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DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
BUREAU OF EDUCATION

BULLETIN, 1923, No. 14

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## PUBLIC EDUCATION IN OKLAHOMA

A DIGEST OF THE REPORT OF A SURVEY OF PUBLIC EDUCATION IN  
THE STATE OF OKLAHOMA, MADE AT THE REQUEST OF THE  
OKLAHOMA STATE EDUCATIONAL SURVEY COMMISSION  
UNDER THE DIRECTION OF THE UNITED STATES  
COMMISSIONER OF EDUCATION



WASHINGTON  
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1923

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LETTER OF COMMISSIONER TIGERT TO CHAIRMAN OF THE  
OKLAHOMA STATE EDUCATIONAL SURVEY COMMISSION.

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DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR,  
BUREAU OF EDUCATION,  
*Washington, D. C., December 11, 1922.*

My DEAR MR. WILSON: In accordance with the agreement entered into with the Oklahoma State Educational Survey Commission, I have caused a careful study to be made of public education in Oklahoma, and have received and given due consideration to the reports made to me by members of the survey staff designated to make the investigation.

I take pleasure in transmitting this report for consideration by your commission and, in due time, by the people of Oklahoma.

Permit me to express appreciation of the cordial spirit of cooperation with the survey manifested by all concerned with education in Oklahoma. The Bureau of Education and the people of Oklahoma are under obligation also to those State and city departments of education and educational institutions which have cooperated by making it possible for representatives to serve on the survey staff. Educational experts from seven widely separated States (Minnesota, Kansas, Illinois, Ohio, Kentucky, New York, Georgia) have participated in this investigation, under the direction of the Federal Bureau of Education. By adding their counsel to that of representatives of the bureau, it has thus been possible to bring to bear on the problems of public education in Oklahoma the lessons of experience drawn from all parts of the United States.

I trust that the results of our efforts may play some appropriate part in the educational awakening for which the people of Oklahoma appear to be ready.

Cordially yours,

JNO. J. TIGERT,  
*Commissioner.*

HON. ROBERT H. WILSON, *Chairman,*  
*Oklahoma State Educational Survey Commission,*  
*Oklahoma City, Okla.*

## MEMBERS OF THE SURVEY STAFF.

The members of the staff appointed by the Commissioner of Education to make the survey of the public schools, the higher educational institutions, and the Government Indian schools in the State of Oklahoma, and to report to him their findings and recommendations, are as follows:

### FROM THE UNITED STATES BUREAU OF EDUCATION.

Dr. William T. Bawden, assistant to commissioner, director of the survey.  
Dr. George F. Zook, Chief of Division of Higher Education.  
Mrs. Katherine M. Cook, Chief of Rural Schools Division.  
Dr. Willard S. Small, Chief of Division of Physical Education and School Hygiene.  
Mrs. Henrietta W. Calvin, specialist in home economics.  
William R. Hood, specialist in educational legislation.  
Miss Maud C. Newbury, assistant in rural education.  
E. E. Windes, assistant in rural education.  
Lloyd E. Blanch, specialist in charge of land-grant college statistics.  
Maj. Alex Summers, collector and compiler of statistics.

### FROM OUTSIDE THE UNITED STATES BUREAU OF EDUCATION.

Dr. Frank L. McVey, president of University of Kentucky, Lexington, Ky.  
Raymond M. Hughes, president of Miami University, Oxford, Ohio.  
Dr. Fletcher Harper Swift, professor of education, College of Education, University of Minnesota, Minneapolis, Minn.  
Ralph Bowman, consulting accountant and member of staff of United States Bureau of Efficiency, Washington, D. C.  
J. W. Gowans, superintendent of public schools, Hutchinson, Kans.  
Dr. E. E. Lewis, superintendent of public schools, Rockford, Ill.  
George A. Works, professor of rural education, Cornell University, Ithaca, N. Y.  
H. B. Peairs, chief supervisor of education, United States Indian Service, Department of the Interior, Washington, D. C.  
Herbert C. Calloun, supervisor of schools for the Five Civilized Tribes, United States Indian Service, Muskogee, Okla.  
R. M. Spalsbury, supervisor of schools, United States Indian Service, Lawrence, Kans.  
Dr. Thomas Jesse Jones, director Phelps-Stokes fund, New York, N. Y.  
Miss Bertha Eckert, secretary Indian department, National Board Y. W. C. A., New York, N. Y.  
Walter B. Hill, State supervisor of negro education, State department of education, Atlanta, Ga.



# PUBLIC EDUCATION IN OKLAHOMA.

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## Chapter I.

### INTRODUCTION.

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The Oklahoma State Legislature, in special session, 1921, passed an "Act creating a Commission of Educational Survey, naming the duties, providing for an educational survey of the State school system of Oklahoma, and making an appropriation of \$20,000."

The members of the commission, appointed by Gov. J. B. A. Robertson, are as follows: Robert H. Wilson, State superintendent of public instruction, Oklahoma City, chairman ex officio; George F. Southard, Enid; Charles L. Brooks, Sapulpa; J. A. Duff, Cordell; Cyrus S. Avery, Tulsa. Later the commission appointed J. S. Vaughan as its executive secretary.

The first meeting of the commission was held at Oklahoma City, November 15, 1921, at which time the chairman was directed to open negotiations with the United States Commissioner of Education. On December 10 Governor Robertson conferred with Commissioner Tigert in Washington concerning the major problems which it was hoped the survey might assist in solving. After some correspondence a second meeting of the commission was held at Oklahoma City, January 2 and 3, 1922, at which a representative of the Bureau of Education was present for conference on details of the survey.

At this meeting "a resolution was unanimously adopted by the survey commission, inviting the Bureau of Education at Washington to direct and make the educational survey of the State as indicated by the law passed by the last session of the Oklahoma State Legislature, and that the commission pledges whatever support it can give to the Bureau of Education in the survey to be made."<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> From letter of Secretary Vaughan to Commissioner of Education.

In view of the desire of the commission to include in the survey a study of the special problems of education for Indians in Oklahoma, the cooperation of the United States Bureau of Indian Affairs was sought through the Department of the Interior. This request was immediately granted, and Commissioner Burke designated Mr. Peairs as his personal representative for this study.

On January 17, 1922, the Commissioner of Education accepted the invitation to make the survey, and steps were taken at once to organize a staff of investigators. On August 21 a partial list of names was submitted to the commission for approval, with the understanding that additional names would be submitted later.

During the months of April and May a committee of Oklahoma educators, under the direction of the Bureau of Education, conducted a series of educational tests and measurements in public schools in various parts of the State. Dean W. W. Phelan, of the University of Oklahoma, served as chairman of this committee until his departure from the State, when he was succeeded by Henry D. Rinsland, director of educational research in the public schools of Ardmore.

In August, 1922, Governor Robertson pledged an additional sum from contingent funds, to be available, if necessary, to meet the extra expense incurred by reason of including a special study of education for Indians.

#### THE FIELD WORK.

The field work of the survey began October 16 with a conference with the commission at Oklahoma City. Conferences of the survey staff were held each Saturday until the close of the field work.

Approximately 523 days were devoted to field work by 19 members of the survey staff, most of the visiting being done between October 16 and November 11. Schools were visited in 46 of the 77 counties of the State, as follows (see figure 1):

Number of counties.	Number of members of staff visiting.
1-----	19
2-----	10
1-----	9
2-----	8
2-----	6
2-----	5
5-----	4
8-----	3
6-----	2
17-----	1
Total number of counties visited-----	46
Aggregate number of visits, at least-----	179



## THE SURVEY BUDGET.

The principal items of expenditure in connection with the survey to date (Dec. 11, 1922) may be summarized as follows:

Transportation of 19 members of staff.....	\$2, 648. 80
Honoraria and subsistence of 13 members of the Staff not connected with the United States Bureau of Education.....	8, 618. 00
Subsistence of six members of the staff from the United States Bu- reau of Education.....	1, 536. 50
Educational tests (Dean Phelan's committee) estimated.....	4, 000. 00
Expenses, secretary's office (Mr. Vaughan) estimated.....	4, 800. 00
Printing report, estimated.....	2, 500. 00
Clerical assistance (Washington—tabulating questionnaires).....	746. 00
Miscellaneous expenses, supplies, etc.....	85. 11
Total.....	<u>24, 934. 41</u>

## Chapter II.

### HISTORICAL BACKGROUND.

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#### OUTLINE OF POLITICAL HISTORY.

OKLAHOMA, a word of Choctaw Indian origin, means "Land of the Red Men." As a name for a territorial area it is said to have been first suggested by members of the Choctaw commission to Washington for the purpose of forming a new treaty between that Indian nation and the United States after the close of the Civil War. Its first legal application to a political division was to the territory comprising the unassigned and certain other lands near the center of what is now the State of Oklahoma when that territory was provided with a form of government by act of Congress in 1890.

By act of Congress approved June 16, 1906, the people of Oklahoma Territory and the Indian Territory were authorized to form a constitution and State government and to be admitted to the Union. Delegates to a constitutional convention were elected November 6; the convention met soon thereafter and continued in session until July, 1907. A constitution was submitted to the people September 17, at which time also an election was held for State officers. The constitution was adopted by a large majority, and a presidential proclamation fixed November 16, 1907, as the date when the State government should be inaugurated.

Aside from its entry into the Union with a large number of inhabitants, making it an important State from the beginning, Oklahoma stands first among the States in the size and importance of its Indian population; and few, if any, new States had drawn their settlers from so wide an area.

For a long period there was no legally organized government in the western part of what is now Oklahoma, and in the east only codes of Indian laws, so that there was little opportunity for the evolution of a legal system out of the experience of the people. When the Territory was established, therefore, it seemed advisable to borrow laws more or less directly from other States. When the State constitution was adopted it attracted wide attention because of the large amount of detail which it embodied.

## INDIAN EDUCATION.

The beginning of grants of land from the public domain for the endowment of the common schools represented the inauguration of the Federal Government's first policy with reference to public education. Its second such policy is seen in the various provisions for the education of dependent peoples, including Indians. Although the Continental Congress made certain appropriations, the beginning of the Government system of Indian education is probably found in the first general appropriation for this purpose by Congress on March 3, 1819. In 1832 the appointment of a Commissioner of Indian Affairs was authorized. From these beginnings the appropriations made by Congress for the "education and civilization" of the Indians have been augmented from time to time until the present annual total is more than \$5,000,000.

Generally speaking, the policy adopted by the Federal Government was one of encouraging the tribal schools of the Indians more advanced in civilization and of providing school facilities with Government appropriations where the Indians were uncivilized or where such provision was otherwise advisable. The Curtis Act of June 28, 1898, took a long step toward the abolition of tribal governments and the consequent transference of the tribal school systems to the control and supervision of Federal agencies. This process was hastened by subsequent legislation, and in 1910 the entire charge of these schools was taken over.

At the present time about 22,000 Indian children attend public schools, while about 3,500 are in Government boarding schools. Since many Indians are exempt from taxation, the Federal authorities each year extended certain financial aid to the public-school districts in which these children are enrolled.

## THE STATE SCHOOL SYSTEM.

The first Territorial legislature, 1890-91, passed a detailed school law making the township the local unit of school organization, providing for a Territorial board of education and for Territorial and county superintendents of schools, prescribing a system of certification of teachers, and otherwise setting a school system in motion.

The township form of organization, however, was displaced with the district unit of local control by the new school law of 1893, which was in large measure the basis of the present school code.

The first Territorial legislature also began the establishment of a system of higher education, providing for the university at Norman, the Agricultural and Mechanical College at Stillwater, and a normal school at Edmond. Other institutions were added as follows: 1898, normal school at Alva, and the colored Agricultural and Normal Uni-

versity at Langston; 1901, the normal school at Weatherford and the University Preparatory School at Tonkawa.

The act admitting Oklahoma to statehood included several important provisions relating to education. Foremost among these was the grant of sections 16 and 36 in each township of land which had been reserved for school purposes by the "organic act," and "in lieu of these sections and other lands of the Indian Territory" Congress appropriated \$5,000,000 in money for the common schools of the State for a permanent school fund.

For the benefit of the higher institutions, the act granted section 13 in each township of certain lands. A grant of section 33 was made, the proceeds of which were constituted a "public building fund," in which the schools have participated from time to time.

A grant was also made of specific amounts of land to certain institutions, the proceeds of which were known as the "new college fund."

#### LIMITATIONS ON TAX LEVIES.

The State constitution, 1907, contained three articles vitally affecting the school system: X. "Revenue and taxation"; XI. "State and school lands"; XIII. "Education." The total permissible State levy was placed at 3.5 mills on an ad valorem basis, but no State tax specifically for school purposes was mentioned in this connection. A county tax of 2 mills for schools was authorized, of which not over 1 mill could be used for high-school purposes. District levies were authorized up to 15 mills, and an additional 10 mills for building purposes.

The legislature was empowered to provide for poll taxes, but it has never exercised this power. An amendment to the constitution, 1913, provides for a tax on public service corporations, the proceeds to be paid into the State common school fund, but the legislature has not taken the necessary action. In 1909 the legislature provided for a State school tax of one-fourth of 1 mill, but the State board of equalization does not make this levy.

Article XI of the constitution accepts all grants of lands and moneys made by the United States, and pledges the faith of the State to their preservation and proper use.

#### FREE PUBLIC SCHOOLS FOR ALL CHILDREN.

Article XIII directs the legislature to establish and maintain a system of free public schools for all children of the State, to establish and maintain institutions for the care and education of the deaf and the blind, to provide separate schools for white and colored children, to enact school-attendance legislation for children between the ages of 8 and 18, to provide for a uniform system of textbooks,

and for instruction in the common schools in agricultural subjects and household arts.

Other important educational provisions were those establishing an ex officio State board of education, creating a board of Commissioners of the Land Office, to have charge of school and other State lands, vesting the control of the Agricultural and Mechanical College in the State board of agriculture, and providing for popular election of State and county superintendents of public instruction.

The first and second State legislatures, 1907 and 1909, established a number of additional educational and correctional institutions in the State system of schools. In 1911 a State board of education was created, under which was centralized the control of all of these State institutions.

Other important acts passed in 1911 included: Provision for a bond issue of \$3,000,000 in anticipation of the growth of the "Public building fund," provision for maintenance of public libraries in cities of over 2,000 inhabitants, creation of a State "Union graded and consolidated school fund," and an act making it the duty of district boards of consolidated school districts to provide transportation for pupils living  $1\frac{1}{2}$  miles or more from school.

Oklahoma enacted its "new school code" in 1913, which included no especially basic changes. Some of its more important omissions should be noted: The State's share of the burden of school support was not increased, the school term remained too short, school attendance was required for only 66 per cent of the term, district boards were left without authority to provide free textbooks except for indigent children, high-school provisions were inadequate, the district system of local control was left unchanged.

In 1915 provision was made for teacher-training classes in schools of secondary grade, and three acts were passed stimulating consolidation of schools and transportation of pupils. In 1916 a "gross production tax" on certain natural resources was provided, one-sixth of the proceeds of which are set aside "in aid of the common schools" of the counties in which they accrue.

The year 1919 showed a decided tendency back toward decentralization of educational control. Separate boards of trustees were provided for all the various State educational institutions, except the Agricultural and Mechanical College, which remained under the State board of agriculture, and the normal schools, which remained under the State board of education, together with the schools for the blind and the deaf.

In this year also a teachers' pension and retirement law and a continuation school law were passed, and the compulsory school attendance law was amended. The establishment of county high schools was authorized.



## CHARACTERISTICS OF THE PRESENT SYSTEM.

After tracing the development of the Oklahoma educational system, the following general observations suggest themselves:

(1) The State system of public education in Oklahoma is not homogeneous or well coordinated.

(2) There is little evidence of the existence of a consistent State policy with reference to public education.

(3) Oklahoma is one of the few States in which the State as such contributes very little toward the maintenance of its common schools.

(4) The district system of local school administration is seen in Oklahoma in its strongest form. Both the power of control and the burden of support lie heavily on the district.

(5) The Oklahoma constitution contains numerous provisions which in other States have been left to statutory law.

## Chapter III.

### PROBLEMS OF FINANCING PUBLIC SCHOOLS.

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#### THE PRESENT SITUATION.

No one realizes better than the citizens of Oklahoma themselves that the financial situation of the public schools is far from satisfactory. In 1920 the people of Oklahoma voted on a proposed amendment to the constitution which would have authorized the State board of equalization to levy not to exceed 6 mills tax on all the property of the State for the support of the public schools. This amendment was defeated. In 1922 an effort was made to raise the present constitutional limit of 15 mills to 25 mills. This amendment was lost. What is the present situation? From every part of the State come reports of inadequate funds, shortened school terms, underpaid and untrained teachers. Over against these conditions is placed the fact that Oklahoma's expenditures for public schools during the last decade have risen by leaps and bounds. In 1910 Oklahoma spent approximately \$6,700,000 for public schools. In 1920 she spent more than three times as much, namely, \$22,900,000. In 1910 she spent approximately \$16 for each child enrolled in school; in 1920, approximately \$39. In 1910 she had invested in school property approximately \$13,000,000; in 1920, nearly \$36,000,000.

The ability of a State, a county, or a district to provide schools does not depend chiefly upon its total assessed valuation. If two districts each have a valuation of \$20,000, and one of these districts has to educate 50 children and the other 150 children, it is easy to see it would be very unfair to consider them equally able to provide schools of the same standard. For this reason, it is customary to take as the measure of the ability of a State, a county, or a school district to provide county schools, its wealth per child.

#### OKLAHOMA COMPARED WITH OTHER STATES.

One way of answering the question whether Oklahoma is exerting herself in proportion to her ability is to compare her with other States. For this purpose, we shall take the estimated true wealth per child of school age as a measure of ability. As a measure of effort we shall take the amount expended for public schools on each \$1,000 of true estimated wealth.

## STATES SELECTED FOR COMPARISON.

The question at once arises, With which States in the Union ought Oklahoma to be compared?

Oklahoma entered the Union less than 20 years ago and was given a vast endowment in lands and moneys for supporting public schools. This endowment has steadily increased. Moreover, from the start she has believed whole-heartedly in public, universal education, and has had no battle to fight against organized opposition to the public-school idea. In view of all these facts, we may say that there is only one satisfactory basis upon which we may make our selection of States for comparison, namely, ability to provide school revenues, as represented by estimated true wealth per child, 5 to 18 years of age. On this basis Oklahoma ranks twelfth. Prof. F. F. Blachly, of the University of Oklahoma, in his monograph *The Financial System of the State of Oklahoma*, chapter 1, shows that Oklahoma ranks fourth as to estimated wealth per capita of total population, and that 25 States had a greater net debt per capita.

In this report Oklahoma is compared with six other States which rank, respectively, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, and 18 as to estimated true wealth per school child.

In this group of seven States, among which Oklahoma ranks first as to ability to provide school revenues, she ranks seventh as to the effort she is making; seventh as to the amount of money she is expending on each child enrolled; seventh as to the per cent of population 5 to 18 years of age who are attending school; and seventh as to the average number of days attended by each pupil enrolled.

It is evident that, in proportion to her ability, Oklahoma is making far less effort than other States in the Union with which she ought to be compared. Let us now ask the same question regarding Oklahoma when compared with the United States as a whole.

Whereas Oklahoma ranks twelfth in the United States with respect to her ability to provide school revenue, she ranks forty-second as to her expenditure for each \$1,000 of estimated true wealth; thirty-fourth as to the amount which she expends per child enrolled; and thirty-seventh as to the value of her school property per child enrolled. With respect to the per cent of population which is attending school, she ranks thirty-third in the Union; thirty-eighth as to the average number of days attended by each pupil; and forty-eighth, or lowest, as to the per cent of enrollment which is in average daily attendance.

## EQUALITY IN EDUCATION.

Every great American leader, from Washington down to the present, has insisted that, without a system of free universal education,

democracy is doomed. Equality in education is a brief but accurate statement of the supreme educational purpose of every State in the Union.

Even approximate equality in education can never be secured throughout a State until school revenues and school burdens are equalized.

The extent to which school revenues are equalized will depend upon at least three things: First, equality in ability of the local units which furnish the revenues (in Oklahoma districts and counties); second, the comparative effort made by such local units to provide revenues; and, third, the extent to which the State evens out inequalities in ability and effort existing among the local units.

#### CONDITIONS IN NINE REPRESENTATIVE COUNTIES.

In order to gain an accurate idea of the actual conditions, an intensive study was made of nine representative counties. These counties were selected on the basis of their ability to provide school revenues; i. e., on a basis of wealth per school child in average daily attendance.

