High school district reorganization in western Hill County

Howard Woodrow Hammond

The University of Montana

1952

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HIGH SCHOOL DISTRICT REORGANIZATION IN
WESTERN HILL COUNTY

by

HOWARD W. HAMMOND
B.A., Montana State University, 1951

Presented in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree of
Master of Education

MONTANA STATE UNIVERSITY
1952
This professional paper has been approved by the Board of Examiners in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Education.

Chairman of the Board of Examiners

Dean of the Graduate School

Date June 2, 1952
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chapter</th>
<th>THE PROBLEM AND ITS SETTING</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I.</td>
<td>THE PROBLEM AND ITS SETTING</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The Problem, 2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Statement of the problem, 2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Delimitation of the field of the study, 2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Importance of the study, 2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Setting of the Problem, 4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>A review of the steps leading to the present situation, 4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Present conditions, 12</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Proposed plans, 12</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>II.</td>
<td>PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS OF DATA</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Areas to be considered, 16</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Presentation of data, 16</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Population of school districts, 17</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Farm-unit census, 18</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Distribution of school population, 19</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>School enrollments and future projections by areas, 20</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Area A, 22</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Area B, 24</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Area C, 24</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Area D, 26</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Area E, 26</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Accessibility of existing roads, 26</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Valuations and mill levies, 28</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Districts, 28</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Area A, 29</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Area B, 32</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Area C, 32</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Area D, 33</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Area E, 33</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Transportation costs and existing bus routes, 33</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Bonding limits, 36</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter</td>
<td>Page</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------</td>
<td>------</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>III. INFLUENCES OF POSSIBLE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENTS ON SCHOOL POPULATION</td>
<td>39</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marias Irrigation Project</td>
<td>39</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Influence of oil activity</td>
<td>43</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IV. SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS</td>
<td>44</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>One-school Plan</td>
<td>44</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Two-school Plans</td>
<td>49</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Areas B and C</td>
<td>49</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Areas D and E</td>
<td>52</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conclusions and recommendations</td>
<td>53</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BIBLIOGRAPHY</td>
<td>56</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>APPENDIX</td>
<td>58</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
LIST OF TABLES

Table                                      Page

I. Population of School Districts in Western Hill County, 1950..................17
II. Enrollment of Districts Operating High Schools in Western Hill County for Last Five Years ....21
III. Projected Enrollments for Area A .............................................23
IV. Projected Enrollments for Area B and Area C ................................25
V. Projected Enrollments for Area D and Area E ..................................27
VI. Comparative Levies over Last Five Years, Hill County ........................30
VII. Summary of Valuation Changes with High School Districting by Addition of Adjacent Districts ....31
VIII. Transportation Data for High Schools in Western Hill County, 1951-1952 ..............34
IX. High School Transportation in Western Hill County, ................................35
X. Preliminary Summary of Preliminary Data on Irrigable Land by Townships and Counties ....42

-v-

-vi-

-vii-

-viii-

-ix-

-x-
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Figure</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Area A, Hill County</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Area B and Area C, Hill County</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Area D and Area E, Hill County</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
LIST OF MAPS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Map</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I.  Area A, Spot Map and Existing Roads</td>
<td>64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>II. Areas B and C, Irrigable Land and Existing Bus Routes</td>
<td>65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>III. Areas D and E</td>
<td>66</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
CHAPTER I

THE PROBLEM AND ITS SETTING

Western Hill County is an area predominantly given to wheat farming. It is crossed centrally from east to west by the Great Northern Railroad and Highway No. 2. Situated along this avenue of transportation at intervals from five to ten miles, are five small towns, the eastern-most being twenty miles west of Havre and the western-most, three miles from the western Hill County boundary. In 1951, only Rudyard had over twenty-five in high school. Inverness High School lost its accreditation in 1947; and, in the spring of 1952, Hingham and Gildford were notified by the State Department of Public Instruction that they would not receive further accreditation. Kremlin and Rudyard are the only high schools accredited for the 1952-53 school year, and Kremlin is on probation due to low enrollment.¹

Hill County has never been subjected to the high school districting procedure, which involves petitioning by the board of any district operating a high school. Upon receiving such a petition, the County Commissioners and the

¹Information from office of State Department of Public Instruction.
County Superintendent must divide the county into high school districts. The people of the County are faced with the problem of reorganizing to equalize the tax burden, to provide adequate high schools accessible to all students and enrollments large enough to insure accreditation and economical operation.

I. THE PROBLEM

Statement of the problem. It is the purpose of this study to examine the available data and bring to light information showing the feasibility of proposed plans for high school districting in western Hill County.

The delimitation of the field of the study. This study is restricted to the compilation and examination of data pertinent to high school districting and reorganization in the western districts of Hill County as shown in Figure 1 on page 14. This area is about twenty-four miles from east to west and forty-eight miles from north to south. Included are fifteen common school districts, five of which were operating high schools in 1950 while Inverness operated an accredited Junior High School. Although some data on eastern Hill County may be used, this study will not deal with the problem of high school districting of that area.

Importance of the study. The people of western Hill County are faced with finding a solution to the problem of

providing adequate high schools within reach of their children. The problem has become one of immediate importance because two of the existing high schools did not receive accreditation for 1952-53.

Several plans have been proposed as solutions to this problem, and the Hill County Educational Planning Committee has asked that the people of each district make known their wishes, so that the redistricting Commission may be presented with a recommendation when asked to divide the county into high school districts. This study will furnish pertinent information for, (1) the public in making its decision at election, (2) the Redistricting Commission in the actual districting, (3) the educators who will operate the high schools.

Districting, to be successful, should come from the wishes of the people. The information in this study will contribute to the knowledge and understanding of the problem by the voters.

This study should also be of value to the Redistricting Commission in providing information which would help it in the actual districting of the County.

After the schools have been established and are in operation, the administrator may find this study of value in helping him to understand the problems of his particular

\[^3\text{Minutes, Hill County Educational Planning Committee, February 27, 1952.}\]
district; and it may serve as a means of presenting his problems to his board and patrons.

II. SETTING OF THE PROBLEM

A review of the steps leading to the present conditions in Hill County. Hill County was opened to homesteaders in 1908. They were allowed to take up homesteads of one hundred sixty acres in some parts of the county and three hundred twenty acres in other parts. In a few years, the County was settled, and elementary schools districts were organized. These homesteads soon proved too small to provide a living. During uncertain moisture conditions and with the need of pasture for horses, crop failures soon forced many to leave. Those who remained began to farm the lands near them and through access to greater acreage and by using improved farming methods, the farm units became larger with a decrease in the number of farm owners.¹

In the early 30's, only Hingham and Rudyard had four-year high schools; and very few of the pupils who finished elementary school went beyond the two years of high school offered in the town near the elementary school. With the help of the WPA, other towns, namely, Kremlin, Gildford, and Inverness, built new buildings for the purpose of meeting requirements for four-year high schools.

¹Andrew Dees, Early Homesteader. Personal Interview, April 29, 1952.
As these towns provided high schools for children of outlying districts, many pupils continued on to school after completing the eighth grade. This led to a gradual consolidation of elementary school districts because of parents "moving in" to town so that the oldest child might attend high school or transporting of their high school age children to school and also taking the younger children to school in town. As a result the rural districts lost enrollment and consequently, many of the schools were closed and some districts abandoned. On the other hand, due to this practice of "moving in", districts 24, 28, 26, 20, 13, 19 including the towns of Hingham, Inverness, Rudyard, Gildford, Box Elder, and Kremlin, respectively, became larger.

These six districts are still providing secondary education for those in adjoining districts which do not help directly to support a high school. The reason that Hill County has not been districted for high school purposes is not clear; but it appears that there has been a feeling that through districting, some towns would lose their high schools. Many feel that losing the high school would cause the community to die since it is usually a center of community activity.

By 1949, the enrollments of Gildford, Hingham and Kremlin high schools had dropped to the point where it was financially difficult to operate a high school. They

---

were also faced with not receiving accreditation from the State Department of Public Instruction. The fear of not being accredited by the State Department of Education was increased by the fact that the Inverness high school had been closed the year before. Prompted by this urgency and the suggestion of the County Superintendent of Schools, members of school boards from these districts met in Havre and drew up the following resolution:

RESOLUTION

Havre, Montana
Hill County

WHEREAS, we school boards representing the communities of Hingham, Gildford, and Kremlin, having met on the 16th day of February in the office of the County Superintendent of Schools, after discussion as to the problem of the small high school, have hereby agreed that something of a constructive nature must be done.

