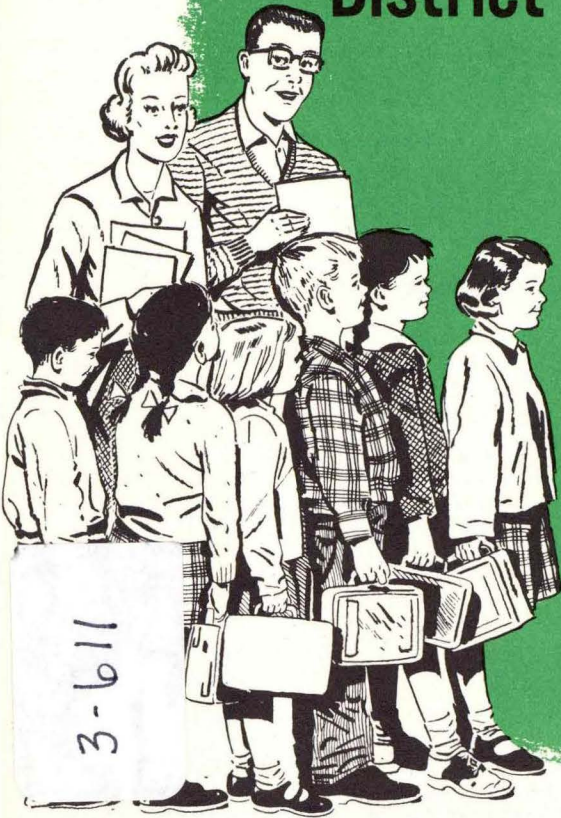


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A Report  
To The People of Iowa  
On The Progress And  
Goals of School  
District Reorganization

Your  
School  
District



EQUAL OPPORTUNITY TO PREPARE  
FOR THE FUTURE THROUGH A  
SOUND PROGRAM OF  
PUBLIC EDUCATION

Published by  
The State of Iowa  
Des Moines

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**DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC INSTRUCTION**  
**DES MOINES 19**

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**STATE OF IOWA  
DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC INSTRUCTION**

**STATE OFFICE BUILDING  
DES MOINES, IOWA**

The State Board of Public Instruction, in attempting to carry out the directives of the Iowa Legislature, presents this booklet as a public information service to the people of the state.

The information in this document with respect to the reorganization of school districts is based on objective research. We believe it involves the most important public school problem facing us today.

This booklet reflects the point of view and recommendations of your Department of Public Instruction regarding school district reorganization. We have attempted to make it accurate and concise.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "J. C. Wright". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long horizontal line extending from the end of the name.

Superintendent of Public Instruction

# Introduction

There is nothing wrong with public education in Iowa that the establishment of sound basic school districts and adequate financial support cannot cure.

Iowans can point with pride to many of their schools that will compare favorably with the finest in the land

# But

We have a right and a duty to be concerned about some shocking inequalities in school programs and inadequacies in school facilities among Iowa's 3,323 school districts.

As early as 1945 the Iowa Legislature recognized the unsoundness of the state's school district organization by enacting a new school district reorganization law. This Act was strengthened by the Legislature in 1953 and again in 1957.

This Act made a declaration of policy which reads as follows:

**"It is hereby declared to be the policy of the state to encourage . . . the reorganization of school districts into such units as are necessary, economical and efficient . . . and which will insure equal opportunity for all children of the state."**

Chapter 275, Section 1, Code 1954.



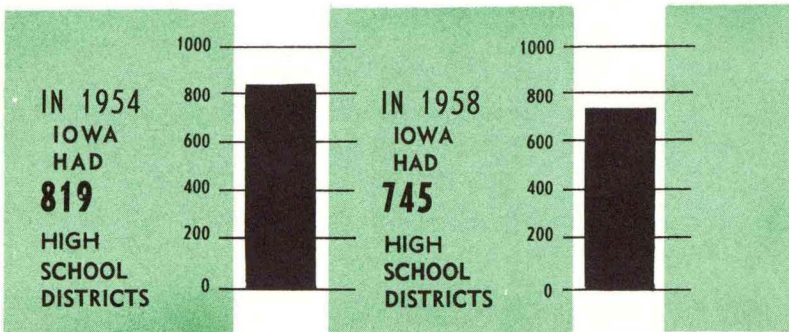
*Progress*

## Progress Is Being Made . . .

In 1954 Iowa had 4,417 school districts.

