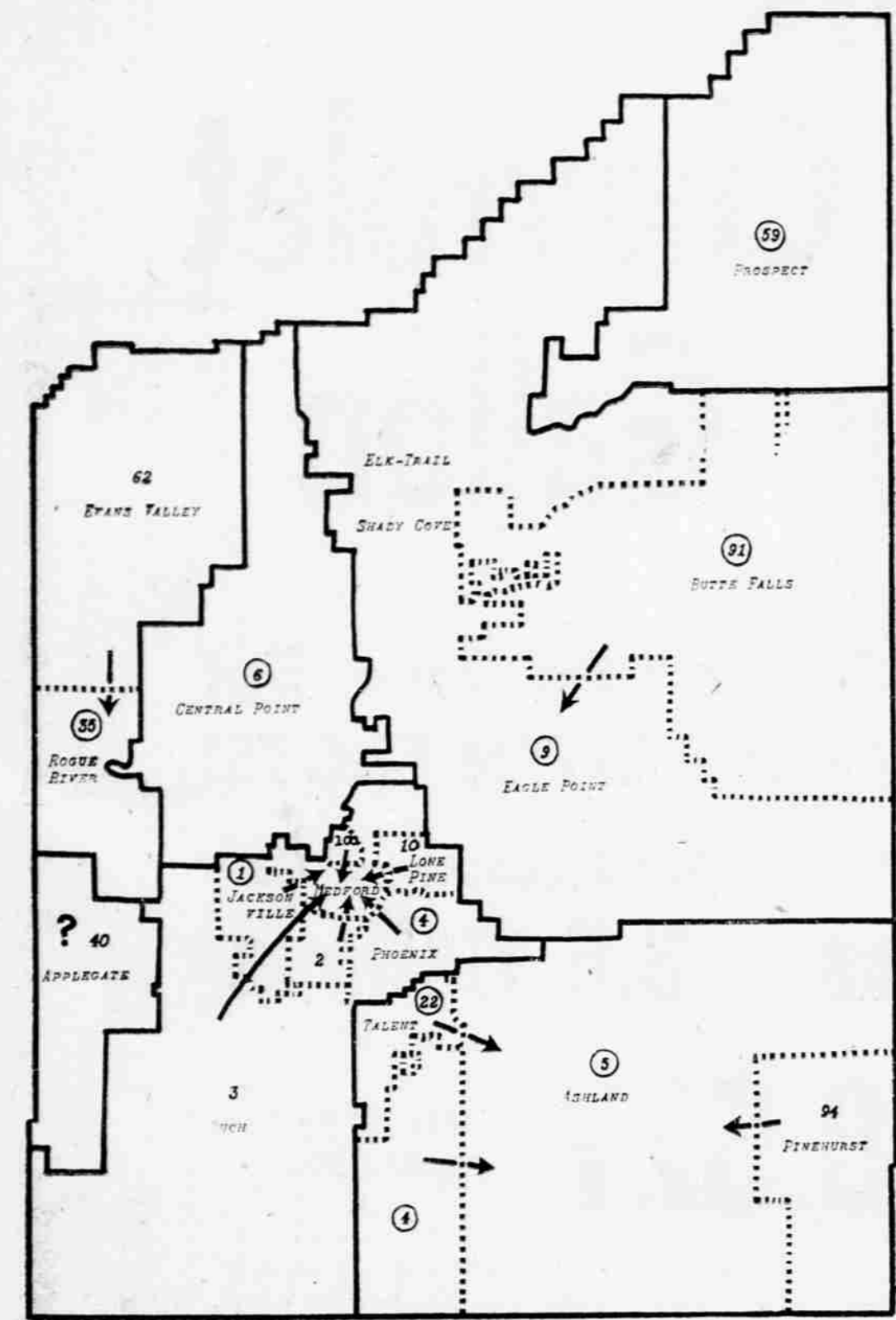


21,000 Children Affected by Reorganization

14 MAIL TRIBUNE, Medford, Oregon, Sunday, March 1, 1959



TENTATIVE CHANGES - Preliminary tentative changes in Jackson county school district boundaries under the reorganization plan are shown on the map above. Dotted lines show existing boundaries that would be eliminated after consolidation with an adjacent district. Two sets of hearings in the communities concerned plus a hearing at the state level will be held prior to actual establishment of district changes, according

to Alf B. Mekvold, executive secretary of the reorganization committee. A tentative decision on the Applegate district cannot be made until after the outcome of an effort to change the county unit law. Also "hanging fire" will be the proposal for the Ashland district to absorb the south, non-contiguous section of the Phoenix district, Mekvold said.

