

A Report on

**COLORADO
SCHOOL DISTRICT
ORGANIZATION**

October 2002

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October 2002

History of **COLORADO SCHOOL DISTRICT ORGANIZATION**

On November 7, 1861, before Colorado became a state, the first territorial legislation creating public schools passed. This legislation:

- established a territorial superintendent of schools whose major task was to recommend a uniform series of textbooks to local districts,
- provided for the election of county superintendents of schools, and
- provided for the establishment of new tax supported school districts whereby electors could petition the county superintendents to schedule an election for that purpose.

When Colorado became a state on July 4, 1876, its first general laws provided for an elected state superintendent of schools and elected county superintendents. At that time, the parents of ten school age children (6-21) could petition county superintendents for elections to establish new school districts. In 1945, the law was amended to require 15 children prior to setting such elections.

Colorado was founded by a group of Jeffersonians who valued local control and decentralized decision-making. In the state's constitution, the general assembly and state superintendent were forbidden to select a state list of textbooks. Today, this power remains delegated to local boards of education.

The General Law of 1877 provided for the organization of two types of high schools:

- **Union high school districts** were created when elementary districts from only a part of a county wanted to cooperate in the establishment of a high school.

Union High School Districts were entities made up of several independent elementary school districts for the sole purpose of providing education above the eighth grade on a cooperative basis while maintaining the autonomy of the common school district. They were governed in much the same manner as today's Boards of Cooperative Services (BOCES). The governing board would consist of one representative from each of the participating elementary school districts.

- **County high school systems** required all elementary school districts in the county to participate.

A separate committee composed of one board member from each elementary school governed a County High School System.

By 1886, there were 685 school districts, most of which contained only a single school. Over 60,000 children of school age were reported to be living in Colorado. However, only 40,000 were enrolled in the public schools. Due to the rapid expansion of population, the Homestead Act, and mining developments, more school districts were created reaching a total of 2,105 in 1935.

Prior to 1949, school district organizational change was based on the consolidation act described in 123-9-2, CRS. It was a simple process. Two or more boards would meet, determine to consolidate, and set an election. No educational plans or reasons for consolidation were required.

Sometimes consolidation occurred because a school had been empty for a few years or had so few students that continuance was not cost effective. Sometimes consolidation would occur so that a district could extend its borders to include railroad property to enhance assessed valuation for property tax. Occasionally, school districts consolidated to provide a better education for students.

In 1946 and 1947, the General Assembly conducted a study of school district administration in the state. This study reported two major problems for schools of the state. One was school district structure and the other was finance for the schools. The School District Reorganization Act of 1949 was an outcome of this study. This act differed from the previous consolidation act in that educational planning was required. In addition, the act required that a county planning committee be formed to study organization throughout the county and to develop a detailed educational plan to be submitted to the voters. The 1949 Act was followed by revised versions in 1953, 1957, 1963, and 1965.

A legislative study completed prior to the passage of the 1957 Act listed reorganization of Colorado's school districts as Colorado's number one educational problem. At that time, there were 239 non-operating school districts in the state and 203 one-room school districts. The legislative study's report recommended that no county have more than six school districts. It also urged consideration of the establishment of school districts, which would provide 12 grades of education within their own boundaries. Finally, the report recommended that non-operating districts be abolished.

Extensive school district reorganization occurred between 1949 and 1965. By 1956, the state's number of school districts was reduced to 967. By 1961, there were 275 school districts and finally by 1965 the number was reduced to 181, where it remained for 18 years. Today there are 178 school districts.

Table 1: School District Reorganization

Year	# of Colorado School Districts	Year	# of Colorado School Districts
1886	685	1965	181
1935	2,105	1995	176
1956	967	2000	178
1961	275		

During this period of 1956 to 1965, Colorado's most extensive school reorganization occurred in the mountains and on the western slope where several countywide school districts were formed. On the eastern plains, reorganization efforts were less successful leaving the plains dotted with many small districts. More than anywhere else in Colorado, El Paso County resisted school district reorganization and still contains 15 school districts.

