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THE HISTORY AND DEVELOPMENT OF THE ALVIN SCHOOL

THESIS

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Texas State Teachers College in Partial
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By

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PREFACE

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the Alvin school

The purpose of this study is not personal interest, but also to present narrative form the facts connected with development of the Alvin, Texas, School. This subject have been taken from newspapers, The Alvin Sun newspaper Board Minutes, Alvin School annuals, Alvin, and personal interviews. These fully selected and taken from reliable

color: 8846

Remarks: match other thesis

The material has been organized in a chronological manner under the following headings: growth of the Alvin School and the community, growth of the school plant, financial growth, evolution of the curriculum, pupil activity program, policies, personnel responsibilities and salaries, and conclusions and recommendations.

Care has been taken to follow good technique in historical research. Controversial issues, gossip, and hearsay have been eliminated, and only such material as could be substantiated by documents and personal interviews with people closely connected with the institution has been employed. No attempt has been made to add to or detract from the educational significance of the institution. An attempt

has been made to tell the story of the history and development of the Alvin School in such a manner that both the triumphs and the adversities will be shown.

It is the wish of the author that this study will cause the administration, faculty, students, and ex-students of Alvin School to gather the original material used in this study and to collect other materials and to place them in a permanent file in order that friends of the institution may know its story.

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CHAPTER I

GROWTH OF THE ALVIN SCHOOL AND THE COMMUNITY

In answer to the call of a quaint old school bell, eight or ten ruddy-faced youngsters from the few scattered families of Alvin, Texas, reported to a tiny frame building to learn their first three R's from Mrs. R. B. Brown, wife of a circuit-riding Methodist minister. The first little school, a one-room masterpiece of haphazard boards and windows, also housed the Christian, Methodist and Baptist churches in 1882. Youngsters threw their books into cotton sacks and came slowly across the prairies to the little school which was located just west of the present Charlie Wright home on what is now Gordon Street.

Mrs. Brown would bring her year-old baby to class with her and delegate one of the older children to keep it amused. It often fell the duty of Felician Slataper to play nurse maid to the crying infant while its mother tried to instill the advantage of knowing reading into the not-so-willing heads of Alvin's youth.¹

A few years later, because of the strawberry boom in

¹Alvin Sun, August 7, 1940, p. 48.

Alvin, the little school-church was taxed to capacity for room; so arrangements were made with the Christian Church to use their new building for school purposes. In 1893 two new two-story buildings were rented to provide additional room for the rapidly growing school.²

In 1895 a high school department was established in Alvin's public school, and enrollment increased so rapidly that three years later buildings were erected near the present campus.³

In 1910 Alvin completed the spacious old red brick school house. The present high school building was erected in 1929. In 1938, with the construction of the million-dollar school plant, the red brick structure was demolished.⁴

The Alvin school plant, now consisting of nine ultra-modern buildings constructed on a twenty-two acre plot, is one of the finest in the Southwest. It includes an elementary building, which houses all grades through the sixth; a junior high building, with the seventh, eighth, and ninth grades; an industrial arts department; a home economics cottage, considered among the finest in the state; a senior high school; a large brick and glass auditorium; a gymnasium; a band house; an agricultural building; a bus

²Alvin School Annual, 1945, p. 6.

³Ibid.

⁴Ibid.

garage; and a recreation hall.⁵

From the wastes of prairie land with a one-room school and a volunteer teacher, Alvin has indeed taken a far step toward enriching the minds of her young with the erection of a school plant that housed approximately 1,000 pupils with fifty-eight teachers in 1946.

In the northeastern corner of Brazoria County lies an old established town of some 4,000 inhabitants, a beautiful town, with numerous old homesteads, tree-shaded streets, and a town rich in historical lore.

Like many communities along the line, the history of Alvin is closely interwoven with the progress and growth of the Santa Fe Railroad. Through miles of prairie with only an occasional water tower to break the monotony of flat country and grazing cattle, the Santa Fe stretched its line through Alvin in 1875.⁶ The story of the railroad's coming was filled with thrills and adventure. Financial difficulties had to be met, obstacles to be overcome, and the struggles and hardships of the early railroaders and pioneers who made the line possible, represented a colorful period in the history of the state.⁷

History relates that no frontier community, no matter how blessed with natural resources, has ever attained to

⁵Alvin Sun, August 16, 1929, p. 1.

⁶Ibid., August 7, 1940, p. 33.

⁷Ibid., p. 28.

real greatness without first developing adequate transportation. Sixty-four years ago Santa Fe rails linked Alvin with the outside world. Santa Fe freight trains steamed in and out of Alvin carrying the raw and finished products of the world. Its passenger trains brought hundreds of travelers from many lands to Alvin.⁸

Alvin Morgan, the man for whom the city was named, was sent to Alvin by the Santa Fe in 1879 to supervise the loading of cattle at the stock pens. Alvin Morgan, father of Mrs. T. M. Savell, was the first actual settler in Alvin, and the city derives its name from his Christian name. The only reason people in Alvin did not reside in "Morgan, Texas," was because another group of intrepid settlers had already established a town in Texas and named it "Morgan."⁹

Major Durant and S. N. Richardson were close followers of Alvin Morgan to Alvin, so close in fact that dim memories of a distant past did not agree on the exact order in which Morgan's fellow pioneers arrived and settled there.¹⁰

Coming to Alvin in February, 1879, Alvin Morgan erected the first house, assisted by the late E. B. Thomas, the husband of Alvin's "Grandma Thomas." Morgan and his family stayed at the Thomas residence on Chocolate Bayou until the

⁸Ibid., p. 33.

⁹Ibid., August 15, 1929, p. 2.

¹⁰Ibid.

building which was to form the nucleus of the city of Alvin was completed.¹¹

The first building, after having been rebuilt and moved two or three times, is still standing, and shares honors with the "Lone Ash" as being the two oldest landmarks of the cattlemen who brought the city of Alvin into existence.¹²

Alvin Morgan afterwards bought the section of land on which the principal part of the city still stands, and paid \$1.00 an acre for it. At that time there were no trees at all within view, except the "Lone Ash" which at this time still stands on the right-hand side of the Manvel road opposite the Winston place.¹³

Alvin was just a broad expanse of prairie. There were few evidences of either present or future habitation in 1879; there was not even a switch on the railroad. The cattle were loaded directly onto the cars of trains from the stock pens. Despite the lack of sidetracks, however, the only cattle shipping point within twenty-five or thirty miles was this same stock pen on the Santa Fe main line which was laid through Alvin in 1875, and for many years this was the most modern thing in sight. Its only competitor was the old "Columbia Tap," which ran every other day between Houston and Columbia. In 1879 the bridge

¹¹Ibid., p. 3.

¹²Ibid.

¹³Mrs. T. M. Savell, interview with the writer, 1946.

across the bayou washed away, and for nearly a year there was no railroad transportation there at all.¹⁴

Alvin and all the country around it was purely western, free and open. As was the habit of cattlemen, the settlers had strung out along the waterways, and depended on this element in their industry. On all sides of them stretched land, theirs for the taking. T. M. Savell well remembered having killed a deer on the ground now occupied by the grammar school and Mrs. Savell tells of another deer that her father killed in 1879, on the site now occupied by the old Bell house where Mrs. W. F. Hooper lives.¹⁵

It was during 1881-1882 that Alvin really began to grow. In 1881 Major Durant plotted and laid out the town; later the Santa Fe Railroad and Alvin Morgan bought land and subdivided it into city blocks. A siding and depot were built and three or four families gathered in the depot building to hold the first church services in Alvin.

Relying on his own initiative and using a box car for headquarters, Alvin Morgan opened the city's first post office on April 12, 1881. He dispensed mail dropped by passing trains on an arm extending from the flagpost that marked the "slow-down" clearing of Alvin. After the building of the Houston branch railway through Alvin in 1875, the post office was moved to the depot with Sam N. Richardson, tele-

¹⁴Ibid.

¹⁵Alvin Sun, August 15, 1929, p. 2.

graph and railway agent, designated as postmaster.¹⁶

Then came the opening of the general store, operated by Alvin Morgan. It included the post office, counters at which one could buy groceries, hardware, clothing, shoes, general merchandise, whiskey and other commodities. Morgan also had charge of the Santa Fe pumping station. He employed a man by the day to pump by hand the water which the wheezy, puffing, spark-distributing Santa Fe engine, that pulled the Santa Fe's "Tri-Weekly Special" of those days, drank at a single gulp and moved on to the next hand pump.¹⁷

There are a number of other citizens of Alvin who came in those early days and became residents of the community. T. C. Edwards came to Alvin in the "gay nineties," and his earliest and most favorable recollection of the appearance of Alvin was what was then known as "Wright's Flower Garden." It is now known as Wade's Addition and includes a part of both residential and industrial districts.

It included about ten acres west of the street on which Stanton's store is located, south to Sealy Street, north to the railroad and ran westward to the Lynch property. It took in the present J. A. Froberg property and the George Stanton home. The owner of the garden took great pride in his well-kept flowers, particularly the magnolia trees and

¹⁶Ibid., p. 10.

¹⁷Ibid., p. 2.

cape jasmines which grew profusely over his entire tract. The flowing artesian well on the Wright property was the watering place of the entire town for years. Wright kept a trough at the roadside where people who came to town could water their stock, fill their jugs, and gossip to their heart's content. The trough became a sort of gathering place for the town wits, wise and otherwise, who daily settled the various political and other affairs of the community near the sparkling water well. This well, with the many romantic and clever tales it might disclose, still bubbles on the lawn of the George Stanton residence.¹⁸

Concentrated in one person were the offices of the justice of the peace, depot agent, express agent, and telegraph operator. All these were successfully handled by S. N. Richardson, one of the town's leading farmers. Richardson was also responsible for the first and greatest of Alvin's many booms. As an experiment, he shipped strawberries which had been grown extensively for home use, to Fort Worth. He was unable to find a crate in the community, so he carefully placed them in a dishpan and started them north. He soon received a telegram that the berries had arrived in fine shape and to send more at once. Thus began the strawberry boom that at its peak found twenty to thirty men registered at the hotel, interested and anxious to buy berries. Car after car was loaded and shipped daily

¹⁸Ibid., p. 3.

at prices around seven and eight dollars a crate. All this came about within a few brief years after that first dish-pan shipment.¹⁹

For twenty-five years the imposing red depot served Alvin's passenger and freight trains as they rumbled in and out of the booming city of Alvin to leave home-seekers and pick up heavy shipments of fruit and vegetables. The depot was moved in 1911 when the new stucco building was completed. The drafty windows and leaking roof of the old red depot were the subject of many quibs from the editor of The Alvin Sun back in the "good old days."

Struggling pioneers, dreaming of better things for their children, envisioned a thriving city of schools and churches growing from a prairie rank with tall grass. Fifty valiant and courageous stockmen, nursery men, truck farmers, and engineers called a mass meeting to make the first step toward organizing the Alvin that was to be.

In 1891, as a result of the town meeting, Judge H. M. Parker was elected mayor of Alvin with aldermen M. E. Williams, W. H. Struthers, and T. W. Carlton serving with him. W. B. Blair was made town clerk and William Tennis was the first city marshall. Town boundaries were established to encompass four square miles with D. Lee Slataper, assisted by others, outlining the district of Alvin.²⁰

¹⁹Ibid., p. 5.

²⁰Records of the City of Alvin, Book 1, p. 18, March 15, 1893.

After two years, the townsmen found that village government was inadequate for the fast-growing boom town, so an election was called and the town incorporated with H. M. Parker still serving as mayor. On the first council of the newly incorporated city, A. H. H. Tolar, M. E. Williams, W. H. Struthers, T. W. Carlton, and W. B. Blair served. William Tennis assumed office of city marshall and William R. Stockwell was named city engineer.²¹

Because of the tax problem in 1893, Mayor Parker named the first equalization board in April and appointed Jesse Hobbs, C. E. Ward, and Charles Engle, T. W. Carlton and M. W. Williams to the first board of finance.²²

About 1892 a small freeze at Hitchcock caused all the pears in the orchard of a Mr. H. A. Stringfellow to be stripped from the trees, only to be replaced by a second crop. Large juicy pears loaded the tree limbs, and this fruit spread enthusiasm throughout the vicinity. Families from the north, where a freeze is definite and final, hurried to the community and spent fortunes in setting out and caring for widespread orchards. The future took on a rosy shade, until the 1900 Gulf storm placed a most abrupt end to many ventures. The trees were forgotten and many buildings were never rebuilt.²³

The waxy cape jasmines were first grown in Alvin by

²¹Ibid., p. 27, June 24, 1893.

²²Ibid., p. 44, 1893.

²³Alvin Sun, August 7, 1940, p. 22.

Mr. Wright, but it was the late C. W. Benson who realized the possibilities of the flowers as a commercial industry. Benson, his brother, W. S. Benson, and T. C. Edwards played important parts in developing Alvin as the largest strawberry and vegetable shipping point in this part of the country.²⁴

In 1904 orange and citrus fruits were planted and by 1907 the industry had gained a large following. With E. L. Long acting as manager in 1914, the city staged an orange day festival and fair unparalleled in Alvin history. City streets were roped off and lined with grapefruit and orange trees which the growers brought. The stores became agricultural exhibits during the affair and ladies of the community did their bit by exhibiting their finest handiwork. For the occasion the Savidge brothers brought the first airplane this community had ever seen and auto polo games and airplane rides were daily events. There was little doubt that it was a great affair, well planned and well executed with more than 5,700 visitors attending in one day. Alvin prosperity justified the celebration and the boom continued until cold days of November put a sudden end to it.²⁵

Of a more recent date was the fig boom. An industry of some forty years' standing, it was not until 1929 that it came into the full glare of the spotlight. At that time

²⁴Ibid.

²⁵Ibid., August 13, 1945, p. 8.

every effort was made to save it from the fate of Alvin's other boom products.

Pears, strawberries, oranges, jasmines, figs, and vegetables are still being grown in quantities at a profit, adding new converts each year to the various class of believers. A bad year comes now and then for one group or another, but these men look into the future and are not easily turned back.

Other industries have included truck farming, dairying, cotton and rice production. Farming, poultry raising, and dairying are three of Alvin's mainstays. The surrounding community is excellent for these occupations, as evidenced by the thousands of acres of hay cut each year, and by the fine herds of cattle, some comprising as many as 500 head, which go to make up the many dairy farms surrounding the city. Three of the largest rice driers in the world are located in the outskirts of the city of Alvin. With the advantage of rice driers in that locality, farmers are able to send to market a bigger percentage than ever of their crop. Brazoria County alone in 1944 had 99,000 acres in rice.²⁶

In the spring of 1934, oil leasing began to spread like a prairie fire, and in December, Alvin received the best Christmas present in her history, the opening of the

²⁶Ibid.

Hastings oil field. The oil industry in this section of the county has added much to the population, as well as to the prosperity of the community.²⁷

Thoughtful citizens are prone to question what the future holds in store for Alvin, if and when drilling ceases in this area. Although contrary to the usual belief, a large group of workers will be required for many years after drilling of wells becomes a memory. Especially will this be true if the predictions of some geologists are true, that the Hastings field will produce for forty to one hundred years from its great depth of sands. Alvin is alongside one of the greatest oil fields in the world. Only in Roumania is there a depth of oil sand comparable to that of the Hastings field. There has never been a boom in Alvin because of oil. It has the largest payroll in Brazoria County by reason of the Hastings and Manvel oil fields, which are actually a part of the Alvin community.²⁸

During 1897 an epidemic of yellow fever swept the Southwest, and while the lowly mosquito was cursed for its bite, it was considered harmless and certainly not blamed for the plague that was ravaging the coast country. The mayor issued a proclamation to persons known to be from areas affected with the plague, and refused them entrance into the city. Even freight shipments were banned under

²⁷Ibid., March 16, 1934, p. 7.

²⁸Ibid., August 12, 1934, p. 9.

the law. During the year a board of health was organized to protect citizens from the fever. The board included M. McDavitt, president, F. M. Duke, J. E. Cannon, F. A. Remley, and J. J. Phoenix, secretary. Epidemics of smallpox, scarlet fever, diphtheria, and influenza were also common during the early development of the town.²⁹

In 1900 a storm roared out of the Gulf of Mexico and flattened houses and stores, but the citizens rebuilt. Two years later a fire broke out, and when the smoke died away, about twenty-four hours later, the town was practically gone. In 1915, Alvin was again flattened by a hurricane, but after every calamity it has grown back stronger than ever.³⁰

To say that Alvin is interested in education is expressing it in the mildest form. Alvin has always been deeply interested in private, collegiate, and public education since her first year's existence. Before the 1900 storm there was a good public school, two private schools, and a college. The morning after the storm there was nothing but wreck and ruin in place of the school buildings. The public school resumed activities in less than six weeks after the storm. The college, with an enrollment of 130 students, began the next September. It was soon forced to abandon because of insufficient facilities, a factor brought about

²⁹Alvin Sun, August 7, 1940, p. 28.

³⁰Mrs. J. Paul Rogers, History of Brazoria County, p. 23.

by the disastrous storm.³¹

Although official records of the Baptist, Christian, Methodist, and Episcopal churches in their early life were very meager and indefinite, the history of the town showed a gradual growth in their membership. The churches have also had their share of struggle and hardships, and today they stand entrenched in the hearts of the Alvin citizens. They are proud of the part they have played in the development of this community.³²

Just ask any of Alvin's old-timers the secret of Alvin's progress and they will tell you that the history of this town has been nothing more nor less than a series of booms; some good, some not so good, with each doing its bit toward the steady progress of Alvin as a city. This was done either directly by the boom or by the substantial people and industries the receding waves left on Alvin's shores.

There have been many times when Alvin lay dormant, but always it has been found as a town that moves forward, a city that must expand. Each successive "boom" has come, receded, and left scattered among the wreckage of forced prosperity some permanent, lasting contribution to the building of the solid, substantial Alvin which survived all

³¹Alvin Sun, February 14, 1902, p. 6.

³²Ibid., August 15, 1929, p. 5.

"booms."

Things have happened in Alvin, though the casual observer may fail to penetrate the veil of spray kicked up by each successive boom wave. The close student of local history will discover that solid, permanent things are still happening, that the progress of Alvin has resembled a man walking on a slippery treadmill, rushing forward, slipping back a step, but always moving ahead slowly, and resulting in forward movement at whatever cost.

CHAPTER II

GROWTH OF THE SCHOOL PLANT

The first Alvin public school was held, during the years of 1881-1882, in a twenty-by-twenty-foot one-room frame building, which was located a little west of the present Gordon Street. Mrs. Brown, wife of a Methodist minister, taught that first school. There are old men and women, pioneer citizens of Alvin, who can remember the little old schoolhouse on the prairie, built out of boxing lumber, entirely bare of every convenience except maybe a desk for the teacher and hard stiff-backed benches for the children.¹

In those early days cattle, munching the grasses on these wide prairies, furnished the livelihood for the few families in this settlement. Settlers drifted in slowly until a few years later when S. N. Richardson, who held all the notable positions in Alvin at that time, and who was also a good farmer, started a boom by sending out a few "dishpans" of strawberries by express to Fort Worth. A new industry was discovered, the public wanted strawberries, and in a short time berries began to roll out of the town in

¹Jim Hood, interview with the writer, 1946.

carload lots.²

A boom populates a town quickly and with the influx of people came small children to be educated. But the intense strawberry activity was overshadowed in the late 1800's when the trend of business in Alvin began to swing farther upward in the famed "pear boom." By the time large numbers of families from the North had been drawn to this locality, the youth of the town overcrowded the school. Because of the "booms," the little school-church was taxed to capacity for room and arrangements were made with the trustees of the Christian Church to use their new building for school purposes.³

Between the period from 1883 to 1889, the need for a separate school became so acute that two wooden buildings which belonged to the Easton Land Company of Houston were rented. These buildings were located on Sealy Street in the locality of the Clyde Bourland home. The rent of the buildings cost the city three hundred dollars a year and the City School Council decided to buy the land and erect their own buildings.⁴

In 1898 a block of land was bought from Colonel Graham for \$375.00, and a two-story frame building, which was used for approximately ten years, was erected at a cost of six thousand dollars. This was really the first building

²Ibid.

³Alvin Sun, August 7, 1940, p. 28.

⁴Records of the City of Alvin, Book 1, p. 92, May 7, 1894.

erected exclusively for the Alvin Public School, and only grade-school subjects were taught at that time.⁵

Arbor Day was observed in 1897 by planting shade trees on the school grounds around the new building. The building committee was instructed to use as much as fifteen dollars for the beautification of the grounds.⁶

On September 6, 1898, a committee of three was appointed to investigate the matter of repairing a room in the old school building to be used for a high school. On this committee were Mayor Welburn, and aldermen Harby and Wilkerson, who held the power to act on their judgment. The expense of this repair was not to exceed thirty-five dollars. Shortly afterwards a high school department was established in Alvin's Public School, and enrollment increased so rapidly that in 1910 the first brick building was erected near the present campus.⁷

The buildings on Sealy Street became a college, which specialized in commercial studies. This institution was operated by the "North Methodists" of the South. Proudly Alvin supported its college until it was abandoned soon after the 1900 storm which left wreckage in its wake.⁸

By November 25, 1910, the finishing touches had been

⁵Ibid., p. 142, December 3, 1894.

⁶School Board Minutes, 1897, p. 64.

⁷City Records, September 6, 1898, p. 221.

