A STUDY OF THE ORGANIZATION OF RICE COUNTY
BASED ON A PUPIL POPULATION ANALYSIS

by

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INTRODUCTION

The prestige of the American school and the education
it has provided has excelled all other school systems
throughout the world. This has been accomplished through
faith in the democratic system, faith in logical objectives,
faith in education, faith in the public schools, faith in
the integrity of people, and faith in God. No matter who
the child is or where he lives it is the responsibility of
educators to develop his potential to the fullest.

The school, through general agreement on purpose,
philosophy, and teaching methods, is perhaps the only
institution which has not been publicly guilty of extrava-
gance. The decentralized form of control has given confidence
to communities both from an educational and financial
standpoint.

But all is not well for many hundreds of school
districts. The Commission on School District Reorganization
found that many conditions still exist that need much
thought, planning, and action.

1. Some schools are not well manned. Good
teachers and good administrators are hard to get
and even harder to keep.

2. Many classrooms are out-of-date, unsafe,
unsightly, grossly overcrowded, and improperly
equipped.

3. Two out of three secondary schools are
too small to do a good job. About one-third of
them enroll fewer than one hundred children.

4. Too many secondary school programs are meager and barren rather than rich and comprehensive.

5. About four out of every ten young people who enroll in high school drop out before graduation.

6. The talents of mentally superior children are not being fully developed.

7. The tax base for school support is outmoded and in serious need of revision.

8. There is not enough money available for the schools to do what needs to be done.

9. Many school districts are too small to use financial resources effectively or to provide high quality educational programs.[1]

There is little doubt in anyone's mind that there is much more to learn, that education will cost more each year, and that the job of educating the youth is becoming much bigger. In a dynamic society such as the one in which the American people live, the goals become higher each year and schools must be prepared to meet them.

With the above facts in mind, it is the intent of this study to present facts and recommendations in a broad area of the educational problem centering around pupil population.

THE COUNTY UNIT OF SCHOOL ADMINISTRATION

The county unit of school administration is misinterpreted in many cases and should be identified as to its basic structure.

[1]Commission on School District Reorganization, School District Reorganization, American Association of School Administrators, Washington, D.C., 1958, p. 11-13.

The county unit of school administration is an
organization through which a system of local schools is
operated. It is identified with the county because the
boundaries of the area generally coincide with or are
approximately the same as the boundaries of a civil county.
There are no subordinate boards of education or other
administrative organization within the limits of its juris-
diction that exercise the function of general public school
administration. It is a single unified school district
comprised of a number of neighborhoods and communities.
It is uniquely adapted to the administration of school
in rural areas.

The county unit of school administration is controlled
by a representative lay board. Responsibility for the
direct administration of schools is delegated by the board
to a school superintendent. All school personnel employed
in the county unit district are directly or indirectly
responsible to the superintendent. There is but one
educational budget and one center of general control in
the entire unit.

The county unit is one of the most recent inventions
in the field of local public school administration. Most
county unit systems have been established during the last
half century. In contrast, township and common school
districts have been familiar patterns of school administration
since the beginning of public education in this country.

With such a background of experience it has been difficult
for laymen to comprehend fully an organization that brings
together several different communities of people distributed
over an area, in many instances many hundreds of square miles,
to form a single working organization for the support and
control of local schools.

There are definite advantages of the county unit which
should not be overlooked and each one would apply to Rice
County. One, by pooling the resources of a number of small
districts into one large unit and distributing the services
purchased by these resources, the county could provide
equal distribution over the entire area. Two, the county
unit would provide a school term of equal lengths in all schools
in the unit. Three, it would develop a program of pupil
transportation and a system of secondary schools which would
give every child in the county district a chance for an
excellent education. Four, it could place a premium on high
level educational preparation of teachers and on teaching
competency. Five, a single salary schedule could be main-
tained; thus, putting the employment and placement of
teachers on a professional basis. Six, it could raise the
quality of educational leadership in the county by
centralizing administrative authority and control at one
point. Seven, it could make possible better utilization of school
plants.

In far too many instances, proponents of school district
reorganization programs overlook these values and stress

rather drastic misconceptions (that are actually far removed from reality) in their attempts to sell the program to the uninitiated.[1]

EDUCATIONAL NEEDS AND OBJECTIVES

Each county has a personality of its own, but there are definite common needs that remain static regardless of size or location. Every public school has the responsibility for developing in the young people it serves certain knowledges, skills, attitudes, and understanding. These common educational needs are worded in many ways but normally they are in the form of educational objectives such as the "seven cardinal principles of education" which include the objectives of health, command of the fundamental processes, worthy home membership, vocation, citizenship, worthy use of leisure, and ethical character.

The Educational Policies Commission has formulated a set of objectives which give careful consideration to the social setting in which schools operate. The Commission found that education should be concerned with the following areas: (1) the development of the learner as a person; (2) home, family, and community life; (3) the economic

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[1]The material in this section was abstracted from Orley W. Wilcox, "Misconceptions About School District Reorganization," The American School Board Journal, April, 1959, p. 25.

demands on the individual; and (4) the civic and social duties of the citizen.[1] A general objective that every educated citizen should possess was formulated from each of these areas. The objectives were respectively:

1. The objective of self-realization. This includes the skills and understandings involved in the use of the fundamental tools of learning in healthy living, in recreation, and in development of a sound personal philosophy.

2. The objective of human relationship. This includes the attitudes, appreciation, social skills, and competencies in developing and maintaining wholesome family, home and community life.

3. The objective of economic efficiency. This includes the competencies essential in making a living, wise spending, buying and investing in lines of endeavor that bring personal satisfaction and have social worth.

4. The objective of civic responsibility. This includes the competencies needed for effective participation in local, state, and national governmental affairs, civic enterprises and improvements in social policy.[2]

Fitzwater and Cooper have compiled a list of objectives taken from state and local surveys, curriculum revision committees, and lay citizen groups. These common needs include:

1. The need for competence in speaking and writing and in reading and listening.

2. The need for the knowledge, skills, and attitudes necessary for maintenance and protection of personal health and the health of others.

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[1]"Policies for Education in American Democracy", Education Policies Commission of the National Education Association, 1946, pp. 188-189.
[2]Ibid. p. 192.

3. The need for competence in the ability to get along well with others.

4. The need for knowledge, skills, attitudes and appreciations essential to wholesome family living.

5. The need for competences in discriminating among values, so that personally satisfying and socially acceptable standards of conduct in personal and social relationships may be developed.

6. The need for competence in application of the scientific method.

7. The need for an understanding of the social environment, including the governmental, economic, social, cultural, and religious institution the people have created for satisfying their needs and wants.

8. The need for competence in participating effectively in a democracy.

9. The need to enjoy the beautiful, including literature, music, and art.

10. The need for competence in effective utilization of the advances of science and technology, including mastery of number processes and application of quantitative relationships, in the practical affairs of living.

11. The need for competence in earning a living through efforts that are personally satisfying and have social worth.

12. The need for a desirable degree of security.[1]

These common educational needs are not only the responsibility of the schools, but must be shared with institutions, organizations and agencies within the locality. In many rural counties there will be a shortage of the non-school educational agencies such as public libraries, recreation programs, adequate health services and opportunities in other

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[1]Shirley Cooper and Charles Fitzwater, "County School Administration", p. 45.

fields. The assessed valuation has direct relation to the size of the school's task. Family income must be able to support not only the schools but the non-school educational agencies as well.

A major question that concerns the school is how far it should go in trying to meet the educational needs of the county. The answer to this question is normally hard to accept and that is "It must do whatever needs to be done but which no other agency is doing adequately".

Three basic questions need to be answered in making such an appraisal. First, is the job that needs to be done being done effectively? Second, if it is not, can the job be done well within the framework of existing school organization? Third, if it cannot be done by means of the existing organization, will reorganization within the current boundaries or by the extension of boundaries provide the potential that is needed?[1]

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The problem was to examine the educational adequacy of the school districts in Rice County in terms of pupil population and school district organization in relation

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[1]Commission of School District Reorganization, op. cit., pp. 121-122.

to existing school district organization and a county unit;
and to compare the two organizations in terms of educational
opportunities for all students of the county.

PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The purpose of the study was to (1) set up defensible
criteria in relation to student enrollment and attendance
units, (2) identify, locate, and project student population
and characteristics, (3) to present a proposal which would
make possible the establishment of adequate attendance
and administrative units to serve the population of Rice
County.

METHODS AND PROCEDURES

A study of literature was made in the fields of school
district reorganization, county unit organization and
other data specific to the area of study which included:

(1) Assessed valuations of all districts of Rice
County.