Two Ways Noted For Reshaping School Districts

Current plans to reshape the county school districts would affect a total of approximately 21,000 school-age children (4-20 years old) including 14,798 youngsters now enrolled in county schools, according to the county school superintendent's office.

Such reshaping of school districts can be done two ways:

- (1) Two or more districts may be grouped under the provisions of the state law as directed by the county school reorganization committee. This is called reorganization.
- (2) Two or more adjacent school districts may become one district through action of their school boards and voters. This is consolidation.

Present Tentative Plans
Present tentative plans call for the following districts to combine under the reorganization plan: Medford and Phoenix; Ashland, Talent, Pinehurst and the southern section of the present Phoenix school district (Wagner Creek); Evans Valley and Rogue River.

Under the school consolidation provisions, Trail and Shady Cove were consolidated with Eagle Point school district effective July 1, 1958. In that same area a recommendation would join Butte Falls with Eagle Point.

Prospect district would remain as is. Under the provisions of the school district reorganization measure Prospect may do this because it is already an administrative unit, in other words, has its own high school.

Annexation of the north section of the Howard school district to District 6C has been scheduled for consideration by the county boundary board.

Consolidation Proposed
Consolidation with Medford school district is proposed for Lone Pine, Griffin Creek, Jacksonville, Ruch and the remainder of Howard district.

A tentative overall plan for the proposed district reorganization is due before the state board of education in approximately two weeks. Preliminary hearings will be held in each of the affected districts in the near future. Further hearings will be held in approximately six months after the revised plan is returned by the state. Total reorganization completion is slated for July, 1962.

The final plan is due April 7, 1959. However, the county has requested an extension of six months, the maximum time, taking it to Oct. 7, 1959.

Election Called
After an approved plan is received from the state, an election is called within 30 days to 60 days. Forty per cent must favor the plan for it to pass and 60 per cent of the district must oppose the plan for it to be defeated. A second election may be called in the districts which reject the plan.

If the districts disapprove the plan, a revised plan is submitted to the state board within 3 days of the election. The state board has 30 days to approve it and another election is held.

If the last election is held between July 1 and April 30 effective date is July 1 the following year. However, if the last election is held between May 1 and June 30, effective date is July 1 of the next ensuing year.

In cases where the plan is rejected, a second election may be called not sooner than one year. A third election can be held on the same plan not sooner than one year from the second election.

If the plan is rejected a third time the county's school district reorganization committee may figure out a new plan to be voted on. The reorganization committee is dissolved when the entire county is reorganized, not later than July 1, 1962.

Purpose of Law
Purpose of the school district reorganization law is to place the schools under more efficient administrative units, based on the theory that a few large districts can do a better job of educating youngsters than many small units.

Main philosophy behind the reorganization is the report on "The American High School Today," by James B. Conant, former Harvard university president. He maintains that no high school can educate its pupils well unless it is large enough to graduate at least 100 students at one time. This would mean a total enrollment of some 500.

Because of their scarcity, teachers must be used where

they will do the most good, he pointed out. This is particularly true of hard-to-get-good math, science and language teachers. A good high school offers four years of sciences and languages, he insisted. It also should have special personnel for counseling.

Serious Defect
One serious defect of a too-small high school, Conant pointed out in his report, is that the top students cannot be given the special instruction they need for their advanced abilities. Also, the slow readers and the pupils having difficulties cannot be given the help they need.

Perhaps the most hotly contested of the reorganization proposals is that of joining Rogue River and Evans Valley. Rogue River school district officials feel their district can provide a better all-around education at a lower cost per pupil if the two districts join.

However, Evans Valley itself is split on this issue. Some would like to send their children to Grants Pass for their high school education, thinking the larger high school can better prepare them for college or for future occupations.

Individual Instruction
Others feel their children can receive more individual instruction at Rogue River and have a better chance to participate in school activities.

Evans Valley now being a non-high district, parents have the option of sending their children to either Grants Pass or Rogue River. This year 23 pupils are attending Grants Pass High school and 33 Rogue River.

Rogue River district officials estimate their per pupil cost of high school instruction is \$620. Combining Evans Valley students with those of Rogue River would mean little or no additional expense, the officials say. In fact, the long term result may be a per pupil cost drop of \$100 by spreading the per pupil costs over more students.