⁸Alvin Sun, February 14, 1902, p. 5.

completed on Alvin's new \$22,000 red-brick public school building which had been accepted by the school board. The structure was two stories high, constructed of red brick, containing twelve large classrooms, each twenty-three by thirty feet. The building had six wings fashioned on the star plan and in the center was a large auditorium and several halls. Each classroom was well lighted and was equipped with sufficient windows, and the building throughout was well ventilated. C. L. Ryals of Galveston was awarded the contract for the erection of the building, and R. L. Pierce of San Antonio was the architect. The building was one of the finest of its kind in South Texas, and was a credit to any of the larger cities of the state. It was not until November 12, 1920, that electricity and water were connected in this building.⁹

At a later date several of the old frame houses were moved to the present campus where they were used for various classrooms until the present buildings were completed. It was suggested that the school board retain at least one of the small buildings to be used for a school house for the North Side. A school in North Alvin was the means of bringing children by transfer from over the county line, and a large number of scholars took advantage of the opening of this school. During the early years of the North Side School, it was used for a grade school, and housed both

⁹Alvin Sun, May 26, 1911, p. 1.

white and Mexican children, but with ample provision made later with additional buildings, this became a Latin-American school for children through the fourth grade.¹⁰

The need of additional room for the Alvin Public School resulted in a called meeting of the school board on August 19, 1927, to remedy the situation. It was voted by the board to build a two-story frame building on the northeast corner of the block of the same type as that already on the lot. The need for this building had been apparent for several years but the hope that they would be able to secure a new building caused the board to delay this matter as long as possible. In 1926 a small storeroom near the school was used for one of the grades and two other grades were able to attend school only half a day. It had been impossible to rent this building again as it was to be moved closer to the school and used as a lunchroom. The school board could not find any satisfactory building in town for this purpose, therefore it was very necessary that a new building be added.¹¹

The addition to the school unit was thirty-two by forty-four feet with each of the rooms being thirty-two by twenty-two feet. The new building was substantially built and it was pointed out that in the near future it could still be of service to the school as a building for manual

¹⁰Ibid.

¹¹School Board Minutes, August 19, 1927, p. 46.

training or home economics. Payment for this building did not require any additional taxation but was paid for from funds which were already on hand for the operation of the school and which had been acquired through conservative management of funds by the school board. Moulton and Spears were in charge of the building program.¹²

On May 4, 1928, a petition was circulated among the citizens of the Alvin area which called upon the trustees of the Alvin Independent School District to hold an election for the purpose of voting upon an eighty-thousand dollar bond issue. The plan was to use the money in the construction of a new high school building, and also to improve the sanitary conditions of the existing building, which was to be used as a grammar school exclusively. The figure was set at \$80,000 after considerable discussion, it being agreed that this was the lowest possible figure at which work could be done in order to hold the state standing and college entrance credits. The proposed bond issue was actively supported by practically all the largest taxpayers in the district, all of whom realized that even though taxes were high at that time, it was absolutely necessary to provide ample housing space and up-to-date school equipment for the children.¹³

A twenty-two-acre plot of ground was purchased for the

¹²Ibid., p. 47.

¹³Alvin Sun, May 4, 1928, p. 3.

erection of a new high school building, two blocks east of the present site. An interesting observation concerning the ground was noted in that this land was formerly a huge orange orchard owned by a Mr. Haas. The high school building was constructed in 1928 at a cost of \$80,000. The structure was in three connected sections, each of a separate type and design. On the north end of the structure was the large auditorium, which included an open floor space of forty-five by sixty-eight feet, seating from 500 to 600 people. This had been designed to serve three purposes, being equipped for use as a study hall, a place for large gatherings and entertainments, and an indoor gymnasium and basketball court. At the west end of the auditorium was a stage with an opening fifteen by twenty-two feet, dressing rooms at each side, and a storage basement for chairs and other equipment under the stage. The auditorium had a steel frame, steel truss pitched roof covered with rigid asbestos shingles, with its main entrance at the east end facing the highway. An ornate portico affair and a nine-foot hallway connected the auditorium and the main building. This hallway ran the length of the main building to the manual training annex which was located on the south end. On the ground floor of the main building was the superintendent's office, teachers' lounge, library, a laboratory and students' lavatories. On the second floor of the main

building was the regular classrooms, the commercial department, and a textbook storage room. Instead of the old open desks, each student was assigned a table arm chair, and also a steel wall locker, thus providing better storage space for books and other school materials. The long main building, which ran north and south at right angles to the auditorium, had a pitched roof and rigid asbestos shingles. Additional furniture contracts for the new building were awarded to Brickley Brothers of Houston. The contract included furniture for an auditorium, classrooms, laboratory, teachers' lounge, the superintendent's office, and lockers. These furnishings complete and installed were \$5,313.25.¹⁴

The manual training and domestic science departments were housed in a single-story, flat-roofed annex joined to the south end of the main building. All floors in the new structure were double edge-grain pine over rough flooring, except the lavatories, which had tile floors. A boiler room was in the basement of the main building and contained an up-to-date steam-heating plant equipped to provide hot and cold running water throughout the buildings. The walls of all buildings were of hollow tile, faced outside with ornamental face brick in seven colors. The inside walls were plastered.¹⁵

A four-foot concrete sidewalk extended the length of

¹⁴Ibid., October 1, 1928, p. 91.

¹⁵Ibid., p. 10.

the entire property line paralleling the highway; and eight-foot concrete sidewalks led from it to the entrance in the center of the main building, while small walks led around the building each way.

In July, 1936, a contract for the erection of a home economics and manual arts building as a new addition to the present Alvin High School was let to Albert Meyerson of Houston. Lamar Q. Cato of Houston presented the plans. The manual arts building was constructed at a cost of \$16,513.00 and was erected south of the present high school. The building had four divisions which consisted of a tool room, supply room, finishing room and work room. Upon completion of the building machinery and other equipment were installed. A great deal of the equipment was made by the manual arts teacher who at that time was a Mr. Snodgrass.¹⁶

The home economics department contained a foyer, combination living and dining room, bedroom, bath, food and serving rooms, and a fitting room. Modern equipment was installed, which consisted of kitchen utensils, silver, china, linens, Tappan ranges, built-in cabinets, a huge electric refrigerator, dining-room suite, living-room suite, machines, and other equipment which made the work in that department more enjoyable and easier.

¹⁶Ibid., July 6, 1936, p. 9.

During the year 1936, a beautification program for the ✓ Alvin Public School was started. Oak trees, magnolia trees, and various ornamental shrubs were set out around the school grounds. The Alvin school board appropriated \$1,000 for the beautification program, quite a contrast to the fifteen dollars which was allowed by the board in 1897.¹⁷

The ultra-modern school plant of Alvin, Texas, was the most noticeable manifestation of the spirit of progress pervading the town and its immediate surroundings. The architect's model was a dream long cherished by the citizens of Alvin for its youth. Now with rich oil discoveries in this district and the consequent wealth that had flowed into the city, a \$300,000 building contract was let, and the pounding of hammers indicated that the imposing structures in that plan presented a realization of that vision. These buildings gave Alvin one of the most expansive and up-to-date school plants in Texas, one of which Alvin could be justly proud.

The extensive building program that was begun in 1936, with the erection of the present home economics and manual arts building, was continued in the spring of 1937 with an addition to the manual arts building at a cost of \$37,500. Complete with equipment, these two buildings totaled a cost of around \$53,500. Alvin possessed one of the finest laboratory of industries in the state. Faced north toward the

¹⁷ Ibid., February 14, 1936, p. 10.

new auditorium, the building was of tan brick, the same color as the high school. It originally consisted of only one building, the wood shop; an "L"-shaped addition was made in 1938 on to the wood shop, which made the building into a "T." The building contained a wood shop in the east wing, a metal shop in the south wing, and a drawing room in the west wing. The style of the building was a modification of modern design to conform with the English line of the high school. The shop wing of the building was thirty-two by sixty-three feet and contained a work shop with a finishing room and a locker room at the east end. Additional equipment added to the shop after the new addition was as follows: two shapers, a thirty-one-inch planer, twelve-inch jointer, radio, saw, paint-spraying equipment, and complete equipment for sharpening saws and brazing band saws together. During the summer of 1937, \$9,000 worth of furniture was made in this shop and placed in the new buildings.¹⁸

The dimensions of the south wing which contained the metal shop were forty by sixty feet. The equipment of this department consisted of three metal lathes, one electric welding machine, one oxy-acetylene welding machine, one machine hack saw, one foundry consisting of three parts, and complete equipment for sheet metal work. Many gifts such as flower holders, lamps, and various types of metal work were made in the shop. In addition to mechanics, some of the

¹⁸Ibid., January 13, 1939, p. 4.

students did fender and body work in their metal courses.¹⁹

The drawing room was located in the west wing of the building. On the east end of that room were blackboards and there were doors on each side of the room leading to small storerooms. The room was thirty-two by fifty feet and had a seating capacity of thirty pupils, with two large teacher's desks which could be used for added desks for pupils. For lighting, this room had three rows of lights, each individual unit containing a three-hundred-watt globe. The state department rated the manual arts department and its equipment and appearance first in the state in 1938.²⁰

The band house was a structure of brick and rubberized coating with architecture much like that of the other buildings on the school campus. The wiring of the building was so arranged that in later years, should air-conditioning be wanted in the building it would be possible. There were eleven rooms in the structure, one of them being a rehearsal room with a podium for the band director. Sound-proof practice rooms and a library were at the front of the building, while a uniform and storage room were located at the back. The band house was one of the finest in the South and it might be said, even in the United States. The school with its seventy-five-piece band, and with the installation of equipment valued at \$21,000, became a center of attention in educational circles over the state.²¹

¹⁹Ibid.

²⁰Ibid.

²¹Ibid., p. 5.

The Alvin Junior High School, a "T"-shaped building located on the northeast corner of the Alvin Public School campus, had ten classrooms, which included a library, complete with an abundance of library materials for children of junior high school age, and a laboratory well equipped for scientific and biological study, and an art room with the best of art supplies. This building was valued at \$71,000.²²

The Alvin Elementary School was designed by Blum E. Hester, who was architect for the complete building program, and it was built for a total cost of \$88,345. It was of modern architecture and was constructed of brick and cement. The building was in the shape of an "H" and included sixteen classrooms, an auditorium, a clinic, a teachers' lounge, and an office. The elementary auditorium had a seating capacity of approximately five hundred and was equipped with modern stage properties. Each classroom had steel lockers for pupils and a storage cabinet. The primary rooms had separate rest rooms, which adjoined the classrooms. In the building there were several large storage rooms in addition to a complete bookroom. There was also a library which was gradually being equipped. There were numerous drinking fountains and two modern rest rooms for pupils above primary grades. The building faced Cleveland Street and was east of the junior high school.²³

²²Ibid.

²³Ibid.

The new gymnasium which was directly behind the senior high school building, had many accommodations for both boy and girl athletes. There were four seven-tier folding grandstands, two on each side of the playing floor, which could be removed and replaced easily when the need arose. There were also two offices for physical education instructors, two classrooms, two check rooms, five sets of lockers, and a ticket office at each main entrance. There were dressing rooms and showers for use at any time, the boys' being located at one end of the building and the girls' at the other. There was also a storage room large enough to store all athletic equipment. This was fitted with cabinets, lockers, etc. The area of the building was 91,000 square feet, and cost \$87,743. The building which was constructed by the Meyers Construction Company, followed the modern, flat-roof design of the other campus buildings. The building had two basketball practice courts, one playing court, and two volley-ball courts. It also had two loud speakers with a microphone hook-up which was connected with an electrical clock and a radio. Electric scoreboards with automatic clocks and other electrical devices made this ultra-modern gymnasium the most efficient and one of the most beautiful in the entire South.²⁴

In the center of the Alvin Public School System stood the new \$112,000 administration building, which was an impressive structure near the center of the plot and fronted

²⁴Ibid., p. 6.

by a circular driveway. It was built of fire-proof brick, tile, and steel construction, and trimmed with aluminum. The architecture was modernistic. In the upper part of the lavish administration building was the auditorium proper with a seating capacity of over 1,000. The interior of the auditorium was complete in every detail, and would rival in beauty and efficiency any building of its kind in the United States. An immense stage contained the finest of stage properties, which included a grand piano and a pipe organ. Also located in the upper part of this building was the school tax collector's office, the school board conference room, broadcasting studio, projection room, and dark room for developing films. The first floor contained the superintendent's office, clinic, guidance office, and several storage closets.²⁵

A radio system centralized in the superintendent's office enabled him to tune in any classroom or permitted any teacher to tune in any radio network program. A two-way radio service had been completed in all of the buildings. Each room was equipped with an electric clock and radio. School news reviews were made over the radio by the journalism class, and all announcements were sent over the radio system. Ten to fifteen telephones were connected to the main office for instructions concerning radio programs and

²⁵Ibid.

various school matters.²⁶

In the basement of the administration building was located the large gas-equipped kitchen of the school and the cafeteria. All new gas equipment had been installed, an outstanding feature of which was the Servel Electrolux commercial gas refrigeration unit, Model CH 502A that protected all the foods stored in the six-door box, and also 126-cubic-foot capacity Friedrich grocer box. Considered the latest in modern automatic refrigeration, the Servel Electrolux commercial gas refrigeration unit was chosen after careful consideration for its performance, its cheapness of operation, and its freedom from moving parts, thus reducing to a minimum the necessity of repairs and replacement of parts. This refrigeration unit and grocer box were located in the storeroom which adjoined the kitchen. The very latest in gas cooking equipment had been installed in the Alvin High School kitchen. A gas-fired Wear-ever aluminum soup kettle, a Steam Chef pressure cooker, a Magic Chef heavy-duty broiler, two Magic Chef heavy-duty ranges, a Blodgett bake oven, a Hobart dishwasher, a \$1,000 electric mixer for cream and potatoes, and a 100-gallon aluminum bean pot constituted the kitchen equipment. A seventy-five-gallon Crane water heater and two twenty-gallon Crane water heaters furnished an adequate hot water supply for

²⁶A. G. Welch, interview with the writer, 1946.

the whole building. Gas steam radiators were used for heating in the cafeteria. In the cafeteria two large stainless steel steam tables, fired by natural gas, were installed. An interesting feature of this cafeteria was the table equipment, which consisted of forty-two tables of oak that had been built by Alvin High School students in the work shop as a class project. The seating capacity of the cafeteria basement was approximately four hundred.²⁷

Two rooms in the administration building were designated to house the clinic. One room was an office where records on all children were kept on file. The second room contained two hospital beds, an examining table, medicine cabinet with first-aid supplies, a sink, supply closet, and a Pelton large size electric sterilizer, which was used to sterilize supplies.

In 1941 a garage to house nine White school busses was built. This building included a repair shop, wash rack, and supplies. It was 122 by forty-five feet and cost about \$10,603. The construction and design of the building were in keeping with the other buildings on the campus. The school operated seven White busses, which were the most modern in design, quite a contrast from the first school bus which had been a Ford touring car improvised into a truck to provide transportation for the children. Four

²⁷Mrs. LeNoir Arnold, interview with the writer, 1946.

other busses from outlying school districts were also used in transporting children to school.²⁸

An unusual feature of the school was the fact that all the buildings were on one twenty-two-acre plot. A \$50,000 landscaping project with labor done by the Works Progress Administration of the United States Government was completed. Truck load after truck load of dirt had to be hauled in to sod the plot. Besides setting out shrubbery over the campus, the landscaping project provided for the building of a circular driveway in front of the administration building. Magnolia trees were set out between the sidewalks and the driveway. A variety of trees and shrubs, including palms, yupon, and cedar trees, were planted in the four divisions of the esplanade in front of the administration building. Live-oak trees were planted about twelve feet apart along the sides of the curving sidewalks that led from the auditorium to the high school and the junior high school. Shrubby was planted around the other buildings also. Sidewalks were laid from one building to the other over the complete campus.²⁹

Other property and outstanding equipment for the Alvin School included a moving picture machine, a film library consisting of fifty films, which enabled classes to

²⁸A. G. Welch, interview with the writer, 1945.

²⁹Alvin Sun, March 31, 1939, p. 7.

see and hear educational films, a visual aid projector, two 16 mm. projectors, one opaque projector, one Jim-Dandy projector, two radio phonographs, one record player, one mirror-phone recorder, four copy reproducing machines, one portable sound system, six pianos, four airplanes, and one link trainer.³⁰

The school building, the equipment, and the teaching and administrative personnel are all important factors in the educational program which cannot be overlooked; but too often, in their zeal to provide adequately for these factors, persons responsible for the location and construction of school plants neglect another significant phase of the school program, namely, the provision of adequate and well-equipped playground space. That this is highly important is indicated in the following quotation:

There is some doubt as to whether the playground can be said to be less important than the classroom. Without adequate facilities for organized play, the children are deprived not only of the enjoyment they deserve, but also of real necessities for their proper development. A relatively large vacant space is in itself no longer considered a "playground" in the present-day conception of education. There should be at least a minimum allotment of standard apparatus for every school, based upon the distribution and the ages of the pupils.³¹

Adequate space has been provided for the playgrounds of the Alvin School, and equipped with swings, seesaws, tennis courts, and a football stadium. Additional playground

³⁰A. G. Welch, interview with the writer, 1946.

³¹J. B. Sears, The Boise Survey, pp. 197-198.

equipment has been ordered for next year.³²

A program for the dedication of Alvin's million-dollar school plant was given October 20, 1938. At noon a free barbecue was held at the high school athletic field, served to more than a thousand people attending. An old-timers' reunion and a reunion of Alvin High School alumni was staged at the noon hour and until after two o'clock. Dedication ceremonies were held about five o'clock on the school grounds, with Carl Bolin, president of the Alvin school board, and A. G. Welch, superintendent of the Alvin School, and members of the school board in charge. State Superintendent of Public Instruction, Dr. L. A. Woods, was the main speaker. A conference football game began at eight o'clock in the evening between Alvin and Galena Park, climaxing the day's activities. Prizes were awarded for the best floats in the parade, to the oldest married couple present, and to the old-timers who came from the greatest distance to the reunion and celebration.³³

The life cycle of the last school building which remained on the old Alvin School campus was about to be completed as it was begun. It had been cut in two and moved to the present campus to be used as additional elementary classrooms. The building had been used by three divisions of the Alvin School -- the grade, junior high, and senior

³²T. A. Smith, interview with the writer, 1946.

³³Alvin Sun, August 11, 1930, p. 1.

high. It was built as a grade school and used until the elementary school building was constructed. The Alvin High School band used the building as a band house until the new band house was completed. The junior high school used it from 1938 until 1943, and in 1942 the Girl Scouts and Red Cross workers used it as a meeting place. In 1945-1946 it was used for first-grade classrooms for the elementary school, which had already outgrown its new building. Several years ago a similar frame building to house the vocational agriculture classes was moved from the old campus to the present one. These were the only two frame buildings on the campus, and they will be replaced in the near future with modern buildings.³⁴

Just a few blocks from the Alvin Public School stands a quaint cottage, fairly bulging with children. A peep inside shows more tiny tots than the old woman that lived in the shoe could ever have imagined. So many flipping gingham skirts and gay short breeches truly remind one of the old nursery rhyme, with one great exception -- here it is at once evident that "she does know what to do."³⁵

It was some thirty years ago, about seven years after the Van Tassell family had moved to the Alvin community from Ashtabula, Ohio, that Mrs. Van Tassell opened her private kindergarten school at the suggestion of one of her friends.

³⁴Ibid., September 24, 1943, p. 2.

³⁵Ibid., September 5, 1925, p. 7.

The first class had sixteen members. Since that time hundreds of pupils have been enrolled, many of whom are now grown and have families of their own. Some of them still reside in Alvin, others live in many other Texas cities, and still others in California and Arizona. It was notable that from fifty to seventy-five per cent of the students whose names have appeared on the honor rolls of the Alvin School had been pupils of Mrs. Van Tassell's kindergarten. With the assistance of at least two teachers, the school at the present time enrolls fifty children and teaches classes in nursery school, pre-school, first, and second grades.³⁶

Mrs. Van Tassell had established a school of which in the future Alvin could well be proud. Alvin is looking forward to having her unit become a part of the Alvin Public School. It is her ambition that her primary school may, as a part of the public system, be given to all the Alvin children without cost, a free grade school with all the privileges of a private school.³⁷

This problem is being seriously considered by members of the Alvin school board, since plans are now being formulated for the erection of a new primary building.

On May 6, 1946, the Alvin school board met for the purpose of discussing plans for additions to old buildings, and the building of several new structures on the campus.³⁸

³⁶Ibid., September 2, 1925, p. 7.

³⁷Ibid.

³⁸Alvin School Board Minutes, May 6, 1946.

Mr. Shult, the school architect, was present and made a report concerning these proposed new buildings. Floor plans of the new primary, Mexican, and vocational agriculture buildings were discussed, and definite plans are being made to go forward with this program within the very near future.³⁹

The new primary building will be located east of the present elementary building, and constructed on the same plan, with one exception: it will contain a cafeteria for the primary children.⁴⁰

The vocational agriculture building will be erected of brick and will harmonize with the construction of other buildings on the campus. The vocational agriculture program has been hampered because of lack of room, but with this new addition and new equipment, it will be one of the outstanding buildings on the campus.⁴¹

The North Side Mexican School will have a modern new brick building, which will contain at least four classrooms, an auditorium, a cafeteria, and the most modern equipment. The building which is being used now is very inadequate for the needs of the Latin-American boys and girls.⁴²

Additions will be built to the present high school, junior high, and home economics buildings to take care of the increased enrollment and the enlarged curriculum.⁴³

³⁹Ibid., p. 350.

⁴⁰Ibid.

⁴¹Ibid.

⁴²Ibid.

⁴³Ibid.

As one can see, the Alvin School has not stopped with its building program, but continues to grow.

CHAPTER III

FINANCIAL GROWTH

The efficiency of any organization is determined largely, if not chiefly, by the adequacy of the financial support which is given the organization. So it is with the schools. The schools cannot be financed out of the air nor on the good wishes of their friends. There is an old saying that "money makes the mare go;" likewise it may be said that money makes the schools go.¹

The financial problem in connection with our public schools is fundamental. Courses of study and proper training of teachers and administrators may be provided, sound aims and well-grounded methods may exist, but still there must be money to build and properly equip and maintain buildings, to provide the necessary books and supplies, to employ competent teachers and supervisors, or all else will amount to nothing.

