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ABSTRACT

Designed to serve as a basic resource for State leadership, this study compares State structures of school districts, intermediate administrative districts, and State education agencies; discusses variations in the control of schools among different States; and points up national trends. Among the implications for action stressed are the need to continue school district reorganization toward optimum efficiency and the necessity for keeping abreast of urban growth in structure and allocation of resources. The study is aimed directly at the need and desire of State decisionmakers to know what is going on in other States and how other States are meeting educational problems, in order to place their own problems and proposed solutions in perspective. (Author/DN)

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STATE SCHOOL SYSTEM DEVELOPMENT: PATTERNS AND TRENDS

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by

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Dr. Fitzwater is Chief of the Administrative Services Division of the U.S. Office of Education. *State School System Development* was written for the Education Commission of the States by Dr. Fitzwater in his private capacity and is an updated and expanded version of an article published in the Spring 1967 issue of the *Journal on State School Systems Development*.

Education Commission of the States
Denver, Colorado

The Education Commission of the States' initial concern for effective school system organization was reflected in the inclusion of "Size of School Districts" among the original seven studies begun by the Commission in 1966. Size, of course, is only one of many aspects affecting the quality and efficiency of school district operation. The scope of the study was, therefore, expanded to embrace state school system development, opening a broader field of study emphasizing the relationships among the different parts of the state education structure.

This study is designed to serve as a basic resource for state leadership as problems are analyzed and structural changes are proposed and discussed. Dr. Fitzwater compares state structures, discusses variations, and points up national trends. Among implications for action, the need to continue school district reorganization toward optimum efficiency and the necessity for keeping abreast of urban growth in structure and allocation of resources are stressed. The study is aimed directly at the need and desire of state decision-makers to know what is going on in other states and how other states are meeting educational problems in order to place their own problems and proposed solutions in perspective.

With this study the Commission concludes its initial consideration of the broad subject of school system development. In addition to its implications for action at the state level, the study also illuminates a number of areas of specialized concern. The Commission hopes to devote substantial resources to some of these possibilities for action and further research in the future.

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TO ERIC AND ORGANIZATIONS OPERATING UNDER AGREEMENTS WITH THE NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION. FURTHER REPRODUCTION OUTSIDE THE ERIC SYSTEM REQUIRES PERMISSION OF THE COPYRIGHT OWNER."

Introduction

There is valid reason to view all of the agencies for administering the public schools in each of the States as constituting a State system. In a legal sense education is a State function in our constitutional arrangements for school government. This is true in all States without exception. The constitutions of all the States provide, either directly or indirectly, that a system of public schools shall be established and maintained. As used in this paper the term "State school system" therefore includes all of the administrative agencies which a State has established for conducting its public schools. These administrative agencies are:

1. The State education agency, which is usually referred to as the State department of education.
2. The local school districts, which are the basic units of school administration and are delegated responsibility for operation of the public schools.
3. Intermediate administrative units, which function between the local school district and the State education agency to supplement and support their programs and services in the total public school enterprise.

In a structural sense, each of these three types of agencies constitutes an echelon or level of administrative responsibility in the State system of public schools. All of the types within a State collectively constitute its structure for administering the public schools. Among the 50 State systems there are three different structural patterns, as indicated by Figure 1 (p. 4).

1. Hawaii's structure is centralized, consisting of a single agency, the State education agency, which is responsible for direct administration and operation of all public schools in the State.

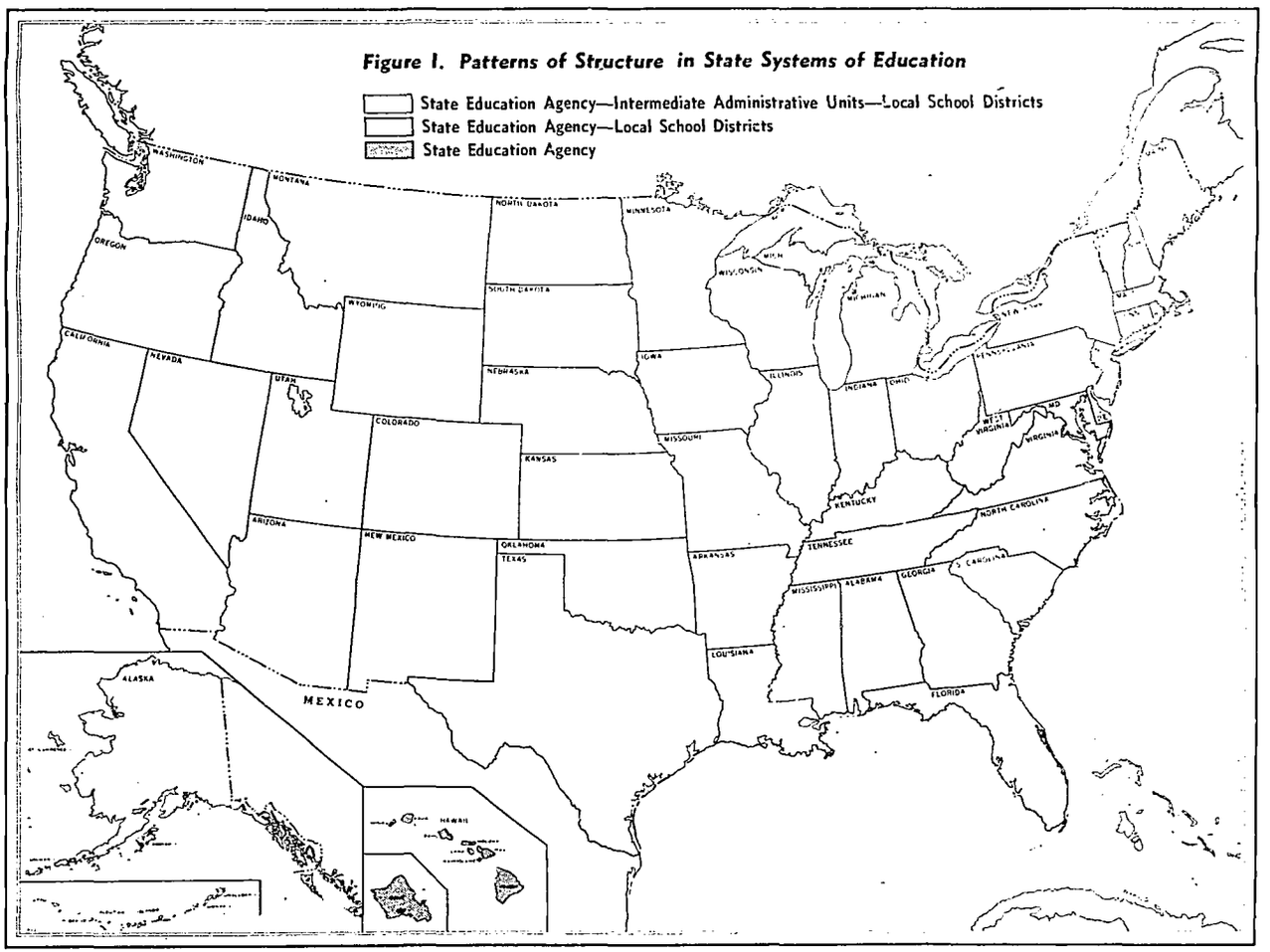


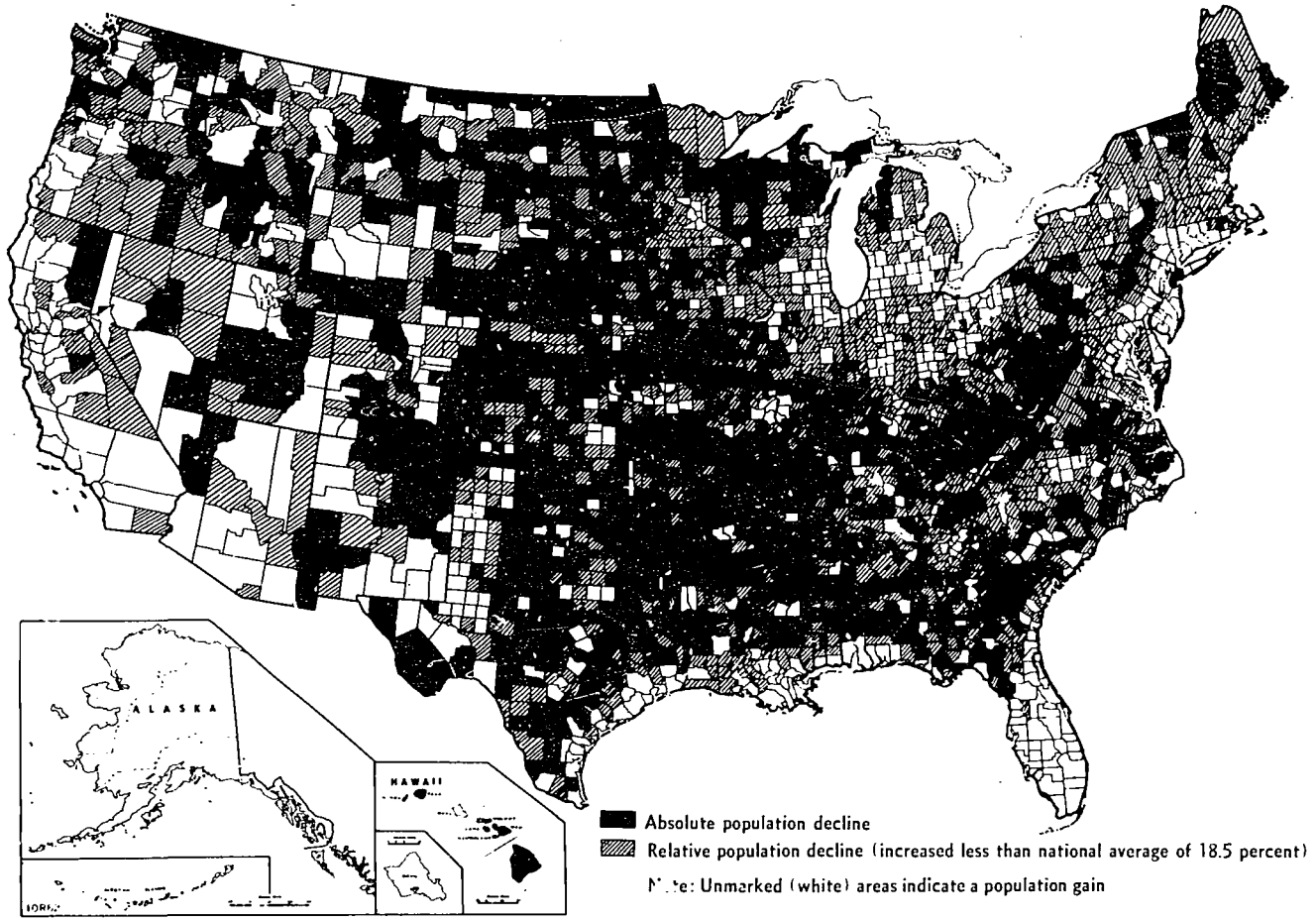
Figure 1. Patterns of Structure in State Systems of Education
State Education Agency—Intermediate Administrative Units—Local School Districts
State Education Agency—Local School Districts
State Education Agency
WASHINGTON
MONTANA
NORTH DAKOTA
MINNESOTA
OREGON
IDAHO
SOUTH DAKOTA
WYOMING
CALIFORNIA
NEVADA
UTAH
NEBRASKA
COLORADO
KANSAS
MISSOURI
ARIZONA
NEW MEXICO
OKLAHOMA
TEXAS
ARKANSAS
LOUISIANA
MEXICO
ALASKA
HAWAII
ILLINOIS
INDIANA
OHIO
KENTUCKY
TENNESSEE
MISSISSIPPI
ALABAMA
GEORGIA
FLORIDA
NORTH CAROLINA
VIRGINIA
WEST VIRGINIA

2. Seventeen States have a two-level structure consisting of the State education agency and the local school districts. This pattern is largely concentrated in the Southeast, but there is also a four-State group in the Western part of the country. In 12 of these 17 States the county-unit type of local school district organization is predominant.
3. Thirty-two States currently have a three-level structure consisting of the State education agency, intermediate administrative units and local school districts. In many of these 32 States, however, the three-level structure does not apply everywhere, as will be indicated later.

Viewed nationwide, none of the three levels of school administrative agencies has been static either in function or in organization. Over the years each level has been undergoing significant developmental changes and in recent decades, particularly since 1945, the rate of change has been quickening.

Almost every State school system has been reshaped in some way since 1945. At least 32 of the 50 States have had organizational changes that can reasonably be regarded as having major significance in the operation and functioning of the State system of education and 18 of them made major changes in more than one level or type of administrative agency. The patterns and trends of these changes and their implications for further legislative consideration will now be examined.

Figure II. Relative and Absolute Population Declines in Counties Between 1950 and 1960



Map reprinted with permission of Council for Economic Development.

Local School District Organization

In State legislation governing the schools no principle has been more generally or persistently held than the principle of local operational control. Administrative structures have been provided by legislation specifically for that purpose. Experience has demonstrated that few educational responsibilities have more far-reaching importance to the people of a State than the establishment of a *sound* local school district structure for administering the schools.

Adapting local district structure to changing conditions and needs has been a persistent problem in American education. Horace Mann recognized it as a major problem in Massachusetts during his tenure there as the first State superintendent of schools in the 1830's. The urgency of the problem has been greatly accentuated in recent decades by the increasing importance of improving school program quality and by the massive population changes affecting all types of local government.

Rural Migration and Increasing Urbanization

Today seven out of ten Americans live in metropolitan areas—central cities of 50,000 or more together with their contiguous suburban areas. Last year the U. S. Bureau of the Census listed 224 such areas (officially termed "standard metropolitan statistical areas") in which 140 million Americans lived in less than a tenth of the Nation's area.

Although urbanization of our population has been proceeding for more than a century, the rate of change has increased rapidly in recent decades. Since 1950, metropolitan areas have accounted for nearly 85 percent of the Nation's total population growth. The mushrooming growth of metropolitan areas continues to be fed by large-scale migration from the farms and small towns. Population on the farms decreased from 23 million in 1950 to about 12 million in 1965. The widespread prevalence of this migration is indicated in Figure II. Between 1950 and 1960 nearly four out of every five counties had a net migration loss.

Urbanization and rural migration have strongly affected school district organization everywhere, from large metropolitan centers to small villages surrounded by farms.

Concentration of Pupils in Fewer Local Districts

The massive population shifts noted above along with school district reorganization have resulted in an increasing concentration of the total public school enrollment in fewer and fewer local school districts. Evidence of this significant trend is given in Table 1 which shows the distribution of the public school enrollment according to district size as of October 1966.

At that time, the total number of school districts in the Nation had been reduced from 37,019 in 1961 to 23,390. Of that number, 4,945 had enrollments of 1,800 or more pupils. Although these 4,945 districts constituted only 21.2 percent of the total number, they had 84.5 percent of the total public school enrollment. The 1,400 largest districts, those having 6,000 or more pupils, had nearly three-fifths (58.4 percent) of all public school pupils.

In contrast, there were 9,380 operating districts with fewer than 300 pupils. Although constituting two-fifths of all districts, they had only 1.7 percent of the total enrollment.

The impacts of urbanization, rural migration, and district reorganization which have produced the conditions noted above have shown no signs of slackening in recent years. Evidence of the continued rapidity of change is shown in Table 2 which compares numbers of districts according to size category in 1961 and 1966.

During that five-year period districts above 25,000 enrollment increased from 132 to 170, or 28.8 percent. The largest relative increases were in the 6,000-11,999 and 12,000-24,999 enrollment size ranges. The number of districts in every size-category above 1,200 enrollment increased, but the number of districts in every size group below 1,200 enrollment decreased, and the smaller the enrollment size-category, the larger the decrease.