(2) School enrollments, past, present, and projected.

(3) Identification of each pupil's age (zero through
seventeen).

(4) Objectives which Rice County should accept to
give an adequate education.

(5) Maps locating residences of rural students within
the county.

(6) Short study of each school in Rice County.

(7) Defensible criteria for minimum enrollments.

(8) Development of the proposal for the area concerned.

The procedure was to study the data gathered and propose
plans to improve educational opportunities for all students
in Rice County.

EXPLANATION OF TERMS

For clarification and as a guide to the reader, the
following are definitions of terms used in this report:

Basic unit of school administration. A board of
education has control, in general, and is responsible for
seeing that public education is provided and managed in
accordance with state laws and regulations.[1]

Legal nature of districts. School districts are agents
of the states, created by the states to assist in carrying
out a state function. In court decisions relating to the
legal status of districts, one frequently finds local units
described in such terms as "mere arms of the state for the
administration of its school system," "creatures of the
statute," and "instrumentalities of the government of the state."[2]

Curriculum. Comprising the ordered content of what is

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[1]Calvin Grieder and William Rosenstengel, Public School
Administration, p. 9.
[2]Ibid., p. 1).

taught, the experiences which children have under school auspices, and instructional services.[1]

Total enrollment. The entire number of pupils who have been on the roll at any time during the period for which total enrollment is being reported.[2]

Common school district. Kansas districts governed by either three or five-member school boards elected for three year terms by the voters of their districts at annual meetings in June. There are four categories of common school districts: those that operate no schools at all, those that operate one-teacher schools, those that operate two or more teacher elementary schools, and those that operate both an elementary and high school.[3]

Rural high school district. Kansas districts authorized to offer only grade nine through twelve, and governed by the same type of board as the common school district. The boundaries of this district frequently overlap those of common school districts.[4]

Local school administration. The control, direction and management of schools by an agency representing a limited local area such as the city, county, borough, town, township,

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[1]Calvin Grieder and William Rosenstengel, op. cit., p. 159.
[2]Carter V. Good, Dictionary of Education, p. 201.
[3]Comprehensive Educational Survey of Kansas, The Elementary and Secondary Education Study, Volume II, Topeka, Kansas, March, 1960, p. 123.
[4]Ibid., p. 124.

or other unit designated by law, which exercises powers delegated to it by the state.[1]

THE STUDY

Adequacy of Existing School District Organization

In an attempt to learn whether the educational needs of the youth are being adequately met in the Rice County school organization comparisons were made in the areas of (1) present school district size and location, (2) school enrollments, (3) number of teachers, (4) tangible values of school districts per pupil and (5) budget of districts per pupil. These comparisons will provide more effective bases for examination of pupil population in Rice County.

Rice County's dimensions are 24 by 30 miles. The county includes 720 square miles of territory. The area is divided into 19 common school districts and six rural high school districts.

Plate I, page 14, indicates that Rice County is divided into many small districts. District 67, which covers only ten square miles is not operating a school. District 43 operates a one teacher school, seven districts operate two teacher schools, and two districts operate three teacher schools.

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[1]Carter V. Good, op. cit., p. 11.

EXPLANATION OF PLATE I

A map showing the present common and
rural district organization in Rice
County.

/ Non-operating schools, grades 1-8

X One teacher schools, grades 1-8

O Two teacher schools, grades 1-8

⌀ Three teacher schools, grades 1-8

▲ City schools, grades 1-8

■ City schools, grades 1-6

● Junior high schools

✱ Rural high schools

⫽ City high schools

PLATE I

Table 1, page 16, indicates that Districts 43, 5, and 10 still operate on an eight month basis. Enrollments in schools with grades one through eight range from 13 students to 393 students. Pupil-teacher ratios in grades one through eight vary from 5.2 to 42. Enrollments in schools with grades nine through twelve range from 63 to 307 pu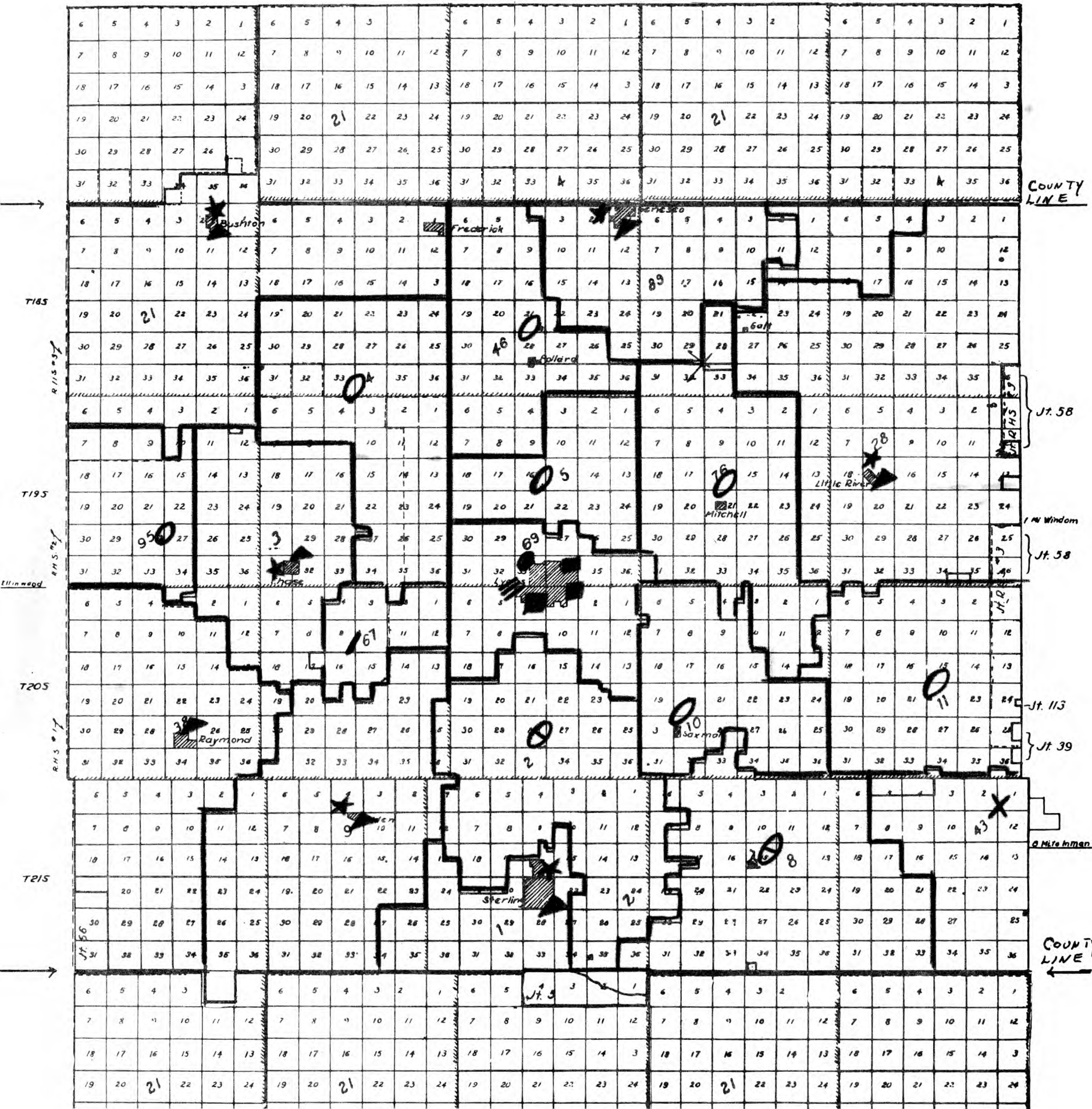pils. Pupil-teacher ratios in these schools vary from 8.2 to 18.6. A teacher's capacity is not utilized when teaching only five children. On the other hand neither the teaching nor learning situation can be effective with one teacher and 42 students.

Table 2, page 17, indicates the total Rice County tangible tax valuation for 1960 was $59,519,550.00 and the total school census for the same period was 3,829. The average tangible value per pupil was $15,545.00. The tangible value per pupil fluctuates from $6,050.00 (Sterling) and $7,431.00 (Lyons) to $37,416.00 (Raymond). School district number 69 (Lyons) and Joint number one (Sterling) educated 1,750 students on a tangible value of $12,217,328.00. In other words, these two districts educated more than half of the students in the county with only one fifth of the tangible valuation. School district number 21 (Bushton), however, educated one-eleventh of the students in the county with one-sixth of the tangible valuation. Table 2, page 17, also indicates the average amount budgeted per pupil is $275.00. Budget allocation varies from $176.00 (Chase) to $504.00 (Raymond), yet Chase offers many more courses, better facilities, and more teachers than Raymond.

