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NAME AND ADDRESS DATE

A PROPOSED PLAN FOR THE REORGANIZATION OF THE RURAL SCHOOLS OF SEMINOLE COUNTY, OKLAHOMA, IN THE FACE OF DIMINISHING REVENUES

By

Dale Rogers

A Thesis

Submitted in partial fulfillment of the

Requirements for the Degree of

Master of Arts in Education

University of New Mexico

1939

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This thesis, directed and approved by the candidate's committee, has been accepted by the Graduate Committee of the University of New Mexico in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

MASTER OF ARTS

Leo F. Hammond
DEAN

May 29, 1940
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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

After observing the increased enrollment in schools in the United States, the greater holding power of the schools of today, and the inclination of the school administrators to offer a more enriched educational program, it seems evident that the average layman has awakened to a new realization of the importance of education. These conditions have created a demand for better types of school buildings, more and better equipment, and more efficient and highly trained teachers. These and many other factors have combined to increase rapidly the cost of education in the past few years, until the present bill for the nations schools is approximately three billion dollars annually. Indications point to the fact, however, that such expenditures cannot continue to increase indefinitely. In fact, in many localities the problem of maintaining the present educational level in the face of diminishing revenue has become acute. This is particularly true in some sections of Oklahoma.

I. THE PROBLEM

Statement of the problem. It will be the purpose of this study to make a survey of the conditions existing in

the schools of Seminole County, Oklahoma, at the present time, to make a survey of the conditions that existed before the discovery of oil, to make as careful an analysis as possible of the existing factors which might show what conditions will exist in the future, and, from a consideration of these conditions, to formulate a proposed plan of organization that will enable these schools to continue to function at the present rate of efficiency after the revenue from oil has been lost.

Delimitation of the problem. This study will deal only with those schools of Seminole County which are maintained for the white children and are under the direct supervision of the county superintendent. This will include one separate school, one consolidated school, eight union-graded schools, and twenty-four dependent districts.

Importance of the study. Oil was discovered in Seminole County in 1923. There followed a rapid increase in the enrollment of many districts in the county. The school administrators were fortunate, however, in that the revenues derived from oil supplemented those obtained from the common sources at that time sufficiently to enable them to develop the schools to a higher degree of efficiency than existed before. Many of the districts were enriched to the extent that quite elaborate programs of expansion were carried on

at little expense to those who paid the ad valorem taxes.

Each year the schools of Oklahoma are examined by High School Inspectors from the State Department of Education as to efficiency in administration of the school, the mastery of subject matter by the pupils, and the type of buildings and equipment furnished by each district. An examination of the reports on these inspections discloses the fact that the schools of Seminole County rank among the best in the state, at the present time. The revenues derived from oil, however, have decreased in the past two or three years and appear to be definitely on the decline. The investigator forsees the time when the present sources of revenue, excluding oil, may be insufficient to operate the schools as they are organized at present. Then, too, there is a tendency on the part of the smaller districts to try to duplicate the attainments of the larger and richer ones. Such circumstances might result in large expenditures for buildings and equipment that will not be needed in the near future. Some plan of organization should be possible that, when put into effect, would enable the poorer districts to have the same educational opportunities enjoyed by the larger and richer districts without the dangers of over-expansion.

Similar boom conditions have existed at many places in the United States, causing a rapid increase in the demands placed on the educational facilities of a restricted area.

Then in a few years the countryside settled back to the previous even tenor of life. In some of these cases fine school houses with gaunt, unoccupied rooms stand as monuments to a poorly organized educational program, monuments to a group of administrators who lacked either vision or information of what the future held for that community. Perhaps this study can serve to prevent the erection of such monuments in Seminole County.

There are many other industries besides oil, such as mining, construction of large dams, and other enterprises, that create like conditions. To what extent the recommendations submitted in this study will be applicable to other counties or these other industries will be dependent upon the extent of the similarity of conditions. The theory upon which this study is based should apply equally well if the differences in emphasis upon particular problems are taken into consideration.

II. DEFINITIONS OF TERMS USED

Separate schools. In Oklahoma, the first factor determining the status of a school district is the race of the majority. If there are more white people than negroes, it is known as a white majority district. If there are more negroes, it is known as a colored majority district. In either case the majority elects the school board for that

district. In districts outside of incorporated towns and cities, the schools attended by the minority race are known as separate schools. Such schools are supported by a fund derived by levying a tax against the entire county and are administered by the county superintendent.

Dependent districts. Dependent districts are single majority districts lying outside of incorporated towns and cities. Such districts have a board of education composed of three members elected for a term of three years each. The schools of such districts are supported principally by ad valorem taxes paid on the assessed valuation of the district. They are prohibited by law from operating buses for the transportation of pupils.

Union-graded schools. A union-graded school is a majority school lying outside of an incorporated town or city and is composed of two or more originally dependent districts. One school is maintained in which all work is offered from the primary grade through the high school. In addition, as many wing schools may be maintained throughout the district as may be deemed necessary. These wing schools offer the first six grades only. There is a board of education composed of three members and elected for a term of three years each. If the union-graded district is composed of three or more originally dependent districts, not more

than one member may be elected from each of the original districts. Otherwise they are elected at large. Transportation of pupils, living more than one mile from school by the commonly traveled road, may be furnished if voted for by 60 per cent of the eligible voters of the district.

Consolidated schools. A consolidated school is a majority school district, usually rural, but may include an incorporated town or city within the limits of the district, and is composed of two or more originally dependent districts. The consolidated school differs from a union-graded school in that only one school is maintained, in which all work from the primary grade through the high school is offered. The board of education is composed of three members elected from the district at large for a term of three years. In the consolidated district, transportation of all pupils living more than one mile from school by the commonly traveled road is mandatory.

Assessed valuation. The assessed valuation of a district is the total value, as listed with the county assessor, of all real estate, personal property, and public utilities within the boundaries of the district. Usually this property is listed at about 50 to 60 per cent of its actual value. Real estate includes all lands with their buildings and other improvements. Personal property includes such things

as furniture, livestock, farming implements, store fixtures and stock, oil field equipment, diamonds, money, stocks, and bonds. Public utilities include electric highlines, electric substations, pipelines, gas mains, privately owned bridges, and the like.

One provision of vital interest to the schools of Seminole County is that any oil field equipment used to get the oil out of the well and into the stock tanks is not assessable.

III. SOURCES OF THE DATA

The data for this study were obtained (1) from the files of the assessor's, treasurer's, and county superintendent's offices in Seminole County; (2) from the records in the office of the Oklahoma State Department of Education; (3) from the back issues of the Seminole (Oklahoma) Producer; (4) from the back issues of the Wewoka (Oklahoma) Times-Democrat; and (5) from interviews with the present superintendents of the rural schools of Seminole County.

Review of related literature. So far as the investigator has been able to find, there has been no previous study made concerning the reorganization of the rural schools of Seminole County. Several books and magazine articles have been read relating to rural school organization programs

and county organization. Some of these, however, were closely enough related to summarize here.

IV. METHOD OF PROCEDURE

The most pertinent data gathered from the above sources will be shown by tables, graphs, and maps. After making a careful analysis of these data, a plan will be proposed for the future organization of the Seminole County schools. The measures of central tendency and dispersion used throughout this study will be the mean and standard deviation.

V. ORGANIZATION OF THE REMAINDER OF THE THESIS

The text of this study will be divided into four sections. Chapter II will be a survey of the conditions that existed in the rural schools of Seminole County before the discovery of oil in 1923.

Chapter III will present a review of the development of the above schools from 1923 until the present time. This review will show the present status as to size, finances, building facilities, equipment, transportation facilities, special departments, and personnel.

In Chapter IV of this study, an estimate will be made of the probable conditions and problems to be faced in the

near future. This estimate will be based upon the probable life of the oil fields, the present status of the farming conditions, probable revenues from state and federal aid, population trends, and the status of homestead exemptions.

Finally the recommendations made and a summary of the study will be presented in Chapter V.

CHAPTER II

THE ORGANIZATION, ADMINISTRATION, AND COST OF THE RURAL SCHOOLS OF SEMINOLE COUNTY IN 1922-23.

I. INTRODUCTION

Seminole County, in the south-central portion of Oklahoma, has an area of 633 square miles, a mean altitude of 900 feet, and an average annual rainfall of forty-two inches. The land is mostly rolling prairie, with an occasional small wooded area. There are approximately 300,000 acres of tillable land and 187,500 acres of wooded areas. It is bounded on the north by the North Canadian River, on the south by the South Canadian River, on the east by Hughes County, and on the west by Pottawatomie County.[1]

Seminole County was originally a part of the country later called Indian Territory. It was a part of the reservation given the Seminole and Pottawatomie Indians by the treaty of February 20, 1867. According to the agreements stipulated in a treaty between the Seminoles and the Federal government in 1866, the freedmen were given the same rights as the Indians. From this period until the early nineties there were no white families in the area then known as the

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[1] Oklahoma Almanac, The Oklahoma Publishing Co., Oklahoma City, Oklahoma , 1931 Edition, p. 49.

Seminole Nation. Wewoka, the present county seat, was selected as the capital just after the Civil War and remained the seat of government until statehood in 1907. At that time it was designated as the county seat of Seminole County, which had practically the same boundaries as the Seminole Nation.

The schools attended by the Seminoles from the Civil War period to statehood were called missions and were maintained by the United States Government. The two largest missions in this area were Mekusukey Academy and Emakaka Academy. The former was used until 1938, when it was destroyed by fire. The first schools for white children were established just prior to 1900 and were supported by tuition charged the pupils. These schools were known as subscription schools.

About 1900 the Seminole Nation permitted the Indians and freedmen to lease their lands to the white settlers for agricultural purposes. This resulted in many families moving into the country to engage in farming and cattle raising and to make it their permanent place of abode. In 1904, the Federal government removed restrictions from some of the land which permitted the freedmen to sell part of their allotment. This was an incentive to a new group of white settlers who came in to engage in both farming and merchandising.

With the advent of statehood, there was a county superintendent selected to head the schools of the new county.

The first records kept for the county schools were those of the school year 1908-1909. For that year there were 3,175 white pupils enrolled and sixty-six teachers employed. The average salary paid men teachers in the county that year was $54.61 a month, while the average salary of women teachers was $44.46.

From 1909 to 1922 there was a gradual growth, the school population increasing about 50 per cent. At that time Seminole County was distinctly rural. There were no existing conditions that would tend to make it stand out educationally from the other counties of the state. The population of the county at that time was 23,808. There were four small villages, none of which had a population of over one thousand. In addition to the schools maintained by these villages, there were three union-graded schools, two separate schools, one consolidated school, and thirty-six common school districts. All of these with the exception of the village schools were under the supervision of the county superintendent. It is the purpose of this chapter to portray the conditions that existed at that time in the schools under the county superintendent's supervision.

II. THE SCHOOL PLANTS

Buildings. The majority of the school buildings in use in 1922 were inadequate to meet the existing needs.

There was no centralized authority to set up regulations concerning their construction. Many of them were nothing but fire traps and health hazards. They were built with little if any consideration given to health, aesthetics, or the demands to be placed upon them in the future. Of the sixty-two school buildings then used in the county, 40 were one room schools, 10 were two room schools, 5 were three room schools, 7 were four rooms or larger, and all but 10 were frame buildings. The efficiency of those buildings apparently was not high, since only six districts, each of which had at least two buildings, estimated the value of their buildings and grounds combined to be more than $2,000.00. The estimated value of the buildings and grounds of all the dependent and union-graded districts in the county was $62,600.00.

Sites. Only eight districts had over two acres in their school sites, the median size being 1.52 acres. Those eight districts, including two that maintained two buildings on separate sites, owned sites from three to five acres in size.

Furniture and fixtures. The meager supply of furniture, fixtures, and equipment was entirely inadequate. Many teachers did not have a chair or desk and it was a very common sight to see two pupils occupying one single desk.

The only equipment owned by the districts and shown in the records of the county superintendent's office was library books. No district owned more than fifty, and 1,490 was the total number in the entire county. During the school year 1922-23 420 new library books were bought.

III. PERSONNEL STATUS

County superintendent. The county superintendent was the administrative head of the rural schools of Seminole County. From statehood to 1928 he was elected for a term of four years. At that time the term was changed to two years. He is sworn into office on the first Monday of July after his election in November. In 1922 the county superintendent drew an annual salary of $1,850 and was allowed one clerk at a salary of $900.

Teachers. The rural teaching staff of the county was composed of forty-two men and fifty-seven women. Of these ninety-nine teachers, five taught some high school work. Only the one consolidated school and the three union-graded schools had included any high school work in their curricula by 1922 and they offered only the first two years. None of the teachers held a state certificate, each holding a first, second, or third grade county certificate. The certificates were based on a high school diploma and an examination given by the county superintendent, the grade of the certificate

being regulated by the averages made on the examinations. All persons teaching high school subjects held a first grade county certificate. Table I shows the qualifications of the teachers and the average monthly salary paid each class for the school year 1922-23. The average salary paid all teachers in the county that year, regardless of qualifications, was $899.58 for an average term of seven and eight-tenths months, an average of $115.33 per month for the time taught.

Pupils. The increase in enrollment for the first fifteen years of statehood was very gradual. By 1922 the enrollment for the first eight grades had reached 4,475 in the rural schools alone. This number was approximately 78 per cent of the 5,753 children of school age enumerated for that year. But the actual conditions were shown more clearly by the average daily attendance. As an average of 2,304 pupils attended for the entire year, only 40 per cent of those of school age were in actual attendance in the grades. The conditions were more startling in the high school, with only 123 enrolled and an average daily attendance of sixty-one. Of these 123, fifteen were transferred from districts in which there were no high schools.

IV. FINANCIAL STATUS

Assessed valuation. The total assessed valuation of the forty rural school districts in Seminole County in

TABLE I

QUALIFICATIONS AND SALARIES OF THE TEACHERS IN THE DEPENDENT SCHOOLS OF SEMINOLE COUNTY FOR THE SCHOOL YEAR 1922-23

Qualification	Number of teachers		Average monthly salary		Average term
	Men	Women	Men	Women	(Months)
1st Grade County	17	17	$136.50	$124.70	7.9
2nd Grade County	15	19	137.60	100.80	7.8
3rd Grade County	10	21	112.50	94.05	7.7
Total	42	57			
Average			$130.46	$122.98	7.8

January, 1923, was $5,135,098.00. This figure included the assessment of all personal property, real estate, and public utilities. Table II shows the distribution of this amount by districts as well as the wealth per pupil enumerated in each district. Figure 1, page 19, gives a graphic representation of this distribution. There were twelve districts having more than $1,000.00 of wealth behind each child of school age. Even though every district had used the full fifteen mill levy allowed to raise funds for current expenses, the educational opportunities would have been far from equalized. District 18 could have raised $41.63 per child from local sources while District 33 could have raised only $6.16. District 18, however, was one of the four which used less than the 15 mills allowed. On the basis of the assessed valuation, the largest sum which could have been raised locally for current expenses would have been $77,026.47. This sum would have lacked $15, 481.26 of equaling the $92,507.73 paid for teachers' salaries that year.

Sources of revenue. The inability of the rural schools to be self-supporting was very apparent even then. The total expenditures for that year were $117,281.13, which was 52.2 per cent more than could be raised by local means. The sources of revenue for each district for the school year 1922-23 are shown in Table III, page 20. The local revenue was raised from ad valorem taxes paid on the assessed valuations.