A community's ability to support its schools may be measured by the amount of its resources and the effort it makes to raise revenues. Prominent educators have used various methods in measuring ability to support public education. Financial ability has been expressed in terms of taxable property reckoned on the basis of each enrolled child. Leading educators have also used the true valuation

¹Ward G. Reeder, The Business Administration of a School System, p. 66.

of taxable property reckoned per pupil in average daily attendance. This measurement as well as most of the other plans inaugurated by modern educators, is not without limitations. Wealth is only an indication of ability, and not an exact measure or standard of ability. Experts in the field of economics and taxation know that certain types of property can carry a much larger tax rate than other types of property of comparable value. Under the present tax system, too large a percentage of our wealth goes untaxed. A community's ability to support its schools might conceivably be calculated on the basis of its income. Income has a more direct relationship to ability than does true wealth, or assessed wealth; but until present laws of taxation are changed, the ability to support schools will have to be determined in the light of true wealth or assessed wealth.

The budget is the most important financial document of a school system. It is the master plan for administering the schools. In it should be found a statement of all anticipated revenues and a scheme for expending them. The order may be reversed; if so, the budget becomes an outline of proposed educational and auxiliary services with their costs and a statement of the revenues needed to pay for them. Under either method, the two parts cover the same school or fiscal year and are in balance. A good budget is based on accurate costs plus intelligent estimates. The

costs should be available in detail comparable with the size of the community and should cover a period of at least three years for all items and preferably as long as ten years for the major items of administration, instruction, auxiliary services, operation, maintenance, fixed charges, capital outlay, and debt service.²

Taxes in Alvin were a problem even in 1893, so in April of that year, Mayor Barker named the first equalization board which consisted of Jesse Hobbs, C. E. Ward, and Charles Engle. T. W. Carlton and M. W. Williams were appointed to the first board of finance. During the early years, the city government had complete charge of educational activities, hiring and firing of teachers, and outlining courses of studies in the Alvin School. During the year 1893, J. N. Richardson was made principal of the Alvin Public School at a salary of seventy-five dollars per month. Other teachers and their salaries were Nancy Turner, first assistant, sixty dollars; Lillian Hobbs, second assistant, fifty dollars; and Kate Hanks, primary teacher, fifty dollars. All the teachers were required to have first grade certificates.³

An inquiry was made on April 24, 1893, into the school fund. The secretary was instructed to correspond with various officials at Brazoria, which was the county seat at that

²American Association of School Administrators, School Boards in Action, Twenty-fourth Yearbook (1946), p. 153.

³Records of the City of Alvin, Book 1, December 7, 1893, p. 10.

time, and also at Austin to ascertain if possible the status of the Alvin School fund due the city of Alvin from the county and the state. By June 19, 1893, the secretary had received a reply to his inquiry, and it was found that the approximate amount of money available for school purposes for the ensuing school year would be about \$2,000.⁴

The matter of raising funds for the purpose of paying the salaries of the teachers of the Alvin Public School was discussed on November 6, 1893, but no definite action was taken. It was decided to defray the expenses of William Tennis, city marshall, to Brazoria to ascertain the status of the transfers of scholars from outside districts for the Alvin School. Tennis reported matters in Brazoria very unsatisfactory relative to the Alvin school funds from the county; unless something could be done there was little likelihood of getting any of the \$635 for 1892-1893 or of the money for 1893-1894. There had been ninety-nine pupils transferred for the school term and the transfers had been badly neglected by the county judge.⁵

It was ordered by the council that the secretary consult the District Attorney and devise some plan by which to secure justice from the county officials. It was also requested that the secretary send a complete list of transfers to the county judge, and then confer with the State

⁴Ibid., January 5, 1894, p. 91.

⁵Ibid., November 6, 1893, p. 100.

Superintendent of Public Instruction and present the case before him. The mayor and the secretary were ordered to issue all salary warrants for teachers and officers without further notice from the board of aldermen.⁶

On December 7, 1893, Alderman I. N. Wilson requested that the secretary investigate the condition of the schools and ask Mr. Decherd, principal of the school, to meet with the board and to write the District Attorney in regard to the condition of the Alvin school funds. It was then suggested that it would be well to have meetings of the trustees of the Alvin, Winston and Mustang districts to discuss the school situation. The time for this suggested meeting was set for Saturday, December 9, 1893, at two o'clock in the afternoon.⁷

A motion was carried unanimously, at a meeting December 11, 1893, to suspend the free school indefinitely due to the financial status of the Alvin Public School. Mr. Decherd, principal, asked and was granted permission to organize a subscription school in case the free school could not be reopened.⁸

1893 marked a year of growth and achievement. In 1894 Alvin was credited with 1,027 bona fide residents, engaged mostly in agricultural pursuits with a property valuation

⁶Ibid.

⁷Ibid., December 7, 1893, p. 105.

⁸Ibid., December 11, 1893, p. 109.

set at a little over \$242,000. During the administration of the city affairs for the years 1892-1893 warrants were issued for school purposes against the general fund for \$1,853.10.⁹

On May 14, 1894, in a school board meeting, a motion was made by G. Petty and seconded by A. Nash that the Alvin Public School be in session for eight months, beginning September 1, 1894. It was decided and voted to elect teachers for the ensuing year, and the maximum salaries were designated as follows: B. Hudson, principal, seventy dollars; and Lena Wright, Nannie Turner, M. V. Boyd, and Josie Smith, assistants, forty dollars each per month.¹⁰

In July, 1894, a resolution was passed by the city council that the tax collector, of the city of Alvin, was authorized and instructed to receive in payment of school tax any outstanding script against the school fund. He was also to receive in payment of other municipal taxes any script against the general fund that might be presented to him, provided, however, that he was not to place a credit on any script as a payment of tax on any property.¹¹

September 7, 1894, the available public school fund for the year 1894-1895 was reported as follows:

Ad valorem tax	$\frac{1}{2}$ of 1%	\$1213.00
Poll tax		160.00
State apportionment		700.00
	Total	\$2073.00 ¹²

⁹Alvin Sun, August 16, 1929, p. 6.

¹⁰City Records, June 4, 1894, Book 1, p. 127.

¹¹Ibid., July 2, 1894, p. 129.

¹²Ibid., September 7, 1894, p. 135.

On October 1, 1894, the city council met and made the following resolutions for the improvement and advancement of the Alvin Public School:

1. That prices be fixed as monthly tuition for pupils attending the city school for 1894 as follows:

Grades 1, 2, 3	\$1.50
Grades 4, 5, 6	2.00
Grades 7, 8, 9	2.50

2. That pupils transferred from other communities be allowed to attend the full term of the free school by supplementing an amount sufficient to make their prorato apportionment from the county equal to the prorato apportionment of the city fund which was \$10.10 and that the same be paid into the city treasury in monthly installments.

3. That pupils under and over scholastic age be charged tuition according to the grade they were placed in and that the same be paid monthly into the city treasury.

4. That pupils transferred from other communities be allowed choice of the provisions of the second clause of this resolution or attending two and one-half months free of extra charge and thereafter paying regular tuition as per grade price established by the first clause of the resolution.

5. Scholastic age within the city limits was from six to eighteen years, inclusive.¹³

Contracts were ordered to be entered into with the

¹³Ibid., October 1, 1894, p. 139.

teachers for a term of six months of free school, with the understanding that the school would be continued longer, provided funds would warrant.

A school building committee was appointed on December 3, 1894, and was composed of the following members: G. Petty, P. M. Hartley, Mat Spears, and T. Wilburn.¹⁴

In January of the school term 1894-1895, Professor T. Wilburn was employed by the Alvin Public School Board and paid a salary of seventy-five dollars. He was to take charge of the department of penmanship. In July of the same year, W. C. Steele was elected principal, at a salary of sixty dollars per month, and his four assistants received forty dollars each per month. Men and women of Alvin still remember W. C. Steele as a capable schoolmaster who taught and disciplined the overgrown boys of the prairie, even when it was necessary to pick up a piece of stovewood to make himself more clearly understood.¹⁵

The lease for the rented school buildings in use expired December 16, 1895, and the Alvin Public School was declared closed temporarily to be reopened in the new school building January 2, 1896. The building was not completed at that time, but on January 7, 1896, it was officially opened, with the enrollment as follows:

Professor Steele	46 pupils
Miss Turner	28 pupils

¹⁴Ibid., December 1, 1894, p. 143.

¹⁵Ibid., July 8, 1895, p. 151.

Miss Carpenter	48 pupils
Mrs. Gibson	27 pupils
Miss Browning	39 pupils

Total 188 pupils¹⁶

Alvin now had one of the finest schools in the coast country. J. W. Saxon was elected principal of the Alvin Public School for the fall term 1896. Five assistants were to help him, and all of them were to be paid the same salaries as the previous year. For support of the Alvin Public School for the scholastic year 1896-1897, the tax rate was one-half of one per cent on the assessed valuation.¹⁷

The period from 1896 to 1898 showed a gradual increase in the enrollment of the school. Only the bare necessities of equipment were purchased during this time. In 1898 J. W. Saxon resigned to become county superintendent, and C. Z. Spahr was elected principal to fill the vacancy. The school term varied between five to seven months depending on the funds. Even though the salaries were very meager, the board received thirty applications for positions from as far away as San Antonio, Missouri, and Indiana.¹⁸

Until 1899 school matters were handled by the city council, but during that year the first Alvin school board was elected with the following members: J. M. McGinty,

¹⁶Ibid., January 7, 1896, p. 174.

¹⁷Ibid., January 12, 1896, p. 174.

¹⁸Ibid., September 6, 1898, p. 221.

W. B. Pair, E. I. Stockwell, T. W. Carlton, W. A. Roman, Matthew Spears, and D. Lee Stataper. Due to financial conditions the salary of the principal was lowered to sixty-five dollars, and the teachers to forty dollars, and an effort was made to continue the school eight months instead of seven.¹⁹

The following committees were appointed by the newly elected school board:

1. Committee on teachers and textbooks.
2. Committee on rules, complaints, and grievances.
3. Committee on finance.
4. Committee on school property.
5. Committee on sanitation and inspection.
6. Committee on teachers' salaries.
7. Special committee.²⁰

American education began near the people, in log cabins, in covered wagons along the trail, among the cottages of seafaring men, sod shanties, and on the prairies. Schools soon began to appear wherever there was a book, a query, a wise parent, and an eager young mind. And so an American tradition came to be: free schools for a free people.²¹

The Alvin Public School was typical of the early American schools. These schools were planned and managed by the whole community, all the citizens possessing a voice in what was done. When such direct control became impractical,

¹⁹Ibid., April 1, 1899, p. 230.

²⁰School Board Minutes, September 25, 1899, p. 10.

²¹American Association of School Administrators, op. cit., p. 1.

temporary committees often were appointed, each to do some important job, such as to build a school house or to select and employ a teacher. Then as the amount of school business increased, temporary committees were replaced by permanent school committees or school boards, and thus was established an institution close to the daily lives of the American people. Local control of the schools through boards of education by the same token has kept them close to the hearts of the people. This plan of local autonomy has proved exceedingly effective, giving this democracy a system of education unmatched in any other major country at any time. Local responsibility for the financial support of education, traditionally associated with local autonomy, has been a serious weakness of the system of school management. Gradually, however, state and federal governments have learned how to equalize initiative and local control which have been the genius of the American plan. To be sure, not all boards of education have been equally prompt in adopting progressive school policies. But, always, there have been leaders to set the pace and, by their example, stimulate other boards to more liberal decisions and actions.²²

Early school boards were compelled to exercise rather complete control over the schools. There were no trained

²²Ibid., p. 10.

superintendents, principals, or supervisors, and few trained classroom teachers. Of necessity, the school committee selected the teacher, gave him his license, and supervised his work in great detail. The school committee visited ✓ classes, heard the children read and spell, questioned them about their work, and examined the writing and ciphering books. If they were not pleased with the school, they told the teacher how to discipline his pupils and perhaps how to conduct his classes.²³

Such direct management of a school system is no longer the necessary or proper function of a board of education. The school committee which actually "ran the school" belonged to the era of the pioneer town, the covered wagon, the clearing of timberlands, the prairies, and the breaking of the sod. Its members were chosen at the little red schoolhouse which became, on occasion, the scene of deliberations and not infrequently of battles which rocked the entire community. The modern board of education, or the modern school board, is still responsible for the maintenance of good schools, but it is concerned, also, with a modern school program and with the educational matters in the community in a larger way. The modern board is sensitive to the nature and educational significance of such institutions and agencies as the family, church, press,

²³Ibid., p. 11.

motion pictures, radio, library, playground, museum, and theaters, and plans its educational policies accordingly. Even its procedures in school management have been adjusted to new and broader purposes.²⁴

W. C. Boone had previously been appointed the city health officer in 1893; however, due to a quarantine proclamation for yellow fever in 1897, a board of health was appointed by John Wilburn, mayor of Alvin. The board was composed of the following men: M. McDavitt, F. M. Duke, J. E. Cannon, F. A. Remley, and N. J. Phenix.²⁵

An ordinance which levied a tax for the city of Alvin to provide for the support and maintenance of the public free school of that city from September 1, 1893, to August 31, 1894, was passed. An ad valorem tax of one-half of one per cent was levied on the assessed valuation of all real property situated within the limits of the city.²⁶

To show the actual seriousness of the financial situation of the Alvin Public School during 1900, the following notation was made from the school board minute book: "A communication from the National Educational Company in which they agreed to extend the time of payment for \$33 worth of charts for an additional 90 days." On March 5, 1903, warrants had been drawn upon the school fund for the amount

²⁴Ibid., p. 13.

²⁵Records of City of Alvin, Book II, p. 284.

²⁶Ibid., July 1894, p. 128.

of \$2,015.44. This included salaries of teachers and all incidental expenses connected with the Alvin Public School for the scholastic year of 1902-1903, and left a balance in the school treasury of twelve dollars.²⁷

On March 30, 1904, a report was given to the joint committee of the Alvin City Council and the Alvin School Board, by the special committee. This committee had been appointed to examine the books and to report on the financial differences which existed between the city council and the school board, as to certain school money.²⁸

The committee had carefully examined the books of the city and found that from May 4, 1902, to March 14, 1904, the only data obtainable on account of the fire, that the city had turned over to the Alvin School Board the sum of \$198.14 which left a balance due the board of \$62.94. This discrepancy resulted from the failure of the city to turn over certain back taxes collected for the years since 1899 when the Alvin Independent School District had come into existence. The funds in the hands of the city council at that time, when the school board was established, and the taxes since collected for the years previous to the year 1899, had not been taken into that account. They believed that this "old fund" which was being held by the city council should be turned over to the school board as a loan without

²⁷Alvin School Board Minutes, 1900, p. 31.

²⁸Ibid., March 31, 1904, p. 83.

interest. After careful consideration, the recommendations were adopted by both the city council and the school board, which showed a spirit of cooperation.²⁹

In 1912 a motion was passed that the city council make the school tax levy at fifty cents per hundred-dollar valuation for maintenance. During that year a report was published in The Alvin Sun by the school board, concerned with the payment of unpaid taxes. The board members expressed their appreciation of the offer made by the teachers to continue their work through the eighth month and to hold their warrants for that month until the money for them had been paid into the treasury, but that they regarded the issuance of warrants for which a certain and definite fund was not in sight, would be unlawful; therefore, the board resolved to meet on the 28th of March to determine whether the fund in the treasury would justify the continuance of the school for a longer period. The fund was not sufficient, therefore the school closed with an eight-month term.³⁰

Due to the financial condition of the school in 1913, Dr. Winn, a member of the school board, resigned and gave the following reason: he thought it wise to let the public know the financial conditions so that much unjust criticism would be silenced. In 1912, when he was elected to the Alvin Public School Board, the board was indebted \$1,500

²⁹Ibid.

³⁰Ibid.

and had five hundred dollars in the treasury. The teachers were unpaid for the last month of the term 1911-1912, which added an indebtedness of \$670. At the end of the year the board had succeeded in paying all the indebtedness except a five-hundred-dollar note yet due on the North Side School, paid up the teachers' warrants for the last month of 1911-1912, added five hundred dollars' worth of equipment to the scientific laboratory, and had on hand about eight hundred dollars in cash surplus. They raised the salaries of the teachers which enabled them to secure the services of first-class teachers. The educational standard of the teachers was raised and the board accepted no application above the third grade from those who did not have a first-grade certificate, and high school teachers were required to be college trained in the special subjects which they taught. The classification of the high school was changed from third class to first class, and if that classification could be continued, the graduation class of 1914 would have full affiliation with the University of Texas. Although a few accomplishments were made, it was not necessary to remind the public of the rocky road that led to that goal.³¹

So nearly was the board bankrupt, and so uncertain were the finances, that no one in Alvin would consent to act as treasurer, and only after being put to the expense of asking the county depository at Angleton to act as treasurer of

³¹Alvin Sun, August 29, 1913, p. 1.

the Alvin School, did W. L. Browning, for civic pride, agree to accept the burden. In order to start the school, Winn gave a personal note to a Houston banker for four thousand dollars. The public constantly complained, and was dissatisfied, and blamed the school board for the condition of the school. Creditors threatened suit on old accounts, of which the board knew nothing, and which required much time and labor to adjust. Last but by no means least, the board members themselves had to learn the rudiments of school administration. There were also criticisms as to why that particular faculty had been selected. Some teachers, who had been long connected with the school, failed to be re-elected because they failed to meet the educational requirements set by the board in December, 1912. Six months before they came up for re-election, complaints had been made by patrons of the school to secure a majority vote against them. In the selection of teachers the only policy of the board was to give some teachers preference where they measured up to the educational standard set by the board. Therefore, considering this terrible financial strain, Winn thought it best to resign.³²

The total revenue for the Alvin School District for 1920-1921 was as follows:

1. Local taxes	\$9,382.11
2. State apportionment	6,062.50

³²Ibid.

3. Tuition and transfers	547.00
4. State aid	1,000.00
	<hr/>
Total	\$16,992.61

Twelve teachers were paid \$12,419.84 for eight months, and the incidental expenses were five thousand dollars.³³

In 1921 the future of the Alvin School was in the hands of the voters, as the question of increasing the maintenance school tax in the Alvin Independent School District was to be voted upon. The defeat of this issue would have meant a calamity to the school. In 1920 in order to maintain the institution it was necessary to increase the valuation of taxable property for school purposes only, but values for 1921 would drop back to the appraisement of 1919. A law had been passed which permitted the small town school districts to vote a maintenance tax of one dollar on the hundred-dollar valuation instead of the fifty-cent limit as heretofore. Should this election carry, it would not greatly affect the previous rate of taxes, but the slight increase would be sufficient to assure the school a full nine-months' term, with the proper instructors and management.³⁴

There was much opposition to the issue and the vote was close -- 118 to ninety-nine -- but it carried and the city was assured of a full nine-months' term. Affiliation with

³³School Board Minutes, May 20, 1921, p. 330.

³⁴Alvin Sun, April 8, 1921, p. 7.

the university, rating with the Southern Commission, and the reputation of the institution would have been wiped out had the vote turned out otherwise. It had taken years to put Alvin School where it now stood, and the true spirit of Alvin people had been reflected in the success of the election.³⁵

The consolidation of the Fairview School with Alvin in 1923 began the program which has grown until fifty per cent of the student of the Alvin School now come from districts which have been consolidated with Alvin. Alvin Heights in 1924 and Alert District in 1925 were additional schools which consolidated with the Alvin Public School. This program of consolidation aided Alvin School financially and has brought many fine students to the school.³⁶

The items which were included in the budget for the Alvin Independent School District for the year 1931-1932 were as follows:

Current payments	\$36,692.80
Capital outlay	400.00
Debt service	9,600.00
	<hr/>
Total	\$46,692.80 ³⁷

A tax levy of one dollar on the hundred-dollar valuation

³⁵Ibid., May 6, 1921, p. 5.

³⁶C. P. Strickland, interview with the writer, 1946.

³⁷School Board Minutes, July 20, 1931, p. 9.

was levied on real estate and personal property rendered and un-rendered for taxes for the year 1931 on property within Alvin Independent School District. The levy was apportioned as follows:

1910 bond fund	4¢
1925 bond fund	3¢
1928 bond fund	20¢
maintenance	73¢ ³⁸

For the year 1932:

1910 bond fund	2¢
1925 bond fund	2¢
1928 bond fund	16¢
maintenance	80¢ ³⁹

The board directed that the valuation of the Gulf States Utilities Company property within the district be set at \$92,250.00 for tax purposes for 1931.⁴⁰

In 1932 the valuation of the Alvin Independent School District from September 1, 1932, to August 31, 1933, was \$3,186,590.00.⁴¹

Approximately one hundred real estate owners who were tax-paying citizens within the Alvin Independent School District petitioned the trustees of the school board and asked

³⁸Ibid.

³⁹Ibid., July 18, 1933, p. 11.

⁴⁰Ibid., July 20, 1931, p. 9.

⁴¹Ibid., July 15, 1932, p. 29.

for a twenty-five per cent reduction on the valuation of real estate for taxable purposes during the year 1934. At that time the tax rate of one dollar per hundred-dollar valuation could not be raised; the reduction of twenty-five per cent in the real estate would mean a decrease in gross tax revenue for the coming school year, and more dollars in the treasury. It was reasonable to expect that a decided reduction in the operation expenses of schools for the coming year would have to be made.⁴²

With the schools, as in any other business, there were set items of expense such as interest and bonds issued for construction of buildings, equipment contracted for on installment plan, etc., on which the payments must be made and could not be eliminated from annual expenses. Therefore, the only place where reductions and savings could be effected in the schools or any business was in the operation expenses of the institutions which covered salaries, transportation, light, power, gas, telephone and other miscellaneous items too numerous to mention necessary for the functioning of the institution considered.⁴³

In the Alvin School the heaviest item of the operation expense was the salaries of teachers. If the tax-payers were to receive any worth-while relief, it would have to

⁴²Alvin Sun, May 12, 1934, p. 1.

⁴³Ibid.

come through a reorganization of the school faculty at reduced salaries from the lowest to the highest. This was not a pleasant task for the school trustees, neither was such action greatly appreciated by the teachers, but there was no other choice in the matter, if the schools were to continue and the tax-payers to pay. The teacher payroll at that time was \$21,560, which included twenty-two teachers, and to this amount there had to be added salaries of janitors, and bus drivers, which increased the large payroll of the Alvin School employees.⁴⁴

April 30, 1934, the Alvin Independent School Board, upon careful investigation of the school, made changes in the educational and financial departments of the school. A reduction of twenty-five per cent on real estate and livestock was adopted. The shortage in the revenue created by the reduction of tax valuations had been partially offset by reductions in salaries, transportation costs, and various other terms wherever a cut seemed possible without jeopardizing the efficiency of the school's educational program.⁴⁵

School tax valuation for the year 1934 was set at approximately \$2,400,000.00 by the budget committee in its report, which was accepted at a meeting of the trustees of the Alvin Independent School District on August 31, in the

⁴⁴Ibid.

