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LOCAL SCHOOL DISTRICT REORGANIZATION IN
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PERSPECTIVES

By

Larry Fuller Paige

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ABSTRACT

LOCAL SCHOOL DISTRICT REORGANIZATION IN MICHIGAN: CENTRALIZATION AND DECENTRALIZATION . . . 1970 PERSPECTIVES

By

Larry Fuller Paige

Local school district reorganization has created quite a controversy in recent years. This is not only true in Michigan, but also in the nation as a whole. In Michigan many educators, legislators and concerned citizens have expressed concerns for reorganization, both negatively and positively.

The major purposes of this study were to present (a) a historical overview of local school district reorganization in Michigan, (b) a sequential account of local reorganization in Michigan for late 1969 and the first half of 1970, and (c) recommendations for further study based on findings of this study.

The design of the study took on the image of a historical case study. Twelve (12) regional workshops (excluding Wayne and Kent Counties) and forty-five (45) interviews were conducted at both formal and informal levels. The interviews consisted of an equal representation of legislators, educators, and concerned citizens.

The study attempted to answer the following questions:

1. Is the State Department of Education and the State Board of Education playing an adequate leadership role in terms of local reorganization?
2. Do concerned legislators favor local reorganization?
3. Why is it that not one of the several local reorganization bills introduced in the legislature passed?
4. What are the major hindrances and obstacles to reorganization in Michigan, as perceived by educators and legislators?
5. What do the proponents of local reorganization foresee in the future?
6. What type of legislation is necessary for further reorganization (mandatory or otherwise)?
7. Will further reorganization occur without some form of legislation?
8. Have there been significant gains in achievement in districts that have been reorganized?
9. Do legislators differ from educators with respect to local school district organization?
10. What incentive provided the initial thrust for decentralization?

It will further accept or reject the following related assumptions:

1. Centralization is desired by local educators (superintendents) and legislators from smaller districts.
2. Reorganization will, in most instances, relieve the tax burden of local districts without drastic tax reform.
3. Decentralization is an outgrowth of community demands for accountability.
4. Voluntary reorganization with a permissive attitude on the part of the legislature will result in limited, if any, local reorganization.
5. Mandatory compliance with legislation is a necessity for further local reorganization to occur.
6. Disciplinary problems due to "bigness" will prove to be the most frequent rationale for opposition to centralization.
7. Scope and breadth of program will emerge as the last frequent rationale for or against centralization.
8. Annexation will receive more acceptance than consolidation.
9. The recent state assessment conducted by the Michigan State Board of Education will show a positive relationship between size and achievement.
10. Districts that have undergone reorganization will show a significant increase in student achievement.

The general findings of the study tend to suggest that (1) the State Department and State Board of Education

must exhibit more leadership as it relates to local reorganization, (2) research be provided that shows positive gains following centralization in Michigan, (3) communication between the State Department of Education, legislators, and concerned citizens be increased, (4) a more appropriate formula for support of schools be developed, (5) mandatory legislation for local reorganization prevail in Michigan, (6) decentralization in Detroit may have implications for other large school districts in Michigan, (7) definite descriptions of "Comprehensive Programs" and ideal school districts be developed by the State Board of Education, (8) some degree of local identity remain following centralization, and (9) community control must be an integral portion of any decentralization plan.

DEDICATION

This dissertation is dedicated to Korie. She sacrificed and tolerated many frustrating moments during the theoretical and practical research. She also provided encouragement and the empathy and sympathy necessary for such an endeavor. I would also wish to dedicate this most arduous task to my children, Tonya and Anthony, who probably suffered a decline in attention, concern, and commitment, which may affect them throughout their lives.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The writer wishes to acknowledge the contributions of Dr. Dale Alam, my committee chairman, who served so committedly and dedicatedly to the total efforts. Further acknowledgment is extended to Dr. John Suehr, Dr. Robert Green, and Dr. Wilbur Brookover, who offered continuous assistance throughout this endeavor.

A tremendous amount of appreciation is also extended to Mr. Roger Boline and Mr. David Donovan of the State Department of Education, who contributed invaluable assistance to the writing of this dissertation.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Problem

Local school district reorganization in Michigan has received and will continue to receive widespread attention. This statement will be true until local educators, parents, students, and community groups are able to cooperatively and systematically develop and implement an educational program that, as near as possible, meets the needs of all concerned. This thesis will attempt to explore the past developments, present situations relative to local district reorganization, and possible and/or potential future developments. In recent years, a trend toward decreasing the number of local school districts has been one of the major concerns of Michigan educators. Perhaps decreasing numbers at the local level on the whole may seem to suggest that increases in some communities are not imminent. However, in the past two years, the push for subdivision of local school districts will undoubtedly result in more local school districts in some communities. The problem of local school district reorganization is not simple and is becoming more and more difficult every day. This is due in part to rising operational cost, a more

sophisticated society in general, community demands for accountability, collective bargaining organizations, tenure laws, and in many instances a threatened loss of local or community control. To cope with the above issues, educators have used various and diverse approaches with positive results in many instances but there are definitely too many negative and neutral results.

The general concensus on the part of educators, parents, students, and community is that all children must be granted equal educational opportunities. Presently there is a great discrepancy in the available opportunities from district to district. Herein lies the problem; that of developing techniques and methodologies which result in true equal educational opportunities for all participants in the Michigan educational process.

Purpose

The major and primary purposes of this thesis will be to provide:

- a) an overview of the historical ramifications of local school district reorganization in Michigan,
- b) a running account of local reorganization proceedings for late 1969 and the first half of 1970, including centralization and decentralization,
- c) recommendations for further study relative to local reorganization.

The study will develop a theory of local reorganization based on objective as well as subjective data.

Need for the Study

Local school district reorganization has implications for everything that transpires in a school setting, i.e., the curricula. Historically, it has had, and undoubtedly will continue to have, a tremendous effect on public and private education.

Many criteria have been offered for local reorganization ranging from something as simple as inadequate numbers to a more complex reduced tax base.¹ Some authorities have purported to guarantee academically superior and socially better adjusted students with local reorganization.

If one looks at the dichotomy which has developed from recent trends toward decentralization and centralization, it is obvious that there is no real fine line of demarcation between the two. Occasional overlapping exists in various areas such as numbers enrolled, programs offered, distribution of authority, etc. Russell Wilson has documented the essentials of local school district reorganization with the top priority being equal opportunity to a good and full education.² This seems to suggest the

¹Orley W. Wilcox, "Misconceptions About School District Reorganization," American School Board Journal, (April, 1959), 24-26.

²Russell E. Wilson, "The Essentials for Local School Districts," The Master Plan - School District Organization, (Columbus, Ohio: State Department of Education, October 15, 1966).

curricular offerings should reflect an emphasis upon equal educational opportunities which are usually enhanced with local school district reorganization.

The idea of the reduced tax base should offer no significant incentive for either favoring or not favoring local reorganization. It is believed that education is the most profitable investment that "we" (Americans) can make. Reeves has stated,

A proper reorganization of local school districts is one of the most important needs for the provision of adequate public elementary and secondary schools in practically all states of the union.³

Money spent on education represents the most appropriate investment possible; an investment in the future of America. The complaint against the rising cost of higher education is not warranted. Four years in college (about \$8,000) costs less than four years in prison (about \$11,000).⁴

The chances are two to one that a man with less than an eighth grade education will earn less than \$3,000 a year. We can avoid supporting the families of dropouts by supporting good education.

In reviewing the literature I have discovered that most authorities favor schools with larger enrollments.

³Floyd W. Reeves, Your School District, Department of Rural Education (Washington, D.C.; National Education Association of the United States, 1948), p. 13.

⁴Based on personal calculations after consultations with college and correctional institutions.

This is especially true at the secondary school level. In terms of size (enrollment) and pupil achievement, educational cost, breadth of educational program, extracurricular activities, professional staff qualifications and school plant, the larger schools offer more positive results.⁵ This is supported by Blanke, Hoyt, and Street.

This is true up to an optimum point of size. Studies have shown that there is a strong relationship between school district size and variations in unit cost of education. Morphet, Johns and Reller, in their 1967 publications suggested that in districts with fewer than 1,200 pupils, the high cost of education deterred provisions for needed educational opportunities.⁶ They noted, however, that beyond the 50,000 level of enrollment, cost tended to rise again. It appears, therefore, that cost factors dictate a minimum enrollment of at least 10,000 pupils within a school district. Hence, their findings provide support for the decentralization of large districts and the centralization of small systems in order to provide economy and efficiency of operation.

⁵V. E. Blanke, "Reorganization: A Continuing Problem," Administrator's Notebook, IX (October 1960); D. P. Hoyt, "Size of High School and College Grades," Personnel and Guidance Journal, XXXVII (1959), 569-573; P. Street, J. H. Powell, and J. W. Hamblen, "Achievement of Students and Size of School," Journal of Educational Research, LV (1962), 261-266.

⁶Edgar L. Morphet, et al., Educational Administration (Englewood Cliffs, N. J.: Prentice Hall, 1959), p. 221.

Significance of Study

The study will be of great significance primarily to local educators who are anticipating any kind of school reorganization. It will provide to the local educator some additional alternatives, incentives, and insights relative to reorganization. This is not to say that others will not benefit from a careful analysis of this study but rather that local educators will probably benefit more. The study will also provide additional and/or meaningful information for the State Department of Education and the State Board of Education.

Design and Methodology

The study will take on the image of a historical case study. Basic underlying assumptions and questions will be presented which will be accepted, rejected and/or answered based on 12 regional workshops held throughout the state of Michigan (excluding Wayne, Oakland, Macomb and Kent counties). The primary purpose of these workshops is to gather subjective and objective data relative to reorganization. Further, acceptance or rejection of the basic assumptions will also be based upon personal interviews with 15 legislators, 15 educators and 15 local community interest groups and individuals. The workshops are planned with the basic agenda being administrator oriented. Hence, the participants consist predominantly of local superintendents. Intermediate superintendents serve as meeting coordinators. Agenda items have secondary implications for local board

members and concerned citizens; therefore, a small percentage of them is expected. The basic criteria for interviewee selection are: a) strong proponent or opponent to local reorganization, b) directly affected by local reorganization, e.g., local reorganization committee members, State Department of Education staff (professional) and legislators on education committees, and c) concerned citizens who have voiced an opinion relative to local reorganization.

Basic Underlying Assumptions, directly related to questions following:

1. Centralization is desired by local educators, (superintendents) and legislators from smaller districts.

2. Reorganization will, in most instances, relieve the tax burden of local districts without drastic tax reform.

3. Decentralization is an outgrowth of community demands for accountability.

4. Voluntary reorganization with a permissive attitude on the part of the legislature will result in limited, if any, local reorganization.

5. Mandatory compliance with legislation is a necessity for further local reorganization to occur.

6. Disciplinary problems due to "bigness" will prove to be the most frequent rationale for opposition to centralization.

7. Scope and breadth of program will emerge as the least frequent rationale for or against centralization.

8. Annexation will receive more acceptance than consolidation.

9. The recent state assessment conducted by the Michigan State Board of Education will show a positive relationship between size and achievement.

10. Districts that have undergone reorganization will show a significant increase in student achievement.

A study of this type does not lend itself easily to a definite systematic method of inquiry. However, given the above mentioned assumptions and the following interview guidelines an attempt will be made to present an on-going, organized, systematic format.

The study will attempt to answer the following questions.

1. Is the State Department of Education and the State Board of Education playing an adequate leadership role in terms of local reorganization?

2. Do concerned legislators favor local reorganization? (Assumption 1)

3. Why is it that not one of the several local reorganization bills introduced in the legislature passed? (Assumptions 1 and 3)

4. What are the major hindrances and obstacles to reorganization in Michigan, as perceived by educators and legislators? (Assumptions 2, 6, 7, and 8)

5. What do the proponents of local reorganization foresee in the future? (Assumptions 4 and 5)

6. What type of legislation is necessary for further reorganization (mandatory or otherwise)? (Assumptions 4 and 5)

7. Will further reorganization occur without some form of legislation? (Assumption 1)

8. Have there been significant gains in achievement in districts that have been reorganized? (Assumptions 9 and 10)

9. Do legislators differ from educators with respect to local school district reorganization? (Assumption 1)

10. What incentive provided the initial thrust for decentralization? (Assumption 3)

Each interview and workshop attempts to answer the above questions. Other pertinent information will also be obtained by using a sentence stem or open-ended approach. It is assumed that subjective as well as objective data can be thus obtained.

The interview will be conducted in an informal direct manner so as to allow for possible feedback (free-flowing and immediate) and/or interaction. A partial list of interviewees follows:

Interviewees (Educators):

Doyle Barkmeier - Berien Intermediate Superintendent

Basil Godbold - COOR Intermediate Superintendent

Gerald Hanson - Cheboygan Intermediate Superintendent

Russell Wilson - Oakland Intermediate Superintendent

Jack Anderson - Haslett Public School Superintendent

Arthur Johnson - Detroit Public School Deputy Superintendent

Edward Fort - Inkster Public School Superintendent

Ralph Rogers - Bedford-Stuyvesant Principal, P.S. 144

William R. Eckstrom - Lakewood Public School Superintendent

State Department Staff

State and Local Board Members

Interviewees (Legislators):

Robert Davis - Representative

George Montgomery - Representative

Lucille McCullough - Representative

Richard Young - Representative

James Del Rio - Representative

Daisy Elliott - Representative

Anthony Stamm - Senator

John Toepp - Senator

Centralization will be viewed separately from decentralization. This is due primarily to the fact that to date, decentralization has been limited to one urban setting (Detroit) while verbiage has been given to the implications of decentralization in two or three other districts within the state of Michigan.

The study will be limited to the state of Michigan because of time allowance, scope and breadth of task and

relevance of home state. An attempt to do a study of this type for the nation would prove to be an arduous and overwhelming task.

Definitions of Terms

Local school district reorganization - the process whereby centralization or decentralization occurs at the local school district level.

Local school district - any primary fourth class, third class, second class or first class district in Michigan.

Primary district - any local district that operates less than a K-12 program or curriculum.

Fourth class district - any local district with 75 to 2,400 pupils aged five to twenty.

Third class district - any local district with 2,401 to 30,000 pupils aged five to twenty.

Second class district - any local district with 30,001 to 120,000 pupils aged five to twenty.

First class district - any local district with more than 120,000 pupils aged five to twenty.

Centralization - the process whereby consolidation and/or annexation take place.

Consolidation - the legal procedure by which two or more local school districts join together to form one district.

Annexation - the legal procedure by which one school district is attached to another.

Decentralization - the process whereby one local school district is divided into several smaller districts with varying degrees of authority and control.

Community control - a situation wherein individual citizens or groups of citizens can exert influence over the local board of education that is created through decentralization. This influence is limited to local boundaries which again are created through decentralization.

Adequate leadership - a subjective opinion as perceived by local educators and State Department of Education professional staff.

Theory of local reorganization - a concept of reorganization based primarily on feedback obtained from interviews and workshops.

Size - the number of children enrolled on a K-12 basis.

Content of Following Chapters

Chapter II will present a detailed review of the literature relative to centralization and decentralization.

Chapter III will present a general but accurate historical account of reorganization (centralization and decentralization).

Chapter IV will present a report of each regional workshop including interviews with educators, legislators and concerned citizens.

Chapter V will present a summary and conclusion based on workshop findings and interviews.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Centralization

Decreases in Number of Local School Districts

The number of local school districts has indicated a definite decline in past and recent years. The N.E.A. division of research noted that from 1930 to 1952 the number of local school districts in the United States decreased from 149, 282 to 50,742.¹ This is indicative of a definite trend toward bigness on a national scale which is also true in Michigan. The fact that all states have legislated various approaches to decreased numbers of local school districts is not simply an indication that some districts were literally too small to offer comprehensive programs; but also a cognizance of minimal efficiency. The trend toward consolidation and annexation has been corroborated by many authorities.² The concept of the "little red school house" has all but disappeared in American thought.

¹National Education Association Research Division, N.E.A. Research Memo (Washington, D.C.: National Education Association, 1963).

²David Wood, "A History of School District Reorganization in the State of Michigan" (Doctoral dissertation, Michigan State University, 1967).

Educators are becoming more and more aware of the fact that even though teacher/pupil identity was viewed on a much higher level of importance before the idea of bigness made an impression on American society, the reality of comprehensive program offerings is drastically obliterated when viewed in terms of optimum efficiency. When one views education from an effective point of view; it is obvious that size plays a very important role in the smooth operation of any institution. This size will be discussed in more detail later.

The trends in school district reorganization on a national and state scale have varied according to geographic area and span of time. The Rural School Survey Report³ shows the greatest era of local school district reorganization to be the five year period between 1948 and 1953. This particular era produced a 36.7 per cent reduction in the number of school districts on a national level. During the same period of time, Michigan showed a 30.1 per cent reduction.⁴ This figure could suggest that Michigan was quite similar to the majority of states in the nation. Local school district organization (centralization) proposals were submitted to various state departments of

³U. S. Department of Health, Education and Welfare, Small Schools are Growing Larger, A Statistical Appraisal (Washington, D.C.: U. S. Government Printing Office, 1959).