Increases in numbers of districts above 6,000 in enrollment came mainly from population growth without enlargement of district

TABLE 1
DISTRIBUTION OF LOCAL SCHOOL DISTRICTS AND ENROLLMENTS, BY ENROLLMENT SIZE OF SYSTEMS FOR THE UNITED STATES, OCTOBER 1966

Enrollment size group	School Districts Number	School Districts Percent	Pupil Enrollment Number	Pupil Enrollment Percent
25,000 or more pupils	170	0.7	12,589,723	28.7
12,000-24,999 pupils	350	1.5	5,729,708	13.1
6,000-11,999 pupils	880	3.8	7,292,690	16.6
3,000- 5,999 pupils	1,726	7.4	7,178,235	16.4
1,800- 2,999 pupils	1,819	7.8	4,251,015	9.7
1,200- 1,799 pupils	1,636	7.0	2,416,352	5.5
600- 1,199 pupils	2,838	12.1	2,436,838	5.6
300- 599 pupils	2,723	11.7	1,185,458	2.7
1- 299 pupils	9,380	40.1	762,044	1.7
Totals				
All districts enrolling 1,800 or more pupils	4,945	21.2	37,041,371	84.5
All districts enrolling 1-1,800 pupils	16,577	70.9	6,800,692	15.5
All districts operating schools	21,522	92.0	43,842,063	100.0
Non-operating districts	1,868	8.0	.....	.....
All operating and non-operating districts	23,390	100.0	43,842,063	100.0

Source: Bureau of the Census, U. S. Department of Commerce **Public School Systems in 1966-67.** CG-P-3. November, 1967. Pp. 9-10.

TABLE 2
DISTRIBUTION OF SCHOOL DISTRICTS BY SIZE OF PUPIL ENROLLMENT, 1961 AND 1966

Enrollment size (Number of pupils)	Number of school districts 1961	Number of school districts 1966	Increase or decrease 1961-1966 Number	Increase or decrease 1961-1966 Percent
25,000 or more	132	170	38	28.8
12,000-24,999	266	350	84	31.6
6,000-11,999	671	880	209	31.1
3,000- 5,999	1,498	1,726	228	15.2
1,800- 2,999	1,684	1,819	135	8.0
1,200- 1,799	1,587	1,636	49	3.1
600- 1,199	3,157	2,838	—319	—10.1
300- 599	3,486	2,723	—763	—21.9
1- 299	18,507	9,380	—9,127	—49.3
0 (Non-operating)	6,031	1,868	—4,163	—69.0
Totals	37,019	23,390	—13,629	—36.8

Source: Bureau of the Census, U. S. Department of Commerce, **Public School Systems in 1966-67.** CG-P-3. November, 1967. p. 3.

TABLE 3

RANK ORDER OF THE 38 STATES BY PERCENT REDUCTION IN NUMBER OF SCHOOL DISTRICTS BETWEEN 1945-46 AND FALL 1966

State	Number of Districts		Reduction	
	1945-46	Fall 1966	Number	Percent
Mississippi	4,194	149	4,045	96.4
Kansas	6,906	349	6,557	94.9
South Carolina	1,703	108	1,595	93.6
Nevada	237	17	220	92.8
Wisconsin	6,393	535	5,858	91.6
Colorado	1,871	183	1,688	90.2
Missouri	8,558	888	7,670	89.6
Idaho	1,114	117	997	89.5
Iowa	4,775	501	4,274	89.5
Illinois	9,861	1,340	8,521	86.4
Minnesota	7,657	1,324	6,333	82.7
Arkansas	2,179	398	1,781	81.7
New York	5,112	986	4,126	80.7
Michigan	4,572	930	3,642	79.6
Oklahoma	4,416	994	3,422	77.5
Pennsylvania	2,543	595	1,948	76.6
North Dakota	2,273	547	1,726	75.9
Oregon	1,607	390	1,217	75.7
Nebraska	6,987	2,388	4,599	65.8
Indiana	1,131	406	725	64.1
Texas	3,605	1,303	2,302	63.8
Delaware	126	51	75	59.5
Alaska	66	27	39	59.1
Ohio	1,622	712	910	56.1
California	2,629	1,187	1,442	54.8
Wyoming	361	173	188	52.1
Washintgon	691	360	331	47.9
South Dakota	3,415	2,015	1,400	41.0
Montana	1,382	873	509	36.8
Maine	500	342	158	31.6
Kentucky	256	200	56	21.9
New Hampshire	240	199	41	17.1
New Mexico	103	90	13	12.6
Arizona	338	298	40	11.8
Georgia	208	196	12	5.7
Vermont	269	262	7	2.6
North Carolina	171	169	2	1.2
Tennessee	152	151	1	.6

Sources: Office of Education, Federal Security Agency, **Biennial Survey of Education in the United States, 1944-46, Statistics of State School Systems, 1945-46,** Washington, D. C., p. 32. 1966 data from unpublished information compiled by Office of Education, Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, Washington, D. C., Fall 1966.

boundaries, but some large reorganized districts have been established in recent years. The most striking change produced by reorganization was in the large-scale reduction in numbers of small districts—a continuation of the reorganization movement that began accelerating after World War II.

Widespread Reorganization Activity

Redistricting has been widespread. Since 1945 only six States (Florida, Hawaii, Louisiana, Maryland, Utah, and West Virginia) have *not* made changes in their organization of school districts. Six other States (Alabama, Connecticut, Massachusetts, New Jersey, Rhode Island, and Virginia) had more school districts in the fall of 1966 than they had in 1945. As Table 3 shows, the remaining 38 States all had reductions: 26 States reduced their numbers of districts by more than one-half, 18 by more than three-fourths, and six by more than 90 percent.

Redistricting Problems Still Widespread

Despite all that has been accomplished, a large majority of the school districts that remain are small, as shown in Table 1. Not only are most districts very small, but the small-district problem is also widespread. Last year only nine States had no districts with fewer than 300 pupils. Only Hawaii and Maryland had none with fewer than 1,800 pupils.

As shown in Figure III (p. 12) there were only 11 States in which more than 75 percent of the districts had more than 1,800 pupils.[1] In 35 States fewer than half the districts had enrollments above 1,800, and in nine States less than one district out of every 10 was that large.

These small percentages of districts having more than 1,800 pupils cannot be attributed to conditions imposed by population sparsity. If Figure III is compared with Figure IV (p. 13) it will be found that in 23 of the States where less than half the districts are above 1,800 in enrollment, the average district area for the entire State is less than 125 square miles; in nine of these States the average area is less than 50 square miles.

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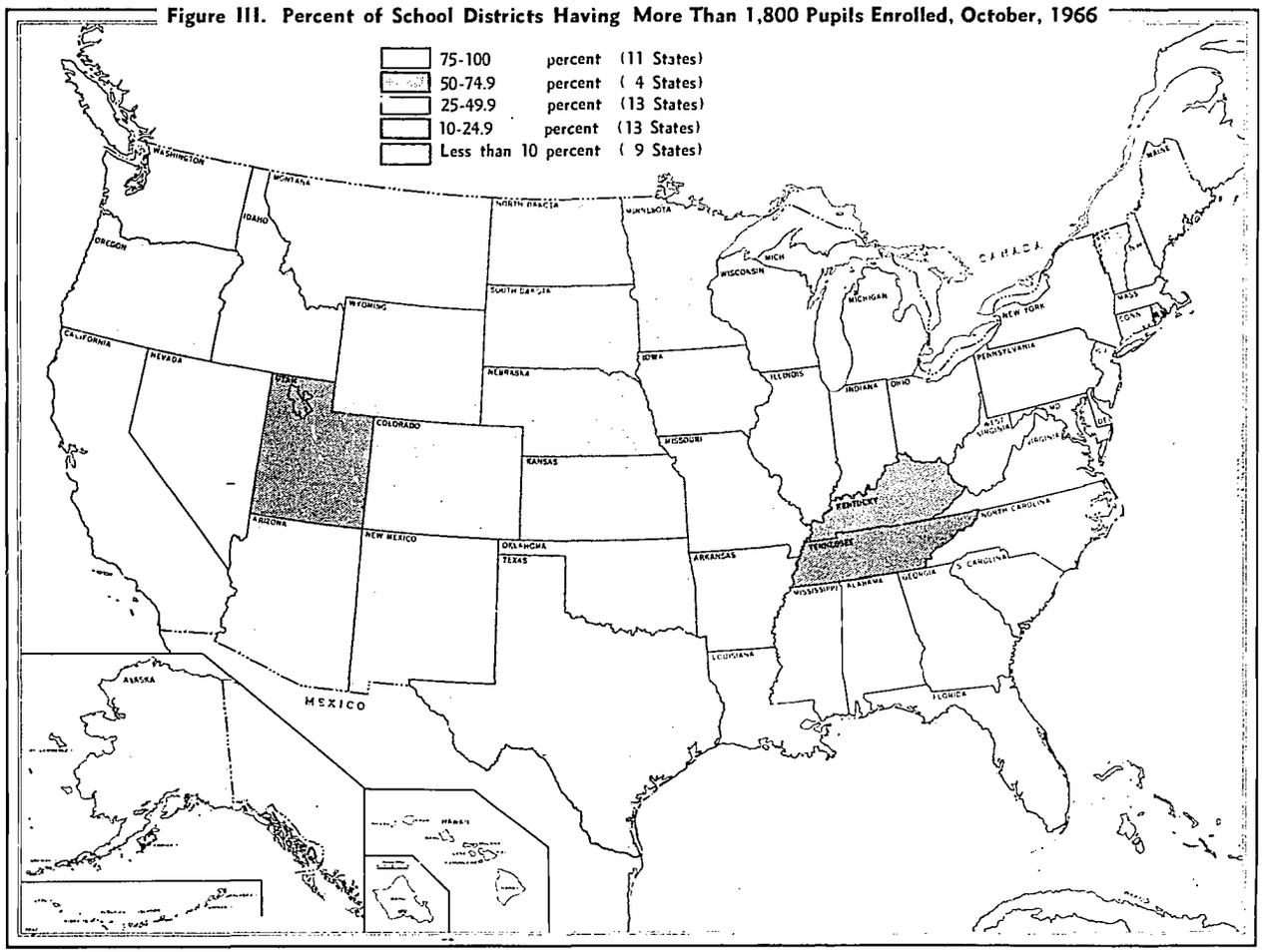
[1] In the 1967 Census of Governments' classification of districts by size of enrollment, the 1,800 pupil size most closely approximates the lowest desirable minimum enrollment for a school district, as will be indicated later.

Figure III. Percent of School Districts Having More Than 1,800 Pupils Enrolled, October, 1966



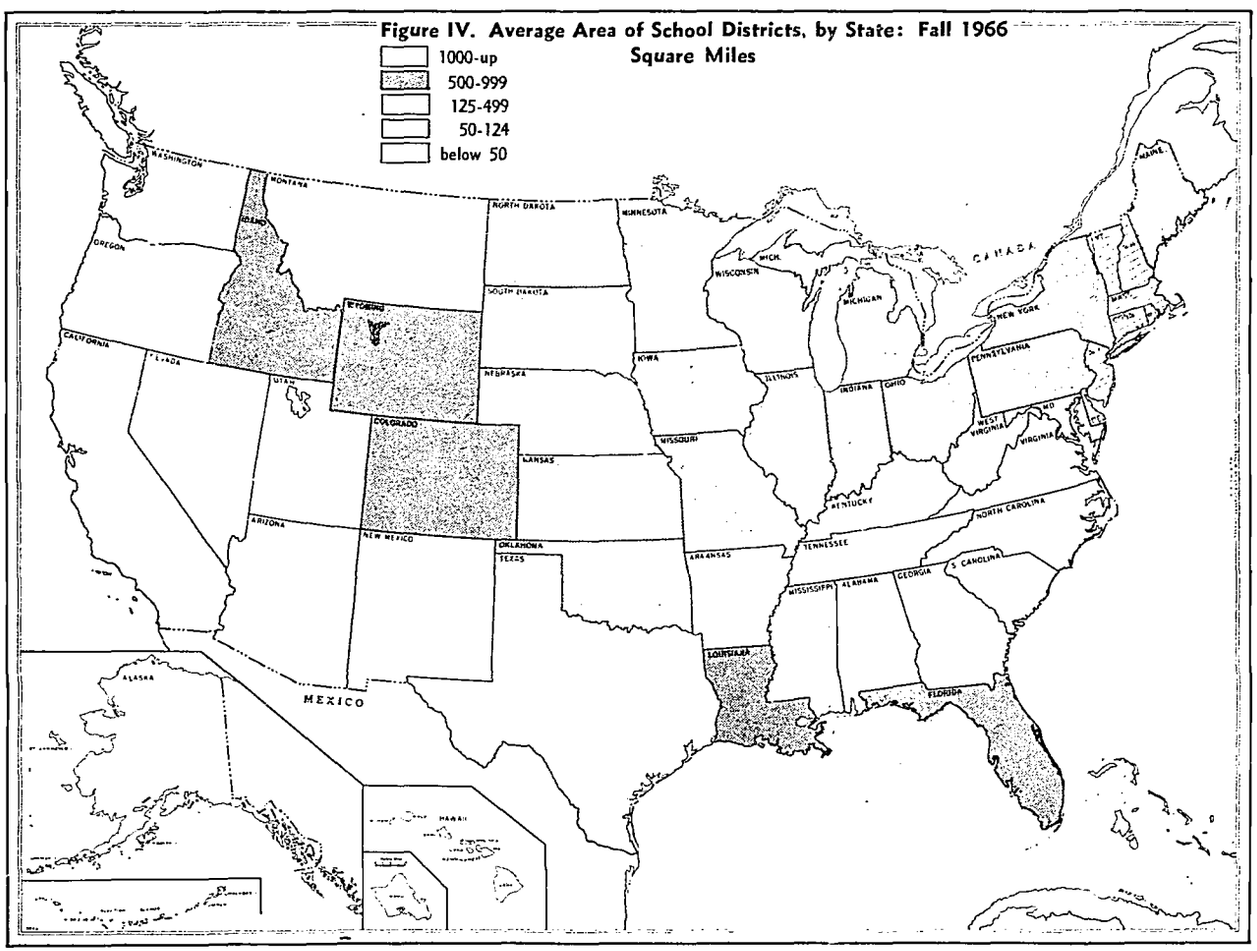


Figure IV. Average Area of School Districts, by State: Fall 1966
Square Miles
1000-up
500-999
125-499
50-124
below 50
WASHINGTON
MONTANA
NORTH DAKOTA
MINNESOTA
OREGON
SOUTH DAKOTA
WISCONSIN
MICHIGAN
CANADA
NEW YORK
MAINE
CALIFORNIA
NEVADA
UTAH
NEBRASKA
IOWA
ILLINOIS
INDIANA
OHIO
PENNSYLVANIA
COLORADO
MISSOURI
KANSAS
WEST VIRGINIA
VIRGINIA
KENTUCKY
ARIZONA
NEW MEXICO
OKLAHOMA
TEXAS
ARKANSAS
TENNESSEE
NORTH CAROLINA
MISSISSIPPI
ALABAMA
GEORGIA
LOUISIANA
FLORIDA
MEXICO
ALASKA
HAWAII

Further evidence of school redistricting tasks still ahead is indicated in Figure V (p. 15), which shows the proportion of school districts that in 1967 operated both elementary and secondary schools, that is, were unified school districts. There were only eight States in which all school districts were unified. At the other extreme were 13 States in which fewer than half the districts were unified. None of the States that have had a school redistricting program since 1945 has succeeded in merging all of its separately organized elementary districts into unified or 12-grade units.

As already implied, trends in school redistricting constitute a varied picture. Although positive features abound, there are also some large-scale, negative aspects.

