

**ALAMOSA COUNTY, COLORADO, SCHOOL CENSUS RECORDS
1914 - 1964**

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By

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NOTE: For presentation purposes the data associated with this publication has been broken up into segments. No data was removed in the reformatting process.

The attached Alamosa County school census records are on Colorado State Archives microfilms L1496 (years 1914 – 1935, District 3), L1497 (years 1935, District 4 – 1951, District 2) and L1498 (years 1951, District 3 - 1964). Up through 1919 the annual report by the district secretary of children of school age residing in the district gives the date, district number, name, and sex. Beginning in 1914, they sometimes listed the parent or guardian and residence town. Beginning in 1920, added to the record was place and date of birth, school grade last attended of each child enumerated; names, address and nativity of parents; names and number of deaf, mutes, blind, illiterates and crippled; and totals.

On the microfilm, the census is arranged chronologically by year, then by school district numerically within the year and alphabetically by the student's named within the record.

Alamosa County was established in formed in 1913 and was named for the Spanish word for "of cottonwood" for the cottonwood forests which grow along the Rio Grande River and throughout the town of Alamosa. It was the last county in Colorado to be organized. It is located in the high San Luis Valley in south central Colorado. Alamosa, the county seat, was established in 1878 by the Denver and Rio Grande Railroad and quickly became an important rail center. By 1890 railroads were running out of Alamosa in four directions. Hispanos, descendants of Spanish settlers, set up farming and ranching communities in the county. For example, the Trujillo family was one of the most prominent ranching families. Other families that settled in Alamosa County were the DeHerrera, Maestas, Martinez, Manzanares and Valdez families. Artesian water wells are located throughout the valley, varying in depth from 200 to 1000 feet. Major cattle ranches in the area were the Medano (nine miles northeast of Mosca) and Zapata (near Mosca) Ranches in Alamosa county which were adjacent to the Sand Dunes National Park. Uracca was located near Mosca, and there is a Uracca Cemetery.

The first year after Alamosa County was formed in 1913, 17 school districts were operating and there were 43 teachers, 1118 enrollment and 24 school buildings, two of them sod, adobe or log, 15 frame and six brick or stone.

Mt. Pleasant School was located eight miles west of Alamosa. Built in 1911, the school building served as the area's only school until 1965 and the last one-room school in the Alamosa vicinity. (1)

Year Enrollment No. Teachers No. School Houses No. of Districts

1913	1118	43	24	17
1924	1008	70	37	14
1930	1691(568 were Jr&HS)	70	37	14
1942	2180	82	20	14
1960	2225	108		6

Alamosa County School Districts:

District

No.	Name	Census Years	Location
1	Mt. Pleasant	1914 -	Alamosa, Monte Vista
2	Waverly	1914 -	Alamosa
3	Alamosa	1914 -	Alamosa
4	Henry	1914 -	Alamosa
5	East Alamosa / Maddox	1914 -	Alamosa, East Alamosa
6	Hilltop	1914 -	Monte Vista
6 Joint		1963	Conejos County
7	South Stanley	1914 -	Alamosa, Monte Vista
8	Newsome-Becker	1914 -	Alamosa
9	Uracca / Airdale	1914 -	Blanca, Hooper, Mosca
10	Mosca	1914 -	Mosca
11	North Stanley	1914 -	Monte Vista
11 Joint Book 1			Alamosa
11 Joint Book 2			Alamosa, La Jara
12	Teller	1914 -	Hooper, Mosca
13	Wiley	1914 -	Mosca
14	McGinty	1914 -	Alamosa
15 Joint	Excelsier	1914 -	Alamosa, Sanford
16		1914 -	Blanca
17 Joint	Carmel	1916 -	Alamosa & Conejos Counties including Alamosa
21 Joint	Hooper	1914 -	Hooper
22 Joint Book 1		1959-	Center, Mosca, Hooper
22 Joint Book 2		1959-	Center, Hooper
23 Joint Consolidated	Hooper	1918 -	Garnett, Hooper, Monte Vista, Mosca
24 Joint	Star	1914 -	Alamosa & Conejos Counties including Alamosa, Estrella & La Jara
24 Joint Consolidated		1924 -	Center, Hooper, Mosca
26 Joint	Center	1957	Center
33 Joint		1959-	Alamosa, Monte Vista
1 Consolidated	Mosca	1917-	Mosca
2 Consolidated	Stanley	1918-	Alamosa, Monte Vista, Mosca
Re1 Joint		1961-	Alamosa

In the attached school census index, names and ages of the students are indexed with the years that the student attended a school. The names and spellings that were given on the

census have been used for the transcriptions in the index. Variations of various day, month and year for birth dates are retained. Different people filling out the forms for different years with different handwriting resulted in variations in all the recorded data and interpretation of the instructions for taking the school census.

