FIFTH ANNUAL REPORT ON SCHOOL DISTRICT ORGANIZATION

COLORADO STATE DEPARTMENT
OF EDUCATION

Byron W. Hansford, Commissioner

January
1962

COLORADO

STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION

FIFTH ANNUAL REPORT

ON

SCHOOL DISTRICT ORGANIZATION

123-25-10, C.R.S. '53. Duties of Commissioner and Special Assistant

> It shall be the duty of the Commissioner and his Special Assistant . . . . . to publish an annual report on progress of organization plans in the several counties on or before January 1, 1958, and each January 1 thereafter.

Prepared by

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Denver 2, Colorado

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LETTER OF TRANSMITTAL

To Members of the Legislature:

The School District Organization Act of 1957, Chapter 237, Session Laws, 1957, invests several duties within the office of the State Commissioner of Education. Among these duties, Section 10 (3) specifically enjoins the commissioner and his special assistant "To publish an annual report of progress of organization plans in the several counties on or before January 1, 1958, and each January 1 thereafter."

In fulfillment of this duty as Commissioner of Education, I herewith submit the fifth annual report on progress in School District Reorganization as of January 1, 1962.

Respectfully submitted,

Byron W. Hansford

Byron W. Hansford
Commissioner of Education

FIFTH ANNUAL REPORT
ON
SCHOOL DISTRICT ORGANIZATION

(January, 1962)

The calendar year of 1961 has seen Colorado's school district reorganization process proceed at about the same rate as previous years. The year began with 385 school districts in existence and ended with 316, a reduction of 17.9% in the number of districts.

Significant reorganizations were accomplished during the year in Boulder and Bent Counties. Partial reorganizations occurred in Montrose, Conejos, Otero, Kiowa, and Weld Counties.

Additionally, county school planning committees accomplished dissolutions and annexations in the following counties: Fremont (1), Arapahoe (1), Otero (2), Adams (2), and Weld (2).

Elections on school district reorganization plans were unsuccessful in the east end of Montrose County, in the central portion of Logan County, in the major portion of Las Animas County, and in the northern portion of Weld County.

CHRONOLOGICAL PROGRESS REPORT ON ELECTIONS, DISSOLUTIONS AND ANNEXATIONS,
JANUARY 1, 1961 TO DECEMBER 31, 1961 UNDER PROVISIONS
OF "THE SCHOOL DISTRICT ORGANIZATION ACT OF 1957"

COUNTY	NAME AND NUMBER OF DISTRICT	DATE OF ELECTION OR ANNEX.	REORGANIZATION	DISS. AND ANNEX.	ELECTION RESULTS FOR	ELECTION RESULTS AGAINST
FREMONT	WEST FREMONT NO. 51	1/ 2/61		X		
ARAPAHOE	TOLL GATE NO. 25	1/ 2/61		X		
BOULDER	ST. VRAIN NO. RE-1J	1/17/61	X		1,811	1,274
	BOULDER VALLEY NO. RE2	1/17/61	X		3,559	1,847
MONTROSE	UNCOMPAHGRE NO. RE-1J	1/24/61	X		269	855
	WEST END NO. RE-2	1/24/61	X		213	83
CONEJOS	NORTH CONEJOS NO. RE1J	2/ 3/61	X		203	89
OTERO	EAST OTERO NO. R1	2/ 7/61	X		483	111
	FOWLER NO. R4J	2/ 7/61	X		237	22
KIOWA	KIOWA COUNTY NO. RE-2	3/17/61	X		114	65
OTERO	PATTERSON VALLEY NO. 19	4/27/61		X		
	STAR VALLEY NO. 22	4/27/61		X		
LOGAN	CENTRAL NO. RE-1	5/15/61	X		354	486
LAS ANIMAS	LAS ANIMAS NO. RE-1	6/ 6/61	X		1,060	1,787
BENT	*LAS ANIMAS NO. RE-1	6/19/61	X		132	131
	MCCLAVE NO. RE-2	6/19/61	X		69	38
WELD	WELD COUNTY NO. RE-2	6/27/61	X		321	373
	WELD COUNTY NO. RE-5J	6/27/61	X		206	99
	WELD COUNTY NO. RE-6	6/27/61	X		196	423
	WELD COUNTY NO. RE-7	6/27/61	X		348	168
	WELD COUNTY NO. RE-9	6/27/61	X		166	257
ADAMS	SABLE NO. 24	7/ 1/61		X		
MONTEZUMA	MONTEZUMA-CORTEZ NO. RE1	7/17/61**				
	DOLORES NO. RE4	7/17/61**				
WELD	KERSEY NO. 87	9/18/61		X		
	BARNESVILLE NO. 54	9/18/61		X		
ADAMS	CLYDE MILLER NO. 62	9/22/61		X		
BENT	LAS ANIMAS NO. RE-4	9/23/61	X		282	214

NOTE: *FIRST ELECTION ON LAS ANIMAS NO. RE-1 SET ASIDE BECAUSE OF SUFFICIENT NUMBER OF INELIGIBLE VOTERS IN CLOSE ELECTION TO CHANGE RESULTS. SECOND ELECTION ON 9/23/61 CARRIED BY GOOD MAJORITY.