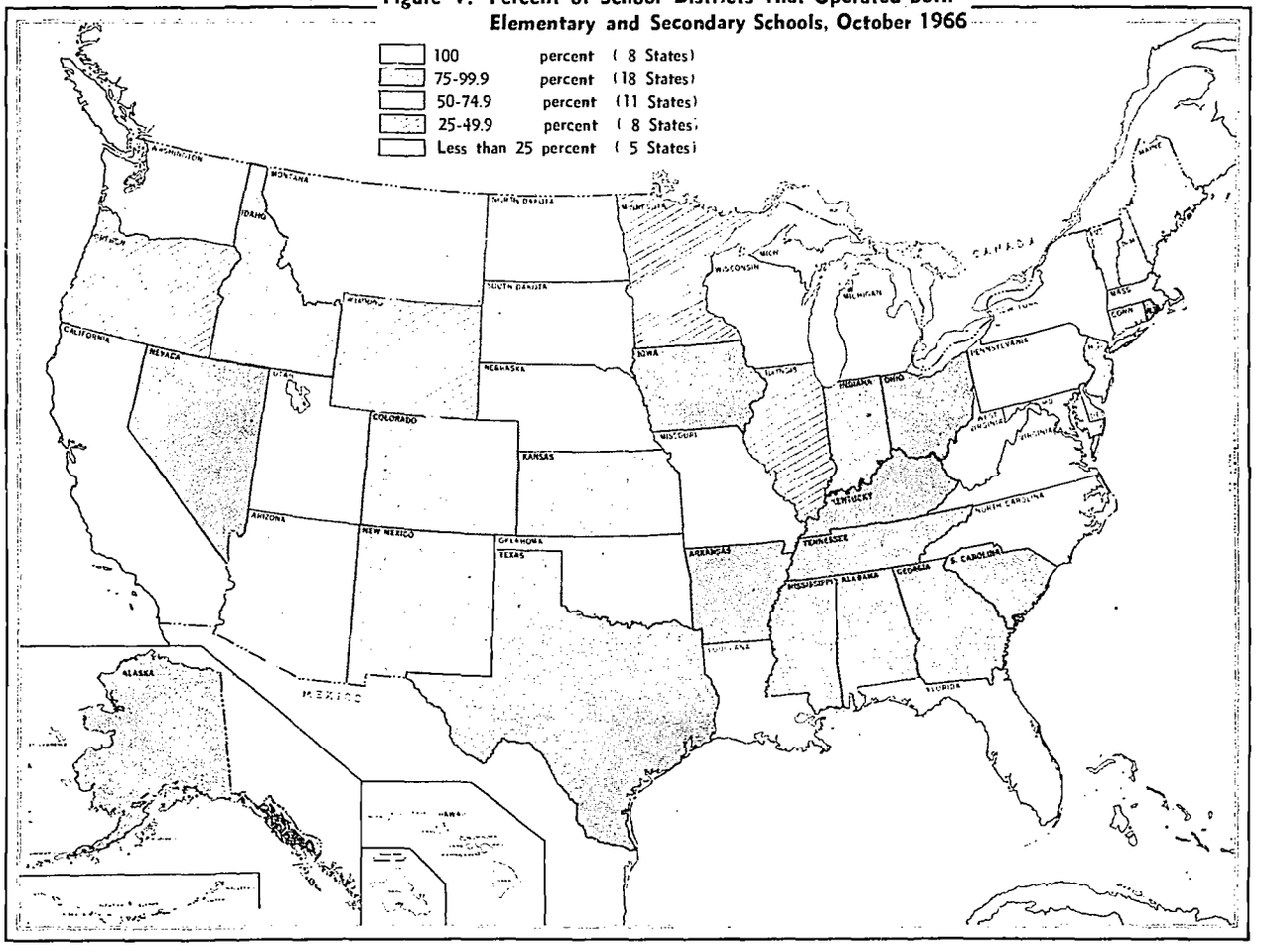
Many of the reorganized districts established since World War II have been too small, constituting little more than a step in the right direction. A 1953 study[2] of 552 reorganized districts in eight States found that these districts had a median pupil enrollment of 626 pupils, and 75 percent of them had enrollments under 1,037 pupils. Many involved mergers of open country elementary districts with the small hamlet or village district to which they had been sending their high school pupils on a tuition basis. Such reorganizations left untouched the problem of the small high school—its skeleton program, its high per pupil cost, its waste and inefficiencies in teacher utilization.

Several shortcomings of small districts are evident. One major weakness is the inefficient usage of teachers and other employees. As indicated in Table 4 (p. 17), the smaller the district the greater the number of teachers and other employees per 1,000 pupils.

A major weakness in reorganization has been the general tendency of local people and local redistricting planning bodies to regard as the *optimum* for their particular situation the *minimum* standards for size of schools and school districts prescribed by State law or by State school board policy. Related to this tendency has been the widespread failure to distinguish between small schools that because of isolation or population sparsity were necessary operating units and small schools that could be consolidated without creating undue inconvenience or hazards for

[2] Office of Education, Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, **Selected Characteristics of Reorganized School Districts,** Bulletin, 1953, No. 3. Washington, D. C., Government Printing Office.

Figure V. Percent of School Districts That Operated Both Elementary and Secondary Schools, October 1966



the pupils. On the positive side, however, have been the actions of State boards of education in denying approval of small high schools as unnecessary operating units that could be consolidated.

District Reorganization in Metropolitan Areas

Probably the most complex and difficult district reorganization problems to be found anywhere are in metropolitan areas, that is in the fringe areas and suburbs surrounding cities above 50,000 in population. The 1962 Census of Governments reported that metropolitan areas had a total of 6,605 school districts that year, of which 4,408 had fewer than 1,200 pupils. Most of those small units were no doubt located in outlying fringe areas.

The widespread severity of this small district problem is illustrated by examples shown below.[3]

Metropolitan Area	Total number of districts	Number of districts with fewer than 1200 pupils
Sioux Falls, S. D.	119	118
Lansing, Mich.	126	116
Portland, Ore.	109	87
Fresno, Calif.	85	73
Peoria, Ill.	82	74
Newark, N. J.	84	30
Dallas, Texas	61	43
Oklahoma City, Okla.	46	35

The problem has other complex dimensions. The rapid outward spread of suburbs makes community and school district planning difficult. Zoning changes and the location of new water and sewer lines quickly attract new housing developments; shopping centers

[3] 1962 figures are used because the 1967 Census of Governments' data for individual metropolitan areas will not be published until later in 1968.

TABLE 4

NUMBER OF FULL-TIME EQUIVALENT EMPLOYEES PER 1,000 PUPILS ENROLLED, BY SIZE OF SCHOOL SYSTEM: UNITED STATES OCTOBER 1962

Size of School System	Teachers*	Other Employees	Other Employees
3,000 or more pupils	42.7	16.1	58.8
1,200 to 2,999 pupils	44.0	16.8	60.8
600 to 1,199 pupils	45.8	18.7	64.5
300 to 599 pupils	47.5	19.8	67.3
150 to 299 pupils	50.3	21.8	72.1
50 to 149 pupils	53.0	22.1	75.1
Less than 50 pupils	78.1	23.1	101.2
U. S. Average	43.7	16.7	60.4

*The summary term **teachers** has been used here to refer to all personnel reported by school systems as "instructional personnel," a category defined to include not only teachers but also principals, supervisors of instruction, school librarians, and guidance personnel, but not school superintendents or other administrative staff.

Source: U. S. Bureau of the Census, **Census of Governments, 1962: Compendium of Public Employment,** Vol. III, p. 499.

spring up to capture the new markets; and industrial firms join the competition for new land. This rapid growth frequently sprawls across a local school district structure that was never planned to deal with such expansion. To house the influx of pupils large schools are sometimes constructed near district boundary lines, with the result that pupils a few blocks away in another district must be transported in the opposite direction. Great variations in financial ability also abound.

Suburban sprawl has created an increasingly acute need for coordinated community planning, including school district reorganization planning. Many metropolitan areas have established planning agencies which are making important contributions to suburban development by projecting future growth and advising on needed services. But the main problem is how to get coordinated planning that will be translated into action.

The Advisory Commission on Intergovernmental Relations — largely composed of governors, mayors, other State and Federal officials—has stressed the importance of coordinating local action

through joint planning. The Commission has stated: "The results of poor coordination have been particularly evident in programs dealing with the physical development of metropolitan areas—with land use controls, transportation, public services, and facilities such as hospitals and schools." Herein lies a challenge to school district reorganization planners in many States.

Decentralization of Administration in Large Cities

To overcome the disadvantages of "bigness," a number of the largest school systems in the country have undertaken to decentralize their administration. Some have decentralized elementary school administration only. In St. Louis, for example, the system is divided into five elementary districts each under the administration of an assistant superintendent.

Others have decentralized the administration of both elementary and secondary schools. Among such systems are Chicago, Detroit, and Atlanta. The city of Chicago has been divided into 20 districts averaging around 300,000 pupils, with each district headed by an assistant superintendent responsible for the entire K-12 educational program. The city of Atlanta is divided into five areas with about 30 schools in each. Each area has an area superintendent with a staff of 10: resource people in subject fields, a librarian, a visiting counselor, and a psychometrist. Of the five area staffs, three are housed in school buildings, while two have separate offices in their areas. The Montgomery County, Maryland, school system enrolling 105,000 pupils, has been decentralized into 12 areas each including at least one senior high school and the satellite junior high and elementary schools.

Of the large systems that have undertaken decentralization, only one, New York City, has developed a plan providing for decentralizing both administration and policy development activities. The city's system is divided into 31 districts each having an average of 30 schools and approximately 35,000 pupils. Each district has a local board of education consisting of nine members chosen by the city board of education from lists of persons recommended by local civic groups in the district. The local boards receive suggestions and complaints regarding operation of the schools,

visit the schools periodically, hold public meetings to get local views on school matters, and make recommendations on school needs to the central board of education. Each district has a district superintendent directly responsible to the executive deputy superintendent. The district superintendent has a staff of 15 to assist him in carrying out his functions and responsibilities for operation of the schools under his jurisdiction. According to official pronouncements of the superintendent's office, the central headquarters staff operates under the stated objective, "to function more and more as a service agency for the school districts."

Apparently the New York City decentralization plan has not been satisfactorily effective. The State legislature in 1966 charged the mayor with the responsibility to develop and submit a new program for decentralization of the city school system; the legislature indicated that further increases in State school funds for New York City would not be forthcoming until the new decentralization plan was submitted. In response the mayor appointed a panel of educators which, late in 1967, submitted a plan for the reorganization of the city system into a federation of 30 to 60 largely autonomous committee community school districts. Under the plan, local community school districts would be given the power to hire teachers, grant tenure, determine curriculum, and formulate budgets and allocate funds. Each district would have an 11-member school board, six of whom would be elected by a district-wide panel composed of parent representatives from each school and five appointed by the mayor. The New York City Board of Education would under the proposed plan lose much of its present responsibility, and would be largely a service and coordinating central agency.

Whether this revolutionary new plan of decentralization will be adopted, either wholly or in major part, seems problematical at this time. The underlying philosophy of the plan, however, does seem to reflect the growing concern that structural adaptations in large city systems are greatly needed to make the schools more responsive to distinctive needs of localities within the city.

Positive Trends in School Redistricting

Among the positive factors in the school redistricting picture are a number of trends; the significance of which usually resides more in their potential than in the present extent of their results. These trends are:

1. **Continued progress in eliminating nonoperating districts.** In October 1966 only 1,777 nonoperating districts remained; although these were scattered among 28 States, two States had over half of them.

2. **The requirement in an increasing number of States that all reorganized districts be unified (organized to operate both elementary and high schools); a related requirement is that all territory of the State be in a district maintaining a high school.**

3. **The inclusion of more than one small high school district in a reorganized district.**
This is directly aimed at eliminating unnecessary small high schools.

4. **The merging of previously established small reorganized units into enlarged reorganized units, in other words reorganzing the reorganizations.**
This trend is helping to eliminate small reorganized districts established during the years before and immediately following World War II and, like number three above, has been gathering momentum during the past 10 years.

5. **The merger of small or medium-sized city districts with the open country districts surrounding them.**
This widely scattered trend is employed in New York State, New Mexico, and some Midwestern States. It typically results in districts having a relatively large area as well as a good-sized pupil enrollment.

6. **Merging all or nearly all of the territory of a county into a single administrative unit.**
Nevada's mandatory redistricting program in 1955 resulted in 17 county units for the entire State. Other States, however, with permissive type programs have formed a sizable number of county unit systems or partial county units. In Mississippi, 62 of

the 149 school districts are the county unit type; 21 of South Carolina's 108 districts are county units. Texas has 36 county units; Colorado has 17; and Idaho has 14.

7. **The formation of large suburban districts adjoining major cities.**
Everywhere such districts have grown rapidly since their formation. For example, Colorado's second largest district is the Jefferson County school system, a reorganized unit adjoining Denver. In Washington, the fourth, sixth, and seventh largest districts are reorganized units established during the 1940's in the Seattle metropolitan area. Oregon's fourth and fifth largest districts are reorganized units in the Portland metropolitan area. In California, the San Juan unified district is now larger than the Sacramento city district which it adjoins.

8. **The merger of independent city districts and adjoining county school districts.**
This is a developing trend in the Southeast. Among the most recent mergers of this type are the Charlotte City and Mecklenburg County systems in North Carolina, and the Nashville City and Davidson County systems in Tennessee. Similar mergers have been considered in other Southern cities, including Knoxville and Memphis, Tennessee, and Louisville, Kentucky.

9. **In county unit school districts, especially in the Southeast, the consolidation of small high schools has been a growing trend, particularly since the mid-1950's.**
School consolidation procedures used have been quite similar to the school district reorganization procedures used in other parts of the country.

10. **The formation of separately organized regional high school districts embracing the territory of several town (or township) school districts has been a developing trend in some New England States and in New Jersey.**
The organizational potential of this trend is dependent upon the important next step of converting such regional districts into K-12 units. This has happened in a few instances.