Table 1. Composite of all Rice County Schools 1960-1961*

District	School Name	Months in Operation	Enrollment	No. of Teachers		Grades
				Full time	Part time	
Joint						
No. 43	Hopewell	8	17	1		1-8
2	Union Two	9	54	3	2	1-8
4	Sunny Four	9	20	2	1	1-8
5	Union Five	8	17	2	1	1-8
8	Midland	9	39	3	1	1-8
10	Saxman	8	42	2	1	1-8
11	Rockville	9	36	2	1	1-8
46	Fairplay	8	16	2	1	1-8
67	Fairview**					
76	Mitchell	9	33	2	1	1-8
95	Banner	9	13	2	1	1-8
	Holy Name# (Bushton)	9	51	2		1-8
	St. Mary# (Chase)	9	50	2		1-8
	St. Paul# (Lyons)	9	84	2		1-8
3	Chase	9	252##	12		1-8
9	Alden	9	83	3	8	1-8
21	Bushton	9	167##	10	2	1-8
28	Little River	9	148##	9	1	1-8
38	Raymond	9	60	5		1-8
89	Geneseo	9	141##	10		1-8
1	Sterling	9	393##	20		1-8
69	Lyons					
	Park	9	169##	6	3	1-6
	Central	9	291##	12	1	1-6
	South	9	176##	6	3	1-6
	Jr.High	9	163	8	4	7-8
	Sr.High	9	307	14	5	9-12
Rural 2	Chase	9	109	10	1	9-12
	Alden	9	63	5	4	9-12
Rural 3	Bushton	9	66	7	1	9-12
Rural 4	Geneseo	9	62	8	1	9-12
Rural 5	Little River	9	78	6	2	9-12
Rural 6	Sterling	9	168	13		9-12

*   Source: Educational Directory of Rice County
**   Fairview was unable to operate last school term
\#   Parochial school
\#\#   Includes kindergarten

Table 2. Tangible value and budget of each school district in Rice County.*

District	School Census	Tangible Value	Tangible Value per Pupil	Budget	Budgeted per Pupil
Jt.1-Sterling	566	$3,418,318.00	$ 6,050.00	$119,150.00	$210.00
2 - Union Two	94	2,806,685.00	29,858.00	32,760.00	348.00
3 - Chase	421	4,789,718.00	11,375.00	74,000.00	176.00
4 - Sunny Four	51	2,455,756.00	48,133.00	23,500.00	461.00
5 - Union Five	39	928,440.00	23,806.00	15,500.00	397.00
8 - Midland	73	2,251,789.00	30,846.00	31,350.00	429.00
9 - Alden	159	3,514,699.00	22,105.00	43,886.00	276.00
10- Saxman	63	1,493,845.00	23,712.00	17,515.00	278.00
11- Rockville	76	2,445,624.00	32,179.00	22,465.00	294.00
Jt.21-Bushton	330	9,043,250.00	27,404.00	83,311.00	253.00
28- Little River	262	4,325,233.00	16,447.00	60,700.00	231.00
Jt.38-Raymond	86	3,233,833.00	37,416.00	43,350.00	504.00
Jt.43-Hopewell	40	1,088,395.00	27,209.00	10,975.00	274.00
46- Fairplay	47	1,683,706.00	35,866.00	14,055.00	293.00
67- Fairview	32	1,018,094.00	31,815.00	7,245.00	226.00
69- Lyons	1,184	8,799,010.00	7,431.00	354,000.00	298.00
76- Mitchell	73	1,710,743.00	23,476.00	20,895.00	286.00
Jt.89-Geneseo	185	4,138,133.00	22,369.00	62,500.00	337.00
95- Banner	48	1,555,759.00	32,412.00	16,625.00	346.00
TOTALS	3,400	$59,519,550.00		$1,053,782.00	
AVERAGE			$15,545.00		$275.00

*Source: Educational Directory of Rice County, 1960-61.

Can the job be done within the framework of existing
school district organization? Evidences of the existence of
inequalities among districts as organized within the county
are easily identified. Data shown to this point clearly
show the problem selected for study.

Criteria for Evaluating School Districts

A study of school district reorganization in ten states,
1935 to 1937, adopted these minimum standards as criteria
for the reorganization of school districts:[1]

    1. An elementary attendance area should make
possible a school with at least one grade per teacher
with a desirable ratio of thirty pupils per teacher.

    2. Junior or senior high schools should have at
least 300 pupils and ten teachers.

Grieder and Romine proposed the following standards in
regard to size of district based on pupil population:

    In general, experts believe that elementary schools
should have a minimum of about 150 pupils, and junior
high schools and senior high schools about 300. In some
sparsely settled areas these standards cannot be met
without creating undue hardship on children and parents.
However, in most places schools of this size can be set
up as a result of improved district organization.[2]

Moehlman suggests five objectives for school district
reorganization.

    1. School districts should be able to support
at least one-half of the total elementary-secondary
program.

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[1]American Association of School Administrators, School
District Reorganization, 1958, p. 131.

[2]Calvin Grieder and Stephen Romine, American Public
Education, p. 259.

2.   School districts should provide an adult education program.

3.   School districts should be of sufficient size to permit a broad program.

4.   Climate, land use, and topography will determine size and shape of the district.

5.   The district should be fluid and adjust easily to changing needs.[1]

Examination of Pupil Population in Rice County

Will reorganization within the current boundaries or by the extension of boundaries provide the pupil population potential that is needed? The effectiveness of a school district in terms of pupil population required recognition of the relatedness of population to financial resources and use of personnel. Appraisal in this study was limited to analysis of pupil population.

To fully appraise from this standpoint it was necessary to find the age and location of every child from age zero through 17 living within the boundaries of Rice County. This was accomplished by using the school census of each school district and locating within the district the home of each rural child. All pupils' locations were plotted on a five by six foot dot map of Rice County, then transferred to the small maps found in this report.

The rural pupil population, ages zero through five (see

[1]Arthur B. Moehlman, School Administration, pp. 129-130.

Plate II, page 22), ages six through eleven (see Plate III, page 24), and ages twelve and thirteen (see Plate IV, page 26) were shown to be equally distributed throughout the county with the exception of the four corner townships. The southwest corner township (Bell) is primarily sandy marsh and very sparsely populated. The southeast corner township (East Washington) is sparsely populated primarily because it is near Hutchinson and families make their homes in the city. The northeast corner township (Odessa) is very hilly and near the Kanopolis Lake; therefore, very thinly populated. The northwest corner (Farmer) is heavily populated but most of the children are older than pre-school age. The higher pupil density in this area is due to a few exceptionally large families with children in the six through eleven year age span.

The rural population for ages fourteen through seventeen (see Plate V, page 28) is evenly distributed with slightly heavier density toward the center of the county. This is probably due to a number of families moving into Lyons when children become senior high school age.

A five year projection of Rice County's rural population shows the pupils, ages six through eleven (see Plate VI, page 30) and ages twelve and thirteen (see Plate VII, page 32) will increase only slightly; however, the increase is more toward the center of the county with a decrease at the boundaries. The Bushton area shows the largest decrease.

EXPLANATION OF PLATE II

A map of Rice County showing the
location of pupils, ages zero through
five.