In order to retain local control in the small districts and still address economy of scale issues, the Boards of Cooperative Services Act was enacted in 1965. Boards of Cooperative Services (BOCES) served low incidence handicapped students by providing teachers who served several school districts. BOCES also utilized cooperative purchasing and shared management services in a variety of areas to attain more efficient use of public funds. This act has served to reduce the need of school reorganization.

The General Assembly integrated the Consolidation Act into the School District Organization Act during the 1974 session. From that time on, the law has required that all school district consolidation include the development of educational plans.

In 1983, the Arriba and Flagler School Districts consolidated. Vona/Seibert School District consolidated in 1984. Arapahoe School District in Cheyenne County consolidated in 1986 with Cheyenne Wells School District. Egnar 18 in Dolores County consolidated in 1986 with Dolores County School District. Genoa in Lincoln County consolidated in 1986 with Hugo. These consolidations reduced the number of Colorado public school districts to 176.

During the time of Colorado's most extensive school reorganization activity, expanded educational opportunity and economy of scale were the key issues encouraging school reorganization efforts. While these issues remain important, new issues in the 1990's have compelled the state to re-examine school organization. Public concern related to student achievement and increasing desire for expanded options from which students and parents can choose are among these new issues.

During the 1992 legislative session, Senator Al Meiklejohn and Representative Jeff Shoemaker sponsored a new school organization bill, which became the School District Organization Act of 1992. For the first time since 1949, the new law allowed "de-consolidation" or the splitting of existing districts. However, the new law did not make it easier to reorganize. Even a simple detachment and annexation now required a planning committee and vote of all eligible electors in all affected school districts. The General Assembly felt that because any reorganization affected the taxes of all citizens, they should all have the opportunity to vote on the issue.

In 1993, the board of education in the Gunnison Watershed School District Re-1J created a school organization planning committee to study the separation of the Gunnison School District into two districts. The planning committee developed a plan, which provided a separate school district for the Crested Butte and Marble communities, leaving the remainder of the county in an existing Gunnison School District.

Because the number of voters in the community of Gunnison significantly outnumbered the voters in Crested Butte and Marble, the planning committee decided an incentive had to be developed to encourage Gunnison voters to approve the plan. Therefore, during the 1994 sessions of the General Assembly, Senator Powers of Crested Butte successfully sponsored a bill changing the law to permit the planning committee to develop a financial incentive for the plan. Under the plan, the citizens of Crested Butte and Marble would vote to accept bonded indebtedness for 16 million dollars. Ten million of those dollars would be used for capital improvement in the Gunnison School District and six million would be available for the new Crested Butte and Marble Districts.

During the elections of November 1994, this plan failed by a 55% to a 45% margin, although it passed by a large margin in the proposed new Crested Butte and Marble School District. Even the bonded indebtedness vote was successful in the proposed new district. Generally, it was believed that the primary reason for the failure of the reorganization effort was concern by the Gunnison voters over the potential loss to the Gunnison School District of Crested Butte's substantial property assessed valuation.

The next attempt at de-consolidation occurred in Weld County. The Weld County School District Re-3 (J) is made up of agricultural properties in five diverse communities: Lochbuie, Hudson, Keenesburg, Prospect Valley and Roggen. The school district is located near the new Denver International Airport and is targeted to have high growth in the future.

In the Weld R-3 School District school organization planning committee was activated by petition. The petition stated its intent to create one or more additional districts within the boundaries of the current district. In November of 1998, by an overwhelming vote, the citizens in the district rejected a plan to create an additional school district named Lochbuie Re-15.

In November of 2000, West Yuma School District RJ-1 was dissolved by its voters at the end of the fiscal year and in July 2001, two new districts were formed. Yuma School District 1 and Liberty School District J-4. Additionally the voters in November of 2000 also dissolved the East Yuma School District to form the Wray School District RD-2 and the Idalia School District RJ-3.

THE PICTURE TODAY

Today twenty counties have only one school district (see table 2 below). Eighteen counties have two school districts and eleven counties have three districts. Only four counties have more than six districts: these four counties account for 23.0% of Colorado’s school districts. El Paso County has 15 districts, Weld has 12, and Adams and Arapahoe each have seven.

