RICE UNIVERSITY

PUBLIC SCHOOL REFORM AND SCHOOL BOARD POLICY IN PAINESVILLE, OHIO: 1850-1920

by

Warren Richard Darrow

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ABSTRACT

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In recent years historians have displayed renewed interest in the history of education. Accompanying this revival in the field of educational history is a more critical examination of the development and goals of public education in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Scholars are now skeptical of the long-accepted belief that the history of public schools is a story of unqualified progress.

Although recent scholarship has added greatly to the historical picture of public schools and school reform, these writings are focused for the most part on public education in large urban areas. Excellent studies of schools in Boston, New York, St. Louis, Portland, and other major cities exist, but systematic studies of education in smaller cities or towns are few. This thesis examines public education in one small city, Painesville, Ohio.
A study of education in a small community should not, however, ignore the historiography of urban school reform. City and town were not separated by an impenetrable barrier. Educational developments in one area could certainly affect other locations regardless of population. In addition, decisions of state legislatures relating to public schools could apply to both city and village. Thus, the first chapter of this thesis is devoted to the literature on public school reform. Although most of the works considered deal with either urban schools in general or with education in particular cities, they provide a basis for comparison with events in Painesville.

Since the purpose of this thesis is to study education in a specific city over several decades, the second chapter provides a brief history of Painesville. County histories, the Painesville Telegraph, and census records supplied most of the information. This historical sketch of the town defines the context within which educational adjustments took place.

Rather than attempt a comprehensive account of public education in Painesville, the focus of this study is primarily on the board of education and on the organizational changes in the school system. Chapters three and four describe the policy and membership of the school boards and trace the structural changes in the
school system. The school board is an appropriate object of study, for this is the body that debated and formulated public school policy. Board members decided which educational changes were needed by the community. Fortunately, the minutes of school board meetings, beginning with the first meeting in 1851, survive intact. This valuable source records educational leaders and the issues they held important. Census records and references in the newspaper give some important information about board members themselves.

School reform in Painesville in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries paralleled changes in large cities, but the reasons for changes were not the same for both places. In large urban areas centralized school systems resulted in part from the pressure of numbers. Political leaders also used bureaucratic school systems to counter the social diversity and the potential cultural threat brought by immigration. Painesville's citizens placed their schools under a central administration in 1851, and over the next seventy years the school board further developed a bureaucratic or centralized system characterized by professional administrators and by codified rules. But in Painesville the motivation for change stemmed primarily from a desire to emulate the progressive educational reforms found in large cities, not from the
pressures of urbanization. Some influential people in Painesville wanted an efficient, centralized school system. The reason for the "progress" of the town's schools was not the pressure of social change, rather it was the symbolic importance that these influential people attached to modern public schools.
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CHAPTER I

APPROACHES AND INTERPRETATIONS IN THE HISTORIOGRAPHY OF NINETEENTH-CENTURY PUBLIC SCHOOL REFORM

Local history is most useful when it contributes to an understanding of larger historical questions. When research into local records tests the validity of historical hypotheses, the result is not a quaint local history, but rather a valuable "case study." This examination of public education in Painesville, Ohio constitutes a case study of some of the arguments developed in recent literature on public school reform. The purpose of this chapter, then, is to describe these arguments, particularly those which concern the formation of urban public school systems. When considered against this historiographical background, the story of public education in one community can acquire more than local significance.

In the past decades historians of American education have produced a great quantity of literature on the question of public school reform. A comprehensive review of this work would indeed demand a book-length effort.¹ This chapter makes no attempt at comprehensiveness, rather it confines discussion to two areas: first, the approaches or methodologies employed in the study of
school reform; second, the specific arguments advanced to explain the nature and causes of school reform.

Sources and methodology can greatly influence answers to historical questions. Opposing interpretations of the same events and periods are often the result of different researchers emphasizing different sources. The historiography of public school reform presents a clear example of the effect that sources and approach can have on historical interpretation.

Early students of public school reform directed their attention to the "common school movement." The explicit aims and the importance of the common school movement were never at issue. Educational historians, past and present, agree that Horace Mann and his fellow reformers wanted to correct the haphazard district system that had characterized American public education since the mid-eighteenth century. The leaders of the movement had three specific goals; they would improve the district system by providing "a free elementary education for every white child," by creating "a trained educational profession," and by establishing "some form of state control over local schools." Students of educational reform also agree that the common school proponents achieved at least some success in all three areas. Advances were indeed limited, but in the years from Jackson through the Civil
War pioneer educators established the common school principles of compulsory attendance, professionalization, and centralization. 4

Though historians have agreed on what the common school movement was and when it happened, they have disagreed about why it happened. The question of who, beside the leading reformers, wanted educational change and why they wanted it has produced different answers. From 1920 until the early 1960s, the "labor-education thesis" was the prevailing explanation for this nineteenth-century drive for common schools. In the past fifteen years, scholars have modified this view.5

Jay M. Pawa describes the labor-education thesis as

...a well-established generalization in American historical scholarship which assumed a direct relationship between the demands of workingmen for free public schools and the establishment of free public schools in certain eastern states in the early nineteenth century.

Pawa, writing in 1971, credits economist Richard T. Ely as the originator of this hypothesis. Ely's Labor in America, published in 1886, argues that the labor movement

...has been one of the chief causes which have brought us a public-school system, --a public-school system which has already accomplished incalculable good...
Algie M. Simons, viewing the Jacksonian period in Marxist terms, asserts in a pamphlet published in 1903 that

..., it is certain as a causal relation can ever be, that it is to this early labor movement more than to any other one cause we owe the great educational revival of the thirties and our common school system of today. ..., 8

Simons explains labor's interest in common schools by portraying "a proletariat struggling for a way to end the oppression under which it labored." 9 Ely and Simons espouse the labor-education thesis in its purest form; subsequent writers would qualify the argument.

Scholars did not grant the labor-education argument immediate acceptance. For many years students of educational history had explained the common school movement

..., as the work of a few great and dedicated humanitarians ..., who had awakened the public to the need for universal education. ..., 10

Apparently historians could not accept an interpretation which did not allow for the importance of the great reformers. Frank Tracy Carlton provides a synthesis which made the argument more palatable. Although Carlton stresses the role of the workingman, he acknowledges as well the role of Horace Mann, Henry Barnard, and other
reformers.

Directed and aided by the humanitarian leaders,

Carlton writes in a 1908 publication,

...the workingmen and the cities have effectively used the weapon [universal male suffrage] placed in their hands by the men of the frontier.11

The noted educational historian, Ellwood P. Cubberly, embraced this argument; and with the publication in 1920 of Cubberly's Public Education in the United States, the labor-education thesis became the predominant explanation of early public school reform.12

Until the last decade, school reform studies which have followed Carlton's have revised, but not seriously challenged, the labor-education thesis. Sidney L. Jackson in America's Struggle for Free Schools, published in 1941, followed Carlton's pattern of revising the labor argument; both added to the number of principal actors in the fight for school reform. Carlton found room for the humanitarian reformers, and Jackson added to these groups "middle-class intellectuals and the clergy."13 Jackson explained the dynamics behind school reform as follows: "...educators offered improved common schools" to mediate the conflict between "the intellectual leadership" and the forces of Jacksonian Democracy.14 In a book
that Jay M. Pawa describes as "one of the more recent and highly respected studies of American education," Lawrence A. Cremin "also accepted labor as a vital force in the creation of New York State's free school system." Cremin actually deemphasized the role of labor somewhat. Writing in 1965, almost fifteen years after the publication of his book on the origins of the common school, Cremin notes that his work

...dealt at length with the contributions of Robert Dale Owen and other labor publicists, though it did regard these as essentially ancillary to those of humanitarian reformers. Thus, in Cremin's work the balance of causation swings back in favor of humanitarian reformers; still, labor was accorded a key role in the struggle for public schools.

All the authors discussed thus far, from Ely to Cremin, viewed early school reform as the outcome of social struggle. The later writers do not employ Simons' Marxist terminology, but even Cremin lists "the democratizing of politics" and "the growth of the struggle for social equality" as developments that led to the advance of public education. Starting with Carlton's work in 1908, however, historians have included more groups on the side of public education. The pro-common school side of the conflict eventually included not only workingmen, but
humanitarians, middle class intellectuals, and the clergy. If someone were to identify a general upper-middle and upper-class interest in school reform, the pro-reform side of the conflict would have all of the historical players, and the social conflict portrayed in the labor-education thesis could no longer exist in the explanation of school reform. When Rush Welter published *Popular Education and Democratic Thought in America* in 1960, he became that someone. "Besides the radical and labor support for free common schools," Pawa writes, "he [Welter] identified an upper-class interest in education as both real and important." The upper class "looked to the school to inculcate values which would bolster loyalty and insure domestic tranquility." Conservatives, Welter argued, wanted free schools to create a loyal citizenry and thus maintain the republic. Even though Welter "continued to accord labor the primacy in educational progress which Ely had assumed some eighty years before," the labor-education thesis lost its dynamic quality. Conflict no longer existed in the explanation of reform; labor was just one of many groups working for public education. Welter's consensus interpretation of early educational reform, however, did not prevail. In the mid-1960s Michael B. Katz reasserted a social-conflict view of nineteenth-century school reform. In his first major work, *The Irony*
of Early School Reform, Katz purposely avoids detailed criticism of earlier works,

because the weaknesses of these older books are, significantly, those of a generation of historical writing and have been recognized.

In fact, Katz argues that these books are valuable "to the discerning and judicious reader"; Cremin's intellectual history of the common school, Carlton's discussion of the importance of industrialization and Welter's perception of the role of the wealthy are all important contributions. But, in general, Katz believes that by equating the term workingmen with the modern meaning of working class, the older works "have overstressed the role of labor in political and social reform." With the role of the "real" working classes put in proper perspective, Katz reintroduces a conflict interpretation by making the opposite side of the social spectrum, the upper and upper-middle classes, the protagonists of school reform. Katz views school reform as a change imposed by the fortunates on the unfortunates. In short, Katz describes early school reform as

the attempt of a coalition of the social leaders, status-anxious parents, and status-hungry educators to impose educational innovation, each for their own reasons, upon a reluctant community.
Not every recent student of school reform shares Katz's harsh account of educational change, but his work definitely marks a new trend in the historiography.

Historians have never adequately accounted for the changes in the interpretation of school reform. They have not explained why at different times scholars have stressed different social groups as the primary forces behind school reform. Bernard Bailyn in *Education in the Forming of American Society* offers, albeit indirectly, the best explanation for the changing view of school reform. Bailyn argues that the major faults of educational history stem from the fact that "it grew in almost total isolation from the major influences and shaping minds of twentieth-century historiography." Because of the assumed importance of the subject of history of education, a course thought necessary for all programs of teacher instruction,

.. .a few of the more imaginative of that energetic and able group of men concerned with mapping the overall progress of 'scientific education', though not otherwise historians, took over the management of the historical work in education.

The scholarship produced by these men and their successors "has been a history of American education that is little more than the public school realizing itself over time." Thus, Bailyn, writing in 1960, noted that educational
history suffered from the narrow perspective of its authors, a perspective which uncritically assumed the educational importance and predominance of the public school. His work implied that a change in this perspective might result in different interpretations of educational history and, perhaps, public school reform.²⁶

Since Bailyn's _Education_ precedes the revisionist interpretations and concerns primarily the historiography of the colonial period, he obviously does not describe the changes in interpretation of school reform. But he demonstrates the limitations of the previous approach to educational history and offers a new approach which still influences all phases of the subject, including studies of school reform. To understand how perspective and approach have influenced school reform studies and how Bailyn's ideas could revolutionize the historiography requires a closer examination of the approach employed in earlier studies.

Of all the writers who espouse the labor-education thesis, Sidney L. Jackson probably provides the clearest statement of method or approach. Jackson tries

...to tell the story of the Common School Revival... by examining the literature of the day that reached—or, at least, was intended for—the public.

He confronts the evidence with the following three
questions:

What problems were uppermost in people's minds? What plans were advanced for the removal of these troubles? What, in such plans, was the role of the idea of education?

To answer these questions Jackson researches a vast amount of published material including almanacs; governors' messages; orations and magazines for the antislavery, peace and temperance movements; newspapers; religious and secular periodicals; educational magazines and addresses; textbooks; college addresses; and protest movement addresses, tracts and periodicals. Thus, Jackson's *America's Struggle for Free Schools* makes clear both the questions it asks and where it looks for answers.

Jackson's methodology is certainly useful in exploring the intellectual history of public school reform. But the range of answers such an approach can produce is limited. Most of the sources used by Jackson are the printed expressions of strong interests such as labor, religion, and educational reform. In these expressions spokesmen for the various interests were pleading their case before a large audience. Hence the evidence is essentially polemical. This type of evidence is necessary for a description of the interest involved, but one can question its validity as an indicator of the relative importance of the interest. In fact, during the early period of school
reform, "there was virtually no opposition to education per se, or to public education." So the literature of public debate at that time usually reflects a pro-public education bias. The great quantity of workingman's literature produced at this time shared in this free education bias. By confining his research to printed sources, sources largely made up of the writings of "working class" spokesmen, Jackson could logically argue the predominance of labor in educational reform. The nature of his sources dictated his answers.

Jackson may have provided the clearest methodological statement, but until Michael B. Katz wrote in the mid-1960s, all the leading writers on school reform employed a similar approach. Frank Tracy Carlton relied heavily on newspapers, workingman's literature, and other polemical sources. In The American Common School, Lawrence A. Cremin frequently cites periodicals like the Common School Journal and the Working Man's Advocate. Cremin does supplement these sources with pamphlets and annual reports by such renowned reformers as Horace Mann, secretary of the Massachusetts Board of Education, and Henry Barnard, Mann's counterpart in Connecticut, but the polemical nature of the sources remains unchanged. Thus all the early writings reflected similar biases. All the works portrayed social conflict because their arguments were based on
polemical sources. Because of the quantity and vehemence of the workingman's literature, they also exaggerated the importance of the working classes. Finally, these early authors did not take into account the general consensus, at least in public expressions of the time, on the desirability of public education. As Rush Welter demonstrated in *Popular Education*, virtually all the political interests in the nineteenth century, regardless of social composition and appeal, could qualify as free school advocates.

Before discussing the recent approaches to the study of school reform, a further, more general, methodological point concerning the early historiography of school reform deserves mention. Richard Storr states the point clearly. Referring specifically to the writings of educational reformers, Storr asks

> Yet were the progressives merely reporters—lay practitioners of that 'scientific' history which is expected to produce nothing but authenticated information?

Replying to his own question, Storr avers "clearly we cannot receive them in court as independent witnesses."²⁹ In taking the reformers at their word, one runs the risk of confusing the actor and observer in a historical question.³⁰ In the question of public school reform, the progressive educators assumed both roles; thus the distinction between
actor and observer is extremely difficult to make. Although the problem is particularly applicable to the educators, the printed expressions of other groups entail the same difficulty. The leaders of labor organizations, for example, were hardly unbiased observers of nineteenth-century reform movements. Many causes underlay the development of the public school; the public pronouncements of individual groups simply cannot reflect all of them.

By 1960, then, researchers had exhausted one approach to the study of early school reform. They had read and read again the printed sources on the common school movement. The story seemed complete until Bernard Bailyn published *Education in the Forming of American Society* in 1960. This work suggests a new approach which asks new questions and points to different sources.

Bailyn's essay deals primarily with the shortcomings of the historiography of early America, but it criticizes what had been the prevailing approach to the historical study of education. He argues that educational history suffers "from the concentration on formal institutions and from the search for recognizable antecedents" of the public school. He offers an alternative to this interpretation, an alternative resting on a broader definition of education. Important developments in education are visible, he argues, only
when one thinks of education not as formal pedagogy but as the entire process by which a culture transmits itself across the generations; when one is prepared to see great variations in the role of formal institutions of instruction, to see schools and universities fade into relative insignificance next to other social agencies. . . .

In other words, Bailyn's broader definition or approach demands that the historian be sensitive to the role of informal institutions like the family, community, and church as well as to the role of formal educational institutions.

While accusing educational historians of focusing too narrowly on the public school and other formal educational institutions, Bailyn does not imply that the scholarship on formal institutions is sufficient. Historians before Bailyn had always assumed the importance of the public school; its growth and development were not examined critically. With the publication of Education, the growth of the public school became a question for detailed study rather than an unquestioned assumption. By offering the broader cultural definition of education, Bailyn led historians to the study of the subtle interplay of educational institutions, both formal and informal. In his review of Bailyn's work, Lawrence A. Cremin acknowledged the discipline's need for this fresh perspective. Finding the hypotheses "original and imaginative," Cremin hoped that
they will prove sufficiently provocative to set in motion the kind of informed historical scholarship that to date has been all too rare in the field of American education.  

In all areas of educational history, school reform included, Cremin's hopes have been realized.

Of the several hypotheses suggested in Bailyn's essay, one applies directly to studies of school reform. Bailyn argues that a basic shift in the relative importance of formal and informal educational agencies took place. During the colonial period formal educational institutions—schools—assumed functions previously performed by informal educational institutions—family, church, and community. Because in the new environment the family could no longer fulfill its traditional educational duties, "the Puritans," according to Bailyn, "quite deliberately transferred the maimed functions of the family to formal instructional institutions. . . ."  

Recent studies of public school reform explore this shift in the importance of institutions. In his preface to The Evolution of an Urban School System: New York City, 1750-1850, Carl F. Kaestle makes explicit this connection between Bailyn's hypothesis and studies of the public school. Kaestle notes Bailyn's sketch of . . . a fundamental shift in colonial education, from reliance on informal
agencies like the family, the church, and apprenticeship, to a predominant reliance on deliberate schooling."

He then adds that

... this study of New York continues, in a sense, the story of that shift. It traces, in an urban setting, a further stage in the transformation: the consolidation of schools into a single, articulated, hierarchical system which was amenable to uniform policy decisions. It seeks to identify the force that led to this systemization.35

Few scholars acknowledge the impact of Bailyn's work so clearly, but most recent work on public school reform reflects the influence of his ideas.

Thus Bailyn's *Education in the Forming of American Society* reinvigorated the discipline of educational history. The subject of educational history became more than the study of formal institutions; now it considered all agencies of instruction and the changing relationships between these agencies. Likewise, the study of public school development involved more than a series of events and people which merely aided the inevitable growth of public education; it required an examination of the institutional adjustments that people make in their attempt to meet the educational demands of a changing society. With this new approach to the study of school reform, both the labor-education thesis and consensus interpretations
seemed inadequate explanations.

Michael B. Katz's *The Irony of Early School Reform: Educational Innovation in Mid-Nineteenth Century Massachusetts* is the first major work on public school reform which reflects the new approach to educational history. As mentioned above, Katz's view opposes both the labor-education thesis and the consensus view. Katz reintroduces a conflict model in which the wealthier members of society impose a public school system on the less wealthy. Katz's approach or methodology is largely responsible for the change in interpretation.

Although Katz does not refer specifically to the methodological limitations of the earlier works, he is aware of the importance of approach. He notes that the older works overstressed the role of labor and implies that his approach will avoid this bias. Katz describes this new approach as follows:

...This study focuses on small, concrete situations, which it tries to examine thoroughly. The intent is not to be narrow; rather it is to start with the concrete and through careful analysis to work outward to conclusions of broad cultural significance.

The three "concrete situations" he explores are "the abolition of Beverly High School," "the attack of the American Institute of Instruction on a respected colleague, Cyrus Peirce," and "the criticism of the state reform
school offered by some of the state's leading reformers.”

Intensive analysis of specific situations such as these, Katz believes, not examination of political and promotional rhetoric, is the key to understanding school reform.

To explore the concrete events, however, requires sources other than those used in the older studies of school reform. In addition to the periodicals and other printed evidence consulted in earlier studies, Katz refers frequently to reports of local school committees. He also uses census, tax, and voting data. Katz's methodological innovations involve more than additional sources, however. To aid in interpreting new evidence, he applies both statistical techniques and psychological theory.

From research into concrete situations, Katz not only derives his imposition theory of school reform but finds a certain irony as well. Schoolmen held contradictory views about urbanization. On one hand, they "agreed that Massachusetts should continue to strive for a prosperity based on large-scale development." But,

...they also agreed that the growth of cities and factories fostered familial and social decay, and they argued that education should both promote and counteract urbanism and manufacturing.

Educators wanted high schools and other institutional and administrative reforms to accomplish both conflicting
goals. 37

Katz's view of the high school and other educational innovations contradicts what he terms "the myth of popular education." This myth portrays a rational, enlightened working class, led by idealistic and humanitarian intellectuals, triumphantly wrestling free public education from a selfish, wealthy elite and from the bigoted proponents of orthodox religion.

The high school, according to the myth, represents one of democracy's triumphs in this struggle. 38 But Katz's research indicates that wealthier classes promoted the high school both to advance business prosperity and to combat the ill consequences of industrialization. Ironically, educational reforms furthered the evil effects, particularly the fragmentation of the rural community, which they were designed in part to combat. Katz discovers this irony and finds imposition only after following Bailyn's general prescription. Katz approaches the study of school reform by examining in detail the institutional arrangements and shifts that a society undertakes for educational purposes.

Katz's Irony of Early School Reform, as indicated above, was the first major work on school reform since the publication of Bailyn's Education. But Jonathon C. Messerli in 1965, three years before Katz's work appeared, wrote an
article which both notes the faults of the early works and suggests an approach similar to Katz's. Messerli, however, argues essentially a consensus interpretation.

Messerli begins with a historiographical critique, similar to Katz's, of earlier works. He summarizes the traditional interpretations by noting their stress on conflict.

The development of our school system came only at the price of intensive struggles between occasionally articulate and frequently vociferous religious, economic, and political antagonists. . . . Good triumphed over evil, and out of the crucible of conflict, the modern public school emerged. . . .

Messerli illustrates, more clearly than Katz, how this older view derived from the approach employed by the authors. He finds the stress on conflict logical because

. . .admittedly, the educational reformers frequented the printer's office and the legislative forum to promote their ideas, and in so doing left us a legacy of controversy.

Even though many of the sources suggest a conflict view, Messerli believes

. . .that to interpret the development of American education primarily in terms of Sturm and Drang is to miss more pervasive and fundamental social processes with which the controversies may have only superficial similarity. . . .
To correct this bias toward conflict, Messerli argues that historians must focus on important sources previously overlooked. "The annual reports of the school committees from the individual towns of Massachusetts from 1836 to 1850" constitute one such crucial source. When Messerli reviewed these records, he did not find controversy on a grand scale; instead he found

. . . the story of groups and individuals devising provisional solutions for immediate and common-place problems, working to revitalize older practices and also devising new lines of authority and responsibility between the church, the family, the employer, the community, and the school."^42

Messerli's analysis fits remarkably well into the institutional approach suggested by Bailyn. He finds, in fact, a continuation of the shift noted by Bailyn, from informal to formal institutions. In answering the question, "where raged the wars" [of educational reform], he remarks that the school committee reports "typically either implicitly or explicitly centered on the changing role of the family, and the assumption of new responsibilities by more formal institutions of instruction."^43 As the church and home lost their ability to unify, train, and moralize, communities placed "a new faith in the more deliberate and systematic instruction of the school teacher."^44 Thus, by studying local records and employing Bailyn's approach,
Messerli portrays a new view of school reform. In his analysis school reform is more than political conflict; it is the reflection of an entire community's efforts to adjust their institution to changing educational demands.

Taken together, Katz and Messerli represent the application of Bailyn's institutional approach to the study of public school reform. Both attempt to study what the particular pressures on a society are and what institutional adjustments are made to ease these pressures. Realizing the bias inherent in the polemical sources consulted by earlier researchers, both concentrate on concrete events and on local records. Given these similarities, then, why do their interpretations differ? Why does Katz see conflict where Messerli finds a basic consensus?

