

1983

The approach of an Iowa school district to program reorganization

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The approach of an Iowa school district to program reorganization

Abstract

The growth and development of public education in this country has been documented in scores of textbooks and countless other publications. Such accounts often focus on the external forces in society to which the schools have responded. Those accounts have understandably not often focused on the growth and development of individual school systems. When school systems have been singled out for a special study, they have usually been large urban systems or systems on the "cutting edge" of educational innovation or reform.

THE APPROACH OF AN IOWA SCHOOL DISTRICT
TO PROGRAM REORGANIZATION

A Research Paper
Presented to
the Department of Educational Administration
and Counseling
University of Northern Iowa

In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Master of Arts in Education

by
Bruce Lee Tepfer

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CHAPTER 1

The Problem

Introduction

The growth and development of public education in this country has been documented in scores of textbooks and countless other publications. Such accounts often focus on the external forces in society to which the schools have responded.

Those accounts have understandably not often focused on the growth and development of individual school systems. When school systems have been singled out for a special study, they have usually been large urban systems or systems on the "cutting edge" of educational innovation or reform.

Such studies have not generally recounted experiences which are relevant to the small and rural area school districts which characterize many states, including Iowa.

The Problem

Statement of the problem. Given the reality of changing economic and demographic circumstances and the implications these changing circumstances have for all schools, but particularly for the small rural school, the needs for administrators in such schools have intensified. Specifically, those administrators need a heightened awareness of these forces which are particularly likely to produce reorganization demands and an increased understanding of those generalizations and strategies which may prove useful in developing a response to those demands.

However, the forces which operate in one district may be quite different from those which operate in another. For those reasons, it seems essential to establish an understanding of the history of a particular district before attempting to generalize from the district's experience.

The purpose of this study is (1) to recount the birth and growth of an Iowa school district, (2) to identify those factors which shaped the development of that district, and (3) to identify those understandings and strategies which proved useful to that district in meeting the most recent challenges posed by changing circumstances within the district.

Importance of the study. This study is, in part, a historical study of the East Buchanan Community School District, with particular emphasis upon the district's latest effort to resolve a problem which originated from declining student enrollment-- a common phenomenon in many schools in Iowa and the Midwest.

Because the East Buchanan District is representative of many midwestern school districts, its experiences should prove instructive to many other like-size districts which face similar challenges.

Since many of the decisions made by the officials of that district were based on an analysis of relevant professional literature, this study represents an application of suggestions made by theorists to an actual school situation. This feature should enhance the value to others of the East Buchanan experience.

Design of the study. The study consists of three emphases: (1) A history of the East Buchanan Community School District, (2) a recounting of the district's experiences in reorganizing the structure of elementary education within the district, and (3) a summary of three particularly important aspects of the reorganization experience; those aspects are indentified for special attention because they represent an application of suggestions from some of the professional literature which deals with program reorganization.

CHAPTER 2

A History of the East Buchanan Community School District

The teaching of reading, writing, and arithmetic first started in Winthrop, Iowa, in 1866. The school consisted of a one-room class located in a small building behind Main Street. Later that year, the first school house was completed for the winter term.

The school continued to grow and by 1868 the citizens organized an independent district. It was quite evident to all that increased school facilities needed to be secured.

With the steady growth of the community, a large and spacious two-story frame school building was erected on its present site in 1871.

The school growth continued and on March 17, 1904, the public voted for a proposition authorizing the construction of a new school building. During the summer, a \$10,000.00 public school building was finished and equipped with modern conveniences and appliances, making it the first public school in the county.

This school was destroyed by fire on December 16, 1914. The fire was attributed to combustion in the coal bin and everything, including the building was lost.

In April, 1915, a special election approved the issuing of bonds in the amount of \$15,000.00 to purchase land adjoining the site already owned and to build, equip, and furnish a new school house. The new building was ready for classes in November, 1915.

As the school enrollment increased each year, the need for more

room became apparent. Another election was held in April, 1925, and the voters favored the building of a new addition to the school. By December, the \$25,000.00 in bonds that were issued helped build a new addition, including a new gymnasium.

The proposition to establish the Consolidated Independent School District of Winthrop was voted upon at a special election held April 29, 1947. The vote was 436 in favor and 99 against consolidation. Individual schools were also located in Aurora, Monti, and Quasqueton. Figure 1, page 6 indicates the districts included in the new consolidation. These districts were: Byron Township, Sections 2, 4, 5, 7, 8; Fremont Township, Sections 1, 2, 5, 6; Liberty Township, Sections 1, 2, 6; and Middlefield Township, Sections, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 8.

After six years of effort, a new building was developed. Voters of the Winthrop Consolidated School District approved a \$150,000.00 bond issue to erect a new high school addition to the present school in 1958. This addition was necessary to house the increase in enrollment. Features included a gymnasium-auditorium, five classrooms, an office and a large locker room. It was an important milestone in the progress of education for the Winthrop Community.

On December 3, 1959, the voters of nine districts, six rural areas and three communities, were asked to approve the formation of a newly proposed school district, the East Buchanan Community School District. The voters overwhelmingly approved the formation of the new school by a vote of 637 to 127. The proposal passed in seven of the nine school districts, as required by law. Table 1 page 7, shows the unofficial results. The new district went into effect on June 20, 1969.

Figure I
District and Township Location for East
Buchanan Community School District

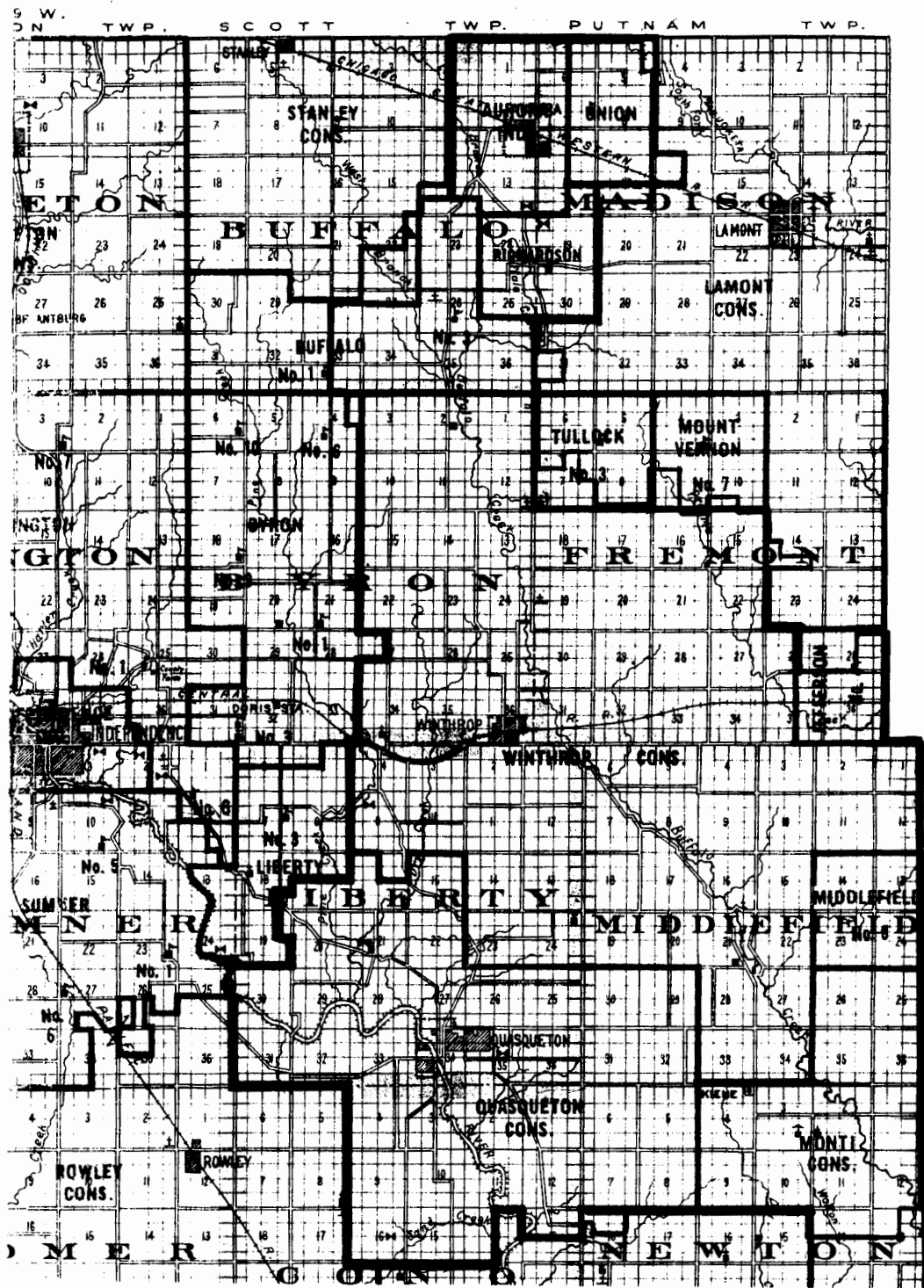


Table 1
Election Results, December 3, 1959

District	Yes Votes	No Votes	Total Votes
Aurora Independent	75	32	107
Buffalo Township	24	4	28
Byron Township	4	0	4
Jefferson Township	6	7	13
Middlefield Township	4	14	18
Quasqueton Consolidated	130	44	174
Richardson Township	12	5	17
Union Township	15	11	26
Winthrop Consolidated	367	10	377
Total	637	127	764

Figure 2, page 9 shows the original boundary line of the new district.

Reorganization was not a new topic as the Boards of Education of the Aurora Independent, the Quasqueton Consolidated, and the Winthrop Consolidated School Districts had been studying a proposed merger for a period of two years. Prior to this period, the Aurora Independent School District had been engaged in a study with the Hazelton Consolidated and the Stanley Consolidated School Districts. This merger study was abandoned in 1957.

