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HISTORY OF EDUCATION IN THE TURTLE MOUNTAIN
INDIAN RESERVATION OF NORTH DAKOTA

A Thesis
Submitted to the Graduate Faculty
of the
University of North Dakota

By
Robert J. Murray

In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements
for the Degree of
Master of Science in Education

August, 1953
This thesis, submitted by Robert J. Murray in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Science in Education, is hereby approved by the committee under whom the work has been done.

[Signatures]

Chairman

Dean of the Graduate School
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The writer wishes to express his grateful appreciation for the valuable assistance rendered by the many persons cooperating in this study. He is particularly indebted to Dr. Erich Selke, Professor of Education at the University of North Dakota, whose guidance and generous help carried the work to its completion.

R. J. M.
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CHAPTER I
INTRODUCTION

Purpose

The aim of this thesis is to trace the history of education of the Indians living in the Turtle Mountains. The education of these people has passed through several stages of development. The mission, the federal government and the public schools have provided education in varying degrees at different times.

The educational problem of the Turtle Mountains is unique. Indian people live on tax-free land assigned to them by treaty. As a result of these treaties between the Indian tribes and the federal government, most of the community services, including schools, usually provided for by local taxation, have been provided for by the federal government.

The various religious groups have made very important contributions to the education of the many Indian tribes in the United States. Mission schools have provided for the education of a large percentage of Indian pupils. Catholic missionaries were the first to establish schools in the Turtle Mountains, and still continue to play a large part in education on the reservation.
The background of the people, and their present economic condition make education a very important factor in a program of rehabilitation. Welfare office records indicate that the average education of adult Indian people applying for aid is less than a third grade level. The history of education may partially account for this extremely low average education.

It is hoped that the facts assembled will serve two purposes. First, to preserve the accumulated accounts of the development of education in this area, together with factual information on groups and individuals contributing to it. Second, the data should serve as a guide in future planning for education in the area.

Sources of Data

Material for this study was gathered from a number of sources. These were:


2. Newspaper accounts of historical happenings in the area, chiefly from copies of Turtle Mountain Star from 1887 to the present time.

3. The files and records of the Turtle Mountain Agency.

4. The files and records of the Rolette County superintendent of schools and county commissioners.

5. Approximately forty interviews held with older residents of the area.
6. Personal observation and contacts. The writer has spent twenty-two years in the Federal Indian Service Education Division, nine of which have been on the Turtle Mountain Reservation. This has made possible the gathering of information through contacts and experience relative to this study.
CHAPTER II
GENERAL REVIEW OF INDIAN EDUCATION

Indian children attend public, federal and mission schools. During the fiscal year ended June 30, 1952, there were 99,441 Indian children between six and eighteen years of age enrolled in schools in the United States and Alaska. More than half, fifty-three per cent, were in public schools, thirty-seven per cent in federal schools, and ten per cent in mission schools.¹

For more than three centuries Indian education in the United States was largely under the direction of missionaries. As early as 1568, the Jesuit fathers organized at Havana, Cuba, a school for Indian children from Florida.² This was the first school attended by Indian children who lived within the United States. During the years since 1568 the numbers enrolled in mission schools have varied; in 1952 there were 10,067.³

Many of the treaties between the United States and Indian tribes provided for the establishment of schools for Indian children. Congress has also provided schools for Indian children where other educational facilities were not provided.

¹U. S. Dept. of Interior, Statistics Concerning Indian Education, Haskell Press, Haskell Institute, Lawrence, Kansas, 1952, pp. 4-5.
As early as 1842 there were thirty-seven Indian schools in operation and by 1881 the number had increased to 106. In 1952 the Bureau of Indian Affairs operated 230 schools in the United States and ninety-seven in Alaska; these schools enrolled 36,414 children of school age.4

The primary objective of federal schools is to prepare Indians for successful living. In federal schools children develop basic academic skills, acquire an understanding of the social and economic world, learn improved standards of living, follow practices which assure optimum health, acquire the necessary vocational training to become qualified for gainful employment, and obtain the necessary education to enter special schools and institutions of higher learning. The system of schools provided by the federal government for Indian children is recognized as being equal to state systems of schools. All secondary schools are accredited so that graduates are accepted in college.

Indian children are entitled to the same opportunities for public education as are provided for any other citizens living within a state; however, tax-exempt Indian owned lands and large numbers of Indian children within a school district may create financial burdens which local funds are not adequate to meet.5 As early as 1890 contracts providing for financial

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4Ibid., p. 7.
assistance to schools attended by Indian children were negotiated with individual districts. It was recognized then, as today, that Indian children become better adjusted to living with other people in a community when they associate with other children in public schools.

The Johnson-O'Malley Act, which became law in 1934, authorizes the Secretary of the Interior, among other things, to enter into contracts with states for the education of Indians and to permit the use of federal school buildings and equipment by local school authorities. As a result of the operation of the law, some states having large Indian populations do not have any federal schools within their boundaries. In 1952 the Bureau of Indian Affairs negotiated contracts with fourteen states and twenty-six districts in four states. Of the 52,960 Indian children enrolled in public schools, approximately 31,000 attended schools that received aid under these contracts. The Bureau of Indian Affairs is transferring the operation of federal schools to local districts as rapidly as conditions are favorable and increasing the attendance of Indian children in public schools where they have the same opportunities as any other group of Americans. Financial aid from the federal government should decrease as rapidly as Indians assume increasing responsibility as citizens.

CHAPTER III
BACKGROUND AND ESTABLISHMENT OF RESERVATION

Location

The Turtle Mountain Indian reservation is located in the north central section of North Dakota, near the Canadian boundary (see Figure 1). It comprises two townships, Couture and Ingebretson, in the northern part of Rolette County.

Origin of Name

The area of the Turtle Mountains is thickly wooded, and is dotted with many lakes. The name Turtle Mountain is credited to early government cartographers, who are said to have used the name at first in a quasi-official manner in the pre-settlement period. From certain vantage points where the complete outline of the plateau can be seen, the elevation is strikingly reminiscent of a turtle's back.9

People

French-Canadian trappers, voyageurs and employees of the Hudson Bay Company were numerous in the northeastern part of the state in the frontier period and many of them married Indian women.10 There were a few men of British stock also, chiefly

Scottish and English, who married Indian women. As a result of these unions, there sprang up a new group, virtually a new race of mixed-bloods, called the Metis. For many years prior to the settlement years, these Metis lived in a manner that was sort of a compromise between the practices of the Indian and the white man. They did a little farming, lived in cabins to a large extent, and adopted many customs of the Canadian-French. But they did not wholly relinquish the nomadic life of their Indian forebearers. They hunted much of the time and did not miss their two annual buffalo hunts. The present inhabitants of the Turtle Mountains are largely descendents of this hardy group.\textsuperscript{11}

When this region began to be settled, the Metis were the first mail carriers. Since their stamina and knowledge of the frontier made them brave and bold, and the most reliable men to be had.

The early Metis of North Dakota, ancestors of the present Metis, enjoyed life with true appreciation. They were fond of good dress, and their clothes were made of the finest imported merinos, cashmeres, and broacloths, bought at the trading posts. The men wore black broadcloth redingotes, long, double-breasted, and trimmed with large brass buttons. At the collar was a capuchon or hood, which was never worn but served merely as an adornment. A bright sash about the waist, beaded mocassins, and

\textsuperscript{11}Ibid., p. 250.
FIGURE 1

GENERAL LOCATION OF TURTLE MOUNTAIN RESERVATION IN NORTH CENTRAL NORTH DAKOTA
FIGURE 2
ROAD SYSTEM AND GOVERNMENT SCHOOL LOCATIONS
TURTLE MOUNTAIN INDIAN RESERVATION
a beaded tobacco pouch used as a French courtier used his snuff box, completed his costume. The women wore the tight basque and flowing skirt, and in summer as well as winter, a half-dozen gaily colored petticoats, which created quite a dazzling array when the wearer stopped to tie the lace of a beaded mocassin. A black silk kerchief was tied about the head, and over this went a large square of black broadcloth which was wrapped about the entire body and served as a cloak. 12

The Metis were, and still are, fond of music and dancing. Their songs came down from their French ancestors or were learned from the mission priests. One favorite was Au clair de la lune (By Moonlight) and another was Marlborough S'en Va-t-en Guerre (Marlborough Goes to War). Square dances, the Red River Jig, Pair O'Fours, and Reel O'Cats were the favorite dances, and some of them are still performed. 15

The most important event in the year for the Metis, in the first half of the last century, was the Pembina buffalo hunt. For this, white and Metis hunters would meet at Pembina on an expedition that sometimes took them as far as Fort Union on the Missouri. Not only men, but also women and children went on the hunt, and even the priest went along to counsel and advise.

12 Ibid., p. 272.
15 Ibid., p. 276.
It was a good sized town on a tour. On the hunt in 1840, probably the largest ever held, there were 1,650 people and 1,210 oxcarts, and the cost of the expedition has been estimated at $120,000. The camp was organized under a chief, with ten captains under him, and ten soldiers under each captain to enforce the camp regulations. For the first violation, the saddle and bridle of the offender were cut up; for the second, his coat was destroyed; and for the third, he was flogged. A thief, even if he stole something of no greater value than a buffalo sinew - a common article of barter in the Red River country - was publicly cried "thief." Hunting was not always good; hot weather or storms delayed parties, and sometimes prairie fires were encountered. Eventually encroaching civilization put an end to the buffalo hunts, but while they were held, and when they were successful, the hunters lived in plenty. The 1840 expedition took home more than a million pounds of meat in their oxcarts.\(^1\)

The main food of the early Metis was pemmican, or dried buffalo meat, but wild game was also plentiful. Galette, an unleavened bread made by mixing flour with water, salt and shortening, was preferred to white man's bread.

Great respect for old age and deep affection for relatives characterize Metis family relationships. Concerning birds and

\(^{14}\text{Ibid.}, \ p. \ 282.\)
animals, they have many unusual beliefs: a hungry beast coming to the door is regarded as a sign of poverty, a woodpecker pecking at a window is said to be a sign of death in the family, and snakes are believed to be symbols of quarrels and enemies.

Two attempts were made futilely to set up a commonwealth of Metis. In 1635, a man named Dixon sought to create a northwestern empire, the citizens of which were to be mainly Metis. Again in 1869-1870, Louis Riel, in his first rebellion in Manitoba against the Canadian government, endeavored, with a closer approach to success, to found a Metis commonwealth in Manitoba. With the advent of whites in large numbers, the Metis scattered. Most of them who were state inhabitants were assembled in the Turtle Mountain reservation about 1884. 15

There were also in the area of the Turtle Mountains a number of full-blood Chippewas. These Indians, as did the Metis, roamed the area not recognizing the international boundary lines. There was no way of telling a Canadian Indian from an American Indian, and as far as the Indian himself was concerned, there was no difference. The Indians claimed the Turtle Mountain area and guarded it jealously. An article published in the Grand Forks Herald, September 8, 1882, tells of the demand of Chief Khashph of the Turtle Mountains that the Indians be given tracts of land in the mountains before the whites "gobble it all up."

15Turtle Mountain Star, op. cit., p. 25.
The newspaper article reported that a band of Chippewa from here had met a commission from Washington a few days earlier, dressed in tribal regalia and exhibited a determined stand against the encroachments of the whites.  

Treaties

As in many instances since the whites came to North America, treaties were made with the Indians of this region by which land they occupied was surrendered for nominal sums. Although the Turtle Mountain district was not included in the area ceded by the Chippewa of North Dakota and Minnesota by the treaty of 1863, other later pacts involved this section. One treaty made in 1892 gave the government control of Indian lands in the Turtle Mountains at a price of ten cents an acre. It has been asserted by Indian leaders that only Canadian and Minnesota Chippewa and none from this section signed the treaty.  

By federal statute, approved on March 2, 1861, providing for the creation of North Dakota, land held by Indians was excluded from settlement. It was apparent by this law that the government could not take land without the consent of the Indians. On October 2, 1863, the Chippewa ceded all the land they held at Red Lake and Pembina to the government. The Turtle Mountain band claimed all the land in the Turtle Mountain
area and as far south as Devils Lake and east to White Earth, Minnesota. On October 4, 1882, the Indian Department at Washington, D. C., directed the General Land Office to take steps to revoke these claims and to restore these lands to public domain. The Indians at once took steps to secure their rights. A delegation was sent to Washington to secure the establishment of a reservation for the Turtle Mountain Indians. They were given an area about thirty-two miles from north to south and twenty-four miles from east to west, which included all of the Turtle Mountain area.18

On March 1, 1885, Congress appropriated the sum of $10,000 for the purpose of aiding these Indians to make a permanent settlement upon the Turtle Mountain reservation or upon land allocated to them.19

**Establishment of Reservation**

Cyrus Beede, a government representative, made a visit to the Turtle Mountains, and in accordance with his recommendation, the Indian Department, on March 29, 1884, restored to public domain all of the land of the reservation established by the executive order of December 21, 1882, except two townships.20 These two townships now constitute the Turtle Mountain reservation. A few of the members of the tribe were later given 160

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20Ibid., p. 40.
acre allotments on the public domain lands adjacent to the reservation, and a few more were given scattered allotments of land in western North Dakota and eastern Montana. However, the large portion of the descendents of the Metis and the Turtle Mountain Chippewas made these two townships their home. There are at the present time over 9,000 people enrolled or recognized as belonging to the Turtle Mountain band. Of these, only about 5,000 actually reside on the reservation. The rest of these people have scattered to many parts of the United States and Canada, and while they are recognized as being members of this group, they are to all intents and purposes completely severed from any connection with the reservation. It is with those who remain that we are chiefly concerned in this paper.

There is a total of 26,273 acres of Indian owned land on the reservation. In 1941, a land purchase program was inaugurated. A total of 35,436 acres of land was purchased by the tribe for leasing to landless Indians. This land was purchased chiefly in the adjacent townships of Hillside, Holmes, Hutchison and Baxter townships. This additional land, and the people now residing on it, are considered a part of the reservation. However, as can be observed from the number of people and the amount of land, this area fails to provide any semblance of an adequate economic unit for the people living here. Much of the

\[\text{Turtle Mountain Consolidated Agency Census Records, 1952.}]

\[\text{Ibid.}\]
little land the Indian people do own is not suitable for farming, being hilly, covered with brush, and with many marshes and lakes. The land purchasing program provided for only a few of the many families living in this area who have no means of livelihood.

Present Inhabitants of Turtle Mountains

The majority of the present residents of the Turtle Mountains live in log, mud covered homes scattered throughout the reservation. Families are large and twelve to fourteen children are not uncommon. Many of these families live in one or two-room houses. For the majority of these people, seasonal labor in the harvest fields, beet fields, and potato fields provide the main source of income. Small gardens, a few cattle, and the wild game and fish which are available make up the only other income and source of food. There are a few of the residents who have sufficient land to carry on an agricultural program which provides them with a good living.

The majority of the people speak a mixture of French and Cree, but also speak English. The remaining full-blood group is largely concentrated in the area north of Dunseith, and in the northwestern part of the reservation. This group speaks Chippewa, and they, too, speak English.

Many of the customs of the old Metis still prevail. The dances of the French are very popular, with the fiddle the
chief musical instrument. The religion of these people is almost universally Roman Catholic as a result of the contact with the French missionary priests in the early years. The full-blood group have an occasional "pow-wow," and each year have the traditional "Sun Dance."

**Summary**

The Turtle Mountain Indian Reservation, located in the north central part of North Dakota, comprises about 71,000 acres of land in Rolette County. There are approximately 5,000 Indian people living in the area, and another 4,000 who claim membership in the tribe scattered in all parts of the United States and Canada. With the exception of a few full-blooded families living in the northwestern part of the reservation, the large majority of these people are mixed-bloods, descendents of the French-Canadian trappers and voyageurs who married into the Indian tribes of this area.

After a series of treaties, the reservation, composed of two townships in Rolette County, was established in 1884. The additional land, now considered a part of the reservation, was purchased under a rehabilitation program in 1941.

The Indian people of the Turtle Mountains are largely dependent on seasonal labor in beet fields, harvest fields, and other laboring jobs for a livelihood. Only a few families have a large enough economic land unit to support themselves adequately. The standard of living is very low.
CHAPTER IV
MISSION SCHOOLS

Father Belcourt

The Catholic missionaries have played an important part in the education of the Turtle Mountain people. As is indicated by the history of the peoples of this area, their first contact with civilization came from the French in Canada. It was from Canada that the first missionaries to this area came, and brought with them the first formal education.