⁴⁵School Board Minutes, May 14, 1934, p. 67.

high school building. This figure represented a reduction from \$3,046,420.00 in 1933, made possible because of the authorized cutting in the value placed upon all real estate and livestock.⁴⁶

To pay current interest and provide for one year's sinking fund for school bonds of 1910, a rate of six cents on the hundred-dollar valuation of all real and personal property, and a rate of twenty-four cents on 1928 bonds was set; to provide for the current expenses for maintenance, seventy cents was allowed.⁴⁷

Through the support of the tax-payers, the aid of the Texas Relief Commission, and the effort and thought of the trustees, it was possible to liquidate the entire previous indebtedness of the Alvin Independent School District, an amount of \$13,129.17. The district was now on a cash basis and in accordance with a report from the finance committee all efforts would be made to maintain that standing.⁴⁸

Teachers' salaries and current bills had been paid promptly, the building repaired, school busses reconditioned, creating an expenditure of approximately \$1,000. The 1934 enrollment of the school was the largest in the Alvin School history, and a well-selected staff of competent teachers had made satisfactory progress.⁴⁹

⁴⁶Ibid.

⁴⁷Ibid.

⁴⁸Ibid.

⁴⁹Alvin Sun, May 15, 1934, p. 1.

The Alvin School Board, through whose excellent management the school had been placed in its present position, functioned without friction. The many committees into which the board was divided cooperated in every way. The board had but one goal, the progress of the Alvin School. The trustees were most grateful to the tax-payers for the support which was given them and asked that this same splendid aid be given in the future. The trustees contended that the school could be maintained upon a cash basis by the united efforts of the tax-payers and the board. Only in that way was it possible to carry on and to make the Alvin School one of the best institutions in the State of Texas.

The "ghost" town, Superior, which is now Hastings Switch, marked the location of the new oil field approximately five miles north of Alvin in northeastern Brazoria County, which was discovered December 31, 1934, in the J. W. Surface discovery well in the Hastings oil field.⁵⁰

It was back in 1891 that J. C. Lyons of Caubon, Kansas, journeyed to Brazoria County in search of a settlers' Utopia for freedom against Kansas drought and sand storms. In Alvin he met John Durant, a real estate agent. After listening to Lyons' plan, Durant offered the land that he thought would prove the solution. It was a portion of land

⁵⁰Ibid., March 1, 1935, p. 4.

between Pearland and Alvin, near the Galveston line. "Section 36 in the Houston Terminal and Belt Railroad Survey," as the description read, was subdivided for the coming settlers.⁵¹

With maps of the subdivided acreage in their pockets and high hopes in their hearts, Lyons and Durant went back to Caubon. Many lots were sold soon afterwards for speculative purposes, it was reported, and at least four families left Caubon in September, 1893, for the new land of promise in northeastern Brazoria County.⁵²

Accompanying the group was M. L. Drake, then owner of an implement, seed and hardware store, who decided at that time he would go into the cattle business. At Alvin he asked Durant to show him the 140 acres that remained out of Section 36 outside of the subdivided acreage. Drake told the real estate agent he would buy the land if he was promised that it would be arid. Durant seldom made a pledge, but subsequent events did more than prove that pledge.⁵³

From Illinois came other families, notably the John Ryans and the Lee Martins. Ryan had paid seven dollars an acre for what was now the discovery oil tract. For the Miller acreage east of the discovery on which another well was drilled, the same price was paid. That acreage in 1935 had a royalty value in excess of \$1,000 per acre.⁵⁴

⁵¹Ibid.

⁵³Ibid.

⁵²Ibid.

⁵⁴Ibid.

Another enterprising real estate agent, with offices in Houston, purchased other acreage on the west side of the Galveston, Harrisburg, and San Antonio Railroad and laid out a townsite. The railroad company, aware of the rapidly growing community along the Alvin line, installed a freight and passenger agent and employed a telegraph operator. Nearby a two-story general store was built and stocked. The village of Chigger Community was given a more dignified name, Superior.⁵⁵

Back to Kansas and Iowa went word of the development, and other Kansas families came and stayed. Iowans heard of the new land of promise and moved down to Superior. The village enjoyed prosperity until the year 1894, when a terrific downpour proved their enemy, and the future no longer appeared so rosy in hue. John Durant was certainly right as to his promise that the land was not arid, for a twelve-inch rain inundated the entire community. Chigger Bayou was formerly just a slough west of the railroad, but with the storm it proved to be more than that as the flood swelled and threatened to sweep out the only bridge the railroad used in that area. Railroad company crews were forced to use sandbags to keep the flood waters from going over the brick bed. The community was actually flooded out. The settlers abandoned their homes never to return to that particular location.⁵⁶

⁵⁵Ibid.

⁵⁶Ibid.

Seven months later another phenomenon as rare and erratic happened. The biggest snow-storm in decades fell over the ghost town of Superior. According to the records, as much as thirty inches of snow fell. It was a forlorn sight and the plans of hard-working settlers turned to naught after several years. The only inhabitants around at the time were a group of hoboes who sought refuge from the storm in the abandoned depot. In an endeavor to keep warm, a fire was built inside by the vagrants, and evidently they were careless, since the depot was destroyed by fire. The railroad company renamed the point Hastings Switch, but the depot remained only a memory.⁵⁷

Four years later Drake came to Texas to carry out his original plan of raising cattle. He settled across the road from where the discovery oiler was located on what was known at that time as Drake's Ranch. In 1899 he purchased several of the abandoned homes, and used the lumber for construction work on his property.⁵⁸

During 1918 geophysical crews roamed over the locality looking for evidences of what might prove to be another field, this time a field of crude oil. Early in November of 1934 the discovery well was spudded in and shortly after Christmas the well "blew in." Hastings Switch had been redeemed from the status of a ghost town. Activity teemed

⁵⁷Ibid.

⁵⁸Ibid.

again as crews were active day and night in the new field.⁵⁹

The oil which lay so stubbornly through the years beneath the soil whereon men labored to eke out their existence brought prosperity into rural homes that were run-down and debt-ridden. It revived the city itself which was staggering at that time from the blow of a failing dairy industry which for many years had served as a backbone for the community but which had finally drifted into profitless drudgery because of twisted price schedules. It brought new population to the town which meant the building of countless attractive new homes, and the opening up of new businesses and improvements of local stores. Oil was undoubtedly the best piece of good luck ever to befall this town in its tempestuous history of successive falls and rises between booms inspired by first an ambitious pear industry back in the 1890's, and later similar expansion in an orange and strawberry boom.

On February 11, 1935, the school finance committee composed of G. A. Barth, chairman, Fred Much, and W. R. McDaniel, presented a report showing a sixty-nine per cent tax collection for 1934, which amounted to \$16,542.57. This, in connection with delinquent tax collections, had enabled the school to liquidate the entire indebtedness except the \$83,000 outstanding school bonds, and to show a

⁵⁹Ibid., December 27, 1935, p. 7.

balance of \$8,943.40 in the bank funds and \$5,362.17 in the maintenance fund. The school tax rate for 1935 was one dollar per hundred-dollar valuation, with the 1928 bond issue fifteen cents, the 1910 bond issue ten cents, and maintenance seventy-five cents.⁶⁰

In December it was agreed by all members of the Alvin School Board that it would be for the best interest of the school to engage some one to establish values for taxation in the Hastings and Manvel oil fields, and to assist the board of equalization in its findings. The board entered into a contract with Pritchard and Abbott of Fort Worth, a company which specialized in the establishing of valuations for purposes of taxation of such properties as producing oil leases, royalties, pipe lines, refineries, tank farms, and all classes of properties used for production, refining, and transportation of oil, gas, and public utilities.⁶¹

May 8, 1936, Mr. Abbott reported that values found for taxation in the district amounted to \$14,921,560, which had been divided as follows: oil products, \$12,056,890; utilities, personal and oil, \$1,264,670; local, \$1,600,000.⁶²

According to the budget accepted by the board for the scholastic year 1936-1937, the estimated resources for the next year were \$94,655.82. Anticipated tax collections were

⁶⁰School Board Minutes, February 11, 1935, p. 99.

⁶¹Ibid., December 9, 1935, Book III, p. 123.

⁶²Ibid., May 8, 1936, p. 149.

\$71,500.82; state available funds, \$16,321.00; and an expected income from other sources of \$6,000.00. Estimated disbursements were \$96,205.10. The tax levy for 1936-1937 was established at one dollar per hundred-dollar valuation, with 1910 bonds at three cents; 1928 school bonds, five cents; and maintenance, ninety-two cents.⁶³

On October 12, 1936, Pritchard and Abbott presented the Alvin Independent School Board with their first itemized statement of each piece of property or valuation in the oil district. Maps of the complete Hastings and Manvel fields had been made. The board was completely satisfied with their report and entered into another contract with them for the year 1937.⁶⁴

In a board meeting on December 14, 1936, a Mr. Edwards who represented the Underwood, Edwards and Company Investment Firm of Fort Worth, brought before the board a proposition to refund the \$69,000 1928 school bond maturing in forty years, for ten-year bonds, at the same rate on interest as present bonds carried, but by reducing the time of maturity to ten years would make a net saving to the district of \$45,344. Mr. Edwards explained fully the manner of converting the forty-year bonds into ten-year bonds and the expense of handling them. The Alvin School was to pay interest on the \$69,000 on April 10, 1937, and October 10,

⁶³Ibid., August 17, 1936, p. 154.

⁶⁴Ibid., December 14, 1936, Book III, p. 161.

1937. The gross saving to the district through the exchange of the short-term bonds for the long-term bonds would be \$51,350. After paying the differential of \$6,005.00, the net saving to the district was \$45,344.00. The Alvin Independent School Board agreed to accept Mr. Edwards' plan, and shortly received sixty-nine cancelled \$1,000 bonds of the 1928 issue from Comptroller George H. Sheppard.⁶⁵

In a report given by the budget committee of the Alvin Independent School District on August 10, 1937, the total tax valuation of the district was shown to be \$12,202,305.00. The report and recommendation of the finance committee was that it would require a total of \$150,586.00 for the total expenses to run the school for the scholastic term of 1937-1938; therefore, they recommended that a tax levy of one dollar on the hundred-dollar valuation be levied on all property within the Alvin Independent School District which was subject to taxation. This included all real estate, personal, livestock, bonds, money, royalties of every nature, and oil well equipment, now held within the jurisdiction of the Alvin Independent School District. The one-dollar tax was divided so that fifteen cents was to be used for interest and a sinking fund to take care of the 1936 redemption bonds, and eighty-five cents to provide for a

⁶⁵Ibid.

maintenance fund.⁶⁶

At a special meeting of the school board, an election was called for November 19, 1937, to determine whether the Alvin Independent School District should issue bonds in the amount of \$300,000 for the erection of an elementary building, a junior high building, an administrative building, a manual arts building, a gymnasium, and a band house. Bonds would be ten-year serials bearing not more than three and one-half per cent interest and would not increase the tax rate in the district. It would not be necessary to raise the valuations to take care of the bonds as they matured.⁶⁷

The board as a whole appreciated the spirit of cooperation displayed by the oil companies, and especially the Stanolind Oil and Gas Company, which concern was easily the largest tax-payer in the district. The Humble and Texas Companies were others of the major oil companies which held interests in the area. All of them lent their counsel and aid freely and were in full accord with the board in the expansive building of the school plant contemplated. The school bond vote carried on November 26, 1937, by a vote of 119 to eight.⁶⁸

⁶⁶Ibid., August 10, 1937, p. 175.

⁶⁷Alvin Sun, November 19, 1937, p. 1.

⁶⁸School Board Minutes, May 10, 1937, p. 175.

The budget committee gave the following report for 1937, with the total anticipated revenue from all sources amounting to \$207,217.00, the total appropriations including interest on bonds and sinking fund, amounting to \$207,912.61. The tax rate for 1938 was established at one dollar per hundred-dollar valuation, with three cents to pay current interest and provide for a year's sinking fund for school bonds of 1936, twenty-seven cents to pay current interest and provide for a one-year sinking for school bonds of 1938, and seventy cents for maintenance of the school.⁶⁹

The tax rate for 1939 was placed at one dollar on the hundred-dollar valuation, with three cents to pay interest and sinking fund on the 1936 redemption bonds, twenty-two cents to pay interest and sinking fund on the 1938 building bond fund, and seventy-five cents for maintenance of the school. The tax rate for 1940 was placed at one dollar on the hundred-dollar valuation, five cents to pay interest and to create a sinking fund, twenty cents to be set aside to pay interest and to create a sinking fund to pay the building bonds of 1938, and seventy-five cents for maintenance of the school.⁷⁰

The tax rate for 1941 was placed at one dollar on the hundred-dollar valuation with six cents to pay the interest and sinking fund on the 1936 redemption bonds, nineteen

⁶⁹Ibid.

⁷⁰Ibid., August 1, 1940, p. 307.

cents to pay the interest and sinking fund on the 1938 building bond fund, and seventy-five cents for maintenance funds.⁷¹

The tax rate for 1943 was placed at one dollar on the hundred-dollar valuation with five cents to pay interest and create sinking funds to pay the interest and principle on the 1936 redemption bonds, twenty cents to pay the interest and principle on the 1938 building bonds, and seventy-five cents to provide a maintenance fund to pay the operation expenses of the school.⁷²

In 1944 the tax rate was placed at one dollar on the hundred-dollar valuation, with five cents to pay the interest and create a sinking fund to pay the 1936 redemption bonds, twenty cents to pay interest and create a sinking fund to pay the 1938 redemption bonds, and seventy-five cents for maintenance funds.⁷³

The tax levy for 1945 was placed at one dollar on the hundred-dollar valuation with three cents to pay interest and create a sinking fund to pay the 1936 redemption bonds, twenty cents to pay interest and create a sinking fund to pay the 1938 redemption bonds, and seventy-seven cents to provide a maintenance fund for operation expenses of the school.⁷⁴

⁷¹Ibid., July 28, 1941, p. 336.

⁷²Ibid., August 23, 1943, p. 377.

⁷³Ibid., August 20, 1944, p. 387.

⁷⁴Ibid., August 20, 1945, p. 396.

In March, 1946, a \$3,000 surplus in the 1936 bond fund was transferred to the 1938 bond fund. On May 13, 1946, all retired bonds back of 1936 were burned.⁷⁵

Thus, it was seen that the Hastings oil field, sensational discovery of twelve years ago, has had an enduring effect on the future of the Alvin community since a large percentage of its earnings are distributed through educational channels.

Every board of education, no matter what the size of the community, should have a financial program and a set of guiding principles controlling both its current and capital expenditures. The two are interdependent.

The budget is the outline of the current financial plan for one year, but that is not enough. Between the extremes of visionary fiscal plans extending over a quarter century or more and the opportunistic type with adjustment and expediency the only standards, there is a middle course which, subject to modification, can be followed for from three to five years. Such a course is planned after consideration of possible growth in the community, changes in over-all income, attendance trends in private schools, and the purchasing power of the dollar. The inexperienced public official instinctively knows that in taxation the amount to be raised as expressed by the tax rate is important,

⁷⁵Ibid., May 13, 1946, p. 401.

but only through experience does he learn that the rate of increase or even decrease is at least as important. A plan which seeks to stabilize the school tax at a fair rate within a reasonable time has, as a consequence, a rather better than average chance of acceptance.

The capital budget which reflects the program of plant development obviously affects the current budget. In the capital budget are the facilities needed, the years in which they should be provided, and the construction, equipment, and operating costs. New operation costs will clearly become charges in future current budgets, but how about the capital costs? The answer is found in the plan of financing: (1) pay as you go, (2) creation of a building fund, (3) issuance of a short-term series of notes, or (4) issuance of long-term bonds.⁷⁶

The financing and business administration of a school system are not secondary to any phase of school work. Neither is the school plant the major educational objective. School business administration is an integral part of good school management. As such it needs the administrative oversight of the superintendent of schools and the interest and judgment of the board of education.⁷⁷

⁷⁶American Association of School Administrators, op. cit., p. 154.

⁷⁷Ibid., p. 156.

CHAPTER IV

EVOLUTION OF THE CURRICULUM

The school exists primarily for the benefit of the pupils of the community which it serves. The types of people, their vocations and interests, their tendencies and prejudices, their abilities, their racial characteristics, their hopes and prospects regarding the future, their customs and habits, the similarities and differences of groups within any community, are different from those of other communities. The school should know the distinctive characteristics and needs of the people and groups of people of the school community, particularly those of the children. But every school community inevitably is interrelated with other communities and is a part of larger communities, particularly of the state and the nation. The school should therefore adapt its general philosophy and specific purposes to its own community and to the larger communities of which it is a part.

A general statement of the philosophy of education as practiced in the Alvin Public School is given here. The school should be a place where the student is given the kind of instruction and individual guidance that will enable

him to go out into the world better prepared to do the job that he chooses as a vocation. It should foster the student's physical and mental health program. It should develop within him an appreciation of the fundamental processes of American democracy and Christian ethics and of satisfactory home relationships. It should create and maintain in each student a desire to improve himself and to instruct him in the use of available tools to that end.

The objectives for the Alvin Public School are as follows: Besides giving him information and activities for immediate use, the student's training should provide for his future needs in

1. Basic general information so that he will be able to
 - A. Speak reasonably correct English for all general conversational and business purposes, read it with sufficient comprehension to understand ordinary adult material, write it well enough to compose ordinary letters, social and business.
 - B. Make mathematical calculations for everyday purposes, figure interest, understand budgeting, credit buying, etc.
 - C. Understand something of the history of human progress and current problems so that he can, and will, take an intelligent part in the workings of his community and country.

2. Health so that he will
 - A. Know how to distinguish between honest medical practices and quackery.
 - B. Enjoy, if possible, games and active participation in at least one sport that he can enjoy over a period of years.
3. Family life so that he will know
 - A. How to carry on the part of the actual household work suitable to the individual's place in the home.
 - B. How to contribute something to the attractiveness of the surroundings that should be a part of the home.
 - C. How to buy intelligently for his personal needs and the household in general.
4. Moral responsibility for meeting his duties to himself, his family, his community, and other institutions with honesty and understanding.
5. His life occupation so that he
 - A. Will find work suited to his abilities and interests.
 - B. Enter life equipped with actual vocational training whenever that is feasible or have the foundation for more advanced training.
6. Social life so that he
 - A. Can meet people with poise and fit into

general social situations with pleasure to himself and others.

- B. Will have a general background of cultural knowledge, literature, music, and the arts.
- C. Will not be entirely dependent upon others for amusement, but can fall back on his own interests and knowledge, either in actual participation in some cultural pursuit or in intelligent listening and watching, for part of his leisure time,¹

Students of the Alvin High School today graduate from that institution under the same rules and regulations and with the same number of affiliated credits as do students who attend other high schools over the state. Such has not always been the case, for the school had to build its curriculum as did the other high schools.²

In the first school at Alvin, Texas, in 1881, reading, writing, spelling, and arithmetic were about the only subjects taught. These were the subjects upon which teachers were examined for certification, when any examination at all was required. The textbooks used in the early public school were Webster's blue-backed Speller, McGuffey's Readers, Murray's English Reader, and Colburn's Arithmetic. However, several other books were used to supplement these

¹Cooperative Study of Secondary School Standards, Evaluative Criteria, 1940 Edition, p. 15.

²W. H. Meyers, interview with the writer, 1946.

staple subjects of the school. Geography, history, and grammar were introduced at a later date into the curriculum of the Alvin Public School. The school laws of the state were followed in the early years, although the studies were so arranged that the course of work was actually laid down by the textbook committee. Since there were not enough teachers in the Alvin School to teach the work as laid down by the committee, the board, after considerable conversation, decided to let the teachers rearrange their studies by alternating them, and in so doing they were able to complete the full course of work.³

From an early resident of Alvin it was learned that the pupils were graded by the readers that they studied, and no report cards were given for a number of years. If a person desired to go away to college, an examination had to be taken.⁴

Incompetent teachers, wasteful methods of teaching, harsh discipline, poor physical equipment, crude methods of administration, poor salaries, lack of organization and lack of professional supervision, were common defects of the early school in Alvin.

In the fall of 1894, when the tenth grade was added to the curriculum, Alvin High School was born. The high school

³School Board Minutes, September 23, 1899, p. 9.

⁴Jim Hood, interview with the writer, 1946.

department thus consisted of three grades, the eighth, ninth, and tenth. Tom Wilbern was principal of the school at that time.⁵

The class which entered high school in 1894-1895 was the first graduating class from Alvin High School. Accurate lists of the early classes were difficult to obtain, but the class of 1897 was said to have included Douglas Remley, Linda McGinty, Claude Renick, Ora Carter, and Jack Richardson. Mr. Saxon was principal in 1897, and also guided the class of 1898. Zadie Sedgwick, who was a member of that class, listed the following as her classmates: Aaron Wilkerson, Claude Rennick, Lawrence Fuller, F. J. Slataper, Hugh Williams, Pearl Wilkerson, Susie Griffith, and Lottie Wingzell. The second class to graduate after the high school was affiliated with the University of Texas was the class of 1903.⁶

The graduates of 1899 included Kate Sammons, Whit Wilson, Zula Wilson, Nannie Smith, Julia Shirley, Edna Hunter, Clara Chadwick, Weed Stockwell, Elmer Stockwell, Julia Bethel, and Lena Hunter. C. Z. Spahr was principal and succeeded Saxon, who had resigned to become county superintendent.⁷

W. C. Stelle, who later became president of the Alvin

⁵City Records of Alvin, September 23, 1894, p. 12.

⁶Alvin School Annual, 1945, p. 3.

⁷Ibid.