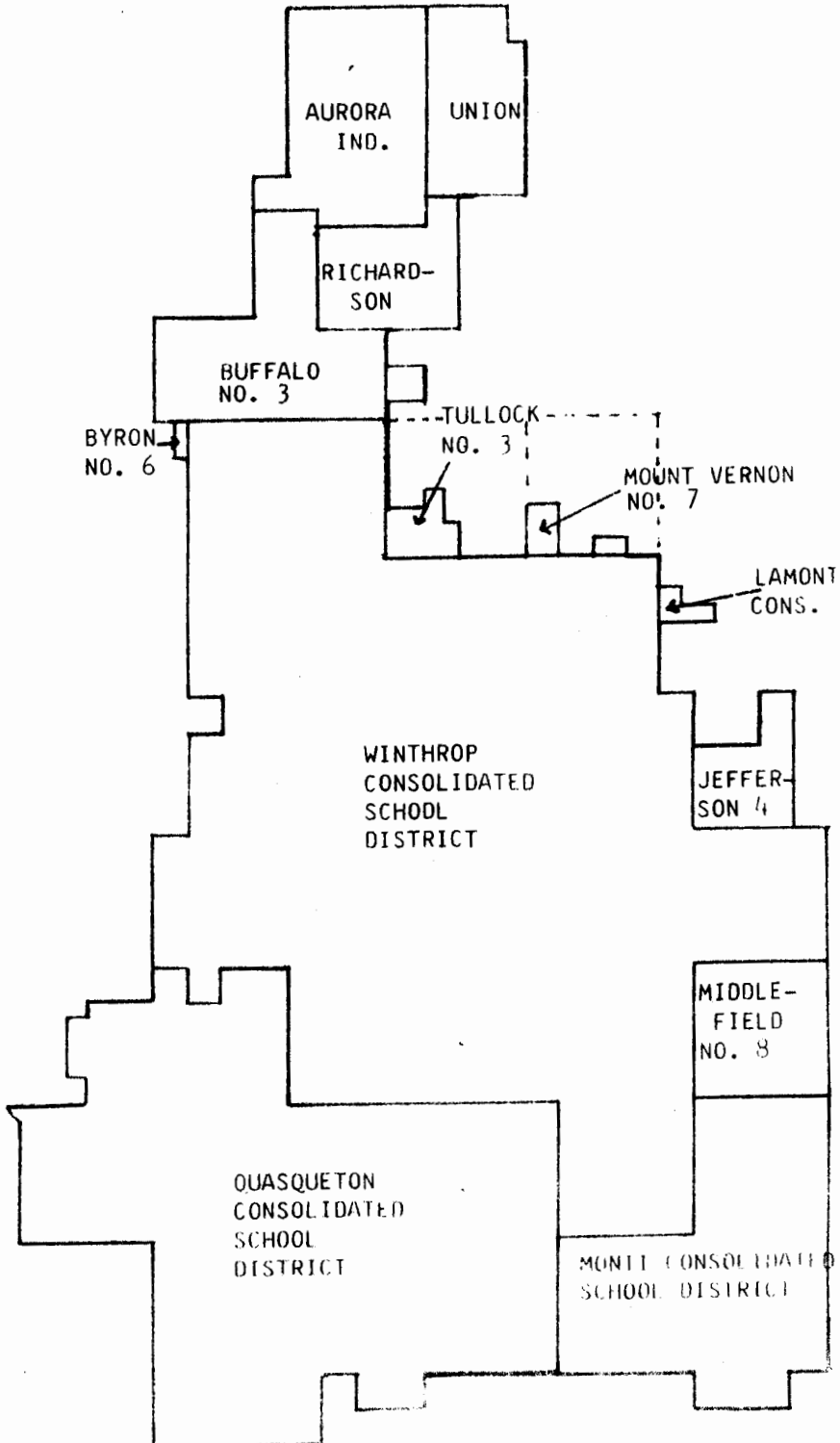
At the time of the reorganization, the rural areas were all attending one of the town schools. The Aurora Independent School District was composed of seven sections of land in Buffalo and Madison Townships. In addition, the township schools in Union, Richardson and Buffalo were attending the Aurora school.

The first school in Aurora was housed in the town hall. The town hall, with additions, served this purpose until the voters of the Aurora Independent School District voted to construct a new school house on April 12, 1927. The building was completed in 1928. At that time the old school, the town hall, was dismantled.

The 1928 building was used for all twelve grades until 1960, when the school reorganization took place; it then became part of the East Buchanan Community School District. At the time of the reorganization, the Aurora Independent School District was debt free.

The Quasqueton Consolidated School District contained approximately thirty-six sections of land in the townships of Liberty, Middlefield, Cono, and Newton. Quasqueton built the original building at the cost of \$17,000.00. There were two additions following the original

Figure 2
Original Boundary Lines for East Buchanan
Community School District



construction; one addition was approved for the amount of \$88,000.00 in 1948. This addition included the gymnasium. In 1958 another addition was approved at a cost of \$20,420.00. This addition included the two classrooms north of the gymnasium. At the time of the reorganization, the Quasqueton Consolidated School District had \$51,000.00 remaining in bonded indebtedness.

At the time of reorganization, the Winthrop Consolidated School District was in debt \$94,500.00. This made a total of \$145,000.00 of bonded indebtedness assumed by the newly organized school district. The district had an enrollment of 982 and was approximately 140 square miles in size.

Voters also approved five Board of Education members with three director districts and two members at large for the new district. All members were voted on by the entire school district. Figure 3, page 11 shows the director districts.

The original boundary line of the East Buchanan Community School District remained for a period of two years. On July 1, 1962, the changes in the boundary lines were additions resulting from people petitioning out of a newly reorganized school district, Starmont Community School District. The addition included portions of Madison Township, Section 31 and Fremont Township, Section 7, 10, and 14. Figure 4, page 12 shows the East Buchanan Community School District with additions.

The first major effort to the newly formed district was the attempt to build a new high school building. The Board of Education presented proposals to the district voters on September 20, 1962; January 26, 1963; January 31, 1964; August 3, 1964; and April 8, 1965.

Figure 3
1960 East Buchanan Community
School Director Districts

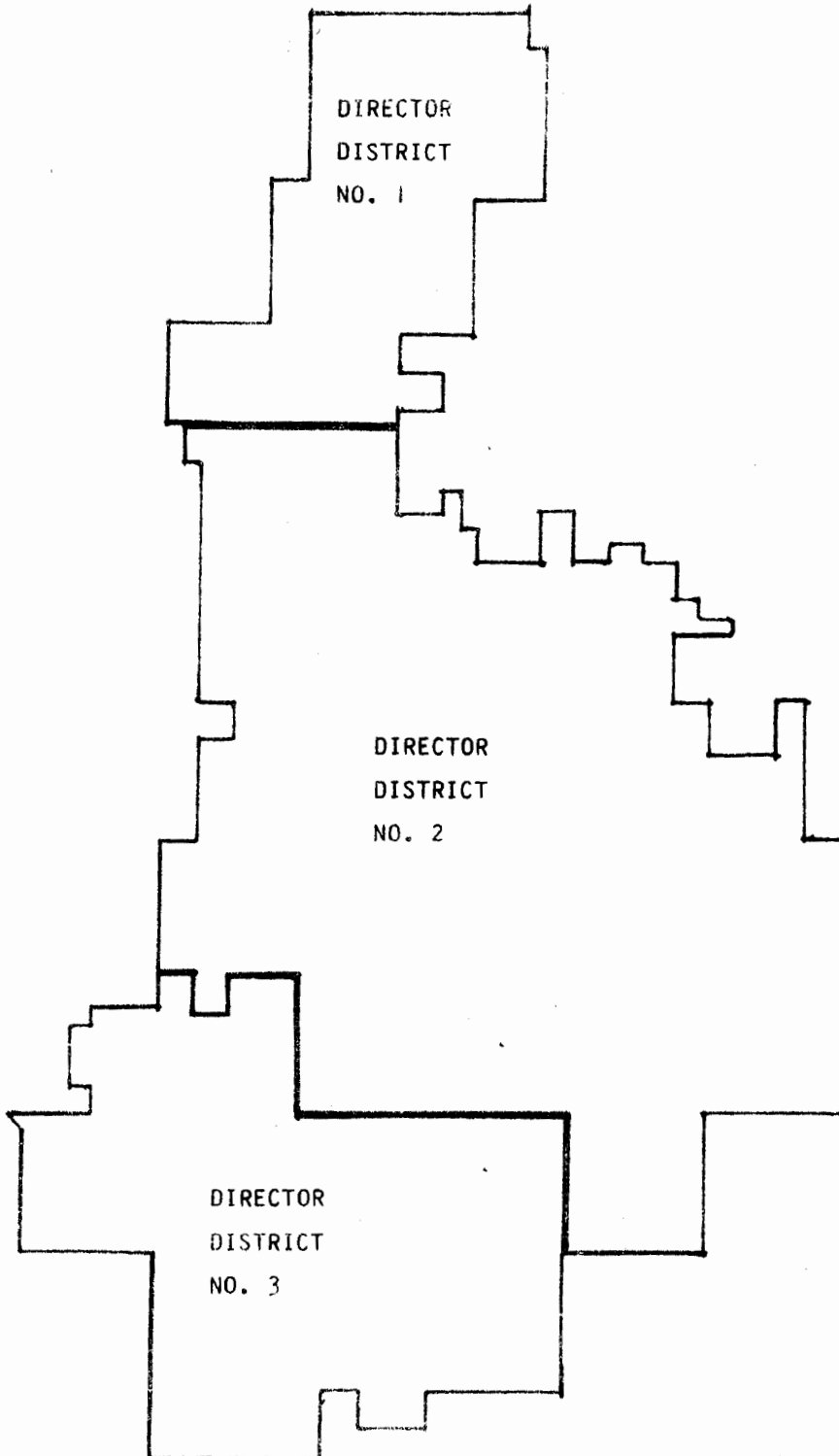
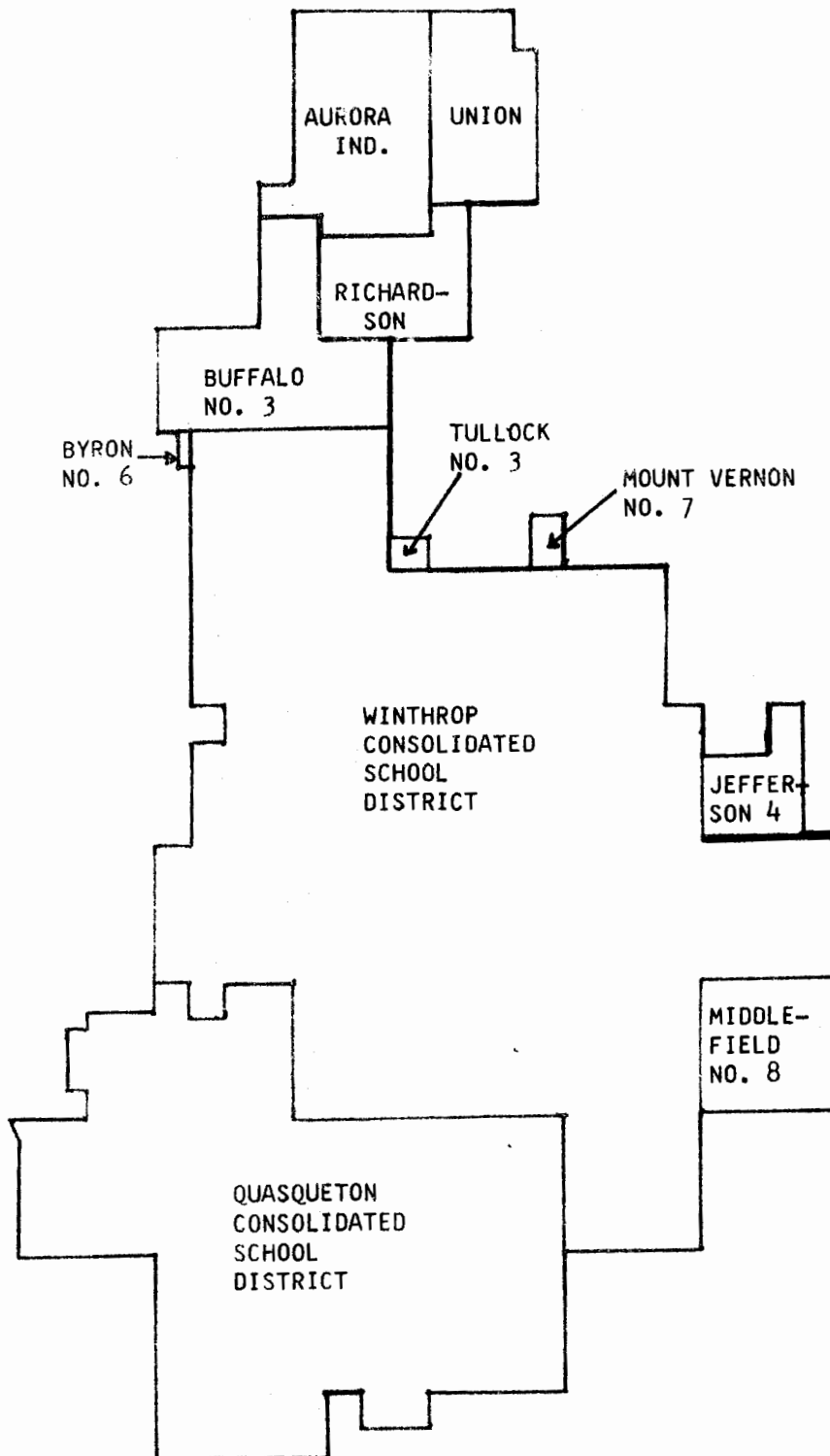