Father George Antoine Belcourt, for whom the village of Belcourt in Rolette County was named, was the first missionary to serve the Turtle Mountain people. It is not known when he first set foot in this area, but it probably was a few years after his advent to St. Boniface, Manitoba, in 1851.

The Turtle Mountain region is definitely related to Father Belcourt and his career because he erected a cross on Butte St. Paul in 1851. Stout oak pieces were set up in the form of a cross by the zealous priest and a number of Indian and mixed-blood converts with appropriate ceremonies. The site is now marked by a granite cross and a monument of boulders. There were no more than a dozen whites in the entire area then and these were trappers who, in many cases, lived after the manner of Indians.
George Antoine Belcourt was born at Baie du Feuvre in the Province of Quebec, April 22, 1805. He attended Nicolet College and was ordained a Catholic priest March 13, 1827. After two years as a curate at Three Rivers, Quebec, he was named rector at St. Francis on the Lake in the same province, being transferred in 1830 to the rectorship of St. Martin, Quebec. 23

It was in 1831 that Bishop Joseph Norbert, Provencer of Winnipeg, visited Quebec, seeking a young missionary who would be willing to go back west with him and devote his life to work
among the Indians and mixed bloods of that country. He had seen M. Belcourt at the time of his ordination and the post was offered the young priest through Bishop Panet of Quebec.

Father Belcourt did not accept at once. He hesitated, according to Judge L. A. Prudhomme, who wrote a biography of Father Belcourt, because he had to support his mother and finance the education of a younger brother. But, after arranging to have these matters cared for, he began the study of the Algonquin language, the mother tongue of both Sateaux (Chippewa) and Cree. It formed an excellent foundation, we are told, for his later study of the Chippewa language.

Father Belcourt, at first, was stationed at St. Boniface (now a suburb of Winnipeg). He began establishing missions, founding several in Manitoba, but his real interest was in the spiritual and material welfare of the Indians. Although serving in Canada, he is believed to have visited the Turtle Mountain area as early as 1836. There were many difficulties, and Father Belcourt returned east. He sought and received his release from the Bishop of Quebec and at the request of the Bishop of Dubuque, Iowa, started work in the Dakota mission fields under his direction. He established a mission in the Pembina country in 1843.

The Pembina establishment was substantial. The priest had with him Delle Isabelle Gladu, his housekeeper; Delle Lefebvre, the school mistress, and an Indian cook. He built a large cabin for the women and a smaller one for himself and an assistant, Albert Macombe.
The government had established a fort at St. Joseph, now Walhalla, and Father Belcourt believed a great city would develop there because of the coal mines believed to be a possibility, the fertile soil and the prospect of the building of a railroad.

It was at St. Joseph that Father Belcourt established the first school for the Turtle Mountain people in 1848. The school was attended by 200 pupils, and from it went interpreters speaking Chippewa, Cree, Assiniboine, French, Italian, English and German.

The school proper was in the basement of the mission which was simply an excavation made in the earth with only the earth for floors and walls. Many of the older inhabitants of the Turtle Mountains attended this school. In their stories of the old school they recalled that many of the children stayed with Father Belcourt or the housekeepers, sleeping on buffalo robes. Others lived in tepees and cabins nearby. The seats were homemade benches, and the instruction was in French. Many of the Indian and mixed-blood families moved to St. Joseph, at least for short periods, in order that the children might have the advantage of the schooling offered by Father Belcourt.

Father Belcourt was a serious worker in behalf of his charges, and his determination to aid them often brought him
into conflict with the authorities. The mixed-bloods, or Metis, were his special charges, and when Major Samuel Woods led an expedition to Pembina in 1849, the priest wrote him:

"The mixed-bloods are mild, generous, polished in their manners and ready to do a kindness; of great uprightness, not over anxious to become rich, contenting themselves with the necessities of life..... The greater number are no friends of labor, yet I believe this vice to proceed more from want of encouragement and the small prices they receive for their products than from laziness."

It is also recorded that Father Belcourt, on a number of occasions, accompanied the Turtle Mountain Indians on their buffalo hunts. As has been noted, most of these people were Catholics, and it was a common practice, whenever possible, to have a priest travel with them - a chaplain to perform the rites of the church in cases of birth, marriage, and death and to conduct masses. Schools were conducted on these expeditions for the families accompanying the hunters. On one recorded trip, Father Belcourt conducted regular school each day for sixty-eight children of the hunting party.

All indications and records point to the fact that Father Belcourt was truly the first teacher of the Turtle Mountain Indians, and the influence of language and religion still remains with the descendants of these early scholars.
Father Malo

The first school established in what is now the Turtle Mountain area was built in 1882 by Father Malo, missionary priest from Manitoba. Father Malo built a church and a mission school, St. Claudes, north of the present site of St. John. The school was of logs with a clay roof. The only furniture were long wooden benches on which the children sat. The old Harper's readers, for the grades one to four, were used.
Some of the pupils who attended were from the families of Laroque, Dionne, Bonneau, Geo. Jeannote, Sr., William McGillis, Sr., Jacob Laviolette, Eugene Couture and William Richard. There were undoubtedly others who were not listed. Later a Mrs. Lafone from Manitoba taught this school.

With the establishment of a mission school in Belcourt, Father Malo closed his school in 1884, and transferred his mission to the present site of St. John. Father Malo remained active in education for many years, assisting with the work in the Belcourt mission, and still conducting his mission church in St. John.24

Belcourt Mission School

At the earnest request of Rt. Rev. Bishop Marty, a community of seven sisters from the mother house of the Sisters of Mercy at Omaha, Nebraska, opened a convent and school in Yankton, South Dakota. This foundation is first mentioned in the Catholic Directory of 1881. Because of financial reverses, this mission was soon abandoned. Some of the sisters returned to the mother house in Omaha, while others, among whom were Mother Genevieve Sheridan and Sister M. Angela McCarthy, went to Belcourt, North Dakota, in 1884, where they opened a school

24Ibid., p. 8.
for Indians. This school was built near the present agency. It was first operated as a day school, with the children walking from the nearby homes to school each day. The first buildings were of logs and were very crudely furnished.

As there was no other school in the area, the demand on the sisters grew, and they were unable to meet the need. The sisters appealed to Mother Katherine Drexel of Philadelphia, who had aided numerous Indian missions from her own families' private fortune. She came to the aid of the new mission and gave them funds to build new quarters to house a convent, and to provide facilities for boarding care. The school then enrolled children from all over the Turtle Mountain area. It cared for about 300 pupils including the eighth grade.25

While the school was operated chiefly by the Order of the Sisters of Mercy, the Indian people made contributions to the school and the church in the form of hides and furs which were sent to Canada for sale. Louis Marion, former student now living in Belcourt, remembers the last large shipment of such pelt's for the church leaving from Rolla on the first train to run north to Manitoba on the newly constructed railroad. The federal government also aided these early mission schools by giving them food used for rations, which was used for the meals of the children attending school.

Several of the sisters who taught in this school are still living. Sister Mother Catherine and Mother Michael who are at the Mercy Hospital in Valley City, North Dakota, and Sister Mary Joseph of the Mercy Hospital in Devils Lake, North Dakota. Sister Mary Joseph remembers her work in the school very well. The children were brought in for the school year at all ages. Many did not start to school until quite old. All of the children had to work on the farm and in the kitchen as this was part of their training and also a means of helping to support the school. She remembers the children as being good students, well behaved, and especially fond of music and art. Most of the children spoke the French-Indian dialect upon entrance into school. Almost all of the children were mixed-bloods. Sister Mary Joseph did not remember of a single full-blood enrolled in school during her time. 26

Father Malo and the sisters were instrumental in sending a number of students away to various parochial schools located off the reservation. In 1889, Father Malo took a number of boys to St. Joseph's School located at Rensselaer, Indiana. Louis Marion, one of the boys taken to this school, recalls that the high school was just being built there. A number of the boys worked on the school, doing the actual construction

26Personal Interview, No. 1, November 19, 1952.
and learning carpentry at the same time. A few of the boys finished high school there and later attended St. Joseph College at the same place. Other boys were sent to St. John's at Collegeville, Minnesota, about this same time, for completion of their high school work. A number of girls were sent to a boarding school located at Milwaukee, Wisconsin.

In checking with people who are still here, most of the men and women who were sent away to school are not living on the reservation at the present time. These people found work and their life away from the Turtle Mountain area. Only a few like Louis Marion, a retired mail carrier, still remain. It is evident that the opportunity for schooling given these few people, gave them the chance to make a better living and provide for themselves better than those who were left behind were able to do. 

In 1907, a disastrous fire destroyed the mission school. Because of their inability to get financial support to rebuild the school, it was abandoned. The sisters of this order went to Devils Lake, where they built a hospital and later a school which they still operate.

This fire ended the educational efforts of the missionaries for a time. These mission schools had helped to preserve the religious traditions of the French ancestors, and had served to bring to these people the first organized system of education.

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27 Personal Interview, No. 2, December 1, 1952.
While the mission schools were not in operation on the reservation for a long period of time, a number of the families made arrangements for their children to attend mission schools away from the reservation. St. Michael's Mission at Fort Totten enrolled a number of pupils from the Turtle Mountains, as did the Marty Mission in South Dakota. Both of these schools were operated by the Benedictine Missionary Order. The agency records show that in 1925 there were seventeen pupils from Turtle Mountain enrolled in St. Michael's Mission, and nine in Marty Mission.

With the decline of the educational opportunities being offered in the public schools, the parents of many children sought to send their children away to non-reservation schools. The government schools were limited in capacity, and also limited in those they could enroll. The Indian missions in Marty, Stephan, and Chamberlain, South Dakota, and the St. Michael's Mission at Fort Totten, North Dakota, were asked by the people to take more of the children into their schools.28 The agency school records indicate that a total of ninety-five pupils were sent to these mission schools in 1930. This practice of enrolling pupils in these mission schools still prevails as will be evident in the enrollment reports.

St. Anne's Mission School

In June, 1933, Rev. Father Hildebrand Elliott, O. S. B., came to Belcourt to take charge of the St. Anne's Catholic Church. Father Hildebrand had been associated with the Benedictine Missions at Marty, South Dakota, and was quite familiar with the educational needs and problems of the Turtle Mountain people. He was instrumental in arranging for the educational opportunities of pupils in the various Indian mission schools. The mission schools in South Dakota were unable to meet the demands of the Turtle Mountain people for educational opportunities, and as a result, Father Hildebrand in 1935 built a small mission school in Belcourt. This school was opened in 1936, with four sisters from the Convent of the Immaculate Conception, Ferdinand, Indiana, teaching. It provided an education for about seventy-five pupils through the eighth grade who lived within walking distance of the school.

There was a continued demand for increased enrollment in the mission school and, in 1947, a new addition to the first school was built. It was at first planned to provide for high school students but, upon completion of the building, the enrollment of grade school pupils taxed the capacity of all classroom space. The school continued to provide education up to and including the eighth grade.
The present school has an enrollment of 303 pupils. Four buses are operated on the reservation, bringing in pupils from all parts of the area, in addition to pupils walking to school. There are nine sisters of the Order of St. Benedict, and three priests, also of the Benedictine Order, at the mission. The school is operated on a summer schedule, opening in April and closing the latter part of December each year. It was found necessary to operate some of the schools in this area in the
summer months. The opening of roads during the winter months presents a big problem, particularly in the more isolated areas of the reservation. The mission school still operates this way, as do several of the rural schools in the vicinity.29

Students are enrolled in the various mission schools off the reservation through the St. Anne's Mission School. Determination as to the need of boarding school care is made locally, and each year students are sent to these various mission boarding schools. These schools are operated by the Benedictine Order in connection with their Indian mission program: In some cases, a small fee is charged to families who can afford to pay, but the large part of the education is free to the students. In many cases of need, not only board and room are provided, but also clothing. All of these schools are accredited in the state in which they are located, and maintain a high academic standard. As indicated in Table I, there are 497 Turtle Mountain Indian pupils enrolled in the various mission schools at the present time.30

The mission schools, as will be noted, have again established themselves as an important part of the educational program of the Turtle Mountain Indian people. As the population of the

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29Personal Interview, No. 4, December 28, 1952.
### Table I

**TURTLE MOUNTAIN INDIAN PUPILS ENROLLED IN MISSION SCHOOLS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SCHOOL</th>
<th>GRADES</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>7</th>
<th>8</th>
<th>9</th>
<th>10</th>
<th>11</th>
<th>12</th>
<th>TOTAL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>St. Anne's Belcourt, N. D.</td>
<td></td>
<td>51</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>22</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>303</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stephan, South Dakota</td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chamberlain, South Dakota</td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St. Michael's Ft. Totten, N. D.</td>
<td></td>
<td>15</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>6</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marty, South Dakota</td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Totals</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td>69</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>497</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Indian people of the Turtle Mountain reservation is almost one hundred per cent Roman Catholic, the influence of the mission schools and of the missionaries is a very important part of life to these people.

**Summary**

The first school for Turtle Mountain Indians was established by Father George Belcourt at St. Joseph, now Walhalla, in 1848. Father Belcourt not only conducted the school, but spent considerable time teaching among the people of this area. He and other Catholic missionaries of these early years brought education and religion to the Turtle Mountain Indian people.
Father Malo established the first school actually located in the Turtle Mountains in 1882. This mission school was located a few miles north of the present site of St. John's.

The Sisters of Mercy opened a boarding school at Belcourt in 1884. This school operated until destroyed by fire in 1907.

The St. Anne's Mission School was opened in 1936. This is a Benedictine mission school and has been enlarged to accommodate over 300 pupils on a day school basis. Sisters from the Convent of the Immaculate Conception in Ferdinand, Indiana, teach in the school, together with three Benedictine priests assigned to the mission.

Catholic Indian mission boarding schools at Marty, Stephan, and Chamberlain, South Dakota, and at St. Michael's in North Dakota, also provide educational opportunities for the Turtle Mountain pupils.

There is a total of 497 Turtle Mountain Indian pupils at present enrolled in the various mission schools.
CHAPTER V
PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Indian Service Policy

It has been, for many years, the policy of the Indian Service to encourage the enrollment of Indian pupils in the public schools of the state in which they reside. This has not always been found possible, especially in the more isolated regions of the country, and in the places that are predominantly Indian. Many problems of finances and organization enter into the picture in a complete turnover of the educational responsibility.

The following letter, dated March 9, 1929, from the Commissioner of Indian Affairs to the Superintendents of all Indian Agencies, points out the policy of that time, and one which has continued up to the present time:

"Wherever Indian children can find places in public schools according to instructions that have been sent out from the Department of the Interior to superintendents and supervisors in the Indian Service, they are to attend such schools instead of those institutions throughout the west that have been created especially for the purpose of educating them.

"Those children who live in isolated all-Indian communities will still go to Indian day schools and boarding schools. Care will be taken of those whose parents are so poor that they cannot provide proper food and clothes for them. At the schools, however,
the effort will be made to increase the contact with the whites, to teach boys and girls to make a living as members of their communities, and to aid them to get money earning places when they finish school. Of the 103,000 Indian children, as reported by the federal census of 1930, 89,000 are enrolled in some schools of which number 50,000 are in public schools.

"The Secretary of the Interior, under the law, is authorized to make and enforce such rules and regulations as may be necessary to secure the enrollment and regular attendance of Indian children who are wards of the government in schools maintained for their benefit or in public schools. Thus, the responsibility of determining which schools they shall attend is exercised by him through the Office of Indian Affairs...."31

As the above quotation from a letter from the Commissioner of Indian Affairs to all superintendents of Indian reservations, dated March 9, 1929, would indicate, it was then, and has been for some time, the policy of the Indian Bureau to encourage the attendance of Indian children in public schools wherever possible.

The early education on the Turtle Mountain reservation was taken care of by either the missionaries or by the Indian Service. The children of those families living off the reservation have, to a large extent, been educated in the public schools. Most of the schools in the areas adjacent to the reservation have always enrolled the Indian children living in their districts.

31U. S. Department of Interior, Bureau of Indian Affairs, Circular Letter from Commissioner of Indian Affairs to all Agencies, March 9, 1929.
Public Schools on Reservation

In 1916, after thirty-two years of missionary and Indian Service schools on the reservation, it was felt by the people of the reservation and by the Rolette County authorities, that the Turtle Mountain people were ready to assume full responsibility for their own educational facilities. In line with the Indian Service policy, two school districts were formed on the reservation. These were Couture and Ingebretson. Regular school boards were elected, and agreements reached with the State Department of Public Instruction for them to assume the responsibility of education on the reservation. Also in line with the government's policy, the four day schools operating on the reservation were turned over completely, that is, the buildings, equipment, supplies, etc., to the newly formed school districts.32 These particular schools were located in various parts of the reservation, and at that time were so situated so as to serve the large share of the population.

