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ADVANTAGES OF A COMMUNITY UNIT DISTRICT FOR
DISTRICTS 3, 30, 99, AND 133 OF CLAY COUNTY

BY

Robert K. Jenkins

PLAN B PAPER

SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR
THE DEGREE MASTER OF SCIENCE IN EDUCATION
AND PREPARED IN COURSE

Education 582

IN THE GRADUATE SCHOOL, EASTERN ILLINOIS UNIVERSITY, CHARLESTON, ILLINOIS

1967 YEAR

I HEREBY RECOMMEND THIS PLAN B PAPER BE ACCEPTED AS FULFILLING THIS PART OF THE DEGREE, M.S. IN ED.

8-4-67 DATE

4 August 1967

ADVISER

DEPARTMENT HEAD

PREFACE

The reason for this study of separate school Districts 3, 30, 99, and 133 in Clay County is the determination of the financial advantages, if any, of a community unit for these districts. The scope of this paper also involves a brief history of the authorization for education in America, free public education in Illinois, and the school district recorganization movement.

The author wishes to acknowledge the assistance he received from the County Superintendent of Schools of Clay County, Virgil D. Shafer; his Assistant County Superintendent, Guy N. Magill; Paul Anderson, Superintendent of District 3; Johnson Beare, Superintendent of District 30; Floyd C. Smith, Superintendent of District 99; Floyd Henson, Superintendent of District 133; the Eastern Illinois University Library; the Southern Illinois University Library; the Research Divisions of the Illinois Education Association and the National Education Association.

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CHAPTER I

A BASIS FOR EDUCATION

Federal Basis

Public education in the United States is a legal function of the State government, an authority granted to each state by the United States Constitution, which states that "The powers not delegated to the United States by the Constitution, nor prohibited by it to the states, are reserved to the States respectively, or to the people." Acting upon this clause, the states operate their school systems.

State Basis

The basic provisions for education are found in the separate Constitution of the states through the authority granted them by the United States Constitution. The Constitution of the State of Illinois in reference to education states, "The General Assembly shall provide a thorough and efficient system of free schools, whereby all children of this state may receive a good common school education." As a result of this article the state has taken on a momentous task, a task so large that it requires additional help and assistance to execute the established goals.

¹U. S., Constitution, Amend. X.

²Illinois, Constitution, Art. 8, sec.1.

County and Local Basis

Each of our states has a Department of Education with an official leader, either elected or appointed.³ This office controls the public education in that state. Depending on the size of the state, the population, and the number of school districts, there may be an additional administrative unit between the state and the local level. Although these intermediate units do not directly operate the schools, they do render consultive, advisory and statistical services.

The local school district is the basic administrative unit for the operation of elementary and secondary schools, upon authority granted by the state.

Morphet, Johns, and Reller give the following description of a local school district:

A local school district is a quasi corporation authorized or established by the State for the local organization and administration of schools. It is comprised of an area within which a single board or officer has the responsibility for, and usually considerable autonomy in, the organization and administration of all public schools. It usually has certain powers of taxation for school purposes that have been delegated by the state and may include from one to a hundred or more schools and attendance areas.⁴

The term "quasi corporation," to be distinguished from the more popular municipal corporation, is defined as follows:

School districts are held most generally to be

National Education Association, Estimates of School Statistics 1965-66, Research Report 1965-R17 (Washington: National Education Research Division, December, 1965), p. 1.

Edgar L. Morphet, Roe L. Johns, and Theodore L. Reller, Educational Administration: Concepts, Practices and Issues (Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, 1959), p. 214.

"quasi corporations" as distinguished from "municipal corporations" but in some circumstances the latter term is applicable nevertheless. A municipal corporation, such as a city or a county, is set up by statute or by charter for the primary purpose of managing civil affairs of local concern. A quasi corporation resembles a municipal corporation except that it is regarded as an agency for carrying out state, not local functions.

The chief function of a school district is to make it possible for the citizens of an area to provide for the organization, operation and administration of an adequate, economical, and effective educational program for those who should be educated in and through the public schools. In turn, any district that does not complete this function satisfactorily must be labeled an ineffective district.

In summary, the local school district is an instrument of the State, and its purpose is to carry out the State's educational function. Since the local school district is usually a relatively autonomous unit which operates by authorization of the State, it is not responsible to anyother governmental units, except in specific instances. It is the State that has complete authority over school districts; it may create or abolish them in accordance with its own judgments.

The United States Supreme Court indicates the relationship of school districts to the State as follows:

Local subdivisions of the state can be created by the sovereign power of the state without solicitation, consent, or concurrent action by the people who inhabit them.

⁵Calvin Grieder, Truman M. Pearce, and William E. Rosenstengel, Public School Administration, (2nd ed.; New York: The Ronald Press Company, 1961), p. 11.

⁶Morphet, op. cit., p. 220.

This being so, it follows that legislative authority over school districts is unlimited except as that limitation is found in the state constitution. 7

Morphet, Johns, and Reller summarize the writer's thesis in the following quotation:

In America the nearness of people to their schools is a distinguishing characteristic. Few if any countries can boast of this phenomenon. There are both advantages and disadvantages to this. On the positive side our schools have achieved some degree of excellence with little state or federal control. On the other hand, this has resulted in the continuation of too many small districts which cannot provide adequate education.

⁷Ibid.

^{8&}lt;sub>Ibid.</sub>, p. 221.

CHAPTER II

A BRIEF HISTORY OF FREE UNIVERSAL EDUCATION IN ILLINOIS

Basic Concepts of American Education

A study of public education in America is grounded in the New England states. It was here, because of religious motivation, that the concept of locally controlled and financially supported public schools was founded. As the New Englanders pushed westward and settled in Illinois, they understandably wanted to adopt their former educational system, the local district. The New Englanders held to the principle that education is a function of the state and that there needed to be collective taxation of all property for the support of the schools.

Illinois also received settlers from the South. The Southerners felt that education was the concern of the individual family and that there was no concern for educating children of others. In addition, the school system in their former locale had been organized on a county rather than on a local district basis.

Because of the aforementioned diversity of background and beliefs, religious, social, and moral, the early settlers of Illinois had a difficult time establishing a system of education. Both groups of settlers, from New England and from the South, wanted to establish educational systems like the ones they were accustomed to.

True, education had its roots in religion in the beginning. Later,

however, there were other important social motivating forces that influenced its development. Education became the responsibility, legally and financially, of the government as people felt that public education was necessary for the guarantee of liberty and political equality and for the development of democratic government.

Education and the Ordinance of 1785 and 1787

The early settlers of America felt so strong about the need for a good educational system that they became proponents of a non-sectarian school system, established and maintained by the proceeds from the sale of public land. It was through the Land Ordinance Act of 1785 that the legislative basis for public schools began, an Act which stated: "There shall be reserved the lot number sixteen of every township." Section number sixteen, containing six hundred and forty acres, thereby became the heritage upon which public education in Illinois is based. 10

Congress, in The Ordinance of 1787, which established the legal basis and the means for education in the Northwest Territory, declared that "religion, morality, and knowledge being necessary to good government, schools and the means of education shall forever be encouraged." The provisions of this Ordinance guided Illinois until it became a state under the provisions of the Enabling Act of 1818.11

Public Education in Illinois

In the same year of the Enabling Act, the Ordinance of 1818 was

⁹George Propeck and Irving Pearson, the history of the Illinois Education Association (Springfield, Illinois: Williamson Press, 1961), p. 17.

