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# The advent of universal public education in Virginia and its Valley: Reconstruction through the Progressive Era, 1865-1920

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The Advent of Universal Public Education in Virginia and its Valley: Reconstruction  
through the Progressive Era, 1865-1920

Paul N. Belmont III

A thesis submitted to the Graduate Faculty of

JAMES MADISON UNIVERSITY

In

Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements

for the degree of

Master of Arts

United States History

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## Dedication

This thesis is dedicated to my wife Nancy and my three children, Emily Therese, Paul Nicholas IV, and Timothy Hayden. I love you all. Thanks for all the editing and distraction along the way.

I would also like to dedicate this thesis the Soldiers, my friends, and my numerous superiors and mentors in the United States Army. In so many ways they have made this all possible.

Finally, to God, who makes all things possible.

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## Abstract

Prior to 1870 there was no such thing as a public school in the state of Virginia, nor in most of the United States. History regards Reconstruction as a lost moment in time which failed to realize its potential to secure the full promises of freedom. The historiography rightly focuses on this ugly legacy of Reconstruction in a racially segregated south. Virginia's Redeemer Democrats had rested political control from Radical Republicans by the ratification of the state's 1870 Constitution. Virginia's 1902 Constitution is rightly remembered for effectively disenfranchising blacks and poor whites. Yet, the promise of education was introduced to Virginia overnight thanks to the same 1870 Constitution and expanded by the 1902 Constitution. This study examines the evolution of education and progressive education in the form of curriculum, modernization, professionalization, and organizational reform in several periods.

The first, 1870 to 1886, will be examined as the period in which Virginia was solely focused on entrenching the idea of universal public education in the minds of its citizenry. Simultaneously it worked to co-opt the already existing rudimentary common school system which existed prior to the Civil War. The second, 1886-1900, is examined as the period when the first fifteen years of experience produced a large degree of organization and standardization across the state; which was ahead of the national movement of the 1900s. This organization and standardization would not be led by national figures but by the new cadre of professional educators at the local level who capitalized on the initiative, work, and experience they had gained in the first period. The period of 1900-1912 will be viewed as the time when Virginia leapt onto the national stage as an educational leader in its own right. It installed an array of progressive

educational initiatives and ideals. Finally, the period from 1912-1920 will serve as an epilogue to portray an entrenched System of Public Free Schools which remains largely unchanged today. This system, though segregated, served both black and poor white alike and radically transformed life in Virginia.

## Chapter I, Introduction and Background on Progressivism and Virginia prior to 1870

A great deal has been written about the Progressive Movement and its role in shaping American History. In, *A Fierce Discontent: The Rise and Fall of the American Progressive Movement in America, 1870-1920*, Michael McGerr writes that the expectations for progressive reform were remarkable. McGerr argues that the progressives developed a stunningly broad agenda for America which included the “control of big business, the amelioration of poverty, and the purification of politics to embrace the transformation of gender relations, the regeneration of the home, the disciplining of leisure and pleasure, and the establishment of segregation.” McGerr adds that the movement wanted to transform more than just the government which it hoped would provide regulation to curb the economy and private life. Progressives “intended nothing less than to transform other Americans, to remake the nation’s feuding, polygot population in their own middle-class image.”<sup>1</sup>

The major vehicle for change which progressives eventually latched onto in order to bring about this transformation of the American population was education.<sup>2</sup> The most

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<sup>1</sup> Michael McGerr, *A Fierce Discontent: The Rise and Fall of the Progressive Movement in America, 1870-1920* (New York, Oxford Press 2003), XIV.

<sup>2</sup> Progressives used a variety of organizations to bring about change in American society. Michael McGerr, Arthur Link, William Link, and Lawrence Cremin all agree on the many and various forms of progressivism. These ranged from simple clubs such as the Boy Scouts and the organizing of sports in America to major movements towards shaping society such as Junior Leagues for women and even the prohibition movement. Progressivism at its heart wanted nothing less than the absolute reform of America’s citizenry. Progressivism saw education as the means to an end and found a willing partner in state and national governments as well as industry in the implementation of an educational system which was designed not just to reform America’s morals but to instill aspects of loyal and productive citizenry. Education could be used to teach morals, teach loyalty to the state, and to produce a capable citizenry geared towards helping American business raise the bar of production through technical (agricultural and



prominent figure in the advent of education in America seems to be Horace Mann.

Horace Mann was not a progressive but simply an educator. He is the only recognized figure in education prior to the progressive era. There are several figures recognized in the historiography of progressive education. If Mann is recognized as the father of education then John Dewey is the founding father of progressive education.<sup>3</sup> There are other lesser known yet prominently heralded progressive educators in the didactic literature which include the likes of Francis Parker, William Heard Kilpatrick, and William Chandler Bagley. Bagley and Kilpatrick were like Dewey disciples of Francis Parker.<sup>4</sup>

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industrial) education. Further reading on Progressivism, and Progressivism in education and Progressivism in the South can be found in Lawrence A. Cremin's *American Education*, Arthur S. Link's *Progressivism* and William Link's *Paradox of Southern Progressivism* and *A Hard Country and Lonely Place*.

<sup>3</sup> Horace Mann's career was at its apex in the 1830s. Mann was a classical educator and his ideals widely shaped the idea of what an educator and an education were supposed to be in America. Simply put his goal was a simple broadening of the mind for individual purpose. Horace Mann was also widely focused on the education of educators. Most schools in the era of Mann were satisfied to teach reading writing and arithmetic. Education for Mann was all about the betterment of the individual or self. John Dewey saw education not simply as a way to better one's self but as a way to improve society. In *Democracy in America*, Dewey laid out his philosophy that producing a better and more educated citizen was the key to moving forward society as a whole. John Dewey is widely regarded as the father of progressive education. His footprint on the field of education in America and the world is unquestioned in the historiography. Francis parker was a peer of John Dewey, though not widely remembered for his role in developing American education. His biography is a reminder that Progressive education was not the brain child of one man. Some of his educational disciples in the form of William Heard Kilpatrick, and William Chandler Bagley are widely regarded as heavy influences in the field of education in the historiography.

<sup>4</sup> Maurice R. Berube, *Eminent Educators: Studies in Intellectual Influence* (Westport, Connecticut: Greenwood Press, 2000). Kilpatrick and Bagley are credited for championing two schools of thought in American Education. Both were disciples of Parker but took different approaches. Kilpatrick's focus was on how education could transform American citizenry through particular sets of programs and curricula. Bagley's focus was on the education of educators. Whereas Kilpatrick felt that the right program would almost teach itself Bagley intently believed in the proper education and preparation of teachers in the art of teaching. These men are useful in understanding competing and complimentary educational concepts of the time but their individual influence on the field is perhaps overemphasized in the historical writing.

Kilpatrick is widely remembered for his focus on the revolution of the classroom. Kilpatrick is best known for his “socially purposeful act,” in which students were to be engaged in “an activity directed toward a socially useful end.” In his ideals can be seen the roots of technical education designed to produce capable agrarians and industrial workers.<sup>5</sup> Both Kilpatrick and Bagley, like Dewey, favored pushing democracy and responsible citizenship. Democracy for Kilpatrick was “a way of life, a kind and quality of associated living in which sensible moral principles assert the right to control and individual or group conduct.”<sup>6</sup>

Perhaps closer to the Horace Mann tradition of educating educators was not Kilpatrick but his less influential colleague at Teachers College, William Bagley. Bagley has recently been written about as being the father of the movement towards the professional education of teachers. E.D. Hirsch writes “That Kilpatrick rather than Bagley won the minds and hearts of future education professors was a grave misfortune for the nation.”<sup>7</sup> Bagley was focused less on the classroom and curriculum and more on the education of the educators. In him historians have found a national figure for the advent of ‘teacher training institutions.’ This study will show teacher training to be a consistently large and growing focus in Virginia’s educational system. The state would undertake a wholesale adoption of the idea that teachers needed to be well educated and well rounded in the 1880s.

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<sup>5</sup> John A. Beineke, *And there were Giants in the Land: The Life of William Heard Kilpatrick* (NY: P. Lang Publications, 1998), 24.

<sup>6</sup> Beinke, *And There Were Giants in the Land*, 25.

<sup>7</sup> E.D. Hirsch, *The Schools We Need* (New York Doubleday, 1996), 2.

The historiography has recently identified men like Kilpatrick and Bagley as national leaders in brining about progressive education in their respective areas. Lawrence Cremin, McGerr, Arthur Link, and William Link often present the South and Virginia as pet project for a national movement of progressive education. This national movement is portrayed as looking to every street corner for areas in which to reform society the South, recently ravaged by the Civil War and stuck in the backwards doldrums of bigotry in the wake of hundreds of years of slavery, was a ripe target for progressive reforms. Cremin writes that two views of redemption through education vied for the loyalties of southerners during the elections of 1876. One was a legacy of Reconstruction. This view held that the best way to regenerate the miscreant South would be through the wide dissemination of northern values and culture, primarily through a system of common schools. As the president of Illinois Normal University had put it in 1865, “it was up to the teacher to finish the work that the soldier had begun.” It was this view that had motivated the hundreds of men and women who had gone south during the 1860s to teach the freedmen, initially under the auspices of the various missionary and freedmen’s aid associations and eventually under the auspices of the Freedmen’s Bureau.<sup>8</sup>

A study of the evolution of the System of Public Free Schools in Virginia reveals the view of progressivism transforming the South to be slightly misguided. This paper will explore the various ways in which many of the progressive ideals and practices commonly associated with a national progressive movement took shape in Virginia near

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<sup>8</sup> Lawrence A. Cremin, *American Education: The National Experience*, (New York: Basic Books, 1977), 212.

dawn of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century. A study of the State Board of Education and its interaction with several counties in the rural Valley of Virginia finds many of the roots of progressive education as planted, not in the north, but within the borders of Virginia. In many ways it will be seen that Virginia's educational leaders had as much if not more to do with shaping its own progressive ideals and the ideals of the nation and the South than the figures mentioned above.

This study will explore the advent of Virginia's educational system as largely self-contained and directed from the state and local level from 1870 through 1900 and then leaping onto the national stage as a leader in the national movement for progressive education from 1900 to 1920. This will be done through a study of Virginia's System of Public Free Schools, from the perspective of the State Board of Education (SBOE) and several counties in the Valley of Virginia, between 1870 and 1920. An examination of the generation and implementation of progressive ideals from the State Board of Education and the Superintendents of Augusta, Bland, Highland, Loudoun, and Rockingham Counties, placed against the backdrop of the national progressive education movement reveals that in most cases Virginia did not receive progressive education from the North but was its own leader and innovator.

This study will examine the evolution of progressive education in the form of curriculum, modernization, professionalization, and organizational reform in several periods. The first, 1870 to 1886, will be examined as the period in which Virginia was solely focused on entrenching the idea of universal public education in the minds of its citizenry while it simultaneously worked to co-opt the already existing privately funded rudimentary common school system which existed prior to the Civil War. The second,

1886-1900, will be examined as the period when the first fifteen years of experience produced a large degree of organization and standardization across the state which ahead of the national movement of the 1900s. This organization and standardization would not be led by national figures but by the new cadre of professional educators at the local level who capitalized on the initiative, work, and experience they had gained in the first period. The period of 1900-1912 will be viewed as the time when Virginia leapt onto the national stage as an educational leader in its own right as it installed an array of progressive educational initiatives and ideals. Finally the period from 1912-1920 will serve as an epilogue which portrays a formally entrenched System of Public Free Schools in Virginia which remains largely unchanged today.

Before moving into the specific periods of this study it is necessary to give a brief examination of the state of education in Virginia prior to 1870. Prior to 1870 schooling in Virginia existed as an enterprise run privately as almost missionary style work of churches and the freedmen's bureau. Education was only provided publicly at the University level and was accessed only by the state's elite.<sup>9</sup> Examples of this missionary work were apparent in the founding of schools like the Waterford School in Loudoun County, Virginia. The Waterford School was in fact a missionary endeavor of the Society of Friends in Pennsylvania. The school had existed as part of the Waterford landscape for years and had been wholly supported by its benefactors, the Society of Friends in Philadelphia. A series of letters from Sarah Steer, a young black teacher, to the "Friends Intelligencer", a Quaker periodical, updated the charity on the finances, direction, and progress of the school. One of her last reports came in 1870 when the

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<sup>9</sup> This included preparation for university level schooling.

school became subsumed by the new State System of public schools. In it Miss Steer happily reported in that first year of operation under the Virginia State School System that the state had “been punctual in paying me ten dollars per month—their portion of my salary. They also bought coal, and paid a man one dollar per month to make the fire and sweep the schoolroom thus relieving me of all trouble of that character.”<sup>10</sup> Missionary schools like this or schools run by local churches geared towards teaching the bible and basic reading and writing skills provided the most open access to education prior to the ratification of Virginia’s 1870 Constitution.

The Radical Republicans made the implementation of universal public education one of their main agendas in Virginia. The powerful coalition of whites and blacks moved quickly and decisively to entrench public education as Virginia worked to create a new state constitution. The 1870 Virginia State Constitution provided for a system of free schools to all citizens. The schools were segregated by race and were compulsory for children between the ages of 8 and 12.<sup>11</sup> There can be no doubt that recently emancipated slaves and their supporters were instrumental in this initial and emphatic embrace of public education in Virginia. Many historians, such as James D. Anderson note the strong desire of freedmen to attain an education. This is best evidenced in “the movement by ex-slaves to develop an educational system singularly appropriate to defend and extend their emancipation.” It is seminal to the understanding of his

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<sup>10</sup> Sarah Steer, Letter to *Friends’ Intelligencer*, Vol. XXV, 4<sup>th</sup> Mo 9<sup>th</sup> 1870.

<sup>11</sup> Harris Hart and J.N. Hillman, “1920 Legislature organization of Laws: Entered as second class matter September 6, 1918, at the post office at Richmond. Va., under Act of August 24, 1912 which regulated free school in Virginia as provided for in the states 1870 constitution.” *Bulletin State Board of Education Issued Quarterly Harris Hart, Superintendent of Public Instruction Vol. III. JUNE, 1920 No. 1* Richmond, Davis Bottom: Superintendent of Public Printing, 1920.

argument that their “struggle to defend and advance themselves was undertaken as an oppressed people.”<sup>12</sup>

For many Radical Republicans education provided opportunities for both blacks and whites. Some saw education as a means of social control. Others hoped it would help the advancement of blacks. Another group believed education was a golden opportunity to ensure education for whites. The ratification of the 1870 constitution was a significant accomplishment for the Radical Republicans, as it would entrench public, universal, and compulsory education in Virginia forever. What remained was how this system of public education would be implemented and controlled, especially what would be taught in the schools. The schools would bring basic knowledge and skills as well as self improvement to many children. Despite this initial step to provide schooling for both black and white children, the first decades of public education in Virginia were perhaps best characterized as disorganized, unsupervised, and decentralized.<sup>13</sup>

One education goal of the Radical Republicans was not met. They had hoped to establish a desegregated school system, but the racial and political climate of the 1870s prevented it. Thus, Virginia established separate public schools for whites and blacks. Regardless, “Whatever the failures of Radical hopes for mixed schools, the Reconstruction governments did achieve notable progress in the establishment of tax-supported common school systems.” Racially segregated schools were common in the North and the West. In this sense the South merely fell into the same pattern. As control

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<sup>12</sup> James D. Anderson, *The Education of Blacks in the South, 1860-1935* (The University of North Carolina Press: Chapel Hill, 1944), 3.

<sup>13</sup> This is the general consensus of both Lawrence Cremin, and William and Arthur Link.

of state politics shifted to the “redeemers,” who campaigned to return education to its traditional format, funding for public education was mercilessly slashed for black schools and for poor whites.<sup>14</sup>

Cremin views the public school model in Virginia as essentially transplanted from New England. The common schools in New England were a regimented and unified system which local communities initially controlled, but gradually state agencies began to exercise considerable influence.<sup>15</sup> William Link argues that local governance was more than the rule in the Shenandoah Valley of Virginia; it was a way of being. The idea that the state or even the county could have any real impact on community life was foreign to both Valley residents and state politicians.<sup>16</sup> As true as this may be it must also be understood that there was no infrastructure or bureaucracy present in 1870 which would have made possible a more centralized execution of the new System of Public Free Schools. The literature on the advent of education in the South overemphasizes the desire for local control and fails to recognize the necessity of a decentralized system in establishing such an expansive project so quickly.

As such school houses were initially erected through the benevolence of local communities or outside agencies, like the Society of Friends that established the Waterford School in Loudon County. The Zenda School near Harrisonburg was built

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<sup>14</sup> Cremin, *American Education*, 230.

<sup>15</sup> Cremin, *American Education*, 231.

<sup>16</sup> William A. Link, *A Hard Country and A Lonely Place A Hard Country and a Lonely Place: Schooling, Society, and Reform in Rural Virginia, 1887-1920*, (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1986).



through local philanthropy after the 1870 Constitution called for public education; no public funding was used to build this school. The Church of the Brethren donated the land, and provided the money and the material to construct the Zenda schoolhouse. This school, like many others in Rockingham County and elsewhere in the Valley of Virginia, was erected and run by the church and a board of trustees.<sup>17</sup>

Simple one-room structures and non graded schools dominated the landscape. Powerless and inexperienced county superintendants oversaw local schools, and they provided little other than new tax supported paychecks and titles with little influence on the school system.<sup>18</sup> The superintendants did little more than travel the country side garnering support for public education. Initially, few counties owned the schools that they supervised and ran; as they were community or church-owned in most cases. One of the main goals of the county boards was to secure possession of the facilities with the tax money generated for their support. By 1886 only 16 of Rockingham County's schools were run out of what progressives would consider a proper school house. Rockingham had been working diligently to correct this problem. The state began tracking and reporting the acquisition and construction of school houses. By 1886 Rockingham

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<sup>17</sup> Schools like the Zenda School and many like it for blacks and poor whites were built in the wake of the civil war out of the desire for education and access to government. Many of these schools mirrored the already existing model of church schools for whites across the state and would be effectively co-opted by the System of Public Free Schools in Virginia. At first by providing funding for their teachers and eventually they would be purchased and administrated by the state. More can be read on Zenda in Nancy Bondurant Jones, *Zenda: An African American Community of Hope, 1870-1930*, (McGayhessville, VA: Long's Chapel Preservation Society, 2007). Two other books help to look at similar stories in the Valley of Virginia to back up the information in Jones's study. Brown C. and John M. Souders, *A Rock in a Weary Land A Shelter in a Time of Storm: An African-American Experience in Waterford, Virginia* (Waterford VA: Waterford Foundation, 2003); and Jonathan A. Noyalas, *Two Peoples, One Community: The African American Experience in Newtown (Stephens City), Virginia, 1850-1870*, (Stephens City, VA: Commercial Press, Inc. 2007)

<sup>18</sup> Link, *A Hard Country and a Lonely Place*.

County had used tax dollars to construct ten new facilities. Over the first sixteen years of public education the county had also purchased and constructed enough schools that they owned 151 of the 189 buildings classified as school houses, though most of the schools were simple frame buildings. Of the remaining facilities nineteen were log constructions, and a paltry five were built out of brick and stone. The war against one-room schools had not gone well so far. Of the 189 schools there were only a total of 216 total rooms. Most of the extra rooms existed in the brick and stone facilities. In examining the advent of the school system in Virginia we will see the generation of progressive ideals and that in most cases Virginia seems to be ahead of the curve when it came to the implementation of progressive style curriculum, modernization and organization. The examination of, roughly, the first twenty years of the System of Public free schools in Virginia will show a process primarily executed at the local level with little micromanagement from the State Board of Education. The minutes reveal no contact or support from national movements until late in the final decade of the 17<sup>th</sup> century. An examination of the later years, 1886-1920 will show the emergence of a national movement towards education, but with input solicited from and directed by Virginia's educational leaders from national sources.

## Chapter II, 1870-1886

The brief moment of time that Radical Republicans had controlled the state of Virginia was a furious rush to realize the full possibilities of the end of slavery and the building of a “New South”. Republican reformers envisioned a South which embraced both white and black in social, economic, and political spheres. Unfortunately, there were many powerful people in the state who were not ready to allow their traditional social hierarchies to simply fade away. Virginia politics had perhaps grown too accustomed to living under what Karen Brown referred to as the “fragile pact.”<sup>19</sup>

Motivated by a belief that the economy of Virginia rested squarely on the shoulders of the labor of both poor whites and blacks and coupled with an understanding that political dominance could be achieved by allying with poor whites against blacks, the Redeemers managed to wrest political control of Virginia from the Radical Republicans by the close of the decade.<sup>20</sup>

Many historians, such as James Anderson, have argued that the advent of education in Virginia in 1870 was simply a “movement by ex-slaves to develop an educational system singularly appropriate to defend and extend their emancipation” as part of their “struggle to defend and advance themselves was undertaken as an oppressed people.”<sup>21</sup> Education in Virginia is perhaps better understood in different terms. While the specter of race and segregation will continually loom over education in Virginia, it is

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<sup>19</sup> Kathleen M. Brown, *Good Wives, Nasty Wenches and Anxious Patriarchs, Vile Rouges, and Nasty Wenches* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1996), 137.

<sup>20</sup> For more on the history of Radical Vs. Redeemer Politics in Virginia see, James P. McConnell, *Negroes and their Treatment in Virginia from 1865 to 1867*, (Pulaski, VA: B.D. Smith and Brothers, 1910).

<sup>21</sup> Anderson, *The Education of Blacks in the South*, 6.

better to understand the evolution of education on its own terms. Most arguments stress the fact that as black southerners lost political and economic power and in turn lost substantial control of their educational institutions, especially in the public sector, which would in turn shape the character of their education. While the concept of race remained a subtext of education, it is important to accept that from the inception of the System of Public Free Schools Virginia in 1870 through its entrenchment in the state by 1920, the subject of desegregation and equality of schools was not open for debate. The most interesting question to explore in this period is how public education would take shape in Virginia. Anderson and others suggest that “Ex-slaves, however, persisted in their crusade to develop systems of education compatible with their resistance to racial and class subordination.” While this may have been true for men like W.E.B. DuBois and Booker T. Washington, for many blacks and whites alike, this early period is better understood as one in which most energies were not devoted to equality or style of education between white and black but to the daunting task of simply implementing a school system. It is unlikely that at the local level blacks and whites were thinking and acting in political terms. In the Shenandoah Valley of Virginia whites and blacks established schools cooperatively with the simple goal of having a school, perhaps with little thought of what a school should or could be. We must question how much the turn to public education was shaped by racist southerners and how much was shaped by progressive southerners and northerners at the national and state level.<sup>22</sup>

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<sup>22</sup> Though there is a clear amount of racist politics apparent in a study of Virginia the bulk of energy seems to be placed towards the political arena and suffrage. The 1870 and 1902 Constitutions deal heavily and specifically with issues of race when it comes to access to the vote and either the enfranchisement or disenfranchisement of blacks in the state. However a close examination of the sources reveals very little internal debate within the realm of educators. The 1870 Constitution and the

Anderson argues that resistance from planters resulted in “a postwar South that was extremely hostile to the idea of universal public education.” He adds that the success of public education was put forward by ex-slaves who had political control of the South: “With the aid of Republican politicians, they seized significant influence in state governments and laid the first foundation for universal public education in the South.” The problem with this explanation is that the Redeemers were clearly in charge of Virginia when the 1870 Constitution provided public education for blacks and whites. While black politicians played a critical role in establishing universal education as a basic right in southern constitutional conventions during congressional Reconstruction, and while many planters viewed black education as a distinct threat to the racially qualified form of labor exploitation upon which their agrarian order depended, universal public education could not be undone by politically dominant southern conservatives. Public education in Virginia, then, was shaped not by racist southerners, but progressive southerners and northerners.

The first period of Virginia’s System of Public Free Schools began in 1870 when it was written into the Virginia Constitution. It concluded in 1886. These formative years saw public education begin under the leadership of William H. Ruffner, the first Superintendent of Public Instruction for the State of Virginia, and Governor Gilbert C.

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1902 Constitution of the State of Virginia say nothing beyond the mandate to segregate schools in the state. Conversely there does not seem to be an “overt” movement to limit funding for black schools, or training for black educators. If anything there seems to be a constant movement towards improving education for all an overt statement of purpose can be observed from southern progressives and educators who felt that educating blacks would be the key to their empowerment and equality. It also seems to be understood that keeping this out of the “political” realm was key to the implementation of education. Considering that most schools were privately funded through local white philanthropy and cooperation at the outset of education in Virginia it is apparent, that despite political rhetoric and opposition, there was also a great deal of support for black education locally. While pay for black and white teachers is not often equal in this era, a review of the records does not seem to reveal “institutional”

Walker in 1870.<sup>23</sup> Ruffner would serve twelve years in this post with considerable support from three different governors. This period would be noted by setbacks under Readjuster Republican control of the state. It would end with a return to Democratic political controls and education with a newfound direction and life under the leadership of Governor Fitzhugh Lee and Superintendent of Public Instruction John Lee Buchanan. Historians such as Lawrence Cremin and William Link have painted this early period as one of sporadic growth due to a lack of state central control. While there is some merit to this idea of decentralized execution of public education in Virginia, attention must be given to the intentionality and necessity of a locally run public school system. A strong argument can be made that Superintendent of Public Instruction William H. Ruffner and the various governors he served under understood that a decentralized state supported but locally executed system of schools was not just something that locals would accept. Given the lack of infrastructure and bureaucracy, a locally executed implementation of public schooling was the only system that was feasible. An examination of state-level documents does not reveal a haphazard or unorganized implementation of schools in this period. Rather, a better description would be that of a nubile system of public education attempting to solidify itself locally as an acceptable institution in very intentional ways. This approach was necessarily decentralized, but far from unorganized.<sup>24</sup>

In examining the development of public education between 1870 and 1886 it will be important to look at several factors. The state mandated call for locally executed

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<sup>23</sup> The Biographical Directory of the United States Congress. *Gilbert C. Walker Biography*. <http://bioguide.congress.gov/scripts/biodisplay.pl?index=W000054>, (Accessed 4 February, 2010). Walker was a supportive Governor for Education. After his term as governor he went on to serve in Congress where he served as chairman of the Committee for Education and Labor from 1874-1878.