**MONTEZUMA COUNTY PLANS SET FOR ELECTION BUT RESTRAINED BY DISTRICT COURT.

TOTAL DISSOLUTIONS AND ANNEXATIONS	8
TOTAL REORGANIZATION ELECTIONS	18
ELECTIONS SUCCESSFUL	12

SUMMARY, MAY 1, 1957 TO DECEMBER 31, 1961

TOTAL ELECTIONS HELD	132	
TOTAL ELECTIONS CARRIED	99	(75%)
TOTAL ELECTIONS FAILED	33	(25%)
TOTAL REDUCTION IN NUMBER OF DISTRICTS	613	(65.98%)

A county-by-county look at the present number of school districts compared with the number of school districts in May of 1957 is presented in the following table. The table also indicates whether the county is completely reorganized (R) under conditions satisfactory to the conditions of the act, or partially reorganized (PR). The counties are listed in accordance with their present number of districts from the counties with the highest number to those with the lowest number, and are listed alphabetically within the group having the same number of districts.

COLORADO COUNTIES RANKED BY NUMBER OF SCHOOL DISTRICTS

(December 31, 1961)

	COUNTY	No. Dists. 12/31/61	No. Dists. 5/1/57		COUNTY	No. Dists. 12/31/61	No. Dists. 5/1/57
PR	Weld	26	78	R	Bent	2	17
PR	Las Animas	20	46	R	Boulder	2	29
PR	Montrose	19	20	R	Chaffee	2	14
	El Paso	17	22	R	Grand	2	12
PR	Garfield	16	25	R	Huerfano	2	26
PR	Logan	15	25	R	Kiowa	2	10
PR	Montezuma	15	15	PR	Ouray	2	2
	Morgan	14	14	R	Park	2	14
	Sedgwick	14	13	R	Phillips	2	13
PR	Costilla	12	12	PR	Pueblo	2	2
PR	Arapahoe	10	16	R	Rio Blanco	2	8
	Crowley	9	9	R	Teller	2	8
PR	Conejos	8	17	R	Yuma	2	27
PR	Adams	7	19	R	Archuleta	1	1
R	Kit Carson	6	15	R	Clear Creek	1	7
PR	Otero	6	15	R	Custer	1	2
R	Baca	5	27	R	Delta	1	1
PR	Elbert	5	8	R	Denver	1	1
PR	Lincoln	5	20	R	Dolores	1	9
PR	Washington	5	29	R	Douglas	1	17
PR	Gunnison	4	22	R	Eagle	1	15
R	Prowers	4	35	R	Gilpin	1	7
PR	Alamosa	3	12	R	Hinsdale	1	2
R	Cheyenne	3	7	R	Jackson	1	7
PR	Fremont	3	22	R	Jefferson	1	1
R	La Plata	3	15	R	Lake	1	6
R	Larimer	3	31	R	Mineral	1	1
PR	Mesa	3	3	R	Moffat	1	23
R	Rio Grande	3	3	R	Pitkin	1	2
R	Routt	3	29	R	San Juan	1	1
R	Saguache	3	5	R	Summit	1	8
PR	San Miguel	3	7		TOTALS	316	929

R - Reorganized (38); PR - Partially Reorganized (21); Unreorganized (4)

Only five counties having more than three districts in May of 1957 have not shown reduction in their total number of districts. These counties are Costilla, Crowley, Montezuma, Morgan, and Sedgwick. Weld County, on the other hand, although it still has the largest number of school districts of any of the counties has had a net reduction of 52 in its number of districts, which accounts for 8.48% of the total reduction in the state. Other counties which have reduced their number of districts by more than 20 since 1957, and the number of districts dissolved are: Prowers, 31; Boulder 27; Las Animas and Routt, 26; Yuma, 25; Huerfano and Washington, 24; and Baca and Moffat, 22.

CHANGES IN CLASSIFICATION

Reduction in number of school districts is, by itself, only an indication that something has been happening. To find out whether this reduction has been constructive or destructive involves analysis of factors other than raw totals.