Table 2: Counties with One School District

1. Archuleta	2. Denver	3. Gunnison	4. Mineral
5. Clear Creek	6. Dolores	7. Hinsdale	8. Moffat
9. Crowley	10. Douglas	11. Jackson	12. Pitkin
13. Custer	14. Eagle	15. Jefferson	16. San Juan
17. Delta	18. Gilpin	19. Lake	20. Summit

Table 3: Counties with Two School Districts

1. Alamosa	2. Costilla	3. Ouray	4. San Miguel
5. Bent	6. Grand	7. Park	8. Sedgwick
9. Boulder	10. Huerfano	11. Phillips	12. Teller
13. Chaffee	14. Kiowa	15. Pueblo	16. Cheyenne
17. Montrose	18. Rio Blanco		

Table 4: Counties with Three School Districts

1. Conejos	2. La Plata	3. Mesa	4. Routt
5. Fremont	6. Larimer	7. Montezuma	8. Saguache
9. Garfield	10. Lincoln	11. Rio Grande	

Table 5: Counties with Four School Districts

1. Logan	2. Morgan	3. Prowers	4. Yuma
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Table 6: Counties with Five School Districts

1. Baca	2. Elbert	3. Kit Carson	4. Washington
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Table 7: Counties with Six School Districts

1. Las Animas	2. Otero		
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Table 8: Counties with Seven School Districts

1. Adams	2. Arapahoe		
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Table 9: Counties with Twelve School Districts

1. Weld			
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Table 10: Counties with Fifteen School Districts

1. El Paso			
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Table 11: School Districts with Over 1000 Square Miles of Area

Steamboat Springs	1015 sq. mi.	Kim	1425 sq. mi.
Hugo-Genoa	1029 sq. mi.	Archuleta	1556 sq. mi.
Rangely	1034 sq. mi.	North Park	1628 sq. mi.
Durango	1056 sq. mi.	Poudre	1755 sq. mi.
Hoehne	1072 sq. mi.	Delta	1764 sq. mi.
Roaring Fork	1118 sq. mi.	Pueblo Rural	1847 sq. mi.
DeBeque	1165 sq. mi.	Fairplay	1977 sq. mi.
Montrose	1185 sq. mi.	Eagle	2010 sq. mi.
Mountain Valley	1192 sq. mi.	Mesa Valley	2203 sq. mi.
Eads	1212 sq. mi.	Meeker	2230 sq. mi.
Dolores	1297 sq. mi.	Gunnison	3924 sq. mi.
Huerfano	1357 sq. mi.	Moffat	4761 sq. mi.

Table 12: School Districts with Under 100 Square Miles of Area

Sheridan	4 sq. mi.	Colorado Springs	70 sq. mi.
Englewood	6 sq. mi.	Greeley	73 sq. mi.
Mapleton	11 sq. mi.	Swink	73 sq. mi.
Westminster	14 sq. mi.	Gilpin County	76 sq. mi.
Harrison	18 sq. mi.	Manitou Springs	78 sq. mi.
Littleton	29 sq. mi.	Aurora	78 sq. mi.
Widefield	41 sq. mi.	Johnstown	87 sq. mi.
Cheyenne Mountain	50 sq. mi.	Manzanola	89 sq. mi.
Commerce City	58 sq. mi.	Pueblo City	93 sq. mi.
Northglenn	59 sq. mi.	Wiley	95 sq. mi.

In table 13 are listed the approximately 92 charter schools in the state. They are distributed widely throughout the state. Their enrollment varies from a few dozen students to over 1200 students.

Table 13: Charter Schools in Colorado

CHARTER SCHOOL NAME	SCHOOL DISTRICT	ENROLLMENT
Academy Charter School	Douglas County RE-1	627
Academy of Charter Schools	Northglenn-Thornton 12	1294
Alta Vista Charter School	Lamar RE-2	92
Aspen Community	Aspen 1	97
Aurora Academy	Adams-Arapahoe 28	450
Battle Rock Charter School	Montezuma-Cortez RE-1	25
Black Forest School	Academy 20	86
Boulder Preparatory High School	Boulder Valley RE-2	79
Brighton Charter School	Brighton 27J	209
Bromley East Charter School	Brighton 27J	689
Carbondale Community	Roaring Fork RE-1	113
Cardinal Community Academy	Keenesburg RE-3J	90