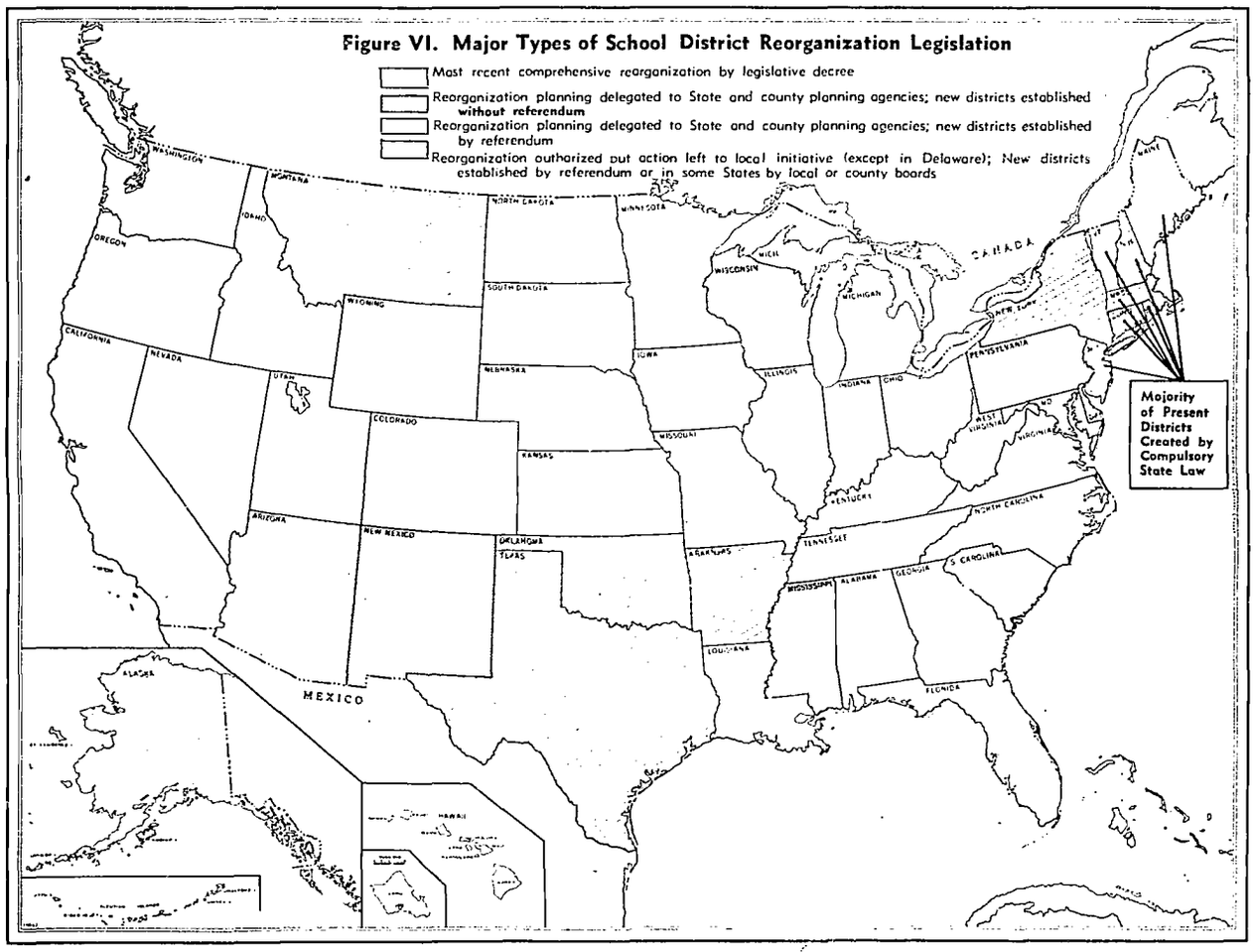


Figure VI. Major Types of School District Reorganization Legislation
Most recent comprehensive reorganization by legislative decree
Reorganization planning delegated to State and county planning agencies; new districts established without referendum
Reorganization planning delegated to State and county planning agencies; new districts established by referendum
Reorganization outharized put action left to local initiative (except in Delaware); New districts established by referendum or in some States by local or county boards
Majority of Present Districts Created by Compulsory State Law
CANADA
MEXICO
WASHINGTON
OREGON
CALIFORNIA
NEVADA
IDAHO
MONTANA
WYOMING
UTAH
ARIZONA
COLORADO
NEW MEXICO
NORTH DAKOTA
SOUTH DAKOTA
NEBRASKA
KANSAS
OKLAHOMA
TEXAS
MINNESOTA
IOWA
MISSOURI
ARKANSAS
LOUISIANA
WISCONSIN
ILLINOIS
MICHIGAN
INDIANA
OHIO
KENTUCKY
TENNESSEE
MISSISSIPPI
ALABAMA
GEORGIA
FLORIDA
S CAROLINA
NORTH CAROLINA
VIRGINIA
WEST VIRGINIA
PENNSYLVANIA
NEW YORK
MAINE
ALASKA
HAWAII

Reorganization Methods

School districts have been reorganized by laws differing greatly in comprehensiveness or coverage, in the procedures prescribed or permitted, and in their effectiveness. Many States have used more than one legislative procedure, and many have used more than one at the same time. The four major types of legislation States are using either currently or since 1945, or used in their most recent comprehensive reorganization are shown in Figure VI.

1. **Reorganization by legislative decree.** In 12 States the current district structure was established by legislative decree which abolished all or nearly all existing districts and established new districts based on county boundaries. The most recent state-wide action of this type was in Nevada in 1956. Since their compulsory reorganization, four of the 12 States have merged some of their remaining independent districts with county districts under local option procedures.

Other States have also used the compulsory method. Between 1882 and 1909 all the New England States abolished their small districts and (except in cities) created town (township) school districts, most of which are still in existence. Each of these States now has permissive legislation, as indicated in Figure VI.

Since 1945 a growing number of States have enacted legislation compelling merger of very small districts, most usually nonoperating units. Such compulsory action has usually been resorted to because of the slowness or ineffectiveness of existing permissive procedures in dealing with the problem. It has contributed little, however, to the major task of creating new districts of adequate size.

2. **Reorganization planning and administrative responsibility delegated to State and county education agencies; establishment of new districts without referendum.** This general type of procedure has been used since 1945 in five States. Mississippi and South Carolina vested administrative and regulatory powers in a special State commission and empowered county boards to plan new districts meeting State standards and to establish them

without referendum. Wisconsin's law lodged advisory responsibilities but no controls in the State education agency and empowered county boards to develop plans and to establish new districts without referendum. Although a referendum must be held if petitioned for, it seldom happens. Pennsylvania's legislation, enacted after years of slow progress under permissive procedures, required county boards, meeting state standards, to develop plans for new districts, which went into effect on a prescribed date unless earlier adopted by referendum.

In New Mexico, reorganization planning is conducted by a State Survey Committee and by county boards of education; new districts are established by order of the State Board of Education.

3. **Reorganization planning and administrative authority delegated to State and county agencies; new districts established only by referendum.** Initiated in Washington State in 1941, some form of this general type of legislation has since been enacted in 18 other States. All of these laws have strongly emphasized systematic planning as an essential process in reorganizing districts and all required that plans for new districts could be carried into effect only by referendum. But despite these similarities there were also important differences, especially in the following provisions:

—In prescribing or authorizing standards or criteria for new districts

—In the degree of responsibility and service functions of the State administrative agency

—In the planning requirements vested in county agencies

—In the referendum methods for adopting proposed new districts.

—In the time period the law functioned.

In some States the legislation has been highly effective; in others, redistricting progress has been slow. In some States its effectiveness has been crippled by amendments, but in others strengthened. In some States the law, though succeeding in its purpose, expired leaving major redistricting problems unsolved.

The experience of States that have enacted this type of legislation indicates the importance of a number of key provisions which are listed in Table 5.

4. **Reorganization authorized but action left to local initiative; new districts established by referendum.** Most States at some time or other have had this general type of legislation and in some it is still the major means of consolidating the districts of a locality into a single new district. In a few States this method has been supplemented either by authorizing or requiring annexation of very small districts without a referendum.

TABLE 5

MAJOR PROVISIONS FOR EFFECTIVE SCHOOL DISTRICT REORGANIZATION PLANNING AND ADOPTION OF PLANS BY REFERENDUM

1. **Duration of legislation:**
   Sufficient length of time to permit establishment of a sound school district structure throughout the State.

2. **Criteria or standards for new districts:**
   Developed both for new districts of **optimum** as well as minimum size. Can best be determined on the basis of a study of educational conditions and needs made prior to enactment of the legislation.

3. **State administrative agency**
   —Authorized and furnished with sufficient resources to provide the professional and technical assistance needed by county planning agencies.
   —Empowered to approve plans for new districts in accord with prescribed criteria or standards; such approval required before a referendum is held.

4. **County or regional planning agencies:**
   To be established throughout the State and required:
   —To conduct studies and prepare reorganization plans, in accord with State standards or criteria, within a specified time limit.
   —To hold public hearings on new districts proposed; submit all proposals to the State agency for approval, and if disapproved submit revised plan.
   —To hold a referendum on all approved plans within a specified time limit.
   —To revise plans rejected by the voters, resubmit to the State agency for approval, and hold a second referendum within one year after the first.

5. **Referendum:**
   A majority of the total vote cast in the referendum required for adoption of new districts.

Characteristics of Soundly Organized Districts

With the wide variation in population density and other factors that must be taken into account, we know that there must necessarily be wide variations in school district organization. The Montgomery County, Maryland, school district (adjoining Washington, D. C.) has a larger pupil enrollment than either Nevada or Wyoming. The Nye County, Nevada, school district, with an enrollment of 1,000 pupils, has a larger area than Connecticut, Massachusetts, and Rhode Island combined. Every State has variables within its borders that should be taken into account when school districts are reorganized.

Major factors that appear to merit careful consideration are briefly described in Table 6. These factors are not all of the same weight, and some are closely related to others but have been stated separately because of their importance to school program quality.

Factors that bear on size of high school and district enrollment merit further comment. Although research and practice have not given unassailable answers to the question of size, they have provided some useful guidelines.

The general view of most authorities on the subject has been that the *minimum* high school enrollment should be at least 300 pupils. On the other hand, it has also been generally recognized that minimum size does not establish conditions for fully adequate programs. In his study, *The American High School Today,* Dr. James B. Conant recommended that a high school have a minimum of at least 100 pupils in the graduating class to function effectively as a comprehensive school.

Recent research and the views of many experts indicate that *optimum* high school size for program adequacy begins around 900 pupils in grades 9-12 and ranges upward to more than 2,000 pupils. The upper limits of that range bring important advantages in breadth of program. Provision of a diversity of program offering and services by a district does not, however, necessarily require that all grade 9-12 pupils be housed in the same high school.

TABLE 6

FACTORS IN DETERMINING SOUND ORGANIZATION OF SCHOOL DISTRICTS

1. **Unified operation and control:** The district is organized to operate both elementary and secondary schools under a single board of education and administrative staff.

2. **Comprehensive educational program:** The district is organized to provide, to the maximum extent practicable, the scope and quality of educational programs and services regarded in the State as desirable for all children (the offerings of existing soundly organized districts in the State may serve as a guide). Consideration of this factor should be limited only by unavoidable conditions imposed by population sparsity and community isolation.

3. **Location and size of high schools:** The district is organized to maintain one or more high schools which, to the maximum extent possible, are sufficiently large to provide well-rounded programs, and are located within reasonable transportation distance of the pupils. This factor will also be applicable to elementary school organization.

4. **Instructional staff utilization:** The district is organized to maintain schools, at reasonable per pupil cost, which can make effective use of the teaching staff, so that teachers are not assigned to teach unnecessarily small classes or are assigned courses outside their fields of preparation.

5. **Staff specialization:** The district is organized to include, where possible, a sufficiently large pupil population to provide at reasonable per pupil cost: (a) the specialized personnel, such as guidance counselors, speech therapists, and librarians, needed to supplement and support the work of the classroom teachers; (b) specially trained teachers to staff special classes for handicapped children, and (c) the specialized administrative, supervisory, and service personnel who function on a district-wide basis.

6. **Financial equitability:** The district is organized to eliminate unjustifiable differences in the market value of real property per pupil and to obtain maximum equalization of the local tax base for support of the educational program.

7. **Adjustment for population sparsity:** The district is organized to minimize effect of population sparsity on district adequacy. The effect of modern sparsity can be largely overcome by making the area large enough to include two or more large villages or a city. Although imposing much greater limitations on district size, extreme population sparsity can be compensated for by making the district areas sufficiently large to include as many pupils as conditions permit.

8. **Socio-economic and ethnic composition:** The district is organized to include all socio-economic and ethnic groups that may be logically included in it. Although relevant everywhere, this factor is especially significant in metropolitan suburbs in preventing unreasonable imbalances in income group and racial composition.

9. **Citizen participation:** The district is organized in accord with the principle of local operational control, so that its size will not hinder meaningful and effective citizen oversight and participation.

The *optimum* size range for high schools provides an important yardstick for determining the optimum size range for school districts. The lower limits of optimum district size begin around 10,000 pupil enrollment and range upward to the neighborhood of 30,000. As with high schools, the upper limits bring important advantages in ability to provide a comprehensive educational program. A 10,000 pupil district will have limitations in program comprehensiveness if its per pupil costs are kept within reasonable bounds.

Such size recommendations are intended only for situations where other factors of district soundness do not exert a modifying or controlling influence. Where the population distribution exerts a modifying influence that cannot be compensated for by reasonable enlargement of district area, district size should be scaled downward. But a basic consideration is: How far can district size be scaled downward without seriously impairing the educational program?

Dr. Conant's recommendation of at least 100 pupils in the senior class would require, with allowance for average attrition,[4] a *minimum* district enrollment of approximately 1,600 pupils in grades 1 through 12. If allowance is also made for rural migration, and it should be allowed for wherever possible, the lowest desirable *minimum* should be in the neighborhood of 1,800 to 2,000 pupils. Although there are areas of extreme population sparsity where such minimums would be unrealistic, only a minority of the States have such extremes.

School Finance Considerations

School district reorganization provides important financial benefits both to local communities and to the State. Among these benefits are the following:

- As has been indicated in Table 6, reorganization eliminates inequalities in property tax wealth within the community and evenly distributes the school tax load throughout the

[4] U. S. Office of Education data indicate a nationwide average retention rate of 75.8 percent from the fifth to the twelfth grades.

new district. This greatly reduces the range of difference among localities of the State and enables it to compensate for such differences with equalization grants-in-aid.

- Reorganization establishes a larger tax base, thereby creating greater bonding power for financing construction of school buildings in terms of greatest need. This also creates a more favorable situation for providing State aid for school buildings.

- Reorganization brings greater financial efficiency in school operational costs. A better quality educational program can be provided at reasonable per pupil cost. Small districts, even though their programs are meager, are grossly inefficient financially. Larger districts cannot only provide more comprehensive educational programs but can do so with efficient use of financial resources. Thus, local people can get full benefit from the property tax dollars they spend on schools, and the State is enabled to get efficient use of the grants-in-aid it provides for school support.

It seems significant that a rather close association exists between the degree of State support for schools and number of school districts. That association may be observed in Table 7 (p. 30).

Of the 26 States having more than 200 school districts only seven were providing higher proportions of State school aid than the national average of 33.9 percent. (These seven States were Texas, New York, Michigan, Pennsylvania, Arkansas, Washington, and Arizona.)

Of the 24 States having 200 or fewer districts all except six were providing higher proportions of State school aid than the national average. The six exceptions were New Hampshire, Colorado, Connecticut, Virginia, Rhode Island, and Maryland.

Table 7 also shows that most States with larger numbers of districts are distributing most of their grants-in-aid on an equalization basis. This raises the question: To what extent is equalization aid being used to reduce inequalities that might be more effectively reduced by district reorganization? On the other hand, not all States with relatively fewer districts are capitalizing on their equalization opportunities.

TABLE 7

PERCENT OF SCHOOL REVENUE FROM STATE SOURCES AND PERCENT OF STATE AID GRANTED ON AN EQUALIZATION BASIS, BY STATE RANK IN NUMBER OF SCHOOL DISTRICTS, 1966-67 SCHOOL YEAR

State	Number of school districts	Percent of school revenue from State sources	Percent of State aid distributed on equalization basis
Nebraska	2,388	5.4	....
South Dakota	2,015	15.2	72.9
Illinois	1,340	22.2	52.1
Minnesota	1,324	38.3	76.4
Texas	1,303	49.3	59.4
California	1,187	38.7	33.2
Oklahoma	994	26.2	69.5
New York	986	45.7	99.1
Michigan	930	47.7	93.8
Missouri	888	32.0	13.1
Montana	873	28.7	76.7
Ohio	712	25.2	99.9
New Jersey	594	29.5	43.0
Pennsylvania	595	43.9	89.3
North Dakota	547	26.5	87.7
Wisconsin	535	25.1	56.7
Iowa	501	15.3	8.3
Indiana	406	38.8	75.8
Arkansas	398	45.0	84.5
Massachusetts	392	23.2	84.8
Oregon	390	27.0	15.7
Washington	360	57.5	82.0
Kansas	349	30.9	87.7
Maine	342	29.9	94.5
Arizona	298	40.8	14.5
Vermont	262	26.1	75.7
Kentucky	200	52.3	98.4
New Hampshire	199	9.8	43.8
Georgia	196	58.8	95.0
Colorado	183	26.3	60.9
Connecticut	176	34.4	3.7
Wyoming	173	40.7	82.9
North Carolina	169	63.8	....
Tennessee	151	50.2	96.0
Mississippi	149	50.5	77.0
Virginia	131	38.8	80.7
Alabama	118	64.3	88.8
Idaho	117	41.7	99.7
South Carolina	108	58.7	....
New Mexico	90	62.3	0.2
Florida	67	46.5	74.4
Louisiana	67	63.7	80.5
West Virginia	55	49.5	56.1
Delaware	51	76.8	....
Rhode Island	40	32.2	100.0
Utah	40	52.8	93.7
Alaska	27	53.3	53.3
Maryland	24	31.9	81.0
Nevada	17	54.0	99.2
Hawaii	....	62.5	....
U. S. average	....	39.9	....