The counties selected include the three richest, Cimarron, Grant, Alfalfa; three poorest, Le Flore, McCurtain, Haskell; and three of middle rank, Cotton, Kiowa, Carter, as measured by their wealth per child.

Investigation shows that Cimarron County is more than five times as able to provide school revenues as McCurtain, six times as able as Haskell, and nearly three times as able as Kiowa. In view of these and other wide variations it would be reasonable to expect that the expenditures for public schools would vary widely also. (See fig. 2.)

This expectation is borne out by the facts thus: Whereas Cimarron County spends \$97 for every child in average daily attendance; McCurtain County and Haskell spend approximately \$35; Carter County, \$71; Kiowa County, \$43; and Cotton County, \$40.

#### CONDITIONS IN SCHOOL DISTRICTS.

We have seen how enormous are the inequalities among counties as to the wealth, expenditures, and taxation for public schools. The situation is even worse among the districts within the counties. This will be discovered by comparing the richest and poorest school districts in the counties which we have already compared with one another.

Whereas the richest rural district in Grant County has \$82,000 back of each school child, the poorest has only \$3,000. In 1922 the richest district in this county levied a tax of 5 mills; the poorest levied a tax of more than 9 mills. In Kiowa County the richest district has back of each child \$20,000 and levies a tax of less than 5

mills; the poorest has back of each child only \$2,000 and levies a tax of 15 mills. The richest district in Grant County is eighty-two times as able to provide school revenues as the poorest in Haskell County, yet it levies a tax of less than one-third the rate levied by this poorest of all districts.

WEALTH AND EXPENDITURE PER CHILD IN AVERAGE DAILY ATTENDANCE  
IN NINE OKLAHOMA COUNTIES  
1921

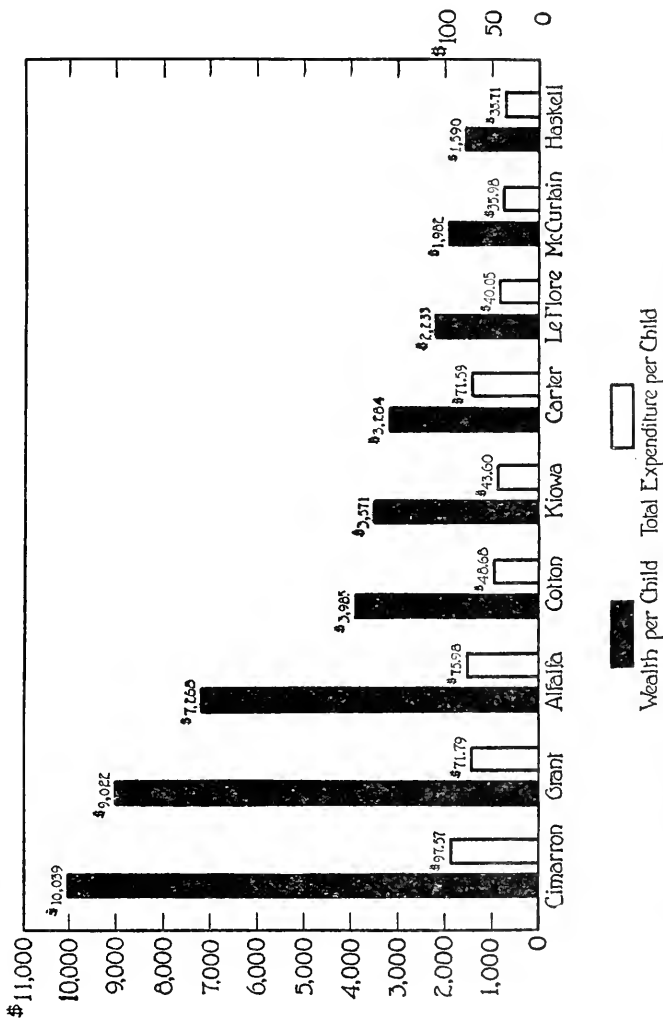


FIG. 2.—Shows how these nine counties compare in the year 1922 with respect to their wealth per child in average daily attendance and their total expenditure per child.

CAUSES OF OKLAHOMA'S EDUCATIONAL BACKWARDNESS.

Space does not permit us to continue further our account of county and district inequalities in ability and effort to provide schools. We have seen that this fair and wealthy State can not stand comparison with many States of less wealth, States which every loyal citizen would claim Oklahoma ought to outclass in educational achievements.

More than this, we have seen that compared with the United States as a whole Oklahoma ranks very low.

Let us now ask what are the chief causes of this situation. We answer without a moment's hesitation: (1) A defective system of

THE STORY OF OKLAHOMA'S SCHOOL BURDENS  
TOLD IN NINE CHAPTERS  
(RURAL AND VILLAGE DISTRICTS ONLY)  
—AS WEALTH DECREASES SCHOOL TAXES INCREASE—

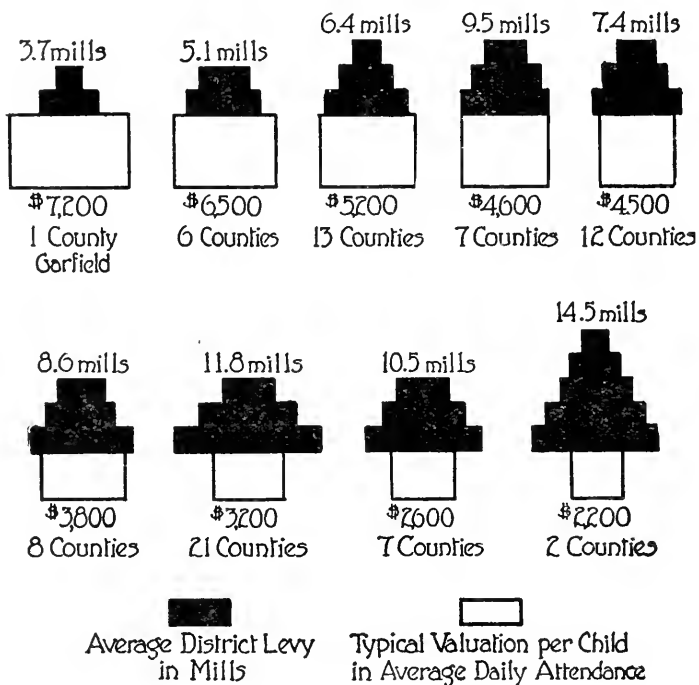


FIG. 3.—Shows the counties of Oklahoma arranged in nine groups. The small white square represents the average valuation per child of counties included in each group. Resting on each square is a figure representing the average school tax levied by rural and village districts of the counties included in the group. The lowest tax is that levied in Garfield County, which has the highest valuation per child of all the groups. Six counties have an average valuation per child of \$6,500. The average tax levied by districts in these counties is 5.1 mills. From this point on, with the exception of the fifth group, the story is the same. The lower the valuation, i. e., the less the ability, the heavier is the burden, which must be borne under Oklahoma's present system of school finance.

taxation; (2) a system of school finance which makes it absolutely impossible to provide adequate school funds; (3) the district system; (4) an unscientific method of apportioning the State funds, which ignores both the ability and the effort of the local units. (See fig. 3.)

In 1920 Oklahoma ranked twelfth with respect to her wealth per child. In that same year she spent for each child in average daily attendance \$64 and ranked thirtieth. Had she ranked twelfth with respect to expenditures as well as wealth, it would have been necessary for her to spend \$90 per child instead of \$64.

There is not a State in the Union which can provide adequate school facilities under a system which depends for three-fourths of her revenue upon school districts and which limits these districts to a 15-mill or even a 30-mill tax.

#### NONTAXABLE INDIAN LANDS AN IMPORTANT FACTOR.

The difficulty of the situation is greatly increased owing to the fact that there are within the State of Oklahoma approximately 6,700,000 acres of land owned by Indians, whose land is exempted by Congress, and which lands therefore are not subject to taxation. It is estimated that a levy of 10 mills on these lands—the average rate of school tax for 1922—would produce an annual revenue of \$1,228,000. The paltry sum of 10 cents per day paid by the United States Government for the tuition of Indian children attending public schools does not meet the actual costs of such tuition. Oklahoma should take steps at once to secure from the Federal Government an appropriation which will adequately reimburse her for the revenue of which her schools are being deprived under the existing system. It is hardly conceivable that if the facts were laid before Congress that body would refuse to recognize the Federal Government's obligation.

#### DEFECTS OF DISTRICT ORGANIZATION.

It has been pointed out that one of the chief causes of Oklahoma's unsatisfactory educational situation is the district system. We may well add that the district system is the most important of all these causes and is also the fundamental defect underlying all others.

There are in Oklahoma at the present time over 5,000 rural school districts and nearly 300 independent districts. It would be almost impossible to think of a more cumbersome system or one which by its very nature would breed and perpetuate greater inequalities of every sort. Not only do these districts vary greatly in size and in wealth, but they vary greatly also in their intelligence respecting the importance of education, their zeal for the same, and their desire to support schools. (See fig. 4.)

#### LENGTH OF SCHOOL TERM.

In the year 1920 the average length of school year in the United States was 8.1 months. Data for 1921 for the United States as a

whole are not available. If they were, we would undoubtedly find that the average length of school year had increased. Yet in the year of 1921 in Oklahoma there were more than 1,000 village and rural white districts which maintained school for six months or less.

WEALTH PER CHILD IN AVERAGE DAILY ATTENDANCE  
AND SCHOOL LEVY IN RICHEST AND POOREST RURAL SCHOOL DISTRICTS  
IN NINE OKLAHOMA COUNTIES  
1921-1922

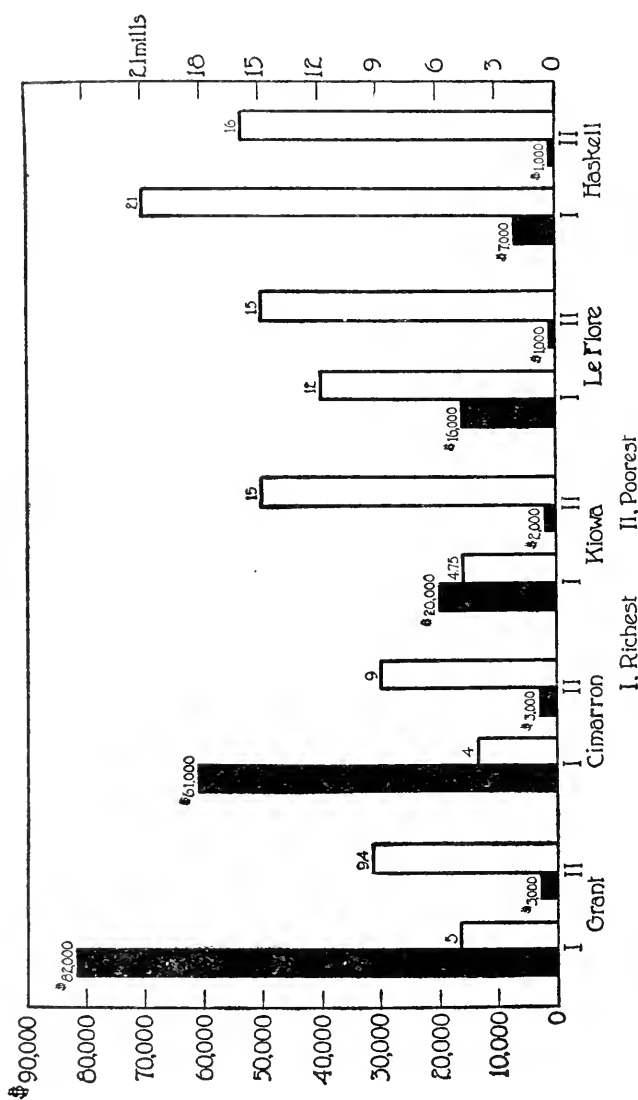


FIG. 4.—Shows how the richest and poorest rural school districts in five Oklahoma counties compare in the year 1921-22 as to ability to support schools, i. e., wealth per child, and as to the effort they made to provide schools, as measured by the district school tax.

Six States in the Union—one-eighth of the total number—each of which had less wealth per child than Oklahoma, maintained in the year 1920 a school year of nine months or longer.

Education is a function of the State. The powers and responsibilities possessed by school districts are, strictly speaking, delegated



to them by the sovereign authority—the State. The wealth of the entire State belongs to the State and should be utilized by the State to provide adequate school facilities for her children.

#### THE DISTRICT SYSTEM IS NOT DEMOCRATIC.

Any suggestion to abolish the district system arouses an outcry from many admirers of this century-old institution. Some of those who champion it most stoutly do so in the name of democracy. The essence of democracy is equality of opportunity. We have shown that the district system not only fails to provide such equality but makes any approach to equality impossible.

Generations of district support and district control find one of the richest Commonwealths in the richest Nation on the earth denying multitudes of her children any educational opportunity whatever and sending hundreds of others to school in dismal and insanitary hovels, under the tutelage of wretchedly underpaid and proportionately ignorant, untrained, and incompetent teachers. Such are the actual results of the time-honored, undemocratic district system in Oklahoma.

#### THE DISTRICT SYSTEM MUST GO.

Oklahoma may temporize with the present situation. She may reduce the existing evils, but she can not cure them unless or until she abolishes the district system with its legion of accompanying evils. The condition of Oklahoma, so far as public education is concerned, is pathological. It can not be cured without a major operation. The major operation it requires is the abolition of the school district as a unit of taxation, organization, and administration. This fact may as well be faced frankly. There is no reason for hiding the truth from the citizens. Twenty-three States in the Union now have the county unit in some form.

#### A STEP TOWARD ELIMINATION.

From the standpoint of school finance the county unit evens out the great inequalities in wealth which exist among the districts within the counties.

The most important and the most vehement opposition will undoubtedly come from wealthy communities, which, at the present time, are able to support fairly good schools from a low tax levy. This is always the case. This is the source of opposition which has been used in many States to defeat bills proposing an increase in State tax rates for schools. We have too long ignored the fact that the education of the children is not in any sense a local problem nor a local responsibility. We recognize in other matters that the county

and the State have the power to levy taxes sufficient to produce the revenues needed for the public good. We must recognize this in education also.

#### UNFAIR METHOD OF DISTRIBUTING STATE MONEYS.

In a preceding paragraph devoted to causes of Oklahoma's educational backwardness it was stated that one of the four most important causes is "an unscientific method of apportioning State funds."

In 1921, out of every \$100 provided for public schools in Oklahoma, the State furnished \$9 (fig. 5). Small as this amount is, if properly distributed, it *could* be made to play an important part in equalizing school burdens and educational opportunities. Oklahoma disburses her State school funds among the counties, which in turn disburse the amounts thus received among the districts within the county on the basis of the number of children enumerated. This enumeration includes all children over 6 years of age and under 21. This method is perhaps the most unscientific, the most antiquated, and the most unfair of all the many methods of distributing State school funds employed at the present time. Apportioning school moneys on the basis of enumeration places no premium upon school attendance, length of school term, the number of months a teacher is employed, high salaries and high qualifications of teachers, nor the effort to provide a good school as evidenced by the levying of a liberal tax. Worse than this, it actually serves in some communities to encourage nonattendance. It does not give State moneys to the children actually in school as it would do if State aid were apportioned on the basis of aggregate attendance. It ignores the fact that it is not chiefly the number of school children but rather the number of teachers employed which determines what schools cost.

If a State is to equalize school burdens she must in her method of distributing aid take into consideration not only the number of teachers employed but she must take into consideration both differences in ability to provide school revenue, as measured by wealth per child, and differences in effort, as measured by the rate of local tax.

#### ACTUAL RESULTS OF THE PLAN.

What does Oklahoma's present method of distributing her State school fund actually do? This can best be shown by comparing the amounts paid to various districts for the children actually in school. Such a comparison will show that whereas in theory Oklahoma gives to the districts the same amount of State aid for each school child, as a matter of fact there is no equality whatever in the amounts districts receive for the children they are actually educating.

The richest common-school district in Grant County, which has back of each school child in average daily attendance no less than

\$82,000, receives \$20 from the State, whereas the poorest district, which has back of each school child only \$3,000, received from the State only \$3. This is true of every county in the group except Haskell. In all the other counties the richest district gets the greater amount of aid. An example of the result of apportioning State aid on the basis of enumeration is that Helena receives from the State \$1.80 for each child actually in school, and McMann \$3.54 for each

### WHERE EACH \$100 FOR OKLAHOMA'S PUBLIC SCHOOLS CAME FROM IN 1920-1921

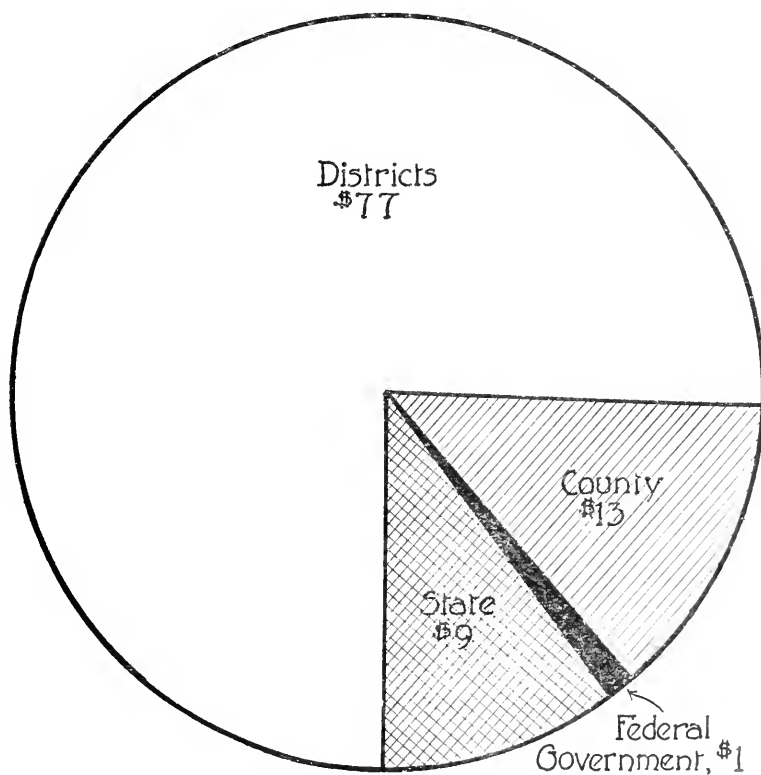


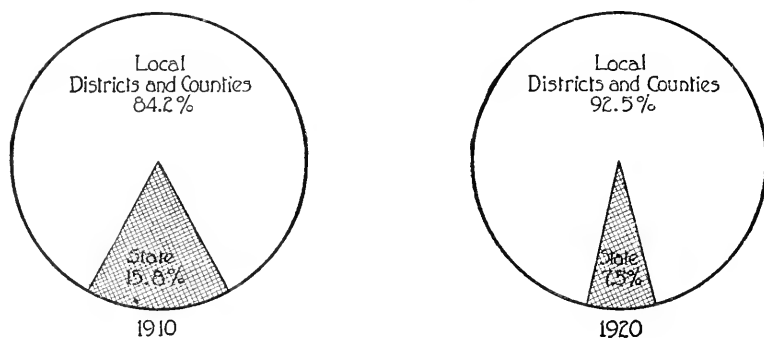
FIG. 5.—Oklahoma's system of school support is essentially a district system.

child actually in school; yet McMann is more than six times as able to provide school revenue as Helena, and has in attendance only 60 per cent of its enumeration, whereas the attendance at Helena is 133 per cent of its enumeration. If the reader will compare other districts in this table he will find further convincing evidence of the unfairness and unsoundness of distributing school moneys on the basis of enumeration.

Inequalities in school burdens, inequalities in ability to provide school moneys, inequalities in effort, inequalities in assistance received from the State, inequalities in length of school year and in educational opportunities offered to the children of Oklahoma; this is, in a nutshell, the story of public education in Oklahoma to-day.

District No. 15, in Cimarron County, is 17 times as able to provide school revenues as district No. 35. District No. 35 levies a 9-mill tax, but is able to expend only \$51 per child, whereas district 15 levies a 4-mill tax and spends \$395 per child. Yet the richest district gets from the State \$18 for each school child, whereas the poorer gets only \$3.

PROPORTION OF OKLAHOMA SCHOOL BURDENS  
BORNE BY LOCAL UNITS (DISTRICTS AND COUNTIES) AND BY THE STATE  
1910-1920



INEQUALITY IN ABILITY OF OKLAHOMA COUNTIES  
TO SUPPORT SCHOOLS  
1921-1922

FIG. 6.—Declining importance of the State as a source of public school revenue in Oklahoma.