PLATE II
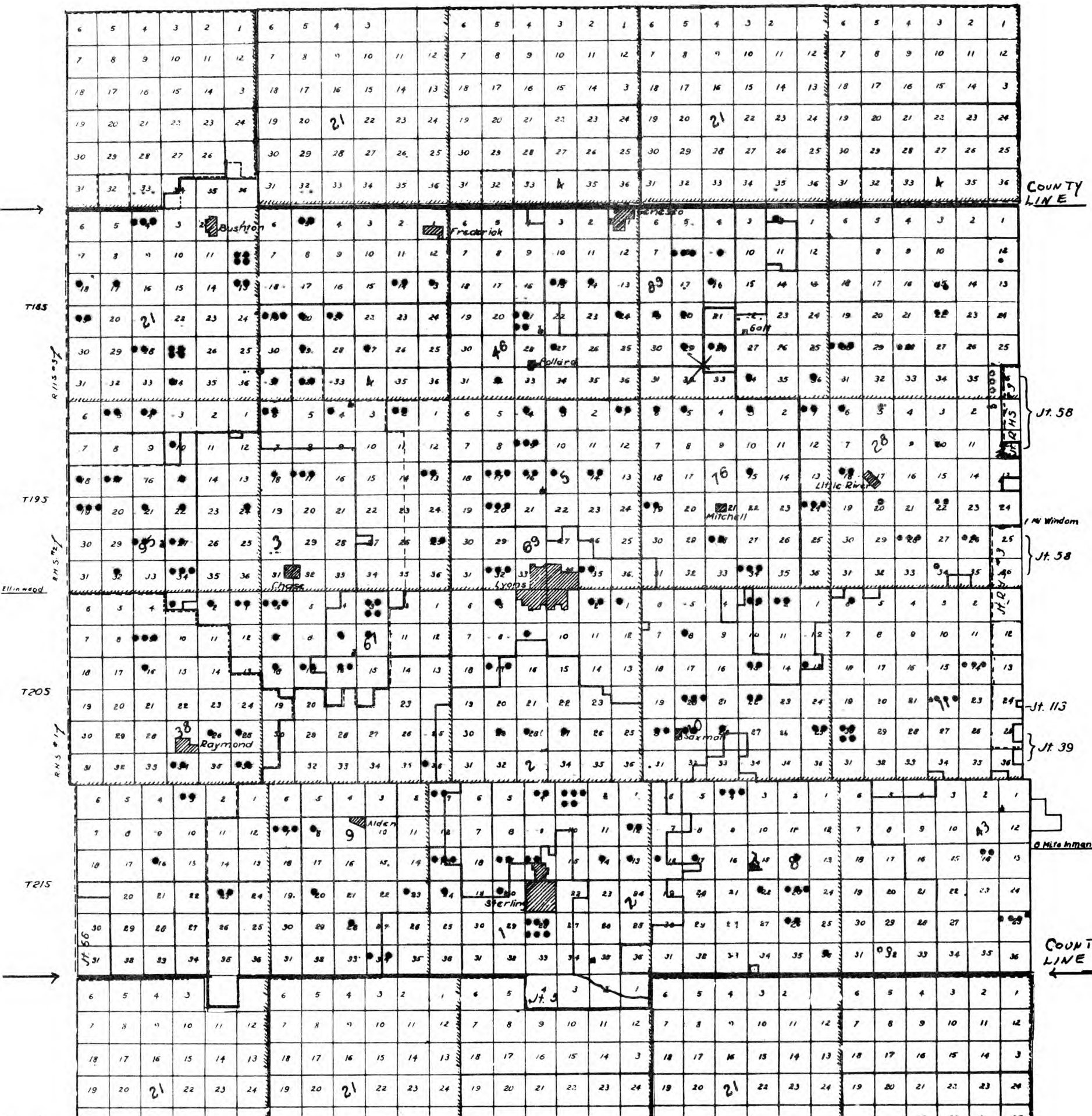
EXPLANATION OF PLATE III

A map of Rice County showing the location
of pupils, ages six through eleven.

PLATE III

COUNTY LINE

T18S

T19S

T20S

T21S

R11S°37'

R10S°2'

Ellinwood

Bushton

Frederick

Pollard

Chase

Raymond

Lyons

Mitchell

Little River

Sterling

Alden

Jt. 58

1 N Windom

Jt. 58

Jt. 113

Jt. 39

0 Mile Inman

COUNTY LINE

Jt. 5

EXPLANATION OF PLATE IV

A map of Rice County showing the
location of pupils, ages twelve and
thirteen.

