Is public aid the answer to parochial education's financial woes? A study of Great Falls Central Catholic High School

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IS PUBLIC AID THE ANSWER TO PAROCHIAL EDUCATION'S FINANCIAL WOES? A STUDY OF GREAT FALLS CENTRAL CATHOLIC HIGH SCHOOL

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

In May 1969, Helena's Catholic parochial school system closed its doors. Recognizing that this could happen with other parochial schools in Montana and Great Falls, this researcher became interested in the financial effects that might occur to taxpayers.

Parochial schools fulfill compulsory school attendance requirements and provide elementary and secondary education for many children. The citizens of Montana and Great Falls would be financially benefited by the retention of parochial schools because closures of most parochial schools would cause a great influx of students into the tax-supported public school system and thereby increase taxes. Closures would also place a heavy new burden on public education. To prevent the closure of more parochial schools in Montana, and in particular the Great Falls Central Catholic High School, this researcher intends to show that limited, controlled public aid given for parochial education would save the community from greater impending tax increases. In order to accomplish this, permissive legislation must be adopted by the Montana State Legislature. Central High was selected for this study, not only because of its location, but because it is the largest parochial high school in Montana.
The problem will be stated in this chapter, and in the remainder of the study its importance will be established and possible solutions will be analyzed.

The National Problem

Throughout the country, parents of children attending parochial schools are being pushed to the limit of parental tolerance in providing for the financial support of parochial education. These parents "...are caught in a viciously accelerating cycle: as public-school taxes and parochial-school tuition go up, many parents decide that they cannot afford both. They simply transfer their children to the public schools, increasing the tax burden to the general public as well as the cost per pupil for those remaining in the parochial schools."¹ As a result, many parochial schools have closed. The National Catholic Education Association reported that in the past six years the number of Catholic schools has decreased by 1,023 schools from 13,205 to 12,182, and the number of pupils has decreased from 5,590,806 to 4,820,000 (estimate for autumn, 1969).² According to a University of Notre Dame survey, 301 Catholic schools would close in 1969, and 111 more would either eliminate some grades or consolidate classes.³


The most significant reason enrollment has declined is
the financial problem the parochial schools are having. While
not fully realized until 1965, the parochial schools' financial
problem has been developing over the past two decades. Prior to
the 1950's, most teachers in Catholic parochial schools were priests
and nuns, who were paid minimal salaries. Lay teachers in these
schools worked for less money than their counterparts in the public
schools. In the last two decades these patterns have been gradually
changing. Priests are finding their parish problems more important
than parochial schools. Nuns, decreasing in number, are turning
more to the secular community. Many lay teachers no longer accept
the sacrifice that comes with the lower salaries paid in Catholic
schools. They are asking for salaries approaching those paid their
public school counterparts. Thus with more lay teachers and fewer
students, nuns, and priests in the Catholic schools, the cost of
Catholic parochial education has risen markedly in the past few
years.

The decline in parochial school attendance has been further
influenced by the Second Vatican Council held from 1962 to 1965,
which precipitated a new Catholic education concept that places
less emphasis on parochial school education. Many Catholic
parents are now asking themselves if parochial education is really
important and worth the extra expenditure. Rev. Msgr. James C.
Donohue, director of elementary and secondary education for the
U.S. Catholic Conference, stated that the decline of the Catholic
birth rate also has helped reduce enrollment in parochial schools. Enrollment has been further reduced by many families moving to new areas where fewer Catholic schools exist, vacating established neighborhoods where the present Catholic school facilities are located.

The Local Problem

Just like the rest of the nation, both Great Falls and Montana are experiencing a loss of teaching nuns, an increase in lay teachers, a steady or declining number of students attending parochial schools, and a resulting increase in the cost of parochial school operation. Since a substantial rise in tuition would prohibit many students from attending parochial schools, this policy was avoided in Great Falls and Montana, although, it has now been adopted reluctantly. In Great Falls the local Catholic parishes had been able to pay for their own schools until 1968-69 when the first deficit was incurred. In 1969-70 a larger deficit is expected, and the future indicates more deficits unless the financial problem can be solved.

With the costs of education rising, the Montana Catholic Dioceses have found it impossible to continue many of their schools because of a lack of finances. In 1969, the entire Catholic

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4U.S. News and World Report, September 29, 1969, p. 34.

5Personal communication with Rev. J. H. Dimke, principal, Great Falls Central Catholic High School, October 22, 1969.
educational school system in Helena was closed, moving students from its elementary and secondary schools to public schools. In the last two years, Montana Catholic schools in Harve, Bozeman, Red Lodge, Forsyth, and Butte have experienced financial problems that resulted in closures, partial closures, or consolidations. 6

**Importance of the Problem**

The importance of this problem was recognized by William B. Ball, a nationally prominent Catholic lawyer, when he stated, "Nationally, about one-seventh of all children attend non-public schools. It becomes clear that the transfer of any substantial number of school children to the public schools would produce chaotic results." 7 If many parochial schools closed, America would lose the history, tradition, and competition of those schools.

The problem of parochial school closures could be very serious in those cities where Catholic schools provide educational opportunities for a large percentage of the total school population. In Chicago and New York the Catholic school population is one-third of the total school population. It is 40 percent in Philadelphia and Pittsburgh, and 50 percent in Green Bay, Wisconsin. 8 If New York City's parochial schools closed, taxes in New York City would need to be increased by $200 million to provide for the additional

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operational costs. Additional classrooms would also be needed for the transferred students. This would be "chaotic" and financially disastrous.

Ten percent of the students in both Montana and Great Falls attend parochial schools, a level slightly below the national average. In Montana a transfer would not be as disruptive as for the cities mentioned, but it would cause approximately a $10 million increase in taxes in addition to increasing the total administrative problem of public schools.\(^9\)

**Non-Catholic Parochial Schools**

Non-Catholic parochial schools are not experiencing as many financial problems as the Catholic parochial schools for various reasons. First, no non-Catholic religious order has an educational system the size of the Catholic Church's school system. Second, the Protestant and Jewish school systems do not attempt to locate a parochial school in all large parishes as the Catholic Church does. Most non-Catholic schools are found in the larger communities or in areas of their respective religious concentrations. Third, funds for non-Catholic parochial schools are subsidized

\(^9\)According to the Montana Taxpayers Association, the public school budgets for 1968-69 = $85.8 million. Since the public schools enroll 90% of the students in Montana, a publicly supported budget for all students in Montana would equal $95.3 million ($85.8 million/.90), an increase of $9.5 million. Building costs per year less any fixed operating costs included in the $9.5 million would easily amount to $.5 million. In addition, the cost of education is rising. Thus, the $10 million figure is a conservative one.
more by the districts or funds to which those churches contribute.

Their job is simpler because there are fewer schools to support.

However, the Lutheran Elementary School in Linby recently was forced
to drop their seventh and eighth grades due to the rising costs of
parochial education.

**Historical Background**

In the 1860s the United States had independent private
schools and Protestant-controlled public schools. The Protestant-
controlled schools had compulsory reading of the King James Version
of the Bible for all students regardless of their religious beliefs.
The Catholics objected to this compulsory reading because their
Bible was somewhat different and the Catholic Church wanted to
control the religious instruction given to Catholic children. In
addition to the compulsory Bible reading, the textbooks used by
the Protestant-controlled schools were required by the Catholics
to be closed against Catholicism. To correct this situation, the
Catholics began building their own schools toward the end of the
nineteenth century. As O'Neil O. B'Nour states, "In its actions
the Catholic parochial school system is to be seen as a fortress
designed to protect the faith and culture of a minority directly
against the onslaughts of a majority sincerely bent on extinguishing
it."8 Catholic schools quickly grew in size. The percent of
the elementary and secondary students were attending Catholic

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schools. Catholic education continued to grow until 1965 when 11.6 percent of the elementary and secondary students were in attendance at Catholic schools.  

The Protestants began to lose their influence over the public schools in the early 1900's. The public schools began to change drastically and have now become strictly non-sectarian, even to the point of avoiding any religious training. As a result, the number of Protestant parochial schools began increasing and have doubled in number. Jewish parochial schools are relatively new to the American educational system. But, since World War II there has been a marked increase in their number.

Brief Summary of Previous Research

Many articles have been published and much thought has been given to public aid for parochial education. Most of this work has been done on the national level or in areas outside the State of Montana. Most articles favor public aid for parochial education. Few articles have been published against such public aid. In Montana some research was done by the Montana Association of Non-Public Schools before it presented two bills to the State Legislature in January 1969.

At the local level, according to a local parochial school official, no specific financial studies have been prepared in the Great Falls area. An opinion survey was undertaken, however, during

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1968. This was a "...long-range planning study financed by the Ford Foundation that aimed at putting facts on paper to help guide growth."12

Sources of Data
Secondary research was confined to the collection and analysis of information found in the Great Falls libraries and that available from state, county, and city educational institutions, both public and religious. Primary research involved personal interviews and telephone and postal correspondence with public and parochial school officials and politicians both in Great Falls and other Montana communities. In addition, an attitude survey was made through the use of a questionnaire to determine attitudes and opinions of the people in Great Falls.

Limitations and Boundaries of the Paper
With an issue such as this, many factors other than financial could enter into the analysis of the problem. To be considered in this paper are the financial problem of parochial schools (namely, Central High) as it exists, the factors that affect the problem, and possible solutions to the problem. Although operational ineffeciency can create financial difficulties, no attempt will be made to determine whether the Catholic schools are more efficient than the public schools. In addition, no attempt will be made to decide whether or not Catholic schools are "morally" desirable or acceptable. Finally, no attempt will be made to determine whether

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the present Catholic educational system still serves a useful purpose.

**Survey of Succeeding Chapters**

Chapter two is a review of various facts about the parochial school educational dilemma. The attitude survey taken for this paper will be compared with the Ford Foundation Survey taken in 1968. Arguments both for and against public aid for parochial education are examined. These arguments include both financial and other reasons for providing public aid. Federal and state aid now being given for parochial education and its legality is considered in the analysis of the local problem.