⁴Citizens Research Council of Michigan, Public Education in Michigan (Lansing, Michigan, September 4, 1969).

education at a fantastic rate from 1955 to 1958.⁵ Dawson found that during this period a total of 3,929 proposals were submitted; 967 comprehensive and the remaining 2,962 partial. Over 80 per cent of this total were approved by the voters of the respective states.

Essentials of Local School District Reorganization

It is very crucial in considering any form of local reorganization to study the basics and/or essentials as suggested by various authorities.

In the past reorganization has occurred for many different reasons. However, an evergrowing demand to add depth, breadth, and quality to all educational programs appears most often.⁶ Wilson goes further with a more specific breakdown of the above reasons, generally referred to as "The Educational Birthrights of Every Child."

A child is born among us without his asking. And, from this event come both responsibilities and rights - to the child, and, in greater measure, to his parents and to our communities - our State and our Nation.

Under our system of government and in our society, the children being the smallest and the weakest among us, are the least likely to know about - and the least able to make sure - that their birthrights will be provided to them. Thus, it is that if our children are to receive the benefits of their birthrights in full measure, then we adults must accept

⁵Howard A. Dawson, "Status Report of District Reorganization," School Executive, LXXVIII (February, 1959).

⁶American Association of School Administrators, School District Reorganization (Washington, D.C.: National Education Association, 1958).

the responsibility of providing the means thereto and the means must be made ready with foresight.

AMONG THE MOST PRECIOUS OF ALL THE BIRTHRIGHTS BELONGING TO OUR CHILDREN IS THAT OF AN EQUAL OPPORTUNITY TO A GOOD AND FULL EDUCATION.

This right to an equal educational opportunity should be open to all the children without regard for the circumstances of their births and the location of their homes.

And thus, it is within their keeping that the local board of education must be the first to understand the needs and rights of the children under their responsibility.

The educational birthrights of our children are provided to them best when:

1. EVERY CHILD HAS A RIGHT TO THE FRUITS OF DEMOCRACY.
2. EVERY CHILD HAS A RIGHT TO THE WISDOM OF THE AGES.
3. EVERY CHILD HAS A RIGHT TO BE HIMSELF.
4. EVERY CHILD HAS A RIGHT TO KNOW MORALITY.
5. EVERY CHILD HAS THE RIGHT TO EARN A LIVING.
6. EVERY CHILD HAS A RIGHT TO DEVELOP SKILLS.
7. EVERY CHILD HAS A RIGHT TO HEALTH.
8. EVERY CHILD HAS A RIGHT TO HAPPINESS.
9. EVERY CHILD HAS A RIGHT TO LOVE.⁷

Reasons for Centralization

Increases in population, and greater demand for broader educational programs appear to lead in reasons for reorganization at the local levels. Dawson and Reeves have suggested the above in addition to changes in social and economic patterns as causes of the following demands: Longer school terms, increased number of years spent in school, enrichment and expansion of curriculum and greater needs of financing.⁸

⁷Wilson, op. cit., p. 4.

⁸Dawson, et. al., op. cit., pp. 27-33.

Migration from rural-farm to urban-city on the part of many Americans has affected the rural situation tremendously, in terms of cause of local reorganization. Moehlam has stated in his publication of 1951 that migration has hampered educational processes at the rural level in terms of quality programs, extra-curricular activities and funds for additional school plants.⁹ All of the above authorities emphasized the fact that students on the average remain in school much longer than in the past. They also stress the opinion that population trends would probably continue.

Educational Costs and Size of Enrollment

Most studies relating school size to educational costs have focused on the secondary schools. However, Grieder reported that the point of greatest economy was reached in elementary schools with an enrollment of 400 children. According to the same writer, peak economy was attained in secondary schools of 500 students.¹⁰

Optimum efficiency in terms of cost factors related to depth and quality of educational programs have been

⁹ Conrad Henry Moehlam, "Social Change and District Reorganization," Phi Delta Kappan, XXXII (March, 1951), 301.

¹⁰ Calvin Grieder, "Relation of School District Reorganization to Finance in Business Administration," Review of Educational Research, XVII (April, 1947), 167-177.

investigated by Hansen. He asserted that unit costs declined consistently as district size rose to approximately 20,000 students.¹¹

Knezevich, in turn, suggested that a local school district needs 10,000 to 12,000 pupils to provide a desirable educational program at a reasonable cost per pupil.¹²

Morphet, Johns, and Reller, in a recently published work, also looked at effects of school size variations on fluctuations in unit costs. They suggested that in districts with fewer than 1,200 pupils, high costs deterred provisions for needed educational opportunities. It was noted, however, that beyond the 50,000 level of enrollment, costs tended to rise again and increased as much as \$10 per pupil in the very large districts. It appeared, therefore, that cost factors dictate a minimum enrollment of 10,000 pupils within a school district. These writers stated that the optimum enrollment for economic efficiency was 40,000 to 50,000.¹³

Thomas has indicated a close relationship between school district organization and educational programs. In

¹¹N. W. Hansen, "Economy of Scale in Education: An Analysis of the Relationship Between District Size and Unit Cost in the Public Schools," (unpublished Doctoral dissertation, Stanford University, 1964).

¹²S. J. Knezevich, "Why Continue the Office of County Superintendent?," Nation's Schools, LII, No. 2, 63-65.

¹³Morphet, et al., op. cit.

general, the very small districts are limited in the variety of programs and services they are able to provide. Furthermore, in cases where programs and services must be offered at a sub-optimal level (e.g., small class size, or light work loads for specialized personnel), these small districts tend to incur high unit costs although the fact that they offer only a limited range of services results in a total cost per student which is often as high or higher than that in larger districts.¹⁴

Strolle has stated that school financing has the greatest influence on local district reorganization than any other factor.¹⁵ He further stressed the need for local educators to become increasingly cognizant of this fact.

McClure has suggested the following positive implications of a reasonable enrollment and educational cost:

- better measures of educational research
- strengthening of local control
- more economic transportation costs
- more efficient and adequately equipped school plants
- equal educational opportunities

¹⁴J. Alan Thomas, Michigan School Finance Study (Lansing, Michigan: Department of Education, 1968), p. 297.

¹⁵Roland S. Strolle, "A Study of School District Reorganization in Michigan," (unpublished Doctoral dissertation, Michigan State University, 1955).

He further indicated that lack of funds could retard if not diminish educational programs at the rural level.¹⁶

Size of Enrollment and Student Achievement

Research has indicated that a positive relationship between school size and pupil achievement exists.

Street, Powell, and Hamblin concluded that Kentucky seventh and eighth graders in schools with 300 or more pupils demonstrated higher achievement than those in schools with enrollments of 100 or 299, or with less than 100 pupils. The size of schools in the Kentucky sample was relatively small; of the 122 schools studied, 47 were one-room rural schools, and the largest attendance center in the sample enrolled 836 children.¹⁷

Conant recommends a district of at least 2,000 for adequacy (provided certain special services were received from other sources) if pupil achievement is to be sufficient.¹⁸

For purposes of research with college bound seniors, Arkansas high schools were placed in five enrollment size classifications: 150 students or less, 200 to 350, 400 to

¹⁶William P. McClure, "School Finance in District Reorganization," Phi Delta Kappan, XXXII (March 1951), 321-26.

¹⁷Street, Powell, and Hamblen, op. cit., pp. 251-261.

¹⁸J. B. Conant, The American High School Today (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1959).

550, 600 to 750, and over 750. Achievement was based on American College Test scores. Seniors from schools in the three largest classifications had significantly higher composite scores than those from the two smallest classifications.¹⁹

Small school proponents frequently contend that student dropout rate is much lower in the small high schools than in the larger secondary attendance centers. Empirical evidence in support of this contention was not uncovered. In fact, two of the studies reviewed did indicate that holding power of high schools is not related to total enrollment. Hartung analyzed dropout rates in 22 Illinois schools outside the Chicago area and found no statistically significant differences in large and small high school dropout rates.²⁰ Similar findings for Iowa schools were reported by Opstad, who concluded that school size per se is not related to a school's holding power.²¹

A 1959 study of 127 seniors at Central Michigan University indicated that those seniors who had graduated from large high schools did not have college grade point

¹⁹Fay W. Smith, "An Analysis of the Relationship of Size of Arkansas High School and the Achievement of College Bound Seniors" (unpublished Doctoral dissertation, Conway, Arkansas State University, 1961).

²⁰Maurice Hartung, "Is There an Optimum Size for a High School?" School Review, LXI (February 1953), 68-72.

²¹Paul E. Opstad, "Nonscholastic Factors Associated with Dropouts from Public Schools in Iowa" (unpublished Doctoral dissertation, Iowa City, University of Iowa, 1958).

averages significantly higher than graduates of smaller schools.²² Furthermore, a negative relationship between high school size and college success was noted for 637 Texas A&M agricultural students who had ranked in the lower quartile on achievement and aptitude tests in high school.²³

Failure to complete college has also been considered in relation to size of high school. From a study of 617 students who had withdrawn from the University of Arkansas, the withdrawal rate was significantly greater among graduates of small schools. However, when the factor of mental ability was held constant, size of the secondary school attended was of little consequence.²⁴

Prohibiting Factors Related to Centralization

Bickley discovered when there has been long tenure of county superintendents, school district reorganization is deterred; it is further deterred when there has been long tenure of city and town superintendents. He also

²²Stuart C. Gray, "A Study of the Relationship Between Size and the Number of Qualitative and Quantitative Factors of Education in Four Sizes of Secondary Schools in Iowa" (unpublished Doctoral dissertation, Iowa City, University of Iowa, 1961).

²³J. R. Bertrand, "The Relationship Between Enrollment of High Schools from which Students Graduated and Academic Achievement of Agricultural Students: Texas A & M College," Journal of Experimental Education, XXV (September 1956), 59-69.

²⁴Elbert L. Dickenson, "Analysis of the Relationship of Size of Arkansas High Schools to Academic Success of Graduates in the First Year at the University of Arkansas" (unpublished Doctoral dissertation, Fayetteville, University of Arkansas, 1958).

found some evidence that the existence of nonpublic schools within the county deters reorganization, and when a majority of the school corporations within a county have a high school, school district reorganization is deterred.²⁵

The American tradition of local control has been an obstacle to school district reorganization. Although public education is legally a function of the several states, Williams found that the custom of delegating to local districts the responsibility for establishing and maintaining public school facilities had been followed for such a long period of time that it has accumulated the force of the law.²⁶

The AASA Commission in 1965 found people had the following fears concerning reorganization:

1. Local control will be destroyed.
2. The school plant will be taken out of the neighborhood and the children transported far away from home.
3. Parental influence on the children will be weakened.
4. School taxes will increase.

²⁵Carl E. Bickley, "An Analysis of Selected Factors Which Aid or Deter School District Reorganization in Certain Indiana Counties" (unpublished Ed.D. dissertation, University of Indiana, 1958).

²⁶Dale Williams Delos, "Oregon School District Reorganization of 1957-64 and Implications for Improvement" (unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, Oregon State University, 1965).

5. The close relationships between the home and the school, which have long been maintained in the smaller unit, will be destroyed.
6. The community itself will be seriously weakened or destroyed.²⁷

Size of Enrollment and Breadth
of Educational Program

Most of the literature reviewed at the secondary level favored the larger schools. The typical Texas high school with 200 or less students, for example, offered an average of 11 subjects while a school with an enrollment range of 201 to 500 offered 18 subjects. High schools enrolling 500 or more pupils average 27 subject offerings.²⁸ In an Ohio study in which high school programs were evaluated, it was found that no high schools with less than 100 pupils were rated as satisfactory. Only one per cent of those with enrollments of less than 200 were considered satisfactory. It was not until the 500 pupil level was

²⁷Report of the AASA Commission on School Administration in Newly Organized Districts (Washington, D. C.: 1965), p. 11.

²⁸W. M. Barr; Harold H. Church; and Marion A. McGhebey, "Trends in School District Reorganization Indiana," Bulletin of the School of Education, XXXII, No. 6 (Bloomington: Division of Research and Field Studies, Indiana University, 1956), p. 28.

reached that a majority of the schools received the satisfactory rating.²⁹

The Morris Survey of secondary schools in nine southern states showed a direct and positive relationship between curriculum variety and level of enrollment.³⁰

Recent writings in educational administration have urged support for the concept that breadth of secondary education programs requires sizeable enrollments. Van Miller observed that many authorities suggest that in most cases curriculum needs dictate high school enrollments of 700 to 1,500 or larger.³¹

According to Sargent, "evidence from several state studies, particularly those in Ohio and New Hampshire, seems clearly to establish the general relationship between size of district and the quality of education."³²

Knezevich suggests that a comprehensive education program would require a district-wide enrollment of at

²⁹ Ohio Education Association, "The Relationship Between Academic Achievement of Students in College and the Size of High School from which They were Graduated," Report of the Education Council (Columbus: The Association, 1959), pp. 7-10.

³⁰ Harold J. Morris, "Relationship of School Size to Per Pupil Expenditure in Secondary Schools in Nine Southern States" (unpublished Doctoral dissertation, Nashville, George Peabody College for Teachers, 1964).

³¹ Van Miller, The Public Administration of American School Systems (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1965).

³² Cyril G. Sargent, "Rural Folk Lose Voice in Children's Education," Phi Delta Kappan, XXXVIII (May 1957), 327.

least 10,000. He commented, however, that an effective intermediate unit (regional educational service agency) could provide needed programs and services in sparsely settled areas. Under such conditions, a minimum enrollment of 2,400 pupils could be considered acceptable.³³

Size of Enrollment and Student Participation

The limited empirical evidence about pupil participation and evaluation of extracurricular activities was somewhat contradictory. Results of a study of Iowa high schools indicated that pupil activity was greatest in secondary schools with enrollments of 150 to 399. Students in schools within this size bracket also rated their extracurricular programs higher than students in schools in any other size category.³⁴

Woods, in his study of Southern California high schools, approached the question from a different perspective. He considered parent reactions and found that the most favorable parental reaction to the extracurricular program offering was in the school size range of 1,200 to 1,599 students.³⁵ (See Appendix A)

³³S. J. Knezevich, Administration of Public Education (New York: Harper and Row Publishers, 1962).

³⁴Gray, op. cit.

³⁵Thomas E. Woods, "Relationship of High School Size to Curricular Offering" (unpublished Doctoral dissertation, Stanford University, 1957).

Kleinert had concluded that the student's opportunity to participate in a number of activities becomes less as the high school grows larger. He further states that the large high school, with its institutional character and impersonal masses is less likely than the small schools to help the average individual student with problems of personal identification, in short to gain honor and glory. The eagerness of a student to participate in those school activities which are essentially voluntary in nature is understandably affected by his being one of 2,500 persons, recognizing only a few faces outside his classes.³⁶

Size of Enrollment and Professional Staff

Research seems to indicate that a positive relationship exists between measurable professional qualifications of teachers and size of enrollment. An Arkansas investigator established an inverse relationship between school size and the number of teachers with emergency certification, and the number of teachers instructing outside their major field of preparation. He discovered, too, that the relative number of teachers with advanced degrees increased with size of school.³⁷

³⁶ John E. Kleinert, "The Effects of High School Size on Student Activity Participation," N.A.S.S.P. Bulletin, (March 1969).

³⁷ Jack B. Collingsworth, "An Analysis of the Relationship of Size of Arkansas High Schools to Selected Qualifications of High School Teaching Personnel" (unpublished Doctoral dissertation, Fayetteville, University of Arkansas, 1961).

Another researcher reported a direct relationship between size and the percentage of experienced teachers, the percentage of teachers with standard certificates, the percentage of teachers with degrees from out of state colleges, and universities, and the number of pupils taught by certified teachers. The amount of college training of the teachers, the percentage of women teachers, and salary levels were related directly to size of school³⁸

Wilson, in his study of the Ohio Public Schools found that small school systems are highly wasteful of teacher personnel, this is shown in Table 2A.³⁹

TABLE 2A.--Number of full-time teacher employees per 100 pupils enrolled, by size of school system.*

		Number of Full-Time Equivalent Employees Per 100 Pupils Enrolled
All Employees	Full-Time Teachers	
3,000 pupils or more	3.94	
1,200 to 2,999 pupils	4.15	
600 to 1,199 pupils	4.37	
300 to 599 pupils	4.68	
150 to 299 pupils	5.06	
50 to 149 pupils	5.03	
less than 50	7.69	

*See Appendix for similar data (Michigan)

³⁸Harold D. Patterson, "Relationships Between Size of Secondary School and Selected Teacher Characteristics" (unpublished Doctoral dissertation, Nashville, George Peabody College for Teachers, 1964).