DECREASING SHARE OF SCHOOL BURDEN BORNE BY STATE.

Not only is Oklahoma to-day throwing the major portion of her school burden upon these the most unequal of all possible units, but the tendency throughout her history has been for the State to contribute a less and less proportion of the school funds and thus to force the districts to assume a heavier and heavier burden. (See fig. 6.)

WILL THE COUNTY UNIT EQUALIZE EDUCATION IN OKLAHOMA?

There can be no doubt as to the great superiority of the county over the district as the unit of local organization and support for public schools. Nevertheless, facts already presented have shown

that the counties of Oklahoma are very unequal in wealth and consequently very unequal in their ability to provide school revenue. However much Oklahoma may improve her educational situation by abolishing school districts and establishing the county as the local unit, flagrant and disastrous inequalities will continue as long as the schools of Oklahoma are obliged to depend upon local units, even though these units be counties, for the major portion of their support.

INEQUALITY IN ABILITY OF OKLAHOMA COUNTIES  
TO SUPPORT SCHOOLS  
1921-1922

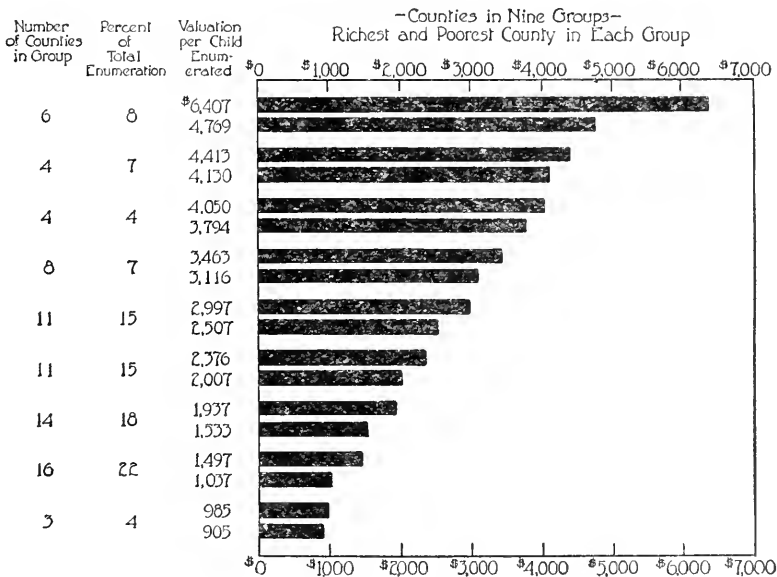


FIG. 7.—Extremes of inequality among the counties. The richest county in the State is more than seven times as able to provide school revenues as the poorest. Of all the children in Oklahoma, 74 per cent live in counties in which the property valuation per child enumerated is less than \$3,000.

Neither the county nor any other local unit which might be devised can equalize school revenues, school burdens, and educational opportunities. The State and only the State can do this.

EXTREMES OF INEQUALITY AMONG THE COUNTIES.

The richest county in the State is more than seven times as able to provide school revenue as the poorest county in the State. Of all the children in Oklahoma, 74 per cent live in counties where the valuation back of each child enumerated is less than \$3,000; 44 per cent live in counties where the valuation is less than \$2,000; 26 per cent live in counties where the valuation back of each child enumerated reaches from \$3,000 to \$6,000. (See fig. 7.)

The impossibility of ever equalizing school revenues by setting up as the source from which the major portion of school funds is to be secured units as unequal in wealth as the counties of Oklahoma is too evident to require additional comment. No further argument should be necessary to convince every citizen of Oklahoma that even the abolition of the district and the establishment in its place of the county unit, although it will be a most important step in the right direction, will never equalize school revenues. The State, and only the State, will ever be able to bring about such equalization.

PUBLIC EDUCATION IS A FUNCTION OF THE STATE—PUBLIC SCHOOLS ARE STATE INSTITUTIONS.

Public education is a function of the State, and public schools are State, not local, institutions. This declaration is not based upon theory, for the matter has been tested in the supreme court, and the court has ruled that public schools are State institutions, and that the powers exercised by local units are distinctly delegated powers. The right to tax for public schools the wealth within a State belongs to the State—i. e., to all the children of the State. The district system is an inheritance from colonial days, when schools were regarded, controlled, and supported as local charitable and semichurch institutions. That day is past, and Oklahoma should free herself from the shackles of a system which makes equality of educational opportunity impossible.

Equality of educational opportunity for all the children of the entire State and equality of school burdens sustained by local school units, the counties and the districts, constitute a brief but correct statement of the aim underlying general—that is, State and county—aid.

WHAT SHARE OF THE SCHOOL BURDEN SHOULD BE BORNE BY THE STATE?

Equality in educational opportunity will never be secured until the schools cease to be in the last analysis, both from the standpoint of control and from the standpoint of support, dominantly local institutions and until the State provides, supports, and directs those factors upon which equality primarily depends, and which may, therefore, be termed the minimum essentials of educational equality.

It is well known that teachers' wages constitute the largest single item of school expenditure in every community and, also, that as is the teacher so is the school. Place upon the State the responsibility of furnishing funds to provide every school with enough money to pay a minimum salary to every teacher for an entire school year of uniform length, and, further, place upon the State the responsibility of providing the materials directly related to instruction and the

moneys necessary to guarantee the scientific supervision of every school, and existing educational inequalities will be rapidly evened out.

In general, we may say that from 60 to 65 per cent of total school costs would, under normal conditions, be devoted to teachers' salaries and textbooks. Were we to add to these items the cost of adequate supervision and apparatus, other than textbooks, directly related to instruction, the per cent would probably range from 65 to 70.

If Oklahoma is not yet ready to go as far as the present report advises, which is to place upon the State from 65 to 70 per cent of the burden, then let her adopt such a policy as California has effectively carried on for many years and which has placed her among the very first States of the Union educationally. This policy guarantees \$1,400 a year to every elementary teaching position in the State, \$700 from State sources and \$700 from county sources.

#### ESTABLISH AN INTERIM COMMISSION ON SCHOOL FINANCE.

Oklahoma should provide for the establishment of an interim legislative commission on school finance, one of whose duties should be to determine the amount of money needed during the next biennium to pay the State's share of the costs of teachers' salaries, free textbooks, supervision, and other projects to be financed by the State. Such a commission should report this amount to the legislature at each session, and the legislature should forthwith take steps to provide the necessary revenue.

#### WHERE SHALL STATE SCHOOL MONEYS COME FROM?

Any proposal to have the State furnish out of State funds from 65 to 70 per cent of the total revenue needed for the support of public schools at once raises the question, From what sources shall the State derive these funds?

In 1915 the permanent school fund furnished approximately \$12 out of every \$100 of public-school revenue, and in 1920, \$3.20. In view of these facts it is evident that, if the State is to furnish an increasing proportion of the total school revenue, this increase is not to be derived from the permanent school fund. Let us now consider from what other sources Oklahoma might derive school revenue.

#### A STATE TAX OR LEGISLATIVE APPROPRIATIONS?

There has been much discussion as to which is the better, making appropriations out of the general fund or providing for a State tax, the proceeds of which shall be devoted to schools.

In favor of the State tax versus State appropriations it has been urged that as the wealth, school population, and school costs increase,

the income provided for the schools increases; also that whereas appropriations frequently depend upon the mood and sometimes even upon the whim of the legislature, a State tax is stable and its proceeds assured.

On the other hand, Illinois and California, after experimenting with the State school property tax, both abandoned it in favor of State appropriations. A very serious objection to the State school tax of a fixed rate is that there is no guaranty that it will furnish the amount of money necessary. This difficulty may, however, be avoided. Instead of fixing a definite rate, the laws may provide for the levying of a State mill property tax sufficient to raise a fixed sum or, better yet, sufficient to enable the State to fulfill its obligations to the public schools.

Four States in the Union are already levying State school taxes of this sort, namely, Arizona, Utah, Washington, and Wisconsin.

The problem of providing school revenue is inseparable from the general problem of public finance. It is evident that if the State is to assume from 65 to 70 per cent of the burden of school costs, she must either discover new sources of school revenue sufficient to produce the increased funds which she is to provide, or she must be allowed, in case these new sources are inadequate, to draw more heavily upon the sources which at present are furnishing State revenues.

Among the new sources of revenue which we recommend to the careful consideration of the Oklahoma Legislature is a State graduated income tax. This is now effectively and satisfactorily employed as a source of school revenue in Massachusetts and Delaware.

Oklahoma levies a gross earning tax of 3 per cent on oil and other natural resources. Of this the State retains 2 per cent and returns 1 per cent to the counties from which derived. The very fact that the State retains two-thirds of the proceeds is a definite recognition that she regards these natural products as belonging primarily and chiefly to the State and not to the communities in which they are located. This suggests at once the possibility of increasing State school revenues by reapportioning gross earnings tax proceeds.

#### NATURAL RESOURCES OF THE STATE SHOULD BE TREATED AS PERMANENT ENDOWMENT.

Attention should be called to the fact that the gross earnings tax is levied upon products which are severed from the soil, and that the removal of these products permanently impoverishes the State. The natural resources of a State should not be regarded as belonging to any single generation but rather to all generations. For this reason Oklahoma should follow the example of Minnesota and cer-



tain other States and devote the proceeds of her earnings tax to her permanent educational endowment funds.

The revenue provided by the State should be turned into a State equalization fund. Out of this fund there should be insured a minimum sum for every teaching position in the schools. In addition, the State should provide an equalization fund to be distributed among those counties which levy a prescribed county rate and are yet unable to raise a sum per child, or per teacher employed, sufficient to provide satisfactory facilities, i. e., facilities measuring up to the standards established by the State department of education.

In striking contrast to Oklahoma's present policy of depending less and less upon the State for school revenues, we may note a marked tendency in more progressive States, such as Washington, California, Montana, and Texas, to increase greatly the quota of State school moneys.

#### RECOMMENDATIONS.

Preceding pages have described existing educational conditions in Oklahoma and present policies; they have not only pointed out the defects but have in many instances suggested remedies. They have also explained the reasons for many of these recommendations. It is desirable to bring together here at the close of this chapter a brief resumé of the recommendations offered. There are added to the recommendations already specifically presented certain others which, although not stated, are, by implication or as a consequence of principles laid down, contained therein.

(1) Abolish the present antiquated, unfair methods of apportioning State school moneys and adopt modernized, scientific methods which will recognize variations among the local school units as to length of school year, assessed valuation per child in average daily attendance, local tax rate, aggregate days of attendance, number and qualifications of school officers and teachers employed.

(2) Abolish present plan of school-district organization.

(3) Establish the county as the local school unit.

(4) Remove all limitations on State and local taxation.

(5) Establish eight months, 160 days, as the minimum school term, beginning in 1924-25, and nine months as the term thereafter.

(6) Require a minimum county school tax of not less than 10 mills, the proceeds to be distributed among the schools of the county on a per teacher basis and in such a manner as to recognize the principles set forth in recommendation 1 in so far as these principles have application within the county.

(7) Extend to counties taxing and bonding powers for school purposes. The plan here proposed of abolishing school districts and of

establishing the county as the local unit of support will equalize local rates of taxation within the counties.

(8) Provide a State equalization fund, to be apportioned among those counties which levy a county school tax of 15 mills or more but are unable to produce thereby for every child of school age resident in the county a quota equal to the State average county quota per child derived from proceeds of such county taxes.

(9) Empower and require the State department of education to fix and to modify from time to time, as conditions seem to warrant, the requirements and standards which counties must meet in order to receive quotas of State moneys.

(10) Require county and all other school boards to prepare annually a budget of estimated school costs for the next succeeding year, such budget to be submitted to the proper authorities and used as a basis for levying taxes.

(11) Require the counties to formulate and provide for the carrying out of a county building program to provide new buildings and other new school property.

(12) Abolish the office of county superintendent as an elective office and place the appointment and fixing of the salary of the county superintendent in the hands of the county board of education, subject only to the limits as to professional qualifications and minimum salary fixed by the State board of education.

(13) Establish an amount not less than that paid to city superintendents in first-class city systems as the minimum salary of county superintendents. The office of county superintendent should be thoroughly professionalized. Nowhere is skilled supervision more important than in rural communities, owing to the large numbers of untrained and inexperienced teachers to be found in such communities. Specific and high professional qualifications should be prerequisites for eligibility to the office.

(14) Provide for every county supervisor or teacher helpers of qualifications sufficient to entitle said supervisor to a salary not less than that paid to expert supervisors employed in first-class city school systems, appointment to be made by county board of education on nomination of the county superintendent upon the basis of qualifications fixed by the State board of education.

(15) Provide for a State graduated income tax, upon the proceeds of which public schools and other educational institutions shall have first claim.

(16) Create a State special commission on taxation. Such a commission is needed at the present time in Oklahoma to make a thorough study of her system of assessing property and levying and collecting taxes. The State board of equalization insists that property is now assessed at its fair cash value. Members of the survey

staff frequently heard it stated by individual citizens that property is assessed at not more than one-third its true value, and striking examples supporting these statements were given.

(17) Create a State interim legislative educational budget commission, which shall prepare and recommend to the next legislature an educational budget.

(18) Provide for the raising by State taxation of funds sufficient to finance all educational projects, positions, and institutions subsidized by the State.

(19) Provide for the State department of education funds sufficient to enable it to dispense entirely with aid from private foundations.

(20) Place the appointment and the fixing of the salary of the State superintendent of public instruction in the hands of the State board of education.

(21) Provide a salary fund for the State department of education sufficient to enable the State board of education to employ a State superintendent capable of commanding from \$7,000 to \$10,000 and to pay other members of the staff proportionately, in each case the salary to be determined on the basis of professional qualifications.

(22) Establish and provide for the maintenance of a division of school buildings within the State department of education.

(23) Provide for State continuing appropriations sufficient to match Federal, private, and all other subventions the receipt of which requires moneys provided from within the State.

(24) Abolish 6 to 21 years as the scholastic age and establish in its stead as the scholastic age 5 to 18 years.

(25) Provide that State tax rates for educational projects shall be determined biennially on the basis of the amount of money required, in addition to that available from the endowment fund and all other continuing sources, to provide adequate funds for all educational projects to be subsidized by the State.

(26) Provide State funds to grant special additional aid to encourage consolidation, transportation, free textbooks, and employment of teachers, superintendents, and other school officers of qualifications higher than the lawful minimum, and to subsidize new and progressive types of educational effort.

(27) Empower and require the State board of education to establish and modify from time to time, as conditions warrant, a scale of educational and professional requirements for all positions to be subsidized entirely or in part by the State, and a corresponding salary scale in which salaries paid shall vary according to the professional preparation, experience, and class of certificate of the incumbents.

(28) Provide for an adequate and reliable school census.

(29) Require the State department of education to prepare a uniform system of recording receipts and expenditures, and an accompanying handbook of detailed instructions such as have been compiled by the State departments of New York and Pennsylvania.

(30) Require the State department of education to furnish free to counties all forms for financial accounting and reporting.

(31) Summarizing the most important tendency of forward-looking legislation which underlies many of the recommendations contained in the preceding sections, a tendency which must be recognized and accepted before school burdens and educational opportunities can be equalized in any thoroughgoing manner:

Place upon the State (which is the only unit capable of equalizing school burdens and educational opportunities) the major portion of the burden of school support by requiring the State to furnish funds sufficient to pay the minimum wage to which every incumbent of an educational position is entitled by reason of his qualifications, professional and otherwise. This recommendation covers salaries of superintendents, assistants, rural supervisors, and all members of the staff of the State board of education.

The important items of expenditures which would be left to the local communities to subsidize, if this recommendation be adopted, would be school buildings, sites, equipment, cost of furnishing, repairing, and operating school buildings, as well as all fixed charges.

## Chapter IV.

### FINANCIAL AND ACCOUNTING PROCEDURE.

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For this study attention was centered on the financial and accounting procedure of the elementary and secondary schools of the cities, towns, and rural districts, selecting for this purpose typical city and county school systems.

Criticisms and constructive suggestions are presented under three heads—budgetary procedure, accounting methods, and financing methods. Under these heads the criticisms, in brief, are as follows:

#### A. Budgetary Procedure:

1. Organization for financial control erroneous.
2. Methods of presenting information regarding school finance tend to confuse rather than to inform the public.
3. Methods of estimating revenues extraordinarily conservative.
4. Duplication of appropriation accounts.

#### B. Accounting Methods:

1. Practice of reporting revenues and expenditures only under heads of general fund and sinking fund erroneous.
2. Appropriation accounts reflect objects of expenditure with little regard to purpose and character.
3. Appropriation accounts not followed explicitly when incurring expenditures.
4. Financial statements issued in the form of balance sheets without being accompanied by operation statements.
5. Financial statements showing functional expenditures can be developed to further advantage.
6. School annual statistical reports to State superintendent of education subject to improvement.

#### C. Financing Methods:

1. Bond issues permissible on liberal basis.
2. Authorization to use sinking funds to pay judgments unsound finance.
3. Policy in regard to investing sinking funds questionable.
4. The issue of sinking-fund bonds a costly method of financing.

It is to be understood that these criticisms are in no sense criticisms of individuals but of methods and procedure. In fact, in numerous instances individuals were found to be producing remarkable results, considering the difficulties under which they labored. Questions were answered freely, information was given willingly, and there was no hesitation whatever about exhibiting any and all records requested for examination.

#### CRITICISMS AND CONSTRUCTIVE SUGGESTIONS.

##### *A. Budgetary Procedure.*

The zeal with which Oklahoma has committed itself to the idea of budgetary control of public expenditures, as evidenced in the written law of the State, is deserving of the highest commendation. The preparation of a plan in regard to expenditures and its review before adoption are unquestionably good business, provided the plan is not so elaborate and involved that its substance is obscured in a maze of detail.

The incorporation of so much detail as to the presentation of the budgetary data, however, which appears in the statutes of Oklahoma, and the forms of organization procedure prescribed for their review in so far as they relate to the schools, is open to serious question. The effect of this policy is that the school law of Oklahoma abounds with financial restrictions and limitations.

##### 1. Organization for financial control erroneous.

The arrangement of financial control of the schools by the county excise board, from the viewpoint of education, is erroneous for the following reasons:

(a) The possibility of development and growth of educational policies is negative by reason of the fact that the group is composed of conflicting interests, only one member of the board, the county superintendent of education, having any particular interest in educational results.

(b) Authority of the excise board to revise and correct any school estimate by striking items therefrom, increasing items thereof, or adding items thereto means that the management of the schools is virtually in the hands of that board, whereas only one member of the board, the county superintendent of education, has any responsibility for educational results.

During the school year of 1921-22 the excise board of Oklahoma County withdrew and canceled \$4,900 in school appropriations. Whether or not the funds withdrawn were used for other than school purposes was not investigated. But it was reported that the excise board of one county in the State levied a school tax with no intention of using it for school purposes, but with the intention of

building a bridge with it, which they did. Whether or not this report is true, the possibility for such action exists, and it violates a fundamental principle of taxation that the funds raised for a specific purpose are not available for other purposes. Obviously any other action is breaking faith with the public.

2. Methods of presenting information regarding school finance tend to confuse rather than to inform the public.

This is a criticism to be made generally of the customary methods of presenting budget information, elsewhere as well as in Oklahoma; and it is because the common method presents a confusion of the following ideas:

(a) The public is asked to express itself as to how much it is willing to spend for school purposes as a whole during the year, i. e., a general fund tax levy which includes current expenses for operation and upkeep of the schools and a minor investment in additions to buildings and equipment.

(b) The public is given a statement of the amount of money the schools desire to spend during the year for salaries, supplies, repairs, equipment, etc.

(c) The public is presented with a statement purporting to be the financial condition of the schools as of the close of the previous fiscal year.

The first of the above (a) is a statement of the character of expenditure, and, in the form it is presented, it fails in its purpose because it is too general a statement to permit of intelligent discussion.

Without specific information the public must determine its support of the public schools on the basis of indefinite information, misinformation, or no information at all.

The second of the above (b) is a statement of the objects of expenditure; that is to say, the elements which are to be used in carrying out the proposed program. It is entirely subsidiary to the first statement and conveys very little information to the public in the form in which it is generally presented.

