

SCHOOLS

Gunnison has been fortunate in having the three essentials for maintaining a good school. The parents want their children to learn and co-operate with the faculty to bring this about. They do not hold grudges against teachers with whom they differ. The school has had good teachers who devote much time and thought to their class work and to developing the latent abilities of their pupils. The Board of Trustees has been composed of men who had the interest of the children at heart, and who wished to provide the best possible opportunities for them. The records of the pupils who went to college, transferred to other schools, or went to work, show that a good school has been maintained.

The first schools at Gunnison were very small. For a time the buildings were makeshift, a room over a livery stable, the first floor of the Masonic Lodge. Then a two-room frame building was built upon a half block of land deeded to the school by Mrs. Wrenn. By that time the number of pupils had increased until two teachers were needed. This building, with a small room added, served until the front part of the present building was built.

In 1920, all of the schools in Supervisors District One were consolidated into one school district. A brick building was erected upon the same site, and bus service was established to bring the children to school. A one-teacher branch was maintained on the Dixie Plantation for several years.

Until the Gunnison Consolidated School District was formed, there had been no high school at Gunnison. Superintendent W. G. Eckles immediately began this work, and the high school was accredited in 1925.

The number of pupils continued to increase for several years. Four new classrooms were added to the building in 1926. The peak enrollment came in the spring of 1930, five hundred ninety pupils total enrollment, and four hundred seventy-three in the highest month. Though this enrollment was not approached again until 1948 when four hundred forty-eight were enrolled during the highest month, for several years the Gunnison Consolidated School was the second largest in the county. The old frame building and the first floor of the Lodge were again used as classrooms.

Because of the depression, no additional building could be provided, and the school was very crowded indeed. In 1940-1942, four classrooms were added, a number of alterations were made and the gymnasium was started. The gymnasium was not finished until 1950 because the war stopped all such work. The classroom and shop for the agriculture classes was ready for use in 1948.

When the schools of Bolivar County were reorganized in 1957, the Gunnison Consolidated School had neither the enrollment nor the tax base to meet the requirement of the State Finance Commission for maintaining an independent district. Therefore it was consolidated with Rosedale and Pace to form Bolivar County School District Number One. The high school was transferred to Rosedale, and the first eight grades were kept at Gunnison. The consolidation has worked out well because all concerned co-operated to the fullest extent to bring this about.

Most of the teachers at Gunnison have served for several years. This has provided a greater degree of con-

tinuity in the school program. A few with the longer periods of service are listed below.

Name	Years	Name	Years
Mrs. C. E. Haag	39	Mrs. J. D. Whittington	14
W. D. Bell, Supt., Prin.	37	J. K. Methvin	11
Mrs. L. E. Arnold	33	G. O. Sanford	9
Mrs. W. D. Bell	20	Mrs. E. B. Scruggs	7
M. P. Creasy, Coach, Principal	19	Mrs. W. C. Pearce	6
Mrs. Thelma Shaffer	15	Miss Carmen Ferguson	13
Mrs. G. O. Sanford	15	R. H. Leigh, Coach	7
Mrs. J. E. Bobo	15	Mrs. R. H. Leigh	9
Mrs. E. M. Pease	14		

Efficient bus service is also a factor in the operation of schools. This is in great part dependent upon having mature careful drivers. The drivers at Gunnison on the average hold their jobs over long periods of years. Some of those driving longest were: Mrs. A. S. Day, Mrs. Lily Lea Davis, Miss Vera Scruggs, Mrs. J. S. Hollis, Mrs. W. G. Trimble, Mrs. R. B. Howard, Mrs. B. C. Conger, Mrs. W. M. Edwards, and John L. Coleman.

In the final analysis, the success of a school depends upon its board of trustees. A list of the men who served as trustees of the Gunnison Consolidated School District is given below.

Dr. H. L. Cockerham*	Hymie Fisher	M. S. Gray
J. W. Potts	G. F. Warfield	M. S. Knowlton
J. S. Kirk	J. E. Poague	Edward Harris
S. D. Knowlton	W. H. Thomson	J. C. Darby**
R. L. Sledge	N. M. Jacobs	Melvin Hood
Dr. J. D. Simmons	W. T. Wilkinson	Leo McGee***
	Paul Seaton	

* Dr. H. L. Cockerham served as trustee for thirty-five years.

** J. C. Darby is now a member of the Board of Trustees of District One.

*** Leo McGee served five years as trustee of District One.

The Gunnison Colored Schools went through the same stages of development as the Gunnison Consolidated School, but at later dates. At first they were one-teacher schools held in churches, though there was a two-room frame building at Gunnison. After that, these schools were operated by a county-wide district. A three-room concrete building was built at Gunnison and several others in other parts of the district. The quality of teachers and instruction began to improve.

After the reorganization of schools, the Bob Woods School was built on a ten-acre lot. This is a well designed attractive building which includes a well equipped lunch room, auditorium, office, and store rooms. The original building proved to be too small. An addition of six rooms has been completed recently.

Most of the children are transported to school. The buses are in good condition. The drivers are well trained careful adults. The school consists of the first eight grades. The high school pupils go to Rosedale. Last year the highest monthly enrollment was seven hundred thirty-one pupils. The children enter school earlier and stay in school longer than formerly.

The faculty is composed of Principal Clyde Leggett and seventeen well qualified teachers. They all have B. S. degrees, and some have done considerable graduate work. The entire community may well be proud of the work this school is doing.