TABLE II

COMPARISON OF WEALTH PER CHILD ENUMERATED IN THE DEPENDENT DISTRICTS OF SEMINOLE COUNTY FOR THE SCHOOL YEAR 1922-1923

District number	Valuation 1922-1923	Enumeration	Wealth per child	Rank
C. D. 1	$ 187,260	308	$ 607.98	31
U. G. 1	317,385	264	1,202.23	11
U. G. 2	256,750	306	835.78	22
U. G. 3	591,285	556	1,081.45	12
S. D. 2	49,230	31	1,568.71	5
S. D. 3	63,613	106	600.12	32
S. D. 8	115,515	132	875.11	20
S. D. 9	68,450	124	552.01	36
S. D. 10	50,057	106	472.40	38
S. D. 11	112,540	129	889.46	16
S. D. 12	209,545	108	1,972.73	4
S. D. 13	106,780	121	882.48	18
S. D. 14	65,670	84	781.79	24
S. D. 15	81,340	92	884.13	17
S. D. 16	210,032	49	2,234.28	3
S. D. 18	224,842	81	2,775.82	1
S. D. 20	154,570	155	997.22	13
S. D. 23	78,675	108	728.47	26
S. D. 24	85,545	120	712.96	27
S. D. 25	159,435	202	789.28	23
S. D. 26	86,430	142	608.66	30
S. D. 27	72,308	130	556.21	35
S. D. 28	116,330	150	775.53	25
S. D. 30	182,655	126	1,449.65	7
S. D. 31	168,485	128	1,316.29	8
S. D. 32	209,545	136	1,540.77	6
S. D. 33	73,060	178	410.45	40
S. D. 35	175,769	136	1,292.42	10
S. D. 36	53,605	90	595.61	33
S. D. 37	47,290	101	468.22	39
S. D. 38	112,004	131	855.00	21
S. D. 40	154,304	176	876.72	19
S. D. 42	120,716	190	635.35	28
S. D. 43	72,460	125	619.68	29
S. D. 44	58,575	104	562.26	34
S. D. 45	205,965	159	1,295.34	9
S. D. 47	53,305	59	903.47	15
S. D. 51	73,460	146	503.15	37
S. D. 53	162,135	65	2,494.38	2
S. D. 54	51,170	54	947.59	14
TOTALS	$5,438,108	5,753		
AVERAGE			$ 945.28	

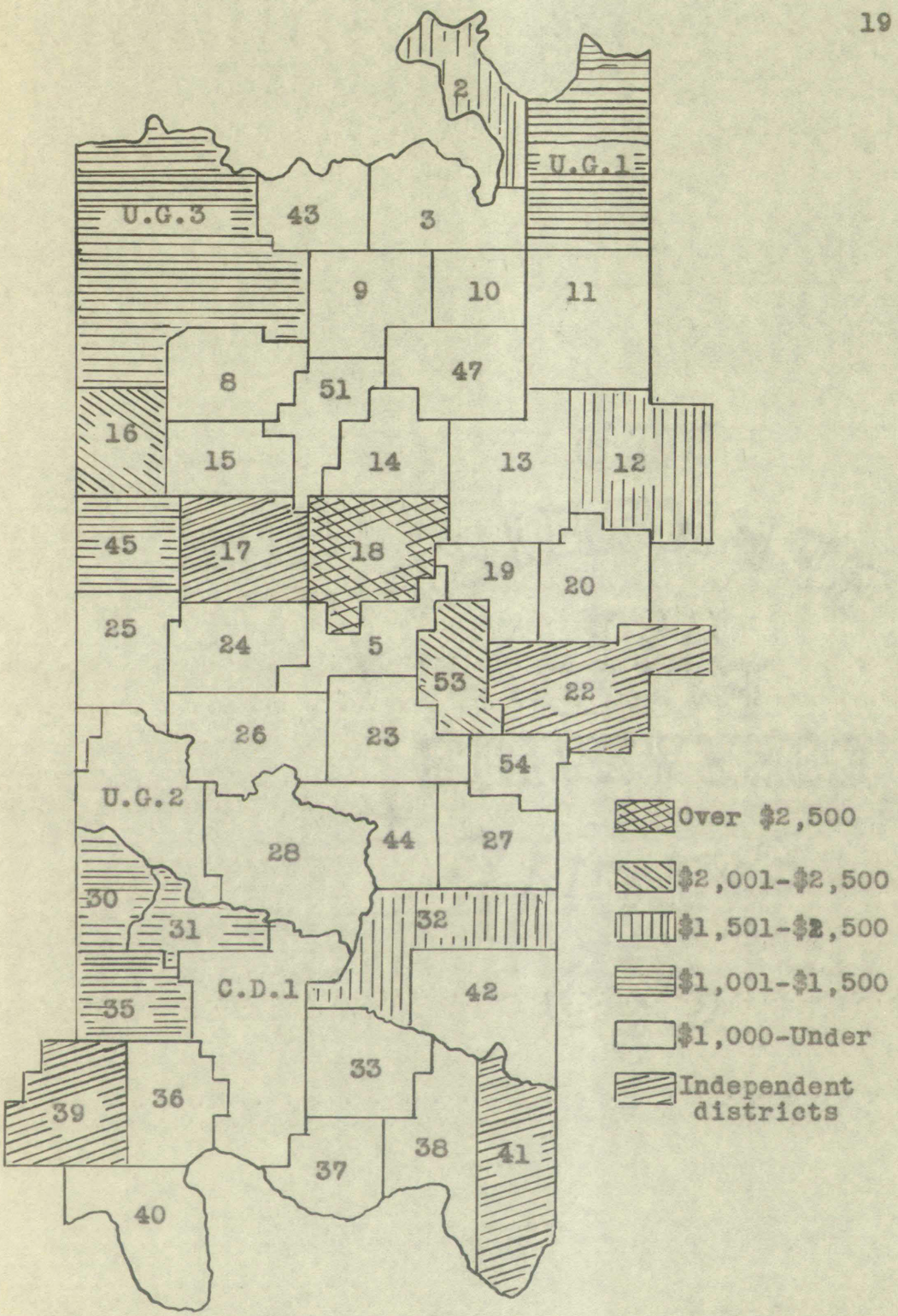

FIGURE 1

WEALTH PER PUPIL ENUMERATED IN THE DEPENDENT DISTRICTS OF SEMINOLE COUNTY FOR THE SCHOOL YEAR 1922-1923

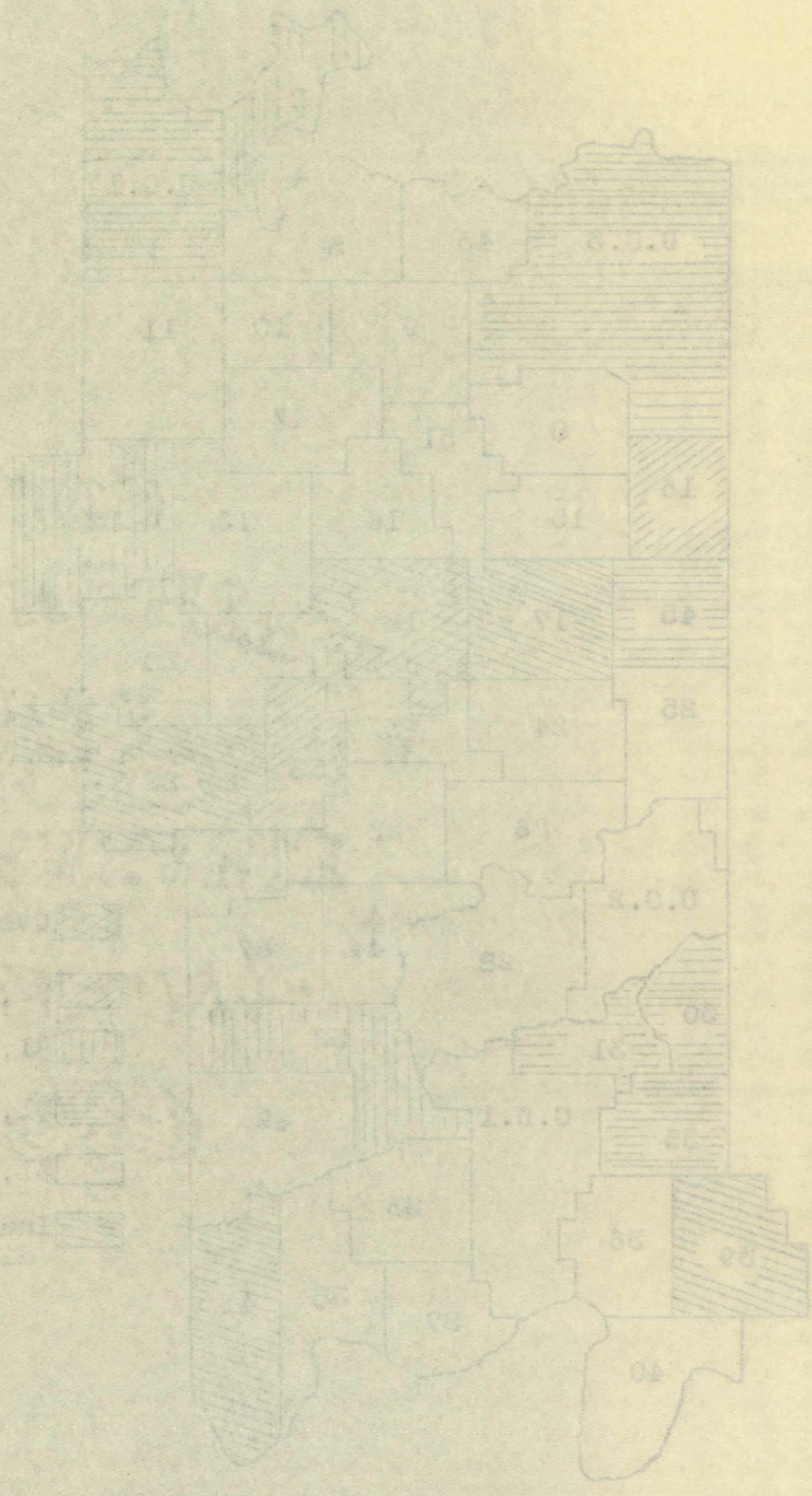

TABLE III

SOURCES OF REVENUE FOR THE DEPENDENT DISTRICTS OF SEMINOLE COUNTY FOR THE SCHOOL YEAR 1922-23

District number	Local	State	County	Federal	Total
C. D. 1	$2,586.04	$3,298.99	$129.46	$	$6,014.49
U. G. 1	3,300.14	152.02	200.99	6.40	3,659.55
U. G. 2	3,924.53	638.90	119.40		4,682.83
U. G. 3	7,605.99	3,377.94	222.56		11,206.49
S. D. 2	742.86	155.89	342.57		1,241.32
S. D. 3	781.20	701.82			1,483.02
S. D. 8	753.89	370.23	47.76		1,176.88
S. D. 9	908.07	906.38	66.66		1,881.11
S. D. 10	1,350.11	494.88	91.91	9.70	1,946.60
S. D. 11	753.87	278.41	51.16		1,083.44
S. D. 12	2,391.47	304.99	54.91		2,751.37
S. D. 13	988.41	502.99	89.56		1,580.96
S. D. 14	974.82	258.26	48.96		1,282.04
S. D. 15	1,220.97	447.51	46.96		1,715.44
S. D. 16	2,667.30	1,390.07	86.16		4,143.53
S. D. 18	2,341.42	414.98	72.11		2,828.51
S. D. 20	2,266.45	178.49		23.20	2,468.14
S. D. 23	1,048.89	730.50	53.51	59.90	1,892.80
S. D. 24	1,248.72	868.86	57.36		2,174.94
S. D. 25	2,173.36	452.00	80.46		2,705.82
S. D. 26	1,020.26	844.15	75.21		1,939.62
S. D. 27	1,280.26	743.79	63.31		2,087.36
S. D. 28	1,879.54	1,382.99	79.60	28.30	3,370.43
S. D. 30	1,945.62	268.96	62.61		2,277.19
S. D. 31	897.01	585.20	62.96		1,545.17
S. D. 32	2,537.21	1,021.70	110.56		3,669.47
S. D. 33	947.45	57.51	27.90		1,905.69
S. D. 35	2,880.90	359.94	66.12		3,306.96
S. D. 36	706.64	340.63	960.91		2,008.18
S. D. 37	528.85	266.08	151.47		946.40
S. D. 38	1,639.67	417.47	449.94		2,407.08
S. D. 40	2,423.87	1,304.39	83.96		3,812.22
S. D. 42	1,738.96	1,567.12	86.76		3,392.84
S. D. 43	554.00	582.41	56.16		1,192.57
S. D. 44	794.80	229.50	40.21	11.50	1,076.01
S. D. 45	3,244.83	445.96	78.01	32.90	3,801.70
S. D. 47	767.42	383.41	37.06		1,187.89
S. D. 51	1,199.87	326.04	59.81	3.50	1,589.22
S. D. 53	1,700.61	325.35	67.71		2,093.67
S. D. 54	617.87	850.86	51.76		1,520.49
TOTALS	$69,255.33	$29,117.51	$4,569.83	$203.20	$103,145.86

Marker			
0.	B.	1	
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0.	B.	45	
0.	B.	46	
0.	B.	47	
0.	B.	48	
0.	B.	49	
0.	B.	50	
0.	B.	51	
0.	B.	52	
0.	B.	53	
0.	B.	54	

The Federal government paid each district ten cents for each days attendance by a child of school age who was a member of the Five Civilized Tribes and lived outside the limits of an incorporated city. This tuition comprised the federal revenue.

The county revenue was derived from certain fines paid in the county which went to the support of the public schools. The funds were divided among the districts on an enumeration basis.

When Oklahoma was admitted to the Union in 1907, sections sixteen and thirty-six of each township were granted to the state for the support of the public schools. In addition, the state received $5,000,000.00 in gold in lieu of grants in the old Indian Territory.[1] These lands and moneys are under the supervision of the State School Land Commission. The rent and interest from these grants are divided among all the public schools of the state on an enumeration basis and make up the major portion of the state revenue.

The total revenue for 1922-1923, as shown in Table III, was $103,145.89, which left a deficit of $14,135.27 for the year. This amount had to be collected the following year in

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[1]Elwood P. Cubberley, State School Administration (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1927), p. 25.

the form of tax judgments.

Bonded indebtedness. The issuance of bonds by a school district in Oklahoma is regulated by the following constitutional provision:

> No . . . school district, . . . or subdivision of the state shall be allowed to become indebted, in any manner, or for any purpose, to an amount exceeding, in any year, the income and revenue provided for such year without the assent of three-fifths of the voters thereof, voting at an election, to be held for that purpose, nor in cases requiring such assent, shall any indebtedness be allowed to be incurred to an amount including any existing indebtedness, in the aggregate exceeding five per centum of the valuation of the taxable property therein, to be assertained from the last assessment for State and county purposes previous to the incurring of such indebtedness; . . .[1]

In determining the amount of indebtedness which may be incurred by a school district, the amount of the outstanding bonded indebtedness should be added to the amount of the outstanding warrant indebtedness for prior fiscal years, and to that total should be added the amount of the proposed bond issue. From this amount is subtracted the amount of the assets in the sinking fund. If the remainder does not exceed 5 per cent of the taxable value of the property in the school district, the bond may be issued.

The total outstanding bonds and judgments of the rural schools in 1922-23 amounted to $158,320.00. The bonds had been issued mainly for the purchase of sites and the

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[1]Oklahoma State Constitution, Section XXVI, Article 10.

TABLE IV

BONDED INDEBTEDNESS AND VALUE OF SCHOOL PROPERTY OF THE DEPENDENT DISTRICTS OF SEMINOLE COUNTY, 1922-23

District number	Estimated value of property	Bonds and judgments	Sinking fund levy (mills)
C.D. 1	$5,000.00	$ 2,495.00	9.0
U.G. 1	6,000.00	5,000.00	6.2
U.G. 2	4,000.00	15,000.00	5.0
U.G. 3	5,000.00	34,000.00	6.4
S.D. 2	1,200.00	1,000.00	2.5
S.D. 3	1,000.00	1,200.00	2.2
S.D. 8	1,000.00	2,000.00	7.3
S.D. 9	800.00	2,500.00	4.3
S.D. 10	900.00	2,200.00	5.1
S.D. 11	1,200.00	1,200.00	5.0
S.D. 12	1,200.00	2,400.00	0.12
S.D. 13	1,200.00	1,300.00	1.0
S.D. 14	1,200.00	1,500.00	4.0
S.D. 15	1,000.00	2,500.00	3.7
S.D. 16	1,500.00	5,690.00	2.7
S.D. 18	1,800.00	2,200.00	---*
S.D. 20	1,600.00	1,000.00	6.1
S.D. 23	1,000.00	2,600.00	3.8
S.D. 24	900.00	5,000.00	7.3
S.D. 25	1,500.00	1,083.32	3.6
S.D. 26	1,000.00	2,600.00	3.0
S.D. 27	1,100.00	1,800.00	8.0
S.D. 28	1,400.00	8,068.33	3.8
S.D. 30	1,000.00	4,000.00	6.0
S.D. 31	700.00	2,600.00	4.1
S.D. 32	2,000.00	5,000.00	4.6
S.D. 33	1,200.00	3,000.00	1.5
S.D. 35	1,800.00	2,000.00	5.5
S.D. 36	1,000.00	1,800.00	4.4
S.D. 37	1,000.00	2,200.00	7.0
S.D. 38	1,000.00	6,333.33	3.4
S.D. 40	2,800.00	5,000.00	2.0
S.D. 42	2,400.00	2,200.00	3.3
S.D. 43	1,000.00	2,000.00	2.5
S.D. 44	1,200.00	1,200.00	0.5
S.D. 45	1,200.00	1,000.00	4.7
S.D. 47	1,000.00	4,300.00	4.5
S.D. 51	900.00	4,350.00	4.0
S.D. 53	1,000.00	5,500.00	1.0
S.D. 54	1,800.00	1,500.00	6.2
TOTALS	$62,600.00	$158,319.98	

*not available

erection of buildings. A comparison of the bonded indebtedness with the value of the property owned by each district is shown in Table IV. At that time the rural schools were bonded for 3.08 per cent of their assessed valuation. Included in this debt were the judgments rendered against the districts in court. These judgments were obtained as payment for materials purchased for which no warrants had been written or for the collection of unpaid warrants. All judgments were collected as part of the sinking fund and paid in three annual installments.

From Table IV it may be seen that likely a large portion of the sinking fund levy was to be applied to the payment of judgments. This conclusion would be reached because of the bonded indebtedness being, generally, much higher than the estimated value of the school property.