WHEREAS, we realize the situation requires much study and planning and must not be rushed into headlong, we hereby petition the State Department to allow us to operate as we are for the coming year. In that year we have further agreed to acquaint the peoples of said communities with changes that are inevitable if education is to progress. Any literature or men that the State Department might have available to loan us a helping hand would be appreciated.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that it is the concensus of this group that the said communities consolidate into one high school, the exact place to be determined later.6

This resolution was sent to the State Department of Public Instruction and the following letter was received:

6Minutes, Hill County Educational Planning Committee, February 16, 1950.
February 20, 1950

Mrs. Lucille Bulman
County Superintendent of Schools
Havre, Montana

Dear Mrs. Bulman:

We have received the resolution drawn up by the school trustees of Hingham, Gildford, and Kremlin concerning the small high school situation in Hill County. In the absence of Miss Condon, State Superintendent of Public Instruction, I have taken this matter up with Mr. Anderson, Mr. King and other Department supervisors.

We have known of the difficult high school situation in Hill County for many years. We are, therefore, heartily in sympathy with the procedure expressed in your resolution concerning the plan to spend a year in studying the various ways by which a solution might be found. Since all the trustees of your three communities signed this resolution, we know that you are determined to cooperate in such a way that the best educational facilities will be available for the boys and girls of your county.

We feel that you are wise in taking the next year for your study and you can rest assured that you will be able to continue during 1950-51 as you have during 1949-50.

Nothing that has happened in the past year has been more encouraging to us than this resolution which indicates a desire on the part of the people of your county to solve their own educational problems. You can be sure that we here in the State Department will do all we can to help you whenever the need for such aid is felt.

Sincerely yours,

GENEVIEVE SQUIRES
Acting State Superintendent of
Public Instruction

Upon receipt of this letter a meeting was called in
the Hill County Courthouse on April 25, 1950. Members
present included representatives from Rudyard, Inverness, Hingham, Gildford, Kremlin, Box Elder and Havre. As the name for their organization, they chose "The Hill County Educational Planning Committee". Their aim, as outlined in the minutes, was "to endeavor to show a true picture of the conditions that exist within our county and to evolve, insofar as possible, means of correcting unsatisfactory conditions, thereby making our schools a better place in which to educate our children."

A suggestion from Dr. Ira W. Stam of Northern Montana College, who was asked to act in an advisory capacity, led to the decision to investigate the probable future enrollment. This was attempted by means of a spot map showing pre-school, elementary, and high school pupils as of that time.

Meetings were held throughout the year and H. V. Gibson, Clerk of the Great Falls District, H. C. Davis, Superintendent of the Cut Bank Schools, and E. H. Fellbaum, City Superintendent of the Helena Schools, were invited to act as advisors of the group. On November 29, 1950, after visiting each of the high schools in western Hill County, this advisory group met with the Hill County Planning Committee and made a report on the individual physical plants. They reported "that all of the plants were very good and much more adequate than what they had anticipated."

---

7 Minutes, Hill County Educational Planning Committee, April 25, 1950.

8 Minutes, Hill County Educational Planning Committee, November 29, 1950.
These advisors recommended that more data be gathered on the financial status of each district and past enrollments.

On January 22, 1951, the Hill County Educational Planning Committee met with C. R. Anderson, Administrative Assistant, K. W. Bergen, Supervisor of Transportation, and W. I. King, High School Supervisor. Five plans were proposed for districting Hill County which were to be presented to the school districts of the county for discussion, arrangement, and changes. The committee proposed and agreed that, after the plans had been drawn up and outlined, each school board be invited to send one representative to the final meeting at which time high school districting would be discussed and planned. The following plans were proposed:

PLAN NO. I

High School 1 Havre
High School 2 Box Elder
High School 3 Gildford and Kremlin
High School 4 Inverness, Rudyard, and Hingham

PLAN NO. II

High School 1 Havre
High School 2 Box Elder, Gildford, and Kremlin
High School 3 Hingham, Rudyard, and Inverness

PLAN NO. III

High School 1 Havre
High School 2 Box Elder, Kremlin
High School 3 Gildford, Hingham
High School 4 Rudyard, Inverness

PLAN NO. IV

Havre and all other districts left as they are with the rural districts which they serve included in each high school district.
On May 14, 1951, the Hill County Educational Planning Committee met again and voted on the five plans as proposed at the meeting of January 22, 1951. Following the vote, it was decided to notify the State Department of Public Instruction of the results. The following resolution was drawn up and sent to the State Department.

RESOLUTION

WHEREAS the Hill County Educational Planning Committee, composed of representatives from the communities of Box Elder, Gildford, Havre, Hingham, Inverness, Kremlin and Rudyard, having met regularly for the last fifteen months for the purpose of studying the high school situation within our county, and believing that all facts relevant to the situation have been considered, do hereby state a decision.

WHEREAS five plans of redistricting were considered by our committee, be it known that a secret ballot showed that six members of our committee favored allowing each of the towns in Hill County to operate a high school. One member was opposed; therefore be it

RESOLVED that this committee goes on record as favoring the re-opening of the Inverness High School to comply with the school law which states
that a high school district cannot be formed in a
district which does not have an operating high school.

HILL COUNTY EDUCATIONAL PLANNING COMMITTEE

__________________________ Chairman

__________________________ Vice Chairman

__________________________ Secretary-Treasurer

Date - May 25, 1951

Upon receipt of this resolution the State Department
of Education returned the following letter:

June 11, 1951

Mr. Alton Sterry, Secretary-Treasurer
Hill County Educational Planning Committee
Hingham, Montana

Dear Mr. Sterry:

Miss Condon has asked me to acknowledge receipt of
your letter and resolution of May 24, 1951.

Inasmuch as the Hill County Educational Planning
Committee was organized for the purpose of finding
a solution to the problems confronting the high
schools of Hill County she is glad to have their
recommendations; however, the problem still remains
for the county as far as high school districts are
concerned and of course will remain a local problem
until the final division is sent to this office for
approval.

You may remember at the meeting in Havre several
months ago the committee requested another year,
as far as accreditation was concerned, in which

10Minutes, Hill County Educational Planning Committee,
May 25, 1951.
to study the high school problem and arrive at some satisfactory solution. Whether you have actually done this as indicated in your resolution or whether you have just given up on the matter and fallen back on a status quo, is a problem that still remains to be settled.

Division of a county into high school districts cannot be accomplished between March 1 and July 1 of any year. If you contemplate such division this year it will have to be done immediately after July 1. The problem of the Inverness high school is one that has been determined by the State Board of Education. That same board will have to decide on its reopening as a four-year accredited high school, upon the recommendation of this department.

This of course, is a matter which will have to be initiated by the Inverness board and will probably run into difficulties.

Sincerely yours,

MARY M. CONDON
State Superintendent of Public Instruction

/s/ C. R. Anderson
Administrative Assistant

Present Conditions. In the spring of 1952 the high schools of Gildford and Hingham were placed on terminal probation. Kremlin was congratulated on the condition of the plant, facilities and course of study but was placed on probation because of low enrollment. Rudyard was given full accreditation and Inverness was accredited through the ninth grade as a junior high school.

Proposed plans. This study proposes to examine three possible plans. These plans are concerned with the number of schools that should be operated on Highway No. 2
between Havre and the western Hill County boundary. The three plans are:

1. Plan One -- one school for the entire area, (Area A) as shown in Figure 1 on page 14.

2. Plan Two -- two schools in the area, (Areas B and C) as shown in Figure 2 on page 15.

3. Plan Three -- two schools in the area, (Areas D and E) as shown in Figure 3 on page 15.
FIGURE I (AREA A)

HILL COUNTY

Districts

28 Inverness
26 Rudyard
24 Hingham
20 Gildford
19 Kremlin
13 Box Elder
AREA B AND AREA C

AREA D AND AREA E
CHAPTER II

PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS OF DATA

In order to give a comprehensive picture of the high school districting problem in western Hill County, a survey was made to obtain data on:

1. Population of school districts
2. Farm-unit census
3. Distribution of school population
4. School enrollments and future projections
5. Accessibility of existing roads
6. Valuation and mill levies
7. Districts
8. Transportation costs and existing bus routes
9. Bonding limits

PRESENTATION OF THE DATA

In securing the following data on the topics mentioned above, the following sources were used: records in the office of the Hill County Superintendent of Schools, records of clerks of local districts, records in the office of the State Superintendent of Public Instruction, census data from the Bureau of Census, materials gathered by the Hill County Educational Planning Committee, and personal
interviews with members of that Committee and superintendents of schools involved. Other information was received from the records of the Hill County Electric Cooperative Incorporated, Bureau of Reclamation, and from the Inventory of Montana Public School Facilities.