¹⁰Ibid., p. 18.

llIbid.

passed. This Ordinance continued the sponsorship of free public education; and a special impact was stated in Articles 1, 3, and 4, which state:

Article 1: That section numbered 16 in every township, and when such section has been sold, or otherwise disposed of, other lands equivalent thereto, and as contiguous as may be, shall be granted to the state for the use of the inhabitants of such township for the use of schools.

Article 3: That 5% of the net proceeds of the lands lying within such state, and which shall be sold by congress from and after the first day of January, 1819. After deducting all expenses incident to the same, shall be reserved for the purposes following, viz: Two-fifths to be disbursed under the direction of congress, in making roads leading to the state; the residue to be appropriated by the legislature of the state for the encouragement of learning, of which one-sixth part shall be exclusively bestowed on a college or university.

Article 4: That 36 sections or one entire township, which shall be designated by the President of the United States together with the one heretofore reserved for the use of a seminary of learning, and vested in the legislature of the said state to be appropriated solely to the use of such seminary by the said legislature. 12

The Free School Act of 1825

On January 15, 1825, the Illinois Legislature approved the Free School Act, which provided for the establishment of free schools in Illinois, showing that the people of Illinois were concerned with free education and good education. The Act proved to be of little value, however, for in 1827 an Amendment to the Act took away the power to enforce the collection of taxes to provide for free public education.

The Establishment of the Superintendency

The push and drive continued for free and good education in Illinois.

¹²Ibid., pp. 21-22.

The next step on the road to our present educational system in Illinois was the attempted development of the office of State Superintendent of Public Instruction. At first, every effort was made to make important educative positions elective, but early attempts were fruitless; in fact, the first attempt to create the Office of State Superintendent of Public Instruction was literally ridiculed to death. A boost to education in Illinois, however, did come in 1845, when the Secretary of State was authorized to act in the capacity of State Superintendent of the Common Schools, ex officio. The results were not as rewarding as first hoped for because the work load on the Secretary of State was already too heavy.

Even though the foregoing authorization might be considered a boost to education, there was a disheartening factor involved. The Act of 1845 gave the legal voters the opportunity to meet together and determine whether or not they wanted to levy taxes for the support of schools, with the requirement that two-thirds of the registered voters favor the proposition before it could be enacted. It was possible, furthermore, that absence from elections could defeat measures leading to taxation. Such absences did occur, and free education continued to suffer. 13

Not only were parents and citizens interested in good education but the teachers were also striving for the same end result, bringing about many local teachers' organizations. The chief objectives of the teachers were the perfecting of a better system of common schools, an increase in teaching efficiency, and school reform. He cause of these early teachers' organizations, the next step toward free education was realized, at least in part.

¹³Ibid., p. 23.

¹⁴Ibid., p. 26.

In 1854, during a special convention of Illinois teachers, the need for the creation of the separate office of Superintendent of Public Instruction from the Secretary of State was pressed, resulting in action by the General Assembly to create what the teachers requested. Yet, an error of dates in the law, forced the governor to appoint the first superintendent, Ninian W. Edwards, until the general elections of 1856. 15

Studies by Ninian Edwards

Studies made by Ninian Edwards revealed that free schooling was not universal in Illinois. Mr. Edwards' in his first Biennial Report of the State Superintendent of Public Instruction pointed out that schools were still not accessible; as a result, the next legislature (1855) was promply confronted with a bill, designed by Mr. Edwards, which would provide for the education of all the children of Illinois. The main provisions were:

The act furthermore provided for a state tax for the common schools, enabling every local community to tax itself at its pleasure to provide for universal free education for all between the ages of five and twenty-one.

Opposition to the free school system had previously come from the southern counties in Illinois. Favorable reaction to this bill came by these same southern counties, however, when the method of collecting and

¹⁵Ibid., p. 39.

^{16&}lt;sub>Ibid., p. 41</sub>

distributing the State Tax was settled by the Bill of 1855. The basis of the Bill of 1855 regarding taxation and collection is clarified in the following quotation:

distribution was made on such a basis as to favor the poorer counties. Two-thirds of the income went to the counties in proportion to the number of minors and the remaining third on the area of school units. Thus the enemies of the measure were the greatest gainers. Cook County was the richest of the counties because of the city within its borders. It paid in the first year more than sixty thousand dollars and received back less than half that amount. The other thirty thousand went to the poorer counties, which received far more than they contributed. The two-mill provision was always popular in the sparsely settled districts and correspondingly unpopular in the centers of population. 17

Mr. Edwards also recommended the adoption of a township system instead of a district system of organization. This proposal was refused by the legislators because they felt a district system of organization was better in that it afforded an opportunity for office holding to every citizen.

As a result of the concentrated efforts of Ninian Edwards, a truly free education system was founded in Illinois. From the passage of the Free School Bill of 1855 through the present, Illinois public schools have been supported, in part, by the property tax. True, there have been changes in the financing of Illinois schools since 1855, and undoubtedly there will be more changes forthcoming, but Edwards was the true originator of financial structure.

The Illinois Constitution of 1870

Although the first Illinois State Constitution did not contain an

¹⁷Ibid., p. 41.

article or section regarding education, such a provision was made in the Constitution of 1870. 18 The general provision reads:

The General Assembly shall provide a thorough and efficient system of free schools, whereby all the children of this state may receive a good common school education. 19

The State, by constitutional authority, therefore, has delegated the responsibility of providing a thorough and efficient system of free schools to the local school district. Just as there are many school districts in Illinois, there are just as many different types of school districts in the state. Grieder, Pierce, and Rosenstengel sum up the reason for this situation:

^{18&}lt;sub>Ibid., p. 69.</sub>

¹⁹Illinois, Constitution, op. cit.

²⁰ Grieder, et. al., op. cit., p. 12.

CHAPTER III

SCHOOL DISTRICTS OF ILLINOIS

Recognizing the desirability of local control, the state legislature has provided for organization, according to desires of the people, of various types of school districts. Local governing boards have almost complete control of the education of public school children. The state governs only to the extent of minimums established by law and administrative process, intended to assure for each child the opportunity to receive a good common school education. 21

Illinois law classifies school districts as follows:

- Charter created under special charters granted by the legislature;
- Elementary to include grades 1 through 8, and kindergarten where it has been added;
- 3. Secondary to include grades 9 through 12;
- 4. Unit to include grades 1 through 12, and kindergarten where it has been added. 22

Separate elementary and high school districts are referred to as dual districts.

The four basic types of school districts in Illinois are listed below, plus a brief explanation of each.

Charter Districts

The Special Charter districts, created in Illinois prior to 1870, were granted under special charters by the legislature. This type of

²¹ Lessons in Illinois Public School Finance (Springfield, Illinois: Research Department, Illinois Education Association, 1962), p. 1.

²² Ibid.

school district can no longer be established in Illinois because the statute providing for such formation has been repealed. Those Special Charter districts organized under the old statute, however, may continue to operate.

Elementary Districts

Elementary districts include grades 1 through 8, and kindergarten where it has been added. Elementary districts are permitted under various Articles of the Illinois School Code.