Figure 4
1962 East Buchanan Community
School District



All of these bond issues failed. Finally on September 25, 1965, a bond issue for \$525,000.00 was passed to construct a new high school building which was ready for occupancy in the fall of 1967.

Monti Consolidated School District

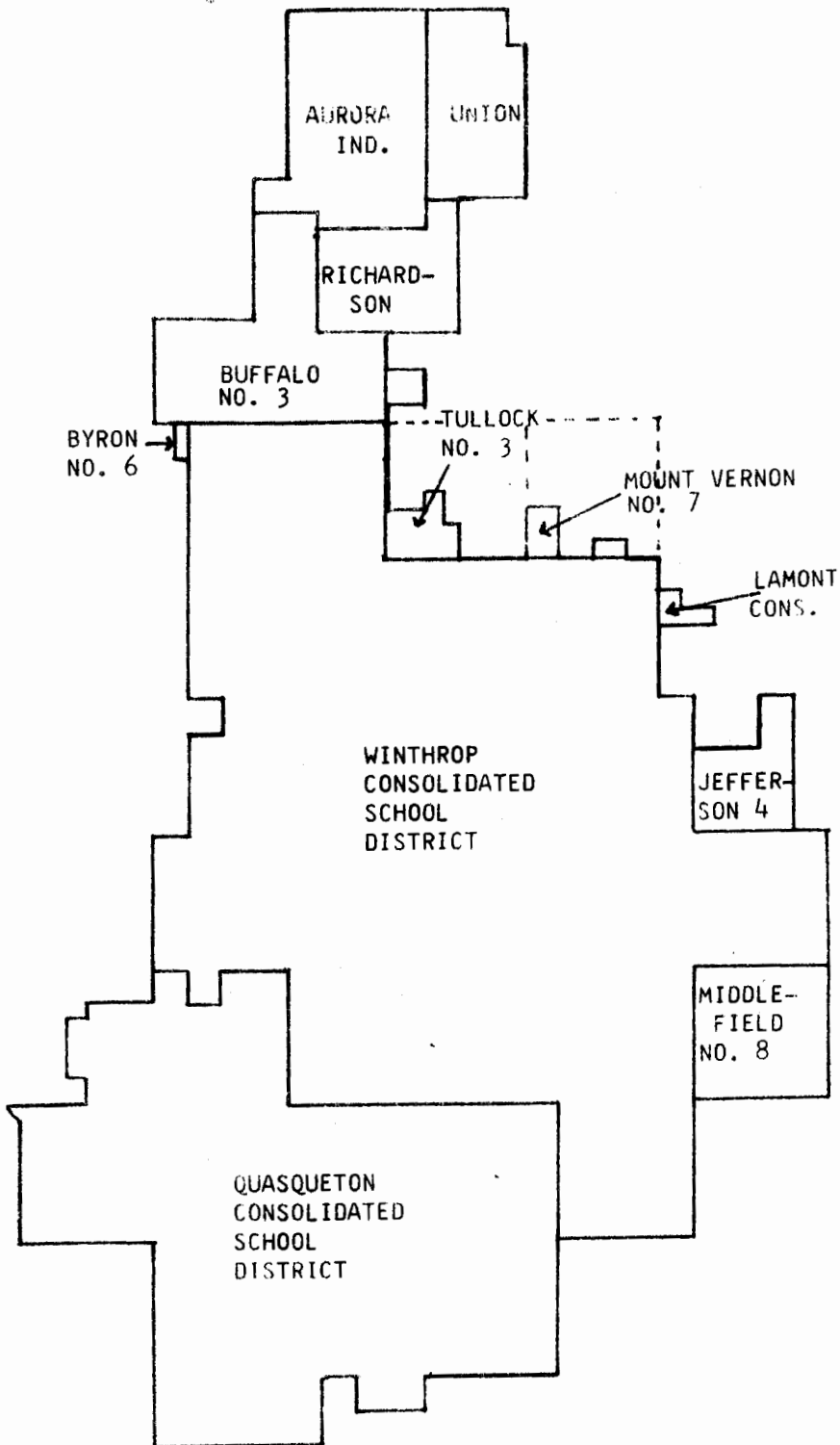
On July 1, 1966 the Monti Consolidated School District was divided into two proportionate parts between the North-Linn Community School District and the East Buchanan Community School District. The East Buchanan Community School District received 62.25 per cent of the assets of the Monti district. The new township sub-districts included Newton Numbers 25, 26, 35, 36, 1, 2, 3, 4, 9, 10, 11, 12, North $\frac{1}{2}$ of 13 and Northwest $\frac{1}{2}$ of 13. Figure 5, page 14, shows the new boundary of the school district.

The Monti school district included a schoolhouse located on a tract of land which was originally part of the farm owned by Mr. and Mrs. Leonard Moroney. The building was constructed in the 1940's after the original bond issue of \$39,000.00 was approved by the voters on July 16, 1947. On March 10, 1948, the voters approved an additional amount of \$8,000.00 for the erection of the school buildings and equipment.

Following the addition of the Monti Consolidated School District to the East Buchanan Community School District, the Board of Education decided to sell the land back to the Moroneys for \$50.00 per acre or a total of \$150.00. A price of \$2,000.00 was placed on the building and it was offered to the Moroneys. The building was being used as a warehouse by the school district.

The Moroneys in turn offered the building to the district if the district wanted to move it. Because it was impossible to move, all of

Figure 5
1966 East Buchanan Community
School District



the usable items were removed and the building left on the property. It is now part of the homestead and is being used by the Moroneys. No records are available to show that any money ever changed hands.

The property obtained in this reorganization was included in director district number 3. Figure 6, page 16, shows the alignment of director districts as of 1966 and as it remains today.

East Buchanan Community School District

The projected enrollment for the newly organized district was 982. The enrollment grew to a peak enrollment of 1082 in the 1968-1969 school year, when declining enrollment began. The enrollment has declined continually, through the 1982-1983 school year and is expected to continue until an enrollment of approximately 650 is reached. Table 2, page 17, shows the history of enrollment.

The final building project of the East Buchanan Community School District was a bond issue for the amount of \$40,000.00 This was passed on February 28, 1973, and was for the construction of a building to house the metal classes for the industrial arts program.

