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Commonwealth of Kentucky

EDUCATIONAL BULLETIN

REORGANIZATION OF SCHOOL DISTRICTS IN KENTUCKY



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Superintendent of Public Instruction

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FOREWORD

Reorganization of school districts of the State has been an important step in the movement for the proper development of an efficient school system for the State.

There is presented in this publication the essential facts concerning the origin development and resulting facts of this movement in Kentucky. Because of its effect in the resulting program of education, I am requesting that it be published as a number of the Educational Bulletins of the State Department of Education. I invite your attention to its contents as an important factor in the development of the present educational program for the State.

Wendell P. Butler
Superintendent of Public Instruction

INTRODUCTION

Almost from the beginning of the public school system in Kentucky the small school district was a deterrent in the development of an efficient school system for the state. Although the early educational leaders recognized this fact and so expressed it in their reports to the Governor and the General Assembly, it was not until 1908 that the first important step was taken by law to correct the situation. This was in the form of what is known as the county school district law.

Opposition to this law, because of the requirement of a local tax levy and the maintenance of at least one high school for each county district, caused a movement in many parts of the state which resulted in an increase in the number of independent school districts which were authorized by the legislature.

This continued until about 1920. At about that period of time the interested school public began to realize that by the united efforts of two or more communities the needed school facilities could be more quickly secured than if they worked by separate units.

At this period in the development of the public school system, rural territory began to demand better school facilities, which could be best secured by the consolidation of the resources and efforts of surrounding territory by school districts. This resulted in a movement of consolidated schools for the benefit of the rural territory.

The facts contained herein, together with the accompanying tables, show a gradual decline in the number of school districts since the beginning of the consolidated movement. This has resulted in more equality of educational opportunity for the school children of the state.

The context of this story shows the essential facts in the reorganization of school districts of the state and the basis therefor.

SCHOOL DISTRICT REORGANIZATION IN KENTUCKY

A. The School District

The law of 1838 creating the public school system provided that school districts were to be laid off in counties by surveyors named by the county court. No district was to have more than 100 pupils nor fewer than 30 pupils. This requirement for getting surveyors to lay off the districts was a handicap to school district organization. The services of such surveyors were expensive, so expensive that the county courts in several counties refused to make appropriations to pay for the work required in making school district surveys. It may thus be seen that there was created school administrative units preceding the establishment of public schools. State funds were made available for educational purposes, but the actual organization and management of schools was delegated to commissioners. Thus, our district system evolved as a channel for State school aid and was not the result of the formation of schools directly by local citizens.

Not only did this law seriously delay the adoption of the system in counties, but it also, at this early day, engrafted on the system a practice which exists today, (1961), in a gradual diminishing practice, of dividing the county into territorial divisions for purposes of education only. It is possible that this was done because schools of that early day were supported largely by local taxation or subscription. The State fund was used only to stimulate the district to tax themselves. Kavanaugh as Superintendent of Public Instruction (1839-40) says:

“In several instances, counties have refused to levy tax to defray the expenses of the survey of school districts as required by law which retards the work of the district in the county. Many sections of the county have not been organized in the school system.”

He states “that 20 or 30 counties are ready to adopt the system as soon as the way is open for them which would comply with the law.”

Superintendent of Public Instruction, B. B. Smith said in 1841 that twenty-four counties had been reported as fully or partially organized under the law. From these counties 686 districts reported as beginning to operate. Of 19 districts in Woodford County to which the plan was submitted, 7 adopted it. Most of

them were in successful operation. The first common school in Kentucky was organized in Versailles in the summer of 1840. The organization of Franklin County followed closely to that of Woodford County. Seven out of nine districts to which the plan was submitted, adopted it. In Mr. Smith's report in 1842, he said "one thing very much in the way of establishing a system of common schools in this State was the provision of law that the county courts must submit the law to the people for their adoption. This many of the courts, in defiance of the law, refused to do. This defeated the intention of the Legislature to submit that question not to the county court, but to the people themselves". At the very beginning of the system, it was thus found that submitting the school question to the county courts was a mistake which resulted in injury to the schools.

B. Graded Districts

An Act of May 4, 1888, provided that upon a written petition of 10 voters, a vote should be taken upon the issue of establishing independent graded schools. Each graded school was required to have six trustees.