The only school remaining under the jurisdiction of the Indian Service was School No. 5, located north of Dunseith. This school was off the reservation proper, was serving a large group of Indian people in that area, and was not in the newly

formed school districts. Attempts were made at that time to have the Dunseith school district take over this school also, but the members of the school board objected, and this school remained a government school.35

**Government Contracts**

Under the new program of providing public school education on the reservation, the two school districts entered into contracts with the Indian Service for the education of the Indian children. As provided in the contracts, any Indian child of one-fourth Indian blood or more, attending the public schools, was entitled to tuition payments. The amount of the tuition was arrived at by figuring the exact per pupil cost of education which was borne locally, or would have to be borne locally, if taxes were levied on the non-taxable lands. On the basis of the budget figures for each school district, the amount of tuition to be paid was arrived at, and agreed upon each year. A contract was entered into, and the sum each school earned was paid on a quarterly basis. Payment of tuition was made on the average daily attendance of the Indian pupils enrolled.34 Thus, the schools were only paid for the actual days the pupils were in attendance. In addition to the tuition payments, agreements were also entered into to provide a noon-day lunch for the

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33Loc. cit.
pupils attending each school. If a school could or would provide a noon lunch for the pupils, the actual cost of the food would be paid the school district in addition to the tuition payments. Not all of the schools availed themselves of this part of the contract. As the costs of operation of the various schools differed, so the amounts paid to the school districts varied. Improvements in the curriculum were encouraged by higher allowances being made for better teachers, better teaching supplies being furnished, improvements to the plants, and generally better educational opportunities offered. This was an added incentive to bring the education of the Indian students to a higher level.35

In 1918, a new position was established on the reservation, that of day school inspector. This person was to act as the government's representative in the various dealings with the public schools; was responsible for the making of the various contracts with the public schools; checked on the public schools to see that they were fulfilling their obligation; made arrangements for the education of pupils at non-reservation schools where local facilities were not available; and in general looked after the educational interests of the Indian pupils. The day school inspector made regular visits to the schools and all reports by the schools were sent through him. It was also his

35Loc. cit.
responsibility to see that only those who were entitled to tuition payments received them. There were a number of Indian children on the reservation at this time who were listed as being less than the necessary one-fourth Indian blood, and some who were not enrolled as Indian at all. This complicated matters as these children had to be educated, were in most cases living on tax-free land so were not contributing toward the costs of the school, and still were not recognized as the responsibility of the government.\footnote{36}

\textbf{New Schools Established}

The four day schools taken over by the newly created school districts soon proved inadequate to meet the needs. It was necessary for the Couture district to build one additional school and to enlarge the school already in operation at Belcourt. These first additions were made in 1919, with an additional room being added to the Belcourt school in 1923. Two additional schools were built in the Ingebretson district, both one-room rural schools, which made a total of four schools, all one-room, in this district. These additions were made in the Ingebretson district in 1923. This made a total of seven schools in operation on the reservation in 1923 and all were one-room schools except the one in the town of Belcourt which at that time was a three-room school.\footnote{37}

\footnote{36}Turtle Mountain Agency, Day School Inspector, Position Description and Duties, Official File, 1918.\footnote{37}Rolette County, County Superintendent's Records, 1919-1923.
At this same time, as previously mentioned, Indian students were enrolled in the schools immediately adjacent to the reservation. These schools also received tuition payments under contracts in the same manner as the schools located on the reservation. The following table shows the enrollment in these schools:

TABLE II
PUBLIC SCHOOL ENROLLMENT AND ATTENDANCE, MAY, 1923

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School</th>
<th>Enrollment</th>
<th>Average Attendance</th>
<th>Per Cent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Couture No. 1, Room 1</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>do Room 2</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>do Room 3</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Couture No. 2</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Couture No. 3</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ingebretson No. 1, 2, 3, 4</td>
<td>175</td>
<td>136.4</td>
<td>79.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St. John</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>11.1</td>
<td>64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hillside No. 4</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>8.2</td>
<td>82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dunseith</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4.8</td>
<td>97</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hillside No. 2</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>8.5</td>
<td>85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shell Valley</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>16.1</td>
<td>91</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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These figures indicate that a total of 314 pupils were enrolled in the schools on the reservation in May, 1923, with an average attendance that month of seventy-nine per cent. A total of sixty-one Indian pupils were enrolled in the surrounding public schools for whom tuition was being paid, with an average attendance of seventy-nine per cent.

The schools on the reservation extended only through eighth grade at this time. No provision was made for high school education unless the pupils were sent away to the non-reservation government boarding school, such as Haskell Institute or Flandreau. The day school inspector's reports for this year indicated five pupils in Flandreau and twelve at Haskell, which represented the total high school population of the reservation at this time.

**Failure of Public Schools**

The reports of the county superintendent's office and of the day school inspector show a continuous falling off of enrollment and attendance in the various schools on the reservation in the succeeding years. The school buildings were allowed to deteriorate, children were very irregular in attendance, teachers were difficult to keep and, in general, the educational program suffered severely in the next few years, as is indicated by the following report of J. B. Mortsolf, day school inspector, dated January 28, 1929:
"The system of public education for these Indians is very unsatisfactory. The buildings are poor and have been allowed to run down. All are in need of paint and repairs, and equipment is in very poor shape. Attendance has been poor, and is continually falling off. Parents are away a great deal, and in many instances, the larger pupils are kept out to work. The health of the pupils has been generally very good.

"Many visits have been made to Indian homes in the interest of better attendance, and the development of better interest in the education of the children. Poverty is the main excuse given for remaining cut of school. In one of the schools, the teacher got a donation of clothing from his home town, which was distributed among the children, and which I am told was greatly appreciated, and resulted in better attendance. In another school the teacher brings drinking water from his home three miles distant, every day, hauling it in a five gallon can. Mention was made in a previous report of slough water being used for drinking at one of the schools. A photograph is attached to this report, of this school, which as a building, site, and equipment is the poorest make-shift of a school that I have yet seen. If it were not for the fact that these children are probably drinking the same kind of water at home as they are getting in school, I would urge the immediate closing of this school.

"Mismanagement in the past years in Ingebretson and Couture districts, which comprise the reservation has prevented them from building up the schools as should have been done, and could have been done, had the money been judiciously expended."

Such were the constant reports of the day school inspector during this period.

The following reports, taken from the files of the Rolette County superintendent of schools, as reported to that office by the teachers for the school year 1928-29, are indicative of the condition of the schools.
### TABLE III
PUBLIC SCHOOL ENROLLMENT AND ATTENDANCE ON RESERVATION, 1938-1939

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School</th>
<th>Enrollment</th>
<th>Average Attendance</th>
<th>Per Cent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Couture No. 1</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Couture No. 2</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Couture No. 3</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ingebretson No. 1</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>13.2</td>
<td>71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ingebretson No. 2</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ingebretson No. 3</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ingebretson No. 4</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The above figures show a total of 176 pupils enrolled in school with an A. D. A. of 124 pupils, or an average daily attendance of seventy per cent.

Of much more concern to those interested in the education of the Indian children on the reservation at this time than those in school, and their condition, were the number of children who were not being reached by any school at all. The following school population report was submitted for the same year for the Indian children enrolled on the reservation, and living on the reservation. This does not include the non-enrolled Indians or those of less than one-fourth Indian blood,
while the above figures include all children, Indians and whites enrolled in these schools for this particular year:

**TABLE IV**

SCHOOL CENSUS REPORT, TURTLE MOUNTAIN INDIAN, 1928

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>147</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>157</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>160</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>167</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>144</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>138</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>171</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>130</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>140</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>156</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>129</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>136</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>106</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>1,881</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

From the day school inspectors' reports for the same year, the following report is filed for pupils sent to non-reservation schools:

**TABLE V**

ENROLLMENT NON-RESERVATION BOARDING SCHOOLS, 1928

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School</th>
<th>Enrollment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bismarck Indian School</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flandreau Indian School</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wahpeton Indian School</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fort Totten Indian School</td>
<td>72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Haskell Institute</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marty Mission School</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>129</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

---

From the county superintendent's reports for the same year the Indian enrollment in the surrounding schools was as follows:

**TABLE VI**

**ENROLLMENT INDIAN PUPILS IN PUBLIC SCHOOLS ADJACENT TO RESERVATION, 1928**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School</th>
<th>Enrollment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dunseith Public</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hillside No. 4</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hillside No. 2</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St. John</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shell Valley</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>69</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The agency records indicate that there were an additional twenty-seven students enrolled in the government day school operating north of Dunseith.

The above reports show a total of 399 Turtle Mountain Indian pupils actually enrolled in some school either on or off the reservation. This number, out of a total school population of 1,881, meant that a total of 1,482 Indian pupils had actually not been in attendance in any school during this year, and all indications are that a majority of them had never been in school at any time.

42 Rolette County, County Superintendent's Records, 1928.
Plans for New Program

In 1926, James H. Hyde, formerly principal of the Fort Totten boarding school, was made Agency Superintendent of the Turtle Mountain reservation. He was appalled at the existing educational conditions then prevailing on the reservation. He gathered all the facts in the case, conferred with the county officials, the state department of education, and the school boards of the various districts involved. They were all in agreement that the situation had reached a point where the local officials were unable to cope with the problem any longer. Some new method of approach would have to be found. It was decided to present the facts of the case to the United States Congress through the Bureau of Indian Affairs, with a request that the schools on the reservation again be taken over by the Indian Service. 43

It was necessary to secure special legislation by the legislature of the state of North Dakota to enable the regularly organized school districts already functioning, to turn over the responsibility of education to the federal government. Through the efforts of Hon. James McManus of St. John, then State Representative from the district, such legislation was introduced and passed. The bill follows:

43 Turtle Mountain Agency, Superintendent's Annual Report to Commissioner, June, 1927.
Chapter 207 H. B. No. 113 - McManus

Payment State and County Tuition Funds to U. S. by Districts within Indian Reservation.

An Act providing for the payment of state and county tuition funds to the United States whenever the educational responsibility of a school district within an Indian Reservation is completely taken over by the United States.

Be it enacted by the Legislative Assembly of the State of North Dakota.

1. Whenever the educational responsibility of a school district within an Indian Reservation in this state, including the payment of High School tuition provided by Chapter 245 of the Session Laws of 1927 and Section 143a2 and 143a3 of the 1925 Supplement to the Compiled Laws of 1913 shall be completely taken over by the government of the United States, the state tuition fund and the county tuition fund, which would otherwise be paid to said school district, if functioning, shall be paid to the United States provided that the compulsory school attendance laws of the state shall apply to and be enforced in such district and government schools.

2. If the school board shall cease to exist a function in such a district, then the county superintendent of schools of the county within which such Indian Reservation is situated shall cause the school census or enumeration to be taken and reported as required by Section 1195 Compiled Laws of 1913, and the cost thereof shall be paid out of the county tuition fund, apportioned to be due the United States as herein provided, the same to be deducted and paid by the county treasurer from the amount apportioned said United States, upon presentation of a bill therefor, approved by such county superintendent of schools.

3. Repeal - All acts or parts of acts in conflict herewith are hereby repealed.¹⁴

Approved February 25, 1929.

¹⁴Revised Code of North Dakota, 1943, Sec. 15-2514 and 15-4715.
The above act enabled the government to proceed with plans for taking over the various schools operating on the reservation, as it provided for the schooling in the area of non-Indian children who would of necessity have to attend the government schools if they were functioning. This law also recognized the fact that school districts could turn over jurisdiction, and responsibility for education to the United States government if they so desired, and it was accepted.

The Congress of the United States appropriated funds in 1929 for the construction of a consolidated school at Belcourt, which was to replace the existing public schools then serving the reservation proper. In view of the appropriation and the existing state law passed specifically to cover this case, the following agreement was entered into:

THIS AGREEMENT, made and entered into this 11th day of April, A. D. 1929, by and between A. O. Halvorson, the duly elected and qualified County Superintendent of Schools of Rolette County, North Dakota, and C. J. Charboneau, the duly elected and qualified County Treasurer of the County of Rolette, State of North Dakota, parties of the first part, and the United States of America, party of the second part,

WITNESSETH: That the said parties of the first part agree to and with the said second party that they and their successors in office, if any, will comply with the provisions of House Bill No. 113, passed the Twenty-First Legislative Assembly of the State of North Dakota and approved by the Governor of the State of North Dakota on the 25th day of February, A. D. 1929, being an act providing for the payment of the State and County
tuition funds to the United States whenever the educational responsibility of such a school district within an Indian Reservation is completely taken over by the United States; and said first parties further agree that whenever the educational responsibility of the School Districts of Couture School District No. 27 and Ingebretson School District No. 28 of the County of Rolette, State of North Dakota, and being school districts upon the Turtle Mountain Indian Reservation, in Rolette County, North Dakota, shall be completely taken over and taken care of by the Government of the United States, and the Government of the United States shall have complied with the provisions of said House Bill No. 113, and they will apportion to the United States of America the state tuition fund and county tuition fund which would otherwise be paid to said two school districts if functioning and operating the said schools in their respective districts, and that when such funds have been apportioned to the United States, that such sums so apportioned to the second party will be paid to the Treasurer of the United States of America, less the cost of taking the school census of school enumeration as required by Section 1195, Compiled Laws of North Dakota, 1913, the same to be deducted only in accordance with the provisions of Section 2, of said House Bill No. 113, and the second party hereby agrees to fully comply with the provisions of said House Bill No. 113 of the Twenty-First Legislative Assembly of the State of North Dakota, and to completely take over the educational responsibility of the School Districts within said Turtle Mountain Indian Reservation in accordance with the provisions of said Legislative act before making demand upon the parties for payment of said State tuition fund and County tuition fund.

IN TESTIMONY WHEREOF the respective parties hereto have caused this agreement to be properly executed on the date first given above.

(SGD) A. O. Halvorson
County Superintendent of Schools
Rolette County, North Dakota
With this agreement made, the plans were immediately formulated for taking over the public schools on the reservation by the federal government. The schools continued to operate as public schools until the completion and opening of the new community school in Belcourt in the fall of 1951.

Thus ended the operation of public schools on the Turtle Mountain Indian reservation, at least for the time being. It was apparent from the results obtained, during the operation of public schools, that some very important phase of organization was seriously lacking. There is no record or evaluation of the efforts on file, but those who were closely associated with the program at the time, feel that it was a combination of many factors, largely the result of inexperience in meeting the particular problems involved in education; failure of the state...
to have an organization to meet the unusual circumstances presented in providing education to such a group; and the inadequacy of finances to meet the demands of education to such a large concentrated group of children in a rural area. The experiences gained in this first program, could and should be used to advantage in any future planning in the establishing public schools in this or similar areas.

Public school education continued for the Turtle Mountain Indian children living adjacent to the reservation, and the educational requirements of this group are still met in the surrounding public schools.

Present Indian Service Policy

By virtue of their citizenship established by the Act of June 2, 1924, (43 Stat. 2538 U.S.C.) Indian children are entitled to admission to the public schools of the state within which they reside. Indian children who are able to attend public schools in continuing contact with non-English speaking pupils, tend to acquire fluent use of the language more rapidly than Indian children who lack this opportunity. Therefore, whenever public schools enrolling non-Indian children are within the normal transporting distance of Indian homes, every effort shall be made to enroll Indian children in these schools. Federal financial aid may be furnished, when necessary, in
accordance with the provisions of existing laws. Furthermore, wherever adequate arrangements can be worked out with local or state authorities to achieve the educational objectives of the Bureau, existing federal school facilities may be transferred to public school administration. Whether the transfer of facilities is involved or not the transfer of responsibility for education of Indian children to public schools should be completed wherever such a transfer of responsibility is feasible. Federal school lands, structures and equipment may be made available for use by public school districts in carrying out these purposes.46

The Indian Service endeavors to see that every Indian child receives the free education to which he is entitled as a citizen of the United States, the state and the district wherein he resides, and to see that states extend to its Indian citizen children the same rights and privileges extended to non-Indian children. To this end, and recognizing the desirability of Indian pupils attending public schools in continuing contact with non-Indian children, the Indian Service negotiates with states for the enrollment of Indian children in public schools when such facilities are available.