One such section states:

School districts having a population of fewer than 1000 inhabitants and not governed by any special act shall be governed by a board of school directors to consist of 3 members who shall be elected in the manner provided in Article 9 of the Act. 23

Community consolidated elementary school districts have been organized by one or the other of the following provisions of the Illinois School Code:

Any contiguous territory having a population of not less than 1500 and not more than 500,000 persons and an equalized assessed valuation of not less than \$5,000,000 and bounded by school district lines may be organized into a community consolidated school district as provided in this article; however, on approval of the Superintendent of Public Instruction and the county superintendent of schools having supervision and control over the proposed district may be formed with a population of less than 1500 persons and an equalized assessed valuation of less than \$5,000,000 based upon the last full, fair cash value as equalized or assessed by the Department of Revenue as of the date of filing of the petition. 24

²³ The School Code of Illinois, Art. 10, sec. 10-1.

²⁴ Ibid., Art. 11, sec. 11-1.

Any contiguous and compact territory, no part of which is included within any community unit school district, having a population of not less than 2,000 and not more than 500,000 persons and an equalized assessed valuation of not less than \$6,000,000 may be organized into a community unit school district as provided in this Article; or the territory of two or more entire community unit school districts that are contiguous to each other and the territory of which taken as a whole is compact may be organized into a community unit school district as provided in this Article; or the territory of one or more entire community unit school districts that are contiguous to each other plus any contiguous and compact territory, no part of which is included within any community unit school district, and the territory of which taken as a whole is compact may be organized into a community unit school district as provided in this Article; or any contiguous and compact territory, no part of which is included within any community unit school district, having a population of not less than 1500 and not more than 500,000 persons and an equalized assessed valuation of not less than \$10,000,000 may be organized into a community unit school district as provided in this Article, provided the special procedure later set forth in this section for a district below 2000 population is followed by the Superintendent of Public Instruction and the county superintendent of schools of the county in which the territory of the greater part thereof is situated.

However, any territory, no part of which is included within a community unit school district, that is contiguous and compact by virtue of the fact that on at least two sides it is bounded by rivers and during parts of certain years bounded on one or more sides by flood waters, or other natural physical barriers, having a population of not less than 2,000 and not more than 500,000 persons and an equalized assessed valuation of not less than \$4,900,000 may be organized into a community unit school district as provided in this Article; provided the county superintendent of schools who would have jurisdiction of the proposed community unit school district, and the Superintendent of Public Instruction jointly concur that said proposed community unit school district can maintain a recognized school. 25

²⁵ Ibid., sec. 11-6.

The organization of a consolidated elementary district is also provided in the Illinois School Code:

A consolidated district shall for all purposes be a single school district. However, any consolidated school district organized prior to July 1, 1951, shall thereafter, if it has a population of 1,000 inhabitants or more, operate as a community consolidated school district under a board of education of 7 members with the powers and duties as set out in Article 10 of this Act; or if the population of such district is less than 1,000 inhabitants it shall therefore operate as a common school district under a school board consisting of 7 directors with the powers and duties as set out in Article 10 of this Act applicable to school directors. 26

Secondary Districts

The types of high school districts are as follows: Community high school districts, township high school districts, which are no longer permitted to be organized, and consolidated high school districts, which are no longer provided for in the School Code. 27

The provision in the Illinois School Code, for establishing a community high school district reads as follows:

²⁶ Ibid., sec. 11-10.

²⁷ Illinois Public School Districts: 1966-67 School Year, Circular Series A, No. 195 (Springfield, Illinois: Office of Public Instruction, Division of Finance and Statistics, 1966), preface.

²⁸The School Code of Illinois, Art. 12, sec. 12-1.

The development of the community high school district was a product of social change, particularly of the changing nature of rural life. The establishment of such a district is as follows:

In 1911 a law was enacted in Illinois which provided that any contiguous and compact territory containing a community center could be formed into a community district for high school purposes without regard to township boundary lines. This law resulted in the rapid formation of high school districts composed of villages and the open-country surrounding them, conforming in general to natural patterns of association of the people.²⁹

Township high school districts were provided for in Sections 10-1 through 10-8 of the 1945 School Code; these sections, however, have been repealed, nulifying the organization of such districts today. In Illinois township school districts were organized for high school purposes only, and were first permitted in 1872.

The consolidated high school district, as this paper has previously stated, is no longer provided for in the School Code. This type of district was established when two or more adjoining high school districts consolidated. Provision for this type of district was found in the 1945 School Code. 30

Unit Districts

The community unit school district, dating from 1945, is a single school district providing instruction in grades 1 through 12. A community unit school district has a board of education of 7 members. The

²⁹ School District Organization (Washington: American Association of School Administrators, 1958), p. 98.

³⁰ The School Code of Illinois, (1945), Art. 10, sec. 10-21.

organizational procedure for such a district is stated in the Illinois School Code:

Any contiguous and compact territory, no part of which is included within any community unit school district, having a population of not less than 2,000 and not more than 500,000 persons and equalized assessed valuation of not less than \$6,000,000 may be organized into a community unit school district

Upon the organization of any territory into a community unit school district, all school districts including high school districts, located within the territory, shall be automatically dissolved and the board of education of the community unit school district shall establish a school or schools best located to serve the pupils of the district 32

³¹ The School Code of Illinois, Art. 11, sec. 11-6.

^{32&}lt;sub>Ibid.</sub>, sec. 11-9.

CHAPTER IV

A BRIEF HISTORY OF SCHOOL REORGANIZATION

School Reorganization In America

The school reorganization movement is almost as old as the Illinois Public School System. District reorganization in the nation started in the early 1800's. 33 Massachusetts had school reorganization laws as early as 1838; Ohio began school district consolidation in 1892.

Reorganization Defined

A definition of school district reorganization is needed at this point to insure its meaning. The Dictionary of Education defines school reorganization as *a change in the internal organization of a school*34 Ellena and Isenberg state:

The term district reorganization can appropriately be used to embrace anything from a merger of a large city school system with one or more systems to form a single school administrative unit for an entire metropolitan area to the combination of two very small school districts involving only a few pupils. 35

³³ Morphet, op. cit., p. 218.

³⁴ Carter V. Good (ed.) Dictionary of Education (2d ed; New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1959).

³⁵William J. Ellena and Robert M. Isenberg, School District Organization, Journey That Must Not End (Washington D. C.: American Association of School Administrators and Department of Rural Education of the National Education Association, 1962), p. v.

Development of School Districts in the United States

A variety of procedures have been used to assist in this task of reorganization, including permissive legislation, compulsory reorganization, and semi-compulsory plans. The most paramount incentive to reorganization is legislation that embodies financial incentives.

As a result of such procedures there have been and continues to be a decrease in the total number of school districts. In 1932 there were 127,244 local school districts in the United States; ³⁶ in 1941-42 there were 115,384 districts; in 1951-52 there were 70,993 school districts; in 1953-54 there were 62,969 school districts, and in 1955-56 the number of local school districts had been reduced to 57,000. ³⁷ In 1961 the total number of local school districts in the United States was 36,402. ³⁸ There was an estimated 26,802 school districts in the United States in 1965-66. ³⁹ Evidence shows that consolidation is gaining momentum across the country.

The Little Red Schoolhouse is passing from the American scene and in its place the modern consolidated school is springing up. As small schools disappear, so do small districts. Some educators predict that there will ultimately be fewer than 15,000 school districts in the United States. 40 Obviously, consolidation is a major trend in American public school education.

 $^{^{36}}$ This was the first year that reasonably complete information was assembled.

³⁷ Morphet, op. cit., p. 218.

³⁸ Ellena, op. cit., p. 1.