³⁹Wilson, op. cit., p. 10.

Decentralization

Initial Thrust for Decentralization

A recent study has indicated that lost initiative and responsibility is common among districts having large enrollments. That organizational bigness and overcentralization can lead to a stifling of initiative and responsibility is well known. Morphet, Reller, and Johns speak of educational staffs, "becoming enmeshed in a web of impersonal relationships, red-tape requirements and prescribed procedures that tend to discourage initiative and responsibility and to place a premium on conformity."⁴⁰ In studying the New York City school system, the Temporary Commission on City Finances reached a similar conclusion about the city's educational structure. "The school system responds slowly to changing needs," stated the commissioners, because "decision-making rests largely with a centralized close-knit professional staff powerful in its resistance to change."⁴¹

The recent "Bundy Report" commissioned by New York's Mayor Lindsay elaborated on this thesis:

The New York City schools, it is clear, while more administratively decentralized in form in the last few years, are not effectively decentralized in practice. While local school boards provide a useful forum for

⁴⁰ Morphet, et al., op. cit., p. 229.

⁴¹ Better Financing for New York City (New York: Temporary Commission on City Finances, 1966), p. 173.

discussing school site selection and other subjects, and sometimes exert decisive influence on less-than-routine matters, they lack effective decision-making power and they cannot hold anyone responsible--not the district administrator, not the central authority--for the performance of the schools in their district. The responsibility which the central authority had delegated to the district superintendent is more than before, but his basic orientation is still upward to administrative superiors, not across to the level of the district school board and to the community it is designed to serve.⁴²

Closely related to the above and recently highlighted by skirmishes between the Board of Education and militant community groups in New York City, is the lack of meaningful communication that often exists between the public and the educational establishment in the large district. Buder writing of New York's I. S. 201 crisis has said blurred channels of communication to and from headquarters tend to negate effective public participation at the local level in the affairs of the schools.⁴³

In addition, the U. S. Government-backed survey, Equality of Educational Opportunity found that a certain pupil attitude measure was importantly related to student achievement, the variable employed was termed the extent to which an individual feels that he has some control over his destiny.⁴⁴

⁴²McGeorge Bundy, et al., Reconnection for Learning (New York: Mayor's Advisory Panel on Decentralization of the New York City Schools, 1967), p. 10.

⁴³Leonard Buder, "Again the Curse of Bigness," New York Times, November 6, 1966, p. E-9.

⁴⁴James S. Coleman, et al., Equality of Educational Opportunity (Washington, D.C.: U. S. Government Printing Office, 1966), p. 23.

The Urban Plight

Large school districts, especially big city districts, have proportionately more problems to solve and fewer resources to solve them with than districts of optimum size. They are asked to cope with enormous numbers of children from disadvantaged slum homes, highly transient populations and often problems of racial imbalance. In addition, they are forced to operate within a city environment that often features air and water pollution, poor transportation facilities, and overcrowded and substandard housing. These and other factors in the urban environment account for "municipal overburden" defined as, "the effect of population density on the cost of government. As population within an area increases, the per capita cost of municipal government increases--and at something like a geometric progression."⁴⁵

Throughout the nation the black community in our cities is frustrated, angry, and bitter over the quality of education provided for black children. Uninclined to accept "compensatory education," "remediation, and cultural enrichment" as a substitute for integration and effective education, black parents are demanding that the educational institutions serving their communities be placed under their control. In many cases they believe the schools are

⁴⁵William S. Vincent, "Lost Wealth of the City School District," IAR Research Bulletin, V (November 1964), 3.

dominated by a white middle-class clique that is uninterested in educating black children. Black America is now questioning the legitimacy of these institutions. "It wants to control what its children learn and it wants to hire and fire teachers who teach them."⁴⁶

Bayard Rustin has written:

People in the ghetto are practical. They do not look to what is promised. They see right through what white people call "progress." Ghetto people measure progress very cunningly. They know that there are more Negro youngsters in segregated classrooms now than there were before the 1965 Supreme Court school decision. They know that the gap between the median income of whites and that of Negroes has broadened. They know that the present proportion of unemployment among Negro males is double that among white males and, among Negro teenagers, it is three times as high as among white teenagers.⁴⁷

Black Americans, in many cases, are convinced that their children are not being educated--and they blame the school. Reflective of this conviction is the following resolution adopted by the National Association of Afro-American Educators:

Whereas, the educational systems of this nation have critically failed the Black youth of this country; Whereas, Black parents have not had a voice in determining the education destiny of their youth; Whereas, the Black youth and the Black parents are demanding relevant education to meet their needs. Therefore,

⁴⁶Theodore R.Sizer, "The Case for a Free Market," Saturday Review (January 11, 1969), p. 34.

⁴⁷Bayard Rustin, "The Mind of the Black Militant," in The Schoolhouse in the City, ed. by Alvin Toffler (New York: Frederick A. Praeger, 1968), pp. 29-30.

be it resolved that we encourage, support and work to organize local communities to control their own schools through local or neighborhood school boards and further that this organization go on record to immediately implement such plans.⁴⁸

Several school districts across the nation have recently developed grade reorganization and desegregation plans (decentralization). Some of the most frequently mentioned advantages of such plans are the following:

1. Upgrading of the instructional program at all levels.
2. Reduction of the age and grade span in all schools so teachers may concentrate on the unique needs of children who are closer in age.
3. Better use of existing school buildings.
4. Optimum use of specialized teachers.
5. Improved inner city education.
6. Achievement of an urban, cultural and ethnic balance.⁴⁹

Integration and Decentralization

Most authorities favor decentralization if it results in integration. Brownell has stated that diverse integration, racially, socioeconomically, religiously and politically, was desired. However, he has stated it is not the crucial element in the plan for decentralization.

⁴⁸Charles V. Hamilton, "Race and Education: A Search for Legitimacy," Harvard Educational Review, XXXVIII (Fall 1968), 676.

⁴⁹Herman R. Goldberg, "Quality Integrated Education," A Report to the Board of Education (Rochester, N. Y.: December, 1969).

School racial integration is not for the benefit of any ethnic group. It is essential to the children of all. In decentralized school systems the city-wide board would be expected to adopt a policy statement placing responsibility on every subdistrict for positive programs fostering racial and socioeconomic integration. What is crucial is commitment of the entire school staff to racial and socioeconomic integration.⁵⁰

Sizer has presented a plea for integrated education:

While schools cannot create such a society (an open society) they can assist in its attainment. Schools must show children alternatives, different values, and modes of living. They should equip children to act realistically on these alternatives. To do this, children cannot be isolated from their majority or minority partners. No 'segregated' school can fully teach, whether it is a black school in a slum or a white, middle-class school in a posh neighborhood. We must mix our children, not necessarily to make them alike but to give them a true picture of realities and possibilities.⁵¹

Decentralization in Michigan Cities

Michigan's large school systems also suffer from overcentralization. Detroit, of course, is the obvious example of a too-large system within the state. Although Detroit has been studied much less than New York, a number of reports have highlighted its size-related problem. The

⁵⁰S. M. Brownell, "Desirable Characteristics of Decentralized School Systems," Phi Delta Kappan, LII, No. 5, (January 1971).

⁵¹Theodore R. Sizer, "Report Analyses," Harvard Educational Review, XXXVIII (Winter 1968), 183.

National Education Association's National Commission on Professional Rights and Responsibilities, for example, wrote in 1967 that:

teachers, school patrons, clergymen, legislators, social workers, and others who have worked, or attempted to work, with the Detroit school system . . . spoke of an overcentralization of authority at the top administrative echelons of the school system, of an apparent willingness to consult with educators and lay citizens about school and community needs countered by a marked disinclination to heed their advice or to accept their proffered assistance, and of a failure to meet with teacher and community groups on a mutually forthright basis.⁵²

In response to criticisms such as that of the NEA (and in consequence of shifting legislative power in Michigan), the legislature recently ordered Detroit to reorganize its school system. It is likely, though that the people of Detroit will not be entirely pleased with the limited power that has been given them in this reorganization. It is also likely that citizens in other large districts--for example Grand Rapids, Flint, and Lansing--would also benefit from more decentralized school systems. We may anticipate, thus, continued school system reorganization in the state's largest cities as well as its rural areas.

Grant has further stated that:

in reality the (Legislature's) decentralization plan does little to redistribute power within the school

⁵² National Education Association, Detroit, Michigan: A Study of Barriers to Equal Educational Opportunity in a Large City (Washington, D.C.: The Association, 1967), p. 54.

system. The central Board of Education is retained in an enlarged form. And it is this board, along with the central professional staff, that will continue to make the important decisions about public education in Detroit.⁵³

Community Control and Suggested Organizational Characteristics

Decentralization may be thought of as having two dimensions. One dimension has to do with the amount of authority and control that is granted to the local governing boards. The other dimensions may be conveniently displayed in the six cell matrix illustrated in Table 2B.

TABLE 2B.--Dimensions of decentralization.

Amount of Control			
Professional	Little (1) Professional Control and Involvement	Professional Advisory Powers (2)	Much Professional Control (3)
Community	Little (4) Community Control and Involvement	Community Advisory Powers (5)	Much Community Control (6)
	Little	Advisory	Much

This matrix assumes three levels of control--little, advisory, and much; and two basic recipients of control--professionals and community. Thus, in theory, we might

⁵³William Grant, "School Mini-Districts Will Be Weak," Detroit Free Press, August 13, 1965, p. A3.

have any two-cell combination of decentralization: for example, little professional or community control (cells 2-4); little community control with a great deal of professional control (cells 4-3); or little professional control and a great deal of community control (cells 1-6).⁵⁴

The reason why urban ghetto children are illiterate or, at best, semi-literate is that schools refuse to teach them to read and write. They refuse to implement a relevant curriculum using pedagogy based on 50 years of research in learning. In most places ghetto children are taught by inexperienced teachers operating with insufficient budgets and in situations where subtle teacher bias is operating. Community control could help to eliminate some of these problems.⁵⁵

Knight has stated:

You have to make the distinction between decentralization and community control. The former is a shift of responsibilities but not power. The latter breaks down existing power that's harnessed in a particular house and shifts it to where it's shared by a community on a joint basis. You can decentralize the administration of the total educational budget, for example, and give me the power to select teachers who are coming into the system, without affecting the powers that exist within a board of

⁵⁴Ira Polley, "The Issues of Decentralization and Community Control," Michigan Department of Education Memorandum, No. 3 (March 1969).

⁵⁵Alan S. Cohen, "Local Control and the Cultural Deprivation Fallacy," Phi Delta Kappan (January 1969).

education or the city administration of New York to determine educational policy.⁵⁶

Rhody McCoy said:

I want to see a good educational program for children. I want to see learning . . . I want to see the community and parents have a part in determining the future. The only way I know this can be done is through a program like our community control.⁵⁷

Decentralization, to provide meaningful community influence and control of school operations, needs to make provisions that will extend to each school, not just to each subdistrict.⁵⁸

Many suggestions for organizational characteristics and decentralized school districts have been reviewed. However, the most recent suggestions are presented:

1. The basic unit would be the pupil-teacher group, ordinarily called a class.
2. The next unit would be the school.
3. A constellation of schools would form administratively a subdistrict in a decentralized city school system.
4. The city-wide school district would consist of the several subdistricts which operate the school programs throughout the city.
5. A decentralized school system would differ from a centralized school system in that there would be greater citizen participation, shift in authoritative responsibilities, direct encouragement of parent participation, protection of minority and majority interest, protection of school employees' rights,

⁵⁶ Robert Knight, Interview with The Center Forum, New York, (May 1969).

⁵⁷ Rhody McCoy, "Ocean Hill: A 'Good Thing' Soured by Politics, Strikes" (quote), Education News, III, No. 6, New York (October 1968).

⁵⁸ S. M. Brownell, op. cit., p. 287.

and encouragement of innovative and corporative programs.⁵⁹

School Staffing and Decentralization

Many researchers have found a direct relationship between size of school district and qualifications of professional staff (see footnotes 38 and 37). However, these professionals reject decentralization patterns which provide for creation of smaller and more autonomous local districts within the urban complex. The teachers' arguments against decentralization follow:

(1) Opportunities for consolidated, forceful collective bargaining for a greater voice in the determination of salaries, working conditions and educational policies would be severely restricted if teachers were required to deal separately with local boards of education within each neighborhood or community. (2) Local pressure groups or individual extremists in the various school neighborhoods would have an increased opportunity to attack and to control local educators. While teachers must serve the special needs of their surrounding communities, they must also be protected from the vigilante efforts of some misguided local citizens. (3) Educational decision-making based upon sound theory and research, would to some extent be removed from the hands of the

⁵⁹ Ibid., pp. 287-288.

persons who are most knowledgeable in the area of professional education.

Responsibility of established representatives of the community to assist in the teacher selection process in the local level (after decentralization), could and would add support for teachers in the pursuit of their work with children in the community.

While the goals and the techniques of instruction should demonstrate a responsiveness to the local community, the highly sophisticated knowledge and training currently required in the field of education demand that a great deal of autonomy be provided the members of the teaching profession.⁶⁰

Arguments Against School Decentralization

The creation of a number of local, autonomous school districts within the boundaries of a major metropolitan area, it is said, could act to heighten the division between races, classes, and communities within the area. This would come at a time when many urban planners and leaders are striving to ameliorate differences and prejudices among neighborhoods, to plan comprehensively for the greater and broader concerns of the total area.

⁶⁰ Arthur E. Salz, "Local Control vs. Professionalism," Phi Delta Kappan, L (February 1969), 332-334.

Racial imbalance among both students and staff members in metropolitan areas would be threatened if local and autonomous districts were created for the various communities of a city.

There is research to support this fear. It is felt that decentralization could harm children who moved from one to another district within the city. At present, intra-city mobility is facilitated, educationally, through the existence of an essentially common curriculum and a coordinated system of schooling. Decentralization might result in differences of local curricula, methodology, philosophy, and procedure which could prove harmful to the child who transferred to another district.⁶¹

The merits and cost-saving of mass purchasing are well recognized. The efficiencies and economics of scale attendant upon centralized data processing, specialized central office personnel engaged in such activities as city-wide research and evaluation, and coordinated auxiliary services for the entire city in such areas as health or instructional technology present financial arguments favoring centralization. With smaller and autonomous intra-city school districts, separate personnel officers, budgetary and financial staff members, supervisors and

⁶¹Alan B. Wildon, "Social Stratification and Academic Achievement," Education in Depressed Areas, ed. by A. Harry Passow (New York: Teachers College Press, 1964), 217-285.

curriculum directors, research coordinators, and clerical assistants would add significantly to the cost of administration for education throughout the city. It would, it is said, be far more effective, educationally, to use scarce resources to provide smaller classes and better instructional facilities in our schools as they now exist.

It has been argued that decentralization misses the real issue. Changes in school district organization, or political decisions about who controls or should control the schools, involve only the periphery of educational reform, innovation, and improvement. The lack of adequate financial resources, obsolete buildings and overcrowded facilities, not enough money to provide needed supplemental services, the inability of city schools to attract more highly-trained teachers, inadequate instructional materials, decaying neighborhoods, and ill-clothed, ill-housed, ill-nourished youngsters are at the root of the educational dilemma. The issue appears to be not how many local school districts we should have or who should own which building, but how can we locate additional resources, train teachers who are more effectively prepared for educating the children of the poor, provide more modern and up-to-date facilities, and expand the services and programs available to our urban children.⁶²

⁶²Ira Polley, "The Issues of Decentralization and Community Control," Michigan Department of Education Memorandum, No. 1 (February 1969).

Summary

Local reorganization has presented quite an interesting array of events since the inception of formal education. Most authorities agree that this array of events will continue until the ideal local school district can be defined and a general consensus is attained. The number of school districts, it is believed, will continue to decline to a point of optimum efficiency and adequacy. However, the number of medium-size school districts will more than likely increase due to current and future movements toward decentralization.

Centralization

The literature reviewed has included decreases in number of local school districts, some of the essentials involved in local school district reorganization, reasons for centralization, prohibitive factors related to centralization, and school district size as it pertains to cost, student achievement, breadth and depth of curricula offerings, student participation, and professional staff qualification.

The literature tends to suggest a marked decrease in number of local districts in past years and a suggestion that this will probably continue. This is due primarily to the ever-growing demand to provide the educational birthrights to every child.

Increases in population and greater demand for broader educational programs appear to lead in reasons for centralization. This might be a result of the increased number of years spent in schools on the part of school-age youngsters. The authorities seem to have consensus that educational cost as it relates to optimum efficiency, has a definite relationship with size of enrollment in a given school district. Very small school districts are definitely operating in a very unrealistic pattern in terms of monies expended per child. One authority has suggested that school financing has the greatest influence on centralization than any other factor.

