

MINNECO COUNTY

Poverty area with
one-school elem.
dist.

- Northtown

40 miles to
Bigtown —

- Southtown

SUMMARY OF RESOURCES:

Northtown School District (3,041 pupils)

2 school nurses

1 remedial reading teacher

2 speech therapists

3 classes for educable retarded (2 elementary, 1 junior high)

Southtown School District (3,774 pupils)

4 educable classes (2 elementary, 1 junior high, 1 senior high)

2 resource teachers for tutoring

1 trainable retarded class

Vocational Adjustment counselor

OTHER RESOURCES:

Southtown

Area Vocational-Technical School

Day Activity Center

District Office of Div. of Voc. Rehab.

State Employment Service Office

Bigtown

State College

Mental Health Center

State Institution for the Retarded

with Sheltered Workshop

MINNECO COUNTY

Minneco County has a population of 43,468 people, according to the 1960 census. It is primarily an agricultural county, although there are two sizeable towns, Northtown and Southtown, twenty miles apart.

The socio-economic status of the area is predominantly lower middle class, with pockets of both rural and urban poverty. Northtown, with a population of 7,500, and Southtown (the county seat), with a population of 16,750, have several small industries and are trading centers for the surrounding countryside.

In its northeast corner, the county has a concentration of families whose income is below the poverty line. These families support themselves, for the most part, on marginal farms, with some public assistance during the winter months. The children attend school in a small, one-school elementary district, and are bused to nearby Northtown for junior and senior high school. There are no special classes in their elementary school, but some of the children are placed in educable classes for the mentally retarded when they reach Northtown. The district looks with some apprehension towards school consolidation.

The Northtown School District embraces parts of three counties and has a school population of 3,041 pupils. There are three elementary schools, each with a full-time principal, and a combined junior-senior high school. The district has two school nurses, one remedial reading teacher, and two speech therapists. School social work and school psychology are conspicuously absent, although both specialties are described by the superintendent as being urgently needed.

There are three classes for educable mentally retarded children in Northtown, two in one of the elementary schools, and one in the junior high school. Although the state division of vocational rehabilitation and special education reimbursement could provide a vocational adjustment counselor to work with Northtown's handicapped children at the

secondary level with minimal cost to the district, the fact that Northtown has never been able to find a senior high special class teacher has prevented this development.

There are no organized services for children with other handicaps. A few physically handicapped children of normal intelligence are bused to the newest elementary school building which has no architectural barriers.

The nearest large school district is Southtown, which does not cover as large an area as Northtown. About 25% of Southtown's 3,774 students are bused in from the country. Southtown has two school nurses, two speech therapists, and a consulting psychologist who comes two days a month from the Bigtown Mental Health Center. Children suspected of being mentally retarded or learning disabled are referred for testing to a psychologist at the State College in Bigtown.

There are two educable classes at the elementary level, one at junior high, and one at senior high level. Children with learning problems are tutored by two resource teachers at the elementary level. There are eight trainable children, aged six to sixteen, in a class in the basement of the Lutheran Church in downtown Southtown. The teacher finds her isolation in the church building disabling.

A newly-hired vocational adjustment counselor is working with students with mild health impairments in order to make up his required caseload of 25. He does not expect to work with the older trainable children, but believes that some of Northtown's dropouts from the educable class could be a part of his caseload if an inter-district agreement were worked out.

Southtown has a new area vocational-technical school which has no vocational education programs for handicapped students. A day activity center, the county welfare department, the state employment service office, and the district office of the division of vocational rehabilitation are also located in Southtown.

Bigtown, the nearest large city, is outside the county, forty miles away. Bigtown State College has a special education department. A psychologist at Bigtown State tests Minneco County children who are suspected of being mentally retarded. Teachers and principals are very critical of his psychological reports which give little more than an I.Q. score. They have no opportunity to discuss his findings with him. The reports are mailed to the school district. Children with behavior or emotional problems are referred to the clinical child psychologist at the Bigtown Mental Health Center. There is a sheltered workshop at Bigtown State Hospital, a 1,000-resident institution for the mentally retarded on the outskirts of the town. There are three adults from the community working in the workshop which has a work evaluation unit, a work training program, and sheltered work stations for about thirty persons.