Another measure of change in district structure in Colorado can be found in the change that has occurred in the classification of school districts. The original measure of classification of school districts was school population (children, ages 6-21 resident within a school district.) A school district was a "first class" district if it had a school population of 1,000 or more; a district of the "second class" if it had less than 1,000 but more than 350, and a district of the "third class" if it had less than 350. Because most of Colorado's districts which offered less than a complete program of education and generally had smaller financial backing and fewer educational resources were found among the districts having less than 350 school population, a popular misconception developed that the arbitrary legal designation of "third class" was synonymous with the quality classification of "third rate." While it should be made clear that a "first class" designation did not necessarily mean a designation of "first rate" nor that the designation of "third class" meant a poor quality of education, it has generally been accepted that stronger resources and broader and more consistent programs of education in Colorado have been found among the "first class" districts.

Since "The School District Organization Act of 1957" was passed, its language decreed that any new school district formed under its provisions should be a district of the "first class", regardless of the district's school population.

It is interesting, nonetheless, to examine the changes which have been accomplished. Since county and union high school districts have no "school population" apart from that of their component elementary districts, they are not accounted for in the following tables.

NUMBER OF COLORADO SCHOOL DISTRICTS

BY CLASS OF DISTRICT

Year	Third Class	Second Class	First Class
1935	1930	89	36
1955	891	79	45
1959	647	75	76
1961 (Dec.)	144	28	134

SCHOOL DISTRICTS BY CLASSIFICATIONS BY COUNTIES

MAY 1, 1957 AND NOVEMBER, 1961

	Third Class		Second Class		First Class	
County	May 1957	Nov. 1961	May 1957	Nov. 1961	May 1957	Nov. 1961
ADAMS	14	-	-	-	5	7
ALAMOSA	11	1	-	-	1	2
ARAPAHOE	8	-	3	1	4	8
ARCHULETA	-	-	1	1	-	-
BACA	26	-	1	-	-	5
BENT	15	-	-	-	1	2
BOULDER	26	-	3	-	2	2
CHAFFEE	12	-	1	-	1	2
CHEYENNE	5	-	1	-	-	3
CLEAR CREEK	6	-	1	-	-	1
CONEJOS	13	5	3	1	1	2
COSTILLA	9	9	2	2	-	-
CROWLEY	6	6	3	3	-	-
CUSTER	1	-	1	1	-	-
DELTA	-	-	-	-	1	1
DENVER	-	-	-	-	1	1
DOLORES	8	-	-	-	-	1
DOUGLAS	16	-	-	-	-	1
EAGLE	12	-	1	-	-	1
ELBERT	7	4	1	1	-	-
EL PASO	15	9	1	1	6	7
FREMONT	20	-	-	-	2	3
GARFIELD	19	12	1	1	1	1
GILPIN	6	-	-	-	-	1
GRAND	10	-	-	-	-	2
GUNNISON	20	2	1	-	-	1
HINSDALE	2	-	-	-	-	1
HUERFANO	23	-	1	-	1	2
JACKSON	6	-	-	-	-	1
JEFFERSON	-	-	-	-	1	1
KIOWA	9	-	1	-	-	2

(CONTINUED)

SCHOOL DISTRICTS BY CLASSIFICATION BY COUNTIES – CONTINUED

COUNTY	THIRD CLASS		SECOND CLASS		FIRST CLASS	
	MAY 1957	NOV. 1961	MAY 1957	NOV. 1961	MAY 1957	NOV. 1961
KIT CARSON	13	4	2	1	–	1
LAKE	4	–	1	–	1	1
LA PLATA	12	–	1	–	2	3
LARIMER	26	–	3	–	2	3
LAS ANIMAS	39	12	2	1	3	6
LINCOLN	17	–	2	–	–	5
LOGAN	21	8	2	2	1	4
MESA	1	1	1	1	1	1
MINERAL	1	1	–	–	–	–
MOFFAT	21	–	–	–	1	1
MONTEZUMA	11	11	2	–	1	3
MONTROSE	15	16	3	–	1	2
MORGAN	11	11	1	1	2	2
OTERO	9	–	4	3	2	3
OURAY	1	1	1	1	–	–
PARK	14	1	–	–	–	1
PHILLIPS	9	–	2	–	–	2
PITKIN	2	–	–	1	–	–
PROWERS	28	–	3	–	1	4
PUEBLO	–	–	–	–	2	2
RIO BLANCO	5	–	2	–	–	2
RIO GRANDE	–	–	1	–	2	3
ROUTT	23	–	3	–	–	3
SAGUACHE	3	1	1	–	1	2
SAN JUAN	–	–	1	1	–	–
SAN MIGUEL	7	1	–	–	–	2
SEDGWICK	10	11	2	2	–	–
SUMMIT	7	–	–	–	–	1
TELLER	7	–	–	–	1	2
WASHINGTON	27	1	1	–	–	4
WELD	65	16	10	2	3	8
YUMA	23	–	2	–	–	2
TOTALS	757	144	80	28	55	134

UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICTS

Another measure of the effectiveness of a school district is the scope of its educational program. If we agree that a high school education is the minimum program for those able to complete it in our modern society, then it should be clear that the modern school district should be able to provide a twelve-grade program or K-12 within its own boundaries. The best way to insure a planned, integrated, and coordinated program for the twelve-grade or K-12 sequence is to embrace the total program under the guidance and direction of one board of education. Accordingly, the students of effective school district organization look upon the independent elementary school district and the superimposed high school district as the weakest and most ineffective structure for providing twelve grades of instruction.

In Colorado, in 1955-56, the types of organization which departed from the "unified" district concept were the "elementary" district which provided only a level below the ninth grade, the "county" or "union" high school district which provided instruction above the eighth grade under direction of a "high school committee" separate and apart from the school boards of the elementary districts, and the "non-operating" district which not only ceased to operate a school within its own boundaries, but surrendered its control of the instructional program to a neighboring school district board of education by transporting its children to its neighbor and paying tuition as its means of discharging its financial responsibility.

At the close of the 1956 school year, this was the picture as between "unified" and "non-unified" school districts in the state.

		1956		1961
Unified		188		187
Non-Unified				
Elementary	492		70	
Non-Operating	247		49	
County and Union H. S.	40		10	
Sub-totals	779	779	129	129
TOTALS		967		316

Forty-eight of Colorado's counties are now completely "unified." These counties include Adams, Archuleta, Baca, Bent, Boulder, Chaffee, Cheyenne, Clear Creek, Custer, Delta, Denver, Dolores, Douglas, Eagle, Elbert, Fremont, Gilpin, Grand, Hinsdale, Huerfano, Jackson,

Jefferson, Kiowa, Kit Carson, Lake, La Plata, Larimer, Lincoln, Mesa, Mineral, Moffat, Otero, Ouray, Park, Phillips, Pitkin, Prowers, Pueblo, Rio Blanco, Rio Grande, Routt, Saguache, San Juan, San Miguel, Summit, Teller, Washington, and Yuma. These 48 counties account for 114 of Colorado's 316 school districts, an average of slightly less than three districts per county. The remaining 15 counties account for 202 districts, an average of over 13 districts per county. Their status with respect to "unified" and "non-unified" districts is as follows:

"UNIFIED" AND "NON-UNIFIED" SCHOOL DISTRICTS IN COUNTIES

WITH SOME DISTRICTS NOT UNIFIED, NOVEMBER, 1961

		NON-UNIFIED			
COUNTY	UNIFIED	ELEMENTARY	HIGH SCHOOL	NON-OPERATING	TOTAL
ALAMOSA	2	-	-	1	3
ARAPAHOE	6	3	1	-	10
CONEJOS	4	2	-	2	8
COSTILLA	1	9	1	1	12
CROWLEY	3	2	-	4	9
EL PASO	16	1	-	-	17
GARFIELD	3	4	2	7	16
GUNNISON	1	-	1	2	4
LAS ANIMAS	6	8	1	5	20
LOGAN	3	8	1	3	15
MONTEZUMA	2	9	1	3	15
MONTROSE	1	12	1	5	19
MORGAN	6	2	-	6	14
SEDGWICK	1	4	1	8	14
WELD	18	6	-	2	26
TOTALS	73	70	10	49	202

PUPIL POPULATION OF SCHOOL DISTRICTS

Another very important measure of the potential strength of a school district is the number of children it serves. It takes children to make a school. The number of courses and special services a district can offer is dependent to a considerable extent, upon the number of teachers employed, and the number of teachers which can be employed at reasonable cost is directly dependent upon the number of children. Some students of the problem say that 1,000 children is the bare minimum as the pupil population which will justify a fair range of educational services at reasonable cost per pupil. Others have set the figure at 1,500 pupils.

For Colorado, these figures have been difficult to attain. Twenty-one of Colorado's 63 counties have a school population of less than 1,000. The area of the state is slightly over 100,000 square miles and

the total enrollment approximately 400,000 which means an average of four children per square mile. Much of Colorado has a sparse school population since most of the 400,000 children are concentrated in the larger population centers. Hinsdale County has only 24 children enrolled in the lone district with headquarters in the county, and yet the county covers 1,062 square miles of Colorado's most rugged territory. The Moffat County reorganization, which is Colorado's largest in point of geography, covers 4,761 square miles and enrolls 1,700 children in the schools of that vast area. In the face of problems like these, the improvements wrought thus far by Colorado's school planning committees are all the more noteworthy.