Source: School Finance Data calculated by Dr. Thomas L. Johns, specialist in school finance, U. S. Office of Education.

Methods of distributing State aid for schools can influence school district reorganization progress. Flat grants per pupil and liberal guarantees for small districts hinder reorganization. The amount of equalization aid may be too small to offer an incentive. In some cases reorganization results in less State aid. At least one State has compensated this with a special "no loss" provision.

In order to encourage school district reorganization, a number of States have tried various kinds of incentives. The most influential of these seem to be the following:

1. Special financial aid for school buildings, especially when sufficient in amount to cover most of the cost in poorer districts.
2. Additional amounts of equalization aid either for State approved reorganized districts only or for all districts meeting State specified school program standards.

However, experience indicates that State financial incentives do not bring rapid progress without effective school district reorganization legislation. Moreover, some States with effective legislation have reorganized extensively with very limited or no financial incentives.

Intermediate Administrative Districts

As pointed out earlier, 32 States currently have a three-echelon structure of school government, in which some form of intermediate administrative agency functions between the State education agency and the local school districts. There are three types of such intermediate agencies: (1) supervisory unions, (2) the county intermediate district, or county superintendency as commonly termed in a number of States, and (3) multi-county or regional intermediate districts. Figure VII shows their location.

Supervisory Unions

Supervisory unions exist only in the New England States, except Rhode Island which eliminated its last one several years ago. They are composed of two or more town school districts grouped together for purposes of sharing the services of a superintendent of schools. The same basic principle is also used in some sections of Virginia which, although generally classified as having a two-echelon structure, has eight superintendents each of whom serves two county-unit school districts and two others each of whom serves a county-unit and an independent city district..

County Intermediate Districts

Major changes in intermediate district structure have appeared in the three-echelon structured States outside New England since the mid-1940's. At that time there were 28 such States and all except New York had a state-wide pattern of county intermediate districts, or county superintendencies.

Influence of local school district reorganization

Wherever local district reorganization took place in these 28 States, it strongly influenced intermediate district structure. The impact was most severe in predominantly rural counties, with their open-country territory typically overlaid with one-room school districts. The new districts replacing them, though often

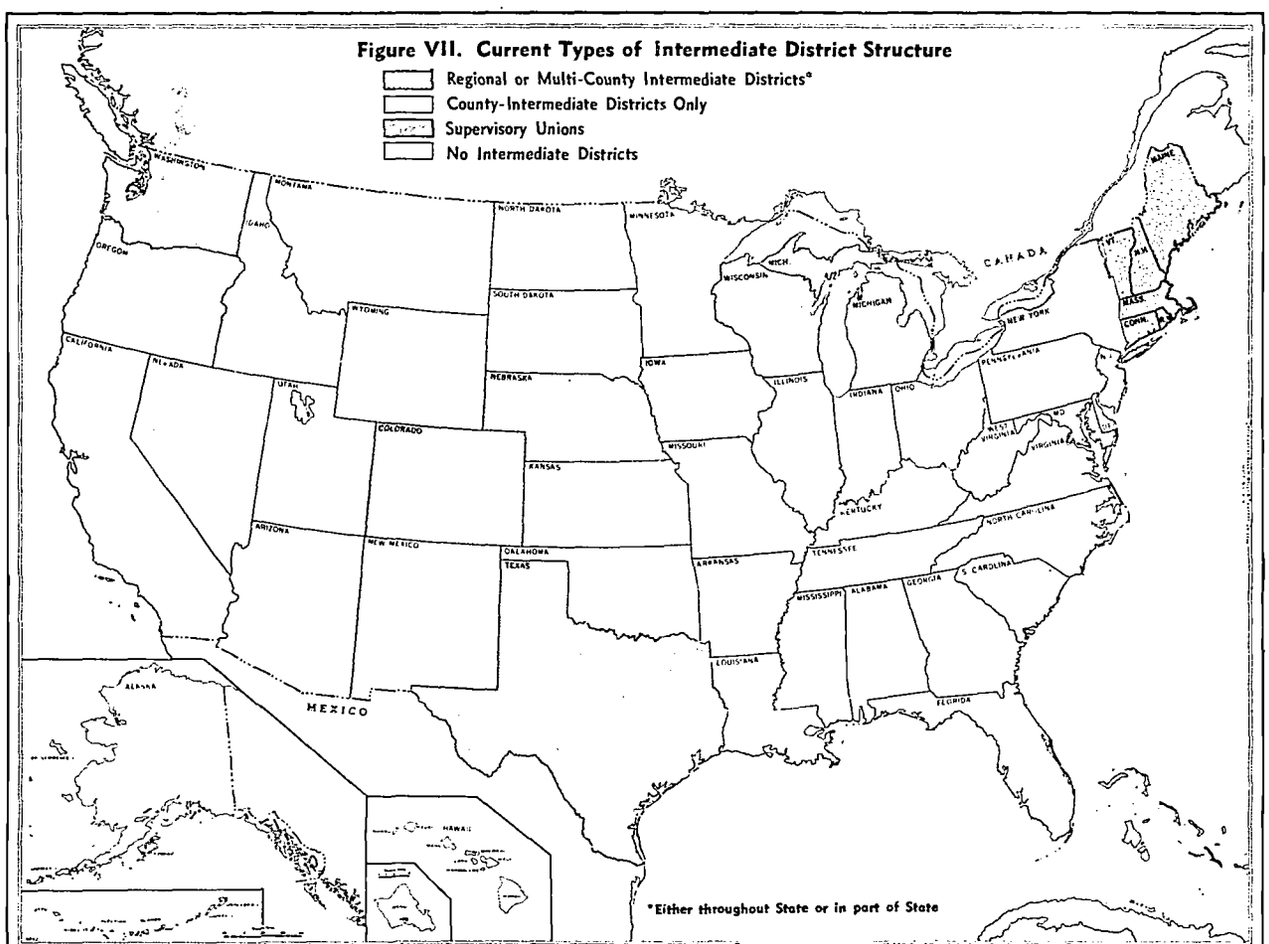


Figure VII. Current Types of Intermediate District Structure
Regional or Multi-County Intermediate Districts*
County-Intermediate Districts Only
Supervisory Unions
No Intermediate Districts
WASHINGTON
MONTANA
NORTH DAKOTA
MINNESOTA
OREGON
IDAHO
SOUTH DAKOTA
WYOMING
WISCONSIN
MICH.
MICHIGAN
CANADA
NEW YORK
MAINE
VT.
N.H.
MASS.
CONN.
R.I.
CALIFORNIA
NEVADA
UTAH
NEBRASKA
COLORADO
IOWA
ILLINOIS
INDIANA
OHIO
PENNSYLVANIA
W. VIRGINIA
MD.
VIRGINIA
MISSOURI
KANSAS
KENTUCKY
NORTH CAROLINA
ARIZONA
NEW MEXICO
OKLAHOMA
TEXAS
ARKANSAS
TENNESSEE
MISSISSIPPI
ALABAMA
GEORGIA
S. CAROLINA
LOUISIANA
FLORIDA
MEXICO
ALASKA
HAWAII
*Either throughout State or in part of State

too small to provide well-rounded programs, were nevertheless large enough to provide for themselves whatever supervisory and related services the county superintendency had been furnishing. In most States, the county structure was poorly designed to cope with these changes. County school superintendents in most instances were elected to office by popular vote. They were assigned a legal status comparable to such other elected county officials as the sheriff and assessor and were dependent on the county governing body for financing staff services which often consisted of clerical help only.

Thus restricted, their opportunities for supplementing and supporting the programs of reorganized districts were extremely limited. The ultimate effect came in counties, not all predominately rural, where all local districts were reorganized into single county-wide districts. Thus, it is not surprising that some people took the view that the intermediate district was outmoded, that it had no use other than serving small districts which ought to be reorganized.

Adjustments made

The responses by States to the impact of local school redistricting have varied widely, and can be classified as follows:

1. **Abolishment of all intermediate units.** Idaho, in the 1950s, enacted legislation which abolished the intermediate district in a county when local redistricting was completed. All have now been abolished.

2. **Elimination of part of the county intermediate districts without provision for replacement by another type.** Three States have eliminated intermediate districts in most of their counties: Mississippi in 71 of its 82 counties; South Carolina in 24 of its 46 counties; and Indiana in 70 of its 93 counties. Minnesota and Missouri both have permissive legislation which has been used in several counties; Wyoming, Kansas, and South Dakota also have such permissive legislation.

3. **Continuation of the existing pattern without any basic strengthening of it.** This response, or lack of response depending on the point of view, has been common to a number of States. With few exceptions these are States where the intermediate

district does not have a board of education. It is headed by a popularly elected county superintendent with little or no professional staff who must depend on the county governing body for financing his office. The prevalence of popularly elected county superintendents and intermediate districts without a board of education is indicated in Table 8.

TABLE 8

PREVALENCE OF COUNTY INTERMEDIATE DISTRICT BOARDS OF EDUCATION AND METHODS OF SELECTING THE COUNTY SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS IN 24 STATES

State	County Intermediate District Board of Education	Method of selecting county intermediate superintendent	
		Elected	Appointed
Arizona	No	X	
Arkansas	Yes		X
California	Yes	X[1]	
Colorado	No	X	
Illinois	No	X	
Indiana	Yes		X
Iowa	Yes		X
Kansas	No	X	
Michigan	Yes		X
Minnesota	No	X	
Mississippi	Yes	X	
Missouri	Yes[2]	X	
Montana	No	X	
Nebraska	No	X	
New Jersey	No		X
North Dakota	No	X	
Ohio	Yes		X
Oklahoma	No	X	
Oregon	Yes		X
South Carolina	Yes	X	
South Dakota	Yes	X	
Texas	Yes	X[1]	
Washington	Yes	X	
Wyoming	No	X	

[1]Appointed in some counties.

[2]Functions primarily in school district reorganization planning.

4. **Strengthening the existing structure without enlarging its component units.** Beginning in the late 1940's, several States started making their county intermediate districts more effective without restructuring them. California began providing liberal amounts of State aid to finance expansion of intermediate district services to local districts and in the 1950's provided for lay boards of education. Michigan established boards of education and appointive superintendents in all counties and later started providing State aid for specified district programs. Iowa established county boards empowered to appoint the superintendent and to levy taxes to provide services to local districts. Oregon took similar action several years later. Pennsylvania provided State aid.

In Michigan and Iowa, these important measures were forerunners of significant developments in restructuring county intermediate districts.

5. **Establishing enlarged intermediate districts.** This type of response, undertaken by eight States as shown earlier in Figure VII, will be described after first considering another significant trend.

Intermediate district development in metropolitan areas

The view that an intermediate structure can be useful only where districts are small has been most sharply challenged by development of expanded intermediate district programs in suburban counties in metropolitan areas. In a number of States these large intermediate units, with their mushrooming suburban communities served by good-sized local districts, have been pace-setters in demonstrating what can be accomplished.

This has not been simply a matter of serving small local districts until they become large enough, either through population increase or reorganization, to be more self-sufficient. For example, in the Philadelphia metropolitan area the Bucks County intermediate unit is currently serving 13 local districts enrolling approximately 82,000 pupils. The Oakland County, Michigan,

intermediate unit provides services to 29 local districts with a total enrollment of nearly 250,000. In the Buffalo, New York metropolitan area, the Erie County intermediate unit, with a professional staff numbering over 250, is providing a broad array of supplementary and supporting services to 19 local districts ranging in size from 2,000 to 8,000 pupils and having a combined enrollment of more than 80,000. The San Diego County, California, intermediate district, with a total operating budget of nearly $2.7 million in 1967, provides an exceptionally broad program ranging from production of instructional resources to data processing for 51 school districts, including San Diego city, with a combined enrollment exceeding 290,000 pupils.

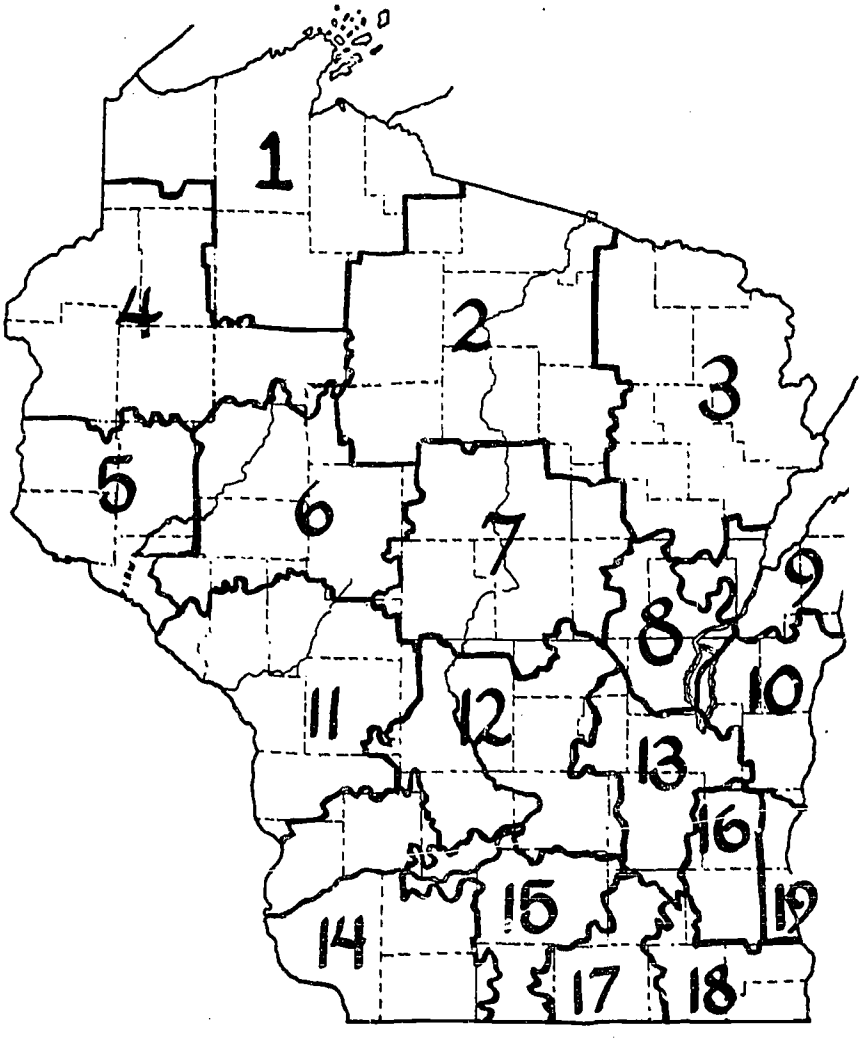
Reorganized Intermediate Service Agencies

In regions outside of metropolitan areas basic improvement of the programs of traditional intermediate districts is dependent upon enlarging them sufficiently so they can function effectively as educational service agencies. As earlier noted, recent years have brought a significant trend in that direction.

The intermediate district restructuring undertaken in the eight States identified in Figure VII can be classified as follows:

1. **Abolishment of county intermediate districts and mandatory replacement with regional education service agencies.** Wisconsin, which since 1947 has reduced its local districts from over 6,000 to 570, in 1965 abolished its 72 county intermediate districts and replaced them with 19 new Cooperative Educational Service Agencies. Each agency has an 11-member lay board of education elected by the board members of the local districts in the service area. The agency board appoints the administrator. Agency boundary lines do not generally conform to county boundaries (Figure VIII) (p. 38). The pupil enrollment ranges from 18,000 to 203,000 pupils; five of the 19 agencies have over 50,000 pupils. A major handicap is the lack of taxing power and the small amount of State subsidy with the result that heavy dependence must be placed on local district funding of the services.