The students attending the district following reorganization were housed in three existing buildings; kindergarten through six in Aurora; kindergarten through eight in Quasqueton; and kindergarten through six, and nine through twelve in Winthrop.

Following the completion of the new high school, housing for the grades changed as follows: grades kindergarten through six in Aurora, grades kindergarten through six in Quasqueton, and grades kindergarten through twelve in Winthrop.

As the enrollment continued to decline, decisions were made about

Figure 6
East Buchanan Community School's
Present Director Districts

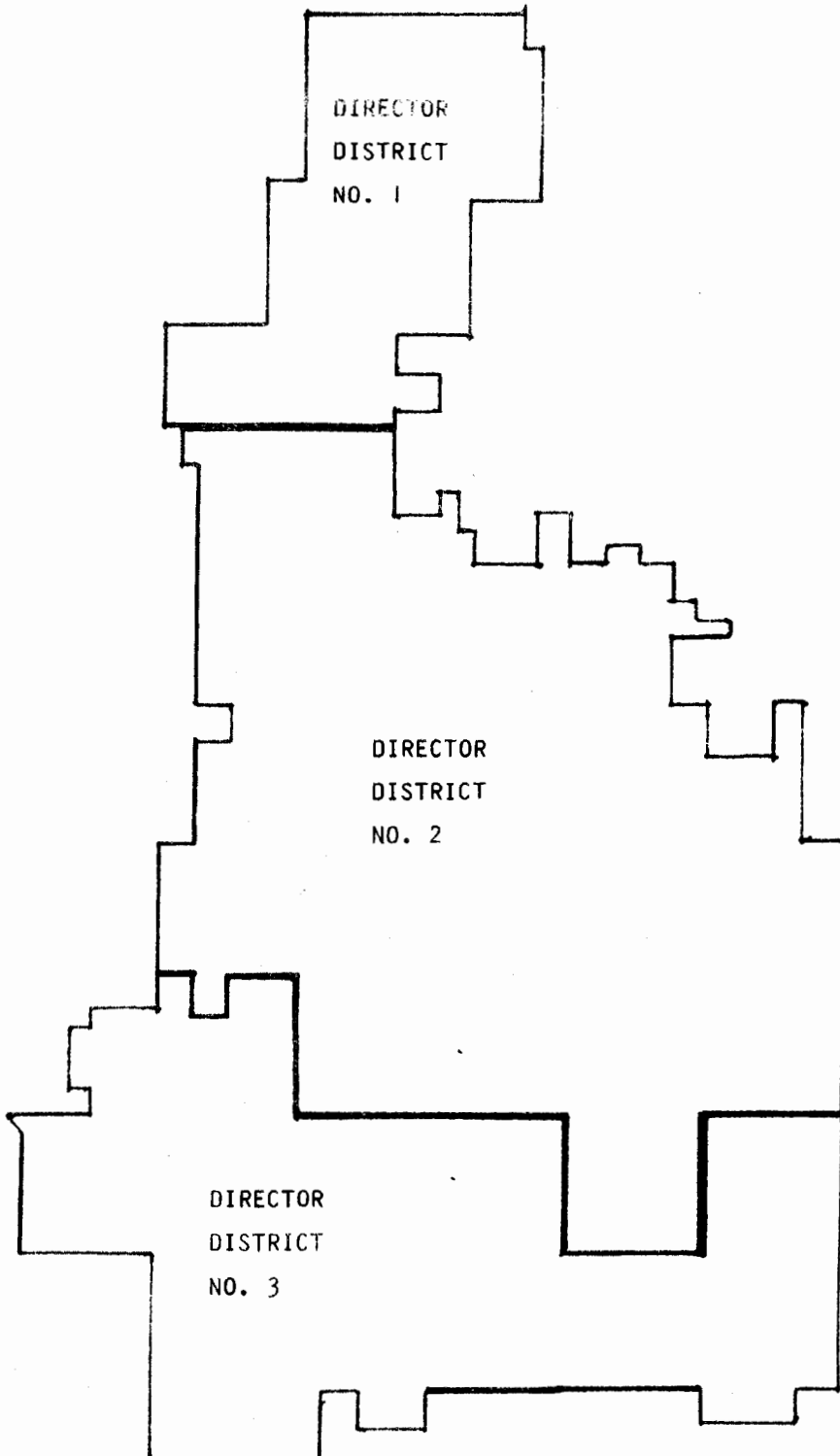


Table 2
East Buchanan Enrollment
1960-1961 to 1982-1983

School Year	Enrollment
1960 - 1961	950
1961 - 1962	971
1962 - 1963	979
1963 - 1964	979
1964 - 1965	964
1965 - 1966	1020
1966 - 1967	1077
1967 - 1968	1066
1968 - 1969	1082
1969 - 1970	1057
1970 - 1971	1054
1971 - 1972	1000
1972 - 1973	982
1973 - 1974	944
1974 - 1975	899
1975 - 1976	873
1976 - 1977	851
1977 - 1978	824
1978 - 1979	821
1979 - 1980	814
1980 - 1981	806
1981 - 1982	759
1982 - 1983	748

the number of sections for each grade and where they were to be housed. By 1974, the north site in Aurora housed only kindergarten through fourth grade, and for the 1976-1977 school year second grade was eliminated because only two sections of the grade were necessary.

On February 14, 1977, at a regular board meeting held at the North Elementary School, it was decided to close that school for the 1977-1978 school year. At the March 14, 1977 board meeting, it was decided to sell the North Elementary School to the town of Auroa for \$1.00. At the May 9, 1977 Board of Education meeting, this was confirmed.

K-3, 4-6 Program

The final change for the housing of class sections came in the 1981-1982 school year. After holding four community meetings in Aurora, Monti, Quasqueton, and Winthrop to explain the positive and negative aspects of changing the existing system to a K-3, 4-6 program, the Board of Education voted to house the kindergarten through third grades in Quasqueton and the fourth through sixth grades in Winthrop.

Due to an increase in enrollment in the kindergarten class following kindergarten roundup, the administration recommended that the scheduled two sections of kindergarten be increased to three. Two of the three sections were to be housed at the Central Elementary in Winthrop and the third section at the South Elementary in Quasqueton. This was approved by the Board of Education.

The decision to reorganize the structure of the elementary school program and to designate sites to house specific parts of the elementary school program was a difficult one. The considerations in that decision

are detailed in the following chapter.

CHAPTER 3

The East Buchanan Elementary Reorganization

The grade structure of the elementary program at East Buchanan remained constant throughout the late 1970's. On May 11, 1981, the concept of possible reorganization was presented to the East Buchanan Board of Education. The reorganization study showed the feasibility of developing a new elementary program. The concept involved sending all K through 3rd grade students to another site, Quasqueton, Iowa. The major reason for developing such a change was to offer quality education for the students under a structured grade level program with K-3 housed at one site, and 4-6 at the other.

The study began in October, 1981, and was conducted in two phases: one phase studied the physical and transportation aspects, and the second phase studied the public's reaction to the proposal.

The concept of possible reorganization was conducted over a two month period. The teacher response to such a change; the physical plant's capabilities to handle it; the impact on transportation, educational materials, and salaries; and the educational programs were carefully studied.

The study was initiated with a questionnaire sent to all elementary teachers at the Quasqueton and Winthrop sites. The Board was unanimous in its belief that the feelings and opinions of the teachers involved with such a change needed to be considered. Whether positive or negative in nature, these feelings and opinions were considered critical in their impact upon the Board's decision.

Figure 7, pages 22 and 23, contains a copy of the questionnaire sent to the teachers and their responses. Figure 8, pages 24 and 25, represents a sampling of responses given from the teacher questionnaire. Several follow-up meetings between the study group and the faculty were held periodically throughout the K-3, 4-6 development proposal to clarify faculty concerns and provide opportunities for additional input in the final decision.

During the month of November, 1981, the study group reviewed the enrollment projections. A study was conducted to correlate the adequacy of the two existing buildings in Quasqueton and Winthrop, Iowa, in relation to room sizes and room numbers. Table 3, page 26, presents enrollment figures for the years 1970 through 1981. The cohort survival ratio described in Chapter 4, relates to the projectionist theory used by the East Buchanan Community School District. Table 4, page 27, contains the East Buchanan Community School District's cohort survival ratio history for the years 1970 through 1991. The projected enrollment for the years 1981-82 through 1991-92 is presented in Table 5, page 28.

Figure 3, page 29, presents the expected elementary enrollments for the years 1982 through 1986, and the projected number of class sections necessary to accommodate the students from enrollment forecasts.

A considerable amount of time was devoted to the capabilities of the two building sites' physical plants. The findings were complex, but generally supported the feasibility of the proposed housing plan. The concern originally raised about added cost was invalidated by the

Figure 7

Teacher Questionnaire

The Board of Education has consented to conduct the feasibility of going to a 1st, 2nd, 3rd versus a 4th, 5th, 6th set up for the 1982-83 school year. The purpose of this survey is to determine how the teachers feel about such a plan. Tentative plans would be to have the 4th, 5th and 6th in the South building because it was felt that *those students living in and around Aurora should be able to stand a longer bus ride than the younger students.*

Following are a few questions for you to consider and to obtain your input into such a plan. Please try to keep personal feelings out, such as changing schools, longer driving, can't work with certain teachers, etc. There could, of course, be other personal feelings that each of you will no doubt be confronted with. Try to keep in mind what the best educational plan for the students will be and possibly your welfare can be considered later.

To make any plan work, teacher support is quite necessary, so please be frank, specific and to the point. Nothing will be held against anyone for expressing their opinions. This would involve a lot of work if it materializes.

1. Do you feel that all kindergarten classes should be with the lower elementary rather than have a class in each building? Yes ___ No ___

Please elaborate.

Eight teachers answered yes, 6 answered no, and 5 gave no definite response.

Figure 7 (continued)

2. How do you feel as a teacher about a plan such as this?

a. Strongly agree Explain

Twelve answered that they strongly agreed.

b. Agree, but have reservations Explain

Seven responded to this question.

c. Strongly disagree Explain

d. Questions you have regarding facilities, equipment and materials.