Chapter three is a study of the financial problem at Great Falls Central Catholic High School. The current operating deficits to be met are analyzed. The financial consequences to the taxpayers of Central High's closing are studied. To further explain the situation that faces Central High, the parochial school closures that occurred in Helena, Montana are discussed.

Chapter four is a discussion of possible solutions to the problem, including various types of public aid available for parochial education.

The final chapter is a summary of the paper with conclusions and recommendations for further research.
CHAPTER II

AN EXAMINATION OF PUBLIC AID FOR PAROCHIAL EDUCATION

One possible solution to the problem that exists in parochial education would be to offer public aid. There are many arguments, both factual and opinionated, that determine whether or not public aid should be given for parochial education. These arguments will be outlined in this chapter. Controversial arguments will be clarified where facts are available. Public aid presently being provided and the legality of that aid will also be discussed. Before public aid can be provided for parochial education in Montana, the legality of public aid must be made evident, and the controversial arguments must be discussed fully in order to provide a firm foundation for offering public aid as a possible solution to parochial education's financial woes.

To help determine the attitudes and opinions of the people in Great Falls, a questionnaire was mailed to a random sample of voters in the Great Falls area. Through this survey it was determined that the people wanted to retain Central High, public aid was the desired solution to the financial problems of Central High, transportation and textbooks were the preferred forms of public aid, and that Catholics were willing to provide more financial support for Central High. The desire to provide public aid was
based upon the fact that the people realized it was more economical to provide public aid rather than let Central High close. Without a desire to keep Central open, there would be no reason to offer public aid as a solution.

The Catholic desire to have parochial schools is much more substantial than that found in the survey taken for the Eastern Montana Diocese, "Operations Outreach." Their survey tended to lean towards expanding the activities of the Confraternity of Christian Doctrine (CCD) and away from parochial schools. Many opinions were given to the effect that since Catholic parochial schools do not reach half of the Catholic children, other educational means were needed. Many Catholics stated parochial schools were too expensive. In "Operations Outreach" respondents desired Catholic children attending public schools should receive first priority in religious education. The second priority was Catholic elementary schools followed by Catholic high schools and adult education.

The survey taken for this paper indicates parents are concerned more with being given a choice in schools for their children. Non-Catholics, too, desire to keep the parochial schools open and are willing to provide public aid to accomplish this end. Therefore, this survey shows that public aid for parochial education should be given to satisfy the desires of both Catholics and non-Catholics.

The questionnaire and its results are located in the Appendix. Reference to the results of the questionnaire will be made throughout the paper for substantiation of material included in the paper.
Arguments For and Against Public Aid for Parochial Education

Arguments Against - Financial

A strong argument used by opponents of public aid for parochial education is that the money given for parochial education could be used better in public schools to improve the teacher-pupil relationships, to lessen the number of pupils per classroom, and to upgrade public school courses. Opponents feel that as long as the public schools are in need of funds in order to offer high-quality education, the public schools should be given first priority for any available educational funds.

There is also considerable opposition to public aid for parochial education of any kind. Opponents state that public schools are available to all children and if anyone wants to operate a private or parochial school, he may do so at his own cost, but at no cost to the public.¹ Only the public school and public education are considered to be community responsibilities.

Opponents also argue that money given for parochial education would neither stop the current decline in the number of religious teachers nor alter some Catholic parents' views of how Catholic education should best be offered. For this reason, many opponents feel public aid for parochial education would be a temporary measure, and that it would be better to let the parochial

¹Appendix A, question 5.
schools close now, if they find it financially necessary, rather than delay the inevitable closure.

Opposition is partly due to anti-Catholic feelings many non-Catholics have. This feeling sometimes is so strong that opponents feel no aid should be given to parochial education, even for special services. One opponent objects to the fact that many states require "...school boards to spend the same amount for each parochial pupil as for each public school pupil in remedial reading, speech correction, and similar subjects."\(^2\)

Much opposition to public aid comes from instances of misuse or badly used public funds. There were reported cases in New Jersey that cost the New Jersey taxpayers $4,500 annually to transport two girls to a Catholic school and $3,720 annually for one boy's transportation. This being a nonacceptable use of public funds, New Jersey recently put a limit of $150 per child for transportation costs for one year. Any additional costs must be borne by the parents.

When the federal Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) of 1965 was being considered there was much opposition to the Act. It was stated that many teachers were transferred to parochial schools to teach parochial students, when at the same time there was a teacher shortage in the public schools. In addition, opponents claimed that religious objects were being purchased with federal funds.

Another view opposing public aid for parochial education is that once limited public aid is given, the parochial schools will demand more. Although most parochial school officials want only limited aid, some Catholic officials insist Catholic parochial schools be given aid equal to the taxes used for public education on a per student basis. Many opponents feel that "...if the state paid for all but the religious instruction, there would be the parody of having a state supported school in one instance that could teach its courses with religious emphasis and the public school that cannot offer even one prayer." A few opponents are also afraid that if aid is given, the limits of the aid would be stretched to include salaries of religious personnel and the actual building of church schools.

If aid is given to the existing parochial schools, many people feel that some churches presently without schools will quickly set up schools and request aid. This situation could be very serious if many public schools fell well below efficient operating capacity. One must realize, however, that the state governments do control school standards, and most certainly would prohibit "fly-by-night" schools.

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4Any increase in parochial schools could cause an increase in state supervision costs. Likewise, any decrease in schools could cause a decrease in these costs.
Arguments Against - Other

Opponents of public aid claim that if aid was given for secular subjects, a skilled teacher of a secular subject could either escape the teaching of that subject in a way in which he could inject a religious purpose into the course, or buy religiously oriented textbooks for the secular subjects. This argument is tied directly to the contention that public aid for parochial education would violate the separation of church and state principle of the U.S. Constitution. This argument will be discussed more fully later in this chapter.

Much is also said about the quality of the overall education a student receives in a parochial school. Many religious teachers have been found to have insufficient college education or only the minimal amount required to teach the courses to which they are assigned. A number of technical and scientific courses cannot be taught in parochial schools because qualified teachers and the needed facilities are lacking. As a result, opponents believe students from parochial schools get an inferior education, have less knowledge, and thus will not do as well as public school students on national tests or in post high school studies.

Many people are of the opinion that the parochial schools will become selective and select only white, well-to-do students and leave the poor and non-white students for the public schools. In many cases, rising expenses have caused some parochial schools

Many people in Great Falls also feel this way, as seen in Appendix A, Section 1.
to offer an inferior education and forced the schools to become financially selective in admitting students.

**Arguments For - Financial**

Supporters of public aid for parochial education contend that parochial schools will close and their students will be forced into the public school system, thus increasing taxes much more than would be the case if limited aid were given. In Great Falls, public aid of slightly more than one-third of Central High's operating costs would negate the school's deficits. Although aid of one-third of a parochial school's operating expenses may sound costly, it is much less expensive than total public school expenses, which in Great Falls are double that of parochial school expenses on a cost-per-student basis.

Parents who send their children to parochial schools claim that aid should be given to them because they are subjected to "double taxation" in that they must pay both public school taxes and parochial school tuition for their children. Most Catholic parents feel they should only be required to support one educational system or else receive some public aid for their support of parochial education. As stated by William W. Brickman, editor for *School and Society*, "From the standpoint of basic justice, the state is obligated to pay for the secular education of every child, wherever he is educated, ..." Catholic parents thereby argue

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that their children are receiving a secular education in the parochial schools, education is by law mandatory for all children, and therefore, the government has a responsibility to financially support the secular education of all children wherever they are educated. From this reasoning, one can see why parents who have children in parochial schools feel "deeply taxed" and desire public aid for parochial education.

Arguments For-Other

Parents of children in parochial schools feel they have the primary responsibility for educating their children, and therefore, there should be no penalty through the denial of educational tax funds if they choose to educate their children in a parochial school. If parents cannot afford parochial schools, they will be given no advice and will be forced to send their children to public schools. Parents who send their children to public schools must "...reject their children to the undermining influences of another ven's religious dogma (be it for or against believing in God, Jesus, and Christ), or suffer the loss of education tax funds."

Proponents of public aid say that parochial schools compete with public schools in the form of ideas, methods of education, techniques of operation, and financial management. In many instances:

7According to Appendix A, question 4, this freedom of education is one of the strongest arguments of proponents in favor of aid.

"Until 1931, Catholic Educators, Christians, and Democrats Change Their Opinion on Education, Jr., YPE, p. 1."

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parochial schools have used a new technique that was later copied by the public schools, such as the idea of flexible scheduling initiated by the Catholic school system in Helena. Results of surveys made in New York by Professor Seymour Sacks of Syracuse University showed that "public schools achieve the greatest degree of excellence where they are in competition with strong church-related schools." Professor Sacks "...found that where church-related schools are strong, public schools are strong. And where church-related schools are weak or non-existent, public schools are weak."^9

Much has been said about the parochial schools being educationally inferior. It must be stated that some parochial schools are superior, some are inferior. Facts could be quoted to show either superiority or inferiority, depending upon which schools were being compared. Some facts, however, cannot be denied. Virgil Blum, of Marquette University claimed that on a basis of every national test available, children who attend Catholic schools do not get an inferior education. One of the best studies of Catholic education was the Greeley-Rossi studies conducted through the National Opinion Research Center of The University of Chicago. Andrew Greeley, co-author of the Greeley-Rossi studies, concluded in part:

1. There is absolutely no evidence that Catholic schools are academically inferior.
   We found that those who attended Catholic schools had

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been more successful academically and economically than those who did not.
They also scored higher on tests of knowledge which took family backgrounds into account.
Grades of Catholic colleges are just as likely to finish graduate work as graduates of non-Catholic colleges. Despite the handicaps of larger classrooms and less teacher-training, the products of Catholic schools are, if anything, superior to the graduates of public schools.¹⁰

Scores on national tests taken by Great Falls Central students compare favorably with national results in the public schools and help substantiate Greeley's findings that Catholic schools are not inferior.¹¹

Recent U.S. Supreme Court Decisions

The main contention advocated by opponents of public aid for parochial education is that it violates the separation of church and state principle of the U.S. and state constitutions.¹² The First Amendment states: "Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion or prohibiting the free exercise thereof." As defined, the government was to have no control over religion nor was there to be a state religion. The annals of

¹⁰Ibid., pp. 71-72.