³⁹Estimates of School Statistics, op. cit., p. 1.

⁴⁰Gregory R. Antig, "Sociological Factors Which Resist School Consolidations," The Clearinghouse, XXXVIII (November, 1963), 161.

Reasons Given for School Reorganization

School reorganization is not a twentieth-century phenomenon.

Throughout the history of the nation, as far back as the first town schools of New England, there has been a process of reorganization. Each state has been creating new school districts as a convenient way to provide education for its junior citizens. Momentum has been gained as more people have become aware of the benefits to be derived from consolidation. As one source says, "Few who have tasted the benefits of an expanded and enriched program would return to the barren educational program of yesteryear."

There are as many reasons given for school district reorganization and consolidation as there are authors to cite them. Listed below are but a few reasons why people are desiring to consolidate their schools:

- 1. Better facilities
- 2. Better trained teachers
- 3. Improved performance of students due to increased opportunities
- 4. Improved financial structure of the districts
- 5. More pudicious efficient expenditure of funds
- 6. Specialized educational services and programs
- 7. Equalization of opportunity due to more equitable distribution of resources. 42

Most authors and proponents of consolidation usually list similar purposes of consolidated. Evidence of this support may be found in the following statement of the major purposes of consolidation:

- To provide better education for children, youth and adults
- 2. To better meet the demands of the modern day world

⁴lEllena, op. cit., p. 1.

⁴²R. F. Campbell and F. H. Vaughn, "Reorganization Revised," <u>Illinois</u> Education, Vol. 52, No. 6 (February, 1964), 249.

- 3. To provide educational programs that achieve quality of educational opportunities
- 4. To provide academic excellence with greater speed and force
- 5. To provide the advantage of an uniformly planned educational program. 43

The source above refers to the foregoing 5 purposes of consolidation as "ideal aspects." He later says that "the most practical factor of reorganization is finance. People are interested in how much it costs.

What will the levy be?"44

In regard to the financing of school consolidation, we cannot assume in all cases that school consolidation will cost the people of the new unit less money in taxes. This economy occurs in some areas because there is a reduction in school spending, from the lessened duplication of facilities. Consolidation, however, must place emphasis on both the need for more uniform educational opportunity and the cost factor.

Objections to Reorganization

Because there are many desirable goals of consolidation, it would seem that people would welcome consolidation without reservation, but this is not the case. People are reluctant to accept change for many reasons, such as these:

- 1. The fear of loss of control by local authorities
- 2. Loss of community identity
- 3. The possibility of increased costs in education. 45

⁴³ John J. Hayes and Richard M, Kimble, "The Knox County's Reorganized High School," The American School Board Journal, CXLVII (May, 1964), 25.

⁴⁴ Ibid.

Burton W. Kreitlow, "Organizational Patterns: Local School District," Review of Educational Research, XXXI (October, 1961), 388.

Among the barriers to reorganizing districts in rural areas have been: the persistent idea of home rule, the resistance to tax increases for any public service, the fact that many people simply do not realize that the quality of the educational program in their districts is inferior; and the degree of heterogeneity reflected in rural populations. 46

It is evident that most of the arguments given against consolidation are emotional in nature and involve loyalties, as stated by one source:

Indeed, one of the primary obstacles to consolidation of small schools into more efficient academic and vocational units is the loyalty to the symbol of the school as expressed by athletic teams, bands, and other public evidence of activities carried on in the school. 47

Campbell explains the resistance to change in the local school district as follows:

Undoubtedly a range of factors influence decisions about reorganization, not the least of which is sentiment or strong feelings about the "old school" as well as the nature of the people themselves. In rural sections . . . the feelings of identification with a given institution are strong. Although tax consideration, too, are important, and in many cases may out weigh other reasons for resisting changes, the sentiments of local citizens cannot be discounted. 48

Reorganized Studies by Burton Kreitlow

A well known study of school consolidation and reorganization has been made by Burton Kreitlow. 49 His study involves many aspects of

⁴⁶Roald F. Campbell, Luvern L. Cunningham, and Roderick F. McPhee, The Organization and Control of American Schools, (Columbus, Ohio: Charles E. Merrill Books, Inc., 1965), p. 96.

⁴⁷ Campbell and Vaughn, op. cit., p. 249.

⁴⁸ Campbell, Cunningham, and McPhee, op. cit., p. 217.

⁴⁹Kreitlow, op. cit., p. 388.

consolidation, one of which includes the comparing of the achievement of students in unreorganized districts. This study has been going on for 13 years. To measure academic achievement, he tested children from grades 1, 6, 9, and 12 in five reorganized schools, all in the state of Wisconsin. The final results indicated that academic achievement was superior in the reorganized situations. His study, designed to measure educational opportunities, educational achievement, educational costs, and community, social, and economic processes, provided these findings:

- Children in reorganized districts had significantly more opportunities in such areas as libraries, supervision, breath of curriculum, lower class sizes, and in-service training for teachers.
- 2. Children in larger reorganized districts achieved significantly better in basic skill subjects than in small reorganized or unorganized districts.
- 3. It cost \$12 more to educate the children in the reorganized districts, but this was offset by better educational opportunities.
- 4. A comparison of personal and social behavior in students found no difference in girls, but a small margin favoring the unorganized districts as far as boys were concerned.
- 5. Ties of rural residents with the village center of the reorganization were neither strengthened nor weakened. 51

Upon examining several studies of school consolidation Mr. Hamilton and Mr. Rowe have this to say about the educational benefits of consolidation: "After carefully considering the studies cited . . . , the present writers conclude that the preponderance of evidence . . . indi-

⁵⁰ DeForest Hamilton and Robert N. Rowe, "Academic Achievement of Students in Reorganized and Non-Reorganized Districts," Phi Delta Kappan, XLII (March, 1964), 401.

⁵¹ Campbell and Vaughn, op. cit., p. 249.

cates that greater academic achievement is more likely to take place in the larger and/or reorganized schools.*52

Because the reorganized and consolidated school can provide so many more services to the student, many educators regard the related services of a larger school district as being vitally important in producing well rounded students and in equalizing educational opportunities.

School Reorganization in Illinois

At one time Illinois had more school districts and more school board members than any other state in the nation. 53 The majority of the districts overlaped one another, and many districts had more board members than school children. In addition to this awkwardness, Illinois had a very low proportion of state support for total education expenditures.

The Illinois Education Association and Reorganization

The necessity for school reorganization was seen long before legislation was provided to make it a reality. For instance, The Illinois
Education Association in the 1930's launched an all-out drive designed
to reduce the number of school districts in the state. ⁵⁴ In 1941 legislation followed permitting a survey of school district reorganization in
Illinois. Seventeen counties engaged in this study with some resulting

⁵²Hamilton and Rowe, op. cit., 403.

⁵³Merle R. Sumption and Harlan D. Beem, A Guide to School Reorganization in Illinois, Vol. 44, No. 60 (Urbana, Illinois: University of Illinois Press, 1947), p. 5.

⁵⁴Propeck and Pearson, op. cit., p. 102.

reorganization. 55 A 1945 law provided that a school survey committee be established in each county to study and make recommendations for an efficient consolidation and reorganization of the local school districts.