Population of school districts. This information was compiled from the Bureau of Census records and shows the number of people in each district in Hill County for 1950 as shown in the table below. Comparable data for past years was not available due to the frequent change in districts by annexation and abandonment.

TABLE I

POPULATION OF SCHOOL DISTRICTS
IN WESTERN HILL COUNTY, 1950

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>District Number</th>
<th>Population 1950</th>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>75</td>
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<tr>
<td>26</td>
<td>521</td>
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Farm-unit census. Census of agriculture statistics indicate that the number of farm units has been steadily decreasing and that this was also true of farm laborers until 1945. According to these data, in Hill County there were 1,035 farms in 1945 and 959 farms in 1950. There were 1,348 workers in 1945 and 1,413 farm workers in 1950.\textsuperscript{2} This would indicate that there is little relationship between the number of farm-units and the farm population. The phrase, "number of farm-units", is misleading because it is based on the number of owners, although they may own 5,000 acres of land on which may be several families, frequently the sons of the actual owner, operating or working and living on these farms.

The very small increase in the number of farm workers from 1945 to 1950 may mean that Hill County has reached its limit in the number of workers required to operate the land with present methods. However, there is evidence that the land cycle beginning with the homestead era of many units, followed by the consolidation of these small units and finally the division of extremely large units among sons of owners or by sale to other individuals, may again increase the number of units in Hill County. This would help to explain the increase in both elementary and pre-school

populations in western Hill County and especially in the outlying farm areas as evidenced by the spot map.\(^3\)

Other evidence that the number of farm homes may be increasing is found in the statistics on the number of "hook-ups" by the Hill County Electric Cooperative. The lines of this company were first energized in 1948 and their records show an increase of 44 farms in 1949, six by 1950 and 70 additional farms by 1951. At the same time, they show only eight disconnects in these four years.\(^4\) From these facts, it appears that the rural population has become somewhat more stable in Hill County where electric service is available. This may account for the slight increase in agricultural workers over this period of five years, but the existing data is too limited to make a definite conclusion at this time.

**Distribution of school population.** The spot map\(^5\) taken from a drawing prepared by the Hill County Educational Planning Committee shows the distribution of elementary, high school and pre-school children of Hill County in 1949. This map indicates the area which must be considered in the transportation problems in high school districting.

The enrollments of the entire area are quite equally distributed among the five towns. Rudyard, (District 26) is

\(^3\)See Map I, Appendix.

\(^4\)Records of the Hill County Electric Cooperative, Incorporated, Havre, Montana.

\(^5\)See Map I, Appendix.
the only district showing an enrollment noticeably greater than the others in both the grades and in high school for the five year period ending in 1951 as shown in Table II.

School enrollments and future projections. The enrollments were found for each of the districts in the area being studied for the five years ending 1951. Statistics for 1951 on districts operating high schools showed that Rudyard had the largest enrollments with a total of 44 high school students and 82 grade school students. Inverness, where a junior high school is operated, was the smallest with an enrollment of 19 in junior high school (grades 7-9) and 51 in elementary grades (grades 1-6). Hingham had 24 in high school and 53 in the elementary grades; Gildford, 22 in high school and 59 in elementary grades; Kremlin, 24 in high school and 62 in elementary grades and Box Elder, 28 in high school and 68 in elementary grades.6

Using the enrollment figures for all western Hill County elementary districts for the last five years, and the pre-school census and enrollments for grades one and two in 1949, projections were made to show how many children might be expected to attend high school in 1959 in each of the proposed high school areas. Similar data for the previous years were not available. Of the number of children who in 1949 either appeared on the pre-school census or were

6Table II, page 21.
TABLE II
ENROLLMENT OF DISTRICTS OPERATING HIGH SCHOOL IN WESTERN HILL COUNTY FOR LAST FIVE YEARS

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</tr>
<tr>
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<td>22</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>24</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>23</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>26</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28</td>
<td>19*</td>
<td>22*</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>10**</td>
<td>17**</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Junior High School  **No High School  ***Four-year High School

Records, Office of County Superintendent of Hill County Schools, Havre, Montana.
in the first or second grades, about 86 per cent\textsuperscript{8} may be expected to be enrolled in grades one to eight in 1955.

Area A, as shown in Figure 1 had an elementary enrollment of 317 in 1947 which increased to 390 in 1950 and decreased slightly in 1951, although not to the level of the 1949 enrollment. The 1951 high school enrollment was 133 which represents 41.9 per cent of the grade school enrollment of 1947. By applying this percentage figure to the grade school enrollments for the years 1948, 1949, 1950 and 1951, a tentative forecast of high school enrollments in 1952, 1953, 1954 and 1955 was obtained, as shown in Table III. According to this projection this area can expect to have 151 high school pupils in 1955.

For further projection, the pre-school children and those in grades one and two in 1949 were used as a basis. In 1949, there were 528 children of pre-school age and in grades one and two. Applying the average Hill County survival for grades one to eight, approximately 454 children will be enrolled in the first eight grades by 1955, and approximately 211\textsubscript{4} may be expected in high school in 1959.

This projection is very conservative inasmuch as this percentage of survival figure was based upon completion of the eight grades. The majority of the children considered from 1949 to 1955 will have reached only the lower grades, and therefore could be expected to have had a

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>AREA A Grades 1-8</th>
<th>AREA A High School</th>
<th>HILL COUNTY Grades 1-8</th>
<th>HILL COUNTY High School</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1947</td>
<td>317</td>
<td>131</td>
<td>1425</td>
<td>643</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1948</td>
<td>320</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>1949</td>
<td>350</td>
<td>131</td>
<td>1556</td>
<td>582</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1950</td>
<td>362</td>
<td>133</td>
<td>1659</td>
<td>544</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1951</td>
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<td>133</td>
<td>1689</td>
<td>577</td>
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<tr>
<td>1952</td>
<td></td>
<td>135</td>
<td></td>
<td>592</td>
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<tr>
<td>1953</td>
<td></td>
<td>147</td>
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<td>648</td>
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<td>1954</td>
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<td>152</td>
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<td>695</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1955</td>
<td>454</td>
<td>151</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1956</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1957</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>1958</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1959</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>214</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
greater percentage of survival as the net survival decreases with the advance in grade.

Area B, as shown in Figure 2, includes districts 28, 26, 24 plus all districts west of the eastern boundary of districts 24 and its north extension and is now served by high schools at Inverness, Rudyard and Hingham. The elementary enrollment in 1947 was 216 with 71 in high school. The total high school enrollment of 1951 was 87. This indicates a 40 per cent ratio of elementary grades to high school population four years later. Applying this ratio about 84 pupils can be expected in high school in this area in 1952, 96 in 1953, 93 in 1954 and 94 in 1955. Using the 1949 pre-school population plus grades one and two and applying the Hill County survival rate, an enrollment of 294 can be expected in the grades one through eight in 1955 with 118 in high school four years later.\footnote{Table IV, page 25.}

Area C, as shown in Figure 2, includes districts 18, 19, 20 and half of 39 and 53 with the lower part of 74 and is now served by high schools in Kremlin and Gildford. In 1947 this area had an elementary enrollment of 101 with 60 in high school. In 1951, there were 46 in high school or 45 per cent of the total grade school enrollment of 1947. Using this percentage, the projection indicates an expected enrollment of 59 in high school in 1954. The grade school enrollment projected from the 1949 census
TABLE IV
PROJECTED ENROLLMENTS FOR AREA B AND AREA C