State Bank, was principal for a while in 1899, and was followed the same year by R. C. Shirley who was principal until 1906.⁸

In 1900 a storm roared out of the Gulf of Mexico, flattened houses and stores, and played havoc with the struggling little school. The damage was extensive and the citizens of the town donated money to repair the damage because there were no funds upon which to draw.⁹

During R. C. Shirley's term in 1901, a kindergarten was added to the Alvin Public School, and five-year-old children were allowed to enroll. Berta McBride was elected as the teacher, and was paid thirty-five dollars per month.¹⁰

Shirley, as principal of the school, was instructed by the school board to prepare a course of study and to visit each schoolroom once a month. Shirley's outline of a course of study for the Alvin School included four grades in the primary department, four grades in the grammar department, and three grades in the high school. With the addition of the eleventh grade to the curriculum, the school became affiliated with the University of Texas in Austin. In August, 1904, the eleventh grade was discontinued, and a certificate was given to any pupil who completed the studies

⁸Ibid.

⁹Alvin Sun, September 15, 1900, p. 11.

¹⁰School Board Minutes, June 17, 1901, p. 40.

in that grade.¹¹

Music, the study that enriched the appreciation of the finer things of life, gave an insight into the lives and history of other peoples, developed talents, and provided a pleasant pastime, was introduced early into the curriculum of the Alvin Public School. When music was first accepted as a school subject, the school was forced to recruit its music teachers from the professional or semi-professional musicians of the community, or else delegate the teaching of the music classes to some musically-inclined teacher of some other subject. Almost no special requirements existed relative to the pedagogical preparation of the music teacher, and the subject was often considered as an isolated unit of an extra-curricular nature. Although the school board elected a music teacher, Pearl Wilkerson, it could do nothing more than give its moral support, for there were no funds.¹²

By 1906 the eleventh grade had been continued and the class of 1906 was the first to graduate after a four-year term. Latin studies were compulsory and no diplomas were issued without them. R. C. Shirley, principal at that time, and now living in Houston, kindly contributed information to this study.¹³

¹¹Ibid., August 22, 1903, p. 72.

¹²Ibid., June 17, 1901, p. 40.

¹³Alvin School Annual, 1945, p. 4.

R. C. Shirley was followed by A. S. J. Steele, 1907-1909. The State Course of Study was followed and state-adopted textbooks were used. The faculty included nine teachers. In 1910, Bernice Woods was elected teacher and supervisor of vocal music in the entire Alvin School and was given a salary of fifteen dollars per school month.¹⁴

A. S. J. Steele was followed by R. R. Sebring, 1909-1912. Mr. Hebbitts followed R. R. Sebring, 1912-1914; and A. H. Russell served from 1914 to 1917. During A. H. Russell's term as principal, high school affiliation was finally secured.¹⁵

The high school commercial department was actually begun in 1912 when Sebring, the superintendent, and several of the high school boys rented a typewriter. As interest grew, bookkeeping, commercial arithmetic, and typing were added to the high school curriculum.¹⁶

By November 22, 1912, the library showed signs of development with the addition of a fifty-dollar set of reference books. The Daughters of the Confederacy also donated 124 volumes, which gave a full account of the Civil War.¹⁷

The science department had its official beginning with the purchase of equipment costing \$375 in 1913.¹⁸

¹⁴Ibid.

¹⁵Ibid.

¹⁶Alvin School Board Minutes, September 27, 1912, p. 9.

¹⁷Alvin Sun, March 14, 1913, p. 1.

¹⁸Alvin School Board Minutes, March 28, 1913, p. 1.

In 1913-1914, Alvin High School was awarded a certificate which showed that the school had been made first class. Fourteen affiliated units were required to be rated as a first-class school. The following subjects were affiliated: English, three units; ancient history, one unit; medieval and modern history, one unit; botany, one unit; Latin, one unit; physical geography, one and one-half units; physics, one and one-half units; and American history, one unit. Alvin was then classed as one of the affiliated high schools of the state.¹⁹

Pupils outside the district paid a tuition rate of two dollars for primary, three dollars for grammar, and four dollars for high school. Teachers had been given a slight raise in salaries but they were still very low. However, the music teacher's salary had been raised to twenty-five dollars per month.²⁰

The home economics department began in 1915, when Mattie Finger, a grammar school teacher, presided over what was then called domestic science. This department met in different homes in the community since there was no room in the school building.²¹

The trustees of the Alvin High School were determined to establish a department of home economics and a department

¹⁹Alvin Sun, September 26, 1913, p. 1.

²⁰Alvin School Board Minutes, September 6, 1917, p. 75.

²¹Ibid., October 15, 1915, p. 16.

of manual training for the girls and boys, respectively, of the Alvin District. In order to secure information, and to get others interested, they motored to Houston and made a tour through the schools of that city. They visited several schools and took notes on all information which concerned home economics and manual arts work. They came back to Alvin with high hopes concerning those two departments, which they hoped to have in the Alvin School in the very near future.²²

In 1916 there were twenty-two graduates of the Alvin High School, the largest class in the history of the school. They carried with them fourteen Carnegie units and sixteen high school credits, the highest number of units since the school was affiliated with the University of Texas.²³

Russell was succeeded by J. O. Webb, who served from 1917 to 1924. Those were progressive years for the school. During that time public school music really came into its own as Mrs. B. F. Phelps was elected as the music teacher, and was paid as a regular teacher. All grades were organized, and every opportunity was given to encourage all children to participate. German was dropped from the course of study and Spanish substituted in its place. An early form of physical training, which was known as physical culture, was also added to the curriculum. Fire prevention was also

²²Alvin Sun, April 22, 1916, p. 1.

²³Ibid., May 22, 1916, p. 4.

introduced. A grade of seventy-five instead of seventy was now required as a passing grade. By 1920 the school had twenty affiliated credits, and by 1921 twenty-two and one-half credits had been attained. This exceeded the number held by any other school in the state, with possibly one or two exceptions, where a faculty of five or six high school teachers was maintained.²⁴

The Alvin School was an institution of which every resident could be proud. The past term had been a critical one for the small-town school. Many places had to close their schools before the full term was completed. A great many people had not fully realized the rank which Alvin High had held. Its educational advantages were the equal of many much larger schools and far in advance of the majority of schools in towns of that population.

In 1921 all requirements for Southern Affiliation and for a first-class elementary school had been met. There were no inexperienced teachers on the faculty, none with less than a first-grade certificate, and only one in high school without a degree. The ratings in both cases were based on the qualifications of the teachers and the general efficiency of the schools. The high school had the distinction of holding four credits in English and three credits in Latin, neither of which was enjoyed by many

²⁴Ibid., October 5, 1917, p. 1.

other schools in the state.²⁵

The people in the Alvin community believed in education. During the past five years the high school had sent seventy-five students to institutions of higher learning from graduating classes. About sixty-five of those had gone to colleges and universities in this and other states, and the remainder had taken business courses. This was indeed a good showing, especially when one considered that conditions during that time had not been favorable. The highest percentage for attendance in higher institutions thus far had gone to the class of 1920, which sent away eighteen of its twenty-three members. Of the total number who had gone away to higher schools, twenty-three had become teachers and twelve were holding responsible positions in business.²⁶

The Alvin Public School had continued to grow, in spite of the fact that the population of Alvin itself had dwindled. In 1919 the scholastic population of the Alvin District was 585, and the high school enrollment was less than one hundred. In 1922-1923 the scholastic population of the district was 470, and the high school enrollment was 132. The graduation class of 1923, consisting of thirty-two members, had been the largest in the history of the

²⁵Ibid., May 20, 1921, p. 4.

²⁶Ibid., July 3, 1921, p. 5.

school. That honor had been previously held by the class of 1920.²⁷

The school had widened the sphere of its influence, and in 1923 it had on its rolls pupils from fourteen outside districts. It was doubtful that any other school in the state could make the same boast, for the districts represented contained perhaps more than three hundred square miles.²⁸

The Alvin School was composed entirely of white children, with the exception of about thirty Mexicans. There was not a Negro in the city. In 1923 the limits of the Alvin School District had been extended to take in the Alvin Heights District, which included thirty-five children. They attended the Alvin School and were transported to and from school by automobile.²⁹

Another feature connected with the operation of the Alvin School was the Mexican school which had been established. The school board had moved a portion of the Alvin Heights School building into the city and located the school north of the Santa Fe Railroad in the neighborhood occupied mostly by the Mexican families.³⁰

During J. O. Webb's term as head of the school, a definite

²⁷Ibid.

²⁸Ibid., July 15, 1921, p. 7.

²⁹Ibid.

³⁰Ibid.

program of physical training for girls was added to the curriculum, the first county Interscholastic League meet was held, and all the athletic activities of the school received impetus.³¹

When J. O. Webb left to become affiliated with the Houston schools in 1924, he was succeeded by J. M. Smith, 1924-1925. During that year an effort to affiliate typing was begun. J. M. Smith was succeeded by C. P. Strickland, who held the post of superintendent from 1925 to 1936.³²

On March 19, 1926, the first elementary school principal, L. O. Wallis, was elected. The work in the grades one through six followed the curriculum set up by the State Department of Education.³³

From 1900 to 1926 the following subjects were taught in grade one: English, which included reading, spelling, phonics, and language; number work which included counting, addition to ten, subtraction, and simple measures; social and industrial life, which included the home and the community; industrial and fine arts; plant and animal life; music and physical education.³⁴

From 1926 to 1945 the curriculum was reorganized to contain practically the same subject matter taught in different groupings. The material was grouped as reading; language, spelling, writing, arithmetic, general lessons,

³¹Alvin School Annual, 1945, p. 3.

³²Ibid., p. 4.

³³School Board Minutes, March 19, 1926, p. 87.

³⁴Lena Hunter, interview with the writer.

which included hygiene, nature study, and geography; some music; and physical education, which included mostly games. The curriculum had not changed appreciably as far as content was concerned. Music and art had been added to the curriculum. Teaching methods had changed with the changing trends in education, but the State Course of Study for Elementary Grades was still followed.³⁵

From 1900 to 1906 grade two offered the following subjects: English, which included reading, literature, language, spelling, and phonics; arithmetic, which included counting, forty-five combinations, multiplication through the five's, division as the inverse of multiplication measurements, simple fractional parts, and analysis; social and industrial life, which included industrial and fine arts, nature study of birds, trees and insects; and some music.³⁶

From 1926 to 1945, the course of study included reading; language; spelling; writing; arithmetic; general lessons, which included hygiene, nature study, and geography; and some music.³⁷

From 1926 to 1945 the State Course of Study was followed, and the changes were made in method more than in subject matter. Music, art, and penmanship became a definite part of the curriculum. In 1915-1916, nature study

³⁵A. G. Welch, interview with the writer.

³⁶Lena Hunter, interview with the writer, 1945.

³⁷A. G. Welch, interview with the writer, 1945.

included two new groupings, home and community and prehistoric life.³⁸

From 1900 to 1926 grade three offered English, which included reading and literature, language, spelling and phonics; arithmetic, which included counting, addition, and subtraction, multiplication and division, measures, simple fractional forms, and problems; Texas geography; industrial and fine arts; music, and physical education.³⁹

From 1926 to 1945, the curriculum included reading, language, spelling, writing, arithmetic, general lessons, music, art construction work, and physical education. From 1915 to 1918 Hebrew history stories became a regular part of the third-grade curriculum.⁴⁰

From 1900 to 1926, grade four offered English, which included reading, literature, language, composition, and spelling; arithmetic, which included counting, fundamental operations, Roman notations to 500, measures, fractions, practical and applied problems; geography, which included home geography, the world as a whole, and United States type studies; history, which included Greek and early Roman life; studies in universal life, which included stars and planets, mother earth, soil, air, water, and interdependence of all life; industrial and fine arts, music, and physical education.⁴¹

³⁸Ibid. ³⁹Lena Hunter, interview with writer, 1945.

⁴⁰A. G. Welch, interview with writer, 1945.

⁴¹Lena Hunter, interview with writer, 1945.

From 1926 to 1945 the curriculum included reading, language, spelling, writing, arithmetic, general lessons, music, art, construction work, and physical education which included contests and games.⁴²

From 1900 to 1926 grade five offered English, which included reading, literature, language, composition, and spelling; arithmetic, which included the four fundamental operations, fractions, common and decimal, practical and applied problems; geography, which included Europe (simple), South America, certain phases of the United States, and a simple presentation of latitude and longitude; history, which included late Roman and medieval, and English life to 1492; studies in universal life, which included for this grade common wayside things, men's dominion, our wonderful bodies, the dwelling place of man's soul; industrial and fine arts; music; and physical education.⁴³

From 1926 to 1945 the curriculum included reading, language, spelling, writing, arithmetic, history, geography, music, art, construction work, and physical education, which included contest games.⁴⁴

From 1900 to 1926 grade six offered English, which included reading, literature, appreciation, composition, and grammar; arithmetic, which included a constant review of

⁴²A. G. Welch, interview with the writer, 1945.

⁴³Lena Hunter, interview with the writer, 1945.

⁴⁴A. G. Welch, interview with the writer, 1945.

fundamentals, counting by aliquot parts, denominate numbers, percentage, and applied problems; geography, which included Asia, Africa, and Australia; history, which included Texas and the United States to the Revolution; elementary agriculture; industrial and fine arts; some music and physical education.⁴⁵

From 1915 to 1916 physiology was a regular part of the sixth-grade curriculum.⁴⁶

From 1926 to 1945, grade six offered reading, language, spelling, writing, arithmetic, history, art, and physical education. State-adopted textbooks were used. From this brief resume of the curriculum from grades one through six, it will be noted that basically there had been little change in subject matter since the beginning. There had been changes in organization and grouping, and methods of presentation.⁴⁷

The North Side School, which was a preparatory school for Latin-American children, also followed the State Course of Study. The first four grades were taught there, and the students learned the English language before they had to compete with the Anglo-American students in school work.

While C. P. Strickland was superintendent, the present Senior High School building was completed. The class of

⁴⁵Lena Hunter, interview with the writer, 1945.

⁴⁶Ibid.

⁴⁷A. G. Welch, interview with the writer, 1945.

1929 was the first to graduate from this building. Further consolidation with rural schools was carried out; vocational agriculture was added to the curriculum; and the school made good progress. The Alvin High School was a standard affiliated school of reputable standing in the Texas Public School System. Included in its curriculum were seven departments, offering a variety of subjects which filled local needs and fitted a student to enter any college or university of his choice.⁴⁸

In 1932 the English, mathematics, and history departments of the Alvin High School offered four courses each. The science, Spanish, commercial, and vocational departments offered three courses each. For graduation from high school a student had to have sixteen credits. Of those sixteen, ten were required units. The student must have four courses in English, two in history which had to include civics and American history, three in mathematics which had to include two algebra courses and plane geometry, and one unit in science. The other six units were optional. Physical education was required of all students by state law.⁴⁹

L. R. Pietzsch took over the administrative reins in 1936, and A. G. Welch became principal of the high school in the year 1937-1938. The huge building program, which has

⁴⁸C. P. Strickland, interview with the writer, 1946.

⁴⁹Ibid.

made the Alvin School one of the best equipped in the state, was launched in 1936. Consequently, the number of teachers was increased as new buildings and new subjects were added.⁵⁰

Industrial arts and home economics were added to the curriculum in 1936. L. R. Pietzsch reported that the interest shown by the students in the two new units had exceeded all expectations, and from all indications it appeared that the students were very anxious to take advantage of the opportunity to add this practical training to their educational program. Instrumental music was also added in 1937.⁵¹

In 1938, upon completion of the junior high school building, Alvin Junior High School came into its own. O. V. Robinson has been the devoted and conscientious principal of the school since its organization.⁵²

The Alvin Elementary School also moved into its new building, with T. A. Smith as principal of the school. The whole school was organized on the six-two-three plan with six grades in elementary, two in junior high, and three in high school.

In 1936 Alvin High School had twenty-two affiliated units, and by 1937 general methematics, Texas history, mechanical drawing, and band were added to the curriculum.

⁵⁰High School Annual, 1945, p. 5.

⁵¹Ibid.

⁵²Ibid.

In 1937-1938 vocational agriculture, additional shop work, advanced bookkeeping, journalism, and public speaking were added to the curriculum, which made twenty-six affiliated credits in the school. By 1938 the Alvin High School offered thirty-three and one-half affiliated credits to the students. This offering included as many accredited subjects as were given to students in the larger city schools.⁵³

A. G. Welch, the present superintendent, succeeded L. R. Pietzsch in 1939. The teaching personnel and the curriculum have continued to grow under his leadership. The school became a member of the Southern Association of Secondary Schools in 1939.⁵⁴

In 1939-1940, additional units of affiliation were added in the curriculum to include the following subjects: secretarial training, agriculture, band, public speaking, music, chorus, mathematics, geography, trigonometry, plane geometry, debating, library, science, radio speaking, and photography.⁵⁵

In 1941, forty-one and one-half affiliated credits had become the curriculum of the high school; art was added for the first time in 1941. A twelve-year system for the Alvin School went into effect with six grades in the elementary

⁵³Alvin Sun, January 21, 1930, p. 2.

⁵⁴School Annual, 1945, p. 6.

⁵⁵Alvin Sun, September 13, 1940, p. 3.

school, three in junior high, and three in senior high.⁵⁶

In 1942, fifty-five affiliated credits included mechanics and airplane mechanics.⁵⁷ Within the past few years, in addition to subjects which have already been mentioned, health, guidance, and supervised study programs have been initiated. Plans were formulated for detailed curriculum study and improvement. At the present time over sixty-five affiliated credits have been added to the Alvin High School.⁵⁸

An evaluation program which was required of all members of the Southern Association of Secondary Schools and Colleges was completed in 1943. The subjects in this study included philosophy of the Alvin School, the school's objectives, curriculum, activity period, library service, guidance service, instruction, results of education program, school faculties, school plant, and administration.⁵⁹

In 1942, a registered nurse was employed by the school board to be on duty all school hours. Compulsory immunizations for all children are required for the first year. Typhoid, smallpox, and diphtheria are dealt with in the second year's immunization program. However, compulsory ruling was lifted for those children with religious affiliations that do not allow medical care. Each year records of

⁵⁶Ibid., January 24, 1941, p. 6.

⁵⁷A. G. Welch, interview with the writer, 1946.

⁵⁸Ibid.

⁵⁹Ibid.

what the child will need in the August clinic are made. Children are given three typhoid injections and then one sustaining injection for the next nine years. Smallpox vaccinations are checked every seven years. After completing the diphtheria inoculations a Scheik test is given every two years to the children to determine their susceptibility to diphtheria. Tuberculin tests are given approximately every two years. If the test is positive, the child is X-rayed to determine whether or not he has the disease. The complete health plan is to have a program of complete physical and dental examinations for every school child within the next two years. The present program is indeed an advancement over the earlier health program of the Alvin School. In early days when epidemics came, the school was closed for an indefinite period of time until all the children had had the disease.⁶⁰

The rapid growth of the secondary school enrollment, the change in the character of the school population, the apparent breaking down of some of the social agencies dealing with youth, the rapid changes in the business and industrial worlds resulting in longer school attendance, and the attendant expansion of our educational offerings have all emphasized the need for the guidance of young people who must make their way in this complex civilization.

⁶⁰Ruth Rogers, school nurse, interview with the writer, 1946.

Guidance, as applied to the secondary school, should be thought of as an organized service designed to give systematic aid to pupils in making adjustments to various types of problems which they must meet. These problems include educational, vocational, health, moral, social, civic, and personal aspects. It should endeavor to help the pupil to know himself as an individual and as a member of society; to enable him to correct certain of his shortcomings that interfere with progress; to know about vocations and professions so that he may intelligently choose and prepare, in whole or in part, for a life career; and to assist him in the constant discovery and development of abiding creative and recreational interests. Such objectives should be achieved through a better understanding among the school, the home, and the community; through a close coordination of the work of the secondary school and the school or schools from which its pupils are received; through adequate and specific data on the individual pupil secured at or prior to his entrance in the school; through a system of cumulative records and reports; through a comprehensive and effective system of counseling and guidance; and through definite provisions for articulating the work of the school with whatever activity the individual engages in after he leaves it.⁶¹

⁶¹Cooperative Study of Secondary School Standards, op. cit., p. 63.

Alvin High School has an established guidance program. It was added to the curriculum in 1941, under the direction of Estelle Cope. Comprehensive information about pupils, systematically organized for use, is essential to an effective guidance program. The permanent cumulative record which is kept in the office of the guidance teacher, includes questions and information concerning home and family background, physical and medical status, scholastic progress, and information from tests.⁶²

Provision is made for acquainting pupils with a variety of occupations, the nature of the occupation, desirable and undesirable elements, opportunities for employment, requirements for admission, and opportunities for advancement. Each pupil is helped to select an occupation in the light of its requirements and his own abilities, interests, and limitations. The director of guidance has a conference with each pupil planning to withdraw from school, seeking a full understanding of the pupil's situation and plans.⁶³

Preparation for college begins in the tenth grade, and the selection of work in the high school is planned accordingly. For seniors who go to college, help is given in making out their programs for the first semester, securing rooms, loans, etc.⁶⁴

⁶²Estelle Cope, interview with the writer, 1945.

⁶³Ibid.

⁶⁴Ibid.

Vocational guidance is begun in the tenth grade. Each student is given a Kuder Preference Test, which helps him to determine his fields of interest. After that, all vocational materials are moved from the library so that each child may study any material on his particular field. This material is then placed in the student's own folder and put in the guidance office and is used as a future guide for conferences in his vocational plans.⁶⁵

As a part of the guidance program for 1946, Estelle Cope is to work with all home-room teachers in planning and executing their programs.

In 1943, Helen Horten, a musician, was employed to teach piano, harp, and organ in the Alvin Public School. Classroom piano is offered to children beginning in the fourth grade, and is continued on through the high school.⁶⁶

In 1944 agriculture was offered in the Alvin High School to boys who were interested in that study and who wanted an opportunity to learn improved practices based on scientific knowledge.⁶⁷

In 1945 a dental clinic was conducted in the Alvin Elementary School, under the direction of Dr. George F. Boshuslav, consultant in dental health education of the dental division of the State Health Department. Alvin was the subject of an

⁶⁵Estelle Cope, interview with the writer, 1946.