<sup>24</sup> Cremin, *American Education*; William Link, *A Hard Country and a Lonely Place*.

schools would lead to an evolving relationship between local boards of trustees and their power, the county superintendants, the State Superintendent of Public Instruction, the State Board of Education and their relationship to educators in the national progressive movement and Virginia's legislature. Local control would be born out in the State Board of Education's policies on the selection of texts, selection of teachers, selection of trustees and county superintendants, determination of curriculum, control over taxes, and the responsibility for building infrastructure.

An examination of this period must begin with the Virginia Constitution of 1870.<sup>25</sup> While Radical Republicans had hoped to achieve a desegregated school system and failed, in many ways Virginia's racially segregated schools fell into the same pattern as existed in other regions of country. The Reconstruction government did achieve notable progress in the establishment of a tax-supported common System of Public Free Schools.<sup>26</sup> The 1870 Constitution provided an extremely basic and widely interpretive blueprint for the establishment of public schools in Virginia. In simple terms it called for

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<sup>25</sup> Historian Lawrence Cremin views the 1870 constitution as more restrictive for poor whites and blacks and a backlash of the 1867 constitution, when it comes to the language of education this is simply not true.

<sup>26</sup> Cremin, *American Education*, 213-216. Redeemers campaigned to return southern education to its traditional formats. Virginia returned to Redeemers in 1870 this brought about a return to segregation, the 1870 constitution makes it explicit. Cremin argues that Redeemers mercilessly slashed the budgets of black schools and those for poor whites. Evidence of this is not found in the records of the State Board of Education. It is important to also note that there was no budget in place prior to 1870. Racially segregated schools were common in the North and the West. In this sense the South merely fell into the same pattern. Cremin gives an example of Louisiana making small appropriations for operations but neglected to provide funds for construction. "When Trustees finally managed to erect a single building, they had to put up future faculty salary funds as collateral for a loan. As late as 1887, only ten students were enrolled in courses beyond the secondary-school level. This could be related to the small expenditures noted by Sarah Steer at the Waterford school. The state of Virginia was basically paying to keep some coal in the fire and for part of the budget. The same can be found in the studies of Zenda, Waterford and Stephens City. Churches and Boards of trustees paid the way for schools in Virginia.

the creation of school districts of at least 100 inhabitants and the election or appointment three trustees serving one, two, and three-year terms.<sup>27</sup> This gave a wide flexibility for localities to establish schools and govern their locations wherever they saw fit. The 1870 Constitution also allowed the state to appoint a Superintendent of Public Instruction for renewable four year terms. The duties of this official were vague and subsequently his authorities and ability to set policy was broad. This individual was to generally supervise the “public free-school interests of the state” and to report to the General Assembly a plan for a “uniform system of public free schools.” Furthermore, the 1870 Constitution established a Board of Education composed of the Governor, Superintendent of Public Instruction, and the State Attorney General. It gave power to the Board of Education to appoint all school superintendents, manage and invest all funds, and supervise schools of “higher grades”. The state constitution did not define schools of higher grades, so some interpreted this term differently and many types of schools emerged in Virginia.<sup>28</sup>

The General Assembly was charged to provide for a “uniform system of public free schools, and for its gradual, equal, and full introduction into all the counties of the State” by 1876. The constitution made no distinction of race. The 1870 Constitution also made it lawful to mandate school attendance after “full introduction of the public free-school system.” It granted the state the power to “make such laws as shall not permit parents and guardians to allow their children to grow up in ignorance and vagrancy.” This translated to compulsory school attendance. It also gave the General Assembly the

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<sup>27</sup> Constitution of Virginia, 1870, Article VII, Section III.  
(<http://www.scribd.com/doc/3930423/1870-Constitution-of-State-of-Virginia>, accessed January 12 January, 2010.)

<sup>28</sup> Constitution of Virginia, 1870, Article IX Education.



power to establish normal schools immediately to educate and prepare school teachers, and that it may establish agricultural schools and any other schools “for the public good”.<sup>29</sup>

The state constitution also provided for the money necessary to execute this new school system. Funding would be provided through the ability to levy taxes at the state, county, and district level and through access to the state’s literary fund.<sup>30</sup> The 1870 Constitution also provided access to proceeds from the selling of large tracts of state land with which to fund this new System of Public Free Schools. Contrary to claims by Cremin and Link who argue that Redeemers would mercilessly slash the budgets of education, the constitution ceded control of the state’s literary fund to the State Board and the proceeds of all public lands donated by Congress for public-school purposes, of all escheated property, of all waste and un-appropriated lands, of all property accruing to the State by forfeiture, and all fines collected for offences committed against the State, and such other sums as the general assembly may appropriate. The literary fund would help keep public education afloat in the short term and the sale of lands would later prove to be a tremendous boon to the coffers of public education.<sup>31</sup>

There were several other provisions in the constitution which specified the raising and use of state and local funds. Textbooks could be provided for “indigent children” and all funds were to be for the “equal benefit of all persons of the state”. The 1870

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<sup>29</sup> Constitution of Virginia, 1870, Article IX education

<sup>30</sup> The literary fund was an endowment which had begun in the days of Horace Mann and was backed by the State, Federal, Government, and philanthropy, and was used to support Virginia’s colleges prior to this point.

<sup>31</sup> Cremin, *American Education*, pg. 250; Link, *A Hard Country and a Lonely Place*, 52.

Constitution also granted counties and districts the authority to levy taxes on property for public schools. The constitution stated that the tax could not exceed five mills, one dollar tax for every \$1000 in property value. One of the first jobs of the county superintendent was to convince the local populace of the necessity of these taxes and to secure them from the populace. The ability to levy taxes on property was a major factor in ensuring that public education would have a permanent and abundant source of revenue. The granting of the resale of state lands was actually a meager offering in 1870. However it would prove to be a tremendous boon to the System of Public Free Schools when Congress passed the second Morrill Act of 1876. This was hardly an economic boon for the system of public free schools. This act opened up the resale of federal lands to the states but in many cases states realized only thousands of dollars as a result of this act. Local taxation was ultimately necessary to fill the coffers of districts, counties, and states.<sup>32</sup>

The constitution also made some minor provisions for the General Assembly to furnish higher grades of schools, ensure that grants will be provided as intended by donors, and that the General Assembly would fix salaries for officials and make laws as necessary to govern public education. There is one section of pessimism written into the constitution which does demonstrate that there were perhaps some who thought that public education would fail in Virginia. Section 11 of Article VIII states that cities and counties were responsible for the destruction of school property that might have taken

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<sup>32</sup> Gordon C. Lee, "The Morrill Act and Education", *British Journal of Educational Studies*, Vol. 12, No. 1 (Nov., 1963), pp. 19-40 (22 pages).

place “by incendiaries or open violence.” It is interesting that the state saw fit to absolve itself of any financial responsibility for the destruction of schools by angry citizens.<sup>33</sup>

The first provision of the constitution allowed the state to appoint a Superintendent of Public Instruction. The Superintendent was appointed to a four year term and there was no limit on the amount of terms he could serve. The duties of this superintendent were vague. He was to generally supervise the “public free-school interests of the state” and to report to the General Assembly a plan for a “uniform system of public free schools.” The superintendent was a member of the State Board of Education, along with the Governor and the Attorney General. The first Superintendent of Public Instruction was William Henry Ruffner. A former Confederate officer, Ruffner had never served as an educator in either an administrative or teaching capacity. Prior to being appointed to work as the Superintendent of Public Instruction, he was a geological survey officer. Ruffner was a man deemed conservative and competent enough to run the state’s school system by the Redeemers in charge of the state. However, if the General Assembly looked for a man in Ruffner who would limit the scope and influence of his position and the school system, then they had chosen poorly. The monthly journal *Education* would report that “no American State ever gave to one man a power so nearly absolute, both in the organization and administration of its school System, as Virginia conferred upon its first great superintendent of schools.”<sup>34</sup> In

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<sup>33</sup> 1870 Virginia Constitution, Article VIII. Though history has provided some shockingly appalling examples of school burnings, against the backdrop of thousands of black schools these incidents are more anecdotal than indicative of any real hostility towards the public school system or black schooling.

<sup>34</sup> Frank H. Casson, Ed. *Education: A Monthly Magazine Devoted to the Science, Art, Philosophy, and Literature of Education*. Vol. XX. September, 1899. No. 1. “The Superintendent—A Dictator or A Leader?” 367.

practice Ruffner used his authority to work tirelessly to develop the state's System of Public Free Schools.

Though Ruffner seemed, on the surface, to have had little power as the Superintendent of Public Instruction, the constitution had invested the Board of Education with considerable authority. The constitution may have been vague in its requirements for schools, but it clearly gave the State Board the authority to regulate the school system as they saw fit. It was essentially up to Ruffner to establish the system of free schools, though Governor Walker had the final say in any decisions that could be made within the interpretations of the constitution. The Attorney General was there to advise in these matters, but an examination of the minutes reveals that only one Attorney General saw fit to oppose the State Board on constitutional grounds and he was largely ignored.<sup>35</sup>

The State Board of education was then, at its inception, a three-man body housed in the Governor's mansion. An analysis of the minutes of the first three years of this board revealed the implementation of public education in the state. The State Board of Education met infrequently and left much of the execution of the establishment of the school system up to the counties and districts which it served. The Board met only five times in 1870. In 1871 the board met a total of twelve times between February and August.<sup>36</sup> The majority of the board's energy during this period was in the confirming of district school boards and in the appointment and confirmation of County School

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<sup>35</sup> The issue over text book adoption will be discussed in the subsequent chapter on the 1900s.

<sup>36</sup> In 1870 the board met on July 1<sup>st</sup>, 17 September, 27 September, 1 November, and 23 December. In 1871 the board met a total of twelve times between February and August on the 10<sup>th</sup>, 17<sup>th</sup>, 22<sup>nd</sup>, 25<sup>th</sup>, and 28<sup>th</sup> of February, 14 and 21 March, 1 and 6 April, 15 May, 3 June, 11 July, and 31 August

Superintendents under the careful scrutiny of William Ruffner. With the bulk of the work in actually establishing a school administration behind them, after 1871 the board began to meet biannually.<sup>37</sup> The school board settled into a routine of biannual reports from the State Superintendent until 1886 and did not begin keeping minutes again until the turn of the century.<sup>38</sup>

One of the first duties of the board was to appoint county superintendents and district school boards. At its first meeting in the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction in the upstairs of the governor's mansion on 1 July 1870, the State Board of Education (SBOE) appointed twelve county superintendents, including one for Augusta County.<sup>39</sup> It was difficult to come up with qualified educators to fill these positions. Superintendent Ruffner insisted on personally screening every applicant for the position to ensure that only the best people would be selected for the positions.<sup>40</sup> Because of the limited applicant pool, the SBOE hatched an expedient plan in its second meeting on 17 September 1870: all current county judges were to be given a double duty of country superintendant. This was done in large part because there was nobody else to fill those positions. Over the course of the next two years actual superintendents would be put into place but judges would fill the gap. These judges were obviously educated men, but they had little knowledge in the execution of education or the administration of school systems. Of course, one might argue the same for anyone taking the job of county

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<sup>37</sup> There are minutes from 21 February and 16 April 1872 and 15 March and 26 April 1873.

<sup>38</sup> Virginia State Board of Education. "Minutes of the Virginia State Board of Education, 1870-2003", Virginia State Board of Education. 1870-1920. (Minutes, Hereafter)

<sup>39</sup> Minutes, 1870-73, 1.

<sup>40</sup> Minutes, 1870-73.

superintendent at this time, as there was nobody who was specifically qualified for the job. These early superintendents would be the same educators and visionaries who attempted to chart a course to provide for public education. There was one advantage of a full-time county superintendent. The position was their primary responsibility. Many of the judges would naturally treat their additional appointment as a nuisance and a distraction from their already full schedules and duties, though many of the initial full-time superintendents also held multiple positions.<sup>41</sup>

An example of the benefit of a full time superintendent was George W. Holland, who was made the first Superintendent of Rockingham County Schools at a meeting of the SBOE in September 1870. Holland, a Lutheran minister, was born in Churchville in Augusta County on July 16, 1838. He graduated from Roanoke College in 1857, the Lutheran Seminary in Gettysburg, Pennsylvania in 1860, and had accepted a call to the Lutheran church in Bridgewater. When war broke out, he enlisted as a private and chaplain and lost an arm in the first battle of Manassas. After recovering and teaching at Roanoke College, he returned to the Valley to accept a call from the Lutheran congregations in Harrisonburg and Bridgewater. In 1870, he accepted the appointment as Superintendent of Schools while continuing to serve his congregations.<sup>42</sup>

Ruffner and the SBOE created an incentive plan for county superintendents to help develop public schools in the state. The same day Holland was appointed, the SBOE resolved the matter of pay for all superintendents. Their salary was to be fifteen dollars for every 1000 students. They would receive an additional five dollars for every

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<sup>41</sup> Minutes, 1870, 2.

<sup>42</sup> History of Rockingham County Schools, [http://www.rockingham.k12.va.us/rcps\\_history/rcpshistoryintro.htm](http://www.rockingham.k12.va.us/rcps_history/rcpshistoryintro.htm), accessed on 05 March 2010.

free school with one teacher and an additional ten dollars for every graded school in their district.<sup>43</sup> With their pay tied to enrollment and the establishment of schools, it soon became the mission of every county superintendent to go forth and convince the people to form schools and to enroll students.

Like many of his contemporaries, Holland needed to do much to get the school system underway. Superintendent Holland devoted considerable time to a variety of organizational tasks. In his first report to the State Superintendent (1870-71), he noted that he "had been officially employed during 175 days, had traveled about 900 miles, had written 200 letters, examined 108 teachers and licensed 94, had made 30 public addresses, conducted three meetings of the county school trustees and visited 40 schools."<sup>44</sup> This zealous mission to convince parents to enroll their children in schools and to keep them in attendance was a near daily battle. Holland and the other county superintendents were focused in a particularly singular way to entrench schools in the hearts and minds of the people. It would be up to the superintendents to convince parents that school was good for their children and that they would need to pay for it in real estate taxes.

The only assistance that the superintendent would have in these duties was in the school boards of trustees and teachers. The model set up by the constitution allowed for the initial boards of trustees to be appointed by the SBOE with the recommendation of the county superintendent. The model was three trustees serving staggered terms of one, two, and three years. This was supposed to ensure a rotation and continuity on these local

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<sup>43</sup> Minutes, 1870-1873, 4.

<sup>44</sup> History of Rockingham County Schools, Holland.

boards, but nepotism often dominated these positions because there were no term limits and the only check on these individuals' qualifications was the county superintendent. On 27 September 1870, the SBOE resolved that the only oath necessary for these trustees was to "execute duties" which were unspecified by the 1870 Constitution or the SBOE. It seemed enough that there would simply be school trustees and that they would run their schools as they saw fit.<sup>45</sup> What these boards were required to do for their schools was left entirely undefined by the constitution and the State Board of Education. In practice these boards were responsible for implementing state and county policy, hiring teachers, managing funds, and providing oversight of the school beyond the day-to-day routines executed by the teachers and school administrators. The boards would be responsible for managing tuitions, distributing books, etc. However, the extent to which this was done was entirely up to each board member's own motivations as they were not paid, and their roles were not defined. Because the boards hired the teachers and managed the funds there was considerable potential for abuse of the funds and for the hiring of teachers for reasons entirely motivated by patronage and bringing money into the locality instead of considering the ability of the person to do the job.

Superintendent L.M. Shumatte of Loudoun vocalized the problem of patronage when asked about the tendency for a "multiplicity of schools" in his districts. Shumatte reported that "The people have gotten the idea that ten is the legal average and the boards have in some instances yeilded to their demands and opened schools that were to weak to live."<sup>46</sup> The decision of the local boards to open schools with only ten pupils put an

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<sup>45</sup> Minutes, 1870-73, 9.

<sup>46</sup> Virginia Department of Education. "Annual Reports of Division Superintendants of



undue burden on the system financially. A school would provide its community with a paid teacher, a postmaster, and employment for someone to clean the school at the very least. The ability of the Districts to open schools despite the will of the Superintendent at this point highlights the potential for abuse. Shumatte, and V.O. Peale both reported conflicts with their District Boards and Peale would often complain of their “undefined” responsibilities. At their best these boards were an asset to the County Superintendent; at their worst they could be the superintendent’s worst opponents in executing the system of public free schools.<sup>47</sup>

The state was obviously not ready as a whole to take on the task of public education. How could it be? With no infrastructure or bureaucracy it must have been difficult to execute and coordinate a state-wide public education system. The system seemed to work on the local level. Trustees essentially would run school districts as they saw fit. The main purpose of the county superintendent during this period was to solicit funds from the public, at first privately and then through taxation, and to convince people to send their children to attend the schools. The first superintendent of Rockingham County reported traveling countless miles across his county in support of this endeavor.<sup>48</sup>

Much like the operation of the SBOE, operations in Rockingham County were also highly decentralized. The physical care of the schoolhouses and the hiring of teachers were handled by the district board of trustees. In Rockingham the electoral

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Schools, 1886-ongoing”. (Virginia: Department of Education, 1870-1920). L.M. Shumatte’s, Annual Report to the Superintendent. 1896. (ARS, hereafter)

<sup>47</sup> ARS, The Various Superintendents in the Valley, V.O. Peale, L.M. Shumatte etc. would complain about their District Trustees in several reports of to the Superintendent during the period. 1895 and 1889 in particular.

<sup>48</sup> ARS, George Huvley, 1870-1871 Report to the Superintendent.

board appointed the district board of trustees and they constituted the county school board. According to a history of Rockingham County, "At a meeting of the county board in September, 1872, the trustees were instructed to appoint three men in the neighborhood of each schoolhouse whose duty it shall be to procure a teacher and see to having their respective schools furnished with fuel and all necessary appliances". This decentralized arrangement would continue until 1922, when the district boards were abolished and replaced by a county school board comprised of one representative from each district.<sup>49</sup> It was not until 15 May 1871 that some controls were placed on the appointment of district trustees. After seeing some early folly to the blind appointment system, the General Assembly authorized the SBOE to appoint officers to supervise the election of members of school boards across the state.<sup>50</sup> Essentially this was an appointed supervisor who was supposed to ensure that self serving individuals were not appointed through acts of patronage. Elections were to be held and the officer simply certified that there was an election. In this manner people in the school districts could also take ownership of the school system and not feel it was as "directed" by the state as appointments by the County Superintendent made it appear.<sup>51</sup>

Another major duty of the County Superintendent was to ensure that facilities could be erected. In his second report (1871-72), Holland reported that there were 104 schoolhouses in Rockingham County: 51 were built of logs, 47 were of frame construction, 5 were brick and one was built of stone. Only four had outhouses and 79

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<sup>49</sup> Rockingham County School History

<sup>50</sup> Minutes, 1870-1873, 151

<sup>51</sup> Rockingham County School History; Minutes 1870-73.

had blackboards. Holland's efforts at stumping for the support of the school system in churches and public venues across the state bore the fruit intended by his duties. He reported that "the public schools are gradually growing in favor with the masses" and that the quality of the teachers was improving. A two-day teacher institute had been held in April, 1871 with 101 teachers present to hear addresses by such notables as Barnes Sears, the Director of the Peabody Fund, and Major Jed. Hotchkiss.<sup>52</sup> About 20 good schoolhouses had been built by private funds during the 1871-72 school years, and others were improved and refurnished.<sup>53</sup>

Initially, teachers were restricted under article 50 of the public school law to teach only reading, writing, and arithmetic.<sup>54</sup> However, the SBOE soon decided that even though it was "contrary to the spirit of the present school law to allow any but the elementary branches named in the law to be introduced into the public free schools," the board made an exception "in those cases in which the partial admission of other studies would manifestly help instead of hindering the special aim of the law." Therefore, the SBOE permitted the teaching of "extra branches" provided they remained secondary to reading writing, and arithmetic. They also required that public money did not pay for this instruction and the studies introduced did not create any cost to the students. The SBOE

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<sup>52</sup> Hotchkiss was a native of Staunton, Virginia. He opened a school in Staunton prior to the Civil war. He was also a renowned cartographer. After the war he reopened his school, and was involved in economic activities designed to promote the recovery of the war-ravaged Shenandoah Valley and in veterans' affairs. After teaching school, he opened an office as a civil and mining consulting engineer and, being so familiar with the geography of the state, was able to steer lucrative foreign and Northern investments to the most appropriate places. Roper, Peter, "One of America's foremost cartographers' : Jed Hotchkiss", *The Map Collector*, 1 November 1989.

<sup>53</sup> History of Rockingham County Schools

<sup>54</sup> Minutes, 1870-1873, 11.

also required that the county superintendent must give written permission for the introduction of “extra studies” by any board of trustees. Teachers were required to state in their monthly reports what extra studies had been pursued and how many pupils were involved. Because enrolment of at least twenty pupils was supposed to be required to keep schools open, the SBOE even encouraged the introduction of “higher branches”<sup>55</sup> if it was needed to bring up the number of pupils. In a graded school<sup>56</sup> the average attendance needed to be one hundred “provided that extra expense is drawn from other than the public funds.”<sup>57</sup> Despite the fact that the school law did not provide for anything beyond the most basic curriculum, it was apparent that the SBOE would do nothing to discourage extra studies which communities were willing to privately fund. In this way the SBOE was able to maintain its budget and foster expanding education where it could be requested or elicited from the local public.

Another issue facing the SBOE and the counties was curriculum. In practice, control of the curriculum was decentralized, but guided by the SBOE. The constitution provided specific guidance but Ruffner and the governor liberally executed the policies. This would later be challenged but never supplanted.<sup>58</sup> The SBOE spent its early years

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<sup>55</sup> This term refers to branches or subjects of education which were not part of the baseline curriculum initially established by the state, Reading, Writing, and Arithmetic. This would include anything from Literature, to History, to sciences. Essentially it was any education given over what it considered the baseline knowledge a person needed, to read, write, and do basic math.

<sup>56</sup> A graded school was loosely defined and implemented at this time as any school which separated its pupils into multiple graded ability levels. This could be anything from a simple two grade format and would eventual evolve into the modern K-12 format.

<sup>57</sup> Minutes, 1870-1873, 57-58.

<sup>58</sup> An analysis of the minutes of the board makes it clear that throughout the history of curriculum and text selection the board submitted to a system of multiple lists from its inception. The SBOE would approve and fund the purchase of options for texts in approved subject areas that would be

selecting texts for a multiple book list from which the counties could select their books. SBOE oversaw the selection of all books, but counties had the flexibility to choose books from a multiple book list. The goal of the state was to achieve a basic curriculum and to balance that with the flexibility to add subjects at no expense to the student but at that of the county. Oddly, one of the most contested and divergently interpreted sections of the constitution was the one which stated that “the Board of Education shall provide for uniformity of text-books, and the furnishing of school-houses with such apparatus and library as may be necessary”. It would later become a matter of some debate about what exactly was to be implemented to establish “uniformity of text books.”

Throughout the early years the main issue facing the SBOE would be the selection of texts and the establishment of a text menu. The SBOE resolved that unnamed “publishers who sent in bids, or such of them as may be readily accessible...be informed by the board...[and that the SBOE] basically determined that two books would be used exclusively by the public free schools on each of the subjects specified in the school-law; Reading, Writing, Arithmetic, English Grammar, and Geography.” The local school authority was then allowed to choose between the books selected and to use them under impartial regulations by this board.<sup>59</sup>

An example of the clash between the text menu and the basic curriculum would be when the SBOE declined the request of John S. Blackburn (district school trustee from Alexandria) to “introduce the History of the United States, of which he is author into such

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selected from by the counties. This was a never ending process of give and take. Subsequent chapters will deal with the specifics of coming battles over the interpretation of the 1870 ad 1902 Constitutions actually allowing a multiple list vs. a single book list.

<sup>59</sup> Minutes, 1871, 78.

of the public schools as are allowed to teach that branch.”<sup>60</sup> History was not considered an allowed branch. It was acceptable for Blackburn to teach this topic, but the SBOE would not fund the purchase of the book. However, the book was allowed if the local board and the community were willing to pay for it. There was flexibility for teachers but not for budgets. Showing the power of local boards to influence the SBOE, U.S. History was added to the list of approved subjects and the SBOE adopted *Holmes History of the United States* as a textbook.<sup>61</sup>

The SBOE would provide a budget for qualified texts. The SBOE resolved to spend \$20,000 on spellers and readers, \$20,000 on geographies, \$10,000 on grammars and \$15,000 on arithmetic. In addition to texts for “indigent children,” the SBOE would provide for other items in primary schools. The state board purchased ink, inkstands, pens, slates, slate pencils, slate rubbers, black board crayons, black board rubbers, writing books, numeral frames; wall maps outline maps, models, school registers, charts, school histories, globes, school dictionaries, and cards.<sup>62</sup>

Books and other items were kept at repositories in Norfolk, Petersburg, Richmond, Lynchburg, Wytheville, Staunton, Winchester and Alexandria where county school boards could purchase materials at 60 cents for the spellers and readers, 45 cents for geographies, 96 cents for grammars, and \$1.35 for arithmetics. Any philanthropic gifts books, even for a specific school, were to be made through the state board.<sup>63</sup> Once

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<sup>60</sup> Minutes, 1870-73, 79.