Center for Discovery Learning	Jefferson County R-1	235
Cesar Chavez Academy	Pueblo City 60	329
Challenge to Excellence	Douglas County RE-1	NEW
Challenges Choices and Images	Denver County 1	107
Cherry Creek Academy	Cherry Creek 5	442
Cheyenne Mountain Charter Academy	Cheyenne Mountain 12	431
CIVA Charter School	Colorado Springs 11	177
Classical Academy	Academy 20	1148
Collegiate Academy	Jefferson County R-1	535
Colorado High School Charter School	Denver County 1	NEW
Colorado High School	Greeley 6	109
Community Challenge School	Denver County 1	101
Community Prep School	Colorado Springs 11	154
Compass Montessori Charter School	Jefferson County R-1	231
Compass Secondary Montessori School	Jefferson County R-1	86
Connect School	Pueblo Rural 70	145
Core Knowledge Charter School	Douglas County RE-1	396
Crestone Charter School	Moffat 2	53
Crown Pointe Academy	Westminster 50	221
DCS Montessori School	Douglas County RE-1	320
Denver Arts and Technology Academy	Denver County 1	240
Eagle County Charter Academy	Eagle County RE-5	257
Elbert County Charter School	Elizabeth C-1	291
Excel Academy	Jefferson County R-1	123
Excel School	Durango 9R	123
Free Horizon Montessori	Jefferson County R-1	NEW
Frontier Academy	Greeley 6	587
Frontier Charter Academy	Calhan RJ-1	90
GLOBE Charter School	Colorado Springs 11	181
Guffey Community Charter School	Park County RE-2	37
Horizon K-8 Alternative School	Boulder Valley RE-2	313
Indian Peaks Charter School	East Grand 2	70
James Irwin Charter High School	Harrison 2	186
Jefferson Academy Charter School	Jefferson County R-1	*676
Jefferson Academy Junior High	Jefferson County R-1	INCLUDE ABOVE*
Jefferson Academy Senior High	Jefferson County R-1	INCLUDE ABOVE*
KIPP Sunshine Peak Academy	Denver County 1	NEW
Knowledge Quest Academy	Johnstown-Milliken RE-5J	NEW
Lake George Charter School	Park County RE-2	124
Leadership Preparatory Academy	Windsor 3	NEW
Liberty Common School	Poudre R-1	526
Lincoln Academy	Jefferson County R-1	315
Littleton Charter Academy	Littleton 6	451
Littleton Prep Charter School	Littleton 6	477
Marble Charter School	Gunnison-Watershed RE1J	19
Montessori Peaks Academy	Jefferson County R-1	312

Monument Academy	Lewis-Palmer 38	437
Mountain View Core Knowledge School	Canon City RE-1	226
North Routt Community Charter School	Steamboat Springs RE-2	15
Odyssey School	Denver County 1	216
P.S. 1	Denver County 1	285
Paradox Valley School	West End RE-2	33
Passage Charter School	Montrose County RE-1J	25
Peak to Peak Charter School	Boulder Valley RE-2	606
Pinnacle Charter School	Northglenn-Thornton 12	876
Pioneer Charter School	Denver County 1	272
Pioneer School for Expeditionary	Poudre R-1	159
Platte River Academy	Douglas County RE-1	413
Prairie Creeks Charter School	Strasburg 31J	10
Pueblo School for Arts and Sciences	Pueblo City 60	329
Ridge View Academy	Denver County 1	210
Ridgeview Classical Schools	Poudre R-1	415
Rocky Mountain Academy of Evergreen	Jefferson County R-1	170
Rocky Mountain Deaf School	Jefferson County R-1	30
Roosevelt/Emerson Edison Charter School	Colorado Springs 11	719
Sojourner School	Boulder Valley RE-2	53
Southwest Open School	Montezuma-Cortez RE-1	140
Stargate School	Northglenn-Thornton 12	311
Summit Middle School	Boulder Valley RE-2	305
Swallows Charter School	Pueblo Rural 70	176
Tutmose Academy	Harrison 2	49
Twin Peaks Charter School	St. Vrain Valley RE-1J	479
Union Colon Preparatory School	Greeley 6	154
University Lab School	Greeley 6	670
Ute Creek Charter School	St. Vrain Valley RE-1J	174
West End Learning Center	West End RE-2	19
Windsor Charter Academy	Windsor RE-4	157
Woodrow Wilson Academy	Jefferson County R-1	236
Wyatt-Edison Charter School	Denver County 1	666
Youth and Family Academy Charter School	Pueblo City 60	154

ENROLLMENT INFORMATION

The October 2001 Colorado public school membership of 742,145 increased by 17,637 students. This is a 2.4 percent increase over the fall 2000 membership of 724,508.