Research has also indicated that students from larger school districts tend to achieve at a higher academic rate than students from smaller school districts. This appears to be true at the elementary, secondary and higher education level. The individual curriculum offerings in small districts have been found to be very limited when viewed beside larger district curriculum offerings. Numerous studies have shown this to be true.

Some of the prohibiting factors suggested by authorities tend to deal with tenure of superintendents, loss of identity, (local community) loss of local control, school plants removed from neighborhood, weakening of parental influence (on children), possible school tax increase, and dilution of close relationships between home and school.

The hard data available related to pupil participation seem to suggest greater participation in larger districts. However, one study suggested that the overall percentage participation was greatly decreased in larger school districts, even though the number of extra-curricular activities available is numerous.

Research has shown that smaller districts are guilty of the following characteristics:

1. Teachers with emergency certification.
2. Teachers instructing outside their major preparation.
3. Limited number of teachers with advance degrees, and
4. Large numbers of teachers with degrees from in-state institutions of higher education.

One study has shown that small school systems are highly wasteful of teacher personnel. It appears then that school districts (local administrators) will continue to have a concern for the administration of a program which will reflect efficiency inadequacy as it relates to cost, breadth, academic achievement, and professional staff qualifications.

Decentralization

This review of the literature has covered the initial movements toward decentralization and rationale for these movements, the current urban situation,

decentralization in Michigan cities, decentralization as it relates to integration, community control, and staffing of decentralized school districts. It further includes basic arguments against decentralization and presents suggested organizational characteristics of a decentralized school district. Most authorities seem to agree that the nation as a whole will continue to experience increased demands for accountability on the part of the administrative unit of large school districts. This demand is likely to emerge in many forms. In many cases these demands would come in the form of frustrations, anger, and bitterness resulting from the failure of these large school districts to attempt to educate inner-city youngsters in the basic skills. Cries from the suburbs will probably come in the form of demands for relevancy. Middle-class youths along with their parents are demanding educational programs that exhibit innovation and creativity. Black Americans, on the other hand, are demanding delivery of promises which were to insure full educational developments of their children.

In Michigan, however, the problem of "bigness" appears to be limited to Detroit, Grand Rapids, Flint and Lansing. In these cities, again, the demand is for accountability on the part of the administrators of these school districts. If decentralization is to be meaningful, then redistribution of power and authority seems a necessity.

Some authorities have suggested that decentralization must include both community control and significant integration patterns. However, they warn against polarization of various ethnic groups. Some writers tend to suggest that the basic difference between decentralization and centralization would be greater citizen participation included in decentralization.

Even though larger school districts reflect professional staff with higher qualifications than do smaller school districts, some authorities still insist that these more highly qualified persons fail to teach Black youngsters and middle-class white youngsters effectively.

Most teachers are a bit reluctant to accept full decentralization, especially the kind that would suggest community control. The basic fears deal with dilution of collective bargaining power, decrease in educational decision-making from a professional level, and potential pressure groups and individual extremists in individual school neighborhoods created as a result of decentralization.

Other arguments against decentralization deal with the fear of segregation, disunity, duplication of efforts (inefficiency), and the possible overlooking of the real issue.

Efforts to achieve decentralization will be accelerated in the years ahead as will efforts to achieve

greater racial integration. The goals of decentralization and racial integration do not appear to be contradictory. Decentralization tends to place more and more of the burden of educational reform at the grass roots level with the intent of accelerating citizen, student, parent, and teacher interest and having a share in the decision-making process.

CHAPTER III

THE HISTORY OF REORGANIZATION

Introduction

The considerations that led to local operation of school systems are compelling, but it is a delusion to suppose that they are the better served who have the smaller local unit of government. Most states found, shortly after school districts were organized, that they (or the preceding territorial administration) had created far too many local school districts for effective and responsible school government. And, in much of the country, this was at a time when the education of most youngsters was limited to three or four winters in school during the few months they were spared from work on the farm. As the number of years spent in school increased, and the school curriculum broadened from the teaching of rudimentary reading, writing and arithmetic, small districts became increasingly incapable of conducting an effective educational program. Rising costs made them incapable of financing one. Population movements left many districts with even fewer pupils than they had at the beginning. Increasing geographic separation of workplace and home, as farming ceased to be the principal occupation, left some

school districts with many children but little taxable property, while others were rich in taxable industrial, utility or commercial property but had few or no children to educate.

Meanwhile, the rationale for small schools serving an attendance area, limited by the distance children could walk, weakened as public transportation became available in many areas, and finally disappeared decades ago with the introduction of the school bus. The idea of a tiny school district, as an instrument of government, limited in size to the area of such a single school attendance area, vanished with widening community patterns and better transportation.

Much of the history of school organization and finance of the past century could be summed up in the long movement for school district consolidation, originating in the cities and towns but spreading to all areas of the states, and in the frustrating and seemingly endless problems of working out a property division of fiscal and administrative responsibility between state governments and local school systems, that ranged from the very strong to the hopelessly inadequate. Many states have had to centralize controls in the state far more than would have been necessary with generally effective local units, or than is desirable to achieve the objectives of local operation. Not unlike other states, Michigan has waged a

continuing struggle to first organize local school districts, and then as conditions have changed to restructure them to more adequately meet new demands in education. This has implications for both small and large school districts in Michigan.

School Reorganization in Michigan

Local public schools in Michigan date from 1827. Originally, school districts were organized on the basis of local need and not as part of an overall plan. The school districts were small and designed to support a one-room, one-teacher elementary school.

The need for expanded educational services, hence, the need to restructure the educational system was obvious early in the state's history. All the superintendents of public instruction in the state of Michigan have recommended local school district reorganization. A chronological presentation of legislative acts follows:

1835 - The first act of organization of school districts.

1837 - The John D. Pierce Plan authorized each township board of school inspectors, later the township board, to divide the township into nine school districts of approximately four square miles each.

1842 - Special act school districts were organized based on individual situations.

- 1843 - Union school districts were organized and this act initiated the grading of schools.
- 1874 - The beginning of secondary schools detached from the university.
- 1891 - The Upper Peninsula Township Act permitted formation of township school districts in the U. P.
- 1911 - An amendment to the township unit law that allowed women to vote on the question of organizing under that law and sign petitions for it. It also provided that graded districts having a population of 900 or less could be included in a township unit district.
- 1917 - The Rural Agricultural School District Act permitted consolidation of three or more contiguous rural districts into a single administrative unit.
- 1955 - Legislative act to remove closed school districts. The law provided that within two years every district that did not operate a school would be attached to an operating district.
- 1964 - The passage of Public Act 289 mandated reorganization studies on an intermediate district basis. (See Appendix E)

The State of Michigan reached a peak number of 7,362 school districts in 1912. From that point to the present, the number has steadily declined to 640 in June, 1970 (530 K-12, 110 non-high school). While the reduction in numbers has been great, unfortunately many inadequate districts remain in operation. Of the state's high school districts, only 254 have a total enrollment of more than 2,000 pupils and, in fact, 128 have less than 1,000 pupils. Of the non-high school districts, 106 have fewer than 500 pupils.

Michigan in the past has gone the route of permissive and semi-permissive legislation to achieve school district reorganization. These methods have produced some change, but have been time-consuming and often have resulted in less than the best plan of reorganization for an area. William Roe, in his 1950 study of reorganization in Michigan, found that recommending changes in institutions or customs that are surrounded by nostalgic memories of the "little red school house" is very often unpopular with many people. Therefore, few people locally want to take the lead in recommending changes in school district reorganization. Further, he found a hindrance to reorganization in the lack of a unified pattern for the accomplishment of reorganization which tended to produce competition between villages and left the establishment of school boundaries in the hands of local interest and pressure

groups. These statements may well provide the answer for the limited effectiveness of permissive legislation.

The most recent legislation, Public Act 289 of 1964, helped eliminate many non-high school districts and helped to improve some K-12 districts. (See Table 3A)

Six years after the inception of this law, Michigan still has nearly 60 per cent of the school districts with less than 2,000 total enrollment. Opposition to central control of any kind is deeply ingrained in these districts; there is little chance that any type of permissive legislation will cause them to reconsider consolidation or annexation.

TABLE 3A.--Number of local districts in Michigan, 1945-1970.

Year	Total Number of Districts	Number of Districts Reduced from Previous Year
1945	5,823	--
1950	4,841	982
1955	3,495	1,146
1960	1,989	1,506
1961	1,794	195
1962	1,580	214
1963	1,515	65
1964	1,227	288
1965	933	234
1966	918	75
1967	743	175
1968	702	41
1969	649	53
1970	640	9

Although the full potential of district reorganization was not achieved by Public Act 289, basic information about school districts was amassed in the intermediate district reorganization plans which can serve as a basis for future decisions relative to redistricting. These plans are on file in the Department of Education, and many include detailed maps, enrollment data, plant and transportation information, community characteristics, etc., for the constituent districts of each intermediate school district.

Upon reviewing both the history of the Michigan efforts to reorganize local school districts and the progress made by various methods in other states, it is clear that this state needs a Master Plan for the organization of local school districts. This Master Plan will first serve as the blueprint on which future decisions relative to school districting will be based; secondly, stimulate interest and activity in educational reorganization; and most importantly, provide a rational plan of reorganization based on facts which will in the long run provide the best and most efficient school system for the children of the State of Michigan.

Classification of School Districts in Michigan

There are presently six kinds of local school districts in Michigan: first, second, third, and fourth

class districts and a few remaining primary districts and special or charter districts.

Generally, the classes are differentiated on the basis of the size of the population aged five to 20 years. Primary districts have 75 or fewer in this age group; fourth class districts, 75 to 2,400; third class districts, 2,400 to 30,000; second class districts, 30,000 to 120,000; and first class districts, 120,000 and over.

Methods of Reorganization

Inasmuch as the state has the responsibility for the organization of the educational effort, the methods of reorganization available are dependent upon state legislature.

In general, redistricting legislation may take three forms: mandatory, semi-permissive and permissive. To each of these forms may be added incentives to facilitate reorganization.

Mandatory Legislation. States may enact a state plan of local school districts. While this is the least complicated method of achieving a given goal, it is a politically hazardous route. Although the state has the responsibility for reorganization, schools are looked upon by most people as a local institution. Thus, any attempt to impose a state plan without local participation in either the development or execution of the plan is liable to encounter strong opposition.

Semi-Permissive Legislation. A state may also facilitate redistricting by establishing general guidelines and then delegating the application of the guidelines to local committees. Actual adoption of such plans is ordinarily obtained by a vote of the electorate in the affected jurisdictions.

Permissive Legislation. Permissive legislation relies upon local initiative for execution and does no more than specify the procedures to be used by local districts when pressures require redistricting. Annexation and consolidation are the most common permissive methods.

Incentives and Disincentives. The state may apply the age-old approaches of the carrot and the stick to any reorganization method. These usually center around state aid. If the legislature wants to offer a positive incentive, it may offer additional state aid to a reorganized district. However, experience in other states has shown that, in order to be effective, such an incentive plan may require considerable amounts of money in order to overcome local resistance in many areas.

In Michigan, there are eight ways in which school districts may be reorganized (centralized):

1. Annexation (Permissive) - The most common form of school district reorganization, annexation, is achieved by a resolution of the board of education of the annexing district (with the approval of the superintendent of public

instruction) and approval of a majority of the school electors in the district to be annexed.

2. Consolidation (Permissive) - Two or more school districts with a total of 75 or more persons in the 5-20 year age group (except first and second class districts) may consolidate to form a single district. The district would be a third or fourth class district depending on school-age population.

3. Mandatory Annexation of a Closed District - A district which has not operated a school for two consecutive years must receive notice from the intermediate school district superintendent that, within one year, the district must either attach all or part of its own territory to one or more operating districts or operate its own school.

4. Division (Permissive) - The board of an intermediate school district may divide a district that has no bonded indebtedness and attach it to two or more operating districts when requested to do so by resolution of the board of the district to be divided or when petitioned by five per cent or more of the registered general electors of the district. The school electors must approve the division at either an annual or special election.

5. Transfer of Territory Between Districts (Permissive) - The intermediate school district board may detach territory from one district and attach it to contiguous territory of another district when requested to

do so by resolution of any board whose boundaries would be changed by such a transfer or when petitioned by two-thirds of the resident landowners in the territory to be transferred. When ten per cent or more of the taxable valuation of a district is to be detached, however, action by the intermediate board is not valid until approved by a majority vote of the school electors of the district. Multi-County transfers must be approved by the intermediate boards sitting jointly.

6. Disorganization (Mandatory) - If a district is unable to fill district offices either because of a lack of qualified persons or lack of those who will accept such offices, it must be dissolved by resolution of the intermediate school district board. In such an action, the district is attached to one or more other districts and becomes subject to the tax rates of the organized district regardless of purpose. The identity of the disorganized district is maintained for retirement of its previous bonded indebtedness, if any.

7. Emergency Reorganization (Mandatory) - Act 239, P. A. 1967 as amended by Act 130, P. A. 1968, applies only to school districts in Wayne County. This law provides that upon determination by the State Committee for the Reorganization of School Districts that an emergency exists in a school district and upon endorsement of this finding by the state board of education, the board "shall

attach the district by annexation or division to such other district or districts as will provide the most equitable educational opportunity for all of the students of the reorganized district."

8. Reorganization of Insolvent Districts (Mandatory) - Act 32, P. A. 1968, passed by the legislature largely in response to difficulties in the Inkster school district, provides for an emergency loan to a district which incurs a deficit and is unable to meet its financial obligations.

Act 32 calls for reorganization of a district that has applied for or received an emergency loan under the following conditions:

- (1) If the district does not levy a minimum of 20 mills for operating purposes in the fiscal year for which it receives the loan.
- (2) If the district's board of education certifies that the district will be unable to balance its budget even with the loan.
- (3) If the district does not balance its budget during the fiscal year following the fiscal year in which it received a loan.
- (4) If the district defaults in repayment of the loan.

Present Characteristics of School Districts in Michigan

Aside from the large number, the most striking characteristic of school districts in Michigan is the great variety of sizes, enrollments and valuations. In recent years, as a result of combining small districts, disparities have diminished somewhat, but significant ranges remain.

Area - The Tahquamenon school district in Luce County is the largest district in the state by a wide margin. It comprises 1,286 square miles, making it slightly larger than Rhode Island. At the other extreme, a number of operating districts are two square miles in area. The median high school district size is 71 square miles.

Because of low pupil densities and the difficulty of gaining adequate tax bases, most of the very large districts are in the Upper Peninsula and the northern Lower Peninsula. Districts over 500 square miles in area have, except for Alpena, fewer than five pupils per square mile. (Grant Township district in Keweenaw County has 0.003 pupils per square mile--one student in 368 square miles. By comparison, Highland Park has 2,728 pupils per square mile or one million times the density of Grant.)

Small districts are located throughout the state. They naturally occur in urban areas where high densities make large enrollments easy to achieve, but they are also found in rural areas, where low densities create a problem

of small enrollments. Huron and Ionia counties have a total of 43 small non-K-12 districts. The largest of these has 24 square miles and 155 pupils; another is only three square miles in area, and a third has only 11 pupils.

Enrollment - Detroit, with just under 300,000 pupils, is six times as large as Flint, the second largest district, in enrollment, and 3,791 times as large as Beaver Island in Lake Michigan, the smallest K-12 district. The smallest enrollment in any operating district, as noted before, is one. There are 33 districts with more than 10,000 enrollment which have a total of 910,000 students, about 43 per cent of the public school pupils in the state. These districts plus the next 18 largest have about one-half of the enrollment in Michigan. The remaining 599 districts have the other half.

Given uneven population distribution and the constraints imposed by transportation time, it is unlikely that substantial equality of enrollments among school districts in the state will ever be achieved, assuming that the same general pattern of organization continues. For example, there are only 214,000 students north of the Bay-Muskegon line. Even if this entire area were one district, it would represent only about 70 per cent of the enrollment of the Detroit public schools. It is, furthermore, questionable whether equality of enrollments is particularly important, provided that a minimum enrollment is achieved in all districts.

State Equalized Valuation - The commonly used measure of a school district's ability to finance its educational program is state equalized valuation (S.E.V.) per pupil. Less commonly recognized is the fact that total S.E.V. is also important, principally in districts with low pupil densities. In such cases S.E.V. per pupil tends to lose its significance. Since certain fixed costs must be met in any district which maintains a school, an adequate program may be beyond the reach of a district with a very high per pupil valuation if the total valuation is low. In such sparsely populated districts, fixed costs loom even larger because of the necessity of providing transportation.

Except for the Grant District which has \$2,746,000 in S.E.V. for its single pupil, the range in S.E.V. per pupil in 1968 is from \$1,900 to \$138,000. The range for K-12 districts is \$1,900 to \$83,000 with the median at \$11,800.