In 1958 Iowa has 3,323 school districts.

**This is a reduction of 1,094 School Districts since 1954**



**A reduction of 74 high school districts. Fifty-four per cent of this reduction occurred during the past two years from July 1, 1955 through June 30, 1957.**

However, the reduction in the number of districts is but one index of progress.

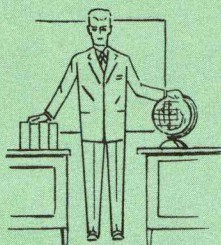
Do the new districts formed have enough children and other resources to meet the goals of the policy set forth by the 1945 legislature? Is it possible for them to be efficient? Can they insure equal educational opportunities?

The median enrollment (K-12) of the new districts formed between July 1, 1951, and June 30, 1955, was 403. Between July 1, 1956, and June 30, 1957, this median was 684. The median high school enrollment for new districts formed between 1951 and 1955 was 113. The median for new districts during the 1956-1957 school year was 183 pupils. This is evidence that Iowans are ready to accept the reorganization of local school districts with enough resident pupil enrollment to make possible quality and breadth of school program at reasonable costs.

# The Goals

## Equal Educational Opportunity for ALL... Your Child Is Surely Entitled:

To well-prepared and competent teachers.  
To be well-trained in the basic skills:



ENGLISH  
MATHEMATICS  
SCIENCE  
SOCIAL  
STUDIES



TO a high school education which includes a choice between preparation for college and a vocational type program for those who will not go on to college.

TO study in a modern building with good educational equipment and a wholesome learning environment.

TO develop his individual talents to the fullest extent possible, whether he be gifted or handicapped.

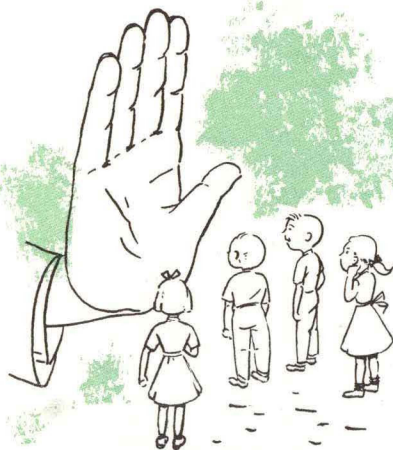
TO have access to adequate health services.

TO guidance services administered and supervised by trained personnel.

TO good citizenship training.

TO transportation if he lives beyond walking distance from his attendance center.

TO have access to a school lunch program.



***Would you deny these and other benefits  
to your own child or your neighbor's child?***

# The Goals

## A Good School Program Demands Schools with Enough Children To:



1-25

Justify elementary attendance centers with one grade per teacher and a pupil-teacher ratio of approximately 25 to 1. This means a minimum of approximately 200 pupils for an elementary school with grades kindergarten through eight.



1-20

Provide high school attendance centers with a minimum of 10 classroom teachers and not less than 20 pupils enrolled for each teacher.

Two such elementary attendance centers would provide enough pupils coming into high school to warrant a 10-teacher staff and use the staff's time efficiently.

### SUBJECTS AND SERVICES TO PROVIDE COLLEGE PREPARATION, GENERAL AND VOCATIONAL PROGRAMS

ENGLISH	Literature Speech Dramatics Journalism Grammar	HEALTH and SAFETY	Safety Education Driver Education Physical Education
SCIENCE	General Biology Physics Chemistry	MATHEMATICS	General Algebra I and II Geometry-Plane and Solid Trigonometry
FOREIGN LANGUAGE	At least two years of one language	SOCIAL STUDIES	History Economics Sociology American Government
BUSINESS EDUCATION	Typing Shorthand Bookkeeping Business Machines	VOCATIONAL	Homemaking Agriculture Industrial Arts Trades and Industry Distributive Education
MUSIC	Vocal Instrumental	SERVICES & ACTIVITIES	Guidance Supervision Special Education Audio Visual Broad Activity Program
ART	Commercial Fine Arts		

Can these courses and services be offered efficiently with less than 10 teachers and 200 pupils in high school?

