2]

3. A strong school district has schools properly located to meet community needs, is convenient for children and brings together enough pupils for good instruction at reasonable cost. For each elementary school at least one teacher is provided for each grade level and in six-year elementary schools 300 or more pupils are desirable. For each high school not fewer than twelve teachers is recommended.[3]

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[1] The National Commission on School District Reorganization, A Key to Better Education (Washington, D. C.: 1947), p. 8.

[2] Ibid., p. 10.

[3] Ibid.

4. A strong school district has a competent staff of teachers, administrators, supervisors and other workers, each one qualified to do a particular job well.[4]

5. A strong school district has a sound way of financing and administering its program. Ample funds from district, county, state or other sources are made available to provide essential services on a sound basis.[5]

In addition to the above listed criteria, it was considered necessary to select a district which had, in the process of reorganization, involved a sufficient number of districts to provide a comparison between small independent districts and one which has undergone a thorough reorganization.

I. A BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DISTRICT

The Evergreen School District is a consolidation of eight small rural schools, most of which were one and two room buildings. The buildings, at the time of reorganization, ranged from twenty to sixty years old.

With reorganization came the problem of new buildings at population centers. The small buildings and property, which were definitely inadequate for school purposes in 1945, were sold and the money therefrom was placed in the

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[4] Ibid., p. 8.

[5] Ibid., pp. 8, 11.

district building fund.

The district lies between the Vancouver School District and the Camas School District, bounded on the south by the Columbia River and on the north by the Battle-ground School District. The district comprises an area of some fifty square miles.

The first wing of a six-year high school to accommodate approximately four hundred students was completed in 1949. By 1950 the new school was operating at capacity. Other subsequent additions to this school were a twelve room wing for the seventh, eighth, and ninth grade students; a gymnasium and health center; a vocational shop building; and an auditorium.

II. POPULATION PROBLEMS CAUSED BY THE WAR INDUSTRIES

Before beginning an analysis of the school districts involved in this study, it will be necessary to consider some of the problems that existed as a result of the masses of population that entered the area during the World War II years. These problems have a direct bearing upon the study and will be referred to many times in the following pages.

The nature of Federal activities carried on in the Vancouver area during World War II can be classified into three groups: (1) shipyards; (2) buildings and allied

trades; and (3) services.

The shipyards were the prime Federal activity in this area. The mass influx of people into this area to secure employment raised the serious housing situation which in turn swelled the ranks of construction personnel along with its allied trades. This population increase in turn called for a doubling and trebling of service and trades personnel. All of the above factors brought about the rise of the population of Vancouver to an estimated 85,000 (over three times the population in 1949), of which 48,000 were classed as workers. Of these workers, eighty-five per cent or a little over 41,000 were directly engaged in ship-building activities. The majority of these were out-of-state people, which meant that housing had to be secured for large numbers almost immediately.

The building trades expanded incredibly during the war years in order to build the housing so desperately needed by the shipyard workers and this force added to the already over-burdened housing in this area. The extent of the new construction may be imagined from the fact that contracts for over 12,000 dwelling units were let in 1942 and 1943.[6] Of the 11,300 which were completed, approximately

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[6]Source: Files of the Vancouver Chamber of Commerce.

1,000 were permanent type housing units with the remainder being of a temporary or demountable construction.

The services for a small town of 25,000 had to increase to accommodate the new 85,000 population also. Some existing services were expanded and new services were inaugurated to care for the newly populated areas.

The population could not be contained in the new housing projects and existing housing in the area, and as a consequence spilled out into the surrounding areas of Salmon Creek, Felida, Hazel Dell, Evergreen, and other adjacent areas. That the dwellings in these areas were saturated as well can be established from the fact that many workers commuted sixty miles and sometimes farther from distant communities. The resulting habitation hunting took place along the well established and best traveled routes, namely, to the north, east, and northwest. As a consequence the outlying districts along these routes housed many of the workers who overflowed from the city proper. Many of these people have remained in these areas as may be easily seen from the fact that approximately thirty per cent of the pupils now registered in the Evergreen District are from parents who moved into the area since 1939 for the express purpose of working in the shipyards. This is further substantiated by the fact that there

was an increase of over 400 farms in Clark County from 1940 to 1945 and an additional increase of 200 after 1945.[7]

Most of these are not "farms" in the true sense but rather rural dwellings since few are self-supporting or add to the money income of the area. Most of these "farmers" earn their livelihood away from farm work.

As the temporary structures in the housing project were closed (5,120 were still occupied in 1947), people sought land on which to build in the outlying districts of Vancouver. This tended to extend the building "boom" beyond the war's end by several years and, if materials had been more readily available, even more building would have been done than was actually accomplished. This also was a direct outgrowth of the Federal activities in the area.

The increase in population did not enrich the district appreciably in that many of the new homes (or farms as they were classified) were not self-supporting nor did they bring more capital into the district than would be the case if the land had been left to its former usage. However, these homes, or "farms", did increase the population appreciably, particularly among the school age children.

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[7]Source: Files of the Clark County Assessor.

III. A DESCRIPTION OF THE PHYSICAL FACILITIES OF THE COMPONENT DISTRICTS

Figure 1 is a photograph of the interior of the East Mill Plain Grade School taken in 1946, shortly after reorganization. This building, located in the southeast section of the district, was a frame building constructed in 1887.

The heating system for the two classrooms consisted of two wood stoves; one located in each classroom. The only means of ventilation was the opening or closing of windows. The total extent of ground space consisted of one-half acre, including the space taken up by the building.

Figure 1
East Mill Plain School District Number 4

Although the East Mill Plain School had a capacity of forty students, at the time of reorganization it was housing sixty-four pupils.

The two classrooms were extremely narrow with high ceilings, and were illuminated by a single light suspended from the ceiling by electrical wiring.

The toilet facilities were of the old-fashioned outdoor model, and were not ample in number.

Certainly no arrangement of this plant could have provided a satisfactory educational program for children.

Figure 2 shows the Proebstel Grade School as it appeared in 1946. This frame building was constructed on one acre of swampy ground in the northeast section of the district. The school, built in 1912, had a capacity of sixty students in its two classrooms.

The acre of ground upon which the Proebstel School was constructed was triangular in shape and was bordered on two sides by highways carrying a considerable amount of traffic. The only playground space available was insufficient even for a softball game, without using one of the highways as part of the playing field.

At the time of reorganization the school was housing eighty-five pupils, with no facilities for remedial or special work to complement the regular instructional program of the six grades in the school.

Figure 2

Proebstel Grade School

District Number 5

Figure 3 is a photograph of the Livingston School, taken in 1946. This plant, constructed in 1896, is typical of the schools of yesteryear, with its outdoor toilet and old-fashioned pump-at-the-well water system.

The Livingston School was constructed on a two-acre plot in the extreme northeast corner of the district. Heat was provided by a wood stove and ventilation was accomplished by opening windows.

Although the building had a capacity of twenty pupils,

during the period from 1940 through 1945 its largest enrollment was seventeen. In 1944, the last year prior to reorganization, the school did not operate because there were so few children of school age in the district.

Figure 3

Livingston Grade School

District Number 13

Built in 1903, of frame construction, the West Mill Plain School is one of the old-time pattern with lack of room and facilities for a sound educational program.

Figure 4 shows the poor state of repair of the plant. It may be noticed that the shed housing the water tank is in a state of near-complete collapse.

The West Mill Plain School was built on two acres of poor quality ground in the southwest section of the district. The two classrooms, with a capacity of sixty pupils, were heated by wood stoves and ventilated by opening windows. The lighting, as was the case with nearly all of the other facilities, was inadequate.