¹¹Catholic eighth graders on the average scored in the 77th percentile in the SRA high school placement test. All Central juniors took the PSAT and scored in the 62nd percentile. These figures were obtained from Rev. J. H. Dimke, principal of Central High. Figures for the Great Falls public high schools were not made available for publication.

¹²These opponents include legislators in Montana and people in Great Falls. Refer to Appendix A, question 5.
Congress cite James Madison, proponent of the First Amendment, as follows: "Congress should not establish a religion, and enforce the legal observation of it by law, nor compel men to worship God in any manner contrary to their conscience." Nothing in the Amendment says the government cannot create an atmosphere conducive to the practice of a religion, but it does say the government may not prohibit the exercise of religious freedom by its citizens. The states, therefore, can neither help nor hinder a religious group.

The First Amendment did not prohibit all relationships between government and religion. As such, a complete separation of church and state never has been a reality. The Bible is used for both public oath-taking and swearing-in procedures in our courts. All states recognize a Supreme Being in their state constitutions. "In God We Trust" is printed on all our coins. In the area of education, the states regulate the parochial schools' accreditations, set standards for those schools and require attendance for children enrolled in parochial schools.

In the Atwood Case (1920), the Supreme Court of Wisconsin ruled that "...grants to war veterans did not violate the state constitutional prohibition against aid to denominational schools, since such grants aid only the students."14

In Pierce v. Society of Sisters (1925), the U. S. Supreme


14Blum, Catholic Education, p. 58.
Court recognized the right of parochial schools to exist, as long as they met reasonable state standards. In *Cochran v. Louisiana State Board of Education* (1930), the Court declared the State's main interest was the individual's education, and therefore, Louisiana could lend secular textbooks to children who attended parochial schools. The U.S. Supreme Court affirmed a Louisiana Supreme Court ruling that stated "...schools, however, are not the beneficiaries of these appropriations. They obtain nothing from them, nor are they relieved of a single obligation, because of them. The school children and the state alone are the beneficiaries."\(^{15}\)

The U.S. Supreme Court reviewed a contested law in *Everson v. Board of Education* (1947), which allowed New Jersey to reimburse parents for bus fares for children attending parochial schools. In this case, the Supreme Court upheld the right of the states to provide transportation to all school children, whether they attended public, private, or parochial schools. In reaching its decision, the Court declared, "It appears that these parochial schools meet New Jersey's requirements. The State contributes no money to the school. It does not support them. Its legislation, as applied, does no more than provide a general program to help parents get their children, regardless of their

\(^{15}\) *Cochran v. Louisiana State Board of Education*, 281 U.S. 370, 375, 50 Sup. Ct. 335, 74 L. Ed. 915 (1930).
religion, safely and expeditiously to and from accredited schools." 16
The legislative purpose was to provide health and safety measures
for the children, not to assist the parochial schools.

The Schempp Case (1963) forbade reading of the Bible and
saying public prayers in public schools. The U.S. Supreme Court
explained its actions by stating, "To withstand the strictures of
the Establishment Clause, there must be a secular legislative
purpose and a primary effort that neither advances nor inhibits
religion." 17 This case provides a new test to determine the
constitutionality of laws alleged to violate the separation of
church and state requirement of the Constitution. It is called
the "purpose and effect" test. "Using the test, the court asked
two questions. The first: What was the purpose of the legislature
in posing the law? Was it to aid religion, or to achieve a secular
(nonreligious) goal? The second: What is the primary effect of
the law? Is the primary effect the aiding of religion or the
achieving of a secular goal." 18 This test is probably the most
important development in the legal history of public aid for paro-
chial education.

In the recent Allen Case (1968), the U.S. Supreme Court


18 Blum, Catholic Education, p. 61.
used this "purpose and effect" test stating that textbooks given to New York children who attend parochial schools that met the state's secular requirements was a financial benefit to the parents and the children. The law's primary effect was said to further the education of New York's children. This is the "child-benefit" theory. The secondary or incidental effect of possibly helping religion was not regarded by the Court as being significant or unconstitutional. The court did stress the aid must be provided for all children, not just to those who attended certain parochial schools. In writing the opinion for this case, Justice White said parochial schools were in fact performing the task of secular education in addition to their sectarian functions. Not only did the Court declare that parochial schools were providing both secular and religious education, it stated, "...we cannot agree...that the processes of secular and religious training are so intertwined that secular textbooks furnished to students by the public are in fact instrumental in the teaching of religion." 

The most recent case, Flast v. Cohen (1968), recognized a federal taxpayer's right to challenge federal statutes by suit. In issue was the constitutionality of ESEA. Only Mrs. Flast's right to sue was determined. The case was recommended for a new trial on the issue of constitutionality.

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19 This "child-benefit theory" is not understood by many people as pointed out in Appendix A, question 2.

These court decisions show an apparent liberality which shows a change in thinking concerning support of parochial school children. We shall now see how the federal government and other states have utilized this change in thinking. Public aid for parochial education in countries other than the United States will also be examined.

**Federal Aid to Education**

ESEA is probably the most important piece of federal legislation providing aid for parochial education. This legislation was designed to benefit all children. Title I, Improvement of the Education of Children of Low-Income Families, was intended to help all educationally deprived needy children. Title II, School Library Resources and Instructional Materials, was "...for the use of children and teachers in public and non-profit private elementary and secondary schools in the states." Title III, Supplementary Educational Centers and Services, was to provide the community needed educational services previously unavailable. Title IV provided educational research and training funds, and Title V strengthened the state Departments of Education.

Titles I, II, and III explicitly stated the legislative intent was to benefit parochial school children as much as public school children. Although this was clearly the Act's intent, there has been much misunderstanding of the intent of ESEA. A

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Boston College study, which was researched for the United States Office of Education, found there was much "uncertainty and inconsistancy" at the operational levels. Some non-public schools were losing out on Title I funds through misunderstandings and various schemes accomplished by public schools. Two examples of these schemes are (1) scheduling activities at times non-public schools could not utilize, and (2) monopolizing funds, stating that their state constitutions did not allow non-public schools to participate.

Other States' Reaction to Recent U.S. Supreme Court Decisions

Many states have parochial schools with financial problems and have taken positive steps toward solving them. Pennsylvania recently enacted the Pennsylvania Nonpublic Elementary and Secondary Education Act (PNESEA) to help prevent any chaos that would occur if the Catholic schools in that state closed, releasing a flood of their students into the public schools. The central operative feature of the law was that the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania purchased the secular education services from the parochial schools. This was legally acceptable because "...the Commonwealth had the right to enter into contracts for the purchase of needed services to solve public problems, even though the contract may be with a sectarian institution." The Pennsylvania Legislature realized

that the non-public schools in that state were providing an adequate education service and fulfilling the government's duty in educating the students. This Act was designed to help pay for secular subjects such as math, modern foreign languages, physical science and physical education. Textbooks and other instructional material must be approved by the Superintendent of Public Instruction, and the teachers of secular subjects benefiting from this aid must be certified. The students who receive aid while attending parochial schools must perform satisfactorily in national standardized tests approved by the Superintendent. This aid was to amount to between $4 million and $5 million dollars annually, with the money to come from harness racing, not from public school funds. An additional $45 million is being sought now from cigarette tax revenue.

Rhode Island pays 15 per cent of the teachers' salaries who teach secular subjects in non-public schools. Connecticut pays "...20 percent of the salaries of teachers of secular subjects and gives allowances of $10 to $15 per pupil for the purchase of secular textbooks." Other states, such as New York, provide textbooks and transportation for children attending parochial schools. Twenty-five states presently provide some form of aid for parochial schools.


Free bus transportation for children attending parochial schools is provided in twenty-five states. Textbook aid is given in eight states. Hawaii allows a small tax credit for those parents who pay for parochial school tuition, and three states provide for salaries of teachers who teach non-secular subjects. In all cases, aid was a reimbursement for incurred expenses, not a prepayment.

Some states have found it easier to modify their constitutions rather than to have to fight the constitutionality of aid for parochial education, even though recent Supreme Court decisions provide a pattern for giving support for public aid for parochial education. The citizens of New York and Wisconsin "...finally modified their constitutions in order to extend the benefit or protection of bussing to all children."^27

Other Countries and Their Procedures

Forty-nine countries in the free world grant tax funds for the education of children in non-public schools. Among these countries are Canada, England, France, Scotland, Holland, West Germany and Austria.

In Canada there are ten provinces, and each makes its own

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26 U.S. News and World Report, September 29, 1969, p. 34.
28 Blum, Catholic Education, p. 103.
determination on whether or not to spend public money on parochial schools. Quebec, which has mostly Catholic schools, provides equal status for the students attending public schools. Alberta and Saskatchewan conduct Catholic systems through grade twelve entirely with public funds. Ontario does likewise, except it terminates public aid at the tenth grade. All other provinces, except two, give aid for parochial education, provide release time, or have local "gentleman's agreements" in which Catholic schools are publicly supported. Some provinces allow the head of each household to designate which school will receive his school taxes. In most publicly supported Catholic schools, the teachers have the same training and credentials as their public school colleagues.

England has two types of schools that receive public aid. "If the school uses state funds for operational and maintenance costs only, it is designated an 'aided' school and can continue to give its denominational religious instruction 5 days per week. But if the state is responsible for operation and maintenance, plus alterations, extensions and repairs of buildings, the school is a 'controlled' school and can give sectarian religious instruction the other three days." Religious instruction given is agreed upon by the local education authorities and the religious institution involved.

In France, private schools can choose two methods: (1) If the state pays some money towards the general expense and certain

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classes, then the school can offer religious instruction, but the methods, syllabus and the teachers' qualifications must meet certain standards. (2) If only salaries of certain teachers are paid, then less exact control is exerted over the private schools.

Scotland had Presbyterian parochial schools plus "public" schools until 1918 when the "Concordat" was drawn up, which did away with denominational schools. In this "Concordat" the local religious bodies retained the right to supply a list of religiously suitable teachers to the local school authorities from which the school authorities could choose the teachers who were professionally best qualified.