Figure VIII. Areas Served by Wisconsin's 19 Cooperative Educational Service Agencies



Source: State Department of Public Instruction, Madison, Wisconsin.

2. **Establishment of regional education service agencies without abolishment of county intermediate districts.** Texas in 1965 enacted legislation authorizing the State board of education to establish Education Media Centers throughout the State in accord with prescribed rules and regulations. A 1967 law increased the number of functions covered in the 1965 law. Each regional center must serve an area having a minimum of 50,000 pupils with exception for sparsely populated areas. The State has been divided into 20 Regional Education Service Centers (Figure IX) (p. 40). Each has a five or seven member board of directors chosen by a joint committee composed of one representative from each 12-grade district and one representative designated by each county board of education in the region. This joint committee also serves the regional board in an advisory capacity.

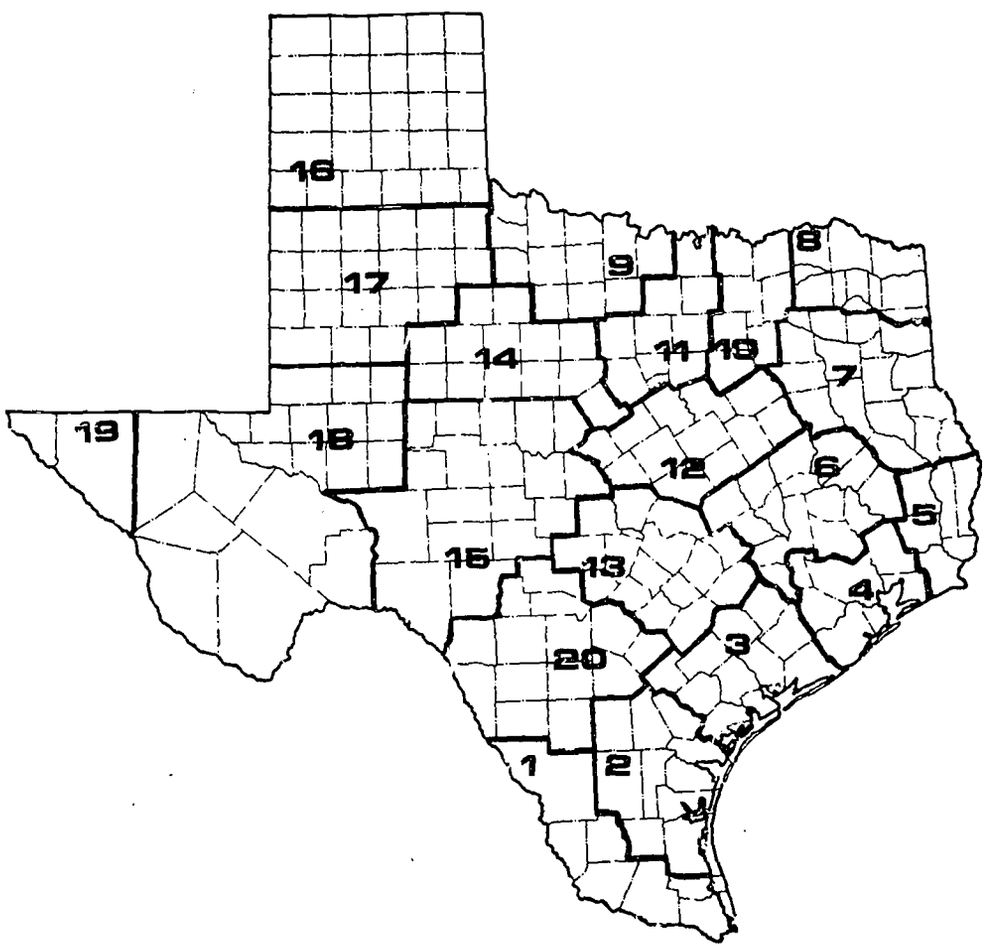
The regional board appoints an executive director, formulates policy, approves fiscal arrangements, and confirms staff appointments on recommendation by the director.

Participation by local districts in services provided is voluntary. State aid is provided to match local district contributions up to a maximum of $1 per pupil annually.

Among the functions and services Regional Education Service Centers are authorized to provide are the following:

- regional educational planning, both locally oriented and contributing to statewide educational planning
- provision of in-service training for local district personnel, including administrators, teachers, and teacher aides
- provision of pupil diagnostic services; special service programs for handicapped and for gifted pupils
- supply supporting instructional services, including curriculum development, assistance to local district staff, and instructional materials and media
- coordinate and encourage development of projects funded by the Federal Government under Title III of the Elementary and Secondary Education Acts.
- establish one or more service center components in a locality remote from center headquarters

Figure IX. Texas Education Service Regions



Note: Lines within service regions indicate county boundaries.

Nebraska in 1965 enacted legislation creating 19 new multi-county educational service units covering the entire State. The educational service unit board consists of one member from each county in the unit plus four members at large. The unit board is empowered to appoint an administrator, employ staff members, and to levy a one-mill property tax. The law included a provision whereby citizens could vote on excluding their county from membership in the service unit. Nineteen counties were excluded, but 11 of the service units were left intact. Although the law created a new pattern of intermediate units, no provision was made for abolishment of the county intermediate superintendency.

3. **County option on abolishing the county intermediate superintendency and local district option on forming new-type intermediate service agencies.** Colorado in 1965 enacted permissive legislation which resulted the next year in the abolishment by county referendum of the county superintendency in 35 of the State's 63 counties.

Also in 1965 another new law was enacted authorizing local district boards to organize boards of cooperative services for purposes of performing contracted services cooperatively for their constituent local districts or for supplementing their fiscal, administrative, or educational functions. A board of cooperative services may be created by vote of interested local district boards assembled in a special meeting. The cooperative board may have five to nine members but if more than nine local districts are involved each must have one member. Cooperative services are financed by participating local districts.

As of October 1967, 13 boards of cooperative services had been formed involving 90 of the 183 districts in Colorado. Two of the most recently established cooperative boards are in the Denver metropolitan area; one of these includes eight suburban districts with a combined enrollment of 40,000 pupils, and the other includes five suburban districts with 45,000 pupils. Another, located in a farming area in the southern part of the State, is composed of 15 local districts in six counties; this cooperative board has been granted funds under Title III of the ESEA for planning a summer school camp to serve the gifted, retarded, and educationally and culturally deprived children in its service area.

Four other cooperative boards are also operating ESEA Title III projects. Although the programs of the cooperative boards vary, they also have common elements, especially in the area of teacher in-service training, special education, and cooperative purchasing.

4. **Consolidation of small intermediate districts.** Michigan in 1962 enacted legislation requiring consolidation of county intermediate districts with a school membership of fewer than 5,000 pupils. As a result of this legislation, 37 of the State's 83 county intermediate units have been involved in 14 multi-county consolidations: eight two-county; four three-county; one four-county; and one five-county.

New York has been consolidating its intermediate districts for many years, and currently has a state-wide network of 60 Boards of Cooperative Educational Services. Several consolidations have been multi-county, but some of the large populous counties still have more than one intermediate district.

Especially significant is the broad range of educational services which New York's intermediate districts furnish to local districts on an optional basis. State financial aid is allocated for many programs and services on the basis of standards prescribed by the State education agency.

Most intermediate districts have for years provided area vocational education programs, some quite limited and others covering an extensive range of subject offerings. This year Cooperative Boards were authorized to construct facilities for area vocational schools and other programs, and State aid will be provided for that purpose.

5. **State-wide plan of intermediate district enlargement, with provision for adoption by county boards of education.** Washington in 1965 enacted legislation requiring the State Board of Education to develop a state-wide plan of enlarged intermediate units and prescribing adoption of the new units by vote of the local district boards in the counties involved in each proposal. In January 1966, the State Board adopted a plan of 15 new intermediate districts. By November 1966, five new intermediate units had been created. Elections in six others had failed, in most instances because of adverse votes by one county or by adverse votes of sparsely

Figure X. Iowa: Merged Areas for Area Community Colleges and Area Vocational Schools

Unorganized counties

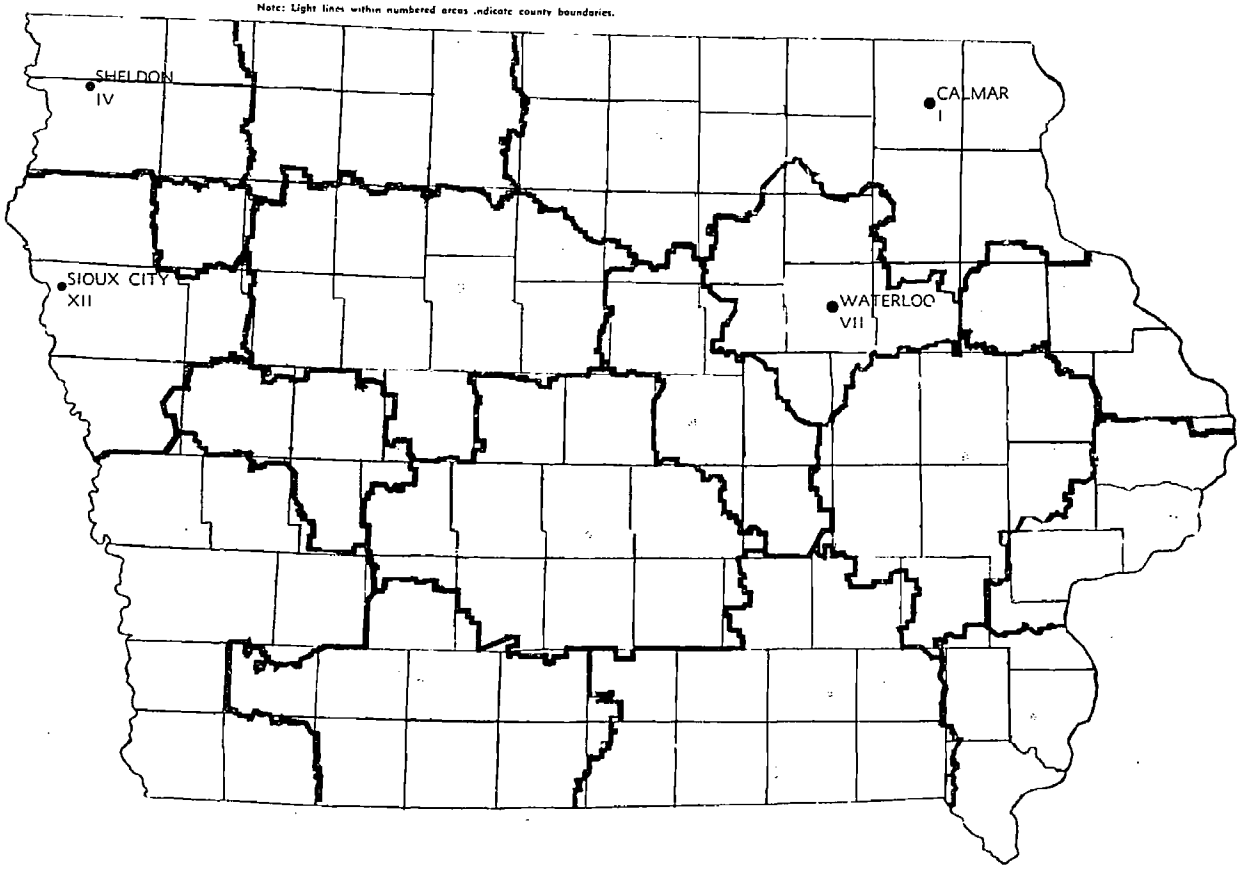
Multi-County intermediate districts

• Administrative Center

Note: Light lines within numbered areas indicate county boundaries.

Administrative centers printed in green contain Area Community Colleges

Administrative centers printed in black contain Area Vocational Schools



populated counties. The Legislative Interim Committee on Education has recommended that the proposed enlarged units recommended by the State Board of Education be established by law, that intermediate boards be empowered to appoint an intermediate superintendent, and that the provision be made for a more effective method of financing intermediate district programs.

Iowa has approached the problem of enlarging its county intermediate districts to conform with the development of area vocational school and community college organization. In 1964, legislation was enacted providing for a state-wide pattern of merged areas, subject to approval by the State Board of Education, for establishment of area vocational schools or community colleges. By September 1966, the State Board had approved 15 merged areas, 10 of which were designated for community college and five for area vocational school purposes. The 10 community colleges will also offer vocational-technical programs. A proposed sixteenth merged area had been sent back for modification, and all except seven of the State's 99 counties had been included in the state-wide plan. Area boards, consisting of five to nine members elected by popular vote, are empowered to levy a three-fourths-mill tax for operation of programs. With approval of the voters, an additional three-fourths-mill tax may be levied for facilities or bonds may be issued for that purpose. State subsidy is provided for program operation and construction of buildings.

Iowa also has legislation permitting county boards of education to merge two or more adjacent county intermediate districts subject to approval by the State Board. The joint county intermediate unit is governed by an elected seven-member board with power to tax and to appoint its superintendent (county intermediate boards have been so empowered since 1947.) The State Board has adopted the policy of limiting its approval to county intermediate district mergers whose areas will conform to the merged areas established for area vocational schools or community colleges. In July 1966, two counties merged to form the first multi-county intermediate district in the State. Two additional mergers—one a two-county and the other a four-county merger—took effect in July 1967. Another seven-county area is engaged in a planning project, funded under Title III of ESEA to determine appropriate functions and services of a multi-county intermediate district.

State Education Agencies

The socio-economic conditions and rising educational needs that have affected local and intermediate district structure have also had a strong impact on State education agency structure. Over one-third of the States have made major changes in State education agency structure since 1945.

Even after all of the structural changes made since 1945, wide variations still remain. This applies to all major components of State education agencies. The major components considered here are: (1) the State board of education, (2) the chief State school officer, and (3) the State department of education staff.

The State Board of Education

Forty-eight States, all except Illinois and Wisconsin, have a State board of education. Of these 48 States, eight (Iowa, Maine, Michigan, Nebraska, North Dakota, Ohio, Rhode Island, and South Dakota), have established State boards of education since 1947.

Number of members

The size of State boards of education ranges from 23 members in Ohio to three in Mississippi (Table 9) (p. 46). However, 40 State boards fall in the five-to-11-member range. The most common size is seven members—12 States; the next most common size is nine members—eight States. Thirty-three of the 48 States have odd-numbered boards.

Type of membership

The membership of State boards of education consists of two types:

1. Members chosen specifically for service on the State board.
2. Members who serve ex-officio, or by virtue of other State office or position held.

Of the 48 State boards, 34 have no ex-officio members. In Florida and Mississippi the State board of education is composed entirely of ex-officio members (Table 9). In North Dakota three of the five members are ex-officio. Although 11 other State boards have one or more ex-officio members, none has a majority.

There is a marked trend toward elimination of ex-officio membership, down from 21 States in 1950 to 14 States in 1966.

In each of these 14 States the chief State school officer is an ex-officio member and is the only ex-officio member in four. In all of the 14 States, except Massachusetts, where he is an ex-officio member, he is elected to his position as chief State school officer by popular vote.

TABLE 9

SIZE OF MEMBERSHIP OF STATE BOARDS OF EDUCATION

Number of Members	State
23	Ohio
21	Texas
19	Indiana (1)
14	Washington
13	New York, North Carolina (3)
12	New Jersey
11	Alabama (2), Hawaii, Louisiana, Massachusetts (2), Montana (3), Tennessee (2)
10	California, Georgia, Maine, New Mexico, Pennsylvania
9	Arizona (3), Arkansas, Connecticut, Iowa, Minnesota, South Carolina (2), Utah, West Virginia, Wyoming
8	Kentucky (1), Michigan, Missouri, Nevada
7	Kansas, Maryland, New Hampshire, Oklahoma (1), Oregon, Rhode Island, South Dakota, Vermont, Virginia
6	Alaska, Delaware, Idaho (1), Nebraska
5	Colorado, Florida (5), North Dakota (3)
3	Mississippi (3)

( ) indicates number of ex-officio members.