⁶⁶School Board Minutes, July 12, 1943, p. 374.

⁶⁷Alvin Sun, January 21, 1944, p. 3.

interesting survey made by Dr. Boshuslav and his assistants. Since it was found that the Alvin water contains one part of fluorine per million gallons of water, a chemical which is a factor in preventing tooth decay, they made a study of the teeth of children who had been residents of the city of Alvin.⁶⁸

In April, 1945, a special committee of the school board composed of H. E. Merz, George Duncan, and A. W. Brown completed a study of the quality of college work being done by Alvin graduates. The work of all pupils who entered college during the past three years was investigated. The University of Texas, Texas Agricultural and Mechanical College, North Texas State Teachers College, Sam Houston State Teachers College, Southwest Texas State Teachers College, Texas State College for Women, University of Houston, Baylor University, Ouachita College, and Schreiner Institute all cooperated with this committee. All but the last three mentioned provided material for ranking forty-eight pupils.⁶⁹

Of the forty-eight student, twenty-one ranked in the first quarter and fifteen in the second quarter. In other words, thirty-six pupils or seventy-five per cent ranked above average; the remaining twenty-five per cent, of course, ranked below average with one in the third quarter and eleven in the fourth quarter. Mary Hardin College and

⁶⁸Ibid., January 11, 1945, p. 1.

⁶⁹Ibid., April 16, 1945, p. 6.

Guachita College highly commended the Alvin pupils. Schreiner Institute listed the Alvin pupils as below average.⁷⁰

In high school these pupils ranked twenty in the first quarter, fourteen in the second quarter, ten in the third quarter, and four in the fourth quarter. It will be noted, as the high school and college ranks are compared, that there are two more in the upper half in college than in high school. Also, there are seven more in college fourth quarter than in the high school fourth quarter.⁷¹

From these reports Alvin graduates had more than held their own in college. It should be kept in mind that high school ranks are attained in competition with local pupils, while college standings come through competition with pupils from all over Texas and adjoining states. As a general rule, a great majority of these college students come from the upper half of high school graduates. Approximately seventy-five per cent of the students who go to college from Alvin are in the upper one-half of their respective classes.⁷²

The following survey was made in 1946 concerning the Alvin seniors as compared with college freshmen, the results being tabulated as follows:

⁷⁰Ibid.

⁷¹Ibid.

⁷²Ibid.

College Freshmen Selected Group		Total Alvin Seniors Unselected Group
Psychological examination..	91.5	81.4
General activities, mathe- matics.....	57.0	52.6
Science.....	55.6	53.0
Social studies.....	53.3	50.0
English, mechanics.....	50.6	49.8
Efficiency of expression...	49.8	49.5
Reading comprehension.....	51.2	50.7 ⁷³

Details of a proposed junior college to be established in Alvin were mapped out at a mass meeting on Monday night, October 25, 1945.⁷⁴

The subject of setting up a proposed fourteen-grade school system until the contemplated junior college could be approved for the Alvin Independent School District was discussed by the school board on December 13, 1945. The junior college cannot be approved by the State Board of Education until the high school enrollment in Alvin averages a daily attendance of four hundred or over. This means that the original plan of a junior college in the district must be temporarily postponed, but it also means that some way must be provided by which the present building program

⁷³Estelle Cope, interview with the writer, 1946.

⁷⁴Alvin Sun, October 25, 1945, p. 1.

can go ahead as contemplated.⁷⁵

Board members stated that if the school abandoned entirely the idea of additional grades until the needed enrollment was attained, and also go ahead with the enlargement of buildings without taking into consideration in the near future the need of a junior college, then the cost of the building will be far greater than that estimated at the present time. The board has stated that the proposed bond issue to take care of needed expansions in the elementary, junior high, high school, vocational agriculture, Mexican school, and other alterations will be necessary, and that to provide for extra buildings with that program for a junior college, an expenditure of only a very nominal sum will be needed.⁷⁶

However, if the board does not provide for the junior college space in this building project which is needed immediately, then the district will have a much greater building cost when the junior college is added. Educators who studied the local situation have agreed, without exception, that Alvin can handle a junior college, but there is a state law which forbids the establishment of a junior college without a specified enrollment.⁷⁷

The Alvin School has received state-wide, and even some

⁷⁵Alvin School Board Minutes, May 11, 1946, p. 324.

⁷⁶Ibid.

⁷⁷Ibid.

nation-wide publicity regarding the proposed six-four-four system which would be established. It is just a question of time before necessary enrollment will be reached in the district. The alternative proposal of a fourteen-grade system to be established until the junior college can be approved is now being seriously studied. Actually, such a proposal would mean that a junior college setup would be inaugurated, and when the necessary enrollment is obtained, approval for the college can be had with but few changes.⁷⁸

The library of the Alvin Elementary School was rather small in comparison with those of the junior high school and the senior high school. The elementary school had a library room from which pupils and teachers could withdraw books for individual use. In the main, however, library books in the elementary school were dispensed through the classrooms, each classroom having its own library shelves and its own collection of books, supplemented by books from the central library. Often, in working on a special project, the teachers went with their classes to the main library to browse through the books and select those that would be helpful in developing the project in which they were interested. The books selected were checked from the main library for the length of time that it was believed they would be needed, and taken to the classroom, where

⁷⁸Ibid.

they would be accessible to all of the pupils of the class. These students might use them in the room or check them out in the same manner as they would from the main library. The teacher was always responsible for the books taken from the library in this manner, and she presided as librarian over the books while they were in her possession. The elementary school had a trained part-time librarian. Due to the crowded conditions of the elementary school, it was necessary for the librarian to teach half of the day, and resume library duties the other half of the day.⁷⁹

The primary children had their own libraries in each room, although they were allowed to go to the main library occasionally. The elementary library was well equipped with tables, chairs, and modern equipment, and met the requirements of the Southern Association of Secondary Schools and Colleges.

The junior high school had a large room equipped with tables and chairs, presided over by a full-time librarian who had no teaching duties, held a bachelor's degree, and had had a number of college courses in library science, although she had not majored in that field. Her qualifications met in every way those recommended by the Southern Association of Secondary Schools and Colleges, namely, that librarians of schools with enrollments of between two hundred

⁷⁹Gladys Ragland, interview with the writer, 1946.

and five hundred pupils should have full-time duty in the library, should possess the same qualifications and educational background as teachers, should have had training in library science, and should have had at least one or two years of teaching experience.

Except for special instances, all pupils in the junior high school had a regularly scheduled library period each day. While in the library, they had freedom of access to the books on the open shelves, could freely consult all reference books and periodicals and could take their research problems to the librarian for assistance in locating the needed materials. Pupils who had library periods were not necessarily expected to devote that time to the use of the library; instead, they could utilize this time in the library as they would that in a study hall, for the general preparation of assignments in their various classes.⁸⁰

The library of the senior high school was the largest in the Alvin Public School, and had at the close of the 1945-1946 session, approximately four thousand volumes. The library subscribed to four newspapers and to the Sunday edition of The New York Times. Ninety-seven magazines were regularly received and placed on the magazine racks for the use of pupils and teachers. The library had a daily circulation of about forty books. About fifty pupils could be

⁸⁰ Maud Benson, interview with the writer, 1946.

accommodated in the library at one time. Most of these could be taken care of at the tables, but the library had numerous chairs with table arms to supplement the standard equipment of tables and chairs. Since the Southern Association of Secondary Schools and Colleges recommended that schools of more than five hundred enrollment should have libraries capable of accommodating one-tenth of the total enrollment, the Alvin Senior High School readily conformed to and far surpassed this requirement.

In addition to having had several years of experience as a teacher and librarian, the librarian, Evelyn Strickland, held a library science degree in addition to a B. S. degree and an M. S. degree. Thus, she had as rich an educational background as any of the teachers in the school, and was in every way fully qualified to serve as a full-time librarian in a school with an enrollment of more than five hundred pupils; moreover, she met all the requirements set forth by the Southern Association of Secondary Schools and Colleges.

As to equipment, the library of the senior high school met the requirements of the Southern Association, which stipulates that the libraries in schools with an enrollment of between five hundred and a thousand pupils should be housed in a separate room and be equipped with tables, chairs, shelves, loan desks, magazine racks, bulletin boards, catalogue case, typewriter, and other essential office

equipment. The library had a small separate workroom for the use of the library staff in cataloging and repairing books. Every book was appropriately catalogued, and the catalogue was accessible to the pupils and teachers at all times.

All periodicals and books, with the exception of reserved books, were placed on open racks and shelves that were readily accessible to the patrons of the library, who had browsing privileges which enabled them to make their own selections of books and periodicals from the shelves, either for use while in the library or for checking out at the loan desk for use outside of the library. Reserved books were shelved separately in the librarian's quarters, and could be obtained at the loan desk.

With its total of approximately four thousand volumes and with its ninety-seven magazines, three daily newspapers, and one weekly newspaper, the library of the Alvin Senior High School exceeded the requirements of the Southern Association of Secondary Schools and Colleges.

While in the library, pupils were expected to maintain discipline and good behavior. There were no restrictions as to what they should do except that they must refrain from disturbing others in any way. They might use the library books, and periodicals, or they might use the library as a general study hall for the preparation of assignments that

might or might not require the use of library materials.⁸¹

This section had shown that the library of the Alvin High School fulfilled the major requirements of the Southern Association of Secondary Schools and Colleges in so far as books and equipment were concerned, and that the librarian fulfilled all of the recommended qualifications for full-time service in schools of that type and size.

In 1945-1946, the school board appropriated \$3,100 for the improvement of the libraries of the Alvin Public School.

The spirit of the libraries was one of friendly, helpful service. Books were only a means to an end, which was the advancement of human knowledge and the enriching of human life. In that adventure the library staff was as eager as the most earnest student. Theirs was a real, if a humble, share in the enlarging of the boundaries of learning. By readiness, courtesy, and intelligent interest they tried to make the search for knowledge a happy quest.⁸²

Under the present administration, with the assistance of the efficient principals -- W. H. Meyers of the senior high school, O. V. Robinson of the junior high school, T. A. Smith of the elementary school, and Louise Kropf of the North Side school for Latin-Americans -- the future looked bright for Alvin School.

Certainly the school had come a long way in the development of the curriculum since the three R's were first

⁸¹Evelyn Strickland, interview with the writer, 1946.

⁸²Ibid.

taught in the 1880's. The class which entered Alvin Senior High School in 1944-1945 was more than ten times as large as that first class which entered in 1894-1895.

CHAPTER V

PUPIL ACTIVITY PROGRAM

Recent years of curriculum revision, organization of junior high schools, and other notable changes in the educational program of the United States, have resulted in the extra-curricular activity problem.

Up until a few years ago there was no doubt as to the place of music, debate, and declamation, clubs, ball games, and other activities that children were interested in. Their place was not in the public school. If the library funds were diminishing, they could be added to by money earned from giving a play, to be sure. But it was not to be considered part of the school day. Teachers gathered the ambitious group of pupils in her room or the neighbor's parlor at night and rehearsed until they were all too sleepy to rehearse longer.

Dramatics and other activities, sometimes designated as extra-curricular, have proved to be of inestimable value in the lives of children. Today progressive and far-seeing educational leaders and teachers are recommending that the curriculum be fitted to the child. This means that those activities he has always been interested in and those that

he has participated in so meagerly because of repressions are becoming more and more a part of the curriculum.

The following implications of pragmatism in modern educational philosophy have served as bases for many changes in modern schools. These concepts have been advanced by Dewey.¹

1. Education is life. -- There was a time when even the most advanced educators believed that "the child existed for the sake of the man or the woman that was to be." This is true to a certain extent, of course, but education is more than a preparation for life. Education is life. It is a continuous process of experience from the beginning to the end of life, both in and out of school. The pragmatist has convinced most educators that they should deal with the child each day as an individual, with the real problems to solve and a real life to live, and when he reaches maturity, he will be more able to solve the problems of life that confront him then.

2. Education is growth. -- When a child grows from what he was yesterday into what he is today, the process of education has taken place.² As long as growth continues, pragmatists believe that real education is going on. Pragmatism implies that it is the function of the school and of the teacher to see that this growth continues day by day,

¹John Dewey, Schools of Tomorrow, p. 54.

²G. W. Frazier, in Journal of the National Education Association, XXVII (1928), 165.

and in the most favorable direction. To make this theory concrete and practical, it may be applied to one school subject, reading.

Taylor says that "ability to read with speed and comprehension is one of the greatest assets a child can acquire."³ He must be definitely trained to act more readily and effectively and to meet the reading demands that are being made, and will be made, upon him.

A central idea in the modern educational theory is that of growth through experience; therefore, the new activity curriculum is primarily a curriculum of experiences. The enrichment and extension of the child's first-hand experiences is a central objective in a modern program of reading.⁴

3. Education is a social process. -- If education is life and growth, then it must be life in a social group. At one time, teachers believed that education was best accomplished in a quiet place where the learner was uninterrupted. It may be true that learning takes place under such conditions, but education is much more than learning. It is living. Schools must be democratic communities where children live natural, democratic lives with their companions and grow into adulthood with good citizenship as a part of their experience. In sharp contrast to this method

³E. A. Taylor, Controlled Reading, p. 50.

⁴William S. Gray, "Summary of Reading Investigations," Journal of the National Education Association, XX (1926), 37.

is the one which would have children learn the rules for good citizenship. These rules may be taught in a non-democratic way by a teacher who is autocratic. The difference between the results of the two methods is that in the first case the children, through experience, are good citizens, while by the second method, through knowledge, they merely know how to be good citizens.

4. Education is the continuous reconstruction of experience. -- Pragmatism is "a stream of experience."⁵ The activities participated in by pupils each day are based on past experience. However, if education is growth, some new element is also added. When this new experience is fused with the old, it is all reorganized in the light of the new experiences. This foundation forms a new base for future experiences. Dewey says that the reconstruction, rebuilding, or reorganization of experience which adds to the meaning of experience and which increases the ability to steer the course of future experience, is education.

Aims of Extra-curricular Activities

As the Twenty-fifth Yearbook of the National Society for the Study of Education points out, whether the activities be curricular or extra-curricular, their ultimate aims are the same; and the separate aims of each should be coincident with the aim of education as a whole. The aims of

⁵William James, Pragmatism, p. 58.

education have been stated by various writers, but the list suggested by S. C. Parker may be regarded as representative of the aims which are most commonly set forward as the aims of secondary education. He states the ultimate aims of education to be the following: (1) economic, domestic, and civic efficiency; (2) good-will; (3) the harmless enjoyment of leisure. For the proximate aims he has chosen the following: (1) health, (2) information, (3) habits, (4) ideals, (5) interests.⁶

While any activity that cannot justify itself on these grounds should be abolished from the school as a parasite, the acknowledgment of their contribution to the aims of education calls for administering them in such a way that the values claimed for them may be achieved.

Values Claimed from Extra-curricular Activities

L. V. Koos has published an analysis of forty representative references on extra-curricular activities, setting forth the values claimed by writers for the various activities classified under the general head of "extra-curricular."⁷ He made twenty-three classifications of values which indicated that the following had been included: training

⁶Analysis of the General Literature on Extra-curricular Activities, Twenty-fifth Yearbook, National Society for the Study of Education, Part II, p. 12.

⁷Leonard V. Koos, ibid., p. 19.

in some social-civic-moral relationship, socialization training in some social cooperation, actual experience in group life, training in ethical living, improved discipline and school spirit, health, vocational training, recognition of adolescent nature, and discharge of superabundant energies (see Table 1). Fretwell regarded them as possible translations into practice of two theses of secondary education, namely:

- (1) The first duty of the school is to teach young people to perform better those desirable activities that they are likely to perform anyway.
- (2) Another duty of the school is to reveal higher types of activity and to make these both desirable and to an extent, possible.⁸

That such activities have educational value is pretty generally conceded by those who are familiar with the modern trend in education.⁹

Since the curriculum comprised all the experiences which pupils have while under the direction of the school, there can be no rigid dividing line, educationally, between the usual classroom activities and those activities sometimes called "extra-curricular activities" which commonly permit more freedom and are more largely initiated and directed by the pupils themselves. There is need for pupil participation and expression in experiences which are more nearly like out-of-school and daily-life experiences than

⁸E. K. Fretwell, "Education for Leadership," Teachers College Record, XX, 324.

⁹L. L. Thompson and F. P. O'Brien, "Student Activities in the Small High School," School and Society, XXV, 318.

TABLE 1

VALUES CLAIMED FOR EXTRA-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES*

Value	Frequency Mentioned
Socialization.....	23
Training for leadership.....	22
Improved discipline and school spirit.....	21
Training for social cooperation.....	19
Actual experience in group life.....	17
Training for citizenship in a democracy.....	16
Training for recreational and aesthetic participation.....	15
Training for ethical living.....	11
Improved health.....	10
Recognition of pupils' interests and ambitions.....	10
Improved scholarship.....	8
Closer relation of school and community.....	7
Intellectual development.....	7
Constructive influence on education.....	6
Opportunity for vocational exploration.....	5
Training for worthy home membership.....	4
Vocational training.....	4
Training in business methods.....	4
Retention of pupils in school.....	4
Discharge of superabundant energies.....	4
Making worth-while friendships.....	3
Training in parliamentary usages.....	3
Training in fundamental processes.....	3

*This table should be read as follows: Socialization as one of the values of extra-curricular activities was mentioned twenty-three times among forty writers on the subject.

are the usual classroom procedures. The pupil activity program should aim to develop desirable social traits and behavior patterns in an environment favorable to their growth and, in general character, so similar to life outside the classroom that a maximum carry-over may be expected. Under competent guidance pupils should share responsibility for

the selection, organization, and evaluation of such activities and of their probable outcomes. In all such activities the development of leadership ability in pupils should be one objective. Opportunities for exercising leadership should therefore be abundantly provided.

In order to get a proper perspective of their places in the present Alvin school system, it seems advisable to give a brief review of the interesting history of extra-curricular activities in their relation to their function in the Alvin School as it is today.

Pioneer citizens of Alvin who recall their school-day experiences will remember playing games, debating, singing or carrying on some other interesting pastimes with their schoolmates. Wherever children were brought together and given an opportunity, they would develop many kinds of activities for themselves. Previous to 1909, such rough games as pop-the-whip, football, and baseball were forbidden on the Alvin school campus.¹⁰ The school grounds were definitely divided with a high hedge in order to separate the activities of the boys and girls.

While intramural sports have existed to some extent through most of the years of school history, interscholastic contests are of comparatively recent origin. Competition between schools could not exist until automobiles and

¹⁰Alvin Sun, October 27, 1911, p. 1.

✓ good roads made possible the rapid transportation of teams and "fans."

In 1909 the boys of the Alvin School organized the first football team, and for several days solicited funds with which to buy uniforms and other equipment for the team. About forty dollars was collected, and the necessary equipment was ordered. According to The Alvin Sun of 1909, the first football game was played with the Independents of Houston. Alvin lost 16-0. Lester Holt was the first coach, James Twifore the first captain, R. Sebring the first manager, and Frank Crouch the first treasurer. Thus began the early extra-curricular activities of the Alvin School.¹¹

In 1919, Alvin played three football games, winning from Texas City once (21-60) and losing to the same team again (12-60). The other game was with Angleton, which Alvin beat (68-0). Members of the team were Dan Harness, Mack Higginbotham, Jr., Oscar Smith, Bob Tinnin, Leslie Pugh, Bascom Merchant, Steinley Pfaff, Ray Spears, Leslie Merchant, Clarence Tinnin, Eltin Wissner, Max Greenwood, and Leon Childs.¹²

The same year, 1919, Alvin placed first in the county track meet, scoring 175 points, winning all first places in athletics except the pole vault, tennis, and junior girls'

¹¹Ibid., September 12, 1909, p. 4.

¹²Alvin School Annual, 1945, p. 122.

basketball.¹³

In 1920, Alvin played Bay City, Ball High, Houston North Side, and Reagan High. On the team that year were T. C. Edwards, Bo Smith, Leslie Merchant, Tony Pugh, and Elton Wissner. The coach was a Mr. Rynolds, who had been preceded by Coach St. John in 1916-1917; and by Coach Phelps in 1918. S. O. Webb acted as coach in 1919.¹⁴

In 1925, due to the lack of material with which to work, Coach Williams was forced to call off football. This was done only after every possible means of remedying the shortage of men had failed. However, in 1927 football was reorganized again and the whole school was very enthusiastic concerning it.

The present coach, Stapp Maxwell, came to Alvin in 1936 as an assistant coach to a Mr. Engman. These coaches worked together until 1940, when Maxwell became head coach. He deserves much credit for producing such fine teams through the years. He is popular not only with the team, but also with the whole student body.¹⁵

During 1936 a new lighted athletic field was added to Alvin High School, which was one of the first steps toward numerous improvement for the athletic system. The woodwork department of the school completed grandstands for the

¹³Ibid., p. 133.

¹⁴Ibid., p. 122.

¹⁵Stapp Maxwell, interview with the writer, 1946.

stadium which had a seating capacity of 2,500.¹⁶

The school board has already made plans for a new stadium. Mr. Shult, school architect, has given some figures on the probable cost per seat of a football or athletic stadium. The location, approximate cost, and amount of land needed have already been discussed, and in the very near future it is hoped to have an up-to-date new stadium.¹⁷

The high school boys were organized each winter into a group of basketball teams. The games played by these intramural teams furnished fun, developed athletic ability, and fostered good sportsmanship.

The Matsushita Cup was given to four boys each year. The boys who have won this trophy were as follows: (1937) Bob Peebles, Troy Uzzell, Ernest Uzzell, George Matsushita; (1938) Bob Peebles, George Matsushita, Johnny McElveen, Elvin Meats; (1928) Johnny McElveen, Laymon Hunt, Manual Garcia, Louis Garcia, Marshall Roden, Homer Moore, Emilio Esquivel; (1942) Alex Bataus, Carroll Roden, R. J. Idoux, Jack Bailey; (1943) Frank Idoux, Wesley Eernisse, Andy Hillhouse, Delmar Libby; (1944) Delmar Libby, Douglas Brightwell, Johnny Hoskey, Billy Hawkins.¹⁸

The Bob Tinnin Cup, the highest athletic award, was given to one boy each year. It was awarded for sports and

¹⁶Ibid.