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>AREA B</th>
<th>AREA C</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Grades 1-8</td>
<td>High School</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1947</td>
<td>216</td>
<td>71</td>
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<tr>
<td>1948</td>
<td>211</td>
<td>61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1949</td>
<td>239</td>
<td>83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1950</td>
<td>232</td>
<td>83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1951</td>
<td>235</td>
<td>87</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1952</td>
<td></td>
<td>84</td>
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<td>1953</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1954</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1955</td>
<td>294</td>
<td>94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1956</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>1957</td>
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</tr>
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<td>1958</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1959</td>
<td></td>
<td>118</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
can be expected to be about 142 in 1955, which means that
in 1959 this area can expect about 65 high school students.\(^{10}\)

**Area D**, as shown in Figure 3, was treated in the
same manner. It had a grade school enrollment of 156 in 1947
with 63 in high school in 1951. Applying this ratio to the
grade enrollments of 1948 through 1951, about 64 pupils may
be expected to be in high school in 1952 and 69 in 1955.
The projection of the 1949 pre-school and primary grades one
and two shows an expected 221 in grades one through eight
in 1955 and 88 high school students in 1959.\(^{11}\)

**Area E**, as shown in Figure 3, would combine the
three high schools of Hingham, Gildford and Kremlin into one
high school, probably located in Gildford. A survey of the
enrollments of this area for 1951 shows 188 in the elementary
grades and 70 in high school. The projection of the
enrollments from 1947 through 1951 shows that this area can
expect to have about 83 high school pupils in 1955. A
further projection by applying the Hill County survival rate
to the 1949 pre-school census and the first two grades gives
an estimate of 210 grade school children in 1955 and 93 high
school pupils in 1959.\(^{12}\)

**Accessibility of existing roads.** Information on
the types and conditions of roads was taken from the County

\(^{10}\) Table IV, page 25.

\(^{11}\) Table V, page 27.

\(^{12}\) Ibid.
TABLE V
PROJECTED ENROLLMENTS FOR
AREA D AND AREA E

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>AREA D</th>
<th>AREA E</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Grades 1-8</td>
<td>High School</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1947</td>
<td>156</td>
<td>59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1948</td>
<td>159</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1949</td>
<td>181</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1950</td>
<td>166</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1951</td>
<td>172</td>
<td>63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1952</td>
<td>172</td>
<td>64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1953</td>
<td>172</td>
<td>72</td>
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<tr>
<td>1954</td>
<td>172</td>
<td>67</td>
</tr>
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<td>1955</td>
<td>221</td>
<td>69</td>
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<td>1956</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>1957</td>
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<tr>
<td>1958</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1959</td>
<td>88</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Road Map\textsuperscript{13} and checked with a map prepared by Wilbur Swenson in his professional paper on "A Survey of Hill County School Transportation Costs, 1949-50".\textsuperscript{14} This map shows Highway No. 2 connecting the towns of Inverness, Rudyard, Hingham Gildford, Kremlin and Havre. One graveled road leading from this highway extends north from Rudyard twenty-three miles to within seven miles of the Canadian border. Highway No. 89 leading from Havre to Big Sandy has little influence on any towns other than Box Elder and Havre.

Other existing roads of importance to this area are graded dirt roads found at intervals of six miles running north and south from each of the small towns named. All connecting roads running east and west are low dirt grades which are of little use in the winter or wet weather.

VALUATIONS AND MILL LEVIES

Districts. In 1951, the districts operating high schools in western Hill County had assessed and taxable valuations as shown in Table VI, on page 30. These common school districts now operating high schools have had their valuations increased over the last ten years by the abandonment of other districts which, in most cases, have been attached to the adjacent districts operating a high school.

\textsuperscript{13}See Map I, Appendix D.

\textsuperscript{14}Wilbur Swenson, "A Survey of Hill County School Transportation Costs, 1949-50". (Unpublished Master's thesis, Montana State University, 1951)
This has helped to make it possible for these districts operating high schools to continue.

One of the proposals for high school districting involves formation of high school districts according to the area now served by these districts supporting high schools. The combined taxable valuations of these districts are shown in Table VII on page 31. The increase would be enough to cut the mill levy for high schools as follows: Box Elder, from 12.21 mills to 8 mills; Kremlin, from 10.56 mills to 4.79 mills; Gildford, from 16.12 mills to 9.4 mills; Hingham, from 20.2 mills to 13.9 mills; Rudyard, from 24.61 mills to 16 mills and Inverness, from 21.14 mills to 15.3 mills. These mill levies are based on the 1951 budgets.\(^\text{15}\)

This proposal was not possible for 1952 due to low enrollments so, a further grouping to increase taxable valuations and assure necessary enrollments was needed. The three plans with which this study is mainly concerned are, a one-school plan for western Hill County, with a high school centrally located in Area A, as shown in Figure 1, a two-school plan with one high school located in Area B and one in Area C as shown in Figure 2, and a second two-school plan, with a high school in Area D and a high school in Area E as shown in Figure 3.

**Area A.** This area with a plan for one high school, has a taxable valuation of $3,715,539. For a high school

\(^\text{15}\)Table VII, page 31.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dist. No.</th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>VALUATION</th>
<th>LEVIES**</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Box Elder</td>
<td>$1,451,642</td>
<td>$433,466</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>Kremlin</td>
<td>1,707,532</td>
<td>495,864</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>Gildford</td>
<td>1,545,027</td>
<td>469,138</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24</td>
<td>Hingham</td>
<td>1,628,604</td>
<td>464,056</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26</td>
<td>Rudyard</td>
<td>1,942,436</td>
<td>545,077</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28</td>
<td>Inverness</td>
<td>1,799,773</td>
<td>510,296</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**This does not include 10 mill county-wide levy.

16 Reports, from Office of the County Superintendent of Hill County Schools, Havre, Montana
### TABLE VII

**SUMMARY OF VALUATION CHANGES WITH HIGH SCHOOL DISTRICTING BY ADDITION OF ADJACENT DISTRICTS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Town</th>
<th>Dist.</th>
<th>Valuation</th>
<th>Foundation Program</th>
<th>Total Budget</th>
<th>Levy</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hingham</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>$464,056</td>
<td>$7,480</td>
<td>$16,102</td>
<td>20.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>39</td>
<td>128,259</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>7</td>
<td>24,989</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td></td>
<td>$617,304</td>
<td>$7,480</td>
<td>$16,102</td>
<td>13.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gildford</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>$469,138</td>
<td>$8,160</td>
<td>$14,904</td>
<td>16.12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
<td>108,075</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>53</td>
<td>137,103</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td></td>
<td>$715,416</td>
<td>$8,160</td>
<td>$14,904</td>
<td>9.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kremlin</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>$495,864</td>
<td>$8,160</td>
<td>$12,580</td>
<td>10.56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>18</td>
<td>177,825</td>
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<td></td>
<td>74</td>
<td>95,199</td>
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</tr>
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<td></td>
<td>67</td>
<td>153,680</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Total</td>
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<td>$922,568</td>
<td>$8,160</td>
<td>$12,580</td>
<td>4.79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Box Elder</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>$433,466</td>
<td>$8,160</td>
<td>$12,634</td>
<td>12.21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>81</td>
<td>114,153</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td></td>
<td>$547,619</td>
<td>$8,160</td>
<td>$12,634</td>
<td>8.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inverness</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>$510,296</td>
<td>$7,140</td>
<td>$17,211</td>
<td>21.14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>50</td>
<td>37,987</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>49</td>
<td>60,015</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>66</td>
<td>48,839</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
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<td>$657,137</td>
<td>$7,140</td>
<td>$17,211</td>
<td>15.3</td>
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<tr>
<td>Rudyard</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>$545,077</td>
<td>$12,240</td>
<td>$24,426</td>
<td>24.61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>61</td>
<td>54,237</td>
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<td></td>
<td>23</td>
<td>98,711</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>63</td>
<td>53,864</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td></td>
<td>$751,879</td>
<td>$12,240</td>
<td>$24,426</td>
<td>16.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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17 Records, from Office of the County Superintendent of Hill County Schools, Havre, Montana
of 151 pupils as expected in 1955, under the present schedule, a foundation program of $269.60 per pupil or $40,709.60 would be assured. The permissive levy of 25 per cent would amount to $10,177.40 or approximately 2.5 mills on current valuations. If more were needed, a vote of approval for the levy by the high school district would be required and for each additional mill levied, $3,715.53 would be made available. County and state funds support the foundation program. Budgetary requirements beyond the foundation program must be paid by the districts.