It wasn't until the enactment of the Community Unit Law in 1945, however, that an enormous amount of reorganization took place. This law provided for cutting the red tape involved in dissolving old school districts and establishing twelve-grade districts. These statistics should indicate the importance of the Act in reducing the number of school districts in Illinois: In 1944-45 there were 11,955 school districts in Illinois; by 1949 there were only 4,951. The number of school districts in Illinois in 1965-66 was 1,355 which shows still a further reduction. 57

As previously stated at one time, Illinois ranked first in school districts in the United States; but by 1964-65, it ranked sixth in the United States. These figures indicate that Illinois is moving forward.

Recommendations by the Illinois Task Force on Education

That reorganization of school districts in Illinois will continue
is a safe prediction, that is, if the recommendations of the Illinois
Task Force on Education are adopted. This group recommends the following:

... that the state set a goal to reorganize local school districts into approximately 200 unit districts with grades from kindergarten (or whatever lower grade may be established) through high school. 59

⁵⁵Ibid.

⁵⁶ Ibid., p. 148.

⁵⁷ Estimates of School Statistics, op. cit., p. 23.

⁵⁸ Ibid.

⁵⁹ Digest of Tentative Conclusions and Recommendations, (Urbana, Illinois: The Illinois Task Force on Education, 1966), p. 10.

The above number may be an extreme in the opposite direction from too many school districts to the providing of too few school districts in Illinois. However, this statistic does indicate that the topic of school reorganization is not dead nor even stagnant in Illinois.

School Reorganization in Clay County, Illinois

Statistics show that in 1966-67 there are 15 school districts in

Clay County, 9 of which are community consolidated districts, 3 are

consolidated districts, 2 are community unit districts, and 1 is a town
ship district. 60 In 1940-41 there were 60 school districts in Clay County.

Xenia Community Consolidated District 3, Lincoln Community Consolidated District 30, Flora Township High School District 99, and Flora Community Consolidated District 133 are all reorganized districts.

Xenia District 3 and Orange Lawn District 5 were combined on November 27, 1948, to form the present District 3 Xenia Community Consolidated District.

August 18, 1947 is the date that reorganization combined Lincoln, District 30, Yellow Blossom, District 31, Excelsior, District 32, and Fisher, District 93, into the present Lincoln Community Consolidated District 30.

Flora Township High School District 99 was formed on April 6, 1912, when the voters approved the proposition to establish a high school district. The only additions to the originally formed township district came in 1948, when Garden Hill and Keith Townships in Wayne County were admitted to District 99. During the same year, a three-year high school, located in Xenia, discontinued its operation. These students continued their high

⁶⁰ Illinois Public School Districts, op. cit., p. 1.

school education at Harter-Stanford High School. Because of the additional land annexation, the name of District 99 was changed from "Harter-Stanford High School" to "Flora Township High School."

Flora Community Consolidated District 133 was created on March 15, 1949, with the reorganization of Flora School District 33 and McCawley School District 61.

Although there has been some progress made in school reorganization in the whole of Clay County and although much more needs to be done toward county-wide reorganization, this study is chiefly concerned with the four school districts in the southwestern part of Clay County. It seems, at least to this writer, that for a county with a total population of 15,815 and a total of 464 square miles, 15 school districts are too many. Efficient and economical education cannot continue for the children of the county under the present system without a serious financial burden being placed on the taxpayers.

This author is concerned with the quality of the schools and the financial burden of education on all 15 districts in Clay County; however, his immediate concern is the schools in his home districts - a concern for better and more economical education that leads him to propose a community unit district for Xenia Community Consolidated District 3, Lincoln Community Consolidated District 30, Flora Township High School District 99, and Flora Community Consolidated District 133 in Clay County.

⁶¹ County and City Data Book: 1962, A Statistical Abstract Supplement (Washington D. C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1963), p. 92.

CHAPTER V

PROPOSED REORGANIZATION OF SCHOOL DISTRICTS 3, 30, 99, AND 133 IN CLAY COUNTY, ILLINOIS

There are definite financial advantages of a community unit for the four districts of Xenia Community Consolidated District 3, Lincoln Community Consolidated District 30, Flora Township High School District 99, and Flora Community Consolidated District 133 in Clay County. However, there are advantages of a community unit district other than the financial. The central and most valid reason for the reorganization is the improvement of education opportunities for the students.

In view of the cost of education, the financial basis for school support also becomes a cause for reorganization. Reorganization per se may result in noticeable, but seldom extensive, economies; it will usually, however, provide an improved tax base and a much better use of the money for the support of schools.

As previously indicated, not everyone is in favor of reorganization. Although long lists of advantages have been cited for reorganization, many people still are not interested. There is one item that interests the majority of people: finances. Of all the reasons for reorganization the providing of an improved tax base and a much better use of tax money for the support of schools is the easiest for the public to appreciate. With this thought in mind the issue of school district reorganization has been approached from a financial standpoint.

School finance is a broad topic. Therefore, the scope of this paper has been limited to the discussion of the financial advantages of a community unit district which could be realized from additional state aid.

The reason that Xenia Community Consolidated District 3, Lincoln Community Consolidated District 30, Flora Township High School District 99, and Flora Community Consolidated District 133 lost approximately \$120,614.06 in state aid during 1965-66 school year was that these districts have not been reorganized into a community unit district.

Description of the Geographic Area

Clay County, in which Xenia Community Consolidated District 3, Lincoln Community Consolidated District 30, Flora Township High School District 99, and Flora Community Consolidated District 133 are located, is not a large nor heavily populated area. Statistics show that it is not a wealthy county. Clay County covers 464 square miles and has a total population of 15,815.62 There was a 9.3% decrease in population from 1950 to 1960.63 There was a net loss of 3,362 through civilian migration from 1950 to 1960.64 The majority of the county's population lives in the urban areas. Approximately one-fifth of the labor force is engaged in agricultural occupations. In 1959 the median family income was \$4,288.00.65 Thirty-two per cent of the families in Clay County had an

⁶² Ibid.

⁶³ Ibid.

^{64&}lt;u>Tbid.</u>, p. 93.

⁶⁵Ibid., p. 92.

income of less than \$3,000.00.66 The total assessed evaluation of the county is \$47,681,777.00.

A Brief Description of Districts 3, 30, 99, and 133

Xenia Community Consolidated District 3 covers an area of 62.77 square miles. This district has an enrollment of 144 students. The district uses the 1-8 plan of organization. There are 7 teachers, a half-time band director, and a superintendent. The physical plant is in good condition because the present building was constructed in 1960.

Lincoln Community Consolidated District 30 extends over an area of 37.56 square miles. The total enrollment of this district is 220. Lincoln also uses the 1-8 plan of organization. There are 8 teachers on the staff, plus a half-time band director and superintendent. The physical plant is in good order.

Flora Township High School District 99 extends over 171 square miles. The students from Kenia Community Consolidated District 3, Lincoln Community Consolidated District 30, Flora Township High School District 99 and Flora Community Consolidated District 133 attend this high school. The school is organized on a 9-12 basis. There are 28 teachers on the staff, plus the superintendent and the assistant administrator. The physical plant is rapidly becoming inadequate because of the increased enrollment.

Flora Community Consolidated District 133 covers an area of 40.50 square miles. There are 3 elementary schools with an enrollment of 795 and one junior high with 207 seventh and eighth grade students. There are

⁶⁶Ibid.

41 teachers and the superintendent on the professional staff. The 3 elementary physical plants are in good repair. The McEndree building, which houses the junior high, is old and in need of much repair. An addition will be needed to this building if it is to adequately and safely accommodate the increasing enrollment.