The Indian children by virtue of their citizenship in a state and residence in a state and district are entitled to the

same free public education as is rendered to any other citizen, without any legal obligation resting on the federal government to pay tuition for this service. It is recognized, however, that the presence of large blocks of Indian non-taxable properties within a school district, or unusually large numbers of Indian children, may create a situation which local funds are inadequate to meet. The present policy of the Indian Bureau, endorsed by Congressional Committees, is to give assistance to these districts based on evidence that the district is taxing itself in sufficient amount to earn entitlement to state aids and is still in need of supplemental funds in order to maintain an adequate school. Appropriations for Indian educational contracts are therefore disbursed on the basis of "need." A flat rate is set in the contract based on the amount needed by districts which, together with all other sources of revenue, will permit the districts to operate schools. 47

The Act of June 4, 1936 (49 Stat. 1458, 25 U.S.C. sec. 452), authorizes the Secretary of the Interior to enter into contracts with any state or territory, or political subdivision thereof or with any state university, college or school, or with any appropriate state or private corporation, agency or institution, for education of Indians in such state or territory and to

47 Loc. cit.
expend under such contract monies appropriated by congress for the education of Indians. The act also authorizes the use by local school authorities of existing federal school buildings and equipment under such terms as may be agreed upon. This act is known as the Johnson-O'Malley Act.48

Under Order No. 2508 as amended, the Secretary of the Interior delegated authority for the negotiation and execution of Johnson-O'Malley contracts to the Commissioner of Indian Affairs. By Order No. 555, the Commissioner delegated authority to the area directors, as follows:

a) Education Contracts. The negotiation and execution of contracts with any state or territory, or political subdivision thereof, or with any state university, college, or school, or with any appropriate state or private corporation, agency, or institution, as authorized by the Act of June 4, 1936 (25 U.S.C. 1946 ed., secs. 452-454).

b) Contracts Admission Indian Students. The negotiation and execution of agreements with school districts for admission of Indian students and payment of tuition, pursuant to the provisions of 25 CFR 45.49

48Ibid., Chap. 3, Sec. 301.01.
49Ibid., Sec. 301.03A.
Under the Johnson-O'Malley Act, the Indian Bureau enters into two classes of contracts for the education of Indian children in public schools.

**State Contracts.** This type of contract is executed on behalf of the Bureau of Indian Affairs and the State Department of Education of the state wherein the Indian children reside, and provides for the education in state public schools of resident Indian children; it is usually applicable in those states having a large, scattered Indian population on tax-free land.\(^50\)

**District Contracts.** In some states where the Indian population is centralized and is confined to one or a few districts, a contract is entered into between the Area Director and a local public school district for the education of the Indian children.

The following are excluded from any benefits of this act: \(^51\)

a) Those having less than one-fourth degree of Indian blood.

b) Those whose parents are Indian Service employees for whom funds are available through public school channels, or through the act of September 30, 1950 (Public Law 874, 81st Congress, Second Session).

c) Those who, or whose parents, own taxable real property within a public school district, provided that when pupil or parent owns taxable and non-taxable real property within a district, payment may be made if the non-taxable holdings by them jointly are greater in value than taxable holdings.

\(^50\)Ibid., Sec. 302.01.

\(^51\)Ibid., Sec. 303.01.
d) Districts embracing incorporated towns of 500 or more population shall not receive reimbursement for Indian children residing permanently within the corporate limits, but may receive reimbursement for attendance of Indian children who live outside the limits, or who live in foster homes within the corporate limits, or who reside at a nearby Federal Indian School.

e) Two, three, or a few Indian children in a district where there is a proportionately large enrollment of white children.

The state of North Dakota, under the Johnson-O'Malley Act, has a state contract with the Bureau of Indian Affairs covering the education of Indian children in public schools. Under this contract the following schools in the Turtle Mountain area are at the present time being reimbursed for the Indian children attending the respective schools:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School</th>
<th>Number of Indian Children</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>St. John</td>
<td>61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rolla</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dunseith</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shell Valley</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rolette</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hillside No. 2</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Russell</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>179</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As the Act so specifies, each school is reimbursed by the State Department of Education, from federally appropriated funds, for the education of the Indian pupils attending school, and eligible under the Act to receive the tuition payments. It is the responsibility of each school to verify and to certify as to the eligibility of a student to receive tuition payments from this fund. The agency records are available and are used to verify degree of blood, and land holdings which are necessary in determining eligibility.

Summary

The Indian Service policy encourages the enrolling of Indian pupils in public schools wherever possible.

In 1916 the federally operated schools of the Turtle Mountains were taken over by the state, to be operated as public schools. The federal government continued to subsidize these schools by payment of tuition for Indian children in attendance. Several additional schools had to be built in order to accommodate the growing population of the area.

By 1927 it was found that approximately 1,400 Indian children of school age were not in school. The public schools were unable to provide adequate facilities for education. The schools then in operation were very poorly equipped, and the districts were financially unable to provide for more schools.
The federal government was asked to again take over operation of the schools, and by an agreement reached with the State of North Dakota and Rolette County, built a consolidated school in Belcourt in 1931.

Indian pupils still attend public schools in the vicinity of the reservation. These schools are presently reimbursed by the federal government, under the Johnson-C'O'Malley Act, for the education of Indian pupils. There are 179 Indian pupils of one-fourth or more Indian blood attending public schools.
CHAPTER VI
FEDERAL SCHOOLS

Organization of the Bureau of Indian Affairs

From the beginning of our government until today, the Bureau of Indian Affairs, under different names, has undergone many changes. Its functions have multiplied and the number of its employees has increased from three in 1824, when the Indian bureau was organized in the War Department, to about 14,000.

Three departments of Indian Affairs were created by the Continental Congress, July 12, 1775. The Northern extended south to include the Iroquois; the Southern extended north to include the Cherokees; and the Middle included all between the other two. Five commissioners were appointed for the Southern department and three for each of the other two. The commissioners were to make treaties with the Indians in order to keep their friendship and maintain peace.53

The Articles of Confederation, which became effective in 1778, provided for regulating trade and managing affairs with Indians, but the legislative rights of any state could not be violated.

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53 George C. Wells, Organization of Bureau of Indian Affairs, Phoenix, Arizona, Pamphlet, 1932, p. 1.
The Constitution of the United States provides for Congress to have exclusive control of Indian Affairs by authorizing it "to regulate commerce with Indian tribes." When the War Department was established in 1789, it was given the management of relations with Indians. The War Department developed a fairly effective organization and continued in control for sixty years.54

In 1793, Congress appropriated $50,000 for Indian affairs, and authorized the president to appoint agents to reside among the Indians. In 1796, at the request of President Washington, it authorized the President to establish trading posts. Two years later, the Office of Superintendent of Indian Trade was established. Government trading posts were not able to compete successfully with those owned by private traders and the system was discontinued in 1822.

The Bureau of Indian Affairs was organized in the War Department in 1824, upon the recommendation of John C. Calhoun, Secretary of War. The personnel consisted of the head, chief clerk, and one assistant. There were complaints of inefficiency and mismanagement soon after the bureau was established. On July 9, 1832, congress authorized the president to appoint a Commissioner of Indian Affairs to direct and manage all relations with Indians.55

54Ibid., p. 2.
55Ibid., p. 3.
In 1834, congress passed the Indian Intercourse Act which is regarded as the Organic Act of the Indian Service. It provided for a field force of twelve agents with salaries of $1500 annually. Governors of territories had formerly acted as ex-officio superintendents of Indian affairs, and in some cases this practice was continued, but all Indian agents were under the direct supervision of the Commissioner. The Indian Intercourse Act was passed during the time the War Department was removing most of the Indians from states east of the Mississippi to lands assigned to them west of that river. Most of these removals were completed before 1850.56

When the Bureau of Indian Affairs was transferred to the Interior Department in 1849, many officials of the War Department resisted it. They pointed out that during the sixty years the War Department administered Indian Affairs, it had organized and developed the Indian Service, regulated trade, tried to keep peace and, in case of war had ended it successfully, it had removed tribes from eastern states and protected them from wilder tribes that tried to attack them. Officials of the War Department, therefore, had some justification in contending that the Bureau of Indian Affairs should not be transferred. On the other hand, officials of the Interior Department contended that the Indian could never be civilized and educated by a department that

56Ibid., p. 4.
recognized only force, and that the conduct of the military in
dealing with Indians had frequently been unreasonable and
ruthless.

With the outbreak of Indian wars and scandals in the adminis­
tration of Indian affairs, there were demands that the Bureau
of Indian Affairs be transferred back to the War Department.
Military officials accused civil officials of the Indian Service
with graft and inefficiency, while the opposition retorted that
the army had been arbitrary with Indians. All this bickering had
a bad effect upon the relations between the federal government and
the Indians. Jealousies and suspicions between the two depart­
ments often produced serious consequences in remote agencies,
particularly when a band of Indians threatened to leave a
reservation and make war. This lack of cooperation continued
until the end of Indian wars; then the Department of the Interior
attempted to develop plans for educating Indians.57

Policies concerning Indians were formulated in Washington,
but agents in remote sections of the country frequently had to
decide important matters immediately. Communication requi
much time and an agent had to use his own judgment and make
decisions based on authority under laws of Congress and regulations
of the Bureau of Indian Affairs. An agent had great responsi­
bility, for his decisions sometimes determined whether there
would be peace or war.58

57 Ibid., p. 5.
58 Ibid., p. 6.
As late as 1867, the Commissioner of Indian Affairs had no
supervisors to bring him into direct touch with conditions in
the field. Difficulties of Indian administration increased after
the Civil War and congress created a special commission to
ascertain the reasons for Indian acts of hostility and to make
treaties intended to remove all just causes of complaint on their
part and, at the same time, to establish security for persons
and property along the lines of railroads being constructed to
the Pacific.

In 1869, the president was authorized to appoint a Board of
Commissioners consisting of ten persons, who served without
compensation, to exercise, with the Secretary of the Interior,
the disbursement of appropriations. Members of this commission
visited reservations and schools and made recommendations. It
was finally abolished in 1933 by executive order.59

The Army Appropriation Act of 1870 provided that any officer
on the active list, accepting a civil appointment should vacate
his commission; therefore, army officers were compelled to
relinquish their positions as Indian agents. President Grant
adopted the policy of delegating the nomination of Indian agents
to religious organizations interested in missionary work among
Indians. In 1872, the agencies were divided as follows: the
Quakers had in their charge sixteen agencies with 24,322 Indians;
Baptists, five with 40,800; Presbyterians, nine with 38,069;

59Ibid., p. 6.
Christians, two with 8,287; Methodists, fourteen with 54,473; Catholics, seven with 17,856; Reformed Dutch, five with 8,118; Congregationalists, three with 14,476; Episcopalians, eight with 26,929; the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions, one with 1,496; Unitarians, two with 3,800; and Lutherans, one with 272; making a total of 73 agencies with 238,899 Indians.60

Beginning in 1871, the practice of having agents nominated by missionary societies was gradually abandoned and by the early eighties these positions had again become political appointments. The general superintendents having supervision over a number of agencies were gradually abolished and the agents reported directly to the Washington Office. In 1873, provision was made for five inspectors to be appointed by the president. Indian policies for the maintenance of order on reservations and the control of liquor traffic were first authorized in 1878.

When the Indians became more peaceful, the duties of the agent changed. He established hospitals and schools, issued rations, provided adult education in agriculture, sanitation, health and home making, preserved order, issued licenses to traders, leased Indian lands, and attempted to advance Indians in the ways of white civilization and make them self supporting. On account of the great differences in tribes and their needs, the duties of agents varied greatly.

The present organization of the Bureau of Indian Affairs, under the Secretary of the Interior, consists of three areas of authority: Central Office; Area Offices; Agency and Local Facilities. These Agency and Local Facilities are comprised of agencies, non-reservation schools and non-reservation hospitals and sanitoria, and independent irrigation projects. The director of each of these Agency and Local Facilities is a superintendent who reports to the Director of the Area Office having jurisdiction over that facility. The Area Director functions under authority delegated by the Commissioner, and is responsible for all activities of the Bureau of Indian Affairs within the area. He reports directly to the Commissioner of Indian Affairs at the Central Office, who in turn is responsible to the Secretary of the Department of the Interior for the conduct of all activities of the Bureau of Indian Affairs.61

The Area Office headquarters for the particular area in which the Turtle Mountain Reservation is located is at Aberdeen, South Dakota. This Area Office has jurisdiction over the agencies in North Dakota, South Dakota and Nebraska.

The federal government has obligated itself repeatedly in its treaties with Indian tribes to provide for the education of Indians so as to aid them in an adjustment to the dominant white

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culture and to conserve the desirable values of their own culture. The education thus provided has been under the direction of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs.

A branch of education, under the Commissioner, headed by a director of Indian education is directly responsible for the education of Indians. It is the responsibility of the branch of education, and its various employees, to provide for educational opportunities for all Indian children to the best of their ability. As has been pointed out, many of the Indian children are cared for in the various mission schools provided by the different denominational groups interested in Indian welfare. Where other opportunities for education are not provided, it is the responsibility of the federal government to provide educational opportunities for Indian children.

Types of Indian Service Schools

In order to provide for the various types of education needed by the Indian children, different kinds of schools have been developed by the Indian Service. A survey of the educational needs is the determining factor in the selection of the school provided. The following types of schools are in operation:

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63 Ibid., Sec. 203.
1. **Federal Indian Day Schools.** In areas where much of the land is in Indian ownership or held by the federal government in trust for the Indians and the major population is Indian, federal day schools are operated for Indian children.

a) **Enrollment for Day School Units.** It is illegal to maintain a day school with an average daily attendance of less than eight pupils by the Act of March 4, 1929 (45 Stat. 1576, 25 U.S.C., Sec. 292a). On the basis of present appropriations, the minimum has been raised to twelve. In general, an average daily enrollment of thirty pupils is considered normal in Indian Service Day Schools. In cases where the average daily attendance exceeds forty-two pupils, a second teacher should be provided.

b) **One-room Day School.** In view of the manifold responsibilities placed upon a one-room day school teacher in the Indian Bureau, the unit allowance provided by the budget bureau for day school operation permits the employment of a housekeeping aid to prepare and serve a noon lunch to the children; to provide some instruction to the girls in food preparation, sewing, and clothing repair. Ordinarily it is preferred
when possible, that day schools be staffed with a man and wife, either of whom may be employed as a teacher and the other as the housekeeping aid. However, a qualified Indian woman may be employed as a day school housekeeping aid.

c) Two or More Room Day Schools. In day schools of two or more classrooms there shall be designated a principal-teacher together with a requisite number of classroom teachers. Financial provision is made for the employment of a full-time housekeeping aid in larger day schools, and the necessary number of bus drivers who may also assist in the operation of the heating plant and in performing maintenance and janitorial service.

2. Federal Reservation High Schools (Boarding and Day). On larger reservations, federal high schools are operated on a day basis where it is possible to transport the children by bus to these centers. To the extent that the size of the reservation makes the transportation of children from outlying districts impracticable, boarding units may be provided for children from these areas.

3. Federal Elementary Boarding Schools. For the dependent Indian children who cannot be placed under boarding home
care, a few reservation and non-reservation boarding schools of elementary and junior high school grade are maintained.

A. Criteria for admission to above schools:

1. The child is dependent, coming from a broken home in which:
   a) One, or both, parents is dead.
   b) One, or both, of the parents is in the hospital for an indefinite period of time.
   c) The parents are divorced, or one has deserted, and there is no adequate home maintained.
   d) One or more of the parents is in jail and the home is broken.
   e) Uncontrollable chronic alcoholism, vice, or criminal tendencies exist in the home.

Before a child, coming within one or more of the above categories, shall be admitted to a federal Indian boarding school, certification that no suitable boarding home care arrangement is available shall be made by a welfare worker.

2. The family is in a remote area not served by either a public or federal school.

3. The child is a high school student desiring specific vocational training which cannot be obtained in a local public high school.
4. Because of local or home conditions which cannot be controlled the child has shown delinquent tendencies, has been before the juvenile court, or has been faced with confinement in a corrective institution although there is evidence that a suitable institutional environment may bring about an effective correction.

4. **Federal Non-Reservation High Schools.** Non-reservation high schools are also operated for dependent children and for children from areas with no adequate or suitable program of public vocational experience. Indian children from reservations operating their own federal high schools may be admitted to non-reservation schools where the vocational needs of these children are not satisfied by the program offered at the local federal high school.