Area B. In the first two-school plan, the taxable valuation of this area would include the total valuation of districts 66, 23, 50, 49, 61, 28, 26, 24, 63 and one half of 39 and 53 which would amount to $2,005,912. The expected enrollment of 914 pupils in 1955 would assure a foundation program of $297.50 per pupil or $25,965. The 25 per cent permissive levy would amount to $6,491.25 or a levy of approximately 3.2 mills on current valuations. Any additional funds needed would have to be raised by a levy voted by the district. Each mill levied would produce $2,995.91.

Area C. This area would combine the high schools of Gildford and Kremlin and include districts 20, 19, 18 and one half of 39 and 53, thereby creating a total taxable valuation of $1,275,657. An enrollment of 57 pupils could be expected in 1955 which would provide a foundation program of $340.00 per pupil or $20,060. The 25 per cent permissive levy would
be $5,015 or a levy of approximately 3.9 mills. For each additional mill levied, $1,275.66 would be raised.

Area D. This area, which is part of the second two-school plan, involves the expansion of the Rudyard district for high school purposes to include districts 24, 66, 23, districts 50, 49, 61, 28, 26, and 63 with a total taxable valuation of $1,409,026. The expected high school enrollment for this area in 1955 would be 69 pupils which would provide a foundation program of $328.75 per pupil or $22,683.75. The 25 per cent permissive levy would amount to $5,670.94 or a levy of approximately 4 mills. Each mill of additional levy would provide $1,409.02.

Area E. This area includes districts 24, 20 and 19 that have been operating high schools. To them will be added the valuations of districts 18, 53, and 39 making a high school district with a taxable valuation of $1,872,545. If this should become a district, the high school would be expected to have an enrollment of 83 pupils in 1955 which would assure a foundation program of $311.25 per pupil or a total of $24,833.75. The permissive addition of 25 per cent would amount to $6,458.44 or a levy of approximately 3.5 mills. Each mill of additional levy would provide $1,872.55.

Transportation costs and existing bus routes. Of the five districts operating high schools in western Hill County, District No. 24, District No. 26 and District No. 28 operate busses. Gildford, District No. 20 and Kremlin,
District No. 19 do not operate busses. A summary of transportation data for these five districts appears in Table VIII as shown below:

TABLE VIII

TRANSPORTATION DATA FOR HIGH SCHOOLS IN WESTERN HILL COUNTY 1951-1952

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Town</th>
<th>District</th>
<th>Valuation</th>
<th>H. S. Budget Transportation</th>
<th>District Tax in Mills</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Kremlin</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>$139,394</td>
<td>$1,909</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gildford</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>632,399</td>
<td>519</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hingham</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>514,134</td>
<td>3,525</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rudyard</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>619,872</td>
<td>4,307</td>
<td>1.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inverness</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>553,407</td>
<td>3,326</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Transportation for high schools is paid by County and State up to the amount scheduled. Any amount over schedule must be raised by a tax levy on the district.

In 1951, 68 high school students were being provided transportation in this area either on school busses or by individual payments. A summary of types of transportation and the number transported for each high school is shown on the following page.
TABLE IX
HIGH SCHOOL TRANSPORTATION IN WESTERN HILL COUNTY 1951-1952

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dist.</th>
<th>Route</th>
<th>Individual</th>
<th>Bus</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Capacity and Make of Bus</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td></td>
<td>9</td>
<td>9</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td></td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24</td>
<td>1-104</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>24 Ford-Superior body</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26</td>
<td>1-83</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>42 Chevrolet-Superior</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2-52</td>
<td></td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>24 Chevrolet-Superior</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28</td>
<td>1-82</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>24 International</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2-52</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>16 International</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>63</td>
<td>1-60</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>30 Chevrolet-Superior</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

One of the main problems in school bus transportation is the original cost of the bus. The State Law provides that a bus depreciation section be set up so that the school district may place money in a fund which will be used to replace the bus in a number of years, usually about eight. The 1951 legislature made it possible for school districts to bond for the purchase of busses.18

The type of road over which the bus must travel influences greatly the up-keep and the life of the bus. Non-surfaced roads, such as found in this area, are not

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18 Supplement to the School Laws of 1949, Chapter 180, Section 1.
conducive to low transportation costs. Transportation costs have increased 81 per cent from 1940 to 1950, and are always higher in sparsely settled areas.

**Bonding limit.** This limit is figured on five per cent of assessed valuation. Current valuations in Area A total $14,179,143. According to the Browning decision\(^\text{19}\) as of 1952, the high school district is a legal body for bonding purposes.

The only two districts of this area with outstanding bonds are District No. 19 and District No. 20. In accordance with this decision the bonding capacity of Area A is given in the following report made by C. R. Anderson, Administrative Assistant to Mary M. Condon, State Superintendent of Public Instruction.

**District No. 19.** Assessed valuation of $2,047,750 could bond for five per cent or $102,375. However, this district has $7,700 in outstanding bonds, which will be reduced by July 30 to $5,500. Subtracting this amount from the maximum bonding capacity leaves $96,875.

**District No. 20.** Assessed valuation of $2,411,175 could bond for $120,708. This district has $8,891 in bonds outstanding. Current payments will reduce this to $6,369 by July 2, leaving a bonding potential of $114,339.

District No. 19, with assessed valuation of $2,047,175 divided into the assessed valuation of the entire high school district of $14,179,143 gives a figure of 14.4029 per cent of the total valuation. Since the amount of bonds outstanding on any of the common school districts cannot

exceed five per cent, and since the equity of any component common school district in the high school district bond is in proportion to its assessed valuation to the valuation of the high school, District 19 could bond for a sum not exceeding its potential bonding capacity less any outstanding bonds. This is $96,875. This amount would represent 14.4029 per cent of the maximum bonding of the high school district.

\[
14.4029 \times \frac{96,875}{100} = x \\
x = 670,866
\]

District No. 20, figured in the same way as the above, has 17.02624% of the total assessed valuation of the high school district, and a bonding potential, excluding outstanding bonds, of $114,339.

\[
17.02624 \times \frac{114,339}{100} = x \\
x = 671,545
\]

The above indicates that if we use the full 5 per cent on District No. 20, it would throw a proportion of the high school district bond issue on District 19 which would go over the 5 per cent on that district. Therefore, since no other district has outstanding bonds, the maximum bonding on the high school district would have to be the $670,866. This issue would assure that none of the component common school districts would be bonded in excess of the legal maximum of 5 per cent.

A $600,000 bond issue amortized at 21/2% would mean:

Semi-annual Interest and Principal payment of $19,152.85.

Annual Interest and Principal payments of $38,305.70.

On a taxable valuation of $3,715,539 the levy for retiring this issue would be: $38,305.70 ÷ $3,715.53 or 10.31 mills

Principal and Interest for 20 years comes to:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Amount of Principal to pay</th>
<th>600,000</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Interest paid on the issue</td>
<td>$116,114</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
A $600,000 bond issue in serial bonds at 2 1/2% would mean:
$600,000 divided by 20 yrs. = $30,000 Prin. ea. yr.
First years interest at 2 1/2% = 15,000
Principal & Int. 1st yr. $45,000

$45,000 ÷ $3,715.53 would mean a levy of 12.1113 mills.

Second year: $600,000 less $30,000 = $570,000
at 2 1/2% interest 14,250

Interest and principal second year:
14,250 plus $30,000 or $14,250
This would take a levy of 11.90944 mills.

Last years principal of $30,000 plus interest of $750 would be a payment of $30,750 and would take a levy of 8.276 mills.

Figuring interest for 20 years:
1st year's interest - - - $15,000
Last year's interest - - - 750
$15,750
Multiply by 20 2,315,000
Total interest paid in 20 yrs. $157,500

In figuring bond issues of $500,000, all that is necessary is to take five-sixths (5/6) of the above figures. On a bond issue of $400,000, take 4/6 or 2/3 of the amounts figured on the $600,000 issue. For example, the millage needed to retire a $400,000 bond issue would be 2/3 times 10,3096 mills or 6,873 mills. (amortization bonds).