C. Extend the Boundary of Graded Districts

Superintendent James Fuqua's report (1903-1907) states that a law was passed during his administration which provided:

"Any graded common school district outlined and existing under any special act of the Legislature, any such district that has been or may hereafter be organized under the general laws of this State, may, by a written consent of the majority of the legal voters in the district, be added, extend the limit of such district so as to include additional territory as the board of education, or the trustees of such district, may desire to take within the limits and add to such district."

D. Instability of the District System

In 1850 Superintendent Breckinridge stated that one of the greatest hinderances to the steady improvement of the school system had been the lack of stability.

"This lack of stability shows itself in the changing of boundary lines in school districts. It is a difficult matter to build a school in some said district in so changeable a unit as a school district. Building good school houses, locating school houses, employing and keeping good teachers and many other needed improvements have

been made doubly hard by this shifting unit. A man is not very willing to contribute toward building a new school house in his district, when he has no assurance that the next year he will not be transferred to an adjacent district. Not only was this true, but it was the rule of the State that about the time a district grew large enough and stable enough to begin a vigorous natural growth, it was divided. Nothing connected with the district school stays long enough to really take root in the life of the people. There is nothing that the common school system in the State needs so much as stability. Good schools must be a gradual growth and no plant can grow much if it is transplanted every time it begins to root."

"We have never had in this State general territorial divisions smaller than counties, and it will be with extreme difficulty that they could be either introduced or made permanent for an isolated object. Districts arranged for a single special, and new object, settled by no permanent rule; liable to incessant alteration at the caprice of the Commissioners, for the time being having such extreme variations from each other as to be equal in no respect whatever and wholly unequal in wealth and territorial extent, present a conception and a practical result which can not be safely relied upon as the basis of a great and permanent system of general education."

E. County Board of Education Proposed

Superintendent Harry D. McChesney (1900-1904) in his annual report states that the present trustee system is very unsatisfactory because of the practice of nepotism and bribery in connection with securing school contracts. He proposed a county board of education to take the place of the trustee system. He recommended that all schools in the entire county except the graded common schools organized under law be placed under the county board of education.

James H. Fuqua (1904-1908) reports that the county board of education bill was proposed, but failed to pass during his administration.

F. County School District Law 1908

1. A New Law

The General Assembly in 1908 passed the county school district law. This called for complete reorganization of the

school system and for the establishment within two years of a high school in every county in Kentucky. This law marks the beginning of a new era in educational growth in Kentucky.

2. The Essential Features of the Law

The county was made one district excluding all the independent districts operating as independent school units. The county outside of these districts operating as independent school units was divided into educational divisions. Each educational division was made up of the number of schools within the educational division. The boundary of a school attendance area was known as a subdistrict. There was one local trustee for each school or subdistrict. Division boards were made up of the local trustees and the chairman of the division board was a member of the county board of education. This division board selected the teachers of the schools in the division. The county superintendent was "ex officio" chairman of the county board of education. This board had the power to consolidate schools, with reference to the needs of the pupils of any two or more subdistricts and these were called consolidated school districts. This law was an attempt to replace the trustee system, which had prevailed, and the too often amended and inconsistent district school law. City and independent districts then existing were not affected by the law.

By the enactment of the county school district law of 1908, there was created what was known as subdistricts for the territory served by each school within the county school district. These subdistricts might have one teacher schools or there might exist a consolidated school, consisting of a number of teachers. The people of these subdistricts could vote an additional tax to that levied by the county district. This subdistrict tax could be used for school purposes only in the subdistrict territory. The subdistrict trustees were all powerful in that the laws authorized them to nominate teachers for their schools which the county board of education must elect unless they could show good reason for refusal to do so.

G. Graded Schools a Detriment

Barksdale Hamlet (1911-1913) in his report on education stated:

"From careful study of the original plan adopted by the first Legislature after the adoption of the present constitution, 1891, for the voting and maintenance of schools,

I am convinced that the Legislature acted wisely and that it was a wise policy to foster and encourage the operation of such schools."

"Since the adoption of the county school district law, in 1908, by which the rural schools vote an annual tax and under which they have made such rapid strides in the matter of public education, I find the graded school a detriment rather than an advantage."