<sup>61</sup> Minutes, 1870-73, 167.

<sup>62</sup> Minutes, 1870-73, 83-84.

<sup>63</sup> Minutes, 1870-73, 93.

the SBOE had contracted with publishers for a list of books, a circular containing the list was sent to all of the boards of trustees and it was determined that texts should be agreed upon by the district boards and standardized by county. If boards failed to respond, then the county superintendent would simply choose from the list which books would be used by his county.<sup>64</sup>

Even in the early days of the System of Public Free Schools, some of the more progressive ideals of the educators began to emerge. Much like adding U.S. History to the curriculum, district and county boards soon had their way on other curricular issues as well. There was an exception made to the use of prescribed textbooks. Teachers could continue to use an unapproved text if they determined that a student had already progressed too far in it to switch. Essentially this made it possible for teachers and boards to make a case not to replace older “familiar” texts for several years. The Richmond school board simply decided it wanted to use other texts than those approved by the state board. Though the SBOE initially refused, they eventually acquiesced. The SBOE also resolved on 31 August 1871, to allow the use of Blackburn and McDonald’s *History of the United States* in several counties. Then, in a move outside the realm of texts, the SBOE recommended that the public free schools of Virginia introduce “calisthenics or systematic physical exercises in the school room; and also of oral instruction on familiar topics not included in the prescribed course of study, and the employment of suitable objects for the illustrating of the topics presented, so as to help the mind not burden it.”<sup>65</sup> The 1870 Constitution provided a loose definition of the types

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<sup>64</sup> Minutes 1870-73, 127.

<sup>65</sup> Minutes 1870-73, 180-189.

of schooling the state could support. The advent of physical education, exceptions to text books, and the assimilation of “higher branches” of education, such as history, into curriculums showed that a decidedly progressive attitude towards education already existed in Virginia even in the 1870s before progressivism really existed as a movement.

One of the more progressive stories of this period would be the Miller School. The school was founded in 1868 and funded with millions of dollars in Miller’s bonds which were “stolen” during the Valley campaign in the Civil War, then were recovered in New York State Court by Mr. Miller. He got half of his money back from the initial investment, and used much it to start the school that bears his name. Miller established the first industrial school in Virginia and one of the first schools of its kind in the nation.<sup>66</sup> Over the next decade the Virginia System of Public Free schools assimilated this school and it become the standard for technical industrial education in the south and the north. The Miller School would play a significant role as Virginia’s model for technical schooling at the turn of the century.

This initial period demonstrated the necessity of a decentralized execution of the school system. There were significant tensions between the SBOE and the county and district boards in the period between 1870 and 1886. The key here was not a fight between local versus central control of the school system. It is a conscious execution of a system which was necessarily run at the local level. So long as counties were readily accepting public education then, in most instances, the SBOE was happy to acquiesce to their demands within reason and budget. While the authority rested with the state board,

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<sup>66</sup> *Proceedings for the 3<sup>rd</sup> Annual Conference for Education in the South*, (Raleigh, NC: Printing Office, St. Augustine’s School, 1900) 77-79. (CES hereafter)



the power resided in the local communities where the bulk of the tax revenue to run the schools needed to be generated.

The issue of state funding and revenue became increasingly important. In its first full year of existence, the Virginia school system had been overrun with requests for financial assistance to public schools. If the state was going to raise and distribute tax revenue for public education, it also needed to determine what exactly constituted a school. In July 1871, the SBOE defined a school month as four weeks of five days. It also resolved to reduce salaries if these days were not met with the exception of state holidays. That same month the SBOE also “ordered that schools must maintain twenty pupils or not be supported.” This placed some stricter limits on the initial, nearly unlimited, ability for districts to establish schools.

It was also in this early period that the state first exercised what might be viewed as a progressive ideal of schooling being capable of educating more than just how to read or write. The state board realized that it was in a unique position to alter behavior outside the school. It also ordered all pupils to prove they had been vaccinated in order to attend school.<sup>67</sup>

While many districts overwhelmed the new system with requests for money, there were indeed places where public education was not accepted at all. In July 1871 the school board realized that several districts had failed to generate revenue through property taxes. The SBOE ordered that if private philanthropy was involved in building schools or providing materials, then it could be used in the same manner as if the tax had been approved. No doubt there were many communities that wondered why they now

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<sup>67</sup> Minutes, 1870-73, 176.

needed taxes to pay for schools. Many already had schools of some sort with no levying taxes and they had gotten along “just fine” with little or no formal education. It is interesting that the SBOE allowed counties to receive state monies without raising local funds if the school was funded through some other means, even if it was private philanthropy. In this manner the state no doubt brought many existing schools into the fold of state education and in some ways “addicted” them to the state funds they had managed to live without. Many communities would find that their schools would be unable to operate without state funds in the next decade.

It was up to the county superintendents to inspect and certify that all schools deserved state funds; however, there was no real oversight from the state. A simple letter or announcement at a meeting could serve as this certification since there was no standardized or uniform reporting to the state board at this time.<sup>68</sup> Realizing the problem of financing schools without receiving tax support, the SBOE resolved not to allow children to attend school if the father failed to pay taxes during the 1873 school year. This was to be reported by tax collectors who would be paid by the SBOE and enforced by the teachers.<sup>69</sup> The SBOE and the General Assembly specified in law that the county treasurer and not the superintendent would have the duty to collect said taxes. The state also granted the treasurer thirty cents per hour to do the taxes for the schools.<sup>70</sup>

School trustee officers were also responsible for employing and certifying teachers and were encouraged not to hire unqualified people. The county superintendent

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<sup>68</sup> Minutes, 1870-73, 178.

<sup>69</sup> Minutes, 1870-73, 177-78.

<sup>70</sup> Minutes, 1870-73, 186.

was authorized to revoke certificates provided by the local boards of trustees. County superintendents were also required “to have at least one teachers’ institute per year starting in 1872” with the idea of providing education to teachers. It was clear that teacher training was a state priority. However, the SBOE was also keenly aware that, in the short term, being too draconian in enforcing their policies for qualified teachers might well lose the support of the public and be detrimental to the overall educational endeavor. For while there were many professionals who were interested in bettering education, there were a fair number of teachers and school administrators who were happy to take a dollar from the state. In that vein teachers were required to attend an institute “unless it is held while schools are in operation.” This created an easy loophole for school administrators. County superintendents had the option of running the required institutes during the school session, so if a school was only open for three months and the institute was held during those same months, it was not actually enforceable during the other nine months of the year.<sup>71</sup> Despite the 1871 regulation that schools should be open for four months to qualify for state funds, the SBOE was again forced to accede to local district pressures. Some school districts could not convince parents to keep schools open four months of the year. In 1873, the SBOE legalized and financially supported a number of schools which only managed to remain open for two and one-half months.<sup>72</sup>

The demand for public education quickly outpaced the state’s ability to support it. In order to keep up with the demand, the SBOE was forced to adopt several new regulations designed to increase the revenue for the school system and appropriately limit

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<sup>71</sup> Minutes, 1870-73, 182.

<sup>72</sup> Minutes, 1870-73, 185.

the participation in the new public schools. These regulations included a one dollar per month tuition for all persons seeking admission, and the exclusion of “adults” from being “enrolled or taught in a public school.”<sup>73</sup> Excluding adults from education in public schools might have helped reduce the cost of running the school system in its initial phases by reducing the number of students. More importantly, it helped to standardize and formalize the delivery of education.

The SBOE also resolved that if a school had levied all district and county taxes, it could apply for help from the Peabody fund<sup>74</sup>. This also showed that the school system, despite being supported by state, county, and district taxation, still relied on the generosity of northern philanthropy and was therefore beholden to private interests from the North. According to historian William Link, this “educational alliance that united northern philanthropists and southern white reformers relied on a generation of intersectional contacts developed through black industrial schools and through the Peabody Education Fund, established by northerner George Peabody in 1867.”<sup>75</sup> The Peabody Educational Fund had succeeded because it avoided local (state) control and influence. It had supplied aid to those educators who believed in a broad and liberal

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<sup>73</sup> Minutes, 1870-73, 330-31. Though if exceptions for adults could be made then they are subject to the authority of the teachers and county superintendents were required to track and scrutinize the exceptions.

<sup>74</sup> Minutes, 1870-73, 338. The Peabody Education Fund was established by George Peabody in 1867 for the purpose of promoting "intellectual, moral, and industrial education in the most destitute portion of the Southern States." The gift of foundation consisted of securities to the value of \$2,100,000, of which \$1,100,000 were in Mississippi State bonds, afterward repudiated. In 1869 an additional \$1,000,000 was given by Mr. Peabody, with \$384,000 of Florida funds, also repudiated later. For more on the Peabody Fund see D. Orr, *A History of Education in Georgia*. (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1950).

<sup>75</sup> William A. Link, *The Paradox of Southern Progressivism*, (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1992), 128.

system of public education but who faced local prejudices.<sup>76</sup> Other organizations, such as the Southern Education Board and the Coalition for Education in the South, of which many Virginia educators, including William Ruffner, were members, took a different approach and operated to shape public opinion, not reform long term educational policy.<sup>77</sup> Relying on private philanthropy could also help local school districts with few students or resources qualify for state funds. If local school districts could get private funds to cover the district's share of taxes then the state would also give its share.<sup>78</sup>

The SBOE also decided how the funds would be distributed to the counties. Size of school population determined initial state disbursements to Shenandoah Valley counties. Augusta County, with a school population of 9,728, received \$2,432.00. Bland County, with a school population of 1,525, received \$381.25. Loudoun County, with a school population of 6,644, received \$1,661.00, and Rockingham County, with a school population of 8,628 received \$2,157. It was important for county superintendents to enroll students, as higher enrollments yielded more state funds for their schools. Highland County received no state funding in the first years of public education. This seems to be the case for many small counties as twenty in all received no funds from the state; many of these counties failed to meet the minimum pupil requirements. The smallest district to receive funds was the City of Williamsburg, which had an enrollment

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<sup>76</sup> Minutes, 1870-73 , 128-129. The minutes here contain a letter from Charles McIver to J.L.M. Curry.

<sup>77</sup> This is the goal of the reports on education. It was loosely organized but had a defined purpose to organize to reform schools. This is why things got better in 1900. Clearly though the influence of the GEB in the North was felt in the reports of 1886-1899; CSC, 62. The thirty thousand Negro public schools, on which the Southern states are spending six and a half million dollars annually, and have spent over a hundred millions since 1870.

<sup>78</sup> Minutes, 1870-73, 56.

of 316 students; they received \$79 from the state. Warwick County was the smallest to receive state funding: it qualified for \$133.75 for 535 students.<sup>79</sup>

Pay for school officials was also a difficult endeavor in the first year. The 6 April 1871 meeting in the Governor's mansion was exclusively devoted to the issue of paying county superintendents' salaries. It was decided to pay superintendents quarterly based on student populations. Superintendent pay ranged from \$70 to \$15. G.W. Holland of Rockingham County received \$57.50. The SBOE also determined that if anyone held an office of profit, trust or endowment, then it was illegal for them to be a county superintendant. G.H. Kendrick and W.A. Brant of Scott and Prince William Counties respectively, were disqualified as being former Confederate officials under the Fourteenth Amendment.<sup>80</sup> The state board officially took control of the "Literary Fund" which helped secure much of the necessary funding to pay the new officials.<sup>81</sup> It is no wonder there were so many problems reported about paying teachers over the next fifteen years as the state could barely afford to pay its top officials.

To be sure there was a fair amount of work to be done to convince Virginia's people that education would be a good thing. A brief history of Rockingham County's journey through the first sixteen years of education serves to shed some light on how this

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<sup>79</sup> Minutes, 1870-73, 130-133.

<sup>80</sup> Minutes, 1870-73, 136, 249. "By authority of an act of the General assembly of Virginia, approved February 7, 1872, authorizing the Board of Education to sell the land such donated to the State of Virginia by act of Congress of the United States approved July 2, 1862 and the acts amendatory thereof, the Board of Education will receive proposals for the purchase of the said land representing three hundred thousand acres of public land, until 12 O'clock on the 1<sup>st</sup> day of May 1872. This must have been huge for the coffers. The minutes track the proposals for sale and sale of land through the year for a staggering amount of money.

<sup>81</sup> Minutes, 1870-73, 138.

played out in a local setting and helps fill the gaps in the local development of Virginia's System of Public Free Schools between 1873 and 1886.

George Holland had supervised the first years of public education in Rockingham County between 1870 and 1872. Mention has already been made of Holland's work in securing and building school houses. He also reported that "the public schools are gradually growing in favor with the masses" and that the quality of the teachers was improving.<sup>82</sup> During the whole period between 1870 and 1886 Rockingham County would increase the total number of school houses from 83 to 189. This would include the replacement of 32 log and 2 brick school houses with an addition of 118 frame structures and one made of stone.<sup>83</sup>

Superintendent Holland spent nearly two years laying the groundwork for the public school system in Rockingham County, when Rev. Joseph S. Loose succeeded him in 1873. Loose had previously been the Harrisonburg School Principal. The years after the Civil War were unsettled ones for Rockingham County as they were in the rest of the state. Many residents of the county were suspicious of the new public education system. The county history reports that many believed public education was imposed on the southern states by the victorious North. To be sure the taxes levied for the purpose of public schools would be a burden for a war-torn South. Superintendent Loose was not as successful as Holland in promoting public education. Residents quickly became aware that since the SBOE appointed the local superintendent, there were indeed political considerations to such an appointment. Therefore, many of the early appointments were

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<sup>82</sup> Rockingham County School Histories

<sup>83</sup> ARS, Extrapolated from George Holland's 1872 report and the 1886 Rockingham Country Report to the Superintendent table 8.

controversial. According to the State Superintendent's Reports filed by Rev. Loose, he had a deep concern for the upgrading of the qualifications of teachers, and spoke very critically of the need for state-supported normal schools, stating that "we can never arrive at a high standard until the state furnishes normal schools, and this elevates the dignity of the profession."<sup>84</sup> He also reported "a gradual improvement of sentiment toward public schools." After serving just one term, Superintendent Loose was not reappointed and the position went to one of his major critics, Jasper Hawse.

Jasper Hawse served two terms as the county's superintendent from 1876 to 1882, yet he endured many of the same criticisms as Loose. Hawse had two main goals for his tenure as superintendent. First, he enlisted the help of the local newspapers to focus attention on the developing school system and to build important public support for the public schools. Second, he sought increased order for the school system. At a school board meeting on October 16, 1876, the new "Rules for Public Schools of Rockingham County" were adopted. Jasper Hawse became an example of the power struggle between locality and the state. Though he wished to continue as superintendent, he was not reappointed despite the recommendation of the Rockingham County School Board.<sup>85</sup>

Superintendent Hawse instituted seventeen rules. They covered everything from attendance, behavior of pupils, and disease control to conduct and pay of teachers, requirements of teachers to attend institutes, and the length of a school day. None of the regulations were required from a state perspective. However, many progressive ideals can be seen in these 1876 rules. The idea of teachers being responsible to educate on

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<sup>84</sup> ARS, Report of Rockingham County Superintendent to the State Superintendent, 1872-73

<sup>85</sup> Rockingham County School History



contagious diseases and to prevent students from attending was ahead of its time. The responsibility for absences and truancy was laid fully on the teacher. There were also specific rules installed in terms of the management of the school by the teachers. Hawse' rules about recesses and their conduct as well the requirement for the resignation of teachers "who were unable to effect an organization of their schools into classes in every branch taught" was a very progressive ideal indeed. In ungraded schools in which twenty-five or more pupils were enrolled, no extra branches of the curriculum could be taught without special permission of the county Superintendent. Hawse also clearly defined rules for extra compensation to teachers. It must have been voluntary on the part of patrons to ensure that the schools remained free according to the law. Hawse was forced to spell out that "teachers cannot make attendance depend on the payment of tuition fees" which showed that there was indeed some abuse on the part of teachers and school boards in terms of the execution of the school system. There was an exception of a dollar per month tuition for pupils over twenty-one years of age when they were allowed to attend. Teachers were also expected to arrange their daily schedule of exercises so that "each class shall not only have an appointed time to recite, but each pupil an allotted period of each study: and all pupils, except primary scholars shall have lessons assigned to study at home." No teacher was to teach less than six hours per day exclusive of recesses and intermissions. In these and other rules could be seen both the progressive ideals of local educators but also the absence of state control. Many of these rules would eventually become standardized in some form across the state.

Republican "Mahoneite's" had taken over the state legislature in 1882 and they appointed one of Rockingham County's most controversial superintendents, Rev. A.P.

Funkhouser. Because of the political nature of his appointment, the state Senate never confirmed his appointment. Controversy and political opposition would mark Funkhouser's tenure. In his short three-year term, he faced controversies relating to textbook selection, racial policies, and general dissatisfaction with his appointment.<sup>86</sup>

This period saw the consolidation of many school districts and the establishment of rules, regulations, and conduct of schools in a very similar manner which was directed across the state by the superintendents but ultimately left to individuals to execute. Rockingham County also provided some examples of the establishment of some other progressive modes of training which would become standardized in later years. Some of Rockingham's schools developed into institutions of higher learning with emphasis on teacher training. This was something that would become more and more emphasized in the establishment of the Public System of Free Schools in the coming decades. One such school was run in Bridgewater from 1873 to 1878. Established by Alcide Reichenbach, J. D. Bucher, A. L. Funk, and others, it was perhaps the first school in the state to do real normal work.<sup>87</sup> Two-year and four-year professional courses were outlined, a model school for observation was conducted, and prominent outsiders were brought in for special lectures. Prior to his tenure as County Superintendent, A.P. Funkhouser had also established Shenandoah Seminary as a normal school in 1875. Originally located in Rockingham County, Shenandoah Seminary is now Shenandoah University located in Winchester. A normal and collegiate institute was established at Spring Creek in 1880 by

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<sup>86</sup> Rockingham County School History

<sup>87</sup> Normal work is defined as teacher training. This was the process by which education would be normalized, or standardized, especially in the execution of teaching as a specific discipline, not just knowledge of subject matter.

D. C. Flory; which was moved to Bridgewater two years later and was chartered as Bridgewater College in 1889.<sup>88</sup> The idea of establishing normal schools and teacher institutes would be one that would eventually be taken up by both the state and the nation.

It becomes apparent that though the establishment of the Public System of Free Schools in Virginia was hardly uniform, it was indeed conducted mostly under the direction of William H. Ruffner and his vision. The brief Readjuster rule in Virginia interrupted this vision, and though he would no longer serve as the State Superintendent, his legacy would loom large over the state. Under Ruffner there was indeed a single-minded intentionality behind the establishment of the school system.

With the election of Governor Fitzhugh Lee in November 1885, the political climate turned and Rev. Funkhouser's controversial term came to an abrupt end. On January 26, 1886, George H. Hulvey, a well-respected educator in Rockingham County, was appointed superintendent. George Hulvey represented an educational shift both within the state and within Rockingham County. The election of Lee to the governorship and John Lee Buchanan to the Superintendent of Public Instruction and his subsequent appointment of Hulvey and many other new and infinitely more qualified county superintendents can be seen as the dawn of a new era of more professional public education. Prior to the start of their tenure in 1886 the initial goal of simply establishing a system of schools had been largely accomplished. The full establishment of Virginia's

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<sup>88</sup> Rockingham County School History

System of Public Free Schools was not yet complete. However, the educational system would surely not be moving backwards in Virginia after 1885.<sup>89</sup>

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<sup>89</sup> An examination of the minutes in the coming period during the next chapter will explain this in detail. The coming period is one portrayed by continued organization and consolidation of the System of Public Free Schools in Virginia as well as the implementation of many of the initiatives and innovations of Virginia's first professional public educators.

### Chapter III, 1886-1900

The national progressive movement began to get underway, as did the progressive school movement, in the late 1890s. However, it took root in smaller, local places first. Like any movement of this sort, it was largely a grass roots affair and the evidence of it becomes more apparent the more closely the microscope is focused on America. Men such as William Dempster Hoard began to rise to prominence as a leading progressive in education. Henry Wallace provides a great example of the local rural push towards shifting rural education towards more progressive and scientific ends. Henry Wallace, the editor of *Wallace's Farmer*, wanted to shift rural education "away from the city" and more toward agricultural endeavors. William Dempster Hoard, editor of *Hoard's Dairyman*, sought to influence educators in methods of scientific farming. Hoard began his campaigns to reform education in Wisconsin, focusing on improving the dairy industry through education in the late 1880s. His ideas did not gain national momentum until the 1890s.<sup>90</sup> According to Cremin, "local institutes were sounding boards par excellence for the educational reform movement."<sup>91</sup> Anything managed locally was perceived by progressives to have more influence than any national effort, perhaps because local affairs could be shaped more easily, and local diverse issues could be addressed more effectively.

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<sup>90</sup> In 1870 Hoard launched a weekly newspaper, the Jefferson County Union, in Lake Mills, but moved the operation to Fort Atkinson (where it remains to this day) three years later. At the same time, Hoard began a vigorous campaign to improve and grow dairy farming, asserting that Wisconsin was particularly well suited to the industry. He crusaded to get farmers who were losing money due to poor soil and crop yields to switch to dairying. In 1872 Hoard organized a dairying convention in Watertown, Wisconsin, where he founded the State Dairyman's Association, the first of its kind in the nation. Hoard became president of the Northwestern Dairyman's Association in 1876. His crusade for a prosperous dairy industry prompted the founding of *Hoard's Dairyman*, the national dairy farm magazine, in 1885.

<sup>91</sup> Lawrence A. Cremin, *The Transformation of the School: Progressivism in American Education, 1876-1957*. (New York: Basic Books, 1977), 47.

It has often been argued that progressive education ideals were brought to the South in the 1890s and early 1900s. However, a closer look shows that the experiences of educators in Virginia in the 1870s and early 1880s had already pushed the state toward progressive educational reform, much more so than national pressures. Local institutions shaped education in Virginia as county school officials unceasingly lectured farmers and wives on the need for a reoriented rural school. School gardens, field trips, and practical courses in farm and kitchen work were the answers to an overly bookish program which emphasized the accumulation of useless knowledge. According to the Report of the County Life Commission, a grass roots organization that had begun to push for technical agricultural educational reforms, “Grammar history, geography [were] bundles of abstractions, while the child is interested in the word of realities.”<sup>92</sup> This and other organizations like it began to see more clearly the need for education to produce more capable and productive citizens. Education was a vehicle by which Virginia could realize better and more productive agricultural capacity through the education of its farmers. In *The Rebuilding of Old Commonwealths* (1902), Walter Hines Page “argued that the traditional educators of the South had fastened an aristocratic education on the region, leaving “the forgotten man” at the bottom of the social structure in ignorance. The public school system generously supported by public sentiment and generously maintained by both state and local taxation was “the only effective means to develop the forgotten woman” and that such a public school system, were it to train “both the hands and the

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<sup>92</sup> Cremin, *Transformation of the School*, 44; “Report of the Country Life Commission”, (Wisconsin Farmer institute: Bulletin No. 15 1901), 87.

mind of every child,” would add immeasurably to the wealth of the region and the strength of its communities.

Thanks to an economic turnaround in Virginia in the 1880s, the State Board of Education (SBOE) suddenly had money to back its years of hard effort and stumping. Historian Lawrence Cremin looked to the economic turnaround as “the situation when the great progressive school revival of the 1890s began in the South.”<sup>93</sup> Virginia was ahead of this curve and would largely begin to realize its revival by 1886. The opening of federal lands in the South to unrestricted cash sale after 1876 provided a huge economic boon to the school system a decade previous. This also “accelerated industrialization [in Virginia] fueled by a large influx of Northern and English capital, and by the rapid development of commerce in the wake of railroad expansion.”<sup>94</sup> If anything the economic turnaround would merely make it easier to acquire tax revenue from both localities and the state.

This growing business and professional interest in a new South would help with the continued push for educational reform. The formation of Progressive Clubs, societies, and public support indicated this newfound interest. One of the earliest efforts mentioned in the didactic literature was the Watuga Club in North Carolina, which pressed for a system of industrial education near the turn of the century to support the economic development taking place. Some professional teachers in Virginia had already worked to create a state-supported teacher institute program to improve instruction throughout the state. By 1886 the execution of a statewide program designed to educate teachers in the

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<sup>93</sup> Cremin, *American Education*, 216-217.

<sup>94</sup> Cremin, *American Education*, 216-217.

art of teaching had actually grown from grass roots movements in places like Rockingham County. While the Watuga Club was forming in North Carolina in near the turn of the century, as early as 1886 in Virginia, the annual superintendent reports tracked teacher institute programs in an effort to improve schools. Historian Lawrence Cremin argues that these efforts were sporadic and fluctuated across the nation until the late 1890s, when, as part of the larger progressive movement, another effort was launched to redeem the South through education. This new effort synthesized earlier versions into a crusade through which the South would be saved by separate and unequal schools.<sup>95</sup> These organizations conducted a “campaign of education for free schools for all the people” by supplying literature to newspapers and periodical press, by participation in educational meetings, and by correspondence through a Bureau of Information and Advice on Legislation and School Organization which was backed by Rockefeller Philanthropy. Rockingham County for One had a good relationship with the *News Record* which would eventually go beyond the papers and produce a book highlighting the necessity of advancing the modernity of the School System in the County.<sup>96</sup> Virginia’s school reports clearly tracked a teacher institute program to improve schools.<sup>97</sup>

As Virginia worked to establish public education, there were signs that the system was becoming more institutionalized. Virginia’s free schools had taken big steps towards establishing themselves in the hearts and minds of the public. During the final fifteen

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<sup>95</sup> Cremin, *American Education*, 217.