The following ten counties had increases in their pupil of one thousand or more students from 1997 to 2001.

COUNTY	FALL 1997 PUPILS	FALL 2001 PUPILS	PERCENT CHANGE FROM 1997	COUNT CHANGE FROM 1997
Douglas	27,274	38,054	39.5	10,780
El Paso	87,629	96,381	10.0	8,752
Arapahoe	90,745	99,386	9.5	8,641
Adams	55,641	63,340	13.8	7,699
Denver	67,858	72,361	6.6	4,503
Boulder	44,065	48,699	10.5	4,634
Weld	27,608	31,331	13.5	3,723
Larimer	38,197	40,611	6.3	2,414
Pueblo	24,057	25,292	5.1	1,235
Mesa	19,750	20,766	5.1	1,016

Table 14: Ten largest (Membership) School Districts

SCHOOL DISTRICT	COUNTY	FALL 1997 MEMBERSHIP
Jefferson County R-1	Jefferson	88,460
Denver County 1	Denver	72,361
Cherry Creek 5	Arapahoe	44,228
Douglas County RE-1	Douglas	38,054
Colorado Springs 11	El Paso	32,808
Northglenn-Thornton 12	Adams	31,544
Adams-Arapahoe 28J	Arapahoe	31,528
Boulder Valley RE 2	Boulder	27,963
Poudre R-1	Larimer	24,412
St. Vrain Valley RE1J	Boulder	20,736

The largest district, geographically speaking, is Moffat County, covering 4,761.2 square miles: the smallest is Sheridan with 3.5 square miles. The largest district by student enrollment is Jefferson County with 88,460 students: the smallest district is Kim in Las Animas County with 61 students. The average area of Colorado school districts is 587 square miles. Average enrollment is 4,169 pupils. Because sections of Colorado are sparsely populated, 68 of the 178 districts enroll fewer than 400 students (all grades) and account for 15,164 students, or only 2.0% of the state's total enrollment.

Denver has a unique situation in that by amendment to the Colorado Constitution, the city, county, and school district boundaries must be coterminous. Therefore, a change in municipal boundaries for Denver automatically changes the school district boundaries. Any changes to the boundaries of the Denver Public Schools would require an amendment to the State Constitution.

Per-Pupil Expenditure

Cost studies of school districts both in Colorado and nationally found a curvilinear relationship that indicated that educating students in small school districts is more expensive than in medium sized districts. Large districts also spend more per student than medium sized districts. Therefore, Colorado's Finance Act has a size adjustment compensating districts differently based on differences in enrollments. Districts with the smallest student enrollments receive the largest size adjustments.

In budget year 2002-2003, total program funding for all 178 school districts, 13 projected to range from \$5,435 per pupil to \$12,276 per pupil with an average across all districts of \$5,782 per pupil.

Analysis of Comparative Results

Examining research such as a study prepared for the Heartland Institute, a Chicago based public policy research organization, shows that bigger isn't better for school systems. Spending more money also isn't the answer to improving student performance. According to Herbert Walberg, professor at the University of Illinois in Chicago and co-author of the study, the results of the study suggest strongly that all things being equal, students in smaller districts do a lot better than students in middle-sized districts. Students in middle-sized districts do better than students in larger school districts.

The study reported that over the past several decades, hundreds of small school districts have been consolidated into larger ones by state and local officials hoping to make them more cost-efficient and to allow for such improvements as greater teacher specialization. This study of student achievement in school districts in the eastern United States found that in all cases, larger district enrollments are associated with lower achievement. Walberg and William J. Fowler, Jr. a senior research associate at the U.S. Department of Education reached these conclusions in analyzing more than 500 school districts regarding their socioeconomic level, student achievement, and spending per student and district size.