¹⁷Alvin School Board Minutes, May 2, 1946.

¹⁸Alvin School Annual, 1945, p. 122.

scholarship. The boys who have won the cup were as follows: Bob Tinnin, 1922; Aubrey Cockrell, 1923; P. G. Monarch, 1924; Leland Murphy, 1925; Barnes Lathrop, 1926; Theodore Baxter, 1927; W. E. Steele, Jr., 1928; Lemoyne Roberts, 1929; Ernest Tilton, 1930; Norman Moller, 1931; Jim Cook Sheffield, 1932; Myron Vogan, 1933; Roy D. Much, 1934; Frank Dean, 1935; Troy Uzzell, 1936; Milton L. Drake, Jr., 1937; Neal Sheffield, 1938; Bob Peebles, 1939; Manuel Garcia, 1940; Audrey Key, 1941; Homer G. Moore, 1942; Alex Butaud, 1943; Sam Dixon, 1944.¹⁹

The Sports Hall of Fame contained the names of graduating seniors who have excelled in two or more sports. This feature of the school annual, The Yellow Jacket, was begun in 1943, and new names have been added each year. The complete list to 1945 is given here: Jack Bailey, Alex Butaud, Doyle Copeland, Emelio Esquivel, Johnny Florida, Tommy Alexander, Billy Brown, G. W. Chappell, Bob Collins, Gene Goodrich, R. R. Idoux, Gilbert Libby, Max Mahaffey, Roy Lee Maxwell, Sam Dixon, Wesley Earnisse, Bob Graves, Lee Morris Peterson, Thad Patrick, Jack Pierson, Carroll Roden, D. P. Underwood, F. A. Roden, Robert Rodgers, Erwin Schilhab, Harry Collins, Andy Hillhouse, Delmar Libby, Richard Slataper, Ernest Garcia, Douglas Brightwell, Frank McKay, R. V. Johnson.²⁰

¹⁹Ibid.

²⁰Ibid.

In 1910 the Alvin High School girls organized the first basketball team. Their costumes consisted of black bloomers, white middies, yellow ties, black stockings and white shoes. The team was composed of the following members: Cecile Parker Tuiford, Bertha Abbot Evans, Ethel Campbell Whitson, Lula Booth Melicher, and Janette Collins Hill.²¹

Basketball and tennis are still popular games among the girls despite the fact that they do not play out-of-town games. These games aid in their physical development and make them quick and alert. Badminton and tumbling are also favorite sports of the girls.

The club of which any mention was made was the Star Literary Society, organized in 1911. Clubs and literary events were not as popular as sports, in the early years of the Alvin Public School.²²

The pupil activity program of the Alvin Public High School of 1946 was complementary to and integrated with classroom activities rather than a separate and distinct part of school life. This program provided abundant opportunity for expansion and enrichment of pupil interests and appreciations; it promoted better understanding and cooperation among school, home, and community; it sought to develop respect for and proper care of property, both public and private. The pupil activity program of Alvin School

²¹Ibid., p. 133.

²²Alvin Sun, October 27, 1911, p. 1.

sought to make every pupil and teacher feel himself a part of the total school life; it aimed to make each member of the school feel a responsibility for the welfare of the school. Membership in each organization was on a definitely democratic basis, that is, open to all who were qualified. The faculty members were definitely interested in the pupil activity program and participated actively in its operation. The nature of this program was such as to win and merit the approval of parents and community.²³

Provision was made for the formation of new or discontinuance of old organizations, and for giving unity to the program as a whole. Each organization had at least one carefully selected faculty sponsor whose function was intelligent, sympathetic, inspiring guidance and supervision without domination. A regular time and place of meeting was scheduled in the school's weekly or monthly program for each organization.²⁴

Provision was made for the cultivation of interests and activities which contributed to the objectives of the school. All of the organizations and units within the school sought to promote the solidarity of the school as a whole.²⁵

The school administration has made definite provision

²³A. G. Welch, interview with the writer, 1946.

²⁴Ibid.

²⁵Ibid.

for pupil participation in the government of the school through a council, association or other type of organization. Provision was made for enabling the staff, the various pupil organizations, and the pupil body in general to understand fully the nature, extent, and conditions of pupil participation in the government of the school. Pupils recognized that they are jointly responsible with the faculty for the proper functioning of government and they accepted this responsibility.

Pupil participation in the government of the Alvin School was largely concerned with the development of leadership in pupil organizations and school activities. The school government enlisted pupils in the support and development of the health, thrift, beautification, recreational, and instructional programs. Pupil participation in the government of the school aimed to develop socially desirable attitudes and to correct anti-social attitudes. All campaigns, elections, and counting of ballots in connection with pupil activities were properly supervised.

A school assembly committee was in charge of the general development and organization of the school assembly activities. These assembly programs were in large part given by pupils and by pupil organizations with pupils presiding. They were planned so as to secure participation and contributions of many, not simply of the few. Assembly programs had definite entertainment, instructional, cultural,

and inspirational values. Programs were characterized by a variety of presentation, such as music, speaking, devotional exercises, dramatization, demonstration, and exhibits. A definite period of thirty minutes was provided for the school's assemblies, and thirty-six assemblies were held each year.²⁶

All work incident to the publication activities of the pupils, collection of materials or news, organization, writing, publishing, and circulation, were properly supervised. Particular attention was given to developing a sense of responsibility on the part of pupils for what they said in their publications and the way they said it. Publications fostered self-expression and creative work on the part of pupils; this included news writing, editorials, short stories, feature stories, poetry, cartoons, illustrations, jokes, layouts, and headlines. Publications fostered cordial relations with other schools by reporting outstanding achievements, practicing and promoting good sportsmanship in all contests, exchange of publications, and otherwise. Staffs were efficiently organized and responsibility was fixed. Staff members were selected on the basis of fitness. Publications promoted better school and community relations chiefly through interpretation of the school and its activities to the public. School publications had a wide

²⁶ Ibid.

circulation and were extensively read in school and community.²⁷

For many years The Clarion was issued as the official school paper, heretofore under the supervision of a staff elected from the senior class, and for the past few years under the supervision of a staff from the journalism class. The paper proved to be satisfactory to the entire school, and the students who took part in its publication each week derived many thrills when they looked at the paper and claimed their work.

The Alvin School had one or more bands and provision was made for developing smaller instrumental units. The high school band had fifty-five members; junior high, forty members; beginners, thirty-five members; and a mixed chorus in 1946. Opportunity to take part in a school chorus was available to every student. Provision was made for developing glee clubs, vocal groups such as octets, quartets, duets, and other small units. Over-emphasis on competitive musical performances was avoided.²⁸

In 1940 the Alvin Band made an extended tour. The details of this trip as printed in The Alvin Sun are given below:

Concluding one of the most sensational tours ever made by a high school organization, Alvin's national championship band paraded in a victory march when it

²⁷Merle Weir, interview with the writer, 1946.

²⁸E. MacCracken, interview with the writer, 1945.

arrived home Tuesday from their 4000 mile tour of the East and Canada.

The flashing orange and white of the Yellow Jacket colors and the sprightly music of Otto Paris Bandsters brought tears of joy to the eyes of spectators who packed the side walks of Gordon and Sealy streets to see the Alvin Band stage its home-coming parade.

Bringing home an Award of Merit presented by directors of the New York World's Fair shows a measure of the acclaim accorded the band on its tour of the East. This is the first award of its kind to be presented this year, and out of 300 bands that have made an appearance at the fair, only two others have been awarded.

Mayor Oscar Holcombe of Houston greeted members of the band and Mr. Paris upon their arrival to Houston and the Musicians favored him with an impromptu concert at Houston's city hall. Several score of Alvin citizens met the band in Houston to hear their final concert and to accompany the group home.

Senators Tom Connally and Morris Sheppard and Congressman J. J. Mansfield greeted the musicians at Washington and took them on a tour through the capitol.

Traveling in three large busses with Director Paris and several chaperones, the band played twelve concerts and marched on many other occasions. During their concert tour the group was probably seen and heard by more than 100,000 people.

85 persons in all made the trip. They travelled in busses which carried bedding, clothing, and band instruments. Sleeping accommodations were furnished through the courtesy of schools in nearly all of the towns where they stopped and food was procured in restaurants.

Each member of the trip contributed \$15 to help finance the tour and other expenses were paid for by the Alvin Band Boosters.

The Alvin band was organized in 1937 by Director Paris and has made an outstanding record for itself in 3 years. Eastern newspapers devoted much space to its concerts, and an unusual interest was shown at each appearance.²⁹

Provision was made for developing the dramatic abilities of pupils by participation in formal or prepared

²⁹Alvin Sun, June 28, 1940, p. 1.

presentations such as addresses, debates, plays, and radio programs. Fifteen per cent of the children took part in this activity.³⁰

In the recreation hall, provision was made for rooms or space appropriately furnished or readily adaptable for social life and activities. Informal games and recreation were included in the social program. Teas, parties, receptions, dances, banquets, and similar social activities were a definite part of pupil life. Opportunity was given for association of the two sexes. However, fraternities and sororities or similar exclusive organizations were definitely discouraged.³¹

Physical activities were characterized by a diversity of sports and games; health, however, dictated the amount and nature of activity for each pupil. Each physical activity was under the direction of a competent, trained faculty member. Major attention was given to intra-school athletics or games. Provision was made for activities involving team play, and exploitation of individuals was discouraged. The physical activities program encouraged good sportsmanship on the part of all spectators toward contestants, particularly toward visiting contestants. The athletic program was not over-emphasized; it was simply one of

³⁰Edna Shaw, interview with the writer, 1945.

³¹W. H. Myers, interview with the writer, 1945.

many school activities and was so regarded by pupils. The athletic program was definitely under the control of the school authorities, not of some out-of-school individuals or organizations.³²

The voluntary intra-school physical activities for boys and the number of participants in each activity in 1945 were as follows: baseball, sixty; basketball, eighty-five, touch football, sixty-six. The percentage of boys regularly participating was eighty-five.

In the same year the voluntary inter-school physical activities for boys and the number of participants in each were: football, twenty-eight; basketball, thirty-five; and twenty per cent of the boys regularly participated.

At the same time thirty per cent of the girls participated in volley-ball and basketball as intra-school physical activities; while eighteen per cent participated in volley-ball as a voluntary inter-school physical activity.

School clubs under proper sponsorship were organized whenever there was sufficient pupil demand. Membership in clubs was voluntary. Pupils were encouraged to become active members in either school or community clubs. Clubs were so conducted as to reveal and develop additional interests and abilities of pupils. The school club program encouraged self-expression in a variety of ways, such as musical, artistic, athletic, literary, forensic, inventive,

³²Doris Cook, interview with the writer, 1945.

and constructive. Every club, through a school assembly program or other appropriate means, enabled the school as a whole to know the nature of its activities. The following is a list of clubs in the Alvin High School in 1945: Home Economics, Camera, Science, Girls' Sports, Press, Spanish, Thespians, Student, Hobby, Expression, Athletic, Grooming, Music, Art, Game, Photography, Future Homemakers, Future Farmers, Library, and Variety. One hundred per cent of the pupils enrolled in the school held club memberships.

Both pupils and teachers regarded the handling of money and money values for others as a responsibility involving personal honor and the proper accounting therefor as valuable business experience. All funds or revenues handled by or for pupil activity organizations were considered as a part of one general pupil activity fund under the supervision of a treasurer of pupil activity funds. Officially approved forms and procedures for the accounting of all funds were used. Every organization treasurer kept a correct account with the treasurer of pupil activity funds of all pupil activity money or money values handled for his organization. All money was deposited with the school treasurer of pupil activity funds. Membership dues and admission fees were low enough to permit practically all pupils to belong to some organization and attend some school games or entertainments to which admission was

charged. All tickets offered for general sale, in school or in the community, by or for pupil activity organizations, were printed by authorization of the treasurer of pupil activity funds, and were fully accounted for to him; duplication of such tickets was made difficult. Pupils were led to realize that gaining free admission to games or entertainments by improper means is an evidence of poor citizenship and poor sportsmanship and should therefore not be practiced. Provision was made by the administration, in cooperation with pupil representatives, for an equitable apportionment of pupil activity funds to the various pupil activities on the basis of educational values. Means used for raising money were educationally justifiable.³³

School and Community Relations

The school furnished the parents and the community with information about the following things: the pupil activity program and its objectives, the school plant and its equipment, financial needs, business management, the school guidance program, community relations organizations, rules and regulations regarding school attendance, home study, and reports.

The community frequently called upon the school for assistance in activities which contributed to community improvement. Members of the school staff were active in

³³W. H. Meyers, interview with the writer, 1946.

community organizations such as churches, service clubs, and other agencies, but not to such an extent as to interfere with school efficiency. The school encouraged the organization of classes for the education of adults and permitted the use of school facilities for such classes. The auditorium was made available for community programs. Whenever school facilities were made available to the public, school officials assumed responsibility for their proper use.³⁴

The Parent-Teachers Association of Alvin has done and is doing work in the child life of the community that could not be carried on conveniently through the school authorities. There is a definite need for the organization, and it has amply proved its worth to the community through the years of its existence. It fostered a better mutual understanding between parents and teachers. To the unthinking this may appear a minor consideration. Yet a ready and satisfactory solution of school problems rests in a large measure on the attitude of parents toward teachers, and vice versa. Such an organization helps to create a more wide-awake conception concerning them.

The Alvin Parent-Teachers Association has had a continuous existence since February 11, 1920, when it was first organized. The history of this organization is a long succession of unselfish services given by those who have been

³⁴A. G. Welch, interview with the writer, 1946.

interested in Alvin's children and in the Alvin School. The organization provided equipment and encouragement during lean years of struggle; it has stood for progressive innovations; it has encouraged good health by providing the school cafeteria and health service for every child; it has fostered good scholarship and the complete development of the child into a well-rounded adulthood.

The organization, since its beginning, has been guided by loyal and energetic women, with vision and foresight. A list of the presidents, and the years when each served,³⁵ is listed here:

Mrs. W. L. Browning, 1920; 1920-1921; 1921-1922.

Mrs. J. T. Kay, 1922-1923.

Mrs. H. P. Lathrop, 1923-1924; 1924-1925.

Mrs. Fred Much, 1925-1926; 1926-1927.

Mrs. W. E. Steele, 1927-1928.

Mrs. J. H. Richie, 1928-1929.

Mrs. A. L. Freeman, 1929-1930.

Mrs. Paul Cherry, 1930-1931.

Mrs. Felix Haas, 1931-1933.

Mrs. E. J. Sheffield, Sr., 1933-1934.

Mrs. M. F. Clegg, 1934-1935.

Mrs. Gus Durant, 1935-1936.

Mrs. Clyde Herring, 1936-1937.

Mrs. Geneva Maonarch, 1937-1938.

³⁵Alvin School Annual, 1945, p. 157.

Mrs. Ella Martin, 1938-1939.

Mrs. W. S. Dixon, 1939-1940.

Mrs. C. P. Strickland, 1941-1942; 1942-1943.

Mrs. Leslie Pugh, 1943-1944.

Mrs. R. L. Etter, 1944-1945.

Mrs. Earl Pierson, 1945-1946.

In 1928-1929, a standing committee was appointed by Mrs. J. H. Richie, president of the Parent-Teachers Association, and given authority to make arrangements for opening a school cafeteria. The committee was allowed \$750.00 for the necessary equipment. The members of this initial committee were Mrs. W. E. Steele (chairman), Mrs. Fred Much, Mrs. J. S. Roberts, Mrs. E. C. Kimmins, and Mrs. C. P. Strickland.³⁶

The first cafeteria was housed in a little frame building on the old campus. In 1945 the Alvin cafeteria was one of the most complete and beautiful to be found in any public school. Between seven hundred and eight hundred students and faculty members were served there daily, and the cafeteria was the scene of most of the school banquets. The direction of the cafeteria was under a board composed of ten members.³⁷

Outside activities included Girl Scout Little House, which was donated to the Girl Scout Organization in Alvin

³⁶Ibid.

³⁷Ibid.

in 1944 by the Lion's Club, as a place where the Girl Scouts could hold their meetings.

The Boy Scout House was formerly the old cafeteria. When the new buildings were built and the cafeteria replaced, the Boy Scouts were given the house as a meeting place.

The Parent-Teachers Association of Alvin North Side School was organized in April, 1938, and it has been the backbone of North Side community progress ever since. Regular meetings were held at the school building at night so that the fathers might attend. This Parent-Teachers Association has fostered the beautification of the North Side School campus, the building of shelters at the school's two bus stops, has sponsored the organization of troops of Girl Scouts, Cub Scouts, and Brownie Scouts, and has added to the equipment of the school.

Because of its interest in community health, the North Side Parent-Teachers Association undertook as its major annual project the Health Clinic conducted by the Brazoria County Health Unit. Complete physical examinations were made of all school and pre-school children; they were immunized against smallpox, typhoid, and diphtheria, and tests for tuberculosis were made.

The Parent-Teachers Association worked for allied victory, helped in Red Cross work, encouraged the scholarship of the students by offering prizes, and showed itself in

many ways to be sensitive to the welfare and progress of the Alvin Latin-American colony.³⁸

Every principal must face the problem of extra-curricular activities. He must be far-seeing enough to recognize and sponsor those that contribute most to the future needs of the pupils. School activities are influenced by local interests in small high schools and these interests vary somewhat throughout the United States. While many aims have been stated for the activities by many writers, and at least three extensive objective investigations have been made, the general aim of extra-curricular activities may be said to be making the student an acceptable unit of society from the standpoint of personality. Public school activities tend to establish vital contact between the people of the community and the school. They arouse a feeling of personal ownership. Suggestions as to what activities the school should sponsor will be influenced by local conditions to some extent. All activities undertaken should arise from a definite need, be one hundred per cent voluntary, be educational, and should not duplicate the regular curriculum work. Educators in the smaller schools rank athletics first in the matter of character training, followed by dramatics, student body meetings, and government by students, club activities, and journalism.

³⁸Louise Kropf, interview with the writer, 1945.

CHAPTER VI
POLICIES, PERSONNEL RESPONSIBILITIES,
AND SALARIES

The school boards of America are among the most, if not the most, important public servants employed by the American people. The welfare of all the children and of the nation itself is involved. The procedures used by boards of education in rendering these services, in large measure, determine the quality and efficiency of the educational program. That we have developed one of the world's greatest programs of public education is generally recognized by competent authorities. That this program has been developed under the leadership of school boards is a tribute to their wisdom as well as to the sound public opinion that has supported them. But to maintain this level school boards must constantly evaluate their own procedures and the work of their school staffs, and through their own school board organizations, as well as through study by individual members, constantly seek to make their own methods more effective.

Before 1899 the affairs of the Alvin Public School were administered by the city council. The first board of trustees of the school began their service in 1899. W. R.

Kimmons was president and D. Lee Slataper was secretary. The minutes of the meetings of that first year, recorded with meticulous care by D. Lee Slataper, are still preserved in the school vault.¹

The veteran of the Alvin School Board was W. R. McDaniel, who had served twenty-one years, and was re-elected again in 1946. Carl Bolin, who served for twelve years on the board, was next in length of service.

The board of education of the Alvin Independent School District is made up of a group of loyal and public-spirited men. The present beautiful school plant bears witness to the vision and progressive spirit of the men and women who have served this community so faithfully.

A complete list of the names of the school board members, from 1899 through 1945, is found below with the length of their periods of service given in years. These names are listed in the order of their election. It is interesting to notice that seven women have served on the board.

W. R. Kimmins - 1	I. A. Quisette - 1
D. Lee Slataper - 1	R. C. Shirley - 3
T. M. Savell - 2	D. B. Askins - 2
M. L. Spencer - 1	J. A. Booth - 2
E. D. Carter - 1	Orr Rowland - 1
J. M. Keeton - 6	R. W. Woodward - 1
J. N. Deer - 3	S. O. Smith, Sr. - 2
A. W. Wilkinson - 5	W. E. Ayres - 5
S. W. Anderson - 1	George Byers - 2
J. T. Cobb - 1	F. R. Winn - 4
M. V. Hon - 2	N. F. Thomas - 1
P. H. Manaker - 13	B. T. Higginbotham - 4
L. V. Carlton - 4	J. L. Evans - 4
B. L. Osgood - 4	J. W. Crouch - 3

¹Alvin School Annual, 1945, p. 34.

R. G. Fuqua - 1	Mrs. A. J. Whitson - 2
Q. A. Rowan - 4	Mrs. W. E. Davis - 9
R. H. Griffin - 1	Mrs. C. M. Bales - 1
Francis Upchurch - 2	Hiram Moore - 8
I. N. Wilson - 10	R. F. McGinty - 2
W. C. Ponder - 3	A. J. Pollard - 2
J. H. Coward - 4	O. G. Wellborn - 4
W. E. Davis - 6	W. R. McDaniel - 21
W. D. Carpenter - 1	Mrs. A. C. Bates - 5
A. H. Lynch - 2	J. W. Vogan - 6
John Crainer - 1	Carlton Ely - 6
W. M. Cummins - 2	Mrs. M. B. Ward - 3
W. C. Blair - 3	Mrs. W. E. Steele - 2
C. P. Collins - 1	L. W. Kost - 4
A. P. Griffith - 1	G. A. Barth - 2
George Moller - 3	Carl Bolin - 12
J. T. Pierce - 4	Fred Much - 5
H. H. Ford - 4	H. C. Morgan - 2
W. R. Isaacs - 4	John Osborne - 5
Frank Spears - 7	J. F. Law - 7
Mrs. B. T. Higginbotham - 3	A. L. Martin - 1
Mrs. Ed Story - 3	A. J. Whitson - 4
C. H. Herring - 8	A. O. Evans - 4
E. C. Kimmons - 5	S. O. Smith, Jr., - 6
T. F. Johnson - 1	E. M. Renfrow - 3
George Haas - 8	J. E. Harriman - 5
Mrs. W. L. Browning - 3	R. W. Peebles - 3
A. L. Ireland - 3	A. W. Brown - 2
Mrs. J. J. Dodson - 1	George Duncan - 2
Ben Wright - 3	F. A. Duke - 1
	Dr. H. E. Merz - 1 ²

Administration is necessary in order to coordinate the educational program, the staff, and the school plant, and to make them all operate effectively for the development of pupils. Responsibility for the administration of schools is usually entrusted to some type of board of control. Members of such boards should be prevailing, if not exclusively, laymen.