<sup>96</sup> The Board of Editors, *The Public Schools of Rockingham County Virginia: Educational Report and History of Schools of County* (Harrisonburg, Virginia. News Record, 1914).

<sup>97</sup> ARS, 1886.



years of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, Virginia worked diligently to improve the System of Public Free Schools with consolidation and control. A shift in this direction began in 1886 with the appointment of a new State Superintendent of Public Instruction, a new governor and changes in many of the county superintendents. In Rockingham County, for example, George Hulvey had just been appointed. After serving as State Superintendent of Public Instruction for twelve years, William Ruffner had been replaced by R.R. Farr who was appointed by the Republican “Readjusters” just like Rockingham County Superintendent A.P. Funkhouser.<sup>98</sup> R.R. Farr was no more welcome than his counterpart in Rockingham County and both were quickly replaced, with Hulvey taking over in Rockingham County and John Lee Buchanan becoming State Superintendent of Public Instruction.<sup>99</sup>

Ironically, as this period of “education-friendly” Republican control of public schools ended, the return to Democratic control of the state in 1885-1886 signaled the beginning of a tremendous period of progress for the System of Public Free Schools in Virginia.

One of the first education issues to be changed was the multiple list of texts. In the early 1900s the secretary of the State Board of Education recalled that Virginia had stood for the “multiple list” since the beginning. Gradually, the state list was enlarged from its original two book list system to one of a four book list, and local school boards chose from this list for their respective schools. In an effort to bring added standardization and control to the school system the new State Board of Education in 1886 abandoned the

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<sup>98</sup> Rockingham County School History, Virginia Polytechnic Library, Biography of John Lee Buchanan, <http://spec.lib.vt.edu/archives/125th/pres/buchan.htm>, Accessed on 28 January, 2010.

<sup>99</sup> Minutes, 1902-1912. Though William Ruffner was no longer the State Superintendent of Public Instruction the secretary of the State Board of Education (SBOE) recalled as late as 1902 that “William H. Ruffner was and is a national leading figure in the realm of school administration.”

earlier multiple book lists and adopted a single book list. They argued that the state constitution and statutes governing public education required state-wide uniformity. Under this arrangement, theoretically, local school boards now had no choice about textbooks. However, in practice, the state board permitted the continued use of multiple books. It is unclear why the board endorsed the policy of single book list in the first place. This may have been largely driven by a political need to regain control of the educational system as Re-adjusters had aroused fears of desegregating schools. Despite a formal declaration of a single book list, the previous policy of a multiple list prevailed.<sup>100</sup> Despite their lack of interest in enforcing a single book list it is clear the new State Board of Education under the leadership of Governor Fitzhugh Lee and Superintendent of Public Instruction John Buchanan sought to increase efficiency and bring uniformity to the state school system.<sup>101</sup>

Under their tenure Virginia saw the advent of a formalized and structured system of consolidated reporting on public education which helped to facilitate dramatic strides towards efficiency and uniformity in the years to follow. State officials sought to consolidate local support. The advent of the standard reporting system shows a subtle but significant assertion of state power and authority. Lee and Buchanan spearheaded this effort. There was also a shift in responsibilities of local superintendents. Under Buchanan's direction the county superintendents shifted their focus from merely enrolling students and convincing them to attend school to an all-out effort to raise

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<sup>100</sup> Minutes, 1902-1912, 44-45.

<sup>101</sup> Several school histories note that Governor Lee was a friend to education in Virginia

support for the schools, especially financial support. There was a concrete shift towards pushing for increased taxes during this period.<sup>102</sup>

The team of Governor Lee and Superintendent Buchanan began with changes in the appointment of superintendents. They were interested in hiring men who could get things done within the new system. Their appointment of men like George Hulvey as Rockingham County Superintendent clearly shows this trend. Even though George Hulvey was not the first Rockingham County School Superintendent, most of the progress in the early days of the school system came through his inspired leadership. Hulvey served as superintendent for thirty-one years (1886 to 1917). His insistence on school consolidation, the development of a high school program, and high levels of teacher certification and competence made Rockingham County one of the model rural school divisions in the Commonwealth of Virginia. Unlike many of his predecessors, Hulvey was well qualified for the endeavor. He had held many responsible positions including the principal of Bridgewater, Harrisonburg, Staunton and Mt. Crawford schools. He organized the Rockingham Teacher's Association, and served as its president. This was the first organization of its kind existing in Virginia prior to the formation of the State Teacher's association. This organization was designed to bring teachers together to exchange and disseminate educational ideals and instruction on teaching. Its main goal was the betterment of Rockingham County's schools and teachers. Like many of his peers, appointed by Buchanan and Lee, Hulvey was an able writer on educational themes. His articles appeared often in the leading educational

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<sup>102</sup> This shift can be seen in the analysis of the reports following this statement.

journals of Virginia.<sup>103</sup>

Over the first fifteen years of its existence, the System of Public Free Schools had entrenched itself in many ways. Ruffner's desire to produce an organized and efficient system was beginning now to take concrete shape in 1886 under the new superintendent and governor. This is in contrast to the arguments of Lawrence Cremin and William Link who maintain that national efforts in education tended to be nascent, episodic, and disconnected during the 1870s and 1880s. Cremin writes that these efforts had "flowed together during the 1890s into a national school reform movement that was one element of the broader Progressive movement in American political and social affairs."<sup>104</sup> If this was the case, then Virginia was well ahead of many of its peers on the national stage as her reform movement was getting underway by the mid 1880s.

Virginia had been collecting reports from its county superintendents annually for some time in 1886. There had been annual reports of the county superintendent to the State Board of Education since Ruffner had served as Superintendent of Public Instruction. What is significant is that the reports become more formalized, bound, and standardized by Buchanan and Lee in 1886. This provided the State Board of Education with "consistent" information which was comparable across the state's counties and districts. Ruffner conceived of the reports but they took on new life and organization under Superintendents John Buchanan and John E. Massey. The organization and formalizing of the reports signified a new efficiency and standardization. It reveals a focused purpose and intent from the State Board of Education which was difficult to

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<sup>103</sup> History of Rockingham County Schools.

<sup>104</sup> Cremin, *American Education*, 226.

observe prior to 1886. This is yet another example of progressive-type inspiration and standardization which was seated and inspired from within Virginia as opposed to influenced from without.

An analysis of the “Annual Reports of the Superintendents of Schools” to the State Board of Education provides a compelling picture of the goals of education in Virginia and the Shenandoah Valley from their inception in 1886. The content of the reports included between nine and eleven tables of various information, plus a specifically formatted questionnaire for County or Division Superintendents. The 1886 report specifically asked for detailed information on pupils, textbooks, teachers, and salaries, graded schools, taxes raised, expenditures, school houses, school populations, number of schools, school attendance, number of teachers by race and district. The superintendent report was not new to Virginia, however under Superintendent Buchanan the format and detail of the reports increased significantly as well as did the formal record keeping of the State Board of Education.<sup>105</sup>

The Virginia Superintendent’s Report provides information in ten tables during this period. This information included such things as attendance records and the mundane accounting of dollars to a report of specific items of interest to the state board. The reports reveal an emphasis on efficiency and uniformity. Many of the requirements of the report, such as pay, accounting, and attendance were a necessity of bureaucracy; it

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<sup>105</sup> Reports to the superintendent existed as annual letters required by Ruffner from the Superintendents. There can be seen in analysis of existing reports much of the same types of information in say the early reports of Huvley in 1970-71. Under Buchanan the report is given a clear format which was sent out to the Superintendents. From 1886 forward these reports were gathered and bound as opposed to existing as correspondence between individual Superintendents and the State Superintendent.

was clear that there were some specific report items which help paint a picture of an already progressive system of public education. It was clear that the state desired information on graded level education, the building and modernization of school houses, teacher training and education, and the beginnings of uniformity in curriculum. It was also, as always, helpful to follow the money. The detailed accounting helps to paint a clear picture on areas of emphasis where the state, counties, and districts were placing their dollars.<sup>106</sup>

The reports are very helpful in determining shows how Virginia fits and sets standards within a national progressive movement of education. Additionally the intentions of the state board will be examined along with the responses and implementation and direction from county leaders. As a general touchstone for the local level, this examination will focus on Rockingham County but will also seek to assimilate a broader rural perspective from the Valley of Virginia by examining and comparing information from Augusta, Bland, Highland, and Loudoun Counties.<sup>107</sup>

One of the major goals of the period was school consolidation. The consolidation of schools was important in streamlining both the financial aspect of the school system but also in creating populations of students who could be taught in an appropriate and efficient manner. In 1886 Rockingham County consisted of six school districts;

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<sup>106</sup> The detailed accounting of the new reports helps to provide a clear picture of what the state was interested in learning. The reports provide 10 tables of information including school populations, teachers, and salaries. Several tables are devoted to the budgets of the Districts, Counties, and State. Expenditures are listed in detail. There is extra specific reporting required on graded schools beyond a basic look at the number of non graded schools and their teacher and pupil numbers. The reports also include a questionnaire which highlights issues of interest the State Board requires of the County Superintendents.

<sup>107</sup> See Appendix A on Locations of Valley Counties.

Stonewall, Ashby, Central, Linville, Plains, and Harrisonburg. The school population of the county contained 10,284 school aged children. It would hold firm around that number for the next fifteen years with only a slight rise and then fall about the turn of the twentieth century. Despite a steady number of school aged children in the county, under the direction of the state, Rockingham County would succeed in reducing the number of schools in order to create an environment more conducive to education.<sup>108</sup>

In 1886 there were 205 state-supported schools in Rockingham County: 187 white and 18 black. This number would grow to 218 schools in 1890. Due to consolidation efforts, the number of white schools would be reduced to 174 by 1900. There was actually a large increase in the number of black schools despite efforts to consolidate. The increase in black schools from 18 to 43 was necessary due to a large increase in black enrollment. Even with the new schools the total number of schools in the county was down one to 217.<sup>109</sup>

Another major concern was to stabilize the state's cadre of teachers. The state deemed participation in teaching to be too transitory to produce capable professionals. Superintendent L.M. Shumatte of Loudoun County expressed the general concern best in his 1889 report. He believed it was a necessity to improve teacher pay:

As would secure the permanent-services of well-trained and experienced teachers. We are compelled to depend largely upon the employment of untrained youths, who teach for a little while in order to obtain funds to use in preparing for other vocations.<sup>110</sup>

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<sup>108</sup> ARS, 1886.

<sup>109</sup> ARS, 1886-1900 Table 1.

<sup>110</sup> ASR 1886, Loudoun County.

In 1886 and in 1890 the vast majority of white teachers were males, and the number of black teachers was about evenly split, with slightly more females teaching. This trend would change by 1900 as the state sought to stabilize its teaching force. Whereas many white male teachers used the profession as a stepping stone to a different occupation in the 1870s and 1880s, a shift to hiring white female teachers brought stability to the profession as many female teachers remained as teachers for years.<sup>111</sup>

Additionally, the emphasis on black education led by W.E.B. DuBois and Booker T. Washington, buoyed by the growing national progressive movement at the turn of the century, made teaching an attractive profession for black men. In 1886 there were 117 white male teachers and 70 white female teachers. By 1900, though the county employed just 13 more teachers, white females now more than doubled the number of white males 117 to 57. Conversely, there were only 18 black teachers in Rockingham County in 1886, 11 male and 7 female. By 1900 the number of black teachers had nearly doubled and there were three times as many male teachers, 32, as female, 11.<sup>112</sup> This despite a relative drop in the number of blacks living in Rockingham County overall.<sup>113</sup>

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<sup>111</sup> Data on teacher sex is readily available in the reports as are complaints about the inability of keeping young men to be teachers from Shumatte in particular as well as others. The problem with pay coupled with the problem of keeping male teachers seems to make it apparent that the sudden shift to a largely female teaching force was no coincidence.

<sup>112</sup> Teaching was one of the few professions almost universally open to blacks. Due to the segregation of the school system and the requirement to provide schools for blacks this created a good number of teaching jobs for which there would have been no white competition. Though the law did not forbid white teachers working in black schools it was not a "socially" acceptable practice. Also, as leaders like W.E.B. DuBois and Booker T. Washington gained national prominence as they espoused education as the "way out" for blacks the prestige of the profession was held in high regard in the black community. Additionally the salaries, though considered too low for white and black by educational professionals, would have no doubt been an incentive in a segregated south. Though they were slightly lower than their white counterparts they were surely much more equal than many other professions.

<sup>113</sup> United States Census Bureau, Manuscript Population Schedules, Virginia 1870,



The Rockingham County Superintendents had done their job and earned their pay by 1886. Rockingham enrolled 7,903 students of its eligible population, which accounted for 73 percent of the white population and 51 percent of the black population. In 1890 white enrollment declined to 71 percent of the eligible population, and black enrollment was down to an abysmal 39 percent of the eligible population. Thanks to efforts over the next decade, the county had succeeded in enrolling 75 percent of the white population and saw a dramatic increase in black enrollment to 63 percent of the eligible students by 1900. Even given a considerably larger enrolled school population of 8,325 students in 1900 compared to 7,903 in 1886, Hulvey and the county had succeeded in raising enrollment and getting a larger percentage of school age students into the educational system. It should be noted that attendance of those students enrolled hovered near 70 percent during the fifteen year period. If the total school eligible population was examined in 1900, only 51 percent of total white student population was in attendance over the course of the year and only 42 percent of blacks. The figure of 42 percent may seem low, but it was double the attendance of 21 percent reported in 1890.<sup>114</sup>

According to reports from the Superintendents of Loudoun and Augusta County, the low attendance was not helped by the SBOE repealing compulsory attendance sometime prior to 1886. This had been done in order to appease many of Virginia's citizens who

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<http://leo.jmu.edu/search~S0?/XVirginia+Census+1870&SORT=DZ/XVirginia+Census+1870&SORT=DZ&extended=0&SUBKEY=Virginia%20Census%201870/1%2C5%2C5%2CB/frameset&FF=XVirginia+Census+1870&SORT=DZ&1%2C1%2C>, accessed on 03 March, 2009.

<sup>114</sup> ASR, Loudoun and Augusta, 1896. Interestingly, according to reports from the Superintendents of Loudoun and Augusta County the low number of attendance was not helped by the fact that the SBOE had repealed the requirement for compulsory attendance sometime prior to 1886.

had been unwilling to support compulsory attendance, especially in the rural areas where children were depended upon for labor on family farms.

Before the shift toward consolidation and standardization in state-supported schools, the state board emphasized “graded” education. This approach indicated which schools separated their students by ability. Most “graded” schools simply had two grades. By 1900 there were many schools with up to four grades. Starting in 1886, the state tracked very specific data on these schools. The 1886 report lists fourteen graded schools in Rockingham County. The 1890 report shows that number to have grown to twenty-three, though some schools were categorized as “graded” one year, and in another year would come off of the list. Sometimes there were insufficient students to have grades, or sometimes the teachers were incapable of running them. Graded schools had to be certified and required attendance in excess of thirty students. This number was greater than the accepted minimum of twenty students, which was often waived to fifteen, as regulated by the state board as a requirement to be considered a school.<sup>115</sup> The 1900 report shows that the number of graded schools in Rockingham County had grown to thirty-seven, with the Harrisonburg school having the most grades with seven.<sup>116</sup> This number did not include high schools which ran anywhere from a one to a four grade format during the period. High schools were also considered to be institutions of higher

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<sup>115</sup> Minutes, 1870-73, 42; ARS, Rockingham, 1886, 1890, 1900.

<sup>116</sup> Graded education was not quite what it is in today’s K-12 format. In 1886 most schools had only two grades. By 1900 many schools had four. One of the schools with the highest grade totals in the state was the Harrisonburg School which had seven grades.

learning as defined by the 1870 constitution and were perhaps more equivalent to colleges in prestige if not curriculum.<sup>117</sup>

The period starting in 1886 saw a shift in the length of school year. Rockingham County's schools were open an average of five months in 1886. This was a dramatic increase from the 1870s when schools were frequently open for only two and a half months each year. Until 1886 the minimum standard remained three months. The 1890 Rockingham County report shows that the average moved up to 5.22 months and that graded schools were open for at least four months and many up to eight months. These term averages held true in 1900.<sup>118</sup> This can be directly attributed to the consistent efforts of the superintendent to champion and the boards to champion education through stumping in the previous period.

Attendance rates also changed as the number of graded schools increased. Graded schools average attendance was much higher in general, usually a good 10 percent better than one room schools in almost every year. In an effort to expand the benefits of graded education, the state board lowered the attendance requirement to be recognized as a graded school. In 1871 there was a required average attendance of 100 for a graded school. In 1886 there were graded schools with attendances as low as forty-five students, and there were recognized graded schools with as few as thirty-six students in 1890, and forty-two students in 1899. This demonstrated that the emphasis was on graded

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<sup>117</sup>A high school diploma was worth as much to a person in this period as a college education might be today. A High School education could be sufficient to become a teacher as well as several other jobs such as military officer-ship, or managing industry which require much higher levels of education today.

<sup>118</sup> In 1899 the reporting became more specific to show up to half months that schools were open. Many of the school terms were probably rounded up a full month 1890.

education. The state board clearly was willing to lower the attendance requirements significantly if it meant that graded education was being conducted. Even a school only meeting the minimum attendance requirement of twenty students would be encouraged to have a graded education.<sup>119</sup> The reason for this compromise was that graded schools were indeed considered to provide a better and more focused education which could not be accomplished in settings with multiple age groups in single classrooms.

While the second Morrill Act of 1876 had opened up the state coffers, this was hardly the only economic boon for the system of public free schools. At the same time, despite reporting trepidation on the part of the public to pay taxes for schools, Virginia's county superintendents had been wildly successful in securing taxes from their populations.<sup>120</sup> The reporting shows that nearly all local funds were being spent with any carry-over being used in the next year.<sup>121</sup> Carry-over always came from the county and districts with state funds always being exhausted. Much of the carry-over was usually unpaid bills from the previous year at the time of the reports. The next highest expenditure was always real estate. This could mean new construction, the purchasing of buildings which

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<sup>119</sup> ARS, 1886-1900.

<sup>120</sup> ARS, Augusta, Bland, Highland, Loudoun, and Rockingham, 1870, 1886. By 1886 Rockingham County had gone from no real budget to total expenditures of \$40,760.45, \$15,897.03 of this money came from the state and another \$21,000 from district and county taxes. Similar numbers based on population can be observed in each of the counties highlighted in Appendix A.

<sup>121</sup> Carry over refers to any funds left over from the tax revenue raised in the previous year which was available to apply to the following years budget. It was important to spend any state revenue first to ensure that the budget would not be cut in the following year. It was also important to commit any carry over from local tax revenue to expenses from the previous year so as to ensure the same.

were previously owned privately, or acquiring new land.<sup>122</sup> After that the budgets were usually close to even between fuel, rent and books and the clerks and treasurers. The superintendent was paid from the state budget, not the county. Salaries for superintendents were significantly better than the originally mandated \$15 for every 1000 students. Board expenses were still on the reports, but were eliminated by 1900. According to the Superintendents' Reports in 1886 and 1890 mere hundreds of dollars were spent on classroom supplies in Rockingham County. By 1900 the money spent on school supplies and instruments was close to the thousands of dollars spent on fuel and administrators. This was directly related to the rising use of laboratories for technical, be it industrial or agricultural, education and the advent of more "scientific" ideas of education.<sup>123</sup>

The budget available to Rockingham County in 1871 from the state was \$2,157 for a school population of 8,628 with no local tax revenue generated. In 1886 Rockingham County had at its disposal \$40,760.45 in tax revenues for public education. The state of Virginia provided \$15,897.03 of that amount, nearly 40 percent. The remainder came from district taxes, county taxes, and hundreds of dollars from "tuition".<sup>124</sup> The county also received \$1,906.64 from "other sources". The nearly \$2000 amount was the extent

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<sup>122</sup> ASR, 1889, Loudoun. Money was always an issue for building. As late as 1889 L.M. Shumatte reported needing more money in two districts than the law allowed him to raise for building purposes and the extension of school terms.

<sup>123</sup> ASR, 1886-1920, Rockingham. Annually almost 500 "indigent" children in Rockingham County both black and white were supplied with text at no charge with similar percentages made available in the other counties.

<sup>124</sup> Minutes, 1870-73, 63. Tuition was added to items tracked in the 1870s by the SBOE in the amount of dollars per student. Tuition did not match the number of students. It was paid by students outside the county, district, or age range. In some cases tuition was basically pocket money given to teachers by school patrons. A way of saying, "good job" from the community to help keep teachers in a small pass the hat fashion.

of private philanthropy in 1886, which had been a large source of resources in the 1870s. Private philanthropy now accounted for less than 5 percent of the county budget. This statistic, perhaps more than anything else, shows how entrenched schools had become. In 1890 the county budget was \$39,337.30, with \$16,265.70 coming from the state, \$45 in tuition and private funding was down to a mere \$400. In 1890 the state contributed just over 40 percent of the county school budget. By 1900 the budget for Rockingham County was \$41,706.13, with \$16,192.54 coming from the state, \$689.75 from tuition (a number which was rarely high that year), and only \$80.00 in private philanthropy. In 1900 the state contribution had once again dropped under 40 percent. It was clear that by 1900 the public was to be the sole supporter of education. In the 1900s histories of the Southern Education Board, Capon Springs Conference, and Conference for Education in the South suggest that the goal was to shift away from private philanthropy. This had already happened in Virginia.

The improvement of teachers was considered a key to improving education progressively by national leaders such as William Chandler Bagley and John Dewey. This was not something lost on Virginia's professional educators. Teacher institutes such as those espoused by Bagley and conducted by Rockingham County could help solve the problem of training. Virginia's leaders also understood, as put so well by L.M. Shumatte earlier, that quality pay equaled quality professionals. Teacher pay was generally an issue in this period. The county superintendents believed that increasing teacher pay was an important component in securing good teachers and providing quality education. At the same time the state expressed concern that many counties were not promptly paying their teachers. In 1886 and 1890 the budget for teachers generally consumed about two thirds

of the counties' expenditures. Teachers frequently had to wait until the end of the next fiscal year to get paid. Though many superintendents such as those of Bland, Loudoun, and Augusta counties called for increases in teacher pay, it was clear that state officials wanted to keep the pressure to pay teachers on the counties and districts.<sup>125</sup> The problem was largely corrected internally as the amount of the budget spent on teacher salary increased to about 75 percent of the Rockingham County budget in 1900 despite little increase in the actual number of teachers. This money was made available due to a decreased focus on real estate expenditures. The switch to a largely female population of teachers no doubt also helped save some money as women were paid slightly less, on average, than their male counterparts. Incidentally, both males and females were paid less in 1900 than in 1886. But while males made on average 29 cents less, females made nearly three dollars less.<sup>126</sup>

Southern progressive reformer James Joyner argued that "attractive physical facilities should inspire every other district and ...every passerby". A local woman said that "there was no better measure of popular attitudes towards education, than the appearance of their schools."<sup>127</sup> Private funds had been responsible for nearly all school construction in 1871-72 in Rockingham County, and much of the 1870s according to the reports of George Holland.<sup>128</sup> Because of this schools were generally simple facilities. However, as

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<sup>125</sup> ASR, 1895, Supplemental reports.

<sup>126</sup> ASR, 1886. 205-18(Colored) Teachers, Males paid monthly \$ 26.69, females \$25.53; 1890, 219(14 Colored) Teachers, Males paid monthly \$28.48 Females \$24.27; 1900, 240-(17 Colored) Teachers, Males paid monthly \$26.40 \$Females\$ 22.70; According to Table 2 of the 1886, 1890, and 1900 VSRs.

<sup>127</sup> Link, *The Paradox of Southern Progressivism*, 127.

<sup>128</sup> George Holland's 1871-72 Report to the Superintendent.

the school system came to believe that attractive facilities promoted public education, the acquisition and construction of new schools became a priority of the SBOE.<sup>129</sup>

In the 1880s Rockingham County, under the stewardship of George Hulvey and the direction of the State Board of Education, began to invest heavily in real estate. The county totaled \$5,986.85 in real estate expenses in 1886. Yearly expenses were down to \$3,826.09 in 1890 and further still to \$3,076.55 in 1900. This helped make room for the larger commitment of the budget to teacher salaries mentioned above, but it also represents that a sufficient number of school buildings had been acquired. From 1886 to 1900 the county invested \$58,000.84 in real estate. In 1886 Rockingham County then owned real estate valued at \$66,226.86. By 1900 the county had built or acquired almost another thirty-thousand dollars in property and was then valued at \$94,575.00. This property value, of course, does not include existing school houses that were renovated or upgraded on land already owned by the district. In the fifteen-year period from 1886 to 1900 the number of county-owned schoolhouses dropped by one. This masks the good work done and provided for by county and state efforts towards school consolidation. Rockingham County had constructed fifty-six new schools and purchased structures to increase the number of county-owned buildings by twenty-one to 172 total school houses. The total number of rooms in the county's schools had also gone up by 34 to 250 as a result of the new and better construction. This increased the seating capacity of the schools by nearly 20 percent. Finally, less than half of the schoolhouses in the county

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<sup>129</sup> In later years the term "attractive" would be better equated with the term "functional". Functional from the standpoint that buildings could house students efficiently and possess the equipment necessary to provide first rate education.



possessed an outhouse in 1886, but by 1900, 94 percent of the county's 180 schoolhouses possessed the luxury of an outhouse.<sup>130</sup>

Teacher institutes seemed to be another pet project of the State Board of Education. Teacher training and the methods of teaching were always hot topics in the circles of progressive education. The great minds such as George Dewey and William Chandler Bagley had been proponents of teacher preparation for years. The training of teachers in the art of teaching would be a hallmark of progressivism in education. However, just as the state was beginning to press the issue in the 1880s and especially in the 1890s, it must be pointed out that not all of Virginia was waiting to be told what to do. Though the SBOE may have been slow to come around to the importance of and focus on teacher institutes, Rockingham County was clearly a leader in the establishment of this practice and no doubt influenced the state in far greater ways than did the national progressive movement.<sup>131</sup>

Rockingham County held its first two-day teacher institute in April 1871. One hundred and one teachers were present to hear addresses by Barnas Sears, the Director of the Peabody Fund, and Major Jed. Hotchkiss, who had been a school professional in Staunton prior to and after the Civil War. The purpose of this institute -- and teacher's institutes in general -- was to impart methods of teaching. Educators such as John

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<sup>130</sup> ASRs, 1886-1900. The SBOE began to turn its eye to seating capacity in the 1890s as it moved towards school consolidation. It was obviously fiscally efficient, but in an effort to move to graded schools and better education it was also necessary to make schools larger in order to allow for more efficient methods of teaching. The low point of seating capacity after it began to be tracked in 1889 was 7580 white and 712 black seats across the county. This peaked at different years due to construction and consolidation schedules at 9316 white seats in 1900 and 964 black seats in 1897.