5. **Post-High School Vocational Offerings.** Selected nonreservation high schools may be designated to offer post-high school vocational training to Indian youth or adults. These courses may include those requested by guidance or placement officers for retraining of unemployed adults. The school authorities shall avail themselves of the consultation services and other assistance offered by the placement officers of both the state employment services, where needs outside the scope of the school must be met in placing employable students.
Over the period of years that the Turtle Mountain reservation has been in existence, the federal government has provided educational opportunities in many of the various types of schools. The types provided have varied with the needs of the time, and have undergone considerable changes.

**Early Government Schools in Turtle Mountains**

The first federal schools were built on the Turtle Mountain reservation in 1895. At that time, three small log schools were constructed on the reservation to supplement the existing mission school then in operation. These first schools, according to Mrs. Fred Morin who attended one of them, were very crude. The equipment was poor and teaching materials limited. These first schools offered work only through the third grade but many of the students enrolled were fourteen or fifteen years old. Each of the schools was built to accommodate about twenty-five pupils. Attendance was irregular and the accomplishments were very limited.

The first of these schools was located west of Belcourt, and about one and one-half miles southeast of the present Roussin Day School. The second school was located about two and one-half miles southeast of Belcourt, and the third was built at the present site of the Belcourt Agency (See Figure 2). Part of each school was set aside as living accommodations for the teacher.  

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64Personal Interview, No. 5, December 29, 1952.
In 1905 four new day schools were constructed on the reservation. The old log schools were abandoned. These new schools were typical of the Indian Service day schools in use throughout the United States at the time. The plant consisted of a one-room school, with an attached kitchen for serving noon day meals, and a five-room cottage for living quarters for the teacher. Other buildings included a barn for keeping a team of horses or a cow.

The four new schools were located in the then more thickly populated areas of the reservation. School No. 1, as it was designated, was located at Belcourt; School No. 2 was located about three miles south and east of Belcourt; School No. 3 was located three miles west of Belcourt and was also known at that time as the Gourneau School; School No. 4 was located about five miles east of Belcourt and was known as the Roussin School. This latter school, the only one of the schools still in use, is still known as the Roussin School.65

The new schools offered work through the sixth grade. Pupils walked to school each day. Each school provided for about thirty pupils.

In each school a teacher and a housekeeper were employed. It was expected that the teacher would be a married man and that his wife would also be employed as the housekeeper. The housekeepers were expected to serve a noon day meal to all students.

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and to teach the girls sewing, cooking, and general housekeeping responsibilities. As was the experience in the first schools, many of the pupils attending were over age, and adjustments had to be made to meet this situation.

In addition to the teaching duties, the teacher was expected to act as a community worker, and a liaison man for the various agency functions. This included the issuing of rations, acting on law and order cases, assisting the adults in their various transactions, encouraging gardening, administering first aid, and in general acting in every imaginable capacity for the isolated community groups being served by the schools. Each school maintained its own garden for the production of produce for use in the noon day meals, and as an example of what might be done by each local Indian family. Each day school had one or two cows to furnish milk for the lunch. A team of horses was provided for the use in gardening and for transportation. At each school a full set of farm machinery was kept for the use of the Indian people of the community when they needed it. Such items as a rake, a plow, harrow, cultivator, binder and other farm machinery were available for the use of the Indian people who did not have these items of their own, and might want to put in a garden or small acreage. An extension agent, then called "Boss Farmer," worked with the people in encouraging these projects, but much of the actual contact was made through the day school teacher.
The school also served as the center of the social activities for the community. The activities varied with the interests of the people and of the teacher in charge. Dances were the chief entertainment, and with the French background, the old French-Canadian dances of squares, reels of eight, waltzes, and jigs to the tune of a fiddle were the common practice. Card parties and other community gatherings were held in the schools. At some of the schools, ball teams were organized among the adults. Adult classes were held for the older people. In some instances, with special permission having to be obtained, the schools were used for religious services during times school was not in session.

Curriculum

A regular course of study for Indian schools was used as a guide for instructional purposes. The course of study used by these early schools was issued by Miss Estelle Reel, Director of Indian schools, in 1901. The introduction to this course of study gives an idea of the emphasis put on Indian education at this time:

"An outline course of study for the Indian schools is herewith submitted to you, and I trust it will receive your cordial and active support.

"This course is designed to give teachers a definite idea of the work that should be done in the schools to advance the pupils as speedily as possible to usefulness and citizenship."
'The aim of the course is to give the Indian child a knowledge of the English language, and to equip him with the ability to become self-supporting as speedily as possible.

"Methods of instruction and subjects of study have their limitations in value, and in view of the aims and purpose in educating the Indian, who is just starting on the road to civilization, such methods must be employed as will develop the various powers and capacities with which the child is endowed, and by systematic industrial training to give him the skill in various directions designed to be serviceable in meeting the demands of active life, making him a willing worker as well as an inquiring learner.

"...In this course, practical lessons in every branch are outlined. The child learns to speak the English language through doing the work that must be accomplished in any well regulated home, and at the same time is being trained in habits of industry, cleanliness and system. He learns to read by telling of his daily interests and work with the chalk on the blackboard. In dealing with barrels of fruit, bushels of wheat, yards of gingham, and quarts of milk; in keeping count of his poultry and in measuring his garden, he becomes familiar with numbers in such a practical way that he knows how to use them in daily life.

"It should be the constant aim of the teacher to follow this course and do as much more in each grade as he or she has time to accomplish; but the chief end in view should be the attainment of practical knowledge by the pupil, and no teacher should feel restrained from asserting his or her individuality in bringing the pupil's mind to a realization of the right way of living and in emphasizing the dignity and nobility of labor.

"As far as possible, teach the children that cultivation of good habits, self-control, application, and responsiveness are recognized as being on a higher educational plane than a knowledge of definitions and unimportant dates; that the development of character is the only imperishable object for which we can work; that consequences follow action with unfailing certainty; and that 'it is the purpose that inspires use and the motive that holds us to our task that limits the extent and value of our service'.

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The course of study outlined the work expected in the various subject fields. It was mostly vocational in nature. Agriculture, bakery, basketry, carpentry, harness making, printing, shoemaking, engineering, dairying, and tailoring were included in the outline of work offered. Most of this work, however, was intended for the upper grades and mostly for the boarding schools then in operation in parts of the United States for Indian children. The lower grades, which included the ones then offered on the Turtle Mountain reservation were chiefly interested in the outlines on reading, language, and sub-primary work; arithmetic, spelling, nature study, cooking, music and gardening were covered in the course.

The entire course emphasized the practical instruction which should be given to the children. In every part of the outline, examples of the practical application of learning are brought out. Emphasis is also placed on citizenship and right living rather than in the learning of facts. The following introduction to the outline on reading, language and sub-primary work gives an example of this:

"The teacher of Indian children must have a general understanding and thorough sympathy with the peculiar circumstances of Indian life, using the articles of the Hampton creed and making her school a school of labor, of love, of life; bearing in mind that we are educating the children for right living and that lessons in kindliness and truth are most important......"67

67Ibid., p. 11.
The course of study was the guide to Indian education for many of the early years, and stimulated a very practical approach to Indian education during this period.

**Teachers**

The teachers for these early schools were selected by the Civil Service Commission on the basis of a written examination. They came from many parts of the country, most of them entirely new to the West, and to Indian people. Quite a number of these early teachers had a missionary spirit and many were connected with the various church missionary groups interested in Indian work. All of these early teachers made many personal sacrifices in ways of living, lack of accommodation, isolation and hard work in order to bring educational opportunities to the Indian people.

One of the most active day school teachers of this early period in the Turtle Mountains, and typical of many others who spent time in this area, was the Rev. Wellington Salt. Rev. Salt was an ordained Episcopalian minister from eastern Canada. He was himself part Indian and came to the Turtle Mountain area as a missionary. According to Mr. W. P. Schwab, who was agent in charge of the reservation from 1904 to 1911, Rev. Salt's missionary work was chiefly among the full-blood group living north of Dunseith. He built a mission church in that place for the Indian people. Upon the opening of the government schools in 1895,
Rev. Salt qualified for a position as a teacher and was assigned to the Roussin day school. Upon the completion of the newer day schools in 1905, he transferred to the school located at the present site of the Belcourt agency where he stayed until that school was turned over to the public schools in 1916. Rev. Salt then transferred to the day school north of Dunseith and stayed there until his death in 1919. The many kind deeds, and the hard work performed in behalf of the people of the area, are still remembered and talked about. He dedicated his life to the work of education among the Indian peoples. His work is typical of the many Indian Service day school teachers of the early years.68

**Dunseith Day School**

A group of Indian people were allotted lands from public domain lands north of Dunseith in Gilbert and Hillside Townships. This group were largely the full-blood Indians of the reservation. There had been no provision for their education. They were located off the reservation and were ordinarily thought of as being under the jurisdiction of the public school districts in which they lived. No effort, however, was made by the public school district to get these children in school. They were too far from the other government day schools to be enrolled and

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68Personal Interview No. 6, January 13, 1932.
being the only Indian group who were not Catholics, were not interested in the mission schools. In 1912, the federal government recognized the difficulty and built another day school, located two and one-half miles north of the town of Dunseith. This was known as the Dunseith Day School, or Day School No. 5. The buildings at this plant were approximately the same as those of the schools already in operation on the reservation. The school had a capacity of thirty pupils and offered work through the sixth grade. As in the schools on the reservation, the pupils were retarded and quite old for their grade. There were many more Indian pupils in the area than could be served by the one school and, as a result, many of the children were still without adequate school facilities. This school, because of its location off the reservation, and because the school district in which these people lived was not interested in providing education for these children, has continued to be a federally operated school even through the period when the rest of the reservation schools were operating as public schools.69

During this period, the reservation schools were offering work only through the sixth grade. As a result, the great majority of those attending schools went only this far in their schooling. Provisions were made for students to attend the non-reservation schools for advanced work.

Non-Reservation Schools

The large majority of students from Turtle Mountain who were sent to government non-reservation schools went to Fort Totten, which is located thirteen miles southwest of Devils Lake, North Dakota. Fort Totten, at that time, offered a large variety of trade courses especially for the boys. These included carpentry, agriculture, shoemaking, baking, dairying for the boys, and an extensive homemaking course for the girls. The Bismarck Indian girls' school enrolled a number of girls from the area. Students from the Turtle Mountains also were sent to the Flandreau, South Dakota Indian Vocational High School, Haskell Institute, Carlisle, Chemawa, Wahpeton Indian School, and to Hampton Institute in Virginia. The agency records indicate that a total of 245 pupils from the Turtle Mountain reservation were in attendance at the government non-reservation boarding schools in 1913. The majority of these pupils had completed the sixth grade on the reservation, and were taking various courses together with regular academic work offered in these schools. Many students, upon completion of their work at these schools, were placed in jobs off the reservation. The great majority still live off the reservation and account for the large number of Turtle Mountain people scattered throughout the country.
Federal Program Discontinued

The program of the federal day schools was seemingly successful. As has been pointed out, in 1916 it was felt that the people of the reservation were able to assume the responsibility for their own education. Arrangements were made for the closing of the day schools, the establishment of regular school districts, and for the turning over of the plants of the day schools to the public schools. The four day schools operating in Couture and Ingebretson Townships were turned over to the districts for operation as public schools. Only the Dunseith day school continued to be operated as a government school. Attempts were made, in line with the policy of the Indian Service, to have the school district take over the operation of this school but no agreement could be reached. With this move, the operations of the federal government in the education of the Turtle Mountain people was reduced to a minimum.

A position of Day School Representative was established on the reservation. It was his duty to maintain relations with the public schools in the interest of the Indian pupils, to make the contracts with the public schools and to make provisions for advanced training at the non-reservation schools as he saw fit. The program of the training in the non-reservation schools continued during the period of the public schools. The public schools did not offer facilities to all the people, particularly
those living in isolated parts of the reservation. As the public schools offered work only through the eighth grade, any further work had to be provided at non-reservation schools if there was to be any advanced work. The agency records indicate that in 1920 there were 262 pupils from the Turtle Mountains in non-reservation schools. The same schools, as previously mentioned, with the exception of Carlisle, were still in operation and were enrolling students in about the same proportion.\textsuperscript{70}

The federal government continued to pay to the school districts a stipulated amount based on the attendance of the Indian pupils at the public schools. This was necessary due to the small amount derived from taxation on the reservation. However, all the supervision was vested in the local school boards and the selection of the teaching personnel was a matter solely within their jurisdiction.

\textbf{New School Program}

\textbf{Need}

Superintendent James Hyde, who came to the Turtle Mountain Agency in 1926, makes the following observation:

"I wish that I might say nothing but favorable things relative to the administration of the local schools under the school boards; but criticism thereof would not be entirely favorable. Suffice to say that on taking over the agency in 1926, I felt that they were improperly equipped to render a service comparable with the money that was being expended by the federal government on their behalf. The number of

school children had grown rapidly until it was found
that the local schools were unable to care for all
the children living within their districts. Even
increased enrollments in the non-reservation schools
were inadequate to care for the situation. In 1926
it was found that over one-third of the enrollment was
in non-reservation schools, and many hundreds of
children were not attending any school, anywhere.
Some reorganization was necessary to provide school
facilities for all the children."

As has been pointed out previously, the situation which
developed led to the federal government again having to assume
the responsibility for education on the reservation in 1931.

Determining Type of School to be Provided

The problem of the type of educational organization to pro­
vide for the area was studied quite thoroughly. Community
meetings were held, and expert advice sought from both the State
Department of Public Instruction and from the educational staff
of the Indian Service. The considerations given to the reorgani­
zation, and the problems encountered, are written up in a report
made by Superintendent Hyde as follows:

"Consideration was given to the enlargement of the
public school facilities by building additional schools
and employing additional instructors. More schools
would have to be placed on the reservation and the
children enrolled therein would have to be given the
same type of instruction as that prevailing in other
schools. There would have been one teacher, or
possibly two, teaching from the first grade through
the eighth grade, and children walking long distances
to reach school. It had been felt in educational
circles that the type of school was wholly inadequate

71Turtle Mountain Agency, Superintendent's Report to
Commissioner, Official File, 1926.
to meet the needs of any group of children, although the old one-room school has developed some of our greatest men and women, nevertheless a large percentage of those who never achieved greatness out-numbers the comparative few who sing its praise.

"It was impossible, therefore, to conceive of a modern school organization built around the one-room school idea. Therefore, the plan was discarded as inadequate. The second proposal - and one that appealed most to the people of the reservation themselves - was the establishment of a boarding school with all the various activities, a school house, a boys' dormitory, girls' dormitory, dining room, kitchen, gymnasium, quarters for employees, a farm and dairy. An initial expense of $500,000 would have been necessary to establish such a school, and the annual outlay of many thousands of dollars would have been necessary to care for the needs. In some ways, the boarding school offered a distinct advantage over any other type of school but the Indian Service had had long experience with boarding schools. They were not new and untried. We have seen graduates going on to school fitting themselves to become useful citizens of the world, but on the other hand we have seen students of the boarding school return to the reservation and drop back into the same old ways and habits that were theirs before their enrollment in the boarding schools. This was not the fault of the boarding school itself, but more especially of the system that robbed pupils of their daily home contacts.

"The sending of children to the boarding schools relieved the parents of a very definite responsibility that was theirs. It was a responsibility that could not, and should not, under normal conditions, be foisted upon the state or federal government.

"With the one-room day school idea impractical, and many objections to the establishment of a boarding school, the consolidated school which has proven so satisfactory in the rural communities throughout our western states was developed and put forward as the best solution to the perplexing problem. To do this would necessitate the provision of suitable roads on which children could be
transported to and from their homes every day. Without proper transportation facilities, the consolidated school idea could not be put across at Turtle Mountain. Therefore, the development of the roads on the reservation and the building of the consolidated school were part and parcel of one project. 

In October, 1929, plans were made for the new school. Before the building could be started, however, it was necessary that the state agree to turn over to the federal government the funds that usually accrue to the school districts. This necessitated legislation on the part of the North Dakota legislature. With the aid of Hon. James McManus of St. John and Hon. Joseph Renault of Thorne, the desired legislation was passed.

The Consolidated School

With all the legal barriers removed, work was started in the spring of 1930 on the present school building located in Belcourt. On October 5, 1931, the first buses made their trip over the newly constructed roads and gathered in the children to the new school.

The new school was formally dedicated on November 19, 1931. The following message was delivered by Charles J. Roads, Commissioner of Indian Affairs:

"The dedication of the consolidated day school marks an advanced step in the education of Indians and whites together. It has been the policy of the Office of Indian Affairs for the past few years to secure the cooperation of the states in the education of our native sons and
daughters. We have endeavored to break down the segregation of Indians in education, and today we are commemorating the success of our efforts in cooperation with the local community and state.