V. SUMMARY

The rural schools of Seminole County in 1922 were poorly equipped from every standpoint. A majority of them were overcrowded one or two-room schools. No provisions were made to safeguard health or stimulate health habits for the future. The grounds were small and entirely inadequate for play purposes. The use of instructional supplies was hardly known. The janitor's work was usually done by either the pupils or teachers. The teachers were poorly

prepared, but received a fair salary considering their qualifications. The low drawing and holding power of the schools was reflected in the low enrollment with respect to the enumeration and the 64 per cent attendance. The majority of the districts were unable to finance their programs, as was evidenced by the $14,135.27 deficit incurred that year.

These conditions were soon changed by the discovery of oil, and in the next chapter will be shown the effect this discovery had upon the educational system of the county.

CHAPTER III

THE ORGANIZATION, ADMINISTRATION, AND COST OF THE RURAL SCHOOLS OF SEMINOLE COUNTY IN 1937-38.

I. INTRODUCTION

The organization, administration, and cost of the rural schools of Seminole County in 1922 were shown in the preceding chapter. The only bright spot in the entire picture was the fact that the teachers were well paid, considering their qualifications. No other conditions existed to which an educator of that day could point with pride.

In July of 1923 oil was discovered in the county. Almost overnight there was an influx of workers and fortune-seekers that engulfed a large part of the county. Small communities were changed into teeming villages, and villages became thriving cities. Almost every thicket became a small tent city and shacks sprang up where fields had been tilled since statehood. In a recent newspaper article Lawrence Thompson depicted the rise and fall of the small town of Earlsboro, Oklahoma. Although Earlsboro is located about three miles west of the Seminole County line, the story of its growth is typical of that which took place all over the county. The article said in part:

Earlsboro in 1926 was a quiet town of less than 500

> The town's total valuation is less than $199,000. Remember it was $530,000 in the boom days.[1]

Approximately 20 per cent of the debt mentioned was incurred for the purpose of enlarging the Earlsboro school system. That system had to be enlarged in one year from one capable of accommodating the children in a community of 500 to one capable of caring for the children in a city of 7,500 population. Then the administrators watched that population dwindle to less than 1,000 in ten years' time. Similar situations existed in many parts of Seminole County. Soon after the beginning of the boom period superintendents and principals of one and two-room schools found themselves facing the problem of teaching several hundred pupils where less than one hundred had been taught before. Every available building was converted into a school room. Even this was more difficult than it might seem, as nearly any kind of shack would rent for fifty dollars a month. All of the old schools, most of the churches, and even tents were used until more permanent buildings could be erected. It is the purpose of this chapter to show the order that came out of such chaos.

II. ORGANIZATION

There were thirty-four rural districts in Seminole County in 1938, one consolidated district, one white separate

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[1]Feature Story in The Daily Oklahoman Oklahoma City, Oklahoma , for January 15, 1939.

district, eight union-graded districts, and twenty-four dependent districts. Each of these districts has a school board of three members who are elected by popular vote of the electors of the respective districts. Each member serves for three years, one member being elected each year. The district board has the power to employ teachers, buy school supplies, make the budget, decide the general policies of the school, and exercise other powers as enumerated by law. The citizens of each district have the right to determine the tax levy the district shall use for current expenses. The board cannot exceed the levy voted by a majority of the patrons at the annual school meeting. It has been the general policy of the school boards of Seminole County to employ superintendents to serve as heads of the various systems, giving them almost complete control in administering the schools.

Five new union-graded districts were formed between 1922 and 1938. District No. U. G. 4 was formed by the union of districts twelve and thirteen, U. G. 5 from districts twenty-four and twenty-six, U. G. 6 from districts eight and fifteen, U. G. 7 from districts three, nine, ten, forty-three, and forty-seven, and U. G. 8 from separate district five. District thirty-six was annexed by independent district thirty-nine. Figure 2 shows the district boundaries as they exist at present.

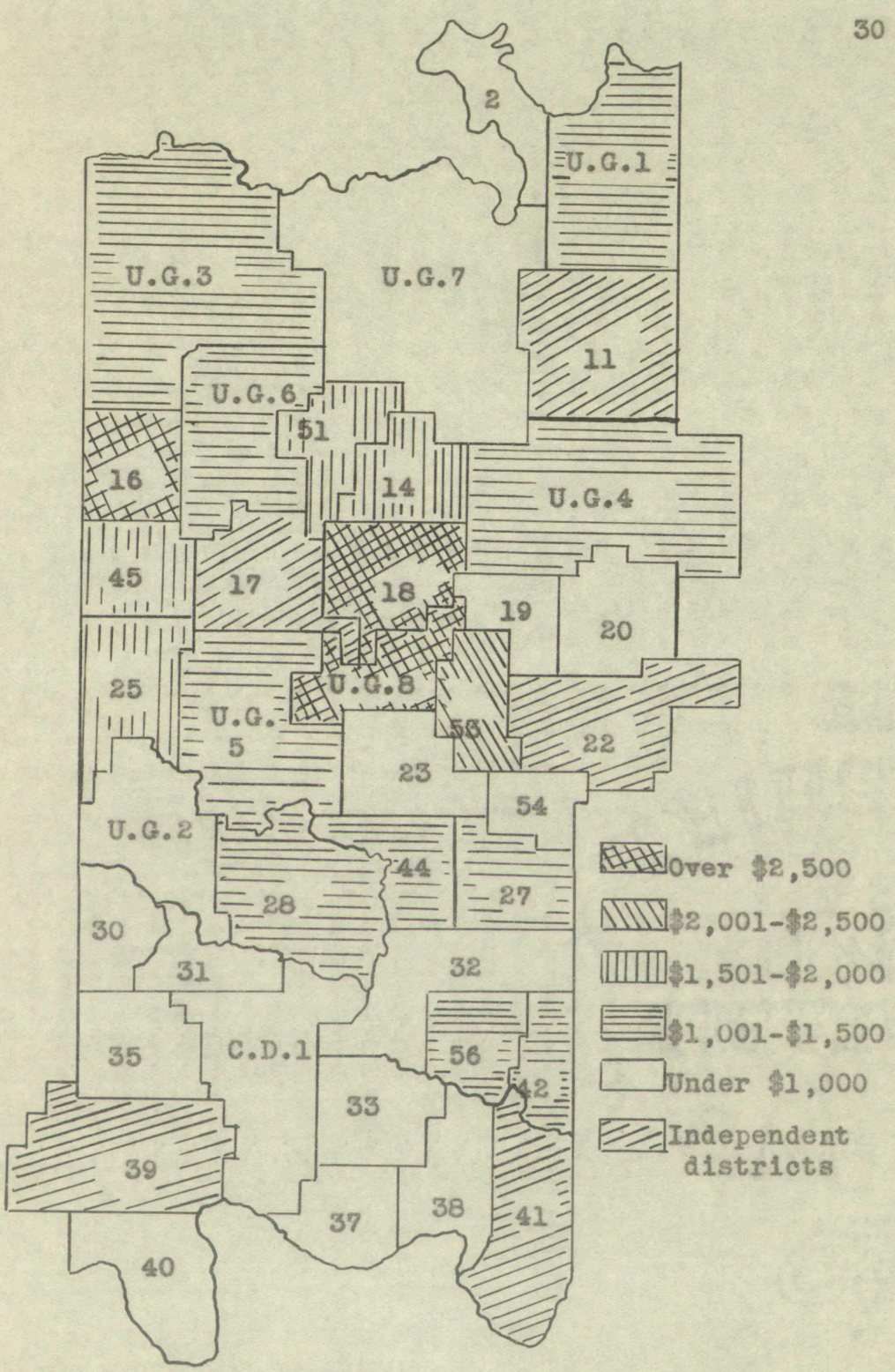
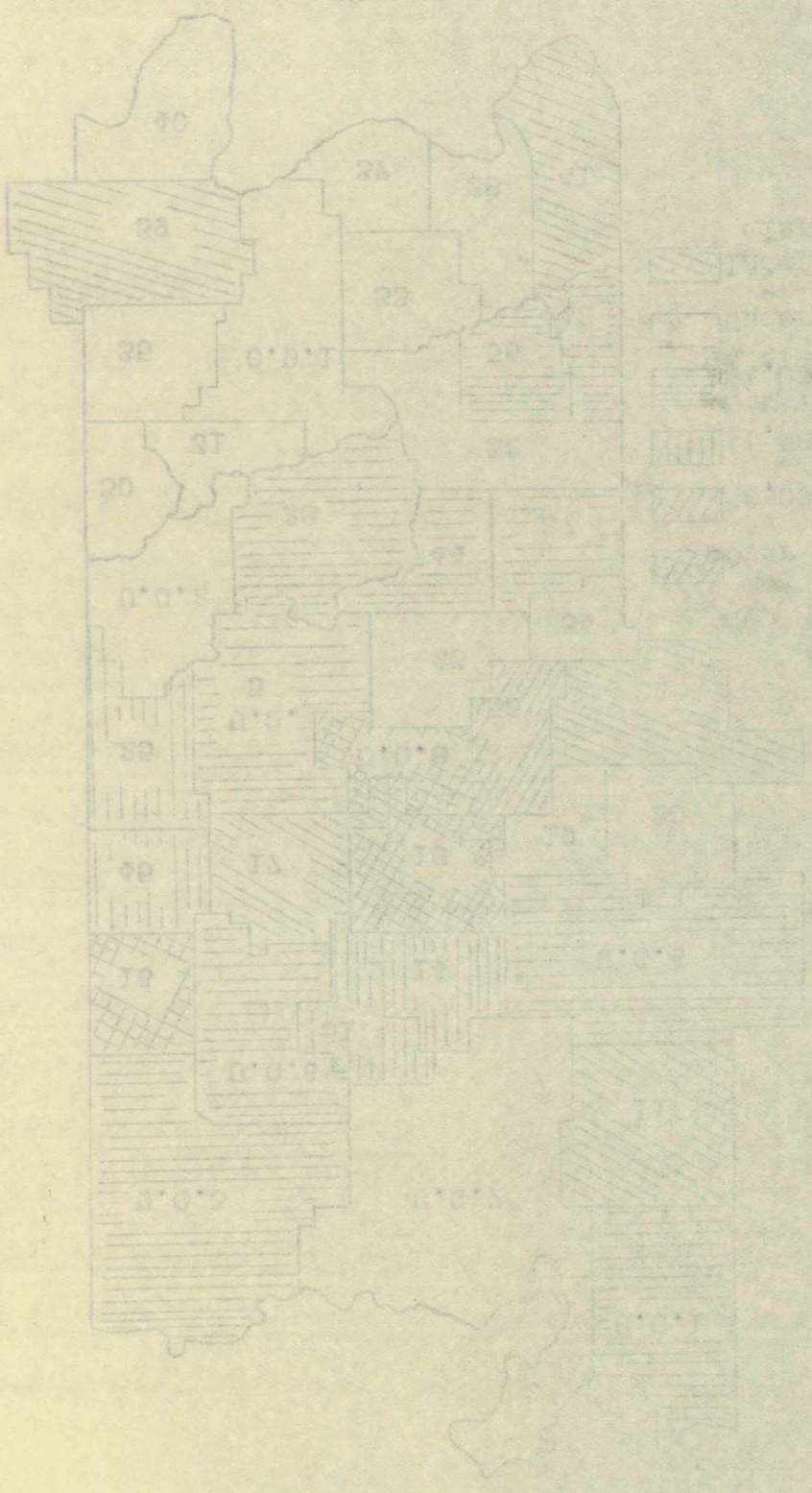


FIGURE 2

WEALTH PER PUPIL ENUMERATED IN THE DEPENDENT DISTRICTS OF SEMINOLE COUNTY FOR THE SCHOOL YEAR 1937-1938



Some secondary work is offered by fourteen rural schools in the county. The average daily attendance of those enrolled in these rural high schools ranges from thirty-nine in District twenty-five to 215 in District U. G. 5, the mean average daily attendance being sixty-four and three-tenths. These facts, with the number of units for which each school is accredited, are shown in Table V.

A divided term is taught in the consolidated district, the separate district, one union-graded district, and twelve of the dependent districts. Their first term begins about the middle of July and lasts for approximately two months. Schools are then dismissed until a majority of the crops are harvested, after which the second term of school begins. All schools in the county operated for a full nine-months term during the school year 1937-1938.

III. THE SCHOOL PLANTS

Seminole County has been, and is yet, one of the fortunate counties in Oklahoma in being able to finance its schools so well during the past few years. The districts as a whole have been able to provide liberally for their children. Before the oil fields were prorated each district drew as high as $54.00 per year in gross production taxes for pupil enumerated. Some of the districts used these funds for their current expenses and eliminated the ad valorem taxes. Other

TABLE V

ENROLLMENT, NUMBER OF ACCREDITED UNITS, AND SPECIAL DEPARTMENTS IN THE RURAL HIGH SCHOOLS OF SEMINOLE COUNTY IN 1938

District number	Units	Enrollment	Average Daily attendance	Special departments*
U.G. 1	24	79	66	ACH
U.G. 2	17	60	40	
U.G. 3	18½	85	71	AH
U.G. 4	18	93	70	CH
U.G. 5	26	247	215	BCHI
U.G. 6	21½	199	175	BCHI
U.G. 7	15½	75	56	
U.G. 8	23	124	102	BCHI
C.D. 1	16	98	65	
S.D. 16	20	98	87	BCH
S.D. 18	19	82	69	BCH
S.D. 25	14	45	39	C
S.D. 28	19½	130	111	BC
S.D. 45	19	41	37	CH
MEAN	18½	67.9	64.3	
TOTAL		1,446	1,203	

* A--Vocational Agriculture
B--Band and Special Music
C--Commerce
H--Home Economics
I--Industrial Arts

districts used their receipts from the gross production tax to swell their current expense budget and finance building programs without voting any bonds. The extent of these building programs may be observed by scanning Table VI, which gives a comparison between the estimated value of school property in 1922 and 1938. Most of the schools were equipped far above the average, especially with respect to libraries. A library expansion program was sponsored by the county superintendent during the school year 1936-1937. By the end of the year almost every district had at least three library books per pupil enrolled in grades one to eight.

IV. PERSONNEL STATUS

County superintendent. At the head of the rural schools of Seminole County is the county superintendent, who is elected by popular vote each two years. There is no limit placed upon the number of terms he may serve. It is the duty of this official to direct and supervise the non-independent districts of the county. The superintendent is assisted by one deputy and a supervisor for the elementary grades. He approves the contracts of the teachers made by the local boards, advises the teachers as to the course of study, and directs them in carrying out any other matters pertaining to the educational program he has planned. He acts as adviser on educational matters to the school boards

TABLE VI

A COMPARISON OF THE ESTIMATED VALUE OF SCHOOL PROPERTY 1922 AND 1938

District number	Buildings No. of rooms 1	2	3	4-over	Estimated value 1938	Estimated value 1922	Increase
U.G. 1			2	2	$ 40,000	$ 6,000	$ 34,000
U.G. 2				1	43,300	4,000	39,300
U.G. 3	2	2	1	2	45,800	5,000	40,800
U.G. 4				1	30,130	2,400*	27,730
U.G. 5			1	4	81,000	1,900*	79,100
U.G. 6				3	77,000	2,000*	75,000
U.G. 7		5		1	44,000	4,700*	39,300
U.G. 8	1		1	2	47,000	1,000	46,000
C.D. 1				2	50,000	5,000	45,000
S.D. 2	1				3,050	1,200	1,850
S.D. 14		2			5,640	1,200	4,440
S.D. 16			1	2	44,500	1,500	43,000
S.D. 18				1	65,700	1,800	63,900
S.D. 19	1				1,650	1,000	650
S.D. 20			1		15,250	1,600	13,650
S.D. 23			1		5,800	1,000	4,800
S.D. 25				1	36,600	1,500	35,100
S.D. 27		1			4,900	1,100	3,800
S.D. 28	1			3	38,800	1,400	37,400
S.D. 30			1		7,300	1,000	6,300
S.D. 31		1			4,850	700	4,150
S.D. 32	1	1	1		4,200	2,000	2,200
S.D. 33			1		3,100	1,200	1,900
S.D. 35			1		9,500	1,800	7,700
S.D. 37		1			4,700	1,000	3,700
S.D. 38			1		6,600	1,000	5,600
S.D. 40			1		4,120	2,800	1,320
S.D. 42				1	22,000	2,400	19,600
S.D. 44		1			6,200	1,200	5,000
S.D. 45				1	28,300	1,200	27,100
S.D. 51				1	23,200	1,200	22,000
S.D. 53			1		7,300	1,000	6,300
S.D. 54				1	9,800	1,800	8,000
S.D. 56		1			3,100	-----**	3,100
TOTALS	7	15	15	29	$824,390	$62,600	$798,790

* Total of component districts.
** Formerly part of District 42.

| District number | | |

of all rural districts. His annual salary is $2,400.00 and that of the supervisor and deputy is $1,500.00 each.