Holland has no public or private schools as we have in the United States. All of their schools have freedom in religious matters, but all must follow the same state regulations and state supervisions.

As in England, West Germany does not have separation of church and state. The church is constitutionally a part of the state, and therefore, religious instruction is compulsory in the state schools. A church tax imposed on everyone is given to the church for the private schools, which are few because the state schools provide adequate religious instruction. Austria also requires religion to be taught in all schools. In Austria, "Religion textbooks must be approved by the state, and religion instructors are paid by the state."^30

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Public Aid for Parochial Education in Montana

Federal aid for parochial education is available to Montana's parochial students. Cooperation between the public and parochial schools in establishing ESEA programs has been effective. All programs must be initiated by the public schools. If a parochial school wishes a program to be initiated, it can ask the public school to do this for them, and this has been done with moderate success. There have been a few times, however, when programs initiated by the public schools were less than helpful to parochial schools.

While public schools in both Montana and Great Falls deserve to be commended for their sensible actions concerning federal aid for parochial education, the Montana State Legislature has slowed the progress of federal aid. SB 267 was introduced in the 1969 Montana Legislature by Senator P. J. Keenan of Anaconda. The bill was defeated. The bill "...would simply have requested the Governor and the State Superintendent of Schools to apply for federal funds which might be available to non-public and private schools. At the present time, neither has the authority to do so." 31 There is no law that would prevent either from applying for the federal funds, but such action could be contested.

The goal of Montana Association of Non-Public Schools established in 1968 is to alleviate the financial problems of

Montana's parochial schools. Its basic aim was to obtain $3 million from the 1969 State Legislature for the secular education of parochial school students, including funds for bus transportation and secular textbooks.

It argued that if all the parochial schools in Montana closed "en masse," taxes in Montana would have to be increased by $10 million. In 1969, they presented two bills to the Montana State Legislature requesting state aid for parochial education, HB 192 and HB 193. HB 192 was designed to authorize the Superintendent of Public Instruction to "...enter into contracts with nonpublic schools for the purchase of instruction in secular subjects. A secular subject is a course which is presented in the curricula of a public school and which does not include any subject matter expressing religious teaching, or the morals or forms of worship of any sect." Textbooks and instructional material would have to be approved by the Superintendent in order to qualify under this bill. HB 193 would allow the Superintendent to purchase and lend secular textbooks to pupils attending non-public schools. It would also grant him power to provide transportation for students attending non-public schools under the same regulation that public school students now receive transportation. Both bills, which would have helped alleviate the financial problem of parochial education in Montana, were defeated. No further legislation concerning aid for parochial education will be possible until January, 1971, when the Legislature convenes again. 

32Legislation proposed by the Montana Association of Non-Public Schools, 1969, p. 2.
After the State refused to provide aid, a special $65,000 bond issue was passed by Deer Lodge County voters to provide funds for lay teachers at Anaconda Central High School. Proponents of the issue said Anaconda Central would have to close without the aid. This bond issue was enjoined by a private citizen, and the case is now pending in the courts.

The main reason for the defeat of HB 192 and HB 193 and the enjoining of the Anaconda bond issue is the legislative interpretation of Article XI, Sec. 8 of the Montana Constitution. This article prohibits the legislative assembly, counties, cities, towns, school districts, and public corporations from making directly or indirectly, any appropriations or paying any public funds or granting lands "...in aid of any church, or for any sectarian purpose, or to aid in the support of any school, academy, seminary, college, university, or other literary, scientific institution, controlled in whole or in part by any church, sect or denomination." Representative Stimatz said that a California constitutional provision is almost verbatim the same as Montana's and that California has approved a law that allows public transportation for parochial school students. In New Hampshire, whose state constitution prohibits aid to sectarian schools, the New Hampshire Supreme Court recently declared constitutional public aid for secular textbooks and special health and guidance services.

33Great Falls Tribune, May 30, 1969, p. 3.
The Montana Constitution only prohibits public aid to churches or any institution controlled by any "church, sect, or denomination," or aid for any sectarian purpose. The U.S. Supreme Court has declared that aid such as textbooks, transportation, and aid for secular subjects is given to children and their parents and not to religious institutions, and the aid is given for the primary purpose of furthering the secular education of children. In light of recent U.S. Supreme Court decisions, and legislative action in other states with constitutions similar to Montana's, it seems reasonable that the Montana Constitution should not hinder public aid for parochial education.

Facts and opinions concerning public aid for parochial education have now been discussed. Financial problems of many parochial schools were solved by states taking advantage of recent U.S. Supreme Court decisions. The magnitude of the financial problem at Great Falls Central Catholic High School will now be analyzed, followed by possible solutions to its problem.
CHAPTER III

GREAT FALLS CENTRAL CATHOLIC HIGH SCHOOL,
ITS FINANCIAL PROBLEMS, AND THE
PUBLIC COST OF ITS CLOSURE

For decades Central High and its predecessors have been a primary source of education in the Great Falls community. The school has produced many fine graduates and, until now, has been able to function financially on its own. This success of Central High could quite possibly come to an abrupt end due to financial difficulties which will now be analyzed.

Financial Difficulties of Central High

Central High, like many other parochial schools, is faced with the problem of not having enough income to meet its expenses. Central High has attempted to contend against this situation by keeping its operating costs at a much lower level than that of public high schools of the same size in Montana. Inflation and a shortage of religious teachers, however, has forced the operating costs to rise beyond expectations. The administrators of Central High are finding it very difficult to acquire the needed income, especially at this time when most people do not have much discretionary income. The predicament in which Central High finds itself is displayed in Table 1, which shows its 1968-69 operating costs and the 1969-70 budgeted costs.


<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Expenditure</th>
<th>Actual</th>
<th>Budget</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Instruction</td>
<td>$132,322</td>
<td>$187,714</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Operation of Plant</td>
<td>30,120</td>
<td>26,780</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fixed Charges (incl. Soc. Sec.)</td>
<td>16,996</td>
<td>19,504</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Administration</td>
<td>12,289</td>
<td>9,910</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maintenance of Plant</td>
<td>1,051</td>
<td>1,100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>2,972</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Expenditures</strong></td>
<td><strong>$195,750</strong></td>
<td><strong>$245,008</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Income                               |            |            |
| Tuition from students                | $82,236    | $90,000    |
| Parish subsidies                     | 40,250     | 50,250     |
| Indirect subsidies                   | 34,970     |            |
| Other                                | 18,150     | 16,567     |
| **Total Income**                     | **$175,006** | **$156,717** |

| Deficit                              | **$20,744** | **$88,291** |

| Number of students                   | 669        | 643        |
| Cost per student                     | $293       | $381       |

Average cost per student for a public high school of this size in Montana: $620 N.A.

Source: Unpublished data received from Rev. J. H. Dimke, principal of Great Falls Central Catholic High School.

Great Falls Central High School's income primarily comes from students' tuition and parish subsidies. Other income comes from special donations, auction sales, candy sales, and indirect subsidies from the church. Central High authorities advise that the student tuition...
has not been raised to cover the deficit because it would drastically restrict enrollment.

The Catholic parishes cannot meet the rising costs for two reasons. First, operating the churches comes first. Once the expenses of the Catholic churches in Great Falls have been paid, there is not enough money to fully pay for the parochial school expenses. Second, the Catholic parishes have a policy of supporting the Catholic elementary schools first and then Central High. As a result, Central High faces a future with less income and much higher expenses resulting in greater deficits.

To bring this problem into sharper focus, the closing of the entire Catholic educational school system in Helena will be examined. The Helena Catholic Diocese was forced to close both the elementary and the high schools because of operational deficits in addition to a complete default in payment of principal and interest on the high school building debt. The cause of the financial difficulties encountered in Helena was similar to those experienced nationwide. A new high school, at a cost of $1.9 million, was finished in 1965, the year Catholic parochial school education reached its peak. The school was built to accommodate 650, but initial enrollment was only about one-half of that, and it never increased. Educational costs had risen considerably due to the increased use of lay teachers and inflation. While school expenses were rising, income derived from the Helena Catholic Community (all Catholic parishes in Helena) was not increasing sufficiently to meet the churches' normal operating expenses.
In 1968-69, the Community had a deficit of $41,922.\textsuperscript{1} Larger deficits were forecast for the next two years. The Community had a $2 million capital indebtedness of which 80 percent was held outside the Catholic Church. Payment on this indebtedness could not be deferred or written off as would have been possible if it had been held by the Catholic Church. Increased pledges by parishioners in the Community were not enough to offset the expected deficits. In fact, there was not enough income to pay the operational costs of the Catholic educational system. Due to these financial constraints, the Diocese was forced to close all Catholic parochial schools in Helena. Because Great Falls Central High is also operating with deficits, a closure such as this may soon take place.

While the operating costs of Central High are a problem, only a $345,000 debt remains on Central High's building. In addition, the debt is owed to the Eastern Montana Catholic Diocese. Central High's situation is unlike that faced by the Helena Catholic Community, because the outstanding indebtedness on Central's school building can be deferred. Consequently, the debt on the Central High School building is not the chief factor in deciding whether Central High should continue to operate.

Central High's deficit for last year was eliminated through gifts from the Eastern Montana Catholic Diocese and other sources. This year's deficit and future expected deficits will soon exhaust

\textsuperscript{1}Catholic Education - Its Hour of Need, Brochure published by the Helena Catholic Diocese, Helena, Montana, 1969.
these sources of revenue. To help solve this financial problem and other Catholic educational problems in eastern Montana, the Diocese has established a committee to examine the present system of Catholic education in the Diocese. This committee is in its infancy and no permanent recommendations have been presented yet. There is a possibility that the committee might find a solution to the financial problems of Central High. However, if the committee cannot solve these problems, or only temporarily solve them, and if public aid is not given, the likelihood is that Central High must close.