Areas B and D will not include districts with any outstanding bonds and so can be bonded for the five per cent of their assessed valuation. For Area B that would be $377,323.90 and Area D could raise $320,738.60. Areas C and E would both be limited by the indebtedness of District No. 19.
CHAPTER III

INFLUENCE OF POSSIBLE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ON SCHOOL POPULATION

Two economic developments to be considered in the study of this area are the Marias Irrigation Project and the oil activity which has resulted since the discovery of the Williston Basin and the rich strikes across the Canadian border. Inasmuch as the realization of either of these possibilities would have a great influence on the population of this area, they must not be overlooked in the reorganization of any school system in north central Montana.

I. MARIAS IRRIGATION PROJECT

The Marias Irrigation Project will probably be completed in the near future.\(^1\) Map II gives an adequate illustration of the area that can be irrigated from this project.\(^2\) Much of the irrigable area is in southwestern Hill County and much of it lies in District No. 13 where a high school is now operated at Box Elder.

\(^1\)H. E. Aldrich, District Manager, Bureau of Reclamation, Region 6. (Letter dated April 8, 1952)

\(^2\)See Map II, Appendix E.
The total acreage for which irrigation can be contemplated in Hill County, amounts to 44,700 acres. This area must be divided into 160-acre farms, thereby increasing by 320, the number of farms in this part of the county. The Bureau of Reclamation estimates that an average of four persons will live on each farm resulting in a total increase of 1,280 people to the Hill County farm population. This increase will certainly have an important bearing upon the future of high schools in western Hill County.

The increase in farm population is not the sole factor to be considered, however. A report from the Bureau of Reclamation pointed out that there is a ratio of about one additional non-farm family to every farm family in irrigated areas, accounting for approximately 1,000 additional people. It cannot be definitely ascertained at this time where the non-farm families will reside, but Box Elder, centrally located in this area, will probably be the trade center for a large part of it.

Temporary growth can be expected in the near future. The Bureau of Reclamation estimates that construction of its big canal and water distribution system in Liberty, Hill and Choteau counties will require four years for completion and

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3 H. E. Aldrich, District Manager, Bureau of Reclamation, Region 6. (Letter dated April 8, 1952)
4 Ibid.
5 Ibid.
that it will employ approximately 250 men during the construction period. In addition to these construction employees, the Bureau will have from 50 to 70 of its permanent staff in the area from the time construction of the dam is started until the distribution system reaches completion.

The preliminary investigations show that the amount of irrigable land outside of District No. 13 in southwestern Hill County would be the acreage included in part of Townships 8, 9, and 10 or about 14,030 acres. In applying the same ratio of irrigable acres per farm as is contained in the report of the Bureau of Reclamation on irrigable lands in all of Hill County, it appears that there will be an expected increase of about 95 farms with an accompanying increase of about 380 persons in this area.

Using the 95 farm families as a basis it is not unreasonable to assume that there will be an average of one child per family in school. How these children will be distributed through the twelve grades is impossible to predict, but on an even distribution, as many as 30 high school pupils could be expected. In addition to the farm families, the report from the Bureau of Reclamation shows that there will be an increase in the number of people living in the trading centers. Inasmuch as Rudyard is now the foremost trading center of this area, as well as the school

6Table X, page 42.
### TABLE X

**PRELIMINARY SUMMARY OF PRELIMINARY DATA ON IRRIGABLE LAND BY TOWNSHIPS AND COUNTIES**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Township Range</th>
<th>Liberty</th>
<th>Hill</th>
<th>Chouteau</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>7 East</td>
<td>4,030</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8 &quot;</td>
<td></td>
<td>5,700</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9 &quot;</td>
<td></td>
<td>6,560</td>
<td>7,570</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 &quot;</td>
<td></td>
<td>1,770</td>
<td>9,720</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11 &quot;</td>
<td></td>
<td>8,090</td>
<td>6,570</td>
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<td>12 &quot;</td>
<td></td>
<td>6,280</td>
<td>6,870</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13 &quot;</td>
<td></td>
<td>1,840</td>
<td>4,310</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14 &quot;</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>7,960</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15 &quot;</td>
<td></td>
<td>4,030</td>
<td>1,950</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{Total Acres} & = 79,220 \\
\text{Indian Land} & \\
\end{align*}
\]

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Township Range</th>
<th>Indian Land</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>10 &quot;</td>
<td>1,210</td>
<td>2,030</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13 &quot;</td>
<td>640</td>
<td>310</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14 &quot;</td>
<td>3,780</td>
<td>2,340</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{Total Acres} & = 7,970 \\
\end{align*}
\]

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7 H. E. Aldrich, District Manager, Bureau of Reclamation, Region 6. (Letter dated April 8, 1952) Great Falls, Montana.
to which the children are transported, Rudyard may expect considerable growth as a result of the developments of irrigation facilities.

II. INFLUENCE OF OIL ACTIVITY

During the years of 1950 and 1951 Hill County has seen an increase in oil activity due to oil strikes in Blaine County to the east and in Canada to the north. Additional interest was aroused by other discoveries in the Williston Basin. During 1951 most of the land in Hill County was leased and drilling activity was begun in several parts of the county.

In the event that oil should be found in western Hill County, some influx in population could be expected. The extent of this however, would be impossible to predict and the increase might not be stable unless a permanent refinery was built in this area. There was a definite increase in population in Toole County after the discovery of oil in the Sunburst area in 1922. Toole County had a population of 3,724 in 1920 and in 1930 the population had increased to 6,714. This is some evidence of what effect oil discoveries in a small area may have on the population.

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8 See Map II, Appendix E.
9 Sixteenth Census of United States, 1940, 1945, 1950, Population Volume, Part 3, Montana
CHAPTER IV

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

District No. 13 operating a high school in Box Elder has been considered in some of the data thus far in this study. In the light of the probable influx of population due to irrigation and its isolated position, it appears that this district should be left as is with the addition of District No. 8½ to comprise one high school district with the high school in Box Elder.

The plans left for consideration in this summary include a one-school plan for the entire western area designated in Figure 1 on page 14 as Area A and, a two-school plan for that area. The two-school plan involves two possibilities, depending upon how and where Area A is to be divided as shown in Figures 2 and 3 on page 15.

ONE-SCHOOL PLAN

In the one-school plan suggested by some residents of the Area, the entire plant in each of the towns where the high schools are now operated would be used solely for grade school purposes. Inasmuch as these physical plants were each designed to accommodate approximately 50 high
school students in addition to the grade school population, the operation of those plants solely upon the elementary budgets would seem to be very burdensome. That the elementary enrollments of the common school district operating these high schools would ever be large enough to fill these plants cannot be expected.

This one-school plan also calls for a four-year high school situated near the center of the area on Highway No. 2. The plan proposes that this school not be located in any town but indicates a site between the towns of Hingham and Gildford.

This plan further calls for a completely new plant where nothing now exists. Architects have estimated from a proposed educational program set up by Francis Yeager, Superintendent of Hingham Schools, that a plant meeting only basic requirements could be constructed at a minimum cost of $525,000 to accommodate a maximum of 200 pupils. This does not include any equipment needed in the building, housing facilities for custodian or dormitory if needed. Projection of enrollments for this area shows that such a building would be overcrowded by 1959 as shown in Table III. The expected capital outlay for the one-school plan would be likely to exceed $600,000 to insure meeting the probable demands.

The total taxable valuation of $3,715,539 will provide ample money with a low mill levy for the amount that

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may be needed over the foundation program to satisfy the budget in such a district. The people of this district will, however, still be paying the 10 mill county-wide high school tax which is used for county equalization based on the amount needed to satisfy foundation programs.

In considering the transportation problem for the one-school plan, bus routes now operated in the western Hill County could be used effectively as they are. The routes of those busses bringing children to the highway may be extended to bring the high school people an additional twelve or fifteen miles to a centralized school plant. In order that the high school students arrive at this centralized plant by 9 a.m., the schedule for all busses would have to be altered. The morning schedules would have to be advanced and the evening schedules retarded as much as 20 or 30 minutes. This might create a considerable hardship on the children boarding first in the morning and leaving last at night, especially the grade school students who must ride the same busses.