The third of the above (c) is a statement of the financial condition of the schools as of a certain date—in other words, a balance sheet. In the form commonly presented it is too technical for anyone but an expert accountant to understand. It is of value to the general public only when presented in simple form showing whether the assets of the schools at the end of a school year (or at any other date) are equal to, in excess of, or less than the liabilities.

3. Methods prescribed for estimating revenues extraordinarily conservative.

The method prescribed in the school law for estimating revenues, which requires 10 per cent to be added to the total estimate because

of possible delinquent taxes, prior to deducting either a surplus on hand or revenues anticipated from other sources, is not only extraordinarily conservative but undoubtedly beyond the intent of the legislature when enacting the law.

It is possible that a deduction of 5 per cent from the tax levied, because of possible delinquent taxes, might be quite sufficient.

#### 4. Duplication of appropriation accounts.

The appropriation accounts of the city and town independent school districts are maintained in detail by the clerks of their boards of education. The county clerks of the counties in which these schools are located maintain these same appropriation accounts, but in condensed form.

### *B. Accounting Methods.*

1. Practice of reporting revenues and expenditures under only the heads of general fund and sinking fund erroneous.

The practice of only reporting school revenues and expenditures under the heads of general fund and sinking fund is erroneous because of the fact that the public is also taxed specifically for land, building, and equipment acquisition, as well as for their repair and replacement. The public may also be taxed specifically, under certain conditions, for playground purposes.

As previously stated, it is a fundamental principle of taxation that funds raised for specific purposes should be expended only for those purposes. Accordingly, under the school law as it now stands, the revenues and expenditures of the schools should be reported under the following heads:

(a) General fund, covering receipts and expenditures for school administration and operation, including maintenance of buildings and grounds.

(b) Sinking fund, covering revenues and expenditures for interest on and the retirement of school bonds issued and outstanding.

(c) Building fund, covering revenues and expenditures for land, building, and equipment acquisition, repair, and replacement.

(d) Playground fund, covering revenues and expenditures for playground activities.

### CONCLUSION.

In conclusion, the major criticism of the public schools of Oklahoma, from the financial point of view, is that they are not under the financial jurisdiction and control of those who are responsible for educational results. This control should be vested in the boards of education, and until it is so vested they can not be held responsible for educational policies and programs.



The minor criticism is that the methods of financial and accounting procedure in the various educational institutions—elementary, secondary, and higher—are deficient in producing digested financial information necessary for administrative and financial review, and the methods lack coordination. In fact, a general reorganization of school financial procedure is necessary, if the schools are to function as an independent, constructive, educational force.

In order to bring about the needed reorganization the various school laws and other laws relating thereto, now providing in detail the manner of preparing financial statements and estimates of revenues and expenditures pertaining to the schools, should be amended so as to eliminate these details and instead provide a general grant of power.

When school budgets are approved by the boards of education having jurisdiction, any school levy incident thereto, provided it is within limitations provided in the statutes and State constitution, should be mandatory upon the tax-levying bodies.

#### RECOMMENDATIONS.

The following amendments to the school laws are suggested:

(1) County boards of education should be created and vested with authority to review and approve budgets of all nonindependent schools within their jurisdiction, provided that all tax levies incident to those budgets should be within mill limitations as to taxation for school purposes which now exist in the statutes and State constitution, or which may be hereafter adopted.

(2) Boards of education for independent school districts should be vested with the same authority as above set forth for the proposed county boards of education.

(3) The State board of education should have authority to review and approve budgets of subsidiary educational boards, which cover different groups of educational activities; the approval of these budgets should be subject to such financial limitations as the legislature may prescribe.

(4) All county and school district tax levies for school purposes should be made in accordance with the following subdivisions:

- (a) General fund: Covering current expenses, including playground activities, now a separate levy, and including all repairs and replacements of land, buildings, and equipment, with the exception of interest on bonds.
- (b) Building fund: Covering all expenditures for additional land, buildings, and equipment, or for additions to existing land, buildings, and equipment.
- (c) Sinking fund: Covering expenditures for bond interest and principal.

(5) The State board of education should be vested with authority to prescribe all details as to school budget procedure, including the preparation of financial statements and estimates of revenues and expenditures, provided that the details of such accounting forms as may be required to secure financial data from other sources than school officials, which may be required in the consideration of school policies, shall be prescribed by the State examiner and inspector.

(6) Whenever the budget of a school district has been approved by the board of education having jurisdiction, all tax levies incident thereto should be mandatory upon the tax-levying agency of the district.

(7) The State board of education should be vested with authority to prescribe the methods of recording all school data, both statistical and financial, which shall be maintained in the different school systems of the State, and to require such periodical reports from the schools as it may deem necessary.

## Chapter V.

### ORGANIZATION AND ADMINISTRATION.

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There are two major considerations affecting educational conditions in Oklahoma:

(1) Inadequate and unsystematic financial support, the remedies for which are discussed in Chapter III; and (2) certain limitations on the functioning of vital and effective leadership, the remedy for which is an enlarged and strengthened State department of education.

The history of education in the United States shows very clearly the acceptance of the theory of responsibility of the several States for public education within their borders and the development of the State as the administrative unit in education. The plans which have been adopted in the States are not uniform, however, nor is there the same degree of centralization.

Oklahoma is now in the position of considering what changes, if any, to make in the State system of public education for the next few years, and has the opportunity to profit by her own experience and that of other States. The following analysis of the administrative features of a State system of education suggests the more important points which should be considered.

#### IMPORTANT FACTORS OF ADMINISTRATION.

1. *Unification of general control.*—A decision should be reached as to the extent or degree of centralization of control to be adopted as a State policy. This report recommends that whatever changes are made in existing arrangements should be in the direction of further centralization of general control and unification of the entire system of education.

2. *Determination of objectives.*—One of the most important functions of the agency which may be charged with the responsibility of general oversight is to bring about some acceptable determination of the objectives of public education.

3. *Definition of functions and responsibilities.*—Having determined the objectives of the various parts of the system, it will then

be possible to make a corresponding assignment of functions and division of responsibilities.

4. *Coordination.*—Coordination of the activities of the several parts of the system is essential if consistent progress is to be made toward realization of the objectives set up. Such coordination should be specifically provided for, and some officer or board should be charged with the duty of securing it.

5. *Determination of standards.*—Since the immediate management of the schools is in the hands of local boards, the State must exercise its function of general control through legislative enactments and regulatory promulgations. These take the form, in part, of prescriptions of minimum standards which are to be maintained. These standards relate to compulsory school attendance, courses of instruction, qualifications, and compensation of teachers, and the like. Upon the State also rests the duty of equalizing educational opportunities for all.

6. *Adequate financial support.*—Participation by the State in the financial support of public education is a necessary corollary of the principle of State control, and the principle of minimum standards set by the State.

7. *Preparation of the budget.*—The importance of having and living up to a budget is no less in education affairs than in the conduct of other public and private business. Furthermore, the necessity for the preparation of a budget furnishes an additional reason for a unified State system of education.

8. *Selection, training, and certification of personnel.*—One of the most important functions of the State system of education is discharged in its dealing with the problem of the supply of adequately prepared teachers.

9. *Progressive development.*—It is not sufficient to establish an educational system for to-day; definite provision should be made for future growth and development. The plan of organization should look toward progressive improvements and increasing efficiency. To this end effective and aggressive leadership at the various levels should be definitely provided for.

10. *Legislation.*—Continuous expert study of the legislative basis of the State educational system is essential, as well as of the plans and policies adopted in other States.

11. *Publicity.*—The schools belong to the people, and provision should be made for keeping them informed as to the goals toward which the schools are working, the progress they are making, and in general what returns they show on the investment which the people have made in them.

## CONDITIONS UNFAVORABLE FOR THE EXERCISE OF LEADERSHIP.

These desirable ends can be only partially realized under existing conditions in Oklahoma, which are distinctly unfavorable to the exercise of leadership.

(1) The first serious defect in the State administrative plan for education is found in the large number of unrelated boards and offices having to do with educational affairs.

## COMPOSITION OF BOARDS FAULTY.

(2) Even if it were possible to conduct a system of education through a multiplicity of boards such as this, the work would be done most inefficiently because of the way in which certain of the boards are constituted. Sound principles of administration demand a clear division of responsibility between the board of trustees and the expert executives and subordinates employed by it.

## RECOMMENDATION OF LEADERS FREQUENTLY DISREGARDED.

(3) A third factor affecting educational progress in Oklahoma is the frequent disregard of the counsel and suggestions of the educational leaders of the State. Many of the recommendations embodied in this survey report have been urged repeatedly in the past by State, county, and city superintendents, and others who have made close study of conditions and needs in Oklahoma.

Many instances could be cited of progressive recommendations originating from those in position of educational leadership in Oklahoma which have come to nought, because they have been rejected without due examination, or because of complexity of administrative machinery and diffusion of responsibility for action.

## STAFF OF THE STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION.

The salary paid to the State superintendent of public instruction, or State commissioner of education, should be considered as an index of the importance of the responsibilities of the office and an index of the realization of their importance on the part of the citizens of the State. The influence of these considerations is reflected in a definite tendency toward higher salaries, but a number of States are still practicing a false and costly economy in this matter.

The total pay roll for Oklahoma in 1920 was reported as \$26,600. Oklahoma needs a much better equipped department of education even for the maintenance and direction of the present school system. If the State is to undertake an educational program such as is outlined in this report, and to carry it out intelligently, effectively, and

economically, the need for a more potent agency for leadership is imperative.

The survey, therefore, recommends the establishment of the salary of the State superintendent or commissioner of education at \$7,500, with other salaries in proportion, and the increase of the salary budget to \$102,000, to be reached by 1925.

#### PERSONNEL OF THE STAFF.

In the appointment of the commissioner of education the State board of education should canvass the entire United States and endeavor to select a man of successful experience in large enterprises and of broad vision in educational affairs, who is capable of assuming a position of leadership which will carry the citizens and the teachers of the State unitedly to the consummation of the great task ahead.

For assistant commissioner in charge of teacher training should be chosen some one of outstanding achievements in this field, whose special assignment will be to improve the qualifications of the teachers now in service and to assist in the development of the State plans for the preparation of teachers.

The director of educational research should undertake the reorganization of the educational statistics of the department, including data on school costs, revenues, enrollment, attendance, and the like.

The director of physical education should have charge of all activities relating to the promotion of physical education, school hygiene and sanitation, and health education.

The specialist in school buildings and grounds should have had successful experience in designing and planning school buildings, and should have thorough knowledge of construction and of the various kinds of school equipment.

It should be the duty of the assistant commissioner in charge of school administration to work primarily with county and city superintendents, principals of schools, and others having administrative responsibilities.

The suggestions with reference to an increased staff in rural education are justified both by the importance of rural education in Oklahoma and by the demands of the proposed program. There should be a supervisor of elementary education, as well as a supervisor of secondary education, in order to insure continuous study of these special problems and to provide authoritative sources of inspiration and guidance in these important phases of education.

A strong division of vocational education should be organized by providing for a State director of vocational education, with a staff

consisting of supervisors of agriculture, education, trades and industries, manual arts, and home economics, respectively.

The importance of the problem of education for negroes in Oklahoma should be recognized by the appointment of a director, who by reason of his special training, experience, and qualifications for this work will command the confidence and support of the people of both races. The white people of Oklahoma have, in fact, at least as much at stake as the negroes in any decision as to what educational opportunities shall be provided for the latter.

In common with many other offices, the department of education is inadequately provided with clerical assistance. The additions suggested will increase the effectiveness of the work and make possible more complete utilization of the expert knowledge and abilities represented by the staff.

## Chapter VI.

### HIGHER EDUCATION.

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The obligation on the part of the State to develop higher education should under no circumstances be considered as a dead expense. The more a State actually invests in higher education the more certain it can be of the physical comfort of its citizens, the stability of its government, and the spread of culture.

The progress of higher education in Oklahoma has been remarkable during the past 15 years. The end is not yet. In the future provision must be made in an even more generous way, if the demands for higher education are to be met adequately.

One of the outstanding features of the growth of higher education in the State is that it has occurred without any definite plan on the part of the State. There are too many State institutions for present demands and some of them are unfortunately located. Evidence is presented later which will show the lack of sound and clear objectives in the development noted as it relates to several institutions.

State administration and control of public higher education in Oklahoma has passed through several phases. In a general way the early administration was quite decentralized.

In 1911 the State radically changed its method of administering its various educational institutions. At that time 16 State boards were looking after various aspects of education.

It was truly a bewildering array of machinery to have in charge of the State affairs of education. In 1911 an attempt was made to bring order out of chaos by setting up a highly centralized control through an act which created the State board of education to be the legal successor of 14 of the boards.

As the organization of the States administration above described continued in its work, it proved more or less unsatisfactory. The reason is not far to seek. Too many heterogeneous interests and activities were thrown together, many of which had little or no relation to others. Consequently an effort at decentralization was made which resulted in 1919 in the creation of a separate board of regents for each State institution of higher learning formerly under the



central board, except for the six State normal schools, which remained under the State board of education.

It should be pointed out here that the experience of Oklahoma above recounted can hardly be said to discredit the idea of a central board of control for State higher education. It rather illustrated the fact that a central board in charge of numerous activities not closely related is not likely to prove a success.

Much thought has been given to the method of State administration now in vogue in the belief that a clarification of this situation will care for many of the defects in the State provision for higher education. Certain principles of sound administration may be stated: First, the number of State boards should be reduced to the smallest number consistent with good administration; second, each board should be in charge of closely related activities only, if it is to look after its charges properly; third, some means should be adopted to insure a plan of development, rather than to allow progress to occur in sporadic fashion.

#### FOUR BOARDS OF REGENTS RECOMMENDED.

With these principles in mind, it is recommended that the work of higher education be put in charge of four boards as follows:

1. Boards of regents for the State university.
2. Board of regents for the agricultural and mechanical colleges.
3. Board of regents for the State teachers' colleges.
4. Board of regents for the Oklahoma College for Women.

The board of regents for the State university should have in charge the university and any State junior colleges of liberal arts which are in existence or which may be established in the future. Under no circumstances should such junior colleges be established except as they are approved by the board.

The Miami School of Mines, if it is to be continued as a State school, should be officially recognized as a junior college of liberal arts.

The board of regents for the agricultural and mechanical colleges should have in charge the Oklahoma Agricultural and Mechanical College and the Colored Agricultural and Normal University.

The Oklahoma School of Mines and Metallurgy, at Wilburton, should be abandoned.

The constitutional provision which makes the State board of agriculture serve as the board of regents of the agricultural and mechanical colleges should be repealed.

The six State teachers' colleges should be under one board of regents.

It is recommended that the boards governing the several institutions be given authority by law to purchase equipment, books, and supplies, and the State board of public affairs be made responsible for purchasing fuel, placing insurance, and erecting buildings, the latter function being performed with the advice of the respective boards of administration. Such an arrangement will make for economical and expeditious service.

From the State point of view there remains to be considered some means or method of coordinating the work of the several institutions of higher learning, and of holding them to their proper functions. Various expedients have been adopted in several quarters to secure the results. It is one of the underlying reasons which has frequently resulted in a central board of control. It does not seem advisable to recommend that a single central board of control should at present be adopted by the State of Oklahoma, and accordingly the setting up of four boards is suggested. To secure some form of coordination, representatives of the four boards should hold annual or semiannual meetings to discuss and determine matters which affect more than one of the groups of institutions.

#### ORGANIZATION OF STATE BOARDS.

The evidence which has been submitted to the committee makes it clear that the State has been unfortunate in the organization of its State boards which have had to do with higher education. Information is not lacking to the effect that political motives have had a prominent part in the administration of the State institutions of higher learning. The frequent changing of presidents of the several institutions, with the exception of only a few institutions, seems to indicate clearly that motives other than professional have all too frequently been present. Such constant changing is extremely unfortunate.

The remedy is clear. On the one hand there must be a development of public opinion which is greatly interested in the best possible provision for higher education and which jealously guards against the prostitution of such provisions for personal or political advantage.

There should be no ex officio members of the boards.

#### THE PRESIDENCY.

At the head of the administration of each institution stands the president, the direct agent of the board of control.

Only competent persons should be chosen for the position. It is little short of a betrayal of high trust to permit such extraneous considerations as personal or political support in any way to have

consideration in the choice. A further consideration is that once able men are secured for the high positions they should be continued in service for long periods.

Two important reasons may be assigned for this recommendation: First, long tenure secures for the State a continuous policy, without which unified and economical administration is impossible. Men who know they are to serve for short periods only are likely to plan for short periods, which is likely to result in impetuous development, if any at all. Second, security of tenure is essential to obtaining the services of the kind of men which the State must have.

#### UNCERTAINTY OF TENURE A SEVERE HANDICAP.

In the institutions other than the university and college for women there is much uncertainty of tenure of position, due partly to the annual election of faculty members.

The constant shifting results in a great loss of loyalty and in a lowered morale. The remedy lies in the adoption of rules governing tenure. Such a businesslike policy would eliminate one of the factors which militates against the growth of scholarly spirit.

The organization of a senate in each of those institutions, composed of all faculty members who hold the rank of associate professor and above, is suggested as a legislative body so far as course of study and student affairs are concerned.

#### THE BUDGET.

The internal budgets at the various institutions do not seem to be well developed. Departments frequently do not know how much they have to spend, and consequently are hampered in planning for equipment and other expenses.

The president of each institution should be required to prepare annually a budget which should show every source of income. On the expenditure side it should present the expenditures for every division and department of the institution, the amounts allowed for salaries, for equipment, supplies, incidentals, etc.

In view of the conditions existing at the Agricultural and Mechanical College a more complete survey should be made of that institution.

#### THE TRAINING OF TEACHERS.

For the training of elementary teachers two agencies have been established, of which the first was the State normal schools now known as the State teachers' colleges.

A second agency for training elementary teachers is the normal training courses in district agricultural schools and in fully accredited high schools under an act approved in 1915.

In addition to the training agencies above mentioned some elementary teachers come from the State university, the Agricultural and Mechanical College, the College for Women, and some of the private institutions of higher learning.

It is also estimated that at the present time the State institutions which prepare high-school teachers graduate annually between 150 and 200 students, with professional training, including practice teaching, in secondary subjects.

The time has come for the State to provide and require better training for its teachers.

Teacher-training classes in the high schools as now organized should be regarded as at best but a temporary expedient and should now be abandoned.

#### TRAINING-SCHOOL FACILITIES INADEQUATE.

One of the weakest features of the teacher-training work at the teachers' colleges is the use made of the training school.

In most of the colleges there seems to be no close correlation between the theory of education and the practice teaching.

The training of high-school teachers as carried on in the State university, the Agricultural and Mechanical College, and the College for Women is also seriously handicapped because of inadequate training schools.

#### FUNCTION OF STATE TEACHERS' COLLEGES SHOULD BE DEFINED.

In view of the present situation in Oklahoma, the principal function of the State teachers' colleges should be the training of elementary teachers.

With the development of the program recommended elsewhere for State aid to high schools, the secondary grades at State teachers' colleges should be discontinued, one year at a time.

The State should depend on the university, the Agricultural and Mechanical College, the College for Women, and the privately controlled colleges for its supply of secondary school teachers.

The best judgment available does not approve offering the four-year courses at the teachers' colleges at present, but in any event such courses should not be offered with inadequate faculties.

#### THE EDUCATION OF WOMEN.

In numerous ways Oklahoma has recognized her higher education obligations to the women of the State. From the early Terri-

torial days the university and the Agricultural and Mechanical College and the State normal schools have been coeducational. In keeping with educational customs in some States, a separate institution for women was also established. Thus to-day a woman in Oklahoma may choose to pursue her higher education in any one of the higher institutions of learning, and she may pursue any course or curriculum.

With the acceptance of women students in educational institutions, certain special obligations are assumed. The physical and social welfare of women is of vital concern to the State.

A dean or director of women should be placed in each educational institution, and she should have such assistance and cooperation from other members of the faculty as will enable her to assure to all women satisfactory social conditions.

#### HOME ECONOMICS EDUCATION.

Home economics instruction is only one factor in the liberal education of women, but it is a very important one, inasmuch as home economics and the basic physical, biological, and social sciences upon which it rests compose the group of subjects which afford excellent preparation for intelligent participation in civic and community affairs.

The objectives of home economics instruction in the university should be three: First, it should make a definite contribution to the general and cultural education of a maximum number of women students in the institution; second, there should be a home economics curriculum for the preparation of high-school teachers; third, special curricula should be outlined for the training of dietitians for hospital, institutional, commercial, and public-school positions.