Figure 8

Teacher Questionnaire

Below are some of the responses to the questions on the preceding page.

"Teachers can work together--team teaching--exchanging reading groups, ability grouping--sharing ideas having all the equipment--books, etc. for the 2 levels in one place (less hauling back and forth) each grade would become acquainted with class members. Also parents would always know each year where their child would be. It would be easier for music and P.E. teachers to teach and schedule. The gym at South could be used by 4-5-6 for their organized sports and activities."

"I feel the quality of education would greatly increase with this proposal. All the teachers at a certain grade level would be able to get together and plan their attack. They could team teach or perhaps departmentalize."

"I think it would be easier for teachers to talk to other teachers of the grade level and would make it easier for P.E. and music classes having the same grades two days per week. Also meetings would be easier to call for certain grade levels without waiting for teachers to travel from one site to the other."

"Parents would know where their child will be each year--either South or Central. It would help with grouping of reading groups and if you wanted to have two groups of math. You wouldn't have to

Figure 8 (continued)

have so many duplicates of materials. Maybe it would help with some of the friction between Central and South teachers and kids."

Table 3

East Buchanan Community School Enrollment

	K	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	SE	TOTAL
1970-71	72	82	75	79	82	83	83	80	79	72	94	77	74	22	1054
1971-72	60	84	67	67	76	78	78	71	79	75	70	86	79	20	1000
1972-73	60	78	73	68	63	78	76	78	83	80	72	72	81	20	982
1973-74	68	75	66	72	61	67	76	72	75	85	75	69	68	15	944
1974-75	62	78	62	61	71	60	70	71	70	75	85	68	67	10	900
1975-76	57	64	63	65	56	72	58	66	70	71	71	85	67	8	873
1976-77	58	68	50	61	60	58	74	58	66	70	69	68	82	9	851
1977-78	67	62	55	51	61	55	60	74	57	64	71	68	64	15	824
1978-79	44	78	48	60	49	64	56	64	75	60	70	72	64	17	821
1979-80	68	51	70	47	57	48	63	56	62	75	55	66	73	23	814
1980-81	51	73	47	69	52	61	47	64	59	59	77	55	64	28	806

Table 4

Present Cohort Survival Ratio History

East Buchanan Community School District

	K	P-1	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	SE	TOTAL
1970-71	.97	.87	.93	1.02	.97	1.04	1.02	.95	.96	1.01	1.00	.98	.96	.93	.92	1054
1971-72	.83	1.07	.97	.97	.89	.96	.95	.94	.98	.99	.95	.97	.91	1.03	.91	1000
1972-73	1.00	1.00	1.07	1.04	1.01	.94	1.03	.97	1.00	1.02	1.01	.96	1.03	.94	1.00	982
1973-74	1.13	.71	1.08	1.03	.99	.90	1.06	.97	.95	.96	1.02	.94	.96	.94	.75	944
1974-75	.76	1.10	.99	.95	.92	.99	.98	1.04	.93	.97	1.00	1.00	.91	.97	.67	900
1975-76	1.09	1.09	1.00	.94	1.05	.92	1.01	.97	.94	.99	1.01	.95	1.00	.99	.80	873
1976-77	1.02	.75	1.04	.96	.97	.92	1.03	1.03	1.00	1.00	1.00	.97	.96	.96	1.13	851
1977-78	1.15	1.33	1.07	.93	1.02	1.00	.92	1.03	1.01	.97	.98	1.01	.99	.94	1.67	825
1978-79	.76	.75	1.03	.96	1.09	.96	1.05	1.02	1.07	1.00	1.07	1.08	1.01	.94	1.13	821
1979-80	1.55	.44	1.09	1.00	.96	.97	1.02	.97	.95	.98	1.01	.96	.98	1.00	.96	814
1980-81	.75		1.01	1.00	.985	1.106	1.07	.979	1.015	1.053	.951	1.026	1.00	.969	1.22	806
Total	11.01		11.28	10.80	10.85	10.71	11.14	10.87	10.81	10.94	11.00	10.85	10.71	10.60	11.16	
Average	1.000		1.025	.982	.987	.973	1.013	.988	.982	.995	1.000	.986	.974	.964	1.014	

Table 5

Projected Enrollment for East Buchanan

Community School District

	K	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	SE	Total
1981-82	54	52	72	46	67	53	60	46	64	59	58	75	53	28	787
1982-83	55	55	51	71	45	68	52	59	46	64	58	56	72	28	780
1983-84	61	56	54	50	69	46	67	51	59	46	63	56	54	28	760
1984-85	51	63	55	53	49	70	45	66	51	59	45	61	54	28	750
1985-86	51	52	62	54	52	50	69	44	66	51	58	46	59	28	742
1986-87	51	52	51	61	53	53	49	68	44	66	50	56	44	28	726
1987-88	51	52	51	50	59	54	52	48	68	44	65	49	54	28	725
1988-89	51	52	51	50	49	60	53	51	48	69	43	63	47	28	716
1989-90	51	52	51	50	49	50	59	52	51	49	68	42	61	28	713
1990-91	51	52	51	50	49	50	49	58	51	52	48	67	41	28	697
1991-92	51	52	51	50	49	50	49	48	57	52	51	47	66	28	701

Table 6

1982-86

K-3, 4-6 Elementary Program Study

Projected Classroom Sections

	K	1	2	3	4	5	6
1982-83 18 Sections	3/60*	3/63	2/52	3/63	2/44	3/63	2/46
1983-84 17 Sections	2/51	3/65	2/52	2/52	3/63	2/44	3/63
1984-85 17 Sections	2/47	3/59	3/57	2/52	2/52	3/63	2/44
1985-86 16 Sections	2/44	2/52	2/54	3/57	2/52	2/52	3/63

*Sections/To Students Ratio

study.

The third area of the October and November 1981 phase 1 study was the transportation aspect. With the enrollment information and the cohort survival ratio means of forecasting enrollment, an accurate transportation study could be developed. The number of bus routes necessary to bus students both to and from Quasqueton and Winthrop was studied.

Following the completion of phase 1 of the study, several conclusions became evident:

1. The elementary teaching staff was very positive toward making such a change.
2. Enrollment would continue to decline.
3. The available classrooms could be adapted to the proposed educational programs with minor alterations.
4. The transportation cost increases to the Quasqueton and Winthrop sites would be minimal.

Appendix A, pages 47-51, presents the evaluation report presented to the East Buchanan Board of Education showing the feasibility of continuing with the reorganization proposal.

The study verified the ideas presented by the committee, and it was the hope of the study group to have the East Buchanan School Board approve further implementation of the reorganization. The school board voted 5-0 in favor of continuing further implementation of the K-3, 4-6 reorganization program study. The study of Phase 2, public reaction, was adopted and a suggestion to hold town meetings for those communities affected by such a reorganizational change was instituted. Their input for the approval for such a change would influence the board's final decision.

Several follow-up meetings were held during the winter months

among the K-3, 4-6 study group, administrators, teachers and concerned parents. A number of alternative concepts were discussed. The final decision about the K-3, 4-6 plan was primarily the result of the town meetings, with the final decision made by the East Buchanan School Board.

On March 3, 1981, the first session of community meetings for concerned parents and townspeople, interested in the elementary reorganization process, was held in Aurora, Iowa. Appendix B, pages 52-60, contains a copy of the highlights of the proposal presented to the public. After the presentation was made by the K-3, 4-6 reorganization study group, a question-answer period followed. After serious discussion, a ballot was circulated and those in attendance expressed their preference among the three options available on the ballot. A copy of the ballot and the final results may be found in Appendix C, pages 61-63. The boards members' final decision was representative of the townships they served.

Similar town meetings were conducted on May 9, in Winthrop, Iowa; on March 10, in Monti, Iowa; and on March 15, 1981, in Quasqueton, Iowa.

A two-thirds majority of those voting indicated a preference for some form of reorganization. The persisting concern in the communities was related to travel distance and school sites.

The decision was finally in the hands of the East Buchanan Community School Board. From the data obtained from phases 1 and 2, and the response to the community meetings, the school board made its final decision on March 21, 1982, after some additional discussion and

research. The East Buchanan Community School Board voted in favor of the proposal 4 to 1. The proposal incorporated the K-3 program at the Quasqueton site, and a K, 4-6 program at the Winthrop site. The additional kindergarten level offered at both sites helped eliminate the fear and confusion of bus riding associated with the first year of school by the younger children.

The program was initiated in the East Buchanan Community School District for the 1982-83 school year. The outlook for an improved educational program resulting from the reorganization is generally thought to be encouraging.

CHAPTER 4

Three Applications From the Professional Literature

During the reorganization experience, the East Buchanan officials relied on expert opinions in decision making. In retrospect, three aspects of the reorganization effort seemed to have benefited from the application of expert opinions.

Declining Enrollments

The major catalyst for the reorganization proposal in East Buchanan was the reality of declining enrollment. Yet many citizens resist the idea of reorganization, and in the process, resist the validity of projections which demonstrate continuing enrollment decline.

It was therefore imperative that those who supported the reorganization proposal develop a degree of sophistication in the area of enrollment projections. Research into the area yielded the following information, which proved most useful to those who favored--and eventually carried--the reorganization proposal:

Researchers have predicted that public school enrollment, which sky-rocketed in the 1950's and began to taper off in the 1960's, will continue to decline sharply until at least 1983. Reports suggest that enrollment in grades kindergarten through eight, which grew by 11 per cent between 1962 and 1972, will decrease by 10 per cent with a projected drop of 3.1 million youngsters by 1982. Overall public school enrollment K-12 will decline during the 10 year period 1972 to

1982 from 45.8 million, a drop of 11 per cent.¹

Elementary schools are obviously the first to feel the effects of declining births. Administrators must study these facts and implement them into reorganizational plans. Kindergarten through eighth grade enrollment peaked at 37 million in 1969 and has since dropped every year. This decline will continue until about 1983-1985, and then should level off to 31 million students in grades K-8.²

A temporary study projects that from 1982 until 1990 the elementary school enrollments will slowly rise again. By 1990, an additional 4.4 million children will be enrolled in the elementary schools over the enrollment level projected for 1982. However, the total enrollment of 33.8 million will still fall short of the peak figure of 37.1 million established in 1969.³

The trend toward consolidation and reorganization of rural districts may decrease and even totally reverse. With the general growth trend, migration to any given area will be affected by several factors: local community policies or growth, land use regulations, employment opportunities, schooling opportunities, and cultural and recreational attractions.