To assure all pupils of such a large area the opportunity of attending this school, it is entirely possible that a dormitory would have to be provided on or near this school site. The need is indicated by the large number of families in extreme corners of the area with many preschool children and elementary pupils who are now attending country schools and who have no living facilities in any of the towns.
Because of rural electrification, more permanent homes have been built on farms within the last four or five years. In the next ten years this will probably have a definite influence on the need for school transportation because it will be unnecessary to move to town in order to have modern conveniences. This in turn will have an influence on the demand for more adequate road facilities.

The eastern part of this area, including school districts 18, 19 and 20 is not serviced by busses, as is the western part. To correct this condition and to satisfy the people in the eastern section, bus service would undoubtedly be necessary. At a minimum estimate one bus would be required to serve the area north of the highway with another to furnish service south of the highway.

If parents would continue, as at present, to transport their children to the highway or to the towns, the problem would be simplified and one bus would satisfy the need. However, if the entire area were consolidated into one district, the people of the eastern area probably would be dissatisfied unless their children received the same transportation advantages enjoyed by the children in the western area.

The estimated cost of these busses would be about $8,000. The additional cost per year because of the extension of present routes and the addition of new routes
in the east would be about $6,000 or equivalent to the transportation cost to the Inverness district in 1951-52.

The money needed for purchase of these busses would require further bonding of the high school district. Part of the capital outlay for these busses would have to be assured by the elementary districts if grade school children were transported to Kremlin and Gildford. Facilities for housing custodians and teachers should also be considered in this plan, although teachers could find accommodations in the nearby towns.

In considering the total capital outlay needed for the main plant, dormitory, housing for custodian, additional busses and all equipment for each building, the district could expect to be bonded to $600,000. On a bond issue of $600,000, amortized for twenty years, this district would have to levy 11 mills per year. The average mill levy for high school purposes for these five schools in 1949-50 was 14 mills. The one-school plan would require an 11 mill levy for retiring bonds, plus the operational costs in excess of the foundation program, making a total levy about equal to the levy exacted during the 1949-50 school year. If this one-school plan is employed the taxpayer cannot expect a reduction in the tax levy until the bonds are retired at the end of twenty years.
II. THE TWO-SCHOOL PLANS

Rudyard-Kremlin. The two-school plans may be arranged by dividing Area A in either of two ways. This area may be rearranged by the extension of the western boundary of District No. 20 and the division of Districts 39 and 53. The division of elementary districts in districting for high schools was made possible in the 1951 legislature by an amendment to the high school districting law. This act requires the vote of the people in the elementary districts being divided. The extension of this dividing line would cut Area A into two parts. The western part has been designated Area B with a high school at Rudyard and the eastern part designated Area C with a high school at Kremlin.

Area B, as shown on Figure 2, includes the districts 28, 26, 24, 61, 49, 50, 23, 66 and the western half of 39 and 53. In this area Inverness, Rudyard, and Hingham have operated high schools. By this plan, these high schools would be combined into one high school at Rudyard, the most centrally located town in this proposed high school district. This district would have an assessed valuation of $7,546,478 with no outstanding indebtedness in any elementary district. Therefore, the bonding limit would be five per cent of the assessed valuation, or $100,295.60. This is the maximum amount that would be available for
additions to the Rudyard plant to care for the added enrollments. According to estimates in Table III, this high school district could expect to have an enrollment of 94 in 1955 and 118 by 1959. By 1959 or 1960, an additional 30 high school students may be expected after the development of irrigation in the southern end of this proposed district.

The present plant at Rudyard will accommodate about 75 students and the expected combined enrollments for this area for 1952 will be about 84. This means that some construction of high school class rooms or other grade school facilities to release room for the additional high school people will be necessary.

The bus system in operation can be used as it now exists except for the addition of six miles for the Hingham bus to bring the high school people to Rudyard after the grade children are let out at Hingham. Inverness and Rudyard are already transporting the Inverness high school children to and from Rudyard.

The increased enrollment would provide a foundation program large enough to offer a good education program with a small levy on the district due to the increased valuation which would result from high school districting. There would be the added expense of a levy to pay off the indebtedness incurred by the expansion of the Rudyard High School facilities to take care of the increased enrollment. This however, would be a small fraction of what it would cost to
build an entirely new plant which is the principal objection to the one-school plan.

The other school in this two-school plan would be a combined school of Gildford and Kremlin in Area C, as shown in Figure 2. This school could be located in either Kremlin or Gildford and either existing plant could handle the 1952 combined enrollments. This Area is twenty miles wide with Kremlin eight miles from the eastern boundary and twelve miles from the western boundary. Inasmuch as Gildford is about two and one half miles from the western boundary, Kremlin has a more central location on the highway. Other factors making it more advantageous to operate the school in Kremlin are: (1) Kremlin is accredited for the 1952-53 school year; (2) Gildford has a very small percentage of its high school population living on the farms and are, therefore, more easily transported; and (3) Kremlin has better developed home economics and industrial arts facilities. For these reasons Kremlin would be the most feasible site.

This district would have an indebtedness. Therefore available money for bonded capital outlay in the next five years would be less than the five per cent limit for the next five years. This factor would be of little consequence as it would be unnecessary to build for the present enrollments and additional classrooms could be added to the high school building at a very small comparative cost to the
One bus would be necessary to bring the high school people from the Gildford area to Kremlin and eighty per cent of them would be picked up in Gildford. This school could expect to have an enrollment of about 65 pupils by 1959. This would provide for a foundation program about three times as large as either school had in 1951. The assessed valuation would be three times that of the Kremlin district in 1951. This would allow a budget over the foundation program at a much smaller levy. Such an increase in the amount of money available will insure facilities for an expanded curriculum.

Rudyard-Gildford. The alternative two-school plan would provide for districts in Areas D and E as shown in Figure 3. Area D would have a school at Rudyard as existed in 1951 with the children from Inverness attending. The district valuations would be increased by the inclusion of districts to the north for high school purposes. The present enrollment could be cared for with present facilities and existing bus routes would take care of transportation. There would be no bonded indebtedness, therefore future building programs could be taken care of, although on a smaller scale than on the basis of Area B which involves the same area. This school will be the one most greatly affected by the irrigation project to the south and must expect to build soon, regardless of choice between the creation of Area B or D.
If Areas D and E should be decided upon, the second school would be at Gildford combining the schools of Kremlin, Hingham and Gildford. This school would need to bond for immediate construction as the enrollment for 1953 would be 74 pupils with 83 expected by 1955 and 93 by 1959. The present plant can accommodate about 50 high school people. This plan would be hampered by the existing indebtedness. Area E would also be faced with the problem of transportation in the eastern end of the Area which has a predominantly rural school population, thus creating an expensive transportation problem. The bus schedule in operation in District No. 24 would suffice for the present.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The following conclusions are offered on the basis of the data presented in this study:

1. The high schools of western Hill County would profit from high school districting of the county.

2. The two-school plan with schools in Area B and Area C could be most easily accomplished and is most likely to provide a desirable educational program with least expense to the taxpayer.

3. A program of road construction for bus routes would be required before the one-school plan
for western Hill County could adequately satisfy educational needs for this area.

4. A high school district composed of District No. 13 and the addition of District No. 84 could take care of the bulk of increased enrollment expected with the completion of the Marias irrigation project.
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BIBLIOGRAPHY

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Anderson C. R., Administrative Assistant to State Superintendent of Public Instruction. (Unpublished Finance-Statistics on valuations and outstanding bonds for western Hill County.

Sherle, Opal, Hill County Superintendent of Schools, Havre, Montana. Enrollments, bus schedules and transportation costs for schools of western Hill County.
Sterry, Alton, Secretary-Treasurer of the Hill County Planning Committee. (Unpublished letters and minutes of meetings and reports of outside speakers.)