DESCRIPTION OF REPR. I. M. PENNYTECTOR

FROM MINNECO COUNTY

Repr. I. M. Pennytektor, 54 years old, owns and manages a small super market in Northtown. His family has lived in Northtown for three generations. His father built the store Repr. Pennytektor now owns and served in the legislature for 16 years. Repr. Pennytektor has been in the legislature for eight years. He is short and overweight. (Perhaps he nibbles too much on his stock during the working day?) He and his wife have a son who is a junior in college and a daughter who is a senior in high school. His wife is an active church worker, has always been involved in the schools which her children are attending, and volunteers her time at the Day Activity Center in Southtown a half day per week.

Repr. Pennytektor lives at the St. Paul Hotel during the legislative session but, because his home is only two hour's drive from the Capitol, he usually goes home for the weekends. He is considered an important man in the community and numbers the president of the local bank and the mayor among his social friendships. His activities include his church, the local chamber of commerce, and the Elks club (which had a successful fund-raising drive three years ago for a Cerebral Palsy clinic).

In the House, he serves on the Rules Committee, the Appropriations Committee, and the Tax Committee. Although liked and accepted by his colleagues, he is not a major power figure or leader in the House. He considers himself to be the public guardian of the tax dollar. One of his main interests is the state university of which he is a graduate. Repr. Pennytektor caucuses with the Conservatives. Although not active in party politics, he has received the endorsement of the GOP County Committee.

SUGGESTIONS FOR THE DISCUSSION GROUP MEMBERS

The effectiveness of a discussion group depends on the extent to which the resources of all are used. You will be a more effective group member if you keep in mind, and act upon, the following suggestions:

1. Speak Your Mind Freely

Discussion is based on the exchange of ideas. No one else has your background, experience, and training. Here is a chance to say what you think. Say it!

Remember: You have a responsibility to the group besides listening.

2. Listen Thoughtfully to Others

Try to understand the other's point of view . . . seek out the experiences and reasoning on which it rests. But don't accept unsupported ideas. Remember:

On almost every question, there are several points of view.

3. Strike while the Idea is Hot

Don't wait to speak until you are called on. You may forget your point or miss the best time to present it. Then too, what you say may clarify the discussion or clear the way for action. Remember: If you wait, you may lose the chance to present that good idea.

4. Let the Other Person Talk Too

Don't speak for more than a minute or so at a time. Try to make your point in a few words. Give the others a chance. Remember: It makes little difference who carries the ball as long as it is carried.

5. Don't Fight Over the Ownership of Ideas

Once you have given an idea to the group, let it become group property. Don't try to defend it because it was yours. Remember: Discussion is not a debate.

6. Don't Let the Discussion Get Away From You

If you don't understand what is being said, say so. Ask questions till you do. Relate the discussion to your own experience. Remember: Your contribution will be helpful only when you understand what is being discussed.

7. Stay on the Beam

Digressions hinder progress. Keep your remarks relevant. Don't repeat what has been covered. Follow the leader. Remember: A discussion group is not the place to ride a personal hobby.

8. Make the Discussion Pleasant for All

Don't be a sad sack. Have fun yourself and help others enjoy the discussion. Act toward the leader and members as you want them to act toward you. Accept criticism graciously. Remember: The other person is a human being too.

9. Share Your Ideas with Whole Group

A private discussion with your neighbors not only cheats the group, but is a disturbing influence.

SYNOPSIS OF SPECIAL EDUCATION LAWS

Children between ages of 5 and 21 are eligible for school aids.

1967 - This law amended, making it mandatory that education for the physically handicapped and deaf be provided at age 4. This amendment also permits education for handicapped children down to birth (to date, state funds have been provided only for very young hearing impaired children).