Cost to the Public if Central High Closes

If Central High were closed, its students would be forced to attend the public schools in Great Falls or attend schools outside of Great Falls. This was precisely what occurred in Helena when the Catholic schools closed. As a result of this closure, the taxpayers of Helena had the levies on their property increased 6.94 mills in order to provide teachers and classrooms for the nearly 900 elementary and high school students previously enrolled in the Catholic parochial schools. The State cannot provide for its entire share of the public education this year; thus an additional $322,400 will have to "come back upon the county in an increased mill levy." This increase in taxes is very substantial. It should be emphasized that everyone in Montana will have increased taxes due to this closure.

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3 Independent Record (Helena, Montana), March 10, 1969, p. 2.

4 Ibid.
A closure in Great Falls would also increase taxes. The extent of the increase will be discussed below.

In Great Falls, the public high school's cost per student is more than twice that of Central High, and is rising each year. As shown in Table 2, the public school system expenditures in 1969-70 are expected to increase almost 10 percent over 1968-69. Because actual enrollment figures for 1969-70 in the public schools are below the expected figures, there may be a 1969-70 budget surplus, if costs are not committed. Consequently, per student cost in the public high schools for this year may not reach $862. Therefore, it seems more reasonable to use the established 1968-69 figure of $777 per student.

It is not known what part of these figures represents variable costs. This determination must be made if one attempts to calculate the increased operating cost of public high school education due to a large influx of students, because only the variable operating costs will increase. (Granted, in the long-run, fixed costs will also be affected, but their effect will not immediately be felt.) Therefore, the following assumptions were made. The same quality of education will be given to the new students. The requirements for teachers, textbooks, services for the students, and classroom space will be met with the same per student expenditure as the present

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The public high school figures include ninth grade and a small number (less than 5 percent) of special education and vtech students. The figures do not include transportation or teacher retirement costs. Transportation costs are not included for two reasons. First, Central does not offer transportation. If it was included, an equal comparison could, therefore, not be made. Second, transportation is not a part of the Foundation Program, the basic source of funds for public schools.
### TABLE 2

**OPERATING COSTS OF PUBLIC HIGH SCHOOLS IN GREAT FALLS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Instruction</td>
<td>$2,628,989.43</td>
<td>69.0</td>
<td>All</td>
<td>69.0</td>
<td>$2,960,149.12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Operation of Plant</td>
<td>372,225.46</td>
<td>9.8</td>
<td>All</td>
<td>9.8</td>
<td>399,930.26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Current Charges</td>
<td>205,018.24</td>
<td>5.4</td>
<td>All</td>
<td>5.4</td>
<td>247,817.61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Capital Outlay</td>
<td>138,482.98</td>
<td>3.6</td>
<td>Half</td>
<td>1.8</td>
<td>150,219.44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maintenance of Plant</td>
<td>118,541.97</td>
<td>3.1</td>
<td>All</td>
<td>3.1</td>
<td>129,787.95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Library</td>
<td>99,959.67</td>
<td>2.6</td>
<td>Half</td>
<td>1.3</td>
<td>111,998.32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Administration</td>
<td>87,611.25</td>
<td>2.3</td>
<td>Half</td>
<td>1.1</td>
<td>84,886.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Post High Votech</td>
<td>70,980.00</td>
<td>1.8</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health</td>
<td>23,225.00</td>
<td>0.6</td>
<td>All</td>
<td>0.6</td>
<td>24,340.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>67,188.00</td>
<td>1.8</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>$3,812,222.00</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td></td>
<td>92.1</td>
<td>$4,184,600.95</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Students attending</td>
<td>4,907</td>
<td>4,857</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cost per student</td>
<td>$777</td>
<td>$862</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average cost per student for public high schools of this size in Montana</td>
<td>$679</td>
<td>N.A.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*aSource: Great Falls Public School Budget, 1969-1970.*
public high school students. In other words, these costs are considered wholly variable. These requirements would include the following items in the public high school budget: instruction costs, operation of plant, maintenance of plant, current charges, and health expenses. These variable costs equal 87.9 percent of the total costs as shown on Table 2. If these assumptions are not correct, the estimated variable cost per student would change. It is the opinion of this researcher, however, that these expenditures considered 100 percent variable could not vary to any great extent.

Table 2 displays the costs of public high school operation, the variable cost assumptions made, and the budgeted costs for the 1969-70 school year. Note that 92.1 percent of the total costs were assumed variable, of which 87.9 percent have been previously discussed. Only 4.2 percent of the remaining 12.1 percent of total costs were assumed variable.

Using the calculated figure of 92.1 percent of total public high school expenditures as the assumed level of variable costs, Table 3 illustrates the revenue and expenditures that would have been realized this year if the 643 students from Central High were attending the public high schools in Great Falls.

The present cost of $4,185,000 for operating the public high schools in Great Falls is paid for by the State, County, and School

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6. The current charges are included because it consists primarily of Social Security expenditures for the teachers. An additional facility would be needed to handle the 643 additional students. Its operating and maintenance costs on a per student basis will have to be at least equal to the present facilities' operating and maintenance costs if equal facilities are to be provided.
District #1 through a complex allocation system. The basis of the system is a Foundation Program, which by state law allows an expenditure of $498 per student in a high school system the size of Great Falls'. Any expenses over the Foundation Program allowance can be met through any federal funds available, a permissive District levy (without voters' consent) up to one-fourth of the Foundation Program, and an additional District levy (with voters' consent).

TABLE 3

EXPECTED COST AND SOURCES OF REVENUE OF THE PUBLIC HIGH SCHOOLS
WITH THE ADDITION OF TRANSFERRED CENTRAL HIGH STUDENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Expected Cost</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cost per student in the public high schools</td>
<td>$777.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Variable cost per student (92.1% x $777.00)</td>
<td>$716.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total variable costs of 643 students ($716 x 643)</td>
<td>$460,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Present cost of public h. s. operation (Table 2)</td>
<td>4,185,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total expected cost, incl. transferred students</td>
<td>$4,645,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sources of Revenue</th>
<th>Presenta</th>
<th>Projected</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Foundation Program ($498 per student)</td>
<td>$2,424,000</td>
<td>$2,744,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Permissive levy (½ of Foundation Program)</td>
<td>606,000</td>
<td>686,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Additional levy and federal funds</td>
<td>1,155,000</td>
<td>1,215,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total revenue needed</td>
<td>$4,185,000</td>
<td>$4,645,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

aSource: Mrs. Loretta Wirtala, Cascade County Superintendent

The County provides most of its 15 mill levy towards the Foundation Program of the public high schools in Great Falls. The District presently adds about $10,000. The State presently provides sufficient funds.
funds to equal 93 percent of the Foundation Program. The remaining 7 percent must be provided through an additional county levy.

The added cost of $460,000 for the transferred Central High students would be paid for by the use of this formula as shown in Table 4. The total increased cost to the County and District is $263,000 and requires a mill levy of 4.50 mills. A one mill levy in the County and District would presently bring $75,347 and $65,967 respectively.

An additional cost is included for a public high school building to provide classrooms for the transferred Central High students. The $101,000 annual figure assumes that a building, possibly Central High's, can be purchased for $1.5 million with a twenty-year bond at 6 percent interest. This is a very conservative estimate and the cost of a building could quite possibly increase to $2 million or $2.5 million.

If Central closes, the increase in the Foundation Program to be provided by State funds (this year it would have been $298,000 if Central had closed) may not be provided for at least one year due to a lack of funds, which is what happened in Helena. This increase would have to be paid through an additional District levy.

The financial impact of Central's closing is indeed great. The County and District would be forced to increase taxes by $263,000, the

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7 According to Page-Werner & Partners Architects, architects for the Great Falls Public Schools, a school building the size of one needed to accommodate 700 students will cost approximately $2,500 per student. This equals $1,750,000. Furnishings would increase the cost by at least $200,000. The building at Central has been valued by its owners at a figure between $2 and $2.5 million. The $2.5 million figure is, therefore, a conservative estimate.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TABLE 4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SOURCES OF TAX REVENUE FOR EXPECTED OPERATING AND BUILDING COSTS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Money Amounts in Thousands of Dollars)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### OPERATING COSTS

**State and County Sources**

- **Foundation Program** - amount needed: $2,744<sup>a</sup>
- **To be provided by:**
  - State: $1,581
  - County's 15 mill levy: $961<sup>b</sup>
  - District: $2,552
- **Additional amount needed**: $192
- **Presently provided by County**: $170<sup>b</sup>
- **Additional County taxes needed**: $22

Mills required ($22,000/$75,347): .29 mills

**District and Federal Sources**

- **Permissive levy** - amount needed: $686<sup>a</sup>
- **Additional levy** - amount needed: $1,215<sup>a</sup>
- **Total amount needed**: $1,901
- **Presently provided by:**
  - District: $1,649<sup>b</sup>
  - Federal: $1,761
- **Additional District taxes needed**: $140

Mills required ($140,000/$65,067): 2.16 mills

### BUILDING COSTS

**District Sources**

- **District taxes needed to provide a $1.5 million building for students now attending Central High**: $101

Mills required ($101,000/$65,067): 1.55 mills

**TOTAL ADDITIONAL TAXES NEEDED**: $263

**TOTAL MILLS REQUIRED**: 4.00 mills

<sup>a</sup>Source: Table 3.

<sup>b</sup>Source: Mrs. Loretta Wirtala, Cascade County Superintendent
State by $298,000. This totals well over one-half million dollars per year, which is a significant amount of money for the people of the Great Falls community and of Montana to produce. The next chapter will discuss possible ways to avoid Central’s closing, and thus save the taxpayers this imminent tax burden.
CHAPTER IV

SOLVING THE PROBLEM

Possible Solutions to Central High's Financial Problems

Realizing that it could cost the taxpayer at least $260,000 if Central High closes, it would seem reasonable to examine possible alternatives to keep the school open. Six possible ways in which to solve Central High's financial problem will be examined.

1. Central could reduce its operating expenses.
2. Central could increase its income, either from tuition or its supporters.
3. Central could ask for more funds from the local Diocese or the Catholic Church in the United States.
4. Central could seek federal assistance.
5. Great Falls and the local school district could provide assistance and solve the problem as a community project.
6. The State, County, and District could provide public aid.

