

2. Forming
the district.

Chapter.

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Rural Agricultural School District #1, Grosse Pointe Township, Wayne County, Michigan, is composed of five adjoining political units plus a fraction of another." The district is composed of the five Grosse Pointes plus a sixth fractional unit which lies in the northwest corner of the district and is a part of Gratiot Township.¹ The Grosse Pointes have a seven mile frontage on Lake St. Clair and extend about two miles inland from the lake. These political units lie south and east of Detroit which they adjoin. They are in order from south to north—Grosse Pointe Park, City of Grosse Pointe, Grosse Pointe Farms, Grosse Pointe Shores and Grosse Pointe Woods.

The history of this area dates back to the voyages of the French explorers and to the French and Indian wars. About one hundred years ago it began to be a popular location for the summer homes of wealthy citizens of Detroit. With the industrial growth of Detroit this situation has changed rapidly since about 1910 and the transition is still in effect. The original large estates are showing signs of breaking up. The descendants of the original owners of these huge mansions are finding them too expensive to operate and keep up.

There are no industries in the entire area. The percentage of home ownership is large. The population is almost entirely native born and there is no racial problem.

¹Present Map of District — See Appendix

PREFACE

The Grosse Pointe School District includes an area of roughly thirteen square miles with a population of around 52,000 and a public school enrollment of approximately 7,200 pupils. The Grosse Pointe area is immediately adjacent to Detroit on the east, lying along the shore of Lake St. Clair. The Grosse Pointe School District was organized in 1922 and is composed of all of the five Grosse Pointe Municipalities and a fractional part of the City of Harper Woods. This suburban community is entirely residential, predominantly American-born, with an unusually high percentage of its working population in the professional, technical, and business executive classifications. The general economic, social, and cultural level of the homes is decidedly above the average.

There are nine elementary schools in the district which range in size from one of about 200 pupils to others with enrollments of 800. The average class size is approximately 29 pupils, although individual class groups vary slightly in size above and below this number. The total elementary enrollment is close to 4,600.

Grosse Pointe has three Junior High Schools, all of which include Grades Seven, Eight, and Nine. The Parcels and Pierce Junior High Schools are designed specifically for Junior High Schools, while the Brownell Junior High School is housed in the same building with

the Senior High School. All work in junior high school is organized on a departmental basis, although interdepartmental correlation is encouraged. A guidance program organized partially on a Home Room basis and with special counselors is in operation on the Junior High School level. The present Junior High School enrollment is slightly in excess of 1,400.

The Grosse Pointe Senior High School includes Grades Ten, Eleven, and Twelve with an enrollment of approximately 1,200 pupils. Almost 70% of the graduates of the High School enter college or some other institution of advanced learning. Strong Commercial, Industrial Arts, Household Arts, Music, and Art Departments provide a healthy balance in the curriculum offering of the senior high school. Placement and follow-up services are important features of the senior high school guidance program which is organized on a home room-guidance counselor basis.

In addition to the schools which are now in operation, the school district owns two sites for future elementary schools and one for an additional junior high school. Both of the elementary school sites are located in the northeasterly part of the school district. At such times as schools are built on these sites, all areas of the school district will be served by elementary schools centrally located to serve the central part of the school district. The Brownell Junior High School, which is now housed in the Senior High School Building,

will be discontinued in the near future to make room for the growth which will take place in the Senior High School as the larger groups now in the elementary and junior high school grades move on into the Senior High School.

The history of the Crosse Pointe School District shows that there has been a rather steady and rapid growth in population and school enrollment since the time of its organization in 1922. At that time there were less than 1,000 children enrolled in the public schools of the district and the total population was less than 8,000. While there was much growth in the late twenties and in the few years preceding World War II, the greatest growth has taken place during the last four years, during which time more than 4,000 new dwelling units have been built; the school enrollment has increased 1,300 pupils and the total population almost 10,000 persons.

In writing the history of this school system the author felt that a study of its growth and development would be interesting and very useful to him as a new superintendent in the district. Other purposes for engaging in historical research on this problem include the following:

- (1) To build a body of adequate and dependable information dealing with the growth and development of the Crosse Pointe school system in order to provide its superintendents, boards of education, and interested laymen with the data required in planning and carrying out a continuing progressive improvement of the educational program.

(2) Through identification, analysis, and recording of the trends of the past events and their impact in this district, to provide others, especially public school administrators, the bases on which they may develop a better understanding of the patterns in the forces and events which operate to enhance or obstruct the progressive development of a good public school system.