In his review of Katz's *Irony of Early School Reform*, Donald M. Scott provides a plausible answer to these questions. Scott finds Katz's treatment an extremely static one. Although he discusses

". . .the period as one of rapid change, Katz's dynamics contain no real notion of process, of change, or of historical experience--of the fact that what he talks of existed and developed in and through time."

Katz does not pay close attention to chronology or periodization. He criticizes works which deal primarily with the earliest school reform, the common school movement.
But Katz deals primarily with later reforms, particularly the high school. He never mentions, however, that he is dealing with essentially different reforms at a different time. Messerli, likewise, is inattentive to chronology. Thus, disagreement between Katz and Messerli could arise simply from the fact that they are studying developments at different times and different places.

Katz and Messerli are not the only students of school reform who ignore chronology. Until the present decade, in fact, most were guilty of this oversight. Cremin, for example, examines the years from 1815 to 1850; Carlton, the years from 1820 to 1850; and Messerli, the years from 1820 to 1860. These authors acknowledge that change has taken place during the designated period, but they do not study this change systematically. They may note obvious legal changes, but basically they treat the period as an undifferentiated whole. Messerli's article, admittedly, is primarily concerned with suggesting the value of unexplored sources. These sources may prove more beneficial, however, when treated systematically through time. Most works on school reform have not considered how closely their findings are related to particular places and times. Because of this failure, many of the generalizations about school reform have proved ill-founded.
Historians of education now recognize that studies of school reform must take into account place and time. In the "Epilogue" to one of his more recent works, Katz stresses this facet of historical methodology. Katz raises the point in a critique of Marvin Lazerson's *Origins of the Urban School*. Katz criticizes the topical organization of Lazerson's book. Lazerson deals separately with three specific innovations, the kindergarten, manual training, and evening schools. His book considers these reforms topically; it does not study the development of reform in particular cities. Demonstrating the influence of criticism of his own work, Katz reminds Lazerson that "educational innovations take place in particular contexts." Katz adds that

. . .to answer the questions about process that this book leaves dangling, Lazerson's material should be disaggregated and re-arranged into a series of case studies of individual cities which attempt to assess the relationship among society, demography, politics and educational change.

What is needed is

. . .a careful dissection of the forces at work in individual cities as people sought to introduce simultaneously kindergartens, vocational training, evening classes, and new forms of civic education.

Although some of the recent works on school reform attempt to synthesize a great deal of scattered information, many
follow Katz's prescription of studying defined communities over a period of time. 49

When supplemented by more careful attention to time, the works of Katz and Messerli represent the current approach to the study of public school reform. But these authors also represent two opposing schools of interpretation. Neil Sutherland's discussion of "networks" of educational historians explains the two positions. 50

Sutherland classifies contemporary historians of education into two networks, moderate and radical revisionists. 51 Moderate revisionists reject the traditional notion that the development of the public school represents unqualified progress. Scholarship in this network adopts either Bailyn's broad definition of education or Lawrence A. Cremin's similar but more precise definition of education as "the deliberate, systematic, and sustained effort to transmit or evoke knowledge, attitudes, values, skills, and sensibilities." 52 Moderate revisionists are also

. . . .careful to distinguish between schooling and education, and to make a self-conscious effort to interweave changes in both with changes in the wider society 53

Messerli's article typifies this approach. It views society as an organic whole and studies the institutional
adjustments made in response to social change.

Although they accept Bailyn's broad definition of education and his institutional approach, radical revisionists constitute a distinct network. The fundamental difference between the two networks centers on their conceptions of the role of education in American society. On one hand, "moderate revisionists believe, that, despite many flaws, education in modern society has generally worked." This group seeks to explain how various institutional

. . .'configurations of education' have provided for upward mobility, how they have met the need for a literate citizenship, how they have assimilated so many nationalities, and so on. 54

Radical revisionists, on the other hand, do not believe that the public school has promoted equality or opportunity.

On the contrary, mass education has ensured--some say deliberately--that the old divisions of power and resources were maintained and extended into nineteenth and twentieth century urban and industrial society. 55

In his article "Revisionism and American Educational History," Marvin Lazerson describes scholarship in this network as follows:

Each tells a story of imposition: those above coerced or cajoled the masses into accepting an educational structure against the latter's own interest. 56
Katz is the most prominent radical revisionist, and his *I Irony of Early School Reform* is the quintessential expression of this view. In Katz's work one does not see an organic society working to meet changing educational demands. One sees, rather, a favored group's conscious, self-seeking manipulation of educational institutions.

Radical revisionism has met with vigorous criticism. Marvin Lazerson finds the imposition argument intriguing; "yet as historical research, it has serious flaws."

Lazerson asks,

> . . . who, for example, were the favored few and did they change over time? Was there ever community participation as a historical phenomenon?

The radical revisionists do not deal adequately with these questions or with questions about "the responses of those on the bottom" and whether they were "really imposed upon."57 Because radical revisionists are so preoccupied with affirming their imposition argument, the quality of their scholarship suffers. Their tendency towards presentism results in inadequate attention to historical context and development.

Probably the greatest problem with the radical revisionist or imposition argument is its treatment of thought. In his review of *The Irony of Early School Reform*, Donald M. Scott notes that for Katz,
the ideas and expression of historical subjects appear to have only function, never meaning. Ideas are considered almost solely as instruments at the service of 'motives', not as parts of continuum of experience, of how people seek to comprehend and cope with reality.  

In his discussion of Beverly High School, Katz reveals just how little thought counts in his argument. Katz believes that advocates of the High School "could not really have expected that the children of factory operatives and laborers would attend." But

by stressing that high schools were democratic, that they fostered equality of opportunity, education promoters could cover personal motives with the noblest of sentiments.

Katz simply ignores the possibility that the term "democracy" could have had a different meaning for reformers, a meaning which stressed equality of opportunity. Consequently, he ignores the possibility that reformers viewed the public high school as consistent with this meaning. But his commitment to the imposition argument, his inattention to chronological development, and his slighting of the role of thought lead Katz to allege conspiracy when a more plausible explanation exists.

This essay seeks to profit from the examination of approaches to the study of school reform. A review of the historiography suggests that community studies are a
particularly fruitful way to study the development of public schooling. Only by tracing a specific community over a period of years, can one detect the type of institutional interplay that Bailyn is talking about. Polemical literature and state legislation did, of course, affect public schooling, but the key forces and events in nineteenth and early twentieth-century school reform usually occurred in a community context. Recognizing that the conclusions have limited application, this study deals with how one community and its school board both perceived and reacted to educational demands.

In the preceding discussion of methodology, interpretations of school reform are discussed only on the most general level. The purpose has been to demonstrate how different approaches have influenced interpretations and how a certain approach to school reform appears particularly fruitful. The remainder of this chapter presents the more specific interpretations or arguments concerning school reform. These arguments provide the test questions in a case study of public school reform.

Both in the historiography and in this paper the term "public school reform" refers to any willful innovation or change in public education. In the period from 1850 to 1920, the years covered in this thesis, many of the reforms were aimed at one of two goals: either the centralization
of administration or the expansion of curriculum. But reformers also sought to increase attendance and to alter pedagogical techniques. Most of the observable reforms in Painesville, Ohio, however, occurred in administration and curriculum. Hence the following discussion centers on these two areas.

William A. Bullough argues, and most contemporary educational historians would concur, that "the centralized, bureaucratically organized city school system" is "the most permanent and significant change wrought in American schools by urban reform efforts of the late nineteenth century." School reformers of the late nineteenth century embraced an ideology

...which embodied the precepts of efficiency, centralization of authority and responsibility, and division of powers"

and which "could be summarized in a single word: 'system'."

Allowing for local variation, Bullough describes the general model of administrative reform as follows:

All proposals for reorganization involved common principles—namely nonpartisan school boards small enough to be efficient and responsible, expert superintendents and assistants to administer the system, fiscal authority divorced from other municipal agencies, extensive data and record keeping, and definitive separation between the legislative duties of school boards and the executive responsibility of the superintendent and his staff. In short, educators sought
and strove toward hierarchically organized, structured bureaucratic systems which would have basis in law and be amenable to sound management and attractive to good men.\textsuperscript{62}

By the early twentieth century most major American cities had adopted the main features of this model.\textsuperscript{63}

Recent authors of school reform history devote much of their energy to depicting this story of bureaucratization in various cities. While all of them essentially find the model described by Bullough, the timing of this process varies from city to city. David B. Tyack believes the key events in the centralization of public school administration occurred in New York in 1896, in Philadelphia in 1905, in St. Louis in 1897, and in San Francisco in the 1920's.\textsuperscript{64} In some cases authors disagree on the timing of bureaucratization in a particular city. Tyack argues that the struggle for administrative reforms in New York City "began with reform plans in the 1880's and finally culminated in a seven-man board for greater New York in 1917."\textsuperscript{65} Carl F. Kaestle, however, maintains that

\[
\ldots \text{when the Public School Society turned over its schools to the Board of Education in 1853, nearly all of the features associated with modern urban school bureaucracies were already evident.}\textsuperscript{66}
\]

One need not stress such differences in timing, however; the authors merely emphasize different developments in the same process. The important point is how pervasive the
theme of bureaucratization is in nineteenth-century school reform.

Historians agree, then, that the adoption of the bureaucratic and corporate model in public education was a fundamental reform of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Explaining this reform movement is, of course, a more difficult problem. One explanation stresses the connection between school reform and progressive municipal reform in this period. Like their counterparts in the areas of city government, public health, police and welfare work, educational reformers

. . . were arguing for a relatively closed system of politics in which power and initiative flowed from the top down and administrative law or system took the place of decisions by elected officials.

Through this centralized decision-making process, educators could

. . . destroy the give-and-take bargaining of the ward system, the active lay influence through subcommittees of the board, the contests over cultural and tangible values that had characterized the pluralistic politics of many large cities.67

As David B. Tyack notes, both municipal reform in general and this

. . . urban educational reform followed a familiar pattern of muckrakers' exposure of suffering, corruption, or inefficiency; the formation of alliances of leading
citizens and professional experts who proposed structural innovations; and a subsequent campaign for 'non-political' and rational reorganization of services. 68

Small school boards elected at large and strong superintendents were structural educational reforms which corresponded to more general political reforms in municipal government.

Tyack finds that

. . .several key groups. . .joined together in the campaign to centralize control of schools on the corporate model and to make urban education socially efficient.

These groups included

. . .university presidents and professors of educational administration, some of the 'progressive' city superintendents, leading businessmen and lawyers, and elite men and women in reform groups like the Public Education Associations and civic clubs. 69

Influenced by business ideology and evolutionary philosophy as well as by the corruption and chaos of municipal politics, these men "chose bureaucratic organization and the educational machine to solve the problems of the city schools." 70

Administrative school reform was more than an elitist attack against the inefficiency wrought by the increased numbers and chaos of urbanization. The reformers had a
more personal target as well: the immigrant. The decentralized decision-making of the ward system made for annoying inefficiency, but wards or districts populated and governed by a foreign people threatened, the reformers feared, American culture. A centralized, bureaucratic school system, educators hoped, would insure that the "right" sort of people were making the decisions.

Reformers' fear of the immigrant was actually only a concrete expression of a more general anxiety about the effects of urbanization. As Marvin Lazerson writes, "the immigrants were seen as part of a larger process; they represented a congeries of problems associated with urbanization and industrialism." For educational reformers the key problems stemmed from their belief that traditional institutions in an urban setting no longer performed their educational functions. Educators hoped that a new institution, the urban common school, could

...replace or restore the sense of community that had existed in the village as well as the family ties broken by the physical, social, and economic conditions of urban life, the political harmony that had supposedly existed in preurban society, and even the vocational training that had been an integral part of the rural experience.72

Although immigrants did not constitute the whole problem, reformers viewed them as a key element in the transformation from rural to urban society, and children of the foreign-born
"provided a major test of public education." Through a centralized public school system, concerned men hoped to replace urban chaos with order and to bring the immigrant, either by persuasion or coercion, into the mainstream of American culture.

Like centralization of administration, curriculum expansion was designed to attack urban problems. Educational reformers of the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries believed that "industrialization had eliminated the family's multiple functions, particularly the provision of moral values and instruction in basic vocational skills." An expanded curriculum which included Kindergarten, manual training, and citizenship training was the reformers' answer to the failure of the urban family. While curriculum revision was a response to a general urban problem, the problem of changes in the family, it applied particularly to the supposed needs of the immigrants. "The belief that the poor, particularly the immigrant poor, were failing their children," Marvin Lazerson notes, "became a dominant theme of the era and pervaded discussions on education from the Civil War to World War I." Thus, like administrative reform, curriculum reform resulted, recent literature argues, from the pressures of urbanization and industrialization; to the reformers the immigrant served as the focus for and point of attack on these pressures.
Historians have stressed both the positive and negative effects of school reform in this period. Michael B. Katz, expressing the view of the imposition or radical revisionist school, argues that by 1880 American education had assumed many of its present characteristics; "it is, and was, universal, tax-supported, free, compulsory, bureaucratic, racist, and class-biased." Katz finds deleterious consequences in educational reformers' attachment to the bureaucratic values of order, efficiency, and uniformity rather than such values as responsiveness, variety and flexibility. Administrative centralization ensured separation of school and community, and "schools remained distant and alien institutions to the poor, the bureaucratic detachment of the staff reinforced by the bias of those in political control of the system." Other historians present a more balanced evaluation than Katz's. These historians grant that bureaucratic development had its human costs; it made for rigidity and the channelizing of students into unequal career levels, for example. But they point out that standardization and organization did provide some opportunity and fairness and made some order out of chaos. For the most part, however, historians have pronounced a negative judgment on the bureaucratic public school systems developed since the Civil War.

Even a brief treatment such as this one makes clear
that recent literature on school reform stresses the importance of urbanization to school reform. The development of bureaucratized school systems and the adoption of expanded curriculums were the result of urban and industrial problems, particularly problems associated with the immigrant. School reform was one way educational and political leaders sought to adjust society to the new demands of city life. Hence along with the organizational and curriculum innovations, educational reform helped to produce a whole new orientation toward life. As Michael B. Katz describes this new social function,

...this meant teaching an essentially rural and nonindustrial population the norms of modern urban life through fostering a sense of the importance of time, rewarding achieved rather than ascribed qualities, and, over all, substituting an inner-direction appropriate to an anonymous city for the more visible authority of tradition and community in simpler places. 78

According to current works the story of school reform is the story of educated, business-oriented men attempting to solve urban problems by applying bureaucratic principles to the schools and by inculcating bureaucratic values through the schools.

This study of Painesville, Ohio examines this cluster of arguments about educational reform. In searching for the dynamics of educational change in a particular community, it asks how important urban pressures were in a
community which grew from a population of about 2500 in 1850 to about 7300 in 1920. Were industrialization and immigration key elements in educational change and public school policy in Painesville? This study also examines the question of who the educational reformers and policy-makers in Painesville were. Did they constitute a narrow, elite group, as much of the recent work argues, or did a more socially diverse group participate in educational matters? Recognizing that most of the assumptions about public school development derived from the study of large metropolitan or industrial areas, the basic question of this study is whether these assumptions can be applied to smaller urban communities.
FOOTNOTES - CHAPTER I

1 Michael B. Katz provides an insightful but polemical review of some of the most recent works on school reform in Class, Bureaucracy, and Schools: The Illusion of Educational Change in America, expanded edition (New York, 1975), 147-194. For a review of school reform literature to 1960, see Katz, The Irony of Early School Reform: Educational Innovation in Mid-Nineteenth Century Massachusetts (Cambridge, Mass., 1968), 1-17.


4 Ibid., 10, 55-61.

5 Frank Tracy Carlton, Economic Influences upon Educational Progress in the United States, 1820-1850 (New York, 1965), xiv.


7 Quoted, Ibid., 288.

8 Quoted, Ibid., 288-289.

9 Ibid.

10 Quoted from Lawrence A. Cremin's, "Introduction" to Carlton's Economic Influences Upon Educational Progress, xi. See also page xiii.

11 Ibid., 102.
12 Ibid., xiv. Pawa, "Workingmen and Free Schools," 293.

13 Cremin's "Introduction" to Carlton's Economic Influences Upon Educational Progress, xvi.

14 Sidney L. Jackson, America's Struggle for Free Schools: Social Tension and Education in New England and New York (Washington, 1941), 172.


16 Cremin's "Introduction" to Carlton's Economic Influences Upon Educational Progress, xv.


18 Pawa, "Workingmen and Free Schools," 296.

19 Ibid.

20 Katz, Irony of Early School Reform, 17.

21 Ibid., 16.

22 Ibid., 218.


24 Ibid., 8.


26 Not all educational historians have considered Bailyn's critique of the historiography original. Frederick D. Kershner, Jr., regrets Bailyn's "failure to recognize that the young Teachers College of Education
group led by Butts and Cremin has been saying these things for a decade. Kershner, Review of Bailyn's Education in the Forming of American Society, William and Mary Quarterly, XVIII (October, 1961), 580.

27 Jackson, America's Struggle for Free Schools, 1.


32 Ibid., 7.

33 Cremin, American Education, 679.

34 Bailyn, Education in the Forming of American Society, 14.


36 Katz, The Irony of Early School Reform, 15-16.

37 Ibid., 116.

38 Ibid., 1.


40 Ibid., 749.
41 Ibid., 750.
42 Ibid., 750.
43 Ibid., 755.
44 Ibid., 757.
46 Katz, Class, Bureaucracy, and Schools, 162, 166-167.
48 Katz, Class, Bureaucracy, and Schools, 166-167.
51 Sutherland defines "networks" in part as a group of scholars who "are actively and self-consciously involved in each other's work," who "often share the same ideology," and who "use, extend, clarify, and question each other's
conceptual frameworks and research findings."

52 Ibid.

53 Ibid., xv.

54 Ibid., xvii.

55 Ibid.


57 Ibid.


59 Katz, The Irony of Early School Reform, 53.

60 In his study of New York schools, Carl F. Kaestle explicitly argues the importance of community context. "The features of the state system introduced into the city in 1842, ward control and elective boards, were short-lived; the indigenous bureaucratic features of control and uniformity were not" (Evolution of an Urban School System, 164). By focusing on particular cities and emphasizing local forces, Katz, Troen, and Tyack implicitly make the same argument.

61 Bullough, Cities and Schools in the Gilded Age, 135.

62 Ibid., 47.

63 Ibid., 47. Tyack, The One Best System, 147.

64 Tyack, The One Best System, 147-148.

65 Ibid., 148-149.

67 Tyack, *The One Best System*, 146-147.

68 Ibid., 128.

69 Ibid., 129-130.

70 Bullough, *Cities and Schools in the Gilded Age*, 54. For a discussion of the ideological basis for educators' attraction to the corporate model, see Bullough, pp. 54-59.


72 Bullough, *Cities and Schools in the Gilded Age*, 11.


74 Ibid., 31.

75 Ibid., 32.


CHAPTER II

URBAN PROSPERITY WITHOUT URBAN COSTS: A BRIEF HISTORY OF PAINESVILLE, OHIO, 1850–1920

As Chapter I stresses, historians explain school reform by pointing to pressures from urbanization and industrialization. This chapter examines the degree to which these pressures were present in Painesville, Ohio, during the years 1850 to 1920. The focus here is primarily on changes in population and social composition, in manufacturing and industry, and in local politics. By studying these developments in Painesville, one sees the social framework within which the school board formulated policy. Also, by comparing this framework with the structure and reform of Painesville's public school system, the purpose of Chapters III and IV, one is able to judge whether the recent arguments about school reform apply to the village and city of Painesville.

Painesville's population grew steadily in the period from 1850 to 1920. In 1850, Painesville village had about 2500 residents. In 1910, eight years after Painesville officially became a city, its population had grown to 5,024, more than double its 1850 total. The rate of growth in this fifty-year period was greatest in the 1860's and
1880's. From 1850 to 1860 the town added only 200 people, less than a five percent gain. During the 1860's, however, Painesville's population increased 39 percent as it grew from 2,676 to 3,728. From 1870 to 1880, population growth was under three percent, reaching 3,841. Rapid growth returned in the 1880's. The 1890 figure of 4,755 represented a 24 percent increase over the preceding decade. From 1890 to 1910, growth was again slow. Over this twenty-year period, the gain was only 746 people, or 16 percent. During the entire sixty-year span, Painesville experienced rapid growth only in the sixties and the eighties.¹

From 1910 to 1920, the last decade of the period studied, Painesville experienced the beginning of a population boom which continued through World War II. The 1920 census gives the number of residents as 7,272. This figure represents an increase of 1,771 or 32 percent over 1910, the largest net gain in Painesville history and the largest percentage gain since the 1860's. By 1930, the population totaled 10,944, more than a 50 percent increase over 1920. During the next 20 years, Painesville added about 3,500 residents. Not until the 1960 census did the city show a loss in population.

All the above numbers are for the village and later city of Painesville. Both Painesville Township and Lake
County, the county of which Painesville is the county seat, however, show the same pattern of continuous, though uneven, growth. Like Painesville, these larger political entities experienced rapid growth after 1910. Gaining only 319 persons between 1900 and 1910, Painesville Township's population went from 9,601 to 14,019 in the decade from 1910 to 1920. In the same ten-year period, the number of residents in Lake County went from 22,927 to 28,667, and by 1960 the county included almost 150,000 people.²

Census data certainly do not establish the degree to which a community encounters the problems of urbanization and industrialization, but for Painesville, they suggest the presence of some of the conditions necessary to produce such problems. First, for the entire period from 1850 to 1920, Painesville qualified as an urban area as defined by the Bureau of the Census; it contained at least 2,500 residents.³ But more importantly, the city experienced continuous and sometimes dramatic growth. The population doubled between 1850 and 1900 and doubled again between 1900 and 1930. Thus, Painesville experienced, at least to some degree, the pressures of increased numbers, pressures which historians of public education believe to be central in the explanation of school reform. Of course the problems associated with numbers did not approach the magnitude found in larger cities in Ohio or elsewhere. But
the important point is that Painesville did not remain a stagnated, rural village. Rather, it shared in the accelerated urban growth which characterized America in the Gilded Age and twentieth century.

Heterogeneous social composition, like rapid population growth, was another condition which accompanied urbanization and industrialization. Many of the recent works on public education stress the importance of social diversity and immigration in stimulating reform efforts. The census indicates that Painesville experienced some diversity in the national backgrounds of its citizens.