Sources: Adapted from Robert F. Will, **State Education Structure and Organization**, Washington, D. C.: U. S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, Misc. No. 46, 1964, pp. 17 and 18. Updated on changes after 1963 from State sources.

Methods of selection

Figure XI (p. 50) shows the methods States use to select members (except ex-officios) of their State boards of education.

In 34 States members are appointed by the Governor. Wyoming adopted that method in 1967 to replace the unusual method whereby the chief State school officer appointed the members. In nine States members are elected to office by the people. All of these States, except Louisiana and Nevada, have adopted this method since 1947; the latest was Hawaii, in 1966.

Washington's State board members are elected by local district boards. Iowa used a similar method but recently changed to appointment by the Governor. In New York members are appointed by the legislature and in South Carolina by county delegations of the State legislature.

Responsibility for vocational education

In 46 States the scope of responsibility of the State board of education includes vocational education as well as elementary and secondary education. In Colorado and Indiana the State board of education does not have responsibility for vocational education. Illinois and Wisconsin have a State board of vocational education, but, as indicated earlier, no State board of education.

The Chief State School Officer

The chief State school officer occupies a key position in the State school system structure. Although the strength of this position still varies markedly among the States, it has everywhere been rapidly gaining in importance. The official title of the position also varies. In 27 States it is Superintendent of Public Instruction. The next most common title, in 15 States, is Commissioner of Education.

Methods of selection

Because of his leadership role in the State system of education, the method of selecting the chief State school officer is of importance. Selection methods are shown in Figure XII (p. 51). In four States he is appointed by the Governor. In 21 States he is elected by popular vote, in 15 States on a partisan ballot and in the other six States on a nonpartisan ballot. The most common

method of selection, used in 25 States, is appointment by the State board of education.

The strong trend toward appointment by the State board of education is indicated in Figure XII, which also indicates the year the 25 States adopted that method of selection. Seventeen year the 25 States adopted that method of selection. Seventeen Alaska made the change in 1967. Kansas made the change in 1966 with a constitutional amendment approved by the voters. It will be noted that the trend toward appointment by the State board of education is strongest in the Western part of the country. In former years both Massachusetts and Rhode Island used the board-appointed method, later changing to appointment by the Governor, and subsequently returned to the board-appointed method.

Length of term

The term of office for chief State school officers varies and bears a marked relation to the method of selection. Of the 21 States providing for election by popular vote, 16 prescribe four-year terms and five prescribe two-year terms. Of the 25 States providing for appointment by the State board of education, 17 provide for terms of indefinite length.

The State Department of Education

As used here the term "State Department of Education" means the staff organization of the State education agency headed by the chief State school officer.

Although in the great majority of States the department staff under the executive direction of the chief State school officer includes the vocational education staff, there are some notable exceptions. In Colorado, the vocational education staff is not under the direction of the chief State school officer. Wisconsin has the same arrangement. Idaho and South Dakota have a dual executive arrangement, wherein the director of vocational education is directly responsible to the State board of education; Kansas has had the same arrangement as Idaho, but this will change under the provision made in 1966 for State board appointment of the chief State school officer.

Staff size and imbalancing trends

Perhaps the most striking characteristics of most State department of education staffs until quite recently have been their small size and lack of balance. Over the years, growth in staff size largely occurred in federally subsidized areas causing neglect of vital areas not subsidized by Federal programs.

In 1947-48 vocational education and vocational rehabilitation accounted for more than half the total department professional staff in at least 33 States. Only five departments had more than 50 professionals in other fields of education and 19 departments had fewer than 20.

New Federal programs begun during the 1950's accentuated the trend. By 1960 more than half the professional staff in all departments combined were assigned to federally subsidized programs; in 13 States the proportion was over 70 percent.

Even with this imbalancing growth, most departments were still quite small. By 1962, only 10 departments had a total professional staff of more than 100, and 21 had fewer than 50. In comparison, according to a 1962 study by the National Education Association, the Cincinnati, Ohio, school system with 81,500 pupils had 106 central office administrators and supervisor; Kansas City, Missouri, with 70,000 pupils had 50; and Omaha, Nebraska, with 52,000 pupils had 45. All three of these city school systems were below the national average in administrative and supervisory staff ratios of city systems in their size classification.

Broadly used Federal support

To help the States in overcoming these staff shortages and imbalances, in 1965 the Congress enacted Title V of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act. This new assistance program covers a broad range of State department of education functions, including the following:

—Provide consultative and technical assistance to local school districts
—Provide for training of State and local education personnel
—Promote teacher improvement courses
—Improve State and local information about education

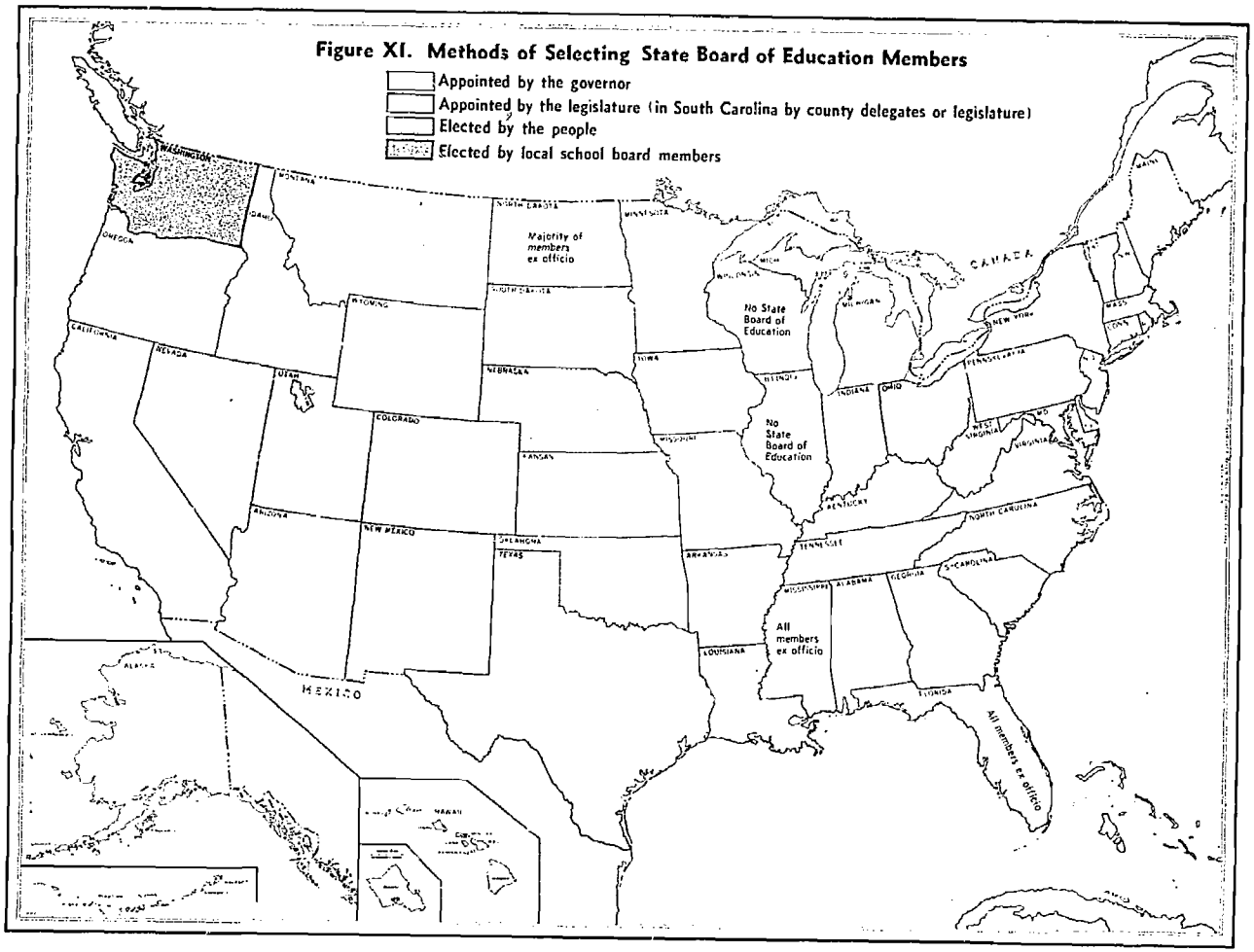


Figure XI. Methods of Selecting State Board of Education Members
Appointed by the governor
Appointed by the legislature (in South Carolina by county delegates or legislature)
Elected by the people
Elected by local school board members
Majority of members ex officio
No State Board of Education
No State Board of Education
All members ex officio
All members ex officio
CANADA
MEXICO
WASHINGTON
MONTANA
NORTH DAKOTA
MINNESOTA
OREGON
IDAHO
WYOMING
SOUTH DAKOTA
CALIFORNIA
NEVADA
UTAH
COLORADO
NEBRASKA
IOWA
KANSAS
ARIZONA
NEW MEXICO
OKLAHOMA
TEXAS
MISSOURI
ARKANSAS
LOUISIANA
ILLINOIS
INDIANA
OHIO
KENTUCKY
TENNESSEE
MISSISSIPPI
ALABAMA
GEORGIA
FLORIDA
SOUTH CAROLINA
NORTH CAROLINA
VIRGINIA
WEST VIRGINIA
PENNSYLVANIA
NEW YORK
MAINE
MASS
CONN
ALASKA
HAWAII

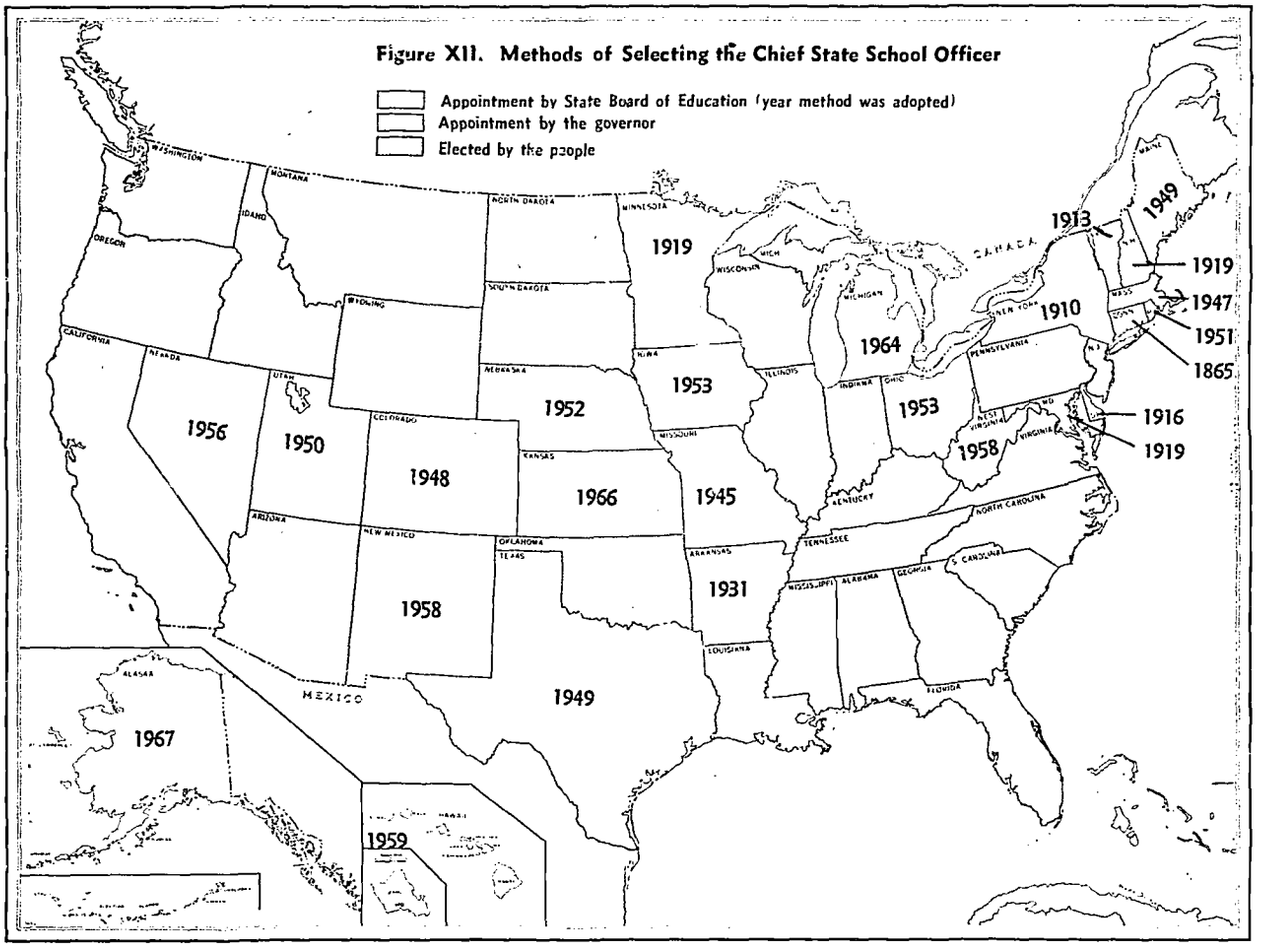


Figure XII. Methods of Selecting the Chief State School Officer
Appointment by State Board of Education (year method was adopted)
Appointment by the governor
Elected by the people
1956
1950
1948
1952
1953
1919
1964
1913
1949
1919
1947
1951
1865
1910
1953
1916
1919
1958
1966
1945
1931
1958
1949
1967
1959
MEXICO
CANADA

—Conduct periodic evaluation of educational programs
—Identify emerging educational problems
—Expand educational research and development
—Formulate long-range plans

State responses have been in keeping with the purposes listed above. To illustrate the point, Figure XIII shows the distribution of the 913 additional personnel employed in fiscal year 1966 according to the general program function to which they were assigned. It will be noted that the greatest staffing emphasis was given to instructional improvement (30.5 percent), followed by study, planning and evaluation (15.7 percent) and general administration (15.3 percent).

Staff increases in undermanned program areas indicate only part of the improvements made. Other indicators were: state-wide studies of educational programs, district organization and finance; development of curriculum guides and instructional materials; in-service training of local district personnel; development of data processing and statistical services; and educational program planning.

