

THE ORIGIN AND EVOLUTION OF MICHIGAN'S
INTERMEDIATE SCHOOL DISTRICTS

by

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BACKGROUND

The Michigan State Department of Education (MDE) and the Michigan Association of Intermediate School Administrators (MAISA) have convened a committee to make recommendations concerning the consolidation of educational services. The committee is constituted by the following representatives of the MDE and MAISA:

Co-chairs:	Elaine Madigan, Michigan Department of Education
	Clark Volz, Midland Intermediate School District
Committee Members:	Pete Everson, Eastern Upper Peninsula Intermediate School District
	Kevin Konarska, Kent Intermediate School District
	Karen McPhee, Ottawa Area Intermediate School District
	Char Myers, Manistee Intermediate School District
	Glenda Rader, Michigan Department of Education
	Jeff Siegel, Berrien Intermediate School District
	Scott Crosby, Wexford-Missaukee Intermediate School District
	Larry Lloyd, Mason-Lake and Oceana Intermediate School Districts
	Vickie Markavitch, Oakland Schools
	Donald Spencer, Monroe County Intermediate School District
	Carol Wolenberg, Michigan Department of Education
	Jon Tomlanovich, Michigan Association of Intermediate School Administrators

The charge of the committee: By November 4, 2009, provide to the MDE/MAISA Governance Committee for Joint Initiatives three proposals for the consolidation of ISD/RESA services that will support world quality learning in Michigan, maximize the use of dwindling financial resources, and eliminate duplication of effort.

The MAISA has requested that Dr. Donald A. Spencer, Superintendent of the Monroe County Intermediate School District develop a paper on the historical evolution of Michigan's intermediate school districts. Dr. Spencer recently completed his dissertation at Eastern Michigan University titled: The Monroe County Intermediate School District: A Case Study. The study analyzes the development of one intermediate school district within Michigan's system of public education.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The federalist system is the term used to describe the relationships between the national, state, and local levels of government. The county intermediate school district is part of the federalist system. Since the inception of public education, the State of Michigan has maintained a three-tiered governance system that includes state, intermediate, and local school district levels.

To understand the evolution of the county intermediate school district, one must first understand the organizational bias of the Michigan State System of Public Education, which was organized in 1835 and implemented in 1837 when Michigan achieved statehood. Contrary to what had been done in other states, where federal lands were given to local communities, founders of the Michigan system, John D. Pierce and Isaac Crary, secured the federal lands to be used to fund local schools, and fashioned the heavily centralized and very bureaucratic state controlled system upon the Prussian model. In addition, the founders separated the position of superintendent of public instruction from the control of the state legislature's politics by embedding it into the State of Michigan's first constitution as a constitutional officer.

In spite of this centralizing bias, the state's educational system was spread out and difficult to control. Although the early state government included an intermediate unit of governance at the township level, the board of inspectors, this system was too remote and too difficult to control for the state superintendents of public instruction. The role of the county intermediate school district can be traced to 1867 when the position of county superintendent for common schools was created to carry out supervisory and ministerial duties. These early county superintendents were primarily a governance arm of the state.

Public education was a new phenomenon, and central government was held in great suspicion by the citizenry of the fledgling democracy. The county superintendents set out to convince people that children should attend school and that quality teachers and good school buildings were important aspects of a civilized and democratic society. During this period, significant changes in the conditions of local public education were noted, including modernized facilities, extended school year calendars, and increased salaries.

Change was also constant in the governance of education in the early years. In 1875 the county superintendents were replaced with township superintendents. Almost immediately the state superintendent of public instruction began to report on the regression in the condition of the public schools. In 1881, a county board of school examiners was created to oversee the examination and certification of teachers. The three school examiners shared the governance of local schools with the township board of school inspectors, whose duties included the visitation governance function.

In 1887 the secretary of the county school examiners regained the role of the chief executive officer and, in 1891, received the title *county commissioner of schools* to go along with it. The county commissioner of schools was clearly a governance arm of the state with responsibilities for submitting school-related reports to the state superintendent of public instruction, providing oversight of the grading of the rural schools, conducting teacher examinations and awarding certificates, and consulting with teachers and local school boards.

Gradually, the state bureaucracy, school district consolidation, and the ever-increasing professionalization of public education infringed on the duties of the county commissioner of schools. The state normal colleges assumed the training and certification

of teachers. The Michigan State Department of Education provided oversight on matters concerning agricultural and rural education. These changes were aligned with the business-scientific ideology of the Industrial Revolution and the municipal reform movement. There was still, however, an issue that had to be addressed in the critical eyes of the state superintendents of public instruction; the consolidation of the rural schools.

In 1947, the intermediate level of educational governance was buffered from its environment when the county board of education was founded. Members, elected by the representatives of the local school districts' boards of education would appoint the county superintendent. The social elites and professional managers controlled the local education environment. This electoral and appointive process was in direct alignment with the ideology of the municipal reform movement. The primary governance responsibility of the county board of education and the county superintendent was to consolidate the rural schools.

The successful consolidation of rural schools was still another "victory" for the business-scientific ideology and its emphasis on efficiency. Very significantly, the county boards of education were also authorized to provide services to any school district when requested to do so by the local district board of education. In 1955, the county school districts were granted permission by the state to generate tax dollars to fund special education.

With the successful consolidation of rural schools, the State of Michigan again changed the role of the intermediate unit of educational government. In 1962, the county intermediate school district was created and given the authority to consolidate services. In addition to control over scarce financial resources in the area of special education and vocational education, in 1971 the county intermediate school district was given

governance authority over the mandatory special education delivery system. With the passage of “Proposal A” in 1994, school funding was centralized at the state level, with the exception of the county intermediate school district’s ability to seek local tax levies for special education, vocational education, and operational enhancement.

In creating the intermediate school district, the State of Michigan established a negotiated educational environment wherein the county intermediate school district and the local school districts operate within a system of organizational interdependencies that include service and governance functions unique to the local educational environment. These interdependencies create a more stable local educational environment.

Introduction

We stand at a point in time when we need to examine those educational institutions and values we have taken for granted. We need to turn facts into principles in order to perceive alternatives both in the past and the present. The way we understand the past profoundly shapes how we make choices today.

Tyack, 1974, p. 4

Since virtually the beginning of public education in Michigan, there has been a three-tiered system of educational governance. At the upper tier of the public education system lies the Governor, the legislature, the state board of education, and superintendent of public instruction; at its base is the local school district. Located at the mid or “intermediate” level is an organizational unit of educational government that has been referred to at various times as the county superintendent, the county board of school examiners, the county school commissioner, the county board of education, and, since 1962, the county intermediate school district. These intermediate units of educational government have had various responsibilities in assisting the State of Michigan in carrying out its constitutional and legislated functions.

Banfield and Wilson (1963) studied the politics of city government and argued that “government serves two principal functions. One is that of supplying those goods and services – for example, police protection and garbage removal – which cannot be (or at any rate are not) supplied under private auspices. This is its service function. The other function – the ‘political one’ – is that of managing conflict in matters of public importance” (p. 19). The researchers maintained that these functions are often “indistinguishable” and “inseparable” as government organizations negotiate their environment (p. 18).

Given Michigan's historical political myth that public education is a local matter, those actors representing the intermediate units of educational government have provided local influence to educational policy development, governance, and the implementation of services at the state and local levels of the public education system (MacIver, 1947). This study will inform educational leaders of the influence of ideology upon educational policy development, governance, and services related to Michigan's intermediate school districts and their predecessors. This study will furthermore document the historical evolution of Michigan's intermediate unit of educational governance.

Research Questions

1. What was the origin of Michigan's intermediate school districts?
2. How have Michigan's intermediate school districts evolved?

Definitions

Culture: "The acquired knowledge people use to interpret experience and generate behavior" (Spradley, 1980).

Federal: The system of federalism in the United States, including the legal and political relationships among the national, state, and local governments (Frantzich & Percy, 1994, p. 53).

Fiscal federalism: The financial arrangement between different levels of the federal system (federal, state, and local (Frantzich & Percy, 1994, p. 53).

Governance: The process of publicly resolving group conflict by means of creating and administering public policy (Wirt and Kirst, 1997).

Ideology: "A set of apparently compatible propositions about human nature and society that help an individual to interpret complex human problems and take action that the

individual believes is in his or her best interest and the best interest of the society as a whole” (Kaestle, C. F., 1983, p. 76).

Myths: “By myths we mean the value-impregnated beliefs and notions that men hold, that they live by and live for. Every society is held together by a myth-system, a complex of dominating thought-forms that determines and sustains all its activities” (MacIver, 1965, p. 4).

Politics: A form of social conflict rooted in group differences over values about using public resources to meet private needs (Wirt and Kirst, 1997).

Data Collection

Sampling

Purposive, within-case sampling was utilized in conducting this research. According to Miles and Huberman (1994), “Sampling is crucial for later analysis” (p. 27). The archives of the Monroe County Intermediate School District, Monroe County Historical Museum, Monroe County Commissioners Office, Monroe County Library System, University of Michigan Library System, State of Michigan Library System, and the Halle Library at Eastern Michigan University provided historical data related to the county intermediate unit of educational government and the State Superintendents of Public Instruction. Additional archival materials were reviewed related to the implementation of public acts, administrative policy, and elections. The public records available through area newspapers concerning policy entrepreneurs and implementers were also studied.

Education

Governance

The first signs of a centralized system of public education appeared during the early territorial period. According to Hoyt and Ford (1905), “The first law relating to schools in the territory was in 1809” (p. 47). This law, which provided for taxation to support the schools, was never enacted (Bald, 1954, p. 174).

Kingdon (1995) labeled advocates “for proposals or for the prominence of an idea” as “policy entrepreneurs” (p. 122). Policy entrepreneurs may advocate for proposals for personal gain or to promote their own values (Kingdon, 1995, p. 123). The first efforts to implement a state system of public education in Michigan were championed by policy entrepreneurs of both the Roman Catholic and Protestant faiths. Father Gabriel Richard, a Sulpician priest, and the Reverend John Monteith, a Presbyterian minister, aided by political leaders such as Territorial Governor Lewis Cass and Territorial Judge Augustus Woodward, created a highly centralized system of public education, apparently based on the French system of education. While the symbolism of having a non-sectarian system of public education created via the collaboration of a Catholic priest and a Presbyterian minister was significant for the future public school system, the Catholepestimiad, or the University of Michigania, as it was named, failed. Still, this first effort to implement a system of public education established several important concepts that were incorporated into Michigan’s public education system that is still maintained today.

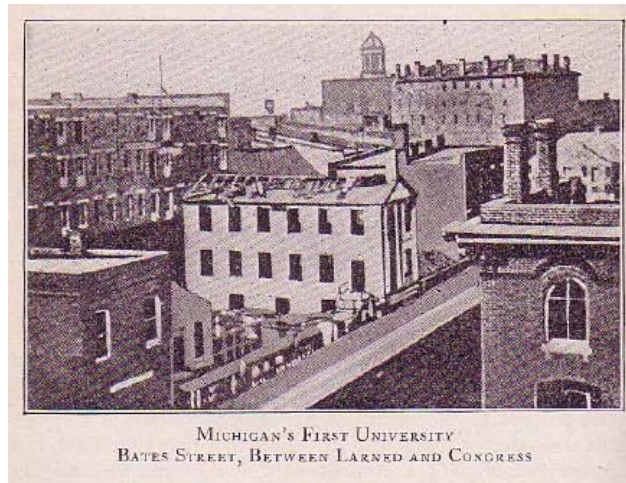


Figure 1: Michigan's First University. Note: From the Story of Detroit, by G. Catlin, 1926, Detroit: The Detroit News. p. 226.

According to Bald (1954), this plan set forth four principles that would “become foundation stones of the public education system of Michigan and of other states as well” (p. 178). These principles were:

1. That it is the duty of the state to provide education for its people from the lowest grade through the university.
2. That the system must be supported by taxation.
3. That tuition fees for higher education should be low.
4. That the schools should be nonsectarian (Bald, 1954, p. 178).

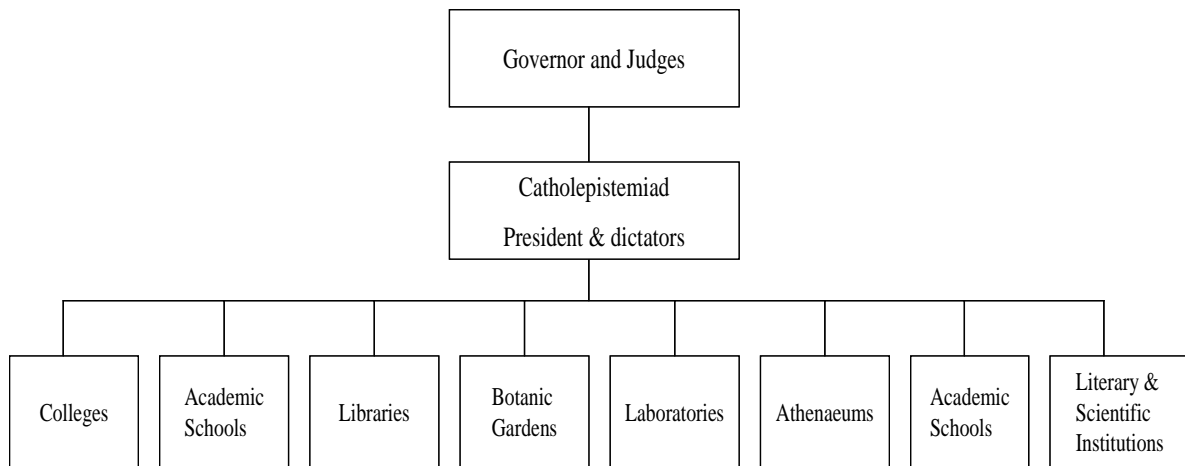


Figure 2. Diagram Showing the Organization of the Catholepistemiad or the University of Michigan. From the Metropolitan America: Public Education in Detroit”, by A. Moehlman, 1974, New York: Arno Press. p. 42.

