

HERE ARE THE FACTS ABOUT PHOENIX - MEDFORD CONSOLIDATION!

This Committee Wants GOOD Education FIRST:

The many recent discussions regarding possible school district reorganizations and consolidations have raised several questions as to the best possible solution for all concerned.

A growing community faces many other problems among which are: better housing, irrigation facilities, sewage disposal systems, and community medical facilities. Local community effort in the solution of these problems is evidenced in the Rogue Valley Memorial Hospital; the Medford-Ashland freeway; the Phoenix sewer system; and the Talent Irrigation Project. Many other solutions are now on the drawing boards. In most every instance the enlargement of metropolitan facilities has provided these answers, and it is generally felt that education logically follows this pattern.

Up to the present time, due to the efforts of many, our valley has been fortunate in having several very good school systems. However, presently our schools are faced with the problem of growth and change. Children today need an ever better and broader education, and this must be made financially feasible. All this was recognized by the 1957 Oregon State Legislature which passed the School Reorganization Act that was endorsed by Oregon citizens.

Locally, the Jackson County School Reorganization Committee, composed of nine citizens from various parts of the county, has recommended that Phoenix-Medford school districts combine. Let us consider this proposal.

1. What advantages are there to this proposal?
 Answer: A larger system can offer an educational program that is more economical and complete with courses in Metal Shop, Carpentry, Mechanical Drawing, Business Machines, Stenography, Journalism, Dramatics, Speech, Foreign Languages, Distributive

Education, Remedial Courses, to mention a few, and also summer school.

2. Why have more subjects or an expanded curriculum?
 Answer: It is apparent to all of us that a highly specialized society demands a broader background in science, mathematics, language, social studies, art, and vocational studies.

3. How many students would be required to include instruction in agriculture in Medford?
 Answer: It is reported that twenty is a minimum number. About five years ago a census was taken, and there were not that number wishing it, however, with present consolidations, there is a good possibility that this course will be required—probably would be set up as soon as facilities could be constructed.

4. Will classes be larger in a larger school?
 Answer: No. State standards control the size of the class. This applies to both Phoenix and Medford.

5. Will a student receive as much individual attention?
 Answer: Yes, each student has a home room teacher whose sole responsibility to those registered for that period is to counsel, guide, and be a friend.

6. Would the average child have the opportunity to participate in sports?
 Answer: Yes, it only follows naturally that a school that can offer a larger number of subjects can also offer a greater number of activities. There is also more chance for intramural sports and junior varsity.

7. What are some sports presently offered in Medford that smaller systems cannot give?
 Answer: Wrestling, baseball, tennis, golf, bowling.

8. What about other activities?
 Answer: There are a great variety of clubs, such as:

Hunter Safety, Photography, Latin, Future Nurses, Science, International Relations, Spanish, and some fourteen others.

9. What about transportation home for those students participating sports and activities?
 Answer: This is admittedly a real problem and one that will have to be handled by car pools, Evergreen Bus Service, and other community cooperation. At the present time this is a problem for many in the outlying Phoenix district.

10. What effect would consolidation have on the Phoenix teachers?
 Answer: Teachers of grades 1 to 6 would be affected in no way. It is reported that the normal turnover in the Medford system each year would give job opportunities for the majority of the others whose teaching record has been satisfactory.

11. What effect would consolidation with Medford have on our grade school?
 Answer: Remove the 7th and 8th grades relieving the present overcrowded condition. In addition to this, students in the Barnett Road area would attend grade school in Medford.

12. I've been told that Medford divides the students into three groups, one bright, one average, one slow. Is this true?
 Answer: No, not exactly. We all know that certain students have more ability in mathematics, while other students may have more ability in history. Medford offers two ability groupings in certain subjects. For example, student A might be in the advanced math class and the regular history class; while student B

might be in the advanced history and the regular math class.

13. What are the advantages of this grouping?
 Answer: One great advantage is that students with regular or average ability need not be disturbed by very fast students who monopolize the top grades. Another advantage is that students in the major work groups can be given more work of greater difficulty to challenge their greater capacity.

14. Will my students be lost in a large consolidated high school?
 Answer: No, they'll enter high school with their friends from Phoenix grade and junior high schools. There they will join equivalent groups from McLaughlin, Ruch, Jacksonville, Hedrick, and other areas.

15. When is the earliest date that reorganization can take place?
 Answer: Not earlier than September, 1961.

16. What would happen to the present Phoenix High School building?
 Answer: This would depend upon total enrollment and needs of the new district at the time of consolidation and later. It might be a high school, junior high school, or even be utilized for grade school.

17. Would Phoenix junior high remain in Phoenix?
 Answer: Can't tell until population trend is certain. To give course requirements of Medford it would prove too expensive to maintain a separate plant if present facilities in Medford could handle it for a time. Eventually it is very probable that there would have to be a junior high at Phoenix.

18. Are the grade levels the same in both Phoenix and Medford districts?
 Answer: If scholastic level is meant; quite similar.