"The law should be amended and a plan adopted by which they may go out of existence and come under the county school district law, when it is desirable and practicable."

An act of 1922 gave some stability to the school system by repealing all special charter schools and giving these districts uniform laws, and by repealing the provisions authorizing the creation of new graded districts. The 1922 Act made more uniform the laws governing independent districts embracing cities larger than the fifth class. This law was made more or less uniform for all districts.

The most significant feature of this act, however, was the repeal of the provision authorizing the creation of new graded school districts. When the law was passed on June 14, 1922, there were approximately 388 independent school districts (319 independent and 69 city). This added to the 120 counties made a total of 508 school districts in the State for the year 1920.

Some of these were strong—others were very weak. In school census they ranged from 40 children to nearly 50,000. Many of them were one and two teacher districts. Many others had only an elementary school and paid tuition for the high school pupils.

H. City School Charters

In 1922 there were new city school charters enacted—one for cities of the third class and one for districts embracing cities of the fourth class. Before this, there was no uniformity of laws for these districts. Some operated under the common school district law, some of them under graded common school district laws and some under special charters, no two of which were alike. Such charters were authorized by the General Assembly prior to the adoption of the present constitution, 1891, but were forbidden by it.

These new laws of 1922 set up uniform and modern school administrative machinery and liberalized the school taxing privileges of these districts.

I. Gradual Decline in the Number of Independent Districts

1. Variety of Tax Rates as a Factor

During the years 1928-32, a study was made of school financial equalization and the factors that existed concerning the variety of facilities which affected equality of education opportunity. It was found that there were 40 tax rates for local school purposes levied in all types of school districts for a particular year. These ranged from 25¢ to \$2. The districts levying the lower tax rates expended more per capita for instruction than did the district levying the \$2 tax rate. During this period, laws were enacted permitting consolidation of districts in order to increase ability to secure the facilities which were needed at the time. These laws permitted a variety of changes for these purposes as follows:

- a. Permitted graded common school boards and the county boards of education by concurrent action to combine the graded school district with the county school district.
- b. The return of graded school districts to the county school districts.
- c. County school districts to combine with city school districts.
- d. Adjacent city and graded districts to combine by contract for a term of one year.
- e. Graded school districts to combine adjacent territory.

2. Decline by Five Year Periods

Decline in the number of districts by five year periods as shown by the Public School Directories of State Department of Education.

Year	Number of School Dist.	Change for Period
1909	313	
1914	480	167
1920	508	28
1925	436	72
1930	399	37
1935	317	82
1940	262	55
1945	258	4
1950	237	21
1955	224	13
1960	211	13

J. School Code of 1934

By this code legal recognition was given to only two kinds of school districts, namely county districts and independent districts. These independent districts replaced the several types of districts recognized under the old law such as independent graded and districts embracing cities of the first, second, third, and fourth class. Under this code, the county district was composed of all the county outside of the independent district. Each independent district under the new law had to have at least 250 census pupils to claim independence. This was later, 1929, reduced to 200.

K. Subdistricts Discontinued

When the new 1934 law was passed, the subdistrict organization was not included in the revised law, but an amendment to the law recognized the subdistrict and changed the number of trustees from three to one, which would serve for a period of four years. This person was elected by secret ballot.

Because these trustees in the subdistricts were all powerful, a great deal of trouble arose from the fact that they frequently would nominate close friends and relatives for the school positions. The amendment by the 1934 law helped to correct this by listing certain relatives which the trustee could not recommend.

In some sections of the State subdistrict trustee elections created much hatred among interested parties for the positions in the schools. This interest in the trustee election became so intense that a law was passed which authorized boards of education to discontinue subdistricts on the basis of providing better school facilities. In some county districts, subdistrict after subdistrict was discontinued until all the subdistricts of the county had been discontinued. By the authority of a decision of the Court of Appeals boards of education learned that they might by one action discontinue practically all of the subdistricts of county school districts if they could show good reason for such action. The work of boards of education in discontinuing subdistricts with that of the intensity of the hatred developed in subdistrict trustee elections finally resulted in a discontinuance of the election of subdistrict trustees in county after county. In 1946 all subdistrict school taxes, except those required to release outstanding bonds, were abolished. The legislature in 1956 repealed all laws authorizing the operation of subdistricts. This repeal came, however, several years after the discontinuance of electing the subdistrict trustees. The delay of the repeal was because of the fact that in several sections of the State subdistricts had outstanding bond issues or tax levies which must be used to

clear the obligations of the subdistrict before such legal action should be taken.