The slowing economic growth which is based on national economic models has some implications. The consequences of slower economic growth and the tighter budget will have schools studying their user costs and the services which will be available at higher prices. The prospect of people between the ages of 25-34 staying in education will become less likely.⁴

As has been shown, long range planning is both difficult and time

consuming. It takes about three years or more before the loss of student numbers can be estimated, thus allowing a school district to cut costs. To help rural schools in times of declining enrollment, several states have adopted measures that gradually decrease expenditures over a one to five-year period after an enrollment decline. The National School Boards Association encourages school systems to actively lobby for similar measures in states without them. Smaller schools, such as the rural communities, will suffer. A rural school of about 200 students will cost about 20 per cent more per person to operate than a school with 300 students.⁵

It is therefore essential that some method of enrollment projection be used in which everyone has confidence, particularly those who stake the justification for reorganization proposals on accurate projections of future student numbers. In East Buchanan a cohort survival method of enrollment projection was used for that purpose.

The first step in the method is to find the number of births in the district for each of the last ten years. Birth data can usually be obtained from local government units, but if they are not available from these sources, the projectionist may have to resort to hospital birth registrations or community surveys. Obtaining this information is typically the most difficult and error-prone part of the projection.

The next step is to compute the "cohort survival ratio" for each grade level, which means the ratio between the number of children in one grade in a certain year and the number of children in the next year. For example if 100 children attend third grade one year and 98 attend fourth grade the next year the cohort survival ratio for grade

4 is 0.98.

The final step involves multiplying each grade level enrollment by the cohort survival ratio for that level and then doing the same for the next year, as far as into the future as desired. These figures are then entered on the enrollment projection table.⁶

The cohort survival ratio will not forecast future enrollment predictions with total accuracy. Other factors which must be considered are dropout rates, private school enrollments, the age ranges of populations in the residential areas and migration patterns. Table 4, page 27, contains the cohort survival projections for the East Buchanan Community School District.

The Value of Parallel Reorganization Experiences

One of the most persuasive tools available to those who favor the reorganization of some aspect of the educational program is the positive experiences of other districts which have undertaken similar programs.

Citing the benefits claimed by those who completed parallel reorganization programs was effective in gaining support for the East Buchanan reorganization proposal.

Two sources were of particular use:

In a Pennsylvania district that was composed of four communities, three communities had two elementary schools and the fourth community had one elementary school. With a 23 per cent drop in enrollment from 1966 to 1975, few schools found themselves left with more than one class at any grade level, and one of these classes contained only thirteen pupils.

The alternative was to turn one school in each of the three communities into a primary (grades one to three) school and the other into an intermediate (grades four to six) school. Benefits sought and apparently achieved included more balanced class sizes, the possibility of separating problem children, opportunities for multi-level instruction in mathematics and reading, closer professional contact between teachers of the same grade level, unification of communities previously split along artificial school attendance boundaries, reduction in the duplication of materials, and easing the budgeting headaches of enrollment decline. The entire program was viewed as a highly successful program by the parents, students, teachers, and administrators.⁷

A similar reorganization plan was developed in the Valley Community School District, which is composed of Clermont, Elgin, and Wadena, Iowa. In 1975, the school district closed the Wadena center and at that time decided to place grades K-3 in the Elgin building and grades 4-6 in the Clermont building. Some of the advantages the district found were the elimination of three separate communities in their district, as well as the inter-rivalry; more flexible regrouping of students according to their individual needs; better teacher planning activities, due largely to teachers at a given grade level sharing a common building; and departmentalization of grades four to six. As a community, the transition went smoothly with few disadvantages other than transportation. A copy of the letter from James Hansen, Elementary Principal in the Valley Community School District, is contained in Appendix B, pages 59-60.

This letter was used to show that a rural Iowa school, similar in size to the Valley Community School District, might experience a successful reorganization. When shown to the East Buchanan Community School Board and the community members of Aurora, Quasqueton, Monti, and Winthrop, while they were considering reorganization, the letter was used as to suggest that East Buchanan could also experience a successful reorganization. The results of the Pennsylvania school experience reinforced the same idea.

III. Fears of the Local Community and Parents

Eisenberger and Keough offered valuable suggestions in underscoring the critical part community fears play in reorganization proposals, and in identifying steps which administrators and Boards of Education can take to offset those fears.⁸

The authors contended that to eliminate these fears is the most important aspect of the reorganization procedure. Significant understanding may be achieved through community polls, coffee hours for small groups, inter-school visitation by students and teachers, participation by the school board members, and the channeling of energy toward constructive ends through the creation of task forces. These are just some of the ways suggested to cope with potential problems before they develop, and several of the suggestions were adopted in the East Buchanan program.

While the community in general worries about the impact of reorganization proposals, parents who are directly affected by the proposal are understandably even more concerned.

Reorganizing a school is usually a traumatic and emotional event

for the parent. However, the "changing attitudes toward enrollment declines, long-range planning and community involvement will help the educational planners for the future."⁹

Suggestions from the related literature which proved particularly useful to the East Buchanan Board and administrators included the following:

1. Schools with reorganizational plans need to keep parents informed of any educational process or changes within the school.

Administrators who overlook the support of the parents and ignore their impact may have a good chance of losing the support and confidence of these people. Educational stagnation and community disenchantment may result:

2. In coping with parental resistance, schools may have to rely on certain strategies to deal with the problem of reorganizational plans and the community response.

Community members and especially the parents tend to resist school changes. The utmost fear of this group of concerned citizens is the loss of their community school building. Recognition and acceptance must be given to the fact that many parents are still fighting to save their old school.

These two considerations can resolve some of the roadblocks that may arise while trying to keep peace within the community. Through the parents' eyes the importance of participation in major decisions regarding reorganization is imperative. Recognition of this need will help school/community relations and lay the foundation for a strong, community-supported school.¹⁰

The research suggests that we must be able to recognize schools

and still maintain public support. Community conflict often accompanies reorganization. Decisions must be made by administrators concerning the following strategies:¹¹

1. Use a citizen task force committee--people who can study alternatives and make recommendations to the board for their reorganized adoption.
2. Use local consultants--acquire local residents who have the special skills of gathering materials.
3. Use community surveys--either opinion surveys or data already gathered may be used.
4. Use public media and press extensively--for disseminating information in decisions or activities that may arise.

Other basic strategies which may be used as a guide for parental and community involvement in the school facility planning include:¹²

1. A clearly defined charge to the community.
2. Committee membership must be representational.
3. Provide space for orderly conduct of business by committee.
4. Provide expert support.
5. Staff should be represented at staff meetings.
6. The question of board attendance at committee meetings should be considered.
7. Deadlines are good for all concerned.
8. Be prepared to take action on recommendations.
9. Expect more attendance at meetings.
10. Give praise when it is due.

Some helpful hints to include when possibly orienting parents to reorganization include:¹³

1. Make an easy transition of parents into groups for the new school; for example the PTA, etc.
2. Use existing parent organizations, such as the PTA for monthly progress reports.
3. Recognize those parents playing leadership roles and keep them in mind for important posts in the future.

For both parents and the community, a sense that the "ground rules" for the game have been established is essential. Assurance needs to be given that whatever disposition is made of the issue, full consideration has been given to certain concerns. Those listed by Peckenpaugh were found to be particularly relevant to the East Buchanan

experience.¹⁴

1. Facilities consideration. The age, maintenance factors, playground and field space, and acreage.
2. Potential disposibility of schools to be closed. There is nothing more traumatic or psychologically upsetting to a neighborhood school community than an empty school which has been frequently vandalized.
3. Geographic locations of a school within the community. This is particularly important in relation to future population patterns.
4. Physical and natural barriers in the community. That is major highways, congested intersections, and railroads may be a serious impediment in the movement of students to and from school and deserve careful study.
5. Student transportation for reorganization or consolidation. The cost benefits of closing a small elementary school may be offset by the additional costs incurred through the potential need for additional student transportation.
6. Establishment of a new elementary attendance areas. The selection of a given consolidation plan could be based in part on the criteria that as few students as possible would be required to move to the attendance area.

In the East Buchanan Community School District, a task-committee was formed from the various communities to fight the reorganization. This committee was interested in transportation of students, financial expenses concerning building alterations, and a decreased quality of education for their children.

A committee was also formed which as in favor of the reorganizational plan. Their major interest was a continuance of the educational policy of the school in spite of the reorganizational plan. Their secondary interests included busing and financial expenditures.

The East Buchanan Community School District used a community survey to gather the necessary information for the school board.

The press was used extensively in the East Buchan Community School District reorganizational plan to both inform and influence the communities.

Some individual advantages identified for the East Buchanan Community School District parents included:

1. Parents would always know the school their child would attend.
2. Fewer smaller children would have to be bused longer distances, thus lessening the parents' concerns.
3. Parents would be assured that the quality of education would not decrease.

It is important that administrators and parents see the positive aspects of reorganization. In the East Buchanan Community School District the major concern centered on the parental feeling about factors influencing their children. It was stressed that the quality of education would not decline and that the reorganizational plan was being considered with the best interests of the students in mind.

In the final analysis, sensitivity and respect for the feelings of parents on both sides of the issue, the ability to provide relevant and accurate information, the creation of assorted vehicles to provide parent involvement, and an unswerving concern for quality educational programs for students combined to make the reorganization proposal successful.

Chapter 5

Summary and Conclusion

Summary

This study dealt with three foci related to the program reorganization completed in the East Buchanan Community School District.