TAXES ALSO INTEREST THIS COMMITTEE:

1. How will consolidation affect my taxes?
 Answer: Phoenix presently has a 61 mill levy. If Phoenix and Medford combine, it is estimated that taxes will drop to 53 mills; while a Talent-Phoenix combination would result in a raise to 67 mills. In addition to these tax facts, if Phoenix should remain as they are or join Talent with the inevitable loss of the north portion of Phoenix district, the millage rate would skyrocket.

2. What is the outlook if the Phoenix-Medford districts do not combine?
 Answer: When other consolidation proposals are completed, the Phoenix district will be the only one left

with a portion of its boundaries within Medford city limits. It must be assumed that as Medford continues to grow the Phoenix district will lose these additional sections adjacent to them.

3. Can the industrial area of Phoenix school district be legally withdrawn without the vote of the whole district?
 Answer: Technically, yes. The Boundary Board has the

final decision. If 100% of the registered voters in a given district portion expressed their wishes, the Boundary Board would probably concur. There is current legislation under consideration which would allow contiguous property to be added to a district by petition of that property owner.

4. How would these losses affect the Phoenix district?
 Answer: The basis for the school's financial support depends upon the assessed valuation of properties within the district. A heavy portion of the tax monies comes from the sections that would be lost.

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Here Are The FACTS From The CONANT REPORT:

Locally, the Jackson County School Reorganization Board has recommended that Phoenix and Medford school districts combine. In part their decision was based upon the Dr. James Conant Report on High Schools. This was a two-year study financed by a grant from the Carnegie Corporation. It is recognized as the most authoritative study in recent years on improving our public school program. The following points have been taken from that report.

- Small high schools are not capable of offering a first-rate education to students of widely varying ability and differing vocational aims.
- The counseling system should begin in the elementary school and be continued.
- Each student should have an individualized elective program over and above the minimum general program required of all.
- Students should be grouped according to ability by subject. There should be three types of classes; one for the able in the subject, one for the average, and another for very slow readers; but no across-the-board grouping. A child might be in the top section in English, but the middle section in history or algebra.
- All students in the vocational programs should take devoted to English composition.
- All students in the vocational program should take the required general program, such as regular English,

social studies, and other courses required for graduation. Vocational courses should be available, depending on the type of community.

- Clerical programs for girls including typing, stenography, and the use of clerical machines.
- Home economics programs for girls which through further work in college could lead to the profession of dietician.
- Vocational agriculture if the community is rural.
- Distributive education, involving work experience in retail shops, if the merchants are willing to work closely with the school.
- Trades and industrial programs involving half a day in the 11th and 12th grades.
- Industrial arts programs which are really a survey of the different skilled trades involving the use of tools and the working of materials as diverse as leather, wood, and metal.

- Students who read below grade level need special help. They need special teachers, using remedial reading techniques and special textbooks.
- A program for the academically talented—those who can study effectively and rewardingly—both foreign languages and mathematics. They will include the top 15%—not the gifted who compose 3%. The loss of extra knowledge to these students would be a loss to the nation.
- The gifted student should be recognized early and be given special classes if available or special tutoring,

10. Prerequisites for advanced academic courses—that is, the student doesn't go into advanced academic courses unless he's demonstrated his ability to handle the work. For math, the sequence should be arranged so that only students who have earned a grade of "C" (at least) can take the next higher course.

- Students shouldn't be given rank in class—eliminate the valedictorian and salutatorian. Lots of able students take easy courses to get high grades.
- There should be an academic honor list published at each marking period for those who made at least a B average.
- There should be a voluntary developmental reading program for those who wish to increase their reading speed.
- There should be a tuition-free summer school, not only for make-up but for the bright student to broaden the scope of his elective program.
- A third and fourth year of foreign languages should be offered no matter how few students enroll. Students should study one foreign language for four years, not two for two years. A language cannot be mastered in two years.
- Science Courses: All students should get some understanding of science by a required course in physical science or biology, but there should be three sections. One for those with considerable academic ability; one for those with average ability; one for those who

handle academic subjects slowly and with difficulty. All the way up the line in science courses, standards should be kept high for the top course, with the material adapted for those with less ability and less mathematical background.

- Homeroms—here no ability grouping at all is in evidence. Purpose of the homeroom is to develop an understanding between students of differing abilities and varying vocational goals.
- In the 12th grade a course in American problems should be required.
- The small high school has to go, says Dr. Conant. A graduating class of at least 100 is necessary in order to offer a first-rate education to those whose formal education will stop at high school and to the academically talented. Some of Dr. Conant's arguments for the larger high school include improvement of instruction, better use of teachers and other professional personnel, good courses for top academic students, and virtual elimination of teacher shortages in such fields as physics. The question then becomes how to eliminate the small high school, especially when the arguments used, such as geography or long bus rides, are not as valid as the real stumbling block—human nature.

The committee believes that the best way to attain the objectives set out by Dr. Conant is through consolidation with the Medford School District.

COMMITTEE FOR INVESTIGATION OF PHOENIX-MEDFORD SCHOOL REORGANIZATION

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