COLORADO SCHOOL DISTRICTS BY INTERVALS OF SCHOOL POPULATION

	School Population							
	0	1	2-250	251-500	501-750	751-1000	Over 1000	Total
Districts in 1955-56	8	14	770	67	18	10	40	967
Districts in 1961	5	1	154	54	23	6	63	306*

*County and Union High School Districts have no school population apart from that of the component elementary districts.

A county-by-county tabulation of the number of school districts by the same intervals of school population, shows that the 15 counties which have not completed their unifications contribute more than their share to the number of districts of small school population.

COUNTY-BY-COUNTY TABULATION OF NUMBER OF SCHOOL DISTRICTS BY INTERVALS OF 1961 SCHOOL POPULATION

	Number of Districts Under Each School Population Interval								
COUNTY	0	1	2-250	251-500	501-750	751-1000	Over 1000	TOTAL	
ADAMS	-	-	1	1	-	-	5	7	
ALAMOSA	1	-	1	-	-	-	1	3	
ARAPAHOE	-	-	2	-	1	1	5	9	*UNION H.S.
ARCHULETA	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	1	
BACA	-	-	3	-	2	-	-	5	
BENT	-	-	1	-	-	-	1	2	
BOULDER	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	2	
CHAFFEE	-	-	-	-	1	-	1	2	
CHEYENNE	-	-	1	2	-	-	-	3	
CLEAR CREEK	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	1	

(CONTINUED)

COUNTY-BY-COUNTY TABULATION OF NUMBER OF SCHOOL DISTRICTS - CONTINUED

COUNTY	NUMBER OF DISTRICTS UNDER EACH SCHOOL POPULATION INTERVAL								
	0	1	2-250	251-500	501-750	751-1000	OVER 1000	TOTAL	
CONEJOS	-	-	5	1	-	-	2	8	
COSTILLA	-	-	9	2	-	-	-	11	*UNION H.S.
CROWLEY	-	-	8	1	-	-	-	9	
CUSTER	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	1	
DELTA	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	1	
DENVER	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	1	
DOLORES	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	1	
DOUGLAS	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	1	
EAGLE	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	1	
ELBERT	-	-	4	1	-	-	-	5	
EL PASO	-	-	9	1	-	-	7	17	
FREMONT	-	-	1	-	-	-	2	3	
GARFIELD	1	-	10	1	-	1	1	14	*2 UNION H.S.
GILPIN	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	1	
GRAND	-	-	-	1	1	-	-	2	
GUNNISON	1	-	1	-	-	-	1	3	*COUNTY H.S.
HINSDALE	-	-	1	-	-	-	1	2	
JACKSON	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	1	
JEFFERSON	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	1	
KIOWA	-	-	1	-	1	-	-	2	
KIT CARSON	-	-	3	2	-	1	-	6	
LAKE	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	1	
LA PLATA	-	-	-	1	1	-	1	3	
LARIMER	-	-	-	-	1	-	2	3	
LAS ANIMAS	-	1	14	2	1	-	1	19	*COUNTY H.S.
LINCOLN	-	-	3	1	1	-	-	5	
LOGAN	-	-	9	4	-	-	1	14	*COUNTY H.S.
MESA	-	-	1	1	-	-	1	3	
MINERAL	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	1	
MOFFAT	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	1	
MONTEZUMA	-	-	11	1	1	-	1	14	*COUNTY H.S.
MONTROSE	2	-	13	1	-	-	2	18	*COUNTY H.S.
MORGAN	-	-	11	1	-	-	2	14	
OTERO	-	-	-	3	1	-	2	6	
OURAY	-	-	1	1	-	-	-	2	
PARK	-	-	2	-	-	-	-	2	
PHILLIPS	-	-	-	1	1	-	-	2	
PITKIN	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	1	
PROWERS	-	-	1	1	1	-	1	4	
PUEBLO	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	2	
RIO BLANCO	-	-	-	-	1	1	-	2	
RIO GRANDE	-	-	-	1	-	-	2	3	
ROUTT	-	-	-	2	-	1	-	3	
SAGUACHE	-	-	1	1	-	1	-	3	
SAN JUAN	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	1	
SAN MIGUEL	-	-	3	-	-	-	-	3	
SEDGWICK	-	-	11	1	1	-	-	13	*COUNTY H.S.
SUMMIT	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	1	
TELLER	-	-	-	2	-	-	-	2	
WASHINGTON	-	-	1	3	-	1	-	5	
WELD	-	-	14	2	2	-	8	26	
YUMA	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	2	
STATE TOTALS	5	1	160	46	22	8	64	306	

*COUNTY AND UNION HIGH SCHOOL DISTRICTS HAVE NO SCHOOL POPULATION APART FROM THAT OF THE COMPONENT ELEMENTARY DISTRICTS.