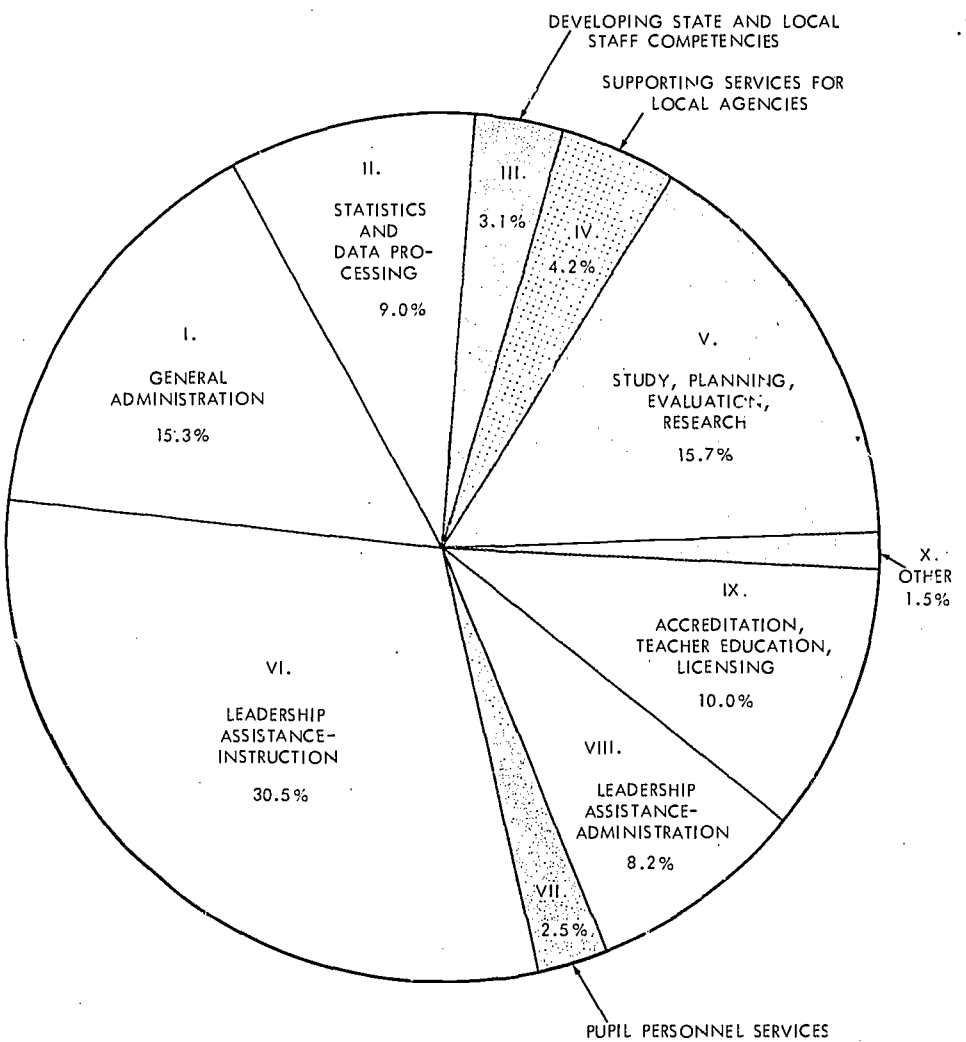
The amount of funds that made it possible to initiate these improvements was not large: $11 million as compared with a total expenditure of $138.9 million in the 1965 fiscal year. Nor was it anywhere near sufficient to enable departments generally to meet their expanding opportunities for leadership and service to the State system of education.

Staff organization trends

With their great variations in staff size and differences in staff functions, State departments of education also vary in how the staff is organized to carry out its responsibilities. However, even though the departmental staff organization differs in various ways among the 50 States, there are a number of significant organizational trends.

Evidence of the following trends is based on information furnished by State departments of education for the *Education Directory of State Governments* which is published annually by the U. S. Office of Education.

FIGURE XIII
PERSONNEL EMPLOYED BY STATE DEPARTMENTS OF EDUCATION
TITLE V. SECTION 503
BY PROGRAM FUNCTION CATEGORY
FISCAL YEAR 1966



Source: U.S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, Office of Education, Reinforcing the Role of States in Education: The Second Annual Report of the Advisory Council on State Departments of Education. Washington, D. C.: Government Printing Office, 1967. P. 16.

1. **Greater organizational emphasis on instructional and curriculum service functions**. Extensively expanded in recent years, these service functions are most commonly grouped together in a major division of the department headed by an associate or assistant superintendent who is directly responsible to the chief State school officer. This major division also commonly includes a number of component units which, although varying from State to State, indicate a broadened scope of services to local school systems. Component units tend to be organized on the basis of specialized services provided. Elementary and secondary subject-matter specialists are often grouped in one major divisional unit under a director, rather than organized under separate directors. Some large departments, notably New York and Pennsylvania, have grouped subject-matter specialists into team units according to specialization, as mathematics, science, foreign languages, and social studies.

2. **Functional units in the fields of special education and pupil personnel services**. Nearly half the departments now have an organizational unit composed of specialists in the education of handicapped children. A similar trend also applies to the field of pupil personnel, or guidance and counselling services. Both of these units are most commonly organized as components within the major division of instructional services.

3. **Organizational placement of vocational education within the department**. In the 45 States where vocational education in 1966-67 was a function of the State department of education, it was most commonly organized as a major division headed by an administrator who was directly responsible to the chief State school officer. However, in 10 of the 45 States (California, Georgia, Indiana, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, New York, Ohio, Oklahoma, and Pennsylvania) vocational education was organized as one of the component units within the major division of instructional services.

4. **Organization of administrative services to local school systems as a major division of the department**. Approximately half of the departments now have a major division, headed by an assistant or associate superintendent, which is composed of

personnel responsible for providing administrative services to local school systems. Included in such divisions are a variety of administrative service units. The most common are the fields of school finance, school buildings, pupil transportation, and hot lunch programs. Other less common service components include statistics and data processing, school district reorganization, and legal services.

5. **Internal administrative management service units.** These organization components, each typically rather small, are designed to aid the chief State school officer and his principal assistants in conducting the internal affairs of the department, particularly in such areas as departmental business management and budget, and staff personnel administration. This trend is most pronounced among larger departments. In some instances such departmental services, along with other functions, are organized directly under the deputy superintendent; in others as a separate composite unit of departmental administrative services.

6. **Supporting service units.** These organizational components provide special services for the department in such areas as public relations and informational services; graphic arts, publications, and editorial services; professional library; and legal services for the department.

7. **Organization for administration and coordination of Federal programs of elementary and secondary school support.** The programs considered here are the NDEA Titles III and V and ESEA Titles I, II, and III. The organizational arrangements, as revealed by the *Education Directory of State Governments,* for administering these programs varies markedly. The most common pattern is placement of both these NDEA and ESEA programs in the division of instructional services. In a number of States, however, the ESEA Titles I and II programs, and in some instances Title III also, are not in the instructional division; instead, the responsibility is placed either in another division which also has other responsibilities, such as administrative services, or a division established specifically for that purpose. Illustrative of the latter is the Division of Federal Assistance in the Ohio Department of Education.

The establishment of a Federal program coordinating unit or a Federal-State relations unit, usually located administratively under the chief State school officer or a deputy, has become a marked trend in recent years.

8. **Organization of statistical and data-processing services.** During the past decade statistical services have been greatly expanded, largely due to the Federal grants program under Title X of NDEA. Frequently, a statistical unit is established to provide department-wide services. Most usually this unit is either placed directly under the deputy superintendent, in the administrative services division, or as a part of the research unit.

A more recent development is in electronic data-processing. Although this relatively new and rapidly growing service function is often organized as a part of the statistical services unit, the trend is to set up a separate unit which most frequently is placed in the division of administrative services or under the deputy superintendent. Accompanying the data-processing trend is the establishment of organizational units responsible for developing educational data systems. Such data systems not yet in widespread use include the areas of instructional programs, staff personnel, pupils, school facilities and school finance, and are designed to provide basic information for purposes of reporting, research, and decision-making at both State and local levels. In Florida, information systems development and data processing are organized as separate units under the deputy superintendent. Wisconsin has a unit on educational information systems, which includes a data processing consultant under the assistant superintendent for administrative and staff services. Iowa has an associate superintendent for educational data systems, under whom is (1) a data processing unit, (2) a unit responsible for data systems development, and (3) a unit for operation of the Iowa educational information center.

9. **Structure for research and the expanding research role.** An important aspect of State department of education development is the increasing emphasis on research. The need for this emphasis is indicated by the following excerpts from a 1963 policy statement of the Council of Chief State School Officers:

> The State department of education encounters a wide variety of problems where research is necessary to the effective exercise of leadership in the state system of education . . . (and) . . . should have an organizational unit with research activities as its primary responsibility, operating in close cooperation with other departmental units.[5]

Several trends illustrate the increasing importance of research in departmental organization and functions.

- **Widespread prevalence of research units.** Forty-seven departments were reported in 1966-67 as having a research unit or a staff member whose primary responsibility was research. There were only 27 such departments in 1957-58.

- **Placement in departmental organization.** The general trend is to make research a department-wide service. One indication of this is that in 23 States it is placed in the first echelon under the chief State school officer; in six States it is directly under the deputy or chief assistant superintendent. In the other 19 States the research unit is a part of a first echelon service area, most commonly administrative services. In four States the research head holds the title of associate superintendent or commissioner, and in two others, assistant superintendent.

- **Concentration on research and research related functions.** In slightly over a fifth of the States the unit for research also has other major responsibilities, such as publications or school finance. The general trend, however, is to make the research unit either solely responsible for research or to include in it other functions that are essentially research related.

- **Subordination of statistical services.** In departments where research and statistical services are combined in the same unit, the general trend is to place the latter in a subordinate position as one part of the research unit. This would indicate that statistical service is becoming a secondary rather than a primary function of the research unit.

- **Expansion to include essentially related functions.** There is a tendency to combine research with the essentially related functions of educational planning, development, and evaluation.

[5] Council of Chief State School Officers, **State Department of Education Leadership Through Research: A Policy Statement,** Washington, D. C. The Council, 1963, pp. 3 and 13.

In Colorado, Maryland, and Massachusetts the unit for research is entitled "Research and Development"; in Rhode Island and Utah it is entitled "Research and Planning"; and in Texas, "Research and Assessment." In New York the major unit for research, which is headed by an associate commissioner, has two divisions, one for research and the other for education evaluation.

10. **Establishment of educational planning units.** One of the newest and most significant trends in State education agency development is the emerging emphasis on department-wide educational planning units. No doubt a number of factors have been responsible for this emerging trend. One factor is the growing realization that systematic, comprehensive educational planning is essential to meeting educational needs in the State, that educational planning should pervade all aspects and levels of the State system of education, and that State departments of education have a key responsibility for such planning. Another factor is Title V of ESEA, mentioned earlier. In writing Title V, the Congress suggested 10 areas in which State education agencies might be strengthened; the first of which was "educational planning on a state-wide basis . . ." A third factor is the emphasis on planning in several of the special interstate projects funded under Section 505 of Title V. One of these, *Designing Education for the Future,* is an eight-State project. Another, *Comprehensive Educational Planning for State Education Agencies,* involves seven States, including two of those participating in the eight-State project.

The emphasis on educational planning is also part of a general trend applicable to all major aspects of State government. A policy statement of State planning prepared by a subcommittee of the 1961 Governors' Conference carried the following two recommendations:

1. . . . that each state create a central planning unit that can take into account all state development efforts and help coordinate and integrate these into an overall plan.

2. . . . that each state reexamine the need for planning units in its major operating agencies to strengthen existing units or establish new ones where they are considered desirable.

With respect to the above recommendations the policy statement concluded:

> Thus the states must organize for planning services at two levels: one level covering the whole gamut of state development functions and their interrelationships; the other covering the preparation of precise plans for each functional part.[6]

The trend of establishing a planning unit in State departments of education is in keeping with the second recommendation stated above. The broadening of research by several departments to "research and development" or "research and planning" may be regarded, in some instances at least, as part of that trend.
The major thrust of the trend, however, is the development of structural units for planning. Such units are department-wide in scope of responsibility and are placed directly under the chief State school officer or his deputy. Although established and functioning, most of these planning units are still in process of developing a comprehensive approach that involves planning at local and regional levels.

The States participating in the interstate project, *Comprehensive Planning for State Education Agencies,* are currently engaged in developing models for comprehensive planning. In developing its model each State is concentrating on a specific aspect of comprehensive planning such as metropolitan school system planning, that is of particular significance in that State.

Among the planning structures currently under development, the Texas Education Agency's structure offers a significant illustration. The planning unit is headed by an associate commissioner for planning directly under the deputy commissioner. The planning unit has two components: one for innovation and communication, and one for assessment and research which includes administration of programs under Title III of ESEA.

The State structure for planning is tied to the Regional Education Service Center structure, earlier described on pages 44-47. It may be recalled that educational planning is a major function of these

[6] Sub-Committee on State Planning, The Governors' Conference, **State Planning: A Policy Statement,** The Council on State Governments, Chicago, Illinois, 1962.

regional centers. The provisions which follow have been established by State board policy to facilitate effective performance of regional planning, local planning within regions, and state-wide coordination. The chairmen of the 20 regional boards have been designated to serve as a state-wide advisory commission to advise the Commissioner of Education on the operation of the regional centers. Each regional board has responsibility for coordinating educational planning within its region, including development of Title III projects to serve the region. Each region has a joint committee, appointed by local district boards, whose duties include advising the regional board and assisting in the evaluation of regional programs and services. The 20 regional executive directors constitute a State planning council to advise the State Commissioner. The Council meets monthly with him for that purpose. Regional executive directors also have the responsibility of working with agencies engaged in metropolitan planning or in other planning activities within their regions.

The planning relationships described above became operational in mid-1967 when the regional boards were organized and had employed their executive directors.

Relationships with Large City School Systems

The sharpest challenge to State school system development is in the big cities. Viewed in historical perspective this is something new.

Until recent decades large city school systems were in the forefront of educational programs. Many of the great reforms in school organization and administration, as well as the instructional and school program innovations that have since become commonplace, had their origin in the big cities. The big cities had the financial resources to forge ahead. They were very largely self-sufficient. But the inundating tides of urbanization brought momentous changes.

The past two decades have been years of mounting crisis. Massive in-migration of the poor and disadvantaged, the exodus of white people to the suburbs, increasing racial imbalances, ghetto schools, mushrooming pupil enrollments are some of the major elements

of the crisis. Past experience provided no pat answers on how to meet it. Financial resources lagged behind the costs of keeping the schools going, even on a business-as-usual basis.

It has been asserted with considerable reason that a big city school system has more in common with others of its size elsewhere than it has with other local districts in the State. But, however true that may be, it does not offer a means of solving the basic problems. In the long pull that can be accomplished only through more effective relationships established within the State.

The financial factor alone has brought big city schools into a new relationship with State government. Measures of "ability to pay" in State equalization aid programs have generally been much more highly developed and refined than have measures of determining educational need for State aid. Most States provide aid for pupil transportation, a need found mostly in rural areas. A sizable number of States provide more aid for the extra costs of small schools that are considered necessary operating units. An increasing number provide additional aid for meeting the extra costs of educating handicapped pupils. All these provisions have ample justification. But rare is the State finance plan that makes provision for meeting the extra costs of educating children in ghetto schools. It is no wonder that big city school boards and administrators have become so interested in the provisions for allocating State school aids.

School finance is only one facet of the total pattern. The legal structures affecting the relationships of big city systems with the State department of education and other State governmental agencies is another facet. A third is the coordination of metropolitan planning and big city educational planning with the planning at the State level—the Governor's central agency and the State department of education. Enumeration of others would only belabor the point that the problems of big city schools are also problems of State departments of education.

It can be claimed that State departments of education generally are not fully prepared to deal with the mounting challenges imposed by large city schools, that they are strongly oriented to assisting smaller systems. Their rural orientation is understand-

able, for until recently that was where the most pressing problems were, and where the need for assistance was most urgent. However, there are indications of an increasing concern for the big city school problem. The following illustrations give evidence of this.

One of the interstate projects funded under Title V of ESEA deals with improving the relationships between State departments of education and big city school systems. The project currently has studies underway dealing with school finance problems and with legal structures affecting big city systems.

The Colorado department now has a staff consultant on urban school problems; another staff member is assigned to assisting city districts and their suburban satellites to set up cooperative service programs.

Early in January, 1968, the Ohio State Board of Education established a new administrative service unit headed by an Assistant Superintendent for Urban Education. According to the Ohio State Department of Education *Newsletter,* a Commission on Urban School Development is being organized to work with the new service unit in studying needs of large city schools and designing new curriculum, programs and facilities to meet them.

In 1960, the New York department initiated a cooperative review program under which school systems desiring assistance in making a thorough review, particularly in instructional improvement, would be provided that service. The first review was made in New York City. It took nearly a year to make the review and many department staff members assisted for varying periods of time. Both the department and the city school system also employed outside consultants to assist with the review. Last year a similar review was made in Buffalo in which over 125 department staff members were involved.

These examples, by no means intended to be representative of all that is being done, nevertheless point to the likelihood of an emerging trend. The needs for it to grow are urgent. And there is reason to believe that it will.

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