Three additional recommendations: First, the university home economics curricula should be based on at least one full year of high-school home economics. Second, the curriculum leading to the bachelor's degree in home economics should be broadened. Third, no home economics of great value can be given at the university until rooms, equipment, and teaching staff are provided. A cafeteria is an essential unit of a good department.

There are several major functions of home economics in agricultural and mechanical college: First, careful attention must be given to prepare teachers of high-school home economics. Second, there should be curricula to prepare county home demonstration agents, of which there are 46 in the State. Third, electives not a part of the home economics curricula must be available for women students not majoring in home economics. All of these important functions should be fully recognized in home economics instruction.

Finally, the present organization of home economics is faulty. All resident teaching, all correspondence courses, and all extension teaching should be under one single division. To maintain several departments dealing with the same subject matter is unwise.

The educational atmosphere at the College for Women at Chickasha is conducive to the maintenance of excellent instruction in home economics, but the material surroundings both for this subject and the basic sciences are far from satisfactory. A special building for science teaching and home economics education is greatly needed.

#### HOME ECONOMICS IN THE STATE TEACHERS' COLLEGES.

Home economics at the teachers' colleges should serve two definite purposes, the primary of which is to furnish such information and skill as will prepare the teacher in an undepartmentalized school to fulfill the legal requirement that home economics be taught to the seventh and eighth grade girls in the State.

A secondary purpose of home economics in teachers' colleges is to give such elective instruction as will assist the teacher to secure for herself the maximum physical health and well-being during her years of service.

#### ENGINEERING.

The recommendations which pertain to engineering are four:

First, the recommendation regarding the schools of mines has already been given. In keeping with this recommendation, it is recommended further that, providing there is a sufficient demand, courses in mining engineering be offered at the university, thus placing the courses on a professional basis.

Second, the curricula in chemical engineering at the agricultural and mechanical college and at the State university are a needless duplication, as the demand for chemical engineers is not large enough for the State to support two such courses of instruction. It is recommended that chemical engineering be given only at the university.

Third, the engineering equipment at the university is woefully inadequate and far below the standard of a first-class engineering school. More apparatus, machinery, and housing are needed. Steps should be taken as soon as possible to bring the facilities for engineering instruction at the university up to standard.

Fourth, one of the important developments in agriculture is in the field of rural engineering. This work should be given greater attention and should be more adequately supported.

After careful consideration it appears that a school of commerce and marketing at the Agricultural and Mechanical College is a mistake.

It seems clear that the Agricultural and Mechanical College has a distinct and most important service to render the State—a service which is greatly impeded by setting up courses of study which have little or no relation to the main purposes of the college.

The work in economics at the Agricultural and Mechanical College can and should properly serve three purposes: First, there is a need for courses in general economics as a part of the training given to students in the school of science and literature; second, there is an important need for strong work in rural economics; third, there is need for training commercial teachers who shall go into the high schools to teach business courses.

#### MEDICINE.

The development of medical instruction as a part of the work of the University of Oklahoma began in 1900, when the first two years of a medical course were offered at Norman. In 1910 the third and fourth years were established in Oklahoma City. Two years later the Training School for Nurses was begun.

At present the work of the medical school is conducted at three places: The university, the old City Hospital building, and the new hospital building built in 1920.

All the work in medicine should be brought together under one roof in Oklahoma City. It is fundamental to the most successful development of medical education in the future.

The school is comparatively young and it faces an abundance of problems. One of these is to provide a larger full-time teaching staff.

A second problem is to erect a clinical building at the hospital and to abandon the building now used for clinical purposes.

The university should as soon as possible develop a school of public health in conjunction with the medical school.

#### GRADUATE WORK.

Opportunities for study beyond that for the baccalaureate degree are offered by the university and the Agricultural and Mechanical College.

Graduate study is a field of work to which the State can well afford to give more attention, especially if it desires to secure the ablest leadership and to provide for the welfare of its citizens. For the present it is wise not to reach out beyond the master's and professional degrees, but work of these grades should be very materially strengthened.

One of the most important functions of institutions of higher learning is to promote the public welfare by adding to the store of useful knowledge, which aids man in his conquest over nature, which shows him how to maintain his health, and which promotes his happiness generally.

## EXTENSION AND CORRESPONDENCE.

One of the ways by which the State institutions of higher education reach out from their doors to all sections of the State, and thus serve the citizens in a very comprehensive way, is through their extension service and correspondence courses.

Extension and correspondence work in Oklahoma has great possibilities, and it should be encouraged by generous appropriations from the State along many lines.

In order that wasteful and unnecessary duplication of effort in these fields may be avoided, and in order that there may be some uniformity in extension practices, it is recommended that the extension directors of the several higher educational institutions meet and agree on a program.

## HIGHER EDUCATION OF NEGROES.

The purpose of State higher education for negroes is threefold: First, teachers must be trained for the negro schools; second, vocational training must be given, as is mentioned elsewhere; third, there is need for a number of negroes who are trained in the professions, such as medicine, the ministry, etc.

The only institution of higher learning for negroes in the State is the Colored Agricultural and Normal University at Langston, which offers a four-year high-school curriculum and two-year normal and college curricula.

Excellent progress has been made in the school during the past few years, since it has been under the present management.

A study of conditions shows that the first step toward improving the institution should be to change its location. Three reasons may be stated for this view: First, the negro population of the State is fairly well concentrated in certain sections (fig. 8).

A second reason and an important one for a change in location is that where the school now is there are not enough children to organize a satisfactory training school.

Third, the school at present is several miles from the railroad, and this circumstance adds considerably to the expense of operation.

## STANDARDS.

In order that entrance credits may be more easily and uniformly evaluated and classified, it is recommended that all the State institutions of higher learning and the State department of education join in the adoption of a uniform high school and college entrance certificate. It is further recommended that the original college entrance certificates accepted by the institutions of higher learning be kept on file at the institutions.



JUNIOR COLLEGES.

Oklahoma has two junior colleges under State control, and several localities have definitely begun junior college work by giving one year of college work in connection with their high schools. There are also two privately controlled junior colleges within the State.

Undoubtedly the purpose in extending the course of study of the Panhandle Agricultural Institute in 1921 to include two years of college work was to provide collegiate education for a section of the State which is far removed from the State institutions of higher

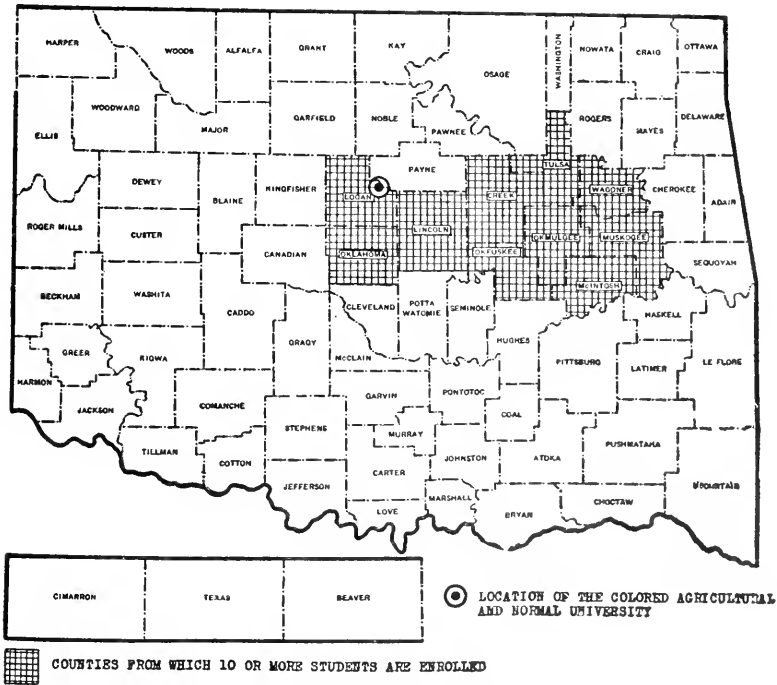


FIG. 8.—Showing the counties (cross-hatched) from which 10 or more students are enrolled at the Colored Agricultural and Normal University.

learning. Elsewhere it is recommended that the State district agricultural schools be gradually discontinued and that a system of adequate State aid for high schools be developed. This recommendation is especially applicable to the panhandle school.

The question then arises, what provision shall be made to give higher education to the graduates of the high schools. Two courses are open. First, the institution at Goodwell can be maintained as a junior college. If a junior college is to be maintained it should be kept up to such a standard that it will be recognized by the State university.

A second course is for the State to pay the round-trip transportation annually of students from the three panhandle counties to any of the following which a student desires to attend: The University of Oklahoma, the Oklahoma Agricultural and Mechanical College, and the Northwestern State Teachers' College.

It is recommended that the junior college work at the Panhandle Agricultural and Mechanical College be gradually brought up to recognized standards; that the college work be materially improved for next year (1923-24); and that the high-school work be discontinued by dropping the first year in June, 1923, the second year in June, 1924, the third year in June, 1925, and the fourth year in June, 1926.

### THREE OTHER RECOMMENDATIONS.

Several additional suggestions and recommendations pertain to a number of unrelated matters:

First, it is recommended that serious consideration be given by the State authorities to the desirability of removing certain of the educational institutions to other locations in which they might be able to render more acceptable service to the State. Inaccessibility and inconvenient railroad connections are serious handicaps to the growth and development of any institution.

Second, it is suggested that catalogues of institutions should not print outlines of courses which they have no reasonable expectation of offering.

Third, it is recommended that the State establish a rotary loan fund at each institution of higher education, such a fund to be available to worthy students who need assistance.

### STUDENT WELFARE.

#### PHYSICAL EDUCATION AND HEALTH.

Recognition of the importance of physical education and health has resulted in certain definite programs for promoting health:

First, facilities provided for thorough medical examinations for all students at least once a year and as many more times as such examinations were deemed necessary.

Second, provision made for remedial or curative treatment for all students in need of it.

Third, the support of an infirmary with nursing and medical care provided to assure all students good care during temporary illness.

Fourth, gymnasiums and athletic fields enlarged and improved.

Fifth, the physical education staffs increased.

Sixth, instruction in health and hygiene given to all freshmen students.

The following recommendations are made:

First, in each educational institution enrolling 1,000 or more students there should be at least one physician employed on full time and attached either to the physical education staff or to the biological science division.

Second, in institutions with an enrollment of less than 1,000 a physician should be employed for a definite portion of his time, with like responsibilities and authority.

Third, full-time women physicians should be employed at the woman's college, the State university, and the agricultural college, who shall devote their entire time to the health and welfare of the women students.

Fourth, modern and adequate infirmaries should be maintained at each of the higher educational institutions.

Fifth, physical education and hygiene should receive much greater consideration at the normal schools than is now given, and full-time physical education instructors should be employed. The gymnasiums should be repaired or rebuilt, and supplied with suitable conveniences.

Sixth, for the men students at the State university there should be built a modern, adequate gymnasium, to the end that all men shall have ample opportunity for the finest physical development possible.

Seventh, provision should be made immediately for suitable quarters for the physical education of women at the agricultural college.

#### LIVING CONDITIONS.

The following recommendations are made concerning living conditions of students:

First, Oklahoma should immediately accept her responsibility for properly housing and feeding at least one-half of the women students in the higher educational institutions.

Second, cafeterias administrated by the home economics departments should be maintained for the day students at the State institutions.

Third, as soon as practicable a portion of the men students should be accommodated in college-owned dormitories.

#### PHYSICAL EQUIPMENT.

One of the important items in the development of Oklahoma's higher educational institutions is that of a sufficient amount of land for each. None of the schools now has enough land for its ultimate needs.

Buildings at all State higher educational institutions are inadequate for present enrollments.

It is recommended that a State building program for all institutions of higher learning be adopted for a period of 10 years, with a view to providing each school with the necessary buildings.

Plans for the future of the university and the agricultural and mechanical college should look forward to enrollments of from 5,000 to 8,000 students each; for the college for women, 1,000 students; and for each of the State teachers' colleges, from 800 to 1,000 college students.

Throughout the several State institutions generous appropriations are needed to provide for more scientific equipment.

#### COST OF THE PROGRAM.

There remains to be considered the cost of an adequate State system of higher education in Oklahoma. It is recommended that for land and buildings at each institution approximately the following sums be made available annually for 10 years:

State university .....	\$750, 000
Agricultural and mechanical college.....	450,000
College for women.....	200,000
Each State teachers' college.....	125, 000
Colored agricultural and normal university.....	125, 000

In general, each institution should have, when properly equipped, educational buildings totaling in cost about \$1,000 for each full-time college student of the average enrollment from September to June, and in addition such dormitories and other buildings as are necessary to meet the needs.

Using a per capita basis, an approximate estimate can also be made for the operation and upkeep of the higher educational institutions. Using the average enrollment of students for the regular school year, September to June, as the basis, the following amounts per capita should be available annually for operation and maintenance:

State university .....	\$350 to \$400
Agricultural and mechanical college.....	350 to 400
College for women.....	300
State teachers' colleges.....	300
Colored agricultural and normal university.....	250

#### LIBRARIES.

The library is and must remain a principal feature of any educational institution. None of the schools has enough useful books or sufficient library accommodation.

The following recommendations are made: First, sums ranging from \$5 to \$10 per student should be made available for books and magazines at the several institutions.

Second, the amounts available for salaries of the library staffs should be approximately equal to the amounts available for books on the above basis.

Third, at each institution plans for the enlargement of the present library building, or for a new library building, should be prepared after consultation with expert librarians of larger institutions.

#### REVENUES.

First, the income derived from the production taxes on oil and minerals should be invested in State building programs. In such a program other State institutions besides those for higher education should be included. To expend this income in a way other than in a permanent investment seems very unwise.

Second, at least a part of the money for higher education should be provided by means of a mill tax. Such a tax provides a definite amount which can form the basis of planning.

Third, the income from the various Federal land grants should be made available to the institutions concerned without appropriation by the State legislature. These grants are for specific purposes. To include them in the appropriation bills can serve no good end, and it makes it appear that these moneys are raised by taxation.

## Chapter VII.

### THE RURAL SCHOOLS.

#### INTRODUCTION.

According to the census differentiation between rural and urban populations, approximately 75 per cent of Oklahoma's population is classed as rural. The problem of developing adequate educational facilities for the rural population is an important one in any State. It is especially important in a State like Oklahoma, in which there are few cities and so large a proportion of the people live on farms or in small towns and villages.

No democratic State can afford permanently to maintain a lower standard of educational opportunity for its rural population than is established for its urban citizenry, least of all a State that is so largely rural as is Oklahoma.

The members of the staff assigned to investigate rural school conditions visited schools in 25 counties, selected with the advice and assistance of members of the State department and the secretary of the survey commission. (See fig. 9.)

Inconsistencies and injustices due to the unequal opportunities furnished by the different districts are common throughout the State. In one county, for example, high-school privileges were denied to more than half those eligible, because the district from which the children came was too poor even with a maximum levy to raise money enough to pay their tuition in near-by districts maintaining high schools. On the other hand, counties visited were found rich enough and progressive enough to have an accredited high school within 6 miles of every child in the county.

The county superintendency is one of the most important positions in the whole school system.

The administrative and supervisory staff, with salaries, in a county of 100 teachers should be approximately as follows:

	Salary.
The county superintendent.....	\$4,000
One secretary to county superintendent.....	1,500
One clerk.....	1,000
Three professional supervisory assistants, at \$2,400 each.....	7,200
Travel expense fund.....	2,000
Total.....	15,700

ATTENDANCE.

Oklahoma has a total scholastic population of 647,083 white children; of these, 46 per cent are in districts classified as ungraded rural; 15 per cent in districts classified as village, consolidated, and union graded; and 39 per cent in independent districts, according to

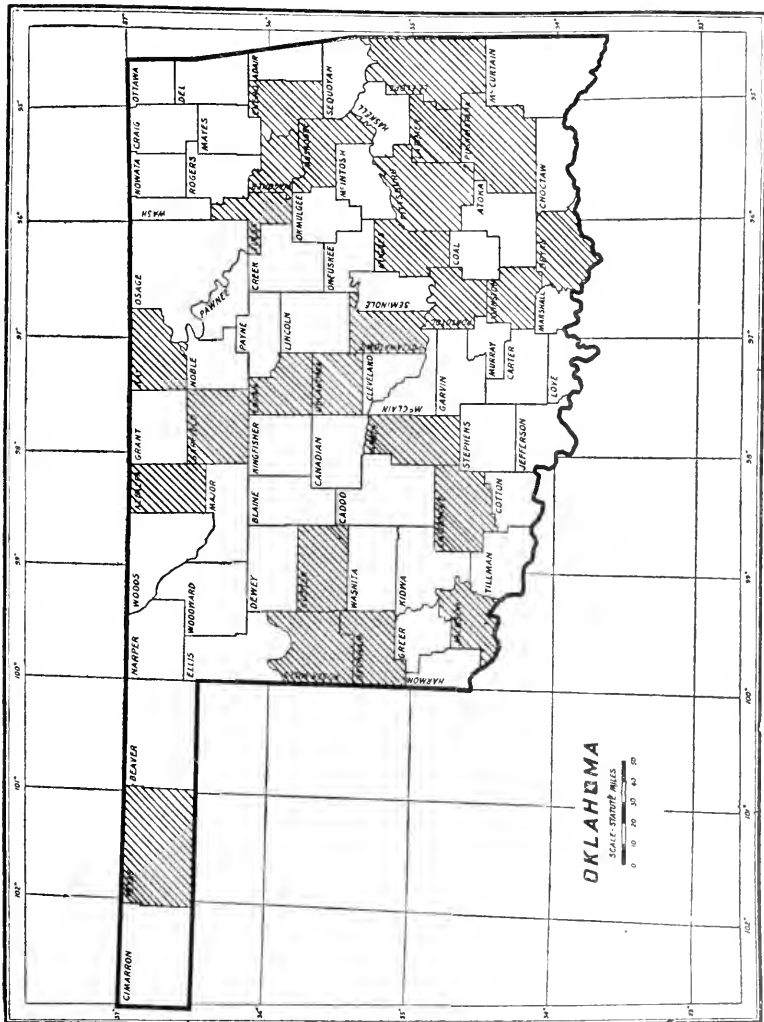


FIG. 9.—Showing the 25 countries (cross-hatched) in which rural school conditions were investigated.

the latest data obtainable. All children classified as belonging in rural, union graded, consolidated, and village schools, as well as many children classified as belonging in independent districts, are really rural children. They constitute between 65 and 75 per cent of the entire scholastic population.

Schools, however efficient, can educate only children who attend school with at least reasonable regularity. An examination of the enrollment and attendance data obtainable in the State attendance reports show conditions very unfavorable for rural children. Average daily attendance data are equally unfavorable.

#### CHILDREN DO NOT ATTEND REGULARLY.

Of the total number of children enrolled in one-teacher schools, 23 per cent attended during the year less than two months; 35 per cent less than three months; 46 per cent less than four months; 54 per cent less than five months; 63 per cent less than six months; 75 per cent less than seven months; and 95 per cent less than eight months. The record for two and three teacher schools is very little better. It appears from these statistics that in the small rural schools approximately half the children attend schools less than four months in the school year, even though a longer term of school is offered.

The divided term so common in the rural districts of the State is another significant influence in the consideration of school attendance and quality of school work. Reports from county superintendents indicate that about 16 per cent of the rural schools have the divided school term. Observation in these schools shows that attendance is poor and school interest indifferent.

Examination of registers in a number of schools in all the counties visited by members of the committee indicate a good deal of irregularity in attendance. In one school visited, in which there were 125 children enrolled, only 10 were present the day the visit was made. In another instance 20 children were present of 75 enrolled. In another case 15 were present out of an enrollment of 50.

Short terms, irregular attendance, or a combination of these, result in very little schooling for large numbers of children. The city child under normal conditions attends school nine months in the year and requires eight years to finish the elementary schools. The rural child who enrolls in school where the term is short, and who is absent a large percentage of that short term, requires not eight years but two or three times as many school years to finish the elementary grades. This explains why many country children become discouraged and leave school often before they have completed more than the fourth or fifth grade.

Oklahoma rural schools as a whole enroll a relatively small number of children in the upper grades and high schools.

#### BUILDINGS AND GROUNDS.

The quality of the school system is determined to some extent by the character of the school site and building.



Members of the survey staff visited approximately 1,000 rural school buildings in 40 different counties, representing all types of buildings, all localities, and all financial and industrial conditions of the State. In addition data were collected from 58 county superintendents through questionnaires concerning school buildings in their respective counties, their surroundings, and equipment.