PLATE IV

EXPLANATION OF PLATE V

A map of Rice County showing the
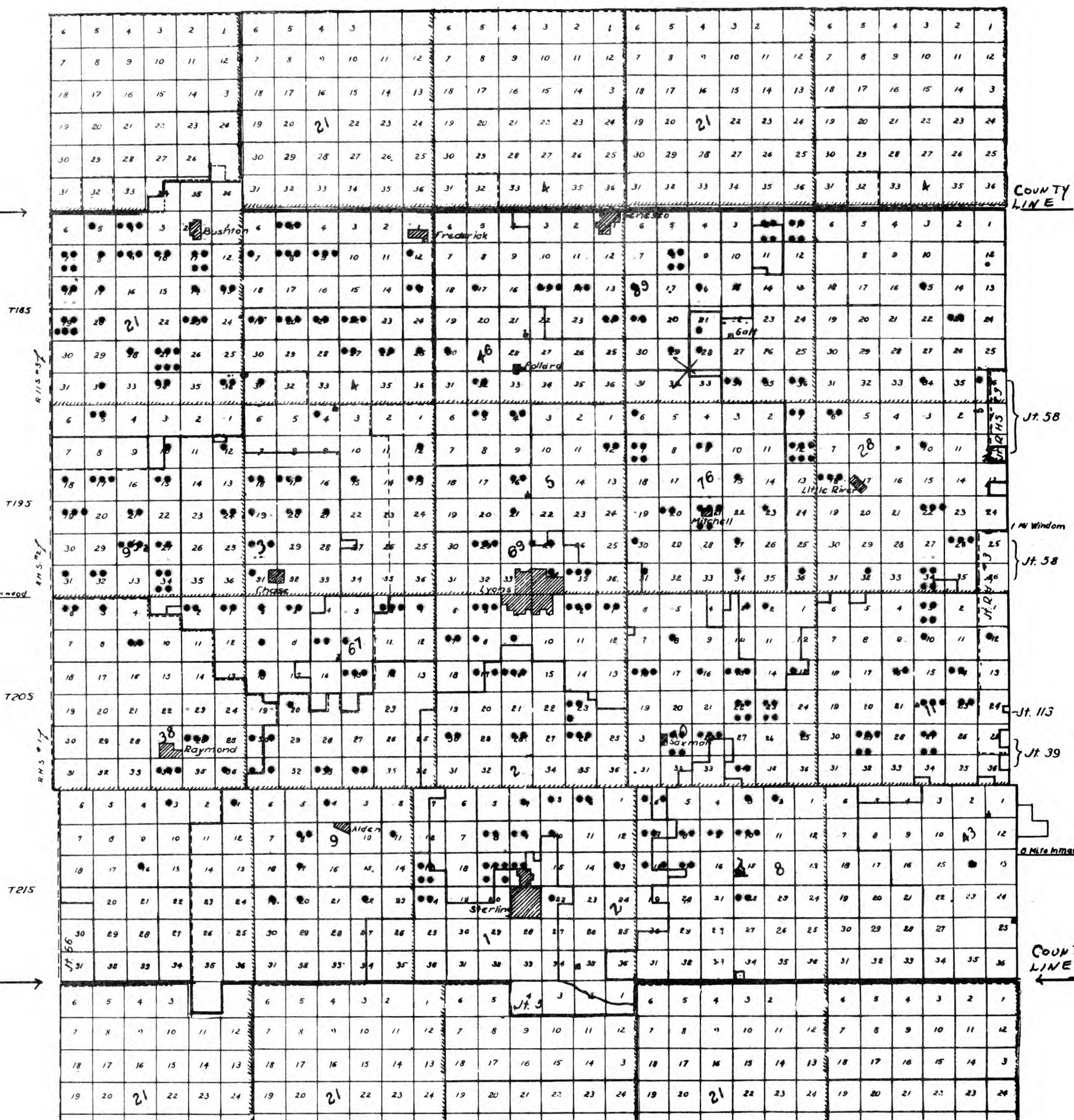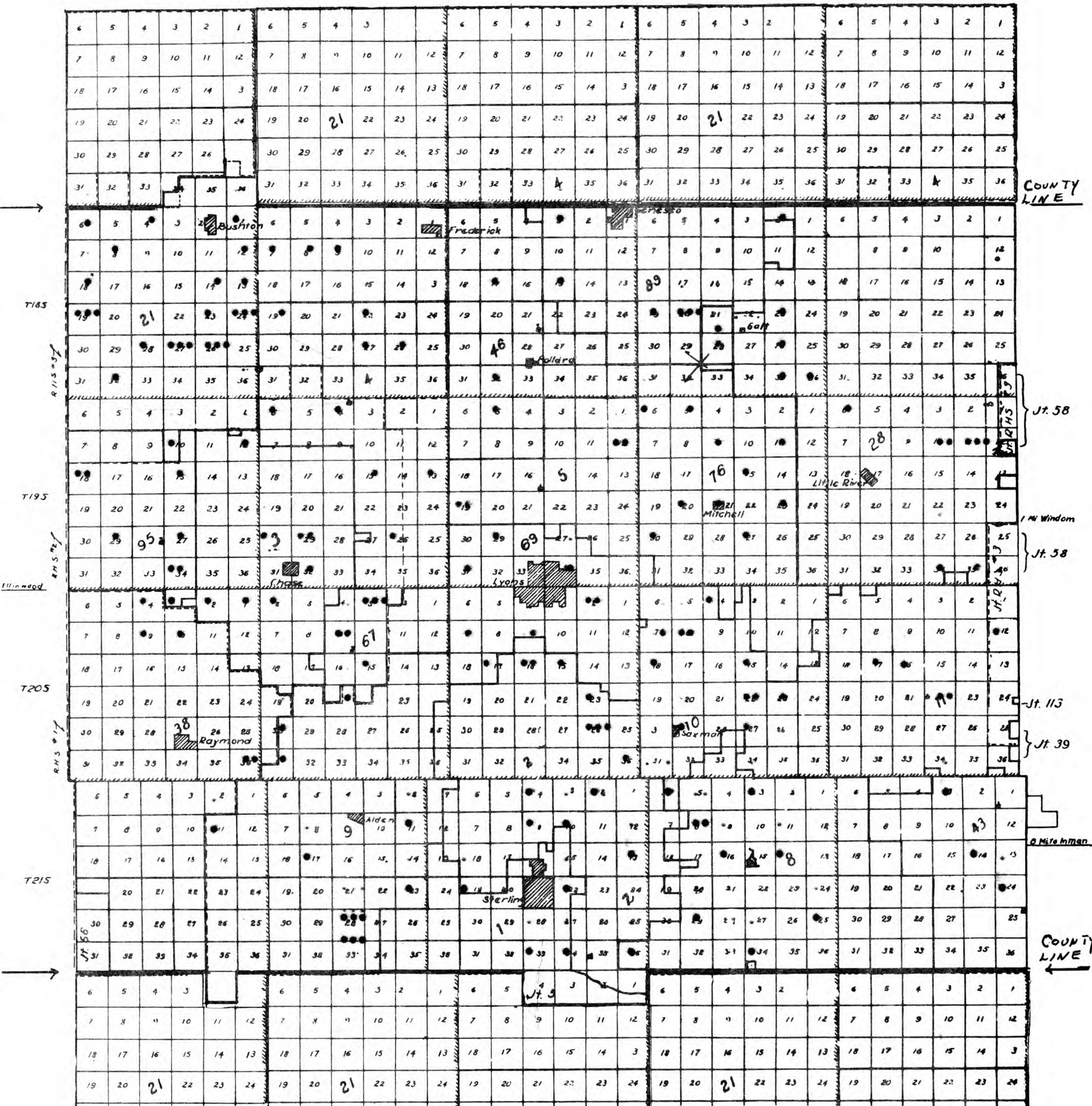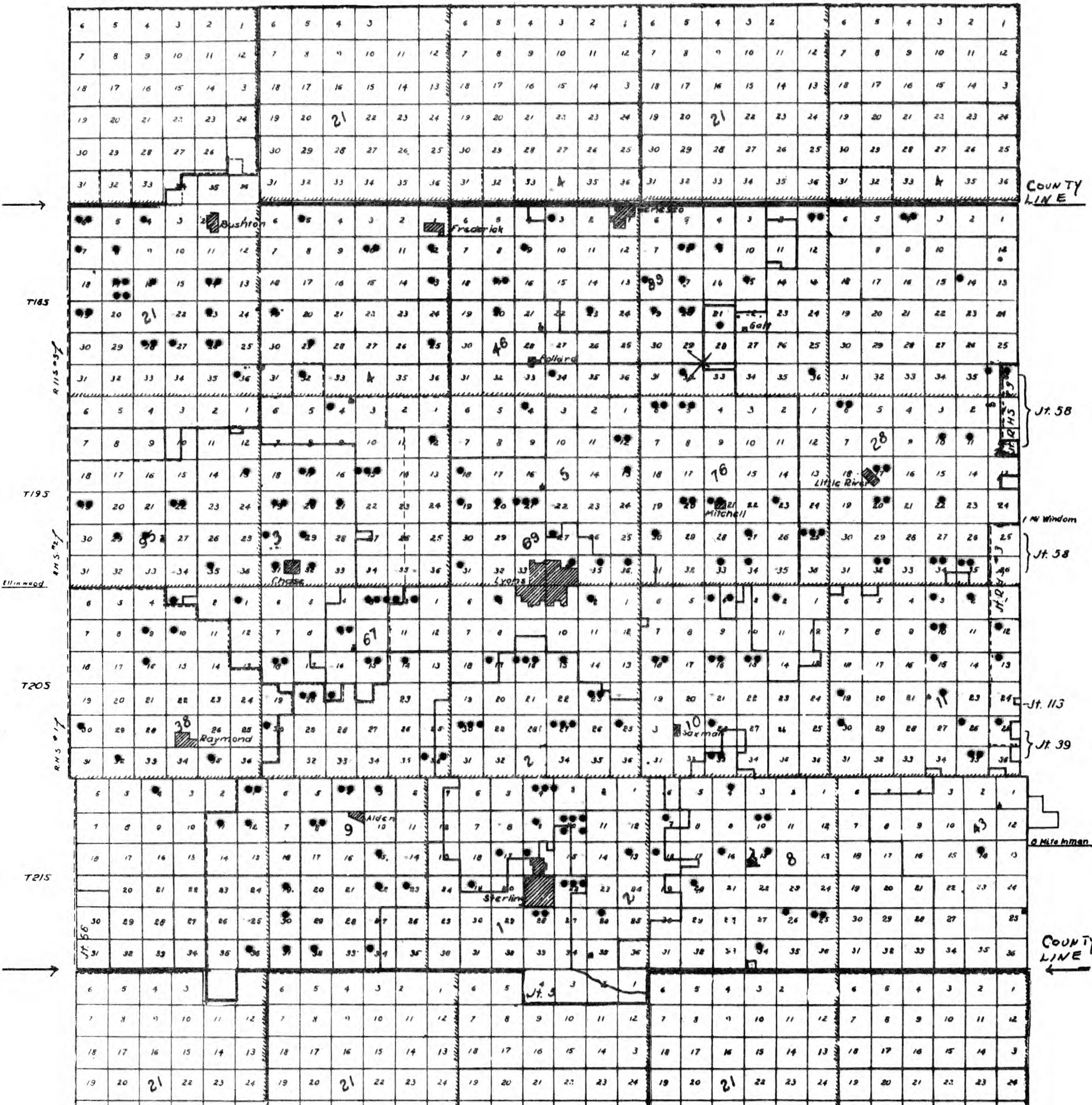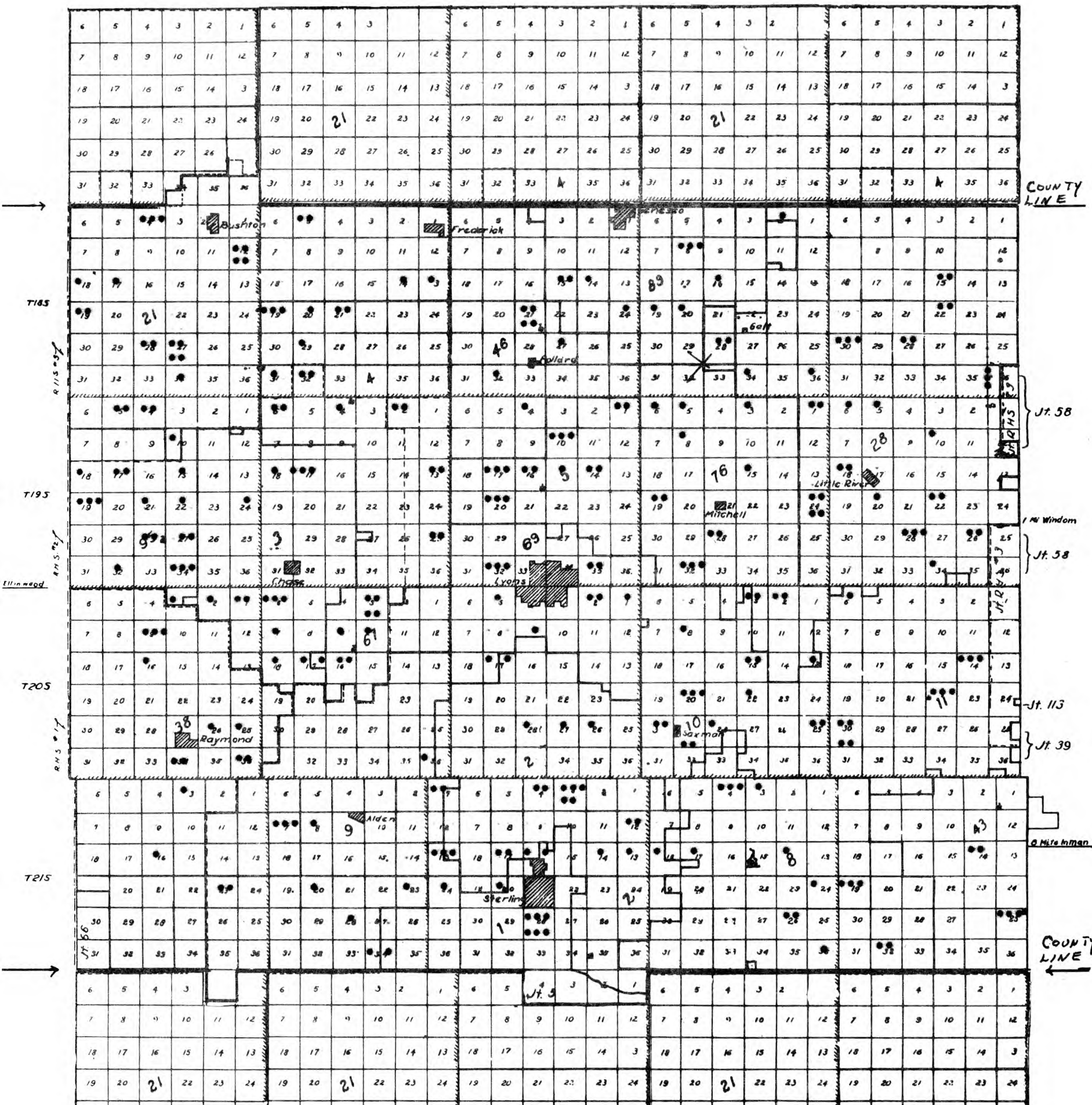location of pupils, ages fourteen
through seventeen.