Teachers. The rural teaching personnel of Seminole County increased 169.9 per cent from 1922 to 1938. This increase in personnel was more than equaled by the advancement made in teacher training over the same period. There was only one teacher in the county holding a county certificate during the school year 1937-1938, while sixteen had obtained the masters' degree and 134 had obtained the bachelors' degree. Only 15.7 per cent of those holding state certificates held one of less than life grade, and approximately one-half of them were employed in non-high school districts. The qualifications of the teachers and the average annual salary paid by the various districts are shown in Table VII. For comparison with the pre-oil conditions, the superintendents' and high school principals' salaries were averaged with the salaries of the secondary teachers, since these were included in the averages shown in Chapter II. Likewise, the elementary principals' salaries were averaged with the elementary teachers' salaries.

In a survey of teaching conditions in the United States, made by the Office of Education in 1936, it was found that 38 per cent of the teachers employed in one and two-room schools and 72 per cent of those employed in rural schools of three or more teachers had two or more years

TABLE VII

TEACHERS' QUALIFICATIONS AND SALARIES FOR THE SCHOOL YEAR 1937-1938

District number	Qualifications						Average annual salary	
	MA	AB	Life	5Yr.	2Yr.	1Yr.	Secondary	Elementary
U.G. 1		7	5	1			$1,613.33	$ 879.00
U.G. 2		3		3		1	1,125.00	751.25
U.G. 3		7	6	3			1,374.83	775.10
U.G. 4	1	8					1,103.00	783.00
U.G. 5	6	24					1,340.39	1,034.44
U.G. 6	3	10	6	1			1,267.77	949.66
U.G. 7		5	4	6			1,370.33	822.75
U.G. 8	1	8	5	1	1	1	1,449.00	1,039.20
C.D. 1		6	3		1		1,031.75	855.00
S.D. 2			1					990.00
S.D. 14			1	1	1			780.00
S.D. 16	1	9	5				1,522.86	1,064.17
S.D. 18		11	3				1,627.86	1,112.14
S.D. 19				1				900.00
S.D. 20		2	1					1,050.00
S.D. 23		1	1	1				1,110.00
S.D. 25	1	5	3	1			1,361.25	960.00
S.D. 27		1			1			877.50
S.D. 28	1	9	5	2	1	*	1,572.00	955.00
S.D. 30		1	1	1				911.67
S.D. 31		1	1					1,035.00
S.D. 32		2	4					872.50
S.D. 33			3					885.00
S.D. 35		1	1	1				886.00
S.D. 37			1			1		855.00
S.D. 38		1	1	1				980.00
S.D. 40		1		1		1		870.00
S.D. 42		2	1			1		1,066.50
S.D. 44				2				1,350.00
S.D. 45	1	6		2			1,243.75	900.00
S.D. 51		1	3					1,023.50
S.D. 53	1			2				1,267.50
S.D. 54		2	1	1				1,409.00
S.D. 56			2					810.00
TOTALS	16	134	66	32	5	5		
MEAN							$1,290.00	$ 930.00

* One teacher with a first grade county certificate.

training.[2] One year later Seminole County ranked far above that average with 94.2 per cent of its rural teachers having two or more years' training. The survey also showed that the average annual salary of the elementary teachers in the United States for the school year 1936-1937 was $832.00.[3] For the following school year the mean annual salary of the elementary teachers of Seminole County was $930.00 and of the secondary teachers $1,290.00. The above salaries were paid for a term of nine months, an increase of 15.4 per cent over the average term of 1922.

Pupils. The growth of the rural high schools in Seminole County from 1922 to 1938 was little short of phenominal. There was an increase in enrollment of 1,075.6 per cent. The increased efficiency of the school systems of 1938 was reflected in their increased holding power. In 1922 the number of pupils in average daily attendance was 49.6 per cent of the total number enrolled in high school. By 1938 this average daily attendance had increased to 83.2 per cent of the total high school enrollment. A graph showing the above relationships is depicted in Figure 3.

The enrollment in the elementary grades increased rapidly after the discovery of oil and reached its peak of

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[2]Bess Goodykoontz, "Elementary Education: Is It All Settled?" School Life, 24:228, May, 1939.

[3]Loc. cit.

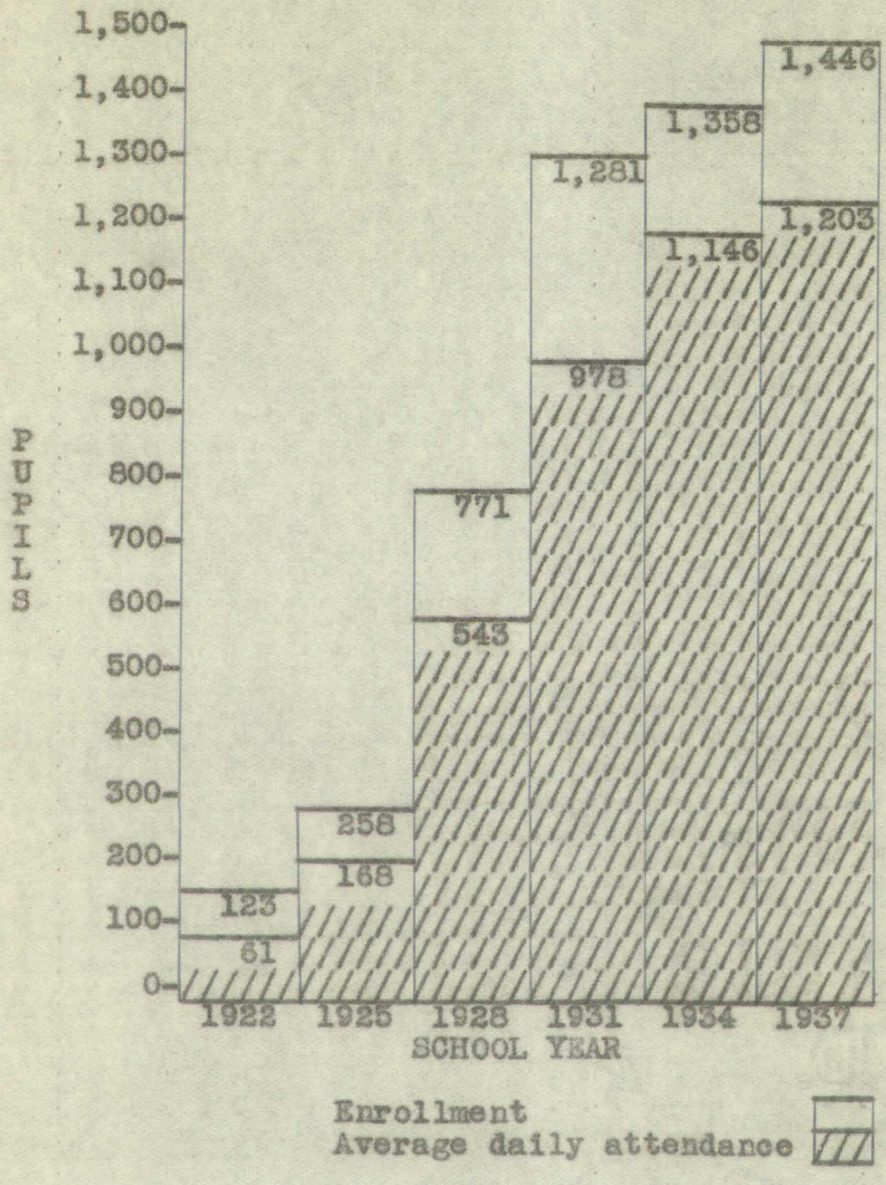

FIGURE 3

HIGH SCHOOL ENROLLMENT AND AVERAGE DAILY ATTENDANCE FOR SEMINOLE COUNTY RURAL SCHOOLS, 1922 TO 1938

11,134 pupils in 1929. There has been a gradual decrease from that time to the present, with 7,230 enrolled in 1938. This decrease was likely due to the transfer of oil employees to other areas as the production diminished in the Seminole field. The total enrollment and average daily attendance for the elementary grades, by three year periods from 1922 to 1937, are shown in Figure 4. The elementary schools have not been so successful as the high schools in maintaining a high percentage of attendance. In 1922 the number in average daily attendance in grades one to eight was 51.5 per cent of those enrolled, in 1931 67.5 per cent, and in 1938 59.6 per cent.

V. FINANCIAL STATUS

Assessed valuation. A majority of the districts in Oklahoma were hard pressed to finance their schools in 1931. Teachers over the entire state were discounting their warrants from 5 to 25 per cent to get them cashed at all. It was then that teachers in surrounding counties looked longingly at the positions held by Seminole County teachers. The oil fields had brought prosperity to them as well as to those engaged in commercial enterprises. The assessed valuation of the rural districts in the county had risen from $5,438,108 in 1922 to $33,877,453 in 1928, with a resultant increase of $426,590 in local revenues. But the financial

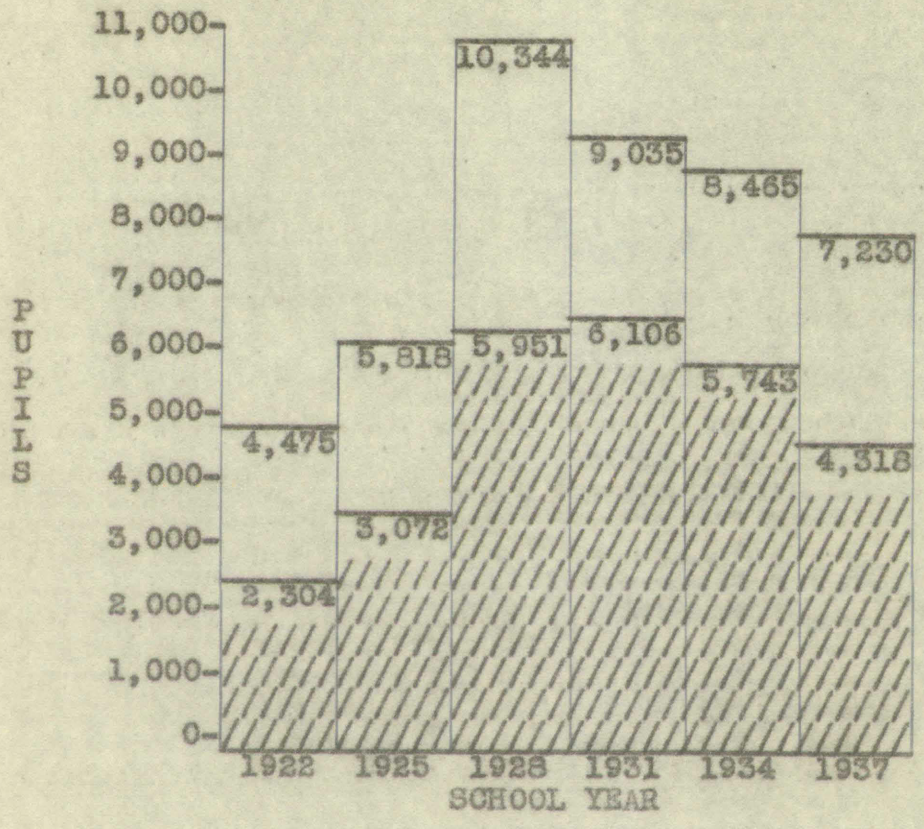

FIGURE 4

ELEMENTARY ENROLLMENT AND AVERAGE DAILY ATTENDANCE FOR SEMINOLE COUNTY RURAL SCHOOLS, 1922 TO 1938

system under which the rural schools were operating did not permit the schools to reap the full benefits from the above increase in valuation. No ad valorem taxes could be levied against the property in one district to finance the educational program of another district. The oil companies quickly realized their advantage and pooled a great portion of their wealth in a few districts, thus building a large valuation and forcing the tax levy down in those districts. One of the best examples of such a condition was District S.D. 18 where the major oil companies built large tank farms for storage oil. By 1929 the assessed valuation had reached $8,029,498.00. That same year each district in the county received $54.00 per pupil enumerated from gross production taxes. These two sources alone would have netted the district $133,931.12 for the current expenses of a school with an enrollment of less than 250 pupils. The result of such practices saved the oil companies hundreds of thousands of dollars in taxes.

When the several states in the Mid-Continent field began prorating the flow of oil in 1931, the companies started using their stored oil stocks. The result was a decline in the assessed valuation of the county. With few exceptions, this decline affected every rural district in Seminole County. From 1929 to 1938 the total assessed valuation of the rural districts dropped $17,559,544.00, a decline of 51.8 per cent.

The 1938 assessed valuation, $16,317,909.00, was divided as follows: personal property and real estate, other than oil properties, $1,854,398.00; public utilities, $1,642,297.00; and oil property, $12,821,214.00. The 1938 assessed valuation without oil property was 35.7 per cent lower than the valuation before oil was discovered. Table VIII shows a comparison of the 1929 valuations with the 1938 valuations. A comparison of the data in this table with those presented in Table II, page 18, shows the valuation of seven of the districts was lower in 1938 than in 1922. District U. C. 2 is a good example of the conditions which will exist after the oil has been exhausted. It has passed through the entire cycle of the oil fields. Its valuation increased from $256,750.00, in 1922, to $641,486.00, in 1929, then in 1938, with very little production in the district, the valuation had fallen to $181,778.00, a reduction of 29.3 per cent below the 1922 level.

Sources of revenue. State participation in the support of public schools in Oklahoma reached its peak in 1937 when the legislature passed House Bill 6 appropriating the sum of $25,600,000.00 to be distributed among the public schools during the school years 1937-38 and 1938-39. This appropriation was devided into three funds as follows: primary aid, $5,200,000.00; secondary aid, $5,800,000.00; homestead exemption reimbursement, $1,800,000.00. The regulations

TABLE VIII

COMPARISON OF VALUATIONS IN THE DEPENDENT DISTRICTS OF SEMINOLE COUNTY FOR THE YEARS 1928-1929 AND 1937-1938

District number	Valuation 1928-1929	Valuation 1937-1938	Percent gain or reduction
C. D. 1	$ 282,827	$ 353,458	24.9 Gain
U. G. 1	886,631	480,860	45.8 Reduction
U. G. 2	641,486	181,778	71.7 Reduction
U. G. 3	791,834	631,162	20.3 Reduction
U. G. 4	667,903	448,839	32.8 Reduction
U. G. 5	4,313,106	1,716,642	60.2 Reduction
U. G. 6	2,203,128	890,521	59.5 Reduction
U. G. 7	612,612	465,515	24.0 Reduction
U. G. 8	3,077,202	1,620,647	47.3 Reduction
S. D. 2	66,420	34,958	47.4 Reduction
S. D. 14	213,347	163,451	23.4 Reduction
S. D. 16	2,692,122	1,640,956	39.0 Reduction
S. D. 18	8,029,408	3,248,697	59.5 Reduction
S. D. 20	216,934	156,071	28.1 Reduction
S. D. 23	196,601	150,616	23.8 Reduction
S. D. 25	717,000	769,223	7.3 Gain
S. D. 27	122,017	134,093	9.9 Gain
S. D. 28	1,557,788	766,040	50.8 Reduction
S. D. 30	147,044	93,705	36.9 Reduction
S. D. 31	167,110	128,098	23.3 Reduction
S. D. 32	211,568	222,129	4.9 Gain
S. D. 33	95,905	57,187	40.4 Reduction
S. D. 35	114,851	123,625	7.6 Gain
S. D. 37	65,914	34,700	47.3 Reduction
S. D. 38	169,419	121,735	28.1 Reduction
S. D. 40	117,781	65,553	44.3 Reduction
S. D. 42	129,377	268,639	107.8 Gain
S. D. 44	182,431	166,438	8.2 Reduction
S. D. 45	1,363,836	487,027	64.2 Reduction
S. D. 51	828,238	302,925	63.4 Reduction
S. D. 53	231,014	194,035	16.0 Reduction
S. D. 54	255,197	116,522	54.3 Reduction
S. D. 56	88,657	82,064	7.4 Reduction
TOTAL	$33,877,453	$16,317,909	51.8 Reduction

concerning the distribution of these three funds are given on page xx in the appendix.

The primary aid received by each district was based upon the number, qualifications, and experience of the teachers employed. The number of teachers allocated to each school was based upon the number of pupils in average daily attendance during the next preceding year. Primary aid could be expended for teachers' salaries only.

The homestead exemption reimbursement fund was distributed among the districts to replace the taxes lost because of the $1,000.00 tax examption placed on homesteads. All declared homesteads, in which the owners were actually residing, were exempt from current tax levies on the first $1,000.00 of valuation, but were subject to sinking fund levies.

The secondary aid fund was distributed among those districts which were unable to maintain a minimum program as outlined by the State Board of Education. The cost of such mimimum program was based upon three items, teachers' salaries, transportation, and maintenance. The sum allocated for teachers' salaries was equivalent to nine months' pay for each teacher as determined for primary aid distribution. The maintenance fund was equivalent to six and one-half cents per day for the total days attended the previous year. The transportation fund was based upon the number of legally transported

pupils and the density of school population in the transportation area.

For the school year 1937-1938 the rural schools of Seminole County participated as follows in these state aid funds: primary aid, $65,142; secondary aid, $24,400; and homestead exemptions, $5,844. These three items comprised 18.5 per cent of the total revenues for current expenses. The sum received by each district for primary aid and homestead exemption replacement is shown in Table IX.