An elementary enrollment of at least 400 pupils is required to support a 200-pupil high school.

# The Goals

## Good Districts Need Adequate HUMAN and FINANCIAL RESOURCES:

### Children and Money



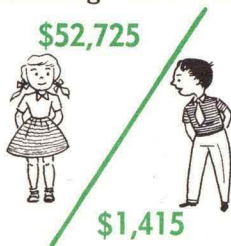
A local district's financial ability is affected by the number of children for which that district must provide a program of education.

A large number of pupils with a comparatively low assessed valuation spells financial burdens. A small number of pupils with a high assessed valuation means inefficiency and waste.

Among Iowa's 745 high school districts, the poorest district has but \$1,415 in assessed valuation per child.

The richest one has \$52,725 per child.

Iowa ranks high, as compared to the nation as a whole, in the percentage of income spent for public education (fourth from the top among the 48 states). It ranks very low in the efficient use of tax funds. The average operating expenditure per pupil in Iowa is 19% above the national average.



#### COMPARISON OF NUMBER OF H. S. DISTRICTS IN WHICH 25% OF H. S. PUPILS ARE ENROLLED

Number of Districts	Total No. Pupils Enrolled	Average High School Enrollment	Total Number Teachers	Average Number Teachers	Pupil Teacher Ratio
12	34,368	2864	1527.0	127.2	22.5
67	32,652	487	1635.5	24.4	19.9
182	33,553	184	2190.0	12.0	15.3
484	33,496	69.2	2837.5	5.9	11.8




*Problem!*

## The Inefficient Use of Public Funds Stems Largely From The Inefficient Use of Teachers' Time.

Six hundred three (603) of Iowa's 745 high schools have an average pupil-teacher ratio of less than thirteen (12.7) pupils per teacher.

### PUPIL-TEACHER RATIOS IN 745 HIGH SCHOOL DISTRICTS

1957-58 School Year



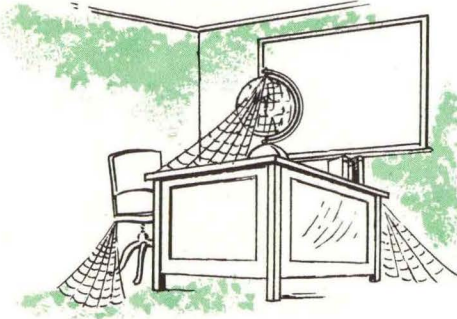
High School Enrollment	Number of Districts	Total High School Enrollment	High School Pupil-Teacher Ratio	Elem. Pupil-Teacher Ratio	Average H.S. Tuition Costs Grades 9-12
0- 24	11	216	6	16.6	\$786.17
25- 49	135	5,175	9.4	19.6	587.97
50- 74	146	9,040	11.2	21.3	545.13
75- 99	106	9,167	12.9	23.6	499.76
Cumulative Totals 0-99	398	23,598	11.3	21.6	
100-149	147	17,969	13.8	24.9	488.80
150-199	58	10,258	15.3	24.3	474.27
Cumulative Totals 0-199	603	51,825	12.7	23.2	
200-299	60	14,013	16.0	25.3	451.80
300-399	35	12,264	18.4	24.7	432.48
400-499	12	5,405	20.2	26.8	418.90
500-599	10	5,410	21.1	25.4	410.02
600 and above	25	44,854	22.2	24.8	452.53
<b>TOTALS or AVERAGES</b>	<b>745</b>	<b>133,771</b>	<b>16.4</b>	<b>24.8</b>	<b>\$512.71</b>

Small enrollments contribute to waste of tax money because of the low pupil-teacher ratios.

In 398 of the 745 high schools, the pupil-teacher ratio is about 11 to 1.

# Problem

## Outdated Iowa High Schools Still Offer The Barest Minimum of An Educational Program



Today's modern program extends through twelve grades for all children. It should provide a challenge both to college-bound youngsters and those who will not seek college training.

### High Schools In Iowa With Less Than 100 Pupils Typically Offer No More Than:

Two years of English.

American history and American government in the social studies field.