Small school districts with enrollments of under 400 students make up 2% of Colorado's pupils (approximately 15,000 students). Small schools spend on the average from \$2,000 to \$3,000 per student above the state average. Assume that approximately half of this amount was from state revenue and the remainder from other sources, primarily property tax. Consolidation could mean potential savings of approximately \$18,000,000 with a reduction from 178 school districts to approximately 100 districts.

It is quite likely however, that the new consolidated schools would have a more efficient teacher/pupil ratio, but they would expand their curriculum to include classes that are presently unavailable such as calculus, foreign language, etc. Therefore the cost would remain approximately the same – no savings would be realized. Additionally, if savings were to occur, it would be in property tax, not state aid. The newly formed districts with more students would receive more state dollars based on pupil count, but the property tax base would not change.

Therefore, the percentage of state dollars would be larger compared to local dollars. Finally, such a proposal is not possible in certain instances where great distances are involved or geographical characteristics of the area prevent consolidation.

SCHOOL ORGANIZATION SCENARIOS

If districts were reorganized so that every district would have at least 400 students, there would be 68 fewer school districts leaving 110 school districts. However, only 2.0% of the state's total student population would be affected. If school district student enrollment were limited to 5,000 students, an additional 108 districts would be created.

Table 23: Districts Affected by 400 Enrollment Minimum

County	District	Enrollment	County	District	Enrollment
Otero	Swink	386	Morgan	Weldon Valley RE-20J	203
Baca	Springfield RE-4	384	Saguache	Moffat 2	202
Elbert	Big Sandy 100J	373	Mesa	De Beque 49 JT	200
Conejos	South Conejos RE-10	369	Arapahoe	Deer Trail 26J	191
Fremont	Cotopaxi RE-3	365	Saguache	Mountain Valley RE 1	175
Las Animas	Hoehne Reorganized 3	365	Las Animas	Primero Reorganized 2	172
Prowers	Holly RE-3	362	Las Animas	Aguilar Reorganized 6	172
Conejos	Sanford 6J	350	Washington	Otis R-3	169
Prowers	Wiley RE-13 JT	346	Baca	Vila RE-5	168
El Paso	Miami-Yoder 60 JT	342	Logan	Plateau RE-5	162
Dolores	Dolores County RE 2	340	Yuma	Idalia RJ-3	158
Sedgwick	Julesburg RE-1	338	Mineral	Creede Consolidated 1	155
El Paso	Hanover 28	334	Las Animas	Branson Reorganized 82	152
Costilla	Centennial R-1	330	Weld	Briggsdale RE-10	142
San Miguel	Norwood R-2J	326	Kit Carson	Bethune R-5	137
Alamosa	Sangre de Cristo RE-22J	322	Elbert	Agate 300	132
Prowers	Granada RE-1	319	Kit Carson	Hi-Plains R-23	130
Ouray	Ridgway R-2	316	Weld	Pawnee RE-12	128
Cheyenne	Cheyenne County RE-5	306	Sedgwick	Platte Valley RE-3	126
Logan	Buffalo RE-4	302	Washington	Woodlin R-104	124
Jackson	North Park R-1	301	Cheyenne	Kit Carson R-1	113
Phillips	Haxtun RE-2J	299	Weld	Prairie RE-11	109
Huerfano	La Veta RE-2	293	Washington	Lone Star 101	102
Elbert	Elbert 200	292	Yuma	Liberty J-4	101
Kit Carson	Stratton R-4	290	Washington	Arickaree R-2	98
Costilla	Sierra Grande R-30	289	El Paso	Edison 54 JT	94
Bent	Mc Clave RE-2	272	Baca	Campo RE-6	90
Baca	Walsh RE-1	253	Hinsdale	Hinsdale County RE-1	83
Kiowa	Eads RE-1	252	Lincoln	Karval RE-23	80
Ouray	Ouray R-1	250	San Juan	Silverton 1	77
Kit Carson	Arriba-Flagler C-20	247	Baca	Pritchett RE-3	74
Lincoln	Genoa-Hugo C113	244	Kiowa	Plainview RE-2	66
Otero	Cheraw 31	228	Las Animas	Kim Reorganized 88	61
Otero	Manzanola 3J	224			
Logan	Frenchman RE-3	209			