While theoretically possible, the first alternative is not very realistic. Central High's costs are at a minimum now.\(^1\) A further cost reduction would force Central into providing a substandard education.

The largest expense item in Central High's budget is teachers' salaries. This is one expense that cannot be reduced. Even if some economizing

\(^1\)Cost figures are shown in Chapter 3, Tables 1 and 2.
could be accomplished on non-instructional expenses, the deficit could not be erased because instruction costs for 1969-70 are expected to exceed income by over $30,000.

The second possibility is feasible but not probable. Increasing students' tuition would force many students to transfer to public high schools. This only adds to one of the present problems, that of a declining student body at Central High. It would also unnecessarily increase the cost of public education. Another possible way to increase the income at Central High is to increase the student body (and thus tuition) by making Central High a non-denominational Christian school, opening the school to students of faiths other than Catholic. A study would have to be made to determine if enough public students in Great Falls would want to enroll at a school such as this.

Many people feel Catholics should pay for their own schools and that this problem can best be solved by increased contributions from Catholics. Finding a way to increase the parishes' income would undoubtedly be the easiest solution for the general public. This is not easy to do, however, and the present parishes' income will not support Central High in addition to the parochial elementary schools and the churches. The Helena Catholic Community tried to accomplish this but was unsuccessful. In Great Falls, Catholics have expressed some interest in increasing their contributions for the support of

---

2 In the Fall of 1970, a co-educational private day school on Staten Island, N.Y. will be opened to students of all religious backgrounds. This ecumenical high school is sponsored by Catholics and Missouri Synod Lutherans on Staten Island.

3 Appendix A, questions 5 and 6.
Central High School. This amount would probably not be enough and would be at most a temporary measure. Money is not easily obtained for religious purposes, and this trend of non-support for religious ventures is increasing. This possibility, therefore, is not the answer.

The local Diocese and the Catholic Church are in the same predicament as the local parishes, if not a worse one. They are further away from the problem and it would be much harder to raise the necessary funds. True, some money could be raised but the results would not solve Central's problem. This is especially true in light of the fact that Catholics outside of Great Falls realize Catholic students in Great Falls can get a free public education.

In many public problems, the "natural" solution is to ask the federal government to step in and render assistance. However, in this case aid from the federal government is limited by existing legislation and appropriations. Asking for more aid at this time would produce negative results.

The problem could be solved on a local level, but this would definitely involve some public aid for parochial education. To achieve this, permissive legislation must be passed by the State Legislature. The local School District could offer classrooms to Central's students for secular courses such as math and science courses. Central would provide instruction for courses that tend to be sectarian in nature and the public schools would

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4Appendix A, question 10.
provide the secular courses. Another possibility is that the public schools could offer a whole education for students at Central with an hour a day set aside for "release time." During this "release time" Catholic students would be excused to participate in religious classes at Catholic educational centers. Both methods are used in the United States at this time. There are disadvantages inherent in these programs, however. They will cost more. Costs will approach those determined in reference to the closing of Central. The administrative headaches involved in public aid of this type will be much more than in monetary public aid. These are possible solutions, but not the most advantageous to the public.

The last solution is for the State, County, and District to offer public aid in the form of textbook aid, transportation, teachers' salaries, etc. People in Great Falls do want to keep Central High operating and are willing to provide public aid. This public aid, if given, would not be given to the schools. It would be given for the benefit of the students for secular textbooks, transportation, or any other aid the State Legislature might authorize. Let us now look at the possibility of providing public aid for Central High and the types of public aid available.

Cost of Public Aid for Central High

The source of public funds for public education now consists of a combination of district, county, state, and federal funds. It

\[5\] Appendix A, questions 3, 4, 5, 6, and 7.
is the opinion of this researcher that public aid for parochial
education should be allocated on the same basis as the public
now provides funds for public education. This basis could change
from year to year. Last year the District paid 41 percent and the
County and State each paid 28 percent. The federal aid of 3
percent would have to be allocated to the District because Central
High presently is eligible for federal aid. The figures for
1969-70 are expected to be very close to these percentages.
Table 5 illustrates the likely allocation of the public aid
needed to allow Central High to continue to operate.

TABLE 5

NEED AND ALLOCATION OF PUBLIC AID FOR CENTRAL HIGH

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Need</th>
<th>Allocation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Annual operating costs of Central High</td>
<td>Total public aid</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$250,000</td>
<td>$110,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Income—tuition and parish subsidies</td>
<td>District share (44%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Table 1)</td>
<td>$48,400</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Need for public aid</td>
<td>County share (28%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>$30,800</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>State share (28%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>$30,800</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total public aid</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>$110,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The District and County responsibilities would be satisfied
through a mill levy. The mill levy needed to obtain $79,200 would
be 1.16 mills. The State could fulfill its responsibility through various tax sources which include income taxes and excise taxes. The $79,200 or 1.16 mills is much less than the $263,000 or 4.00 mills needed if Central High's students were forced to attend the public schools in Great Falls. A 1.16 mill levy would produce taxes slightly under $1.30 per $10,000 worth of property. A 4.00 mill levy would produce taxes around $4.40 per $10,000 worth of property. Even though the amount of taxes is small, the people of Great Falls would rather pay the 1.16 mill levy and keep Central operating rather than pay the 4.00 mill levy and allow Central High to close.

Types of Public Aid Available

Numerous types of public aid are available to provide aid for parochial education. The most common public aid provided is transportation for pupils attending parochial schools. One probable reason for its common usage is that many times school buses can be used to transport simultaneously both public and parochial school children. If transportation is provided, parents of Central High students will have more funds available for the educational expenses of Central High. Another inexpensive form

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6One mill levy in the County and District will produce $75,347 and $65,067 respectively.

7Table 4.

8Appendix A, question 4.
of public aid is textbooks for secular education. This is the second most common form of public aid provided in the United States. ⁹

Some proposed state aid is patterned after the federal aid provided under the ESEA. Aid is given for special health and special education (such as remedial reading) needs of parochial school children. This is a new type of aid and the needs it satisfies are just being recognized in many states. Children in parochial schools with special needs receive financial assistance equal to that received by similarly deprived children in public schools.

One form of aid that has not received much attention in the United States, except Hawaii, is a tax benefit for those parents who send their children to parochial schools. A tax benefit can work in various ways. Parents may be given the right to designate which school system, public or parochial, should receive his school taxes. This plan, common in Canada, might be unlawful in that a portion of these taxes would provide for religious instruction. A tax credit, given for some percentage of tuition and fees paid for secular education in parochial schools is an acceptable plan used in Hawaii. A form of aid somewhat related to the tax credit is the tuition grant proposal. Under this plan, a certain stated amount of money would be given by the state to the parents for partial reimbursement of parochial school tuition.

---

⁹These forms of public aid are also preferred by the people of Great Falls as shown in Appendix A, question 7.
In order for this aid to be given, the state would have to require that this tuition reimbursement could in no way exceed the cost of secular subjects, pay for any religious courses, or be given to children who attend schools either not qualified under state requirements or that were being discriminatory.

Public aid can also be given in the form of a "shared time" plan, in which parochial students attend public schools for instruction in math, science, and other non-religious subjects. This plan could also be accomplished by the public entering into a contract with the parochial schools to pay for the teaching of secular subjects in the parochial schools. This second method has a great advantage over the first method in that classroom space would not be a problem, nor would there be as many scheduling problems involved.

**Effect of Public Aid Used to Decrease Tuition at Central High**

Public aid, if given, must at least eliminate present deficits in order to maintain enrollment at Central High at the present level. Any less aid will only cause tuition to rise and enrollment to fall. The present shortage of funds has forced tuition to rise from $150 in 1966 to $185 in 1969. Consequently, enrollment has decreased from 807 in 1966-67 to 643 in October, 1969. This is an average annual enrollment loss of 7.6 percent. It is estimated that enrollment would have declined further this year except that many ninth graders who would normally attend the public junior high schools are not attending these schools. This
has happened because overcrowding in the public schools has forced
split shifts and thus abnormal school hours which are undesirable
to many students.

Since lack of funds causes tuition to rise and enrollment
to drop, it seems logical to this researcher that sufficient public
aid could produce opposite effects. Lower tuition at Central
High might cause enrollment to rise. Providing sufficient public
aid to lower tuition hereafter will be called the "additional public
aid theory." This rise in enrollment would come primarily from
students now attending public high schools. This transfer would
definitely be a savings to the public because the variable per
student cost in the public school is $716.00. Any public aid
given would certainly be less than this for two reasons. First,
the public would not be expected to provide aid sufficient to pay
for the total bill at parochial schools. Second, the per student
cost in parochial high schools is much less than that in public
high schools as will now be shown.

Central High's per student cost is expected to be $381.00
for 1969-70. However, students that transfer from public high
schools to Central will require more funds per student than the
present Central High students because any increase in the number
of students at Central will require additional teachers. An addi-
tional staff composed entirely of lay teachers would cost
approximately $140 more per student than the present staff composed

\[10\]This is the variable per student cost as computed in
Table 3.
of twenty religious teachers and seventeen lay teachers. Because Central High's building can accommodate between 300 and 400 more students, the cost per student for the operation and maintenance of the building would actually decrease. Administrative costs per student would also decline somewhat. The cost for a transferred student, therefore, would be $381 plus $140 less $21 approximated cost savings in administrative costs and operation and maintenance costs, or approximately $500 per student. Because Central High can offer quality education to students at a lower cost than the public schools, society as a whole will spend approximately $216.00 less for each transferred student. This would be a real step forward for the community of Great Falls.

The aforementioned savings renders the additional public aid theory as a promising solution to the problem. How much must tuition at Central be reduced in order to induce a transfer of students? This researcher believes reducing tuition in half will be needed to revive the interest in students not presently attending Central High in order to make the theory workable. Table 6 illustrates the theory of using public aid to reduce the tuition by one-half in addition to eliminating the present deficit. Costs are given for four levels of student enrollment: 650 (approximate number of present students), 700, 800, and 900.