Evans Valley elementary schools can be operated at the same per pupil cost under Rogue River administration as at present. Average costs per pupil for Rogue River for all 12 grades is \$400. Per pupil costs for Rogue River grades 1 through 8 would be considerably less, he said.

"Over the long run the reorganization would be a net saving to taxpayers," the school district official said. "At least such reorganization would keep the taxes from going as high as they otherwise might have gone."

Not Much Difference
Curriculum-wise, the reorganization would not make much difference, an official said. It would make class scheduling easier. More sections could be set up and each student would be able to take what he should take.

The main thing is that geometry, chemistry and physics could be offered every year instead of during alternating years, it was explained. The school has a shop program already. That would not have to be changed. Some arrangement may be worked out with Central Point school district authorities so Rogue River students can take vocational agriculture classes at Crater High school, a school district official said.

"One thing Evans Valley people should bear in mind is that when a non-high district joins with a county unit such as Josephine county it has no representation on the school board," a district official said. "A reorganized school district would elect its board members by zones."

Primary Units
"Also, it has been the trend (in county unit districts) when an elementary school has less than 10 pupils they are transferred to some other elementary school," the school official pointed out. "We believe in primary units where the kids can go to school close to home. We are opposed to see the kids lose their names and become numbers."

The county school district reorganization committee has recommended that Phoenix be regrouped with Medford except for the south end of the district, Wagner Creek. That area would be regrouped with Talent and Pinehurst and all joined with Ashland, according to a further recommendation.

This recommendation, made last Tuesday night during the committee's meeting, is a reversal of a previous tentative recommendation that Talent be combined with Phoenix.

Reason for Reversal
One reason for the reversal of the previous recommendation is that the industrial and business properties at the north end of the Phoenix district are already pressing to join Medford. Some parts of the Phoenix district already are within Medford city limits. Removal of this area

from Phoenix district tax rolls would seriously handicap the district, which is classed primarily as a "bedroom district."

Talent school district board has not made a clear-cut statement on its attitude. It originally contacted the Phoenix board to propose a voluntary consolidation.

The Phoenix to Medford regrouping would have several effects. Senior high school students (10th through 12th grades) would be transported to Medford. Whether Junior high school students would remain in Phoenix has not yet been determined. The grade school would remain with Phoenix. Students would get more foreign language and be grouped according to ability.

Other Advantages
Other advantages, as outlined by school district officials, would be more vocational type courses, larger programs of music, athletics and some other activities for the student who can excel. Vocational agriculture probably would not be offered at this time, it has been pointed out.

Regrouping of Phoenix with Talent would give a senior high school of 260 students in Phoenix. The junior high would have 180 to 200 eighth and ninth graders established in the present Talent High school. Phoenix eighth and ninth graders would be transported to Talent. Each town would keep its own grade school.

The high school would continue to provide four years of mathematics, three years of science, and probably two foreign languages. Vocational agriculture, shop, home economics, and business offerings would be expanded with those of the increased number of students. Metal shop might be offered in the future. Music, athletic and other activities would be expanded.

Phoenix has a 61 mill levy. Talent has a 77 mill levy. The two district budgets would be combined under the regrouping plan. However, each district would retain its existing bonded indebtedness. Combined millage would be about 67.3 mills, it is estimated.

New Junior High Gym
The reorganization would also mean a new junior high gym would have to be con-

structed at Talent in one to three years, and new high school rooms would have to be added in Phoenix. This would mean an added two to four mills on the combined district. The Talent district now receives county equalization funds, it was noted.

Total estimated millage could go up to about 70 mills in the reorganized district. This would be due to less state and county equalization than is now being received by the two districts operating separately.

Medford now has a millage rate of 46.8 mills. After the consolidation of the "fringe" elementary districts, and if Phoenix should be joined with Medford, the millage would be raised to an estimated 53 mills. A new high school in Medford to take care of this expansion would mean another 2 to 4 mills, making the total about 56 mills.

Difference in Millage
The difference in millage would be 10 to 15 mills more if the Talent-Phoenix proposition should develop.

Ashland, on the other hand, would be helped with a regrouping with Pinehurst which would give it \$800,000 more in assessed valuation. Ashland millage is 43.3 mills and Talent's is 77. Ashland district officials now are involved in a building program and haven't had much chance to discuss the reorganization proposal.