Decentralized Education

In 1827 the Territory of Michigan enacted the “Act for the Establishment of Common Schools” (Rosalita, 1928, p. 205). This law was Michigan’s first attempt to enact a “free” public school system modeled after the decentralized New England model of education. The law allowed for instruction in English or French. It called for the election of a township board of school inspectors to govern the schools and a local board of trustees to oversee the daily operations. Very significantly, the “Act for the Establishment of Common Schools” provided for the general taxation of inhabitants to maintain the school building and to pay the teachers’ salaries. The law called for financial penalties against townships that failed to comply. Townships could exempt themselves from compliance by a two-third’s vote at the annual township meeting. The 1827 Common School Law was largely ineffective.

The school laws in the territory of Michigan were further amended in 1829 and 1833. The school law of 1829 created the office of superintendent of common schools. The law placed the superintendent in an administrative role focused upon managing the reserve land grants, which had been given to the territories for educational purposes and

overseeing the funds. These administrative duties included insuring that the rate bills were paid in proportion to the amount of time each individual student attended school and the total number of scholars attending the school during the three months it operated (Dain, 1968, p. 141). Through an oversight, the city of Detroit was exempted from complying with the School Act of 1829.

Detroit would be exempted from the Michigan School Laws until 1833 when Governor Porter approved an act providing for common schools in the City of Detroit (Burton, 1922, p. 731). Students attending school under this law were required to pay tuition. According to Burton (1922), “The law also provided that at the annual April meeting, the qualified voters should determine the amount of money to be raised for the purpose of defraying the charge of schooling such poor children as have no parents to provide for them” (p. 731).

Cultural Migration

As Michigan entered into statehood in 1837, there were approximately 175,000 inhabitants. The majority of these people hailed from New England and, principally, New York. Nowhere in the west did the New Englanders dominate migration as they did in Michigan (Dunbar, 1970, p. 255). This fact would influence the development of a public education system, the naming of communities, state politics, and the state’s religious character. Once the New Englanders who came to Michigan took care of their basic needs, they set their sights “to providing schools, churches, literary societies, and other cultural organizations patterned on their previous experiences in New England” (Bald, 1954, p. 174).

Federalism

The early federalist relationship between the national, state, and local governments was cautious at best. The earliest form of relationship in education took the form of enablement. The national government owned most of the property in Michigan, but granted to the state Section 16 of each township for local schools.

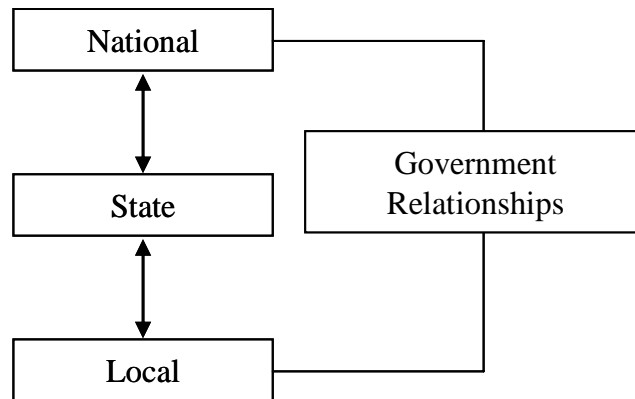


Figure 3: Federalist System of Governmental Relationships.

Ideology

Protestant Republican Reform Ideology

As Michigan's population grew and became more diverse, the local culture changed significantly. New cultural groups, migrating mostly from the eastern United States and, later, Europe, were driven by an ideology that viewed education much differently than the indigenous people and the frontiersmen who came before them. It was this migrating ideology, as expressed through the political process, which led to the development of Michigan's system of public education. Beginning in the 1820s, and gaining momentum through the mid-1800s, an ideological reform movement, primarily linked to anti-slavery, took hold in Michigan and elsewhere in the United States (Dunbar, 1971). This was followed in prominence by movements promoting "temperance," "women's rights," and even "the complete reorganization of society into communist units" (p. 415).

This reform movement reflected the religious beliefs of the many Protestant Anglo Saxon sects that now populated the country. The roots of the reform movement began in western New York, with its many New Englanders holding Puritan and Calvinistic beliefs. At the heart of the movement was the belief in pre-destination; that we are all living in a sinful world, and thus are sinful beings. The new twist in this reform movement involved an accompanying belief “that it is the duty of the Christian to make the world better” (Dunbar, 1971, p. 426). It was the belief of the clergy, and the churches they led, to realize their destiny by spreading the Gospel to all (p. 426). Tyack (1982) refers to this belief system, which resulted in the building of churches and schools throughout the nation, as “Protestant-republican ideology” (p. 19). Its proponents held “a common belief that the United States was a redeemer nation entrusted with a millennial destiny. Schools and churches were institutions designed to produce a homogenous moral and civic order and a providential prosperity” (p. 19). The Protestant-republican reform ideology dominated the American culture well into the twentieth century.

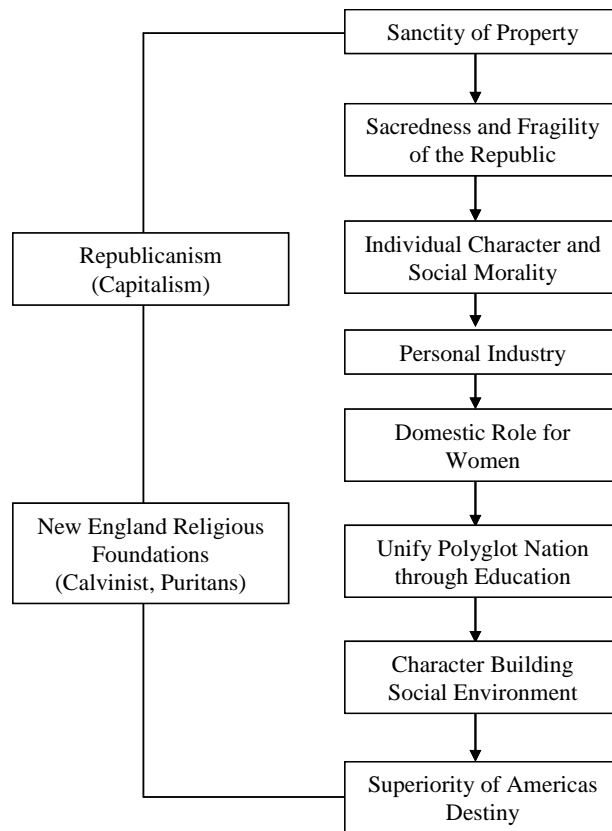


Figure 4: Central Principles of Protestant-Republican Ideological Reform Movement.¹

State Educational Policy Entrepreneurs

The ideological foundations of Michigan’s system of public education were found by this researcher in the advocacy of state educational policy entrepreneurs Isaac Edmond Crary and John Davis Pierce. Just as the Territory of Michigan owed its territorial educational efforts to the partnership between Gabriel Richard and John Montieth, a similar partnership was formed by two influential leaders during the time of Michigan’s transition into statehood. Crary and Pierce were New Englanders who found their way to Marshall, Michigan, and whose friendship resulted in the public education system that essentially still exists in Michigan to this very day. Crary, a lawyer, relocated to Marshall, Michigan, from Connecticut in 1832, and was elected as a delegate to the Constitutional Convention of 1835 by the people of Calhoun County. During the convention, Mr. Crary

¹Kaestle, 1983. pp. 76-77.

was appointed to the education committee and selected as the chairman (Barber, 1907). Thus, Michigan's constitution, with its strong emphasis on education, is a testament to Isaac Crary's ideological beliefs and political skills.

Mr. Pierce, a native of New Hampshire, came to Michigan in 1831. Following the death of Pierce's wife, Crary and Pierce lived together "for a year or two" (Pierce, 1875). On February 3, 1875, Pierce gave the Michigan Pioneer and Historical Society the following account of how this relationship led to the beginnings of Michigan's Public Education System:

In 1834 the census was again taken, and Michigan was found to contain 87,000 inhabitants. Soon after this time the legislative Council authorized the calling of a convention to form a State constitution, and fixed upon May, 1835, for it to assemble at Detroit for that purpose.

It was at this period of our history that the Michigan public school system as it is essentially structured still today had its inception and origin. Gen. Isaac E. Crary, a graduate of an eastern college and a warm friend of education, was, for a year or two, an inmate of my house. The condition and prospects of our new State were often subjects of discussion, and especially of schools of various grades, from the highest to the lowest.

About this time Cousin's report of the Prussian system made to the French minister of public instruction came into my hands, and it was read with much interest. Sitting one pleasant afternoon upon a log, on the hill north of where the court-house at Marshall now stands, General Crary and myself discussed for a long time the fundamental principles which were deemed important for the convention to adopt in laying the foundations of our State. The subject of

education was a theme of especial interest. It was agreed, if possible, that it should be made a distinct branch of the government, and that the constitution ought to provide for an officer who should have this whole matter in charge and thus keep its importance perpetually before the public mind.

That gentleman went to the convention and was appointed chairman of the committee on education; drew up an article on that subject; reported the same to the convention; it was adopted, and became the law of the land. It provided what no other in the United States had done, namely: for the appointment of a superintendent of public instruction. This was to be done on nomination by the Governor and joint vote of the two houses of the Legislature. (p. 38)

At the election held in October 1835, the constitution was ratified.

Superintendent Pierce saw the primary school districts as the most important of all the branches of the public education system. This is expressed in his own words to the legislature on the first Monday of January, 1837:

Without education, no people can secure themselves against the encroachment of power. Superstition and ignorance furnish the raw material of despotism; for there is nothing to prevent the tyranny of the sword, where the mind is degraded and the many unacquainted with their rights and powers.

In the attainment of an object of such magnitude, so grand and comprehensive as a nation's welfare, prosperity and happiness, universities may be highly important and academies of great utility, but primary schools are the main dependence. Nothing else can secure the great mass of the people against legalized oppression; nothing else can retain them in full possession and enjoyment of all their rights, privileges, and immunities, as men – as rational

beings, endowed by their common Creator with the high attributes of moral agency and freedom of choice, and the essential prerogative of self-government. How valuable soever high seminaries of learning may be, we cannot rely upon them for instruction of the great body of the people, because they are to be found only in the primary schools. And hence these demand the first attention. They ought to be the foundation of our whole system of public instruction, as they are indeed the chief support of all our free institutions. (Report of the Superintendent of Public Instruction of the State of Michigan, 1836, p. 30)

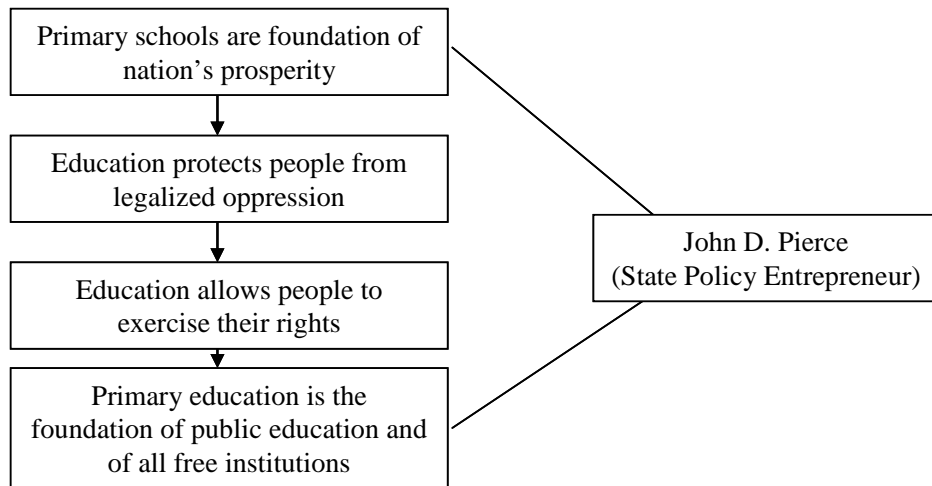


Figure 5: Principles of State Policy Entrepreneurs Ideology.

Governance

State Constitutions

The Michigan Constitution of 1835 specifically addressed education in Article 10. It mandated that the Governor appoint, with the consent of the legislature, a superintendent of public instruction whose term was two years. According to Bald (1954), “No other state constitution at the time contained such a clause. The Michigan delegates made him a constitutional officer so his position would be secure” (p. 197).

The Constitution of 1850 called for a number of changes to the governance of the public school system. The first of these changes was that the superintendent of public instruction and the university board of regents would become elected positions. The constitution also established a three-member state board of education with provisions for the popular election of these persons to terms of six years. The superintendent of public instruction served as an ex-officio member and secretary of the state board. The sole responsibility of this board was to oversee the operation of the state normal school. The constitution also called for the legislature to create a new agricultural branch of the university and authorized the sale of salt spring lands to pay for it. The operation of this new entity would be under the supervision of the university. Perhaps most significantly, upon voter approval of the second Michigan Constitution, the legislature was mandated to create a free system of public schools in each district, to be taught in English, for at least three months of the year.