Census records for 1850 do not distinguish between Painesville Village and the township. Information on immigration, therefore, does not relate exactly to the village. The figures still have value in a study of the city, however, for at least three reasons. First, Painesville village accounted for more than 75 percent of the 3,128 people who resided in the township in 1850. Given the number of foreign-born listed in subsequent censuses, where village and township were distinguished, one can logically conclude that many of the immigrants lived in the village. Secondly, even if many or most of the foreign-born resided outside village limits, the figures would still give some idea of social diversity in Painesville. The city served as the commercial center for both county
and township, and villagers would necessarily receive some exposure to groups living in outlying areas. Finally, local histories speak of a Catholic Church and the presence of Irish, the predominant immigrant group in Painesville at least until 1910, even before 1850.4

According to the 1850 census, foreign-born residents of Painesville Township represented seven nationalities. The most numerous immigrant group was the Irish. Of the 3,128 people enumerated, 151 of them, or about five percent, gave Ireland as their place of birth. The English were the next largest group with seventy-four persons. The Canadians were next in importance with fifty-two, and they were followed by immigrants from the Isle of Man, who numbered thirty-five. The remaining three foreign groups, Germans, French, and Scottish, together totaled only twenty people. Racial diversity in Painesville in 1850 was indeed minimal; the township had only seventeen blacks. Combining all eight groups, Painesville Township included 349 blacks and foreign-born, about 11 percent of the total population.5

By 1880, immigration had increased the social diversity of Painesville. The town now contained foreign-born from thirteen countries, and the black population increased significantly. Of the thirteen foreign nationalities, the Irish remained the largest. Out of a
total village population of 3,841, 238 or about 6 percent were born in Ireland. The Canadians replaced the English as the second largest foreign nationality; seventy-six persons were born in Canada and fifty-seven in England. Germans were the fourth largest group with thirty-four persons claiming birth there, an increase of sixteen over the 1850 total. The Welsh group was next in size with eleven. Nine citizens were from the Isle of Man. Seven other countries—France, Switzerland, Scotland, Austria, Bohemia, Norway, and Poland—provided a combined total of eighteen residents. In addition, seventy blacks and mulattoes now lived in Painesville. Thus, by 1880, 513, or 13 percent, of the city's population were foreign-born, black, or mulatto.6

Since 1880 was the last year for which census records were available, the nature of immigration in the final forty years of the period, 1880 to 1920, is less clear. In his thesis on secondary education in Painesville, Allan Lee Baumgartner suggests that significant immigration did not begin until 1881.7 As the preceding analysis of the census shows he is incorrect, but he probably does identify the beginning of a more visible immigration. More reliable secondary sources indicate that in the 1880's, Painesville and nearby Fairport received an influx of the "new" immigration from southern and eastern Europe. Encouraged
by the opportunities for railroad and dock work, Slovaks, Finns, Hungarians and Italians located in the Painesville area. Most of the work, however, was in or near Fairport, and probably only a small number of immigrants resided in Painesville village itself before 1910. A perusal of the Painesville City Directory for 1911 and 1912 reveals only a scattering of names of Italian or eastern European origin; on the other hand, many names suggest Irish origin. The population boom which began in the decade from 1910 to 1920 may have brought more immigrants to Painesville. Unfortunately, local historians have not addressed this question, and records are not readily available.

Census records and secondary sources indicate, then, that Painesville experienced some of the pressures of social diversity, pressures associated with urbanizing America and with the growth of public education. The Irish were by far the most important foreign influence until 1880, thirty years after the first important school reform movement in Painesville. In fact, Irish influence was more pervasive than the figures cited, for the number of children of foreign-born was large. On page thirty-two of the 1880 census, for example, sixteen persons listed their birthplace as Ireland, but the fathers of all fifty on this page were born there. While Painesville did not
receive a large number of foreign-speaking immigrants, the potential effect of the Irish in Painesville was not negligible. In his book on Boston public education, Stanley K. Schultz considers native reactions to and beliefs about the Irish to have been crucial in shaping that city's public schools.11

As in the case of population growth, the effect of social and ethnic diversity in Painesville should not be exaggerated. Problems were not as severe as in the larger cities where more immigrants and languages were present. The proportion of Irish in Painesville from 1850 to 1880 varied somewhat, apparently responding to the availability of railroad work, but never exceeded 10 percent in any census year. But Painesville clearly was not an isolated rural village; in addition to population growth, it encountered to some degree the social mixing of a modernizing United States.

While the census records reveal that both population growth and some immigration occurred in Painesville, numbers alone cannot portray the way people in this city lived. To judge the degree to which Painesville could be considered "urban," requires an examination of the business and industry of the town. Developments in transportation also tell something of the nature of the community. Finally, the number and variety of social and religious
institutions are important indicators of the prosperity and way of life in Painesville.

Permanent settlement of Painesville began about 1800. Having purchased land directly from the Connecticut Land Company or from an earlier buyer of the Company's holdings, by 1810 enough families had arrived at the site near the mouth of Grand River to give Painesville the appearance of a village. By 1820, the town had become a commercial center. The first issue of the Painesville Telegraph, printed July 16, 1822, described the rapid growth and the appearance of the community. "The ground on which Painesville stands," the paper stated, "ten years ago was marked only by the appearance of a few miserable log huts." But "since its first commencement as a village to the present time," the article continued, "like a snow-ball on the roll, it has increased as it progressed with astonishing rapidity. It is surrounded by a rich and flourishing country, making this the grand mart of its surplus products." The Telegraph gave the following description of the appearance, commercial promise, and business of the village:

It contains about four hundred inhabitants and one hundred buildings, chiefly of wood, many of which are built with elegance and taste. It contains two dry-goods-stores, one drug-store, and three taverns. There are four attorneys and four physicians in the village. The water-privileges for
different kinds of machinery on the Grand River are very superior. Several mills are already erected.

In 1822, Painesville's future appeared to hold great promise.\(^1\)

But even in the 1820's Painesville had more than just hopes. It was already serving as a commercial center of sorts. In his "Recollections of a Pioneer Printer," an early resident of Painesville commented on the nature of the village's trade in the early 1820's. He remarked that "the exports from the county were then mostly destined to Detroit and Mackinaw, and the greater portion was in whiskey." The beverage came from "several distilleries in the neighborhood, which transformed most of the rye corn into blue ruin." In exchange for the whiskey, Painesville merchants received maple sugar from the western Indians. Even though the production and export of spirits "receded on the advance of civilization" as other forms of trade replaced it, the "Pioneer Printer" regretted that Painesville's initiation into the commercial world took this form. The whiskey producers "left their mark enstamped upon the community for many years," for he lamented, "many of our best citizens fell a prey to the devouring monster."\(^1\)

Thus, as early as the 1820's, Painesville, by being one of the first settlements in the Western Reserve and by virtue of its access to a harbor on Lake Erie, was an established
trading center.

In addition to its early commercial success, Painesville had another asset which promoters and leading citizens, mostly from New England and New York, thought would ensure the town's progress. From the earliest years they were certain that the appearance of the town and its surroundings would draw people and business. The first issue of the Telegraph extolled the beauty of the village.

If scenery adds to the appearance of a place, that of Painesville is truly pre-eminent. The eye descends from the village along the high, bold banks of the river to view its gently-flowing current, winding through meadows and corn-fields till it meets an abrupt declivity of rocks towering above the stream below, their summits crowned with lofty pines and beautiful trees of every kind.15

When combined with its location near Fairport Harbor on Lake Erie and with its agricultural advantages, this pastoral beauty, promoters somewhat paradoxically hoped, would assure success. Of course if this wish was ever realized, and the rural appeal of the town stimulated urban and industrial growth, these very forces would destroy the initial attraction of the countryside.

Painesville did not have to face the implications of the paradox, however, for almost a century. Until the second decade of the twentieth century, the town did not experience major industrialization, at least not enough to
change the basic character of the community. Throughout the nineteenth century, Painesville remained much the same as it was in 1822. The promise of industrial and commercial growth was always there and population grew steadily. But until 1910 the town was little more than a prosperous yet in many ways rural, village. Even after 1910 most of the new industry located outside the city limits, and Painesville retained the residential atmosphere that had characterized almost all of its past.16

According to one local historian, Painesville's future as an industrial center was more promising in the first half than in the last half of the nineteenth century. Between 1805 and 1852 various manufacturing concerns which produced plows, steam engines, mill machinery, and iron fences were started and abandoned.17 Even if these efforts failed, the ambition was there, and other businesses, particularly mills, succeeded. In fact, agriculture and manufacturing in the Painesville area provided enough exports in the 1830's to make Fairport, located less than three miles from Painesville, a rival of Cleveland, located thirty miles to the west.18 The rivalry was short-lived, however; Cleveland soon became the major port in the area. But Painesville and Fairport declined only in a relative sense, only when compared to other, more rapidly growing, cities. The village on Grand River grew in population and
established new industries well into the twentieth century.

Painesville entrepreneurs established a wide variety of industry and agriculture in the last half of the nineteenth century. In 1854, Jesse Storrs started a nursery which by 1878 had grown into "the immense industry known as the Painesville Nurseries, by far the largest of its kind west of Rochester." In nearby Fairport, Charles Ruggles entered the fishing business in 1869. His first year he caught almost 15,000 sturgeon, most of which were sold to the nurseries as fertilizer. In 1870, a Mr. Pincus put the fish to better use by manufacturing caviar; he grossed almost $10,000 in his first year of business. The most complete early history of Lake County lists the following Painesville "Manufactories" still in business in 1878: flouring mills, planing mills, Gas-Light and Coal Company, Coe & Wilkes (which manufactured saw-mills and special machinery), Hulburt and Paige (which produced steam-engines, turbine-wheels, and mill machinery), Geauga Stove Company, Plow-Works, Union Fence Company, a toothpick and skewer factory, two carriage companies, and a boot and shoe manufactory. None of these companies were large, however; Coe and Wilkes, for example, employed only "twenty workmen on the average, and did a business amounting to $28,098 in 1873." These small industries did not change the village atmosphere of Painesville.
One enterprise could, and eventually did, change the small-town character of Painesville, that enterprise was the railroad. But the change was not as expected. The railroad did not make the city a major commercial and industrial center. Rather, it aided Painesville's development as a residential community.

Prominent citizens of Painesville, like those in so many other small towns, had from the beginning a fascination with the railroad. In 1835, fifteen men in the area obtained a charter for the Painesville and Fairport Railroad. Cleveland was the Lake terminal for the recently-completed Ohio Canal and, consequently, was growing rapidly. A railroad from the Ohio River to Fairport, via Painesville, investors reasoned, might bestow similar favor on their port. In 1837, the tracks were completed between Fairport and Painesville, and directors planned an extension to the Ohio River. But hard times and high water conspired against the venture. In 1841, the Painesville and Fairport, the second working railroad in Ohio, ended operations. Another proposed line, the Ohio Railroad, started construction in 1836 along an east-west route which terminated near Painesville. This effort failed financially before a year had passed.

But these early failures were not portents of the future of railroads in Painesville. Permanent lines would
soon lace the area. After the failures of the late thirties and early forties, railroad building in the area did enter a ten year lull. The 1840's were prosperous years in Fairport nevertheless, and before the end of the decade enterprising men directed their efforts toward an ambitious plank road project which eventually connected Painesville and Fairport with towns to the south. But the interest in rail transportation remained keen, and in 1848 a group of local investors secured a charter for the Cleveland, Painesville and Ashtabula Railroad. In November, 1851, the track was completed between Cleveland and Painesville. The Lake Shore Road, as it was popularly known, survived into the twentieth century.  

Both optimism and desperation spurred the railroad building of the 1850's. In January, 1850, the Painesville Telegraph, always on the side of progress, wrote that "Painesville never wore a more prosperous look, or promised a brighter future than now." Property values were rising and new buildings were under construction, "and until the bad roads our streets presented a lively and animated appearance." The editors were certain that Painesville could be a great city; "all that is wanting," they concluded, "is union." In the following spring the Telegraph again expressed optimism about the town's prospects. "We notice that changes are constantly going on," the editors
remarked, and "our mechanics and merchants are enlarging their shops and stores in order to accommodate an increasing business." Again, the paper knew why the town was not realizing its possibilities. All that the citizens needed was "an unconquerable will to go onward." 25

Behind the optimism, however, lurked doubt about the future. Despite the newspaper's assertion that times were never better, citizens and investors had reason for caution. The town was no longer growing at a fast pace. Between 1822 and 1850, Painesville grew from 400 to 2500 inhabitants, a sixfold increase in less than twenty years or an average increase of 700 for each decade. Painesville would add less than 200 people in the entire decade of the 1850's. The more informed members of the community undoubtedly sensed this slackening in growth. But what was equally disturbing was the relative success of neighboring cities, particularly Cleveland. 26

Concerned citizens, including the editors of the Telegraph, were determined to prevent Painesville from lapsing "into rural somnolence." 27 The imminent completion of the plank road and the Lake Shore railway were small consolation. The answer was an association which could secure the necessary "union" and "unconquerable will." On March 26, 1851, the Telegraph reported a public meeting attended by many of the "leading and most enterprising
citizens. The object of the meeting was the organization of citizens "interested in the growth and prosperity of Painesville." This eminent gathering decided

. . . that the most efficient way of carrying out plans for public improvement would be by holding weekly meetings, hearing and discussing projects for building plank roads, erecting factories, etc., and reporting upon schemes and works of rival places.

The people at this meeting were afraid that Painesville would be surpassed by other towns. William Perkins, a prominent lawyer, announced that even Centerville, a town as distinguished as its name, was making more progress than Painesville. To the staff of the Telegraph the meeting was crucial: "... We regard this movement as the one which is to build up Painesville, if it is ever to grow anymore."28

Two weeks after the story about the meeting, the Telegraph triumphantly announced the official formation and the election of officers of the "Painesville Improvement Association." Only a few months later, in August, 1851, the citizens of Painesville created another institution designed to further or confirm the town's progress; they voted to establish a graded public school system headed by a board of directors. Three of the officers of the Improvement Association, the president, vice president, and secretary, were also elected to the new, six-member school board.29 The simultaneous creation of the two organizations
and the overlapping of officers suggests that many people in Painesville equated material prosperity and education. William L. Perkins made the equation the week following the school board election. Addressing a crowd celebrating the completion of the railroad bridge over Grand River, Perkins "reviewed the progress for the last half century, in public improvement, education, population, etc."\(^{30}\)

For attorney Perkins and the other leading citizens, progress meant both advancement in material prosperity and advancement in education. Progress through material gain was highly dependent on forces beyond the town's control, as Painesville would learn. But educational attainment was within the people's control; perhaps it required only "union" and "unconquerable will."

William Perkins and other notables of the town were still determined not to let Painesville slip into rural, though educated, somnolence. The railroad still was the key to success. In January, 1856, Dr. Storm Rosa made a speech supporting the Painesville and Hudson Railroad, which was then under construction. The *Telegraph* praised the talk and added that "we hope the efforts of the lecture in setting before us some of our past follies, will serve to make us hereafter vigilant and active in our behalf."

In June of the same year, leading citizens, many of whom served or would serve on the school board, held a railroad
meeting to secure early completion of the Painesville and Hudson Line. Too much was at stake to take chances with so important a project. 31

Throughout the year 1856 the Telegraph campaigned for progress and railroads. Early in the spring the paper printed a letter to the editor which asked rhetorically, "is Painesville going to grow or is it finished?" The contributor noted that the town had good soil, men of enterprise, and location, "but," he added, "there is much to be done to make Painesville what nature destined her to be." He granted that the railroad currently being built was having a good effect on the village. But in order for Painesville to rank "among the first class towns on the lakeshore," a railroad line to Erie, Pennsylvania, would have to be constructed. The Telegraph endorsed the letter and added its own analysis of the town's dilemma. Thirty years ago nature was enough to build a thriving community, the paper stated. But in 1856, beauty, intelligence of the people, and location would "not build Warehouses or Workshops, or add very largely to our population, or the value of our real estate." If Painesville was going to "... march up to her proper rank as a first-rate business town," the paper admonished its readers, "the intelligent but courageous enterprise of her citizens must be added to her native resources." Just as the author of the letter
suggested, what was needed was a railway to benefit "from the commerce that flows along this South Shore."

Building the right railroads would place Painesville "at the fork of the two great western Routes," one to Cincinnati and St. Louis and one to Chicago and the upper Mississippi valley. If the track gauge were broken at this junction, "Painesville would stand only second to Cleveland of all of the towns on the South Shore of Lake Erie." The editors conceded first place to the emerging giant to the west, but the possibilities for their own town were indeed thrilling.32

For all the Telegraph's encouragement and suggestions, Painesville did not live up to the expectations of its vigorous boosters. Thirty years after the railroad promotions of the 1850's, the paper printed an article which described the town's progress in the last half of the nineteenth century. The article was entitled, "Why Don't you Boom Painesville?" As usual, the author listed the village's assets; Painesville was a "healthy, beautiful town" with ample fuel, a good natural harbor, transportation facilities, productive farms, a number of churches, and educational opportunities next to none. But "Why more manufacturing is not carried on here is easily answered," the paper asserted. The proposals of outside manufacturing interests "have not met with that cordial response from our
moneyed men which they meet with in other places." Painesville would not benefit from large-scale manufacturing until 1911 when a large chemical industry settled a mile outside the border.

Although heavy industry or large-scale manufacturing did not locate in the area until after the turn of the century, Painesville remained a prosperous community. Railroad building continued; by the first decade of the twentieth century lines laced the area. After 1885 extensive railroad and dock improvements revived Fairport. In 1878, Painesville not only had the wide variety of small "Manufactories" listed earlier in the chapter, it had more than 70 privately-owned "Business Houses" as well. The city directories for 1895, 1908-1909, and 1911-1912 all indicate that Painesville was a healthy, but small, commercial center. The banking community of the town remained independent and demonstrated reasonable stability through the various national financial crises. The sketch of Painesville given in the 1908-1909 city directory noted that "the city is well supplied with all the accessories and improvements of a modern metropolis." Among the accessories were a "first class water and sewage system" electric and gas illumination, a street car line, three steam railroad lines, a traction line to Cleveland, two banks, two hotels, and "many large and flourishing
The author was, understandably, guilty of exaggeration. Painesville had many flourishing industries, but none of them, excepting railroad lines, employed more than a few dozen workers. Despite its promotional character, however, the directory reveals that Painesville was a prosperous town, a town in little danger of slipping into rural isolation.

Until Painesville's "boom" in the second decade of the twentieth century, the town presents a contradiction. On the one hand, ample evidence suggests prosperity and growth. The newspaper and leading citizens, on the other hand, lamented that the city lacked manufacturing and industry commensurate with its advantages. The different but simultaneous complaints of the newspaper and the school board in the late 1880's demonstrates this incongruity with particular clarity. While the local paper complained that Painesville was not booming, the school board was pleading for more money to cope with Painesville's first instance of seriously over-crowded schools. People were moving to Painesville and were evidently finding employment; what more did the town leaders want?

One explanation of this contradiction is that the businessmen of Painesville were either over-zealous or greedy and would not be satisfied with anything less than phenomenal growth. These men undoubtedly envied the
progress of cities like Cleveland, Toledo, and Erie, and they were dissatisfied with Painesville's relatively meager success. Their disappointment was not without justification; the town did possess attributes favorable to industrial growth. But the paradox of discontent amid prosperity says more about Painesville than that some of its prominent citizens were rapacious or had unrealistic expectations about the future of the city. The enthusiasm the business leaders displayed toward industry was undampened by experience with the negative effects of urban growth. Painesville had industries; but they were small and workers remained close to the final product. Painesville had railroads, but they brought jobs without the smokestacks of the steel mill. Painesville had immigrants, but for the most part they spoke English and readily adjusted to, or were adjusted to, the community. Crime and poverty, conditions which often accompanied immigration, were not problems.

The town's acquaintance with urban and industrial growth, then, was one-sided. The people benefitted from transportation, sanitation and other technological improvements associated with modernization. At the same time, however, they escaped the poverty, crime, social tension, and environmental destruction also associated with urban and industrial development. Under these circumstances one understands why the city's businessmen were fascinated
with industrial growth and dissatisfied with the seemingly ideal condition of moderate growth in a semi-rural village environment. To these men the large cities, despite their problems, provided a model of true progress, and when the time came to fashion a school system, the place to look was the large city.

Despite the efforts of the more ambitious citizens, Painesville developed into and remained primarily a prosperous residential, as opposed to industrial, town. As mentioned, the railroads brought jobs, but not heavy industry. In fact, by 1912, of the 1,765 people who had occupations listed in the city directory, 239, or about one-seventh, worked for one of several railroad companies which had lines in the area. Occupations ranged from laborer to local administrative officers, with a large number listed as brakemen, conductors, and engineers. The 1911-1912 directory also indicates that many of the railroad and other jobs were outside Painesville. The Cleveland, Painesville, and Erie Railroad shops, for example, were in Willoughby, about ten miles west of Painesville. The B & O also employed Painesville citizens in shops outside the city limits. Other people worked in stations in nearby villages. Among employers other than railroads, the Mentor Mills, located several miles to the west, employed about thirty of the town's residents. Sixteen men from
Painesville worked on the docks at Fairport, and twelve worked at the new soda ash plant just north of town. The extensive railroad network and the construction of an interurban streetcar system in 1896 aided Painesville's development as a residential, commuter city.

Occupational listings in the 1911-1912 city directory suggest that Painesville was not only a residential community, but a rather affluent one as well. Of the sixteen men employed at the Fairport docks, only five indicated that they were unskilled laborers. Three men--two electricians and one engineer--held skilled positions, and one man listed his occupation as a policeman on the docks. The remaining six men, however, were either foremen or superintendents. Of course one has to trust the accuracy of the directory, but these figures indicate that for this occupational group, a disproportionate number of management-level employees resided in Painesville. The same pattern appears when considering the Diamond Alkalai, or soda ash plant, employees. Of the twelve persons who worked there, only three performed manual labor. Seven Diamond employees, however, were foremen, superintendents, managers, or office workers. The directory also indicates that a relatively large number of professionals lived in the city. Sixteen physicians, twelve lawyers, and six dentists resided in a community of 5500 inhabitants. One
The final figure suggests that the town was affluent. Only eighty-three of the almost 1800 persons employed were listed simply as laborers. Skilled positions and traditional trades represented a far greater number. The above evidence is far from conclusive, but it does suggest that Painesville resembled a relatively affluent, residential community more than it did an industrial city.

An attempt to characterize Painesville by examining social and religious institutions and local politics results in a mixed picture. Again, as in the case of population and industrial growth, one sees more than a rural village whose economy was tied to agriculture. But at the same time one does not see all the characteristics of an urban area.

Throughout the period 1850-1920, Painesville had a full range of the social clubs, intellectual societies, and educational institutions associated with the nineteenth century town. During the nineteenth century the Telegraph regularly reported news about lyceum and other public lectures, literary and music societies, and debating clubs. Starting around 1900, the Y.M.C.A. joined the High School in performing many of these functions. A library association was active as early as 1822, and beside the public school system, Painesville had many short-lived "private academies, seminaries and finishing
schools." Preceding the formation of the "union" schools in 1851, the Painesville Academy, founded in 1823 and reorganized in 1831, was one of the premier schools in the county. Lake Erie Female Seminary, which moved from Willoughby to Painesville in 1859, also gained recognition, and by 1898, the Seminary had raised its standards sufficiently to become Lake Erie College. In addition to the groups and institutions with primarily an educational or cultural focus, Painesville had a number of lodges or societies; nine lodges were active in 1878. All of these institutions were extremely important to the community, and coverage of their activities comprised a large portion of the local news in the Telegraph.

Painesville's important social causes, like its social institutions, typified those of the small town in the nineteenth century. Antislavery, temperance, and women's rights were movements which filled many columns of the Telegraph. In the 1840's and 1850's, citizens held repeated meetings to discuss and counter the problem of slavery. In October, 1850, almost 300 men, "signed a call for a meeting for the repeal of the fugitive slave law." Painesville and surrounding villages were key terminals in the Underground Railroad system which guided escaped slaves to Canada. Seth Marshall, a wealthy merchant and school board member, supposedly housed up to one hundred slaves at one time while they awaited passage to Canada.
If their antebellum activities are any indication, many of the Painesville volunteers entered the Union army with conviction.

Enthusiasm for temperance and women's rights matched abolitionist sentiment. As in so many other towns, temperance remained an active or latent issue from the founding of the town to Prohibition. Local elections sometimes centered on the regulation or tolerance of "grog shops."

