

# History of Education in Cochise County



## Cochise County School Superintendent's Office



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## A Letter from Elsie Toles- \*As told by Elsie Toles, County Superintendent, to Myriam Toles in the Cochise Quarterly copyrighted in 1972 by Cochise County Historical and Archeological Society.

The first rural school in Southern Arizona was established at Dos Cabezos in 1879. The first teacher, Father Gregorio, taught in a school made of adobe, who's shingles were hauled from Silver City, New Mexico, at the expense of those who would benefit directly from the school.

When Cochise County was made from a part of Pima in 1881, the new county started its school system with four districts: Dos Cabezos, Tombstone, Tres Alamos, and Charleston. Between 1881 and 1900, twenty-seven more districts were established.

When Elsie Toles became county school superintendent in 1917, the number had increased to ninety, due largely to the tremendous influx of homesteaders in the county. One-room schools sprang up everywhere. They were scattered over six thousand square miles of Cochise County.

The county superintendent was supposed to visit and supervise instruction in these schools, a formidable task that meant driving over dirt roads in a model T Ford. One school was perched on top of a mountain at the end of a winding road. To make the climb she would reverse her car and back up three miles of slope so the gas would feed into the carburetor.

To visit another school in a remote little goat raising community, it was necessary to drive thirty miles, park, and borrow a horse to ride the remaining twelve miles to the school. The superintendents' office was in Tombstone and as there were no accommodations that permitted an overnight stay at any of the districts, the travel was lengthy and difficult.

All of the schools were as poverty stricken as the homesteaders they served. Usually the buildings were bare little frame shacks, unpainted and with windows on two sides. The only equipment was a heating stove, old-fashioned stationary desks and a bucket of drinking water.

The children were of all ages, so all eight grades were taught. Teachers were scarce. Some of them were very competent but many of those available were untrained. Frequently they were the wives of homesteaders who had taken the county examinations, requiring little more than an eighth grade education to secure a position that would relieve the homesteaders poor circumstances. Though only seventy-five dollars a month for nine months, the salary was a relief to the poor farmers.

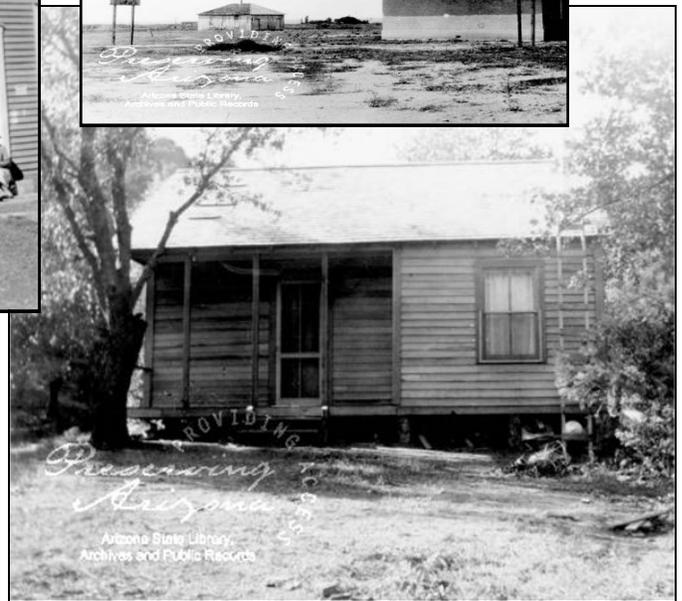
There was seldom a suitable place for a teacher to live. Often a bed was set up in the corner of the schoolroom and the teacher cooked her meals on the heating stove. A teacher who was not the wife of a homesteader often had to live with a family and had to share a bed with some child. The poor equipment in these schools and the lack of highly trained teachers affected the quality of education and made supervision difficult.

Added to these problems, was the fact that the school boards were selected at random. Some were efficient, but some considered the school the battleground for their personal affairs. In one instance, the board burned down the school to express their personal dislike of the teacher.