Administrative Structure

On July 26, 1836, John D. Pierce was nominated by Stevens T. Mason, at the recommendation of Isaac Crary, to be Michigan's and the nation's first state superintendent of public instruction (Pierce, 1875, p. 39). Reverend Pierce was given until the first Sunday in January to submit to the legislature "a plan for the organization and support of primary schools; a plan for a university with branches, also a plan for the disposition of the university and primary school lands" (Pierce, 1875, p. 39). The future of Michigan's public education system had essentially been placed into the hands of one man.

With the passing of this law, Pierce quickly embarked on a tour of the eastern United States, meeting with some of the nation's educational leaders and political

supporters of public education. Pierce returned after two months and submitted his report that, in essence, was three plans addressing the issues with which he had been charged. The Reverend Pierce's plans were adopted as a whole "with scarcely a dissenting voice" (Pierce, 1875, p. 40). The Pierce plan for public education included primary schools, township school inspectors, the University of Michigan, and its branches (academies).

Governance Function

Mr. Pierce and the Legislature endowed primary school districts with corporate powers; they could sue and be sued and had the responsibility to secure and maintain the school site. Each district could tax its inhabitants one time up to a limit of \$500.00 for school district related purposes. The meetings of the districts were to be posted in a central location. The districts were to set the length of the school year (not less than three months), and the amount of money to be raised, in addition to its state apportionment, not to exceed \$60.00 in any given year.

Under the state of Michigan's first school law, district officers, including a moderator, school director, and an assessor were appointed at a mandatory annual meeting. The moderator presided over the meetings of the district, and affixed the official district signature. The school director was responsible for hiring teachers, examining them, and ensuring that enough taxes were collected to pay the teachers. The director was also responsible for conducting the census of the children between the ages of five and seventeen within his primary school district. Finally, the director was responsible for the enrollment of the students and submitting reports related to the subjects taught, attendance, and expenditures.

The assessor's role was to work with the moderator and director, and to make certain that all taxes voted were assessed and levied. Together, this body was the district's Board of Education.

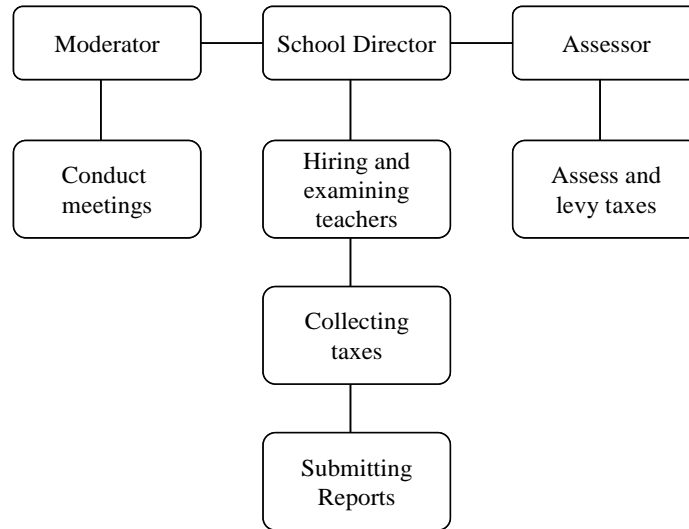


Figure 6: Governance and Services Function of Township District Officers.

Mr. Pierce, in his township-based system, called for three school inspectors to be elected at the township's annual meeting, one of which to be elected chairman of the board. These individuals were to insure that new districts were formed as population increases required, to inspect the teachers and schools at least twice a year, and to apportion money from their townships to the respective primary school districts therein. The township board of school inspectors was responsible for submitting an annual report to the superintendent of public instruction concerning the state of their schools. The townships were required to raise the necessary taxes, choose the school inspectors, and generally comply with the law in order to receive their apportionment of the school funds. The township board of school inspectors was the intermediate unit of educational government in Michigan's first system of public schools.

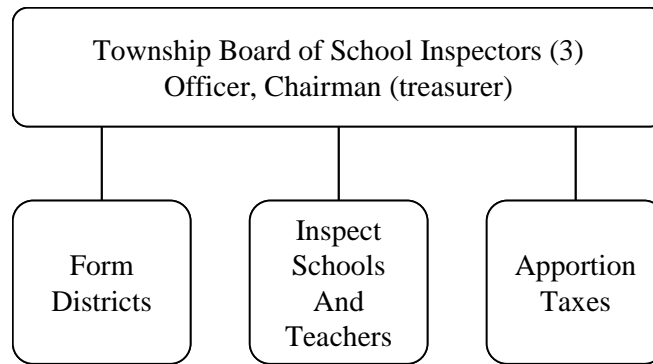


Figure 7: Michigan's First Intermediate Unit of Educational Government.

Deficiencies

Although Michigan's education law was viewed as one of the best of its period, Pierce believed there were deficiencies. According to Pierce (1875),

One defect was that it [law] did not provide for the support of a school in every district throughout the year. To have done this at this time was simply an impossibility. Besides, five days in a week for forty weeks is as much as any school ever ought to be kept open in one year. I think that this was in accordance with the sentiment of all experienced teachers.

To have proposed thus early in the settlement of the country to levy a tax to keep the schools open the year round would have defeated the whole thing. Even up to 1850 we failed to procure the passage of a law for the establishment of free schools, even for three months; and then the best we could do was to make it the duty of the legislature to establish such schools after five years, and this was neglected for two years longer.

The second defect pointed out was in not providing for the appointment of county superintendents, to be named by the state superintendent. Such a proposition at that day would have been as fatal as the other. The people were not prepared, nor could they afford, to be taxed \$1,000 more or less in every county,

in addition to their other taxes, to pay a superintendent. Township inspection was our only resort; it was the best we could do. (p. 41)

These “defects” noted by John D. Pierce, would be a concern for state superintendents for many years to come.

The difficulties that the early Michigan superintendent of public instruction encountered in “superintending” the decentralized Michigan Public School System should not be understated. The lack of the bureaucratic connection from the state to the local educational arena was a consistent theme in the early state superintendents’ reports. Pierce’s successor, Franklin Sawyer (1841), revealed his frustration with the school district directors and township inspectors, whose statutory responsibilities were to report “in addition to the statistics enumerated . . . such other facts and statistics in regards to schools and the subject of education, as the Superintendent shall direct” (Annual Superintendent’s Report, 1841, p. 244). Superintendent Sawyer had requested that the directors address a number of questions concerning the conditions of their schools in October, 1840. The response that Superintendent Sawyer received, or didn’t receive, from the local directors raised his ire. Sawyer commented in the Annual Superintendent’s Report:

In some instances, the questions did not reach the districts in season to be answered in the October report; in others, little attention was given to them; in a few, they were deemed officiously inquisitorial, but, in *three* or *four* only, sufficiently so, to induce an *uncivil* return; while in a very great number of cases, the responses were all that the most devoted public servant could wish. The *exceptions* bore upon their face conclusive evidence of the fact that *ignorance* is the worst foe our school system has yet to combat. Many of the reports are

prepared with the minuteness of detail that does credit to the head and heart of the officer. The object of the circular was fully apprehended-the facts sought to be elicited were furnished with a promptitude and good will that speaks volumes in the way of encouragement to future efforts of the kind-suggestions were made with a frankness becoming the dispenser and recipient of common school education-and pledges of co-operation were so given as amply to compensate for any amount of labor that a sense of public duty may impose upon this department. (pp. 244-245)

Superintendent Sawyer (1841) continued,

That if the inspectors of every town would take pains to acquaint themselves with the local operation of our school system, its defects and obvious improvements, the degree of interest manifested by parents on the subject of education, the qualifications of teachers, the character of their schools, the modes of instruction and the discipline, the location and construction of school houses and various other details absolutely indispensable to through comprehension of our whole plan of public instruction, and communicate their knowledge and experience in the form of an annual report, educational legislation would cease to be guesswork, and our school laws, instead of being, as one director reports, a puzzle to [sic] perplexing for the wits of a Philadelphia lawyer to work out; and as another expressed it, like double geared machinery, costing more to work it than it comes to, would be to ordinary minds as intelligible as the simplest every day rules of common life. (Annual Superintendent's Report, p. 246)

Superintendent Sawyer (1841) also requested that the legislature direct its attention to the State of New York, which had, in the past year, passed a law placing a

deputy superintendent to supervise the schools in each county. These deputy superintendents were appointed by each county's board of supervisors. Superintendent Sawyer concluded this aspect of his report by stressing that his proposal would "insure greater efficiency in our schools, higher interest and more harmonious action among parents, and greater economy" (Annual Superintendent's Report, 1841, p. 259).

Michigan's system of public schools continued to grow rapidly. Superintendent Sawyer's report (1841) reflected that there were 2,309 school districts in Michigan in 1840. He received reports from 1,486 of these districts that accounted for 51,254 "scholars" in attendance during some time of the school year. The length of the school year in 1840 ranged from 3 ½ to 5 ¼ months in session (p. 241). By 1845 there were reported to be 75,770 "scholars" attending school. Attendance during these early days of public education meant that the students had been accounted for in school at least once. Ira Mayhew (1845), Michigan Superintendent of Public Instruction, lamented the fact that, in the school districts reporting, there were 4,478 children between the ages of four and eighteen "who have not attended any school during the year, and who cannot read, write or cipher" (Annual Superintendent's Report, pp. 7-8).

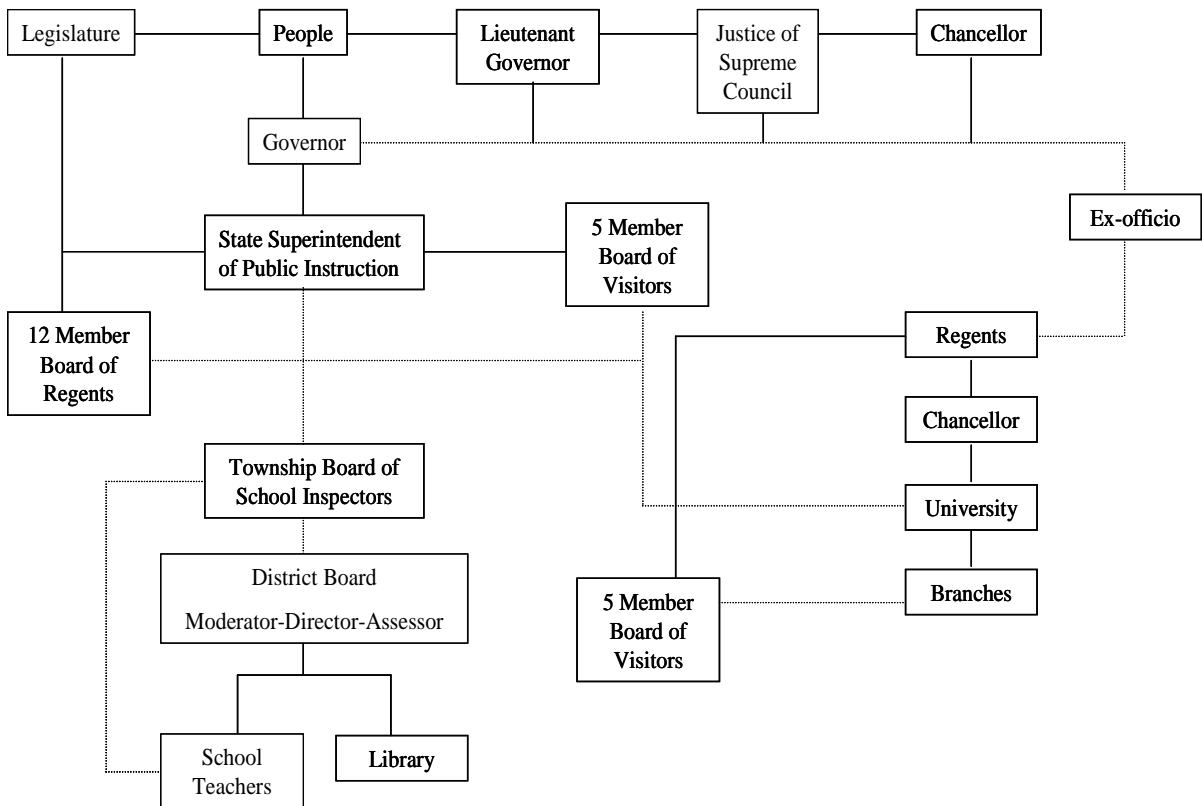


Figure 8: Organization of Michigan's Public Education System, 1837.²

State Economy/Tasks

After the Civil War, the State of Michigan became the model for the Industrial Revolution, which began in the forests of Michigan and ultimately and unimaginably stripped it bare of one of its most substantive natural resources. Michigan and the world moved into an automotive and manufacturing period that further changed every aspect of culture, society, politics, and education. The Industrial Revolution indeed changed everything in Michigan, as a new dominant ideology based on mass production and manufacturing took hold.

Manufacturing

During the early days of the Industrial Revolution in Michigan, manufacturing quickly expanded. Lumber products, paints, varnishes, wagons, carriages, and

² Note: Adapted from *Public Education in Detroit*, by A. Moehlman, 1974, New York: Arno Press p. 59.

shipbuilding flourished, especially in Detroit, where “locomotives, steam engines, stoves, and freight cars” were also produced (Bald, 1954, p. 298). According to Catton (1984), “In 1860, this area [Detroit] had just under 3,500 manufacturing establishments with a total invested capital of \$28,000,000; at the turn of the century, there were more than 16,000 factories, representing an investment of \$284,000,000. Detroit had burst at its seams” (p. 184). On the western side of the state, Grand Rapids became a manufacturing center for many of the same products. Electric street lights also began to replace gas lights outdoors. The Edison Illuminating Company of Detroit was organized in 1886. The chief engineer for the Edison Company during the 1890s was Mr. Henry Ford, and in 1896 Ford completed his first automobile in Detroit.