Figure 4

West Mill Plain School

District Number 39

Russell Grade School, a frame building constructed in 1900, is shown in Figure 5. This plant, together with the West Mill Plain School made up School District Number 39.

The Russell School was constructed on two acres of sloping ground in the southeast corner of the district. The sloping nature of the grounds made the playground area

totally inadequate. The grounds were made even more undesirable by being immediately adjacent to a large area of swampy terrain.

The presence of the heavily travelled Evergreen Highway immediately in front of the school created a terrific safety hazard for young children.

This unit, by present standards, was not large enough to provide desirable facilities and equipment for the education of children.

Figure 5

Russell Grade School

District Number 39

Burton School was one of the newer plants serving the Evergreen area. Built in 1938 of brick veneer, it was intended to serve a maximum of sixty pupils. At the time of reorganization it was housing eighty-four pupils in six grades.

The plant itself had nothing to offer in the way of modern facilities and equipment.

Figure 6 is a photograph taken of the Burton School in 1946.

Figure 6

Burton Grade School

District Number 45

Harmony Grade School was built in 1898. It was a frame building erected on one acre of ground, located in the east-central portion of the district. Although it was built to house only twenty pupils, at the time the picture

facility was a single outdoor shed, shared by all children and the teacher.

No arrangement could have modernized Harmony School, and the installation of equipment and conveniences would have been impractical, if not impossible.

Figure 8 is a photograph of the Fisher School taken in 1946. This plant, built in 1898, is also representative of the out-moded one-room school of early Washington.

Figure 8

Fisher Grade School

District Number 79

The wood frame building, its single room heated by a wood stove, was constructed to house thirty pupils. At the time of reorganization thirty-eight pupils were attending Fisher School.

Toilet facilities were of the outdoor type; and the size and condition of the school offered nothing in the way of modern practices and conveniences, considered a necessity in most school programs.

Orchards Grade School was constructed in 1928 of brick veneer on four acres of ground which is extremely low and rocky. Large portions of the grounds were water-covered the whole of the winter months.

The Orchards School had a gymnasium. This was a frame building with an entirely unfinished interior. The room was not ceiled or walled. It had no heating system or locker room facilities, and the lighting was inadequate for dark and cloudy days and entirely so for night use.

The pupil capacity of the building was 140, but at the time of reorganization it was overcrowded by 398 pupils. The high enrollment required four classes to be improperly housed in the basement.

Orchards School was the only unit in the district with enrollment enough for kindergarten and remedial units; but in this building there was no available space. Even

the school library, an eight by ten foot room, was used to capacity. The library served as sick room, nurse's room, teachers' room, music room and library.

Figure 9 is a photograph of the only high school serving the eight non-high school districts described above. The plant is of frame construction, built on eight acres of ground in the southeast section of the district. The date of construction was 1910.

Figure 9

Union High School

District Number 1

Heat for the Union High School building was provided by a wood furnace with forced draft for warm air. The only method of ventilation was the opening of windows.

The facilities in this plant were outmoded or were lacking to a great extent. The school, with an original capacity of ninety students, was housing 232 children, both high school and eighth grade, at the time of reorganization. Toilet facilities were inadequate, even for ninety pupils, and there were no lockers or locker space in the entire plant.

The school had no auditorium, and the seating capacity was inadequate for the large numbers of pupils that were in the classrooms. No space was available for specialty rooms of any kind, except for two tiny cubicles in the basement. No space was available for lunch room or cafeteria use.

The plant did have a gymnasium and farm shop building; however, the gymnasium was totally inadequate in size, facilities and capacity for high school use. No dressing rooms or shower facilities were included in the building. The heat was provided by two small wood stoves, one on each side of the gymnasium floor. The farm shop building was of good construction, but inadequate in size for a high school farm-shop program. The building was poorly equipped and provided no storage space.

In 1944, just prior to the reorganization of the Evergreen School District, the patrons of Union High School District Number 1 submitted a petition to the Clark County Superintendent of Schools requesting that their school be reorganized with the Battleground School District. Below is a summarization of the major reasons listed in the petition for reorganization:

1. Union High School is a fire hazard. It is not a fit and proper place to send children.

2. The sanitation system is deplorable. The present conditions jeopardize the health of the children.

3. The school is outmoded and overcrowded.

4. There is a lack of adequate supervision of children.

5. There is no hot lunch program. This lowers morale and the physical resistance of children.

6. No music is taught at Union High School.

7. There is no 4-H work activity in the school.

8. There are no organized athletics.

9. There are no facilities for teaching physical culture.

10. The school has no means of transportation of its own.

11. There are no lockers, showers, or other forms of athletic equipment in the school.

12. Our children are dependent on the Battleground buses for transportation to and from school.[8]

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[8]Source: Clark County Reorganization Board files, in the office of the Clark County Superintendent of Schools.

IV. ENROLLMENT AND PUPIL-TEACHER RATIOS

Table I, on page 48, indicates that there was a great variation in pupil-teacher ratios in the several districts prior to reorganization. The greatest difference shows a ratio of 1 : 3.8 between District Number 13 and District Number 80. These figures are based on the average enrollments for the five year period, 1940 through 1944. Even higher ratios occur when a single year is examined.

It is also significant to note at this point that the majority of teachers during this period were not teaching a single grade level, but in most cases had children of from two to eight different grade levels.

In examining the figures in Table I it is logical to conclude that the number of pupils in each grade in several of the smaller schools was very low. This conclusion is drawn from the fact that each of the eight schools educated children at least through grade six, and in two instances through grade eight.

An examination of Table II, on page 49, indicates that a relatively stable pupil-teacher ratio was maintained during the five year period following reorganization. It may reasonably be assumed that the slight increase in the ratio can be attributed to the rapid increase in population

TABLE I

Enrollments, By Years, Of The Component Districts

Prior to Reorganization

District	Pupil Enrollments					Number of Teachers					Pupil-Teacher Ratio AVERAGE For the 5 Year Period 1940-44
	1940	1941	1942	1943	1944	1940	1941	1942	1943	1944	
4	37	33	32	48	52	2	2	2	2	2	20.2
5	37	51	50	83	85	2	2	2	2	2	30.6
13	7	7	9	16		1	1	1	1		9.8
39	95	100	93	235	172	4	4	4	5	5	31.6
45	54	50	52	91	84	1	2	2	2	2	36.8
52	23	25	21	27	29	1	1	1	1	1	25
79	22	23	27	58	37	1	2	2	2	2	20.9
80	179	184	206	421	398	6	6	7	9	9	37.5
UHS 1	129	147	151	185	183	7	6	7	7	6	24.1

TABLE II

Enrollment and Pupil-Teacher Ratios Of

The Evergreen School District; 1945 - 49

Year	Faculty		Average Daily Attendance		Pupil-Teacher Ratio	
	H. S.	Grade	H. S.	Grade	H. S.	Grade
1945	7	23	124	628	17.7	27.3
1946	7	22	124	665	17.7	30.2
1947	9	23	160	704	17.8	30.6
1948	10	25	195	704	19.5	28.2
1949	13	25	246	830	18.9	33.2

mentioned earlier in this chapter.

It should also be noted that the pupil-teacher ratio during the 1945 through 1949 period very closely approximates the ideal ratio (1 : 30) recommended by most of the leading authorities in the field of elementary education.