Elsie Toles took a survey of the children in schools and found many suffered from physical defects that could be remedied. In 1918, Elsie Toles organized, with the help of Dr. R.B. Durfee and Ruth Fuess, a nurse, the first county health program in the state.

Elsie Toles' major efforts were directed to securing legislation to raise the standards of requirements for teachers, and to improve the living and working conditions for them.

The struggle to maintain these schools was grim and somehow heroic. It was inspiring that parents, in spite of extreme poverty, and the difficulty of even making a living, were determined that their children should have an education.



### 1920 Photographs of Hilltop School in Cochise County, AZ

From the collection of the History and Archives Division, Arizona State Library, Archives and Public Records

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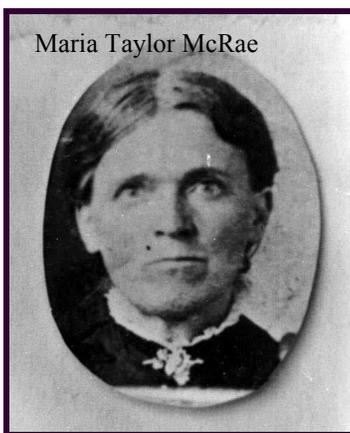
In 1853, the Gadsden Purchase, an agreement between the United States and Mexico, added a 29,670 square mile portion of Mexico to the United States and the New Mexico Territory. This land later became part of Arizona and New Mexico. When President Lincoln signed the Organic Act of 1863, the Act created the Arizona Territory and Tucson was the county seat of Pima County. After the Civil War, settlers poured into Southeastern Arizona and mining and ranching flourished. In 1881, Cochise County was separated from Pima and Tombstone became the county seat.



Cochise County's history began in the mining settlements of Bisbee, Tombstone, the Mormon settlement of St. David, and the military fort of Fort Huachuca. All which date their beginnings within a very few years of each other.

Fort Huachuca was founded on March 3, 1877, by Captain Samuel Marmaduke Whitside, to suppress Indian trouble and provide safety for the settlers. The Fort offered protection for the settlements from the Indians; especially in 1885 and 1886, when Geronimo caused trouble for the communities of Tombstone, Bisbee, and the surrounding districts.

In 1877, a small group of Mormons established a camp, used for religious purposes and missionary work, at the present site of St. David. A small fort was built on the bank of the San Pedro and against those walls they built one-room dwellings for the settlers. Eventually, the settlers moved out to build homes on the land nearby. When the Mormons arrived at their town site, Mrs. Maria McRae taught the rudiments of education to the children of the neighborhood, using her home as a classroom. Two years later, one of the rooms in the old fort was set aside as a school allowing Mrs. McRae and Mrs. Susan Curtis to teach classes.



Maria Taylor McRae

Wherever the settlers made their homes, a school was established. Tombstone's first school district was created under a petition granted by the board of supervisors of Pima County on January 23, 1880. The first class started in February 1880, under the teaching of Miss Lucas, and started out with nine students. By July 1880, the enrollment was one hundred and twenty-eight. The following year, 1881, a new school house was built and Mrs. C. A. Stanton and Miss McFarland taught the classes. In 1882, Tombstone's school had a staff of four teachers and Mr. M. M. Sherman was the principal. By December of 1882, Mr. Sherman suggested the establishment of a high school and added higher classes in Latin, Algebra, Bookkeeping, and Physiology. Mr. M. M.

Sherman was credited with the real beginning of advanced educational teaching in the Territory.

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Four years after Mrs. McRae had begun her work at St. David, Miss. Clara Stillman was hired by the first school board of Bisbee, which was composed of Mr. H. C. Stillman, Mr. Lewis Williams, and Mr. J. F. Duncan. On October 3, 1881, Clara Stillman taught her first class. For the first three months, the money for running the school was raised privately. The school house was located in an abandoned miner's shack, with no windows, and a dirt floor. Fearing an Indian attack, the school was soon moved to Brewery Gulch. By 1882, the enrollment originally five students had grown to seventy-eight, including thirty-nine Mexican children. In 1883, the Copper Queen Company donated a new building to house the school. A unique feature of the school was the public examinations that were held at the end of the year. This was when both the teacher and the pupils were scrutinized by the citizens of the community.