"The consolidated day school at Turtle Mountain is unique. It is the first instance in the education of Indian youth wherein the school has been built and is to be maintained by the Indian Service for the education of Indian and white children. The funds for the purpose of building the school were appropriated from the federal treasury by congress. The local community very cheerfully agreed to deposit in the treasury of the United States, for expenditures for the support of the school, the state allowances for payments for education of the children residing within the reservation in which the school is located.

"The native residents of the Turtle Mountain band of Chippewas have belonged here even before the days of the Louisiana Purchase. These native sons and daughters of the Chippewa tribe have been in contact with the white men since long before these United States came into being. Their first contacts were with the roving French voyageurs and trappers, a sturdy race who lent much color to the narratives of the early days, and northwest territory. Early in the history of our country the Northwest Company established trading posts in the country of the Turtle Mountain Chippewa, and from then on white settlers and white pioneers found friends among the native North Americans. The Turtle Mountain Chippewa have always eagerly absorbed the civilization and culture of the white man."

The new modern school building was completed at a cost of $150,000. It consisted of fifteen classrooms, a home economics department, a shop, medical room, teachers' lounge, library, combination gymnasium and auditorium, a large kitchen and dining room, lavatories and showers for boys and girls, office space, and a full third floor for storage and a play room (See Figure 6).

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73Turtle Mountain Star, Rolla, North Dakota, November 21, 1931, p. 1.
A new modern employees' club building, for housing the single teachers, was also constructed. Rooms were available at moderate prices and facilities for serving meals on a club basis were provided (See Figure 7).

Eight bus routes were put into operation over the newly constructed road system (See Figure 2). A total of 429 pupils were enrolled the first year. Work was offered through the eighth grade. Ten per cent of the first year's enrollment were white pupils living on the reservation.
The faculty for the new school was drawn from many parts of the country. Assignments were made on the basis of Civil Service examinations taken by those applying for teaching positions in the Indian Service. Heading the new school as superintendent was Dr. J. Arthur Anderson, a graduate of the University of Minnesota. The following completed the teaching faculty upon the opening of the new school:

Carey D. Coffman, B.S., Central Missouri Teachers College, Missouri
Goldie Cohen, B.S., Columbia University
Hilda Gustavson, B.S., Kansas State Teachers College
Ruth Ann Gruver, B.S., Cortland Normal, New York
Mary Harrison, B.S., Winthrop College, Georgia
Elbert Hubbell, B.S., Jamestown College, North Dakota
S. A. Lavine, M.S., University of Boston
Jacob Levy, B.S., City College of New York
Hazel Dyer Worthington, B.S., in Home Economics, Kansas State Agriculture School

J. B. Mortsolf continued in the position of Day School Representative. His work in arranging for contracts with public schools in the outlying areas enrolling Indian children, and arranging for attendance at non-reservation schools, continued.

74Turtle Mountain Agency, School Records and Reports, 1931.
In addition to the faculty, the school employed a cook, a dining room matron, a laundress, a janitor, eight bus drivers, a mechanic, and a clerk.

Problems of New School Program

The new school was faced with many problems. A number of older students enrolling in school had never been in school before. Many pupils 15, 16 or 17 years old could neither read nor write. Special classes for these retarded pupils had to be set up, and many devious ways of teaching were used in meeting the problems thus presented. It was impossible to put these older
pupils in the same rooms as the younger pupils, even if they were doing the same grade work. Shop work for the boys, and home economics work for the girls were emphasized with these older retarded pupils. The regular course of study was followed for the pupils of the right age grade placement.

Many other problems, not ordinarily encountered in schools, were faced. Adequate clothing for school was a major problem. School funds were used to purchase items of clothing needed. While not all of the families needed this help, the majority did. Each item of clothing was given a price, and the parents were asked to work in return for the clothing at an acceptable hourly rate of pay. Work projects were planned for this type of work. Regular school cleaning, painting and repair work, work in school gardens for furnishing food for noon day lunches, road repairs and maintenance, were among the common work performed by parents in return for school clothing. Many of the women came to the school and, in the sewing room, made clothing for children which could be issued to the less fortunate families.

The school had to work very closely with the medical department. The very crowded conditions on the reservation made the spread of disease a major problem. Trachoma and tuberculosis were quite common. It was very necessary to emphasize a health program in the new school. It was necessary to carry out an intensive adult program in order that the school health program
might have a chance of success. Regular periodic examinations were provided in the school, with vaccinations and innoculations for the common diseases. Teachers spent a good share of their spare time making home visits and informing parents of the school program, encouraging better attendance, and acquainting themselves with the living conditions of the people of the reservation.

The problem of transportation during the severe winter months created another major problem. Early in the fall of 1954, a severe snow storm blocked all the roads. The snow removal equipment was unable to keep the reservation roads open, and buses were not able to bring the children into the central school. After an unsuccessful effort to keep the roads open, it was decided to close the school for the winter months of January, February and March. The regular term was started in April and continued until the Christmas holidays. This schedule was kept in operation until 1939 when larger and better snow removal equipment was provided. Since that time, with few exceptions, the regular bus routes have been kept open during the winter and the school has been able to operate on the accepted schedule from September to May each year.

As has been pointed out previously, one of the more serious difficulties encountered in the public schools operating on the reservation was the matter of attendance. This problem remained when the federally operated schools were put in operation.
were taken to enforce the existing compulsory school laws of both the state and the Indian Bureau. Compulsory school attendance of Indian children is provided by law as follows:

"Hereafter the Secretary of the Interior is authorized to make and enforce such rules and regulations as may be necessary to secure the enrollment of and the regular attendance of eligible Indian children who are wards of the government in schools maintained for their benefit by the United States or in public schools."


It will be noted that the above law applies to Indian children "who are wards of the government." The relationship of guardian and ward does not exist between the United States and the Indians although there are important similarities and suggestive parallels between the two relationships.

As experience has shown that generally throughout the country, the most effective enforcement of compulsory education is that which is secured by local authority, it is the duty of the reservation superintendent and his school administrator to endeavor to secure passage of effective ordinances by the local tribal council calling for compulsory attendance, and providing appropriate penalties against parents, guardians or pupils for violations of these ordinances.

The state laws for attendance may be used. The Act of February 15, 1929 (45 Stat. 1185), was amended August 9, 1946 (60 Stat. 962, 25 U.S.C., Sec. 231), as follows:

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"The Secretary of the Interior, under such rules and regulations as he may prescribe, shall permit the agents and employees of any state to enter upon Indian Tribal lands, reservations, or allotments therein (1) for the purpose of making inspection of health and educational conditions and enforcing sanitation and quarantine regulations or (2) to enforce the penalties of state compulsory school attendance laws against Indian children, and parents, or other persons in loco parentis except that this subparagraph (2) shall not apply to Indians of any tribe in which a duly constituted governing body exists until such body has adopted a resolution consenting to such application."76

This law explicitly permits the enforcement of penalties of state compulsory attendance laws against Indian parents of any tribe not having a duly constituted governing body whose children are attending either federal or state schools. Where a constituted governing body exists, it must consent to the application of state laws to the members of the tribe residing on the reservation.

The Turtle Mountain Tribal Council, being recognized as an organized tribal governing body, has the power of deciding whether the enforcement of school attendance laws should come under the tribal code, or the power transferred to the state.

The Tribal Council of the Turtle Mountain tribe has consistently refused requests that the power of school attendance enforcement be transferred to the state. They cite the failure of the state to enforce attendance on the reservation during the period of state operated schools. However, Sec. 27, Chapter 5 of

76Ibid., Sec. 60, p. 41.
the Code of Indian Offenses of the Tribal Laws for the Turtle Mountain tribe specifically state that the school attendance laws, as provided for by the state of North Dakota, shall be enforced by the tribal court, and the same fines and penalties are to be imposed on offenders by the tribal court as those provided by the state. Under this code, the responsibility for the enforcement of school attendance laws is taken by the tribe, arrests are made upon complaint of school officials by the tribal police and cases are tried by the tribal judge in regularly held tribal court.

The tribal law enforcement officials have been very cooperative, as well as active, in enforcing school attendance. In the school year 1951-52, a total of twenty-seven cases were brought to the tribal court, twenty-two of these offenders were fined and five were given suspended sentences. The results have been a much better attendance record on the part of these habitual offenders. Complaints for non-attendance can be made by any school official. The investigation is made by the tribal policemen, with the resultant hearing in tribal court.

An intense program of home visitation by teachers has aided considerably in helping to solve attendance problems. Each teacher makes an effort to visit the home of each pupil at least once during the year. Many homes, where special problems exist, are contacted as often as is necessary to get results.
The most serious problems faced by the schools is a result of the economy of the people. The large majority of families depend on seasonal labor for a livelihood. For many years it has been the practice of the Turtle Mountain people to work in the harvest and beet fields, to go to the "valley" during potato harvest season, to get seasonal work on railroads or roads and, in the last few years, to obtain summer employment at the Garrison Dam or other similar projects. There are very few families with sufficient income from either local employment or from land to enable them to live without seeking employment away from the reservation.

The mass migration to the various places of employment is looked forward to with pleasure. Besides being the means of making a living, it is an opportunity to travel to new places. This spirit of wanting to travel, to work together for a period of time, is reminiscent of the buffalo hunts of the early years. In most instances, the entire family goes and, in many cases, the older children are employed. When the work season is over, the families return to the reservation and live the remaining part of the year.

A great part of the seasonal labor extends through the fall months of September, October and, sometimes, into November. As a result there are large numbers of children not enrolling in school until six or sometimes eight weeks after the schools have opened.
In the spring of the year, the same difficulty exists to a slightly lesser degree. Work projects open up, farmers hire seasonal help for spring's work, and families move out to the places of employment for the summer months.

Much thought and study has been given to this problem. Every effort has been made to encourage the parents to enroll children in the local schools of the community where they may be working. Some improvement has been made, but most of the children remain out of school while the parents are on seasonal work. Parents have been encouraged to leave school-age children with relatives who stay at home, but many problems are encountered in this arrangement. The suggestion has been made that a partial boarding school be established to care for children during a portion of the year so as to enable them to be in school regularly. No solution to the existing problem has been found as yet. It has been noted, however, that average daily attendance has increased and there is definitely a more sincere effort on the part of parents to get children into school wherever and whenever possible.

The situation, as it has existed, contributes a great deal to pupils being retarded and over-age for their grade. It also contributes a great deal to pupils dropping from school, not only because of age but because work opportunities are made available to them at an early age. It also make enforcement of
school attendance laws difficult, as so many families are moving in and out of the area that it is almost an impossibility to keep track of all of them.

The reservation schools have made every effort to adjust to the situation. Summer school classes have been offered to those who can attend so they may make up the work. Home visits are made regularly by all members of the staff. As accurate a record as is possible has been kept of moving families, and the schools in the area to which families are moving have been contacted, in these instances, to ask their help in getting the children into school.

Course of Study and Organization

The curriculum and program of the new school was largely determined by the Washington office of the Bureau of Indian Affairs. While considerable local control was allowed, the central office set up a fairly definite pattern to be followed.

Still in effect at the time of the opening of the Turtle Mountain school was the course of study prepared by H. B. Pears, Director of Indian Education, in 1922. The course of study provided for the amount of time to be given to each particular phase of work in the school. While many of the items pertained particularly to boarding schools, the daily work schedule in the classroom was followed in the day schools of that time.
The following outline indicates the suggested work schedules and the material to be covered in the daily schedules:

Outline of Course of Study for Indian Schools
Department of Indian Affairs, 1922

First Grade
General Exercises
Manners and right conduct

English
Conversation and other oral exercises
Phonics
Reading
Spelling

Writing and drawing (alternate)

Industrial instruction

Occupation and study

Recreation

Second Grade
General Exercises
Music
Manners and right conduct

English
Conversational and other oral exercises
Reading
Spelling
Phonics

Numbers

Writing and drawing (alternate)

Industrial instruction
Sanitation
Gardening
Sewing

Recreation

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Third Grade
General Exercises 15 minutes
Music
Civics
Manners and right conduct

English 100 minutes
Conversational and other oral exercises
Reading
Spelling
Language (written) and Mechanics

Arithmetic 30 minutes
Writing and drawing (alternate) 20 minutes

Industrial instruction 60 minutes
Gardening
Repair work
Sanitation
Cooking
Sewing
Housekeeping

Occupation work and study 105 minutes
Recreation 90 minutes

Pre-vocational Division

Fourth Grade
General Exercises 15 minutes
Music
Manners and right conduct
Review work of previous grades

English 20 minutes
Conversational (oral exercises)
Stories of travel
History
Personal experiences
Dramatization
Nature Study
Agriculture
Games
Picture study
Reading
Readers
History
Nature Study
Agriculture

Language
Mechanics of language
Written exercises

Spelling (twice a week)

Breathing exercises and recess

Arithmetic

Geography

Physiology

Writing and drawing

Industrial instruction
Gardening
Farm and shop projects
Repair work
Sanitation
Sewing
Housekeeping

Occupation and study

Recreation Noon hour

All chores should be done after school

Fifth Grade
General Exercises
Music
Manners and right conduct

English
Conversational and other oral exercises
Reading
Language
Spelling

Arithmetic
Geography 15 minutes
Physiography 15 minutes
History 30 minutes
Writing and drawing 20 minutes
Breathing exercises and recess 30 minutes
Industrial instruction
Sanitation
Gardening
Re- work
Farm and shop projects
Sewing
Cooking
Housekeeping

Occupation and study 55-85 minutes
Recreation Noon hour 60-90 minutes

Sixth Grade
General Exercises 15 minutes
Music
Manners and right conduct

English 60 minutes
Conversation and oral exercises
Reading
Readers
Classics
History
Nature

Language
Spelling

Arithmetic 30 minutes
Geography 15 minutes
History 30 minutes
Writing and drawing 20 minutes
Breathing exercises and recess 30 minutes
Occupational study 55-85 minutes
Industrial instruction
Gardening
Farm and shop work
Repair work
Sanitation
Sewing
Cooking
Housework

Recreation 60-90 minutes

The course of study in boarding schools was practically the same with the exception of additional institutional details that the students were assigned, such as cooking, laundry, farm, dairy and dormitory cleaning. A special course of study was developed for these students, but the academic work was similar.

Junior Vocational Division

Seventh Grade
General Exercises 20 minutes
Assembly - once each week
Current events - once each week
Music - once each week
Penmanship - twice each week

English 60 minutes
Reading
Classics
Health
History and civics

Grammar
Mechanics
Composition

Spelling

Arithmetic 40 minutes
Geography (first 20 weeks) 30 minutes
History (second 20 weeks) 30 minutes
Physiology 30 minutes
Industrial work
  Mechanical drawing - 40 hours  4 hours daily
  Construction - 3 hours per week
  Application and production - 40 weeks

Physical training
  Competitive group games  60 minutes
  Military and gymnastic drills

Evening hour  60 minutes

Meals, free time, extra detail  8 hours, 15 minutes

Sleep  9 hours

Eighth grade was exactly the same as the seventh grade except that the work was more advanced. The time was the same in all details. The work was usually alternated between the two grades.

Examinations

The program called for final examinations, prepared by the Washington office, to be given in all major fields of work above the third grade level. These examinations, similar in nature to state examinations, were given at the end of each school term and were, to a large extent, the determining factor in promotion to the next grade. Teachers were judged in many cases on their ability to have pupils under their direction pass these examinations.

The following rules were set up for giving examinations and final marks for pupils:

Indian Office Rules for Final Examinations

"There shall be no deviation from these rules unless prior approval has been obtained from the chief supervisor."
1. **Nomenclature-rating:** per cent on examination papers. **Class standing:** per cent given on daily work. **Average:** sum of class standing and examination rating in a subject by 2.

2. **Age of pupils:** Have pupils state their age on the examination papers.

3. **Required of candidates:** No pupil shall take the final examination, except where unusual circumstances exist, if the general average based on class standing is less than seventy per cent.

4. **Class standing:** Only work done during the present school year shall determine class standing. The examination rating shall be final where there is no record of class standing. In marking papers, no credit shall be given for effort alone. Reasonable accomplishment must be evidenced.

5. **Dismissal of classes and time of examination:** Instructors may dismiss all classes of third and higher grades during examination week.

6. **Rating examination papers:** Each examination paper must be rated by the instructor and initialed by him, using a blue pencil or black ink.

**Rules and Regulations Governing Schools**

In 1928, the Secretary of the Interior issued rules governing the Indian Service schools and which were in effect the first years the Belcourt school was in operation.