A comparison of the high school figures on Tables I and II would seem to indicate that the number of pupils per teacher had decreased appreciably since reorganization. However, this is due partially to the addition of several special teachers in vocational education and remedial education. These people were added to the staff in 1947, 1948 and 1949. Figure 10, on page 53, may be consulted for the exact number of special teachers.

V. TEACHERS' SALARIES

Figures 11 and 12, on pages 54 and 55, are designed to show graphically what actually happened to teachers' salaries during the ten year period being considered in this study.

Because the cost of living is constantly fluctuating, an analysis of only the actual salaries paid during a ten year period would unavoidably be distorted. For this reason a dotted line, on each graph, has been presented to show the adjusted value of the median salaries for each

year. The index-numbers, from which the adjusted figures were derived, are taken from the Federal Reserve Bulletin.[9]

The graph on Figure 11, page 54, indicates that over the ten year period there was a general increase in the median salary of elementary classroom teachers. In only one instance, during the 1948-1949 school year, does the median (of actual salaries paid) show a decline. Since the decline during this period amounted to only ten dollars, it would be difficult to determine any specific reason for this occurrence.

It is interesting to note that no single year presented on this graph shows an outstanding increase in the salaries paid to elementary teachers. The year showing the greatest increase being 1948, with a difference of $476 over 1947. However, it will also be noted that the purchasing power of teachers' salaries during the 1948 year was somewhat lower, thereby reducing the true value of the increase in salaries.

An analysis of the adjusted figures, represented by the dotted line on the graph, shows a definite gain in the purchasing power of teachers over the ten years covered in this study. It may be noted that the increase in actual

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[9]Federal Reserve Bulletin, December, 1955: Vol. 41, No. 12, p. 1384.

salaries paid during the five year period following reorganization is sixty-three per cent greater than the increase of the five year period prior to reorganization.

Figure 12, on page 55, showing the median salaries of high school classroom teachers, is almost a duplicate of Figure 11. The same general trends appear on both graphs for each year. Only one significant difference occurs in each year of the study; the median salaries of the high school teachers are consistently higher than those of elementary teachers.

VI. INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS PROVIDED

A complete survey of all instructional materials provided during each year of this study was quite impossible. Few records were maintained by the small component schools, other than those absolutely required by the County Superintendent of Schools. Only two records were available for the full ten year period. These were (1) the number of reference and library books of each school district, and (2) the number of free textbooks available in each school district.

Figure 13, on page 58, shows the number of reference and library books for each year, from 1940 through 1949. The number of books listed for each of the years prior to