Instructions for taking the school census were as follows:

1. This census blank usually is for use in districts having a school population less than 100 persons.
2. Sections 97 and 115 of the School Laws Annotated, 1912, should be carefully consulted for *directions*. Usually the age on last birthday prior to April 10th should be given.
3. Place names of boys on left-hand page and those of girls on right-hand page in *alphabetical order*.
4. The names of all persons between the ages of six (6) and twenty-one (21) years should be given. In districts below first class, under residence, enter name of parent or guardian and post office address. Enter on separate list in back of the book each deaf mute or blind child between the ages of four (4) and twenty-two (22) years, with *name and* post office address of each parent or guardian.
5. In calculating the numbers between 6 and 21, 8 and 14, the first number only in each case is to be included.
6. Students in a private or public institution, whose parents are not residences of the district in which such institution is located, should not be included in the census of that district.
7. This list must be taken, sworn to and filed with the County Superintendent on, or before the first day of June, of the current school year, or the district will forfeit its money for the ensuing year. The person taking the school census is directed to require each parent or guardian to subscribe or to take oath that such record is true and correct.
8. Crippled children up to the age of 21 years shall be included who have a physical deformity such as to restrict normal capacity for education or self-support. This includes all congenital deformities such as harelip, club feet, absence of some member, etc.; deformities caused by disease such as infantile paralysis, bone tuberculosis, etc.; or by accident such as fractures, burns which cause contractures, and the like. All children 6 years of age and under should be reported as early as possible to Colorado Child Welfare Bureau, Denver, Colorado.

The census record on these films may consist of these parts: student's name, date attended, district number, sex, place of birth (towns are in Colorado unless noted otherwise), birth date, usually age as of April 10th, residence / Post Office and school grade last attended of each child enumerated, year of attendance census; parents or guardian names occasionally given, and country nativity of parents (after 1920) and whether illiterate; names and number of deaf, mutes, blind, illiterates and crippled. Some of the children had infantile paralysis which is an old synonym for polio, an inflammation of the central nervous system especially of the spinal cord and brain stem, resulting in muscle function disability. In some cases the last grade attended may be some years prior to the census year. The Census was taken about May of the census year. In some cases it appears the students continued to attend school even after having attended for twelve

years or are attending college which is reflected in the census as grade numbers larger than twelve. In some cases the girls got married, changed their surname, but continued to attend school. Beginning in 1941 there was a special school census list of unemployed, out of school youth between the ages of 14 and 21, which are noted as “unemployed” in the attached database.

In the case of information conflicts, one should always check the original records. Some of the records list the residence as “Ranch” which is not a town but indicates that they lived on a rural large farm. In some cases, the residence listed is the school name or a nearby creek and is not a town. It should be noted that only the most common residences specified were indexed in the attached database, and where residences are not specified one should check the original records which may have a residence specified. Some conflicts especially in birth dates and birth place appears in the records, and further study evaluating an age with a grade level or through other sources such as birth certificates, U.S. census, gravestones and obituaries would be required to determine the correct birth date or birth place. Also, in some cases divorces and remarriages has created confusion in the information recorded for the parents or guardians. The larger school districts appear to have much more reliable birth information.

N.Y.A. in the records stands for the National Youth Administration which was a New Deal agency sponsored by President Roosevelt to provide work and education the youth between the ages of 16 and 25. The youth normally lived at home, were paid for their work that included job training. They worked on construction or repair projects.

Listed below is the following information: student’s name, birth place, birth date, residence (Joint districts included counties other than Alamosa), school district attended, parents or guardian, age, attendance year and Archives film number. For the residence, state abbreviations were used, and Colorado towns have no Colorado state abbreviation. aka means “also known as”. At the very top of the columns (the first first record in the database) on the right is the year of the census which begins with 1914 and ends with 1964. An X in the column indicates that the student is reflected in the census for that year. Most of the records were handwritten, and it was hard to distinguish between the letters a & o , i & e, u & a, u & n, T & I, T & F, T & L and S & L, the numbers 2 & 3, 7 & 9, 4 & 9 and the names Lu and Lee. Some records were illegible and not indexed.

Complete information from these records may be obtained by contacting:

The Colorado State Archives
Room 120
1313 Sherman Street
Denver, CO 80203
Phone 303-866-2358
Fax 303-866-2257

Internet web site: <https://www.colorado.gov/archives>

References:

1. <https://www.historycolorado.org/location/mt-pleasant-school> “Mt. Pleasant School”
2. <https://www.alamosanews.com/article/school-lawsuit-from-1914-remembered>
3. https://history.denverlibrary.org/sites/history/files/Colorado_Place_Names_Indexes.pdf