In 1882, M. H. Sherman, in a report to the Education Department of the Arizona Territory, reported that Cochise County had one thousand, one hundred, and thirty-one pupils enrolled in its eleven public schools and there were five male and fifteen female teachers.

Education from 1883 to 1889 followed the trend of business activities in the County for the same years. The mines in Tombstone were undergoing a period of depression, and the mines at Bisbee were slowing down.

It is important to note that information pertaining to most of the schools in Cochise County prior to 1890 is meager and unreliable; it is only possible to record the dates of establishment of a few of the early schools. Official records are incomplete up to this time.

Bisbee and Douglas showed the greatest increases in expansion. In 1899, the first graduation of eighth grade pupils took place in Bisbee. In 1901 and 1902, Lincoln and Lowell Schools were built. By 1904, a school superintendent was hired to take charge of the great increase in the school population and new school facilities. Up to this time the schools had been financed without the aid of bond issues, but it became necessary to resort to this means of collecting revenue in 1905, and at this time the first bond election was called, by which \$75,000 was raised. In 1907, there were five schools in Bisbee— Central, Lincoln, Lowell, South Bisbee, and Don Louis— with an enrollment of one thousand nine hundred and fifteen pupils.

The new town of Douglas experienced a very rapid development in its school system as well. The first public school was started on November 4, 1901, under the guidance of Daisy Maude Lincoln, in a twelve by twenty-four-foot building on the present site of the Gadsden Hotel. The school started with nineteen pupils, but in a few months the number had been increased to eighty-five, and a twelve-foot addition had to be made to the building. In 1902, H. G. Hendrix became principal and Edith Hess took Miss Lincoln's place as teacher.

Three months after school started, the enrollment reached three hundred and eleven. The large increase in the enrollment made the building of additional school facilities a necessity, and by 1908 there were five schools in Douglas.

The period from 1890 to 1912 saw the establishment of four high schools in Cochise County. In June, 1906, Bisbee graduated its first high-school students—four girls. One year later, 1907, the high school was established in Central School Building. In 1910, attendance reached one hundred and ten pupils.

The Douglas school system was not long behind Bisbee in providing higher education. The first step toward establishing high-school work was taken in 1905, when the first two years were offered. The first record of high-school work in Tombstone indicates that as early as 1893, there were as many as twenty-five children registered for high-school classes. However, it was not until 1908 that the taxpayers voted to establish a high school in the Tombstone community. The second high school building in the county used entirely for high-school purposes, was established at Wilcox in 1909.

The schools of Bisbee and Douglas reflected the prosperity of their towns and the schools of Tombstone reflected their poor conditions. From the early 1890's to 1912, there was always a great problem of how to raise enough money to run the schools of Tombstone. Flooded mines caused much of the population to leave the town. The future of the schools, as well as of the town itself, was in trouble.

In 1897, the Legislature made the County Superintendent of Schools an elected position serving a two-year term. The Superintendent of Public Schools apportioned public school monies in the school fund of the County Treasurer and received quarterly reports of average daily attendance. School trustees oversaw the care and custody of all school property. Each district also appointed a school marshal to take a count of all children within each district once a year. The Legislature maintained this school administration structure when Arizona became a state on February 14, 1912.

The period from 1912 to 1922 was one in which Cochise County experienced the boom days of the pre-war and the war demand of mining production. The increased production of mining, the demand for agricultural products and cattle, and the increased demand for adequate transportation all caused growth of the population in the county. As a result, new schools had to be built to take care of the increased population of school-age children. In general, the period from 1912 to 1922 showed an advancement for the schools of the County.