Geographically, valuations per pupil are lowest in the Upper Peninsula which has an S.E.V. per child of \$10,600 compared to \$15,300 in the Lower Peninsula. A cluster of counties in central Michigan (Eaton, Barry, Ionia, Clinton, Shiawassee, Gratiot, Montcalm, and Isabella) and scattered others in the Lower Peninsula are, however, comparable in valuation per pupil with the Upper Peninsula. Per pupil valuations are highest in urban

areas in southern Michigan and in districts in the Lower Peninsula north of a line running from Tawas City to Manistee.

With respect to total S.E.V., Detroit with \$4.9 billion is by far the highest while the lowest operating district, Oneida Township District No. 3 in Easton County, has only \$190,000 in S.E.V. (for three pupils). In Huron and Ionia counties, 43 districts have less than \$1,000,000 in S.E.V. In such cases, even very high millage rates provide little money (e.g., 40 mills would yield only \$20,000 on an S.E.V. of \$500,000). Thus, in order to operate, districts such as these must be heavily subsidized by the state even if per pupil valuations are extremely high.

Decentralization

Decentralization in Michigan has been non-existent. Prior to 1969 verbiage had been given to decentralization in Detroit, Lansing, Grand Rapids, and Flint. In 1969 various legislation was introduced which dealt specifically with Detroit public schools. The final emergence of Public Act 244 of 1969 proved to be the major catalyst for efforts in this area. The Detroit Board of Education viewed Public Act 244 as a stepping stone toward better curriculum offerings and increased community understanding of curricula in Detroit. Prior to Public Act 244 the Neighborhood Services Program provided impetus

toward decentralization. The Neighborhood Services Program was established within a local junior high school district as a forerunner of the Detroit Model Cities program. It was an attempt to demonstrate the benefits of cooperation among local agencies in the identification and solution of broad social problems. The major decision-making body for the project was a board of directors comprised of representatives from 20 agencies providing services in the area, and 20 citizens who resided in the area. The major issue was the relevance of formal education to the world of work.

Provisions of Public Act 244

The provisions of this Act provided that the Detroit public schools divide its districts into not less than seven nor more than 11 regional school districts of 25,000 to 50,000 students. This division shall not take place later than January 30, 1970.

Detroit Situation Prior to Public Act 244

Detroit has eight administrative regions, but in no way could these be considered decentralized regions. The current regions are not based on number of students enrolled, availability of staff, nor land acreage boundaries, but arbitrarily selected boundaries.

Initial Steps Related to Public Act 244

Upon the passage of Public Act 244, the Detroit Board of Education initiated the following steps: (1) the formation among administrative staff of a general consensus on semantics and an essential difference between community control and community involvement. This was achieved through meetings with central administrative staff, teachers, and community leaders and parents. The essential difference between control and involvement resided in the terms authority and influence. Authority would mean the legitimate right to act; influence would mean the ability to cause a change in behavior. He who has authority has control. He who has influence is able to affect the behavior of the person or persons exercising authority. Based upon the above meanings, three basic types of decentralization mechanisms were considered:

1. Administrative Decentralization. Professional responsibility and authority for the execution of policy are shared between the office of the central superintendent and the office of the local or regional administration. However, lay responsibility and the authority for all policy resides in the hands of the central board of education.

2. Administrative Decentralization with Community Participation. Professional responsibility and authority for the execution of policy are shared between the office

of the central superintendent and the offices of the local or regional administration (regional superintendent/principal). However, there exist mechanisms at the regional level whereby individual citizens or groups of citizens can exert some type of influence over the local or regional schools.

3. Administrative Decentralization with Community Participation and Control. Professional responsibility and authority for the execution of policy are shared between the office of the central superintendent and the offices of the local administrators. Lay responsibility and the authority for all policy are shared between a central board of education and an elected local board of education. In addition to the local board, citizen(s) can exert much influence over the local board and the schools.

The basic difference among the three types seems to be the degree to which lay authority and power emanate from the local community. Citizen participation would include "blue ribbon" and "grass roots" participation, thus causing the following objectives to be submitted and accepted and will be the rule of thumb (on a different level) at both the local and central office:

1. To develop community understanding and support for education.
2. To supplement school staff members in pursuit of educational objectives.

3. To articulate citizen expectations for schools.
4. To insist upon accountability for educational objectives.

The following sequence of events evolved, based on Public Act 244:

1. The Detroit Board of Education authorized the formation of a decentralization committee.
2. Committee was very optimistic about meeting the January 30, 1970, deadline.
3. Public hearings were held by the Decentralization Committee to gather information and attitudes concerning the legislative act.
4. Based on open hearings, the Decentralization Committee submitted a plan of 11 school regions to the state legislature.
5. Legislature rejects 11 regions plan.
6. Detroit submits eight region plan to the legislature.
7. Governor William G. Milliken signs into law eight region plan.
8. Governor Milliken appoints three-member commission to draw up boundaries for eight region plan. The commission included John Mogk of the Wayne State University Law School, Reverend Dr. Charles Morton, member, State Board of Education, and Anthony Wierzbicki, a member of the Detroit Common Council.

9. The National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) took an official stand against the proposed plan. They said the intent of the proposal would prevent meaningful decentralization and desegregation.
10. The proposal creates recall vote of Detroit Board of Education members who voted to approve the eight region plan.
11. The following Board members were voted out: Darneau Stewart, Andrew Perdue, A. L. Zwerdling, and Peter Grylls.
12. A suit challenging school district reorganization plans for the city of Detroit by the Michigan Legislature was filed in the U. S. District Court by the NAACP.

Court actions are still pending in this matter

Recent Legislative Occurences

Several reorganization bills were introduced in the legislature during 1969. However, they all proved to be something less than successful. Many different legislators were involved in this action and all plan to reintroduce similar bills in the current session of the State Congress.¹

¹Information obtained from State Department of Education Bureau of Administrative Services.

CHAPTER IV

DESIGN AND FINDINGS OF STUDY

General

The initial efforts of this study dealt with basic strategies and techniques for approaching and adequately dealing with the problem. The problem of assessing local, state, and judicial opinion and reaction to current movements in the area of local school district reorganization seemed quite cumbersome. After considerable interaction with local educators, state department of education personnel, and various legislators, the problem appeared to have a more centralized focus. A decision was made to approach the problem from a practical-philosophical level. The following strategies were decided upon:

1. Regional workshops with local educators and possibly concerned citizens
2. Interviews with educators, legislators and concerned citizens
3. Analysis of responses
4. Synthesis of responses
5. Report and/or interpretation of responses

The above steps were adhered to without exception.

Procedures and General Findings
of Workshops

The study will attempt to answer the following questions and accept or reject the following basic related underlying assumptions:

1. Are the State Department of Education and the State Board of Education playing an adequate leadership role in terms of local reorganization?

2. Do concerned legislators favor local reorganization?

Assumption: Centralization is desired by local educators, (superintendents) and legislators from smaller districts.

3. Why is it that only one of the several local reorganization bills introduced in the legislature passed?

Assumptions: Centralization is desired by local educators, (superintendents) and legislators from smaller districts. Decentralization is an outgrowth of community demands for accountability.

4. What are the major hindrances and obstacles to reorganization in Michigan, as perceived by educators and legislators:

Assumptions: Reorganization will, in most instances, relieve the tax burden of local districts without drastic tax reform. Disciplinary problems due to "bigness" will prove to be the most frequent rationale for opposition to centralization. Scope and breadth of program will emerge as the least frequent rationale for or against centralization.

Annexation will receive more acceptance than consolidation.

5. What do the proponents of local reorganization foresee in the future?

Assumptions: Voluntary reorganization with a permissive attitude on the part of the legislature will result in limited, if any, local reorganization. Mandatory compliance with legislation is a necessity for further local reorganization to occur.

6. What type of legislation is necessary for further reorganization (mandatory or otherwise)?

Assumptions: Voluntary reorganization with a permissive attitude on the part of the legislature will result in limited, if any, local reorganization. Mandatory compliance with legislation is a necessity for further local reorganization to occur.

7. Will further reorganization occur without some form of legislation?

Assumption: Centralization is desired by local educators, (superintendents) and legislators from smaller districts.

8. Have there been significant gains in achievement in districts that have been reorganized?

Assumptions: The recent state assessment conducted by the Michigan State Board of Education will show a positive relationship between size and achievement. Districts that have undergone reorganization will show a significant increase in student achievement.

9. Do legislators differ from educators with respect to local school district reorganization?

Assumption: Centralization is desired by local educators, (superintendents) and legislators from smaller districts.

10. What incentive provided the initial thrust for decentralization?

Assumption: Decentralization is an outgrowth of community demands for accountability.

Workshops were scheduled according to Table 4A and Map. A letter explaining reasons for the workshops was sent to an arbitrarily selected region representative (see Appendix D). The specific purposes of the workshops were:

1. Establish communication between the state department and local districts.
2. Provide the local district up-to-date feedback of legislative and state department of education action relative to school district reorganization.
3. Obtain the general reaction (at the local level) to various reorganization proposals.
4. Provide direct interaction for the purpose of sharing clarification of terminology used in various bills, and
5. Obtain additional data relative to local school district reorganization.

An attempt will be made to present a synopsis on a regional basis of each workshop.

TABLE 4A.--Regional workshop meetings

Number	Site	Date
1. Western U. P.	Kingsford	April 23, 1970
2. Central U. P.	Escanaba	April 21, 1970
3. Eastern U. P.	Rudyard	Feb. 25, 1970
4. COP	Gaylord	Feb. 23, 1970
5. Upper W.	Traverse City	Feb. 5, 1970
6. Upper E. and Mid. Central	Higgins Lake	April 16, 1970
7. West Central (Except Kent County)	Muskegon	May 4, 1970
8. Low Central	Mason	May 13, 1970
9. Low E. Central	Flint	May 14, 1970
10. Thumb	Caro	April 9, 1970
11. S. W. Corner	Berrien Springs	March 23, 1970
12. S. and S. E. Corner (except Wayne County)	Adrian	April 7, 1970



Region #1**General reactions:**

- The curriculum is of primary importance and should include a K-12 program locally developed in keeping with general program standards set by the state.
- The school size (enrollment) should be adequate. This means 600-1,000 pupils in grades 9-12.
- Transportation should require no more than a one hour trip each way.
- Sufficient financing must be provided for reorganized districts. State aid for new buildings in reorganized districts should be available.
- Provision should be made in reorganized districts for the retention of neighborhood schools for primary grades.
- Unless there is an incentive to reorganize, few districting changes will take place under existing law. With a financial bonus, or incentive for consolidation some districts would move now. Money can move people. Especially, this is true when tax rates are high and schools are in financial difficulty as they are now.
- Although a district is financially poor, reorganization still offers a better academic program than the previous small district. The public receptivity to reorganization increases when they can see progress and new programs.

Region #2**General reactions:**

- Educational planning is greatly needed in this area. Reorganization should be supported because it provides many of the long-term solutions to area problems.
- The first priority in setting up criteria should be an organization that can provide the programs we need in education. All schools should be able to support basic education, vocational education, college prep programs and special education.

- Numbers of pupils and money available largely determine the ability to make program plans a reality.
- Transportation and distance are limitations to what can be achieved in practice.
- The compatibility of districts and their citizens should be considered.
- The efficiency of operation (dollar per pupil on administration, education, etc.) should be examined.
- The superintendents from Hermanville and Powers-Spalding noted the upcoming May vote for merger of the districts. They stated their opposition to approval of the Bark River-Harris request for construction of a high school. This approval, in their judgment, would present a roadblock to implementation of the 1968 area reorganization study. Included in the study were the three aforementioned districts and Carney-Nadeau. Bark River-Harris spoke in favor of building and remaining independent.

Region #3

General reactions:

- The group regarded reorganization as educationally desirable, but raised specific problems, such as: transportation distances in sparsely settled areas, financing, need for new facilities, etc. The discussion turned to the values of large administrative districts which could include multi-attendance centers. The administrative area appeared to receive acceptance. It had not been proposed as an alternative previously.
- Whitefish: The district is isolated, but if Whitefish had to go any place it should be to Tahquamenon.
- Engadine: The district already encompasses 480 square miles. The only district logically to join is Tahquamenon which has 1,200 square miles now. Given this situation, the 458 students of Engadine should continue as an independent district. There is a part of the Tahquamenon District around Curtis which should be split off and added to Engadine.
- St Ignace: There was an expression on the part of St. Ignace that they should eventually have the three K-8 districts; Brevort, Moran, and St. Ignace Township, plus the Mackinaw Island district.

- **Rudyard:** The Rudyard situation is an uncertain one. At this time, they have 2,600 students but with the Air Base being phased out, they could lose pupil enrollment. There are good building facilities available and a decline in enrollment could provide even more. They see themselves as possibly annexing Brimley; in fact, Rudyard serves students that come from Brimley for special education and some other special programs. Part of Moran Township may also belong with Rudyard.
- **Sault Ste. Marie:** Unless there is an intermediate district-wide reorganization, Sault Ste. Marie will not be involved in change.
- **Les Cheneaux:** An area reorganization that has a possibility, after study, may be Les Cheneaux, Pickford and Detour. The great problem here is the distance from Drummond Island to wherever the central school would be located.
- An expression from three or four people, including Sault Ste. Marie Superintendent, was that reorganization would be better accepted by people locally if the state mandated it. The Sault Ste. Marie Superintendent cited the experience of Ohio in this regard. He felt that there would be great animosity on the part of the local people towards the state but that they would bind together and resolve to make the new situation work. If left to work voluntarily toward reorganization the bitter in-fighting locally would leave "wounds" and "scars" that would take many years to heal.
- One of the grave concerns of the people is that they will not be represented on the reorganized school board. The question was raised: is there some way that ward or precinct representation or division of districts can be made so that there is representation from various population areas or centers? This, of course, is a parochial concern much the same as the question of where should the school be located. It is a practical one that is worthy of some thought and consideration as to a solution.

Region #4

General reactions:

- The focus of the resulting discussion was on the problems created by larger districts, e.g.,

transportation, discipline, voter dissatisfaction. The need for differential reorganization plans to meet the needs of sparsely and densely populated regions was expressed. Little leadership has emerged in the area to promote area studies, or to formulate alternative plans to present districts and programs. The group seemed to divide in attitude toward reorganization into three groups: (1) willing to actively sell reorganization under voluntary statutes, (2) the community does not want reorganization and to advocate it would be a waste of time and would alienate people, and (3) the state must develop the plan and implement it.

- The research basis for reorganization was questioned. The opinions of board members, superintendents and teachers in previously reorganized districts would be of value in making judgments. The problems of adverse voter reactions, discipline problems and transportation distances, it was thought, probably outweigh the advantages.
- Ellsworth and Charlevoix defeated annexation two years ago, but it is still the most logical of the redistricting alternatives in the area. About eight years ago an area study proposed the consolidation of Ellsworth, Central Lake, Alba, Macelona and Bellaire. This merger would create transportation problems for Ellsworth which is on the north end of the proposed district. The Charlevoix board has discouraged a second election, although Ellsworth has petitioned for one.
- Boyne Falls is not interested in any reorganization. If pressed, the district would favor Petoskey because of the services available in that district. The Twin Valley District has no program and the proposed new high school would be as far away as Petoskey.
- Petoskey has a policy that they will work with any district on cooperative programs and area studies. In fact, the new Petoskey High School was planned for expansion to serve the county. Community college, special education and vocational education centers are now in Petoskey.
- In general, the feeling of people attending this workshop was in opposition to immediate reorganization. A significant number expressed the belief that school reorganization must come along with other educational reforms. The districts of Cheboygan, Rogers City, Petoskey, Harbor Springs, of those represented, most favor redistricting.

Region #5**General reactions:**

- **Comprehensive Educational Programs:** The inclusion of comprehensive educational programs in H.B. 3883 as the major criteria for reorganization is a definite improvement over use of a minimum enrollment. The enrollment criterion is inflexible in application and puts too great an emphasis on the direct relationship of size and quality.
- **Mandatory Reorganization:** A mandate from the state is the only way significant reorganization will be achieved. Citizens in small communities believe in the values of the small school. School administrators should take the lead in the push for reorganization but have a lack of understanding in this area too. More immediate concerns occupy the time and energies of the chief school administrators.
- Most administrators accepted the need for further consolidation but felt that more information is needed about criteria, functions, and values before committing themselves.
- Except for a small number of vocal dissenters, the majority supported the concept of school district reorganization. Questions raised were relative to compromises needed to achieve an acceptable reorganization plan.
- Superintendents seemingly were unable or reluctant to attempt a definition of the basic requirements for school district adequacy. The discussion of curriculum, staffing, facilities and the interrelations of these areas was not possible. The focus continually turned to specific problems in the local district. Our conclusion is that administrators are mainly bound to the status quo and rely on their experiences to provide the basis for decision. They have a difficult time conceptualizing a different situation and role.
- We had hoped in this meeting to derive some specific possibilities and plans for district change but were not completely successful in getting the group to focus on this point. More basic information on reorganization is needed before they will make commitments.
- The district superintendents expressed an appreciation for the opportunity to meet with department

people in a planning meeting. They would like to have continued involvement in the decision-making process.