A branch of the Women's Christian Temperance Union began in Painesville in 1874, giving the Telegraph a formal ally in the perpetual struggle. The Telegraph also joined the local branch of the Equal Rights Association, founded in 1883, in the movement for women's rights. In the 1880's and 1890's the newspaper published a regular feature entitled "Woman's Era" which focused on equal rights issues. The editors were elated when, in 1895, women were granted the right to vote in school board elections. The article covering the first election held under the new law proclaimed that "there was not only a large percentage of women who accepted their legal right, but they carried the day for the women's ticket and elected it by a handsome majority."

These social movements in Painesville were to a large extent community concerns. This community involvement was more characteristic of a town than a city.
Due primarily to the presence of Irish immigrants, Painesville had some religious diversity. In 1878, the Roman Catholics and five Protestant denominations had churches in the town. By 1912, the number had grown to one Catholic and nine Protestant churches. Two of the Protestant churches, the Union Congregational and the St. John's Free Baptist, were designated as "colored." The general religious tone of Painesville was certainly Protestant, but enough variety existed to prevent religious domination by any one church. In this sense Painesville was, perhaps, closer to an urban than a small-town pattern.62

Local politics in Painesville is a confusing subject, and this chapter makes no attempt to fathom its intricacies. Rather, the only questions of concern here are whether citizens generated any reform movements to correct governmental corruption and whether school reforms were ever part of such an effort. These questions are prompted by the recent studies of educational reform in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, studies that often relate structural school reform to broader changes in municipal government.63

An examination of issues of the Telegraph printed before and after municipal elections reveals little preoccupation with structural reform. Throughout the entire
period from 1850 to 1920, local efforts apparently led to only one structural reform, the adoption of the city manager plan. This reform was not enacted until 1920 and did not appear crucial to most of the citizens. The plan provided a good high school debating topic, but when it came to a vote, few went to the polls. Other structural reforms resulted from state legislation. Through the 1880's, for example, all of Painesville's councilmen were elected at large. By 1906, however, four councilmen represented wards and three were at-large members. This innovation actually reversed the trend of municipal reform in most cities. The law provided for ward representation instead of eliminating it through a uniform at-large election plan.

Occasionally, the Telegraph reported corruption. But, as is typical of small-town politics, the accusations were leveled at personalities. In the late 1880's, the paper attacked the spending policies of the council, and throughout the nineteenth century the temperance issue sometimes elicited claims of betrayal. But the problem was with individuals, not with the political system. Issues seldom divided the town for long. In 1886, for example, different sections of the town disputed the question of public expenditure for improvements which would benefit some parts of town more than others. The improvements passed, however,
by a five to three majority, and the issue soon faded. Thus, the politics of Painesville were the politics of the small town. Differences of class, race, or religion were not great enough to produce an urban political environment. The religious or ethnic minorities present did not, or could not, challenge the prevailing Protestant culture of the town; consequently, Painesville retained a degree of community.

This historical sketch of Painesville, Ohio has paid little attention to the chronological development. This omission is due in part to the purpose of the chapter. The primary objective is to evaluate the town according to certain criteria of urbanization and industrialization, criteria which include population growth, social composition, politics, and the nature of industry. While Painesville changed in these aspects, the general impression is one of stability in the type of community. In the early decades of the nineteenth century Painesville undoubtedly relied on agriculture, but by 1850, manufactured goods and profits from commerce were probably of equal importance. Painesville's physical resemblance to a small-town, farming community declined steadily. By 1912, only twenty-three farmers lived within the city limits, a fraction of the number in 1850. But the fact that any farmers still resided in the town says something about the
persistence of its rural quality.

Thus, Painesville in the years 1850 to 1920 seems subject to generalization. The town developed commercially and experienced to a mild degree the pressures of urban development. Ethnic and religious minorities were present, and by the second decade of the twentieth century some local workers knew what it meant to work in an automated industry. But experience with modern pressures was limited. After 1910 the Painesville area attracted large industry, but the effect on the city's residents was probably not felt for at least ten years. Supplied with a relatively progressive newspaper and numerous social and cultural institutions, the people were well informed about American development, but they did not feel its worst effects. Crime, poverty, strikes and riots happened elsewhere until the Depression. Living in a "modern," yet semi-rural village, the people of Painesville, or at least the leaders, would look longingly at the "real" progress occurring around them. Moderate prosperity and comfort simply were not enough when progress is what counted. Fortunately, progress was not always found in a factory; sometimes it was found in a school room or school system.
FOOTNOTES - CHAPTER II

1 Census totals are given in Janice M. Ahstrom et al., Here is Lake County (Cleveland, 1964), 137.

2 Ibid.


4 Ahstrom, Here is Lake County, 82-83.


6 1880 Census.


10 1880 Census.


13 Quoted in Williams Brothers, *History of Geauga and Lake Counties*, 213.

14 Ibid., 214.

15 Ibid., 213.

16 The Painesville Telegraph's "Souvenir Volume" for Lake County's 125th anniversary entitles the section covering the years from 1890 to 1915 "Signs of Urbanization" (pp. 34-51).


18 Ibid., 16.

19 Williams Brothers, *History of Geauga and Lake Counties*, 213. As early as the 1840's, the Painesville area was a productive fruit-growing region (Ahstrom, *Here is Lake County*, 99).


21 Ibid., 217-218.


24 Ahstrom, *Here is Lake County*, 80-81.

25 *Painesville Telegraph*, January 16, 1850; April 24, 1850.

26 Population figures are listed in Ahstrom, *Here is Lake County*, 137.

27 Smith, *As a City upon a Hill*, 99.

28 *Painesville Telegraph*, March 26, 1851.

29 *Painesville Telegraph*, April 9, 1851; August 6, 1851. Records of the Educational Board of Directors of Union Schools, Town of Painesville, Lake County, State of Ohio, August 13, 1851. Hereinafter cited as Records of the School Board, followed by date of meeting or entry. The three men who were officers in both organizations were Aaron Wilcox, Timothy Rockwell, and Jerome Palmer.

30 *Painesville Telegraph*, August 20, 1851.

31 Ibid., January 2, 1856; June 4, 1856.

32 Ibid., April 9, 1856.

33 Ibid., April 14, 1857.

34 Ahstrom, *Here is Lake County*, 120, 122.


36 Ahstrom, *Here is Lake County*, 103-104.


Williams Brothers, History of Geauga and Lake Counties, 216.

Painesville City Directory, 1908-1909, p. 66.

Painesville Telegraph, March 24, 1887.

The Painesville City Directory, 1911-1912, lists eleven manufacturing establishments; none of them qualify as heavy industry or as mass production operations. The most recent county history suggests that automation did not begin in Painesville industry until Coe Manufacturing Company employed the veneer roller drier in 1902. (Ahstrom, Here is Lake County, 103)

Complaints of crime and vandalism appear occasionally in the Telegraph, but they seem almost ludicrous when compared to problems in larger cities. Isolated incidents of drunkenness, fighting, and schoolboy pranks comprised most of the crime and vice in Painesville through most of the period. For examples of such incidents, see Painesville Telegraph, September 17, 1851; December 7, 1853; September 25, 1855; and April 2, 1856.

Page Smith in his study of towns provides examples of cities which attracted industry and consequently underwent drastic change (As a City upon a Hill, 92-97, 104-105).

Painesville City Directory, 1911-1912. The railroad companies which maintained depots in Painesville were the B&O; New York Central and St. Louis; Lake Shore and Michigan and Southern; and the Cleveland, Painesville, and Eastern and Cleveland, Painesville, and Ashtabula (p. 134).

Tbid., 10-130.
47 Baumgartner, "History of Public Secondary Education," 54; Ahstrom, Here is Lake County, lll.


49 Painesville's social and intellectual institutions were those described in Page Smith, As a City upon a Hill, 157-182, 250.

50 Baumgartner, "History of Public Secondary Education," 9-21, 58; Painesville Telegraph, October 22, 1856; March 24, 1859.

51 Painesville Telegraph, December 15, 1904; November 25, 1905.

52 Baumgartner, "History of Public Secondary Education," 47.

53 Ahstrom, Here is Lake County, 52, 107-108.

54 Williams Brothers, History of Geauga and Lake Counties, 218.

55 Smith, As a City upon a Hill, 145-156.

56 Painesville Telegraph, October 16, 1850.

57 Ahstrom, Here is Lake County, 85-86.

58 The 1856 election was one in which temperance was a key element (Painesville Telegraph, April 9, 1856).

59 Ahstrom, Here is Lake County, 105.

60 Ibid., 106; Painesville Telegraph, April 3, 1895.
Ahstrom, *Here is Lake County*, 83; Williams Brothers, *History of Lake and Geauga Counties*, 215-216; *Painesville City Directory, 1911-1912*, p. 140.

For a discussion of patterns of religious life in small towns, see Smith, *As a City upon a Hill*, 55-83. The general Protestant tone in Painesville is typified in the Telegraph's coverage of religious ceremonies of the various churches; St. Mary's Catholic Church was seldom, if ever, mentioned (*Painesville Telegraph*, April 9, 1885).

Tyack, *The One Best System*, 78-125 (Part III).

*Painesville Telegraph*, April 18, 1917; *Lake County's 125th Anniversary Souvenir Album*, 55.


Smith, *As a City upon a Hill*, 121-126.

Some elections in the 1880's were particularly spirited. For examples, see *Painesville Telegraph*, April 5, 1855; April 1, 1886; March 28, 1888.

*Painesville Telegraph*, April 1, 1886; April 8, 1886.

Smith, *As a City upon a Hill*, 175-180.

The record of imports and exports of Fairport Harbor in 1847 suggests a rough balance between agriculture and processed or manufactured goods. Chart is in Williams Brothers, *History of Geauga and Lake Counties*, 219.

*Painesville City Directory, 1911-1912*.

*Ibid.*, 131; Ahstrom, *Here is Lake County*, 122-123.
CHAPTER III

THE CREATION OF A MARGINAL BUREAUCRACY:
CENTRALIZATION OF PAINESVILLE'S
PUBLIC SCHOOLS, 1850-1880

Painesville's public school system gained recognition as one of the most progressive systems in Ohio. Only six years after the formation of the "Union School System" in 1851, State Commissioner of Common Schools Reverend Anson Smyth visited the city and marvelled at the schools. According to the Telegraph,

"...the gentleman said that from the excellent reputation throughout the State of the Schools of Painesville, he had expected to find good schools, but he had no expectation of finding such superior Schools in every department as had been his pleasant disappointment.

Usually in towns with a series of schools he found some good and some bad, but in Painesville Commissioner Smyth saw for the first time "an unbroken series of a very superior order." The system had virtually "all that pertains to a good school"—neat rooms, good teachers, orderliness, and attentive and mannerly scholars. Indeed, with better schoolhouse accommodations, the Commissioner seemed to think, the schools of Painesville might be quite regarded as the Model Schools of the land."

Painesville had, in other words, what Smyth and other
schoolmen viewed as the ideal urban school system. Even
though the system taught only a few hundred students and
employed about a dozen teachers, Smyth apparently consider-
ed it an appropriate model for large cities like Cleveland
and Cincinnati.\textsuperscript{2} Painesville's schools represented the
possibilities of urban education in the nineteenth century.

This chapter examines the origin and early development
of this school system. It focuses on who implemented the
system and why these reformers believed the change
desirable. But the chapter is also concerned with how the
system worked. What did the school board, the real
managers of Painesville schools, do to make public
education in their town a model for other cities, regard-
less of size?

Public school reform in Painesville began in 1826
when the township trustees divided the town into school
districts. This action was in response to legislation
passed the previous year. State legislation in 1838
stimulated further reform. This law raised the compulsory
school tax from one-half to two mills and created district,
township, and city school officers. The 1838 school law
also provided for an optional township tax and designated
cities and incorporated villages as separate districts.
As a result of this law, Painesville citizens voted to
establish subdistricts in the village of Painesville.\textsuperscript{3}
The townspeople were not ready for a centralized system. In 1838, the entire township contained about twenty school districts. Since Painesville had more than half the township's population, the village probably included at least ten of these districts. By making each city or incorporated village a separate district, the school law gave Painesville the opportunity for centralization. Without the vote on subdistricts, three directors would have controlled all the city's schools. But in 1838 the attachment to the old district pattern was too strong. A major effort toward centralization of the city's schools would not come for more than a decade.4

Significant reform of Painesville's public schools did not occur until voters adopted the provisions of the "Akron Law" of 1847. Earlier legislation provided some centralization of administration by giving the township treasurer supervision of all schools, but basically these laws confirmed the district system which had developed over the previous century. The Akron Law, however, provided what became a widely adopted model for the reorganization of school systems in Ohio.

This special act of the Ohio legislature resulted from the efforts of Reverend Isaac Jennings. Jennings, dismayed at the chaotic conditions of Akron's schools, organized a committee whose recommendations formed the basis
of the law. Though the provisions applied specifically to Akron, Painesville and other cities adopted them with only minor changes. The law provided for the incorporation of the city's schools into one district and for the popular election of a six-member board of education which controlled school property and funds. The law also required examinations for the promotion of pupils and gave teachers the power to classify pupils. Other clauses created a board of examiners for teachers and provided for annual public examinations. Reformers believed that these measures gave the 700 school-age children of Akron better schools.

In 1848, the Ohio legislature extended the law's provisions to all incorporated villages with a population of 200 or more. This general legislation had limited effect, however, for it had to be approved by two-thirds majority of the town's voters. The following year a revision of the Akron Law permitted adoption by half the voters in any town with a population of at least 200. About one-half of the incorporated towns in the state, and some that were unincorporated, eventually adopted this act.5

Citizens of Painesville did not take advantage of the law immediately. Not until January, 1851, was a meeting of the citizens held "for the purpose of considering the propriety of establishing the Union School System of Education."6 About fifty citizens, some of them women, gathered at the courthouse and defeated the proposition by a
large majority. The Telegraph reported that due to the defeat "an effort will now be made to place the Academy on a more firm foundation." Those who cared about school matters still retained some of the doubts they had had when centralization was rejected in 1838. The Academy seemed a familiar, safe alternative to the innovation. This reluctance toward reform did not last long, however. On July 16, 1851, another meeting announced a second election on the issue. On July 28, 1851, only six months after the first election, a large majority of forty-nine out of fifty-two total electors voted to adopt "the Act entitled An Act for the better regulation of public Schools in Cities, Towns, etc." What could have caused such an abrupt change of opinion?

To the Secretary of the first school board, Dr. A. Plimpton, the reason for the change was clear. Before the second election Dr. Asa D. Lord, "a man practically acquainted with the system in its various bearings," addressed the citizens. Dr. Lord certainly spoke with authority. He had both a degree in medicine and a license to preach in the Presbyterian Church. His accomplishments in education were impressive. He had edited several educational journals, and later would edit the Ohio Journal of Education, and at the age of twenty-three had served as principal of the Western Reserve Teacher's Seminary. But most important, as the superintendent of public schools in Columbus, Ohio, he
developed the state's first system of graded schools. With this background, he was a formidable advocate of union schools for all villages and cities. According to Dr. Plimpton, Asa Lord was responsible for selling the union system to Painesville voters.\textsuperscript{10}

In a letter to the editor of the \textit{Telegraph}, Dr. Lord explained to the readers the advantages of union schools. First of all, he cleared up any confusion over terminology; "Union Schools" were essentially classified, or graded, schools. "The most important feature of this system," he continued, ". . . is that all the common schools, in a town or corporation, whether taught in a single house or in several different buildings, are united together, and controlled by one board of directors." Dr. Lord thought that the system had six distinct advantages. First, since the whole community selected the board of directors, both the people at large and the six directors have a greater sense of responsibility for teacher selection and other school business. Second, by having the board control books and the courses of study, the community avoided the caprice of teachers and students and the influence of book agents. Third, a system of classification according to knowledge and mental discipline and a system of promotion according to rigid examination furnished

. . . to all one of the strongest inducements to industry, and effort for
improvement, from the time they enter the lowest class in the Primary, till they complete the Course in the High School.

Fourth, discipline was superior to that in common district schools and private schools, for a pupil stands on "his own merits, his scholarship, his deportment, his character." Thus, the "wealthy or exalted" received no favors and the "poor or humble" suffered no embarrassment. The fifth advantage that Dr. Lord cited was the ease with which teachers could be supplied "with library apparatus and other needed facilities for successful teaching." Sixth, Lord believed that the system was the most economical ever adopted; it was good enough for the richest but cheap enough for the poorest. On one hand the poor regarded free schools "as a priceless inheritance to which their children, [in] common with those most favored of fortune, have an inalienable right." The rich, on the other hand, paid their taxes

. . . cheerfully and promptly, with the conviction that the best possible way to increase both the safety and the value of property, is to educate all the youth around them.

According to one schoolman, then, the union system was truly the system for all, truly "The American System of Popular Education."11

Lord's arguments contain many of the objectives sought by educational reformers later in the century. His system
would bring efficiency and economy to school management and would inculcate the physical and mental discipline necessary in a modernizing society. Strict hierarchy would replace individual caprice, and testing would induce industry and effort for improvement. But he also advanced his centralized system by appealing to the more traditional ideals of the common school. In his fourth point he stressed the mixing of social classes, and his first point implied that the system promoted democracy and community involvement. How a centralized, graded school could be more democratic than the local district school he did not make clear. Perhaps he was simply attempting to make the loss of strict local control more acceptable to people accustomed to the district system. Whatever his intentions, the people of Painesville, at least the relatively few who were concerned enough to vote, apparently found his arguments both persuasive and reassuring. These citizens decided to end the district system in Painesville, the system employed since the founding of the city. Lord's supportive statement, while convincing, did not in itself bring about this radical change. Circumstances in Painesville made his system and arguments particularly appealing. But before considering these circumstances, a description of the historical actors, the men who actually voted for school reform, is useful.

Thanks to the enthusiasm of the first secretary of the school board, both the poll book of the election to establish
union schools and the poll book for the first board election still exist. Because the July 28, 1851 vote was forty-nine to three in favor of adopting the new system, the poll book, although it does not record individual votes, approximates a list of the most zealous proponents of school reform. Fortunately, fifty of the fifty-two names could be located in census records. All twenty-two voters in the first school board election on August 11, 1851, appear in the 1850 census. The census records, therefore, permit some generalization about the supporters of public school reform in Painesville.

Voters in the "Akron Law" election of July, 1851 represented twenty-four occupations and demonstrated considerable variation in wealth. The national origin of these men showed less diversity. Merchants comprised the largest group with ten of the fifty-two voters. Carriage-makers were next with five voters, followed by farmers and physicians with four voters each. The remaining twenty-nine voters covered a wide range of occupations of the type one would associate with a small town. The legal profession and traditional trades such as blacksmith, butcher, carpenter, and shoemaker were all represented. Only one laborer voted in the election, but, unfortunately, how he voted will never be known. The wealth of the electors is not easily subject to categorization. Of the forty-one voters located in the 1850 census, sixteen had no real estate or had real estate valued
under $500. Twelve voters had real estate valued between 1000 and 2000 dollars. Only five men had property valued in excess of $5000. At least twenty-eight of the fifty-two voters owned real estate. Generalization about place of birth is less difficult; the voters in this election were for the most part native American citizens. As mentioned, fifty of the fifty-two voters appeared in the census, and forty-seven of the fifty were from Ohio, New York, Pennsylvania, or New England. Two voters were born in England and one in Ireland.13

These sociological facts have limited value, but they do provide a vague picture of who did, or did not, vote to establish the centralized system. First of all, merchants, men in private business, were most interested in the reform; they provided one-fifth of the voting strength. As Chapter II indicates, Painesville was already a commercial center by 1850, but the number of merchants participating in the election was certainly greater than their percentage of the population warranted. Aside from merchants and farmers, the voters were predominantly professionals or skilled workmen. Relatively few laborers resided in the city, but the one who voted did not reflect the proportion of manual laborers in the town. Thus, even though fourteen of the voters had no real estate in 1850, the participants in the election tended to pursue middle- or upper-class occupations. Meaningful categories of wealth are difficult to discern; the ones
### WEALTH OF VOTERS

#### IN "AKRON LAW" ELECTION*

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### PLACE OF BIRTH OF VOTERS

#### IN "AKRON LAW" ELECTION*

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<td>1</td>
<td>Ohio</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
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<td>Maine</td>
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<td>Massachusetts</td>
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### IN FIRST SCHOOL BOARD ELECTION*

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<th>Place of Birth</th>
<th>No. of Voters</th>
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<td>New York</td>
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</tr>
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<td>England</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Ohio</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Massachusetts</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Vermont</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(* Information was compiled from Records of the School Board and census records.*)
chosen are admittedly arbitrary. But the numbers do show that more than half the voters owned real estate. Another figure concerning wealth is perhaps useful. Seventeen of the voters were located in both the 1850 and 1860 census. Of this seventeen, sixteen had increased the value of their real estate. Five of the fourteen voters who had no real estate in 1850 were found in both census years; all five had accumulated at least $1200 in land. The smallest increase among the sixteen who increased their wealth was $1000. Some individuals made much more dramatic gains. Merchant-banker Aaron Wilcox, for example, in one decade added $49,000 to his wealth in land. Census records suggested that those who favored reform were prosperous businessmen, professionals, and skilled workers. Unfortunately, the three who voted against the innovation cannot be identified; they could have been the laborer, teamster, and painter or, possibly, three of the ten merchants. The number who opposed the system was too small, however, to negate the above generalizations.

Voters in the first school board election form a composite picture similar to that of the "Akron Law" electors. This resemblance is not surprising, for sixteen of the twenty-two school board voters also participated in the previous election. But one slight difference is noticeable; those who voted for board members were somewhat wealthier as a group. Only four of the twenty-two men did not own
real estate in 1850, whereas fourteen of fifty voters in the previous election did not own land. Twelve voters were traced in the 1850 and 1860 census. While two men had less money in real estate, ten had increased the value of their real estate. Proportionately, more future members of the school board voted in the second, the school board, election. Eight of the twenty-two voters in this election would eventually serve on the board themselves. Twelve of the fifty-two "Akron Law" voters later became school board members.

Statistics concerning the voters on school issues may not, of themselves, tell a great deal about individuals and their motives. But the small number of voters tells something of the community's attitude toward educational matters. Most of the qualified voters, and the town in general, let fifty-two people decide Painesville's educational future. In a town of 2,500, probably ten times that number of voters were enfranchised. This pattern of non-involvement persisted until the 1870's. In the twenty school board elections from 1851 to 1870, at least seven drew fewer than fifty voters. Early public school reform and policy in Painesville occurred with little interference from the mass of voters or citizens.