Bisbee Daily Review, 20 Oct 1910

**Than 7,000 School Children, According to Statistics Just Compiled**

Interesting facts are brought to light in the school directory of Cochise county, compiled by E. H. Stover, the superintendent and H. E. Berner, deputy. The pamphlet just issued shows there are 61 districts in the county, including 14 new districts. One hundred and sixty-six teachers were employed last year and it is expected that 180 will be enrolled when all of the districts are supplied this season. The average wage is \$75 monthly. Douglas and Bisbee both have 49 school teachers. During the past year ten new school houses have been erected, including the high school at Douglas. High schools are now located at Bisbee, Douglas, Tombstone and Wilcox. A high school building is about to be erected at Wilcox.

The total enrollment in the county is 7,358 school children, between the ages of six and 21, giving Cochise one of the largest rolls in the territory. Bisbee leads with 2,203, with Douglas second 2,146.

Douglas has the best average daily attendance and the best average number belonging. Bisbee is second.

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Douglas and Bisbee took the lead in increased school enrollment in the mining districts and Willcox in cattle and agriculture. The post-war results hurt commerce and the industry of the county, but the schools continued to expand for a number of years after the war had ended. It was at the end of this period that Cochise County reached its top growth. The most significant thing about the schools in 1912 to 1922 was the vast number of school districts that were created. Cochise County had nearly twice as many school districts as Yavapai and ran a close second to Maricopa in the number of teachers hired and the number of children enrolled.

As early as 1912, there had been talk about having the county seat moved from Tombstone to the Southern part of the county. By 1929, it was evident that Bisbee had become the business center of Cochise County and that the future of Tombstone was in doubt. On November 19, 1929, the taxpayers of Cochise County voted to move the county seat to Bisbee.

Schools from 1922 to 1930 saw increased enrollment in Benson due to the influx of families because of the establishment of the Apache Powder Company. One of the most noteworthy changes in the educational system of the county, between 1920 and 1930, was the unification of the many school districts. In 1920 there were seventy-nine school districts in the county, but by 1930 the number had been reduced to forty-six.

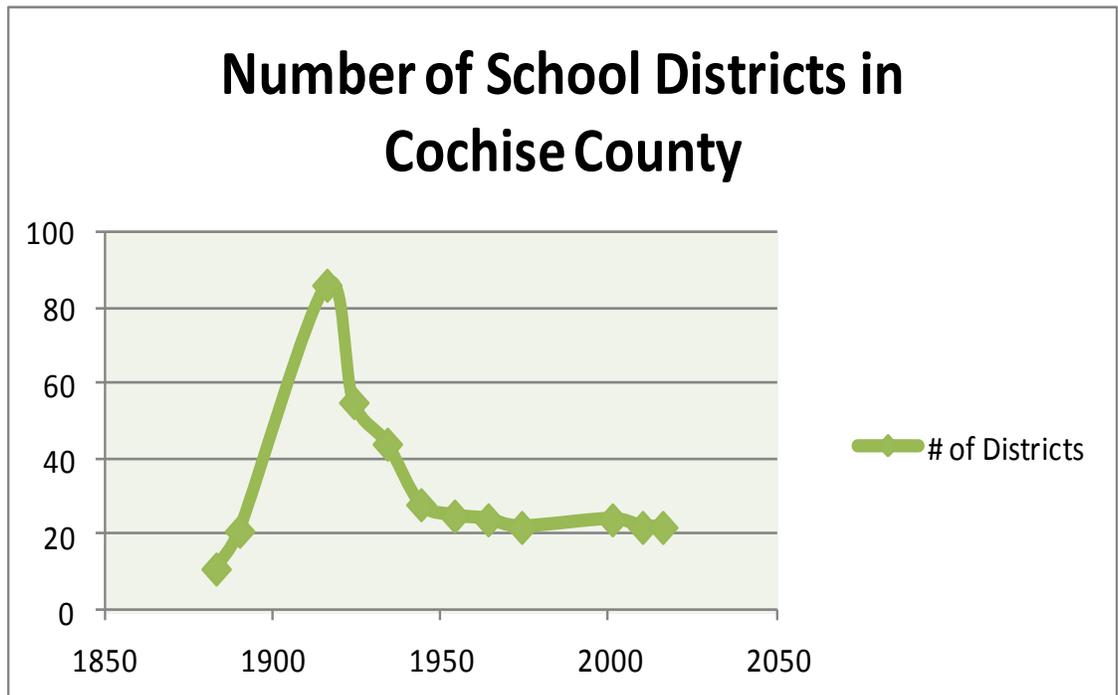
The years from 1930 to 1938 saw a gradual decrease in the total enrollment of the elementary schools of Cochise County. The elementary schools, for the first sixty years of their existence, experienced periods of sudden growth and gradual decline. During this time, it was noted that in certain sections of Cochise County the progress was gradual, while in other sections the progress was more erratic tending to fluctuate with the business conditions at the time. The largest donor to the general school fund, from 1934 to 1938, was the Phelps Dodge Company. When the Democratic Party went into office in 1938, the Federal Government extended a lot of help to the public schools of the country, and Cochise County was no exception.