Table 24: Additional Districts Affected if Minimum Is Increased to 750 Pupils

County	District	Enrollment
El Paso	Calhan RJ-1	720
El Paso	Peyton 23 JT	716
Montezuma	Dolores RE-4A	711
Rio Grande	Del Norte C-7	708
Phillps	Holyoke RE-1J	691
Bent	Las Animas RE-1	663
Rio Blanco	Meeker RE-1	662
Lincoln	Limon RE-4J	660
Saguache	Center 26 JT	650
Park	Park County RE-2	649
Teller	Cripple Creek-Victor RE-1	645
Morgan	Wiggins RE-50(J)	613
Crowley	Crowley County RE-1-J	594
Rio Blanco	Rangely RE-4	594
San Miguel	Telluride R-1	547
Arapahoe	Byers 32J	532
Grand	West Grand 1-JT	528
Mesa	Plateau Valley 50	526
Routt	Hayden RE-1	498
Elbert	Kiowa C-2	476
Custer	Consolidated C-1	473
Montezuma	Mancos RE-6	473
Gilpin	Gilpin County RE-1	466
Washington	Akron R-1	466
Montrose	West End RE-2	431
Routt	South Routt RE-3	430
Rio Grande	Sargent RE-33J	413

If the maximum enrollment permitted were 5,000 students, multiple small districts would replace existing large districts.

Table 25: Multiple Small Districts Within Existing Large Districts With Enrollments Over 5,000.

County	District	Enrollment	#of New Districts
Jefferson	Jefferson County R-1	88,460	17
Denver	Denver County 1	72,361	14
Arapahoe	Cherry Creek 5	44,228	8
Douglas	Douglas County RE-1	38,054	7
El Paso	Colorado Springs	32,808	6
Adams	Northglenn-Thornton 12	31,544	6
Arapahoe	Adams-Arapahoe 28J	31,528	6
Boulder	Boulder Valley RE-2	27,963	5
Larimer	Poudre R-1	24,412	4
Boulder	St. Vrain Valley RE-1J	20,736	4

Mesa	Mesa County Valley 51	20,040	4
El Paso	Academy 20	18,137	3
Pueblo	Pueblo City 60	17,738	3
Arapahoe	Littleton 6	16,590	3
Weld	Greeley 6	16,527	3
Larimer	Thompson R-2J	14,806	2
Adams	Westminster 50	11,283	2
El Paso	Harrison 2	11,053	2
El Paso	Widefield 3	8,671	1
Pueblo	Pueblo County Rural 70	7,554	1
El Paso	Falcon 49	6,915	1
Adams	Adams County 14	6,587	1
Adams	Brighton 27J	6,575	1
Montrose	Montrose County RE-1J	5,577	1
Adams	Mapleton 1	5,551	1
El Paso	Fountain 8	5,195	1
Delta	Delta County 50 (J)	5,002	1
		TOTAL	108

APPENDIX A

From: *Colorado Department of Education Efficiency and Effectiveness Study*: May 14, 1987. Efficiency and Effectiveness Study Committee Members: Pat Pascoe, Steve Leatherman, Charles S. Brown, Jr., John Buckner, Donna Good, William Haberlein, Willard E Holthus, Fitzroy "Buck" Newsum, Reynie Ortiz, Bud Paulin, Victor J. Ross, Pat Ryan, George Shineovich, Gary Sibigroth, Barbara Smith, Edwin Steinbrecher, James A Weatherill, Donald M. White, William Winter, and Wes Yordon. CDE Support: Don Saul, CL Stiverson, Cindy De Larber, Gene Howard, Howard Brown, and Peter Intaranpanich.