SMALL DISTRICTS IN "NON-UNIFIED" COUNTIES

COUNTY	NUMBER OF DISTRICTS UNDER EACH SCHOOL POPULATION INTERVAL							
	0	1	2-250	251-500	501-750	751-1000	OVER 1000	TOTAL*
ALAMOSA	1	-	1	-	-	-	1	3
ARAPAHOE	-	-	2	-	1	1	5	9
CONEJOS	-	-	5	1	-	-	2	8
COSTILLA	-	-	9	2	-	-	-	11
CROWLEY	-	-	8	1	-	-	-	9
EL PASO	-	-	9	1	-	-	7	17
GARFIELD	1	-	10	1	-	1	1	14
GUNNISON	1	-	1	-	-	-	1	3
LAS ANIMAS	-	1	14	2	1	-	1	19
LOGAN	-	-	9	4	-	-	1	14
MONTEZUMA	-	-	11	1	1	-	1	14
MONTROSE	2	-	13	1	-	-	2	18
MORGAN	-	-	11	1	-	-	2	14
SEDGWICK	-	-	11	1	1	-	-	13
WELD	-	-	14	2	2	-	8	26
TOTAL	5	1	128	18	6	2	32	192*

*COUNTY AND UNION HIGH SCHOOL DISTRICTS ARE OMITTED FROM TOTALS, SINCE THEY HAVE NO "SCHOOL POPULATION" APART FROM THAT OF THEIR COMPONENT ELEMENTARY DISTRICTS.

Thus, these 15 counties (25.4%) which have not completed unification of their school districts account for 152 (72.1%) of the 215 districts which have less than 500 children, and account for all six of the districts having one or no children. The fact that these are counties which do not need to remain in this small district status is illustrated by the fact that they also account for 34 (49.3%) of the 69 districts having more than 750 children.

AREA OF SCHOOL DISTRICTS

At the close of the 1955-56 school year, Colorado had 967 school districts (and some unorganized territory in Larimer County) in its 104,247 square mile area. This would mean that the average school district at that time embraced 107.8 square miles. In November, 1961, with the number of districts reduced to 316, and every bit of Colorado's territory now in some kind of organized school district, the average district covers 329.9 square miles.

Again it should be pointed out that mere "bigness" is not a guarantee of quality, but these figures do indicate that Colorado's citizens are taking advantage of improved roads and other means of communication to expand the resources under one administration which can be devoted more effectively to the development and support of educational programs.

Colorado's school districts in November of 1961 distributed by various categories of area by county appear as follows:

NUMBER OF SCHOOL DISTRICTS WITHIN VARIOUS CATEGORIES

OF AREAS BY COUNTY

COUNTY	DISTRICT AREAS IN SQUARE MILES												
	0-5	6-10	11-25	26-50	51-100	101-250	251-500	501-1000	1001-2000	2001-3000	3001-4000	OVER 4000	TOTAL
ADAMS	-	-	2	-	2	2	1	-	-	-	-	-	7
ALAMOSA	1	-	-	-	-	-	1	1	-	-	-	-	3
ARAPAHOE	3	1	-	1	1	1	2	-	-	-	-	-	9*
ARCHULETA	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	1
BACA	-	-	-	-	-	-	3	2	-	-	-	-	5
BENT	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	-	-	-	-	2
BOULDER	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	-	-	-	-	-	2
CHAFFEE	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	1	-	-	-	-	2
CHEYENNE	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	2	-	-	-	-	3
CLEAR CREEK	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	1
CONEJOS	-	-	-	1	3	3	1	-	-	-	-	-	8
COSTILLA	-	-	-	4	5	1	-	1	-	-	-	-	11*
CROWLEY	-	-	-	3	2	4	-	-	-	-	-	-	9
CUSTER	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	1
DELTA	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	1
DENVER	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
DOLORES	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	1
DOUGLAS	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	1
EAGLE	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	1
ELBERT	-	-	-	-	-	2	3	-	-	-	-	-	5
EL PASO	-	-	1	2	4	7	3	-	-	-	-	-	17
FREMONT	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	2	-	-	-	-	3
GARFIELD	-	1	3	3	2	3	1	-	1	-	-	-	14*
GILPIN	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
GRAND	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	1	-	-	-	2
GUNNISON	-	1	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	3*
HINSDALE	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	1
HUERFANO	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	1	-	-	-	2
JACKSON	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	1
JEFFERSON	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	1
KIOWA	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	1	-	-	-	2
KIT CARSON	-	-	-	-	-	1	4	1	-	-	-	-	6
LAKE	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	1
LA PLATA	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	-	1	-	-	-	3
LARIMER	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	-	1	-	-	-	3
LAS ANIMAS	3	2	5	4	-	-	1	2	2	-	-	-	19*
LINCOLN	-	-	-	-	-	2	1	2	-	-	-	-	5
LOGAN	-	-	3	3	1	4	3	-	-	-	-	-	14*
MESA	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	1	1	-	-	3
MINERAL	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	1
MOFFAT	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	1
MONTEZUMA	-	-	4	2	3	2	2	1	-	-	-	-	14*
MONTROSE	-	2	3	3	4	5	-	1	-	-	-	-	18*
MORGAN	-	-	2	4	3	3	2	-	-	-	-	-	14
OTERO	-	-	-	-	2	2	-	2	-	-	-	-	6
OURAY	-	-	-	-	-	1	1	-	-	-	-	-	2
PARK	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	1	-	-	-	2
PHILLIPS	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	1	-	-	-	-	2
PITKIN	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	1
PROWERS	-	-	-	-	1	-	2	1	-	-	-	-	4