Total enrollment will continue to fluctuate in the 4 districts in the future as it has in the past. The trend of urbanization will be felt in Flora (it is the largest city in the county) as it is being experienced in other metropolitan areas. As the Xenia and Lincoln school districts decline in adult population, the total student enrollment in their schools will also decrease. This loss of population will be a factor in the increase cost of education per child until finally the taxpayers of those districts will not be able to support a proper operation of their schools.

The moving of families from the above mentioned district will cause Flora Districts 99 and 133 to expand in total enrollment, an expansion that will require more money to provide for high quality education.

The Preliminary Procedure for Reorganization

Before a community unit district could be organized from the four present districts, Xenia Community Consolidated District 3, Lincoln Community Consolidated District 30, Flora Township High School District 99, and Flora Community Consolidated District 133, a common boundary would need to be established. At present the Flora High School District 99, covers 171 square miles. The three elementary districts cover a total of 140.83 square miles, or 30.17 square miles less than the size of Flora High School District. The maps on pages 41 through 48 indicates the

present boundaries and territory of the four districts involved in the proposed reorganization.

These maps show that the Flora Township High School District includes land not served by one of the three elementary districts, just as the elementary districts service areas not included in the High School district.

The first step in the proposed reorganization is to annex land to and delete land from the existing territory to establish a common boundary to serve Xenia Community Consolidated District 3, Lincoln Community Consolidated District 30, Flora Township High School District 99, and Flora Community Consolidated District 133.

Table I indicates the area, in square miles, that would be annexed to and deleted from the four school districts in the proposed community unit district.

TABLE I

AREA INVOLVED IN ANNEXATION AND DELETION OF LAND
IN DISTRICTS OF PROPOSED COMMUNITY UNIT DISTRICT

District	Area in Square Miles Before any Changes	Area in Square Miles Annexed to District	Total Square Miles of District	Area in Square Miles Deleted from District	Area in Square Miles After Deletion
Xenia 3	62.77	10	72.77	.25	72.52
Lincoln 30	37.56	19.25	56.81	-0-	56.81
Flora 99	171.00	-0-	171.00	-0-	171.00
Flora 133	40.50	2.50	43.00	1.33	41.67

Any change in the boundaries of a school district will affect the assessed valuation of that district. Table II indicates the change in the assessed valuations of Xenia District 3, Lincoln District 30, Flora District 99, and Flora District 133 from the proposed land annexation and deletion.

TABLE 2

ASSESSED VALUATION OF LAND INVOLVED IN TRANSFER
OF TERRITORY IN PROPOSED COMMUNITY UNIT DISTRICT

District	Assessed Valuation before Land Transfer	Assessed Valuation of Land An- nexed to District		Assessed Valuation of Land De- leted from District	Total Assessed Valuation of District after Annexations and Deletions
Xenia 3	4,391,629	599,311	4,990,940	22,930	4,968,010
Lincoln 30	3,353,189	719,221	4,072,410	-0-	4,072,410
Flora 99	22,428,086	-0-	22,428,086	-0-	22,428,086
Flora 133	13,208,615	225,121	13,433,736	46,070	13,387,666

Land would not be the only item involved in district boundary changes; students would also be involved. Some students would be required to attend different schools because of the proposed district boundary changes. Table III shows the number of students affected by school boundary changes.

A total of thirty-two students would be added to the proposed community unit district.

TABLE 3

NUMBER OF STUDENTS GAINED AND LOST IN ANNEXATION AND DELETION OF
TERRITORY IN DISTRICTS OF THE PROPOSED COMMUNITY UNIT DISTRICT

District	Students Added to District Due to Land Annexation	Students Lost to District Due to Land Deletion	Average Daily Enrollment Before Land Annexation or Deletion	Adjusted Average Daily Enrollment Due to Land Annexation and Deletion
Xenia 3	13	1	143.06	155.06
Lincoln 30	16	0	219.14	235,14
Flora 99	0	0	563.80	563.80
Flora 133	6	2	1001.45	1005.45
Totals	35	3	1927.45	1959.45

Assuming that all the changes in land area and student population for the proposed community unit district were established, this study can now calculate the financial advantages of such reorganization.

The Financial Advantages of the Proposed Community Unit District

The following is a calculation of additional revenue that could
have been received in state aid, based on ADA (average daily attendance)

if Xenia Community Consolidated District 3, Lincoln Community Consolidated
District 30, Flora Township High School District 99, and Flora Community

Consolidated District 133 had been a community unit district.

The figures used in the following tables are for the 1965-66 school year.

The reader should keep in mind that the following rates are those that have been levied for the educational fund only and that no part of the finances involved concern any other fund.

TABLE 4

AN OVER-ALL VIEW OF THE FINANCES OF THE FOUR MEMBER SCHOOLS IN THE PROPOSED UNIT DISTRICT ORGANIZATION

District	Assessed Valuation	Average Daily Attendance	Average Daily Enrollment	Ed Tax Rate	Extension	State Aid Received
Xenia 3	4,968,010	151.80	155.06	.96	47,692.90	13,330.73
Lincoln 30	4,072,410	227.38	235.14	.90	36,651,69	44,899.57
Flora 99	22,428,086	553.00	563.80	.84	188,395.92	25,991.00
Flora 133	13,387,666	1000.00	1005.45	.75	100,407.50	231,238.17
Totals		1933.11	1959.45		373,148.01	315,459.47

The state aid claim, had there been a unit district in effect in 1965-66, would have resulted in the following figures:

State Aid Claim Computed:

\$ 47 x 1933.11	= Total Flat Grant	\$ 90,856.17
\$283 x 1933.11	= 547,070.13	
Less 22,428,086 x .90	= 201,852.77	
Special Aid		\$345,217.36
Total Claim	=	\$436,073.53

If the four districts had been a unit district \$436,073.53 would have been collected from state aid. However, since these four districts were not organized as a community unit district, they received a total of \$315,459.47 (See Table 4). The difference between what was received

in state aid, \$315,459.47 and what could have been collected, \$436,073.53 is \$120,614.06.

It would seem, therefore, that if for no other reason a community unit district should be formed so that the schools and the local taxpayers could take advantage of the money which is lost annually in state aid. The financial loss was due solely to the type of school district organization that was operational in 1965-66.

Taxpayers are usually interested in lower taxes. At the same time they want quality for their tax dollars spent. Had a community unit district been in operation, there would have been more money and lower taxes.

Table 5 shows the present educational tax rate paid by taxpayers of Xenia Community Consolidated District 3, Lincoln Community Consolidated District 30, Flora Township High School District 99, and Flora Community Consolidated District 133.

TABLE 5
1965-66 EDUCATION TAX RATES PER \$100 ASSESSED VALUATION

District	Grade School Rate	High School Rate	Total
Xenia District 3	.96	.84	1.80
Lincoln District 30	•90	.84	1.74
Flora Districts 99 & 133	.75	.84	1.59

Using random tax bases for comparative purposes, the author has calculated what four different rates would have yielded the education fund of the proposed unit.

The table that follows summarizes this information. (Because Illinois School Code provides for a \$1.60 maximum education tax rate for a unit district, I have used that figure.)