Having considered the social composition of the men who desired reform, the question remains as to why these
men wanted change. Could Asa Lord's six point lecture alone convince them of the virtues of graded classes and centralized administration? Complaints from school officials indicate Painesville was suffering from problems that Lord's union system was designed to remedy. One problem was insufficient funding of the Academy and district schools. On June 20, 1849, the trustees of the Painesville Education Society made a public appeal for funds. The trustees first reminded the citizens that generous men, "actuated by an ardent desire for the common good of the village and surrounding country," donated money, time, and care to establish an Academy as good as any in Ohio. Strictly in the interest of the common good, these same men, the trustees claimed, built schoolhouses and organized school districts. The common schools and the "public, un-endowed Academy" were Painesville's alternative to the "private or select schools" which degraded the common school "into a sort of charity school for the poor." But the point of the message was that the Education Society needed money to continue its successful management of the Academy, which was in effect the town's high school. Having assured the readers that the Academy, which charged tuition, was no threat to the common schools, the trustees requested $275 for globes and repairs. The four-mill levy permitted upon adoption of the Akron Law must have appeared enticing to the eight trustees of the Education Society, three of
whom later served on the school board. Adoption of the law would allow the school board to allocate the school resources of the entire town. District interference would disappear, and the board could make improvements wherever they were most needed. Under the Akron Law, the board would no longer have to depend on the despised undemocratic tuition or the whims of private largess to finance the higher grades.16

In addition to the financial problems that centralization would help solve, some citizens were dissatisfied with the general state of disorganization in the district schools. In a Telegraph article entitled "Common Schools," a local school official expresses this concern about the district schools in Lake County. The author begins by admonishing teachers for their failure to report the conditions of their schools. "There are in Lake County, about one hundred and twenty school districts, the condition of which we know but little," he complained, "from the fact that teachers do not report as required by the Secretary of State." Common schools were of vital importance. These schools were "the only means by which the great mass can be educated; and unless the mass are educated, we cease to be a free and independent people." The success of District Number 2 in Mentor, as indicated in the teacher's report, proved that the common schools could fulfill their noble mission if they were "well-conducted."
While this author did not mention the Akron Law specifically, he did imply that improved school organization was needed.\textsuperscript{17}

Textbooks presented another problem. Different schools used different books, creating general confusion and specific problems for students who moved from one district to another. An article in the \textit{Telegraph}, reprinted from a newspaper in a nearby county, stated the case for uniformity of textbooks. The author expressed his astonishment "at the apathy, prevailing in the community, in respect to the character and quality of the books used by youth." Not only would the standardizing of textbooks improve education, it would also aid economy and efficiency. Teachers would lose little time from incorrect classification of students or unfamiliarity with books. For the writer of the article, the answer was the adoption of McGuffey's series and Ray's \textit{Arithmetic}, "another rightdown substantial 'Buckeye' book . . . that will prepare young Ohioans to count their own money."\textsuperscript{18} Of course, to start using particular books was only a temporary expedient; the implication was that some type of system was necessary to ensure textbook uniformity. In Painesville, the problem was probably less severe. In Lake County, the County Board of Examiners of teachers recommended textbooks. But these were recommendations only; districts still controlled which books would be used.\textsuperscript{19}
Painesville and surrounding areas appeared, then, to experience some of the educational problems the Akron Law was designed to rectify. But the real enthusiasm for the system came after its adoption and was expressed by only a few people. A large majority of the citizens did not feel a desperate need for a union system. Even the elite of the town and the newspaper did not really campaign for the system until right before adoption, and the Telegraph's editors were seldom silent on issues that concerned them. In fact, only one month before the Akron Law referendum, the Telegraph reported favorably on "the examination and exhibition of the pupils of Miss Gee," a district school teacher. The reporter was satisfied that children were learning, for the "...answers, often in the words of the pupil, were given in a manner which plainly demonstrated that they had imbibed the ideas of the author." The residents of the district did not appear dissatisfied either; the paper noted that "the room was crowded to overflowing with the parents and friends of the scholars."²⁰ Another indication of general satisfaction with the district system is that the Akron Law failed on the first vote and that relatively few people voted in either election. The benefits of centralized administration were not readily apparent to the people of Painesville, at least not apparent enough to make them give up a system that seemed to work.
A satisfactory explanation of why Painesville citizens were willing to change radically their school system goes beyond matching the provisions of the Akron Law to the educational needs of the community. Educational reform meant more to some of the residents than just improved schools; reform meant progress.

As Chapter II has emphasized, the 1850s in Painesville witnessed a concerted effort for industrial growth. Business leaders vigorously promoted plank roads and railroad projects. Just three months before the formation of the new school system, prominent citizens organized the Painesville Improvement Association. The town was prosperous in these years. An indication of this prosperity was the town's ability to rebuild after an extensive fire in August, 1857. But people also had doubts. An article which appeared a few months before the Akron Law vote demonstrated that other areas were growing more rapidly. The paper noted that from 1840 to 1850 the population of Lake County had grown from 13,719 to 14,646, or 6-1/2 percent. But neighboring Cuyahoga County, which included Cleveland, grew from 26,506 to 48,089, an 82 percent increase. Sometimes the paper was more reassuring; in one article it noted that, including townships, Painesville still had more inhabitants than Warren, Conneaut, Ashtabula, and Youngstown. Another article implied that Painesville mechanics were superior to mechanics from Cleveland. But
people were clearly anxious about the future of their city. Despite the building and prosperity, citizens wondered, "Is Painesville going to grow or is it finished?"

Industrial wealth was one form of progress; education was another. About the same time that the new school system was adopted, the Telegraph printed articles which associated education and industrialization. The June 4, 1851, issue contained a story entitled, "Schools, Newspapers, and Railroads." According to the author, these institutions were "the triumvirate spirit of progress." Within a year after the new system went into effect, the paper quoted Senator Charles Sumner as making a similar connection between education and railroads. "Under God," Sumner proclaimed, "the [rail]road and the schoolmaster are the two chief agents of human improvement." In the Senator's view, the railroad somehow expanded the education begun by the teacher. The speech by a Painesville man at the completion of the railroad bridge, cited in Chapter II, associated education with population growth and public improvement. Industry, population growth, and education were, to some people in Painesville, important indicators of progress.

To people concerned, or perhaps preoccupied, with progress, the Akron Law had special meaning. Industrial growth was not predictable; Painesville had all the right resources and still fell behind. But Painesville could easily achieve educational progress; all that was required
was a few votes in favor of the Akron Law. The town might trail Cleveland and other neighboring cities in industrial growth; this did not mean that schools need lag as well. Thus, school reform offered an opportunity to those anxious to affirm their community's and their own personal success. Adopting a centralized school system was one way Painesville could avoid being left behind.

This argument that the adoption of a centralized school system served personal more than educational needs is supported by the social analysis of the voters. Although far from conclusive, the census records indicate that as a group the voters might have more concern about status and progress than people of the town in general. More than half the group pursued what today would be considered white-collar positions. At the most, only two voters were unskilled and only four were farmers. Two of the farmers, however, eventually attained real estate valued at $25,000 or more. Merchants, men in private business, would seem particularly sensitive to the town's progress and this group constituted about one-fifth of the voters. The overlapping of proponents of the Improvement Association and voters in the Akron Law or school board election also suggests that school reform was stimulated in part by anxiety over progress or success. Three of the six men on the committee that wrote the Improvement Association constitution voted in one of the two elections. Four of the eight men who made up
the officers and Executive Committee of the Association were also participants in one or both of the elections. These men were conscious of progress and success; if someone could demonstrate to them that school reform was progress, then this small group of men would give up their present system.

Doctor Asa D. Lord was such a person; he could convince the prominent men of small towns that a union school system was both the answer to educational problems and the modern way to manage school. In Painesville, Lord's job was not particularly difficult. The city was proud of the educational accomplishments of the Academy, and the Telegraph frequently printed articles on the importance of education. All Lord had to do was convince the people of Painesville that centralization was the next step in educational progress. Because of Lord's background, a small group of interested citizens were ready to listen. Thus, on July 28, 1851, forty-nine people, many of whom probably rejected the Akron Law vote the first time, produced a lasting change in Painesville's school system.

While the Telegraph did not criticize the district schools before the Akron Law reforms were implemented, after the 1851 election it vigorously disparaged the old system. One lengthy article began with a quote from the letter of a disgruntled citizen. "The Union system of schools," he
### OCCUPATIONS OF VOTERS IN "AKRON LAW" ELECTION*

<table>
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<tr>
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<th>Occupation</th>
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### OCCUPATIONS OF VOTERS IN FIRST SCHOOL BOARD ELECTION*

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* Information was compiled from Records of the School Board and census records.
stated, "is not very popular with our people--and if any attempt is made to add to its expense, the people will overthrow the whole affair." The Telegraph, which remained throughout the period from 1850 to 1920 a staunch supporter of the school system and school board policy, believed the man totally mistaken "as to public sentiment." "The superiority of the union and graded system over the older order of things," the paper countered, "is so very great and so very manifest, that excellence must be generally recognized." With fifty to sixty students in one room, "everything was crowded, hurried, brief, and of little value." Because students of all ages filled the classroom, district school teachers faced almost insurmountable problems of instruction and discipline. Of course, teachers had the problem of textbook diversity as well. After portraying the ills of the former system, the Telegraph maintained that they had presented a "fair picture of the old-fashioned district school; and who says the whole affair was not pretty nearly a farce."29 But dissatisfaction with the district schools was not the major cause of school reform in Painesville, for dislike of these schools did not develop until after the new system was adopted. This dislike grew out of the enthusiasm for the centralized system and out of a fear that a vote of the citizens might negate the town's educational progress.
But Painesville was in little danger of renouncing its new school system. The Telegraph gave the schools frequent and favorable publicity. The brief story in the March 2, 1853 issue was typical. "These excellent Schools were never in a more prosperous condition than at the present time," the paper announced. Superintendent George E. Howe "has rendered, we believe, universal satisfaction in the discharge of his various duties," and "the public exhibition . . . of the public schools . . . reflected the highest credit upon all concerned." The editors expressed similar satisfaction with the schools eight years later after the Civil War had begun. On September 19, 1861, the paper reported that "our schools in the county feel the stringency of the times, with one exception, and that is the Union Schools in this village." The school received tuition from about fifty "outsiders," and even with the new high school, the system had "almost as many pupils as can be accommodated in our schools." Later that year, some of the staff of the Telegraph visited the schools and found "everything in order" even though the number of males "was more than decimated to fill the ranks of the insatiable Mars." Throughout the period from 1850 to 1920 both the paper and the leading citizens remained satisfied with the new system.

Survival of the new system was assured by more than good publicity and the patronage of the town elite, however.
The general population was content with the system as well. On March 13, 1854, the Telegraph expressed concern that "the cry of high taxes has made many discontented [sic] with the present school law." But the following school board election reflected little dissatisfaction. Only seven people voted in the election, and five of them served on the newly-elected board. In February, 1858, the Commercial Advertiser accused the school board of mismanagement of the public schools. The board denied the charges and was vindicated at the polls when the two members up for re-election won by large majorities.32

Another measure of the people's approval of the system was their willingness to approve extra tax levies for building purposes. On March 12, 1860, a public meeting of the voters passed a maximum $13,000 levy for a new high school. The vote was close, however. A resolution to lower the amount to $10,000 failed by only four votes, and the final amount carried by a vote of 145 to 112. Samuel Moody and other citizens appeared at a board meeting two weeks later and protested the action of the public meeting. Moody and his followers were only dissatisfied with the amount of the tax, and stated that they were willing to pay $10,000; they were not protesting the board's decision to build a new high school.33 In May, 1864, voters approved the purchase of a lot for $1150, including damages to an adjacent lot.
Again, the vote was fairly close, 105 to 80, but any lasting discontent was not apparent at the next school board election in August.\textsuperscript{34} The board asked for building funds two more times during the 1860s. At a May 21, 1866 public meeting the citizens unanimously approved $6,850 for the purchase of a lot and the erection of a school house in District One. But the board reported that they could not locate a contractor who would build a school for $6,000, even after instructing board member Abram Teachout to negotiate with Cleveland builders. The lowest bid was from local contractor Julius Weed who asked $8,300. The board returned to the voters and were granted an additional $4,000; again the vote was unanimous.\textsuperscript{35} Every proposal that the board brought before the voters between 1851 and 1880 was successful. Although the number of votes in the last two unanimous decisions was not recorded, the people of Painesville demonstrated increasing acceptance of the board's ambitious building policy.

In addition to acquiescing in the policy of the school board, the general public participated in other ways. At least half the population either attended school or as parents sanctioned their children's attendance. In the absence of superintendents' reports or other data compiled by the school, census records give some indication of how many pupils went to school. The census can also suggest
whether any particular group, such as the Irish, had an attendance pattern different from that of the community as a whole. The census attendance figures are somewhat misleading, for the category tells only whether the individual attended school within the census year. Thus, the validity of the subject's reply or the duration of schooling is always uncertain. But any inaccuracies that result are simply inherent in the source. Fortunately, the census figures in this case are corroborated to some degree by secondary sources. 36

In 1850, more than twenty-five years before Ohio had a compulsory attendance law, Painesville schools had a high attendance rate. 37 Of all persons aged five to twenty-one, 68 percent attended school within a year of the enumeration. If only the five-to-fourteen age group is considered, the number attending jumps to over 90 percent. By comparison, William T. Harris reported that in St. Louis in 1870, 61 percent of persons aged five to eighteen were enrolled in school. 38 The attendance rate in Painesville drops rapidly when considering persons past fifteen years of age. Only 42 percent of those sixteen or seventeen years old attended school.

Ohio's first compulsory attendance law, enacted in 1877, had little effect on Painesville's already high rate of attendance. This law required only that parents
of children between the ages of eight and fourteen years . . . send such children to a common school for a term of at least twelve weeks in each school year, six weeks of which should be consecutive.

For ages five to twenty-one in 1880, attendance had actually decreased since 1850. Only 63 percent of this group attended school in 1880, five percent less than in 1850. This decline was apparently the result of the classification or grading of schools. In 1850, five-year-old children frequently attended schools; in 1880, however, they seldom attended. Only nine out of seventy-five persons aged five attended school in 1880. The 1880 attendance rate for those between the ages of six and twenty-one was 67 percent, about the same as 1850. The rate for those aged sixteen or seventeen was 46 percent, only a four percent increase over the 1850 figure. The law might have had some effect, however. Of the persons aged eleven to fourteen, ages which were governed by the law, 88 percent attended in 1850, and 95 percent attended in 1880. 40

All that the above numbers really demonstrate is that throughout the period Painesville children went to school. Unfortunately, where these children attended school is not entirely certain. Painesville had a Catholic school after 1859, and a number of small private schools throughout the nineteenth century. The impression gained from secondary literature is that few students attended either. The public
Irish immigrants in Painesville revealed a schooling pattern only slightly different from that of the community as a whole. This conclusion rests on three categories of data in the 1880 Census: the birthplace of fathers of six-to-fourteen-year-old children who did not attend school, the birthplace and the attendance of persons aged sixteen or seventeen, and the birthplace of illiterates. In 1880, the Irish comprised six percent of the population of Painesville Township. About one-fourth of the forty-six children aged six to fourteen who did not attend school, however, were born in Ireland. In 1880, 46 percent of persons aged sixteen and seventeen had attended school within the year. Of the twenty-two Irish that were this age, however, only seven had attended. Illiteracy was much higher among the Irish than among society as a whole. Seventy-seven people in Painesville could "neither read nor write"; fifty-five of them were Irish. The age at which a person could be considered illiterate was not given; the youngest person listed in this category, however, was seven. Assuming, then, that the minimum age for illiteracy was not over ten, the illiteracy figures have a different meaning. Only six persons under the age of twenty-two were illiterate; four were Irish. Of the four Irish illiterates under twenty-two, three were siblings. The low rate of illiteracy among young
persons suggests that all people in Painesville were involved with schooling. While Irish children had slightly lower attendance rates in all grades, they still approximated this pattern of involvement.\(^{42}\)

Another way in which citizens could participate in the school system was to attend the public examinations and exhibitions. In July, 1856, the Telegraph reprimanded readers for not witnessing the school examinations. "We noticed," the editors commented,

\[\ldots\text{what we doubt not is regretted by both teachers and pupils, a very small attendance of those, who in the education of their children, are receiving the benefits and blessings of our school system.}\]

The editors knew that there was "interest strongly felt," but they wanted "to see it more fully manifested on such occasions." The following year the staff of the paper attended what "universal sentiment" proclaimed "was the best School Exhibition ever witnessed in this town." This time, however, "\ldots the hall was crowded to its utmost capacity." The small audience in 1856 was probably atypical. Public school exhibitions in small towns were important social events. In Painesville, the school board took advantage of popular interest by charging a 10 cent admission fee to everyone except students.\(^{43}\)

While most people in Painesville seemed to approve or
participate in the public school system, they had very little to do with its direction for the first twenty years. Between 1851 and 1871, the largest number of voters in any school board election was 201 in 1858.\textsuperscript{44} In each of the three elections from 1853 to 1855, less than ten votes were cast. In 1869 and 1870, nineteen and twelve votes were cast, respectively. The number of qualified voters in the period is not recorded. In 1860, the \textit{Telegraph} reported that over 400 voters participated in the municipal election, while in the same year only 185 persons voted in the high school levy referendum.\textsuperscript{45} In 1871, voting in the school board election increased dramatically from twelve to 224. The reason for the increase is not clear. Day of the week was not important; in 1870, the August 11 election fell on a Thursday, in 1871, on a Friday. Apparently the reason for more voters was the effort of two men, Samuel R. House and Pliney Pratt, who were seeking office. Although these men did not replace the incumbents in 1871, both of them eventually succeeded, House in 1872 and Pratt in 1879.\textsuperscript{46} Election participation for two years after 1875 was above 250, but a legal change in 1875 boosted it even higher. After 1875, the date of the school board election coincided with the general county, township, and municipal elections which were held on the first Monday in April. The first year this law was in effect the number of voters increased to 584, more than twice the number in the last recorded
election in 1873. From 1875 to 1880, the number of electors never fell below 340.47

This voting pattern parallels community response to educational reform. Only a small number of Painesville inhabitants were concerned with the direction of school matters. When the state legislature dictated or permitted change, these same individuals took charge of local implementation. Leadership and concern by a few characterized the Akron Law reforms in 1851, and probably the district reforms of 1826 and 1838. Painesville citizens exhibited similar behavior in school board elections and building levy referendums. Painesville did have a few contested board elections immediately before 1875. Participation was not consistently high, however, until a state law in 1875 made voting in school board elections more convenient. Since neither the Telegraph nor the school board minutes reveal an important issue in 1875, the law was probably the main cause of the large increase in voting. People in Painesville attended school, sent their children to school, enjoyed exhibitions, and participated in school elections when a law scheduled these elections on the day that traditionally important voting took place. But these people were not interested in directing school reform or policy; this was a task better left to men more concerned and more knowledgeable.
Public school reform in Painesville did not occur in an atmosphere of urban chaos. A few individuals concerned with progress simply decided that Painesville should adopt educational innovations developed elsewhere. By implementing the Akron Law in 1851, the citizens of Painesville created a centralized school system. Public school administration was now a bureaucracy, at least in form. The remainder of this chapter examines how this new bureaucracy performed in a small but prospering city. School reform literature suggests two important areas of study. One area is the function of schooling. Were grading and other features of the system designed to instill the new urban discipline referred to in recent works? The second area is the operation of the new system. Did Painesville's school system approximate Max Weber's conception of bureaucracy as

...the institution of rational and systematic procedures, and the transfer of power from elected officials or charismatic leaders to bureaucrats with expert training who performed specialized and well-defined functions? 

One of the major functions of schooling in the last half of the nineteenth century was to instill in pupils a new urban discipline. William T. Harris, Superintendent of St. Louis schools, wrote in 1874 that the growth of cities and industrial combinations demanded "precision, accuracy, implicit obedience to the head or directive power." These
values were "necessary for the safety of others and for the production of any positive results."49 As David B. Tyack argues, schools were to perform functions comparable to such other reform agencies in the nineteenth century as almshouses, insane asylums, and prisons. Schools isolated students from society and taught them "order, regularity, industry and temperance" and "to obey and respect" their superiors.50 But Tyack notes that schools had a more positive function as well. Although urban

. . .schools 'imposed' a curriculum and an urban discipline, . . . they also opened up opportunities that many of the students might otherwise never have had: to read a newspaper, to compute, to know something of history and geography, to speak standard English.

By teaching "habits of punctuality, obedience, and precision," schools "did help the young to adjust to the demands of the world of work."51 Thus, the functions of schooling in the nineteenth century exhibited a tension between broad social and political goals on one hand, and the welfare and morality of individuals on the other.

According to Tyack and Michael B. Katz, schoolmen resolved this conflict during the second half of the nineteenth century. While educators spoke of concern for the individual, ". . .they worried most about the aggregate social and political functions of schooling."52 The first thirty years of systematic public schooling in Painesville did not produce
Painesville had its own version of the conflict between individual values and urban discipline. When the *Telegraph* explained the virtues of the new school system, it did so primarily in terms of the benefits to pupils. The paper proceeded to detail a model system for any era. Because the new system was graded according to age, the frequent movements and oral instruction of younger students did not interfere with older ones working at more intricate tasks. The primary grades taught children aged five to eight. These pupils "should have a light, airy, cheerful room with benches suited to the length of their legs." Primary grade teachers should use "simple apparatus and visible instruction" and give students long recesses. Taught by a "motherly sort of woman who loves children," these pupils should acquire

... kindly dispositions, graceful and respectful manners, confiding obedience, habits of observation and discrimination, the use of the voice and of simple and correct language. ...

and the elementary principles of arithmetic, geography, and drawing. In short, the primary school "begins the great work of intellectual cultivation." The secondary or grammar school continues this development of the mind and strengthens the pupil's abilities in specific subjects, particularly
reading, spelling, mental arithmetic, geography, and United States History. The high school was the culminating step in developing the individual. Here the student learned interesting subjects like chemistry, natural history, and moral science. But more importantly, high school subjects

...strengthen the powers of reasoning, give a healthy tone to the judgment, and lay the foundation for successful and useful lives in all the range of human experience.

The superintendent of this school system was not a head drill-master whose instructors instilled the new discipline of industry. He was more the capable and benevolent general who could assure "a combination of resources and a unity of purpose" and could "secure the best class of associate teachers." Clearly, some of the most well-informed people of Painesville believed that the new system guided students to achieve their ultimate in ability and self-reliance; they did not believe that their schools fashioned the ideal factory worker.53

While the new school system aided individual development in some ways, it also imposed a new discipline which restricted the freedom of a semi-rural people. Ten years after the establishment of a union school system, parents still complained about the mandatory attendance rule. The Telegraph explained to its readers why the rule was necessary. The rule was admittedly strict; it required
"attendance in all cases and at all times, or expulsion, except in cases where there are substantial reasons for absence." But the editors thought that it was an important rule "and should be rigidly enforced." "Schools as large as these are," they explained, "must be classified, and each class to make proper progress must have no clogs to it in the form of habitual absenteeism." The code of rules the schools followed, the editorial concluded, "was essential to a proper management of them, and no one, as a parent, should arise in rebellion against them." The new system may have aided individual development, but it also required adjustments by the community.

Painesville's School Board apparently enforced attendance rules. In the minutes of the board meetings, the secretary recorded suspensions for violations of Section Nine, Chapter Eight. The minutes never give the wording of this rule, but it was evidently the attendance rule. In other cases of suspension the secretary usually gave the reason, which could range from burglary and vandalism to improper demeanor. Given the newspaper's emphasis on the attendance rule, a violation of Section Nine, Chapter Eight, was probably repeated absenteeism. In the early 1860s, the Board dealt with numerous violations of Section Nine. In June, 1861, for example, the board defeated David D. Aiken's motion for readmittance of Mary Colby, expelled on a
Section Nine violation. At the December 8, 1862 meeting, the board suspended James Gray for the same reason. The severity of the problem forced the board to act. But rather than rescind the rule and risk demoralizing those who attended regularly, the board created an "ungraded school." Miss Pepoon's ungraded school was open, with the Superintendent's permission, to "all scholars attending other schools, except the primary, who have been suspended for rule Chapter 8, Section 9." The ungraded school was in effect a return to the pedagogy of the district school with pupils of all ages in one room. The board apparently formed the special school out of consideration for the personal needs of some students. The system retained enough flexibility to educate those who violated its attendance rule, even if this meant a return to outmoded techniques.

An ungraded school was one way in which the attendance rule was softened to meet personal needs of the students. Another way was simply the school board's attention to individual cases. Throughout the period from 1850 to 1880, the board frequently granted special permission for absence. W. E. Stickney was given

... leave to be absent from school every afternoon such absence in the judgment of the Superintendent will not interfere with recitation or the regular course of study.