PLATE V

EXPLANATION OF PLATE VI

A 1966 projection map of Rice County
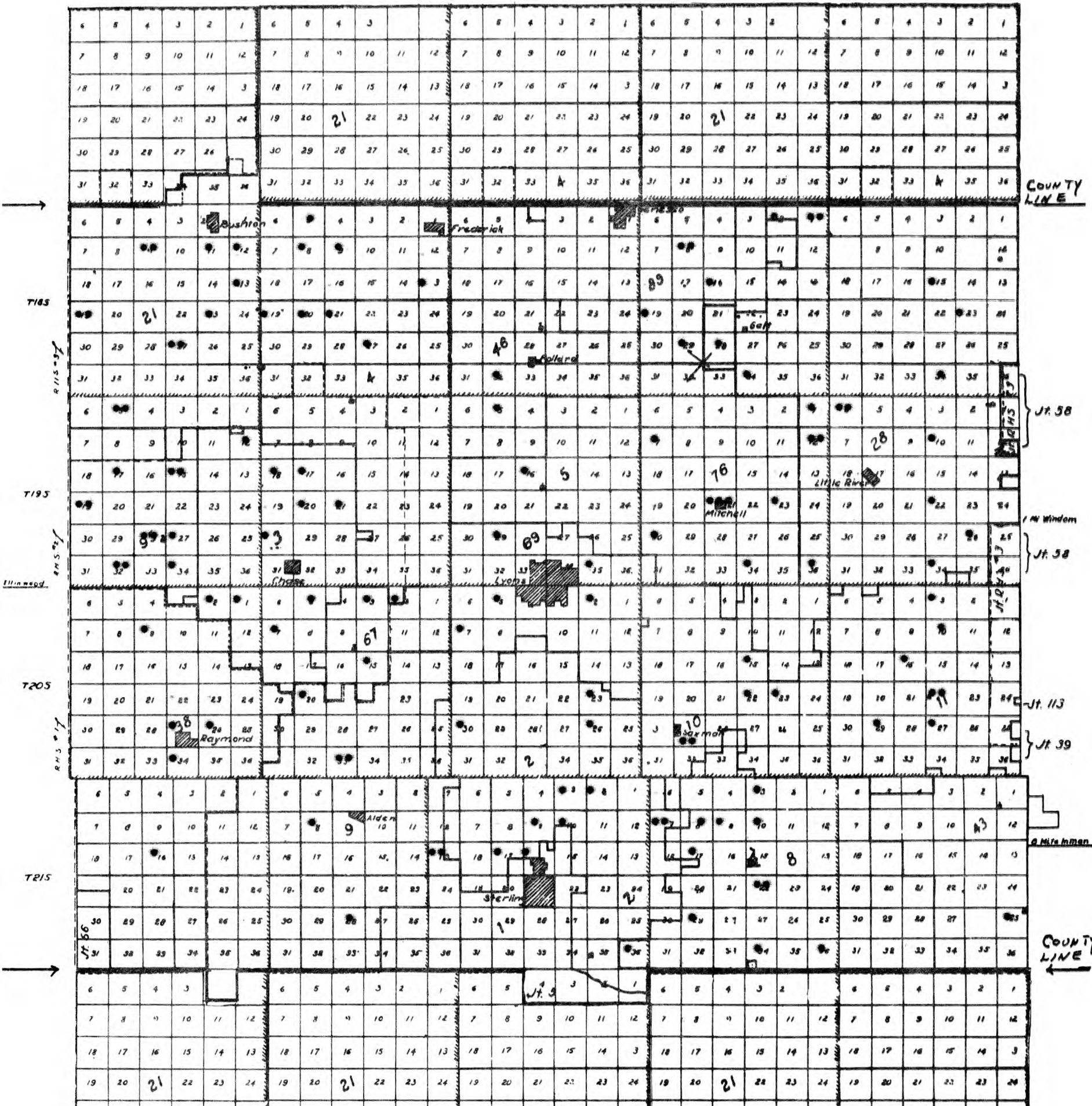showing the location of pupils, ages
six through eleven.

PLATE VI

EXPLANATION OF PLATE VII

A 1966 map projection of Rice County
showing the location of pupils, ages
twelve and thirteen.

PLATE VII

The 1966 map projection showing the location of rural pupils, ages fourteen through seventeen (see Plate VIII, page 35), indicates the Bushton area will experience a greater rural population. However, the increase in only temporary as shown by preceding maps.

Another comparison was made using the total number of children, ages zero through seventeen, in each city and rural area (see Table 3, page 36). The number in each age group remains about the same or lower in all areas except in the city of Lyons. Lyons data show a definite increase in the number of younger children.

Suggested Criteria for Rice County Enrollment

The answer to the third question is again based on factual evidence. Only by extending district boundaries can the potential that is needed be provided. A school district should be identified that is large enough to be educationally adequate and economically efficient, yet small enough to retain a sense of community membership.

In many areas topography, climatic conditions and highways are big factors in reorganization. Fortunately, Rice County topography is flat, climatic conditions relatively stable with a few exceptions in the winter, and the highways and county roads are normally well surfaced.

A big problem is to suggest minimum enrollments for school districts. There are two approaches to this problem. One is