Rules for the Indian School Service are approved by the Secretary of Interior, January 30, 1928. These deal with conduct and general condition of the school and do not go into detail of classroom instruction.78

Maps and Plans - At each school there shall be kept on file an accurate map of the grounds, plans of the building and other essential data concerning grounds and buildings.

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School Grounds - It shall be the express duty of some employee to care for the school grounds. Sufficient careful attention must be given to the campus so that it may present at all times a neat, sanitary and attractive appearance. Interior decorations, repair of the buildings, floors, cleaning and machinery protection left to the responsibility of the superintendent in charge and he is expected to be guided by the regulations covering the items.

School Year - Shall commence on the first Monday in September and continue for a period of ten months, except when date of closing shall be otherwise indicated by the Commissioner of Indian Affairs.

Annual Calendar - Not later than August 15, a calendar shall be prepared for the ensuing year, showing the program for each day, and shall be submitted to the Commissioner of Indian Affairs for approval. The calendar should schedule all regular and extra-curricular activities which the school proposes to undertake.

Classroom Program - Each teacher must arrange and follow a daily schedule of classroom exercises. This schedule must be prominently posted in the school room. In arranging the schedule the time allowances made to the different subjects by the course of study must be adhered to closely. These daily programs must show both study and class periods. The course of study definitely limits the hours for the young children who are in school during both sessions of each day. In no case must these hours be exceeded.

Daily Sessions - Regular sessions in day school for older pupils are to comprise three hours each day, including an intermission of not to exceed 10 minutes each forenoon and afternoon. Noon hours shall be sufficient length not to exceed one half hours, to provide for work in serving the noon lunch. Shorter hours prescribed in the course of study for younger pupils must be observed. Day school buildings must be opened thirty minutes before the beginning of each session. Regular classroom sessions in boarding schools should conform to the foregoing. Institutional production departments should be in session four hours each day, in halves. For pupils below the seventh grade who do not fall below a determined requisite degree of academic advancement as compared with the normal, evening study hours shall not be required. Not more than three evening study hours shall be required for pupils of the junior and senior high grades. One evening shall be used for religious instruction, one for school activities, and Saturday evening shall be unassigned.
Hours of Rest - To make sure that rest for the pupils shall conform to present standards, the schedule must be observed:

- 6 years old or under: 7:00 P.M. sleep 11 hours
- 7 to 11 years old: 8:00 P.M. sleep 10 hours
- 12 years old or older: 9:00 P.M. sleep 9 hours

Curriculum - The course of study prescribed for Indian schools must be followed. All the instruction prescribed in it must be given as indicated. Pupils in the Primary division, Grades I, II and III, shall be in class during both forenoon and afternoon sessions. Pupils in the pre-vocational divisions, Grades IV, V and VI, should also be in school both forenoon and afternoon as soon as conditions at the school and funds available will permit. This is the ultimate aim of the school service.

Outline of Instruction - Prior to the opening of school, teachers must prepare outlines of instruction for each subject taught. Each Saturday, the outlines shall be given the principal for examination. The plans should include:
- Subject matter to be covered
- Definite and concrete aim
- The crucial points in the assignment and the pivotal questions
- Materials needed to accomplish the aims
- Methods of presentation to be used
- New words to be taught

Use of English - Pupils should be required to converse with employees in English. All employees must be able to speak English fluently. All employees must use English when on duty.

Music - Instruction in music (singing) shall be given in school and made a part of each school session.

Instrumental Music - Instruction in instrumental music may be given when approved by the Commissioner and where facilities are available.

Instruction as to alcoholics and narcotics - According to congressional act May 20, 1886, it made it compulsory to teach the harmful effects that alcoholic drinks and narcotics have on the human system. Instruction as to the nature and effects of alcoholic liquors and narcotics, in connection with the subjects of physiology and hygiene, shall be given in accordance with the foregoing provisions.
of the law. Practical sanitation and hygiene, and the cause, prevention and treatment of tuberculosis, and of trachoma are to be taught in every school, and should be emphasized in connection with health education.

Textbooks - Textbooks shall be selected from the list authorized by the office, but shall in states where there is uniformity of textbooks, may be authorized to secure the books used in the public schools, on local civil government and history.

Students' Mail - The officer in charge shall receive and control all mail addressed to pupils of the school who are minors, and shall withhold mail from delivery when, in his opinion, it contains unmailable or other improper communications or articles. All mail retained because it is unmailable must be promptly transmitted to the postal authorities. Other improper communications shall be returned to the writer or the Commissioner.

Pupils Associations - Shall be encouraged, but school management is required to see that the true purpose of the associations are maintained.

Inspections - Officers in charge of the school or employees designated by him, shall visit daily the various departments, and at least twice a week shall thoroughly examine dormitories, workrooms and dairies.

Grades of Instruction - The general policy is that the graduation of the Indian schools will conform with the 6-3-3 plan. This comprehends an elementary school of six years work, a junior vocational course of three years, and a senior vocational course of three years. The several day and boarding schools will carry only the grades which have been authorized by the Commissioner of Indian Affairs.

Schools as Community Centers - The day schools and reservation boarding schools should be the center for the varying types of community work essential to the improvement of the Indian home life. Principals and teachers in the above schools will be held responsible for leadership in this work. Boys' clubs, chapters, parent organizations, and work with the returned students will, in most cases, center with the school. The improvement of health, of homes, and of industrial conditions are of paramount importance and the schools should lend effort to further community activities to this end.
Enrollment - All healthy Indian children between the ages of 6 and 18 should be in some school, day, reservation boarding, non-reservation boarding, public or private. No Indian youth over 20 years of age shall be admitted to any Indian school except those maintaining senior high grades, when schools enroll up to 21 years of age for special vocational courses, without the consent of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs. No pupil over the age of 21 years of age shall be continued in school, except in senior high schools, without the approval of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs. Preferences in all cases shall be given to those children who (a) have a greater degree of Indian blood and (b) would be denied an education if not admitted to an Indian school.

Indian children shall not be enrolled in Indian schools if suitable and adequate public school facilities are available and home conditions are such that they can be admitted without prejudice because of their health or the conditions under which they live. Applicants whose parents have ample financial resources shall not be enrolled except upon payment of tuition. Pupils shall be required to pay their transportation expenses if they have sufficient funds to do so.

Students at the boarding schools shall not be permitted to gamble, use intoxicating liquors, profanity, tobacco, and permitted to carry concealed weapons. Habitual desertion, moral turpitude or continued misbehavior will constitute sufficient cause for expulsion. The superintendent may expel a pupil for incorrigibility or just and sufficient cause, subject to the approval of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs. Pending approval of his actions he may suspend the pupil, if advisable, provided that the superintendent of the non-reservation school may not return a pupil to his home without first communicating with the reservation superintendent. At the same time, the superintendent shall notify the pupil's parents or guardians.

All pupils before entering a government school shall have a medical examination. Pupils are expected to attend the respective churches to which they belong or for which their parents or guardians express a preference. Should a question arise as to the church to which pupils belong, they shall be classed as belonging to certain denominations, as follows:
Those whose names are found on baptismal record of said denomination, or who have been formally received as members of such denomination. Those who are over 18 years of age may choose their own church. Transfer of denominations made only voluntary at the parents' request.

Orphans under 18 shall retain their baptismal denominations, or at the voluntary request of their lawful guardian. Ample provision shall be made for their conveyance if the church is not within reasonable walking distance. One hour, on week days, is allowed each church for religious instruction, the hours to be decided upon by the superintendent. Each Sunday, all pupils belonging to certain denominations are expected to attend the Sunday School taught.

Change in Educational Policy

In 1954, the general policy of the Indian education was changed. Emphasis was placed on meeting the needs of the local community in which the school was operating. The following indicates this change:

"There is no uniform curriculum for Indian schools, and federal schools are not subject to state courses of study of the areas in which they are operated. Programs of instruction suited to the needs of each particular area should be developed by the personnel of that area in the light of the general principles set out in this manual – not dictated by college entrance requirements. However, Indian schools may be accredited by the state departments of education, or other accrediting agencies, when the recognition is based upon a sympathetic attitude which permits the development of a legitimate educational program suited to the needs of the area."

With the above objectives in mind, each school set about to prepare its own curriculum suited to the needs of the community.

Aid in the preparation of the curriculum was given by supervisors sent out from the Washington office, and from the area office. In addition, an in-service training program for the teachers and other personnel of the Indian Service was set up in the form of Indian Service summer schools held at various Indian schools. These summer schools, for which regular college credit was given, were specifically planned to give courses which would aid in solving problems peculiar to the Indian Service schools. At these summer sessions, workshops were organized to enable personnel from a given area to work out their own curriculum. A general five-point program of in-service training was introduced and carried out under the direction of Dr. Willard W. Beatty, Director of Indian Education, as follows:

1. Began to organize a series of summer schools designated to present a common philosophy of education, demonstrate this philosophy in action, and supply to teachers the techniques and materials to carry it into their own classrooms and communities. These summer sessions were held at Indian Service boarding schools located in typical Indian country, so that the summer program could be designated to increase the familiarity of the staff with Indians and their problems. Demonstration classes, opportunities for practice teaching and chances to learn Indian handicrafts by actual participation were a part of each program.

2. Supplemented these summer schools with short reservation centered planning conferences participated in by all the staff members of a given area. This afforded the opportunity to apply the general principles presented in summer school to specific areas and school situations.

3. Encouraged long term cooperative study of area needs and curriculum planning in terms of these needs, by the entire staffs of individual schools, or groups of schools in an area.
4. Decentralized much of the supervision, setting up regional staffs with considerable independence, who could become intimately familiar with their own areas and begin to plan cooperatively with the local school people, calling in central office staff members for specialized assistance. These local supervisors made it a point to remain in areas for weeks or months at a time in the study of problems, rather than running in and out as would have been necessary if they were responsible for service-wide supervision.

5. Added to all this was launched a fortnightly field letter addressed to every employee and designated to present clear cut statements of philosophy, policy, and preferred procedure, "Indian Education."

Dr. Beatty was Director of Indian Education from 1932 until 1951. During these years, he exerted a great influence on the type of program being offered in the various schools throughout the country dealing with Indian education.

Present Objectives

The general objectives of the present Indian Service program of education are listed as follows:

A. To teach students through their own participation in school activities, democratic government and community association, to become constructive citizens of their community, the state and the nation.

B. To aid students in analyzing the economic resources of their community and in planning more effective ways of utilizing these resources for the improvement of standards of living.

C. To develop better health habits, improved sanitation, and higher standards of diet with view of prevention of trachoma, tuberculosis, infant and other diseases.

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80 Williard Beatty, Education for Action, Printing Department, Chillico, Oklahoma, 1944, p. 8.
D. To give students an understanding of the social and economic world at large as related to their present and future environments to the end that they may more successfully achieve mastery over the conditions under which they live either on or off reservations.

E. To afford high school students preparing for off-reservation employment the choice of suitable vocations and development of qualitative and quantitative skills and the acquisition of such related knowledge as may be needed to earn a livelihood under competitive conditions.

F. To offer qualified students college preparatory training meeting standards required for college entrance.

G. To give students opportunity for physical, mental and moral growth through activities involving the co-mingling of racial groups to the end that they may be enabled more successfully to meet competition in the world about them.

H. To serve as a community center in meeting the social and economic needs of the community.

I. To give students first hand experience in livestock management, in the use of native materials for housing and clothing, in subsistence gardening, cooperative marketing, farm mechanics, to the end that skills necessary to successful rural living may be acquired.

J. To teach, through actual demonstration, intelligent conservation of natural resources.

K. To give students an understanding and appreciation of the cultural contributions their own tribal arts have made to the literature, art, music and folklore of the nation.

resent Indian School Curriculum

It shall be the purpose of the Indian schools to achieve the same basic educational objectives as those of the state curricula
for public schools in the several states within which they operate. As recognized in these state courses of study, specific programs of instruction must be suited to the needs of each particular area and should be developed by the school personnel of that area in the light of the general principles set forth in the state course of study and in this manual. Specific objectives which must be met at various levels of instruction are those which appear in the minimum essential goals for Indian schools issued by the central office. In addition to required goals, approximately half of the school time may be devoted to suggested areas of enrichment to be determined in the light of local needs. In view of the fact that Indian children in many areas enter school unable to speak the English language, it will frequently be found that these minimum essential goals differ in grade placement and in sequence of topics from those suggested in public school courses of study in order to meet this problem adequately. However, it will also be found that the minimum outline of the state courses are equaled and in some cases exceeded by these outlines for federal school work. In view of the fact that considerable emphasis must be placed upon problems of social adaptation and cultural assimilation as well as mastery of the English language, it will be seen that the sole use of the typical public school curriculum prepared for English-speaking, culturally-adapted white children will not adequately meet the needs of many Indian children and must be adjusted accordingly.82

82Ibid., Part III, Chap. 2, Sec. 92.
In federal schools, the curricula and teaching methods are necessarily different from those employed in most public schools because of the differences which exist between beginning Indian children and white children. Teachers who have had their training and practice teaching in the environment of the average public school find the problem of the Indian school quite different.

The problem of having to teach the student English before he can be taught reading, writing, arithmetic and geography is peculiar to the Indian Service. Few public schools, other than those located on the Mexican border, have a similar problem. In most public schools, it is the exception if teachers are confronted with a non-English speaking child. In the Indian Service, some schools rarely have beginning students who know English, and in almost all schools the language problem is ever present.

Additional Schools Provided

The school facilities offered by the Community School at Belcourt, and the one-room day school at Dunseith, proved to be inadequate to care for the pupils of the Turtle Mountain area. It was found necessary to make changes, additions and enlargements of plants in order to care for the school population.
Dunseith School

The Dunseith Day School, originally built in 1912 to care for the Indian children living off the reservation north of the town of Dunseith, operated as a one-room day school until 1933. At that time, a survey was made in this area and a total of eighty children were not attending school. In 1933, an additional room was added to the Dunseith school and the enrollment was increased to ninety-two children. In 1936, another temporary room was added with another teacher. The facilities under this plan were very poor, the rooms were small and overcrowded. In 1940, the present school was constructed. It consists of four classrooms, a combination gymnasium and auditorium, combination dining room and kitchen, bus garage, and two four-room apartments on the second floor for living quarters for teachers. The new school is modern in every respect. Classrooms are bright and cheerful. The living quarters are very adequately furnished. The house, used in connection with the old school plant, is also used for quarters for teachers.

With the building of the new school, bus routes for the area served by the school were initiated. Quite a number of the Indian children living in the area were too far away from the school to walk. The bus routes served this group. Also served were the families moved to this area in the rehabilitation program previously mentioned.
The Dunseith school offers work through the eighth grade level. With the inauguration of the high school program in the Belcourt school in 1940, provisions were made for bus connections to the Belcourt school for students of high school level. Previous to this time, students finishing the Dunseith day school and wishing to attend high school were sent to one of the government boarding schools, or mission boarding schools. A few of the students enrolled in the Dunseith public high school.

In 1947, an additional classroom was needed to take care of the added enrollment. One of the upstairs rooms of one apartment was converted into a classroom, making a total of five classrooms.
At the present time, the Dunseith day school has an enrollment of 137 pupils through the eighth grade, with four teachers and a principal-teacher, two bus drivers, a cook and kitchen attendant. The school is operated as part of the reservation school system, is fully accredited by the state as a grade school, and serves the school and community needs of the area.

The Dunseith school has an active P. T. A. group, sponsors a Boy Scout program, has regular movies once a week, is used for a clinic once a week with the services being rendered by the hospital staff of Belcourt, and is in general, the center of all community activities.

**Roussin School**

The Roussin school was originally built in 1905 as part of the day school program started at that time. It was also known as School No. 4, but has been called the Roussin School in honor of Eustache Roussin who donated the land for the building of the school.

This school operated as a one-room government day school from the time of its building until 1916, when the day schools were turned over to the local school boards for operation. It was then used as a public school until the federal government again took over the schools in 1931. In 1933, in order to provide for the pupils in this area, and to eliminate the overcrowded condition of the Belcourt school, the Roussin school was again opened as a one-room federal day school.
The Roussin school plant consisted of the regular day school buildings in use at this time: a one-room school building with an attached dining room and kitchen, a five-room cottage for the teacher, and the usual out-buildings. The teacher's wife was expected to be the housekeeper, and perform the usual duties assigned to this job. The school offered work through the sixth grade. Pupils finishing the sixth grade were sent by bus to the Belcourt school.
In 1940, in accordance with the over-all reservation program, the Roussin school was enlarged. The newer room of the old Dunseith school was moved and attached to the Roussin school, making it a two-room school. The bus routes on the reservation were changed, providing for bus service to the Roussin school for students living farther away. The school continued to offer work through the sixth grade.