Region #6

General reactions:

- Larger administrative units would provide more comprehensive programs.
- Reorganization will reduce the need for new building.
- Some districts exist because of geography. Several districts could have reorganization and still be below criteria.
- Reorganization criteria should include a transportation distance-time factor. As a guideline, one and one-half hours maximum per day on the bus is suggested.
- Have we gone far enough in reorganization to legislate for the whole state? Can we get more high school reorganization by some method other than mandatory legislation?
- Chippewa Hills is closer to Isabella in many ways than Mecosta. Although fairly large in area, more reorganization is required to justify new programs. There are now some areas between Chippewa Hills and Beal City where people want to transfer districts.
- Clare County has cooperative programs in vocational and special education and community college. Harrison and Farwell schools desire to remain autonomous. Clare is willing to investigate merger possibilities. All districts are in need of facilities now. A county system with a central high school deserves consideration. The south boundary of Clare with Mt. Pleasant is unstable and should be resolved.
- The Mio and Fairgrove districts of Oscoda County probably would become one district in reorganization. The resulting school district would have a 1,100 K-12 enrollment, and a new senior high school building would be required. Another alternative, which should be studied, is a two-county district including Oscoda and Alcona.
- There is no great enthusiasm in this area to promote reorganization in local communities. For the most

part, citizens are not in favor of reorganization of schools and would fight it. School administrators are aware of the need for larger districts and expanded programs, but feel that a community campaign would be wasted effort and would be divisive. The hope is that local districts will receive vocational education services from an area center and will be able to tap the resources of the community colleges to improve educational opportunities.

Region #7

General reactions:

- Largeness tends to make schools less personal and less responsive to citizens. High schools should be limited to 1,500 pupils.
- Administrators must set a high priority on participation and involvement of people. Largeness makes the task of communication more difficult, but not impossible.
- There is a need to define an adequate educational program before anyone decides reorganization is required. Until people know what is lacking in schools of small size, they will be satisfied with what is in existence.
- The State Department of Education should give serious thought to distance, homogeneous groupings and quality and education in drawing new boundaries.
- Generally, there was minimal support for local district reorganization, but there was strong recognition that intermediate reorganization is needed. Local administrators expressed the need to know why reorganization and how will education be better because of it?

Region #8

General reactions:

- Robert Beauchamp of Ovid-Elsie Schools and William Eckstrom of Lakewood Schools presented an overview of reorganization as perceived by administrators who have gone through the change. They stressed:

- a) The need for financial assistance in newly reorganized districts.
 - b) Some state financial formulae militate against reorganized districts receiving even as much money.
 - c) The need to prepare citizens to accept the "new" school and to initiate programs to bring the formerly separate districts together.
 - d) The need to provide financial help for capital construction if the potential for reorganization is to be realized.
- The State Department of Education will have to take the lead in the development of a master plan. Local people cannot agree on the need, criteria, area plan, or whatever. The plan must be "drawn up" and presented to them or we'll talk for another 20 years of planning for reorganization.
 - Local control has failed in education. Neither the leadership nor the finances are there. The state must assume greater control of local districts.
 - Little reorganization will take place without a mandate to do so.

Region #9

General reactions:

- We cannot expect much further voluntary reorganization. People are concerned about the creation of "monster" districts and schools, and the problems which occur in larger districts, such as: student disorders, failure of local millage issues, loss of pupil identity, and citizen apathy.
- The educational benefits to be derived from reorganization are unclear to most people. We have heard that it will provide "quality education," for 20 years without anyone really defining quality education. The department must assume the leadership in the state to identify the elements of a quality program. Until this is done, we don't really know whether or not we must reorganize schools to accomplish quality programs. A quality education definition may be illustrated by North Central and University of Michigan accreditation criteria, but these

do not have wide enough application or acceptance to be employed for reorganization purposes.

- Planning should involve local and intermediate districts, the state department of education, and colleges and universities before boundary changes are made.
- Inter-scholastic athletics must cease to be the reason districts remain autonomous. Rivalry creates animosity in some cases. Parents believe their child will have less opportunity to participate.

Region #10

General reactions:

- Groups were formed to discuss the criteria which should be used to redistrict schools under a mandatory reorganization.

The priorities agreed upon were:

1. Proper financial support must be provided from local and state sources.
 2. The staff and finances necessary to effectively compete with other school districts.
 3. Geography and distance factors.
 4. The ability to offer every student a comprehensive program.
 5. Reasonable efficiency of operation in terms of the learning process (pupil-teacher ratio), and utilization of facilities.
- Also, the following questions were raised in the group sessions:
 1. Are there any statistics on pupil achievement in reorganized districts as compared with those not reorganized?
 2. Should assessment results be available and be used as the factor determining quality, and thus the need for reorganization?
 3. Could the department sponsor demonstration educational programs in reorganized districts to show what is possible?

- The recommendation was made that local people be involved in department planning for reorganization, rules and regulations. Possibly, a K-12 advisory council of board members and administrators could be formed.
- The general attitude toward reorganization in this area is negative. There is no expectation that districts will institute area studies or take any initiative voluntarily. It is an emotional issue that is better left alone.

Region #11

General reactions:

- What evidence is there to show success of graduates from larger vs. small schools?
- Are we graduating better students at less cost per student in larger schools?
- What commitment does the state have to assist local districts to meet the challenge of reorganization? Funds are needed to institute new programs and reorganization should be given more state aid. (Benton Harbor was used as an example of reorganization that has not succeeded because money isn't available to implement ideas.) Demonstration programs in newly reorganized schools could be initiated with state assistance and serve as a showcase for the values reorganization.

The state could study schools that are excellent examples of reorganization and new programs. The study results would be valuable to districts anticipating reorganization.

There is a strong local feeling against reorganization. The sentiment is that the state should not force the change, but should first convince local citizens of the value. The ground-up approach is preferable to the top-down imposition.

- Our curricula are still largely oriented to the academic. Reorganization is a must if we are going to serve all youth.
- Bridgman is against reorganization. If told what programs are necessary for a comprehensive school, the citizens would vote the money to offer the program.

- Mendon is strongly in favor of reorganization and has held meetings with Three Rivers to investigate annexation possibilities.
- Martin schools object to reorganization. The cost of transportation would be greater.
- The Department of Education should have taken a position years ago to formulate policy toward reorganization and recommend to the legislature.

Region #12

General reactions:

- The fact that the local reorganization bill requires all schools to have the potential for a comprehensive program raised the fear that the state would impose, in effect, a set of curriculum standards. The need for program flexibility and autonomy was stated as a necessity. However, a program and curriculum focus is an improvement over the use of enrollment size as the major criterion for reorganization.
- Parochialism was cited as an inhibitor of reorganization and not consistent with the desire to improve public education by increasing district size. The fear is that private schools will draw even more pupils from public schools and leave them even smaller in pupil numbers. A reorganization mandate should be placed on parochial schools, as well as public, if they get public monies.
- The need for dissemination of research germane to reorganization is needed. Most people are skeptical that education will improve and believe that it will bring higher costs, more problems, etc. Educators must have information themselves and be convinced of the need for reorganization before they can sell their citizens.
- A good comprehensive program seems to bring us right back to size in terms of enrollment. There is agreement that size alone is not meaningful enough to warrant reorganization. How do we utilize our monies, personnel, and facilities to have a comprehensive program that is effective? An evaluation process that brings about meaningful accountability is necessary.

- The state must establish requirements in terms of course offerings and/or outstanding K-12 programs.
- There are only two districts in Washtenaw County eligible for reorganization, Whitemore Lake and Manchester. Whitemore Lake will fight mandatory reorganization on the grounds of population growth potential in the next five years. The only reorganization involving Whitemore Lake would be the addition of a northern section now in the Ann Arbor district.

Attendance at Workshops

The initial intent of all workshops was to attract local educators only; however, several concerned citizens attended each workshop. Potential interviewees emanated from each workshop due to the fact that state department of education staff, local educators, and concerned citizens were present. The attendance consisted of both strong proponents and opponents to local reorganization and most importantly, people who were directly affected by local reorganization at any level. Some interviews ensued at each workshop.

Specific Procedures of Design

In the process of selecting workshop participants one point prevailed. The fact that the local representative be a superintendent or his duly appointed representative remained a constant. The attendance at each workshop consisted of at least 90 per cent educators. The following steps emerged in interviewee selection:

1. That all interviewees be educators, legislators, and/or concerned citizens.

2. That each of the above be a strong proponent or opponent to local reorganization (centralization and decentralization).
3. That there exist an equal distribution of all educators, legislators, and concerned citizens. Fifteen of each was finally decided upon.
4. That all potential interviewees represent various school district patterns, i.e., rural-farm, rural non-farm, urban, as well as suburban.
5. That some of the interviewees be legislators who have introduced bills, educators who will be directly affected by reorganization, and concerned citizens who have voiced opinions relative to local reorganization.

Interview Procedures and Overview by Type of Interviewee

Interviews were conducted both formally and informally. Some were scheduled while others were not. The idea was to conduct the interview at a time when the interest level was high.

A presentation of general reaction follows.

Educators

"I doubt the Detroit plan for high school integration will achieve anything substantial and that alternative plans might prove necessary."

Local, state, and national polls assert that the majority of our people concur with the desirability of integration and believe that eventually it will be a reality in our nation. Let us, therefore, have a plan for self-renewal of our schools and our community, rather than drift in a climate of uncertainty, fear, and frustration.

I recognize that our primary objective as teachers is quality education, but to repeat, the majority of accepted research and scholarship asserts that quality education in a heterogeneous society such as ours cannot be attained to its fullest measure without integration. It is essential for white and black, for poor and rich.

Since as a people we concur with the necessity for eliminating religious, racial, and economic barriers, let us, therefore, begin with a plan, however limited it is. Let us begin where we are and move forward. America has been willing to deprive itself of billions of dollars to travel 250,000 miles in space to reach the moon. I am confident Detroiters will be willing to accept the idea of traveling one or two additional miles to school for the sake of a better education for our young people and for a better future for our city.

Fiscal reform is needed to relieve the property tax burden. A change to the income tax and a greater proportion of state aid will make reorganization come easier. State budget control is also necessary so that the amount for salaries is limited, otherwise salaries will siphon off all increased appropriations.

Economic factors have much to do with reorganization. People weigh the money benefits of reorganization against their present situation. It doesn't help when districts that reorganize lose state aid. Section 23 in House Bill No. 3883 should be changed to read, 'would have been received.' This would help reorganized districts financially by basing aid on current figures rather than on status two years old. School districts should not have to go to court to get the payment guaranteed after reorganization.

Studies are now under way in Marquette County. A proposal has been made for a widespread reorganization, but implementation has not been possible. To provide greater information and planning to back up the reorganization recommendations, a curriculum study with projections for combined districts is now in progress.

A moratorium on reorganization should be imposed until a coordinated plan can be developed for the state. The state should be more involved in reorganization planning for the future.

There is a problem involving the one K-8 district whereby the board has recently voted to send the high school students to St. Ignace as tuition students. Many parents are dissatisfied with this and are continuing to send their students to Rudyard at a higher tuition, which is being paid by the board, and are providing their own transportation. It would seem that some division of this district in a reorganization would be in order.

Parochial aid is opposed in the northern areas. I foresee many small private schools beginning operation in the region and pulling students from public school enrollments. Thus, the already small public schools would become smaller and more inadequate. Parochial schools should be required to be of adequate size, if they are to get state aid.

Mackinaw City is not interested in reorganization. However, if mandated, the preference would be to go to St. Ignace, providing transportation arrangements can be made across the Mackinac Bridge for parents as well as students engaged in school activities.

The concept of a comprehensive program is intriguing but nebulous. The definition of goals in education and agreement on programs necessary to achieve the goals are nonexistent now. Goals will provide a basis for program definition. Definitions must be broad and flexible so that local autonomy is retained and a state mandated curriculum is not the result.

More leadership is desirable from the state level. Authority must come from the state department; not suggestions, but recommendations with teeth. More department time should be spent with local people.

The intermediate district services should be spelled out. The size of the local district will in large part be determined by the role of the intermediate in providing supplemental and support services.

Money is a major factor in the consideration of plans for reorganization. The current differences

in S.E.V., bonded indebtedness, and the possible loss of state aid impede reorganization. Possible approaches to reducing the impact of money on reorganization are:

- a) Provide financial assistance in the form of additional state aid for districts that reorganize; and/or alter the present formula to pay out differential state aid by the size of district.
- b) Increase the ratio of state to local financing of schools. When the state pays substantially all of our K-12 costs, people will be much more willing to accept reorganization.
- c) Give local boards the power to levy taxes without a vote of the people, and allow a choice of property or income tax. This would take away the argument that millage votes would fail in an enlarged district. Most people realize more money from the state will bring greater control, but would accept it. Schools are in a fiscal crisis today and can't go it alone locally.

Districts it was thought, should be kept to a moderate size. Schools which get large are too impersonal, have discipline problems, and reduce student participation. Reorganization for some administrative functions without changing attendance districts would be preferable to complete reorganization.

Legislators

Legislators were not as liberal with comments as were educators and concerned citizens.

General reactions:

"I am hopeful that this legislation will enable the Detroit school board and the people of Detroit to move ahead with a decentralization program and to maintain quality and integrated education in the city."

I am in the process of drafting an alternate plan to Public Act 244 as it pertains to Detroit, one that would make proximity of the home to a school as secondary factor in assigning students to schools.

My constituency deplore centralization on any scale and would prefer that the state department of education began to formulate action plans relative to this small problem. I have not had the opportunity to interact with educators within the districts that I represent but I have been in constant contact with concerned citizens who view the suggestion of loss of local identity as absurd.

In the past legislative action relative to decentralization has been quite inadequate. I hope to introduce in the next session of Congress a bill that has implications for not only Detroit but all districts that have enrollments of 20,000 or more.

I know that because you are seeking information for the primary purpose of writing a dissertation, that you could also be viewed as an educator. Hence I will react to the question as though you were such. I have not been actively involved in developing legislative actions that would affect local school districts in terms of reorganization. However, my position is that local reorganization of any kind would probably result in better curricula offerings.

I believe that the initial thrust for any kind of local reorganization should emanate from legislators based on local input.

All meaningful and significant movements toward local reorganization have in the past begun at the state legislative level. If we are to have meaningful reorganization in Michigan, I feel that this will also be necessary.

Concerned Citizens*

Professional educators, like others in public employ, have become insulated and isolated from the

* Note: School board members were viewed as concerned citizens.

people they purport to serve. A new reform movement to make big government more responsible to citizens seems to be emerging.

All definitions of quality concern input criteria. People want to know about results, output, and accountability today. Can it be shown that size produces better prepared students?

Outstanding school districts, regardless of size, should be identified for us.

I will not permit my children to attend schools different from those attended by their older brothers and sisters; if larger districts are better, why are we having the most problems in the larger districts?

This proposal is designed to go into effect in September of 1970. Regardless of the destiny of Public Act #244 (which is the state law requiring the carving of the Detroit Public School District into regions, each to have an elected regional board to be chosen in the November, 1970, elections and to take office in January, 1971) today's proposal will set the pattern for the reorganization of the school district; this plan is necessary not just because it meets legal requirements. It also gives the people of this city a powerful instrument for good which, if effectively used, can mean better schools for our children--schools more responsive to community needs and aspirations. It can mean improved personal relationships among all of the citizens of Detroit.

The proposal made here today will not, unhappily, by itself end the segregation of children that now exists in our school system because of the housing pattern of this city. But it will not serve to further segregate the schools, nor to freeze the pattern of segregation which already exists to such a large extent. Instead, it will make it possible for the school system to move in the direction of an integrated education.

It will not automatically make the Detroit school system better. It will not help solve the problem of a big city school system which is provided with far less money per child to spend on education than other systems which face a less serious challenge.

But it will enhance the opportunity for our senior high school students to share a common constructive experience in living and learning together. It will keep the doors open for a better tomorrow.

Where can we find community control in regions that have 186,000 to 238,000 population? Act 244 ignores the pleas of the man in the street for a voice in the control of his elementary, intermediate and secondary school. It simply provides him with one more form of governance that may effectively deny his child an opportunity for quality education.

We may have a mandate from the Michigan Legislature, but the real mandate is from the people for community control, not decentralization for the sake of decentralization.

Therefore, I urge this board in the strongest possible terms to seek from the legislature a delay in its implementation in order that the legislature and this board may have an opportunity to resolve together the complex legal, social and economic problems that have plagued this board in attempting to implement an act that makes smaller districts out of a large district but fails to provide any solution for the pertinent school problems of Detroit; and utterly ignores the pleas of every man, woman and child in this community for the answer to the question, 'How does my child acquire a quality education?'