There is a noticeable lack of expert guidance and direction, that results in the erection of buildings without due regard to the simplest sanitary requirements. Even new buildings in the process of completion show disregard for the health of the children and their educational needs as well. Often no additional cost is involved when a building is in process of erection for compliance with necessary regulations if they are known in time.

Poor lighting is very general; e. g., only 14 per cent of schools reported have unilateral lighting. Insufficient lighting is also common. There are few sanitary toilets on rural school grounds, and many observed were not clean and well kept. Sometimes good wells may be in unhealthful condition because no seepage-proof platforms are provided. Seats and desks are not adjusted to the size of the children occupying them and cloakrooms are not provided. These and various similar conditions are important considerations affecting the health and comfort of the children; school equipment has much to do with the quality of the school work.

The remedy for the present condition should be sought in better administrative practice. School boards and superintendents should seek advice from specialists in school buildings. The State department should be enlarged to furnish this service.

#### RURAL TEACHERS.

The members of the survey staff responsible for the study of rural-school conditions based their judgment of the teaching staff on observation of several hundred teachers, nearly all of whom were at work when observed on information secured from the records and reports of the State department of education and on replies to questionnaires sent directly to all the teachers in the State before the close of school in the spring of 1922.

The members of the staff are agreed that in native ability, personality, and professional spirit the rural teachers of Oklahoma are a promising group, interested in the schools and the children, and ready to take advantage of direction and guidance if it were furnished. They are generally immature, inexperienced, and without academic or professional preparation in any sense commensurate with the work they are trying to do.

## QUALITY OF INSTRUCTION IN RURAL SCHOOLS.

The fundamental weakness of the rural schools of Oklahoma, in one or two room and consolidated schools alike, is the lack of skilled teaching. This weakness was evident in every county visited, even in those counties having the most efficient superintendents.

In fully 90 per cent of the schools visited the following conditions were observed: Rooms are bare and unattractive; class organization was inefficient; lesson assignments were indefinite, with a tendency to stimulate effort on the part of children for short periods of time only; children were expected to repeat the lesson as given in the book, as individuals, to the teacher, instead of doing original thinking or challenging the attention of their classmates when reciting. Entire reading periods were spent by children reading orally, for the most part in a very halting manner selections familiar to all pupils, without any attempt on the part of the teacher to question the children's understanding of the selection, to provoke the use of judgment, to explain meaning which might not be clear to them, or to drill on difficulties.

## NEED OF PROFESSIONAL SUPERVISION.

The inferior quality of instruction is not attributable to lack of native ability or conscientiousness on the part of the rural teachers observed but to a lack of knowledge of good school organization and teaching methods and to the lack of professional supervision. Rural teachers in the State of Oklahoma have less training and are receiving less direction than any other group of teachers in the State.

## COURSE OF STUDY.

A new State course of study is being prepared by the State department of education; copies were not available at the time the survey was made, therefore this discussion is based on the observation of members of the survey staff.

So far as practice in the schools is concerned, it is apparent that the special needs of rural schools and rural children have received very little attention in the curriculum or from administrative and supervisory officers. This is true both as to organization of the schools and classes according to the number of teachers, size of classes, etc., and in the content of the curriculum.

## ORGANIZATION.

A few of the schools visited were well organized and had well-balanced programs. The larger number showed faulty organization. One and two room school-teachers apparently lacked knowledge of or ability to use the plan of combining classes and of alternating

subject matter by years, very generally advocated by leaders in rural education for schools of this type.

#### COURSE OF STUDY A TEACHER'S MANUAL.

The State board of education should be responsible for the compilation of a State course of study specially adapted to rural schools. In its formulation the best talent in the State or, if necessary, in the entire country should be enlisted. Such a State course of study should indicate—

- (1) Objectives to be attained.
- (2) Principles to be stressed in each of the subjects taught in rural schools.
- (3) Desirable methods of teaching each subject, accompanied by lesson plans illustrating method described.
- (4) A method of outlining an entire term's work by problems closely related to the lives of the rural children of Oklahoma.
- (5) Projects that would serve to unify the organization of the various school subjects, to lengthen teaching periods, and economize time.
- (6) Plans for lengthening periods by combining closely related branches of the same subject—literature, composition, and spelling, for example, and the various branches of science.
- (7) A plan for alternating subject matter by years for one and two teacher schools.
- (8) Minimum essentials for each grade in one-teacher schools, with additional requirements for grades in schools of other types.
- (9) The kind of organization that is best adapted for use in the various types of rural schools, and the one and two room and consolidated schools of varying size.
- (10) Suggestive type programs for one-room schools, two-room, and consolidated schools.
- (11) Lists of supplementary material, with directions for its use, including the place of current literature in the preparation of children for intelligent participation in government; games for motivating drill in the various subjects, etc.

#### PROVISION FOR TRAINING RURAL TEACHERS.

The State of Oklahoma is to be commended for establishing six State schools for the training of teachers. Some States as large and populous as Oklahoma have not as many. It is, however, unfortunate that neither in the organization of these schools nor in the law which establishes requirements for teaching certificates has any adequate attention been given to the supply of teachers for rural schools.

## NEEDS OF RURAL SECTIONS NEGLECTED.

It is doubtless true in Oklahoma as it is in some other States that the teachers' colleges are inadequately supported; that they are not turning out as many teachers as the State needs; that, therefore, the prepared teachers can get positions in towns and cities and do not, as school officials say, "need to go into the country schools." But this does not excuse the State in shirking its responsibility to country children.

In order that the State teachers' colleges may more nearly fulfill their purpose, they should organize to prepare rural teachers for their respective sections. The legislature should appropriate funds to enable them to do this and should expect the institutions to prepare a constantly increasing percentage of the student body for teaching in rural schools.

## TEACHER TRAINING IN SECONDARY SCHOOLS.

The secondary departments of the six teachers' colleges, the four State agricultural schools, and 68 city high schools offer teacher-training courses leading to a State two-year certificate and designated as especially for the preparation of teachers in rural schools.

Members of the staff visited 25 of the normal training classes in high schools, conferred with the instructor in most cases, and visited the schools (usually city graded schools) in which observation and practice work was done in nearly all.

## DIFFICULTIES CONFRONTING TEACHER TRAINING CLASSES IN HIGH SCHOOLS.

Some of the obstacles encountered in classes observed are:

(1) There is no adequate opportunity for observation and practice under direction.

(2) The instruction is unsatisfactory. Too many subjects must be crowded into a short time. Not only is time too limited, but one instructor must cover too many subjects.

(3) Too much of the professional work observed is of an extremely formal nature.

(4) In several cities visited, it is believed, the money spent for a special instructor for the normal training class in high school would be more economically and effectually used to employ a supervisor of elementary grades.

The establishment of normal training classes in secondary schools is a compromise with the real solution of the rural teacher-preparing problem. It is difficult to see how the State can justify itself in setting up two standards for qualified teachers, one requiring gradua-

tion from high school and an additional two years of college-grade work; the other requiring graduation from a secondary school only, with a minimum of professional work.

#### RECOMMENDATION FOR IMPROVEMENT.

The high-school training class as a part of the program for the professional training of teachers should be regarded as a temporary expedient and gradually abolished as requirements for certificates are raised. It is undoubtedly true that it will be necessary to make use of it for several years. In order to make it as effective as possible during this interval the following suggestions are offered:

(1) Reasonably uniform standards for all rural teacher-preparing courses leading to certification or renewal, or credited in whole or in part toward certification, should be established by the State board of education and the courses should be inspected and approved by officials of the board on the basis of these standards.

(2) Teachers in charge of training classes should have no other teaching duties.

(3) The State department of education should develop in cooperation with at least one State institution in a summer course, attendance at which should be required of all who are to serve as training-class teachers.

(4) All training-class teachers who have not taught in the country schools during the past 10 years should be required to obtain such experience.

(5) There should be at least one rural school with which the high school having a training class is cooperating.

(6) In accordance with the recommendations made under the certification of teachers, the training-class work should soon become an additional year to be required after high-school graduation.

(7) During the time the training classes continue there should be liberal State assistance to local districts that are maintaining training classes in accordance with the requirements of the State board.

#### CENTRALIZATION OF SCHOOLS.

The people of Oklahoma are to be commended for the progress they have made in the consolidation of schools in the face of serious financial obstacles. (See fig. 10.)

Fewer errors have been made in the way of leaving out from the boundaries of such districts isolated strips of territory than in many States because of this careful planning of the county superintendent and the State rural supervisors in most of the counties in which consolidation has proceeded to any appreciable degree.

LARGER DISTRICTS AND HIGHER VALUATIONS NEEDED.

There is much evidence to indicate that in many instances, in fact, some instances in nearly all the counties visited, consolidation has been stimulated beyond the possibilities for sound and substantial growth. This observation was verified by consultation with county superintendents. The majority of those visited feel that there is grave danger that many consolidated schools will be forced to retrench during the coming school year, either through cutting the length of term or the teachers' salaries. Indeed, a number of

STATE OF OKLAHOMA

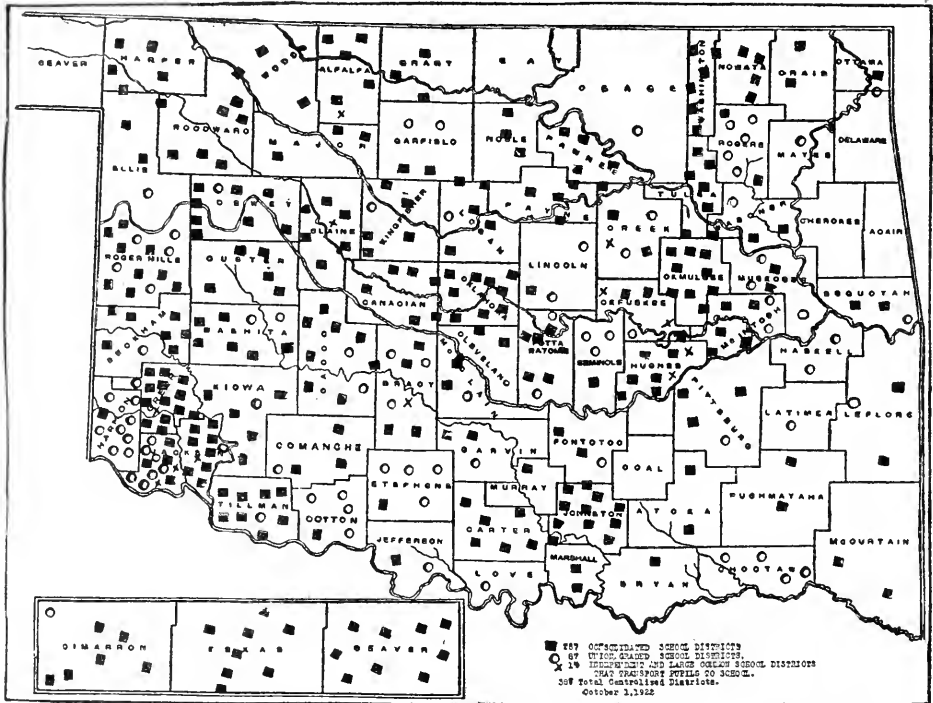


FIG. 10.—Extent to which the movement for school consolidation has developed in Oklahoma.

schools have already been forced to adopt one or both of these measures.

When small schools attempt to cover so much ground, it follows that their teachers are teaching too many hours and too many subjects, or too many high-school teachers are employed in proportion to the district's income, and the elementary grades suffer either by being overcrowded or by having too many grades to the teacher.

Probably no stronger evidence of the need of a large proportion of total support from State fund can be furnished than that offered

by certain consolidated districts in the State which spend as much as 60 per cent of maintenance funds for transportation. The serious handicap which the rural consolidated districts must overcome as compared with the village or city districts of like resources shows clearly the need of increased State support if the goal of equality of educational opportunity is to be realized.

Larger valuations; combination of two or more of the small and financially poor districts for the employment of a superintendent or supervising principal, with a plan for division of time and prorating of salary among the districts served; a strong teaching staff; better organization on the part of union graded and consolidated schools maintaining high schools, and concentration on fewer subjects; larger increments in the way of State aid, especially for transportation; all these are essential to make the consolidation movement a success in Oklahoma.

Most of these needs can be taken care of best through the form of county-wide administration of schools as recommended in Chapter III. Strong professional leadership and effective administrative policies can then be provided and carried out to effective ends.

#### A STATE PROGRAM IN RURAL SECONDARY EDUCATION GUIDING PRINCIPLES.

(1) The present consensus of expert opinion holds that it is the business of the locality to provide facilities for elementary and secondary education in accordance with its ability to pay for education, and that it then becomes the duty of the State to supplement local effort to such extent as is necessary to provide actual equality of educational opportunity to all children of the State in so far as is possible.

This consensus of opinion has come about through observation of various State experiments, beginning in complete local support of schools in our early history, and slowly evolving through various degrees of State aid administered according to a variety of schemes of distribution.

(2) It is the province of organization in the State system of secondary schools to extend an effective type of education to the highest possible percentage of children of secondary-school age in the most economical way.

(3) It is the function of secondary curricula to offer such content of subject matter as will contribute most surely to realization of the objectives of secondary education.

(4) It is the function of instruction so to organize and present the subject matter of individual courses of the curriculum that for a particular group in a particular community the previously enumerated objectives are realized.

## EQUALITY OF OPPORTUNITY.

Oklahoma is not providing equality of educational opportunity in the field of secondary education.

Here are some of the facts indicative of inequalities:

(1) Eighty per cent of all high-school teachers are employed in independent districts, in which 41 per cent of the school enumeration is found.

(2) \$13,378,823 is spent in independent districts, where 41 per cent of the children live, whereas \$8,288,844 is spent in rural districts, where 59 per cent of the children live.

(3) \$140.29 per capita is invested in buildings and grounds in independent districts, as compared with \$56.38 in villages, \$34.88 in consolidated schools, \$59.48 in union graded schools, and \$27.86 in ungraded rural schools.

(4) In independent districts every child is within easy access of the school, whereas large areas occur in rural districts where children are more than 25 miles from any high school, cut off by very poor roads, and entirely without means of transportation.

Not only with reference to money spent, accessibility, and percentage of students reached, inequalities exist also in the kind of education offered in relation to need and in the effectiveness of instruction in courses offered. Inequalities of instruction will always exist, because of the personal element, but the facts that as a whole the rural group is poorly instructed as compared with the urban group and that curricula for rural high schools are poorly adapted to the needs of the students indicate the need for earnest efforts at correction.

## CURRICULA.

Curricula being administered in the rural high schools of Oklahoma are poorly adapted to the needs of the students. The favorite subjects are Latin, ancient history, mediæval and modern history, English, and mathematics.

The history which should contribute to citizenship is presented in a very formal way and no connection with present life is made. No definite health program was found in any school. Vocational guidance and vocational training are attempted in only a few schools. Music and art appreciation are neglected, though it is through these subjects that education for leisure must proceed. Ethical character is a product of these objectives which are being neglected.

## BASIC PRINCIPLES FOR DEVELOPMENT OF CURRICULA.

Oklahoma should develop curricula in the rural high schools that make it possible to realize these objectives through the proper teach-



ing of the subject matter provided. The following principles should guide:

A general curriculum for junior high schools, with a body of subject matter to be regarded as a core of minimum essentials common to all curricula, should be developed first.

Specialized curricula in agriculture, home economics, industrial arts, business, and college preparatory should be developed in the six-year rural secondary schools.

Integration of the junior and senior high school curricula should be insured through carrying English and social science as constants common to all curricula through the six years, and through so scheduling elective courses in home economics, agriculture, language, science, mathematics, business, and industrial arts that a minimum of two units in one of these fields is possible in the senior high school for graduates of the junior high school.

In small schools, both junior and senior, in which the numbers of pupils are not too large to permit combination of sections the expedient of offering courses on alternate years should be freely used.

#### STATE SCHOOLS OF AGRICULTURE.

Oklahoma, in common with several other States, committed itself a number of years ago to the policy of providing State schools of agriculture of secondary grade. Since the establishment of these schools in Oklahoma the experience that has been gained in vocational instruction in agriculture of secondary grade has shown conclusively that except for unusual circumstances there are more effective and more economical methods of reaching prospective farmers.

In 1917 the Federal vocational education act was passed. One of the provisions includes Federal aid to States in developing programs of agricultural education of secondary grade. The State of Oklahoma accepted the provisions of this legislation and has started the development of a program of agricultural education in connection with the public-school system of the State. These departments in which the instruction is offered have the advantage of being readily accessible to local students, thus making the instruction available without the expense of living away from home. They have the further advantage of making it easy to connect the work of the school with the practical demands of the home farms through the project method of instruction.

At present none of the district agricultural schools is adequately equipped to carry forward the work they are attempting. If they are to be continued it will be necessary for the State to improve the facilities, thus calling for a considerable capital outlay. In addition, the maintenance allowance is inadequate.

When consideration is given to the marked growth that has taken place in connection with the development of agricultural instruction as a part of the public-school program of the State, and the possibilities of its further development on an effective and economical basis, to the rapid development of local high schools, and to the large outlays both for plant and instruction that are necessary, it appears wise to recommend the ultimate discontinuance of all of these schools as State-supported schools of agriculture. They should be put on a basis of local support with State aid and merged into the system of rural high schools. This action should be accompanied by the use of State funds to encourage consolidation of schools, the development of more adequate local high-school facilities, and an extension of the program of agricultural education in the direction indicated elsewhere in this report.

#### SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS CONCERNING RURAL SCHOOLS.

(1) The elementary and secondary school system, teacher-preparing institutions and functions, and certificating authority should be under the direction and supervision of the State board of education. The board should be composed of seven or nine members elected at large on a nonpartisan basis for long terms of office, probably seven or nine years.

(2) The State superintendent should be appointed by the board for a term and at a salary to be fixed by the board, and should be its executive officer, to whom educational matters are delegated for execution. The board itself should function as a legislative body.

(3) A division of rural schools should be established in the State department of education, with one director in charge and at least three assistants.

(4) Present school district lines and organizations should be discontinued, except in the case of certain districts meeting standard requirements of the State board of education as to territory, valuation, and educational efficiency. All other districts now designated as ungraded rural, union graded, consolidated, and independent should together form county systems of schools administered by county boards of education.

(5) The county board of education should be composed of five or seven members elected at large for terms of five or seven years each, one term expiring each year. They should have general control over all schools of the county outside of independent districts, have power to levy a county-wide school tax to be apportioned on an equalizing basis as between independent districts and county school districts, as set forth in Chapter III, and should appoint as executive officer of the board a county superintendent of schools.

(6) The county superintendent should be appointed for a term and salary designated by the board; should hold an administrative and supervisory certificate, as provided in the certification law; should be a person of executive ability, broad training and culture, and successful administrative experience. selected without regard to residence within or without the State or county, but solely because of special fitness for the position.

(7) The county board, upon the nomination of the county superintendent, should appoint the supervisors and teaching staff; should levy a special tax for the support of the schools under its administrative control, and apportion the proceeds among the schools in the county according to their needs; provide buildings and equipment; locate school buildings and sites; fix the county salary schedule within the law; and perform all other duties usually assigned to boards of school trustees.

(8) An adequate supervisory and clerical staff, suitable office accommodations and equipment, and traveling expenses for superintendent and supervisors should be provided by the county board. Professional supervisors should be selected because of special ability, preparation, and successful experience, and should be paid salaries commensurate with the importance of their work. They should be nominated by the county superintendent and act as his assistants. At least 1 supervisor to every 40 teachers, in addition to the first 25, should be employed; 1 supervisor for every 25 teachers is a better allocation.

(9) As soon as the State and county departments are properly staffed, a division of school attendance should be established in the State department, which should work with and through the county departments of education. The responsibility for the enforcement of the compulsory education law should be assumed by this division. A new system of keeping attendance records and reports and of encouraging better school attendance should be inaugurated.

(10) A new course of study should be prepared by the State board of education providing specifically in content and organization for the needs of rural schools of all the different types prevalent in the State.

(11) A division of school buildings should be established in the State department, which should cooperate with the county departments of education. All new buildings and repairs for amounts greater than \$400 should be submitted by the county superintendent for approval by the State building inspectors. These officers should be empowered to condemn present buildings which do not meet the standards and requirements fixed by the State board of education.

(12) Special provision for the training of teachers for rural schools should be made at an early date. Standards for teacher-preparing

courses should be set by the State board of education, and requirements should conform to the provisions of the certification law and should be increased as rapidly as is consistent with the demand for teachers and the welfare of the schools. As soon as possible requirements for teaching certificates, standards for teacher-preparing courses, and entrance requirements to classes and institutions preparing teachers should be equivalent for rural and urban schools.