In 1899 the Detroit Automobile Company was organized, but in 1901, “Mr. Ford withdrew from the company and it was reorganized as the Cadillac Motor Company with Henry M. Leland as production manager” (Bald, 1954, p. 362). Ford then organized the Henry Ford Automotive Company, which failed in 1902. In 1903 the Ford Motor Company was organized yet again. Over the next few years, Ford would create automobiles ever more inexpensively. Using mass production techniques, 200,000 cars were being turned out annually by 1913, and the cost had been reduced from “\$1,926.00 per vehicle in 1908” to “\$550.00 per vehicle in 1913” (p. 363).

James H. Whiting of the Flint Wagon Works purchased the Buick Company from David Buick in 1902, and moved the auto company to Flint, Michigan. Whiting sold the company to William C. Durant, a successful carriage manufacturer, who would later purchase the Olds Motor Works, Cadillac, Oakland, and the Chevrolet car companies to form General Motors.

Chrysler Corporation was a later development that resulted when the Maxwell and Chalmers companies were reorganized in 1922 as the Maxwell Motor Corporation and again in 1925, as the Chrysler Corporation. In 1928 Chrysler acquired the Dodge Brothers Incorporated. Detroit truly earned the name of “The Motor City” during those times. “The Hudson,” “Packard,” “Saxon,” “Flanders,” and “Buick” were other cars produced in Detroit during the early twentieth century (Bald, 1954, pp. 365-366).

Business-Scientific Ideology

As the impact of the Industrial Revolution spread, new studies were conducted aimed at improving the efficiency of organizations. In 1910 Frederick Taylor became widely known for his work concerning “scientific management” or the “Taylor System.” The basic principles of scientific management were to raise production, increase wages, and reduce costs. Taylor’s research findings revealed that “there was always one best method for doing any particular job and this best method could be determined only through scientific study” (Callahan, 1962, p. 25). With the help of the federal government, the principles of scientific management were soon widely acclaimed to be the panacea for improving nearly every aspect of life, including education (pp. 19-25).

Taylor’s system was predicated on the idea that every aspect of work could be measured, and workers could be trained to do their jobs efficiently once their jobs were properly measured. The Taylor system called for a further separation of the roles of managers and laborers, as Taylor believed that those who did the work were inherently different from those who planned the work (Callahan, 1962, pp. 22-28). The classic symbols of the “Taylor Method” of “scientific management” were the “stop watch” and the “time and motion study” (p. 28).

Concurrent with Taylor's work, tremendous momentum was being built by the technological advances and personal wealth being generated by men such as John D. Rockefeller, Andrew Carnegie, and J. P. Morgan. "The publicity surrounding these wealthy businessmen was increasing the prominence of their role in the minds of the American people" (Callahan, 1962, p. 2). What was "good" for business became "good" for every aspect of American society. Gradually the new business-scientific ideology overcame the Protestant-republican reform ideology as the dominant force behind public education policy development.

Municipal Reform Movement

The business-scientific ideology led to the municipal reform movement, which began in the late nineteenth century and progressed throughout the twentieth century, and was used to reform government at all levels. The municipal reform movement was the societal response to the systemic stressors placed upon the public education and social systems by industrialization, immigration, and urbanization. Journalistic "muckrackers," who exposed tremendous graft and dishonest practices within America's large urban governments helped to fuel the municipal reform movement. Eventually the application of business methods to all social systems as an answer to the problems of the cities led to a new set of political myths concerning education. These myths, according to Iannaccone, (1977) were 1) the separation of politics and education, 2) the concept of a unitary community where an elite educational system will meet the needs of all, and 3) the belief in administrative neutral competency; the belief that professional administrators make decisions that are value-free and apolitical (pp. 57-60).

Educational Ideology

The influence of the business-scientific ideology and the municipal reform movement soon crept into the “business” of education. According to Tyack and Hansot (1980):

At the turn of the twentieth century the earlier evangelists were replaced, for the most part, by full time professional managers who saw their careers as building on the foundations laid by Horace Mann’s generation but who had somewhat different views about the functions of schooling. Equally millennial in their own way, they believed that they stood at a point in history when experts could and should control the course of human evolution. The newer rhetoric shifted from religious to scientific language. They saw business efficiency as a social panacea. Instead of trying to mobilize local citizens to act in a broad-based social movement, the twentieth century managers sought to “take schools out of politics” and to shift decision making upward and inward in hierarchical and buffered systems.” (p. 292)

Educationist’s Ideology

The origin of the ideology concerning the county intermediate superintendent was found in the 1855 Superintendent’s Annual Report. Ira Mayhew (1855), in his second stint as the superintendent of public instruction, called for “the establishment of a more thorough system of inspection of teachers, and provisions for a more efficient supervision of schools, and for granting different grades of certificates for teachers (p. 26). Mayhew advocated for “one school inspector in each township” and “one school commissioner in each Senatorial District of the State” (p. 26). He believed that the commissioner should have “general supervision of the schools” to “visit schools” and to “examine teachers” (p.

26). Mayhew would continue to recommend this addition to the educational governance system throughout his tenure as state superintendent of public instruction to 1858.

It was John Gregory, Superintendent of Public Instruction from 1859-1864, who advocated most vociferously for a county superintendent's role within Michigan's Public School System to supervise the local school districts.

Superintendent Gregory (1861) recommended that the county superintendent's position be appointed by the township school inspectors, who would also set the position's salary within the state's prescribed parameters. Gregory also suggested that the county superintendents might be commissioned by the state superintendent of public instruction and, thus, be subject to removal upon "proof of incompetency or unfaithfulness" (pp. 22-24). The duties of the county superintendent under Gregory's proposal would involve the examination and licensure of teachers, inspection of schools, establishment of school district boundaries, and transmittal of reports to the superintendent of public instruction (pp. 22-24).

Local Administration

Though Mr. Gregory would leave the state superintendency without seeing his vision realized, in 1866 the State of Michigan did indeed create the county superintendent's position. Oramel Hosford, Gregory's successor, in his 1866 report, continued to advocate to the legislature for the establishment of the county school superintendency. In doing so, he provided a summary of his perception of the township based status quo:

With the present arrangement for examining teachers and supervising the schools, persons are often placed over the schools, as instructors, who are notoriously incompetent. The examinations, as conducted in a multitude of instances, is [sic]

simply a form; or, perhaps, to say that it was a mere farce, would be saying what was more nearly the truth, and not infrequently are certificates given without even the form of an examination. We are constantly receiving intelligence from different parts of the state that teachers are employed who are entirely incompetent for their work. A letter has just come to the office, stating that for years the Inspectors of a certain township had been in the constant habit of issuing certificates without even the formality of an examination, and no examination had ever been had, except one, when one of the citizens offered his services as examiner, but even then, a certificate was granted to one who was unable to answer a single question, and not a single school had been visited for several years. I fear that it is true that a *thorough* visitation and examination of the schools is unknown, to the larger number of the schools of the State. The present system of examining teachers, so far as the securing of competent instructors by it is concerned, is a complete failure, and the system of school supervision, so far as the improvement of the schools by it is concerned, is equally a failure. But these examinations and this supervision are imperatively demanded. We can never have schools successful, in any true sense, without a constant and rigid system of supervision. It was a part of the plan, originally devised, that the schools should be constantly cared for. It was never intended that the schools should be neglected, and suffer in consequence of the neglect, as they have done, and are still suffering. (pp. 4-5)

Mr. Hosford (1866) also compared the positive experience and educational improvements of the large cities and towns that were “employing competent men to take the supervision of their schools” (p. 5).

The Origin of the County Superintendent

State Governance

State Law, Regulation, Structure

On March 13, 1867, the Michigan legislature passed Public Act No. 55 of 1867 to create the county superintendent of schools, thus placing an agent of the state into the counties to develop the local educational system.

This law required that the first popular election of the county superintendent of common schools take place on “the first Monday of April, one thousand eight hundred and sixty seven, and every two years thereafter” (Public Act No. 55, 1867, p. 74). The superintendent, once elected by the people, would have an office at the county seat or at some other place as designated by the Board of Supervisors. The superintendent’s compensation was determined by the county board of supervisors but “could not be less than \$3.00 or more than \$5.00 per day” (p. 74). The number of days the superintendent would work was determined by the Board of Supervisors, but would not be less than the number of school districts, and one day for each township in the county.

Under the Law of 1867, which required a county superintendent in counties with 10 or more districts, there were a total of 46 superintendents elected in April (Thirty First Annual Superintendent’s Report, 1867, pp. 22-23).

County Superintendent Educational Services Function

Professional Development

From its earliest days, the county intermediate unit of government addressed the needs for improving teachers’ instructional skills. Public Act No. 55 of 1867 called for county superintendents to “promote by public lectures and teachers’ institutes and by such other means as he may devise, the improvement of the schools in his county, and the

education of the character and qualifications of the teachers thereof” (p. 77). This service was closely related to the certification responsibility of the county superintendents.

Student Attendance

Public Act No. 55 of 1867 required the county superintendent “to consult with the teachers and the school boards to secure the more general and regular attendance of the children in his county upon the public school” (p. 77). As there was no compulsory education requirement, this required the county superintendent to promote the virtues of education to families and children in the communities. The men who served with the county superintendent were essentially performing ministerial services on behalf of public education.

County Superintendent Educational Governance Function

Teacher Examinations

The county superintendent was required to examine all prospective teachers in a public setting. He was authorized to grant certificates to “all persons whom, on thorough and full examination, he shall deem qualified in respect to good moral character, learning, and ability to instruct and govern a school” (Public Act No. 55, 1867, p. 75). The successful teaching candidates would have to pass an examination in “orthography, reading, writing, grammar, geography, and arithmetic” (p. 75).

Teacher Certification

Three grades of certification could be granted by the county superintendent. The first grade certificate could be granted to any person of “approved learning, qualifications, and character” and with at least one year of successful teaching (Public Act No. 55, 1867, p. 76). The first grade certificate was valid for two years, anywhere in the county for which it was granted. The second grade certificate could be granted to any

person meeting the same personal qualifications as previously mentioned but without any teaching experience. The second grade certificate was valid for one year, anywhere in the county in which it was granted. The third grade certificate, which carried no presumptions of qualifications, could be awarded to a person by the county superintendent and used within a township for up to six months. The law establishing county superintendents forbade the employment or contracting “with any person to teach in any of the public schools in this state, who has not such a certificate in force,” or a certificate provided by the State Normal School, or a certificate provided by the superintendent of public instruction (p. 75). The State Superintendent for Public Instruction had the authority to grant certificates that would only be revoked by him and that would permit the teacher to teach in any “primary or graded schools in the state” (p. 77). The governance duties of the county superintendent under Public Act 55 of 1867 included:

First. To visit each of the schools in his county at least once in each year, to examine carefully into the discipline and the modes of instruction, and into the progress and proficiency of the pupils, and to make a record of the same, and to counsel with the teachers and district boards as to courses of studies to be pursued, and for the improvement of the instruction and discipline of the schools.

Second. To note the condition of the school-house and appurtenances thereto, and to suggest plans for new school-houses to be erected, and for warming and ventilating the same, and the general improvement of school-houses and grounds.

Third. To inquire into the condition of district and township libraries, and to counsel if necessary for the better management of the same, and to see that the money collected from fines is directed to the increase of such libraries. (p. 77)

Reports

Under Public Act 55 of 1867, the county superintendent would also receive and manage communications from the state superintendent of public instruction. The township school inspectors were required to submit their mandatory reports to the county superintendents. The county superintendent was given authority to examine the reports from the township school inspectors and correct them prior to forwarding them to the state superintendent of public instruction and the county clerk.

The benefits resulting from the employment of county superintendents were almost immediately reported in a most favorable light within the Thirty-first annual report of the Superintendent of Public Instruction (1867). In his report, Superintendent Hosford, credited this new position with “an increased interest on the part of the people in the public schools” (p. 5). He also remarked on “the evident anxiety exhibited by the teachers to more thoroughly prepare themselves for their work” (p. 5). Mr. Hosford addressed the work these superintendents were doing to assist schools to retain teachers longer, bring communities together to celebrate their schools, and improve their counties’ school buildings.

State Salary Increases

At the state level, progress related to salaries was attained through the efforts of the county superintendents (Riegle, 1971). In particular, the salaries of female teachers showed a marked increase across the state, from an average of \$19.48 per month to \$28.19 per month, a 45% increase. During the same time, the average salary of males increased from an average of \$44.03 per month to \$51.29 per month, a 16.5% increase.

The reported increase in female teachers’ wages was a bit misleading. Superintendent Briggs noted in his Annual Report of 1877 that the practice of “boarding

around” had significantly changed. Early on in the common school movement, teachers drawn to distant places to teach would board with the families of their students for periods of time based on the number of students the family enrolled in their school. This cost was included as part of calculating and off-setting the “rate bill” parents paid. This expense, however, was not included in the reported teachers’ wages. With the advent of free public schools in 1869, there was no longer a “rate bill” and the cost of board was now included as part of the teachers’ wages. Still, critics pointed to increases, such as this, as excessive and attributable to the increased costs associated with the establishment of county superintendents. On March 31, 1875, the county superintendents were replaced by the State of Michigan with a township-based educational governance system.