During public hearings on decentralization thousands of Detroiters showed up to tell members of the Board of Education that (1) They did not support the Decentralization Act (Public Act 244); (2) If all else failed they wanted districts that were compact and contained contiguous High School constellations and contained a community of interest.

Apparently those who intend to adopt this plan either were not listening or have deliberately ignored their constituents. There are indications that they will adopt an obviously gerrymandered plan containing districts that are 4 to 5 miles long and only 1/2 mile wide. It adopts a plan containing a non-contiguous district and even a non-contiguous High School constellation. I ask the question: which Board members by their actions have supported the true community voice of involvement and which members have merely spouted rhetoric while their actions seem to the contrary?

Has there been time to consider the fact that while our school system and other agencies are attempting to obtain more lunches for children who are unable to even pay for lunches, we are asking them to pay more than that amount for their travel to and from school?

This plan today does not increase the quality of education any place in the City. It is divisive and discouraging. The fact that some frosting is put on day-old pizza does not make it a birthday cake and nobody is going to celebrate.

Although this does not give the black and the poor the maximum amount of control, maximum integration for our schools is important. Let's support this measure--with its imperfections--it can move along to develop the kind of guidelines which will insure more meaningful involvement of our citizens in their schools.

The decentralization plan for Detroit is a reasonable and modest plan. It should be put into effect now.

I feel that community conferences should be held to educate people as to what is at stake in decentralization and to hammer out recommendations for the Board of Education.

Unless there is broad community participation, decentralization will only serve the interest of the school board and the Detroit Federation of Teachers.

We really have a problem in the financing of improved curriculum offerings and school buildings allocations. I feel that we should consolidate with another district if it will improve these conditions.

Results According to Questions and Assumptions

An attempt will be made to present an objective observation based on numerous, highly subjective reactions. These observations were compiled from a composite of workshop and interview reactions.

The following format is utilized:

1. Presentation of central point of each question.
2. Objective Summary of reactions including most appropriate answers as evidenced by frequency of occurrences, and

3. Acceptance and/or rejection of assumptions (where applicable)

I. Should State Department of Education and State Board of Education Elect More Leadership as It Pertains to Reorganization?

The initial approach in the analysis and synthesis of all reactions to this most important question created a great deal of concern from the vantage point of the researcher. There was an overwhelming number of quite obvious reactions, that the state (department and board of education) should in fact, display more leadership both quantitatively and qualitatively. There were numerous suggestions and ideas as to why this leadership should be forthcoming. These ranged from a simple "heretofore this leadership has been lacking" to "if Michigan is to retain educational statehood, then immediate and meaningful leadership should come from the state office of education."

II. Concerned Legislators Favor Reorganization?

This question created very emotional reactions in many instances. The apparent reason is probably because it is highly suggestive. Of the legislators interviewed, all except two, seemed enthused by the suggestion of reorganization. This was for both Centralization and Decentralization. Most were of the opinion that larger districts should become more accountable to its constituency and

that smaller districts need to become larger for the purpose of creating a more appropriate and reasonable tax base.

There were very few instances of disagreement on this question. The rationales for favoring reorganization varied naturally, but in summary reorganization is favored by concerned legislators.

Assumption is accepted. Educators and legislators strongly desire reorganization of some kind, with diverse stipulations, conditions and assurances.

III. Why Various Local Reorganization Bills Failed?

(exception: one)

Many reasons were presented for the lack of successful legislature (1969-70). However, the most frequent (in terms of priority) were: (1) lack of state department and board of education leadership; (2) exclusion of operational definition of comprehensive program; and (3) lack of open communication between legislators and constituents. The concerned citizens felt literally "out of touch" with most legislators except in large metropolitan areas.

Assumption(s) are accepted. Centralization is desired by both legislators and educators. Decentralization is, for the most part, an outgrowth of community demands for accountability on the part of monstrous school districts (Detroit). These demands are increasing, resulting from exclusion of Community Control provisions in Public Act 244 (1969).

IV. Major Hindrances and Obstacles to Reorganization?

There is a growing demand, on the part of educators, legislators, and concerned citizens for educational reform that will alleviate the school finance problem. This was the only common reaction, i.e., educators, legislators and citizens. This tends to suggest that a meaningful, workable, and reasonable school district operating cost index would remove most, if not all of the major obstacles which hinder the educational process.

Assumption accepted. According to reactions of educators, legislators, and citizens, there is enough evidence to support the assumption that reorganization would (in most cases) result in a reduced tax base without drastic tax reform.

Assumption rejected. Although disciplinary problems due to bigness were expressed as an opposition to centralization in many instances, the most frequent rationale for opposition proved to be transportation distance and time. There was a general feeling that travel time should not exceed one (1) hour each way.

Assumption rejected. Scope and breadth of programs ran a close second to transportation in frequency of occurrence in terms of rationales for or against Centralization. Hence, it is obviously not the least frequently mentioned rationale.

Assumption accepted. Even though many educators and citizens favor reorganization in general, when asked a preference, in almost every instance, there was a tendency toward annexation as opposed to consolidation.

V. Future Ramifications of Local Reorganization? (proponents' view)

Proponents of local reorganization at the state department of education, legislators, local educators, and concerned citizens all agree to the following ideology:

1. Several groups will continue to lobby for mandatory legislature as it pertains to local reorganization,
2. The State Department and Board of Education will be pressured by staff, legislators, local educators, and concerned citizens to assume more leadership for local reorganization. They will and must assume this leadership role with local autonomy prevalent, and
3. Very little (if any) additional local reorganization will occur without mandatory legislature.

Assumption(s) accepted. There is a general consensus of educators, legislators, and concerned citizens, that limited local reorganization will occur with permissive legislation and that mandatory legislation is a must if further local reorganization is to take place.

VI. What Types of Legislation are Necessary for Further Reorganization?

This was answered almost "all inclusively" in the results of question five (5) above.

Assumption(s) accepted. Same as five (5) above.

VII. Further Reorganization Without Some Kind of Legislation?

This proved to be a very difficult question. The arduous task of answering such a question based on highly subjective data seemed to have infinite proportions. First, it is not an open-ended question and second, it can possibly result in one-word answers (yes and no). Subsequently, during each interview, the researcher injected prodding "side remarks," i.e., you really believe that? why? I heard an opposing view, etc.

This maneuver resulted in rationales for answers in most instances.

In summary, there exists a strong belief that occasional local reorganization will occur without legislative directives.

Assumption accepted. Centralization is desired by educators and legislators from smaller district.

VIII. Has Academic Achievement Improved with Reorganization?

Again, the researcher was only able to gather highly subjective data (in Michigan) from workshops and interviews. However, according to reactions, academic achievement is enhanced with local reorganization (centralization). (See note below)

Note: (Decentralization is not applicable here due to the provisions of Public Act 244 of 1969).

This is true in terms of both quantity and quality of program offerings.

The researcher was able to obtain an abundance of evidence to support this notion from various authorities.

Hopefull, some hard supportive data will be soon forthcoming.

Assumption accepted (partially). School districts classified as small rural areas scored lower, on the average, on measures indicative of the amount of school resources expended relative to other community types. Further, these districts were at or below the State median on vocabulary and composite achievement except in the Upper Peninsula where they were above the State median.* This latter observation accounts for partial acceptance of assumption.

Assumption accepted. According to data obtained from workshops and interviews, significant increases in student academic achievement result from Centralization.

IX. Do Legislators Differ from Educators with Respect to Local Reorganization?

It is quite obvious from earlier reports that educators and legislators agree on most issues and factors related to local reorganization. However, there is slight disagreement in one area. I will use the quote of one

* Information obtained from Michigan Department of Education Assessment Report #4, May, 1970.

legislator to make this point: "All meaningful and significant movements toward local reorganization have in the past begun at the state legislative level. If we are to have meaningful reorganization in Michigan, this pattern must continue." This was supported by several legislators.

Assumption accepted. Educators as well as legislators desire local Centralization based on community inputs.

X. What Incentive Provided the Initial Thrust for Decentralization?

Many reasons have been reported for movements toward decentralization. In Detroit, however, educators, legislators and concerned citizens tend to agree that the one most significant occurrence affecting local thrust for decentralization was the "McGeorge Bundy Report" which presented an in-depth analysis of New York City Schools. This publication received national prominence in a relatively short period of time.

There was a general feeling in Detroit that maybe community demands, at best, played a secondary role.

Assumption rejected. The outgrowth of community demands for accountability emerged as a secondary incentive in the Detroit Public Schools decentralization plan.

Summary

The study proved to be quite amenable to assessment and evaluation as it pertains to significance and

meaningfulness. In general, reorganization is desired at all levels in the state of Michigan. It is hoped that in the future the State Department of Education and the State Board of Education will provide sufficient and/or adequate leadership in this effort.

Centralization

With the exception of Region Numbers 7 and 11, local school district reorganization is desirable, at the administrative, legislative, and citizen level. In Region 12 the idea of reorganization does not prove to be an issue due to the fact that population growth projections indicate school enrollment sizes that will be conducive to providing educational programs which meet the needs of all concerned. It is suggested that some, if not all, of the following inputs present themselves on the educational scene in the immediate future:

1. The State Department of Education and Board of Education exhibit meaningful leadership toward centralization;
2. Research be provided that shows positive gains through centralization;
3. Transportation concerns be resolved;
4. Increased communications between local educators, legislators, State Department of Education staff, and concerned citizens be improved;

5. A more viable school finance formula be developed;
6. Mandatory legislation prevail;
7. Definition of "comprehensive programs" be provided by the State Board of Education;
8. A general consensus for the ideal school district be reached;
9. Local educators and citizens be involved in planning for centralization; and
10. Some degree of local identity remain following centralization.

The above suggestions seem to necessitate immediate action at the State level. If Michigan is to achieve meaningful centralization, that will reflect the concerns of local educators, legislators, and their constituents, then a cooperative effort on the part of all concerned is mandatory.

Decentralization

The Detroit plan for decentralization generally received favorable support. The underlying question seemed to deal with what plan will emerge as a final prototype for the Detroit community. Even though the Detroit School Board members who were replaced by recall vote supported decentralization, many concerned citizens tend to agree that the general community (citizens) opposed the

Detroit plan in its current form. Further, they recognize the fact that the plan may or may not bring about meaningful educational programs, desegregation, or educators with a genuine concern for quality education. It will enhance the potential of community control. Decentralization was viewed as a positive for white, black, poor, as well as rich children of the Detroit Public Schools. The Superintendent of the Detroit Public Schools recognized the possibility that the proposed decentralization plan may not provide a panacea for quality education; however, he felt that positive gains could be attained with decentralization that included integration.

Again, distance and state leadership proved to be important factors relative to decentralization. Educators as well as concerned citizens possess an ever-growing concern that meaningful and significant decentralization could only come as a result of state input. The recent Michigan Assessment Program tended to favor larger school districts. Hopefully the efforts to date in Detroit will have significant implications for the other large school districts in the State of Michigan.

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS WITH IMPLICATIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

Conclusions

A careful analysis and synthesis of research findings leads the researcher to conclude the following:

1. A growing demand for the State Department of Education to develop action plans for local school district reorganization appears to be the most crucial concern;
2. That legislators introduce and/or support bills with provisions for local reorganization including (1) reasonable cost index, (2) operational definition of comprehensive programs, (3) fixed periods of time allocations for pupil transportation, (4) directives pertaining to precise participative levels (community, administrator, etc.), and (5) descriptions and/or preferences for ideal school districts;
3. That mandatory legislation is a necessity if further local school district reorganization is to occur at a significant level;

4. That a theory of reorganization without input from educators, legislators, and citizens is not feasible or workable;
5. That decentralization in Detroit, Michigan, has implications for the remaining large school districts in the state;
6. That Community Control must be an integral portion of any decentralization plan;
7. That research along with community demands for accountability play a major role in any form of reorganization; especially decentralization;
8. That there still remain far too many inadequate school districts; inadequate in terms of school finance, curricular offerings, extracurricular activities available, qualifications and placement of staff, etc.;
9. That large school districts (20,000 plus) in Michigan are "in fact" out of touch with community groups and individuals;
10. That Michigan will experience further local school district reorganization; and
11. That there is evidence to believe that voters from reorganized districts, i.e., annexed districts, have a growing concern for loss of local identity. Inherent in this is the ever present concept of stability. Local educators

are concerned with the passage of millage elections and bond issues, while the newly acquired voters are concerned with lower tax rates as an incentive for accepting and becoming a tax payer in an unfamiliar district. Perhaps the only party capable of resolving such an issue is a third party (State Department of Education), superficially removed from the issue.

In viewing the above conclusions, one can readily assess the extent of concerns at various levels in Michigan relative to local reorganization. This may be indicative of initial efforts towards concerted patterns for reorganization. Patterns that reflect cooperative efforts and result in workable legislation would most definitely alleviate the need for some of the above conclusions.

Recommendations

The following recommendations are directly related to the aforementioned conclusions.

1. That the State Department of Education and State Board of Education begin to recognize local reorganization as an integral component of the total Department operation by (a) expanding the existing school reorganization unit to induce a decentralization division; and (b) immediate implementation of the following intra-departmental plan.

The following is presented as a reactionary proposal. An attempt has been made to be precise and specific. It is hoped that this (with minimal revision) will serve as a prototype for possible evaluation.

It is generally assumed that all Bureaus, Divisions, Sections and Units, in which there exists direct or indirect contact with local school districts, will be affected by reorganization, thus requiring a possible shift in services to local districts and in many instances shifts in function of a given unit, section, etc. If long-range planning is to be effective, then perhaps some perceptions of the implications of reorganization are a must prior to legislative action on school reform.

Justification (Objectives)

1. The possible and highly probable improvement of education through reorganization is dependent on strong leadership from the state level. All available assistance will be greatly appreciated at the local level.

2. The need to overtly define the role of the State Department of Education as related to services, functions, programs, etc., for local school districts.

3. The need for inter-bureau communication to prevent replication and duplication of services, functions, etc., thus allowing for a coordinated cohesiveness within the department prior to and after reorganization.

4. The need for information on all phases of school operation as in-put into decision-making in reorganization planning.

5. The need for the sharing of information on reorganization for the purpose of creating a general consensus of an operational definition of reorganization.

To achieve the proposed objectives (1-5 above), a sequential (step by step) format is presented.

Step I. Distribution of this Plan to all Bureaus, Divisions, Sections and Units.

- A. All professional staff should be informed of the plan.
- B. Voluntary response is anticipated.

Step II. Request that each Bureau develop an in-depth statement, documenting the implications for reorganization in their particular bureau and responding to specific questions presented later in this thesis.

- A. The implications of reorganization should be greatest in the curriculum division.
 - 1. Each section, unit and division chief.
 - 2. Consultants.
- B. Vocational Education Division.
 - 1. All section chiefs (minimum).
 - 2. Limited unit chiefs and consultants.
- C. Higher Education - Statement of implications and response to specific questions.
- D. Administrative Services - Statement of implications and response to specific questions.
- E. Library Services - Statement of implications and response to specific questions.
- F. Research - Statement of implications and response to specific questions.

Step III. A series of inter-departmental seminars (preferably one or two days per week at a site in Lansing or remote from Lansing). The purpose of the seminars would be to:

- A. Provide for socialization across Bureau lines of the Department and the "cross pollination" of ideas.
- B. Interrelate the functions of the various Bureaus, Divisions, etc., to promote a meshing of goals and work efforts.
- C. Define the long-range goals, responsibilities and challenges of the Department, specific Bureaus, Divisions and Sections in anticipation of total school district reorganization.
- D. Form task forces to design plans and approaches to the achievement of the defined goals, etc.
- E. To explore any other related concern.

The responses will be analyzed and evaluated by the reorganization section and possibly committed staff at Michigan State University.

After analyzation and evaluation, with possible revision, the proposal will be submitted and/or presented to local districts as well as intermediate districts for immediate feedback as related to revision, augmentation, or deletion.

At this stage, the State Department of Education and/or the reorganization section could authorize or designate precise procedures and personnel to be utilized in the final steps to be taken.

Dr. John Porter, recently appointed Superintendent of Public Instruction, could possibly use the seminars and documented statements to further enhance his communications within the Department of Education. At the same time, each individual participant in the planning of the State Department's role in reorganization would be provided an opportunity to exchange ideas, opinions and experiences as related to reorganization.

