

sume and has assumed the additional responsibilities of educating some 5,000 more students this year, and in subsequent years, than we did last year.

We are confident the citizens of Topeka will support us in our efforts to give the children of Topeka the very best educational opportunities our community can afford.

procedure. Teachers new to the system are recruited from colleges and universities and other school districts.

Out of hundreds of applicants only those who appear to be the best qualified in academic training and experience are selected. Such applicants are screened through a careful examination of their transcripts and

conducted by The Public Schools of Topeka in August. New teachers are given a careful orientation at a get-acquainted meeting. Later, all new teachers meet in their assigned school with their building principal.

New teachers participate in other special sessions, then attend the general workshop meetings for all teachers.

These new texts have been carefully selected from all available volumes studied by committees of teachers and administrators.

The Topeka Board of Education has provided the positions of consultants and supervisors for elementary education, art, music, physical education, social studies, language arts, home economics, industrial arts and

board. These policies and procedures are designed to help guarantee the welfare of the children in our schools, as well as the welfare of the teachers and employes of the school system.

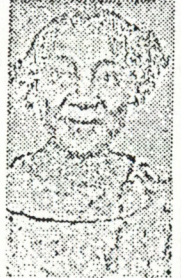
This transitional period of school unification will bring forth many problems, but all of them should have reasonable and fair solutions if we "make haste slowly."

No One Sorry To See Old Pierce Closed

By MRS. ETHEL BARBOUR, Pierce-Buchanan Principal. After 67 years of service, the doors of the old Pierce School building were closed for the last time this spring.

The dilapidated structure will be razed, and the last vestige of the 104-year-old Pierce Common School District will disappear.

Probably no one will feel nostalgic about Pierce, even though the district was formed in 1855, before Topeka was founded. The tarpaper-covered



Mrs. Ethel M. Barbour

school building, located at 2235 Jefferson, dated back to 1892. Patrons of the district are principally low-income families, and most of the school's troubles stem from financial conditions. Before annexation, when Topeka was averaging around \$8,000 of valuation per pupil, and Highland Park High \$24,420, the Pierce district showed a valuation of \$1,575 per pupil.

AS BAD AS conditions were in the past year, after Superintendent's Annual Report

the Pierce District was unified with the Topeka School System, things were much worse before the school annexation, which followed automatically in December, 1957, a step in municipal annexation by the city.

Before unification, the old school's walls needed painting, floors needed repair, and dirt was everywhere. The children's desks were very old and broken, and of improper size. Teachers had no facilities. Toilets were inadequate. There was poor lighting and ventilation, and no indoor play space. The old building was infested by rodents and wracked by termites.

ACADEMIC arrangements before unification were almost equally hopeless. Grades 1-8 were in three rooms. This arrangement made discipline an almost insurmountable problem. There was no kindergarten, no provision for severely retarded children, and no enrichment materials. The curriculum was seriously limited. There was little guidance effort, and test scores were available only on grades 3-4-5.

Attendance by the children was the one bright spot, and there was a Gra-Y Club for the girls.

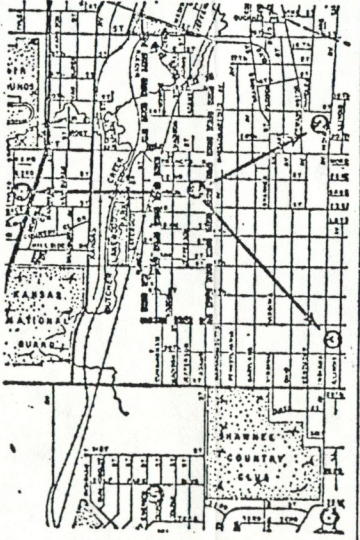
Immediately after unification, Topeka school officials began to improve conditions at Pierce.

The building was reconditioned, floors repaired, and the interior decorated, though the structure remained inadequate. New desks were provided for the primary room, and some new facilities were provided teachers.

ACADEMIC standards were improved, with one teacher for grades 1-2, one for 3-4, and one for 5-6. Five-year-olds in the district were admitted to kindergarten classes at Quinton Heights or Monroe Elementary Schools, nearby. Special services for retarded children were made available. The program was broadened to fit the needs of the children, with addition of special enrichment material. Trips were taken by classes to the Topeka Public Library; the Nelson Art Gallery, Swope Park, and Museum in Kansas City.

A Gra-Y was set up for both girls and boys, and

some limited social activity was established. The community became more aware of the school. Pupils, always eager to learn, were staying after school to do additional studies. Test scores showed an average normal rating.



—Hall Directory Co. Map WHERE THEY'LL GO— Students from the old Pierce School (1) will go to Quinton Heights (4), Highland Park North (2), or Highland Park Central (3). Also shown are East Avondale (5) and Highland Park South (6).

FOR MORE THAN a half century Pierce School served the Pierce Addition as many other county schools have, with varying pupil achievements below average, average and superior, as attested by one pupil whose scores in county examinations exceeded the range listed.

Unification has brought many needed advantages to children in the Pierce district. New diversity provides greater stimulation to intellectual achievement, richer and more meaningful experiences, and the co-operation of parents who desire education for their children superior to that which they themselves enjoyed.

THROUGH UNIFICATION we have the machinery—equipment, educational supplies, and the competent professional services necessary to bring the desired program into actual fulfillment.

In unification there is strength and proof of the transforming power of the extended educational services—strength to reach the goal of The Public Schools of Topeka: "Worthy Citizenship."