A century later shows the primary territorial goals of education continue to date. The purposes of education are a direct result of the democratic process and are subject to all of the influences of those who care. Significant events in history have influenced educational change. The years of World War II brought the need for technical and vocational education and increased emphasis on Math and Science. The communist threat in the late 50's found increasing emphasis on teaching of the free enterprise system, a focus on the Arizona and United States constitution, and a daily salute and pledge to the flag. The G. I. Bill brought hundreds of thousands back to the classroom. The 50's brought with it regulations for transportation and bussing of students. In the 60's, the State Board of Education broke the tradition of unitary textbook adoption permitting multiple adoptions of curriculum and the experimental attitude in school design. The provisions of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 have affected

schools in Titles I through V and have had a profound and lasting influence. The State Department of Public Instruction maintains most of its personnel and programs through the funds of this and other Federal Acts.

An unusually complicated and confusing system of aid to education rests with a tax and disbursement formula. The funding for schools continues regardless of funding lags and deficit funding. Bonding programs allow the construction of new schools. The Equalization Aid Program of 1965 regulates districts budgets. The problems of taxation and financial aid to schools continues to be a controversial subject.

The current trends for quality teachers, individualized direction, common core curriculum, acceptance of analytical and critical thinking, flexible scheduling, the cooperative efforts of teachers and administrators, and most noteworthy, the integration of technology, proves that the history of education and schools in Cochise County has been and continues to be a direct reflection of our society, Federal Legislature, state government, and local leadership.



Information obtained from the annual Arizona Education Directories  
issued by Arizona Superintendent of Public Instruction

# History of School Districts in Cochise County

District Name	Years
Adams District #63	1916-17
Allen District #51 (Pearce)	1919-1920
Apache District #42	1916-Present
Apodaca District #37 (Pomerene)	1916-1943
Ash Creek District #53	1916-Present
Babacomari (aka Leslie Canyon) District #46	1916-1920, 1930-1933
Bear Creek (aka King Copper) District #58 (Rodeo, NM)	1916-1920
Benson District #9	1883-Present
Bernardino District #30 (Douglas)	1916-1928
Bisbee District #2	1883-Present
Bowie (aka Teviston) District #14	1883-Present
Brophy (aka Kelton) District #62 (Courtland)	1916-1920
Buena District #68 (becomes Sierra Vista)	1916-Present
Campini (aka Parker Canyon, Car Canyon) District #4	1916-1934
Canyon District #73	1916-1917
Charleston District #72 (#5?)	1883-1917
Cochise District #26	1916-Present
Cochise Technology District #0108	2001-Present
College Peak District #87 (Bisbee)	1916-1917
Contention District #7	1883-1891
Courtland District #43	1916-1941
Dixie Canyon District #86 (Bisbee)	1916-1920
Dos Cabezas District #15	1883-1954
Double Adobe (aka Central) District #45	1916-Present
Douglas District #27	1916-Present
Dragoon District #61 (#12?)	1883-1946
El Dorado District #16 (Dos Cabezas)	1890-1965
Elfrida District #12 (aka Whiteriver, Whitewater, Soldier Hole)	1883-Present
Elma (aka Swisshelm, Hunt Canyon) District #35 (Dos Cabezas)	1916-1932
Erie District #41 (Douglas)	1916-1927
Fairbank District #6 (aka Dragoon)	1883-1943
Forrest District #81 (Douglas)	1916-2010
Frontier District #87 (McNeal)	1923-1947
Ft. Bowie District #71	1916-1917
Ft. Huachuca Accomodation Schools (#74A & #74B)	1916-1940, 1944-1947, 1952-Present
Gadsden (aka Hilltop, San Pedro?) District #19	1890-1937
Garces District #70	1916-1920
Gleeson District (aka Turquoise)#25	1916-1943