APPENDIX A

SCHOOL LAWS OF MONTANA

CHAPTER 188

AMENDS HIGH SCHOOL DISTRICT LAW TO PROVIDE FOR ADDITIONAL BOARD MEMBERS, COMPLETE DIVISION OF COUNTY AND FOR THE DIVISION OF A COMMON SCHOOL DISTRICT

Section 2. That Section 75-4602 (Chapter 275-2) of the Revised Codes of Montana, 1947, be and the same is hereby amended to read as follows:

"Section 75-4602. Commission may divide county into high school districts. In all counties having a high school, or high schools, a Commission consisting of the County Commissioners and the County Superintendent of Schools shall at the request of any High School Board of Trustees in the county, divide the entire county into and establish one or more High School Districts for the purpose of this Act, after hearing, provided, that each High School District so formed must have one or more operating, accredited high schools within its boundaries. That the commission shall fix the time, date and place, and at such time, date and place hold a public hearing of the requested division of the county into High School Districts, at which hearing any interested person may appear and be heard concerning the requested division. Written notice of such hearing shall be mailed by the County Superintendent of Schools to the Chairman of each and every Board of Trustees of each and every school district in the county, and Chairman of the Board of Trustees of the County High School, stating the time, date and place of such public hearing, and shall be mailed not less than two (2) weeks preceding the date fixed for such hearing. The certificate of the County Superintendent of Schools filed with the Commission reciting that said notices were mailed shall be conclusive.

The boundaries established by said Commission shall be subject to the approval of the Superintendent of Public Instruction.

If any High School District shall cease to have within its borders an operating, accredited high school, then it shall be the duty of the County Superintendent of Schools to consolidate and annex the Common School District comprising said High School District to one or more operating high school district comprising said High School
District to one or more operating high school district within a period of six months after one (1) year of being declared non-operating or non-accredited.

In creating such districts the commission shall give first consideration to the factor of convenience of the patrons of the several schools. Common school districts may be grouped for the purpose of this Act and when practicable High School Districts shall be made up of contiguous and adjacent Common School Districts but the Commission must take into consideration the existence or non-existence of obstacles of travel, such as mountains and rivers and existence or non-existence of highways and distances to high school. No common school district shall be divided for the purpose of this Act but must be made a part of a High School District in its entirety, unless such division is approved and authorized by the voters of the Common School District involved, at a special election held for that purpose and such division shall be on the basis of equal area, or as near thereto as practicable in relation to the geographical features of such district; provided that the entire portion of a joint school district within the county shall be included within a High School District."
APPENDIX B

SCHOOL LAWS OF MONTANA

CHAPTER 92

COUNTY SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS

Section 970. Abandonment of School Districts. He shall attach to contiguous districts territory not a part of any district and he shall have power to declare school districts abandoned when no school has been actually held within such districts for two (2) consecutive years, if in his judgment there is not immediate prospect of the need of a school, and he must declare a school district abandoned when terms of school aggregating at least twelve (12) months have not been actually held in a district during a period of three (3) consecutive years. The county superintendent in determining the question of abandoning any school district under this act must include any period of time that may have elapsed before the approval of this act; provided, however, that if any such district has provided transportation for all children of school age, living within the district, to another district for the purpose of attending school therein for a term of at least six (6) months during each of such three (3) years, such transportation to be by means of a safe and proper omnibus, or omnibuses, driven or operated by a competent driver, or drivers, under contract let by the board of trustees of the district, and which driver, or transportation shall be deemed equivalent to the actual holding of school in such district for a term of six (6) months in a year, and such district shall not be ordered abandoned. The abandoned territory shall be attached to a contiguous district or districts whenever there are five or more children in abandoned territory eligible for attendance in an elementary school as determined by the county superintendent and residing more than three (3) miles from an established school in the district to which the abandoned territory is attached, the school trustees shall provide a school in such abandoned territory when requested so to do by the parents of at least three of such children. In determining whether such children reside more than three (3) miles from an established school in the district, the measurement must be by the shortest regularly traveled route. Whenever a school district is ordered abandoned and there is any indebtedness outstanding against the district represented either by registered warrants, or bonds, or both, and there is not sufficient money in the funds of the district to pay the same, all money in the funds of the district shall be
set aside and applied in payment of such indebtedness, and
there shall be levied annually, in the manner provided by
law, a tax against all property within the boundaries of
such district, as the same existed when such indebtedness
was incurred, sufficient to pay such indebtedness as it
matures, with all interest becoming due thereon.

All funds of an abandoned district, after all the
debts of the district have been paid, shall be placed in the
general fund of the district or districts to which its
territory is attached or order of the county superintendent.
If the territory of an abandoned district is divided and a
part attached to two (2) or more districts, the funds of the
abandoned district, after all its debts have been paid,
shall be apportioned by the county superintendent between
the districts to which such territory is attached in pro-
portion to the assessed value of the property attached to
each thereof.

The county superintendent shall have power to
declare a school district abandoned when there is an in-
sufficient number of residents of said district who could
qualify or when the available residents refuse to qualify
in sufficient number as trustees for said district so that
no legal board can be formed or a quorum obtained so that
meetings of a board of trustees of such district can be
held. Whenever a school district is ordered abandoned upon
order of the county superintendent of schools in such case,
then he shall attach said school district to a contiguous
district or districts as herein provided. (As amended by
Chapter 168, Laws of 1943.)
A REVIEW OF THE BROWNING REPORT

Decided February 14, 1952
Supreme Court Reporter, Volume 7, Page 9132

William T. Wright, Appellant
vs
Browning High School District, Respondent

Opinion by Angstman, Bottomly, Freebourn and Chief Justice Adair concurred; Justice Metcalf concurred in the result. Evidently Lee Metcalf disagrees with reasoning of the opinion, see his dissent in Rankin vs Love, the Ennis school case decided June, 1951, 232 P(2d)998.

December 6, 1949 County Commissioners and County Superintendent, Glacier County passed resolution dividing Glacier County into two high school districts, one of which was defendant Browning High School District comprised of Elementary School Districts 1, 7, 8, 9, and 50.

April 7, 1951, voters authorized issuance and sale of $200,000 bonds, to buy a site, and build and equip a high school.

Presided in Elementary District 9, as a Taxpayer brought action to restrain D from issuing the bonds and to get a declaration judgment holding Ch. 275 Laws of 1947, void and D without legal existence and no authority to issue bonds.

Elementary District 9 has $42,500 outstanding indebtedness, D Browning High School District had no indebtedness. If the $200,000 was divided between elementary Districts 1, 7, 8, 9 and 50 in proportion to the assessed valuation in each elementary district, and the portion so allocated to each elementary district was added to the already existing indebtedness of each elementary district will in no case, be over 5 per cent of the value of the taxable property.

District Court (Judge Padbury) held "Ch. 275, Laws of 1947, and the amendments thereto are unconstitutional only so far as they attempt to permit or authorize the creation of an indebtedness by a high school district in the full amount authorized by Section 6 of Article 13 of the Constitution without reference to the indebtedness of the common school districts comprising such high school district".
"The District Court found that D Browning High School District is a valid and subsisting school district and may issue bonds so long as the indebtedness of the high school district, when divided among the common school districts comprising said Browning High School District, in proportion to the assessed valuation in each such district and portions this divided are added to the existing indebtedness of each district respectively, does not exceed five per cent of the assessed valuation of the taxable property in any of such common school districts".

Opinion states that the opinion it rendered in Rankin vs Love, 232P(2d) 998 (Ennis High School, June 1951) did not overrule that portion of the Pierson vs Hendricksen, 98 Mont. 244, 38P(2d)991, which held the high school districts were legal entities. "Such districts were likewise by necessary implication held in both the Pierson Case and the Rankin Case to have authority to issue bonds and incur among the common school districts in proportion to the assessed valuation of the property in each and this part added to the existing indebtedness of the common school districts respectively, did not bring the debt of any of the latter in excess of the limit prescribed by Section 6, Article XIII, of the Constitution.

Article XIII, Section 6, of Montana State Constitution.

"No city, town, township or school district shall be allowed to become indebted in any manner or for any purpose --- exceeding three per cent of the value of the taxable property therein, to be ascertained by the last assessment for the state and county taxes ---." (Exception - municipal corporations can vote more for sewer or for a city owned water works.)

Amendment of said Constitution, Article XIII, Section 6, changed the limit from three per cent to five per cent. Chapter 65, Laws of 1951, p. 24 in white supplement, changed the law from three per cent to five per cent limit.

Notice the Constitution and the Law (Section 1224.2 on page 137 of School Laws, Ch. 115 Laws of 1949) both say the debt limit is "Five per cent of the value of the taxable property therein to be ascertained by the last completed assessment".

Notice this case states "five per cent of the assessed valuation" when speaking of what the District Court decided,