Township Superintendents

Competing Ideologies

In spite of significant changes in the public education system, or perhaps because of them, the educational governance and service functions of the county superintendent were transferred to the “local” township level. Government centralization was being rejected for its perceived wastefulness, and the county superintendents were caught in the reform politics of the day (Dilla, 1917). According to Katz (1987), “democratic localism” was one of the competing ideologies put forth by policy entrepreneurs (pp. 32-37), such as John C. Spencer, Secretary of State for the State of New York, who viewed the bureaucratization of education, as proposed by people such as John D. Pierce, an affront to the intelligence and freedom of man. The proponents of democratic localism believed that the school should be controlled by the families with children therein, and “subordinated both efficiency and organizational rationality to an emphasis on responsiveness, close public control, and local involvement” (Katz, 1987, p.

34). State Superintendent of Public Instruction, Tarbell (1878), summed up the issue of supervision of the public school system within the broader political context of the state: “There is in Michigan, a feeling prevailing to a greater degree than in most other states, which abhors centralization and resents outside interference. This worked and would again work against county or district supervision” (Forty First Annual Superintendent’s Report, 1876, p. xxiv). Superintendent Tarbell would leave the matter of centralized county supervision, via an intermediate unit of governance, for another day.

As opposed to 56 county superintendents in the year prior, with the repeal of the county superintendent’s law, 915 superintendents of township schools were required to report to the superintendent of public instruction in 1876. According to Superintendent Briggs (1876), only 272 township officers returned reports, providing their local school districts’ data for 1875, to the state superintendent as required by law. Ironically, Briggs reported that this new form of township educational governance had actually cost the state more than the county structure (Thirty Ninth Annual Superintendent’s Report, 1876, p. xxxiii).

Township Educational Services Function

The township system essentially transferred the duties of the county superintendent onto a township superintendent. There were no qualifications for the township superintendent, and the area of jurisdiction was so small that a full-time position was unwarranted. The townships paid little and reportedly attracted unqualified people to the position. The duties of the township superintendent, like those of the county superintendents before them, were to examine and license teacher candidates, visit schools in the townships, examine discipline and modes of instruction, and counsel teachers and district boards as to the course of study, discipline issues, and instructional

needs of their schools. He was also an advisor on matters related to the condition of school buildings and grounds, the district and township libraries, and improving student attendance.

Conflict between Educational Governance and Service Levels

According to Edelman (1985):

For the spectators of the political scene every act contributes to a pattern of ongoing events that spells threat or reassurance. This is the basic dichotomy for the mass public. The very fact that the same act which one grouping favors looms ominously for another reinforces each side in its perceptions for it seems to make it all the more clear that the enemy is really there, fighting against the good life or against life itself. (p. 13)

Such an act was observed by this researcher when Superintendent Briggs' successor as State Superintendent of Public Instruction, Cornelius Gower, sounded the alarm that the forces in favor of decentralizing the governance of public schools had made a serious mistake when the county superintendent was eliminated.

Attendance at schools began to drop off, especially in the non-graded, rural primary schools. Standards of qualifications for teachers were "lowered at least 50%" since the county superintendents were eliminated in 1875 (Forty Third Annual Superintendent's Report, 1880, p. xxxi). Teachers' wages, since 1875, had decreased 25%, and during the previous year, 1879, there had been a decrease in the wages of female teachers of 15%. Gower (1880) stated,

Those who favored the abolition of the county superintendency and the adoption of the present system that we might have "cheap schools" must certainly be abundantly satisfied with the result of their labors while all sensible people

throughout the state are nearly unanimous in declaring that the township superintendency has wrought great evils, which can be remedied only by years of faithful effort under a latter system (Forty Third Annual Superintendent's Report, 1879, p. xxxii).

Superintendent Gower proposed combining the best aspects of the township and county governance models that had thus far been implemented in Michigan. In justifying his proposal, Gower noted the lack of maps in district schools, the failure to keep any records, the lack of uniform lists of text books in district schools, and the siphoning off of library funds by district and township officials for other purposes. Gower (1881) stressed the "efficient" and "harmonious" aspects of his "scheme" of local supervision of the schools (Forty Fourth Annual Superintendent's Report, 1880, p. 14). The forces for centralization had found their voice.

Shared Educational Governance Structure

In July 1881, a system of shared educational governance between the townships, the counties, and the state was implemented by the State of Michigan. State Superintendent of Public Instruction, Cochran (1882), believed the new system represented "a combination of elements for the work which experience has taught should be brought to bear to secure the best results" (Forty Fifth Annual Superintendent's Report, 1882, p. iv). The "new" three-tiered system created the county board of school examiners to be responsible for the testing and certification of teachers. The new law (Public Act No. 164, 1881) required the chairmen of the township boards of school inspectors to meet and elect three school examiners on the first Tuesday of August in 1881. The officers would be sworn in and begin their duties the fourth Tuesday of August following their election. The first board members would have their terms staggered from

one to three years. Each year thereafter, the township inspectors were to meet at the county clerk's office to elect a member to the county board of school examiners to a new three-year term. The county board of school examiners was responsible to elect a member as secretary who would serve as the executive officer of the board. The law specified that the officer whose term would "soonest expire" was to serve as chairman.

Township Educational Service Function

The three-person township board of school inspectors would be responsible for the day-to-day operations of the district. The services of the township board of school inspectors would be to visit each school during the term to examine the discipline, instruction, and student progress therein. It was the inspector's responsibility to counsel with teachers, report on the conditions of the schoolhouse, and promote the cause of education in his township. The township board of school inspectors was to notify the secretary of the county board of school examiners whenever there was a school within the township not being conducted in a "successful and profitable manner" (Forty-Fifth Annual Superintendents Report, 1882, p. VII).

County Educational Governance Function

The educational governance function of the county board of school examiners centered on the administration of teacher examinations held in the county seat on the last Friday of March and October. Special examinations could be held in other parts of the county at the discretion of the county board of school examiners. Specific responsibilities were placed on the secretary of the township board of school inspectors to publish the schedules in newspapers and with the township board of school inspectors at least ten days in advance of the examination. The county board of school examiners granted certificates in accordance with the directives of the state superintendent of public

instruction, which stipulated that teachers could be licensed only after full examination demonstrated they “were qualified in respect to good moral character, learning and ability, to instruct and govern a school...” (Public Act No. 164, 1881, p. 194). The law required the prospective teacher to pass a “satisfactory examination in orthography, reading, writing, grammar, geography, arithmetic, and the theory and art of teaching.” After 1881 the law required prospective teachers to also satisfactorily pass an examination in the “history of the United States and civil government” (Public Act No. 164, 1881, p. 195). The certificates had to be signed by the secretary and chairman of the board of school examiners. The county board of school examiners was authorized to grant three grades of certificates: the first grade certificate required one year of successful teaching and was valid for three years, the second grade certificate was to be granted to those who had six months of successful teaching, and the third grade certificate was for new teachers and was valid for one year. These three grades of certificates were valid for any school district in the county in which it was granted. The secretary of the county board of school examiners was authorized to grant, upon his personal examination, and as authorized by rules established by the county board of school examiners, special certificates to teach in a specific school district until the next public examination.

The board of school examiners could suspend or revoke teaching certificates for “neglect of duty,” “incompetency to instruct or govern a school,” and immorality” (Public Act No. 164, 1881, p. 195). A hearing was required prior to such action, unless the accused individual failed to appear “after reasonable notice” had been given (Public Act No. 164, 1881, p. 196).

Visitations

The governance functions of the secretary and chairman of the school board examiners reflected the centralized authority of this law. The secretary was authorized to conduct visitations as follows:

To visit any school in the county and examine its condition whenever he shall receive notice from the chairman of the Board of School Inspectors of the township in which such school is being taught, that said, school is not successfully and profitably conducted and report the result of his investigation to the Board of School Examiners. (Public Act No. 164, 1881, pp. 196-197)

The county board of school examiners could revoke the teacher's certificate if that person was determined to be "incompetent" (Public Act No. 164, 1881, p. 197).

Reports

The law required the secretary of the county board of school examiners to report annually to the state superintendent of public instruction concerning the board's activities and the general condition and management of the schools (Public Act 1881, No. 164).

Supervision

Superintendent Cochran (1882) did not hide his ultimate vision concerning the relationship between the county board of school examiners and the township board of school inspectors when he expressed the following in the Forty Fifth Annual Superintendent's Report of 1882:

But it is not alone in examinations that the county board should be a power for good. Its relations to the township inspectors, the teachers, and the schools are so intimate that its influence should be felt in all departments of supervisory work. I confidently look forward to the time when one member of the board in the larger

counties may give his entire time and best efforts to general supervision with fitting pay for the best kind of service. (p. vii)

State Threats to Township Inspectors

The public education system continued to evolve toward more centralized local governance. The township inspectors failed to meet the demands of the system in the critical eyes of the superintendent of public instruction. Superintendent Hershall Gass (1883) severely criticized the township inspectors for failing to visit schools in his annual report to the legislature (Forty Seventh Annual Superintendent's Report, 1883, p. xxx-xxxv). He stressed the inefficiency of the current system and the previous systems of supervision employed by the state government of Michigan. Superintendent Gass attacked the lack of effort and the qualifications of the township inspectors:

In my official work I am constantly reminded of the weakness of our educational system in the local supervision and management of school affairs. The charge of general inefficiency on the part of those who are elected to inspect the schools is the complaint most frequently heard (p. xxx).

The Superintendent's Report of 1884 contained the opinions of educational and county governmental leaders from throughout the state calling for "a single [county] superintendent," "as being well pleased with the work of the examining board," and charging the township inspectors with "ignorance or indifference" (Forty Seventh Annual Superintendent's Report, 1883, p. xxxiii). These criticisms would continue until 1887 when the county supervision of the rural schools was returned to the county board of school examiners. The examiners would be appointed by the chairmen of the boards of township school inspectors for a two-year term.

The Return of the County Educational Executive

Educational Governance

State Law, Regulation, Structure

Public Act No. 226 of 1887 returned an executive officer to the county intermediate unit of educational government in the form of the secretary of the county board of school examiners. This act reduced the previous three-member board of school examiners to two. These two members would continue to be elected by the chairmen of the township school inspectors. The county probate court judge would join the two members of the county board of school examiners annually and elect the secretary of the board of school examiners.

The secretary was an ex-officio, non-voting member of the county board of school examiners on all matters except his removal of office by the board (Beem and James, 1956, p. 17). The services of the township board of school inspectors were shifted to the secretary of the county board of school examiners under Public Act No. 266 (1887). These were the same duties formerly assigned to the county superintendent.

The return of centralized governance over the State of Michigan's rural schools was further strengthened with the passage of Public Act No. 147 of 1891. This act confirmed the reinstatement of the county superintendent, which had been eliminated in 1875. The new law called the position county commissioner of schools. There were several differences in the new law: (1) That the county supervisors would set the compensation for the position. The compensation was set not less than \$500.00 annually for a county commissioner of schools with at least 50 schools under his supervision, not less than \$1,000.00 annually with at least one hundred schools, and not less than \$1,200.00 if there were at least one-hundred and twenty-five schools. (2) That two

additional members of the county board of school examiners would also be appointed by the county board of supervisors. (3) That the term of the commissioner, who was to be appointed in 1891 and then elected by the people beginning in 1893, was for two years. Public Act No. 147 of 1891 was the first Michigan law requiring that the administrator hold professional credentials. Further, Public Act No. 147 (1891) required that:

No person should be eligible to the office of county commissioner of schools who shall not be a graduate in the literary department of some reputable college, university or state normal school, or hold a State teachers certificate, or who shall not have held a first grade certificate, within two years next preceding the time of his or her election, or shall have held the office of county commissioner under this act; *Provided*, That in counties having less than fifty schools subject to the supervision to the county commissioner, a person holding at the time of his or her election a second grade certificate shall be eligible. (p. 184)

Teacher Certification

The State of Michigan began to take greater control of the licensure of teachers with the law establishing the secretary of the county board of school examiners as the executive officer of the public schools (Public Act No. 226, 1887). Michigan's law now mandated that teachers had to be at least sixteen years of age. The lawmakers required that the examination taken by prospective teachers include, in addition to, those subjects previously required, "physiology and hygiene with particular reference to the effects of alcoholic drinks, stimulants, and narcotics upon the human system" (Public Act No. 266, 1887, p. 353). The law specified that "all examination questions shall be prepared and furnished by the superintendent of public instruction to said secretary, under seal, to be opened before the applicants for certificates on the day of examination."

The grades of certificates were also somewhat changed with the increased centralized state control of the system. Certificates of the first grade, requiring one year of successful practice, were now valid throughout the state for three years. Certificates of the second grade, requiring six months of previous successful practice, were now valid throughout the county for two years, and certificates of the third grade allowed the holder to teach for one year in the county in which the certificate was granted. Special certificates, outside of the grades, were becoming very difficult to obtain, as permission by the secretary of the county board of school examiners was allowed for specific district assignments only until the next opportunity for a full examination. An individual once granted a special certificate, who failed to meet this requirement or failed to pass the exam, could still receive an additional special certificate if authorized by the county board of school examiners.

County Educational Governance Function

Reports

The secretary of the county board of school examiners received, reviewed, and corrected any local district reports prior to their submission to the superintendent of public instruction (Public Act No. 266, 1887, pp. 354-356). With the state controlled chief executive school officer at the county level, the authority of the township school inspectors was limited to filing reports and conducting supervision of the schools as directed by the county commissioner of schools and the state superintendent of public instruction. The legislature had stripped the township board of school inspectors of their authority. Local control, at least as it pertained to rural primary schools, was fleeting. City schools with superintendents, and others with authority to inspect and grant certificates to teachers, were exempt from the supervisory examination and licensing

aspects of this law. The governance function ascribed to the secretary of the county board of examiners was transferred to the county commissioner of schools in 1891.