# History of School Districts in Cochise County

District Name	Years
Happy Valley District #85 (Benson)	1919-1925
Hereford District #3	1890-1946
Huachuca District #4 (?)	1890-1891
Johnson District #33	1916-1925
Jordan District #69	1916-1917
Kansas District #20 (Willcox)	1890-1920
Lone Oak District #48 (Rodeo, NM)	1916-1928
Luzena District #52 (Rodeo, NM)	1916-1917
Mascot District #65 (Dos Cabezas)	1916-1931
McAllister District #59 (Parker Canyon)	1916-1920
McDonald District #28 (Douglas)	1916-1924
McHaley District #84 (Willcox)	1916-1920
McKinney District #77 (San Simon)	1916-1925
McNeal District #55	1916-Present
Mescal District #75	1916-1920
Mexizona District #50 (Rodeo, NM)	1916-1924
Miner's Flats District #85 (Elfrida)	1916-1917
Montezuma District #79	1916-1920
Moore Spur District #39 (Apache)	1916-1920
Mountain Spring District #89 (Bowie)	1919-1920
Mt. View District #56 (Willcox)	1916-1920
Naco District #23	1916-Present
Neel District #44 (McNeal)	1916-1925
Olga District #76 (Bowie)	1916-1917
Osborne District #36 (Lowell)	1916-1917
Palominas District #49	1916-Present
Paradise District #31	1916-1928
Pearce District #22	1916-Present
Pine Canyon Accommodation School	1936-1940
Plainview District #80 (San Simon)	1916-1934
Pleasant View District (aka Silver Creek) #32 (Douglas)	1916-1924, 1927-1941
Pomerene (aka Fairview) District #64	1916-Present
Poole (aka Pool & Cascabel) District #24	1890-1963
Portal (aka Cave Creek) District #34	1916-1965

# History of School Districts in Cochise County

District Name	Years
Price Canyon District #67 (Apache)	1916-1928, 1938-1939
Pridham District #10 (Sunglow)	1916-1927
Ramsey Canyon District #4	1883-1884
Rucker Canyon District #66	1916-2012
Russelville District #78 (Dragoon)	1916-1933
San Simon District #18 (Bohn?)	1890-Present
Servoss District #40	1916-1920
Stark District #88 (Lowell)	1916-1920
St. David (aka Marcus) District #21 (#8?)	1883-Present
Stewart District #57 (Willcox)	1916-1943
Stronghold District #60 (Cochise)	1916-1924
Sulphur Hills District #83 (Pearce)	1916-1920
Sulphur Springs District #47 (Cochise)	1916-1933
Sunnyside District #8	1916-1925
Texas Canyon (aka Adams) District #11 (Dragoon)	1916-1941
Texas (aka Webb) District #7	1916-1941
Tombstone District #1	1883-Present
Tres Alamos District #82 (Benson) (#10?)	1883-1920
Turkey Creek District #54	1916-1920
Valley Union High School	1948-Present
Webb Accommodation School	1923-1924, 1927-1928
Webb District #29	1916-1941
Wells (aka Lee) District #38	1916-1924
Wilgus District #17 (Pearce)	1916-1941
Willcox District #13	1883-Present

Information taken from available published documents.