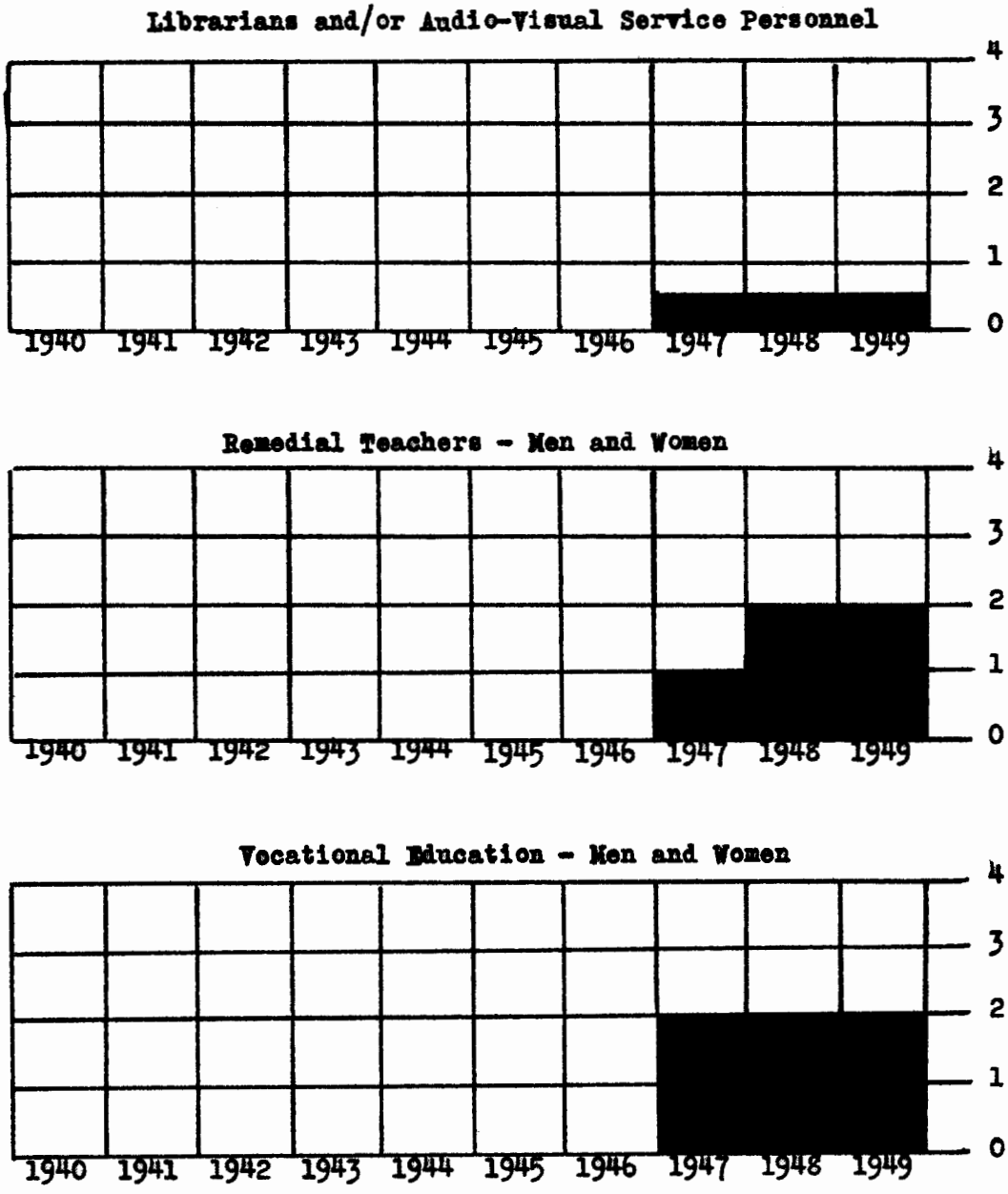

Figure 10

Number of Special-Service Personnel

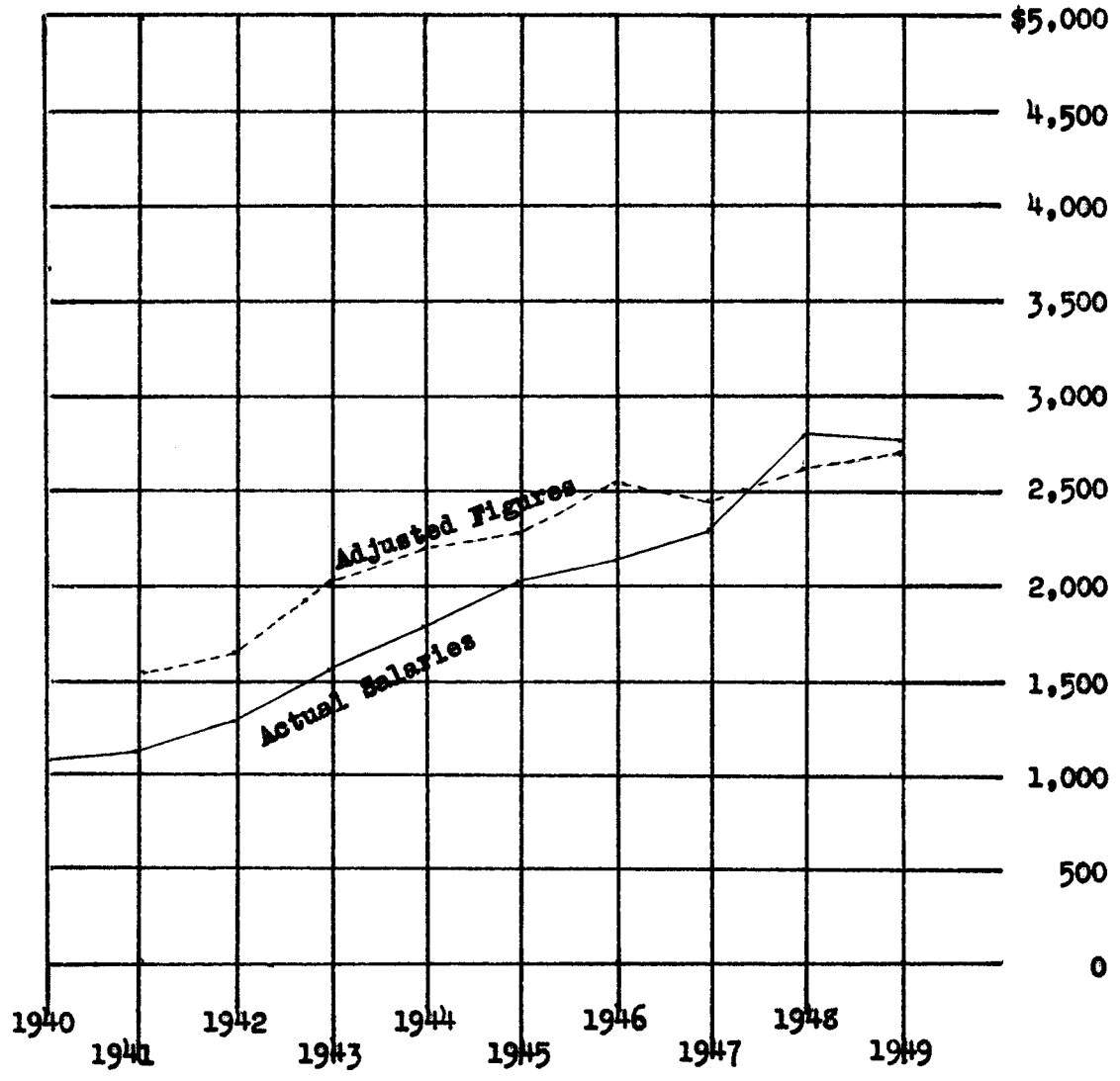

Figure 11

Median Salaries of Elementary Classroom Teachers

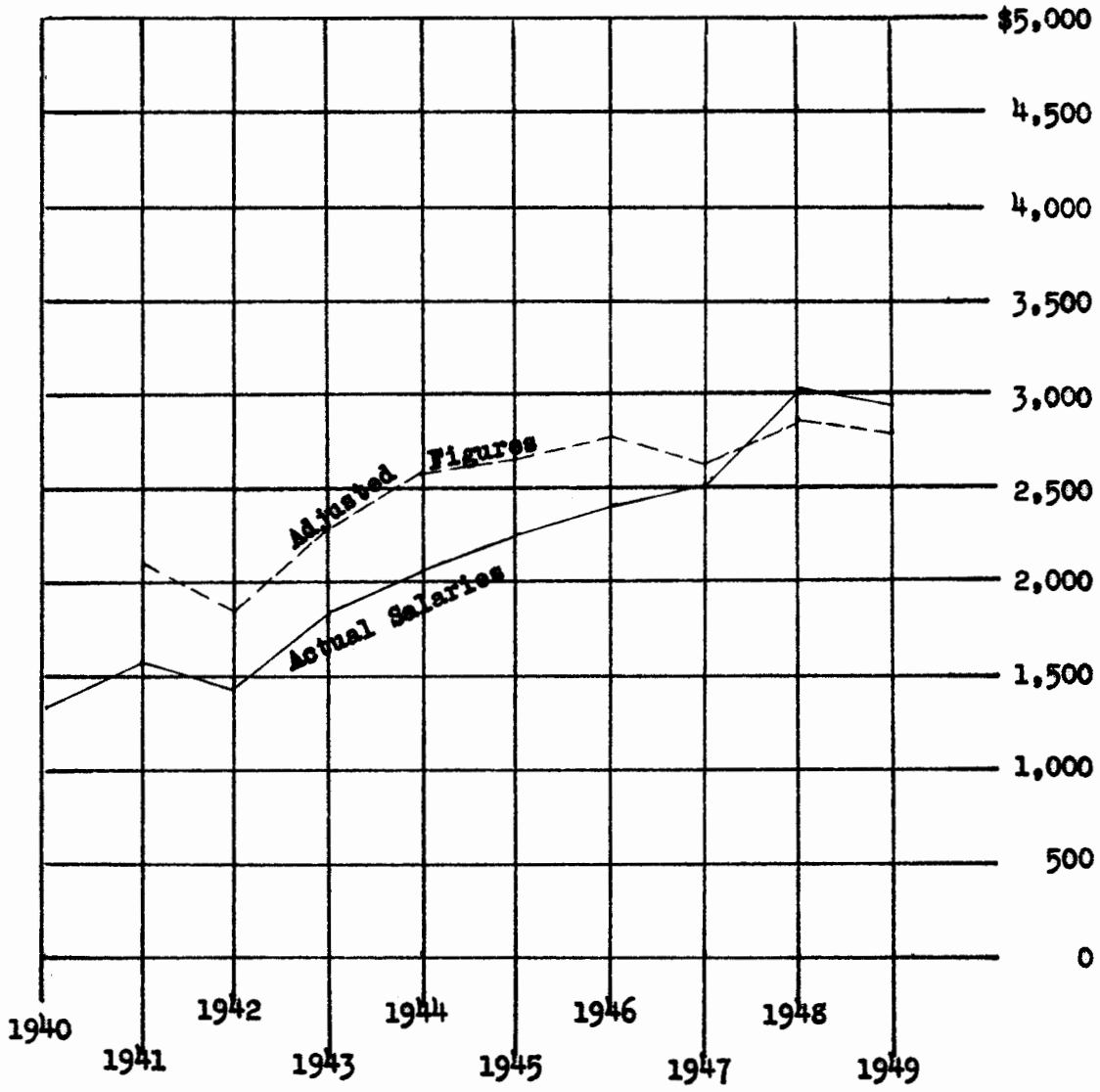

Figure 12

Median Salaries of High School Classroom Teachers

reorganization (1940-1944) represents the total number of books for all of the component districts.

Although it is impossible to determine the actual reason for the wide variation in the number of books before and after reorganization, certain assumptions are quite reasonable when Figure 13 is examined.

There is a strong probability that of the nearly 4500 books on hand in 1943, many were old and of little practical use. The large decline in the first year following reorganization would indicate that the books were screened for their value and usefulness prior to the closing of a number of the small, outmoded school buildings. This, of course, would have eliminated the transporting of useless books to the new school sites.

Figure 14, on page 59, showing the number of free textbooks available, follows the same general pattern as does Figure 13. The only major difference between Figures 13 and 14 is that the latter does not show a great increase in 1948, as does the former.

The only reasonable explanation for the large increase in the number of textbooks, beginning in 1943, is that the rapid growth of school enrollments at that time made it necessary for each of the component districts to purchase additional textbooks to meet pupil needs.