<sup>131</sup> In this instance the ideals of educational thinkers like Dewey, Kilpatrick and Bagley are occurring outside of any apparent direct influence on their part. A more proper view of educational ideals might be a concurrent formulation of ideals by many educators as opposed to receiving them from a single source or non-existent think tank of educators.

Dewey, William Chandler Bagley, and George Hulvey had long been on record as believing that it was not enough to understand a subject. It was also necessary to understand the art and application of teaching as a science. Under the leadership of Fitzhugh Lee and John Buchanan, teacher institutes underwent a transition in Virginia from great idea to a mandatory component of teacher training. There was a loophole in the law which only made them mandatory during the school terms. If a county held an institute when school was not in session, attendance was not required.<sup>132</sup>

In Rockingham County these institutes soon grew into normal schools such as those mentioned in the previous chapter and West Central Academy, located at Mt. Clinton. West Central Academy operated under its Principal I. S. Wampler from 1890 to 1902. The school claimed that 65 percent of Rockingham County teachers in the year 1907 had spent some time in this school.<sup>133</sup> The growth of normal schools and teachers' institutes had grown up in places like Rockingham County in the 1870s and were now becoming full-fledged institutions entrenched in the school system. At the same time the emphasis on teacher training makes it clear that the SBOE wanted to export these methods and institutions to the rest of the state.<sup>134</sup>

The annual reports of the county superintendents help to shed some light on educational issues as the state board asked more specific questions about school districts.

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<sup>132</sup> Minutes, 1900-1912, 48

<sup>133</sup> Rockingham County School History. Other schools established in Rockingham County for the purpose of teacher training or collegiate work included: Shenandoah Seminary, which was established at Dayton by A. P. Funkhouser in 1875 and another normal institute was established at Spring Creek in 1880 by D. C. Flory. This school moved to Bridgewater two years later and was chartered as Bridgewater College in 1889.

<sup>134</sup> ARS, Valley Supplemental reports.

The format and questions of the reports from 1886 until 1888 of Augusta, Bland, Highland, Loudoun, and Rockingham Counties are illustrative of initial concerns related to the inception of public education in Virginia and the introduction of others. These questions show the state board and its relationship with schools in Virginia. The early reports reveal the concern over developing public favor for the school system. They also show a new and additional emphasis on teacher training across the state. They also show the superintendent's disorganization or lack of control over the district boards of trustees. There were some questions which will not be examined here because they were mostly administrative and designed to double check many of the facts and figures in the report. The important questions provide a glimpse into the changing nature of public education on the local level in the late nineteenth century. The reports also offer a greater sense of consensus about education in the Shenandoah Valley and show where different counties kept pace with the march of education in Virginia, being innovative, or lagging behind and being directed by the state board to change.

The State Board of Education asked superintendents in the period from 1886-1888 to answer three basic questions. The first question was "What is the Public Sentiment toward Public Schooling?" In many ways, this question was a continuation of concerns associated with the origins of public education in 1870, and how the public responded to the mandated school system. Nearly all of the superintendents reported something along the lines of "Favorable" or "generally favored" or "growing in favor." Loudoun County Superintendent L.M. Shumatte frequently provided more astute responses than most of his peers. In 1886, he reported public sentiment as being "Generally Favorable. The public school as an institution has the almost universal support of the people of this

county."<sup>135</sup> D.H. Munsey, Superintendent of Bland County, reported in 1888 that "a large majority of our people favor them. They are only opposed by those who never enjoyed the benefits of an education and would not support private schools"<sup>136</sup>

The second question revealed the growing state board interest in the efficiency and effectiveness of the district boards of trustees across the state. The report inquired if the "district school boards hold regular meetings?" "Hold meetings as occasions requires" was the response of most superintendents. Only Highland County reported its boards having a regular "monthly meeting,"<sup>137</sup> perhaps because in this rural and isolated county there was little else to do.<sup>138</sup> It seems apparent that many of the superintendents found their district trustees to be lacking in their ability to do their job. L.M. Shumatte intoned as much when he responded that "A general law providing for a small compensation to cover the expenses of school trustees coupled with a requirement that they shall visit each of their schools once a year in order to draw said compensation" was required. The fact that trustees were not paid and their duties were undefined seemed to be a frustration for many of the superintendents as they found the district trustees difficult to manage. Shumatte was also politely pointing out that the district trustees in Loudoun did not even

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<sup>135</sup> ARS, Loudoun, 1886.

<sup>136</sup> ARS, Bland County, 1886, Table 10.

<sup>137</sup> ARS, Highland, 1886-1888.

<sup>138</sup> ARS, Highland and Rockingham, 1886. In 1886 Highland County only had 50 schools total which supported a school population of 1479 students taught by 50 teachers. This was only a ¼ of the schools and teachers in Rockingham and 1/5 the students.

bother to visit their schools. Augusta County Superintendent V.O. Peale also complained about this issue several times in his reports.<sup>139</sup>

The third question showed the additional emphasis on teachers and their professional development through institutes. The state board wanted reporting on “the number of teachers' institutes held during the year, and the number of teachers present at each, and whether for white or colored teachers?” Rockingham County Superintendent George Hulvey reported in 1886: "One institute for white and colored. I have no data for whites present but was there and suppose 150." D.H. Munsey in Bland and V.O. Peale in Augusta County also had one institute each.<sup>140</sup> In his first report in 1886 Shumatte reported that Loudoun County offered no teachers' institutes.<sup>141</sup> This would change in later years. According to the reports, only Rockingham County conducted any institutes in 1887 and 1888. Loudoun County's L.M. Shumatte believed it was not feasible to get his teachers to an institute three years into his tenure as superintendent.<sup>142</sup>

Perhaps feeling confident that public sentiment generally supported education, the state board shifted the focus of its superintendent questions after 1889. For the next eleven years, the board was almost entirely concerned with efficiency. With the exception of a supplemental report in 1895, there was no change to the state's questions until the end of the century.

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<sup>139</sup> ARS, 1895. Supplemental Report.

<sup>140</sup> ARS, Rockingham, Bland, and Augusta, 1886.

<sup>141</sup> ARS, Loudoun, 1886.

<sup>142</sup> ARS, Rockingham, Bland, Loudoun, Highland, and Augusts, 1886-1888.

It seemed that as early as 1889 the state board was beginning to espouse something very similar to the progressive ideas of scientific management of education. Progressive ideals aside, it was just plain necessary for an organization the size of Virginia's System of Public Free Schools to become efficient in the execution of its duties. The reports reveal a separation of the state's concerns from those of the county superintendents. In some areas the state pushed uniformity. In other areas, the counties called for uniformity. It is important to ascertain in which cases the county superintendent was compelled to go along with the public and in what cases the superintendent appears to be working in the "best interest" of improved education.<sup>143</sup>

The first new question of the state form in 1889 showed the shift to a new order. The question asked: "How can the efficiency of the Public Schools of your county be improved?" George Hulvey conveyed some humor in his response: he "could greatly improve [the public schools] by spending my entire time for the term among the schools. So much of my time is taken in the evil work of the office." Many people claimed to not like the office, but in truth Hulvey was more diligent than most in visiting his schools, perhaps following in the original standards set by Rockingham County's first superintendent George Holland.<sup>144</sup>

A.O. Peale shed some light on the deficiencies of the district trustees. He believed it was necessary for the state to be more explicit in the defining the duties of the district boards, which had been left as vague for nearly twenty years. Peale added that this could be accomplished:

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<sup>143</sup> ARS, 1889.

<sup>144</sup> ARS, Rockingham, 1889.

by requiring district trustees to visit all schools once a month and report at which are lacking to the [county] superintendent. The superintendent should then be required to visit each schools as are not progressing satisfactorily, and stay long enough to find the cause and apply the proper remedy. In a large county like Augusta the supt's visits are so short but little good is accomplished hereby.<sup>145</sup>

D.H. Munsey of Bland County, an area not blessed by a large tax base, put the matter simply -- "More money. More schoolhouses."<sup>146</sup> In contrast, L.M. Shumatte argued the focus needed to be on securing better teachers through increased salaries. His report shed some light on the problem of teacher turnover:

Such a general increase in the salaries of teachers as would secure the permanent services of well-trained and experienced teachers. We are compelled to depend largely upon the employment of untrained youths, who teach for a little while in order to obtain funds to use in preparing for other avocations. Two of our Districts need more money, for building purposes and for the extension of their school terms, than can be obtained under existing laws.<sup>147</sup>

All the superintendents agreed that teacher development was paramount to the improvement of the school system. National figures such as William Chandler Bagley were making similar arguments. The state's educators were indeed reading pedagogical literature throughout the period and the state even produced its own educational journal, but operating on the grass-roots level, these superintendents saw first-hand that there was no teacher like that of experience and years growing up in the nubile system of public free schools in Virginia. These superintendents were educational experts. In many cases they were the authors of articles in the *Virginia Journal of Education*, especially Shumatte and Hulvey. Each of the superintendents listed several authors that teachers

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<sup>145</sup> ARS, Augusta, 1889.

<sup>146</sup> ARS, Bland, 1889.

<sup>147</sup> ARS, Loudoun, 1889. .

read in the educational literature. One name in common among Valley educators was an R. Brooks who wrote about the ideology of Appalachian education.<sup>148</sup>

The new questionnaire also revealed the continued problem of district boards. Superintendents reported that district boards were haphazard in their educational oversight and in the general irregularity of their meetings. As was noted earlier, exceptions to meeting irregularity were in the smallest counties of Highland and Bland.<sup>149</sup> This problem would not be solved until the state formalized the district boards and did away with trustees in 1922. It was in this year that the state abolished district boards and began to elect representatives from the districts to county boards of education.<sup>150</sup>

The reports also reveal a change in teacher institutes after 1895. As late as 1894 Rockingham County remained a model in the Valley and the state for teacher training and influenced the state's pressure on other counties to implement teacher institutes. While the other Valley counties all reported they held no teacher institutes in 1892, the Rockingham report enumerated that "We have teacher's meetings once in two weeks in the several districts, and every quarter in Harrisonburg." This practice would soon become the model and standard the state would establish. In 1894 the "Rockingham County Teacher's Association began meeting [for institutes] once a quarter."<sup>151</sup>

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<sup>148</sup> R. Brooks is a frequently mentioned author in the 1895 Supplemental from all superintendents. He is not known or recognized in any of the modern historiography. He wrote on Appalachian education according to the reports but I am unable to locate any of his work today outside of references to him in older books on education. He is prevalent in the bibliographies of some older journals on education.

<sup>149</sup> ARS, 1886-1900..

<sup>150</sup> Rockingham County School History.

<sup>151</sup> ASR, Rockingham, 1892 and 1894. According to all reports in the valley almost no District boards met regularly. This highlights the consistent problems with the boards reported by the



In 1892 the state also began inquiring about the use of the *Virginia School Register*. The state asked whether all of the teachers were “supplied with the revised edition of the *Virginia School Register*, and were these registers returned at the close of the session to the District Clerks, as required by law?” The register was sent out every year so that the state board could approve a standardized list and conduct proper contracts with textbook publishers. Sending out the list of books for review by all of the teachers and districts was an integral part of the process of compiling the book list. Every superintendent was generally able to report that his teachers accomplished this goal enthusiastically.<sup>152</sup>

Some of the most detailed and interesting shifts in the public school system were evidenced in a supplemental report furnished to the counties in 1895. John E. Massey had just begun his second term as State Superintendent of Public Instruction when a supplemental report was requested. In his first term he mandated some sweeping reforms including, most significantly, the implementation of uniform examinations for teachers in Virginia and a program for summer normal schools for teachers subsidized by the state. Massey wanted information on the effect of uniform teacher examinations and the progress of the state “encouraged” and supported normal schools on the improvement of teachers. He also wished to understand what educational materials were being read and used by the state’s teachers. The state was also beginning to consider a uniform “course of study”. What this exactly meant was a bit amorphous and the report was designed to

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Superintendents and in the Rockingham County School History. Shumatte’s suggested in 1895 that they make the District Boards a paid position or at least compensated. Peale is constantly appealing for some regulation of duties by the District boards. Their only duty, as explained in 1870- is to “perform their duties” Minutes, 1870-73, 5.

<sup>152</sup>ARS, 1889-1900.

solicit the opinions of the county superintendents on the subject. This thinking likely addressed the “extra” subjects being taught all over the state and a desire to consider curriculum standardization. This would eventually help the state pick books and influence the materials used to teach these courses. This would become apparent in the new standardized book registers of the early twentieth century.

The state was also interested in improving schools through consolidation. This was thought to improve education and obviously bring about administrative and fiscal efficiency. The report also provided for a review of attendance policy, and laws, and the enforcement of these laws. This feedback would help to justify consolidation which would pave the way for efficient construction of “modern facilities”. The first step was to establish the “state of current facilities.” Massey wanted to implement changes which would require more money from the legislature and possibly higher taxes in the counties. He requested a survey of public opinion on schools, not taken since 1888, and conducted a comparison of public and private schools to demonstrate to the legislature that the populace would support public education. He also asked the county superintendents to propose legislation which might help better support the public free school system. Massey was also pushing his superintendents to take a more active role in the progress of teachers’ abilities and to ensure they were being paid. The report closed with a chance for the county superintendents to provide remarks. This report was a rare occasion in which nearly all the superintendants chose to provide substantial comments.<sup>153</sup>

The supplemental report opened with a four-part question concerning uniform examinations for teachers and teacher efficiency. There was a mixed bag of responses

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<sup>153</sup> ARS, Augusta, Bland, Loudoun, and Rockingham, Supplemental Report, 1895.

from the superintendents of Augusta, Bland, Loudoun, and Rockingham counties on the general effect of the examinations. George Hulvey of Rockingham and a proponent of teachers' institutes and training reported that they had "tended to equalize the grade of teachers in different counties, and give more general satisfaction," while A.O. Peale of Augusta County reported them to be "Rather demoralizing, because they are so simple that every one with a little smattering [of education] thinks he can get a certificate, and abuse the superintendent if he does not." D.H. Munsey of Bland simply complained of the workload, while L.M. Shummate of Loudoun "observed no special effects. Our teachers had been accustomed for years to examinations." The responses showed that most agreed with examinations, but the current ones were perhaps inadequate. It is also apparent that where teacher's institutes had now taken hold, in Augusta, Loudoun, and especially Rockingham, the state's implementation of mandatory institutes was viewed as inadequately behind the institutes in the more advanced counties. At the same time the new institutes were viewed as a new burden to underdeveloped counties like Bland.<sup>154</sup>

The superintendents also commented on the value of examinations to increasing teacher efficiency. Hulvey was again willing to admit that he thought "they have contributed in this." Peale and Munsey, on the other hand, believed that the efficiency of their teachers had not increased at all. Shummatte, who was now a convert to the new way of doing things, replied that they had helped "no more than previous examinations, so far as my observation extends". The superintendents were similarly divided on their effect in getting teachers to devote more to their own professional studies.<sup>155</sup>

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<sup>154</sup> ARS, Supplemental, 1895.

<sup>155</sup> ARS, Supplemental, 1895.

With the exception of Munsey, who had no comment on the issue, the other superintendents were all in concert concerning suggestions for the examinations. Hulvey wrote that:

I should prefer to have them in graded more advanced work for no. 1's and such work as we have had for 2's and 3's. The two limits are too close together. Many of our teachers, with proper incentives could pass beyond the limits of the one.<sup>156</sup>

V.O. Peale agreed that they “ought to be of a higher grade and more practical. The Arithmetic and Grammar were entirely too simple, were no test of knowledge on these subjects.” Shumatte suggested “raising the standard for white teachers upon such subjects as arithmetic, grammar, and geography, and a general lowering of the standard of first grades among white.”<sup>157</sup>

The superintendents commented on the influence of the summer normal schools. There was no visible divide on this issue. Hulvey, whose county had been running several of these schools for years, believed that “The Summer normals have been beneficial to our higher grade teachers, and very indirectly to our lower grade teachers; but their influence is reaching the masses very slowly.” Peale, for whom the schools were newer, wrote that they were “Good for the most part. Too much attention, I think, is paid to reviewing simply for the purpose of passing sub[ject] examinations, and not enough to “Methods of Teaching”. The recent convert Shumatte was still warming up to the idea when he wrote about the influence of the schools:

Very good as far as it extends. As a rule only those who feel their deficiencies most and those who are among the most inefficient make a

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<sup>156</sup> The ones, twos, and threes referred to the grade level of teacher certification being granted by passing the examination.

<sup>157</sup> ARS, Supplemental, 1895.

point of attending these schools. We have a number of old and experienced teachers, a number who are graduates of normal schools and higher institutions of learning and some who are married. Among these classes I have not been able to excite much interest in the summer schools. I wage upon all the importance of attending at least once.<sup>158</sup>

Munsey was again the odd man out. Bland was a small county which did not have the resources to run its own schools and was also geographically disconnected from going to a county like Rockingham to attend them. He observed, “Our teachers complain of hard times, and low salaries, and cannot be induced to attend them.”<sup>159</sup>

The reports on attendance at summer normal schools showed the lack of teacher interest. Rockingham County had little need to hold the summer normal schools now instituted by the state. Hulvey reported that “Probably not more than 10% [attend the summer normals]; and [that most] 40% [attend] the home normals” located in Rockingham County. This leaves little doubt that Rockingham was far ahead of its peers in that it had its own normal schools. This shows two things. First, professional development for teachers was not a foreign idea in education in Virginia. It had long been a part of the grass roots movement in the state. Second, many counties were not holding summer normal schools. Though Peale was suspicious of the school’s effects, he also had to admit that very few of his teachers attended them because of a small-pox scare. To say that a few of Bland County's teachers attended the normal schools was an overstatement by Munsey since none of his teachers had attended a single one. Shumatte highlighted another benefit of having normal schools within the county’s borders. Instead of boasting of his own attendance, he pointed out that “each year we have quite a

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<sup>158</sup> Ibid

<sup>159</sup> Ibid

number of teachers from other counties and if they attend they are credited to those counties.” Loudoun was ahead of the curve here also. It showed that more “progressive” counties like Loudoun and Rockingham supported neighboring counties due to their own volition to press the issue.<sup>160</sup>

Some superintendents commented on the practical value of teacher institutes. Huvley stated that “Those [teachers] who attend are generally the more progressive.” The positivity placed behind the use of the word progressive is interesting considering that many scholars have argued that educational associations had to hide the fact that they were progressive from southern Democrats. There is clearly an understanding of the political implications of this term. Peale made an interesting case for having teachers who were well grounded in the principles of education. The term principles is meant to convey grounding in education of subjects matter vs. methods which have to do with teaching. He believed the effect of the institutes depended on a teacher’s “knowledge of subjects before they go. If well grounded in principles, methods greatly improve”. This highlights the fact that the normal schools were more focused on methods than subject matter, which most educators believed teachers already possessed. If they didn’t a good texts could easily make up for a deficiency.

Teacher certification tests also addressed this issue. Although Shumatte had submitted to running the schools on his own, and supported them, he was not entirely convinced of their effect saying that “of course [teachers] show decided improvement in themselves but owing to the facts stated above I cannot say that they are as a rule more efficient than others.” This statement is interesting. Loudoun had a better established

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<sup>160</sup> Ibid

education program than other counties<sup>161</sup> Peale admitted that the better teachers were not attending and that the weaker teachers who did participate did not improve. Shumatte was also first and foremost on the record as believing in hiring more qualified teachers from a principle standpoint. He admitted that teachers well versed in their subjects could teach more efficiently.<sup>162</sup>

In another measure of progressive teacher improvement, the state began to inquire about the extent to which teachers were reading educational journals and other pedagogical literature. It seems apparent from all the reports that nearly all of the state's teachers were reading educational journals and materials. The superintendents boasted that nearly all of their teachers were doing so with the exception of D.H. Munsey in Bland County who reported that around 50 percent of his teachers were involved. Shumatte reported that "the Great majority, nearly all, are reading such literature in some form. There has been a marked improvement along this line in recent years."<sup>163</sup>

This comment as much as any other shows the new committed focus on standardization in thought and raising standards of teachers across the state. The new focus and requirements for teachers to attend institutes and the expanded access to normal schools showed the commitment of the state board in this regard. First, it is apparent that the state is committed to getting the literature out there and it is following up to ensure that it was read. The state was also concerned that it was hiring educators who were genuinely interested in the profession. Here again the development of the

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<sup>161</sup> The town of Waterford in Loudoun had even had a black school even before the end of the civil war. For more on this see Souders, *Shelter in a Time of Storm*.

<sup>162</sup> ARS, 1895, Supplemental.

<sup>163</sup> Ibid

counties along progressive lines exposed fissures in the level of educators being produced. Hulvey and Shumatte agreed that most were interested in being teachers with few exceptions, even if Hulvey did have to admit that “some teach as if forced.” For Peale it was a mixed bag and for Munsey, Bland county reported that “a majority of them do not” show interest in being educators.<sup>164</sup>

The superintendents reported the teacher improvement and movement toward professionalization in “their success with their pupils, their progress, and their enthusiasm are all evidences of interest”<sup>165</sup> and “by attendance upon and participation in teachers’ meetings, by the study of educational literature, and by making special preparation for classroom work.” Even Peale was forced to admit that attendance of normal institutes and “able reading of educational literature [in a] desire [to] work for higher grade certificates” was the best and sure sign of a good teacher.<sup>166</sup> In this way Virginia was very much in line and ahead of thinking from national figures such as William Chandler Bagley in terms of focus on training teachers in order to get results from students.

The superintendents named the most common books read on methods and school management in their counties. Brooks, Rambli, White, Payne and Page were all reported with Brooks and Page being by far the most common.<sup>167</sup> All of these authors were, like Brooks mentioned above, writers in the field of educational theory and practice. None of them, are recognizable today as in any way influential in progressive educational thinking

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<sup>164</sup> Ibid

<sup>165</sup> ARS, Rockingham, Supplemental, 1895.

<sup>166</sup> ARS, Augusta, Loudoun, Supplemental, 1895.

<sup>167</sup> These are the educators listed in common according to the responses of the Superintendents reports. I cannot find anything on any of them as their first names are not listed with the exception of Rambli.



even as second tier figures, yet these men helped shape the minds of Virginia's educators. Teachers across the state were provided with educational reading material for their professional development. The superintendents all reported making a point of questioning their teachers in respect to this educational reading material. There was clearly much more focus on the ability to teach over the ability to understand subject matter. It was generally assumed that subject matter could be understood from the books used to instruct.

The SBOE also examined the issue of teacher salaries with the intent of finding some remedy. All superintendents admitted to tardiness in paying teachers with the exception of Peale. All also fixed the problem on the treasurers and believed that in some cases "the last months were not forthrightly paid on account of our tardiness in paying the taxes." Shumatte was the only superintendent to offer a solution: have a full time treasurer to the school system in addition to the county treasurer.<sup>168</sup>

The state board was also interested in ensuring that the superintendents were conducting personal evaluations of their students. There was no specific requirement for this except as part of their routine school visits. This would generally be done during an unannounced visit by the superintendent and would be of a "pop quiz" nature. All reported doing this to the extent possible and that they did indeed make their examination of the pupils a test of the teacher's work. Except for Shumatte who believed that he should do this "by no means. It would be unfair to the teachers. Many things would have to be considered in applying such a test."<sup>169</sup> Though Shumatte did agree with assessing

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<sup>168</sup> ARS, Loudoun Supplemental 1895.

<sup>169</sup> Ibid.

the general information and knowledge of the teachers on the subjects they were teaching, Hulvey reported that he was “sorry in many to find that it does not extend beyond the little outline book.” Shumatte argued this was of utmost importance with “young and inexperienced teachers especially. I give such instructions and make such suggestions as I think necessary and profitable.”<sup>170</sup> All agreed that it was their duty to inform the teachers of their defects in teaching and school management. Though Shumatte urged some caution in this as there were “no established standards in these matters, and there is such a thing as a meddlesome and fault-finding inspection that does more harm than good.” Though Bland and Peale did little about this, Hulvey and Shumatte kept up periodical meetings for teachers’ improvement in school work which they attended regularly. In 1895 Shumatte reported having had “six such meetings for white teachers and five for colored teachers. I am always present unless prevented by circumstances beyond my control.” The expectation of the county superintendent remained very hands-on even at this later stage in the development of the school system.<sup>171</sup>

Though Virginia had begun its public system of free schools with a simple uniform curriculum of reading, writing, and arithmetic, the counties and districts had added to the curriculum over the years. New courses like music and art, history, geography, and even technical instruction were taught in many schools. There was a diverse set of “extra” approved and non-approved courses in just about every county across the state. In 1895 State Superintendent of Public Instruction Massey began to

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<sup>170</sup>ARS, Rockingham, Supplemental, 1895.