Recommendations from that study

1. **Staff development** – The State Board of Education should require that all school districts plan and implement a program of training and development for both teachers and administrators. Requiring such staff development could enforce this recommendation.
2. **Training** – State funded regional centers should be established for the training of school board members. Board training programs should be comprehensive and systematic, addressing both the specialized needs of new board members and the in-depth training of veteran school board members.
3. **Testing** – The State Board of Education should continue statewide-standardized achievement testing in selected grades at least every other year. The analysis and reporting of these tests for secondary students should also address the questions of basic competency and proficiency skills.
4. **Curriculum coordination** – The State Board of Education and the Department of Education, through the accreditation process, should insist that Colorado school districts define curricular content and skills in well articulated, published curriculum guides. These guides should be coordinated with the district testing program and with each school's practices to assure consistent teaching of that which is specified in the curriculum.
5. **Districts with greatest need** – The State Board of Education and the Department of Education should be allocated additional Field Service Personnel for supervision and technical assistance to districts determined to have the greatest need, i.e., performing below expectations. Such determination should be based upon self-evaluation, test performance and other appropriate effectiveness measures.
6. **BOCES** – Boards of Cooperative Educational Services should provide expanded staff development and curricular development assistance. BOCES should also provide funding and coordination for member districts to foster experimentation and innovation, particularly among smaller districts. Funding should be increased for BOCES so that they may successfully provide these services. Such funding would best be accomplished by including BOCES as an integral part of the state School Finance Act.
7. **Very small high school** - The General Assembly in cooperation with the Department of Education should provide positive incentives to encourage, where practical, the consolidation of high schools with an enrollment of 150 or less. The State Board of Education and the Department of Education should encourage the use of technology in small schools to make more programs and teaching talent available.

APPENDIX B

From: Colorado Department of Education Study on School District Administration and Staffing, January 1990, Prepared by Judith Burnes, Dan Stewart, and Arthur J. Ellis.

Recommendations from that study

1. ***Create incentives*** for school districts to utilize shared services, other cooperative arrangements, and the use of contracting in both the educational and administrative areas.
2. ***Strengthen Boards of Cooperative Educational Services*** by increasing the basic grant from the current \$10,000 level. Encourage increased participation in cooperative service arrangements by smaller school districts to achieve the advantage of greater economy of scale.
3. ***Revise the School District Organization Act of 1965*** to simplify its burdensome requirements. Include a strategic planning process and provide incentives which would attract interest in school reorganization during the 1990's.
4. ***Amend the School Finance Act of 1988*** to clarify existing ambiguities regarding the funding and category assignment of reorganized school districts.
5. ***Explore the expansion of existing statewide cooperative purchasing agreements*** to include other items (such as school buses) frequently purchased by school districts. Create incentives for districts to participate in state or regional cooperative agreements.
6. ***Explore the feasibility of establishing a statewide mechanism for responding to environmental emergencies*** such as radon abatement or asbestos removal.
7. ***Support the development of new technologies*** such as telecommunications networks that will provide an effective cost efficient method for delivery of expensive educational services.
8. ***Create incentives for school districts*** to experiment with alternative organizational arrangements that have the promise for improving both the effectiveness and efficiency of the educational system.

APPENDIX C

Advantages Available to Large School Districts

1. Larger school districts can afford more specialized teachers, counselors, and other instructional leaders to assist individual students.
2. Larger school districts can afford to purchase diverse and specialized equipment and materials to assist students in curriculum learning.
3. Larger school districts can provide more special education programs because there are more students and thus the district can provide the service more economically.
4. Larger school districts are seldom plagued with difficulties in recruitment and retention of quality personnel, and inadequate facilities due to low assessed valuations.
5. Larger school districts are able to offer more high school course offerings with a larger number of electives.
6. Larger school districts generally have large high schools. These are often able to dominate high school athletic contests. This can translate into more prestige for the school and district.

APPENDIX D

Advantages Available to Small School Districts

1. In small school districts, a higher percentage of the students are able to participate in multiple student activities. In smaller school districts virtually all students participate in athletics, music and other student activities. In larger school districts the majority of students do not participate in such activities.
2. Smaller school districts usually have the potential for a close knit educational organization, close student/teacher relationships, and exist in a community very involved with the school district.
3. In smaller school districts a higher percentage of student's graduate and most go on to college.
4. Smaller schools are safer. Teachers know individual students better and can respond rapidly.
5. Parental involvement and hence sense of community is usually greater in a small school district.
6. School flexibility and capacity of change is usually easier in a small school district.