The sharp decline in the number of textbooks in the first year following reorganization (1945-1946) is the most outstanding feature of Figure 14. Although no absolute or positive explanation for this decline is available, several known factors lead to the following hypothesis:

Prior to 1945 there were nine school districts operating independently. Each school was attempting to educate children through at least grade six, and in some instances through grade eight. To accomplish this, each school must have had texts for each subject at each grade level. When, at the close of the 1944 school year, six of the nine schools were closed and the children were consolidated in three buildings, a large number of texts were accumulated. It may also be assumed that since each of the component districts was totally independent, that the texts were not all from the same publishing company. Therefore, to provide a coordinated program of studies for the newly reorganized district it would have been necessary to discard many of the older texts which would not fit the new program.

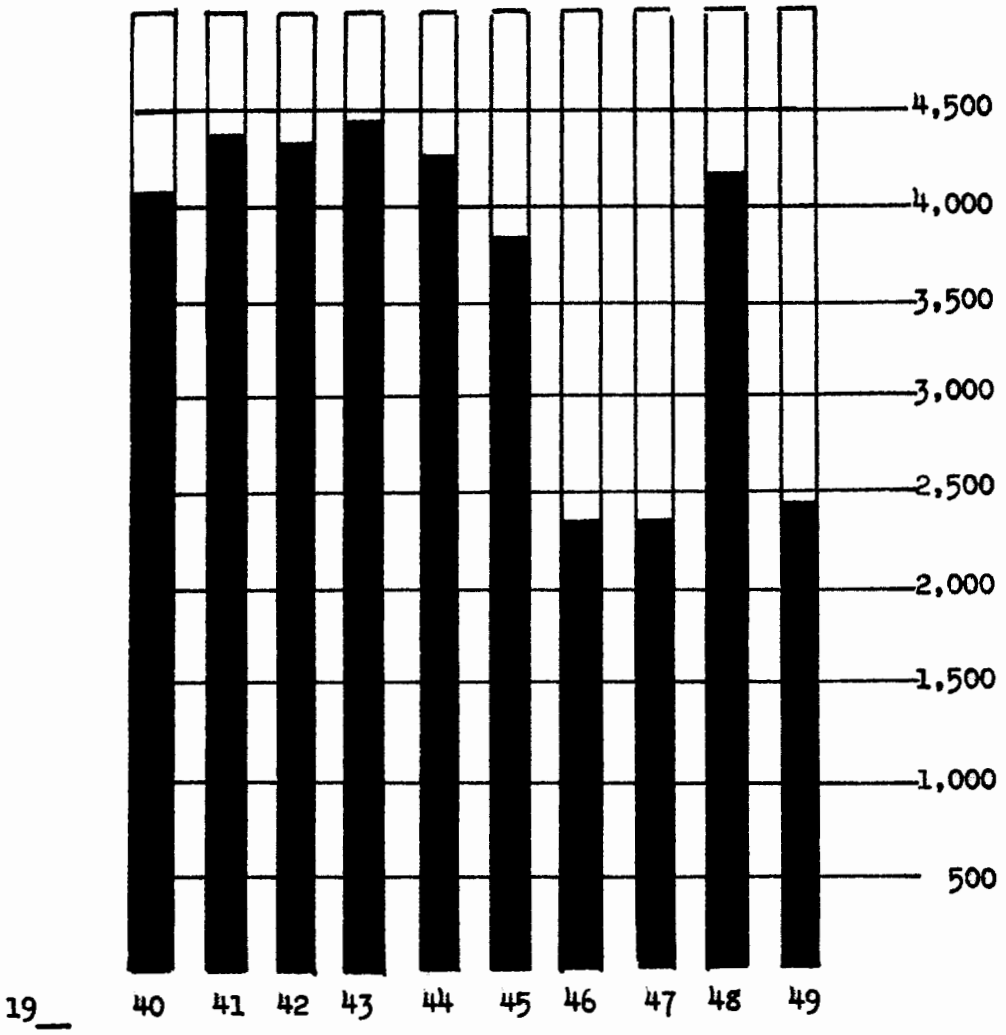

Figure 13

Number of Reference and Library Books

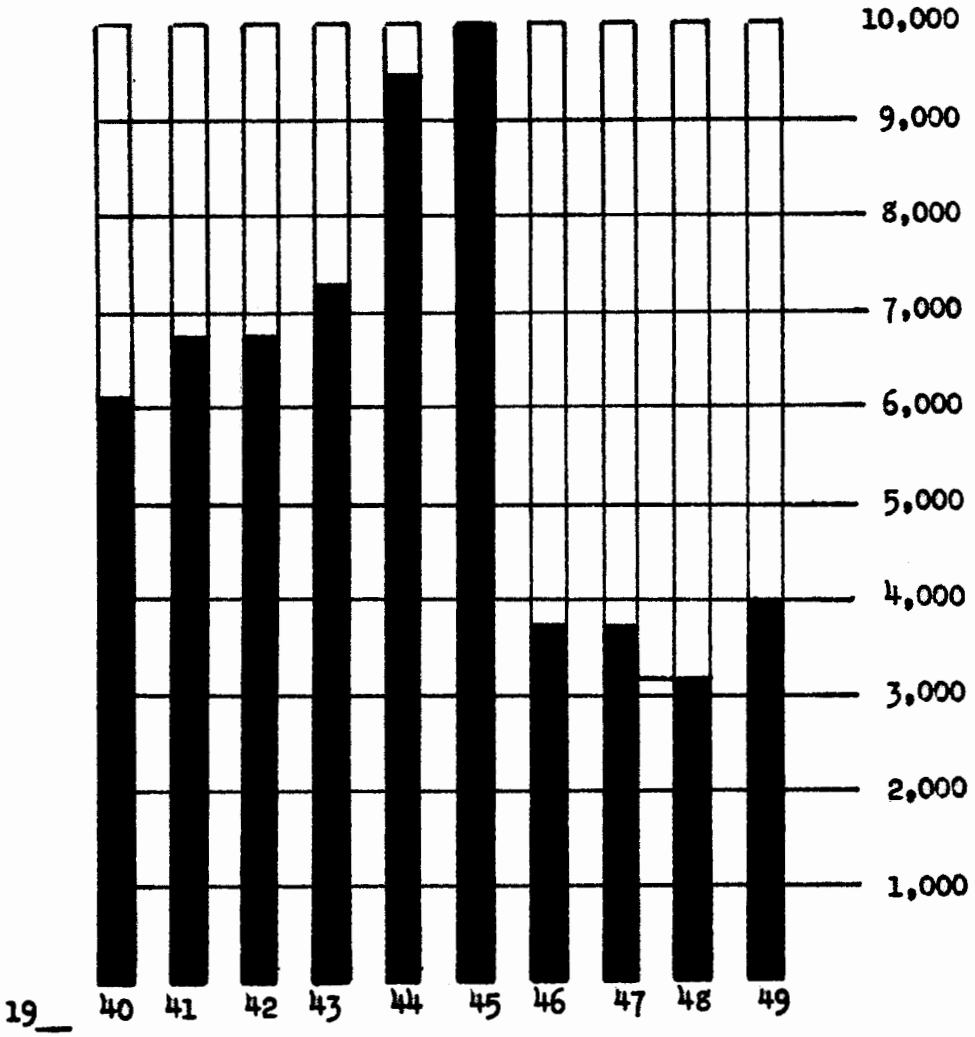

Figure 14

Number of Free Textbooks

VII. PUPIL DROP-OUTS

The data presented on Table III, page 63, has two purposes: (1) it shows the number of pupils at each grade level for each year, and (2) it gives the percentage of pupils going from one grade level to the next.