(13) The movement for centralizing schools needs direction. The administrative organization suggested will provide this. Even with liberal State aid for equalization of educational opportunities and tax burdens, it will probably be necessary for the State to assume all or a large proportion of the expense of transportation. The growing number of centralized schools indicates that there is a demand for special attention to their needs in organization, management, instruction, and course of study on the part of State authorities.

#### SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS CONCERNING RURAL HIGH SCHOOLS.

(1) Oklahoma should develop a system of rural junior high schools whereby instruction in grades 7, 8, and 9, may be made effective and elementary schools relieved of the burden of the work in grades 7 and 8. Work in these grades is now maintained at the cost of efficiency in the first six grades.

(2) The independent district system should be abandoned and the county unit system substituted under proper conditions of State aid. Inequalities of educational opportunity will thus be materially reduced.

(3) The State board of vocational education should be made a part of the State department of education, thus avoiding the possibility of conflicting educational policies.

(4) Oklahoma should give much more attention to the development of part-time work in vocational agriculture and in home economics.

(5) Itinerant teaching on the part of vocational instructors should become general in sparsely settled agricultural counties.

(6) Club work with boys and girls under the Smith-Lever service should be placed on a definitely educational basis under the direction of county superintendents.

(7) Curricula definitely adapted to the needs of rural boys and girls should be developed in rural high schools.

(8) Local administration in high schools should make such use of alternation and rotation of subjects in the curriculum as to insure that classes are of the proper size and a proper teaching load maintained.

(9) A complete reorganization of instruction in English is desirable.

(10) Instruction in social science should be emphasized and should grow out of problems laid bare by study of the community.

(11) Vocational guidance, rather than vocational training, should be sought in the junior high-school years.

(12) The State department should immediately undertake the task of organizing vocational courses in agriculture about the practice jobs of the dominant agricultural enterprises of the State.

(13) Instruction in home economics should make general use of project methods and get away from the academic method now prevailing.

(14) State schools of agriculture should be placed on a basis of local support with State aid.

(15) State schools of agriculture should be placed under the control of the State department of education so long as they operate as State schools.

(16) The State schools of agriculture should conform to the recommendations for curricula in comprehensive senior high schools.

(17) Administration of rural high schools of the boarding type should bring about a close correlation between the three units which make up the schools—the school proper, the farm, and the boarding department.

(18) The real vocational method in agriculture should be followed at such schools through a group project method.

(19) Land-owning rural high schools should become centers for agricultural extension work.

#### THE UNIVERSITY PREPARATORY SCHOOL AND THE OKLAHOMA MILITARY ACADEMY.

Much of what has been said with reference to the district agricultural schools applies with equal force to the University Preparatory School at Tonkawa, and the Oklahoma Military Academy at Claremore. At the dates when these schools were established, it was thought that the maintenance of secondary schools of these types by the State was necessary to the proper development of public education in Oklahoma. The conditions then obtaining, however, no longer exist. With the subsequent improvements which have taken place, and with the development of public high schools along lines recommended in this report, it is difficult to see the necessity for the continuance of these schools as now constituted under State support and control. If they are to be continued as State institutions, their functions should be defined more specifically in harmony with the general educational program suggested in this report.

## Chapter VIII.

### VILLAGE AND CITY SCHOOLS.

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Amend or revise the constitution in such a manner as to permit a school unit to raise sufficient funds to maintain standard schools.

#### A LONGER SCHOOL YEAR.

Section 58 of the school laws should be repealed and a law enacted requiring all school districts to maintain at least eight months of school in 1924-25 and nine months thereafter.

Amend or revise section 443 in such a manner as to make it mandatory upon an excise board to levy whatever rate, within the law, a school board may decide that it needs to run the school properly. If a school board fails to appropriate a sufficient sum, the excise board should exercise the right to increase the appropriation.

The present system of issuing teachers' certificates should be gradually abolished, and the plan herein proposed substituted for the present system as rapidly as possible.

#### NUMBER AND KIND OF CERTIFICATES.

The law should provide that the State board of education shall make regulations concerning the number and classes of teaching certificates, and shall fix regulations for the same in addition to the minimum prerequisites fixed by law; that the board shall provide for at least seven classes of certificates, with at least two grades of each.

As rapidly as possible all teachers in grades 7 to 12 in city schools should be expected to meet the qualifications prescribed by the North Central Association of Colleges and Secondary Schools. These standards should not, for the present, apply to rural schools so far as the seventh and eighth grades are concerned.

The certification law should be accompanied by a minimum salary provision. The minimum salary should be prescribed for each grade of certificate, which salary should increase at least \$50 a step, as requirements increase.

#### MODERN EDUCATIONAL OBJECTIVES.

The public schools of Oklahoma should adopt the seven cardinal objectives of education announced by the Commission on the Reor-

ganization of Secondary Education, or some similar formulation of aims. The seven objectives are these: Health, command of fundamental processes, worthy home membership, vocation, citizenship, worthy use of leisure, and ethical character.

#### REORGANIZATION OF CITY SCHOOL SYSTEMS.

At present most of the city school systems of Oklahoma provide 12 grades of instruction. The 12 years are divided into 8 years of elementary and 4 years of high school, or what is commonly known as the 8-4 plan of organization. It is gratifying to note that many cities in Oklahoma have found it advantageous to modify the standard 8-4 plan and to inaugurate the 6-3-3 plan or the 6-6 plan. In every instance observed the adoption of the 6-3-3 or the 6-6 plan has apparently been decidedly advantageous. This plan is recommended for all cities, and the standards of the North Central Association of Colleges and Secondary Schools may well be adopted as guiding principles by city school boards throughout the State in the development of junior and senior high schools.

#### FREE TEXTBOOKS.

County uniformity of free textbooks should be provided except in districts of 2,500 population or over. The State should not attempt to print its own textbooks or continue the present policy of State uniformity.

The fundamental principles that should guide in the selection of textbooks have been largely ignored in the present textbook law. The following cardinal principles, which should be the basis of legislation in regard to textbooks, are set forth in the report.

#### STATE AID FOR FREE TEXTBOOKS.

It is recommended that the State shall provide each school unit, for the purchase of textbooks, the sum of \$3 to \$5 per pupil enrolled in kindergarten and grades 1 to 6, inclusive; the sum of \$4 to \$6 for each white and colored pupil enrolled in grades 7 to 12, inclusive; provided that all money not expended for the purchase of textbooks may be spent in purchasing supplementary and reference books; provided, also, that all money not so expended shall revert to the general school fund of the State. It is estimated that after the first year free textbooks will cost from one-third to one-half of the above estimate. This provides for replacements. Appropriations should be made on this basis.

Practically all of the cities visited should spend much more money for equipment, including charts, maps, sand tables, etc., for the grade schools. The needs of the high schools in the way of laboratory

equipment have been fairly well met. In most cities the library facilities are very poor and should be materially increased. Supplementary reading material should be supplied much more liberally than is now done throughout the 12 grades. Few schoolhouses or rooms are supplied with good pictures. Appropriations made for purchase of choice pictures are good educational investments.

The general provision in section 397 which empowers the State textbook commission "to select and adopt maps, charts, globes, and other apparatus" should be repealed, along with other provisions of section 397. Such materials should be selected by the same agencies as are elsewhere provided in this report for the selection of free textbooks.

#### CHANGES IN TAKING OF CENSUS AND IN COMPULSORY ATTENDANCE LAW.

The following changes are recommended:

(a) The superintendent of schools should direct and the teachers take the school census.

(b) The compulsory attendance law should apply equally to children attending nonpublic schools.

(c) The limiting clause of section 240, which permits children to absent themselves one-third of the time the school is in session, should be repealed, and "full-time" attendance should be required.

(d) A provision should be added to section 253 making it mandatory for counties of 52,000 population or more to provide a county home for dependent white boys.

(e) Section 245 and section 248 should be amended to read "Destitute mothers of children under the age of 16 years."

(f) The minimum age for compulsory school attendance should be reduced from 8 to 7 years.

(g) All nonpublic schools should be subject to inspection by local and State school authorities and should be required to maintain standards for teacher preparation and certification, courses of study, school hygiene and sanitation, and attendance requirements the equivalent of standards set up by the local and State public-school authorities.

#### ATTENDANCE LAWS.

Directly associated with the school census is the problem of attendance. Section 241 requires the appointment in cities or incorporated towns of truant officers by the board of education and in school districts the appointment of truant officers by county superintendent. Attendance in city school systems seems to be fairly satisfactory in the white schools. Attendance officers state, however, that the pro-



vision (section 240) which requires that the child be compelled to attend but two-thirds of the session practically nullifies the effective administration of the law.

This limiting clause, namely, the two-thirds proposition in the law, should be repealed immediately and all children compelled to attend the full session unless physically or mentally incapacitated. This should apply equally to white and colored children under 16 years of age.

Section 245 and section 248, which provide for the aiding of "destitute mothers," should be amended to read "mothers of children under 16 years." There is a gap of two years between the age 14, as stated in the present law, and 16 years, provided for in "compulsory attendance law and child labor law," which has proved to be the cause of genuine distress.

#### CONCERNING COUNTY HOME.

Section 253 provides for "a county home for dependent white boys" in any county having a population of 52,000 in 1920. This number might well be reduced to 25,000 population and provision made that two or more counties may jointly carry out the provision of the act. In counties of over 52,000 population it is recommended that the act be made mandatory.

#### RETARDATION AND ELIMINATION OF PUPILS.

The following recommendations are made for reducing retardation:

(a) Parents should be urged to enter children at the earliest possible legal age.

(b) Kindergartens should be established wherever school funds permit and enrollment justifies.

(c) Greater care should be taken in grading, classifying, and promoting children.

(d) Homogeneous speed grouping should begin with the first grade and continue throughout the system.

(e) Scientific diagnostic and remedial work should accompany homogeneous speed grouping.

(f) Medical and physical supervision should be provided for all children.

(g) Regular attendance in the primary grades should be stressed as in upper grades.

#### DEFINITION OF SCHOOL DISTRICTS.

At the present time there is some confusion concerning the definition of the different types of school districts and also concerning

the application of various laws to the different types. This confusion should be cleared up in order that the proper administration of the various school districts may be facilitated.

#### SCHOOL HYGIENE AND HEALTH EDUCATION.

One of the cardinal principles in modern education is the conservation of the health of the pupils and the creating of a health conscience; that is, the individual pupil should think not only of his own health but also how he may contribute to the general community health. Children should be taught the principles of health and hygiene.

#### HELPFUL SERVICE OF THE SCHOOL NURSE.

One of the most helpful agents in promoting health in the public schools is the school nurse. By inspecting the schools frequently she discovers communicable diseases in their incipient state and thus prevents epidemics. The nurse also many times discovers physical abnormalities unsuspected by the parents of the children. The nurse's work is not only corrective and remedial but also educational.

The splendid work in educational tests and measurements in a number of school systems should be encouraged and extended and its benefits made state-wide.

A law should be enacted and enforced making it illegal for any school board to erect or remodel any school building until the State superintendent of public instruction or an officer designated by him has certified to the clerk of the board in writing to the effect that he has examined and approved the plans and specifications for the proposed building or remodeling. A minimum amount of 2 acres of ground for each school building should be required, unless for reason the requirement is waived by the State superintendent of public instruction. The State superintendent of public instruction should be required to prepare and adopt regulations fixing certain minimum standards for school buildings and equipment and covering the plans and specifications of the same. Local school authorities who ignore and violate these standards should be punishable under the law.

Boards of education in growing communities should be encouraged to lay out a 10 to 20 year building program for the community. Sites should be purchased as long as possible in advance of the time when they will be needed. School systems should not be allowed, like Topsy, to just grow. If city planning is possible, city school system planning is even more possible.

Many cities in Oklahoma are making satisfactory progress in this regard, and this progress is to be commended to other municipalities.

The training equipment and ability of the teachers in the city schools of Oklahoma rank up with the same class in other cities of the United States. At present there is no shortage in the supply of city school-teachers. This applies to both trained and untrained teachers.

If every superintendent rigidly observes the practice of employing for all new vacancies in the elementary school only normal school graduates and only college graduates in high school, it would be but a short time before Oklahoma would rank with the most progressive States in the qualifications and training of the teachers.

Few cities in Oklahoma attempt to maintain a scientifically graded salary schedule. The few attempts are commendable in their accomplishments.

The Oklahoma school law on teachers' pensions apparently is a failure. There is a law on the statute books, but there is no money for its enforcement. Furthermore, the law itself is scarcely adequate. Oklahoma should have an adequate teachers' pension law. A commission should be appointed, authorized by the legislature, for the sole purpose of investigating and reporting to the legislature a sound state-wide teachers' pension and annuity system.

The powers and duties of boards of education should be more specifically defined.

The relation of the superintendent to the board should be clearly defined.

The law on the tenure of school superintendents should be amended so as to permit a board of education to contract with a superintendent for a period of three to five years by a majority vote.

The powers and duties of superintendents and other officers should be specifically defined.

The survey commends the junior colleges which have been established in a few cities, and the desire to develop standard one and two year college courses in conjunction with other city school systems. It is more economical to train college freshmen and sophomores in standard public junior colleges under the administration and partial support of local school units than it is to train them in State schools.

#### SCHOOLS FOR NEGROES.

Schools for negroes should be operated on the same basis and maintain the same standards as white schools, and they should be under the administration and support of the board of education of each local unit with a population of 2,500 or over.

## Chapter IX.

### EDUCATION FOR INDIANS.

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The factors to be considered in formulating policies for Indian education are: First, the economic, hygienic, and tribal conditions of the Indians; second, the enumeration and enrollment of Indian youth of school age, and the school facilities now available for the Indians; third, the financial support of Indian education and the relation of this support to the extensive areas of the nontaxable land in Oklahoma; fourth, the principles and methods of Indian education during the transition of Indian youth from the boarding and day schools of the United States Indian Bureau to the public-school system of the State; and fifth, recommendations concerning the education of Indians in Oklahoma.

#### SOME FACTS CONCERNING THE CHILDREN.

In order to have some estimate of the number of Indian children now in boarding schools who should possibly be in public school, a study was made of the homes of the pupils in three of the largest Government boarding schools in western Oklahoma and three of the tribal schools of eastern Oklahoma with the following points in view:

(1) To find the number of Indian children now in boarding schools who should continue there.

(2) To find the number of children now in boarding schools who might be placed in public schools if provided with the assistance of a home and school visitor or field matron to act as interpreter of the child to the public school and of the school to the home of the child.

(3) To discover the number of Indian children now in boarding schools whose home conditions are such that they can be accommodated in available public schools.

The following conclusions can be deduced: (1) Of the 598 children of whose home conditions information could be gained, 406 should continue in boarding schools; (2) 131 might be transferred to public schools if provided with the help of a home and school visitor; (3) 61, only 15 of whom are from the western district, might now be in public schools.

The following conditions make attendance of the majority of the pupils in boarding schools either desirable or necessary: Financial

inability to pay tuition in public schools; distance from public school (3 or more miles and difficulties of travel where the distances are less); lack of home because of death, immorality, separation, or wandering propensities of parents, or cruelty of step-parents; insanitary home conditions and disease.

#### DIFFICULTIES TO BE OVERCOME.

The following statements from the Government health-drive records throw additional light on the need of boarding schools for Indian children or a radical change in the public-school system:

(1) Many Indian children 14 or 15 years of age are in the first and second grades.

(2) Indian children in public schools do not always receive proper consideration from white pupils and teachers.

(3) Indian children enrolled in public schools attend so irregularly that they receive little benefit.

(4) The length of the school year in public schools is shortened because of the necessity of using the children in the cotton fields.

(5) In the country schools of Oklahoma hygiene and sanitation are not taught until the eighth grade, which is reached only by a few of the Indian children most in need of this information.

Other significant facts are as follows:

(1) The number of Indian youths of school age (6 to 21) in Oklahoma is 30,798.

(2) The number enrolled in public, Government, and mission schools is 25,424. The apparently favorable significance of this figure is greatly diminished by the fact that the attendance for most of the large groups is only about 60 per cent.

(3) Twenty-one thousand two hundred and forty-five Indians, forming 84 per cent of the Indian school enrollment, are already in public schools.

(4) Only 3,584 Indians, or 14 per cent of the Indian school enrollment, are in Government and tribal schools.

The following facts concerning the pupils enrolled in the Government schools are both significant and interesting:

(1) Classification of the pupils according to grade shows that 86 per cent are in grades 1 to 6 inclusive; 9 per cent are in grades 7 and 8; and only 2 per cent are above the eighth grade.

(2) The age classification indicated that 29 per cent are 10 years of age or under; 47 per cent are 11 to 15 years, inclusive; 19 per cent are 16 to 18, inclusive; and 5 per cent are over 18 years of age.

(3) According to proportion of Indian blood, the full-blood Indians are 71 per cent, the one-half to three-fourths bloods are 24 per cent, and one-fourth blood are only 5 per cent.

## FINANCIAL SUPPORT.

The study of the financial support of education for Indians in Oklahoma involves a consideration of appropriations made by Congress for Indian education, the school expenditures from tribal funds, public-school taxes, and the loss of income to the State on account of the extensive areas of nontaxable Indian lands in the State.

The potential taxes on untaxed lands can only be estimated on the basis of reports obtained from county tax assessors and officers of the United States Indian Bureau. The estimates relating to the taxation of untaxable Indian lands are as follows:

(1) Number of acres of untaxable land.....	7,000,000
(2) Average value per acre of untaxable land (1922).....	\$18.33
(3) Average rate of school taxation (1922), in mills.....	10
(4) Taxable value of 7,000,000 acres, at \$18.23 per acre.....	\$128,300,000
(5) Potential tax, at 10 mills.....	\$1,283,000

Comparison of potential tax and United States Government expenditures for Indian education:

Potential tax.....	\$1,283,000
Appropriations from United States Government and tribal funds.....	855,000
Difference.....	428,000

The difference between these two figures, amounting to \$428,000, is the present loss of the State because of nontaxable Indian lands, and this difference added to the amounts now expended by the Government from congressional appropriations and tribal funds equals the sum that will become available for the support of public schools when the trust period expires.

## INCREASED FEDERAL AID FOR INDIAN EDUCATION SHOULD BE SOUGHT.

It is evident that the United States Government should adopt a policy of liberal support for all educational movements providing for the preparation of the Indian youth to enter the public-school system, so that the transfer may be made with the least possible friction or injustice to the Indians.

The history of the Indian people in America shows that they are being gradually merged into the general population of the country. The policy of the United States Indian Bureau is in accord with the general tendency of Indian life.

Sound educational policy requires that the responsibility and function of both groups of schools should be clearly recognized.

(1) United States Government schools, originally offering the only school facilities to Indians, and still needed to supplement the limited school facilities of the State, will be needed for some time to come

to provide education for the following special classes: (*a*) Orphans; (*b*) those subnormal in health; (*c*) those excluded by poverty; (*d*) those living too far from school; (*e*) those with unfavorable home conditions.

(2) The public-school system, with its numerous school districts, is fitted to care for the younger children who can thus remain at home and receive their training in the local schools.

#### HOME AND SCHOOL VISITORS SHOULD BE APPOINTED.

To the end that the public-school facilities for Indian children may be improved, not only for those already enrolled, but also to justify the enrollment of still larger numbers of Indian children, it is urged that home and school visitors should be provided in those counties having large numbers of Indian children to be educated.

#### RECOMMENDATIONS.

(1) The school system should be organized so that the Indian youth shall ultimately be educated in the public schools of the State. To this end the responsibility of the Federal Government will gradually decrease, and that of the State will increase, until the schools are entirely controlled and maintained by the State.

(2) Home and school visitors should be provided in the counties having large numbers of Indian children. These workers are to study the Indian homes and the schools and to enlist the help of all county agencies for their improvement. During the trust period the Federal Government should give liberal financial aid for the employment of these workers.

(3) The present system of Federal and tribal boarding schools should be continued so long as necessary to care for special classes of Indian children, such as orphans and those unable to attend public schools on account of bad health, poverty, distance from school, or other disabilities.

(4) The Government school plants should be eventually acquired by the State of Oklahoma, to be used as secondary training schools offering trade courses, agriculture, and home economics to white and Indian youths.

(5) The Federal Government should provide liberal financial aid for the education of Indian children in public schools during the trust period.