School Visitations

The secretary of the county board of examiners was required to visit every county school annually to examine the discipline, instruction, and student progress. It was the secretary's responsibility to counsel teachers and school boards concerning courses of study and to report on the condition of the school facilities. The secretary could make recommendations concerning improvements of school buildings and grounds. This service function was transferred to the county commissioner of schools in 1891.

County Educational Services Function

School Improvement

Among the legislated responsibilities of the secretary of the board of school examiners and later the county commissioner of schools was the duty to "promote" the "improvement of schools" and the "evaluation of the character and qualifications of the teachers and officers therein" (Public Act No. 266, 1887, p. 355).

Professional Development

In December 1884, the State Teachers' Association adopted a resolution to appoint a committee "to devise and report a scheme for 'Teachers Reading Circles'" (Report of the Superintendent of Public Instruction, 1884, p. 196). A plan was ratified by the State Teachers' Association in December 1885. "The county organization was to consist of a county council of five members composed of the secretary of the board of school examiners and four others appointed by the state council from a list of six nominated by the secretary" (Starring and Knauss, 1969, pp. 83-84). A three-year course of study was attained for the reading circle students to complete. According to Starring

and Knauss (1969), those who enrolled in the reading circle were required to complete the following studies:

For the first year, those who enrolled in the reading circle were required to study David P. Page's *Theory and Practice of Teaching*, William Swinton's *Studies in English Literature* with supplementary reading, and the *General History* published by A. S. Barnes to page 312. The second year's work consisted of a study of the *Outlines of the Theory and Art of Teaching*, published by G. P. Putnam, Barnes' *General History* from page 312 to the end of the book, and Swinton's *Studies in English Literature* (completion). For the third year the prescribed books were Alexander Bain's *Education as a Science*, Joseph Haven's *Mental Philosophy*, and Gabriel Compayre's *History of Pedagogy*. (p. 84)

County Normal School

Still another aspect of the work assigned to the county commissioner of school was oversight of teacher preparation via the county normal school. In 1905 the county normal school was created and the county commissioner of schools was made a member of the Board of Education (Sixty Seventh Annual Superintendents Report, 1904, p. 71). In 1915 the legislature required that all teachers had to be graduates of the county normal school or take six weeks of professional training at one of the state normal schools.

POST-WORLD WAR I ERA – 1918

Standardization, Efficiency, and Professionalism

The End of the Protestant-Republican Reform Era

In 1917 the United States entered World War I against Germany with the patriotic fervor of the Protestant-republican ideological reform movement that had begun in the mid-nineteenth century. As influenced by this ideology, the nation's purpose was to fight

evil and make the world a better place in which to live. The resulting stalemate and loss of life during World War I, coupled with the failed ratification of the Treaty of Versailles and the League of Nations by the Congress of the United States, left the nation hungry to be left alone.

State Demographics

Michigan's population continued to grow as manufacturing increased and new workers were demanded. By 1920 Detroit had nearly a million inhabitants, approximately five times the number it had in 1890. Bald (1954) summarized the nuances of this growth:

During the same thirty years, the population of Flint increased ninefold, that of Pontiac fivefold, and of Kalamazoo and Grand Rapids twofold. It is significant that the greatest growth appeared in cities which made automobiles. Saginaw and Monroe grew slowly, while Manistee and Menominee declined in population.”
(pp. 370-371)

It is also significant that “in 1890, only 35% of the people of the state lived in towns or cities of 2,500 or more and 65% lived in villages or farms. By contrast, in 1920, the ratio was almost reversed. Sixty-one percent were living in towns or cities, and thirty-nine percent in villages and on farms” (Bald, 1954, p. 371). This dramatic shift impacted the cities' capacity to meet the safety, health, education, and economic needs of its population.

State Cultural Shift

One of the most significant factors of the twentieth century to impact Michigan was the phenomenal growth in the number of African Americans migrating to Michigan from southern states. In 1900 there were 15,816 African Americans residing in Michigan.

By the 1930 census, there were 169,453 African American living in Michigan. During World War I, immigration from Europe ceased and the manufacturing plants needed workers. African Americans were recruited and brought to Michigan by the trainload. Others soon followed, attracted by economic opportunities. Subjected to low pay and discrimination, the African Americans were forced into poor living conditions in the urban areas, primarily Detroit (Bald, 1954, p. 396).

State Accreditation: The Standard School

Michigan State Superintendent of Public Instruction Keeler (1914) put forth his initiative of the “standard school” in his annual report “to arouse the spirit of improvement” for “better rural schools” (p. 18-23). Keeler assured school leaders that he or “his representative” would be present to award the plate and diploma to deserving rural schools. According to Keeler, “A certain degree of excellence in environment, in comfortable and sanitary conditions, and in the ability and character of the teacher is fixed upon as necessary for the proper efficiency of the school” (Seventy Seventh Annual Report of the Superintendent, 1914, p. 18).

The “standard school” designation required the school to have the following attributes:

1. A school year of nine months.
2. A suitable salary for teachers.
3. School grounds of one half acre, with shade trees.
4. Two well kept, widely separated outbuildings, or inside toilets.
5. A school house in good repair, well painted, and decorated inside.
6. A school house with proper lighting.
7. Hardwood floors in the school. A well and a sanitary drinking fountain.

8. A heating and ventilating system.
9. Seats and desks suitable for all ages of children.
10. A library of 80 volumes, suitable for all grades.
11. Good blackboards, with some being accommodating to small children.
12. A school with a dictionary, flag, maps, charts, globe, organ and pictures.
13. The teacher of the standard school had to have experience, and hold at least a second grade certificate or county normal certificate, and have the endorsement of the county school commissioner.
14. Standard high schools had to employ high school instructors holding first grade or life certificates.
15. In order to qualify as a standard school teacher candidates for county normal certificates had to have completed eleven grades in a standard high school and be at least 18 years of age at time of graduation, or be the holder of a third grade or second grade certificate, or had taught two years in the rural schools in the county. (John G. Shafer, 1935, April 7, p. 3)

Consolidation of Rural Schools

State Superintendent of Public Instruction Keeler cast a critical light on Michigan's rural schools and the need for their consolidation (Eighty Second Annual Report, 1919). In his report, Keeler cited the rural schools for their inadequacy:

The educational training of the country school has lagged behind in the onward march of rural progress. The ideals of the teacher, the desire of parents, and the ambitions of the youth have contributed to the movement of our boys and girls from rural to city life. If this movement is to be checked so that we may retain on the farm the boys and girls who are best fitted to do this part of our country's

work, the rural school must be reorganized upon a basis that will cause it to be a force in bringing the boy and girl of the country to appreciate its possibilities. (p. 51)

At the time of Keeler's report, Michigan had, according to the Eighty-Second Annual Report of 1919, four different laws that provided a method for the consolidation of rural schools:

1. The Graded School Act
2. The Township Unit Act for the Upper Peninsula in Michigan
3. The General Township Unit Act
4. The Rural Agricultural School Act (p. 51)

Keeler further cited the "natural limitations and the inherent weaknesses of the one-room school."

With as many as eight grades to teach, with nearly thirty recitations daily, with an average class of less than ten minutes for the actual class work of each class the teacher of such a school cannot hope to do much of the kind of teaching that the boys and girls should receive. (pp. 91-92)

Superintendent Keeler stressed that in order for the rural community to meet more fully the educational needs of the country, it must provide a larger and more efficient school organization" (Eighty Second Annual Superintendent's Report, 1919, p. 92).

Keeler further put the responsibility of improving the rural schools upon each local community, stating, "The solving of the whole rural school problem rests with the people who support the rural school. How well they will solve the problem depends to a large degree upon their open-mindedness toward the problem and their desire for better school opportunities" (p. 92).

Superintendent G. N. Otwell also reported on the “progress in rural education in Michigan” (Ninetieth Report, 1929, pp. 46-53). Otwell reported that since 1919, when consolidated schools were first reimbursed for maintenance and transportation of students, 61 consolidated school districts were established, replacing 308 one-room schools. Through the increased consolidation of rural schools, the following improvements in efficiency were noted by Superintendent Otwell:

Michigan Has Made the Following Additional Provisions for Rural Education:

1. Provided not only an effective compulsory attendance law but a continuous census and uniform child accounting system.
2. Provided a uniform grading system and for an accumulative education record of each child.
3. Provided for a 9-month school year.
4. Provided special state aid for districts having excessive tax rate.
5. Provided for payment of school tuition.
6. Provided for use of school buildings as community and recreational centers for residents of the district. (p. 52-53)

Michigan’s movement toward larger, more efficient, and professional school organizations continued to intensify.

State Department Growth

During the twentieth century, once the matter of securing supervision of the rural schools was resolved via the county commissioner of schools, the Michigan State Department of Education grew immensely. The growth and bureaucratic trend aligned with the business-scientific ideology and fueled by the Industrial Revolution was reflected in a Superintendent’s annual report for the years 1921-22. In addition to the

“superintendent of public instruction,” there was listed a “deputy superintendent,” “three assistant superintendents,” “twelve support staff,” a “division of rural education,” a “statistical division,” the “board of control for vocational education,” and ten “executive staff” (Eighty Fifth Annual Report of the Superintendent, 1924, pp. 7-8). These figures excluded the “state schools” such as the Michigan School for the Deaf established at Flint in 1854, the Michigan School for the Blind established in 1871 at Lansing, the State Industrial Home for Girls established in 1879 at Adrian, the State Industrial School for Boys established in 1855 at Lansing, and the State Public School established in Coldwater in 1871. This burgeoning state bureaucracy and expanding authority was coupled with the growing size of consolidated local school districts led by professional superintendents. Again, the state gradually took over control of teacher training via its normal schools in Ypsilanti (1849), Mount Pleasant (1895), Kalamazoo (1904), Marquette (1899), and other universities. The state normal schools in Kalamazoo and Mount Pleasant were specifically created to train teachers for the rural schools (Ninetieth Annual Superintendent’s Report, 1927-29, p. 51). In 1921 the state required teachers to possess post-high school training from approved institutions of higher learning. In 1923 the statutes of the State of Michigan “required graded school districts employing six or more teachers to employ a superintendent” (Beem and James, 1956, pp. 19-20). Gradually, in many areas of the state the county commissioner’s post was being reduced to mere clerical work. In addition to being squeezed out by the growth of the State Department of Education, the larger consolidated districts, and the higher levels of professionalism of local school leaders, the county commissioners found themselves strapped by county politics. As an elective post, subject to the county board of supervisors budgetary priorities, the county commissioners ability to lead suffered (Beem

and James, 1956, p. 21). Their salary also suffered, and by 1930, in over 50% of the counties in Michigan, the county commissioner of schools was a part-time position. The changes brought on by the “science and business” ideologies of the Industrial Revolution have been observed by this researcher in the growth of the Michigan State Department of Education, the State of Michigan’s educational policies, rules and regulations, and the communications of the county commissioner of schools during the early to mid-twentieth century (Tyack and Hansot, 1980, p. 313). The science and business ideology set the stage for the reorganization of the intermediate unit of governance.

POST-WORLD WAR II ERA – 1945

Cultural Environment

Economy/Tasks

During World War II, Detroit became the “arsenal of democracy,” wielding its manufacturing might to supply the allied armies with the tools to defeat the axis powers. Following the war, the 1950s became Michigan’s economic heyday. “In 1955, Michigan’s per capita income was 16 percent above the U.S. average – and by 1960 the state probably had the nations broadest middle class” (Public Sector Consultants, 2002, pp. 3-4).

According to Dunbar (1971), “In the 1860s probably 85% of the people of Michigan depended upon agriculture for their subsistence” (p. 619). By 1960, “only about 5% of the families in Michigan were dependent on farm income for their support” (p. 620).

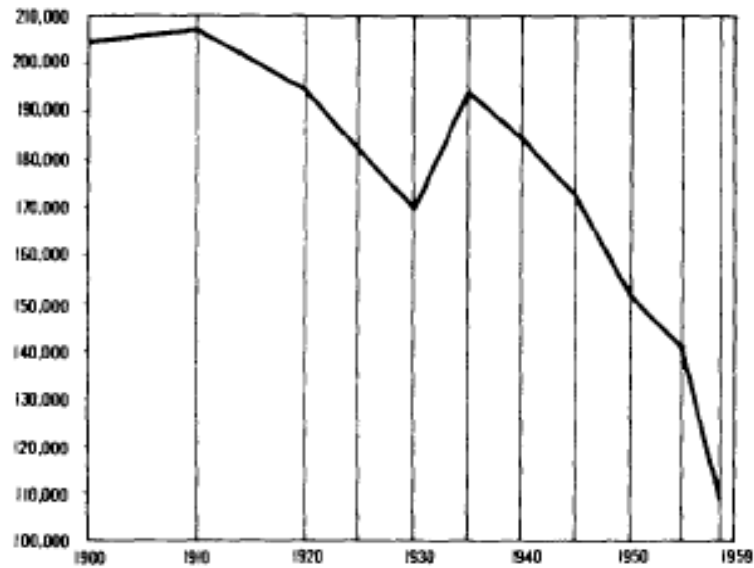


Figure 9: Number of Farms in Michigan in 1900-1959.³

The influence of the auto manufacturers, suppliers, and workers on the world's political, social, and economic development and fortunes has been profound. Detroit, Michigan, was the poster child for the Industrial Revolution.

The Founding of the County School District

State Laws, Regulations, Structure

As the State of Michigan approached the midway point of the twentieth century, the business-scientific ideology was dominating educational policy making. The systemic role of the county commissioner of schools was diminished and threatened with extinction due to the increasing professional management of consolidated rural schools and the ever-advancing state educational bureaucracy. The county intermediate unit of educational governance was at a political crossroad. It would either disappear into historical oblivion, a vestige of the past Protestant-republican reform ideology of the nineteenth century, or be reorganized in accordance with the era's dominant business-scientific ideology and the closely related municipal reform movement.