Those figures listed vertically in Column (1) are the actual enrollments in the first grade for each year, from 1940 through 1949. The figures in Column (2) show the percentage of children going into the second grade from grade one. The following illustration is an example showing how Table III should be read.

	8th	%	9th	%	10th	%	11th	%	12th
	(15)	(16)	(17)	(18)	(19)	(20)	(21)	(22)	(23)
1940									
1941									
1942	84								
1943		70	59						
1944				83	49				
1945						63	31		
1946								100	31
1947									
1948									
1949									

Column (16), in the example shown above, shows the percentage of children entering the ninth grade in 1943. Column (17) is the actual number of children entering the ninth grade. The 49 children in the tenth grade in 1944 (Column 19) is only 83 per cent (Column 18) of the number

that entered the ninth grade in 1943 (Column 17). Column (21) indicates that only 31 pupils entered grade eleven in 1945. This was 63 per cent (Column 20) of the tenth graders in 1944 (Column 19). In 1946, 100 per cent of the eleventh graders from 1945 went on into the twelfth grade (Columns 22 and 23).

The data shown in Table III presents strong evidence that the pupil holding power of the Evergreen District increased substantially in the years following reorganization.

Below is a summarization of the holding power of the schools in the Evergreen District during both the pre-reorganization and after-reorganization periods. Only grades eight through twelve are shown, since these are the years usually considered to have the highest frequency of drop-outs.

Per Cent of Eighth Grade Pupils Entering Ninth Grade:
1940-1944: 60.2 % (Average of the five-year period.)
1945-1949: 70.9 % (Average of the five-year period.)

Per Cent of Ninth Grade Pupils Entering Tenth Grade:
1940-1944: 85.5 % (Average of the five-year period.)
1945-1949: 97.0 % (Average of the five-year period.)

Per Cent of Tenth Grade Pupils Entering Eleventh Grade:

1940-1944: 83.5 % (Average of the five-year period.)

1945-1949: 84.2 % (Average of the five-year period.)

Per Cent of Eleventh Grade Pupils Entering Twelfth Grade:

1940-1944: 79.7 % (Average of the five-year period.)

1945-1949: 84.5 % (Average of the five-year period.)

The brief summarization given above would indicate that at each grade level, from eighth through twelfth, the Evergreen District had increased its ability to hold pupils in school subsequent to reorganization.

VIII. PER-PUPIL ASSESSED VALUATION OF ALL COMPONENT DISTRICTS PRIOR TO REORGANIZATION

The per-pupil assessed valuation of the component districts for the five-year period prior to reorganization is shown in Table IV, on page 65.

Of particular interest in this table is the decreasing valuation of each district over the five-year period. It will be noticed that in every district the per-pupil valuation is considerably lower in 1944 than it was in 1940. This can be attributed to the growth in the pupil population during the war years which is mentioned in detail earlier in this chapter.

TABLE III

Pupil-Holding Power Of The Evergreen Schools

By Grade Level And Year

YEAR	Gr. 1	%	Gr. 2	%	Gr. 3	%	Gr. 4	%	Gr. 5	%	Gr. 6	%	Gr. 7	%	Gr. 8	%	Gr. 9	%	Gr. 10	%	Gr. 11	%	Gr. 12
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)	(11)	(12)	(13)	(14)	(15)	(16)	(17)	(18)	(19)	(20)	(21)	(22)	(23)
1940	84		71		52		96		77		75		73		75		45		32		23		25
1941	98	108	91	99	70	112	59	100	97	100	77	99	73	100	73	60	45	93	42	106	34	80	18
1942	110	105	103	99	90	130	91	120	71	99	95	117	90	113	84	65	47	98	44	80	33	77	26
1943	147	124	137	131	135	142	128	149	136	140	105	135	128	115	105	70	59	68	32	64	28	73	24
1944	135	72	106	87	119	76	102	93	120	80	108	85	89	89	112	46	48	83	49	84	27	89	25
1945	127	90	121	88	93	94	112	94	96	96	115	97	102	83	74	54	61	110	53	63	31	80	21
1946	170	83	107	90	108	106	99	94	107	120	115	94	107	85	87	60	44	62	44	74	39	100	31
1947	140	77	132	104	111	94	102	93	92	103	110	90	101	81	87	79	69	114	50	104	46	74	29
1948	142	84	118	97	126	100	112	90	92	103	95	97	107	100	102	84	73	101	70	86	43	70	32
1949	139	94	134	103	122	104	130	94	96	103	95	108	103	95	102	77	79	98	69	94	66	98	42

It is interesting to note at this point that although the per-pupil valuation of the component districts was declining steadily, very little effort was made to increase the millage rate, and thereby increase the amount of local taxes with which schools could have been supported. Table V, on page 66, shows in detail the assessed valuation, the millage rate for school purposes, and the tax derived from the school millage.

Another disparity in financing education may be noted when Table I, on page 48, and Table IV, on page 65, are compared. In 1944, Orchards School District Number 80, with an enrollment of 398 pupils, had a per-pupil valuation of only $766. During the same year the smallest school, Harmony District Number 52, with an enrollment of only twenty-nine pupils, had a per-pupil valuation of $4,173. This was a ratio of 5.4 : 1. Thus, the Harmony District, with a ten mill levy was able to raise over forty dollars per-pupil, while the Orchards District, with a fourteen mill levy, could raise only ten dollars per-pupil.

Further evidence of the unequal tax burden among districts is seen when other districts are examined. For example: Burton District Number 45, with a fourteen mill levy in 1944, was able to raise only eighteen dollars per-pupil, while East Mill Plain District Number 4, with a ten mill levy in the same year, produced more than twenty-six dollars per-pupil.

TABLE IV

Per-Pupil Assessed Valuation Of Districts

No.	District	1940	1941	1942	1943	1944
4	East Mill Plain	$3686	$4105	$4254	$2906	$2666
5	Proebstel	4223	3197	3276	2122	2118
13	Livingston	5430	5521	4512	2618	
39	West Mill Plain	3953	3753	4181	1759	2405
45	Burton	1776	1946	1911	1153	1496
52	Harmony	4794	4577	5432	4618	4173
79	Fisher	9903	9222	7810	7390	6372
80	Orchards	1388	1381	1271	651	766

No.	District	1945	1946	1947	1948	1949
114	Evergreen	$2170	$2018	$1895	$1927	$1624

TABLE V

Yearly District Valuations and Taxes Derived From Millages

	1940			1941			1942			1943			1944		
District	Valuation	Levy in Mills	Tax	Valuation	Levy in Mills	Tax	Valuation	Levy in Mills	Tax	Valuation	Levy in Mills	Tax	Valuation	Levy in Mills	Tax
No. 4	$ 136,400	10	$ 1364	$ 135,460	10	$ 1355	$ 136,130	9.75	$ 1327	$ 139,481	10	$ 1395	$ 138,640	10	$ 1386
No. 5	156,260	10	1562	163,060	10	1631	163,810	9.75	1597	176,180	10	1762	180,050	10	1801
No. 13	38,010	10	380	38,630	10	386	40,570	9.75	396	41,890	10	419	44,890	10	449
No. 39	375,531	10	3755	375,323	10	3753	388,858	9.75	3791	413,388	10	4133	413,678	10	4137
No. 45	95,930	9	863	97,300	12	1168	99,400	11.75	1168	104,920	14	1468	108,300	14	1516
No. 52	110,270	9	992	114,420	10	1144	114,080	9.75	1112	119,140	10	1191	121,020	10	1210
No. 79	217,869	10	2179	212,107	10	2121	210,881	9.75	2056	219,833	10	2198	235,790	10	2358
No. 80	248,405	15	3726	254,125	15	3811	261,800	12.75	3338	274.080	14	3837	305,150	14	4272