EXPLANATION OF PLATE VIII

A 1966 map projection of Rice County
showing the location of pupils, ages
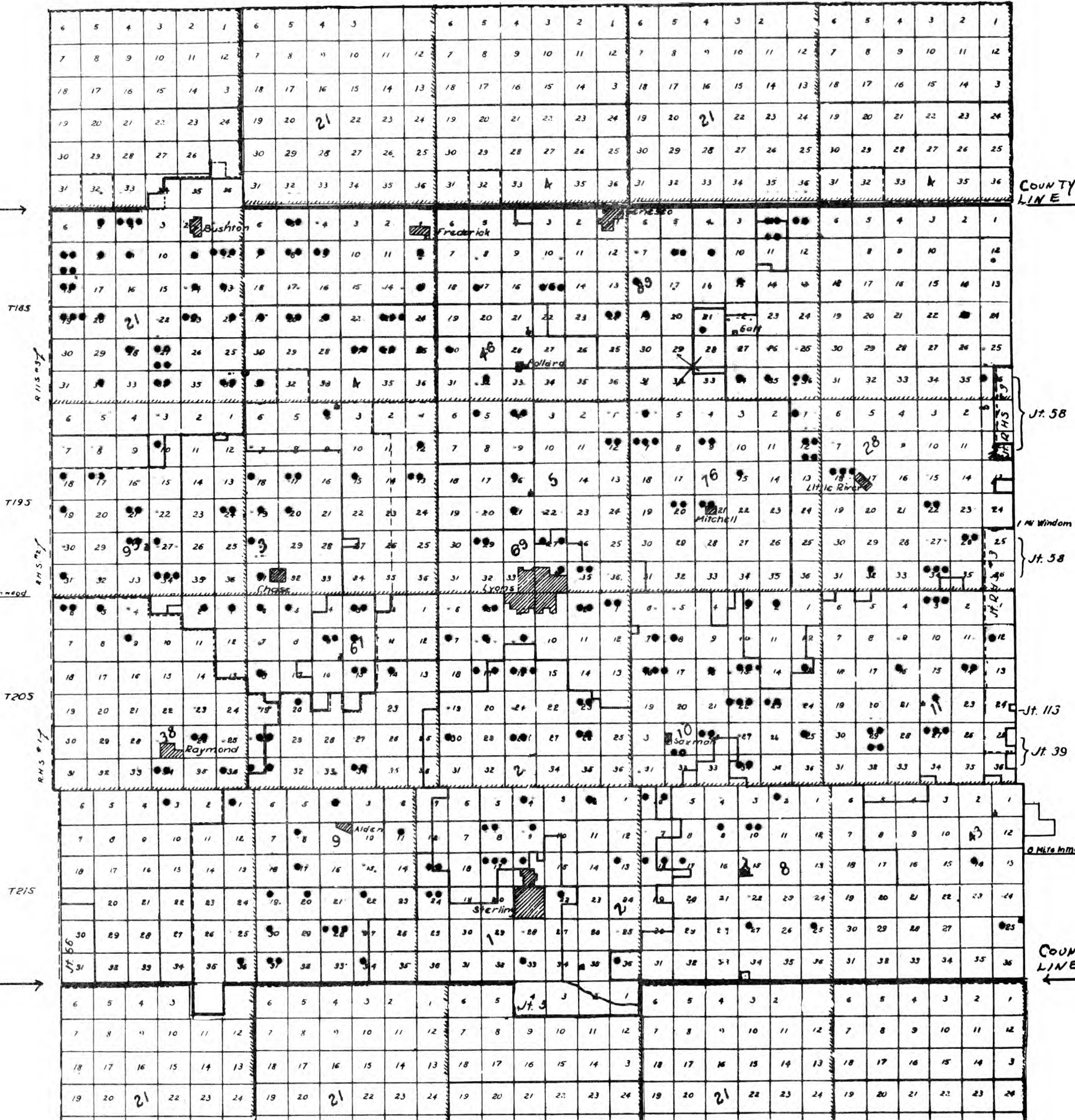fourteen through seventeen.

PLATE VIII

Table 3. Total number of children, ages 0-17, in cities and rural areas in Rice County.*

City or Locality	17	16	15	14	13	12	11	10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	0
Lyons	48	64	61	77	82	79	76	87	91	100	103	99	92	105	101	102	73	107
Sterling	37	32	36	45	45	40	41	42	39	39	47	41	39	35	43	45	34	37
Geneseo	10	9	6	7	7	14	8	8	12	10	10	7	11	11	12	18	16	6
Alden	6	5	6	7	5	3	3	2	5	7	3	1	2	3	4	4	5	1
Raymond	2	4	3	1	3	2	5	7	4	5	5	1	4	1	3	3	2	1
Bushton	5	5	7	14	12	15	17	11	14	14	13	16	14	15	15	14	6	10
Little River	13	8	6	8	7	6	4	8	8	8	8	12	15	8	8	6	8	7
Chase	19	16	19	26	21	26	20	20	26	21	24	25	29	20	27	17	18	14
Mitchell	0	1	0	1	1	1	0	2	2	1	0	3	1	1	2	0	4	0
Frederick	0	2	1	3	0	1	1	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	3	1	1	1
Northern Natural	0	0	0	2	1	0	0	3	0	1	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	0
Rural	67	43	68	72	88	89	76	76	69	79	64	66	64	50	60	54	54	16#

*Source: Rice County School Census, 1961.

#Not reliable

based on the distance students live from schools, and the
other is concerned with actual student enrollment.

The American Association of School Administrators in its
twenty-seventh yearbook recommended that school centers should
be located so that the smallest number of children require
transportation and no child is unduly fatigued upon arrival
at school.[1] The following standards were suggested:

Walking distance (one way)

Elementary pupils - 3/4 mile

Junior high school - 1½ miles

Senior high school - 2 miles

Travel time on buses

Elementary pupils - ½ hour

Secondary pupils - 1 hour

Using as a foundation the proposals of Grieder, Romine,
Moehlman, and the American Association of School Administrators,
the following criteria were developed for Rice County.

1. Elementary schools should enroll a minimum of
about 150 pupils.

2. An elementary attendance area should make
possible a school with at least one teacher per grade.

3. Each elementary attendance area should have
a desirable ratio of thirty pupils per teacher.

4. Junior and senior high schools should enroll at
least three hundred pupils and ten teachers.

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[1]American Association of School Administrators, American
School Buildings, Twenty-seventh Yearbook, Washington, D.C.
1949, p. 43.

5. The district should be designed so it may easily adjust to changing needs.

These two basic approaches can be used very effectively in conjunction with the population analysis. Each map is consistant in showing a high concentration of people of school age toward the center of the county and more sparsely populated areas near the boundaries. It is logical to assume from these data that the boundaries of a unified district could coincide with the boundaries of the county. The schools must provide the needs for all walks of life. This becomes expensive and cannot be initiated when the county is divided into many small school districts which are not financially able to provide facilities, or which have a large tax valuation and no students to put the money to effective use. Analysis using Plates II through VIII shows that the approach recommended by the American Association of School Administrators on walking distance and travel time could be used in Rice County because of the shape of the county and the locations of the communities throughout the county. It is also shown that desirable ratios of students to teachers and adequate enrollments could be made possible by changes in attendance units within the county. It is indicated that an answer may well be a county unit type of school administration.

SUMMARY

Rice County is divided in 20 small common school districts. Many of the districts operate one and two teacher schools with as few as 16 students.

The county had an assessed valuation of $59,519,550.00 and a total school population of 3,400 in 1960. The valuation of the county is quite adequate if evenly distributed to provide financial backing for all pupils. Many small districts with small pupil populations have the bulk of the valuation. The larger schools in the county cannot operate efficiently because they do not have adequate money to do the work which is required to provide a high quality educational program.

The pupil population has changed very little over the past ten years so it is unlikely that there will be much change in the next ten. However, there has been a general rise in operating costs and many small districts as well as large districts are beginning to realize the difficulty of providing children the kind of education needed.

Pupil population analysis of Rice County shows a high density toward the middle of the county, due primarily to the city of Lyons, which is situated in the center. With the exception of the Bushton area, all the corners of the county are sparsely populated.

Leading authorities in education generally agree that the pupil population criteria for evaluation of school districts should include (1) a minimum of about 150 pupils in elementary

schools, (2) a minimum of 300 pupils for junior and senior
high schools, (3) an area not less than 200 square miles,
(4) a desirable ratio of pupils per teacher, (5) adequate
guidance for the pupils, and (6) the ability to adjust to changing
needs.

Basically the county unit makes possible equal educational
opportunities to each student in the county. It does not
promise a reduction in mill levy but does propose to make
wiser and more efficient use of the taxes raised for school
purposes.

From the evidence gathered it is apparent that there
is an immediate need for reorganization of Rice County.

RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that all the common school districts
and rural school districts of Rice County be reorganized into
a single county unit of school administration with boundaries
coinciding with the boundaries of the county. The new
unified school district would include approximately 720
square miles of territory with an assessed valuation of
$60,000,000.00. The pupil population of the district would
be 3,400 in grades one through twelve.

The new county unit could be organized into seven elemen-
tary attendance centers; one each at Bushton, Geneseo, Little
River, Chase, Lyons, Sterling, and one new elementary atten-
dance center located in section six of East Washington

township. (See Plate IX, page 43)

The Little River elementary attendance center could serve 96 square miles of territory. No pupil would need to be transported more than twelve miles one way. The attendance center would include grades one through eight. The Little River High School could be converted to accomodate a minimum of 126 elementary pupils.

The Geneseo elementary attendance center could serve 94 square miles of territory. The maximum transportation distance for the most distant child would be fifteen miles one way. The Geneseo High School could be converted to accomodate grades one through eight with a minimum enrollment of 166 pupils.

The Bushton elementary attendance center could serve 66 square miles of territory with no pupil being transported over thirteen miles one way. The Bushton High School could be converted to accomodate grades one through eight with a minimum enrollment of 212 pupils.