Sources and amounts of revenue other than state aid in 1937-1938 included: Federal aid, $14,993.00; gross production tax, $148,340.84; beverage tax, $14,712.48; and local taxes, state apportionment, and county apportionment, $203,171.15. The monies derived from gross production taxes and the ad valorem taxes on oil property are the only revenue which can be attributed directly to oil. These two sources, however, contributed approximately 63 per cent of the funds expended for current expenses.

VI. TRANSPORTATION FACILITIES

Transportation was an important item in the budget of all union-graded and consolidated districts. With the exception of district U.G. 4, all districts transporting their pupils owned their equipment. District U.G. 4 owned the bus bodies, and the chassis were furnished by the bus

TABLE IX

APPORTIONMENT OF PRIMARY AID AND HOMESTEAD EXEMPTION MONEY TO THE DEPENDENT SCHOOLS OF SEMINOLE COUNTY FOR 1937-1938

District number	Primary aid	Homestead exemption
U.G. 1	$2,807	$196
U.G. 2	1,896	210
U.G. 3	3,302	967
U.G. 4	2,981	359
U.G. 5	8,902	334
U.G. 6	6,803	386
U.G. 7	3,177	440
U.G. 8	3,346	136
C.D. 1	2,960	356
S.D. 2	260	22
S.D. 14	676	75
S.D. 16	3,068	124
S.D. 18	2,522	89
S.D. 19	702	50
S.D. 20	741	109
S.D. 23	741	128
S.D. 25	2,649	115
S.D. 27	520	61
S.D. 28	5,014	251
S.D. 30	715	76
S.D. 31	729	117
S.D. 32	1,128	76
S.D. 33	663	42
S.D. 35	936	110
S.D. 37	702	16
S.D. 38	689	194
S.D. 40	662	79
S.D. 42	999	88
S.D. 44	66	40
S.D. 45	2,168	208
S.D. 51	689	106
S.D. 53	546	138
S.D. 54	1,102	114
S.D. 56	481	132
TOTALS	$65,142	$5,844

drivers. All districts bought their own fuel and supplies with the exception of district U.C. 4, which contracted for these items with their drivers. Through the cooperation of the oil companies, the county commissioners have constructed a system of roads that would facilitate a county-wide transportation program.

VII. THE SCHOOL OFFERINGS

Many of the rural high schools have expanded their offering beyond the standard academic subjects. Home economics and commercial subjects have received more attention than the other non-academic courses. The number of schools offering some work in the various fields are as follows: commercial work, ten; home economics, nine; industrial arts, three; vocational agriculture, two; and band and special music courses, six. In addition to these vocational subjects, each school offers the regular academic subjects. Table V, page 32, shows the number of units for which each high school is accredited and the departments in which non-academic courses are offered.

VIII. SOME EXISTING INEQUALITIES

Many inequalities exist among the rural districts of Seminole County under the present educational organization. One of the most outstanding examples is the difference in

assessed valuations. These valuations in 1938 ranged from $3,248,697 in district S.D. 18 to $34,700 in district S.D. 37. These two districts ranked first and thirty-third, respectively, in wealth per child enumerated. Table X shows the relations for both valuations and wealth per child in each district in the county. District S.D. 19 was omitted from this table, as it is a separate school and is supported by a tax levied against the total assessed valuation of the county. The mean wealth per child for the rural districts in 1938 was $1,288. These facts are reflected to a certain extent in the cost per pupil for current expenses in each district. In 1938 district S.D. 37 expended $50.18 per pupil in average daily attendance, while district S.D. 18 spent $110.63 per pupil, ranking thirty-second and fourth respectively. Their rankings relative to expenditures and wealth are very similar. The cost per pupil and ranks of the other districts in the county are shown in Table XI.

IX. SUMMARY

The rural schools made vast improvements over the fifteen year period from 1922-23 to 1937-38. These improvements were made possible largely through the discovery and development, in Seminole County, of one of the largest oil fields in the United States. A strong interest and sentiment has been manifested by a big majority of the patrons of the

TABLE X

COMPARISON OF WEALTH PER CHILD ENUMERATED IN THE DEPENDENT DISTRICTS OF SEMINOLE COUNTY FOR THE SCHOOL YEAR 1937-1938

District number	Valuation 1937-1938	Enumeration	Wealth per child	Rank
C. D. 1	$ 353,458	513	$ 689	27
U. G. 1	480,860	446	1,078	16
U. G. 2	181,778	267	681	28
U. G. 3	631,162	518	1,217	13
U. G. 4	448,839	329	1,364	10
U. G. 5	1,716,642	1,294	1,327	11
U. G. 6	890,521	844	1,055	18
U. G. 7	465,515	586	794	23
U. G. 8	1,620,647	411	3,943	2
S. D. 2	34,958	47	744	24
S. D. 14	163,451	83	1,969	6
S. D. 16	1,640,956	527	3,114	3
S. D. 18	3,248,697	270	12,032	1
S. D. 20	156,071	166	934	20
S. D. 23	150,616	170	886	21
S. D. 25	769,223	389	1,977	5
S. D. 27	134,093	122	1,099	14
S. D. 28	766,040	715	1,071	17
S. D. 30	93,705	130	721	25
S. D. 31	128,098	158	811	22
S. D. 32	222,129	226	983	19
S. D. 33	57,187	116	493	30
S. D. 35	123,625	226	547	29
S. D. 37	34,700	128	271	33
S. D. 38	121,735	171	712	26
S. D. 40	65,553	151	434	32
S. D. 42	268,639	194	1,385	9
S. D. 44	166,438	133	1,251	12
S. D. 45	487,027	310	1,571	8
S. D. 51	302,925	162	1,864	7
S. D. 53	194,035	96	2,021	4
S. D. 54	116,522	244	477	31
S. D. 56	82,064	75	1,094	15
TOTALS	$16,317,909	10,217		
AVERAGE			$1,288	

TABLE XI

COST PER A. D. A. PUPIL IN THE DEPENDENT DISTRICTS OF SEMINOLE COUNTY IN 1937-38

District number	Current expenditures	Average daily attendance	Cost per pupil	Rank
U.G. 1	$ 20,810.62	277	$ 71.52	16
U.G. 2	20,975.96	183	114.51	3
U.G. 3	21,712.89	350	81.85	7
U.G. 4	19,412.66	300	64.71	23
U.G. 5	58,466.34	952	61.41	26
U.G. 6	38,584.19	694	55.59	31
U.G. 7	22,935.41	336	68.26	20
U.G. 8	35,374.96	350	101.07	5
C.D. 1	18,921.01	315	60.07	28
S.D. 2	1,318.08	19	69.37	17
S.D. 14	4,462.46	62	71.97	15
S.D. 16	24,494.66	315	77.76	9
S.D. 18	27,104.83	245	110.63	4
S.D. 19	1,289,92	6	214.99	1
S.D. 20	4,605.53	67	68.74	18
S.D. 23	4,193.92	62	67.64	22
S.D. 25	19,871.15	260	76.43	11
S.D. 27	4,167.27	54	77.17	10
S.D. 28	26,419.07	540	48.92	33
S.D. 30	4,715.41	62	76.05	12
S.D. 31	5,952.38	79	75.35	13
S.D. 32	9,341.13	148	63.11	25
S.D. 33	4,390.11	64	68.59	19
S.D. 35	6,012.29	105	67.26	29
S.D. 37	3,713.04	74	50.18	32
S.D. 38	4,020.32	71	56.62	30
S.D. 40	5,235.91	64	81.81	8
S.D. 42	6,898.76	114	60.51	27
S.D. 44	4,040.84	64	63.14	24
S.D. 45	13,420.38	199	67.94	21
S.D. 51	10,325.49	62	166.38	2
S.D. 53	4,430.08	47	94.25	6
S.D. 54	6,170.61	127	48.59	34
S.D. 56	2,815.79	38	74.10	14
TOTALS	$466,603.47	6,505		
AVERAGE		217.6	$ 82.35	

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county in maintaining and supporting the best schools possible with the funds available. Now that the sources of revenue are definitely on the decline, the schools face a serious problem. When the oil fields have been depleted, approximately 60 per cent of the present revenue source will have disappeared. Under the present system each district has considerable leeway to provide and maintain the type of school the majority of the patrons desire, so long as the funds are available to maintain such a program. Each board is directing the progress, or failing to direct the progress, of its district without any special regard as to what the surrounding districts are doing. In many cases there may be certain factors present which prevent the districts from having the type of schools desired.

The next chapter will point out some of the educational inequalities which exist in the county. Since no far-sighted administrator can make adequate plans for the future without considering what that future holds in store, the next chapter will also portray an estimate of some of the factors which will affect the future educational policies of Seminole County.

CHAPTER IV

THE FUTURE OUTLOOK FOR THE SCHOOLS OF SEMINOLE COUNTY

I. INTRODUCTION

A survey of the effects of the oil development upon the educational system of Seminole County was given in the preceding chapter. From the facts thus presented, it may be seen that the rural schools are facing a crisis in the future as to methods of financing their desired programs. In this chapter an estimate will be made concerning some of the future trends which will influence the development of any proposed educational policies or programs.

II. OIL SUPPLY

It is very difficult to make an accurate prediction as to the future development of the oil fields in Seminole County, due to the inaccessibility of information relative to seismograph reports and similar records. The oil companies are very reluctant to release any information they might possess concerning any areas in which they have holdings. In 1938 two small fields were discovered in the southern part of the county. These developments completed the testing of a major portion of the Greater Seminole Area of the Mid-Continent oil field. There are very few areas that have not had

a test of some kind drilled during the past fifteen years.

The Wilcox Sand was the only one given much consideration when the earlier wells were drilled. A great amount of production was drilled through in shallower sands at that time. As the Wilcox production has been depleted, it has been the policy of the companies to plug the wells back to the shallower sands, perforate the casing, and secure new production. The history of such wells, however, has indicated that the period of productivity will be very short. The total oil production for Seminole County for 1930 was 85,408,049 barrels, making the total production of the county to that time 508,819,769 barrels. The subsequent production has been far below that of 1930.

In the absence of exact figures, one of the best indications of the trend of production in the past few years is the gross production tax collections. This tax is one levied against the gross value of all the oil produced in the county. In 1929, with oil priced at an average of $1.12 per barrel, a rural enumeration of 12,206 children, and a 5 per cent gross production tax, the revenue amounted to approximately $54 per pupil. In 1938, with the average price of oil $1.10 per barrel, 10,217 children enumerated in the rural districts, and an 8 per cent gross production tax assessed, the revenue was $14.52 per child.

After conferring with several men serving in the

capacity of oil field superintendents and geologists and observing the average life of other oil fields in the state, it is the opinion of the investigator that ten years hence the schools will approach the end of the period when school revenues will be derived from oil sources in Seminole County.

III. POPULATION TRENDS

The statistical information in this section was obtained from the 1930 Federal Census Reports.[2]

In 1920 the rural population of Seminole County was 23,808 and increased, during the next decade, to 56,285. Of this number 32,538 were classed as non-farming population. This was by far the greatest per cent of increase shown by all the counties of Oklahoma for the same period. The remaining 23,747, classed as rural farming population, are approximately the same in number as those living in the county before the discovery of oil.

The 1930 census showed 10,266 children in the non-farming rural families between the ages of five and nineteen, inclusive, while there were 9,325 children of the same ages in the rural farming population. If the same ratio of division was maintained until 1938, approximately 3,058 of the 6,505 in average daily attendance were from farming families.

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[2] Fifteenth Federal Census, Population, Vol. II, p. 563.

If all those connected with the oil industry should move when the productivity of the fields expires, the demands upon the schools would be cut in half. An estimate of the per cent of non-farming families who would remain in the county and pursue other occupations would be a mere guess. It is evident, however, that there will continue to be a decline in enrollment as shown in Figures 3 and 4, pages 38 and 40.

IV. STATUS OF FARM LANDS

Improvements. No records could be found showing the actual amount of terracing or other land improvements that have been made during the past few years. The present crop trends and conditions of farm lands in the county were discussed with Mr. Claude Sullivan, Seminole County farm agent. The remainder of this section contains the gist of this interview.

Before oil was discovered in Seminole County about 125,000 acres of the tillable soil of the county were in open pasture land and approximately 175,000 acres were in cultivation. Much of the most fertile soil, which lies along the creek and river bottoms, has been polluted by oil and salt water until it is entirely unproductive. This is especially true of the Salt Creek bottom land, which was considered the best land in the county. Many good farms were turned into

tank farms or were ruined by having wells drilled on them. The average wells are spaced 660 feet apart and each well will completely ruin the soil within a radius of 100 feet. Thus it may be seen that the productivity of a farm on which active wells have been drilled is practically lost. There is very little hope of any of these polluted lands ever being tillable again. A conservative estimate of the land which will be in cultivation when all the oil is depleted is 100,000 acres.

Much of the land remaining in cultivation has been terraced and built up to a much better state than before. The county farmers have cooperated with the federal program of soil conservation to the fullest extent. Very likely this program has been much more extensive in Seminole County than in many other counties of the state, due to the increased income of the farm population from oil leases and royalties. The increase in value of the tillable land resulting from this program, however, lacks much in offsetting the loss of approximately 75,000 acres of fertile land to cultivation.

One example of this is seen in the assessed valuation of Union-Graded District 2. Table II, page 18, shows that in 1923 the valuation of this district was $256,750. At the peak of the oil activities in 1929 the valuation of this same district, as shown in Table VI, page 34, had increased to $641,486.00 and nine years later had fallen off to $181,758.

This was a reduction of 29.2 per cent of the 1923 valuation. Districts 30, 31, 33, 35, 37, and 40 have suffered similarly, with District 40 losing 57.8 per cent of its 1923 valuation. These are examples of what is gradually happening all over the county. The valuations, without the oil property listed, are already lower than in 1923.

New crops. Some new diversified farming has been introduced, but nothing so outstanding as to influence greatly the farm income or the farm land values has been developed. The soil of the county is well suited to raising pecans, grapes, berries, and many other fruits. Perhaps these in the future may be developed to a greater extent.

Number of farms. Polution of lands by oil and salt water was not the only cause for the decrease in tilled acres in Seminole County. Many of the farmers deserted their crops for the more lucrative oil field work. More especially was this true in the earlier days of the boom when there was a large demand for men with teams. Many of them found themselves earning more in one month than the incomes from their farms would have amounted to in one year.

A farm, for census purposes, includes all the land which is directly farmed by one person, either by his own labor alone or with the assistance of members of his own household or hired employees. Any tract of land of less

than three acres used for agricultural purposes which produced products less than $250 in value the preceding calendar year is not considered as a farm. On the basis of the above regulations, the number of farms in Seminole County decreased from 3,507, in 1920, to 2,796, in 1930, a loss of 20.3 per cent.[1] This loss accounts for a portion of the drop in assessed valuation of non-oil property.

IV. SUMMARY

In the light of the preceding chapters, it is evident that new sources of revenue must be found, or a new educational organization must be perfected, if the schools of Seminole County are to continue progressing as they have in the past. The state has seemingly exhausted almost every source of revenue and continues to operate at a deficit each year. The remaining course of action, therefore, appears to lie in a reorganization program. It will be the purpose of the next chapter to set forth a proposed plan under which the rural schools may operate in the future.

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[1] The Oklahoma Almanac, Oklahoma Publishing Company, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, 1931 Edition, p. 210.

CHAPTER V

THE PROPOSED PLAN OF REORGANIZATION

The leaders of school administration for many years have advocated larger administrative units. The district system, under which Seminole County is organized, has completed its period of usefulness. Modern methods of travel and communication have caused a new value to be placed on rural and city relations. The enrollment in the rural school has increased to the point where new methods of administration are needed. If these schools are to continue to contribute appreciably toward the solution of the rural life problems and are to render a worthy community service in the future, rural school administration and supervision must be placed on as high a professional plane as city school administration and supervision. Ellwood P. Cubberley made a statement a few years ago which is even more true today. He said in part:

> Long ago our cities abolished their districts, began to manage their schools as a unit, and did away with the plan of selecting the superintendent from among the body of the electorate, and not until our counties introduce some such unit system into their educational organization can there be a proper and economical coordination in rural and village educational effort. For the pleasure of electing a horde of unnecessary trustees and voting for another county officer, the people have, as a consequence, an unnecessary number of small, costly, and inefficient rural schools, poorer teachers than is necessary,

inadequate and often unsuitable instruction, and supervision that is little more than a name.[1]

The schools of Seminole County have been fortunate to be able to keep abreast of the times and at least partially meet the challenges which have been flung at the modern schools. If they are to continue to progress, or even hold their own, a change must be made. In view of the fact that many states, most of which rate higher educationally than Oklahoma, have turned to the county as the local educational unit, it is the opinion of the investigator that the county unit system would be the logical one to adopt for Seminole County. It is believed such an organization would be more economical and more efficient than the present system and would eliminate many of the educational inequalities now existing. The proposed county unit plan, however, could not be put into operation until the Constitution of Oklahoma is amended.[2] New legislation would have to be passed making it permissive for any county in the state to adopt the county as the local unit of school control for taxation, administrative, and supervisory purposes. This has been attempted once and failed.

The remaining part of this chapter will be devoted to the more intricate details involved in the proposed plan.

