

# School Consolidation Enlarges Salem District Considerably

## SCHOOL ADMINISTRATION SITE



New location for Salem school administration building, estimated to cost about \$250,000, has been acquired at 13th and Ferry streets. Standing on this site is the "Old Parsonage," Salem's second oldest building, that may be saved by re-location elsewhere.

## Consolidation Success Seen

During its nine-year trial, school consolidation, according to superintendent Walter Snyder, has proved its own case against the "unbelievers." Perhaps the biggest threat consolidation carried, was to the complete independence of smaller schools under city jurisdiction. "We won't be heard," was the cry of people who felt that Salem would take control. This, according to Snyder, has not happened. And to prove it he offers a glance at the record. Of the five members of the present school board, only two live within the original boundaries of Salem. Harry Scott lives in the Liberty district which joined Salem in 1947. Gus Moore lives in West Salem which also came in in 1947. LeRoy Stewart, chairman of the board, lives in the Lincoln-4-Corners (Rickey) area, also a Joiner in 1947. Only Faye Wright and Gardner Knapp are residents of the original city. This, says the superintendent, would seem conclusive evidence

that the "city folks" have not taken over the schools. So far as the relative merits of the small country school with the modern consolidated school are concerned, the record again speaks for itself, says Dr. Snyder. Improved buildings, more adequate supplies and equipment, better paid and therefore better trained teachers and a better educational program are now figures on paper. Parents themselves, he says, bear out the fact that programs, facilities and equipment are heartily approved. Another fear, that of closing the small schools, has likewise failed to materialize in the Salem consolidation. Of the 18 districts which have joined with district 24, only four buildings have been closed. Of these, Rickey has been replaced by a new building in a more convenient location (Lincoln-4-Corners). The children from Pleasant Point are attending Pringle school and the children from the Prospect and Ankeny schools are attending a new building at Rosedale.

### IT'S TIME TO—

- Check children's eyes!
- Check children's teeth!
- Immunize and inoculate against preventable diseases.
- Give children hearing test!

### JEANS GO GLAMOROUS

Girls' favorite casual attire for after school activities, blue jeans or dungarees, have taken on new glamour for Fall! They are being shown with suede flannel turnback cuffs in bright-colored plaids. A matching flannel shirt and pert plaid-trimmed cap complete the clever outfit.

### BRIGHT, NEW RAINCOATS

Reversible raincoats appear to be the favorites of most schoolgirls. The most popular is the combination of bright corduroy lined with water-repellent cotton gabardine in checks, plaids, or contrasting solid colors. Matching jockey caps are included in most size ranges.

## Enrollment Grows From 5000 to 8000 in 6 Yrs.

Since its birth in Salem in 1947, school consolidation, highly contested in each election, has brought to the system not only a larger enrollment but increased property valuation.

Consolidation has meant simply the inclusion of smaller school districts with the city system. Since 1947 elections have brought in Auburn, Liberty, Middle Grove, Pringle, Rickey (now Lincoln-4 Corners), Swegle and West Salem. In the years that followed nine additional rural schools entered the consolidated district.

With the addition of Mountain View and Halls Ferry this year there are now 26 elementary buildings, three junior high schools and one senior high. Enrollment has increased from 5,000 in 1947 to 8,000 in 1953.

Popcorn and Brush College districts have so far shown little interest in consolidation as has Keizer district in Marion County which has so far voted to maintain independence, though sentiment in favor of merging is frequently expressed.

When asked about the feeling of the Salem schools in further consolidation, Dr. Walter Snyder, superintendent, said, "We are quite well satisfied with things as they are—all of our suburban schools are within a reasonable distance from the city center, our special services are readily available to them and our maintenance workers can reach them quickly in case of emergency. Until our city grows considerably beyond its present boundaries, there seems to be little to be gained from our point of view, by further consolidation."

Dr. Snyder remarks, however, that should districts within a reasonable area wish to come in, it is probable the voters of Salem would react favorably since the Salem metropolitan area "makes a natural unit for a consolidated school system."

According to the superintendent, the expansion of the school system has meant a closer knit community feeling and an increased interest in school affairs. "School patrons and citizens in general have become aware of the problems of the schools and are actively participating in

community planning for the schools."

Parents' clubs, he says, have organized in every community and are cooperating with the district school board and the school administration in seeking to improve the schools.

Financially, the consolidations have had little effect on the taxpayer's burden. With each new district has come additional buildings, teachers, and pupils but at the same time, additional taxable property to help bear a share of the tax burden. This spreads the load of school taxes over a larger area. This increased property valuation from \$20,730,085 in 1957 to \$44,845,857 in 1953.

Consolidations do not come easily, particularly in the early years, due chiefly to the lack

of understanding of the purpose and intent behind the consolidation movement, according to Superintendent Snyder.

The system is designed to improve the educational program of member schools by bringing to even the smallest units the advantages which the larger ones enjoy. No single district of one, two, or even five classrooms can afford the services of special help in music, art, physical education, agriculture, home economics which can be brought by pooled resources.

Resistance to consolidation has been expressed in three ways: fear of loss of local control over the school; too impersonal contact with the school board members and no direct access to them.

Felt, which rates importantly in the Fall showings for college girls, is also sparking the wardrobes of younger schoolgirls.

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