L. Merger of School Districts

1. Concurrent Action of Boards of Education

Although there existed certain authority of the Legislature for the change in boundaries of school districts, the new School Code of 1934 authorized the merger of school districts by concurrent action of boards of education.

The boards of education of any contiguous districts may, by such action merge their districts.

By an amendment to the law in 1948 the initiative for such merger must come from the independent school district. Under authority of this law the independent district may require a merger with the county school district.

In case the county board of education refuses to accept the merger, or if the two boards can not agree on a merger, the independent district board may appeal to the Superintendent of Public Instruction and request that such merger be submitted to the State Board of Education for final settlement. Such procedure is authorized by KRS 160.041.

2. Transfer of Territory Between Districts

The General Assembly has provided procedures whereby property located in one district may be transferred to an adjacent district. Independent districts may annex any part of the county district lying adjacent to it and a county district may annex part of an independent district lying within, partly within, or adjacent to it. The board desiring to annex territory must first secure approval of the affected districts and the Superintendent of Public Instruction. The Superintendent's decision must take into consideration the ratio of the census pupil wealth of the territory proposed to be annexed to the wealth of the district in which it is located, and the effect of the proposed territorial loss on the district's educational program.

An alternative procedure enables all property located within one municipal incorporated territory to be placed in one school district. Prior to 1940, when territory annexed to a city was located in a county school district it automatically became part of the city school district. Present law requires that 75 percent of the owners of real property in such territory petition the county board of education for transfer to the independent district. Where the recipient district approves the transfer, the county board cannot prevent it. If the county

district fails to carry out the transfer, or the city board does approve the demand, property owners of the territory may petition the circuit court for a writ of mandamus and force action.

Annexation of valuable property by city school districts has proved a real problem for some counties. These statutes, which provide the exclusive procedures for annexation, were intended to assure that transfers would be with the approval of citizens of the area. The Court has invoked legislative intent in examining the law:

“the fundamental school system unit is the county district. The independent districts are cut out from the county district. If the county district may be reduced or enlarged by vote of a city council without the approval of the county district, the affairs of the latter unit must obviously be at all times uncertain and unstable . . . the financial ability of a county to support its schools might be seriously impaired by a city’s absorption of valuable taxable property located in the county, . . . we believe the legislature has shown a clear intention to establish specific methods in which all interested parties participate.”

3. Effect of County Consolidation on School Districts

The legislature has provided for the disposition of school districts in the event of county consolidation, a situation that has not yet occurred. If two counties consolidate, they become one school district. The resulting district assumes all the assets and liabilities and continues to levy any special taxes of the former districts. Members of the two boards may serve out the terms for which they were elected, and superintendents may serve out the remainder of their contract periods, after casting lots to see which will serve as superintendent and which as assistant superintendent. The law does not specify whether or not independent districts in the two counties would remain operative, but the language of the statute, that “the counties as consolidated shall constitute one county school district,” implies that county consolidation would not affect city school districts.

4. Present Status in District Reorganization in Kentucky

As the demand has increased for better school facilities because of vast change in economical, social and technological changes which have taken place there has been gradual decrease in the number of independent school districts. Regardless of any obstacles that may have existed to district

reorganization it is gradually gone forward. Revision of state plans for the support of public schools has played an important part in such a reorganization during the past few years. The reduction in the number of independent school districts has continued until now (1961). There are only 91 independent districts in operation in the state while in 1921 there were 388 such districts.

At present there are 55 county units with no independent districts, there are 30 counties with one central high school, but also with one or more independent districts within the county.

ANNEXATION OF TERRITORY TO SCHOOL DISTRICTS

Between the dates of 1908 and 1934, school districts were known as (1) county school districts and (2) graded school districts and school districts in cities and towns of the first six classes.

After the revised code of 1934 all of these districts were combined into two types, namely county districts and independent districts.