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[1]Ellwood P. Cubberley, Public School Administration (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1922), p. 448.

[2]Oklahoma State Constitution, Article X, Section 9.

I. COUNTY BOARD OF EDUCATION

Membership. The county board of education should be composed of five to seven members elected from the county at large, each being elected because of his sincerity and interest in the educational policies of the county as a whole. Perhaps it would be wise to require at least a common school education as a qualification for membership on the board.

Some provision should be made for the removal of corrupt and inefficient members as in New Mexico, where board members may be removed by the State Department of Education for any of the following reasons:

> . . . for conviction of any felony or of any misdemeanor involving moral turpitude; failure, neglect or refusal to discharge any duty devolving upon the officer by virtue of his office; knowingly demanding or receiving illegal fees; failing to account for money coming into his hands as a member of the Board; gross negligence in discharging his duties; or for any other act or acts which in the opinion of the State Board of Education, amount to corruption in office or gross immorality, rendering the member unfit to fill the office.[3]

The commendable efforts to remove education from politics should be aided by requiring members to serve without pay, but they should receive actual expenses incurred in traveling to and from meetings. These efforts should be further abetted by following the present tendency toward

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[3] S. P. Nanninga, "Problems of Education in New Mexico," (Unpublished textbook for Education 107, University of New Mexico, Albuquerque, 1938), Chapter IV, p. 5.

staggered terms, with not more than two members being elected at one time and the elections being held separately from the regular political elections.

Powers and duties of the county board of education. One of the first duties of the board should be to secure the services of a well trained professional expert to act as county superintendent of schools. Other suggested powers and duties of the board of education follow:

1. To hold the title to all school properties, with the power to purchase, sell, repair, build, and insure school property.
2. To approve an annual budget of expenses for the schools of the county, both for current expenses and for buildings and repairs, and order levied, within the legal limits, a county school tax to supplement the funds received from the state and other sources. This should be done at the last meeting of the fiscal year.
3. On the recommendation of the county superintendent of schools, to appoint all principals and teachers for the different rural schools of the county.
4. On the recommendation of the county superintendent of schools, to appoint all special teachers, supervisors, clerks, and secretaries.
5. To decide all educational policies of the county.

6. To determine the location of the schools, and determine and change attendance and transportation area lines where the best educational interests of the county would be served.
7. On the recommendation of the county superintendent of schools, to appoint janitors and bus drivers for the different schools of the county.
8. To fix the salaries of all employees under their direction.

In general, the board should have the control and management of all the rural schools of the county, just as the average city board does for the city schools. In most matters the board should act only on the recommendation of the county superintendent of schools.

II. THE COUNTY SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS

Qualifications. The county superintendent of schools should be the recoginized professional and executive head of the educational system of the county. The success or failure of the county unit plan, to a great extent will depend upon his ability as an educational leader. For this reason he should possess an abundance of those traits which establish one as a leader and organizer. In setting up the new system, a superintendent with a sufficient amount of training and experience in educational administration and supervision would be of invaluable aid. There should be no restrictions

placed as to the locality from which the superintendent should be selected. His choice should depend wholly upon his merits. His term of occice should be of such length and his salary sufficiently large to offer the assurance that an administrator worthy of the name might be secured and held. No restrictions should be placed on the number of times the county superintendent could be reemployed. Some suggested powers and duties of the county superintendent of schools are as follows:

1. To attend all meetings and act as executive officer and professional adviser to the county board of education.
2. To nominate for election all teachers, principals, supervisors, janitors, bus drivers, secretaries, and clerks.
3. To assign and supervise the work of all educational employees of the county.
4. To remove them when the best interests of the schools are impaired by their retention.
5. To execute all rules, regulations, and policies decided upon by the board.
6. To supervise the preparation of the courses of study.
7. To interpret the school laws.
8. To decide controversies and disputes relating to the schools.
9. To prepare and present to the county board for their approval the school budget.
10. To take the lead in developing lay interests and improving

educational conditions.

11. To direct the taking of the school census.
12. To transfer pupils from one attendance district to another.
13. To have authority over the school plants.
14. To approve the purchase of all books, supplemental texts, apparatus, and supplies.
15. To prepare an annual report for the county board of education showing the condition, progress, and needs of the schools of the county. Additional copies of this report should be printed for distribution over the county and at least one copy be sent to the State Superintendent of Education.

III. OTHER EMPLOYEES

Teachers. All teachers of the county should be elected by the county board of education upon the recommendation of the county superintendent. The teachers in the small towns and rural schools should be at least as versatile and adaptable as the city teachers. The teachers are one of the most potent forces for progress in a community.[4] Thus the best teachers possible should be employed regardless of source, sex, or marital status. They should be selected on the basis

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[4]John C. Almack and James F. Bursch, The Administration of Consolidated and Village Schools (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1925), p. 94.

of qualifications and ability. The present certification regulations in Oklahoma are rapidly weeding out all teachers of less than two years of college training, with the average being above three years. Teachers should be assured of a salary that willenable them to maintain a standard of living suitable to their position in the community. The salary should be sufficient to allow for recreation and travel, and also for further preparation in their field by summer study in a reputable college or university. Teachers should be made to feel that good service will be rewarded by long tenure. Any new regulation made by the board concerning the employment of teachers should be made in the light of a statement made by Ward G. Reeder. His idea was, "Any rule which prevents the securing of the most competent teachers is to be condemned; it is a Frankenstein."[5]

Secretaries and clerks. With the approval of the county board of education, the county superintendent should appoint one or more secretaries to perform such duties as: draw warrants for the payment of all teachers, principals, supervisors, and other employees; pay all approved bills; administer oaths; sign contracts as directed by the board; register all teachers certificates; distribute blank forms

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[5]Ward G. Reeder, The Fundamentals of Public School Administration (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1937), p. 70.

and collect and tabulate statistical information; keep a set of books covering all financial transactions of the board.

Janitors and bus drivers. Although they are often thought of as minor employees, the janitors and bus drivers are very important members of the school personnel. The janitor is the custodian of large quantities of property and the guardian of the health and safety of the pupils and teachers. Likewise, the bus drivers are responsible for the safety and lives of a large number of the children. The utmost care should be taken in securing the right type of persons for these positions. If competent employees could be obtained in the attendance district where they are to serve it would likely be wise to employ them.

IV. DIVISION OF THE COUNTY

The next step of the reorganization plan is the division of the rural sections of the county into attendance areas for both high schools and grades. These divisions should be based on economy in operation, chances for increased offerings, and utilization of transportation facilities. The districts are thought to be a step in the right direction and are offered merely as a starting point. The county board would have to make changes gradually as the need arose and the wisdom of such action was clearly seen.

High school districts. The investigator's proposal is to divide the rural areas of the county into six high school districts, each composed as follows:
High School District 1 composed of S.D. 2, U.G. 1, and the east half of U.G. 7; High School District 2 composed of U.G. 3, the north half of U.G. 6, and the west half of U.G. 7; High School District 3 composed of S.D. 14, S.D. 16, S.D. 18, S.D. 45, S.D. 51, and the south half of U.G. 6; High School District 4 composed of U.G. 4, S.D. 19, S.D. 20, and S.D. 53; High School district 5 composed of U.G. 2, U.G. 5, U.G. 8, S.D. 23, S.D. 25, and the north half of S.D. 28; and High School District 6 composed of C.D. 1, S.D. 30, S.D. 31, S.D. 33, S.D. 35, S.D. 37, the west half of S.D. 32, and the south half of S.D. 28. Under this reorganization there would be six rural high school districts instead of the present fourteen.

The following dependent districts could transfer their high school pupils to the designated independent districts: S.D. 40 transfer to Konawa, independent district 39; S.D. 38, S.D. 42, S.D. 56, and the east half of S.D. 32 transfer to Sasakwa, independent district 41; and S.D. 27 and S.D. 54 transfer to Wewoka, independent district 22. These independent districts are maintaining bus routes through these dependent districts at present, and could easily continue the same routes. The district lines under the proposed division

are shown in Figure 5. There are not enough high school pupils in the southeast section of the county to justify building a high school to accommodate them.

If each of the proposed high schools were organized on the six-year plan, there would be an enrollment large enough that the offering could be expanded to include home economics, vocational agriculture, commerce, industrial arts, foreign language, music, and art in every high school. The estimated enrollment, the location of the high school, and the number of teachers required in addition to the principals are shown in Table XII. The number of needed teachers is based upon the teacher requirement scale as shown in the state aid program on page 91. Each of the plants designated as a high school building is large enough amply to accommodate the estimated increased enrollment. In the two districts where it is desirable to maintain both a high school and a grade school it would be necessary to construct a grade building.

Grade school districts. Modern practices have clearly shown the inadvisability of maintaining grade schools with less than four teachers including the principal. The proposed division of the county into twenty-two grade districts is as follows: Grade District 1 composed of U.G. 3; Grade District 2 composed of U.G. 7; Grade District 3 composed of U.G. 1 and S.D. 2; Grade District 4 composed of U.G. 4; Grade District

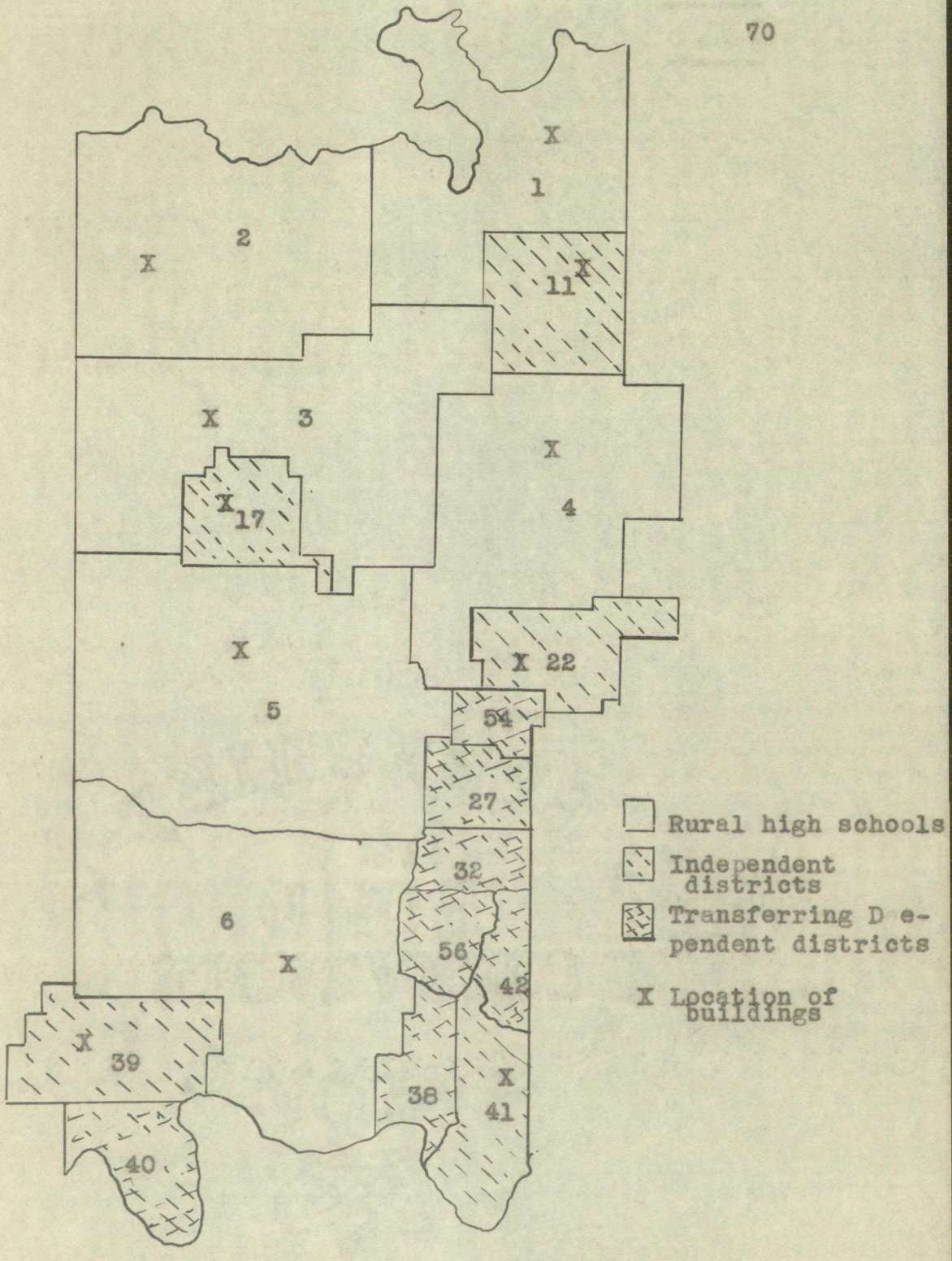
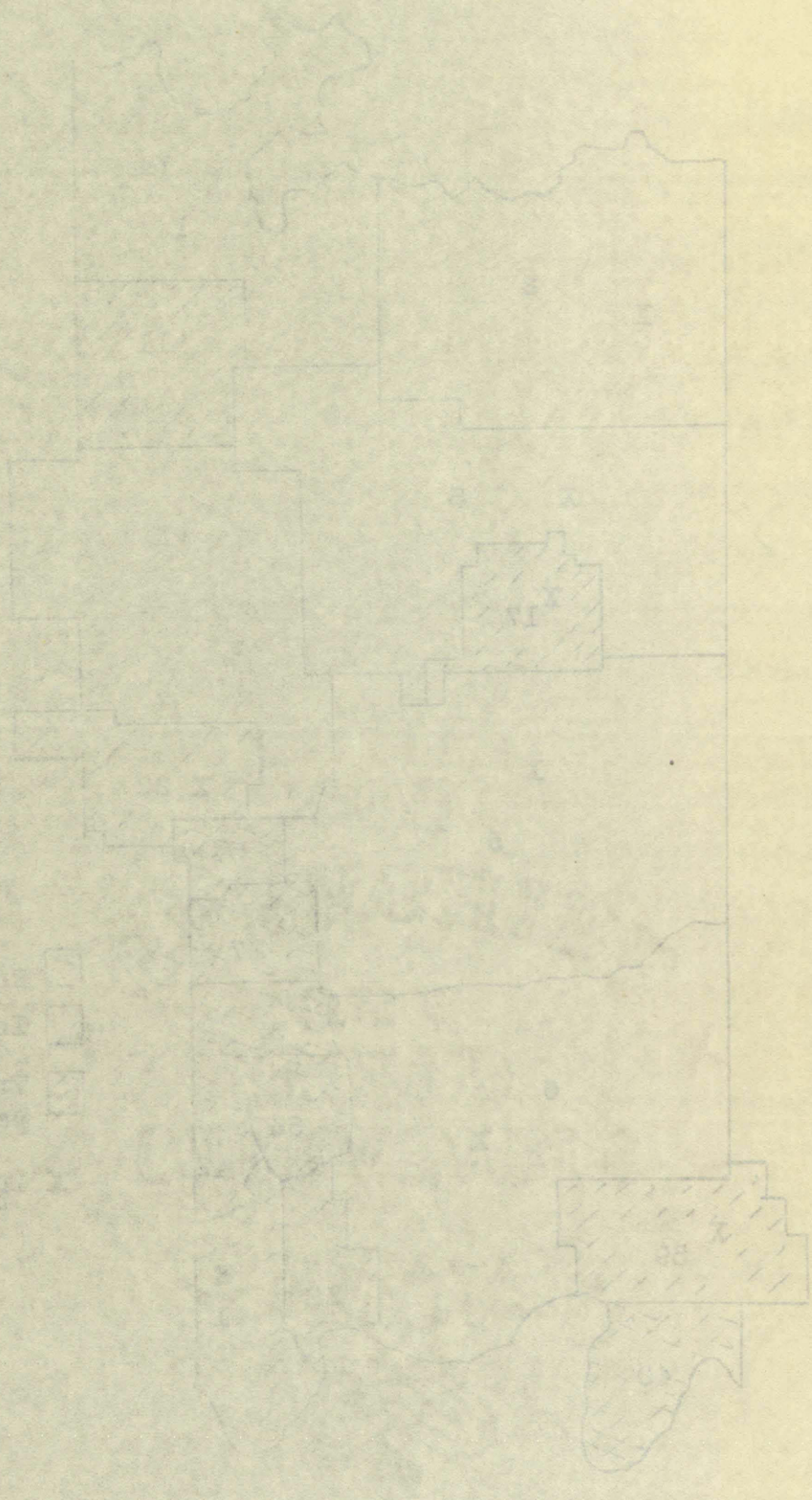


FIGURE 5

PROPOSED HIGH SCHOOL DISTRICTS FOR
THE COUNTY UNIT SYSTEM OF SEMINOLE COUNTY



5 composed of S.D. 14 and S.D. 51; Grade District 6 composed of U.G. 6; Grade District 7 composed of S.D. 16; Grade District 8 composed of S.D. 25; Grade District 9 composed of S.D. 45; Grade District 10 composed of U.G. 5; Grade District 11 composed of S.D. 28 and S.D. 44; Grade District 12 composed of U.G. 2; Grade District 13 composed of C.D. 1 and S.D. 40; Grade District 14 composed of S.D. 30, S.D. 31, and S.D. 35; Grade District 15 composed of S.D. 42 and S.D. 56; Grade District 16 composed of S.D. 18; Grade District 17 composed of U.G. 8; Grade District 18 composed of S.D. 27 and S.D. 54; Grade District 19 composed of S.D. 19 and S.D. 20; Grade District 20 composed of S.D. 23 and S.D. 53; Grade District 21 composed of S.D. 33, S.D. 37, and S.D. 38; and Grade District 22 composed of S.D. 32. The enrollment and size of Grade Districts 6, 10, and 13 would justify the maintenance of two grade schools in each. There are seventeen brick buildings in the above designated districts. The other buildings are substantial frame structures and in some instances better arranged and equipped than the brick buildings. The proposed divisions were made to utilize the existing buildings in the areas involved as far as possible. Table XII shows the estimated enrollment, estimated average daily attendance, teachers needed, and location of the plant in each of the Grade Districts. Under this plan the number of rural grade districts would be reduced from thirty-four to twenty-two.