The board excused Mattie Ladd from morning attendance and
Helen S. Steele from afternoon sessions. These exemptions did not require the approval of the Superintendent. Board rulings also affected the curriculum of individual students. Nellie Paine, for example, was excused from her philosophy class provided she completed the course before graduation. Even teachers benefitted from the Board's willingness to circumvent the rules. Miss Gertrude Axtell was granted a one day leave of absence "provided that she procure a teacher to supply her place who shall be satisfactory to the Superintendent." Thus, while attendance and other disciplinary rules appeared formidable, the school board intervened directly and reduced the actual impact. All disciplinary matters were subject to the board's scrutiny. In cases of suspension the board welcomed appeal from the parents and usually readmitted the pupil. Parents always held considerable power in the system. In January, 1876, a unanimous resolution of the board stated

...that all excuses for absence from school, given by parents to the Teacher --shall be accepted--unless special cases become so frequent, as to be deemed demoralizing to the school, such cases shall be subjected to discipline as provided in rules Number 27 and 18.

If children were learning an urban discipline in Painesville they were also learning that their parents or a neighbor on the school board could make the lesson less harsh.

In his study of the Portland school system,
David B. Tyack found that one product of bureaucratization of schools was a standardized curriculum. Through a uniform curriculum teachers could "render the next generation homogeneous in habits of thinking, feeling, and acting"; in other words, they could instill urban discipline. In 1867, the Painesville School Board ordered a uniform curriculum for the high school, but the evidence does not suggest that their motives stemmed from a conscious desire to render students more homogeneous. A standardized curriculum was not in effect until fifteen years after the formation of the union schools. In 1861, the board approved a curriculum which had three separate courses: English, Latin, and Classical. The standard curriculum started in 1867 did not include instruction in Greek and Latin. In his thesis on secondary education in Painesville, Allan Lee Baumgartner explains the revision "as an economy measure" and an effort "to improve the quality of teaching." Baumgartner maintains that "the change was also thought to be time-saving and to be more attractive to a greater number of pupils."

While quality of teaching, efficiency, and appeal to students were probably important reasons for change, economy was not. The first year the uniform curriculum went into effect, the total amount of the salaries paid to high school teachers increased 15 percent. In a high school that employed only three teachers, however, the reduced curriculum would logically improve teaching and efficiency.
A curriculum centered on English instruction and practical courses such as surveying and bookkeeping may have been more appealing to students than classical courses. Curriculum standardization in Painesville was primarily the result of the wishes of an influential superintendent and the assessment of the system's needs and resources; it was not a willful attempt to produce students who conformed to industrial or bureaucratic values.  

Aside from the motivation for curriculum revision, school board policy mitigated the effects of a uniform curriculum. Already mentioned in the discussion of attendance was the board's willingness to allow students to delay the completion of a particular course. If a student failed a course, the board would reclassify him. No case was too trivial for the school directors' personal attention. At least one resolution suggests that the school board was not comfortable with a standard curriculum. In January, 1876, they ruled that "Botany, Natural Philosophy, and Physiology be made an option of study in A [grade] Grammar School at the request of Parents or Guardians." After only one term the board rescinded its ruling and held that "in the future these studies will come in the Regular Course as per printed rules." But even a change lasting one term shows some flexibility in their view of the standard curriculum. The board also added music to the curriculum
as an optional course. At the October 6, 1873 meeting, two members unsuccessfully moved that music become a regular course of study. The survival into the late 1870s of the "ungraded school" is perhaps the best indication that throughout the period 1850 to 1880 school officials did not develop a strong attachment to a uniform curriculum. In 1894, the board abandoned uniform requirements completely and returned to a three-course program: "Literacy," "Latin-Scientific," and "English."  

When judged according to its attendance and curriculum policies, Painesville's public school system does not appear to have been oriented toward socializing students into a new urban-industrial environment. The school board often negated its own rules. While stressing the absolute necessity of attendance, for example, the board might on short notice close the schools so students could attend the county fair. The ability of the Painesville schools to balance individual needs and social values is not surprising when the nature of the community is considered. Historians of school reform argue that educators and concerned laymen created the bureaucratic school because they perceived numerous threats to the fabric of society, the authority of state: mobs and violence; corruption and radical ideas in politics; vice and immorality as village constraints broke down; immigrants who refused to become assimilated; conflict between labor and capital; and highly visible crime, poverty, and disease.
The answer to this disorder, schoolmen believed, was a school that was itself "a model of order, regularity, obedience." But, as Chapter II noted, Painesville did not experience firsthand the threats — "immigration, immorality, class conflict, and corruption" — that "demanded efficient schools" with their militaristic rules. When Painesville residents formed a school system, they did so to emulate progressive cities, places where the threats to society were felt. Painesville's school system, therefore, assumed the appearance of a sophisticated bureaucracy even though the town did not have the forces that produced a rigid, alienating system. In a small city the school system could imitate bureaucratic form but at the same time operate on a personal level which defied the fundamental principles of bureaucracy.

Painesville's public school system had approximations of all the structural features of an urban bureaucratic system:

- the classification of schools; the uniform curriculum; the hierarchy of offices and delineation of duties; the time schedules; the elaborate plan of examinations and promotions.

But despite the apparent structure, the system did not function bureaucratically. In a truly bureaucratized system, experts, as well as elected officials, hold power. When reformers in St. Louis secured a new charter for the
city's school in 1897,

. . . executive powers were concentrated in the hands of four highly specialized officers: the commissioner of buildings, secretary-treasurer, auditor, and superintendent of instruction.

Painesville's system had one "expert," the superintendent, but only occasionally did he resemble a trained expert "who performed specialized and well-defined functions."73

After the 1897 reform movement in St. Louis, the powers of the superintendent were commensurate with the role prescribed in the ideal bureaucratic school system. He "became the most powerful individual in the system" and

. . . was entrusted with the appointment, transfer, and promotion of teachers; the introduction and change of textbooks; the content of courses; and the maintenance of discipline in the schools.74

In the Painesville system prior to 1880, the superintendent performed all these functions at certain times, but his authority always emanated from the school board. The superintendent was, in effect, another member of the school board. When the board decided to revise the by-laws and fix the conditions for graduation in 1852, they appointed a committee composed of two members and the superintendent.74 But the superintendent was never assured of a place on such a committee. On June 29, 1858, the board "appointed a committee to draw up Rules and Regulations for the government of the Schools, and to effect a more perfect
classification of the schools." This committee consisted of two board members and a female high school teacher. When the board decided to draft a set of rules in 1875, prepare a list of textbooks, and devise a course of study, they appointed two members to a committee which was instructed to meet with the superintendent.¹⁵ No specific procedures defined the superintendent's role in rule-making or in curriculum matters.

Pupil classification and the hiring of teachers were other areas where the role of the superintendent was highly variable. In 1861 and 1862, for example, the superintendent secured a position on the board's Committee on Classification, one of the three standing committees. In 1870, however, Superintendent Thomas W. Harvey, Painesville's most eminent educator, was not on the Classification and Discipline Committee.⁷⁶ The method for hiring teachers was similarly unsystematic. Before 1851, teachers were tested before a County Board of Examiners. After 1851, the Painesville school system had a separate three-member Board of Examiners, often consisting of school board members and superintendents of the system. Once teachers obtained certification the board had discretion over hiring. Sometimes they would direct the superintendent to hire a teacher; other times an ad hoc committee or one of the standing committees employed teachers. On March 15, 1869,
members Henry C. Beardslee and Henry P. Sanford, not Superintendent Harvey, were "appointed a Committee to inquire and report what teachers can be secured qualified to fill vacancies occurring at the close of the present term."77 The Superintendent did have some minor discretionary powers in classification, discipline, and the closing of schools, but this authority was granted by the board for a specific period of time or for a specific purpose.78 The authority and specific duties of the superintendent were not rigidly defined. His primary function was to serve as a teacher in the high school.

In Painesville's school system all power rested with the school board, and they delegated it sparingly. Standing or ad hoc committees appointed by the president were the agencies that proposed and executed board policy. The superintendent probably attained greatest influence when he was given a place on a committee. Thus, school board members controlled the system on a personal level. Most of the rules and procedures that actually influenced the system applied to the lowest levels of the hierarchy, students and teachers. But even at this level the board would intervene. The board could function on a personal level in Painesville. Expertise and procedural regularity were not necessary when leaders were trusted and values were shared.
Some of the school board's procedures would have produced cries for reform in a larger city. When the board built the new high school in 1860 and 1861, for example, it hired one of its own members, Jerome Palmer, to plan and superintend the construction. Whatever expertise Palmer possessed in school-house construction was acquired from his background as a carpenter, lawyer, judge, and undertaker. The appointment was profitable for Palmer; in addition to numerous smaller payments, he received $327.55 for "superintending the building of the High School." Some actions of the school board seemed to border on collusion. Before the new high school was built, the board appointed a four-man inspection committee, none of whom were on the board, to examine the strength and safety of the high school building. The committee reported the building unsafe, and one of the committeemen, Harvey Woodworth, received the contract for brickwork. Another member of the inspection committee, Julius Weed, was awarded the contract for the schoolhouse built in 1867. Purchasing insurance from past or present members was a common practice of the board. One man in particular, David Perry, realized the benefits of involvement with the school board. In 1854, he was one of seven voters in the board election; in fact, he was the only elector who was not a board member. Perry's name appears repeatedly in the records for performing all forms of repair and maintenance
work. As late as 1879 he received $75.75 for repairs. Another potentially corrupt practice of the board was the selection of election judges from its own membership. A dissatisfied community would not have had to look far if it wished to allege graft.

But serious allegations never came. The same practices which eventually led to reform of the St. Louis system never became an issue in Painesville. What was considered corruption and graft in large cities was acceptable in at least one small city. The people of Painesville did not question the board's decisions. They accepted the board's faith in the architecture of Jerome Palmer and the masonry of Harvey Woodworth. The school directors were, for the most part, beyond reproach.

A brief look at the backgrounds of school board members reveals why these men were trusted with the management of the schools. These men were leaders in all facets of community life. Their names appear repeatedly among the membership of political organizations. Four future board members belonged to "the political friends of William Henry Harrison." Seth Marshall, also a future board member, was a representative at the 1840 Whig state convention. In 1860, three of the officers of the "Republican Club," Henry C. Beardslee, Timothy Rockwell, and Seth Marshall, were either current or former school directors. Board members
frequently served as village officers. Of the thirty-four men who served on the board between 1851 and 1878, twenty-one held a village office, often concurrently with their school directorship. Board members were prominent in areas other than politics. Their role in the Painesville Improvement Association has already been mentioned, but they were also active in the antislavery and temperance movements. Among 300 signatures on a petition for a meeting to protest the Fugitive Slave Law were the names of twelve future board members. Silas T. Ladd, a member of the board in the 1850s, served as secretary of the Painesville Temperance Society in 1840. Sixteen years later, thirteen men who served on the board signed a petition against the sale of liquor, and on August 22, 1855, nine of thirty-one names on an anti-gambling petition belonged to men who either served or would serve on the school board. A glance at the Appendix reveals that a high percentage of board members were physicians, lawyers, clergymen, and merchants. As these random facts demonstrate, residents of Painesville had reason to believe that their schools were under the best management possible.

Given the support Painesville residents gave school board policy, school reform beyond the formation of the union system was unnecessary. Painesville did not need to adopt at large elections to ensure that special interests were eliminated and that the best men were elected; the
town had always elected school directors at large and had always elected the best men. Painesville did not need rationalized procedures and trained experts either, for capable men were competently running the schools. For the small city of Painesville, minimal centralization, through the elimination of school districts, and the appearance of a bureaucratic structure were enough to secure what the community and outside officials believed was a successful system.

Differences in the educational needs of Painesville and the educational needs of large urban areas become obvious when the problem is examined in retrospect. But public school reformers in the period did not see the differences so clearly. Painesville's system, which in 1877 instructed about 700 pupils, was an appropriate model for all cities. To schoolmen, educational progress was the same everywhere. Superintendents and teachers from Painesville visited schools and attended conventions in Cincinnati, Cleveland, and Akron; and when Governor Rutherford B. Hayes was looking for a capable man to serve as State Commissioner of Common Schools, he found Thomas W. Harvey, textbook author and superintendent of schools in Painesville, Ohio. Armed with his experience as a superintendent in Massillon and Painesville, Harvey went to Columbus in 1871 to confront the educational problems of a rapidly industrializing
state. To educators like Thomas Harvey and Asa Lord, Painesville's schools were successful because they were organized into the correct system. Combined with able teachers, this system gave Painesville schools "preeminence among the schools of the state." School officials did not see that the success of the system rested on a small town's sense of community and deference to leadership. Painesville's school system was successful largely because the personal management by the school board made the system a bureaucracy in form only. When the town adopted the Akron Law, Painesville essentially became one large school district instead of several. This centralization without bureaucracy worked because the town, although prosperous, remained relatively homogeneous. Not recognizing such distinctions, Harvey and other schoolmen attempted to create one system for all people. Instead of showing these men the impact that local conditions could have on the success of a school system, cities like Painesville probably proved to educational reformers that a unified, bureaucratic system could work anywhere.

This examination of the first thirty years of the Painesville Public School System gives little support to the imposition interpretation of school reform. When the question of the centralization of school administration was to be discussed at a meeting, the Painesville paper
announced that "citizens are earnestly invited to attend." But few citizens were interested in school reform. Schooling was important to most of the inhabitants, but only a few cared about changes in structure or management. The fact that only a few persons actually ran the schools does not mean, however, that the others were imposed upon. Before the adoption of state compulsory attendance laws, the board had its own strict attendance policy. Any bureaucratic rigidity in such a policy was mitigated by the board's personal intervention, but the point is that the people in Painesville desired schooling even if it circumscribed their previous pattern of living. School board elections, votes on special levies, and the absence of issues in either the Telegraph or the board minutes all suggest satisfaction with the system. Robert H. Wiebe notes that "during the nineteenth century the school had largely arranged its schedule to suit the habits of the community," but by 1900 "...more and more families were expected to bend their habits to a fixed school year..."88 In Painesville one sees the beginning of this process in the years between 1850 and 1880. But the willingness of the people to adapt to changes in schooling and the board's reluctance to apply rules with bureaucratic rigidity suggests that the process of school reform in Painesville was not one of imposition.
A study of school reform in Painesville also supplements the current explanation for innovations in public schooling. Reformers in Painesville were not directly motivated by experience with the urban problems that characterized many American cities in the last half of the nineteenth century. For these men, advances in education helped to answer their desire for the community progress. Identification with a progressive town confirmed the personal success of the men who voted for the Akron Law provisions. Many of these men were leaders of the town and businessmen, and for them the success of Painesville had both monetary and personal implications. As other cities surpassed Painesville in industrial growth and people realized that "...they might not expect their town to become especially a business point, and consequently may not look for a large manufacturing of mercantile growth," educational progress became increasingly important. The Telegraph, after conceding that the town might not become an industrial center, noted that Painesville could still grow by attracting people who "are looking for a pleasant and healthful town— for high-toned society, good morals, good schools, and all the kindred institutions of a good civilization." While some men profited financially from the new school system, most of Painesville's school reformers and managers were seeking intangible benefits. Educational progress, while it answered some specific
educational needs in the community, was most important as an ideal. For the few who cared, educational progress provided an intellectual confirmation of personal success and progress.
FOOTNOTES - CHAPTER III

1 Painesville Telegraph, April 30, 1857.

2 On November 17, 1856, the board paid the superintendent and 10 teachers (Records of the School Board, November 17, 1856).


4 Painesville Telegraph, March 29, 1848.


6 Records of the School Board, August 13, 1851.

7 Painesville Telegraph, January 22, 1851.

8 Records of the School Board, August 13, 1851.

9 Ibid.

10 James J. Burns, Educational History of Ohio (Columbus, Ohio, 1905), biographical sketch of Dr. Asa D. Lord.

11 Painesville Telegraph, July 23, 1851.

12 Poll books are in Records of the School Board, August 13, 1851.
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131850, 1860, and 1870 Census.

14Ibid.

15Reports of most of the elections are found in Records of the School Board. From 1851 through 1874, elections were held on August 11. After 1874, elections were held on the first Monday in April.

16Painesville Telegraph, June 20, 1849; Bossings, "The History of Educational Legislation," 369. One can read Michael B. Katz's interpretation into the Education Society's appeal for money and the subsequent adoption of the union school system. Because relatively few students attended the high school in Painesville, one could argue that school reform here parallels Katz's findings in Beverly, Massachusetts. Katz argues that in Beverly middle class parents favored the establishment of a high school knowing that lower class children would not attend. He supports his contention by a vote analysis which demonstrated a division between factory workers and those with wealth or "middle level social position" (p. 49). The latter, Katz argues, were "spreading throughout the whole community the burden of educating a small minority of its children" (p. 53). In Painesville, however, one must account for the initial rejection of the new system and the absence of conflict in the vote for the system. In Painesville, tuition to the higher grades financed the new system for a short time because the board was "unable to find any authority in the School Laws authorizing them to assess a tax for the payment of teachers until[ sic] the coming of summer/. . ./. . ." One does not see in Painesville the "imposition" which characterized school reform in Beverly. See Katz, The Irony of Early School Reform, 19-53; Records of the School Board, August 16, 1851.

17Painesville Telegraph, April 24, 1850.

18Ibid., April 17, 1850.

19Ibid., August 15, 1849.

20Ibid., June 25, 1851.
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21 Ibid., August 27, 1857; September 3, 1857.

22 Ibid., February 12, 1851.

23 Ibid., April 16, 1851; December 25, 1856; April 9, 1855.

24 Ibid., June 4, 1851; March 10, 1852; August 20, 1851.

25 See chart on page 646. Occupations considered "white collar" are cashier, clerk, Court Recorder, editor, lawyer, merchant, physician, and teacher.

26 Harvey Cram and Lemuel G. Storrs listed in Appendix.

27 Painesville Telegraph, March 26, 1851; April 9, 1851. The seven men involved in both the Improvement Association and the school system were E. B. Adams, Aaron Wilcox, Milo Harris, Timothy Rockwell, Jerome Palmer, John F. Morse, and William L. Perkins (see Appendix).

28 Examples of articles favorable to the Academy are in Painesville Telegraph, April 26, 1848; October 9, 1850. The reprinted article on "Premature Education," appearing in the November 27, 1850 issue is typical of the many articles on pedagogy and child rearing which the Telegraph carried.

29 Painesville Telegraph, June 1, 1857. The Telegraph maintained an ambivalent view of the district schools. In February 1857, the staff visited several districts and found only the facilities, not the pedagogy, wanting. These men had pride in all schools in the area and attacked district schools only when they seemed to threaten the new system (Painesville Telegraph, February 5, 1857).

30 Ibid., March 2, 1853. Other examples of favorable articles are found in the following issues: December 7, 1853; June 21, 1854; March 25, 1856.
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31 Ibid., September 19, 1861; November 14, 1861.

32 Painesville Telegraph, March 13, 1854. Records of the School Board, August 11, 1854; September 9, 1854; February 8, 1858; August 16, 1858.

33 Records of the School Board, March 13, 1860; March 26, 1860.

34 Ibid., May 23, 1864; August 15, 1864.

35 Ibid., May 2, 1866; June 1, 1866; March 4, 11, 18, 1867; April 2, 1867.

36 Allan Lee Baumgartner states that when the union schools opened in 1852 about 500 scholars attended. According to the 1850 census, the number of persons in the township who attended school was 722. The number of pupils in the village schools is roughly proportional to the village's percentage of the township's population. Baumgartner, "A Historical Sketch of the Painesville Schools," in Lake County Scrapbook, Vol. V (Morley Public Library, Painesville, Ohio), 13.

37 Eugene H. Roseboom and Francis P. Weisenberger, A History of Ohio (Columbus, Ohio, 1967), 297. Attendance figures were calculated from the 1850 and 1880 censuses.

38 Tyack, The One Best System, 66.

39 Bossings, "The History of Educational Legislation in Ohio," 139-140.

40 1880 Census. For purposes of comparison, attendance in Madison, a small village in eastern Lake County, was examined in the 1860 Census. In this town, 90 percent of children six to fifteen years old attended school. Surprisingly, two-thirds of those aged sixteen and seventeen attended.
41 Seymour Freeborn, History of St. James Episcopal Church, 1824-1966 (Painesville, Ohio, 1966); The League of Women Voters of Painesville, Profile of Painesville, Ohio, 7. The argument for the predominance of public schooling is based primarily on negative evidence. Neither secondary sources nor primary sources like the school board minutes and Telegraph tell of any issue between public and parochial education.

42 1880 Census. In 1850, only nine people in Painesville were illiterate—over twenty years of age and could neither read nor write (1850 Census).

43 Painesville Telegraph, July 9, 1856; March 26, 1857; Records of the School Board, February 13, 1854.

44 School board elections were held on August 11 for the first twenty-five years and can be found in the Records on that date. The Records of the School Board do not contain an election report for the years 1852, 1859, 1860, and 1868.

45 Painesville Telegraph, April 5, 1860.

46 Records of the School Board, accounts of the elections for 1870, 1871, 1872, and 1879 (April 7).

47 Ibid., April 5, 1875, April 3, 1876; April 2, 1877; April 1, 1878; April 7, 1879; April 5, 1880.

48 Troen, The Public and the Schools, 208.

49 Quoted in Tyack, The One Best System, 73. For a discussion of the teaching of this new discipline in St. Louis, see Troen, The Public and the Schools, 141-156.

50 Quote is from David J. Rothman in Tyack, The One Best System, 72.

51 Ibid.
The very title of Katz's book, *Class, Bureaucracy, and Schools* indicates his interpretation of the outcome between individualism and routine.

Painesville *Telegraph*, January 1, 1857.


Records of the School Board, February 10, 1862; February 1, 1864.

*Ibid.*, June 17, 1861; December 8, 1862.


*Ibid.*, January 20, 1861; April 22, 1861; June 10, 1861.

*Ibid.*, September 1, 1876; May 1, 1874.

*Ibid.*, December 14, 1863; October 29, 1864; February 7, 1873.


Quote is from George Atkinson in David B. Tyack, "Bureaucracy and the Common School: The Example of Portland, Oregon, 1851-1913," *American Quarterly*, XIX (Fall 1967), 482.

*Baumgartner, "History of Public Secondary Education,"* 70-73.


An example is the board's reclassification of Kittle Carson and Kittie Kilbourne (Records of the School Board, February 10, 1862; February 1, 1864).
Board, January 10, 1877).

66 Ibid., January 22, 1876; August 18, 1876.

67 Ibid., October 6, 1873.

68 Ibid., July 5, 1876; Baumgartner, "History of Public Secondary Education," 76-79.

69 Records of the School Board, September 29, 1862.

70 Tyack, The One Best System, 73-74.

71 Tyack, "Bureaucracy and the Common School," 483.

72 Ibid., 488.


74 Records of the School Board, July 22, 1852.

75 Ibid., June 29, 1859; September 18, 1875.

76 Ibid., September 9, 1861; August 27, 1862; August 22, 1870.

77 Ibid., March 15, 1869; August 18, 1867.

78 Ibid., January 20, 1861; September 14, 1863; September 17, 1864; October 26, 1877.

79 Ibid., March 5, 1961; Williams Brothers, History of Geauga and Lake Counties, 227.

80 Records of the School Board, January 26, 1860; October 6, 1860; December 23, 1867.
81 Timothy Rockwell, William Perkins, and Horace Steele all received money for insurance (Ibid., January 24, 1869; February 6, 1871).

