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NINTH ANNUAL REPORT — JANUARY 1966

# School District Organization

Colorado Department of Education

Byron W. Hansford, Commissioner  
Denver, Colorado 80203

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## LETTER OF TRANSMITTAL

January 1966

Report prepared by  
STANLEY A. LEFTWICH  
Director, Division of Organization and Management

To Members of the Legislature:

The School District Organization Act of 1957 required the Commissioner of Education "to publish an annual report of progress of organization plans in the several counties . . ." In 1965 the Act was rewritten, and this specific report requirement was repealed. However, so many requests for a continuation of the reports have been received that it was deemed worth while to publish this Addendum, which is the Ninth in the series, the First of which was published January 1, 1958.

**Table 1**  
NUMBER OF COLORADO SCHOOL DISTRICTS

July 1:	January 1:
1925 ..... 2,003	1957 ..... 929
1930 ..... 2,041	1959 ..... 792
1935 ..... 2,105	1960 ..... 478
1940 ..... 2,037	1961 ..... 382
1945 ..... 1,884	1962 ..... 316
1950 ..... 1,648	1963 ..... 263
1955 ..... 1,017	1964 ..... 222
	1965 ..... 205
	1966 ..... 184

It is interesting to note in passing that the voluntary program of school district reorganization initiated by the Colorado General Assembly and utilized by the citizens has virtually revolutionized the educational climate of the State to the point where the old "common school" district with its pattern of elementary education has been virtually replaced by school districts offering twelve grades of education as a minimum. We are now at the point where Colorado can put its major emphasis on quality and scope of educational offerings instead of contenting ourselves with the quantitative recitation of educational developments.

### COLORADO STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION

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(First Congressional District)

There are still some major reorganizational problems to face, but the developments to this point have served to bring us to a clearer analysis of the basic problems. I would like to express my appreciation to the Legislature, to the Governor's office, and to the many citizens of the State who have patiently assisted us in the progress to this point.

Respectfully submitted,  
Byron W. Hansford  
Commissioner of Education

Table 2

**Summary, Chronological Progress Reorganizations,  
Dissolutions and Annexations, Colorado School Districts, 1965**

COUNTY	Number of Dist.	Date of Election	Date of Incorporation	Date of Annexation	Re-organization	Diss. and Annex.	Election Results	
							For	Against
Las Animas	5	.....	.....	2/1/65	....	X	.....	.....
	7	.....	.....	2/1/65	....	X	.....	.....
	14	.....	.....	2/1/65	....	X	.....	.....
	18	.....	.....	2/1/65	....	X	.....	.....
	30	.....	.....	2/1/65	....	X	.....	.....
	32	.....	.....	2/1/65	....	X	.....	.....
	38	.....	.....	2/1/65	....	X	.....	.....
	42	.....	.....	2/1/65	....	X	.....	.....
	53	.....	.....	2/1/65	....	X	.....	.....
	56	.....	.....	2/1/65	....	X	.....	.....
	63	.....	.....	2/1/65	....	X	.....	.....
Morgan	County High School	.....	.....	2/1/65	....	X	.....	.....
	Re-2	1/26/65	3/30/65	.....	X	.....	780	223
	Re-3	1/26/65	3/30/65	.....	X	.....	610	143
	Re-20	1/26/65	3/30/65	.....	X	.....	106	13
Morgan and Washington	Re-50	1/26/65	3/30/65	.....	X	.....	89	6
	10 Jt	.....	.....	4/3/65	....	X	.....	.....
Morgan	14	.....	.....	4/5/65	....	X	.....	.....
Arapahoe	75	.....	.....	9/23/65	....	X	.....	.....
Sheridan	Union H. S.	.....	.....	9/23/65	....	X	.....	.....

The number of school districts was reduced from 205 to 184 during 1965. This was accomplished in part by a new dimension of school district reorganization introduced to Colorado by H. B. 1009 enacted by the 44th General Assembly in its 1964 Session (Ch. 71, S.L. '64), which provided in effect that County High School Districts and their component elementary districts should cease to exist on February 1, 1965, and that, if the combined enrollments of such districts were less than 1,500, their areas be annexed to the adjacent district or districts containing enrollments of more than 1,500 all in accordance with a plan of annexation prepared by the County School Planning Committee. On the date when the law became applicable in all its provisions, the Las Animas County High School District was the sole remaining district of this kind. It embraced 11 elementary school districts. The total combined enrollments being less than 1,500, the Las Animas County School Planning Committee developed a plan and held appropriate hearings on it which annexed the territory to Trinidad, School District No. 1, of Las Animas County, the only adjacent school district enrolling in excess of 1,500, effective February 1, 1965.