Title to school property in transferred territory was defined in the 1934 code as follows:

“Section 4399-5, Ky. Stat., *Title to School Property in Transferred Territory*. The title to school property in the territory transferred from one school district to another shall remain vested in the board of education of the district from which the territory was transferred.

In case of the sale of such property the board of education to which the property belongs may allow a credit on the sale price of the property in proportion to the ratio which the school population of the transferred territory is to the total school population of the district from which the territory was transferred before the transfer was made.

A board of education owning and operating a school plant in another district at the time of the passage of this act may continue to own and operate such plant, and a county board of education may establish and maintain a school in an independent school district; and any independent school district may purchase school sites and establish and maintain schools outside the school or corporate limits of the independent district, but such independent districts containing cities of the first or second class shall not purchase school sites or establish or maintain schools outside the

county in which such independent district is located." (1934, C. 65, p. 231.) (Page 47, 1934 School Law.)

In 1938 a law was passed by the General Assembly of Kentucky concerning transfer of part of the independent district to the county district. This law reads as follows:

"Boards of Education in independent school districts in incorporated cities, where the independent district boundaries extend beyond the city boundaries, may by joint and concurrent action with the county board of education of the county wherein the independent district is located, transfer to the county district any portion of the area of the independent district outside of the corporate limits of the city.

Provided, however, that no transfer shall be made if such transfer would reduce the number of census pupils of the independent district to less than 250 in number." (1938) Page 18, Supplement to School Laws, April, 1938.

In 1940 the laws governing title to school property in transferred territory to which we just referred, remained the same as in 1934. This action of the Assembly provided for the annexation of county sub-districts as follows:

"Section 4399-4b, Ky. Stat. *Annexation of County Subdistricts.* Any independent school district may annex and unite as a part of the independent school district any county subdistrict, sub-districts, or parts of subdistricts lying adjacent to the independent school district, or any county district may annex a part of an independent district either lying within, partly within, or adjacent to the county district, subject to the following provisions:

"When a part of the county district is to be annexed to an independent district, the board of education of the independent school district shall secure the approval of the county board of education and of the Superintendent of Public Instruction. Such approval of the Superintendent of Public Instruction shall consider the ratio of the per census pupil wealth of the territory proposed to be added to the independent school district to that of the average per census pupil wealth of the county school district as a whole and the effect of the proposed territorial loss of the county district on the educational program of such county school district.

"If and when such approval has been secured in writing, the board of education of the independent school district shall submit to the legal voters of the territory proposed to be added the question of whether or not said territory shall become a part of such independent school district. If said proposal shall be

adopted by a majority vote of the legal voters resident within the territory to be added to the independent district, such territory shall become a part of the independent school district.

“When a part of the independent district is to be annexed to the county district, the board of education of the county school district shall secure the approval of the board of education of the independent school district and of the Superintendent of Public Instruction. Such approval of the Superintendent of Public Instruction shall consider the ratio of the per census pupil wealth of the territory proposed to be added to the county school district, to that of the average per census pupil wealth of the independent school district and the effect of the proposed territorial loss of the independent school district on the educational program of said independent school district.

“If and when such approval has been secured in writing, the board of education of the county school district shall submit to the legal voters of the territory proposed to be added the question of whether or not said territory shall become a part of such county school district. If said proposal shall be adopted by a majority of the legal voters resident within the territory to be added to the county school district, such territory shall become a part of the county school district.” (1940, C. 70, p. 302.) (Page 312, School Laws, 1940.)

In 1942 the Legislature modified Section 4399-4b annexation law by setting up two separate sections namely 160.050 and 160.060. They are essentially the same as 4399-4b quoted above.

Section 160.050 (4399-4b) reads as follows:

“Annexation of Subdistrict by Independent District. Any independent school district may annex any part of a county district lying adjacent to the independent district. When a part of a county district is to be annexed to an independent district, the board of education of the independent district, shall secure the approval of the county board of education and of the Superintendent of Public Instruction. In giving approval the Superintendent of Public Instruction shall consider the ratio of the per pupil census wealth of the territory proposed to be added to the independent district to that of the average per census pupil wealth of the county district as a whole and the effect of the proposed territory loss of the county district on the educational program of the county district. When such approval has been secured in writing, the board of education of the independent district shall submit to the legal voters of the territory proposed to be annexed the question of whether or not the territory shall become a part of the independent district. If the proposal is adopted

by majority vote of the legal voters residing in the territory to be annexed, the territory shall become a part of the independent district." (Page 750, 1942 School Law)