As Table 6 displays, a breakeven point between the additional public aid theory and the present proposed public aid exists around 800 students. If less than 150 students transfer, this theory would need more public aid, even though society as a whole would
TABLE 6

THE EFFECT OF PUBLIC AID USED TO DECREASE TUITION
AND INCREASE ENROLLMENT AT CENTRAL HIGH SCHOOL

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Enrollment Levels</th>
<th>650</th>
<th>700</th>
<th>800</th>
<th>900</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Present educational costs at Central High</td>
<td>$250,000</td>
<td>$250,000</td>
<td>$250,000</td>
<td>$250,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cost of transferred students @ $500 per student</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>25,000</td>
<td>75,000</td>
<td>125,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total cost</td>
<td>$250,000</td>
<td>$275,000</td>
<td>$325,000</td>
<td>$375,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tuition income (½ of present rates)</td>
<td>$45,500</td>
<td>$49,000</td>
<td>$56,000</td>
<td>$63,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Normal parish subsidies</td>
<td>50,000</td>
<td>50,000</td>
<td>50,000</td>
<td>50,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total income</td>
<td>$95,500</td>
<td>$99,000</td>
<td>$106,000</td>
<td>$113,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Need for public aid (Total cost - Total income)</td>
<td>$154,500</td>
<td>$176,000</td>
<td>$219,000</td>
<td>$262,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Savings by transferred students @ $716 per student</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>36,000</td>
<td>108,000</td>
<td>180,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Net cost of proposed aid under this theory</td>
<td>$154,500</td>
<td>$140,000</td>
<td>$111,000</td>
<td>$82,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aid needed to meet present deficit (Table 5)</td>
<td>110,000</td>
<td>110,000</td>
<td>110,000</td>
<td>110,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Additional aid needed for this theory</td>
<td>$44,500</td>
<td>$30,000</td>
<td>$1,000</td>
<td>($28,000)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
benefit. If over 800 students transfer, this theory would cost less than the proposed public aid in addition to benefiting society. This number is not unrealistic because only three years ago there were over 800 students attending Central High. Also, there are over 1000 Catholic students in Great Falls not attending Central High. The breakeven point could easily be lowered by granting aid which would allow tuition to drop by a lesser amount. In other words, if public aid was given which allowed tuition to drop by only one-fourth (which would bring the tuition slightly below the level of three years ago), the breakeven point would be around 740 students.

Another benefit of this theory is that any present or future overcrowded conditions at the public high schools could be reduced. Central High has capacity for over 1000 students and thus the facilities would not be overcrowded if even 300 students were to transfer.

This theory could lower the cost of education to society, it could strengthen a very competitive parochial high school, and it could insure that Central High would continue to operate. This theory does have some merit and should be considered as a solution to the problem.
CHAPTER V

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Parochial schools are in financial trouble. By examining the trend of the declining number of parochial schools, one can foresee further closings unless public aid is given. After a study of the financial situation at Great Falls Central High School, this researcher has concluded that it would be cheaper for the taxpayer to provide public aid rather than to let Central High close. This conclusion should hold true for all parochial schools that cannot provide enough income to meet expenses. Public aid is the cheapest and most logical solution to the parochial schools' financial problem.

In Chapter 2 it was shown that public aid is legal as far as the U.S. Supreme Court is concerned. Many states have also agreed that their state constitutions will allow public aid for parochial education. There seems to be no logical reason why Montana's State Constitution will not also allow public aid.

This researcher has also concluded that state governments do have a responsibility to provide secular education, special health, and special education services to all children, regardless of the school they attend, be it public, private, or parochial. Parents should have the freedom of choice to send their children to the school of their choice with no loss of tax funds for the secular
education of their children.

This researcher has found that people would rather provide public aid for parochial education than let the parochial schools close. This fact was born out by a questionnaire mailed to a random sample of voters in October, 1969.

Because of the aforementioned findings, this researcher recommends the adoption of permissive legislation by the State of Montana to provide public aid for parochial education. There are many types of public aid available, the most popular being transportation and textbook aid. No County or District levies can be expected until the State passes the necessary legislation.

Previous legislation failed because the appeal made by the backers of the bills did not have enough concrete facts or studies of all the Catholic schools in the State. Facts presented in this paper should be helpful for further legislation. Perhaps what is needed is an opinion by the Montana Supreme Court similar to the opinion that paved the way for public aid for parochial education in New Hampshire. The opinion stated, "Our state constitution bars aid to sectarian schools and institutions and religious sects or denominations. But it is our opinion that since secular education serves a public purpose, it may be supported by tax money if sufficient safeguards are provided to prevent more than incidental and indirect benefit to a religious sect or denomination."1

Public aid for parochial education must be controlled. Funds

1Great Falls Tribune, November 1, 1969, p. 2.
should not be used for anything religious, nor should money be given for courses that teach any religious dogma. Most parochial school officials only want limited aid. They realize that if too much aid were given, the government control would soon inhibit the purpose of parochial education. A local parochial school official stated he would welcome an elected public person on the parochial school board as a control measure for any public aid given.

Granted, there are some negative aspects concerning public aid for parochial education. Parochial schools can be selective and it is very difficult to allocate public funds for schools that are selective. However, if funds are not given for parochial education, the schools will be forced, due to finances, to become even more selective. At the same time this will force many more students into the public school system which is much more costly.

Public schools are in need of more funds. If aid is given for parochial education, will that not take away needed funds for public education? In a sense it will, but if aid is not given to parochial schools, there will be even less money available per student for public education. Public aid for parochial education, however, should not cause public education to suffer unnecessarily.

Catholics would be better off if they closed their schools. If their schools closed, they would no longer be forced to support two school systems. A few Catholics do feel this way. Nevertheless, a majority of Catholics have a great desire to continue their schools.

Fifty-seven percent of the people in the United States do not
know how much it costs to educate a child in the public schools. How many of them also do not know how much it costs to educate a child in the parochial schools or how much aid is needed to help parochial education? How many of them do not know the full effect of parochial school closures? Many do not know and never will unless they are informed. In order to inform people, dialogue between groups both for and against public aid must be opened up and facts and opinions brought out into the open.

Dr. Harold Wenaas, Superintendent of the Great Falls public schools, says the future of public schools must be thoughtfully considered if the schools are to prosper. Because of the impact parochial school closures have on public schools, parochial education is of great importance to public schools and their future. Again, communications between public and parochial school officials must be opened up.

If aid is given, there will be a lag between permissive legislation and the raising of the first funds. Central High parents and other backers must provide additional funds and services to help maintain Central High's program until state funds are available. If aid is not given, a joint Central High School-Great Falls School District committee would need to be established to plan the gradual takeover. The minimum time period needed for a complete changeover would be approximately six months.

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In order to convince the Montana Supreme Court and the State Legislature that public aid for parochial education is needed, the hierarchy of the Catholic Church will have to get behind its people and push for public aid. Thus far the Catholic Church's position has not crystallized in Montana. It must crystallize soon and become a solid supporter of public aid for parochial education if public aid is ever to materialize. As Missouri's State Senator T. D. McNeal said, "In order that our cause (tax funds for nonpublic education) may prevail, we must face up to the cold fact that in the political arena one does not win because he is right -- that a legislative proposal is not adopted because it is just. Legislation is adopted or defeated because somebody put together enough votes to get the end result!"  

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APPENDIX A

The Questionnaire

In October 1969, a questionnaire (a copy is included at the end of the Appendix) was mailed to a random sample of voters in the Great Falls area. This area included all people in Public School District #1. The random sample was obtained from the May 1969 voter registration list, which was the most recent one available. The list obtained was divided into precincts in which each voter was listed alphabetically by precinct. A random number between one and one hundred was picked. Using this number as a starting point, every hundredth name was selected, running the selection continuously through all precincts, as if they were one continuous list. A total of 250 names were selected and sent questionnaires.

Twenty-three questionnaires were returned because the people had either moved or died. Six people said they did not receive a questionnaire, and it was doubtful that at least five more people received one. These five people had no phone, no address listed in the Great Falls Directory, and were not living at the address listed on the voter sheets. It was determined, therefore, that 216 people received the questionnaire. Of these 216 people, 177 or 83 percent answered. There were 122 fully completed questionnaires, twelve partially answered or modified returns, and forty-three returns obtained over the telephone.

An attempt was made to contact via the telephone the 82 people
that did not answer the mailed questionnaire. Of these people, 6.5 percent either had moved or had no listed telephone number and were not contacted. Those people without phones were not given an additional chance to respond. Because of this, it is possible that obtaining answers over the telephone could have biased the results somewhat.

**Modified Returns**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Comments</th>
<th>N</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Returned with comments that the person was not in a position to answer</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blank returns</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Against public aid for parochial education</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>For public aid for parochial education</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Telephone Answers**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Opinion</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>For public aid for parochial education</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>28%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Against public aid for parochial education</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>21%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No opinion</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>51%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

An analysis of the results of those people that were contacted by phone showed one half had no opinion, and the other half showed only slight favoritism for giving public aid for parochial education. Because the results obtained by the telephone were similar to those obtained through the mail, it would appear those that were not contacted because they had no telephone would not bias the results to any significant degree.

The following results were determined by summarizing all answers given:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Opinion</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>People favoring public aid for parochial education</td>
<td>97</td>
<td>55%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>People against public aid for parochial education</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>27%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>People with no opinion</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>18%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>177</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Using the estimate of proportions method of analyzing statistical data, one can be 95 percent sure that the actual percentage of people in Great Falls favoring public aid for parochial education lies between 47.4 percent and 62.2 percent of the total population. Of those people that have an opinion on this matter, twice as many people favor public aid as those that oppose it.

Analysis of the Survey

The following is an analysis of the results of the survey. The modified and telephone returns were previously presented as a summary of answers given. The fully completed questionnaires will be discussed question by question. Each question will be stated, the results of each question will be listed, and a brief analysis of the results will be given. Question one was used to encourage interest in the questionnaire and, therefore, is not discussed because it had no effect on the results.

Question 2

When money is given to help ease financial problems of parochial schools, is the money going to the child (child benefit theory) or to the parochial school?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>No.</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Parochial school | 76  | 62%
| Child            | 40  | 33%
| Unanswered       | 6   | 5% |
|                  | 122 | 100%|

These results indicate that most people in Great Falls believe public aid will benefit primarily the parochial schools. In closer analysis of the results, I found that the Catholics' answers were evenly divided, whereas the non-Catholics answered in the strong major-
ity that parochial schools were the primary benefactors.