Specific Questions of Concern

- a. If there is reorganization of local school districts, there will be a reallocation of educational functions within the three echelon state system. What services not now generally offered by any echelon of the educational system should be offered by the restructured units and by which level?
- b. What reallocation of function will be necessary and/or desirable?
- c. As a guideline, suppose that districts when reorganized will have a minimum of 50,000 pupils in intermediate districts and 5,000 pupils minimum in local school administrative districts. What implications will districts of these sizes with new capabilities and potential have for the functioning of the State Education Department? For your Bureau? For your Division? For your Section? For you in your job?
- d. Outline the design of an ideal program for the educational systems of Michigan in your area of expertise (e.g., mentally handicapped, science education, adult education, etc.).
- e. What is the optimum number of pupils necessary to justify each segment of this program (if possible, substantiate from research findings, the literature of the field, etc.)?
- f. Consider economics, personnel availability, vocational opportunities, equipment and space needs, pupil interest and other such constraints in your decision on programming.
- g. To obtain the optimum number of pupils for the specialized program, what would the total pupil population have to be?
- h. What would be the most appropriate approach to establishing a working model of 1, 2, and 3 above?
- i. Other related questions of concern.

Possible Format for Organizing Seminars

- a. Each Bureau could request and conduct a seminar with professional Bureau staff and possibly a representative of the reorganization section to focus upon the aforementioned objectives.

- b. Sections and Divisions within the Bureau could conduct seminars with similar focus.
- c. After each Bureau has conducted 1 and 2 above, the merging of the total group could provide in-put and immediate feedback for each individual Bureau, thus allowing for more precise directions for the Department of Education as one leadership body as related to reorganization.
- d. These seminars could be planned for two half-day sessions or one full day per week until deemed necessary for other directions.
- e. This format is very flexible in terms of augmentation, revision or deletion.

The researcher feels that before any form of state leadership can exist in terms of reorganization, the department staff must possess an awareness, and commitment centered around reorganization.

- 2. That Detroit deliberately include community control in its decentralization plan. This level of control should include the following:
 - a. Local school board composed of at least 51 per cent community representatives, i.e., parents, businessmen, etc.
 - b. Power and authority commensurate to existing boards of education, i.e., hiring and firing of staff, modified tenure laws, budget, administration, policy-making, etc., and
 - c. Permanent support.
- 3. That Grand Rapids, Flint, and Lansing school districts begin to develop decentralization action plans with cross-communication between citizens, educators, and legislators.
- 4. That the State Board of Education
 - a. Designate a transportation time span based on the number of school pupils per square mile.
 - b. Exclude transportation time from school codes, or

- c. Formulate flexible guidelines which may include (a) or (b) above and input from the local level.

The transportation unit should be involved in the formation of these guidelines.

5. That the State Board of Education appoint a task force composed of at least two local superintendents who have been relatively successful following reorganization, two departmental staff (preferably reorganization unit), and four other competent people. The latter may be educators and/or concerned citizens. The charge to the task force will be to study various means for friendly transition of local citizens to districts resulting from centralization and formulate general guidelines for dealing effectively with this issue. Included in the guidelines should be procedures for implementation.
6. That legislators begin to touch base with the State Board and Department of Education before introducing local reorganization legislation. This tends to ensure some degree of state leadership.
7. That State Board of Education (and department staff) develop an operational definition of "comprehensive program" or begin to substitute a less evasive concept (a concept that is more easily definable).
8. That the Legislature immediately introduce legislation that will close local school districts having less than 500 students enrolled.
9. That incentives other than finance be offered to reorganized districts, i.e., additional materials and equipment, full-time state Consultant for Curriculum, visiting lectures (community organizing specialist), or receive finance incentive to allow local school district creativity and innovation.
10. That a school tax formula be developed through a cooperative effort of legislators, educators, and citizens. This formula should be based on the following:
 - a. Existing financial status of local district;
 - b. Curricula offerings and teacher qualifications;
 - c. Teacher and administrator accountability;

- d. Potential financial status of district; and
- e. Property tax, cigarette tax, non-profit organization tax (church), etc.

The philosophy of unequal educational opportunity must prevail in developing such a formula. The Governor and legislators must begin to realize the importance of education and the most crucial role it plays in all successful endeavors.

Implications for Further Study

Some interesting findings could result from the following investigations.

A study should be undertaken to assess the relationship between attitudes of local citizens and local centralization.

In-depth studies should be conducted at each local school district level in Michigan which has undergone some form of local reorganization to assess improvements, if any, in achievement, breadth of curricular offerings and personnel qualifications.

Comprehensive opinion polls should be conducted to determine the level of interest (among non-educators) towards local reorganization.

A study of the Detroit Public Schools to determine the effect of decentralization on students, teachers, administrators, and community seems inevitable.

A survey to investigate the residential patterns of school board members in centralized local districts should be undertaken. A comparative study could be included in this investigation, i.e., if some school board members reside in annexed districts and others in existing districts, if all board members reside in existing districts, etc.

A study to determine the effect of local reorganization on moral values and social behavior and adjustment should be undertaken.

A study to determine the level of ethnic polarization following decentralization could prove significant.

A predictive study to determine the kinds of legislation necessary for decentralization in Michigan's remaining larger cities seems necessary.

A study should be conducted to determine the most appropriate means of transportation in reorganized districts, reflecting community inputs.

Historical studies should be conducted to determine why Michigan allowed local autonomy initially and what possibilities exist for change in this area (local autonomy).

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APPENDIX

APPENDIX A

<u>Sport</u>	<u>Class A (165)</u>	<u>Class B (200)</u>	<u>Class C (181)</u>	<u>Class D (197)</u>
Swimming	116 = 70.3%	42 = 21%	5 = 2.8%	2 = 1%
Tennis	144 = 87.3%	108 = 54%	26 = 14.4%	8 = 4.1%
Gymnastics	14 = 8.5%	12 = 6%	5 = 2.8%	4 = 2%
Football	165 = 100%	181 = 90.5%	170 = 94%	139 = 70.6%
Golf	147 = 89.1%	170 = 85%	106 = 58.6%	41 = 20.8%
Cross Country	163 = 98.8%	143 = 71.5%	77 = 42.5%	36 = 18.3%
Basketball	165 = 100%	200 = 100%	181 = 100%	195 = 99%
Baseball	160 = 97%	177 = 88.5%	156 = 86.2%	144 = 73.1%
Hockey	14 = 8.5%	5 = 2.5%	3 = 1.7%	1 = 5%
Skiing	19 = 11.5%	16 = 8%	14 = 7.7%	6 = 3%
Track	163 = 98.8%	198 = 99%	174 = 96.1%	156 = 79.2%
Wrestling	122 = 73.9%	125 = 62.5%	57 = 31.5%	15 = 7.6%

Classification Limitations (9-12 Enrollment)

Class A - 1,200 or more	Class C - 300 - 549
Class B - 550 - 1,199	Class D - Less than 300

Source: Michigan High School Athletic Association, 1968-1969.

APPENDIX B

In Michigan, smaller school systems are highly wasteful of personnel as indicated in the following table:

Number of Full-time Equavalent Employees
per 100 Pupils Enrolled, by Size of
School District, Michigan 1968-69

Enrollment of Pupils by School District Size	No. of Full-time Equivalent Employees per 100 Pupils
50,000 and over	2.26
25,000 - 50,000	3.75
15,000 - 25,000	3.98
10,000 - 15,000	4.78
5,000 - 10,000	5.92*
2,000 - 5,000	6.58
1,000 - 2,000	7.01
300 - 1,000	7.23
0 - 300	8.75

Source: This information was compiled and computed by the researcher from data obtained from Form DS-4324; Section D (Employee Personnel) and from Bulletin 1012 (School Enrollment) of the Michigan Department of Education.

The number of employees per 100 pupils rises steadily as the size of the district decreases until it reaches 8.75 per 100 pupils in districts with 300 pupils or less. This is more than a 300% increase over the largest district.

It is suggested that the *5.00-6.00 figures are more appropriate in term of unit cost.

APPENDIX C

A Partial List of Legislative Bills Related to Local Reorganization During 1969 Session (Fall).

- House Bill #3883**
- House Bill #3390**
- Senate Bill #1081**
- Local Centralization Bill included in Governor's Educational Reform Package**
- Local Centralization Bill initiated by State Board of Education**
- Various substitute Bills for all the above**

APPENDIX D

Dear Superintendent:

The State Department of Education is requesting your presence at the regional workshop on reorganization. The workshop on reorganization. The workshop will be held on _____ at _____. The coordinator will be _____, _____ and the location will be _____.

(date) (time) (name) (title)

The school district reorganization section of the Department of Education is currently involved in long range planning relative to reorganization. It is generally assumed that this planning has implications at the local, intermediate and state level; hence, requiring communication and cooperation between the three levels.

The above announced workshop is one of a series. The proposed agenda is administrator oriented, however, discussions may be broad enough to interest school board members or other concerned educators.

It is assumed also, that pertinent subjective and objective data concerning the attitudes of local and intermediate superintendents towards various reorganization proposals that have been introduced in recent bills and by the State Board of Education can be obtained. Further, there is a possibility of establishing regional liaison committees for the primary purpose of providing feedback to constituent

districts. (Note: All workshops have been scheduled on a regional basis.) The specific purposes of the workshops will be to:

1. Establish communication between the state department and local districts.
2. Provide the local district up-to-date feedback of legislative and state department of education action relative to school district reorganization.
3. Obtain the general reaction (at the local level) to various reorganization proposals.
4. Provide direct interaction for the purpose of sharing clarification of terminology used in various bills, and
5. Obtain additional data relative to local school district reorganization.

We will appreciate your presence at this meeting. Please advise us and/or your meeting coordinator of your intention relative to this request. If you have any questions, please contact the reorganization section, State Department of Education (Mr. David L. Donovan) or your regional coordinator. A list of meeting coordinators, tentative workshop agenda, and scheduled workshops to date is attached.

attachment

APPENDIX E

FINAL REPORT

of the

COMMITTEE ON SCHOOL DISTRICT REORGANIZATION

as required by

Public Act 289 of 1964

To

State Legislature

State of Michigan

FOREWORD

Deciding that there should be increased consolidation or merging of local school districts, the Michigan Legislature four years ago created a law to provide this type of reorganization.

To carry out the highly important educational task, Act 289 of the Public Acts of 1964, provided for the study and development of district reorganization plans, called for creation of a State Committee on School District Reorganization and study committees at the intermediate school district level.

The legislation required that a study be made in each intermediate school district, that elections be held on eliminating non-high school districts and that existing kindergarten-12th grade districts be strengthened.

Functions of the reorganization committee directly applying to Act 289 ended in July of 1968, and this is the committee's final report, although the committee itself is continuing under related legislation. The committee, appointed by the Governor, has been extremely active and greatly effective and, under the primary direction of Dr. Roland S. Stroh of Western Michigan University, has performed forthrightly, wisely and with impressive efficiency.

As Superintendent of Public Instruction, I was chairman but Dr. Stroh performed the excellent day-to-day leadership. The committee's other current members were, Mrs. Barbara Dumouchelle, of Grosse Ile; Clayton O. Healey, of East Jordan; Leslie W. Richards, of Negaunee; E. George Schutt, of Lansing; and Robert E. Smith, of Fowlerville.

Ira Polley
Superintendent of Public Instruction

In 1964, when Public Act 289 became effective, 1,438 local school districts existed in the State of Michigan. On July 1, 1968, this number had been reduced to 676, a difference of 762 districts. Of this number, 263 districts were reorganized directly by the requirements of Act 289 while many of the other 499 districts initiated reorganization using other statutory reorganization provisions. There were 2 new high school districts created under the requirements of this Act.

In the last six months of 1968, another 23 school districts have reorganized. Thus, as of December 31, 1968, there were 653 school districts in Michigan. Of this number, 123 offer less than a K-12 school program to slightly over 14,000 students. Approximately 99.4 percent of the children of this state reside in a K-12 school district.

The requirements of Act 289 of the Public Acts of 1964, as amended, have been met in all 60 intermediate school districts.

Because of the failure of intermediate school district study committees to submit plans of school district reorganization which were approved, the State Reorganization Committee prepared plans of reorganization for the following ten intermediate school districts:

Alpena-Montmorency-Alcona	Menominee
Lewis Cass	Ottawa
Cheboygan-Otsego-Presque Isle	Sanilac
Jackson	Traverse Bay Area
Manistee	Wayne

The reorganization plans of the following intermediate school districts provided for continuing the existing school districts:

Clinton	Kalamazoo
Genesee	Livingston
Gladwin	Macomb
Iosco	

The voters in seven intermediate school districts rejected the approved reorganization plans. These districts are:

Cheboygan-Otsego-Presque Isle	Marquette-Alger
Copper Country	Menominee
Hillsdale	Oceana
Lenawee	

The attached table gives the complete report for each of the 60 intermediate school districts. It shows the changes in the number of school districts resulting directly from Act 289 elections.

TABLE 1

1.	2.	3.	4.	5.*	6.	7.
Intermediate District	Non-H.S. Districts 7-1-1964	High School Districts	Proposed H.S. Districts	Election Method and Result	Non-H.S. Districts 7-1-1968	High School Districts
Allegan	54	9	9	2 Partial	4	9
Alpena-Alcona-Montmorency (state plan)	4	4	3	2 No	1	4
Barry	20	3	3	2 Yes	0	3
Bay-Arenac	7	7	7	2 Yes	0	7
Berrien	43	14	14	2 Partial	2	14
Branch	8	4	3	2 Yes	0	3
Calhoun	27	10	10	2 Partial	11	11
Cass (state plan)	19	4	4	2 Partial	0	4
Charlevoix-Emmet	8	9	6	2 Partial	3	11
Cheboygan-Presque Isle-Otsego (state plan)	10	10	7	2 No	2	10
Clare	3	3	3	2 Yes	0	3
Clinton	41	6	6	(No election required)	0	6
COOR (Crawford, Ogemaw, Oscoda, Roscommon)	18	8	4	2 Partial	1	6
Delta-Schoolcraft	10	10	4	2 Partial	2	8
Dickinson-Iron	2	10	5	2 Yes	0	6
Eastern Upper Peninsula	21	10	10	2 Partial	4	11
Eaton	33	7	7	2 Partial	3	7
Genesee	3	21	21	(No election required)	0	21
Gladwin	1	2	2	(No election required)	0	2
Gogebic-Ontonagon	3	10	8	2 Partial	1	9
Traverse Bay Area (Grand Traverse, Antrim, Benzie, Kalkaska, Leelanau (state plan))	24	15	9	2 Partial	8	14
Gratiot	20	6	5	2 Partial	5	6
Hillsdale	1	8	1	1 No	0	8
Copper Country (Houghton, Baraga, Keweenaw)	10	9	9	2 No	7	9
Huron	40	10	9	2 Partial	24	9
Ingham	3	12	12	2 Yes	0	12
Ionia	52	5	5	2 Partial	23	5
Iosco	0	4	4	(No election required)	0	4
Isabella	7	5	3	2 Yes	0	3
Jackson (state plan)	10	13	12	2 Yes	0	12
Kalamazoo	4	9	9	(No election required)	0	9
Kent	19	19	19	1 Yes	0	19
Lake	7	2	1	1 Yes	0	1
Lapeer	12	5	5	2 Partial	4	5
Lenawee	5	12	4	2 No	0	12

TABLE 1

1.	2.	3.	4.	5.*	6.	7.
Intermediate District	Non-H.S. Districts 7-1-1964	High School Districts	Proposed H.S. Districts	Election Method and Result	Non-H.S. Districts 7-1-1968	High School Districts
Livingston	1	5	5	(No election required)	0	5
Macomb	0	22	21	(No election required)	0	21
Manistee (state plan)	3	4	4	2 Yes	0	4
Marquette-Alger	12	12	5	2 No	10	11
Mason	7	4	4	2 Yes	0	4
Mecosta-Osceola	18	9	7	2 Partial	2	7
Menominee	5	5	3	2 No	0	5
Midland	6	4	4	1 Yes	0	4
Monroe	10	10	9	2 Partial	2	9
Montcalm	11	7	7	1 Yes	0	7
Muskegon	14	12	12	2 Partial	1	12
Newaygo	40	5	5	2 Partial	2	5
Oakland	3	27	28	1 Yes	0	28
Oceana	27	4	2	2 No	7	4
Ottawa (state plan)	20	7	8	2 Partial	3	7
Saginaw	19	12	13	2 Yes	0	13
St. Clair	14	6	7	1 Yes	0	7
St. Joseph	11	8	4	2 Partial	3	8
Sanilac (state plan)	53	7	7	2 Partial	3	7
Shiawassee	3	8	7	2 Partial	0	8
Tuscola	25	9	9	1 Yes	0	9
Van Buren	9	11	11	2 Partial	3	11
Washtenaw	9	10	10	2 Yes	0	10
Wayne (state plan)	8	35	36	2 Partial	4	35
Wexford-Missaukee	16	7	6	2 Partial	2	5
	893	545	457		147	529

* Method 1 Election - All school districts within an intermediate school district whose boundaries would be changed would vote collectively as one unit.

* Method 2 Election - Each proposed school district votes separately as a unit; thus, in such counties some elections may pass while others fail, resulting in a partial "yes" result.