<sup>171</sup> Ibid.

consider a “uniform course of study in the State”. This was the first time it was explicitly mentioned by a state official. Naturally, there were responses from the Valley county superintendents. Hulvey was unprepared to comment at the time, no doubt accustomed to charting his own course. Peale reported that he thought “it would be profitable, if practicable.” Hulvey observed that a uniform course of study would depend on what the course of instruction was and if it would fit with what his county had already seen fit to install. Shumatte perhaps summed up the trepidation best. He agreed with it “as an abstract proposition. I have formed no decided opinion upon this question. I should say no if it would interrupt the existing order of things to any great extent. Our people are up in arms at the bare suggestion of a change in text books.” Interestingly D.H. Munsey, whose small county wanted for experienced and imaginative teachers, thought that the idea was fantastic. A uniform course of study might well enhance the level of education in Bland County by bringing a broader focus to its schools.<sup>172</sup>

After twenty five years under the public system of free schools, the SBOE was starting to consider truly uniform instruction. The leading educators in the Valley were undecided if it was necessary and agreed that it would depend on the form. There was also plenty in Shumatte’s response to suggest that the public and the teachers would not be willing to accept any loss of flexibility in instruction and control over the school. The fruition of this debate would take place in the early 1900s as a small battle ensued over the adoption of textbooks to support a new uniform curriculum and exactly how flexible that curriculum would be.

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<sup>172</sup> According to the Superintendent’s report the students in the Black school in Bland County were still “happy with” the “basic level” of education they were receiving at this time.

A key to uniform instruction was also the consolidation of schools. This would provide much greater fiscal flexibility to deliver education to the masses as well as provide a more uniform and manageable structure under which teachers and schools could be managed and supervised. Placing students and teachers in consolidated locations made sense on a variety of levels. If nothing else it better supported the sheer logistics of it all. The state board was interested to see if there was an undue tendency to multiply the number of schools. Creating more schools was a way to create more teaching jobs and to bring employment and education into poor areas. However, it became cost prohibitive. Additionally, it was harder for a small school to survive even slight fluctuations in attendance or population. For this and other reasons the state became interested in consolidation and standardization. Consolidation was fiscally responsible and administratively efficient.<sup>173</sup>

The Valley superintendents were uncertain about consolidation. Hulvey and Peale both agreed that there was indeed an undue tendency to open schools. Peale, whose reports on school names and locations seemed to change with each report, placed the blame squarely on the patrons and absolved his loathed district school officials for being responsible for the problem. Peale's response shows continued public demand for schools and general public's desire to control local schools. District officials were obviously becoming over-burdened. Augusta County was especially woeful when it came to the multiplicity of its schools. The table on the number and names and location of

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<sup>173</sup> Paying teachers to teach fewer students than they were capable of is an obvious financial liability for the counties and the state. Expending resources on small schools, heat, fuel, chalk boards, postage, etc. was a waste when a consolidated school would save money by providing the same thing to more students.

graded schools in Augusta County changed drastically on an annual basis.<sup>174</sup> Shumatte reinforced this view when he reported that “the people have gotten the idea that 10 [pupils] is the legal average and the boards have in some instances yielded to their demands and opened schools that were too weak to live.” This shows the problems of consolidation in rural areas. There was not an efficient way to run schools that were so small. Furthermore, the degree of local control might keep attendance even lower. It seems absurd to pay a teacher and run a school for ten pupils, but this was what many rural areas desired. The cost of maintaining these schools was no doubt a burden on already stressed educational budgets. In truth, even after consolidation, most of the teachers kept their jobs with a simple move. It was the community who would suffer the loss of the school.

An example of a community suffering from the loss of a school was Zenda in Rockingham County near Harrisonburg. In an effort to improve the school system a new consolidated black school was opened in Harrisonburg at the present site of the former Lucy Simms School. Lucy Simms and her fellow teachers from the Zenda School simply picked up and moved to Harrisonburg and more black teachers were employed as a result of the building of a new and improved school. However, Zenda lost paid teachers, custodians for the school, the post office which supported the school, and eventually many of the families who moved the several miles to Harrisonburg to be near the new

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<sup>174</sup> The number of schools and the names of graded schools in Augusta County fluctuated by as much as ten schools annually. Often times the locations and names of the schools in the county would change. The difficulty in keeping up with the Augusta County Graded School Report may have specifically led to new specific instructions on the formatting of the 3<sup>rd</sup> table of the report being painstakingly detailed in terms of alphabetizing and districting after 1890.

school. In short order the once-thriving town of Zenda was decimated and reduced to a historical afterthought.<sup>175</sup>

Superintendent of Public Instruction John Massey no doubt believed there would be a positive effect on the school system by “reducing the number of schools, equipping the schools better, providing skilled teachers (increasing their pay), and lengthening the school term.” The question was really, in other words “what would be the effect of such changes upon the patronage and general efficiency of the schools?” Here the state and local school boards made their plan apparent. Superintendents of the larger Valley counties were in agreement with Massey. Hulvey reported that “it would give much better results, and much opposition on the part of patrons.” Peale alluded to the opposition to consolidating schools stating that he did not “think we could do away with enough schools to amount to anything. More money, longer terms & compulsory attendance is what we need.”<sup>176</sup> It was clear that despite the state’s desire for consolidation, local authority would be the determinant.

There was perhaps no better exercise of local power over the state than in the area of attendance. The 1870 Constitution gave the authority needed for compulsory attendance but it was a weak statement and something that the superintendents realized needed to be approved by the people to enforce. Though an analysis of the county and its revolving door schools seems to suggest that Peale was wrong, he was obviously submitting to public will. In the small county of Bland, schools were already

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<sup>175</sup> **Add a footnote on this and cite your own paper. Nancy B. Jones, a local historian, wrote a book on Zenda. You need to footnote it. She doesn’t have this information in her book. She doesn’t know why the schools closed. Just that they did. But there probably is need to footnote the book to show that the town was in good shape. This will be a long footnote paul.**

<sup>176</sup> ARS, Augusta, Supplemental, 1895.

consolidated out of necessity and Munsey agreed that “the patronage and efficiency of schools would be increased.” Shumatte echoed these sentiments and pointed out the inherent benefits and opposition to school consolidation:

Those within reach of such schools would be greatly benefitted and such schools would always be strong and efficient, but such changes would deprive many weak communities of constitutional rights which they now enjoy. Such changes would necessarily either greatly increase the rate of taxation or greatly reduce the number of schools. The people would not quietly submit to either. We have in this county 19 graded schools and quite a number of other schools that are furnishing a high grade of instruction and I think the people are in most places satisfied with the character of their schools.<sup>177</sup>

If the state could not enforce compulsory attendance in order to bring the numbers of pupils in its schools to desirable levels, then it could do so through consolidation.

Massey was also aware that the current school law required that schools have at least 20 pupils to remain open. However, in many cases, schools, such as the one in Zenda, were allowed to stay open even when they had fewer than twenty pupils because the superintendent could keep the school open with fifteen and even as low as ten pupils. With the exception of Bland County, all the superintendents reported that in one way or another they compromised on the twenty pupil rule. Shumatte was perhaps the strictest superintendent. He reported opening schools with enrollments of only fifteen pupils and waiting to close schools when their averages fell below ten.<sup>178</sup> Peale, who was very quick to open and close schools, agreed with the law as did Munsey who had no real choice in the matter. Hulvey, who would become a leader in school consolidation, agreed that “for the good of all there should be; but this bears heavily on our sparsely

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<sup>177</sup> ARS, Valley Supplementals, 1895.

<sup>178</sup> *Ibid.*

settled sections”, a reminder that this would be a problem for many of the rural schools. Shumatte thought that “in no case should it be less than 15 and in my opinion the teachers’ pay should in part be made to depend upon the average, with such relief as might be afforded by sessional average and by allowances for factious spirit, contagious diseases to.” He also pointed out that “after the repeal of the original law on [compulsory attendance] the attendance in many communities fell off in number and regularity and I have had to close quite a number of schools for want of attendance.” The opposition to the compulsory attendance laws showed that despite the good work done, there were still many who believed that school should not be mandatory and in more rural areas often did not get their children to schools. Consolidation of schools was a key to combating low attendance. It was a necessity that schools be moved to locations where they could draw the most interest and be located centrally to populations.<sup>179</sup>

New schools were a key component to consolidation. State Superintendent Massey began to collect information on the schoolhouses in Virginia in an effort to remove poor facilities in the coming drive for modernization. He inquired in the 1895 special report about the general condition of [county] school-houses with regard to location, convenience, comfort, equipment, heating, lighting, ventilation, and other like topics. “Condition” was in the eye of the beholder. Though the schoolhouses in Augusta County were no better built than most anywhere else in the Valley, Peale reported his were in “very good condition.” By the coming standards, they were nowhere close. To those who had grown used to them, the schools were as D.H. Munsey pointed out, “conveniently located, comfortable, [but] poorly equipped, [especially in regards] to

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<sup>179</sup> *ibid.*



heating, light.” The best Munsey could say for the ventilation was “sufficient.” Hulvey pointed out that the schools were “not very good; but about as good as our present fund will admit of.” Shumatte pointed out that even though the schools were “generally good...there is room for much improvement along these lines. I have made a point of presenting these matters for consideration at every meeting of the county Board, and there has been a gradual improvement not only in the style of building but also in the care given to the buildings and their surroundings.” Until 1900 there were still many schools which lacked even, as D.H. Munsey put it in a very positive manner, a “prudently located” outhouse.<sup>180</sup> Shumatte even admitted that while many of his schools had a “generally good” outhouse, he had “however, found and called attention to quite a number of cases where it was otherwise.” This would be an issue the SBOE would address after the turn of the century.<sup>181</sup>

State Superintendent Massey also began to inquire about the security of the older buildings, planning to build a case that modern and secure buildings and grounds would be necessary. This would seem especially prudent considering the amount of money which would soon be invested in classroom supplies and equipment. The superintendents admitted that there was “a general desire for better equipped schools, but there was a lack of means for such purpose.”<sup>182</sup> In truth the question was if the public was willing to be taxed to increase the school facilities, and, if so, to what extent?

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<sup>180</sup> Simply put, this meant that the outhouse was far enough away not to stink too bad, but close enough to walk to in time.

<sup>181</sup> The implementation of requirements of buildings in terms of plumbing and outhouses would later become a significant issue.

<sup>182</sup> ARS, Loudoun, Supplemental, 1895.

Rockingham's residents were willing to be taxed on "what is barely sufficient to give them good schools." D.H. Munsey reported that he "fear[ed] not, although our Co.[unty] tax should be doubled." Peale protested that the people were not "willing for tax to be increased for anything. I would oppose it unless we have compulsion with it." Both of these comments showed the lack of ability at this time to persuade people in the more rural counties to pay taxes to fund education, especially when taxes had been raised so much already. People were unwilling to pay for improvements to schools that the educators within the system and many progressives desired.<sup>183</sup>

As the nineteenth century came to a close it was not the nation who came onto Virginia's stage, but Virginia's educators who launched themselves onto the national stage. Dr. J.L.M. Curry, namesake of the University of Virginia's Graduate School, and the First Capon Springs Conference for Education in the South were major headlines in the *New York Times* on June 25, 1899.<sup>184</sup> Curry had come to national

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<sup>183</sup> ARS, Augusta, Supplemental, 1895. The unwillingness of people to pay for these school improvements provides an excellent opportunity to show how a partnership between the educators and newspaper men could provide excellent dividends in garnering public support. The News Record in Harrisonburg had a long standing and supportive relationship with the County School board and was a willing supporter in working to expand public education. A campaign to change public opinion in regards to modernizing school facilities would be conducted in the next period. It would culminate with the News Records production and publication of *The Public Schools of Rockingham County Virginia* in 1914. This Book was a history of Rockingham's public schools which highlighted and championed progressive school programs such as science, agricultural education, and sports. Additionally the history focused a great deal of attention on highlighting the magnificent modern facilities of the County versus the "old relics", some of which had been built in the 1890s.

<sup>184</sup> The American politician Jabez Lamar Monroe Curry (1815-1903) was the main force behind improved education in the South in the latter half of the 19th century. Born on June 5, 1815, in Lincoln County, Ga., J. L. M. Curry was the son of a slaveholding family that ultimately moved to Alabama. He graduated from the University of Georgia and the Harvard University Law School. While at Harvard, Curry heard a lecture by Horace Mann that awakened his zealous interest in universal education. In 1845 Curry was admitted to the Alabama bar, and he quickly gained prominence as a lawyer. Three terms in the Alabama Legislature preceded four years as a member of the U.S. House of Representatives. During the Civil War he served first in the Confederate Congress and then as a colonel on the staffs of generals Joseph E. Johnston and Joseph Wheeler. Shortly after his 1866 ordination as a Baptist minister, Curry

renown as an educator by 1899 and was at this time, during his tenure as president of Richmond College, serving as a de-facto member of the Board of Education. He was consistently present at state board meetings in this period. Notable in the *New York Times* feature were several issues presented by Dr. Curry. First and foremost was a presentation of the South as having long been the nation's leader in education. Curry noted the numbers of universities, professors, and students as compared to the North, and he noted the money spent on education in the North and the South. All figures favored the South despite its smaller populations. The second issue presented in the piece was that of co-education of races being desired, which was the major headline of the piece. Finally, Curry emphasized the equally important necessity of industrial and non-sectarian education. Many of the notable educators in this conference, such as its President William L. Wilson and Dr. Charles W. Kent, were prominent educators from Virginia as well. Wilson was the President of Washington [and Lee] College in Lexington and Dr. Kent was the long serving secretary of the State Board of Education generally responsible for Virginia's extra-state affairs. This conference signaled the beginning of an era of

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accepted the presidency of Howard College in Alabama. He left that post in 1868 to become a professor of English, philosophy, and law at Richmond College, Va. Meanwhile, New England philanthropist George Peabody had donated \$2,000,000 as a fund for the improvement of Southern schools. When the directorship of the Peabody Fund became vacant, Curry was immediately nominated. As one endorser stated: "He is so many-sided, so clear in his views, so judicious and knows so well how to deal with all classes of men. His whole being is wrapped up in general education, and he is the best lecturer or speaker on the subject in all the South." In 1881 Curry received the appointment. He later became special agent for a similar educational endowment, the Slater Fund. His supreme goal, Curry stated, was to "preach a crusade against ignorance." He practiced as well as preached, for he was the inspiration behind the establishment of normal schools in 12 Southern states; he was the chief organizer of elementary schools in a number of major cities; and he constantly prodded state legislatures to create more and better rural schools. His 40 reports and 10 addresses on education at this time dominated the subject. Two historians, Thomas D. Clark and Albert D. Kirwan, wrote: "Scarcely a major educational advance was to be made in the South between 1881 and 1902 that was not influenced in some way by J. L. M. Curry; in fact his name became synonymous with public education."

national cooperation towards progressive education. The ideals and educators of the conference were presenting experiences and lessons learned over thirty years of their endeavor to bring about the System of Public Free Schools in Virginia.<sup>185</sup>

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<sup>185</sup> "Education in the South", *The New York Times*, 25 June 1899.

## Chapter IV, 1900-1912

The next period of this study will focus on the period stretching from 1900 until 1912. If the years stretching from 1870 to 1886 had been a story of people feeling around in a dark tunnel, then the last fifteen years examined from 1886 until 1900 had been one of a growing sense of direction aided by a few torches to show the way. The First Annual Conference for Education in 1898 at Capon Springs, West Virginia might best be seen as a beacon shining forth in the tunnel signaling the direction into the light. In this conference for the first time education can truly be seen in the national spotlight with a clear group of leaders to guide the way. Virginia educators, strengthened by new found support in civic groups of progressives, became a part of the beginnings of a truly national movement with the clear-minded goal to use education to transform a nation. The 1899 Capon Springs Conference was the first gathering and organizing of a national group of educators and progressive minded thinkers and businessmen joining hands as they prepared to make the last part of their journey into the light.

Historians like William Link and Alexander Cremin view the 1900-1920 period as one where consolidation of state power and authority over the public free schools in Virginia took place.<sup>186</sup> During this period the infrastructure and bureaucratic administration of the schools grew exponentially. Caution must be used when rushing to judge the public free school system in Virginia as growing into an autocracy dominated by state politicians. Despite more expressly and explicitly written laws as well as a new

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<sup>186</sup> Cremin, *Transformation of the School*, Link, *A Hard Country and a Lonely Place*. Both of these histories tell a story of education in the South and Virginia which rapidly moves from a decentralized ramshackle of locally run institutions to a suddenly organized and autocratic system as an almost overnight process. They ignore much of the organization and work that had gone into the system between 1870 and 1900 and give too much credit to the rapidly rising Progressive National Education Movement for inspiring significant change from without pausing to look within the South and its states.

public and legislative fervor interested in influencing the direction of education both nationally and in the State of Virginia, what emerged was not total state dominance over the public school system. The growing sums of money provided by the national and state governments, as well as legislation from the Virginia General Assembly, surely did increase the power and authorities of the State Board of Education. An examination of the application of the new Constitution of the State of Virginia in 1902 and the subsequent actions of the State Board of Education over the next twenty years will show that both the Virginias, counties and districts and the growing formal public support would not simply fade into a state-run autocracy. Power was still jealously guarded locally. This will be seen in battles over curriculum, especially as they pertain to the selection of texts. Despite a growing national progressive movement and growing national independent progressive associations who all had their own ideas about the direction of education, it is apparent that Virginia would direct these efforts much more than it would follow.

This chapter will use an analysis of the Capon Springs Conference of 1902 to demonstrate both the national direction of progressive education as well as Virginia's leading role. An examination of the 1902 Constitution of the State of Virginia will provide a clear picture of the state's refined role as it pertains to the System of Public Free Schools in Virginia. Finally, an examination of the Minutes of the State Board of Education in two periods, 1904-1912, and 1912-1920, will serve as a touchstone for examining the issues and policies of the state and county school districts. Specific issues to be examined are prescribed curriculums which were increasingly expansive and flexible given their intention of uniformity, the formalizing of technical education in both

agricultural and industrial forms, and increased powers and authorities as well as reform and efficiency within the System of Public Free Schools of Virginia.

As a diverse group of educators began to coalesce into national and regional organizations, Virginia emerged as a leader. This was evidenced at the 3<sup>rd</sup> annual Capon Springs Conference in 1902 and the formation of the Southern Education Board. After years of purposeful experience and trial by its educators, Virginia became a leader in establishing curricula and technical and agricultural education and pushing for more state and federal funding for education. William Link correctly argues in the *Paradox of Southern Progressivism* that the “Legendary crusade for schools began in the [South]. Its organizers were diverse: professional school administrators who had long advocated change but had remained in the political wilderness, middle-class women, ministers, journalist, and publicists.” Link argues that the Southern Education Board, first organized in 1901, brought these disparate groups together. However, there are some misperceptions to this argument and Link perhaps does not go far enough, at least in the case of Virginia, in giving credit to the strong roots of an educational coalition in Virginia. Virginia had already seen, in the years between 1870 and 1900, significant organization happening between educators and newspaper men, churches, and women in the Valley of Virginia. Also from its inception, the State Board of Education had included the governor and state Attorney General and had worked closely with the General Assembly to develop a public school system. All Virginia’s Superintendents for Public Instruction from William Ruffner to John Buchanan to John Eggleston had not only worked in concert with the governor but had worked from offices in the Governor’s Mansion right behind the State Capitol Building. Education was in all aspects never far

from politics at the state level. Virginia's counties were also all too familiar with education's ties to politics as the state board was responsible for appointing their counties' superintendents who were reviewed (later approved) by the State Senate. Every County in this study and most in the state had experienced rapid and sudden changes in administration during the switches from republican to democratic control for the state in the previous period.<sup>187</sup>

The Southern Education Board consisted of eleven northern and fifteen southern member states during its thirteen-year history. It has been best described as an intersectional partnership of moderate progressives, moderate in the North on the delicate racial and sectional issues, and progressive in the South in that it offered education as a key to regional progress. In challenging racial views by good will, tact, and hard work, the Board's efforts were a test of the progressivism in a field where Radical Republicans had signally failed. This group did direct a region-wide public school crusade; however, its early years were marked with a powerful opposition movement.

The board included several prominent members in the progressive movement. George Foster Peabody, a Wall Street banker, and the young railroad president William H. Baldwin, Jr., had long been associated with the president Robert C. Ogden<sup>188</sup> as trustees of Negro industrial schools. These men financed the board's modest budget, with

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<sup>187</sup> Link, *Paradox of Southern Progressivism*, 125.

<sup>188</sup> Robert C. Ogden was a northern merchant, philanthropist and educational worker who was a dedicated and active member of the Southern Education Board. His NY times obituary on October 27<sup>th</sup>, 1913 remembered him as a friend to education both black and white and there were glowing thanks even from the Hampton Institute. Ogden is often remembered as a racist in the current historiography as he is well known for supporting a separate education system and often pandered to racist supporters of education.



help from Andrew Carnegie and the General Education Board.<sup>189</sup> Southerners Walter Hines Page and Jabez L. M. Curry served as intersectional diplomats. Booker T. Washington was the agent for African Americans, but did not attend the board meetings. Most of the southern members were college presidents. Veteran campaigners Charles D. McIver, Edwin A. Alderman<sup>190</sup>, and Charles W. Dabney had been partners in the earlier North Carolina school crusade and were also key figures in Virginia.

The issue of black education was important to the Southern Education Board. Ogden reported that “impulses have risen from negro education to the question of the entire burden of educational responsibility that you have throughout this entire section of the country.”<sup>191</sup> The board believed that race prejudice was due to ignorance and economic competition, and through public schools they hoped that whites might learn racial tolerance along with skills which would widen their opportunities.<sup>192</sup>

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<sup>189</sup> This is the federal board for education.

<sup>190</sup> Edwin Alderman was also a leader in Virginia’s educational movement. He would later serve as the Superintendent of Public Instruction and is Currently Memorialized in the form of the University of Virginia’s Library due to his contributions.

<sup>191</sup> Louis R. Harlan, “The Southern Education Board and the Race Issue in Public Education” *The Journal of Southern History*, Vol. 23, No. 2, (Southern Historical Association: Rice University, 1957). 189-202.

<sup>192</sup> Harlan, “The Southern Education Board”, 194-198. It is true that in some sense immediate goals of racial equality were sacrificed for the ability to expand education in the south in general. “An educational movement of constructive character, moving in a path parallel to the insistent white supremacy demands, could so harbor strength by avoiding direct clashes as to outdistance and check the rival force.” Wallace Buttrick “As a matter of absolute justice they ought to participate proportionately with the whites,” he said in a confidential report. “But we are confronted ‘with a condition and not a theory.’ . . . We shall err and invite defeat, if, in the present state of public sentiment, we demand too much from the white people of the South.” Alderman rejoined: “Southern men have shied from this subject. It has been touching a sore tooth. . . . We want now to influence public sentiment: stop being silent, but be wise; go forward, but with forethought, not so spectacularly as to set back the movement.”<sup>33</sup>T his discussion made clear the Board's dilemma that a crusade for Negro education would jeopardize the crusade for white education Points out that white education was in jeopardy and under attack as well. Perhaps the Southern Education Board can better be judged on the basis of general trends in the South than on its discreet utterances. There really was a Southern educational awakening between

The Southern Education Board was neither a novel concept nor the first of its kind. In truth, it was the child of the Conference for Education in the South, of which men like William Ruffner and Edwin Alderman had been members since its inception in the 1890s. These men had enlisted the help of northern philanthropists and were now attempting to harness the growing national energies towards progressivism. Another effort to improve education in the South was the annual Capon Springs Conference. The SEB sprung almost directly from these meetings.<sup>193</sup> The third conference in 1901 sheds light on Virginia as an educational innovator and a leader on the national stage.

The Third Capon Springs Conference for Education in the South assembled in the chapel on the grounds of the Capon Springs Hotel in Capon Springs, West Virginia on Wednesday, June 27, 1901. It included representatives from all over the North and South, with Pennsylvania and New York sending the most. But this was a Virginia-led conference. Opening remarks were made by the President of Washington and Lee University about the need to bring energy and efficiency to the school system.<sup>194</sup> Interestingly, Wilson also called for a review of black education in the South which would lead direct conduct of a *Report on Negro Education* conducted by the United States

1900 and the First World War Annual expenditures for education quadrupled, kept well ahead of the rise in property values, and acted as a springboard for further increases in the next decade.

<sup>193</sup> The point is to consider the Southern education board as born of the Capon Springs Conference and of Southern will largely directed by Virginia, not as being developed by Northerners or progressives on the national stage.

<sup>194</sup> CSC, 1-3, 7. Wilson felt that "irresponsible persons in the South are using the situation for fraudulent ends. Where there is no fraudulent end in view there is often incompetency and folly. The result is that a great deal of money is given every year to worthless enterprises. And a worse result follows. The confidence of the public is shaken. Men hesitate to give because they cannot determine what objects are worthy. The problem is a serious one. The situation should be relieved. A great waste of charity should be stopped and the confidence of the people should be preserved in the good work undoubtedly done by many excellent institutions."