³ From: Michigan: A History of the Wolverine State, 1965, by W. F. Dunbar, Grand Rapids, Michigan: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company.

The structure of school governance in Michigan began to change when Public Act No. 117 of 1935 allowed counties with populations of more than 250,000 to form a county district. To become a county school district, voters had to first approve a referendum. In 1943 Public Act No. 212 extended the opportunity to become a county school district to counties with a population of *less* than 250,000. In 1947 Public Act No. 269 created county school districts in every county in the state with a population of more than 15,000. The county commissioner was completely eliminated from Michigan's system of school governance in 1949.

In place of the county commissioner, the State of Michigan established a board of education to be elected by representatives from the local school districts of the county. The election would take place on the first Monday in June on a biennial basis. The establishment of the county board of education began to remove the control of the intermediate unit of governance and the rural schools from the general government of the county and townships. Thus people would no longer have a direct vote of the people for the officers of the county's intermediate unit.

Appointed County Superintendent

At the same time the state legislature created the county board of education, it reestablished the county superintendent to be appointed by the county board. The county board of education could also employ a deputy to assist the superintendent in carrying out the services related to the position. The costs related to the services of the county board of education and the county superintendent were to be paid by the county treasurer. First, however, the budget had to be approved by the county board of education and appropriated by the county board of supervisors, a frequent source of conflict. The county superintendent was also required to meet professional standards to be qualified for the

office. At a minimum, the county superintendent had to be a college graduate, possess a Michigan teaching certificate, have a minimum of forty-five months teaching experience within the public schools and hold a Master’s Degree if the county population was over 30,000. Salaries for the county superintendents were set by the State of Michigan as follows by Public Act No. 269 (1947, p. 414):

<u>Population Range</u>	<u>Salary</u>
15,000 – 25,000	\$4,000.00
25,000 – 35,000	\$4,250.00
35,000 – 50,000	\$4,500.00
50,000 – 75,000	\$4,750.00
75,000 – 125,000	\$5,000.00
125,000 – 150,000	\$5,250.00
150,000 – 175,000	\$5,500.00
175,000 – 200,000	\$5,750.00
200,000 – 225,000	\$6,000.00
225,000 – 250,000	\$6,250.00
250,000 – 275,000	\$6,500.00
275,000 – 300,000	\$6,750.00
more than 300,000	\$7,000.00

The State of Michigan paid the county superintendent directly. This law also made it permissible to pay the county superintendent in excess of these amounts from county funds (p. 414).

Significantly, the county board of education was authorized to furnish services for any district, when requested to do so by the local board of education. The county board could evolve beyond the mandates of the regulations and negotiate to provide services within the local educational environment. This provision of the law gave the county

board of education authority to develop interorganizational resource dependencies with schools beyond those services required by statute.

The county intermediate unit of governance originally created as a supervisory arm of the state was beginning its evolution into an educational service agency, as shown by the services and governance functions in Table 1.

Table 1.

Functions of the County Board of Education, 1947-1962

Services Functions	Governance Function
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Professional Development 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consolidation of Rural Schools
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maps and Census 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Special Education Resources
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Permissive Services when requested by a local Board of Education 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Audits
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Determine Local Tax Revenues
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain Libraries

County School District Services Function

Secretary

The county superintendent served as the secretary of the county board of education. His duties were to “put into practice the educational policies of the state and the county board of education” (Public Act No. 269, 1947, p. 415).

Professional Development

The county superintendent was the assistant conductor of the county institutes and was responsible for collecting the related fees and submitting them to the county

treasurer. The county superintendent also could audit records, upon the direction of the Michigan Superintendent of Public Instruction.

Libraries

The county board of education was responsible for recommending books and instructional equipment to be purchased for school libraries in schools not employing a superintendent.

Maps and Census

It was also the county board of education's responsibility to ensure that a map of the county showing the boundaries of all the school districts was produced and distributed. These maps were to be updated as school districts were reorganized. The county board of education was also required to conduct an annual school census.

Permissive Services

Perhaps most significantly, the county board of education was "empowered to furnish services on a consultant or supervisory basis to any school district employing a superintendent of schools upon request of the board of education of that district" (Michigan Public Acts No. 269, 1947, pp. 412-413).

County School District Governance Function

Supervision

The county superintendent had administrative duties related to primary school districts that did not employ superintendents. He recommended teachers for hiring, supervised, and reported to those local boards.

Resources

Under the "County School District Act" (Michigan Public Acts No. 269, 1947, p. 411) the county treasurer was required to report to the county board of education

concerning delinquent taxes. The county board of education would, in turn, determine the amounts available to each district and notify them accordingly. The county board of education was authorized to adopt its budget independent of county government, though the county board of supervisors appropriated the money. Costs, thus approved, were to be submitted to the county clerk and the tax allocation board or board of county auditors, where appropriate, and paid from county taxes.

Consolidated Schools

The business-scientific ideology called for the efficient consolidation of rural schools. Tyack (1974) explained that “beginning in the 1890s and gaining momentum in the early twentieth century, reformers mounted an attack on the Rural School Problem” (p. 21). This attack, which focused on the shortcomings of the small rural school at the exclusion of its strengths, was observed in the writings of the Michigan State Superintendents of Public Instruction in their annual reports throughout the late nineteenth and early mid-twentieth centuries. These reports generally supported the need to prepare students for a future in a changing community different than the one in which the student lived. The solutions for the perceived shortcomings of the small, rural, one-room school were consolidated districts, standardized curriculum, professional supervision, and vocational training.

The county board of education was given the authority to alter school district boundary lines and organize new districts. In fact, the role of the townships concerning school districts was eliminated. In essence, the county superintendents’ primary responsibilities were to supervise the rural school districts, to bring about their consolidation, and to manage the resulting conflict. The first order of business for the county board of education was to oversee the reduction in the number of primary school

districts. In Monroe County, Michigan, the county board's first actions served as a condensation symbol and signaled its authority to change boundary lines. The schools belonged to the state, and, in a form of educational federalism, the county intermediate unit would carry out its duty of setting boundaries.

State Special Education

Gradually, the cultural and societal myth-complex concerning who should attend school began to change. In 1944 the Visiting Teachers Program was instituted in Michigan to address the needs of students with emotional and behavioral problems. In 1949 the state authorized local districts to provide certain programs for "mentally handicapped children" (One Hundred and Fifth Annual Superintendent's Report, 1961, p. 46). These legislative actions were permissive and not mandatory in their effect.

Superintendent Thurston (Ninety Ninth Annual Superintendent's Report, 1948) reflected an evolving myth-complex in his report defining "exceptional children."

The term *exceptional children* is applied to those children who, because of physical, mental, or emotional deviations, need additional services not required by non-exceptional children. The home-bound or hospitalized children, those suffering from crippling conditions, the cardiopathic, the acoustically or visually handicapped, or those of lowered vitality are the physically handicapped. Children who are mentally defective or slow or those who have brain injuries are included in the mentally handicapped group. Children with behavior problems, including not only the delinquent or pre-delinquent but also those who are overly aggressive or recessive, are considered as emotionally disturbed. Those having several types of handicaps are classified as the multiple-handicapped children. (p. 10)

Superintendent Thurston stated that, “In many cases the exceptional child should attend the classes for non-exceptional children, but specialized services and thoroughly trained consultants should be available to the regular teacher. In other instances the child should attend regular classes for normal children part-time and go to other classes for specialized services” (p. 11). The following programs were available to students when districts chose to provide them (Michigan Department of Public Instruction, Circular No. 12, 1960):

- a. Type I Programs – These programs were designed for the “physically handicapped.” Type I Programs were classes for the “deaf or hard of hearing,” classes for the “blind,” classes for “sight saving,” classes for “crippled,” and classes for the “epileptic.”
- b. Type II Programs – These programs were for those students “homebound” [or] “hospitalized.”
- c. Type III Programs – These programs were provided by the “speech correctionist.”
- d. Type IV Programs – these programs were provided by “teacher counselors” for the “physically handicapped.”
- e. Type A Classes – These classes were for the “mentally handicapped” who were “potentially socially competent.” Pupils enrolled in Type A Classes could be integrated into regular classes “in all but one session each day.”
- f. Type B Classes – These classes were for the “mentally handicapped” who “may be only partially socially competent.” Students within these classes were given two years to demonstrate that they could be served in the public school.

- g. Type C Teacher Consultant Programs – These teacher consultants would counsel with teachers, parents and students on behalf of “mentally handicapped” students who could be integrated into classes with non-handicapped students.
- h. School Diagnosticians of the Mentally Handicapped – These staff worked with a “screening committee” to determine whether “mentally handicapped” students entered into “Type A,” Type B,” or “Type C” programs.
- i. Visiting Teachers – These staff worked with students, teachers, parents, and others in assisting students with personal and social adjustment problems. (pp. 3-4)

The law allowed for room and board, transportation, and tuition for districts under certain circumstances when approved by the state superintendent of public instruction. County districts under Michigan’s permissive legislation were allowed to receive state aid for services to the homebound and hospitalized, speech correctionists, visiting teachers, teacher counselors for the physically handicapped, teacher consultants for the mentally handicapped, and diagnosticians for the mentally handicapped.

Resources

Pfeffer and Salancik (2003) have studied the manner in which organizations survive within the context of their environment. These researchers viewed “the ability to acquire and maintain resources” as the most important aspect of an organization’s survivability (p. 2). Thus, one of management’s key roles is to “guide and control” the organization by manipulating the environment (p. 18). Organizational actors create linkages within the environment that result in mutual interdependencies, thus creating less uncertainty in the environment (p. 143). One of the earliest examples of these efforts

of linkage and interdependence within the environment was observed in the area of special education services. The Oakland County School District became the first county in Michigan to seek and receive approval to provide special education services and receive local tax dollars to pay for them under Act 269 of the Public Acts of 1955.

The County School District Special Education Act allowed county school districts to operate programs where local programs were not available. In these cases, county school districts could employ teachers and other personnel, provide transportation, provide equipment and supplies, and count children for state aid purposes. The dollars generated by the county tax, if levied, could be used to support constituent districts in financing added costs above the general per pupil state aid, build classrooms, purchase land, and provide equipment.

The Formation of the County Intermediate School District

Ideology

State Educational Policy Entrepreneurs

The emerging prominence of organizations in the development of public policy was observed by this researcher in 1953 when the Michigan Association of County School Superintendents sponsored a study of the county superintendency. The study was conducted by the Midwest Administration Center, University of Chicago. Harlan D. Beem, Assistant Director of the Midwest Administration Center, and Thomas James, who replaced Mr. Beem, conducted a number of surveys throughout Michigan and worked with a screening committee made up of county superintendents, representatives of the Michigan Department of Public Instruction, and numerous professional associations with a stake in the future of the intermediate unit of educational governance in Michigan. The committee chairman was Charles Brake, Deputy Superintendent of Wayne County

Schools. The report of the committee was completed in December, 1955. According to Beem and James (1956), the study sought to answer the questions: (1) Should there be an intermediate unit of school administration? and (2) if so, what should be its nature?

One of the conclusions Beem and James (1956) reached was that the duties of the county boards of education were scattered throughout the law, “woven into the whole fabric of school law in the state” (p. 23). The authors reported,

The county superintendency is an old agency in our public school system, well established and well defined as to role in many states long before the city superintendent evolved to its present form. Because the office developed during the period when public education meant elementary education, the county superintendent was identified firmly with elementary education. The development of secondary education, on the other hand, became identified with the growth of the independent city school system and the city superintendent of schools. The result has been that the county superintendent has come to be associated nationally with rural elementary education and it is only the occasional exception that has developed the staff and the vision to serve the twelve grades now recognized as constituting the public school system. One of the major problems in improving the effectiveness of the county superintendency—and it is largely a psychological problem—lies in identifying the office not only in the mind of the average citizen, but also in the minds of a great many county superintendents who do not now do so, with responsibilities for the whole twelve-grade educational program in the areas served. Until this coming-of-age can be realized in a great many more county superintendencies than it now is, efforts toward improvements will continue to falter and break against a very real and solid wall of different

expectations of the role and function of the county superintendent held both by citizens shaping policy and by practicing incumbents of the office.” (p. 24)

The surveys returned showed that, in general, Michigan’s county superintendents were better trained than county superintendents in the Midwest. Nearly 70 % of those answering questions (62) on the study concerning educational attainment had five years of college education (Beem and James, 1956, p. 25). At the time of the study, the salary range for county superintendents was from \$3,000-\$3,999 to \$12,000 and above. In eight counties, at the time of the study, the county superintendent was not a full-time job (p. 30). The study showed that the average county superintendent’s salary was about three-fifths of the average of the state’s highest paid local district superintendents (pp. 30-31). “The percent of the county budget devoted to the county school office ranged from one-tenth of one percent to five and four-tenths percent. Counties appropriating the least proportion of their funds to the school office were the very rich and the very poor” (p. 33). The study found that county superintendents were “burdened with a tremendous amount of formal meetings” (p. 35), and that the county superintendents formed “a convenient line of communication for many community tasks (p. 38). The committee felt that the “intermediate unit could provide the following services in the future:

Services of the Intermediate Unit

1. Visual Aids. Film strips, projectors, motion pictures, maps, globes, charts, clipping services, magazines.
2. Central purchasing.
3. Direct services to exceptional children. Speech correction; schools for partially deaf, partially blind, mentally deficient, emotionally handicapped, homebound, gifted children.