The other new section reads as follows:

"160.060 (4399-4b) *Annexation of Part of Independent District by County District.* Any county district may annex a part of an independent district lying within, partly within, or adjacent to the county district. When a part of an independent district is to be annexed to a county district, the board of education of the county district shall secure the approval of the board of education of the independent district and of the Superintendent of Public Instruction. In giving approval the Superintendent of Public Instruction shall consider the ratio of the per census pupil wealth of the territory proposed to be added to the county district to that of the average per census pupil wealth of the independent district and the effect of the proposed territorial loss of the independent district. When such approval has been secured in writing, the board of education of the county district shall submit to the legal voters of the territory proposed to be annexed the question of whether or not the territory shall become a part of the county district. If the proposal is adopted by a majority of the legal voters residing in the territory to be annexed, the territory shall become a part of the county district." (Page 750, 1942 School Law)

At this time (1942) 160.065 was added concerning the liability of indebtedness in case of annexation. This section reads as follows:

"160.065 *Liability for Indebtedness in Case of Annexation.* When any property assessable for school purposes in one school district is annexed by or transferred to another school district, the recipient district shall assume a part of the indebtedness, if any, of the other school district incurred for school buildings and grounds in the proportion the assessed valuation of property taxable for school purposes transferred bears to the total assessed valuation of property taxable for school purposes in the district losing the territory. (1942, C. 197.)" (Page 751, 1942 School Law)

It will be noted that this law details the procedures for adding territory to the county district and to the independent district.

There was added to the 1942 law by the 1946 General Assembly KRS 160.045. This section was in addition to 160.050, 160.060 and 160.065 cited above.

The 1948 Session of the Legislature amended KRS 160.045 (1) of the 1946 law, by leaving out of line two the words "fifth and sixth class".

KRS 160.045 of the Kentucky Revised Statutes was amended to read as follows:

“(1) Whenever any territory in any municipality or any territory which may become incorporated in any municipality, is located in a county school district, the owners of real property in such territory are given the right to demand of the board of education of the county school district in which their property is located that said property should be placed in and become a part of the school district in which the greater part of said municipality is located and embraced; whether said school district be a county or independent school district.”

The annexation law of 1946 consisted of KRS 160.045, 160.050 and 160.060 copied above.

The law of these four sections 160.050, 160.045, 160.060 and 160.065 remained as the annexation law until 1956 when 160.050 and 160.060 were repealed and 160.065, and 160.045 as amended, became the annexation law and reads as follows:

“160.045 *Transfer to adjacent territory to school districts other than that in which it is located; procedure; surplus physical plant or facilities.*

“(1) If seventy-five per cent of either the registered voters of property owners in an area adjacent to either a county or independent school district petition the respective school boards for a transfer of said property to the school board district other than that in which it is located or if either board initiates such action, the school boards may affect such transfer by agreement, duly spread upon the minutes of their respective boards.

“(2) In the event that the boards fail to agree within ninety days from the filing of petitions for such a transfer, either board may petition the Superintendent of Public Instruction for approval or disapproval of the transfer of the property involved. In his consideration for giving approval or disapproval, he shall be governed by any policies and rules and regulations of the State Board of Education which may be affected by the transfer of the property and shall give due consideration to the following: The ratio of the wealth of the territory involved in its relation to the total wealth of the district from which the territory will be annexed; the effect of the proposed territorial loss or gain on the educational programs of the respective districts; the indebtedness and bonded or rendered obligations of the respective districts; any contemplated indebtedness or obligation arising out of the proposed transfer; such other factors as may have a bearing upon the determination of the desirability of the proposed annexation from the vantage point of all interested persons.

"(3) In those instances where the requested transfer will result in a surplus of physical plant, facilities or equipment in the transferring school district, the Superintendent of Public Instruction shall determine an equitable plan for the transfer of any such surplus to the annexing district as his plan may determine will be needed. His plan shall be based on the fair value of such property on a replacement basis, taking into consideration its age and condition. In any considerations and suggestions which he may propose for the settlement of the differences between the boards of education, he shall be bound by any agreements outstanding between the boards of education of the school districts upon the effective date of this law.