## Chapter X.

### EDUCATION FOR NEGROES.

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#### SIZE AND DISTRIBUTION OF NEGRO POPULATION.

The State of Oklahoma has a population of 2,028,283, and of this number 149,408, or 7.4 per cent, are negroes. The Federal census of 1910 reported the negro population as 137,612; so that the actual increase in 10 years was 11,796, and the per cent of increase 8.6. The negro population is 67.9 per cent rural.

In 1910 the negro urban population was 36,982, and in 1920 it was 47,904, an actual increase of 10,922, or 29.5 per cent. The rural population was 100,630 in 1910 and 101,504 in 1920, an increase of 874, or less than 1 per cent. The census reports as "urban" those who live in cities of 2,500 or more. It is evident from these figures that between 1910 and 1920 there was a decided movement of negroes from the country districts to towns and cities. This was due to economic and other causes. It seems reasonable to assume, however, that one of the causes was the better school facilities offered by the cities.

The negro population is largely concentrated in a few counties. According to the 1920 report of the State superintendent of public instruction, 27 counties have less than 100 negro children of school age. In 52 of the 77 counties in the State, the negro population forms less than 10 per cent of the total.

#### OCCUPATIONS FOLLOWED BY NEGROES.

Farming is the most important occupation followed by negroes in the State. In the towns and cities where the negro population is large the negroes furnish a considerable part of the unskilled labor and an important part of the skilled labor.

They engage in various forms of domestic service, serve as porters in stores, bell boys and waiters in hotels, truck drivers, etc. Among the skilled occupations followed by them may be mentioned the building trades, especially carpentry, bricklaying, plastering, and painting. A considerable number engage in such trades as shoe repairing, tailoring, cleaning, and pressing. The two professions most largely represented among them are teaching and the ministry. Other pro-



fessions—the medical profession, for instance—are gaining in prominence. In recent years a number of so-called “race enterprises” have been developed, and these enterprises use more employees every year. The negro insurance companies may be cited as an example of this.

#### IMPORTANCE OF PROPER TRAINING FOR NEGROES.

The white people of Oklahoma have a direct interest in the welfare of the negroes, although some white people may not realize that fact. If illiteracy is removed in Oklahoma, negro illiteracy, as well as white, must go. Figures have already been cited to show that 25 per cent of the illiterates in the State are colored. This means that much of the negro labor on the farm and in the city must be inefficient.

#### DISTRICT AND SEPARATE SCHOOLS.

All the public schools are either district or separate schools. There are only 92 colored district schools in the State. On the other hand, the total enrollment in the white separate schools is only 994 in the entire State. It is therefore evident that most of the negro schools are separate schools, or “minority” schools. The law of Oklahoma provides that all the district school tax shall go to maintain the school for the race that is in the majority. Thus, all the school district tax in Oklahoma City goes to support the white schools. The negro schools in Oklahoma City and in all other cities except Boley are supported by a county-wide tax levy of 2 mills or less. In some counties the levy has been less than 2 mills. A school district tax (for the “majority” race) may be levied up to 15 mills.

It is easy to see that as a rule a district school can be better financed than a separate school. In this connection it should be remembered that the county levy must provide all the money for building, equipping, and maintaining these separate schools. The policy of erecting buildings out of maintenance funds is unsound. The law has worked a hardship on a number of negro schools in towns and cities, because under the law bonds can not be issued to erect buildings, nor can the town or city pay for the building in any way except by a county levy.

#### PRACTICAL EFFECT OF LAW A HANDICAP ON NEGRO EDUCATION.

The separate school law does not work a hardship on the negroes in counties like Oklahoma, Tulsa, and Carter, where the negro population is relatively small and the valuation large. It does work a hardship, however, on the negroes in counties like Wagoner, Choctaw, Okfuskee, McCurtain, and Seminole, and in some others. In these counties the negro population is relatively large and the valuation

small, as compared with Oklahoma's rich counties, and the permissible county levy of 2 mills for separate schools is inadequate.

The county school superintendents of Wagoner and Okfuskee Counties stated that under the law sufficient funds could not be secured to maintain the separate (negro) schools properly. The white and colored schools should be financed in the same way, under a county unit system. Oklahoma's "separate school law" is peculiar to this State, and no other State has any such law.

#### PUBLIC SCHOOL STATISTICS.

The figures indicate clearly that the primary work in these town and city schools is inefficient, because of too many pupils to the teacher, poor teaching, lack of suitable equipment, lack of supervision, and other causes. More than half of the total enrollment in eight grades is found in the first three grades. Undoubtedly many pupils repeat grades, and thus become retarded, or older than they should be for their grade. If 250 pupils in a school system repeat a grade each year, there is a total loss of 250 years. These pupils can not make up this time, which is greater loss than the loss in money represented by the inefficiency of the work in the first grade.

#### NEW TYPES OF WORK TO HOLD PUPILS IN SCHOOL.

In order that the elimination from the upper grades may be reduced, vocational courses should be given in the seventh grade, and in some schools probably in the sixth. It may as well be recognized that some of the pupils in those grades will not complete a high-school course, and these are the very ones who need some vocational training, in order that they may engage in some semiskilled occupation on leaving school.

Organization of the schools so as to provide for junior high-school work on the 6-3-3 plan would strengthen the negro schools. This organization has been introduced in some of the negro schools, but not to the same extent as in the white schools.

#### SPECIAL ACTIVITIES AIDED BY EDUCATIONAL FOUNDATIONS.

A considerable part of the time of the rural school agent, whose salary and expenses are paid by the General Education Board, has been devoted to the following activities, in which aid has been secured from the Julius Rosenwald Fund, the John F. Slater Fund, the Anna T. Jeanes Fund, and the General Education Board.

In 1920-21 and in 1921-22, \$19,430 was secured from the Julius Rosenwald Fund to aid in building model school buildings for negroes.

At present five vocational high schools, or county training schools, are receiving \$1,300 a year (1922-23) for industrial equipment, and

\$600 for teachers' salaries from the General Education Board. The total amount given these schools for salaries from the Slater Fund is \$1,250 in 1922-23.

The sum of \$1,000 is given by the Jeanes Fund. This is used at present to pay \$50 a month for 10 months on the salaries of two industrial supervisors, one in Wagoner and one in Carter County. The money is matched by local appropriation.

#### RETARDED PUPILS IN NEGRO SCHOOLS.

One of the most serious problems in the negro schools is the problem of retardation—pupils being older than they should be for the grades they are in. The common cause of this, of course, is the repeating of grades by many pupils. Some pupils do not enter school until they are older than they should be. In city schools some of the retardation is due to pupils being already "retarded," or over age, for their grades when they enter the school. In all the schools, and especially in the rural schools, the chief cause of retardation is irregular attendance.

#### SOME CAUSES OF INEFFICIENCY IN NEGRO SCHOOLS.

At present much of the money being spent on negro schools each year is being wasted, because satisfactory results are not being secured. One of the most conspicuous defects in the rural schools, especially in the separate schools, which enroll most of the negro children, is the lack of suitable buildings and equipment. The fact that many negro tenants move from one part of the county to another makes it difficult to make permanent locations for these schools. It is reasonable to suppose, however, that the building of good schools would to some extent reduce this moving.

#### IRREGULAR ATTENDANCE A CAUSE OF SERIOUS LOSS.

The poor attendance is an important factor in making the schools inefficient. Even supposing that the schools are effective, so far as those pupils in average attendance is concerned, there would be a great loss in efficiency, due to so many pupils being out of school part of the time.

The lack of supervision is another thing that makes the negro schools ineffective. A county superintendent can not, without assistance, be expected to supervise all the schools, white and colored, in a county.

There is a great need for improvement in the teaching of the primary grades—the first four grades—where most of the pupils are. This is true to the same extent in both rural and urban schools.

An effective education program will demand more money than is now being spent, especially on the schools now operated as separate

schools. The cities should not be handicapped in providing needed buildings and equipment for negro schools as they are now.

#### GREATER DEVELOPMENT OF VOCATIONAL COURSES NEEDED.

In recognition of the fact that economic pressure will cause many pupils in cities, especially boys, to leave school at an early age, with no preparation for earning a livelihood, ample provision should be made for part-time schools, continuation schools, and evening schools.

The negro schools have suffered because no State school supervisor has given his entire time to improving them. The rural school agent has been devoting half his time to this work, and has secured excellent results. The negro schools, however, should be supervised and directed, in cooperation with county superintendents, by a State school officer, giving all his time to that work.

The State school at Langston should be given suitable equipment and buildings, and should be properly supported by the State. Otherwise, many colored students from Oklahoma will be forced to go outside the State, as they are now doing, for educational facilities that should be provided by Oklahoma.

#### RECOMMENDATIONS.

It is assumed that all recommendations of a general nature in other chapters of this survey report will apply to both white and colored schools.

(1) The white and colored schools, both city and rural, should be supported financially in the same manner.

(2) A State supervisor of negro schools should be employed to give his full time to the betterment of negro schools in the State. This supervisor should be appointed by the State superintendent of public instruction, and should be paid not less than \$3,000 per year, and allowed at least \$1,200 for traveling expenses.

(3) The course of study in negro schools, both city and rural, should be made more practical, and should be more closely related to the life and needs of the pupils.

(4) In those 15 counties having the largest rural negro populations county industrial supervisors should be appointed to work as assistants to the county superintendents, in order that the work in the negro rural schools may be of more value to the pupils. The work of these supervisors should be similar to that of the Jeanes Fund workers in Carter and Wagoner Counties and in other States. A salary of not less than \$1,500 should be paid, and the worker employed for 12 months. The supervising teachers should be appointed by the county superintendents, subject to the approval of the State supervisor of negro schools. In order to induce the counties to employ these workers half the salary should be paid by the State. An appropria-

tion of \$11,250 will be required for this. Well-trained and experienced colored women teachers should be secured for this work.

(5) No more one-teacher schools should be built or operated than is absolutely necessary. As far as possible consolidation should be effected, so that the children may be taught in schools having two or more teachers.

(6) Where conditions make a one-teacher school necessary, the school should have an industrial room as well as a large classroom, and should be equipped so that the teacher may have plenty of material to work with.

(7) A State appropriation should be made to match the Federal funds now available for the teaching of vocational agriculture under the Smith-Hughes Act. Thus, if \$5,000 is available, the State should set aside an equal amount. Since this money is matched by local funds, the total amount then available would be \$20,000.

(8) In order to encourage the teaching of vocational home economics, a State appropriation of \$10,000 should be made, to pay one-half the salaries of teachers in State approved rural schools. This work should be under the direction of the State supervisor of home economics, and at least 90 minutes per day should be devoted to the work. This amount would be sufficient to provide for 20 schools, with an average salary of \$1,000.

(9) The State college for negroes, either at Langston or some other location, should be provided with dormitories and a teaching staff, such that an adequate supply of teachers for Oklahoma's colored schools may be trained in the State.

(10) In addition to providing for a supply of teachers, a college department should be developed at the State college, now the Colored Normal and Agricultural University, in order that those students who expect to engage in other professions may receive college training without having to leave the State.

(11) A policy of State aid in the building of rural schools should be inaugurated, and an initial appropriation of \$25,000 should be made for the first year. Aid should be given on the same conditions under which aid from the Rosenwald Fund is secured. This would insure proper use of the State money, and would insure the proper design and construction of rural schools.

(12) Provision should be made for giving additional training, especially along vocational lines, to those boys and girls who are forced to leave school before completing the high-school course. By means of evening schools in cities, for example, many of these boys and girls can be reached.

(13) The high-school course in a city school should include at least one vocational course, designed to prepare students for some definite occupation open to them in the city.

(14) An effort should be made to make the work in primary grades more effective, especially in city and town schools. This can be done by securing better primary teachers, by employing more teachers, so that there will be fewer pupils per teacher in the first four grades, and through supervision by the superintendent or a primary supervisor.

(15) In order that at least one vocational high school may be developed in each of the 15 counties having the largest negro rural population, it is recommended that the State aid one school in each county to the extent of \$1,000 per year. The schools aided should be recommended by county superintendents, and approved by the State department of public instruction, as to location, building, local support, equipment, and teaching force. A State appropriation of \$15,000 would be necessary for this. Every school should be inspected and approved or disapproved, each year, in order that proper standards may be maintained.

## Chapter XI.

### EDUCATIONAL TESTS AND MEASUREMENTS.

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This chapter contains a brief account of a series of educational tests and measurements given to select groups of children, in all types of public schools, in 17 counties in all sections of the State (fig. 11), and a summary of the results. The tests were given during April and May, 1922, by a group of Oklahoma educators, under the direction of the United States Bureau of Education. The chairman of the committee was Dean W. W. Phelan, of the University of Oklahoma, and later, Henry D. Rinsland, director of educational research, public schools of Ardmore.

The subjects in which tests were given are: Spelling, reading, handwriting, English composition, arithmetic, algebra. The Haggerty intelligence test was used also.

In order to save space, this chapter is omitted from this digest.

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## Chapter XII.

### SUMMARY OF CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS.

In this digest recommendations will be found in their appropriate places in the several chapters, and are not repeated here.

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## Appendix A.

### LEGISLATION AFFECTING CITY SCHOOL SYSTEMS.

This consists of several paragraphs quoted from the report of the survey of the public schools of Wheeling, W. Va. (See U. S. Bur. of Educa., Bull. 1921, No. 28, "The Legislative Program," pp. 12-17.)

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## Appendix B.

### UNTAXED INDIAN LANDS IN OKLAHOMA.

A table showing by counties the acreage of Indian lands exempt from taxation in Oklahoma in 1922.

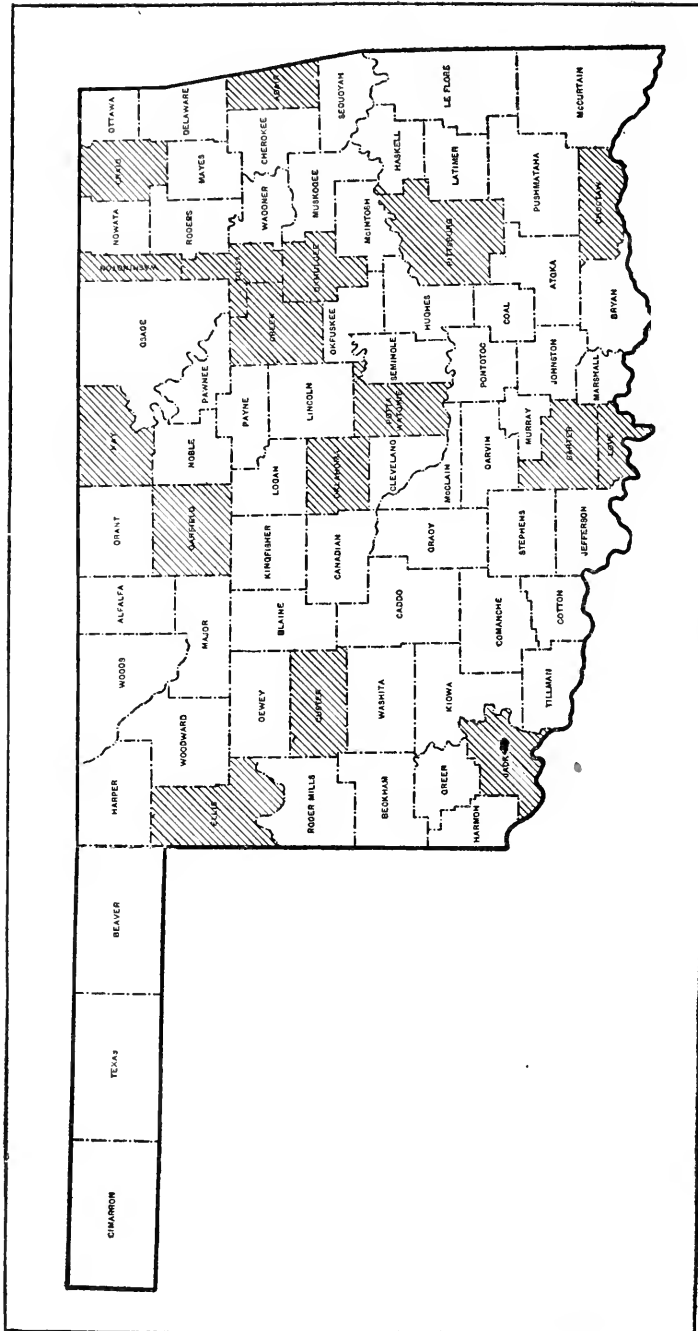


FIG. 11.—The 17 counties (crosshatched) in which the educational tests were given.

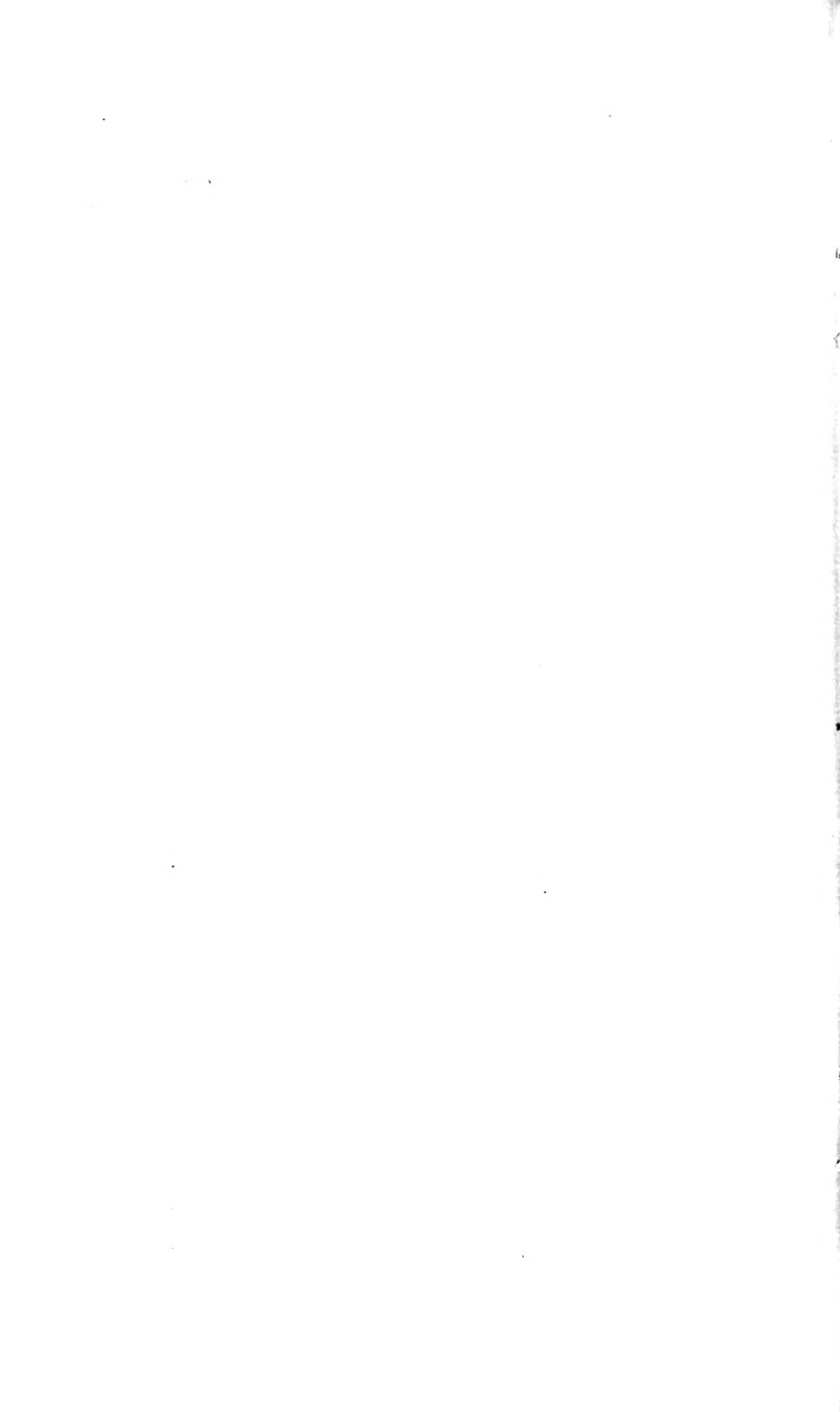


## Appendix C.

### A PLAN FOR DISTRIBUTION OF AID FROM THE JULIUS ROSENWALD FUND.

The details of the plan for distribution of aid from the Rosenwald Fund for building rural school houses in the South.

In order to save space the appendices are omitted from this digest.



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