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## **“Cochise County Education: The 19th and 20th Century.”** as told by Trudy Berry, Cochise County School Superintendent

In 1976, a national group named the American Association of Education Service Agencies was started with the purpose of providing organized and professional services to school districts across the United States. Some of our county school superintendents, including Paul Street from Yavapai and Jack Harmon of Pinal, became involved in the national movement and brought the concept back to Arizona.

In 1978, under Pat Goren, the Cochise County Special Services office was formed to provide services such as Special Education, library, and vocational education services. The office was in the basement of Bisbee City Hall and from 1978 to 1984, operated under Slim Gregan, the Education Services Director. The Vocational Education Coordinator was Hal Thomas and Carol Pinnix joined the office in 1984 as the office manager serving under Ernie Kelley. The office was funded by Small Schools money from the state, which we still receive in 2016. The little districts benefitted greatly from having these shared services, but costs grew at the City Hall office and five of the districts rebelled against higher bills. Dr. Nelson, Dale Mortensen, Steve Webb, and other superintendents asked Carol Pinnix to move with the operation to St. David School District where it is still housed today and named the St. David Special Services Cooperative and funded by a state grant.

The Ft. Huachuca Accommodation School District has been operating since 1916, but closed from 1940 to 1952. The district serves the military students on the fort, and it was discovered that very few Arizona registered voters were in the military ranks because they were registered to vote in their home states. Since the situation was not conducive for having an elected school board, ARS 15-465 allows for an accommodation school district to be established for a district with no distinct boundaries or voters, such as schools for special education or homeless students that serve a large area. The County School Superintendent serves as the governing board for these districts which have various purposes throughout the state. In 2010, there were 7 statewide. In 2008, legislation, ARS 15-461, provided that the military reservation school district, (the only one of its kind in Arizona) would be allowed to have an appointed governing board of five members who had to reside or work on post with two being appointed by the County School Superintendent, two appointed by the garrison commander, and the fifth chosen by the four. The legislation also allowed the Ft. Huachuca Accommodation School District to spend more of their Federal Impact Aid for M&O, thus improving the salaries and classroom spending for military dependents. (The district is 100% impacted which means its district boundaries include only federal land.)

The Cochise County SMILE (Stimulating, Motivating, Innovative, Learning for Educators) Conference was begun in the late 80's and took place on the Cochise College Douglas Campus for many years. It involved thousands of teachers and

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administrators from all over Cochise County, as well as instructors from Cochise College. It was a great day for networking and instruction held on the last Friday of January every year, or in later years, its been held at Buena High School every other January, and is scheduled for 2017.

In 2003, the Arizona County School Superintendents drafted legislation which established state Education Service Agencies (ESAs). The new statute allowed the County offices to expand their services beyond providing staff development and conferences for teachers, business managers and other school staff. They expanded many types of support services to school districts in their county. In 2012, the ESA's joined to form five state regional centers. The plan was to become the main providers of education services funded by federal grants such as Race to the Top, and to work closely with the Arizona Department of Education to be their direct link to the schools.

One successful project was the Statewide Instructional Technology Grant, which provided a Technology Integration Specialist in each of the 15 counties. Cochise County served as the first fiscal agent for the \$1.4 million per year grant from 2005 to 2008, with Lillian Hritz serving as the State Director, and Val Quarto as the Cochise County Technology Integration Specialist. Thousands of teachers benefitted from Technology Conferences and computer workshops statewide.

County School offices have always served as the fiscal agent for all of the school districts, reconciling all school funds with the County Treasurer and assisting with setting tax rates. Sierra Vista Public Schools decided in 2000 to be a recently state-approved pilot project and process their own checks, but the County School Office remained in charge of the other 23 districts. In 2015, the county office processed \$130 million a year in payroll and expense checks.