In the last half century the educational task and

²Ibid., p. 35.

mechanism have become highly complex. Compulsory attendance laws with their constantly expanding age limits, extensive unemployment, and the demands of a more complex industrial, social, and political life have not only multiplied manifold the number of pupils to be served by the school but have also increased the complexity of educational offerings and of the machinery necessary to make education effective. A secondary education for all who are mentally competent should be regarded as an obligation on the part of each individual, a duty of the state, and a necessity in a democratic society. Inevitably the cost of education has increased, frequently accompanied by objections to this increased cost. Scientific method has become a part of education and has revealed that it is both a difficult art and a complex science. Scientific evidence and concrete facts should be available to justify both the costs of education and the educational program itself.³

Education is one of the largest business enterprises in every community and directly influences the daily lives of the great majority of the inhabitants. The head or superintendent of an enterprise so extensive, complex, and influential should have marked administrative functions. He should be delegated authority necessary to carry out his work. The board should retain the determination of general

³American Association of School Administrators, op. cit., p. 163.

policies and some judicial functions.⁴

The administrative head is, then, the chief executive officer of the board of control. He should be responsible for the selection and assignment of all school employees (the board confirming his selections), for the business management of the school, including school plant and equipment, and for the administration of the educational program, including supervision of instruction. This should require organization of resources, both material and personal; delegation of duties and authority; and supervision of all delegated tasks and of all individuals to whom authority and responsibility are assigned. The better the administrative personnel, the more efficient will be the organization and management and the greater the probability of the successful attainment of the school's objective, provided the personnel is always mindful of the primary function of the school -- the development of its pupils. Success should be measured in terms of results, not of machinery.

The activity most neglected by administrators is supervision, particularly supervision of instruction. This involves not only the organization of programs of studies and of instructional activities but also revision of curricula, pupil activities, non-instructional school activities of staff members, and every other phase of the educational

⁴Ibid., p. 179.

program. Alert and sympathetic supervision makes management and organization effective. Whatever is educationally desirable and attainable should be made available and effective through able administration.

The administrative head of the school should share with the controlling board, responsibility for establishing and maintaining desirable relations with the school's public. Communities seldom appreciate enough the fact that the school is their greatest cooperative enterprise and that it permanently affects the welfare of their children. This requires that the supporting public be informed as to the policies, program, objectives, activities, and plans for the future of the school and that the support of the public be assured for the school's undertaking. There should always be a sympathetic and understanding relationship between the school and its administration on the one hand and its public on the other, whether this public be closely concentrated as is usually the case with public schools, or more widely distributed as is often the case with private schools.

In the minds of some Americans the public school has had a small place in the structure of representative government in the United States.⁵ This, however, has not been the case with the Alvin School, for here the public has

⁵Ibid., p. 183.

consistently manifested an abiding interest in the school and have labored for its progress. The personnel of the Alvin Public School has shown an interesting growth and development from the small staff of 1881, consisting of one teacher with very few pupils, to the present staff of fifty-eight teachers.

Although the school showed a slow growth, students and teachers were added during the early years of the school. According to the minutes of the school board in 1904, the principal's salary was raised from sixty-five to seventy-five dollars, but the salaries of the other teachers remained the same forty dollars per month. Teachers were required to attend institutes and to take part in the proceedings of these institutes, and if they did they received full salary for the week. They would also receive credit toward the extension of their certificates and proper protection for their lawful rights.⁶

In 1909, the principal's salary was raised to one hundred dollars per month. All high school teachers were required to hold first-grade certificates, and grammar school teachers were required to hold second-grade certificates.⁷ By 1910 the grade school teachers' salaries had been raised to fifty dollars.⁸

⁶Alvin School Board Minutes, June 6, 1904, p. 89.

⁷Ibid., May 12, 1909, p. 149.

⁸Ibid., July 14, 1910, p. 171.

In 1912 a special examination was authorized for the issuance of state certificates only. The first mention of a uniform salary was made during this year; however, this salary schedule was not followed very long. It was decided by the board that all teachers except the superintendent, would be paid sixty dollars per month, and an increase in salary of five dollars per month, if the teachers were giving satisfaction, each succeeding year until a maximum salary of \$1,000 was reached. The superintendent's salary was to be \$135 per school month, and the outlook was bright for the schools for the coming year.⁹

In 1913 the high school and the grade school were placed on the department plan, with five high school teachers and six grade teachers. High school teachers were paid seventy dollars per month and the superintendent was paid \$1,400 for nine months.¹⁰

By 1919 grade teachers were paid seventy-five dollars per month, and the salary of the superintendent had been raised to \$1,800. High school teachers were paid ninety dollars per month.¹¹

In 1920 the salary of the superintendent had been raised to \$2,400 per year, and grade teachers had been raised to ninety dollars a month.¹²

⁹Ibid., June 1, 1912, p. 210.

¹⁰Ibid., September 4, 1913, p. 232.

¹¹Ibid., May 8, 1919, p. 314.

¹²Ibid., April 16, 1920, p. 325.

In 1921 J. O. Webb, who was then superintendent, received \$3,000 per year, and all salaries had been increased.¹³

In 1927 teachers' salaries had increased as much as twenty dollars each, and the superintendent's salary was \$3,250 per year. The high school teachers were being paid substantially more than the grade teachers.¹⁴

In 1930 the following standards for teachers were set up by the Alvin School Board:

In order to be considered, by the superintendent and by the board of education, for a position in the Alvin Public School, an applicant must meet or exceed the following requirements:

1. High school department -- minimum requirements.
 - (a) Two years college or university, high school certificate.
 - (b) One year successful experience.
 - (c) A teacher with degree will receive consideration over one with no degree.
 - (d) Teachers with degrees required to attend five weeks of summer school within four years to remain on the faculty.
 - (e) Teachers without degrees to attend five weeks one summer within two years.

¹³Ibid., May 18, 1921, p. 330.

¹⁴Ibid., May 23, 1927, p. 368.

2. Elementary department -- minimum requirements.
 - (a) Two years in college or university and a four-year elementary certificate.
 - (b) One year of teaching experience.
 - (c) Teachers with permanent certificates would receive consideration above those who did not have them.
 - (d) Summer school requirements were the same as for high school teachers.

In 1931 there were twenty-one members of the faculty. Salaries ranged from eighty dollars per month for teachers to \$3,500 for the year for the superintendent.¹⁵

By 1932 salaries had to be cut due to financial difficulties. By this reduction in salaries, \$5,000 would be saved. The Spanish and vocational agriculture teachers were eliminated. To further reduce expenses, the services of the bus transporting children from the Cemetery Road and Five Points communities had to be discontinued.¹⁶

In 1935-1936, due to the discovery of oil in the Alvin District, the salaries of the thirty-one teachers were again advanced, but it was not until 1939 that they were back to the previous schedule.

In 1944, the Alvin School Board had taken a step forward in adopting a definite salary schedule for teachers.

¹⁵Ibid., April 30, 1930, p. 112.

¹⁶Ibid., May 2, 1932, p. 24.

For years teachers had worked for lower salaries than were paid to any other professions requiring the educational and other qualifications demanded of teachers. Realizing this and having enough money to make increases in salaries, the school board adopted the following schedule, to go into effect September 1, 1944:

The minimum salary for teachers was \$1,500 a year. Twenty-five dollars a year up to ten years was allowed for experience in other schools. Teachers were given a seventy-five dollar increase in salary per year until a maximum of \$2,250 was reached, and a hundred-dollar increase was allowed for holders of the Master's Degree. There was a hundred-dollar yearly increase up to a maximum of \$3,200 allowed for principals.¹⁷

Very few schools of this size in Texas had adopted such a salary schedule, although many schools in the North had a higher schedule. The adoption of one in Alvin was a big step in bringing the teachers' salary standard up to that of other professions.

In 1944 the superintendent's salary was increased to \$4,000.

In 1945, \$3.50 was allowed for each approved college semester hour beyond the requirements for a bachelor's degree, not to exceed forty semester hours.¹⁸

¹⁷Ibid., May 8, 1944, p. 395.

¹⁸Ibid., March 12, 1945, p. 413.

In March, 1946, a new salary schedule was set up by the school board. All classroom teachers on the salary schedule with a bachelor's degree have a beginning salary of \$1,800 per year plus a seventy-five dollar yearly increment with twenty-five dollars given for each year's work outside the system up to a maximum of ten years. Five dollars is given for each hour's credit above the bachelor's degree requirements, with no maximum on the number of hours. The maximum schedule was set at \$2,550 plus the extra hours' credit.¹⁹

The starting principal's salary was set at \$2,700 per year with a yearly increment of one hundred dollars; five dollars will be given for each hour above the bachelor's degree with no maximum set on the number of hours. The maximum of this schedule was set at \$3,700 plus extra hours' credit. The superintendent's salary is to be \$5,200.

A competent staff is one of the indispensable elements of a good school. Such a staff should not be merely a collection of individually competent persons. It should be a cooperating group having common purposes and motivated by common ideals. Each member of such a staff should give evidence of awareness and understanding of educational problems and of continuous professional growth. Before election to the staff, each member should produce evidence of

¹⁹Ibid., March 25, 1945, p. 450.

thorough preparation for his particular task and of possession of such personal traits as are requisite to teaching and to associating with youth. Diversity of preparation and viewpoints is desirable for a well-rounded staff, but its members should have the ability and the desire to work together, cheerfully, harmoniously, and efficiently for the good of the school and of its pupils.

The number of staff members should be adequate for the curriculum offered, and also for the school's enrollment and for the special needs of the pupils. The teaching load and the total working load should be such as not to endanger educational efficiency.. Salaries should be such as to assure a living comparable with the social demands on the profession and the worth of service rendered, as well as to provide security for old age. In the membership of the staff should be found both experience gained by years of service and vigor and enthusiasm characteristic of youth. Provision should be made for proper induction and adjustment of new and inexperienced members.

In the selection of individual staff members, attention should be given to teaching ability, personality, health, and character. Each staff member should have a broad, general scholarship, thorough preparation in his special field, professional competence, and reasonable social development.²⁰

²⁰A. G. Welch, interview with the writer, 1946.

The faculty of Alvin School consists of fifty-eight teachers of whom twenty-one have the Master's Degree, and twenty-eight have the Bachelor's Degree, or the equivalent. In the senior and junior high schools, the teachers are placed in the teaching field in which they majored. The teachers were carefully selected after consideration of their fitness for work in which they were assigned. In the elementary school there are only four specialized fields: art, music, penmanship, and library. The other teachers teach all the other subjects in their respective grades.

An outstanding record in the Alvin School is that of Miss Lena Hunter, the "senior" teacher. Of the thirty-six years Miss Hunter has taught in Alvin, she has had only eight absences. She has served Alvin School since 1909, and is herself a graduate of the class of 1899.

Candidates were selected on the basis of their fitness for the particular position they were to fill, and only those who met the legal requirements and had a valid standard certificate for the position concerned or met the qualifications for such certificates were considered for positions. Candidates were selected in the light of full personal, family, and health records of all applicants and in the light of their records of education and experience. Confidential recommendations from reliable persons who were well acquainted with the candidate were secured; such

recommendations were specific in terms and applied to a definite position. The principal or the superintendent, or both, had a personal interview with the candidate, or observed him at work, if he was seriously considered for a position.²¹

Faculty and staff meetings were concerned chiefly with educational problems, principles, and progress rather than with announcements, discipline, and routine. They were also characterized by general teacher training, planning, and participation rather than by monopolization by one or a few individuals. The staff constantly studied the improvement of teaching, problems of guidance, pupil activity program, and how to promote health and health conditions of the pupils and the school. They were actively cooperating in other phases of school improvement, such as better use of English, respect for property, beautification of the school plant, and better school and community relations.²²

The Alvin Public School had a definite salary schedule for professional staff members. The maximum, minimum, and average salaries were related to appropriate standards of living and social and economic conditions in the community. The initial salary in the schedule was determined chiefly by the amount of training and experience of the applicant. Regular increments in salary were spread over a large

²¹A. G. Welch, interview with the writer, 1945.

²²Ibid.

proportion of the potential service career, and persons of the same rank or type of position received equal salaries for equivalent training and experience.²³

Indefinite tenure was provided after a successful probationary period of not over three years and continued as the employee's work and conduct merited it. The proposed dismissal of an employee on account of incompetence, misconduct, or neglect of duty was preceded by a warning and specific statement of defects, and dismissal was made only after failure of real efforts by administrative or supervisory officers to improve the employee.²⁴

Provision was made for employees to leave their regular school duties a limited number of days each year to attend professional meetings or for other professional purposes; no reduction in pay was made for such absences. Provision was made for employees to have a limited number of days (ten) of absence from school duties because of personal sickness on an annual cumulative basis and without loss of pay. Leaves were granted for those who were called to the armed services.²⁵

All those employed since the introduction of the retirement system were contributors to the retirement fund and share in its benefits. Periodic investigations of the retirement system were made to insure his financial soundness.

²³Ibid.

²⁴Ibid.

²⁵Ibid.

Individual retirement deposits of each employee with the system were returnable upon withdrawal from educational service or upon death prior to retirement.²⁶

All members of the clerical and accounting staffs were efficient, reliable, trustworthy, and resourceful. They were cooperative, courteous, and agreeable to associates and to visitors. Their health and habits were such as to assure fitness for service and to safeguard the health of others.²⁷ These staffs, individually and as groups, definitely studied and improved office procedures such as: correspondence service and office and school forms. Candidates were selected only after full inquiry into their personal and health records and their records of training and experience.

Although the importance of custodial service has long been recognized by school administrators, the problems pertaining to the selection, supervision, and training of custodians have not received the consideration commensurate with their significance.

In any administrative organization every person who contributes to the carrying forward of the program of work to be done is important. It is particularly true in a system of public schools that the work of the janitor-engineer contributes to the efficiency of every other person who works in the school system.²⁸

²⁶Ibid.

²⁷Ibid.

²⁸C. E. Reeves and H. S. Ganders, School Building Management, Introduction, p. v.

All members of the custodial and maintenance staffs were efficient, resourceful, trustworthy, reliable, and cooperative. They sought to effect improvement by the selection and proper use of cleansing agents, and the proper use of supplies and other forms of school property.

All of the school bus drivers were experienced and properly licensed, and could be depended upon to observe traffic laws and traffic regulations formulated by school authorities. The moral character and conduct of drivers were satisfactory. They were courteous and cooperative in relations with pupils, staff members, and the general public.

R. T. Ripley, better known to many of his friends as "Rip," has served the Alvin School as a bus driver longer than any other driver. As head driver, he was responsible for the maintenance of all school busses. He started driving a school bus in October, 1937. Besides making daily trips to deliver children to and from school, he drove the busses on several long trips. In the spring of 1938, 1939, and 1940, he drove the band to contests and clinics at Waco and Huntsville. He took the band to the national meet in Abilene in 1939. In the summer of 1938, he drove one of the busses that carried the band to Carlsbad Caverns. In August, 1940, he drove the football boys to Camp Arrowhead at Hunt, Texas.

The band trip to New York in 1940 was by far the longest

trip he made for the school. Between June 1 and June 25, he drove one of the busses 4,439 miles, visiting twelve states, the District of Columbia, and Canada. The busses were provided with police escort in New York, Philadelphia, and four other large cities.

During the war restrictions were so heavy that busses were not used for football or basketball transportation. But as soon as restrictions were lifted in August, 1945, Ripley was making a trip. This time he took thirty of the football squad to Camp Rio Vista for training camp.²⁹

Pupil transportation is one of the most important means of bringing pupils together into groups sufficiently large to make desirable programs of elementary and secondary education practicable. It is a means of bringing pupils into contact with special types of education. Through transportation handicapped children may live at home and still be provided with the teachers and equipment which their educational development demands. Excursions to industries and points of historical or geographic interest are facilitated through the use of school busses.

These mass developments in pupil transportation have urgently brought to attention problems of adequate roads, of suitable and efficient conveyances, of well-conceived rules and regulations, and of school administration and support.

²⁹Alvin Sun, September 23, 1945, p. 4.

The Alvin School Board represents all of the people. Chosen to control a public trust, it has no time or place for selfish or petty purposes. Through the school system it builds America's future.

The superintendent is the school's board's executive officer. Working with a skilled administrative staff, he uses democratic means to carry out the policies of the school board and to bring effective professional techniques to the school's program.

The teachers form the professional backbone of the school system. Upon the quality of daily instruction depends the success of the school. Organization and administration exist solely to facilitate the work of teachers.

Secretaries keep many activities within the school moving smoothly. Often they relieve teachers of routine tasks, graciously meet school visitors, and help administrators with their many complex duties.

Custodians provide for the comfort and safety of others. Assisted by mechanics and other employees, they keep buildings in repair, saving the tax-payers' money and safeguarding the welfare of children and teachers.

The parents' cooperation is essential in a modern school program. Through their parent-teacher groups they help to build constructive community attitudes, assist the school board in developing policies, and help to improve the educational opportunities of children and youth.

Faith in the local administration of school is a part of the democratic tradition. It is important that all the people should feel responsible for their government. In no area is it more necessary than in the provision of public education that the thinking, desires, and ambitions of the people be made effective. It is true that the control of educational policy is exercised by persons elected to boards of education. Nevertheless, through the exercise of the franchise, the people are in the long run enabled to determine educational policy, whether it be with respect to the support of schools, their organization, or even the program developed by the professional staff.³⁰

³⁰American Association of School Administrators, op. cit., p. 1.

CHAPTER VII

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Conclusions

From a survey of the foregoing study the following conclusions have been reached:

1. That from its beginning in 1881, the Alvin Public School progressed steadily not only in buildings and facilities, but also in the personnel of teaching staff, curriculum, and standards.

2. That the Alvin Public School increased in buildings from the first frame building to the present nine ultra-modern buildings on the present campus, with additional new buildings proposed.

3. That this school has a complete and most elaborate school plant in every respect.

4. That the school grew from a one-teacher school to a fully accredited high school of twelve grades, with a proposed plan of fourteen grades and perhaps a junior college in the very near future.

5. That the total affiliated credits grew from fourteen units in 1914 to over sixty-five in 1946.

6. That the faculty of the Alvin School consists of fifty-eight teachers, of whom twenty-one have the Master's

Degree and thirty-eight the Bachelor's Degree.

7. That the fifty-eight teachers of the Alvin Public School are adequately prepared as evidenced by the fact that all hold degrees and are teaching in their major fields.

8. That teaching experience and tenure of Alvin teachers is commendable.

9. That the Alvin school system is conforming to the modern trend that teachers should be employed in the fields of their college specialization.

10. That some of the teachers have more than thirty-five in their classes, and thus exceed the maximum of thirty pupils per class recommended by the Southern Association of Secondary Schools and Colleges.

11. That Alvin High School graduates are well-prepared to enter higher institutions of learning and have adequate training to enter any phase of industry or any occupation in line with their abilities and interests. Not the least among the many valuable things at this school, perhaps, is the confidence in their own ability and training as expressed by many graduates.

12. That the libraries of the Alvin School meet all major recommendations of the Southern Association of Secondary Schools and Colleges for the qualifications of the librarians, and for books, space, and equipment of the library.

13. That this school employs a full-time guidance director in the person of Estelle Cope, who is doing a most excellent job.

14. That the salary schedule of this school has been revised recently to give substantial increases to all teachers.

15. That this school is promoting aircraft training and has received four airplanes and one link trainer from the federal government for use in this program.

16. That additional land will be secured in order to make a runway to begin a flight program.

17. That additional land will be secured in order to build a new football stadium.

18. That two visual aid machines have been provided in this school in 1946.

19. That this school offers complete and splendid cafeteria facilities and services to all of the buildings, which is worthy of commendation.

20. That there is a wonderful spirit of cooperation among the personnel of the school.

21. That this school provides adequate health facilities for its pupils' welfare.

Recommendations

In view of the findings of this study, the following recommendations are proposed for consideration:

1. The arrangement of the high school building is so

unsatisfactory for school purposes that it is recommended that future plans should include the demolishing of the present building and the construction of a new building on ultra-modern lines.

2. That the major needs of the school plant cannot be alleviated until new buildings are erected is obvious; and when plans are being perfected for new educational edifices, these needs should be kept constantly in mind.

3. Careful thought should be given to the phases of the school plant which were shown to be deficient when evaluated, and improvements should be put into effect at the earliest possible date and thus contribute to the total efficiency of the educational program of the Alvin Public School.

4. The teacher-pupil load should be distributed in such a way that no teacher will have classes containing more than twenty-five to thirty pupils, in order to conform to the requirement of the Southern Association of Secondary Schools and Colleges.

5. A comprehensive remedial and personalized instructional program for retarded pupils should be set up throughout the Alvin Public School.

6. More playground equipment should be purchased for the elementary school.

7. Provision should be made for children who ride the busses to enter the buildings in some way that would

eliminate their being exposed to disagreeable weather.

8. Physical fitness programs and pre-flight aeronautics should be given consideration.

9. Arts and crafts should perhaps be established in the senior high school.

10. More should be done to make students conscious of the very great educational opportunities afforded in the Alvin School, together with the greater obligations which that entails.

11. The need for clerical help in the library should be met. The library should be made distribution center for audio-visual education materials. Also, the separate budgets for library materials in homemaking, shop, vocational agriculture, and physical education departments should become an integral part of the central library's financing program.

12. Both the guidance department and the pupil activity department should become more conscious of definite responsibilities for developing the social graces and cultures in students of the high school.

13. A program of teacher training should be initiated in which problems arising within the system could be discussed and progress made in their solution.

14. A professional library for teachers should be established, and every effort should be made to keep this library up-to-date in both periodicals and books.

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