Department of Education.<sup>195</sup> Of the forty-four individuals making presentations at the conference over one third of them, sixteen, were from the state of Virginia. There were 6 other southern representatives, fifteen from northern states and the rest from Washington D.C.<sup>196</sup> Virginia's representatives included many leading educators and faculty from prominent universities and the Hampton Institute as well as some leading ladies, most notably Miss Anne Ruffner of Lexington.<sup>197</sup> The Superintendent of Public Instruction encouraged most of the presenters to participate in this conference. They would showcase the experience of thirty years of educational development in Virginia to the rest of the South and to the nation.<sup>198</sup> This was an opportunity for Virginia to gain national prestige and leadership of the Progressive education movement in the South and the nation.

The Virginia participants at this conference give direct evidence to the state's leading role in the national education movement. The Rev'd George S. Dickerman

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<sup>195</sup> CSC-7- This committee is to stand ready to investigate all cases referred to it of schools claiming to educate the Colored race. The attention of the public should be called to the existence of this committee, and all persons shall be asked to consult it before giving aid to unknown parties. The committee in each instance is to report the facts in the case with all information necessary for a clear view of the situation. The fruition of this is the RNE!!!

<sup>196</sup> The northern membership is not readily recognizable. I would have to do research to discover who these people are other than "businessmen" etc. If this is necessary I will add.

<sup>197</sup> Membership from Virginia. 1) Prof. W. F. McIlwee, .... Rosenberger, Va. 2) Rev. H. B. Frissell, D. D. . Hampton, Va. Hampton Institute. 3) John L. Campbell, Lexington, Va. 4) Miss J. E. Davis Hampton, Va. Hampton Institute. 5) President Julius D. Dreher, . Salem, Va. Roanoke College. 6) Prof. James A. Ouarles, . . . Lexington, Va. Washington and Lee University. 7) Prof. A. H. Tuttle, Charlottesville, Va. University of Virginia. 8) Mrs. A. H. Tuttle Charlottesville, Va. 9) Miss Louise J. Smith Lynchburg. Va. Randolph-Macon Woman's College. 10) Rev. W. A. Crawford, .... Kernstown, Va. 11) Prof. H. S. G. Tucker, .... Lexington, Va. Washington and Lee University. 12) Prof. A. L. Nelson, Lexington, Va. Washington and Lee University. 13) Miss Kate B. Conrad, .... Winchester, Va. 14) Miss Anne Ruffner, .... Lexington, Va. 15) President Wm. L. Wilson, . . . Lexington, Va. Washington and Lee University. 16) Captain C. E. Vawter Miller School, Va. Also Dr. Curry of Washington D.C. but a long time member and regular attendee of the State Board of Education

<sup>198</sup> Minutes, 1902-1912, 12.

presented a paper on "Changing Conditions and Changed Methods" who for a year had been collecting information in the interest of the Conference. He developed this report visiting Virginia, the Carolinas, Georgia, and Alabama. Dickerman called to mind the drastic amount of change he had viewed in the realm of education and in the nation since 1800. He even recalled that since as late as 1895 there had been rapid and sweeping changes. "America of five years ago was very different from that in which we now live."<sup>199</sup> The evidence of changing conditions was surely evident in Virginia.<sup>200</sup>

Dickerman stressed that education needed to move beyond the confines of "what we call 'education'" and that "training in school is to be taken in connection with other training out of school." Echoing the growing progressive sentiments of the nation, Dickerman believed that home training needed to be placed first and related teachers to family which led to a discussion of rural vs. urban environments. Dickerman argued for greater attention being given to schools of the "country" despite the rapid and overwhelming shift to city life in America. He cautioned educators that children in rural areas needed "schools to meet the conditions that prevail, and to insure this, the school must be developed on its own ground."<sup>201</sup> He essentially acknowledged that the South was already endeavoring to change its institutions in the country and to begin industrial and agricultural schools. This could already be seen in places like the Miller School and the Hampton Institute for both whites and blacks.

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<sup>199</sup> CSC, 12.

<sup>200</sup> The publication of, *The Public schools of Rockingham County*, in 1915 was a clear example of the new attitude towards physical schools. It clearly highlights the changing dynamics of school buildings in the county and shows old "relic" style one room schools in sharp contrast to modern multi room and story buildings, outfitted with the latest technology of the period.

<sup>201</sup> CSC, 16.

Dickerman also called for an outright attack on the current decentralization of the school system. Noting the abuses of school office-holders who abused school funds for personal gain or the appointment of teachers being “sold for so much cash, sometimes it is made a reward of political services, and cases now and then appear in which it is bestowed for even more objectionable ends.”<sup>202</sup> This could be solved by more control over the certification of teachers and by sending “well endowed teachers” to more “worse off” areas. He calls to mind the public cry for better schools and conditions in newspapers which can be seen in documents like the History of Rockingham County Public Schools.<sup>203</sup> Dickerman noted the progress of Virginia in this area by highlighting Staunton out of the many places he travelled as one of the best examples of schooling in rural areas, citing both its success in the extension of the school session and its progress towards establishing a graded school system.<sup>204</sup>

Jonathan Ogden presented a paper on "The Object of the Conference as seen by a Northern business man." Ogden was essentially speaking about not riling up the racist politics of southerners in giving aid. Many of his remarks were remembered as racist but it seems clear that he was willing to trade “semantics” of race and bigotry of the South in the short term for the acceptance of financial aid and the expansion of educational opportunities for blacks AND poor whites. Ogden expressed opinions on more than just race issues; he advised the businessmen not to tell teachers how to teach but to tell them

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<sup>202</sup> CSC, 17.

<sup>203</sup> This was a newspaper produced school history designed to engender public support for school reform on many levels.

<sup>204</sup> CSC, 23.

what sort of education was required for the world to operate. This was indeed industrial and agricultural education, which was of vast importance to industrializing manufacturing and farming industry.<sup>205</sup>

Virginia's ladies also were prominent as presenters and on the role of women in helping education. Mrs. A. H. Tuttle then addressed the conference on the work of the southern woman in helping solve the Negro problem.<sup>206</sup> She here communicated the more altruistic goals of Southern progressives often dismissed in many of the educational histories. She showed the altruistic motives of the conference on education. Mrs. Tuttle imparted that education of blacks should and would increase the economic value of the Negro to himself and to the state, and would develop a true moral and religious life among the Negroes. It would also import a "right conception of the duties and of the rights of the citizen", which would in turn help blacks achieve equality. She also believed that education was the only way to bring Virginia's black citizens to "fit the competent for a true leadership." Education would "enable the Negro to develop a full and high type of social life which shall have in it that which will satisfy his social cravings." Mrs. Tuttle's words could hardly be confused with those of a bigot nor did they communicate an attitude of progressivism as a tool to suppress the blacks in the South.<sup>207</sup>

Miss Louise J. Smith of Lynchburg also spoke on the need to broaden curricula a paper about "Art in Education." Speaking on her work in this regard she tied the

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<sup>205</sup> CSC, 38.

<sup>206</sup> CSC, 5.

<sup>207</sup> CSC, 52-54.

necessity of this to national pride and identity and held up her program in Lynchburg as an example to the nation. If America was to become the next “center of the world” then the arts must be cultivated in its citizens.<sup>208</sup> Indeed Virginia would add music and some other programs to its formal curriculum in 1904.<sup>209</sup>

Virginia also presented itself as a leader in the ideas of industrial as well as agricultural education. Capt. C. E. Vawter, the head of the Miller Industrial School, Albemarle County, Virginia, addressed the conference on industrial education. In his presentation Virginia can be seen as the model for industrial education in the south and the nation. The idea was to transplant this in the form of other industrial and agricultural schools as well as into the classrooms, “workshops”, and “laboratories” of regular schools.<sup>210</sup> This is also further proof, like the Hampton Institute for blacks, that Virginia was indeed the leader it perceived itself to be in education. This Miller School also was intended to call to mind that it was not only blacks who were suffering from lack of education and few opportunities for advancement in society but poor whites. Capt. Vawter addressed the conference: “I count myself most happy, after the great flood of eloquence that we have had here to-day in behalf of Negro Education, to have the opportunity of calling your attention to the needs of the White Race in the South, and to the rich results that can be secured by work in this field.”<sup>211</sup> It seemed in this and many other statements that there was a need to convince northern philanthropists and

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<sup>208</sup> CSC, 42-48.

<sup>209</sup> Minutes, 1902-1912, 35.

<sup>210</sup> Pictures in the *Public Schools of Rockingham County Virginia*, show that the laboratories in some of the schools were indeed very modern and not too distant from what we might see in a high school today with the notable absence of computers.

<sup>211</sup> CSC, 74.

politicians motivated to assist in the education of blacks that it was equally important to educate whites and eliminate ignorance and bigotry on their part as well as the economic disparity which fueled it.

Some history of the existence of the Miller School has already been addressed in the previous chapter. It is important again to mention that the endeavor of industrial education in Virginia begun at the Miller School in 1869 and Virginia was now importing its thirty plus years of experience in industrial training at the Miller institute, of which Vawter had been in charge for twenty- two years, back on the South and the Nation.<sup>212</sup> Vawter called attention to the fact that when the institute began, industrial training was mostly theory and in many ways still was across the nation, but it was theory he had been grappling with and refining into practice for 22 years. One of the main goals of technical education, be it agricultural or industrial, Vawter argued, was to dignify labor and not just for blacks but for poor whites:

The Negro looked upon all Manual Labor as slave work from which he had been liberated, while the white man regarded Manual Labor as the peculiar occupation of the Negro and therefore beneath him. To educate away from this false idea on the part of the whites and make all kind of labor honorable was the difficult task before us. [...] It became necessary to teach our own race that a man is more honorable who earns a living for himself and those dependent upon him by honest labor, than he who by the tricks of trade accumulates to himself what others have made, and that he

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<sup>212</sup> CSC, 75-79. The founder of the school, Samuel Miller, was born in a log cabin near Albemarle County, Virginia, on the 30th. Day of June, 1791. The place of his birth is in sight of the School, but the log cabin has long since disappeared. A hearth-stone remains to tell of the rough home he transformed into His school. Mr. Miller's estate showed him to be worth at his death \$1,250,000 whereas in 1900, after paying the litigation and the compromise, and the various legacies of the will, and putting up all those magnificent buildings, buying land, equipping laboratories and running the School for twenty-two years, the principal of the fund now in the Second Auditor's office, Richmond, Virginia, amounts to \$1,441,738.40, yielding an annual income of \$71,734.39. To the work of organizing and equipping this great charity he appointed Capt. Vawter in 1878.. Vawter reported that he "found no chart or compass to guide us in this new field of labor. Industrial Training existed then only in theory. Some had crude notions as to what it ought to be, but there was no model and no definite ideas as to what it meant."



who makes a single horse shoe nail adds more to the material wealth of the country than he who by doubtful means transfers a railroad from one man's pocket to another man's pocket.<sup>213</sup>

It is apparent to the progressive, and even the southern progressive, that class was perhaps more important than race. Vawter and others at the conference clearly expressed the view that poor whites had much in common with poor blacks and the problems were similar in nature. Law may have separated them but education was clearly meant to bring them together in station if not in space.

Vawter also stressed the need for massive amounts of money to bring about technical education. The school's "Work Shops", as he coined them, required "the very best equipments that could be had." Vawter recalled that he put in this equipment at the expense of having it called by his neighbors "Vawter's Folly." He also employed the best teachers that "New England could supply, educated men, gentlemen." The establishment of good facilities, educators and equipment alone was as important a lesson as the actual instruction. Vawter highlighted that no expense was spared in outfitting the school.

The Shop, the equipment, the educated gentlemen and teachers with overalls on, doing the work themselves and teaching the boys to do it, created inspiration and enthusiasm. The barrier of the ages was crossed, the victory was won, labor was made honorable and now it is considered a great honor to be assigned to a class in the shops which have already sent out hundreds of young men to honorable and profitable and happy lives.<sup>214</sup>

In his twenty-two years running the Miller School, Vawter boasted "men who have become finely educated, who have gone to the University of Virginia and elsewhere and have made themselves leaders and men of influence and power. Industrial education was to be a "way out for the 'dull boy'. Though he may fail year after year on arithmetic,

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<sup>213</sup> CSC, 79.

<sup>214</sup> CSC, 80.

there is something that he can do and in that field he can graduate and become a leader and a power and a success in the world.” Vawter let the results do the convincing. The school had turned out about 600 boys, “of these 54 are dead and of 44 we have no record”, but of the others numbering above 500 Vawter evidenced records that their salaries ranged from \$10,000 “down to the pay of a private soldier in the U. S. Army in the Philippines” whose average salary was \$594. The average salary of the Miller School’s current graduates was over \$1000. Miller argued that his “500 boys are receiving annually \$300,000 or \$225,000 more than in all probability they would have received had they never had the benefits of the Miller School.”<sup>215</sup>

The Miller School was also an example of the benefits of education for women. Though the school was not purporting the notions of female equality acceptable today Vawter was able to boast that he had taught over 150 girls trained in cooking, sewing, art and letters who had gone on to successful careers as wives and mothers of “beautiful homes” where they could teach their younger children, with about 50 of the graduates working in teaching and other fields open to women “making honorable and useful citizens.”<sup>216</sup>

Miller closed with an argument that the funds needed to increase this type of training throughout the school systems would be an investment because few other fields offered “finer results and better revenue.” The people trained in industrial education, he

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<sup>215</sup> CSC, 82. Among the graduates were 5 Electrical and Mechanical Engineers, 5 College Professors, 19 Instructors mainly in Manual Training in the South, 50 Mechanics, 27 Workers in wood, 34 Rail-Road men, from Superintendent of a road in South America to a brakeman. Then follow foremen of shops, draughtsmen, chemists, pharmacists, inventors, engineers, plumbers, printers, farmers, florists, horticulturists, nurserymen, overseers, clerks, stenographers, soldiers, and sailors.

<sup>216</sup> CSC, 84.

argued, would become “wealth producers and home builders” whose work would simply “go on multiplying through the ages” to bring about a generally better society and the “uplifting of both races in our Southland along the line of what is most needed, SYSTEMATIC INTELLIGENT INDUSTRIAL TRAINING.”<sup>217</sup>

Wilson laid out the greater view of the problem and the goals of Virginia in using industrial and agricultural education to bring up both blacks and poor whites in Virginia and by extension the South in his comments:

Industrial training now afforded the Negro at Hampton, Tuskegee and similar institutions; and given to whites at the Miller School, Albemarle County, Virginia, indicates the methods which, in our opinion are best fitted, in the main, to provide the solution of this problem. But the noble and effective work now being accomplished for both races by these institutions is entirely insufficient in extent to cover the whole field. We therefore earnestly call on our fellow citizens of both sections of the country to petition the General Government to furnish such assistance to those States of the Union, on which the burden chiefly rests, as will enable them more fully to meet the needs and to relieve the strain of the situation.<sup>218</sup>

This call for federal aide was indeed realized in Virginia as will be seen in the examination of the State Board of Education later in this chapter.

Looming heavy on horizon for Virginia’s educators was the upcoming Constitutional Convention which would create one of Virginia’s more infamous constitutions. The Virginians would leave this conference and enter into the convention which would produce the Virginia Constitution of 1902. This constitution disfranchised poor whites and blacks. Virginia’s educators carefully navigated the roaring political waters of this convention in order to produce positive changes for the System of Public

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<sup>217</sup> CSC, 85.

<sup>218</sup> CSC, 6.

Free Schools. Educators worked in this convention to provide for an article on education which would help to expand the power and authority of the State's System of Public Free Schools and work to bring about equality through education to the same poor masses that the 1902 Constitution of the State of Virginia went out of its way to disfranchise.<sup>219</sup>

There were some in the state who did understand the impact of education on poor whites and blacks. The chairman of the State Senate on the committee on education at the 1902 Constitutional convention expressed that blacks had the right to learn to read the Bible but not much more. One committee member expressed horror at the realization that there were 2500 black schools in Virginia funded by the state.<sup>220</sup> It says something positive about the attitudes between the races at the local level when cooperation of whites and blacks produced 2500 black schoolhouses and funded under the direction of local Boards of Education. Clearly, on the ground, there was much more goodwill between the races than was evidenced by the politics of Richmond as espoused by the two representatives mentioned above. Despite their misunderstandings, the 1870 Constitution laid out an equal education for all Virginians and this was not something that could or would be changed in the new 1902 Constitution.<sup>221</sup>

The 1902 Constitution brought some administrative changes to public education. The State Board of Education was expanded to include three educational professionals elected by the Senate every four years as well as the Governor, Superintendent, and

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<sup>219</sup> See Appendix, B for full text of Article X, Education, from the 1902 Virginia Constitution, and Appendix C for Article IX from the 1870 Virginia Constitution.

<sup>220</sup> Cremin, *American Education*, 219.

<sup>221</sup> 1902 Virginia Constitution, Article X.

Attorney General. While the Senate may have sought additional “control” over the Board, in reality this tipped the board’s balance of power toward professional educators and was a victory for education. The State Superintendent of Public Instruction, though now an elected official, was placed at the head of the board superseding the governor in matters of education. The SBOE was also given the full power to redistrict the state into school divisions as it saw fit. The Senate did reserve confirmation of the superintendent appointments, but the SBOE could remove them for cause. The appointment and redistricting powers enabled the SBOE to go much farther in its goals for consolidation than in the past. In addition to selecting texts, the board acquired the ability to place “such apparatus” as it saw fit in schools.<sup>222</sup> This gave the SBOE much greater power to implement a state-wide technical education curriculum as well as specifically run agricultural and technical schools. Though it had been doing so under the board’s interpretation of the old constitution, this allowed for no debate in the matter.<sup>223</sup> The constitution also mandated compulsory school attendance for children between eight and twelve. The state also mandated that only schools exclusively controlled by the state to receive public funding. This allowed the state to take control of many private schools or

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<sup>222</sup> Essentially this meant that the SBOE was authorized to spend money on a much wider variety of equipment for supporting curriculums of its schools than simple black boards and text books and fuel. This gave the board the explicit ability to purchase, request, and justify funds for the purchase, for laboratory equipment which might support industrial and agricultural education.

<sup>223</sup> The State had already begun supporting agricultural clubs and societies within the common schools as well as providing support to places like the miller school and the Hampton institute. There was room in the 1870 Constitution for opponents to interpret that this was not allowed and the new constitution expressly granted the SBOE the power to fund the new alternative methods of technical, industrial, and agricultural education it so adamantly believed was the future of the System of Public Free schools.

“quasi” private ones which ran themselves but received state funds and would help with the goal of school consolidation.<sup>224</sup>

The new constitution gave the Virginia’s System of Public Free Schools an even wider berth with which to execute education as it saw fit. Additionally, it added to the expressed authority and power of the State Board of Education and the Superintendent of Public Instruction. An examination of the Minutes of the State Board of Education provides an understanding of how the System of Public Free Schools would proceed and consolidate itself in this new truly progressive era.

The energy and detail in the minutes after 1900 was incredible and speaks to the fresh focus placed on education. An important shift was to gain almost zealous public interest in the schools. And as long as the schools remained segregated, the SBOE was able to push for almost any reform the organization and efficiency that had long been the dreams of state superintendents Ruffner, Buchanan, and Governor Fitzhugh Lee and many educators in Virginia since 1886 would now become a reality. The business of the SBOE in this period was heavily engaged with the adoption and continuation or discontinuation of text books as well as starting up special schools like schools for the Pumonkey Indians, technical schools, agricultural schools and adding those types of education to existing schools. Very little time, unlike the 1870s, was spent on the placing of officials or creating bureaucracy. No longer was the System of Public Free Schools concerned with establishing itself; now it focused on merely refining and expanding.

Joseph Eggleston began his ten- year tenure as Superintendent of Public Instruction in 1902 under the new constitution. It seems that Eggleston intended to

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<sup>224</sup> 1902 Constitution, Article X.

continue Virginia's role as a national leader in education. One of his first decisions was to establish the Virginia Commission, which was to be headed up by Dr. Lehas Kent. This commission was to go to St. Louis and demonstrate Virginia's approach to education. Eggleston wanted to exhibit 1) all the schools public and private, 2) a map giving the location of all public and private schools and state institutions, 3) a case where the catalogues, periodicals, and other advertising material of the schools could be displayed, 4) and as full a display as possible of equipment and achievements of the public school system.<sup>225</sup> Eggleston hoped that Virginia would have such a presence at this conference that some would consider Virginia as the "host". He also wanted to be sure that Virginia was espousing its methods of education on a national stage, not as a state in need of direction, but one which could provide direction and qualify for funds. Virginia clearly saw itself as a leader in education. The state innovations and the Capon Springs Conferences demonstrated this leadership. Virginia was clearly ahead of the national curve entering the stage at Capon Springs; this lends credence to Southern Education Board wanting not just to receive help but to export Virginia's educational ideals to the South and the nation.<sup>226</sup>

The new powers granted to the SBOE under the 1902 Constitution clearly gave new energy and direction to the System of Public Free Schools under Eggleston's leadership. The sheer amount of information and frequency of meetings alone are testament to this. The minutes under Eggleston's are almost non-stop and the reforms are never ending after 1904. Under the new constitution, the General Assembly outlined the

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<sup>225</sup> Minutes, 1902-1912, 35.

<sup>226</sup> Kent would prove to be a leader in the coming years though he would not hold a key position during this period.

duties of the Superintendents of Public Instruction. They provided eleven specific charters, as opposed to their old single mandate to manage and inspect schools. This provided authority for Eggleston to manage the school system.<sup>227</sup> In general the minutes show an ongoing series of loan applications and inspections. Reforms included adding subjects such as music to the curriculum, providing for regulations of the sanitation of schools, and the addition of libraries as we understand them today.<sup>228</sup> In a single day the friends of popular education in the south<sup>229</sup> appeared before the board. They motioned for the board to provide assistance across the state to help with the normal and agricultural institute in Hampton and to begin installing technical schools. The board later that day went even further than the request and began to approve the installation of manual training and normal schools across the state.<sup>230</sup> In many cases new ideas such as examiners and libraries were simply suggested, presented, and put into action with very little deliberation. There is also a never ending series of applications for loans and the results of inspections present in the minutes which are almost constant by 1909 and 1910.<sup>231</sup>

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<sup>227</sup> Minutes, 1912-1920, 270-279.

<sup>228</sup> Minutes, 1912-1920, 53. Dr. Lehas Kent pushed for the establishment of “formal libraries” across the state in the 1912 minutes. Prior to this libraries existed in schools in similar condition to what most people would consider a library in their homes today. There was no uniformity or reason behind them and they contained what books the teachers had gathered or left behind over the years. Under Kent’s direction libraries would become formalized and institutionalized across the System of Public Free Schools between 1900 and 1920 falling into the format of standardized and organized facilities recognizable in schools today.

<sup>229</sup> This was a civic group of progressives organized across the south. It was another in a growing list of coalitions wishing to use education to the benefit of their progressive cause.

<sup>230</sup> Minutes, 1902-1917, 19-21.

<sup>231</sup> Minutes, 1902-1920 .



The power and prestige of a position within the System of Public Free Schools was clearly of a higher caliber than it had been for Virginia's first superintendents and members of the SBOE. One of the new appointments to the State Board of Education was Dr. Lehas W. Kent, who would become an educational leader in the state. In 1904, for instance, Francis H. Smith, who had previously held the position as Superintendent of the Virginia Military Institute, was approved as the new Superintendent of Staunton's schools.<sup>232</sup> That becoming a superintendent of the public school system was now seen as a promotion from a prestigious posting at one of Virginia's premier colleges was another sure sign of the increasing respect and authority of the System of Public Free Schools. The new constitution also provided an amount of oversight, authority and organization for the system. Mr. Wilson was correct when he asserted that the growing size of the school system and the money flowing through it provided a tempting target for abuse. In 1904 the SBOE investigated and found guilty the second clerk of the Superintendent of Public instruction J. A. McGiluvay for profiting off of the Virginia school register and sale of books.<sup>233</sup> In March 1905, to better supervise the growing state education system, the SBOE recommended and appointed a state board of examiners and inspectors, and prescribed their duties.<sup>234</sup> Using its newfound powers from the constitution, the board divided Virginia into five circuits. The SBOE appointed examiners and inspectors to each. The state board of examiners and inspectors were employed by the SBOE and were made directly responsible to the board. The examiners and inspectors were given a wide

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<sup>232</sup> Minutes, 1902-1912, 9.

<sup>233</sup> Minutes, 1902-1912, 198.

<sup>234</sup> Minutes, 1902-1912, 210-212.

range of duties. They were essentially a sweeping cadre of watchdogs for the state. Their appointment was an example of the newfound authority and financial power of the education system to be able to employ and empower these inspectors.

The SBOE also enacted many new regulations designed to increase the quality and uniformity of its teachers across the state. The board restricted all new teacher applications to those having first grade<sup>235</sup>, professional, or collegiate certificates as well as some other general requirements under the provisions outlined in a SBOE circular.<sup>236</sup> In order to provide for the improvement of its existing teachers, the SBOE funded the program so that “any white male teacher in the public schools of the state of Virginia can now attend the schools of the Academic Department of the University of Virginia during the spring term (3 months,) free of all University Fees.” White male teachers who did this would be exempt from state examination on the subject covered by the course of their study. Any graduate would also be exempt from the examination.<sup>237</sup> The Board also motioned and ordered that uniform teacher examinations be held for whites on July 12 and 13 and for blacks on July 14 and 15.<sup>238</sup>

The state also placed new requirements for its high schools to receive state aid. Local funds must have been expended, the high school had to show it was conducting a “State Approved course of study” and the high school must have been operational for at least eight months with exceptions made for seven weeks. The state board also required

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<sup>235</sup> Certified to teach High School

<sup>236</sup> Minutes, 1902-1917, 239, Circular 279, section 8.

<sup>237</sup> Minutes, 1902-1917, 33.