Eugene Orr Leaves For Washington

Eugene Orr, Medford businessman and vice chairman of the 11 western states of the American Legion's National Rehabilitation commission, plans to attend a meeting of the commission in Washington, D. C., this week.

A member of the executive committee of the commission, he plans to attend a meeting of the committee tomorrow, prior to regular sessions of the commission.

Problems arising from cases handled by the commission staff and Legion department and post service officers will be reviewed during the 36th annual conference.



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'Positive' Loyalty Oath Asked For Civil Service Applicants

Salem -UPI- The matter of loyalty oaths for government workers was before the Oregon Legislature yesterday.

Rep. Vernon Cook (D-Troutdale) and Keith Skelton (D-Eugene) introduced a bill to provide positive rather than negative oaths for state civil service applicants.

Today civil service applicants are required to sign a statement that they are not members of any organization seeking to overthrow the government of the United States by force or violence.

In contrast, elected and appointed officers of the state are only required to state positively that they will uphold

the constitutions and laws of the state and nation.

Cook said civil service applicants should not be required to take an oath different from that one required of elective and appointive officials. "Gratuitous Insult"

Both sponsors quoted editorial comment from Oregon papers to the effect that the negative oath stating that they were not members of any subversive organization was a "gratuitous insult" to civil service applicants and a "hangover from the spirit of the McCarthy era."

The bill was expected to bring on some fireworks when it gets to the hearing stage.

Other business saw the House meet in a rare afternoon session to pass a number of bills which did not get acted on because of a long debate over a bill to tax fixed load vehicles. That bill will be voted on next Tuesday.

Three Tabled
The House Tax committee tabled three bills that Rep. Clarence Barton (D-Coquille) said would "whittle away" the income tax base.

One, presented by Rep. Joe Rogers (R-Independence) would have allowed a father to claim his son as a dependent and still have the boy

Officers Installed By Salesman's Club
Bill Sweet was installed president of the Southern Oregon Salesman's club at a recent dinner meeting at the Tally Ho restaurant, Talent.

Other officers installed include Jim Whalin, vice president; Chuck Shepard, secretary; Robin Binns, treasurer; Maynaud Paup, sergeant at arms; and Don Pryor, program chairman.

Committees named include grievance, Dick McElhose, chairman, and Bob Gustafson and Larry Sullivan; publicity, Gene Barlow, chairman, Paul Mitchell and Vern Collins and membership, Rex Sweeney, chairman, Art Wood, Nick Vanikiotis, and C. W. Williams.

Larry McConnell was named chaplain.

work for him and earn up to \$599 tax free.

Another would allow teachers to take education costs off their tax returns if they were required by a school district to take certain courses.

Exemption Asked
The third bill would have given exemptions to certain retired people who have earned retirement in other states but retired in Oregon.

Other legislative highlights: Community College; Community college bills will be the subject of a joint hearing of the Senate and House Education committees here Tuesday at 8 p.m. There will be no public testimony at this hearing, but education experts will testify.

Unemployment Compensation
The Senate passed a bill placing the employer of one or more employees under state unemployment compensation coverage. The bill then went to the House.

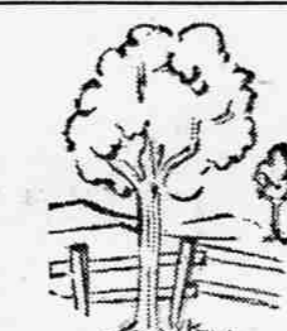
Three Girls Hurt In Car Accident

Three teen-age Medford girls were injured Thursday night when the car one was driving struck a Medford Corporation switch engine at the grade crossing on North Pacific highway near the Big Y, Medford police reported.

Police said the driver, Jean Annette McGuire, 16, of 909 West Fourth st., suffered a bump on the head, an injured nose and a possible leg injury. She was driving her family's car.

One passenger, Marlene Ann Miller, 17, of 2642 Biddle rd., suffered bruises and abrasions, according to the report. The second passenger, Hazel Jo Creel, 17, of 686 Gilman rd., reportedly suffered a gash on the forehead. They were taken to Rogue Valley hospital by Medford Ambulance Service. They were released Friday morning.

Police identified the engineer as George Henry Davis, 42, of route 2, box 664, Central Point. The collision occurred about 10:30 p.m. when the girls' car, southbound and overtaking another vehicle, struck the engine as it backed eastward across the highway, according to the police report.



High Above the Valley work is starting on the

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