TABLE 6

THE FINANCIAL GAINS TO THE EDUCATION FUND RESULTING
FROM THE PROPOSED UNIT DISTRICT PLAN

Present State Aid Plus Local Taxes	Random Proposed Ed. Tax Rates	Tax From Local Sources	State Aid for Proposed District	State Aid Plus Local Taxes for Proposed District	Gain In Ed. Fund Resulting From Proposed District
\$688,607.48	\$1.25	\$280,351.07	\$436,073.53	\$716,424.60	\$ 26,817.12
\$688,607.48	\$1.40	\$313,993.20	\$436,073.53	\$750,066.73	\$ 61,459.25
\$688,607.48	\$1.50	\$336,421.29	\$436,073.53	\$772,494.82	\$ 83,887.34
\$688,607.48	\$1.60	\$358,849.37	\$436,073.53	\$794,922.90	\$106,315.42

Still using the same proposed educational tax rates, the resulting tax income, and the available state aid for the proposed community unit district as was used in Table 6. Table 7 shows that more money per pupil would be available to the educational fund than available before with higher local tax rates (Table 5).

This additional money per student would be possible by organizing a community unit district.

TABLE 7

THE FINANCIAL GAINS PER PUPIL RESULTING FROM THE PROPOSED COMMUNITY UNIT DISTRICT

State Aid & Local Taxes 1965-66	Amount Avail- able per Child in 1965-66 based on ADE	Proposed State Aid Plus Tax From Local Sources	Amount Available Available per Child Based on ADE for the Proposed Unit District	Per Pupil Gain in Aid for the Proposed District Column 44 less Column 2)
\$665,381.86	\$351,42	\$716,424.60	\$365.62	\$14.20
\$665,381.86	\$351.42	\$750,066.73	\$382.79	\$31.37
\$665,381.86	\$351,42	\$772,494.82	\$394.24	\$42.82
\$665,381.86	\$351.42	\$794,922.90	\$405.68	\$54.26

The taxpayers of these four districts would have to pay an additional .537 per \$100 assessed valuation to raise the additional \$120,614.06 that could have been available in state aid had a community unit district been in operation.

In summary the financial advantages of a community unit district for Xenia Community Consolidated District 3, Lincoln Community Consolidated District 30, Flora Township High School District 99, and Flora Community Consolidated District 133 are these: 1) An additional \$120,614.06 could have been available to the education fund from state aid and 2) The present tax structure could be reduced at least \$.34 per \$100 assessed valuation and still provide more money, based on ADE, per student than

collected in 1965-66. These advantages could become a reality if a community unit district was formed.

Establishing A Reorganized District

Having realized the financial advantages of a community unit district the last question is, "Will these four districts meet the State requirements for the formation of such a proposed district?"

Kenia Community Consolidated District 3, Lincoln Community Consolidated District 30, Flora Township High School District 99, and Flora Community Consolidated District 133 meet the requirements as set forth in the <u>Illinois School Code</u> for the formation of a community unit district.

Any contiguous and compact territory, no part of which is included within any community unit school district having a population of not less than 2,000 and not more than 500,000 person and an equalized assessed valuation of not less than \$6,000,000 may be organized into a community unit school district as provided in this article.67

The legal requirements for such a proposed district have been satisfied. However, it may well be years before the voters of these districts give in to such reorganization, even though they are made aware of the financial advantages and the quality of education that such organization would bring.

Among authorities there is practically universal agreement on the superiority of the unit system, or districts maintaining all grades through the high school under one administration. 68 This type of system

⁶⁷ The School Code of Illinois, Art. 11, sec. 11-6.

⁶⁸ Sumption and Beem, op. cit., p. 39.

holds the children in school better by eliminating the sharp break at the end of the eighth grade. The author feels that the eighth grade graduates of the three elementary schools, Xenia, Lincoln, and Flora, do experience this sharp break and thus their orientation and articulation in high school is made more difficult.

This is no time for the perpetuation of outmoded, inefficient, weak school districts. Enjoying four separate districts rather than one community unit district is a pseudo luxury that the people of the Flora, Lincoln, Xenia area cannot afford.