General science and biology in the science field with less than 50 per cent offering physics, and but 15 per cent offering chemistry.

Algebra and plane geometry.

Less than 10 per cent offer algebra II, solid geometry or trigonometry.

*Foreign Languages are almost unknown in these schools!*

*Only about 50 per cent of the small high schools offer Industrial Arts or Trades and Industries Courses.*

*Vocational Agriculture is available in only 12 per cent of these high schools.*

***Surely this cannot mean equal opportunity for all children!!!***

*Problem*

## Planning for More Adequate Local School Districts In Iowa

At the present time, the Iowa school law requires that all areas of the state shall be in a twelve-grade school district by July 1, 1962. When this comes to pass, the problem of non-high school districts will be solved.

The problem of planning these districts so that the welfare of adjoining area to new districts is considered requires careful consideration. The Legislature has delegated the initial task of planning to county boards of education and, in the Acts of the 57th General Assembly, has placed importance on joint district planning across county lines.



County plans are tentative and amendable. Local planning and petitioning for proposed districts may request amendment to county plans.

Local planning by the people is important because only by such planning and study can the best possible districts be proposed.

The law now carries a requirement that any new district proposed, planned, or permitted to go to an election, must have at least 300 pupils enrolled in public school, grades kindergarten through twelve.

Many authorities contend that this minimum standard is not realistic and that the figure should at least be doubled, or a 600-pupil minimum.

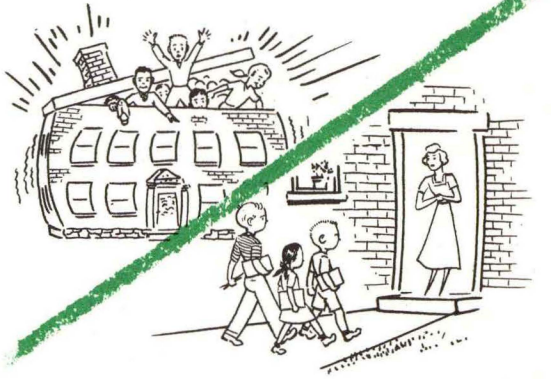
**ONLY** through objective study and planning can the public be informed as to the advantages and disadvantages of any proposed district.

**ONLY** through unselfish planning can the welfare of adjoining area be determined and protected.

# These Facts Face Us...

Too many pupils, too few classrooms, too little educational equipment, too few qualified teachers, too limited local financial resources; this, while we have districts with:

Too few pupils to justify the cost of maintaining an attendance center. Inefficient use of teachers, high per unit costs for an adequate program. **OVER-CROWDING OR TOO FEW PUPILS.** In all such cases the quality and breadth of program suffers.



## THE ANSWERS

*must come from you*

Citizens must obtain the facts on their own local problems.

Organize local study groups.

Hundreds of such committees are at work in Iowa today.

Such committees are highly successful, providing these factors are present:

High quality, local leadership.

Active interest and willingness to give of their time and energy on the part of the committee members.

Cooperation and active leadership from the county superintendent and county board of education, the local boards, their superintendents and teaching staffs.

Good organization and understanding of the job to be done.

A willingness on the part of the committee to seek help from trained or experienced resource people.

A recognition that recommendations of the committee are not binding on future boards of education.

As a result of this fact finding, the people make more intelligent choices as an informed electorate.

Of course, the final choice lies in the vote of the people.



## WHAT CITIZENS COMMITTEES STUDY

Define first the areas of study.

Draw some tentative boundary lines for study purposes.

Determine the educational load by an analysis of the school population.

The number of pupils by grades, a spot map of pupils of the area, and the number of pre-school age children.

Determine the attendance centers and use of each.

**STUDY**, and finally recommend the educational program for the district.

How much English, mathematics, science, social science? Is foreign language needed? What vocational subjects? Business education? What services should be provided as supervision, guidance, special education, remedial services, health services?

Survey and evaluate plant facilities — those existing now and those needed in the future.

Analyze transportation facilities needed. Design bus routes. Estimate school bus needs, time on the bus, and cost analysis.

Make a financial analysis of proposed district.

*Determine assessed valuation.*

*Estimate budget needed.*

*Project millage rate.*

*Project bonding limit.*



*The Answers*

## *Plan Your Own School District*

BEFORE time and circumstances plan it for you.