The Chase elementary attendance center could serve an area of 132 square miles. No student would be transported over fourteen miles one way. The Chase Grade School would be used to accomodate grades one through eight with a minimum enrollment of 332 students.
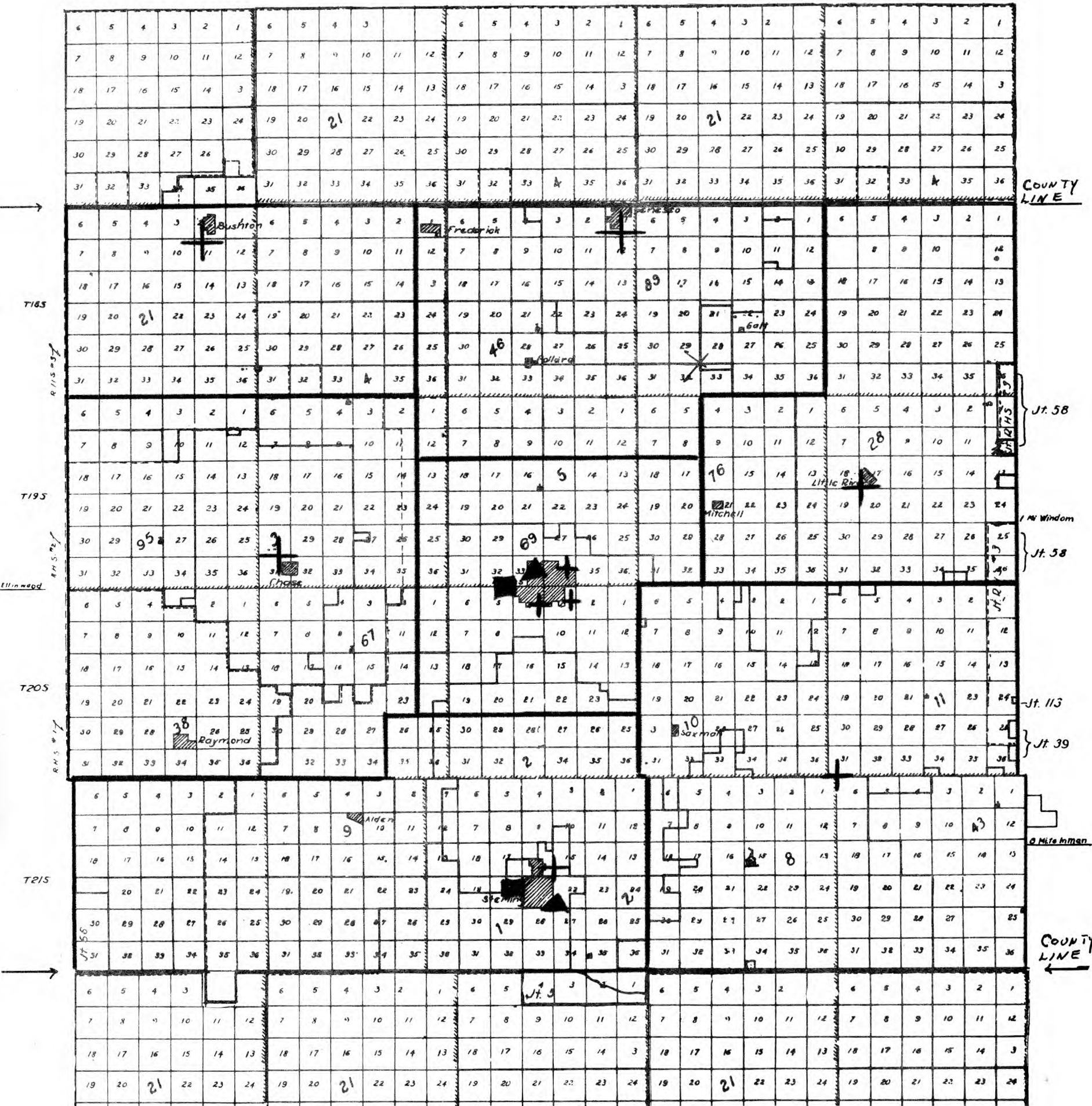
The Lyons elementary attendance center would serve a territory of 64 square miles with a maximum transportation distance of nine miles one way. The three grade schools,

EXPLANATION OF PLATE IX

A map of the proposed county unit
including boundaries and attendance
centers.

+ Elementary attendance centers

▲ Junior high attendance centers

■ Senior high attendance centers

PLATE IX

grades one through six, will accomodate a minimum of 600 students. Lyons High School could be converted to a junior high school with a minimum enrollment of 180 pupils.

The Sterling elementary attendance center could serve a territory of 108 square miles. The maximum distance pupils would ride is seventeen miles; however, the farthest township is very thinly populated and probably no one would be transported over fourteen miles. The grade school could accomodate a minimum of 327 students in grades one through six. The Sterling High School could be converted into a junior high, grades seven and eight, with a minimum of 120 students.

The new elementary attendance center would serve 144 square miles of territory with the school located at the center. The maximum transportation distance for pupils would be twelve miles. The school would accomodate a minimum of 113 students.

The recommendations for the senior high school attendance centers are divided into two alternatives: the ideal and the practical.

The ideal high school organization for the county unit would be one high school attendance center located at Lyons with accomodations for a minimum of 853 students. No student would travel over twenty-five miles (one way) and very few would travel over twenty miles because of the thin population in the corner townships. With this organization the county unit would be in a position to offer pupils the highest

quality education possible.

The practical plan for county high school organization is based on the following:

1. Sterling has a population of 2,060 which for Kansas standards is not particularly small. With this in mind, it is deserving of a high school attendance center.

2. Sterling College is a four year college with an enrollment of 480. The absence of a high school could have adverse effects on the college.

3. The ideal plan mentioned earlier would probably be defeated if brought to a test, and with it would go the whole county unit idea.

This second plan is favored as the more practical plan of reorganization. It is recommended that two four-year senior high schools be erected in the Rice County unit. The first high school would be situated in Lyons to serve an attendance territory of 456 square miles covering the north half of the county to three miles south of Lyons. (see Plate IX, page 43) The high school would accomodate a minimum of 560 students. The second four-year senior high school would be located in Sterling with an attendance territory of 214 square miles covering the remainder of the county. This would be a high school of approximately 250 students.

This proposed plan would provide an opportunity for assuring a high quality education for all youth in Rice County.

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The writer wishes to express his sincere appreciation to Dr. O. Kenneth O'Fallon for his help and guidance in the writing of this report, and to Mr. Arthur Harvey, County Superintendent of Rice County, to Mr. John Buller, superintendent of the Lyons school system, and to Mr. Galen F. Davidson, superintendent of the Sterling school system for making available information necessary for this report.

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A STUDY OF THE ORGANIZATION OF RICE COUNTY
BASED ON A PUPIL POPULATION ANALYSIS

by

ROBERT WARD SMITH

B. S., Kansas State University, 1955

AN ABSTRACT OF A MASTER'S REPORT

submitted in partial fulfillment of the

requirements for the degree

MASTER OF SCIENCE

Department of Education

KANSAS STATE UNIVERSITY
Manhattan, Kansas

1962

The purpose of the study was to (1) set up defensible criteria in relation to student enrollment and attendance units, (2) identify, locate, and project student population and characteristics, and (3) present a proposal which would make possible the establishment of adequate attendance and administrative units to serve the population of Rice County.

A review of literature was made in the fields of school district reorganization, county unit organization and other data specific to the area of study.

The study included (1) assessed valuations of all districts of Rice County, (2) school enrollments, past, present and projected, (3) identification of each pupil's age (zero through 17), (4) objectives which Rice County should accept to provide adequate education, (5) maps locating residences of rural students within the county, (6) short study of each school in Rice County, (7) defensible criteria for minimum enrollments, and (8) development of the proposal for the area concerned. The procedure was to study the data gathered and propose plans to improve educational opportunities for all students in Rice County.

The study revealed that in 1960-61 there were 20 common school districts in Rice County. Many of the districts operate one and two teacher schools with as few as 16 students. The county had an assessed valuation of $59,519,550.00 and a total school population of 3,400. The valuation of the county is quite adequate if evenly distributed to provide financial backing for all pupils; however, many small districts with

small pupil population have the bulk of the valuation.

The pupil population has changed very little over the past ten years so it is unlikely that there will be much change in the next ten. However, there has been a general rise in operating costs and many districts, both large and small, are beginning to realize the difficulty of providing children the kind of education needed.

From the evidence gathered it is apparent that there is an immediate need for reorganization of Rice County.

The proposed plan was that all the common school districts and rural school districts of Rice County be reorganized into a single county unit of school administration with boundaries coinciding with the boundaries of the county.

The new unified school district would include approximately 720 square miles of territory with an assessed valuation of $60,000,000.00. The pupil population of the district would be 3,400 in grades one through twelve.

The new county unit could be organized into seven elementary attendance centers: one each at Bushton, Geneseo, Little River, Chase, Lyons, Sterling, and one new elementary attendance center located in section six of East Washington township. The new county unit would also provide two four year senior high schools, with one high school located in Lyons and another one in Sterling.