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Saunders County Bicentennial Educational History

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1976

District #72 - Mead

Office of the County Superintendent, Saunders County

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On January 23, 1875 Mead School , District No. 95 was formed and included Sections 25, 26, 27, 34, 35 and 36. At the annual meeting in 1876 the board voted to build a school house 18' x 36'. At a special meeting bonds were approved in the amount of \$600.00 to build and furnish the school. However the County Clerk informed them that according to law they could not vote a bond of more than \$380.00. So they decided to vote the \$380.00 and build the schoolhouse for that amount. The one-room frame building was located on the NW $\frac{1}{4}$ of Section 35, Township 15, Range 8 in the village of Mead, known at that time as Alvin. Mr. John Williams, owner of the land deeded one acre to District No. 95 for \$1.00.

After standing ten years the building was moved into Mead. Classes were also held in the town hall, which was located on the site of the Andrew Freeburg home and in homes of the community while a new school was erected. Elizabeth Ruff was the last Superintendent in the building.

The new four-classroom building, one of the finest in Saunders County, was located on the ground now occupied by the city park. It was completed in 1886. The first class was graduated in 1891.

In 1882 John Williams sold the quarter section of land, minus the one acre school ground to Charles Peter Johnson for \$3085.00. In 1885 Mr. Johnson and his bride lived in Mead's first schoolhouse.

In 1887 District No. 95 sold the schoolhouse and one acre to Mr. Johnson for \$125.00. The deed was signed by Mr. Peter Gibson, president of the board, who lived one mile west of Mead.

In about 1915 a school consolidation law was passed. Class I districts could consolidate with high school districts. Mead was one of the five schools in Nebraska that took advantage of the law. Enrollment in the Mead school was about 200.

Mr. Henry Ostenberg and several other Mead citizens spearheaded a drive to create a consolidated school district. The Class I districts known as Adams, Crinklaw and Harlner voted to join District No. 95. In 1918 District No. 72 became the first consolidated school in the state. The school year of 1919-20 was held in the four-classroom building.

The new consolidated school building and garage were built in 1920 at a cost of \$195,000.00. F.E. Alder was the superintendent. Paul

Seidel was vocational agriculture instructor. Pupils were transported in five Reo buses which were driven by four students and the mechanic.

By the early 1970's District No. 72 had outgrown its quarters. In 1973 a new Junior-Senior High School was built at a cost of \$970,000.00. The 1920 building is used for kindergarten through grade six pupils. The new building is considered one of the finest schools in Saunders County.