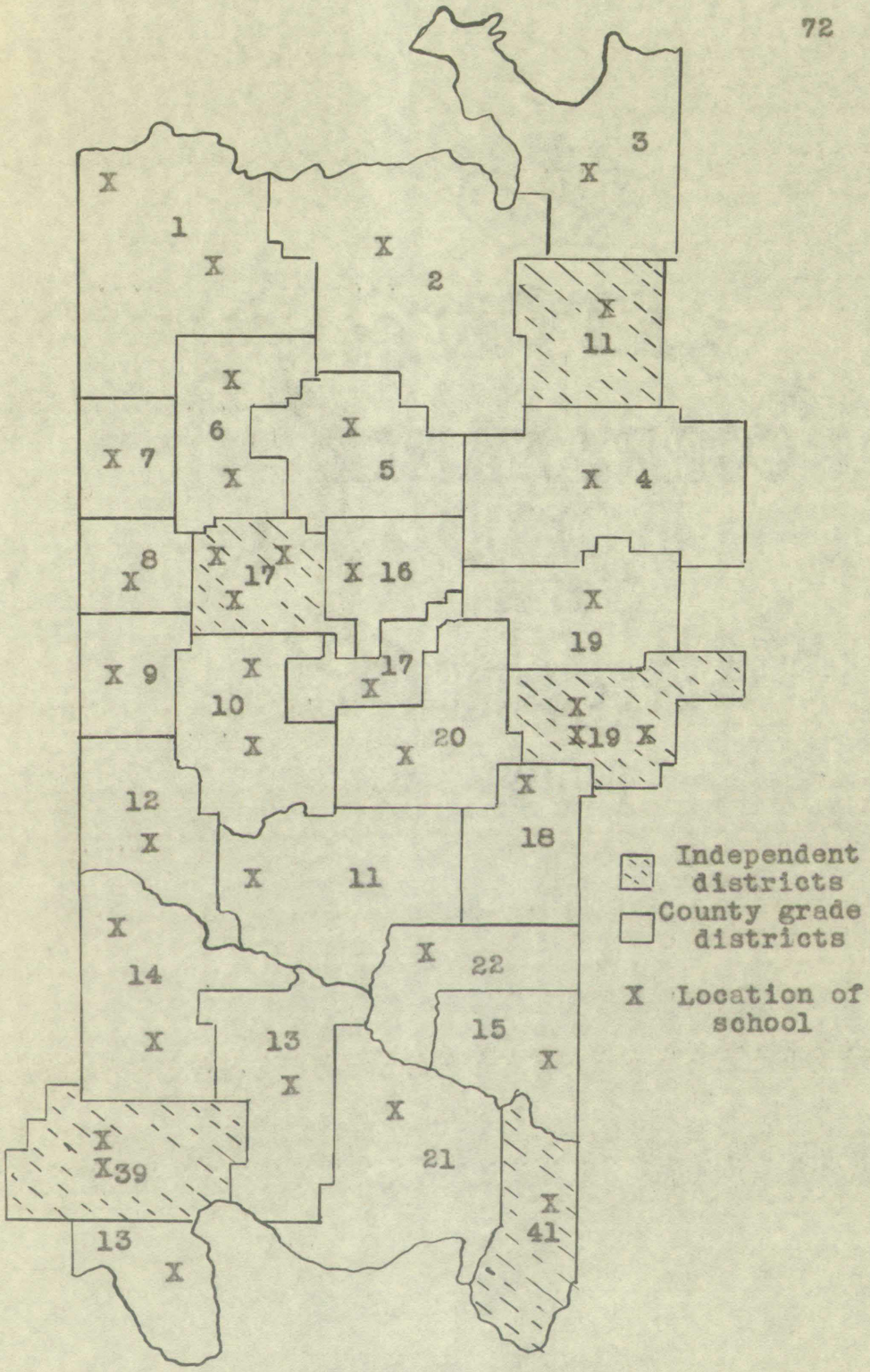


FIGURE 6

PROPOSED GRADE SCHOOL DISTRICTS FOR
THE COUNTY UNIT SYSTEM OF SEMINOLE COUNTY

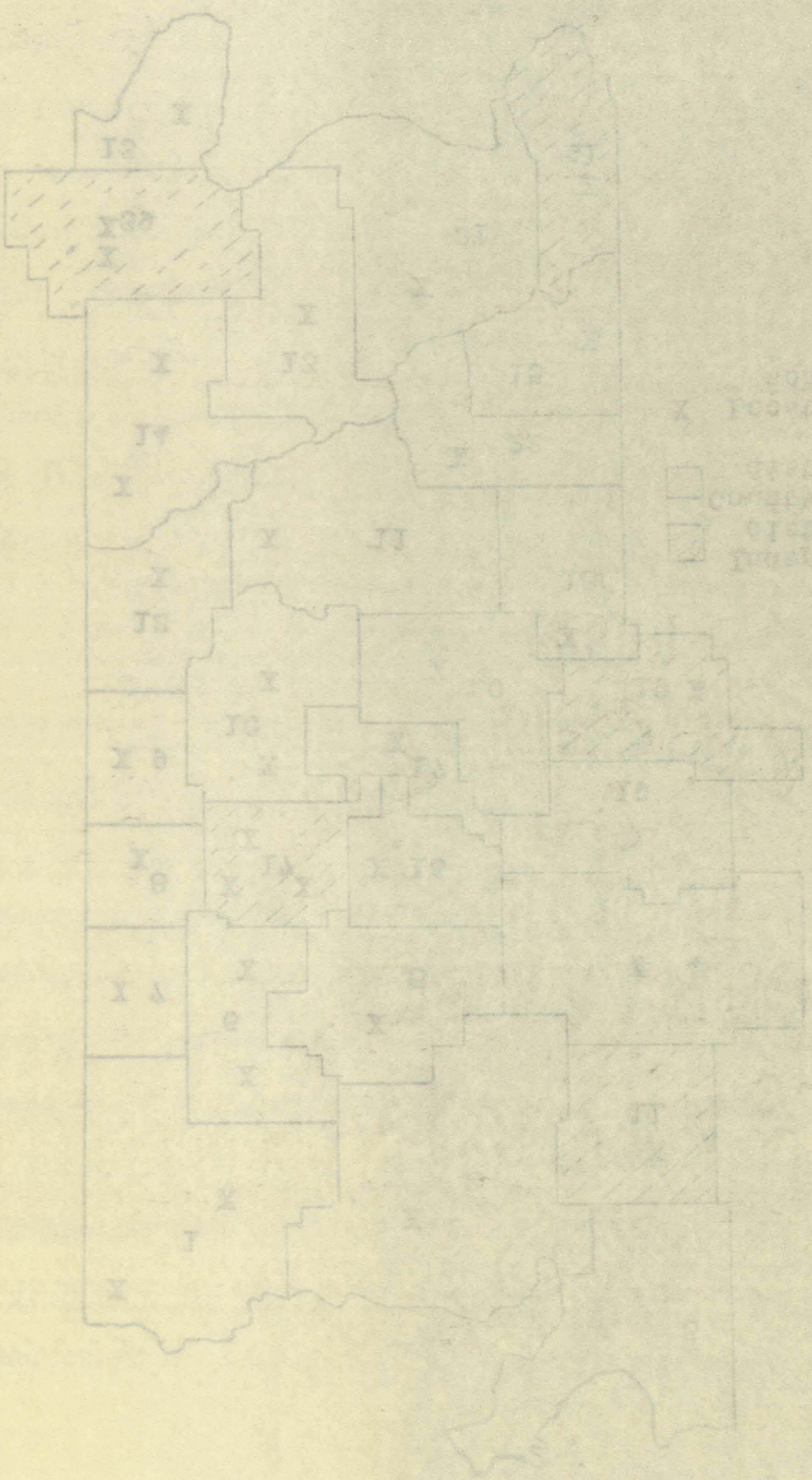


TABLE XII

ESTIMATED ENROLLMENT, AVERAGE DAILY ATTENDANCE, AND TEACHERS REQUIRED FOR THE COUNTY UNIT SYSTEM OF SEMINOLE COUNTY

District number	Estimated enrollment	Estimated A. D. A.	Teachers required	Location of school
H.D. 1	200	160	7	Excelsior
H.D. 2	325	260	11	Prairie Valley
H.D. 3	525	420	17	Varnum
H.D. 4	175	140	6	Butner
H.D. 5	825	660	26	Bowlegs
H.D. 6	375	300	12	Vamoosa
TOTAL	2,425	1,940	79	
G.D. 1	300	210	7	Prairie Valley
G.D. 2	350	245	8	Strother
G.D. 3	250	175	6	Excelsior
G.D. 4	225	160	6	Butner
G.D. 5	150	105	3	Twin Oak
G.D. 6	550	385	12	Liberty
G.D. 7	225	160	6	Prairie View
G.D. 8	225	160	6	Pleasant Grove
G.D. 9	150	105	3	Carr City
G.D. 10	750	525	17	Bowlegs
G.D. 11	500	350	11	Wolf
G.D. 12	175	125	4	Central
G.D. 13	300	210	7	Vamoosa
G.D. 14	300	210	7	Summers Chapel
G.D. 15	175	125	4	Kite
G.D. 16	200	140	5	Mountain View
G.D. 17	250	175	6	New Lima
G.D. 18	175	125	4	Justice
G.D. 19	100	70	3	Sams
G.D. 20	150	105	3	Ong
G.D. 21	250	175	6	Culley
G.D. 22	200	140	5	New Model
TOTAL	5,950	4,180	139	
GRAND TOTAL	8,375	6,120	218	

H.D. --- High school district, grades seven to twelve.
G.D. --- Grade school district, grades one to six.

The estimated number of teachers needed under the county unit plan would be seventy-nine high school teachers, 139 grade teachers, and twenty-eight principals, a total of 246 teachers and principals. This is fifteen teachers fewer than now used by the same schools to teach approximately the same number of pupils. If the six-year plan should be introduced for the high schools, a few more teachers would be used in the high school division than under the present plan. On the basis of the present mean average salary of the grade teachers $930 annually, a saving of $13,950 in the teachers' salary account would be effected.

V. ESTIMATED FINANCIAL NEEDS

The financial needs of any school system depend upon the educational program that system expects to carry out. The program of the entire county under the proposed plan would be basicly the same for all communities, yet flexible enough to meet any special needs arising in each community. Each child would have an equivalent amount of wealth to support his education. The taxes for school purposes should be levied against the assessed valuation of the rural sections of the county as a whole, all property sharing an equal burden of the tax load. This would prevent the frequent practice of building up large valuations in a few districts for the purpose of dodging taxes.

An estimate of the financial needs and a proposed budget for the first year of the county unit plan has been prepared to give a clearer picture of the financial set-up under the proposed system. In so doing, the teachers' salaries were given the first consideration. The proposed salary schedule is not adequate, but it is above the average of the state, enabling the county superintendent to engage the best teachers from the surrounding state aid schools. No principal would receive less than $125.00 per month for a term of ten months. Grade teachers would receive ten dollars and high school teachers fifteen dollars per month above the state aid schedule. Under the proposed schedule, as shown in Table XIII, the teachers' salary account in the budget would be $257,770.

Ward G. Reeder has the following to say concerning a well proportioned budget:

> Only by comparing his practice with that of similar school systems can a school official be fully aware of his own practice. Of course the modal practice is not necessarily the best, nor is the majority always right. The thing which should always be kept in mind is the local needs, and local needs may be so different that, compared with the budgets of similar school systems, an unusually large percentage of the budget for a particular item would be justifiable. According to a recent report of the American City Bureau (New York) the following median percentages of the school budgets of a large number of random-selected cities of varying size were devoted to the several major items of school expense:[6]

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[6]Ward G. Reeder, The Fundamentals of Public School Administration (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1937), p. 171.

Function	Cities between 8,000 and 30,000 population	Proposed budget
General Control	4.9 %	5.0 %
Instructional service	72.8 %	74.3 %
Operation of plant	13.5 %	13.8 %
Maintenance of plant	3.8 %	3.9 %
Fixed charges	1.2 %	1.2 %
Auxiliary agencies	1.6 %	8.3 %

The proposed budget for the first year of the county unit system, as shown in Table XIV, is based upon Reeder's standards shown above. The estimated income is based upon the 1938 assessed valuation, the gross production tax for that year less 14 per cent, and the state aid regulations as shown in the appendix. Since the above standards were established in large cities, the proposed budget for rural areas must deviate some. This is seen most clearly in Auxilliary agencies where transportation must be considered. The amount appropriated for these purposes was approximately $19,000 more than the 1.9 per cent allocated by Reeder above.

The estimated income exceeds the expenditures by $56,486. There will be a number of adjustments to be made during the first year. This surplus would be a great aid toward making such adjustments as well as a safeguard against a deficit at the end of the year. No provisions were made in the budget for the erection of new buildings or the purchase of new equipment other than transportation equipment. These items could be financed by a five mill building levy, which

TABLE XIII

PROPOSED SALARY SCHEDULE FOR THE COUNTY UNIT SYSTEM OF SEMINOLE COUNTY

Training	Years teaching experience					
	None	1	2	3	4	5
Master's degree	$95	$100	$105	$110	$115	$120
Bachelor's degree	90	95	100	105	110	
90-124 semester hours	85	90	95	100		
60-89 semester hours	80	85	90	95		

Principals shall draw their base salary above plus a $5.00 increment per month per teacher under their supervision, not to exceed 25 teachers.

High school teachers shall draw the base salary above plus a $5.00 increment per month.

Principals supervising more than 10 teachers shall receive 11 months' pay, all others 10 months' pay.

All teachers shall receive a salary based on the above schedule for 9 months. By a majority vote of the teachers in any school, they may receive the same annual salary in 12 monthly payments.

TABLE XIV

PROPOSED BUDGET FOR SEMINOLE COUNTY RURAL SCHOOLS

ESTIMATED REVENUES		
1. 15 mill ad valorem tax		$244,700
2. State primary aid		51,366
3. State secondary aid		25,000
4. Homestead exemption reimbursements		6,000
5. Beverage tax		15,000
6. Federal aid		15,000
7. County apportionment		1,000
8. State apportionment		7,500
9. Gross production tax		50,000
TOTAL REVENUES		$415,566
EXPENDITURES		
General Control		
1. Expenses of county board	$ 800	
2. Salary of county superintendent	3,600	
3. Salary of secretary	1,800	
4. Salary of clerk	1,200	
5. Salary of 2 supervisors	3,600	
6. Office supplies	500	
7. Expense of supervision	900	
8. Expense of county superintendent	300	
9. Rent for supplies store room	360	
10. Publicity expense	300	
11. Enumeration	700	
12. Election expense	500	
13. Telephone expense	400	
14. Annual audit	250	
15. Principals' office supplies	2,800	$ 18,010
Instructional Service		
1. Teachers' salaries	$219,475	
2. Principals' salaries	38,295	
3. Instructional supplies	5,000	
4. Library	5,000	267,770
Operation of Plant		
1. Janitors' wages	$ 25,200	
2. Janitors' supplies	5,000	
3. Light, water, and fuel	19,300	49,500

(Continued on next page.)

TABLE XIV

PROPOSED BUDGET FOR SEMINOLE COUNTY RURAL SCHOOLS (CONTINUED)

Maintenance of Plant		
1. Repair and upkeep of buildings	$ 10,000	
2. Upkeep of grounds	2,000	
3. Repair of furniture and fixtures	2,000	$ 14,000
Fixed Charges		
1. Insurance	$ 4,400	4,400
Auxiliary Agencies		
1. Transportation	$ 25,000	
2. Physical education	4,000	
3. Health	2,000	31,000
TOTAL EXPENDITURES		$359,080

is a legal procedure in Oklahoma.[7] Such a levy against the 1938 assessed valuation would produce over $240,000, a sum which would be sufficient to erect the two new grade buildings and make any required additions to the other buildings. A portion of this program could be financed by the sale of abandoned school property.