Enrollment at the Roussin school has varied each year. Many of the families of the area move out for seasonal work, returning to their homes usually during the winter months. The enrollment over the past several years has varied from forty to seventy pupils. The present enrollment is forty-seven.

The Roussin school also serves the needs of the immediate community. It has an active P. M. A. unit, weekly shows, dances, club work, and, in general, serves the general community needs. At the present time, there are two teachers, a cook, and a janitor employed. As at the other day schools, large amounts of the food needed for the noon day lunch are raised in the school garden. Potatoes and other root crops are stored in a very good root cellar, the store room in the school has large quantities of jars of canned vegetables to be used for the very adequate noon day meal served to the children.
Another addition to the reservation school system was made in 1939 with the building of the Great Walker School. This school, named after Great Walker (Indian name - Natawestana) and located seven miles north and west of Selcourt was completed at a cost of $31,627.  

See Figure 2.) It consists of two classrooms, a combination dining room and kitchen, office space, and two four-room apartments on the second floor.

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Great Walker School

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Figure 10

GREAT WALKER DAY SCHOOL

Turtle Mountain Agency, Building and Maintenance Reports, 1939.
The Great Walker school is also served by the reservation bus system and offers work through the sixth grade. Pupils above this grade are transported into Belcourt. As is the case in the other day schools, the same buses serve to bring in the pupils to this school as bring pupils in to the Belcourt community school.

The present staff at this school consists of two teachers, a bus driver, and a cook. The school offers the same community services as do the other schools. As in the case of the other schools, the plant is entirely modern. The enrollment also fluctuates between sixty and eighty pupils, depending on the number of families leaving for work at other places. The present enrollment is sixty-eight.

Houle School

The Houle School, located five miles north and east of Belcourt, was built in 1940 at a total cost of $36,361 (See Figure 2). It was named after Abraham Houle. The building provides for three classrooms, a combination kitchen and dining room, bus garage, office space, medical room on first floor, and two four-room apartments on the second floor.  

For the first four years, this school operated as a three-teacher day school. A number of families in this area moved to other places for permanent employment during the war, and it was

84Ibid., 1940.
possible to take care of the enrollment with two teachers since at time. The present staff consists of two teachers, a cook and a bus driver. The school is also served by the buses operating out of the Belcourt school. Work is offered through a sixth grade, with pupils beyond this grade being sent in to a Belcourt school. The present enrollment is sixty-seven.

As in the other day schools, this school offers all the usual community services having movies once a week, an active T. A. group, dances and athletic teams.
Inauguration of High School Program

It had been the original plan when the consolidated school was completed in 1931, to eventually have a full four-year high school at Belcourt. This program did not materialize until 1940.

One of the chief difficulties in establishing a high school program was in providing sufficient facilities to adequately care for the number of pupils to be enrolled. The building program completed in 1940, with the completion of the new Dunseith school, the Houle school, the Great Walker school and enlarging the Roussin school, relieved the student load of the Belcourt school to the extent that it was then able to make room for high school classes. In addition to the original building completed in 1931, another smaller building was constructed at the Belcourt school in 1935. This building was used for shop and arts and crafts classes.

The Belcourt school has been offering work through the ninth grade beginning in 1938. Students wishing to take senior high school work went either to Rolla high school or were sent to one of the federal or mission non-reservation schools. Only a small percentage of the pupils attended high schools anywhere.

The high school program inaugurated in 1940, was planned to provide for the regular program as recommended by the State Department of Education. The school was fully accredited by the state the first year in operation and has continued to be accredited each succeeding year.
In addition to the regular academic subjects, a full vocational shop program for boys was offered. Shop was offered in both the junior and senior high school. Home mechanics, simple carpentry, some metal work, mechanical drawing and farm shop were stressed.

A home economics program was offered for the girls in both junior and senior high school. Both cooking and clothing courses were given. The practical aspects of both were emphasized in the program.

An arts and crafts course was offered for the older girls. This course was started as part of an Y. W. A. program and adult work. It consisted of instruction in bead work, basketry, weaving, and some ceramics. The object of the instruction was to preserve the native arts and crafts ability for the commercial value it might have. A regular sales shop was set up to sell products produced by students and adults. For a time there was much interest in this type of work but it has gradually diminished until at present, the products and sales are very limited and interest has declined. This seems to be chiefly due to the fact that the younger people of the reservation no longer have an interest in craft work. Present plans are to discontinue this work in the school and in its place offer commercial subjects such as typing and business training.
After the inauguration of the high school program, an additional year was added each term, with the first graduating class completing their work in the spring of 1943. A total of five pupils received diplomas. The following table shows the senior high school enrollment and graduates to date:

**TABLE VIII**

**SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL ENROLLMENT AND GRADUATES**

**TURTLE MOUNTAIN COMMUNITY SCHOOL, 1940-53**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>High School Enrollment</th>
<th>High School Graduates</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1940-41</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1941-42</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1942-43</td>
<td>52</td>
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<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1944-45</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1945-46</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1946-47</td>
<td>82</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1947-48</td>
<td>82</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1948-49</td>
<td>89</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1949-50</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1950-51</td>
<td>109</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1951-52</td>
<td>121</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1952-53</td>
<td>132</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As will be noted in the above table, the high school enrollment has gradually increased. Indications are that it will increase more rapidly in years to come. The grade-age of pupils is each year getting closer to the normal of other schools.

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parents and children both are becoming more interested in education, and probably most important, the graduates' success in being able to make a better living has become a great incentive to the younger pupils to strive for further education.

The Turtle Mountain community school continued to care for pupils in grades one through eight in addition to the high school.

**Enrollment and Employees**

The following table shows the enrollment, grade offered, average daily attendance and number of employees in each of the federally operated schools on the reservation. These figures are for the past four years.

The table indicates considerable increase in the enrollment in the federal schools and, with the exception of the past year in the Roussin school, a definite increase in the average daily attendance has been shown. It must be noted that a percentage of attendance as considered from the A. D. A. and the enrollment, would be low. However, consideration must be given to the number of late entries in school, many of whom probably attended other schools besides the local schools during the school term.

The other employees besides the teachers are bus drivers and cooks assigned to the schools. Each school provides a free noon day lunch for all students as part of the school program. It
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Enrollment</th>
<th>A.D.A.</th>
<th>Number of Teachers</th>
<th>Number of other employees</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1949-50</td>
<td>445</td>
<td>355.5</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1950-51</td>
<td>489</td>
<td>391.3</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1951-52</td>
<td>513</td>
<td>386.2</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1952-53</td>
<td>530</td>
<td>414.6</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1949-50</td>
<td>149</td>
<td>101.8</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1950-51</td>
<td>143</td>
<td>110.01</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1951-52</td>
<td>134</td>
<td>114.5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1952-53</td>
<td>137</td>
<td>123</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1949-50</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>42.43</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1950-51</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>47.1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
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<td>1951-52</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>44.7</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1952-53</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1949-50</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>43.57</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1950-51</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>56.6</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1951-52</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>42.54</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1952-53</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>54.2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1949-50</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>45.81</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1950-51</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>44.3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1951-52</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>44.8</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1952-53</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>40.8</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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has been the practice of the Indian Service schools to provide a noon meal at each day school. Menus for all schools are now prepared by the home economics department of the Belcourt school and a well balanced meal is served each day.

Bus drivers in the schools do the necessary janitorial work, help with gardening in the summer months, assist with playground supervision and, in general, act as a "handy man" around the schools when not driving the bus. The teachers in the Indian Service schools are obtained through the United States Civil Service Commission. The qualifications, salaries, appointments, and position descriptions are all determined by law and administered by the Civil Service Commission. The qualifications standards of teachers have been gradually increased. Present requirements for an elementary teacher entering the service are as follows:

**Education:** Completion of a full four-year course leading to a degree from an accredited college or university, including or supplemented by twenty-four semester hours of education, twelve of which must be in elementary education.

**Experience Required for Some Applicants:** Applicants who meet the education requirements but whose courses in education do not include two semester hours in methods of teaching elementary grades and two semester hours in practice teaching of elementary grades must have had one year of successful teaching at the elementary level.

**Recency of Education or Experience:** Within the five years immediately preceding the date of their application, applicant must either have completed ten semester hours towards fulfillment of the education requirement or have a minimum of one year's successful qualifying experience specified.

Requirements for secondary teachers are based on the subject fields to be taught. Each teacher is expected to teach in his major field of training, and must have completed a four year course leading to a degree.

As all of the schools of the Turtle Mountain jurisdiction are accredited by the State Department of Education, all teachers must secure the proper teacher certification for the position they fill.

It has occasionally been necessary for the Civil Service Commission to approve a temporary appointment of a sub-standard teacher because of the inability to secure a person from the regular Civil Service register. Such appointments are for a limited time, and every attempt is made to eventually secure a fully qualified person.

All employees, including teachers, work on a twelve-month basis. Schools are in operation for the regular nine month term. Teachers spend the summer months on educational leave, doing community work, adult work, attending special workshops or in-service training sessions, conducting summer recreational programs, making home visitations, or preparing teaching material for the coming year. Each employee is entitled to the regular annual leave provided by law for each Civil Service employee.

With the assistance of the bus drivers and cooks, each school has a considerable garden. Garden crops are raised and
preserved to be used for the noon day meals for the students. The students help with these gardens as school projects, and it is intended that these gardens be an example of what might be done in a community as well as providing food for noon day meals.

Non-Reservation Federal Schools

As part of the federal educational program a few non-reservation boarding schools of both elementary and high school levels are still maintained. A considerable number of pupils of the Turtle Mountain area attend these schools.

Children admitted to these boarding schools must meet one or more of the criteria for admission (See page 70). A full investigation of each boarding school case is made by the Welfare Department and their recommendation is the determining factor in acceptance.

Non-reservation boarding vocational high schools are operated for dependent children and for children from areas with no adequate or suitable program of public vocational education. Indian children from reservations operating their own federal high school, may be admitted to non-reservation schools where the vocational needs of these children are not satisfied by the program of the local federal high school.

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89 Ibid., Sec. 206.
The following table shows the enrollment of Turtle Mountain Indian students in the various non-reservation schools for the 1952-53 school year.

**TABLE X**

**NON-RESERVATION BOARDING SCHOOL ENROLLMENT, 1952-53**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School</th>
<th>Grades Offered</th>
<th>Enrollment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Wahpeton, North Dakota</td>
<td>1-8</td>
<td>143</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fort Totten, North Dakota</td>
<td>1-12</td>
<td>67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flandreau, South Dakota</td>
<td>9-12</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chemawa, Oregon</td>
<td>1-12</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Haskell, Kansas</td>
<td>9-12</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The large percentage of pupils attending the non-reservation schools are orphans, children from broken homes, or those who live in isolated areas where schools are not available. Every attempt is made by the Welfare Department to place these children in boarding homes where possible so that they may attend local schools. This has not proven possible in too many cases. Desirable type homes to be used as foster homes for Indian children are difficult to locate. As a result, many of the pupils where a suitable home cannot be located, even for the summer months, must remain in the boarding schools the entire year.\(^91\)

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\(^91\) Personal Interview No. 7, April 16, 1953.
Educational Aids for Higher Education

The Bureau of Indian Affairs endeavors to provide educational encouragement and opportunity to deserving and capable Indian students to continue training beyond high school and, thus, assist in developing Indian leadership and increase employment opportunities for many talented Indians in both vocational and professional fields. 92

The Act of June 18, 1934 (48 Stat., 25 U.S.C., 471), authorizes a program of assistance by educational loans and guidance to Indians seeking higher education. 93

It is the policy of the Indian service to encourage Indian students to seek higher education in cases where there is evidence of adequate ability and where the Indian stands to benefit. Financial assistance of several types are available.

There are three classes of aids available for young people having one-fourth or more degree of Indian blood who are seeking higher education or special training and who need assistance to continue their education: loans, grants for tuition and other assistance, and working scholarships. Low-cost post high school training at non-reservation schools is available under certain conditions. These are in addition to the growing list of scholarships aid program offered for eligible students whether Indian or non-Indian.

93 Ibid., Sec. 501.02.
An annual appropriation has been made available to provide for payment of tuition, books and supplies, or other necessary expenses of selected students doing advanced study or to assist outstanding undergraduate students whose needs are greater than can be met with a maximum loan. The grants are non-reimbursable. Each case is considered on an individual basis. Applications are made through the area office and approval is given in the Washington office. 94

The Turtle Mountain Tribal Council has made available limited funds for educational loans to deserving students. Students obtaining these loans must be recommended by the school for a specific training program. Funds are very limited and all loans are made on a reimbursable basis. The loan fund is a revolving fund and depends entirely on payments from former borrowers for available money for loans.

The records indicate that of the seventy-nine high school graduates from the Turtle Mountain community school previous to the present year, fifty-seven of them have had at least some post-high school training. Of that number, thirty-one have received some assistance in their training either in the form of a loan, working scholarship, or attendance at federal post school institutions. 95 No record is available of high school graduates

94Ibid., Sec. 502.02.
95Turtle Mountain Agency, School Records and Reports, 1943-53.
of non-reservation or mission schools. The graduates of these schools, however, are as eligible for assistance as those graduating from federally operated schools, as are the Indian students graduating from the public schools. Quite a number of these students avail themselves of the assistance offered, or attend institutions of higher learning without any aid.

Summary

The federal government has many times obligated itself in treaties with Indian tribes to provide for educational opportunities. Indian lands for the most part are tax exempt and, as a result, oblige the federal government to provide community services including education.

Various types of schools, including boarding schools and day schools, have been provided by the federal government for Indian pupils. The early schools in the Turtle Mountain area were one-room day schools and very inadequate. The day school program was enlarged in 1905 to better care for the educational needs.

In 1916, the government schools were turned over to newly organized public school districts. The reservation schools, which were subsidized by the federal government, operated as public schools until 1931.

Many unusual circumstances made the operation as public schools unsuccessful. As a result, the federal government again
assumed the entire educational responsibility. A new consolidated school was opened at Belcourt in October 1931. Day schools located at Dunseith, Houle, Great Walker and Roussin communities were either built or enlarged.

Many problems still face the educational program. Chief among these is the difficulty presented by the economy of the people. The large majority of the families depend on seasonal labor in surrounding areas, for a livelihood. This type of work takes many families away for long periods and causes a serious loss of school time. No remedy to the situation has as yet been found.

A reservation high school program was inaugurated in 1940, with the first graduating class completing their work in 1943. The Turtle Mountain community high school, serving the secondary school needs of the area, has each year increased in enrollment. The program included vocational as well as regular academic subjects. The school is fully accredited by the State Department of Public Instruction.

Teachers in the federal schools are employed through the Civil Service Commission. All employees, including teachers are employed on a twelve-month basis. Schools operate the usual nine month period.

The federal government, in addition to the schools on the reservation, also maintain non-reservation boarding schools for
specially needy pupils. Most of the pupils attending these non-reservation schools are orphans, children from broken homes, or those living in isolated areas where schools are inaccessible. Selection of students for the schools is made after investigation by the Welfare Department.

The federal government encourages Indian students to continue training beyond high school. There are opportunities for low cost post-high school work in some schools. Limited amounts are available for reimbursable loans by both the government and the tribe. Approximately seventy-two per cent of the graduates of the Turtle Mountain community school have had at least some post-high school work. No record is available of the graduates of the mission and non-reservation schools.

The government schools on the reservation are presently caring for a total of 830 pupils on both elementary and secondary levels. The federal non-reservation schools have an additional 233 selected pupils enrolled, making a total of 1,063 pupils enrolled in these schools in the school year 1952-53. This number of students, together with the 497 currently enrolled in mission schools both on and off the reservation, and 179 Indian pupils enrolled in surrounding public schools, totals 1,739 resident Indian pupils of the Turtle Mountains that were enrolled in the school year 1952-53.
It is felt that the present federal school program, supplemented by the mission and public schools, adequately provides for the elementary and secondary educational needs of the Turtle Mountain people. Enrollment and census figures indicate that more facilities will be needed very soon, especially in the secondary field.

With the standard of living of these people as low as it is, and the economy as uncertain, educational facilities to help this situation are very important. It is the one means of assistance that can be given to enable the coming generations to more adequately provide for themselves. This assistance most likely will have to be for some time the combined and sincere efforts of mission, public and federal schools working together toward a common aim.
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