"(4) In the event the Superintendent of Public Instruction is unable to arrive at a satisfactory agreement with the two boards of education concerning the transfer of the involved property within one hundred twenty days from the time it is presented to him, either board may request that he bring the matter on for hearing before the State Board of Education at its next regularly scheduled meeting. In that event, he shall file with the State Board of Education all the facts which he has gathered, the recommendation he has made, and the basis for his recommendation, for their consideration.

"(5) Within at least ten days before the holding of any hearing provided for in subsection two or subsection four of section 160.045 of the Kentucky Revised Statutes, the Superintendent of Public Instruction shall serve written notice thereof, by registered mail, on the respective boards fixing the time and place at which the hearing shall be conducted. All hearings provided for herein shall be open to the public, and any interested person may appear and be heard in accordance with such rules and regulations as the State Board of Education may prescribe with reference thereto."

These laws remain the annexation law today, February, 1961.

Tabulation of Number of Districts*

The table presented herewith shows the number of school districts in operation in the State from 1909-1960. The tables give the number of districts which existed from year to year as shown by Public School Directories. Facts for a few of the years were not available when this table was compiled.

*As shown by Public School Directories with a few years unavailable.

For many years, the small district continued to be the typical school organization outside of the large cities. Many different types of reorganization of the districts have occurred since 1909.

Elimination of school districts has been a continuous problem to this day because of the need for larger basic administrative units for school control. Much attention has been given to consolidation of small schools into large attendance units over the years. Many factors have delayed the formation of school districts of adequate size. A few of them might be listed as follows:

1. Politically ambitious local trustees or boards of education have been unwilling to be displaced.
2. False local pride, community acceptance of the "Status Quo" and resistance to change combined to block reorganization.
3. Misconception of what a reorganized district could mean to the community has produced unwarranted fears.
4. Rather cumbersome procedures in reorganization planning have obstructed efforts to form larger districts.

Despite the obstacles, reorganization has gone forward. The revision of State plans for the support of public schools has played a large part in the improvement during the past number of years.

Reduction in the number of school districts continues year after year. Most leaders and educators believe that the elimination of a number of the districts which still remain would bring still further improvement in school opportunities for many children of the State.

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To

NUMBER OF SCHOOL DISTRICTS*

	1909	1912	1914	1915
County	119	120	120	120
Ind. Graded	167	314	330	325
Spl. Act Leg. (City)	27	30	30	30
Total	313	464	480	475
	1916	1917	1918	1919
County	120	120	120	120
Ind. Graded	325	309	333	340
Spl. Act Leg. (City)	28	31	31	31
Total	473	460	484	491
	1920	1921	1922	1924
County	120	120	120	120
Ind. Graded	357	319	296	260
Spl. Act Leg. (City)	31	59	61	61
Total	508	498	477	441
	1925	1926	1927	1928
County	120	120	120	120
Ind. Graded	256	243	235	227
Spl. Act Leg. (City)	60	60	62	62
Total	436	423	417	409
	1929	1930	1931	1932
County	120	120	120	120
Ind. Graded	218	216	202	195
Spl. Act Leg. (City)	62	63	67	63
Total	400	399	389	378
	1933	1934	1935	1936
County	120	120	120	120
Ind. Graded	184	175	197	182
Spl. Act Leg. (City)	68	68	—	—
Total	372	363	317	302

NUMBER OF SCHOOL DISTRICTS*

	1937	1938	1939	1940
County	120	120	120	120
Ind. Graded	163	155	144	142
Total	283	275	264	262
	1941	1942	1943	1944
County	120	120	120	120
Ind. Graded	142	141	141	140
Total	262	261	261	260
	1945	1946	1947	1948
County	120	120	120	120
Ind. Graded	138	137	128	126
Total	258	257	248	246
	1949	1950	1951	1952
County	120	120	120	120
Ind. Graded	122	117	113	113
Total	242	237	233	233
	1953	1954	1955	1956
County	120	120	120	120
Ind. Graded	109	107	104	104
Total	229	227	224	224
	1957	1958	1959	1960
County	120	120	120	120
Ind. Graded	96	95	92	91
Total	216	215	212	211

*The numbers are from Public School Directories