	1945			1946			1947			1948			1949		
District	Valuation	Levy in Mills	Tax	Valuation	Levy in Mills	Tax	Valuation	Levy in Mills	Tax	Valuation	Levy in Mills	Tax	Valuation	Levy in Mills	Tax
No. 114	$			$ 1,593,880	25	$ 39,822	$ 1,637,595	15	$ 24,564	$ 1,732,157	45	$ 77,947	$ 1,790,930	15	$ 36,864

IX. PER-PUPIL ASSESSED VALUATION OF THE REORGANIZED DISTRICT

The per-pupil assessed valuation of the Evergreen School District, from 1945 through 1949, shows a definite downward trend. This is a direct result of the tremendous population increases in the area which was discussed earlier in this chapter.

Although the valuation per-pupil was considerably lower than would be desired, the reorganization did provide a leveling effect on the many small districts, thereby equalizing the tax burden among the property owners.

An examination of Table VI, on page 68, shows that although the assessed valuation of the district did increase annually, it was unable to keep pace with the growth in pupil population.

X. STATE SUPPORT

Table VII, on page 70, uses only two years of the pre-reorganization period to draw several comparisons. The first year, 1940, is used because it is the first year with which this study is concerned. The year 1944 is used because it is the last year prior to reorganization.

A comparison of the amount of local taxes for school purposes for each district indicates that in each district,

TABLE VI

District Assessed Valuation and Per-Pupil Valuation

Of The Evergreen School District

1945 - 1949

		Average Daily Attendance			
Year	Valuation	H.S.	Grade	Total	Per-pupil Valuation
1945	$1,632,498	124	628	752	$2,170
1946	1,592,889	124	665	789	2,018
1947	1,637,595	160	704	864	1,895
1948	1,732,157	195	704	899	1,927
1949	1,790,930	246	830	1,076	1,624

Source: Files in the office of the Clark County Assessor.

except District Number 39, the taxes increased substantially. In some districts the increase was two and three fold. However, it may be noted that the per cent of total revenues derived from local taxes does not reflect the increases in local district taxes. To the contrary, the percentage figures decrease considerably. This situation is a result of increased costs of education, and the larger apportionment granted by the State to compensate for the increased costs.

During the years after reorganization only small variations occurred in the amounts of local school district taxes. However, a marked increase may be noted in the amounts provided by the State. This, also, is a result of the increased pupil-population and the higher costs of public school education.

At this point it should be pointed out that although the local taxes provided a smaller percentage of the total cost of education after reorganization, the local effort of the new Evergreen District Number 114 was substantially greater. Table V, on page 66, shows that prior to reorganization the millage rates of the component districts ranged from nine to fifteen mills, whereas, after reorganization the range was from fifteen to forty-five mills.

TABLE VII

Comparison of Local District Taxes

And State Apportionments

YEAR	District No.	Local Levy in Mills	Local School District Taxes	State Apportionment	Per-cent of Total Revenues By Local District Taxes
1	4	10	$ 761.16	$ 2,037.91	23 %
	5	10	1,025.95	1,656.78	34 %
9	13	10	208.22	719.43	20 %
	39	10	2,808.93	4,688.13	34 %
4	45	9	284.94	3,043.88	7%
	52	9	520.35	884.82	32 %
0	79	10	769.01	1,262.86	34 %
	80	15	1,399.99	11,723.05	9 %
1	4	10	934.32	4,161.99	17 %
	5	10	1,102.34	6,920.44	13 %
9	13	10	295.01	1,345.26	17 %
	39	10	2,530.08	13,203.37	15 %
4	45	14	852.12	6,698.11	10 %
	52	10	750.88	2,289.16	23 %
4	79	10	1,470.79	3,777.30	27 %
	80	14	1,920.57	38,867.34	4 %
1946	114	25	16,361.62	99,533.74	13 %
1947	114	15	16,222.66	92,925.28	14 %
1948	114	45	15,883.96	144,568.70	9 %
1949	114	15	17,116.08	155,485.12	9 %

Source: Files in the office of the Clark County Assessor.

XI. TRANSPORTATION SUMMARY

Table VIII, on page 72, reveals some interesting data concerning the transportation provided for school children over the ten year period covered in this study.

Of primary interest is the rapid increase in the number of children that were transported by school conveyances. It may be noted that within the ten years there was an increase of from 236 pupils in 1940 to 1122 pupils in 1949 that were being provided transportation within the Evergreen District. This was an increase of 4.75 : 1. Although the total enrollment also showed a rapid growth during the same period (1.86 : 1), it by no means matched the increase in the number of pupils being provided school transportation.

In comparing the costs of transportation it was necessary again to convert the figures to the base-years 1947 and 1949. This was done to eliminate the distortion caused by fluctuations in dollar values over the ten year period.

When the cost column of Table VIII is examined, it appears evident that the per-pupil cost of transportation decreased considerably following reorganization. Although no positive evidence is available, it may be assumed that the change from contracted privately owned conveyances to

TABLE VIII

Summary of Transportation

Year	District	Number of Pupils Transported		Number of Conveyances		Total Cost Of Transporting Pupils	Total Cost Of Transporting Pupils
		Grade	H.S.	Private Owned	District Owned	Including Depreciation Actual Costs	Including Depreciation * Adjusted Costs
1940	39	53	35	3		$ 1,348.44	
	79	7	13	1		247.50	
	80	81	71		1	2,152.53	
	UHS.1	2	74	2		2,552.61	
1941	39	33	40	1		1,361.13	$ 1,864.75
	79		11	1		252.50	345.93
	80	71	59		1	2,419.59	3,314.94
	UHS.1		108	1		2,632.25	3,593.84
1942	39	45	39	2		1,433.62	1,863.71
	79		22	1		270.00	351.00
	80	101	60		2	3,317.05	4,312.17
	UHS.1		111	2		2,962.30	3,499.99
1943	39	133	32	1		1,479.20	1,863.79
	79		25	1		418.85	527.75
	80	158	74		2	5,536.56	6,976.07
	UHS.1	24	109	2		3,510.55	4,423.29
1944	39	43	21	1		1,597.00	1,996.25
	79	18	4	1		550.00	687.50
	80	172	65		2	6,682.98	8,353.73
	UHS.1		141		1	3,681.64	4,602.05
1945	114	240	524	2	3	12,883.85	15,847.13
1946	114	458	81	2	4	13,105.00	15,332.85
1947	114	115	38	2	5	16,184.89	16,832.28
1948	114	770	300	1	7	17,387.43	16,865.81
1949	114	782	340	1	7	18,368.35	18,000.99

* The adjusted cost figures are based on the base-years 1947 - 1949.

district owned conveyances, plus the reduced overlapping of bus routes had a great deal to do with the reduced cost of transportation per-pupil.

XIII. PER-PUPIL COST OF EDUCATION

Probably no other single factor in public school administration has more meaning to the administrators, or to the lay citizen, than does the per-pupil cost of education. Therefore, the data presented on Table IX, on page 75, is vital to this study.