4. Psychological services, Psychiatrists, interviewers, testing services.
5. Social casework.
6. Mental health clinics.
7. Transportation. Routing, training of drivers, cooperative repair and maintenance, cooperative purchasing, setting standards, county planning.
8. In-service training. General; special teachers where there are few in one district; administrators and supervisors; cafeteria workers; bus drivers.
9. Public relations. Work with citizens' groups, publicity, planning bond issues, planning rate referenda and other campaigns, radio-television and handbooks.
10. School building services. Planning and maintenance, clinics, architectural services.
11. Adult education. Trade and industrial education, itinerant [sic] teachers, cooperative community adult programs (training in social and cultural activities).
12. Coordination of supervision. Cooperative planning of curriculum construction, supervision, teacher improvement by resources from various units under direction of cooperating superintendents.
13. Financial services. Accounting, auditing, financial counseling, reporting.
14. Health services. School nurse, doctor, dental health, and hygiene.
15. Professional personnel services. Teacher placement service, substitute teacher pool, salary schedule development, coordination, sick leave policies. (pp. 53-54)

Beem and James (1956) encouraged the development of additional opportunities via permissive legislation. The permissive special education law that had been passed in

1955 was given as an example of this type of legislation. The committee made the following recommendations for “further research toward the solution of the problems of the intermediate unit”:

1. Wherever possible, newer practices in the intermediate unit should be tested and demonstrated before an attempt is made to promulgate them statewide.
2. The intermediate office will develop to full fruition only when there is general recognition of the need for some of the services which are not now being rendered by local districts. This implies a need for wide dissemination of the knowledge gained from successful experimentation. Solution of the problems of the intermediate unit office demands public awareness of the issues involved.
3. A method of continuous evaluation of the work of the intermediate school district should be developed.
4. Leadership offered by administrators in the intermediate office has a major bearing on the future development of that office.
5. Those who are to receive the services from the intermediate office should have a major voice in determining what those services are and in training the leadership to offer them.
6. Improvement of the intermediate school office should be geared to efforts to improve the state school system in general. (p. 60)

In addition, Beem and James (1956) developed a “Forecast of Action.”

1. The development of an efficient intermediate office is an essential ingredient of the preservation of local control.

2. Since the initiative and leadership offered by the administration in the intermediate office have a major bearing on the future development of that office, means should be provided to:
 - a. make the office attractive to educational leaders;
 - b. institute through the state department and colleges and universities an in-service growth program for those responsible for the intermediate district, both lay and professional;
 - c. provide a means for local organizations of administrators, school boards, citizens' committees and others to have a part in the development of this program.
3. The intermediate office will develop to full fruition only when there is general recognition of the need for some of the services not now offered.
4. Solution of the problems of the intermediate office demands better methods of arousing public interest, better methods of communication, and methods of evaluating progress.
5. Improvement of the intermediate school office depends upon improvement of the state school system in general.
6. The evolution of a better intermediate school office should start from the county district, and move gradually toward whatever unit is found to be desirable. A first step strongly urged by the Committee is experimentation with combining several counties into a single intermediate unit. (p. 61)

In its report, *The Intermediate Office of Education in Michigan* (1956), the committee, which came to be referred to as “The Michigan Advisory Committee on the Intermediate Unit,” concluded:

The task given the intermediate unit in Michigan is more challenging than has been supposed. The county superintendent’s interest in and responsibility for rural elementary education, though important, is but one of his concerns. In addition, there is a strong conviction that control should be kept close to the people served. The above conclusions led to an early agreement: *an intermediate office will be needed in Michigan for an indefinite period of time.* (p. 2)

Educational Governance

State Laws, Regulation, Structure

In 1962 Public Act No. 190 created the “intermediate school district” (Public and Local Acts of the Legislature, 1962). The act essentially transferred the educational services and governance functions of the county school district to the newly created Intermediate School District (ISD). The act expressly prohibited the Intermediate School District from superseding or replacing the board of education of any constituent district. The law separated the governance of the intermediate school district from the county board of supervisors. No longer would the county intermediate unit of governance have its budget appropriated by the general county government. The special education funds were to be paid out upon order of the intermediate board. General fund monies would be distributed by the county tax allocation board, an independent body from the county supervisors. With the consolidation of schools, the educational professionals and local social elites were in firm control of the intermediate unit of educational government.

Electors, chosen by the local district boards of education, would now elect the trustees of the county intermediate school district board of education.

Role and Governance Functions of the County Intermediate School District

State Regulation

In 1962 the successful consolidation of Michigan's school districts once again led to a change in the role of the intermediate unit of educational government in Michigan. The consolidation and professional administration of the rural schools allowed the state to supervise the local school districts without the intermediate unit of governance. In its place, the state would give the intermediate school districts expanded responsibilities relative to special education and vocational education services. These new governance and service responsibilities reflected the dominant business-scientific and municipal ideologies in that they emphasized efficiencies, the consolidation of services, and professional management of school districts. The intermediate school district also controlled the approval and appropriations of its financial budget. No longer would the special education financial resources be subject to the general budget allocation process of the County board of supervisors. This resource control further separated the county intermediate school district from general government.

Mandatory Special Education

In 1971, Public Act No. 198 mandated every school district in Michigan to provide special education services to "handicapped children." Public Act No. 198 (1971) broadened the definition of "handicaps" to "include, but are not limited to, mental, physical, emotional, behavioral, sensory, and speech handicaps" (p. 637). Public Act No. 198 prescribed specific "special education personnel" to educate "handicapped persons" including teachers, aides, social workers, diagnostic personnel, physical therapists,

occupational therapists, audiologists, speech pathologists, instructional media curriculum specialists, mobility specialists, consultants, supervisors, and directors (p. 639). In accordance with the business-scientific ideology, specific and measurable diagnostic criteria would be used to determine the eligibility of students to receive special education services.

The intermediate school district board of education had extensive duties assigned to it in implementing mandatory special education under Public Act No. 198. Under this law (Public Act No. 198, 1971), the law stated “That the Intermediate Board shall”:

Develop, establish and continually evaluate and modify in cooperation with its constituent school districts, a plan for special education which shall provide for the delivery of special education programs and services designed to develop the maximum potential of every handicapped person of which the board is required to maintain a record under subdivision (f). The plan shall coordinate the special education programs and services operated or contracted for by the constituent school districts and shall be submitted to the state board of education for its approval. (p. 640)

The intermediate school district board of education was required to contract for or directly provide special education or related services in accordance with the county plan. The intermediate school district board of education was mandated to employ a county director of special education who would meet state standards. The county intermediate school district was responsible for maintaining records on all handicapped persons up to 25 years of age. Michigan’s special education law mandated special education services from birth to age 25 years of age, unless the student graduated from high school. The intermediate school district board of education could place any “handicapped” person

into “appropriate special education programs or services” (Public Act No. 198, 1971). The intermediate school district board was authorized to investigate constituent school districts and report any failures to comply with Michigan’s law or the intermediate school district’s special education plan. The state would also allow the intermediate school district to own facilities in which special education programs could be operated (pp. 639-640). The intermediate school district board would have responsibility for the implementation of mandatory special education.

County Enhancement Resources

With the passage of Proposal A in March of 1994, Michigan’s citizens shifted the funding of public education away from local property taxes. According to Arsen and Plank (2003), “Proposal A marks an unprecedented shift of power in Michigan’s education system, from local communities to state officials” (p. ii). Under Proposal A, the only local general operating revenue available to local school districts is through the intermediate school district. This millage source is an enhancement millage. Under this provision of Proposal A, school districts can levy up to three additional mills on property within the ISD with the approval of local voters. The enhancement millage must be approved by a majority of voters in the ISD, and the new revenues must be distributed across all of the constituent school districts in the ISD on a uniform basis (p. 34) Tables 2 and 3 show the services and governance functions of the county intermediate school district.

Table 2.

Services Function of the County Intermediate School District

Negotiated Environment
• Consolidated Services
• Special Education
• Vocational Education

Table 3.

Governance Function of the County Intermediate School District

Negotiated Environment
• Financial resources
• Special education
• Policy entrepreneurs
• Consolidation of educational services
• Conflict management
• Reports

Vocational Education

State

Vocational education was a gradual development in Michigan beginning in the 1800s. By 1880 the classes in commercial and industrial education began to occur in the larger city schools. Instruction in home arts, “sewing and cooking” for girls, and manual training, viewed as “tool work” for boys found a place in the curriculum. The advocates for this method of instruction, however, viewed manual training as a means of using hands-on manipulation of real life objects “such as measurements” to expand one’s

capacity to reason. As the need for industrial age workers expanded, the call went out to educators to prepare students for the world of work as it was evolving in the twentieth century.

Act 189 of the Public Acts of 1917 was passed so that the State of Michigan could qualify for federal funds. As required by the federal law, the state established a “State Board of Control for Vocational Education” who would oversee the state’s implementation of the federal vocational funds. Though the funds were to be used in the K-12 system, the board of control consisted of the superintendent of public instruction, the president of the state board of education, the president of the University of Michigan, and the president of the Michigan Agricultural College. This board of control was mandated to “formulate plans for the development and conduct of vocational education within the state” (Eighty-First Annual Report of the Superintendent, 1918, p. 36). The State Board of Control designated the Michigan Agricultural College as the institution that should train the teachers for agricultural and trade schools. The Michigan Agricultural College and the Michigan State Normal School would train the teachers of home economics (p. 36). Monroe Superintendent E. E. Gallup was appointed State Supervisor of Agricultural Education in May 1918 (pp. 39-40).

Vocational education became an ever-more emphasized component of the State Superintendents Annual Reports as the twentieth century proceeded. Clair Taylor, Michigan State Superintendent for Public Instruction (Ninety Ninth Annual Report of the Superintendent, 1954) stated the following in calling for increased state involvement in vocational education:

Increasing awareness on the part of school people, business, industry, and labor groups that secondary school youth are not being adequately prepared

occupationally leads to the necessity for increased activity in this responsibility and privilege of the Department of Public Instruction. The recent life adjustment education movement states that local schools are providing fairly adequate education for the 20 percent who go to college and for the 20 percent who are being trained for the skilled trades, but that the remaining approximately 60 per cent [sic] do not have educational programs which satisfy their needs. This movement has brought into greater light the necessity for assistance and encouragement to local schools in the development of programs which will more nearly satisfy the life adjustment needs of youth. It has been clearly demonstrated that these needs involve largely work experience and occupational training. In addition, this does not take into consideration the 40-odd per cent [sic] of youth in Michigan who drop out of school before completing the secondary program.

It seems apparent that the increasing pressures for expanded services in the area of occupational training will make it necessary for Michigan to respond realistically in terms of leadership and assistance. (p. 37)

On April 13, 1966, the legislature amended Act No. 269 of the Public Acts of 1955 and allowed county intermediate school districts to seek voter approval to come under legal provisions governing vocational-technical education. The law also allowed county intermediate school districts to seek operational millage for vocational-technical programs. The county intermediate school districts could not directly operate the vocational-technical educational programs. The county intermediate school districts could, however, borrow money and issue bonds related to building and equipping a facility. The intermediate school district could not purchase or construct a site for a vocational program unless the local district board of education approved it (Public Act,

No. 114, 1966, pp. 133-134). Intermediate school districts were allowed to operate area vocational-technical programs beginning in 1977 (Public Act No. 451).

Implications for Educational Leadership

This research documented the historic roles played by the intermediate unit of educational government in the State of Michigan's public education system. These findings have significant implications for Michigan's educational leaders.

First and foremost, these research findings can be utilized in the professional development of educational leaders. The drift of educational governance of Michigan's system of public education has been toward centralization and away from local control. As the state has assumed more control of educational governance, the intermediate school districts, originally an arm of the state, have evolved into educational policy entrepreneurs acting on behalf of local school districts.

Within the locally negotiated environment, the intermediate and local school districts have created resource interdependencies that have resulted in increased organizational certainty. Changes in the dominant educational ideology that result in regulatory changes will alter the conditions existing in the educational environment and increase uncertainty for all educational organizations. This information is vital to educational leaders of the intermediate and local school districts alike.

Since the year 2000, there has been a tremendous turnover in intermediate school district superintendents, as 49 of 57 intermediate school districts have changed superintendents. This turnover has occurred at a time when the intermediate school districts have been under increasing scrutiny by state level public policy entrepreneurs with agendas to change the governance structure of education via the consolidation or reduction of intermediate school districts. Any such changes will greatly alter the locally

negotiated educational environment. Recently, there have been efforts to have the boards of education of the intermediate school districts elected by popular vote. Such a change would greatly politicize and socialize the educational conflicts at local levels. Given control of the media and resources by elite policy entrepreneurs, such actions could result in the seizing of even greater authority by the state elites under the premise of increasing “local control.” It is imperative that intermediate school district leaders understand the ideological nature of the political conflict and organizational bias inherent in the Michigan Public Education System.

Since the inception of the intermediate school district in 1962, the state level government has continued to erode local control of educational policy making. “Proposal A” of 1994 centralized operational funding at the state level, with the exception of the intermediate school district’s ability to raise local tax levies for special education, vocational, and operational enhancement millage. The ability to generate scarce financial resources across the county and distribute them to local school districts has created interdependency and given legitimacy to the county intermediate school districts. As the last vestige of the local control of financial resources, the leaders of the intermediate and local school districts must understand the historical and political implications of the bias of Michigan’s public education system toward stronger centralization. This understanding will enable them to make future management and leadership decisions in the best interest of public education and the children they serve.

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