(CONTINUED)

NUMBER OF SCHOOL DISTRICTS WITHIN VARIOUS CATEGORIES - CONTINUED

	DISTRICT AREAS IN SQUARE MILES												
COUNTY	0-5	6-10	11-25	26-50	51-100	101-250	251-500	501-1000	1001-2000	2001-3000	3001-4000	OVER 4000	TOTAL
PUEBLO	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	2
RIO BLANCO	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	1	-	-	2
RIO GRANDE	-	-	-	-	-	2	-	1	-	-	-	-	3
ROUTT	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	1	-	-	-	3
SAGUACHE	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	1	1	-	-	-	3
SAN JUAN	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	1
SAN MIGUEL	-	-	-	-	-	1	1	1	-	-	-	-	3
SEDGWICK	-	-	5	6	-	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	13*
SUMMIT	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	1
TELLER	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	-	-	-	-	-	2
WASHINGTON	-	-	-	-	-	1	1	3	-	-	-	-	5
WELD	-	1	2	2	7	9	4	1	-	-	-	-	26
YUMA	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	-	-	-	2
TOTALS	7	8	30	39	42	60	55	40	20	3	1	1	306

*AREAS OF COUNTY AND UNION HIGH SCHOOL DISTRICTS ARE NOT INCLUDED, AS THEIR AREAS ARE ALREADY ACCOUNTED FOR BY THEIR COMPONENT ELEMENTARY DISTRICTS.

The 15 "non-unified" counties account for 181 (75.1%) of the 241 school districts of the state which have an area of less than 500 square miles.

NUMBER OF DISTRICTS IN "NON-UNIFIED" COUNTIES SMALLER THAN 500 SQUARE MILES

COUNTY	0-5	6-10	11-25	26-50	51-100	101-250	251-500	TOTAL
ALAMOSA	1	-	-	-	-	-	1	2
ARAPAHOE	3	1	-	1	1	1	2	9
CONEJOS	-	-	-	1	3	3	1	8
COSTILLA	-	-	-	4	5	1	-	10
CROWLEY	-	-	-	3	2	4	-	9
EL PASO	-	-	1	2	4	7	3	17
GARFIELD	-	1	3	3	2	3	1	13
GUNNISON	-	1	-	1	-	-	-	2
LAS ANIMAS	3	2	5	4	-	-	1	15
LOGAN	-	-	2	2	1	3	3	14
MONTEZUMA	-	-	4	2	3	2	2	13
MONTROSE	-	2	3	3	4	5	-	17
MORGAN	-	-	2	4	3	3	2	14
SEDGWICK	-	-	5	6	-	2	-	13
WELD	-	1	2	2	7	9	4	25
TOTALS	7	8	28	39	35	44	20	181

While a small area itself is not necessarily a problem, when the small area includes only a small number of children, this combination present in the same district usually points to limited educational resources. The 48 "unified" counties now account for 69.87% of the total area of the state. If the areas of the unified districts within the 15 counties not totally unified are added to these areas, it is noted that 92.9% of the area of the state is now organized under a grade 1-12 pattern.

STATUS OF LITIGATION ON SCHOOL DISTRICT REORGANIZATION

During the calendar year, Weld, Larimer, Bent, and Montezuma Counties were involved in litigation affecting school district reorganization.

In Weld County, a case involving the original organization of Weld County Reorganized School District No. Re-8 (School District No. 23 vs. The School Planning Committee of Weld County, Civil Action No. 14137 in the District Court of Weld County) had been carried on appeal of plaintiffs to the Colorado Supreme Court.