82 Ibid., August 11, 1854; August 23, 1879; April 1, 1878.


84 Painesville Telegraph, January 7, 1840; February 14, 1840; March 29, 1860. Williams Brothers, History of Geauga and Lake Counties, 214.

85 Ibid., October 16, 1850; February 9, 1840; April 16, 1856; August 22, 1855.

86 Records of the School Board, December 19, 1854; July 18, 1864; October 1, 1866. Burns, Educational History of Ohio, 414-415.

87 Painesville Telegraph, July 30, 1857.


89 Painesville Telegraph, November 19, 1857.
CHAPTER IV

THE GROWTH OF A BUREAUCRACY: PAINESVILLE'S PUBLIC SCHOOL SYSTEM, 1880-1920

In many large cities across the United States, the years from 1880 to 1920 brought marked changes in public education. Even if Katz's contention "that the basic structure of American education has remained unchanged" for nearly a century is correct, most observers, including Katz, grant that public schooling has changed in detail. The principle of bureaucratic organization may have been firmly established by 1880, but educators and reformers strove in subsequent years to perfect the system and its curriculum.1 They could always centralize and rationalize the system further; they could always find more areas where their own expertise was needed. Case studies of the further articulation of school systems in New York, Philadelphia, St. Louis, San Francisco, and other cities stress the importance of conflict in the process of school reform. "... the proponents of reform," David B. Tyack writes,

...were members of highly educated civic elites who believed that structural reforms were necessary to create efficient, rational, and 'non-political' school bureaucracies.

Opponents "tended to be those who had a political or occupational stake in the system or who viewed the reformers as
'snobbish intruders.' Enemies of reform frequently received support from teachers and lower-class or middle-class ethnic groups. Out of this environment of contention the modern bureaucratic school system emerged.

Painesville's school system went through a similar process of articulation during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, but the development of Painesville's system was not accompanied by the conflict found in larger cities. Innovations in public education did not provoke any apparent opposition within the community. The purpose of this chapter is to trace the development of Painesville's school system and to suggest an explanation for the absence of conflict.

Throughout the period 1880 to 1920 crowded schools constituted what the board perceived as its most serious problem. As early as the middle 1870s school officials were complaining about inadequate facilities. On January 15, 1876, two teachers reported that the A, B, and C grades of the grammar school were too full to permit the students "to do good and thorough work in their studies." To relieve the overcrowded grammar school, the board complied with the teachers' request that an ungraded school be established. But the ungraded school did not solve the problem of overcrowding in the primary grades. On October 2, 1877, the board decided to construct a relief
building for 100 primary scholars. The directors did not have to consult the voters, however, for they

Resolved that in the sense of this board this case is such an one as is recognized in the School Law Section 55 as one of urgent necessity and that we avail ourselves of the exception made therein. . . .

to hasten the completion of the work. . . .

Another way that the board confronted the problem of overcrowding was the consolidation of grades. In June, 1878, the board resolved to combine the B primary grade in the St. Clair Street School with the A grade. But the board made the transfer contingent on the B grade passing a reading examination.

According to board members, the problem of crowded classrooms became more acute in the 1880s. In the beginning of the decade, the directors continued to take steps short of building a new school. They instructed the Property Committee to refit the basement of the high school, and after rejecting a plan to build an annex to the high school, they instructed the Committee on New Buildings to rent rooms for immediate relief. By 1885, the board had decided that such temporary measures would not suffice; a new school would have to be built. At the municipal election on April 6, 1885, voters approved a special levy of $8,000. The community apparently supported the board's building policy, for the levy was passed by a vote of 272 to 17.
Overwhelming voter approval did not facilitate immediate construction, however. The preliminary stages proceeded smoothly. On April 10, 1885, the board commissioned George R. Brakeman to draw plans, and a month later his final drawings were adopted unanimously. But the school directors must have been surprised when bids were received in late May. The lowest bid was over $15,000, almost twice the amount raised in the special levy. The board took immediate action to reduce the costs of the proposed school. The Building Committee suggested lower elevation, plainer walls, a simpler roof, plaster ceilings, and a soft wood finish. The Committee again contacted Brakeman and asked him to incorporate these changes in a new set of plans. Because of the need to cut costs, members of the school board sought to familiarize themselves with the intricacies of school construction. Thus, the entire board visited "Ashtabula to investigate the matter of school building and to view the building in the process of erection there," and the Building Committee traveled to Toledo to study heating apparatus. The directors revealed the emphasis that they placed on building a new school when they "ordered that for the ensuing year no special teacher in penmanship be employed." In order to gain a few hundred dollars toward construction of a new school, the board was willing to forego what they had considered a pedagogical necessity for thirty years. In a further effort to gain
Although the board considered signing a contract for a less expensive building, they could not resist the temptation to make another appeal to the voters. Hoping that the citizens shared their own disdain for an inferior structure, the directors asked for an additional $10,000. The date of the special election was set for May 1, 1886.

Two days before the election, the Telegraph printed a lengthy editorial that supported the additional levy. The first point made by the editors was not the lack of facilities. Rather, they began by noting the importance of the public school, "No institution in our midst," the editors argued,

...has such a hold upon the people of this community as our public schools.
... They become at once the safeguard of our intelligence and integrity.

Even the second point of the editorial did not relate to physical necessity, for the paper next had to remind readers that "The public schools of Painesville are recognized as standing in the front rank of the public schools of Ohio." Painesville schools were of such high quality that graduates were among the best college students. In fact, many families moved into town solely "to avail themselves of the advantages offered in the education of their children."

The paper finally considered the actual lack of classroom
space. Seldom giving exact numbers, the editors stated that "Many of our children are in rooms altogether unfit for school purposes." Two schools were held in the basement of the high school, where furnaces annoyed the students and where the rooms were "low, dark, and gloomy." Two classes were conducted in old shoe shops where poor heat and ventilation caused frequent illness. The editorial complained, then, about the quality of accommodations, not about an actual shortage of classrooms. It did state that that the previous year about 25 students were refused admission, but these students were from other towns.10

In the opinion of the Telegraph, the primary reason for building a new school concerned Painesville's image. Classes held in basements and shoe shops were a disgrace to the town. Facilities like these, the editors believed, were "not in keeping with the wealth and character of our city." The six-room building under consideration was of "substantial character and artistic style" and would reflect the "evident wealth and refinement of the city." In case readers were concerned about the extra tax burden, the paper reminded them that the school directors were men of "excellent judgment" who were subject to the same taxes. By voting for the new school, people might incidentally remove children from unfit classrooms, but more important in the editors' views they would "testify to their pride in
Despite the newspaper's effort, the citizens defeated the $10,000 levy by a vote of 191 to 93. This was the first and only time in the period from 1850 to 1920 that voters rejected a request for an additional levy. For most Painesville inhabitants in the 1880s, personal finances took precedence over modern schoolhouses. Besides, they had consented to an $8,000 levy only a year before. Attendance figures indicate that the people of Painesville had an objective basis for rejecting the levy. In June, 1876, the first year that complaints of overcrowded conditions became frequent, the examination record listed 723 pupils. In June, 1886, one month after the request for a $10,000 levy, the record included only 618 pupils. The number of pupils did not seem to warrant a large investment in a new school. People were satisfied with their children's education, and few shared the Telegraph's extreme concern for the town's image. For most residents of Painesville, the symbolic value of superior schools was not worth an additional $10,000.

Board members and interested citizens were disappointed of course with the voters' negative verdict, but the board continued to plan for future construction. Despite little apparent rise in attendance--examination records show a gain of only nine students between 1886 to 1887--
the board regarded a new school as a necessity. By 1887, the building of schools had almost become an obsession for the school board. One explanation of this fascination with construction relates to the directors' concern for progress. Like earlier proponents and officials of Painesville's public schools, board members in the late nineteenth century associated educational progress with material progress. The board must have shared the sentiment expressed in an editorial in the Painesville High School's senior class paper, "The Independent." The young editor thought that the school system moved too slowly. Except in day to day matters, the board had to wait for the will of the people, and "In a community naturally conservative and lacking in enthusiasm this is especially apt to be the case." The editorial noted the use of shoe shops with poor lighting and argued that "Painesville has for some time been in need of a new school building." But the major concern of this high school pupil was with what a new school might mean to the image of Painesville as a progressive city. "Painesville may not become a great manufacturing city or a railroad center," he conceded, "but there is no reason why it should not be known all over the state for its excellent educational advantages." Like the school directors, this student wanted to see the high school and the town "progressive in the midst of this busy age." Most citizens,
however, made a distinction between material and educational progress. Only a month before rejecting the additional school levy, the voters had approved a special $8,000 levy to "open" St. Clair Street.14

Although the voters had limited the funds available for construction, the board decided early in 1887 that a school must be built. Aware of the upcoming school board election and the negative public opinion expressed in the special vote the previous May, the directors addressed an "Open Letter from the School Board to the People of Painesville." The board evidently recognized that the Telegraph had made a mistake when it justified new schools primarily on the basis of their contribution to the image and progress of Painesville. The town's citizens were money-conscious, so the board emphasized both the physical necessity of more classrooms and the sound financial judgement of the board. The "Open Letter" assured the readers that the superintendent had studied the distribution of pupils in the nine districts and that the central location for the new school would benefit the greatest number of pupils. Although they did note that some of the rooms were "seriously overcrowded," the directors primary justification for the new school was that four schools occupied rooms "wholly unfit for school purposes." The letter also assured readers that the school board was not responsible
for the increase in village taxes for fiscal year 1886. The school levy was set at seven mills in 1885 and 1886. Even though taxes had not been raised, the board had sufficient funds for construction. The directors' letter closed on a note calculated to help the two members up for reelection the following week. Citizens were invited to examine the board's records and see for themselves "that there has not been made any extravagant expenditure of the people's money."\(^{15}\)

Painesville voters were not convinced that the board's policy had been wise. Seven hundred of them went to the polls on April 4, 1887, and a large majority thwarted the reelection of Pliney Pratt, a member for eight years, and Thomas W. Harvey, a former superintendent of Painesville schools and a former State Commissioner of Common Schools. Due to the resignation of George R. Merrill, a third position on the board went to Perry Bosworth, who like the other new members had no previous experience on the school board.\(^{16}\) A turnover of half the membership was indeed rare; coupled with the defeat of revered members Harvey and Pratt, it was a sure indication that people were dissatisfied.

Although the newspaper did not specify campaign issues, the new members obviously had promised to cut costs. One of the first actions taken by the 1887 board was to
enforce the tuition policy. Teachers were

\[\ldots\] required to report to the superintendent without unnecessary delay the entrance of any foreign pupils in their several schools. \ldots,

and the superintendent was "required to report the names of all such pupils to the board." The board also instructed the Finance Committee "to collect all outstanding bills for foreign tuition." As a further means of reducing costs, the board withheld payment of Superintendent James H. Shepherd's salary "pending the arrangement or settling the amount of deductions for time spent with the township schools." A special committee decided that a $120 deduction was reasonable.

Members of the 1887 school board may have been united in their desire to cut expenses, but with the election of three new directors, the board experienced internal dissension for the first time in its thirty-seven-year history. The question of the tax levy for fiscal year 1887 separated the directors into two factions. Two of the new members, Wallace S. Baker and James H. Taylor, proposed a 5.5-mill levy, a 1.5-mill reduction from 1886. The three senior members, Samuel K. Gray, Seeley R. King, and Henry H. Coe, wanted a 6-mill levy. President of the board Perry Bosworth was unable to attend the meetings, and since the law specified that only a majority of all board members
could pass a tax levy, the issue was deadlocked. Finally, Henry H. Coe changed his vote and the president pro tem declared the 5.5-mill levy passed. Though the board had technically defied state law, no one registered any complaint. Other issues produced the same division. For example, senior members Gray, King, and Coe moved to rehire Superintendent Shepherd; new members Taylor and Baker voted no. The senior members wanted to hire J. D. Luse as the music teacher; the new members wanted someone else. The senior members thought Mr. Perkins should be the high school janitor; President Perry Bosworth joined Baker and Taylor in supporting Mr. Gregory's candidacy for the job.

But the most curious division of the school board occurred over the issue of construction. Although the new members were elected amidst sentiment for frugality, they actually pursued a more vigorous building policy than the other members. As early as June, 1887, Baker and Taylor wanted to build two 4-room schoolhouses instead of one. Gray, King, and Coe opposed the plan. In January, 1888, Gray, Taylor, and Baker were chosen a "committee to investigate the costs of sites and buildings for two 4-room school buildings of modern style." After consulting an architect, the committee reported on January 17 that the cost of two schools would be $35,000. At the same meeting, Samuel K. Gray sided with the new members, and together they were
able to pass a resolution to build two schoolhouses. Baker, Taylor, and Bosworth were designated a building committee "with instructions to procure plans." On March 30, 1888, the board accepted a bid of $10,374 and construction of a new school finally began.  

More than ten years had passed since the problem of overcrowding had emerged in the minds of the board members. Several times the board had almost contracted for a new building but had been discouraged by reluctant citizens who did not share the board's desire for modern schoolhouses. The board probably felt somewhat reluctant themselves; for as much as they wanted to see new schools that reflected the town's progressiveness, they knew that increases in attendance had not been large enough to justify extravagance. Properly ventilated and lighted classrooms did not require a new building. But in December, 1888, a fortuitous incident removed all reason for hesitation; fire destroyed the Phelps Street School. Now the board could embark in good conscience on a program that provided schools commensurate with the "wealth and character" of Painesville.  

After the election in April, 1888, the board did not experience serious conflict for at least thirty years. Even before the election, Samuel K. Gray had joined the newly-elected members and enabled them to set policy. Both Coe and King resigned before the election, thus
relinquishing the final year of their three-year term. Gray and Bosworth were reelected almost unanimously, and the new members, Silas L. Thompson and Henry P. Sanford, both won by large majorities. 23 Citizens did not seriously question the policies of school boards after 1888 as they had done in the May 1886 levy referendum. In November, 1892, 862 out of 899 total voters approved a $15,000 levy for the building of new schools and the furnishing of old ones. This generous grant came shortly after a local bank failure disrupted Painesville's economy and politics. 24 Construction of the new school proceeded without delay despite the financial crisis of 1893. More remarkable, in the fall of 1897 voters approved a special tax of $47,000 for the purpose of building a new high school. This vote was not as favorable as the previous one; only 431 out of 735 voters wanted the levy. But the fact that a town of 5,000 people passed such a prodigious sum by any majority was indeed remarkable. 25 By 1900, the community as a whole, not just the school board and leading citizens, had become enamored of the idea of new schools.

Thus, when considered against the entire history of Painesville public schools, the years 1886 and 1887 appear somewhat aberrant. Both conflict among board members and the denial of an additional tax levy were atypical. But a closer examination reveals the superficiality of this dissension. All board members desired improved school
facilities and sought at the same time reduced costs. Disagreements apparently arose over personal differences. At no time was the board confronted with serious charges of corruption. Nor did people allege that the school system was somehow faulty. What little turmoil Painesville experienced in its municipal and school politics was somehow related to national politics. The leading newspaper and most of the citizens of Painesville were staunch Republicans, and dissatisfaction with the Cleveland administration nationally was echoed in local displeasure with certain village officers. In 1888, the Republican ticket was victorious both nationally and in Painesville, and politics in the town returned to their normal state of tranquillity.\(^{26}\)

In addition to the influence of national politics, Painesville's political unrest was due in part to the social and economic disquiet experienced throughout the country in the 1880s. The people of Painesville were uncertain about the future, and this uncertainty produced an erratic pattern of response to taxes and public expenditure. Thus, citizens approved a plan to extend a major street but denied the board's request for an additional levy. People wanted their town to grow but were reluctant to increase taxes.

Painesville's period of instability was short-lived,
however. In 1892, the Telegraph feared that a recent bank failure would cause "a political revolution in the coming village election." The paper asked the voters not to blame the current officers for the failure of the Savings and Loan Association. The management of the bank was at fault, and "The men who have had to stand the brunt of this loss can be trusted to recover the financial standing of the village." But the anti-Republican revolution that the editors dreaded did not occur. Although the straight Republican ticket was defeated, the voters chose a "Citizens Ticket" whose candidates were "all good men." Partisan conflict was simply not normal in Painesville politics. After 1888, voters returned to their usual concern for the temperance issue, and school directors could depend on public support for additional tax levies.

Political dissension in Painesville may have been brief and rather superficial, but it was important for the development of public education. The tension between the school directors' desire to build schools and the people's desire to limit taxes helped to make board members more aware of efficiency. One of the first actions taken by the board assuming power in April, 1887, was to codify the rules governing the operation of the school board. In the first decade of its existence the board had defined a code of behavior for students and teachers, even if the rules
were not always enforced. But nowhere had the directors specifically defined the functions of the various officers and committees of the board. For thirty-five years the board had operated according to tacit guidelines; after April 25, 1887, duties and procedures were put in writing.

Seventeen of the twenty-one rules adopted at the April 25 meeting defined the duties of the officers and committees. The other four concerned operating procedures and revision of rules. Only one rule described the duties of the president. He had

... the usual duties of the president of deliberative bodies. ... and such other duties as are required of him by law or may devolve upon him by the board.

Eight rules detailed the responsibilities of the clerk. The treasurer was the subject of rules 10 and 11, and rules 12 through 16 dealt with special and standing committees. Since its creation in 1851, the board had usually functioned with three standing committees that were known by a variety of names. Rule 12 formerly named the committees -- "Teachers and Discipline," "Repairs and Supplies," and "Finance" -- and defined their duties. Rules 17 through 20 specified the order of business and other formal procedures, and rule 21 provided that the rules could be changed by three-fourths of all the members. The 1887-1888 school board disagreed about many issues, large and small,
but they managed to adopt each of the twenty-one rules unanimously.  

Whether overcrowded schools were an objective reality or existed only in the minds of a few leading citizens, Painesville's school directors became fascinated with efficiency about the same time they perceived the problem of crowded schools. They believed that efficient, codified rules and procedures would enable a better use of resources. Bureaucratic or rationalized methods would also permit the board to operate even though its membership was divided. Before the minor dissension of the 1880s, the board could operate according to personal, informal procedures. In 1887, however, this means of operation would have paralyzed the board. Thus, both the directors' perception of overcrowding and Painesville's brief encounter with political conflict in the 1880s produced an impulse toward bureaucracy, an impulse reflected in the board's codification of rules.

Another important change that originated in the 1880s concerned the function of the superintendent. To aid the board in determining the best location for proposed schoolhouses, it ordered Superintendent Shepherd in 1886 to list the number and grade of pupils in each of the nine districts and to give the distances that they traveled to school. The following year the superintendent began
preparing monthly reports of enrollment and attendance. The presentation of the superintendent's report became a regular feature of board meetings. Around this time the office of the superintendent gained some independence from the board. On September 1, 1887 "It was moved and carried that the revision of the course of study in the High School be accepted as prepared by Professor Ready." The superintendent had made the revisions without the assistance of board members. The superintendent's autonomy in curriculum matters was not yet established, however; a year later a committee of the board wrote a set of rules and a course of study. But by the 1880s the superintendent had become more than a high school teacher and an auxiliary board member. The office had begun to resemble superintendencies in large and progressive urban school systems, systems that required a trained expert who operated according to rational procedures.

Bureaucratization of Painesville's school system reflected in both codification of rules and the changing role of the superintendent, stemmed in part from the political and financial instability of the town in the 1880s. Efficiency had a special appeal when the directors' goals went beyond what the people were willing to pay. But aside from indigenous forces, the school boards' bureaucratic impulse derived from a more general fascination with
business organization. Beginning in the late 1880s, the *Telegraph* endorsed candidates who evidenced a knowledge of business principles. Prior to the 1889 election, the editors advised voters that "In the selection made, special reference should be had to sound out conservative business qualifications." The issue preceding the 1890 election endorsed Mr. Turner for mayor because he was "a safe and conservative businessman of excellent judgment." Some citizens were disturbed that Turner was an agent of the Lake Shore Railroad. Since the railroad employed many local residents and conducted a large volume of business in the area, some people feared a conflict of interest. To reassure readers, the *Telegraph* remarked rather inappropriately that the "...Lake Shore has not done anything detrimental, but has built up Painesville." To have a competent businessman running the city was worth the risk of possible conflict of interest. The school directors must have been influenced by this pervasive fascination with businessmen and their principles of management.

Whatever the causes that led the school directors to adopt a bureaucratic model, the process of developing a bureaucracy continued from the 1880s to the present. The attraction to making and codifying rules was one indicator of this process. In 1894, the board revised and published the Rules and Regulations of the public schools. The manual
contained 118 rules. Thirty rules related to the board; 76 were general "Rules and Regulations"; and 8 pertained to janitors. The board published another revision in 1905. This version contained only seventy-four items, but the content of the rules revealed how much the system had changed in the previous twenty years. Most important, the 1905 edition included thirteen rules that defined the duties of the superintendent. None of the items mentioned teaching as one of his responsibilities; the superintendent was "To be the Executive Officer of the Board." He was "To Supervise the Work of Instruction" and to keep "all necessary school records and blanks." In his monthly report on the schools, he was to

\[\ldots\text{recommend such changes and modification of their management.} \ldots\text{and such repairs and improvements in buildings and furniture. As shall, in his judgment, increase their efficiency.}\]

But item 67, "General Duties," best indicates the extent to which change had occurred during the previous two decades. Under "General Duties" the superintendent formally received authority, "with the approval of the Board, [to] prescribe and arrange the course of study pursued in the schools."

Item 67 also directed him to

\[\ldots\text{furnish teachers with the necessary regulations and directions to enable them to perform systematic and uniform work in corresponding classes in the different schools.}\]
The superintendent was to "see that judicious programs of study and recitations are instituted" and to "report to the Board whenever he shall find any teacher deficient and incompetent in the discharge of his or her duties." Thus, by 1905 the superintendent truly acted as an executive official under only the most general supervision by the board. In 1907, the board confirmed Superintendent Franklin H. Kendall's independence by awarding him a three-year contract. As in many larger cities, the corporate model had come to Painesville's school system.

By the second decade of the twentieth century, Painesville's schools had adopted other features of a bureaucratic system. As late as 1890, the school board employed principals in only the high school and grammar school. But a list of teachers hired in 1903 reveals that principals, all of whom were female, were employed in the three grade schools as well. The rules and regulations printed in 1905 devoted items 60 and 61 to the responsibilities of principals. They were officers with a definite place in the chain of command. Item 60 stated that "The Principals shall see to the enforcement of the rules and regulations of the Board and strictly carry out the directions of the Superintendent." They were to report to the superintendent "any deficiency on the part of teachers or pupils." According to rule 61, principals had, "subject
to the Superintendent, entire charge of the work assigned to them." Assistants could change the content or the order of work only with the approval of the principal.\textsuperscript{38}

In addition to principals, janitors became trained experts in the school system. In 1908, the Committee on Textbooks and Discipline reported a new code of rules for janitors. Seven rules defined the duties of the "janitor in chief"; he was required, for example, to keep accurate records of requisitions. Eleven rules governed assistant janitors. To ensure that the men hired were qualified professionals, the board administered examinations to prospective janitors. By 1914, nearly all employees of the school system were subject to either competitive or non-competitive examinations.\textsuperscript{39}

Accompanying the increasing emphasis on expertise was an emphasis on reports and data. When the board was preparing to build a new high school in 1919, it appointed a special committee to determine a building program. The appointment of a building committee was not unusual. But, unlike such committees in the nineteenth century, this one perceived its task as more than suggesting a possible location and a rough estimate of the costs. The new building committee produced a fifteen-point document that both described the current condition and needs of Painesville schools and contrasted
The report was replete with figures. The areas examined by the committee included "number of rooms occupied," "number of rooms required," "teachers employed," and "number of teachers required." The board now conducted affairs and made decisions in a business-like manner. Although Painesville schools had fewer officials than schools in larger cities, by 1920 the system was more than a marginal bureaucracy. Committees still performed some duties that would come under the authority of a professional in a larger city. In St. Louis, for example, a study like the one undertaken by the special building committee in 1919 would have been the responsibility of the commissioner of buildings. But Painesville's school system did have experts with specialized functions; and, more important, it also had a bureaucratic orientation. As in larger cities during the early twentieth century, board members and superintendents valued hierarchy and efficiency.