In 2000, the Joint Technology Education District, Cochise Tech was added to the county. The new district had been approved by voters in eight districts with high schools in the 2000 election. The first superintendent was Dale Mortensen and a governing board had to be appointed by the County School Superintendent, but it was not a "normal" 3- to-5 person board. It included a representative from each of the eight districts. Later, Bisbee and Sierra Vista joined to make it 100% of the county high schools and a ten-member board. The extra money from local property taxes (five cents) and state funds provided more Career and Technical Education programs for the high school students.

In 2001, the county had two transportation districts which had no school of their own, so they bused their students to other districts. Forrest was located between Bisbee and Douglas and transported six students. Per ARS 15-469, the district was "lapsed" and joined with Bisbee. The Rucker Transportation District north of Elfrida was dissolved through legislation introduced by Senator Gail Griffin and it became an unorganized territory, not part of any district.

The Apache District came close to closing in 2015 when their attendance dipped to 6 students. The community came together pleading to remain open.

In the first decade of 2000, school budgets seemed to be decreasing because of diminishing state funds and in 2011, the state experienced a depression leading legislators to sell state buildings, sweep accounts from schools and other entities and even delay payments to the schools to balance their budget. Schools increased their credit lines at the bank. Sierra Vista, Bisbee and Douglas closed schools. Charter schools also were increasing in the county and state and put pressure on the traditional public schools by enrolling their students. Capital allocations were cut by the state and the School Facilities Board (SFB) virtually closed down.

The SFB had been very well funded in the late 1990's and new buildings/schools were built in Naco, Ash Creek, McNeal, Pearce, Pomerene, Sierra Vista, and Double Adobe. Tombstone built a new high school in 2002 amid controversy over the location, Whetstone or Tombstone, and after choosing Tombstone discovered they needed a road to the building. The state, county, and city all joined together to help. Many of the districts are still involved in disputes with contractors over shoddy construction and have filed law suits to recover damages such as the ceiling falling in the new Tombstone gymnasium.

Now, in 2016, the Governor and the legislature have proposed to use more of the funds which have been accumulating in the state Trust Land account. These lands were set aside in 1912, by the federal government to fund education. Voters will decide whether to amend the state constitution to allow more withdrawals in the amount of \$3.5 billion in the next ten years. Arizona now ranks 49th in education funding.

Submitted by Trudy Berry, 4-14-2016

**The Rucker  
School District  
north of Elfrida**



# Education Administrative Design

Education is a state function by the absence of authority in the Tenth Amendment to the United States Constitution. In turn, the states have traditionally delegated responsibility for education to the local school district. Arizona has been no exception to this historic pattern. The flow of responsibility for public elementary and secondary education in Arizona moves from the central organization (the Board, Superintendent, and Department) through the fifteen county school superintendents, to the school district boards and superintendents and finally to the individual school.

From 1879 to 1899, the probate judges served as ex-officio county school superintendents by authority of the Territorial Statutes. From 1899 to date, all counties have elected their superintendents. These officers are eligible based on citizenship and teacher certification requirements. The superintendent is the chief school officer in each county. He is responsible for the conduct of his office directly to the public in the county. His duties and powers are listed in the State Statutes. Though the range of responsibilities is the same for all of the superintendents, the expression of it has varied with the characteristics of the incumbent and the needs of the county.

The primary function of the superintendent is to apportion money to each school district. The funds do not actually transfer through his office. Rather, the county treasurer is advised to disburse a given amount to school districts through a transfer prepared by the county superintendent. It is interesting to note that a law enacted in 1901 permits the superintendent to require school district trustees to provide "suitable outhouses." If viewed symbolically one can see that county superintendents' functions have traditionally related from the personal and practical aspects of school life to general educational supervision within the county. Few pressures have existed to modify the pattern of responsibility found in the county superintendent's office.

A stratified representation of the administrative design for Arizona education includes:

State Board of Education  
State Superintendent of Public Instruction  
State Department of Education  
County School Superintendent  
Local Boards of Education  
Local School Superintendents  
Principals  
Teachers



Arizona State Board  
of Education