Classes for educable children are mandatory.

Classes for trainable retarded children are permissive (i.e., eligible for state aids).

Reimbursement is made by the state to local school districts for special education services.

- (a) Approximately 50% of costs of materials and equipment.
- (b) Two-thirds of salary is reimbursed (ceiling of \$4,400). This includes all special education teachers, psychologists, social workers, speech therapists, supervisory personnel.

MEMBERS OF NORTHTOWN SCHOOL BOARD

J. C. Banker (progressive young banker, president of Jaycees)

Rufus Farmer (rather conservative)

Susan Sharp (former teacher, now homemaker and active in community affairs, including Minn. Assn. for Mental Health)

Connie Concerned (homemaker, has many children, including a CP child
at home)

Hy Spender (druggist)

Sam Pension (retired mailman, living on fixed income)

COMMITTEE ASSIGNMENTS FOR EDUCATION LEGISLATION

1967 LEGISLATURE

Senate Education Committee

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Robert J. Brown
George R. Conzemius
Karl F. Grittner
Raymond J. Higgins
Roy W. Holsten
K. F. Hughes
Robert G. Johnson
Norman Larson
John A. Metcalf
John L. Olson
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Harold G. Krieger, Vice-Chairman
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William B. Dosland
Mel Hansen
Stanley W. Holmquist
J. M. Hughes
V. K. Jensen
J. A. Josefson
Gene Mammenga
R. G. Perpich
Donald Sinclair
Donald O. Wright

House Education Committee

Roy Schulz, Chairman
Salisbury Adams
H. Anderson
R. Christensen
Robert Dunn
Arlen I. Erdahl
Ron Everson
Richard H. Hanson
George F. Humphrey
N. Johnson
Calvin R. Larson
Rolf T. Nelson
Joseph T. O'Neill
Donald Savelkoul
Alfred Schuman
Frank Theis
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Harvey B. Sathre, Vice-Chairman
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Wendell O. Erickson
Joe Gimpl
William House
C. M. Johnson
Jack Kleinbaum
John H. Lemme
Richard W. O'Dea
Martin O. Sabo
Rodney N. Searle
Doug H. Sillers
John P. Wingard

Interim Comm. on Elementary & Secondary Education

Senate:
Robert Brown
Kelly Gage
Karl Grittner
Rudolph Hanson
Roy Holsten
Keith Hughes
Gene Mammenga

House:
Rodney Searle, Chairman
Ron Iverson
Dick Hanson
Jack Kleinbaum
Martin Sabo
Harvey Sathre
John Wingard

Senate Finance Committee

Donald Sinclair, Chairman (Kittson, Roseau, Marshall Counties)

Education Subcommittee

Gordon Rosenmeier, Chairman (c) - Morrison, Crow Wing
Wm. Dosland (c) - Clay, Wilkin
J. A. Josefson (c) - Pipestone, Lyon, Lincoln
Rudolph Hanson (c)-Waseca, Freeborn
John Olson (c) - Nobles, Murray, Rock
Mel Hansen (c) - Hennepin
Jack Davies (l) - Hennepin
Karl Grittner (l) - Ramsey
Raymond Higgins (c) - Cook, Lake, St. Louis

House Appropriations Committee

Richard Fitzsimons, Chairman (Kittson, Roseau, Marshall Counties)
Verne Long, Vice Chairman (Pipestone, Lincoln Counties)

Education Subcommittee

Rodney Searle, Chairman (c) - Waseca
W. Casper Fischer (c) - Lyon
Edward J. Gearty - Hennepin
Verne Long (c) - Pipestone, Lincoln
Mrs. Helen McMillan (l) - Mower
Jack Morris - Ramsey
Fred C. Norton (l) - Ramsey
Andrew O. Skaar (c) - Pennington, Marshall, Roseau
Howard E. Smith (l) - Aitkin, Carlton, Crow Wing
Charles R. Weaver (c) - Anoka
Ray Wolcott (c) - Hennepin