The Morgan County School Planning Committee elected in 1963 carefully studied the problems of that county, prepared plans, conducted hearings, and promoted elections on January 26, 1965 in which the voters approved the organization of four new school districts out of the previously existing 13 districts of

the county. It is interesting to note that the favorable vote totalled 1,585 to a negative vote of 385, which was a margin of approval greater than four-to-one. Two small portions of districts not included in the reorganization plans because of the Committee's concern for convenience of pupils were dissolved and annexed to neighboring school districts with headquarters in other counties, a portion of the former District No. 10 Joint of Morgan and Washington Counties being annexed to School District No. Re-4 with headquarters in Logan County, and a portion of Morgan County School District No. 14 being annexed to School District No. Re-10 with headquarters in Weld County.

The Board of Education of Snyder School District No. 1 of Morgan County brought suit against the Morgan County School Planning Committee and the County Superintendent of Schools challenging the correctness and validity of the acts of the Committee, but the District Court upheld the reorganization.

Three of the four new districts involve territories of neighboring counties: Re-2 contains some Washington County territory; Re-20 contains some Weld County territory; and Re-50 contains some Weld and Adams County territories. This continued willingness of people in Colorado to make other considerations secondary to pupil convenience in drawing school district boundaries is worthy of note.

### Fort Logan Annexation Problems

Another interesting development in boundary changes occurred during the year in conjunction with Denver annexations. On August 5, 1961, 1,040 acres of Arapahoe County from Fort Logan School District No. 75 and Sheridan Union High School District No. 75 were purportedly annexed to Denver. On September 11, 1962, another portion of Fort Logan School District No. 75 and Sheridan Union High School District and also a portion of Littleton School District No. 6 of Arapahoe County were annexed to Denver. This second annexation was dependent for its contiguity to Denver upon the 1961 annexation.

On February 11, 1963, the remaining portions of School District No. 75 and Sheridan Union High School District were reorganized within Sheridan School District No. 2 of Arapahoe County.

On August 5, 1963, a portion of the newly reorganized Sheridan School District No. 2 of Arapahoe County was annexed to Denver. This annexation was dependent upon the 1961 and 1962 annexations for its contiguity to Denver.

In June of 1965 the Colorado Supreme Court in the case of *Elkins et al. V. City and County of Denver et al.* delivering an opinion declaring the 1961 an-

nexation of portions of District No. 75 and Sheridan Union High School District to Denver invalid. Thus, these two former school districts, hitherto regarded as annexed and reorganized out of existence, were revived. Also, the annexations subsequent to this invalid proceeding were voided because of their loss of contiguity with Denver.

The Arapahoe County School Planning Committee on September 23, 1965 dissolved School District No. 75 and Sheridan Union High School District, annexing them to Sheridan School District No. 2.

On September 23, 1965, a major portion of the territory involved in this series of proceedings was re-annexed to Denver.

In the meantime, Arapahoe County School Districts No. 2 and No. 6 organized the Arapahoe Junior College District, whose boundaries include the territory re-annexed to Denver on September 23.

At the time of this writing, annexation to Denver of the Fort Logan Mental Health Center, which is the major portion of the remaining territory in question, is scheduled to be accomplished on or about December 24, 1965.

There are, of course, continuous threats of further litigation of the procedures.

### Trends in Area and Enrollment of Colorado School Districts

Total Area of Colorado: 104,247 Square Miles

Year	No. of School Districts	Enrollment	Square Miles Per District	Pupils Per District	National Total
1935	2,105	238,726	49.5	113.41	
1945	1,884	190,518	55.3	101.12	103,000
1950	1,759	220,840	59.3	125.55	99,713
1957 (Time of Passage of 1957 Act)	929	310,889	112.2	334.65	
1958	900	328,713	115.8	365.24	
1959	830	345,828	125.6	416.67	
1960	415	364,583	251.2	878.51	
1961	340	386,265	306.6	1,136.07	
1962	312	407,547	334.1	1,306.24	
1963	222	429,893	469.6	1,936.45	
1964	217	451,918	480.4	2,082.57	
1965, July 1	184	465,621	566.6	2,530.55	
1965 Fall Enrollment, Oct. 1	184	486,784	566.6	2,645.57	26,000

### Reorganization Election Summary

May 1, 1957 to December 31, 1965

Elections held .....	155	100.00%
Elections voted favorably .....	119	76.77%
Elections failed .....	36	23.23%
Reduction in number of school districts .....	745	

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