First, an overall review of the history of the East Buchanan Community School District was given against this background; how the reorganization came about, and how it was studied and developed were described.

Second, a review of the process of the East Buchanan reorganization was presented. The district's experiences in reorganization and the structure of elementary education within the district were recounted.

Third, three major applications of this study, drawn from the professional literature, were suggested as particularly useful for school administrators confronting program reorganizations.

This study recounts the experiences of a smaller Iowa community school district made in responding to the need for program reorganization. Those experiences of the East Buchanan Community School District reorganization procedures may aid other districts in future decision making.

The East Buchanan experience is essentially summarized in the following observation:

Schools and school educators are public servants
and were established entirely for serving the community
and providing better education to its people people within the

educational process. Administrators, teachers, students, and parents are equally important components of this structure.¹⁵

Conclusion

Several suggestions developed in the professional literature support the conclusions drawn from the East Buchan Community School District reorganization experience. From these two sources, these generalizations seem particularly important as suggestions for others confronted with program reorganization.

1. Develop a reliable student enrollment forecast method appropriate to the school and community.

The enrollment forecasting in reorganization is perhaps the most important factor to implement. The literature reveals that mathematicians, statisticians and demographers are interested in finding the ideal methods of forecasting possible reorganizations accurately. Administrators will have to adopt the best techniques that theorists develop. Yet administrators must remember the truth of Skiera's admonition:

Understanding the community and the ways in which it is changing and realizing the effects that social economic pressure groups can have on how factors are interpreted is just as important as knowing the strengths and weaknesses of the different forecasting techniques.¹⁶

2. Develop a study of similar program reorganization procedures.

The positive experiences of other districts who have undertaken similar programs can be used to identify the benefits likely to be associated with program reorganization in the home district. This was effective in gaining support for the East Buchanan reorganization proposal.

3. Develop a procedure to receive the input of the community, and especially those parents of children involved with the reorganization.

This application formulated several system-wide organization alternatives which provided options for administrators, boards, and community groups for decision making and planning. This dimension of the reorganization can perhaps best be summarized by another observation from Skiera:

The school is a part of the community. These facilities are an integral part of the resources of the community. The educational members can be utilized together to help each other move towards becoming a self-actualizing community.¹⁷

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

EAST BUCHANAN COMMUNITY SCHOOL DISTRICT'S

K-3, 4-6 REORGANIZATION STUDY PRESENTATION TO THE BOARD OF EDUCATION

K-3, 4-6 ELEMENTARY STUDY

PRESENTED TO

EAST BUCHANAN BOARD OF EDUCATION

PRESENTED BY

Bruce Tepfer
O.S. Myers
Wayne H. Burk

EAST BUCHANAN COMMUNITY SCHOOLS

WINTHROP, IOWA 50682



Board of Education

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Superintendent
Office Phone: 225-3287

FLOYD W. LEMING
Sr. High Principal

JAMES S. DAVIDSON
Jr. High Principal

O. S. MYERS
Elementary Principal

November 9, 1981

To: Board of Education
East Buchanan Community Schools

From: K-3, 4-6 Study Group
Wayne H. Burk, O. S. Myers, and Bruce Tepfer

Subject: K-3, 4-6 Elementary Program Study: 1982-86
School Years Proposal

Upon the completion of two months of careful study and research, we have found what we feel are positive reasons for changing the current elementary program at the East Buchanan Community Schools. The new proposal for a K-3, 4-6 elementary program is a very feasible, positive aspect for the school district and all concerned.

We began our study by presenting a questionnaire to the elementary teachers at the Winthrop and Quasqueton sites. The questionnaires were to be returned by September 18, 1981. The purpose of the questionnaire was to determine the feelings and opinions of the teachers that would be involved in such a change. If the feelings and opinions were negative in nature, the possibility of dropping the proposal would have to be considered. Exhibit A of the appendix contains a copy of the questionnaire and the results of the responses to the short answer questions.

As you can see, the responses were of a positive nature. Such a move would be beneficial. It would allow for departmentalization of the elementary classes as was indicated by several teachers. Another positive aspect, which we feel is of high importance, is the elimination of the duplication of many materials because of having two separate sites. With the financial outlook being very conservative, this would be a savings to the budget and at the same time would not impair the education of the students.

"Educating Today For Tomorrow's Leaders"

Upon the completion of the questionnaire review, our next approach was to study enrollment projections and the adequacy of the two existing buildings in relation to room size and room numbers. Exhibit B of the appendix contains our actual enrollment for the years 1970-71 through 1980-81 and projected enrollments for the years 1981-82 through 1991-92. It becomes apparent that the enrollment at East Buchanan will continue to decline. Exhibit C of the appendix contains the expected elementary enrollments for the next three years and the projected number of class sections that will be necessary to house the students.

Our primary aim was to make this changeover through the elimination of any financial costs if possible. It appears that it can be accomplished with no additional costs due to room alterations. The rooms of both sites will serve very adequately. Exhibit D of the appendix contains several pages of room diagrams which show which grades will be housed in which rooms through the 1985-86 school year.

The third and final part to phase one of the study was the transportation aspect. We needed to determine the number of routes that would be necessary to bus students both to and from Winthrop and Quasqueton. If there was going to be an additional financial cost, we knew it would be in busing.

We first went through the existing bus routes south of highway 20 and the students from Quasqueton. We tallied how many students would be coming to Central Elementary in grades K-3 and 7-12 during the next three school years. For each year affected, we had to change each child's grade level appropriately, drop the seniors for each year, and add the new kindergarten as indicated by the 1980 census.

The bus routes north of highway 20 and the town of Winthrop were next analyzed through the same procedures to determine how many K-3, 7-12 students would remain at Central Elementary and how many K-3 students would need busing to South Elementary. Exhibit E of the appendix contains the results of the study on transportation. The 1982-83 school year will see an increase of one bus route between Winthrop and Quasqueton. This route will be eliminated by the 1984-85 school year.

We were very pleased with the evidence available and with the conclusions on the transportation system. By having to add only one bus route, the bus is available at Quasqueton and will simply haul a load to Central Elementary and return to South Elementary with a load of 4-6 grade students. Additional miles per day will be approximately forty-eight.

Following the completion of the study, several factors became evident: 1) the elementary teaching staff was very positive toward making such a change as for the first time they could envision departmentalization; 2) enrollment will continue to decline; 3) the classrooms can be moved with no major alterations to buildings and classrooms; and 4) the increased amount of transportation due to the additional busing of students

Board of Education

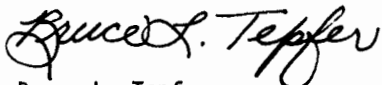
- 3 -

November 9, 1981

will be minimal with one route from South to Central being added for the 1982-83 school year.

In conclusion, the study verified several ideas that were held by the committee and gives us enough background information to continue to pursue our objective of a K-3, 4-6 elementary program. We hope that you will study and approve the feasibility of this study so that we may go into phase two of the study. Phase two will involve the presentation of the results of this study to the public for their approval or disapproval. Hopefully, this can be done this winter and by early spring. The final decision can be made and we will know what the future holds in store for the East Buchanan Community School District.

Respectfully yours,



Bruce L. Tepfer

APPENDIX B

**EAST BUCHANAN COMMUNITY SCHOOL DISTRICT'S
K-3, 4-6 REORGANIZATION STUDY PRESENTATION TO COMMUNITY**

AT THE MAY 11, 1981 BOARD OF EDUCATION MEETING, MR. MYERS AND I PRESENTED AN IDEA OF CHANGING OUR EXISTING ELEMENTARY PROGRAM TO A PROGRAM WITH ALL FIRST THROUGH THIRD GRADES AT ONE SITE AND ALL FOURTH THROUGH SIXTH GRADES AT THE OTHER SITE. KINDERGARTEN AT THAT TIME WAS BEING SEPARATED BETWEEN THE TWO SITES.

AT THAT MEETING THE BOARD OF EDUCATION INSTRUCTED MR. MYERS AND ME TO BEGIN WORKING ON A STUDY TO SHOW THE FEASIBILITY OF DEVELOPING SUCH A PROGRAM. IT WAS DETERMINED THAT THE STUDY WOULD BE CONDUCTED IN TWO PHASES, ONE PHASE STUDYING THE PHYSICAL AND TRANSPORTATION ASPECTS OF SUCH A CHANGE AND THE SECOND PHASE STUDYING THE PUBLIC'S REACTION TO SAME.

PHASE I HAS BEEN COMPLETED AND THE RESULTS AS COMPILED BY MR. MYERS, MR. TEPFER, AND ME HAVE BEEN REPORTED TO THE BOARD OF EDUCATION AT A MEETING ON NOVEMBER 9, 1981.

THE BUILDINGS AT THE TWO SITES WERE ANALYZED IN DETAIL AS TO NUMBER OF ROOMS AVAILABLE FOR THE NECESSARY NUMBER OF SECTIONS FOR EACH GRADE. AS THE REPORT VERIFIED, BOTH SITES WERE CAPABLE OF HANDLING EITHER THE LOWER ELEMENTARY OR THE UPPER ELEMENTARY.

THE ONE SINGLE FACTOR THAT LED TO THE FINAL SUGGESTION OF RECOMMENDING TO YOU THAT KINDERGARTEN THROUGH THIRD GRADES BE HOUSED AT SOUTH AND THE REMAINING GRADES AT CENTRAL WAS THE RESTROOM FACILITIES THAT WERE AVAILABLE AT SOUTH. THE FACILITIES AT SOUTH WERE MUCH BETTER FOR THE LOWER GRADES THAN WERE THE FACILITIES AT CENTRAL.