Table IX shows three columns for each year of the study. In each case the first column presents the actual cost of education; the second column shows the index-numbers based on the 1947 - 1949 average of 100. The final, or third, column is the adjusted cost figure based on the Column-Two index numbers.

The data presented on Table IX gives strong evidence that there was little uniformity between districts in per-pupil expenditures prior to reorganization. For example, in 1941 the per-pupil cost of District Number 80 was only $71. When this amount is compared to the $149 cost in the Union High School District it shows a ratio of 2.1 : 1. An even greater differential may be noted in 1944. During that year, District Number 5 had a cost of $73 per-pupil,

and the Union High School District had a cost of $170. This was a ratio of 2.3 : 1. It would be hard to imagine that all children could possibly have received equal educational opportunity when such disparities in expenditures per-pupil existed.

The per-pupil costs after reorganization tended to be somewhat higher than the average costs of all districts prior to reorganization. However, this post-reorganization rise in costs could quite conceivably be justified by the expanded curriculum, the increased and improved instructional materials and equipment, the additional services provided, and the higher salaries paid to teachers. Also, it is evident, when the description of the pre-reorganization physical facilities are examined, that little money was expended in maintaining or improving the school buildings or grounds.

It is also interesting to note that although the post-reorganization costs per-pupil were higher than the pre-reorganization average of all districts, still, in several instances the costs in individual districts during the earlier period were actually much higher than in the later period. For example, in 1944, the $170 per-pupil cost in Union High School District was higher than any year following reorganization. This would lead to the

TABLE IX

Per-Pupil Cost of Education of the Ten Year Period

1940 Through 1949

	1940			1941			1942			1943			1944		
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(1)	(2)	(3)	(1)	(2)	(3)	(1)	(2)	(3)	(1)	(2)	(3)
East Mill Plain District Number 4	$ 65			$ 86	63	$118	$ 80	70	$104	$ 74	74	$ 93	$ 79	75	$ 99
Proebstel District Number 5	57			57	"	78	48	"	62	52	"	66	58	"	73
Livingston District Number 13	126			87	"	119	82	"	107	94	"	118			
West Mill Plain District Number 39	65			68	"	93	71	"	92	51	"	64	74	"	93
Burton District Number 45	89			63	"	86	54	"	70	52	"	66	65	"	81
Harmony District Number 52	79			55	"	75	60	"	78	67	"	84	75	"	94
Fisher District Number 79	54			95	"	130	85	"	111	70	"	88	124	"	155
Orchards District Number 80	50			52	"	71	93	"	121	60	"	76	74	"	93
Union High School District Number 1	120			109	"	149	118	"	153	131	"	165	136	"	170
Average per-pupil costs of all districts for each year of the pre-reorganization period.						$102			$100			$ 91			$107

	1945			1946			1947			1948			1949		
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(1)	(2)	(3)	(1)	(2)	(3)	(1)	(2)	(3)	(1)	(2)	(3)
Evergreen District Number 114	$104	77	$128	$111	83	$130	$133	96	$138	$172	103	$167	$153	102	$149

(1) Actual cost figures; (2) Index numbers (1947-1949 base years); (3) Adjusted cost figures, based on index numbers.

conclusion that some of the component districts actually witnessed a savings in money, while receiving a more adequate educational program for their children.

CHAPTER IV

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

The problem of this thesis was to examine the Evergreen School District, both before and after its reorganization, to determine: (1) whether or not the reorganization resulted in more acceptable educational services and facilities for all school children residing within its boundaries, and (2) whether reorganization had been accomplished without waste or unnecessary expenditure of public funds and without unfair financial advantages for its residents.

I. SUMMARY

The Evergreen School District is a consolidation of eight small rural schools, most of which were one and two room buildings. The buildings, at the time of reorganization, ranged from twenty to sixty years old. Each of the buildings was overcrowded, outmoded and generally unsatisfactory for present-day public school standards.

During the pre-reorganization period studied in this thesis there was a great variation in pupil-teacher ratios among the component districts. It was not at all uncommon to find one teacher with four times as many

pupils as another teacher in a nearby school. Of probably even greater significance was the fact that most of the teachers in these small schools were not teaching a single grade, but were often teaching as many as six or eight different grade levels.

Following reorganization a relatively stable pupil-teacher ratio was maintained. The ratio of pupils to teachers in the elementary schools was brought very near to the ideal ratio of 1 : 30 that has been recommended by educational authorities.

There was a definite increase in teachers' salaries during the period following reorganization. Although the median salary of classroom teachers had increased somewhat during the pre-reorganization period, the post-reorganization increases were much greater.

During the pre-reorganization period there were no special teachers in any of the small individual districts. It is significant to note that there was not even a vocational education teacher available in a community that was largely a farming community. No remedial programs were carried on in the schools, and none of the schools had a person designated as librarian.

Beginning in 1947, the newly reorganized district began hiring librarians, remedial teachers and vocational

education teachers. During the final year of this study, 1949, the district was employing two full-time remedial teachers, two full-time vocational education teachers, and one librarian on a half-time basis.

There is good evidence to indicate that the holding-power of the Evergreen District increased substantially in the years following reorganization.

Both before and after reorganization the per-pupil assessed valuation of the Evergreen District showed a steady decline. This was largely as a result of the tremendous growth in pupil-population that occurred during the early years of World War II.

Although the reorganization did not increase the per-pupil valuation appreciably, it did provide a leveling effect on the many small districts, thereby equalizing the tax burden among the property owners.

Although local taxes provided a smaller percentage of the total cost of education after reorganization, the local effort of the new Evergreen District Number 114 was substantially greater. Prior to reorganization the millage rates of the component districts ranged from nine to fifteen mills, whereas, after reorganization the range was from fifteen to forty-five mills. This situation was the result of the tremendous increase in pupil-population and the higher costs of public-school education.

Table VIII, on page 72, reveals that there was a great increase in the number of children that were provided with free school transportation during the ten-year period being considered in this study. This table shows that in 1940 only 236 pupils were being transported, while in 1949 a total of 1122 pupils were making use of free school transportation.

It was also significant to note that although more pupils were being transported after reorganization, the per-pupil cost of transportation had substantially been reduced. This fact has been attributed to the change from contracted privately owned conveyances to district owned conveyances, plus the reduced overlapping of bus routes.

Prior to reorganization there was little uniformity between the component districts in per-pupil expenditures for education. Some districts were spending more than twice as much per-child as their neighboring districts. In view of such evidence it is quite apparent that there was little equality of educational opportunity among the various component districts.

Following reorganization the per-pupil costs tended to be somewhat higher than the average costs of all districts of the earlier period. However, in several

instances the costs in individual districts during the pre-reorganization period were actually much higher than in the later period.

II. CONCLUSIONS

From the evidence presented in this study it is apparent that the reorganization of the several small individual districts into one unified school district actually resulted in a more satisfactory educational program, at very little extra cost per-pupil for most districts.

In the case of several of the component districts there was an actual savings in money, while the children were receiving a more adequate educational program.

This study has revealed to the writer a great many related questions in the field of school district reorganization that are in need of careful and complete analysis. Among these questions are: Are educational outcomes better achieved in reorganized districts? What are community attitudes before and after reorganization? Why do elections on reorganization fail in some communities and carry in others? Is community integration fortified or weakened in reorganized units? What legislation should be incorporated in the Washington State school code? These are only a few of the many pressing questions that will need to be

answered in the next few years if our State is to achieve a truly satisfactory pattern of school district organization. The continuance of small, inefficient, costly, and educationally weak districts is a burden that the State of Washington cannot afford.

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