Explaining the continuing bureaucratic development of Painesville schools from 1890 to 1920 is more difficult than accounting for the initial drive for centralization in 1851 or the major impetus to adopt bureaucratic methods in the 1880s. The latter two developments in public education can be related to specific events and people. But later
structural school reform did not come as abruptly in Painesville as it did in many large cities. The town certainly had a group of men who David Tyack would classify as "administrative progressives," but in Painesville these men did not have to fight ethnic or other political foes in order to reform the school system. Bureaucracy in Painesville schools developed gradually with no overt opposition. Two forces probably influenced this development. First, the obvious fact of increasing numbers produced changes in organization. Second, the importance of progress and the desire to emulate the educational progress of other cities were also important.

Between 1895 and 1905 enrollment in Painesville schools went from 968 to 1138. The number of students increased every year except 1903 and 1904, but the largest increase was from 1904 to 1905 when almost 100 new students entered the system. By 1919, the enrollment had reached 1320. More pupils meant a corresponding addition of teachers and staff. In 1886, the entire system included the board, the superintendent, nineteen teachers, probably two janitors, and an occasional substitute teacher. In 1919, the system employed forty-four teachers and seven janitors. In addition to a quantitative increase in staff, administrative positions had increased through the appointment of grade-school principals and a janitor-in-chief.
Bureaucracy was one way of dealing with the pressure of numbers.

But to understand why Painesville's school system changed from a superficial or marginal bureaucracy to a true bureaucratic system requires a consideration of the meaning that school officials attached to bureaucratic development. Chapter III has argued that Painesville adopted a centralized system in 1851 largely because the people who voted associated that reform with progress. In the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries some people attached similar significance to the development of a sophisticated bureaucracy. The superintendent's duties listed in the 1905 school report ordered him "To Keep the Board Advised as to School Systems, Etc." More specifically, he was to

...keep himself and this Board informed in regard to the school system of other cities, their plans of organization, modes of government, methods of instruction, and such other matters as may assist the Board to legislate wisely for the highest interest of the schools, and for this purpose shall effect the best possible arrangement for a permanent exchange of reports between this and other school boards.\(^5\)

The board frequently sent superintendents to various educational meetings. In 1897, Superintendent George W. Ready was instructed to attend both the National Education Association meeting in Milwaukee and the state association
meeting in Toledo. In 1901, Superintendent William W. Boyd attended the NEA meeting in Chicago. Superintendent Kendall was especially active. In 1906, he received a ten-day leave of absence to attend a superintendents' convention in Louisville, Kentucky. The following year he attended a meeting of the Department of Superintendents of the NEA.46 The board gladly paid the expenses for these trips. It was a small price to pay for the assurance that Painesville's school system was modern.

Certain people in Painesville had a strong belief in the importance of a progressive school system, a system that could help identify the town as modern. Building new schools was one way that a city could demonstrate progressiveness. At the dedication of the new high school in January, 1899, Mayor A. G. Reynolds spoke of the significance of building for "God or education." "I can think of no other circumstances connected with the growth of a community," the mayor stated, "that so marks its advancement along the high tide of civilization."47 But by 1900 new buildings alone would not verify the progressiveness of a town or its schools. Many urban schools boasted sophisticated bureaucracies with professional staffs. Painesville schools could continue serving as a model only if they kept pace with these innovations in management. In 1900, the town's schools were still considered among the
best. At the high school dedication in 1899, the Honorable O. T. Corson told the gathering of citizens that their "fame in this respect has gone far beyond the limits of your city, and all over the state the name of Painesville stands for progress in educational matters." But this lofty status depended on the board's ability to incorporate innovations into the system. If the superintendent visited enough schools, corresponded with enough school administrators, and attended enough meetings, Painesville's schools might stay at the top.

After the 1880s the desire for Painesville to have model schools became particularly acute among some people. By this time the town was clearly not going to rival Cleveland, Toledo, or Buffalo in industry, manufacturing, or commerce. But Painesville could rival any city when public education was the basis for comparison. Until the 1880s leading businessmen could realistically hope for industrial growth as well as educational greatness, but by 1890 education became the major focus of hopes for progress. In the absence of industrial growth, a modern school system provided a comforting identity.

A satisfactory explanation for the bureaucratization of Painesville schools must consider more than numbers alone. The number of students does not automatically explain why in 1880 the system could be managed personally
by the six board members but in 1905 successful management required an expert superintendent, a strict hierarchy, and an extensive code of regulations. The addition of a few hundred children could not in itself necessitate or produce such a complete reorientation of values. Although the initial impetus toward bureaucracy coincided with minor political conflict, Painesville did not experience sufficient political and ethnic dissension to stimulate persistent innovation. Indigenous social or political conditions were not major determinants of school reform in the town. Rather, the development of a bureaucratic school system in Painesville resulted largely from the school directors' desire to emulate progressive, urban systems. By the early twentieth century bureaucracy was an accepted feature of urban systems. Without this form of organization, Painesville schools could hardly serve as a model.

Curriculum innovations in Painesville also resulted primarily from school officials' desire to copy progressive developments. During the superintendency of Franklin H. Kendall in the years 1902 to 1913, Painesville's schools added both manual training and domestic science to the curriculum; both were innovations that many educators regarded as necessary in an urban system.

Incorporation of manual training into the curriculum
came about in a notably unspectacular manner. In December, 1905, the board held a special meeting "to consider the matter of introducing manual training in the city schools." At the meeting an agent of the American Manual Training School of Chicago offered

\[
\text{...to supply the necessary papers, materials, models, and instruction by correspondence for a class of 25 pupils and their teachers for one year for$100, and individual tools and benches, each set$14.}
\]

The board adopted the proposal unanimously and ordered fifteen sets.49 Minutes of board meetings do not explain why the innovation was believed necessary or desirable. The Telegraph, however, carried a front-page article that described the purpose and the educational benefits of the program.

The purpose is not the teaching of a trade, but to develop skill in the manipulation of the hands and in the use of ordinary tools, to develop keen observation and accuracy as well as to teach indirectly the dignity of labor and to develop the sense of value and economy.

The paper did not describe who supported the program or why manual training became important in Painesville at that time. It noted simply that manual training was found "satisfactory in other places," and that the twenty-five eighth-grade boys fortunate enough to be in the class would "no doubt welcome the innovation."50 Manual training did
not provoke serious pedagogical debate in the town. It worked in other cities; it would work in Painesville.

Domestic science, an early equivalent of home economics, entered the curriculum at about the same time but in a slightly different manner. In January, 1906, the board held another special meeting to consider "a recommendation by the superintendent concerning instruction in domestic science in the public schools." Superintendent Kendall endorsed

...a proposition made by the president of Lake Erie College to furnish for the current school year instruction (including materials) in domestic science for the girls of the eighth grade for 25¢ per pupil for each lesson of two hours duration.

The board unanimously accepted the proposal and resolved that "each pupil be given two lessons per month for the remainder of the school year." Unlike manual training, domestic science in Painesville schools did not originate in a correspondence course. But like manual training, domestic science came without debate over its educational merits. Its value went unquestioned by local school officials.

These important educational innovations apparently resulted from the efforts of Superintendent Kendall. He had attended numerous educational meetings and knew which new curriculum developments were important. Kendall had
served as principal in Painesville High School during the 1890s, but before that he had been Director of Night Schools in Steubenville, Ohio. Night schools were themselves important innovations in nineteenth- and twentieth-century schooling. Well-educated—he had earned a degree from Ohio Wesleyan in 1887 and had later studied at Columbia University—Kendall wanted to succeed as the superintendent of a model school system. He must have been concerned about the pace of progress in other Ohio cities when he became superintendent in 1902. Cleveland schools offered manual training by 1885. Toledo had manual training by 1884, and Cincinnati had it by 1886. Kendall apparently did not consider whether the adoption of these innovations had something to do with the size or social composition of the various cities. Rather he saw only that Painesville was lacking the educational options found in other cities. The board agreed with him that changes in curriculum were necessary. A correspondence course and a nearby woman's college provided the directors with the immediate means to close the educational gap between Painesville and other cities.

Although the school board did not adopt manual training and domestic science out of a deep concern for the educational needs of Painesville's children, students did benefit from the innovations. The manual training program
prospered. In 1907, the board refitted a building on the grammar school grounds to accommodate the manual training class, and in 1908 the program was extended to include seventh-grade boys. Manual training probably served the needs of some of the town's children by 1920, but the motivation for curriculum revision remained closely related to a desire for progress. When the building committee justified construction of a high school in 1919, the last point in their report to the board revealed the importance that they attached to being "modern." The committee stated that the present high school "is a very good building but is inadequate from the standpoint of the necessary number of class rooms and study rooms to meet the present needs." But another serious problem, according to the chairman, was that "The building is not modern. It has not the equipment and conveniences to meet the demands of the modern age in education." The chairman specifically believed that

...there ought to be some provisions made for vocational subjects in our course of study--such as some type manual training, wood work, metal work, domestic science, domestic art and etc. As conditions exist now it is impossible to think of enlarging the scope of our work which I believe the people of Painesville would like to see in their high school.55

The board had missed an important educational debate that occurred in the early decade of the twentieth century.
Educators had disagreed over the merits of manual and vocational training. By 1920, the emphasis in urban areas was on vocational programs. The building committee apparently recognized that Painesville's manual training program for grammar school children was outdated. But neither in their appeal for new facilities nor in the board meetings in general, does one find reference to the specific educational needs of children. Nowhere in the records does one find reference to the debate over the purpose of manual training. For the school board, new vocational programs, like new buildings, would demonstrate progress and modernity.\textsuperscript{56}

Some of the most dramatic changes in Painesville's school system were the result of state legislation. In 1895, state law permitted women to vote in school board elections. This radical innovation did not produce conflict, however, for the two female candidates did "not pose as reformers." They sought office because they were "intensely interested in the education of their children and desire[d] only to cooperate in the efforts made to advance the great cause of education."\textsuperscript{57} The two women, Nancy T. Wolverton and Mrs. O. S. King, won seats on the board. Wolverton was the Superintendent of the Domestic Department of Lake Erie Seminary and had helped organize the normal department in Milwaukee's schools. Having taught in both
Cleveland and Painesville, she probably was, as the *Telegraph* stated, "conversant in the latest and most approved methods of teaching." Wolverton's professional knowledge was an important asset. Shortly after her election she was responsible for starting a successful normal department in Painesville schools. Although neither Wolverton nor King were reelected, women commonly served on the board in the early twentieth century.

In addition to female suffrage, state law effected three other important changes in Painesville's school board. In 1904, a law changed the way candidates were nominated. Before 1904, Painesville school directors had run as independents elected at large. But to comply with the new law, Painesville had to elect an entirely new board from candidates that had been nominated either by a regular party convention or by petition. Painesville citizens eschewed bringing politics into school matters and nominated two tickets, the Citizens' and the People's ticket, by petition. Very likely political corruption in the schools of larger cities stimulated this legislated reform. But in Painesville, the *Telegraph* evidently told the truth when it stated that

> The general opinion seems to be that politics should play no part in the naming of such a board and that the welfare of the board should be the first and only thing to be considered in making the selection.
As in the case of other reforms in both curriculum and structure, the 1904 law appeared inappropriate to the needs of the town. Three members of the previous board were on the winning ticket; two were on the losing ticket. Painesville's school system adapted easily to the law, but the new procedures seemed unrelated to local political or social conditions.

The other two legislative reforms of the period also appear to have been inappropriate to local needs. By 1911, the Ohio legislature had passed a law prohibiting school directors from serving in another office. Even though Painesville voters had frequently elected men to both a school and a municipal office, the new law apparently created little disturbance.60 In 1913, state law required that in cities with less than 50,000 residents, boards of education could have a maximum of five members. Thus, the law forced the Painesville board to reduce its membership by one. This law produced some confusion in the November, 1913 election, but again the school system and the town's citizens readily adapted to a reform that had little immediacy locally.61

By 1920, Painesville's public school system had changed in many ways but had not been the focus of serious conflicts. Changes had occurred in administrative structure and in curriculum. The motivation for
innovation had sometimes been generated within the system; other times it was supplied by legislative command. In most of the other cities studied by educational historians, these changes were accompanied by visible dissension. Except for a brief period in the 1880s, Painesville schools escaped political or social turmoil. Before concluding, an attempt must be made to explain this lack of contention.

One of the most important reasons for the lack of serious conflict in the history of Painesville's public schools was that the people were not alienated from the system. In July, 1882, a Mrs. Balfour appeared before the board and requested that temperance be taught in the public schools. This was the first time that the subject had been raised, so the board deferred action until a later meeting. But on February 6, 1883, the board authorized

...the principal of the grammar school, under the direction of the superintendent, ...to give instruction in General Exercises as to the effect of alcohol on the human system. 62

This particular example of communication between the system and the community occurred before the system had really begun to develop into a bureaucracy. But numerous incidents in subsequent years show a continuing rapport. In 1895, the senior class petitioned the board to change the commencement exercises. The board refused, however,
stating that they did not want to establish a precedent contrary to

... the old-fashioned commencement which usually attracts the largest audience that assembles in Painesville during the year and reveals a deep public interest in the literary program furnished on such occasions.63

A petition from students and large gatherings at commencement hardly suggest alienation.

A close relationship between city and school continued into the twentieth century. In 1905, the Telegraph reported that the "Open House" in the public schools was of "Mutual Benefit to Parents and Teachers." About 400 people visited the schools, and the paper proposed that the open house become an annual event. On November 18, 1912, the Mothers Welfare Association of the Jackson Street School presented a petition "in regard to sanitary arrangements at the Jackson Street building." The board referred the matter to the Building Committee.64 In 1912, the board began a program of medical inspection of students. To some present-day observers, this program may suggest an imposition similar to the ritual of military induction. But the parents of Painesville students did not view the physical examination of their children that way. In 1915, the directors honored the request of parents who wanted the board to assume the cost of tonsillectomies for about
twenty children. Superintendent C. C. Underwood consulted several physicians, and the board hired Dr. I. J. Kerr of Cleveland to perform the operations for a total fee of $200. In 1917, twelve parents requested operations for their children. Parents did not protest the medical care as an unnecessary imposition; many appreciated its benefits.

Painesville's school system implemented special programs to answer the particular needs of certain groups. In June, 1915, members Lucy Buell and Laura Wild proposed a resolution to instruct the superintendent to investigate a plan for a room, teacher, and equipment for defective children. On April 17, 1916, the board approved the "special room for exceptional pupils," and hired Blanche Webster as the "Opportunity Teacher." At the board meeting November 15, 1915, Buell moved "that the board under the direction of Superintendent Underwood organize and conduct a night school for adult foreigners in the St. Clair Street Building." Buell offered to pay the teacher if the board would heat and light the room. This motion passed unanimously. In 1919, the board permitted the use of the high school as a night school "for foreign-born persons who desire to become American citizens." Expenses for books and teachers were raised from private sources, however. Although major innovations derived primarily from the directors' concern for progress, some school programs were
specifically designed to help the community.

Teachers also had an amiable relationship with the board. Whether the directors wanted good teachers primarily to glorify the system or whether they truly wanted the best possible education for the students, the school board encouraged professional accomplishment among teachers. By the first decade of the twentieth century Painesville teachers participated in an annual visiting day. On visiting day in November, 1904, Superintendent Kendall visited Lakewood schools while other teachers visited Warren, Ashtabula, or Cleveland. The school board gave bonuses to teachers who attended institutes or attended summer school at an accredited institution. On September 20, 1915, twenty-seven teachers were paid as much as $10.00 for attending the teacher's institute. In September, 1919, several teachers were given a $100 bonus for attending summer school. This sum was larger than many monthly salaries. Teachers received other benefits. In 1913, they were given five days' sick leave and received only partial deduction for absence. In 1915, the teachers petitioned the board for "creation of a pension fund in accordance with the laws of Ohio." A committee of the board reported favorably on the request, but the financial situation of the schools prevented immediate action. The board's policy toward teachers, like its relationship to the community, did not promote
This apparent responsiveness toward the teachers and community was related to the town's homogeneity. Even after more foreign-speaking immigrants moved to Painesville in the early twentieth century, social tension did not disrupt the city or the schools. The relationship between the public and Catholic schools in the second decade of the twentieth century gives some idea of the harmony that existed. In 1911, the board permitted the St. Mary's Drama Club to use the auditorium for four nights. The board also paid the club $50 for the scenery and sets that were constructed for the play. In a more significant display of cooperation, the board ruled that students who had graduated from the eighth grade at St. Mary's School could "be admitted to the High School on the recommendation of the Catholic teachers and approval of the Superintendent." The board required the eighth-grade Catholic students to pass the same examinations given in the public schools. Because the community was homogeneous or at least cooperative, the school system could more easily respond to educational needs. Bureaucratic school systems appear regimented when one or more groups disagree with the policy. Disagreement is much less likely between school and community when the officials, teachers, and parents share educational and social values. Most people in Painesville were satisfied with the curriculum and instruction offered in the schools.
In a more diverse community such widespread approval would be much less likely.

Nothing in this study of Painesville's school system challenges what has been written about urban education. As scholars have shown, in many large cities school reform stemmed from political and social turmoil. Leaders in these cities used schools in their attempt to control problems of urbanization and industrialization. Immigrants were particularly important in the development of public school systems. They served as the focus for the attack on urban problems. This study does not argue that these urban dynamics were not the cause of school reform in many cities. It does argue that many of the same innovations found in large cities could occur in small cities where these urban dynamics were lacking or, as in Painesville's case, were insignificant. The dynamic of school reform and of the development of the school system in Painesville was the school officials' desire to see their schools and community progress. If this study of Painesville questions any argument in school reform literature, it is the argument that imposition characterized public education in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Again, the imposition interpretation may be true for large cities, but Painesville citizens approved the board's policies and the changes in the system. This is not to say that the general public had a direct influence on school matters, for only a few,
relatively wealthy people managed the system. But in Painesville the values of school officials and parents were too similar to suggest the presence of imposition.

This study may help explain why imposition was so prevalent in school reform and public education after 1880. Historians have explained imposition by noting the material benefits that the leadership obtained; elementary schools provided social control and security of property, while high schools provided status and occupational advantages. Historians who argue the imposition interpretation believe that these benefits led educators to support a system that was blatantly inadequate, a system that was "universal, tax-supported, free, compulsory, bureaucratic, racist, and class-biased." A system like Painesville's must have been reassuring to schoolmen laboring to solve the problems of urban education. Painesville provided an example of an urban, bureaucratic system that worked. Painesville schools were centralized, hierarchical, and governed by myriad rules. But nowhere did officials or parents associated with the system complain of truancy, rigidity, corruption, or any of the other evils associated with urban schools. Painesville could have confirmed urban educators' belief that the faults were in the students and parents, not in the system. Ideally, Painesville could have demonstrated that the success of a bureaucratic school system rested on the
homogeneity of the community. But at the time urban educators, like businessmen, scientists, and various professionals, were making progress. If urban school reformers and managers noticed Painesville at all, they probably saw only the vast potential, not the limitations, of bureaucratic school systems.
FOOTNOTES - CHAPTER IV

1Katz, Class, Bureaucracy, and Schools, xviii.


3Records of the School Board, January 15, 1876; June 13, 1876.

4Ibid., October 2, 9, 1877.

5Ibid., November 17, 1881; May 31, 1884; June 15, 1884.

6Ibid., April 6, 1885.

7Ibid., April 10, 1885; May 9, 30, 1885.

8Ibid., June 2, 1885; October 3, 1885; February 27, 1886.

9Ibid., June 6, 1885; July 27, 1885.

10Painesville Telegraph, April 29, 1886.

11Ibid.

12Records of the School Board, May 1, 1886; Examination Record: Painesville Public Schools, June 1876, June 1886.
13 Records of the School Board, January 6, 13, 1887; February 28, 1887. Examination Record: Painesville Public Schools, June 1886, June 1887.

14 Painesville Telegraph, April 8, 1886; February 3, 1887.

15 Ibid., March 27, 1887.

16 Records of the School Board, April 16, 1887.

17 Ibid., June 4, 1887.

18 Ibid., June 20, 28, 1887.

19 Ibid., June 4, 1887.

20 Ibid., June 28, 1887; July 19, 1887.

21 Ibid., January 17, 1888; March 29, 1888.

22 Ibid., January 1, 1888.

23 Ibid., April 2, 1888.

24 Ibid., October 24, 1892; November 8, 1892. Painesville Telegraph, March 30, 1892; April 6, 1892.

25 Records of the School Board, October 15, 1897; November 2, 1897.

26 Painesville Telegraph, April 5, 1888.

27 Ibid., March 30, 1892; April 6, 1892; March 29, 1893; April 5, 1893.
28 Records of the School Board, March 10, 1854; September 8, 1858.

29 Ibid., April 25, 1887.

30 Ibid., April 27, 1887.

31 Ibid., January 3, 6, 1887; October 3, 31, 1887.

32 Ibid., September 1, 1887; August 4, 1888.

33 Painesville Telegraph, March 28, 1889; April 3, 1890.


37 Records of the School Board, June 2, 1890; May 8, 1903.

38 School Report, 1905, p. 70.


40 Ibid., December 15, 1919.

42 Tyack, The One Best System, 126-132, 167-168.

43 School Report, 1905, pp. 6-7; Records of the School Board, December 15, 1919.

44 Records of the School Board, June 5, 1886; September 15, 1919.


46 Records of the School Board, May 31, 1897; February 18, 1901; February 19, 1906; February 18, 1907.

47 Clipping in Records of the School Board, January 23, 1899.

48 Ibid.

49 Records of the School Board, December 21, 1905.

50 Painesville Telegraph, December 21, 1905.

51 Records of the School Board, January 31, 1906.


53 Burns, Educational History of Ohio, 382, 384-388, 397.

54 Records of the School Board, January 21, 1907; April 28, 1908.

55 Ibid., December 15, 1919.

57 Painesville Telegraph, March 27, 1895.

58 *Ibid.*, March 13, 1895; Records of the School Board, August 30, 1895.

59 Painesville Telegraph, October 13, 1904.

60 Records of the School Board, December 29, 1911.


63 Painesville Telegraph, January 30, 1895.

64 Records of the School Board, November 18, 1912.

65 *Ibid.*, June 10, 1912; December 21, 1914; August 16, 1915; August 20, 1917.


68 Painesville Telegraph, November 17, 1904.

69 Records of the School Board, September 20, 1915; September 15, 1919.

71Ibid., October 24, 1911; January 17, 1917.

72Katz, Class, Bureaucracy, and Schools, xviii.
APPENDIX
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Names</th>
<th>School Board Member</th>
<th>Voter in Akron Law Board Election</th>
<th>Voter in First School Board Election</th>
<th>Occupation</th>
<th>Value of Real Estate 1850</th>
<th>Value of Real Estate 1860</th>
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* Information for this chart was taken from Records of the School Board and Census Record.
BIBLIOGRAPHY
SELECTED
BIBLIOGRAPHY

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**Articles**


Thesis