APPENDIX A

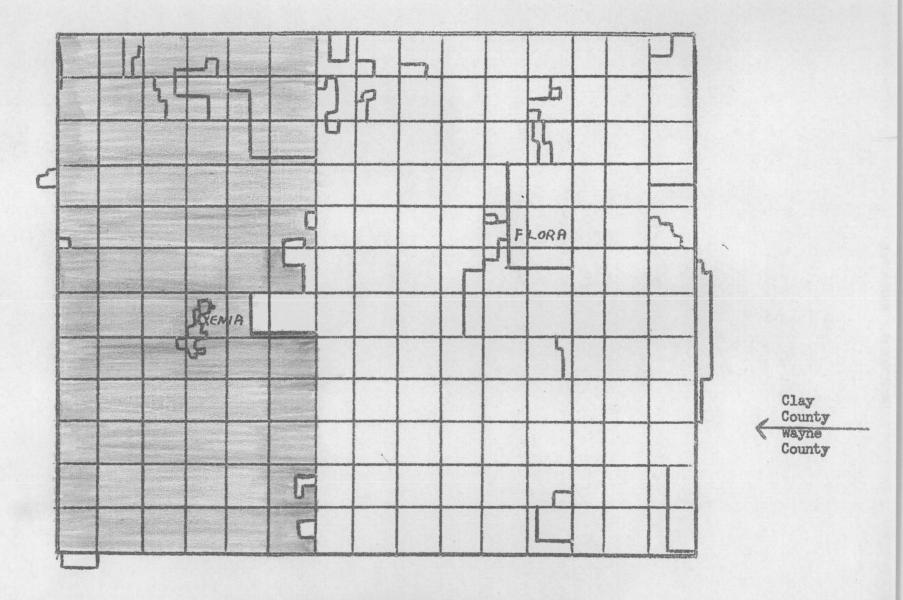
PRESENT BOUNDARIES OF XENIA COMMUNITY
CONSOLIDATED DISTRICT 3

41

PRESENT BOUNDARIES OF MENIA COMMUNITY
CONSOLIDATED DISTRICT 3

APPENDIX B

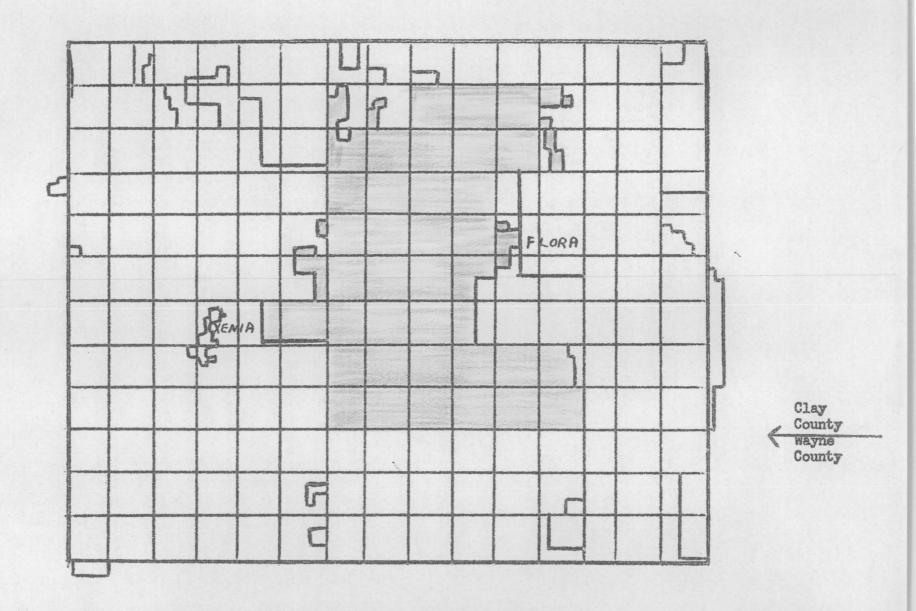
PROPOSED BOUNDARIES OF XENIA COMMUNITY CONSOLIDATED DISTRICT 3



PROPOSED BOUNDARIES OF XENIA COMMUNITY CONSOLIDATED DISTRICT 3

APPENDIX C

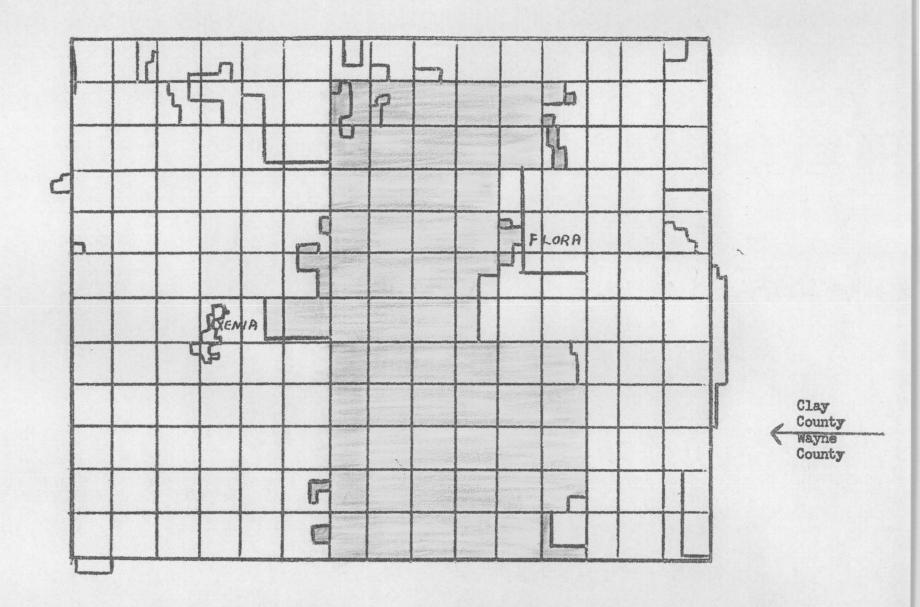
PRESENT BOUNDARIES OF LINCOLN COMMUNITY
CONSOLIDATED DISTRICT 30



PRESENT BOUNDARIES OF LINCOLN COMMUNITY
CONSOLIDATED DISTRICT 30

APPENDIX D

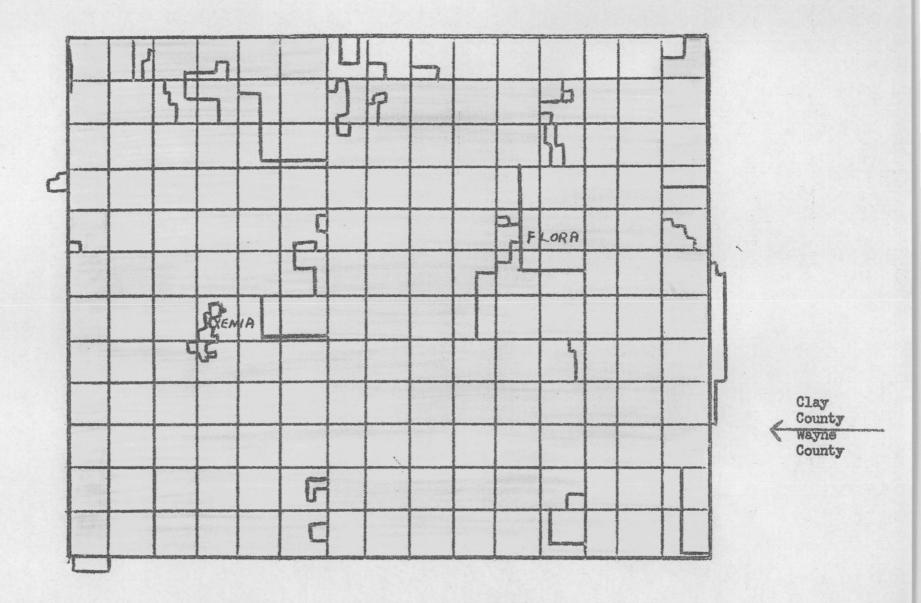
PROPOSED BOUNDARIES OF LINCOLN COMMUNITY
CONSOLIDATED DISTRICT 30



PROPOSED BOUNDARIES OF LINCOLN COMMUNITY CONSOLIDATED DISTRICT 30

APPENDIX E

PRESENT BOUNDARIES OF FLORA TOWNSHIP HIGH SCHOOL DISTRICT 99



PRESENT BOUNDARIES OF FLORA TOWNSHIP HIGH SCHOOL DISTRICT 99

APPENDIX F

PRESENT BOUNDARIES OF FLORA COMMUNITY
CONSOLIDATED DISTRICT 133

46

Clay County Wayne County

PRESENT BOUNDARIES OF FLORA COMMUNITY CONSOLIDATED DISTRICT 133

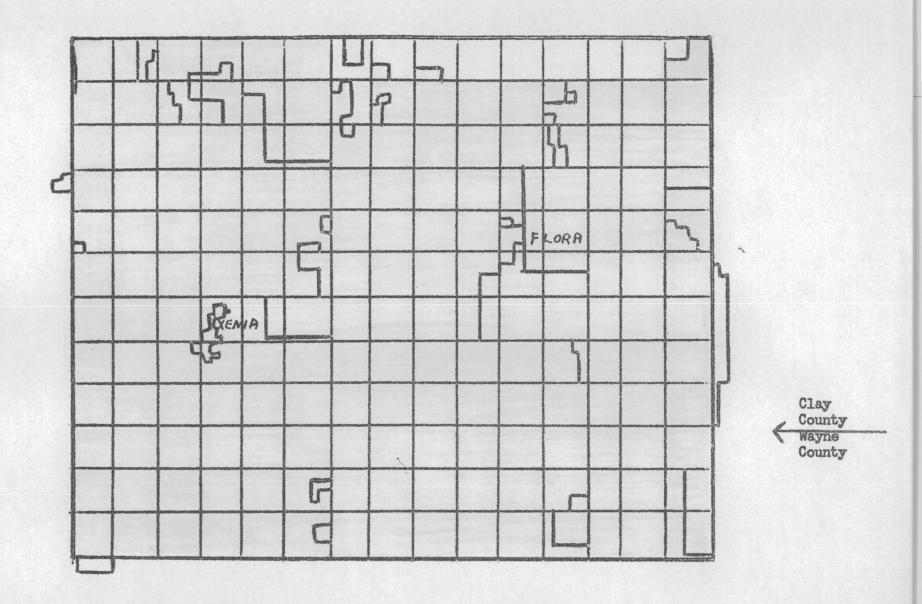
APPENDIX G

PROPOSED BOUNDARIES OF FLORA COMMUNITY CONSOLIDATED DISTRICT 133

PROPOSED BOUNDARIES OF FLORA COMMUNITY CONSOLIDATED DISTRICT 133

APPENDIX H

BOUNDARIES OF PROPOSED COMMUNITY
UNIT DISTRICT



BOUNDARIES OF PROPOSED COMMUNITY
UNIT DISTRICT

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