Think of your school district not as ONE school but one administrative unit with as many schools as are necessary.

**AN AREA WITH:**

**ONE TAX BASE**

**ONE SUPERINTENDENT**

**ONE SCHOOL BOARD**

**ONE STAFF OF TEACHERS**

*But*

With as many attendance centers as are needed to serve your pupils conveniently and efficiently.

Sound basic districts can be formed by a favorable vote of the people.

Proper-sized attendance centers, elementary and high school, can be developed gradually.

Some of you should be ready with the answers to patrons' questions based on facts:

Facts about what constitutes a good school program.

Facts about financing the public school program in the proposed new district.

Facts about transportation of pupils, about where each child will go to school, and about local control of the district.

A school district is a governmental subdivision created by the state. It has one purpose . . . that purpose is to provide **FREE PUBLIC EDUCATION TO ALL**. The structure and design of local school districts is important to the quality of free public education.

Data on the per cent of reorganizations approved by the voters which have included as many as 500 or more children in grades kindergarten or one through twelve during the past four years are:

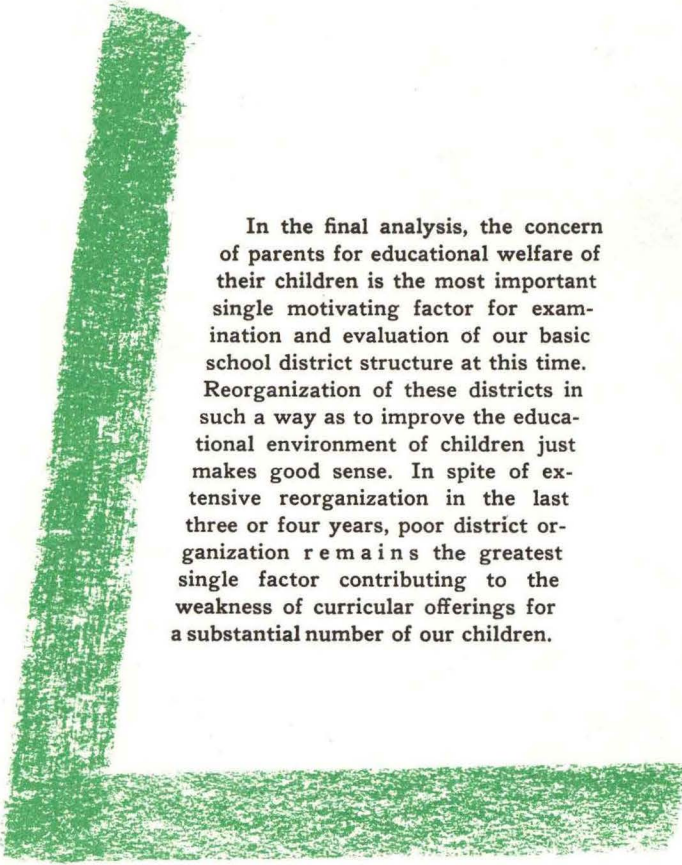
1953-1954	10%
1954-1955	33%
1955-1956	50%
1956-1957	80%

As a result of the larger reorganizations which have occurred during the past three years, the number of high school districts with 500 or more pupils from grades kindergarten through twelve in the state has been substantially increased as shown below:

1954-1955	165
1955-1956	184
1956-1957	206
1957-1958	227

Here are the percentages of the state's area in high school districts for the last four years:

1954-1955	36.9%
1955-1956	41.9%
1956-1957	48.9%
1957-1958	55.6%

A large, hand-drawn green L-shaped graphic on the left side of the page. It consists of a vertical bar on the left and a horizontal bar at the bottom, meeting at a right angle. The texture is grainy, suggesting it was drawn with a marker or crayon.

In the final analysis, the concern of parents for educational welfare of their children is the most important single motivating factor for examination and evaluation of our basic school district structure at this time. Reorganization of these districts in such a way as to improve the educational environment of children just makes good sense. In spite of extensive reorganization in the last three or four years, poor district organization remains the greatest single factor contributing to the weakness of curricular offerings for a substantial number of our children.