



New York State Archives

**New York State Education Dept. Bureau of School
District Organization School District Centralization and
Reorganization Files 15672**

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Overview of the Records

Repository:	New York State Archives
Summary:	This series contains the primary administrative and legal documentation on formation of central school districts and enlarged city school districts, annexations and reorganizations of districts. Reorganization records may include correspondence; memoranda; feasibility studies; budget and state aid estimates; maps of proposed districts; publicity material; applications to lay out new districts; legal notices, vote totals, sample ballots, and copies of final orders laying out or altering the districts. There are files for successful and unsuccessful reorganizations.
Creator:	New York (State). Education Department. Bureau of School District Organization
Title:	School district centralization and reorganization files
Quantity:	33 cubic feet
Inclusive Date:	1936-1978
Series:	15672
Sponsor:	This series' description was enhanced as part of the States' Impact on Federal Education Policy Project (SIFEPP), in December 2010. The New York Community Trust - Wallace Special Projects Fund provided funding for this project.

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Arrangement

Arranged into three subseries: 1. Files on reorganization studies and hearings, 2. Boards of Cooperative Education Services files, 3. Independent superintendencies files

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Administrative History

The consolidation of small rural school districts into larger central school districts was first enacted into law in Chapter 55 of the Laws of 1914, which provided for the formation of "Central

Rural Schools." The first rural central school district was created in 1924. In 1925, the Cole-Rice Law (Chapter 673 of the Laws of 1925) was enacted, which provided state financial aid for transportation and school construction in order to encourage rural school districts to consolidate. The pace of centralization increased in the 1930's, but the process of centralization was criticized as piecemeal by the Regents' Inquiry into the Character and Cost of Public Education in 1938. In response, the Bureau of Rural Administrative Services was created in 1943 to facilitate the process of school district centralization, and a Master Plan for School District Reorganization was created by the Joint Legislative Committee on the State Education System in 1947. The Bureau of Rural Administrative Services was renamed the Bureau of School District Organization in 1964. By 1959, the number of school districts in New York State had fallen to under 2,000, down from around 10,000 in 1925. Overall, the movement toward centralized school districts was reflective of a national trend towards greater involvement by state governments and state education agencies in the administration and funding of public schools.

The Education Department has responsibility for supervising all educational institutions in the state and the Commissioner of Education exercises a quasi-judicial authority by which he may review actions of local school boards and officials. Applications for forming central school districts are reviewed by the State Education Department, and the orders laying out such districts are issued by the Commissioner of Education.

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Scope and Content Note

This series contains the primary administrative and legal documentation on formation of central school districts and enlarged city school districts, annexations of districts, and subsequent reorganization of districts. Many of these records were used in the process of creating and revising the Master Plan of School District Reorganization, and in the process of revising consolidation plans in specific New York State school districts. These include plans and reports submitted to the Rapp Commission, a State legislative body charged with revising the Master Plan; records used in public hearings where the reorganization plans were presented; and correspondence with district officials regarding the size and boundaries of school districts within cities. Also included in the series is correspondence between bureau staff and members of Boards of Cooperative Education Services on the creation and operation of BOCES, as well as files submitted to the Bureau of School District Organization in support of applications to be designated an independent superintendency district.

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Related Information

Related Material

15671Series 15671, District Superintendent County Files Relating to Appointments and Organization Orders

B0477Series B0477, Bureau of School District Organization Subject and Administrative Files

11120Series 11120, Bureau of School District Organization Files of Master Plan Studies and

B1104Series B1104, Education Dept. Office of Counsel School District Centralization Files

Series B0472, School District Centralization and Reorganization Files, 1924-1974, contains earlier accessions of these records.

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Use of Records

Access Restrictions

There are no restrictions regarding access to or use of the material.

Administrative Information

Acquisition Information

15672-99: Records were transferred under RDA 11122, later superseded by RDA 15672. The accretion includes records from transfer list 810251.

15672-99: At the time of accessioning in 1999, one box from the original transfer of this accretion (Box 9) was missing and presumed lost.

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Access Terms

- Reports
- Planning
- New York (State)
- Vocational education
- Education
- University of the State of New York
- New York (State). Education Department