Approximately 51 per cent of the estimated income, $213,800, is to be derived from oil sources, which were estimated to be practically exhausted in ten years. Under the proposed plan, however, this situation is not so alarming as it might at first seem. Approximately 50 per cent of the school population are members of families deriving their income from the oil fields.[8] As the oil fields become depleted and these families move, the demands placed upon the schools will be lessened. If the enrollment should decrease 50 per cent and the major portion of the oil revenues be lost simultaneously, the remaining revenues would be approximately $22,000 more than one-half the proposed expenditures in the present budget. Certain items, such as operation and maintenance of plant, would tend to reduce at a slower rate than the enrollment. Such items, however, could be 12 per cent higher in proportion to the remainder of the budget and the

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[7] Oklahoma State Constitution, Article X, Section 10.

[8] Fifteenth Federal Census, Population, Vol. II, p. 563.

non-oil revenue still be sufficient to operate the schools at the same rate of efficiency. Then, too, as the local revenues decrease the county schools would qualify for larger amounts of secondary aid.

VI. TRANSPORTATION

One of the largest problems of any consolidated or centralized school is transportation. It is very vital to the operation of the plan proposed for Seminole County. The transportation of pupils must be carried out efficiently and with consideration for the safety and comfort of the pupils. There are approximately 500 miles of paved and hard surfaced roads in Seminole County, enabling the trucks to make more trips with little additional expense. Transportation should be furnished to all pupils living more than one mile from school by the commonly traveled road. The transportation of the consolidated and union-graded schools would form a nucleus around which the transportation program of the county might be built. It would be wise to appoint a committee of the principals to work out the transportation routes. As the plan progresses and the occasions arise, the routes may be changed to meet the existing needs. A program should be worked out between the school authorities and the State Highway Patrol relative to the safety factors, both from a driving standpoint and the physical equipment used.

VII. SUMMARY

The plan proposed for the reorganization of the rural schools of Seminole County should result in more efficient training of pupils, an enriched offering, and more economical operation. The savings made in quantity purchases of supplies should go a long way toward offsetting the decreasing revenues. A more diversified offering may be presented, using a smaller number of teachers and enabling the payment of better salaries and the command of better qualified teachers. County-wide supervision for both the elementary and secondary grades should result in a more unified program and a more vitalized curriculum. Many of the existing educational enequalities should be removed.

Adjustments would be necessary from time to time, but an energetic, public-spirited board of education, through the recommendations of an efficient, professionally-trained county superintendent, should be able to maintain an educational system that would far surpass any accomplishments that might be reached under the present organization. A comparison of the two systems is summarized in the following statement:

> . . . It is clear that the solution of our problems cannot be finally reached through county support, but let us bear in mind that county support is a great step in advance over district support, for the inequalities among the districts are always greater than those among the counties.[9]

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[9]Fletcher Harper Swift, "Sound Methods of School Finance as a Means of Equalizing Educational Opportunity in Texas," Texas Outlook, V:9, February, 1924.

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APPENDIX

SOURCES OF SCHOOL REVENUE

School Laws of Oklahoma, 1937 Edition, Edited by
A. L. Crable, State Superintendent of Public Instruction

ARTICLE XXVI

Section 392. Permanent School Fund: All proceeds of the sale of public lands that have heretofore been or may be hereinafter given by the United States for the use and benefit of the common schools of this State, all such per centum as may be granted by the United States on the sales of public lands, the sum of five million dollars appropriated to the State for the use and benefit of the common schools in lieu of sections sixteen and thirty-six, and other lands of the Indian Territory, the proceeds of all property that shall fall to the State by escheat, the proceeds of all gifts or donations to the State for common schools not otherwise appropriated by the terms of the gifts, and such other gifts, appropriations, or donations as shall be made by the legislature for the benefit of the common schools, shall constitute the permanent school fund, the income of which shall be used for the maintenance of the common schools of the State. The principal shall be deemed a trust fund held by the State, and shall forever be held inviolate. It may be increased, but shall never be diminished. The State shall reimburse said permanent school fund for all losses thereof which may in any manner occur, and no portion of said fund shall be diverted for any other use or purpose. (Sec. 2, Article XI, Oklahoma State Constitution.)

Section 393. Revenues Used for School Purposes Only: The interest and income of the permanent school fund, the net income from the leasing of public lands which have been or may be granted by the United States to the State for the benefit and use of the common schools, together with any revenue derived from taxes authorized to be levied for such purposes, and any other sums which may be added thereto by law, shall be used and applied each year for the benefit of the common schools of the State in proportion to the school population of the several districts, and no part of the fund shall ever be diverted from this purpose, or used for any other purpose than the support and maintenance of the common schools for the equal benefit of all the people of the State. (Sec. 3, Article XI, Oklahoma State Constitution.)

ARTICLE XXVII

Section 419. Rate of Levy: The annual rate of levy of five (5) mills for school purposes may be increased by any school district by an amount not to exceed ten (10) mills on the dollar valuation on condition that a majority of the taxpaying voters thereof voting thereon shall vote for such additional levy, and by their majority vote approve an estimate to be submitted to the county excise board. . . . The excise board shall have no power to reduce the levy so voted and made at the school district meeting, neither shall the said board have the authority to reduce the estimate, unless the rate of levy so voted, shall be insufficient to raise the amount thereof, . . . (12675)

ARTICLE XL

Section 599. Beverage Tax: There is hereby levied on all beverages containing more than one-half of one per cent (½ of 1%) alcohol . . . a tax of $2.50 for every barrel containing not more than thirty-one gallons, and a like rate for any other quantities or for the fractional part of a barrel . . .

Each and every manufacturer . . . shall pay an annual license . . . in the sum of one thousand ($1000.00) dollars.

Each and every retail dealer . . . shall pay an annual license . . . in the sum of one hundred ($100.00) dollars.

Each wholesaler . . . shall pay an annual license . . . in the sum of two hundred and fifty ($250.00) dollars.

. . . Five (5%) per centum . . . to be used for the collection of revenue . . .

Ninety-five (95%) per centum . . . shall be apportioned quarterly to the several school districts of the State on the scholastic enumeration per capita distribution basis . . (Chapter 153, S. L. 1933)

Section 600. Gross Production Tax: . . . Every person, firm, association, or corporation engaged in the mining or production, within this state of the aforesaid asphalt, or of ores bearing lead, zinc, jack, gold, silver, or copper, or of petroleum or other crude oil or other mineral oil, natural gas and/or casinghead gas, shall, monthly, file . . a statement under oath . . . and shall, at the time, pay to the Oklahoma Tax Commission, a tax equal to three-fourths of one per centum on the gross value of asphalt, ores bearing lead, zinc, jack, gold, silver, and copper . . . and a

tax equal to five per centum of the gross value of the production of petroleum or other crude or mineral oil . . .

Seventy-eight per centum of all monies collected hereunder shall be . . . used for the general expenses of state government . . .

One-tenth of the sum collected from each county whence . . . produced shall be . . . credited . . . to . . . the County Highway Construction and Maintenance Fund. One-tenth of the sum collected . . . shall be . . . distributed . . . to the various school districts in said county on a par capita student attendance basis as shown for the last previous school year and used for the maintenance of common schools.

Two per centum of all moneys collected shall . . . be used for the collection of revenues collected hereunder . . (H. B. 87, 1935)

METHOD OF APPORTIONING PRIMARY AND SECONDARY AID

ARTICLE XXIX

Section 505. . . . Apportionment generally.

. . . . . .

III. There shall be apportioned to each district as Primary Aid, levying and using not less than eight mills . . . on the lawfully assessed valuation and voting an eight months or more term of school a sum to supplement the district's funds appropriated for the payment of the salaries of teachers.

1. The following schedule shall be used as a basis for the apportionment of Primary Aid for the payment of teachers' salaries:

(a) For each teacher holding a first grade Elementary Certificate issued on examination, $50.00 per month.

(b) For each teacher holding an Elementary Certificate issued on 40 hours of college work, $65.00 per month.

(c) For each teacher holding a State Certificate issued on 2 years of college work, $70.00 per month.

(d) For each teacher holding a State Certificate issued on three years of college work, $75.00 per month.

(e) For each teacher holding a State Certificate issued on a Bachelor's Degree, $80.00 per month.

(f) For each teacher holding a State Certificate issued on a Master's Degree, $85.00 per month.

(g) Provided, that $5.00 per month for each year of experience but not to exceed three (3) years, for teachers without standard degrees; not to exceed four (4) for teachers with standard baccalaureate degrees; not to exceed five (5) for teachers with master's degrees, shall be added to the monthly schedule to be used as a basis for apportionment of Primary Aid.

2. The total number of needed elementary teachers in any district shall, on the basis of average daily attendance for

the previous year be as follows:

(a) In districts having 15 to 29 pupils, 1 teacher.

(b) In districts having 30 to 59 pupils, 2 teachers.

(c) In districts having 60 to 89 pupils, 3 teachers.

(d) In districts having 90 to 110 pupils, 4 teachers.

(e) In districts having 111 or more pupils, 4 teachers shall be allowed for the first 110 and one (1) teacher for each additional 32 pupils.

Provided, that pupils of grades one (1) to eight (8) inclusive attending any school in this state shall be credited to the district in which they actually reside and attend school, unless they have been legally transferred therefrom.

. . . . . .

3. The total number of approved junior and senior high school teachers in any district shall, on the basis of average daily attendance for the previous year, be as follows:

(a) In districts having 36 to 54 pupils, 3 teachers.

(b) In districts having 55 to 66 pupils, 4 teachers.

(c) In districts having 67 to 130 pupils, 4 teachers for the first 66 and 1 teacher for each additional 32 pupils.

(d) In districts having 131 or more pupils, 6 teachers for the first 130 pupils and 1 teacher for each additional 26 pupils.

Provided, that any high school having fewer than 36 high school pupils shall be given aid for two (2) teachers if its schoolhouse is more than twelve (12) miles by the commonly traveled road from the school house of a district willing to provide transportation and educational facilities for all the high school pupils, and any high school which by reason of the topography of the district cannot safely and economically transport its pupils to a school willing to provide high school facilities shall be approved for two (2) teachers.

. . . . . .

4. Transfer fees for all districts not qualifying for secondary aid shall be paid from the funds made available

under the provisions of this subsection in accordance with the existing laws, but no transfer fees paid under the provisions of this Section shall exceed forty-five ($45.00) dollars per year for elementary pupils and seventy-five ($75.00) per year for high school pupils.

IV. There shall be apportioned as Secondary Aid to each district levying and using not less than ten (10) mills . . and voting an eight month term of school, a sum to supplement the district's funds (exclusive of the purchase of sites, the construction of new buildings, additions to buildings, interest on all warrants, or sinking fund requirements) equal in amount to the difference between (1) the income of the district from a ten mill levy on the lawfully assessed valuation of the district after deducting the loss due to homestead exemption, State Apportionment, County Apportionment, gross production tax, beverage tax, transfer fees, tuition for orphan children, Primary Aid, moneys received for restoration of losses incurred through homestead exemption for that part of the budget financed by the ten (10) mill levy, and all other revenue receipts except unexpended surpluses from previous years, one-half of the Federal Indian tuition, and funds provided by the Federal Government for payment of teachers' salaries in excess of the minimum program and (2) the cost of the minimum program as hereinafter defined. The minimum program shall be defined as the program of a school operating for a term of nine (9) months during the fiscal year and including:

1. The number of teachers and the salary scale as set forth in Subsection III of this Section.

2. Maintenance at the rate of six and one-half (6½) cents per day per pupil in attendance during the next preceding year, or not less than One Hundred Fifty ($150.00) Dollars per teacher per year.

3. Transportation on the basis of the following scale, where the average number of legally transported pupils per square mile during the preceding year was:

(a) 8 or more, Ten ($10.00) Dollars per year per pupil.

(b) 5.0 to 7.9, Fifteen ($15.00) per year per pupil.

(c) 2.0 to 4.9, Eighteen ($18.00) per year per pupil.

(d) 1.0 to 1.9, Twenty ($20.00) Dollars per year per pupil.

(e) Less than 1.0, Twenty-five ($25.00) Dollars per year per pupil.

The amount of transportation shall in each district be determined by multiplying the average number of pupils legally transported daily by the district during the month of the preceding year in which the greatest number of pupils were transported by the appropriate amount per pupil set out in the foregoing schedule. Where the number of pupils per square mile during the preceding year was less than 0.6, however, the State Board of Education is authorized to make special adjustments to meet the actual costs of transportation. The average number of pupils per square mile shall be determined by dividing twice the number of legally transported pupils living inside the district plus the number of legally transported pupils living outside the district by twice the area of the district plus the area served by the district served for transferred pupils.

4. The district's pro rata part of transfer fees payable to other districts under existing laws.

It is provided, however, that districts qualifying for Secondary Aid shall not make an appropriation for transfer fees payable, but shall have all the said fees, if any, paid direct to the district entitled to receive same by the State Board of Education from the funds made available under the provisions of this Sub-section.

Provided, no transfer fee under this act shall exceed Forty-five ($45.00) Dollars per year for elementary pupils, and Seventy-five ($75.00) Dollars per year for High school pupils. (Section 4, H. B. 6, 1937)

Section 506. Minimum Program: Any school district which desires less than a nine (9) month term shall have its minimum program as defined in Sub-section IV, Section 4, of this Act reduced proportionately on the basis of the actual number of months it maintains its school. (Section 5, H. B. 6, 1937)

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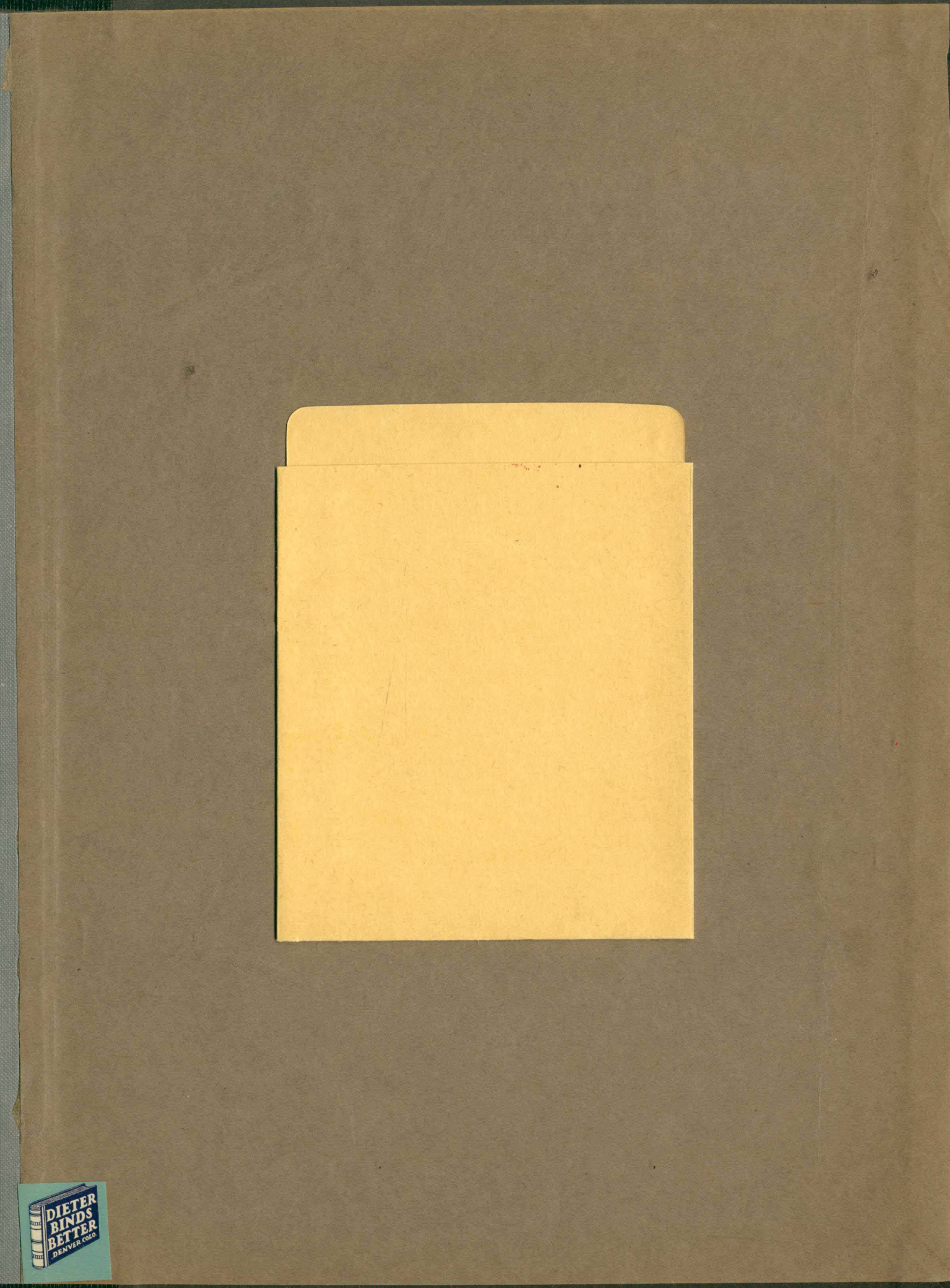
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