

In the Arvin area two schools were opened in 1902-3, with a total average daily attendance of 29. A school was opened at Arvin in 1914-15. These three schools reached a combined average daily attendance of 1,242, and the Arvin school reached a peak of 683 in 1940-41 and is still close to that level. District boundaries conform poorly to the community boundary as delineated, with one of the three schools serving neighboring Weedpatch as well as many homes in the Arvin area. Strictly speaking, therefore, the school attendance never reached as high a figure in Arvin as it did in Dinuba. This is to be expected, for Arvin is presently smaller than Dinuba, and the Dinuba population is considerably less than its post-World War I peak. The close parallel in the growth of the two communities is shown in figure 20, which gives the growth curve of the elementary-school attendance for both towns on the same scale, but with Arvin dates set back 20 years. The similarity in growth pattern is striking.

If attention is given to the elementary school in the towns, rather than to all schools in the area, the same similarity in growth pattern is found. Again the growth curves are closely parallel, but Arvin is about 24 years later than Dinuba, rather than 20. Since this does not represent town residence, but merely the pupils from that geographic area which the town school serves, the comparison is of less value than the more inclusive one, and is indicated merely further to substantiate the general similarity in growth and the relative age of each community.

Both Arvin and Dinuba have modern school plants. The Arvin buildings are newer than the Dinuba ones, but are somewhat more crowded. Both conditions would be expected in view of the history of the two communities. Arvin has somewhat greater average daily attendance per teacher—30 as compared with 26. A very significant difference, however, lies in the nature of the planning. Dinuba has adopted an unusual plan of separating its school into four parts. Two units each serve the first four grades and the other two units serve grades 5 and 6 and grades 7 and 8. There are several advantages to this system. First, by placing the lowest grades at the opposite corners of town, the small children have relatively short distances to walk, second, the school playgrounds are scattered through town, and third, the age groups are separated. Undoubtedly the original cost as well as the upkeep is somewhat greater, with some disadvantages in the administration. For many reasons, this plan would not have the same advantageous effect in Arvin, where the district is large and the students are more widely scattered. Arvin has a system of bus transportation to bring the children the long distances to school.

The turn-over in teachers is an index to the school situation. In Dinuba 3 out of 22 teachers did not return for the 1943-44 session. In Arvin 14 of the 22 did not return. These figures apply only to the schools in the towns, but the other schools in the Arvin area had high turn-over rates—5 out of 8 and 4 out of 13. In the three schools combined, fewer than half the teachers had been there the preceding year. Such a high rate of turn-over indicates that the schools are viewed by teachers as a poor alternative and they tend to move away at their earliest opportunity. It means that the school cannot hold the best grade of teachers, and has fewer experienced ones. Rapid turn-over also means that the teacher does not become acquainted with the peculiar problems of the community and that the staff cannot develop the teamwork that is necessary.