The importance of this question is that for public aid to be legal, the U.S. Supreme Court has said that the children must be the ones to primarily benefit from the aid, not the school. People in Great Falls, and the State Legislature, must be convinced of this fact before any public aid will be given for parochial education in Montana.

Question 3
Do you want Central High to continue to operate?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Anxious</th>
<th>Indifferent</th>
<th>Opposed</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>64</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percentage</td>
<td>53%</td>
<td>44%</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Realizing Great Falls Central Catholic High School has financial problems, a slight majority of Great Falls people are anxious to see Central High continue to operate and very few people (only 3 percent) are opposed to its operation. Non-Catholics were found to be indifferent as to whether or not Central High operates. Of Catholics answering the questionnaire, 77 percent of them were anxious to keep the school open. This compares favorably with a 1967 national Gallop Poll which found that 70 percent of the Catholics wanted Catholic schools.

Question 4
If Central High closes, the added cost to your local property taxes (plus a small increase in various state taxes) will be $4.40 per $10,000 worth of property. The cost of aid to keep the school operating will cost $1.30 per $10,000 worth of property (plus a smaller increase in state taxes). Given these two alternatives, which would you choose?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Give aid to Central</th>
<th>Let Central close</th>
<th>Unanswered</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>82</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percentage</td>
<td>67%</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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These answers are interesting in that 67 percent of the people of Great Falls want to give aid to Central High because of financial reasons, even though 14 percent of these same people are indifferent as to whether Central High continues to operate or not. This stresses the problem's financial importance to the general public, even though the financial difference to each individual taxpayer is small.

**Question 5**

Please list any non-financial factor that influenced your decision in Question 4.

Reasons listed by those for public aid:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reason</th>
<th>Count</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Overcrowded public schools</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>24%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Freedom of choice</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>24%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Good or better education</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Religious</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Competition</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>54</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Reasons listed by those against public aid:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reason</th>
<th>Count</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Separation of church and state</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>23%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inferior schools</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>19%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Should pay for their own schools</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>19%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All should go to public schools</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Religious</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>31</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

These answers emphasize the fact that public aid for parochial education is a complex problem and includes many factors other than financial factors. Reasons given by those against public aid stress the need to have the legality of this problem fully explained. Likewise, the quality of parochial education in Great Falls needs to be
better publicized. It is noteworthy that many people in Great Falls realize the benefits Central High provides the Great Falls area.

**Question 6**

How should this problem be solved?

1. Increased contributions from Catholics  21  17%
2. Provide limited and controlled aid to help ease the financial problem  65  53%
3. Close the school and assign the children to public schools  17  14%
4. Full, equal aid for parochial education  5  4%
5. Increased contributions from Catholics or give public aid  5  4%
6. Increased contributions from Catholics or close the school  4  3%
7. Other  3  3%
8. Unanswered  2  2%

Many people (24 percent), both those against and those in favor of keeping the school open, would rather the Catholics increase their contributions and save the taxpayer taxes. Even though these people are hoping for this to happen, most people (53 percent) realize it is not too much of a reality, because many Catholic parents are financially burdened as much as possible now by providing operating funds for two school systems.

**Question 7**

Check your position concerning public aid to parochial schools. This aid would be controlled and given only for non-religious uses. (You may check more than one.)

1. Provide aid for transportation and/or non-religious textbooks.  32  5/12  27%
2. Provide aid for special health and education services.  17  11/12  15%
3. Tuition grants to children for parochial education  6  11/12  6%
4. Salaries for teachers of non-religious subjects  
   25 3/4 21%
5. No aid  
   36 29%
6. Other  
   3 2%
   122 100%

Because it was possible to choose more than one answer, the numerical answers must be explained. If a person chose three types of public aid, each type of aid was given 1/3 of a point, if a person chose all four types of aid, each type of aid was given 1/4 of a point, and so on. These answers again confirm the answers given in question 4. Only 29 percent of the people in Great Falls are against any form of public aid for parochial education, and only 31 percent would just as soon let Central close than provide public aid for parochial education. Of the 70 percent favoring aid, the most desired aid is transportation and/or textbooks for secular subjects. This aid is also the most common nationally. The second choice of aid desired was salaries for lay teachers of non-religious subjects. This is noteworthy because a bond issue which provides for lay teachers' salaries is being contested at the present time in Anaconda. Somewhat disappointing is the fact that Great Falls citizens do not feel very strongly about aid for special health and special education services (such as remedial reading) for parochial school children. This aid should be given top consideration.

Question 8

Please indicate your religious preference.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Religion</th>
<th>Count</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Protestant</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>56%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Catholic</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>36%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>122</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
This question helped determine how the different religious denominations feel towards public aid for parochial education. It also was needed to insure the survey was not biased by a certain denomination. No religious survey has been taken in Great Falls in recent years, although it has been estimated that between 1/4 to 1/3 of the adults of Great Falls are Catholic. Using these unofficial figures, it would appear that my sample was slightly biased by the Catholic desire to provide public aid for parochial education. Catholic returns (44) equaled only 25 percent of the total returns (177). If most of the returns with religious preference undesignated (the modified and telephone returns) were in fact non-Catholic returns, the percentage of Catholic returns would then correctly fall in the expected range. Because the bias, if it exists, was at most slight, and because Protestants in Great Falls as a whole are not against public aid for parochial education, any bias would not appreciably change the outcome.

**Question 9**

For Catholics only:
Is it desirable to have a Catholic high school for the benefit of the Catholic community?

<p>| | | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>77%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>21%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unanswered</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

These answers infer that not only are 77 percent of the Catholics anxious to keep Central High open, but also 77 percent feel it desirable to have Central High for the benefit of the Great Falls Catholic Community.
Question 10

For Catholics only:
How much EXTRA will your family be willing to give each week to help keep Central operating (over and above any tuition being paid now.)?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Extra</th>
<th>Responses</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Nothing</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>34%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$.50</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$1.00</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$1.50</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$2.00</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$2.50</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unanswered</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>23%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Whatever is needed</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Whatever can be afforded</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Many people (24 percent) would like to see the Catholics contribute more to their own schools. Some people against public aid for parochial education stated that Catholics should pay for their own schools. Answers to this question indicate Catholics are willing to increase to some extent their already overburdened share of parochial education. Using the answers that can be quantified, and by quantifying the other twelve answers, giving a value of zero to those unanswered, a value of $1.00 to the one who would give what he could afford, and $2.50 to the one who would give what was needed, the results show the average Catholic family will increase their contributions $.64/week, or $33/year. Three thousand Catholic families giving this amount would provide $99,000 a year for Central High's operation. Realizing that what people say they will give to religious activities, and what they actually do give are different, the amount actually given would probably be considerably less.
**Question 11**

For Catholics only:
What do you feel is the best way to offer Christian education to Catholics?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Option</th>
<th>Responses</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Parochial schools</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>63%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sunday School, catechism classes, other church classes</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CCD</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Home</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Release time</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grade school only</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unanswered</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Answers to question 11 reaffirms the desire to have parochial schools, even when directly compared to all other types of Catholic religious instruction. If CCD or religious programs other than the parochial schools were desired, arguing for public aid for parochial education would be futile. Parochial schools would soon close no matter what the taxpayers desired.
My name is Paul R. Carlson. I am working on my Master of Business Administration degree from the University of Montana. One of the requirements for this degree is the writing of a professional paper. The subject of my paper is "Financial Aspects of Public Aid to Parochial Schools." Your name was selected at random from a list of people in the Great Falls area to give an opinion on this important issue.

Would you please complete the accompanying questionnaire and return it to me as soon as possible in the enclosed self-addressed, stamped envelope? I must stress that the value of this survey depends entirely upon the number of questionnaires returned. Since you will not be identified in any way, please be frank with your opinions.

Thank you very much for your help and cooperation.

Sincerely yours,

Paul R. Carlson

Enclosures: 2
Great Falls Central High School, and many other parochial high schools in the country are experiencing financial difficulties. Some states are granting public aid to parochial schools, and the question arises as to whether or not Montana and other states should not be giving public aid to help guarantee the survival of parochial schools.

1. Who should decide whether or not public aid should be given to Central High?

2. When money is given to help ease financial problems of parochial schools, is the money going to the child (child benefit theory) or to the parochial school?  [ ] Child  [ ] Parochial School

3. Do you want Central High to continue to operate?
   [ ] Anxious  [ ] Indifferent  [ ] Opposed

4. If Central High closes, the added cost to your local property taxes (plus a small increase in various state taxes) will be $4.40 per $10,000 worth of property. The cost of aid to keep the school operating will cost $1.30 per $10,000 worth of property (plus a smaller increase in state taxes). Given these two alternatives, which would you choose?
   [ ] Let Central Close  [ ] Give Aid to Central

5. Please list any non-financial factor that influenced your decision in Question 4. ____________________________________________

___________________________________________

___________________________________________
6. How should this problem be solved?
   - Increased contributions from Catholics?
   - Provide limited and controlled public aid to help ease the financial problem?
   - Close the school and assign the children to the public schools?
   - Other (Please state) ____________________________

7. Check your position concerning public aid to parochial schools.
   This aid would be controlled and given only for non-religious uses.
   (You may check more than one.)
   - Provide aid for transportation and/or non-religious textbooks.
   - Provide aid for special health and education services.
   - Tuition grants to children for parochial education.
   - Salaries for teachers of non-religious subjects.
   - No aid.

8. Please indicate your religious preference.
   - Protestant  - Catholic  - Other

NOTE: If you are Catholic, please answer the last three questions.

9. Is it desirable to have a Catholic high school for the benefit of the Catholic community?  - Yes  - No

10. How much EXTRA will your family be willing to give each week to help keep Central operating? (Over and above any tuition being paid now.)
    - Nothing  - $.50  - $1.00  - $1.50  - $2.00  - $2.50

11. What do you feel is the best way to offer Christian education to Catholics? ________________________________________________
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