The District Court of Weld County had refused to restrain the reorganization election on the basis (1) that the trial court was without "jurisdiction in the premises" and (2) that the plaintiff school district was "without standing to maintain the present action."

The Supreme Court reversed the judgment of the District Court on both counts. The Supreme Court held "that plaintiff has sufficient interest to bring this action and is entitled to a judicial determination of the validity and legality of defendants' acts." The Court further held that "Reorganization under The Act of 1957 is not a mandatory matter. It provides an orderly manner for reorganizing old school districts into new school districts where deemed desirable. The manner in which such reorganization shall be accomplished is provided in the Act and a lawful reorganization can only be effected if there be compliance with the requirements thereof. Such being the case, it follows that this plaintiff does have the right to seek and obtain a judicial determination as to the legality of legislation under which its existence may be terminated and its property taken, and may also obtain a judicial review of action taken by administrative boards or officials acting pursuant to such legislation, to determine whether their acts were lawful or were arbitrary or in excess of their jurisdiction and authority."

The matter was thereby remanded to the District Court for consideration of the merits of the premises, but plaintiffs decided to withdraw the entire action, so that this matter is apparently now dead.

Another action brought in Weld County was moved for dismissal on the basis of lack of prosecution. This action on behalf of several of the

school districts of Weld County contested the validity of the School District Organization Act of 1957, and the right of the County School Planning Committee members to hold the offices they claimed as members of said committee. To date, no final disposition has been made of this action.

The Larimer County litigation contesting the Larimer County reorganization, which was dismissed by the District Court and which dismissal was appealed to the Colorado Supreme Court was of importance in that the Supreme Court refused to review the findings of the District Court, thus upholding the legality of those reorganizations.

An action of a nature entirely different from any of the others was lodged in Bent County Court, contesting the election in Las Animas School District No. Re-1 of June 19, 1961, which resulted in a count of 132 votes in favor of the plan and 131 votes against the plan. Plaintiffs brought action on the basis that a number of ineligible voters, sufficient to have changed the outcome of the election, participated therein. A stipulation calling for a new election was entered by the County Court, and the second election resulted in a favorable vote of 282 to 214.

A suit of significance is the one lodged against the plans in Montezuma County by a non-operating school district, No. 29, McPhee, which in addition to questioning several procedural matters on the part of the Committee and the Commissioner, questioned the authority of the County School Planning Committee to include the Southern Ute Indian Reservation in the plan for one of the two proposed districts.

Here the District Court held against the Committee on the procedural matters, and also held that the Committee had exceeded its authority by including the Southern Ute Indian Reservation in the territory embraced by the plan.

While a new planning committee could rectify the procedural defects, the issue of the inclusion of the Indian Reservation is a broader one that may result in an appeal to the Supreme Court. This matter is now under study.

CURRENT COMMITTEE ACTIVITY

Experience of previous county school planning committees indicates that it takes new committees from six to eighteen months to complete their studies and reach agreement on county-wide plans of school district reorganization. Nevertheless, several of the new committees are moving ahead rapidly on proposals.

Arapahoe County is putting finishing touches on a plan to unify the

Sheridan Union High School District and its three component elementary districts.

Conejos County is holding hearings on proposals to dissolve and annex an elementary district and three non-operating districts in the north end of that county.

Costilla County has presented its plan for the unification of the Centennial Union High School District and its 10 component elementary districts in the south half of that county. The Commissioner of Education approved this plan on December 8, and the election will be held early in January of 1962.

Garfield County is conducting a thorough study of the reorganization problem in the west end of that county.

Las Animas County is working on a revised plan of reorganization following the defeat of the previous committee's broad plan of reorganization.

Logan County has reached tentative agreement on a county unit proposal.

Montezuma County, as previously reported, is still marking time pending the outcome of its litigation.

Montrose and Morgan Counties are making careful studies of their problems.

Sedgwick County Planning Committee, with the financial cooperation of its school districts, has employed the Bureau of Educational Research of the University of Denver to make a thorough study of its problems.

Weld County is currently examining several alternative plans for the unreorganized portions of that county.

The following chart shows the kind and number of districts by county involved within the solutions now under active proposals:

COUNTY	Reorganized Districts Proposed	Dissolutions and Annexations Proposed	Districts Involved: Non-Oper.	Elementary	High School	TOTALS
ARAPAHOE	1	-	-	3	1	4
CONEJOS	-	4	3	1	-	4
COSTILLA	1	-	1	9	1	11
TOTALS	2	4	4	13	2	19

This activity so early in the work of the new committees would seem to augur well for the continued achievements of the rest of the committees by July 1, 1963.