THE OTHER ASPECT OF THIS PHASE INCLUDES TRANSPORTATION. IT IS APPARENT THAT, REGARDLESS OF WHICH SITE HOUSES WHICH PROGRAM, THERE WILL BE A NEED FOR ADDITIONAL SHUTTLE BUSES BETWEEN THE TWO SITES. IF K-3 WERE AT SOUTH, THE FOLLOWING ROUTES WILL BE NECESSARY:

BUS ROUTES TO SOUTH

YEAR	NUMBER OF STUDENTS	NUMBER OF ROUTES
1982-83	* 126	3
1983-84	* 116	2 or 3
1984-85	* 116	2 or 3

BUS ROUTES TO CENTRAL

YEAR	NUMBER OF STUDENTS	NUMBER OF ROUTES
1982-83	226	4
1983-84	225	4
1984-85	226	4

*THIS FIGURE INCLUDES ALL KINDERGARTEN ATTENDING THE SOUTH SITE. IF THE CLASS WAS SPLIT BETWEEN THE TWO SITES THE THIRD BUS WOULD BE ELIMINATED.

IF K-3 WERE HOUSED AT CENTRAL, THE FOLLOWING ROUTES WILL BE NECESSARY:

BUS ROUTES TO SOUTH

YEAR	NUMBER OF STUDENTS	NUMBER OF ROUTES
1982-83	96	2
1983-84	103	2
1984-85	87	2

BUS ROUTES TO CENTRAL

YEAR	NUMBER OF STUDENTS	NUMBER OF ROUTES
1982-83	283	5
1983-84	254	5
1984-85	221	4

THE PRESENT PROGRAM HAS THE FOLLOWING NUMBER OF ROUTES:

BUS ROUTES TO SOUTH

YEAR	NUMBER OF STUDENTS	NUMBER OF ROUTES
1981-82	38	1

BUS ROUTES TO CENTRAL

YEAR	NUMBER OF STUDENTS	NUMBER OF ROUTES
1981-82	241	4

BUS ROUTE SUMMARY

CENTRAL TO SOUTH

YEAR	K-3 SOUTH	K-3 CENTRAL	PRESENT PROGRAM
1982-83	3	2	1
1983-84	2 or 3	2	1
1984-85	2 or 3	2	1

SOUTH TO CENTRAL

YEAR	K-3 SOUTH	K-3 CENTRAL	PRESENT PROGRAM
1982-83	4	5	4
1983-84	4	5	4
1984-85	4	4	4

ADVANTAGES TO K-3, 4-6 PROGRAM

1. IN THE UPPER ELEMENTARY, THE STUDENTS COULD BE TAUGHT ON A DEPARTMENTALIZATION APPROACH WHERE THE TEACHERS COULD TEACH IN THEIR AREAS OF STRENGTH OR INTEREST. THIS WOULD MEAN PREPARING FOR FEWER SUBJECTS, THUS, WE HOPE, DOING A BETTER JOB TEACHING A GIVEN SUBJECT. THIS DEPARTMENTALIZATION WOULD NOT INCLUDE MATH AND READING.
2. READING GROUPS AND MATH GROUPS CAN BE HANDLED MORE EFFICIENTLY. STUDENTS WITH SIMILAR ABILITIES COULD BE GROUPED TOGETHER IF ALL GRADES WERE IN ONE SITE. THUS THE VARIOUS PRIMARY TEACHERS COULD CONCENTRATE ON ONE OR TWO LEVELS OF ABILITY RATHER THAN ALL THAT EXIST IN THEIR OWN INDIVIDUAL CLASSROOM AS THEY DO NOW.
3. WE FEEL THAT THERE WOULD BE A VALUE TO EDUCATION IF THE TEACHERS FOR SIMILAR GRADES WOULD BE ABLE TO MEET TOGETHER AND DISCUSS COMMON PROBLEMS AND TO PROVIDE MORE CONTINUITY FOR THEIR CLASSROOMS.
4. THE DUPLICATION OF EQUIPMENT, SUPPLIES AND LIBRARY MATERIALS COULD BE ELIMINATED.
5. EVERYONE WOULD ALWAYS KNOW THE SCHOOL THEIR CHILD WOULD ATTEND.
6. EVERY CHILD WOULD BE AN EAST BUCHANAN STUDENT FROM THE DAY THEY ENTERED SCHOOL - NOT WINTHROP, QUASQUETON, OR AURORA.
7. THE MOST IMPORTANT OF ALL IS THAT STUDENTS WOULD BENEFIT FROM ALL OF THE ABOVE.

DISADVANTAGES TO K-3, 4-6 PROGRAM

1. A TEN TO FIFTEEN MINUTE LONGER BUS RIDE FOR THOSE BEING SHUTTLED SOUTH. (HOWEVER, STUDENTS WOULD NOT LEAVE HOME EARLIER IN THE MORNING OR ARRIVE HOME LATER IN THE AFTERNOON.)
2. SOME CHILDREN WOULD HAVE TO ATTEND A SCHOOL OUT OF TOWN EVEN THOUGH THEY MAY LIVE NEAR A SCHOOL IN THEIR TOWN.
3. MORE BUSES GOING SOUTH WITH CHILDREN.
4. CONFERENCES AND MUSIC PROGRAMS WOULD HAVE TO BE ATTENDED AT BOTH SITES IF A FAMILY HAS A CHILD IN EACH CENTER.

BOARD OF EDUCATION

PAUL W. FAUSER
 ELINOR MEDBERRY
 KENNETH J. NELSON
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Valley
Community School District

Clermont - Elgin - Wadena

RICHARD E. BURMEISTER, SUPERINTENDENT

426-5209

ELGIN, IOWA 52141-9705

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 GERALD R. HILTON
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March 4, 1982

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Superintendent Wayne Burke
 East Buchanan Schools
 Winthrop, Iowa

Mr. Burke;

I want to apologize for not getting this letter off to you earlier. My secretary told me you had called requesting information about our elementary program, so I made a note and immediately lost it.

I understand that you are considering re-organizing your elementary program similar to ours for the coming school year. Prior to 1975 we had an elementary center in each of our three communities which housed one section at each grade level K - 6. In 1975 we closed our Wadena center, and at that time decided to place grades K - 3 in our Elgin building, and grades 4 - 6 in our Clermont building. I feel that the move was a success, and that we are able to offer a much better educational program for our children.

Some of the advantages to this decision in our particular district are:

- A. it helps to eliminate the attitude of three separate communities within our district - our students no longer think of themselves as being from "Wadena", "Clermont" or "Elgin", but are from the Valley District,
- B. much more flexibility in regrouping children to meet their individual needs - Example: we have one period when reading is taught in all classes in grades one through three in the Elgin building (8:45 - 10:15). Nothing else is scheduled so we have the latitude of moving children from their homeroom to any one of approximately 18 reading groups,

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- C. allows teachers at the same grade level to share ideas and materials, and to plan the daily activities together,
- D. allows us to departmentalize at grades 4 - 6 for part of the school day. Teachers with interests in specific subject areas can teach in these areas and eliminate preparations in other areas. I feel this also helps our children to adjust to the total departmentalized program at junior high where they must assume much more responsibility in their academic work.

Obviously transportation of students will be one of the disadvantages which you will have to deal with in making this decision. We faced some criticism when we were making this decision, but most of the parents in our communities could see that the advantages far outweighed the disadvantages. I'm sure that we would not go back to our program of those years prior to 1975.

If you do decide to re-organize your program, I hope that your transition can be made as smoothly as our's. Our parents and teachers accepted the change very well (after much selling).

If you have any questions, or if I can be of help in any way, please feel free to give me a call, or send a letter.

Respectfully,

James Hanson
 James Hanson

APPENDIX C
EAST BUCHANAN COMMUNITY SCHOOL DISTRICT'S
K-3, 4-6 REORGANIZATION STUDY COMMUNITY VOTING BALLOT

The board of education and the administrators are conducting a study on the feasibility of changing our present K-6 program at two sites to housing all K-3 students at South and all 4-6 students at Central. In order to assist us in making the final decision, we need to have your vote of recommendation as a parent of one of the students involved.

_____ Yes, I would like to see a K-3 program at South and a 4-6 program at Central.

_____ No, I want everything to remain as it is.

_____ After hearing the information presented, I would like to see a K-3 program at Central and a 4-6 program at South.

BALLOTING RESULTS

	<u>K-3 South</u>	<u>K-3 Central</u>	<u>No</u>
Aurora	1	12	33
Winthrop	33	8	3
Monti	19	1	1
Quasqueton	43	4	14
<hr/>			
Total	96	25	51
<hr/>			
South Special		17	28

172 Votes Cast - 56 Percent for K-3 South
15 Percent for K-3 Central
29 Percent Opposed

FOOTNOTES

FOOTNOTES

1. Lloyd Bishop, "Dealing With Declining School Enrollments," Education and Urban Society, 2 May 1979, p. 86.
2. Ibid.
3. Ibid.
4. Russell G. Davis and Gary M. Davis, "Coping With Declining Enrollments," NASSP, 61 March 1977, p. 5.
5. National School Boards Association, "Coping With Declining Enrollment," Research Report, (1976), 59.
6. Jo Ann Mazzaella and Larry Barber, "Facing Declining Enrollment: Consideration and Procedures," Eugene, Oregon, Eugene School District 4, (1978), 59.
7. Robert S. Piatt, "A Reorganized Elementary Structure to Accomodate Declining Enrollment," (ERIC ED 111 111), p. 1.
8. Katherine E. Eisenberger and William F. Keough, "Declining Enrollment: What to Do: A Guide for School Administrators to Meet the Challenge of Declining Enrollment and School Closings," American Association of School Administrators Executive Handbook Series, 2 (1974), 67.
9. Judith A. Brody, "How to Close a School and Not Tear Apart Your Community in the Process," American School Board Journal, 35, (June 1976), 35.
10. Ibid.
11. Bishop, loc. cit.
12. Ben E. Graves, "Involving the Community in School Facility Planning," The Education Digest, 42 May 1977, p. 26.
13. Donald Peckenpaugh, "What the Principal Must Consider," NASSP, 61 March 1977, p. 25.
14. Ibid., p. 23.
15. Lou Skiera, "Declining Enrollments and Community Options," Educational Leadership, 2 October 1979, p. 134.

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