

Name: _____

Education in the News: Ohio School History

Complete the chart using the article below:

How we got to 612 schools

Written by Benjamin Lanka CentralOhio.com

Public education in Ohio dates back to before it was a state, with the Northwest Ordinance putting an emphasis on creating schools to educate children.

But in reality, rural families practiced home instruction because there were no taxes to provide schools. In some cases, parents would pool resources to hire a teacher, according to Marianne Mottley, management analyst supervisor in the Ohio Department of Education's Office of Policy and Research.

In 1825, the first property tax was assessed for education — 0.5 mills — and by the next decade there were 8,000 districts serving 500,000 students. Most of them had one-room buildings, with many not having any dedicated building at all.

In 1914, the legislature abolished the township school district and made the county the basis for school organization. By this time, the number of districts had dropped to about 2,600.

The invention of the automobile and better transportation prompted further consolidation, Mottley said, dropping the number of districts to 1,900 by the 1930s.

"The driving force of consolidation was transportation," said Jack Conrath, superintendent in residence with the Superintendent's Licensure Program in the College of Education and Human Ecology at Ohio State University.

In 1965, the Ohio General Assembly directed the State Board of Education and Ohio Department of Education to devise a plan to reorganize Ohio school districts, according to the historical society. That effort led to the development of minimum enrollments of 2,500 students for a school district and 500 students for a high school.

Mottley said many districts saw what was coming and decided to partner and join with other districts to avoid state action. She said this led to districts meeting the size requirements, but creating a mishmash of areas to represent. She noted more than 10 public school districts serve various parts of Columbus.

"There really isn't any rhyme or reason to it today," she said of district borders.

By 1966, there were 712 districts remaining, meaning the decline in the number of school districts to 612 during the past 45 years has been fairly slow compared to the previous decades.

Ohio Schools Timeline

Date	Education style or purpose, legislation, or changes	# of schools in Ohio
1785	Northwest Ordinance emphasized...	?
1825		
1914		
1930s		
1965		
1966		
2013		