<sup>238</sup> Minutes, 1912-1917, 60.

that at least two teachers be devoted full time to high school work. Funds would be reduced if there were fewer teachers. The new examiners were now required to inspect the high schools in their districts annually. The state also formally defined two levels of high schools. A First Grade High School had to maintain an average attendance of not less than eighteen students, and a Second Grade High School not less than fifteen students.<sup>239</sup> In placing the steps of high schools the state was able to do two things. First, it was able to expand the number of high schools in the System of Public free schools in the short term by allowing the existence of a Second Grade High School with lower attendance and educational requirements. However in the long term the state examiners could work to improve and expand the new second grade high schools. Eventually this would lead to an expansion of high schools and the raising of standards to one single uniform level of High School education in the State.

In 1912 the State Board completely reorganized and districted the school system to provide better inspection reporting and accountability through the new examiners and inspectors. This was to improve the efficiency of reporting, accountability, and administration of the system, though it may have had tough consequences for small local schools. This also marks the first time that duties are clearly laid out for school administrators and teachers alike.<sup>240</sup> The Duties of the Superintendent of Public Instruction were expanded from the initial single mandate to manage and inspect schools to 11 specific charters.<sup>241</sup> The school system was broken into five circuits and a leader

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<sup>239</sup>Minutes, 1912-1917, 249.

<sup>240</sup> See pictures in Appendix D.

<sup>241</sup>Minutes, 1912-1917, 272.

was elected for each circuit to direct the examiners and inspectors. There were specific duties laid on the examiners and inspectors to the Division Superintendents, to the District Boards of Trustees, to the individual schools, and to the teachers. These duties also clearly mark areas of emphasis and duties of each of these reportable groups as the examiners and inspectors were literally there to help facilitate the jobs of each.<sup>242</sup>

During this time the state began to expand the curriculum in public schools. Though the state desired uniformity in its curriculums, many localities prevailed on this issue. This is exemplified in the renewing of an old battle over text books and the expansion of technical education across the state. The battle over the multiple list for texts will illuminate how the state curriculum was both standardized and expanded. The addition of music was the first expansion towards this more diverse curriculum. Following the lead of Miss Louise J. Smith and the Lynchburg school system, Virginia officially adopted music into its curriculum in 1904.<sup>243</sup>

For many years the state sought control of the curriculum through texts, but under the new constitution Virginia's ability to provide flexibility of its curriculum through multiple texts was both codified and expanded. Shortly after the new constitution was passed, the board resolved that the existing contracts with publishers for supplying textbooks for the public schools of Virginia be continued in free for one year from the first day of August 1902; and that county and city boards had no authority to adopt for use in their schools any other books than those adopted in 1898, except histories of the

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<sup>242</sup> Duties laid out in full in the Appendix D.

<sup>243</sup> Minutes, 1912-1917, 68.

United States, until another adoption was conducted by the Board of Education, or until special authority was delegated to the divisions for this purpose by the board of education. This decision showed that that unlike in the 1870s, the state meant business when it came to texts. At least they tried to mean business.<sup>244</sup> The SBOE intended initially to be much more directive in its approach to selecting text and thereby defining curriculum.

The fight over text books was outlined best in a paper read by the Secretary of Education Joseph W. Southall, at a meeting of the SBOE. Southall called for the Superintendent of Public Instruction to resolve the matter of textbook adoption after years of internal disagreement. Southall laid out three methods for adoption of text books in various states. These methods included 1) absolute local selection, which meant no input from anyone other than the local boards, no county or state input; 2) state-local selection, in which the state board or a commission selected a multiple list of books, varying in number of series from which local authorities can choose; and 3) absolute state selection, in which the State Board provided a single uniform series of books for all schools with no input from anyone but the board.<sup>245</sup>

Southall framed the issue as “perhaps the most important and far-reaching problem that awaits our determinations.” Calling to mind William Ruffner, who “was and is a national leading figure in the realm of school administration” Southall argued that Virginia had stood for the multiple list since the beginning. Over the years the state had enlarged the register from its original two list system to one of a four book list with the

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<sup>244</sup> Minutes, 1912-1917, 7.

<sup>245</sup> Minutes 1912-1917, 43-54.

local boards choosing for their respective schools. Southall recalled that in 1886 the State Board, “acting upon the theory that State uniformity was required by the constitution and the statutes,” adopted a one book list, but permitted the continuance of the books then in use; so that in fact, throughout the period during which this policy prevailed (from 1886 to 1890) a multiple list was actually in use. “In 1890, 1894, and again in 1898, multiple lists were adopted, in each case county and city boards being permitted to choose from the state lists such books as were best adapted to their respective needs.”<sup>246</sup>

Showing the influence of the national movement towards progressive education, Southall looked to the policy of other states for precedent. He provided a list of twenty-six states in which educational excellence was proved through data and correlated it to the adoption of local selection. He listed the states that ran a system of state adoption and criticized them. He also pointed out “fully 4/5<sup>th</sup> s of educators in VA” had pushed for local adoption. He argued that “one book adoption” was opposed even in states where it existed and that the decision for one book had “nothing to do with the education of children and everything to do with dollars and politics.” He also pointed out that no institutes of higher learning used a one book restriction. Southall cited both the 1870 and 1902 constitutions to provide legal support for his position.<sup>247</sup>

If Southall supported a flexible multiple list, he had a bitter opponent on the board in the Attorney General Williams, who cited the same constitutions as reason for a completely uniform list of books. Williams shows up often in the minutes of the SBOE protesting the use of a multiple list. His interpretation of the Constitution’s provision to

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<sup>246</sup> Minutes 1912-1917, 43-54.

<sup>247</sup> Minutes 1912-1917, 43-54.

provide a “uniform set of texts” to the System of Public Free Schools was that this meant the SBOE should be selecting a single text to be used across the entire state for each subject.<sup>248</sup>

Eggleston sided with Southall and argued that the method of letting local and county boards decide on text books “met with the approval of our most progressive practical educators, among whom I may mention Dr. Ruffner, the late Dr. Curry, and many of our strongest superintendents principals and teachers.” It was clear that progressive was to be the way of things. Eggleston recommended a multiple list with four to six series for each subject. The board resolved to come up with a law for a list of textbooks, not less than two, no more than four. Each school division would pick from that list as they saw fit and textbook committees would be appointed to come up with the State list which would be produced.<sup>249</sup>

The battle for centralization vs. decentralization of curricula was both won and lost. Things were clearly centralized. The board allowed for the “privilege of multiple lists” as opposed to the school divisions just doing what they wanted anyway. The register would be restricted to just a two-book to four-book list.<sup>250</sup>

The Attorney General Williams actually convinced Governor William Hodges Mann to take his side and actually made one final attempt to stop the adoption of a

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<sup>248</sup> Minutes 1902-1912, 43-54. 1870 Constitution “The Board of Education shall provide for uniformity of text-books and the furnishing of schoolhouses with such apparatus and library as may be necessary, under such regulations as may be provided by law.” 1902 Constitution, “The State Board of Education shall select text-books and other educational appliances for use in the public schools of the State, exercising such discretion as it may see fit in the selection of books suitable for the schools in the cities and counties respectively.”

<sup>249</sup> Minutes 1912-1917, 43-54.

<sup>250</sup> Minutes 1912-1917, 43-54.

multiple list but due to the expanded powers of the State Superintendent in matters of education even he was unable to stop it.<sup>251</sup> The new list gave the first overarching look at the manner in which curricula had grown across the state since the original provision for “reading, writing, and arithmetic” in 1871. The board appointed committees to specifically review Arithmetics, Grammars and Language, Geographics, readers and spellers. There were also committees on History, Physiology, Hygiene, Manual Training, Drawing and Writing. These committees produced a five page list of books which was adopted by the SBOE. The list was broken into Primers, Spellers, Readers, Literary Masterpieces, Language Lessons, History of Virginia, American History, Geographies, Arithmetics, Physiologies, Music, Teacher’s Manuals, Dictionaries, and Miscellaneous books which included; punctuation, teachers registers, Burkett and Stevens and Hills’ Agriculture for beginners. Almost all of the subjects approved on the curriculum had four books to choose from with the exception of specific things like dictionaries and teachers’ registers. There were also several pages of regulations regarding text books which were mostly meaningless concessions and legalese which made the Attorney General feel better.<sup>252</sup> This would end the text fight, for the time being.

The other major issue for curricula was the advent and assimilation of technical education into the System of Public Free Schools. In 1904 a group called “friends of popular education in the south” motioned the SBOE to begin helping with the normal and agricultural institute in Hampton to begin with Technical schooling. Soon after this the SBOE, acting under its new constitutional prerogative, began to approve “manual

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<sup>251</sup> Minutes, 1912-1917, 60.

<sup>252</sup> Minutes, 1912-1917, 62-68.



training and normal schools” across the state.<sup>253</sup> This would pick up steam dramatically after 1912 during the administration of Superintendent Stearnes.

Oddly, the decade-long administration of Eggleston from 1902 to 1912 ended as it began, fighting over text books. On January 18, 1912, the SBOE resolved, this time with the support of the governor, to extend the current list of books. The State Attorney General, Sammuel W. Williams, vehemently opposed their ability to pick this list on the grounds that “1-There is no power or authority in this Board to adopt this resolution, as in so doing, the Board does not comply with the law which requires the board to select text-books for use in the public free schools, of this State.” Williams argued that the adoption of the “said list of books as a whole” was not a selection of text books for use in the public free schools of the State by the Board, “as is required by the Constitution, and laws of this State. Signed Sammuel W. Williams”<sup>254</sup>

It is funny that years after the multiple list was formally adopted, and really since 1870, there was still not resolution of this topic. There seemed to always be a faction that wished to limit a specific set of books and a continuously victorious faction who allows for interpretation of the board’s duty to “select texts” and for participation by localities by selecting a “menu” or register. Despite the political nature of appointments to the State Board and even to local positions since 1902 it is apparent that educators within the Democratic Party were clearly much more progressive than their political counterparts. Due to the overwhelming strength for local rule and control of the schools, which was only further fueled by the advent of progressivism in the general society that perhaps

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<sup>253</sup> Minutes, 1912-1917, 19-21.

<sup>254</sup> Minutes 1912-1917, 490-492.

Virginians in general were more progressive, at least when it came to education, than the politics of the period might also suggest.

On December 23, 1912, Eggleston resigned his post. Governor Hodges Mann hailed Eggleston's tenure and the fervor of the period from 1902-1912 dominated by Eggleston's two terms which began in 1904. Mann summed up the period as well as any:

Over the seven years of his administration the public schools of Virginia have greatly increased in number and efficiency, the standard having been raised and a spirit of enthusiasm and progress infused into the entire system; the primary schools have been developed; high schools have been built in all sections of the State and their work articulated with the work of the colleges; vocational education has been emphasized; the agricultural interests have been redeemed by the formation of boys' corn clubs and girls garden clubs, and the organization of school fairs, and in every other possible way, and in every direction educational work has been intelligently, persistently, and efficiently pressed. Mr. Eggleston has taken high rank among the educators and superintendents of the country. His work has been broad and constructive, continually going forward to higher and better things. And always utilizing to the best advantage the work done by his predecessors. The board rejoices that his worth has been recognized by the general government, and that as Chief of Field Service in Rural Education in the United States Mr. Eggleston has been called to a broader field of usefulness. (proof that Virginia had indeed set the bar for education in the nation) While this Board feels to the full extent the loss to the State, it expresses its pleasure because of Mr. Eggleston's advancement and its confidence that in his new field he will conduct his duties upon such a basis as to contribute greatly to the success of rural education through out the country.<sup>255</sup>

Eggleston would be succeeded by Eben S. Stearnes, the former secretary of the board.

Stearnes' tenure from 1912 to 1920 would seal the end of the solidification of the System of Public Free Schools and complete the hard work of progressives and educators across the state. The SBOE had begun building a modern and progressive System of Public Free Schools through new and modern construction as well as the implementation of cutting edge curriculums of technical education.

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<sup>255</sup> Minutes, 1912-1917.

## Chapter V, 1912-1920

Joseph Stearnes's tenure as Superintendent of Public Instruction for Virginia's System of Public Free Schools serves as an appropriate epilogue for this study. In his term can be seen the fruition of fifty years of work establishing, defining, and entrenching Virginia's public schools. Progressive ideals such as building construction, technical education, and school consolidation to provide an efficient delivery of education designed to produce a citizenry capable of lifting Virginia out of the ashes of the Civil War through their capacity to be economically and culturally productive was born out in Stearnes's administration. The dream of modern facilities would become a reality; a consolidated school system and flexible curriculum would emerge that was geared towards producing an educated citizenry that was capable of producing culturally, socially, and, of course, economically.

If Superintendents William H. Ruffner and Douglas Eggleston had envisioned Virginia as a national education leader, then Stearnes would oversee its coronation. After years of effort sending men like Dr. Lehas Kent abroad to espouse Virginia's educational ideals,<sup>256</sup> the nation would now be coming to Virginia. One of Stearnes's first major contributions was to secure Virginia as the site of the school fair for the nation which was set to occur on 9 December 1913.<sup>257</sup>

Working with Stearnes to create a more streamlined and efficient public education system was Governor Hodges Mann and Attorney General Samuel W. Williams. The

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<sup>256</sup> Referring to the Capon Springs conference and the national conference on education in St. Louis detailed in previous chapters.

<sup>257</sup> Minutes, 1912-1917, 98.

state-level records are more complete and organized than any before his tenure. This is a testament to the administrative prowess of Stearnes, but it is indicative of an administration that had time to build off the work of previous generations as opposed to forging new ground. While there were still numerous initiatives in this period, the bulk of the records are much more “mundane” than the previous decade. Much of the Board’s time and energy was not spent espousing the ideals of education to the state or attempting to garner national and regional support for progressive ideas and programs. Rather, the board spent the majority of its efforts managing a never ending stream of schools and districts applying for the now abundant funds and a constant reviewing of new districts and teaching certificates. This was not the work of a new organization, but the maintenance of a bureaucratic machine.

Under Stearnes the State Board of Education (SBOE) continued to consolidate and build new schools. However, there was a major shift in the broad goals of this new school construction. Under Ruffner the focus was mainly on constructing facilities to accommodate the growing number of students and school districts across the state. Under Buchanan new school construction was often a necessity of the consolidation movement, as the system fought to organize and streamline itself. However, as the system spent less and less time justifying itself and as the progressive movement added more public support for education, there was now a defined shift in the goals for new facilities. Superintendent John Lee Buchanan and Superintendent John Massey had begun to think about building modern facilities as was evident in the 1895 supplemental report. Virginians had long been in line with the progressive desire to build new modern school facilities.

The fruition of the quest for modern facilities came during Stearnes's administration.<sup>258</sup> The SBOE minutes also portray this same attitude in Virginia. They include a circular which was sent to the Division Superintendents and School Trustees on December 10, 1913. This circular showed a new degree of control and authority present in the board. It communicates a managing of mundane details not present in the 1870s or 1880s. It is the fruition of reforms from the 1890s which would now be mandated in terms of the standards for school facilities.

The circular highlights Section 58 of the new school laws. It provided that "every school board shall provide at least two suitable and convenient out-houses or water-closets for each of the school houses under its control unless the said schoolhouses have suitable, convenient and sanitary water closets erected within the same; said out-houses or water-closets shall be entirely separated, each from the other, and shall have separate means of access. School boards shall see that said out-houses or water-closets are kept in a clean and wholesome condition."<sup>259</sup> The legislature had provided that the State Board of Health shall have the power to make, adopt, promulgate and enforce reasonable rules and regulations from time to time requiring and providing for the sanitation of all schools.<sup>260</sup> Acting under the authority conferred by the legislature, the State Board of Health had adopted a regulation which only allowed for outhouses where plumbing was not available. There were also specific regulations for dry closets

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<sup>258</sup> Buchanan had wanted to move in this direction in the 1890s. His intent is clear in the questions about raising taxes to and consolidating schools in the 1895 Supplemental reports and several other ARS of his tenure. His effort to elicit public support for more taxes and increased schools was now realized in action.

<sup>259</sup> Footnote on plumbing/sanitation in progressivism?

<sup>260</sup> Section 59 of Virginia School Laws 1912.

(outhouses) and water closets.<sup>261</sup> In addition, the State Board regulated that districts could not receive funds until the board approved of the school houses in the district. Proper schoolhouses qualifying for state funds were defined as those which had “made proper provision for schoolhouses, furniture, apparatus, text-books for the indigent children, and all other means and appliances needful for the successful operation of the schools.”<sup>262</sup> This effort under Stearnes went far beyond the locally driven efforts accomplished like those of Rockingham County when newspapers made public pleas for better school houses and an active campaign against the “old relics” which were one room schools.<sup>263</sup> This was no longer a suggestion, but a law. The board continued to follow up with circulars, threats and the actual pulling of funds if compliances were not met beginning in October 1912. In August 1913 the board made it clear that it would enforce the law saying that it was:

positive and peremptory that two sanitary closets shall be provided at each public school building. Our duty is clear. We must carry out the provisions of the law, not in a few cases nor in fifty or sixty-percent of the cases, but everywhere. This must be done before the schools open this fall. An inquiry to that effect will be sent out on or about October 15th.<sup>264</sup>

At the Conference of Division Superintendents held in Radford, Virginia on August 27, 1913, it was announced that one of the duties of the year would be to carry out these

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<sup>261</sup> “Every building used for public school purposes shall be furnished with two closets; one for males and the other for females separated as far as possible from each-other and so arranged as to give the greatest possible privacy to persons using same. (put this in the sanitation footnote) “Buildings to which water and sewerage are available shall be provided with water-closets and connected with the sewerage system. Where water and sewerage are not available, buildings shall be provided with dry closets, built and maintained in accordance with the standard given in the regulations on dry closets. Such closets shall be at all times maintained in a clean and sanitary condition” (See section 60 of the School Laws.)

<sup>262</sup> Section 61 of the School Laws

<sup>264</sup> Minutes, 1912-1917. 252.

provisions. Plans and specifications were provided which enabled the local school boards to comply with these provisions of the law at a cost not exceeding \$25 for each one or two-room school building. Specific plans were made available for distribution in the Department of Public Instruction beginning August 15, 1913. It was decided that it would be “wise not to withhold all of the State school funds until the conveniences herein mentioned have been provided,” as laid out by the regulations adopted on October 10, 1912. The SBOE instead decided to begin by withholding the high school and graded school funds until this matter was settled. This circular requested each division superintendent give the names of all districts in his county in which “two sanitary out-houses have been provided for each school,” and that the division superintendents had communicated the requirements to the clerks of all school boards which are delinquent. In December 1913 the Board began to pull funds.<sup>265</sup>

This ability to mandate and enforce the standard school facilities across the state and to withhold the now abundant funds from the district school boards for failure to comply with a vision for school facilities was a clear sign of the entrenchment of the school system. No longer were educators simply trying to convince the populace that new schools were a good idea. Instead, the board had the ability through financial purse strings to not tolerate the old one and two room schools it had long since found unsatisfactory. A direct example of this would be the SBOE putting out a warrant for the

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<sup>265</sup> Minutes, 1912-1917, 251.

recuperation of \$400 in state money from Bland County for failing to meet the new standards for its schools.<sup>266</sup>

The state-wide school system had grown in many ways since its establishment in 1870. The management of the system had grown so large that Stearnes established the first routinized meetings of the SBOE in late 1916.<sup>267</sup> On February 2, 1918 the State Board officially reported that their quarters at the Governor's mansion "in which the Department of Public Instruction is now housed are entirely inadequate, thoroughly inconvenient, unsanitary, and unsafe as a depository for valuable records." This was no doubt true as the auditing committee alone provided pages and pages of the minutes in this year. The state education fund had grown from non-existent in 1870 to an annual expenditure of \$3,166,382.79 in 1918.<sup>268</sup> The Board of Education moved to the fourth floor of the present day Patrick Henry Building near the State Capitol.<sup>269</sup>

The state was also quickly streamlining the qualifications of its teachers under Stearnes. On May 30, 1912, the SBOE required that all teachers across the state be required to have a 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup>, or 3<sup>rd</sup> Grade Certificate which indicated or demonstrated that a teacher was qualified to teach at least that corresponding grade at one of the state's high schools. Whereas, simple pay of teachers had remained an issue at the beginning of Eggleston's term near the turn of the century, Stearnes's administration had what one

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<sup>266</sup> Minutes 1912,-1917, 90-91.

<sup>267</sup> Minutes, 1916. On December 21<sup>st</sup> 1916 resolved to meet on 10<sup>th</sup> day of each month.

<sup>268</sup> Minutes, 1912-1917. 318.

<sup>269</sup> The Department of Education now takes up the better part of the Monroe Building in Downtown Richmond. It is the tallest building in the city.



might call a “good problem.” Teacher pay was no longer an issue for the SBOE. Now the board’s attention shifted to fixing the pay of pensions for the many teachers who had since retired from the then forty- year old System of Public Free Schools. Stearnes began a review system for pensions in 1912 which would occur every three years and much of the minutes over his tenure would deal with the administration of the pension system. There are countless pages in the minutes addressing this issue throughout his tenure.<sup>270</sup> Normal teacher training became standardized under Stearnes’s tenure. On August 16, 1913, the SBOE set three minimal requirements for normal training teachers. First, graduation from a normal department, college, or school was required, and only the State Superintendent could make exceptions to this rule. Second, three years teaching in primary or grammar grades were now required. Third, a professional teaching certificate was required. Oddly, Attorney General Williams actually voted against these requirements on the final measure.<sup>271</sup> The minutes also show the state board constantly pushing to improve the quality of its high school certification in addition to its campaign for sanitation in schools.<sup>272</sup>

The standardization of curriculums was also accomplished under Stearnes. The first issue facing Stearnes was the final resolution of texts. Despite all the work that had been done by his predecessor, Attorney General Williams was not quite ready to give up on the fight over the list of books. As late as April 1913 Williams was still a vocal

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<sup>270</sup> Minutes, 1912-1917. OCT 17-18.

<sup>271</sup> Williams had long sought diligent and strict reform of the selection of texts. It seemed odd that he would oppose a measure designed to more clearly define the requirements for becoming an educator in Virginia.

<sup>272</sup> Minutes, 1912-1917.

opponent of the multiple list. Other than the decree of Eggleston there had been nothing formally decided on this issue. Governor William Hodges Mann, unlike his predecessor, was a proponent of the multiple book list. In fact, according to the report Williams seems to be the only voice, albeit a loud voice, of opposition. In order to quiet the Attorney General, the State Board asked the legislature to relieve them of the responsibility for the decision on the book list and to pass a law explicitly granting them permission to use a multiple book list.<sup>273</sup>

The board also took advantage of this opportunity to refine and update the list of texts to meet the needs of the new curriculum. The board produced an eleven- page document in 1916 which justified many of the changes already made to the text list. The legislature approved this document into law. The board argued that advances in technology, science, and in education in general required the updating of texts when it came to methods and sciences. Books were rated on several categories. These included their “Excellence in General method”, “Attractiveness and thoroughness of presentation”, and the extent to which “practical and useful material [was] used, especially from industrial and country life”. Books were also judged on their “interest and variety of reviews” and the books “teachableness and adaptability to schools of different types.” The board also evaluated the books on their “subject matter” and the arrangement and presentation of material in the books. It generally looked for books which if placed “in the hands of an untrained teacher the child should be able to learn.” Stearnes considered it helpful if the book contained “a good working manual furnished free to teachers, explaining the method of presentation and directing the teacher’s work.” Stearnes was

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<sup>273</sup> Minutes, 1912-1917, 94-95.

interested in books which in his opinion were “markedly superior in every respect of physical manufacture, literary content and educational methods.” Stearnes would list some of the more outstanding points of books: the superior literary quality of material included, excellent grading in language and thought content, adaptability to the grade for which it is intended “by the peculiar interest of the selections to the pupils”, as well as “superior teachableness resulting from aids and methods in presentation, as, for example, the questions and notes at the end of each selection.” Stearnes was also aware of the financing of texts and looked to maximize budgets by selecting books which made available a teacher’s manual without cost. He also looked for books which contained “a greater amount of reading material, reducing the actual cost by pages to the pupils.”<sup>274</sup> Stearnes would ultimately win this battle. On November 21, 1917, ninety-one books were added to the Virginia List, which was now formally recognized by the state legislature. The broadening of the multiple list and the addition of the State Legislature in the approval process to add legality and formality to the lists did not completely end any debate in the matter. Counties were still more than willing to press back their individual desires for texts despite the expansive list now provided by the legislature.<sup>275</sup>

The expansion of new types of schools across the state drove the overhaul of textbook lists. Technical education was expanding rapidly under Stearnes. On August 17, 1912, the SBOE authorized a public school at the Virginia Home and Industrial School for Girls in Chesterfield County, which the minutes referred to as an “Industrial

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<sup>274</sup> Minutes, 1912-1917, 474-487.

<sup>275</sup> Minutes, 1917-1920, 27. An example of this would be that on 15 and 16 January 1918 the board was tied up listening to representatives from Loudoun County requesting the use of Smithey’s History, which had not made the new list, for their schools.

Home for Incurable Girls.” Industrial education was clearly seen as a way to help the lower classes of society. Specialized individual schools such as the Virginia Home, Hampton Institute, and Miller School were no longer the sole thrust of technical education. The SBOE under Stearnes in 1917 authorized a payment of \$5,000 and \$2,000 respectively to the United Agricultural Board for the Boys Corn Club and the Girls Garden Club as provided by Chapter 53 of the Acts of 1912. This decision allowed for reimbursement and funding of these new organizations. They were designed to augment the education of local schools through the use of clubs. Essentially this provided legitimacy and state and federal funding for progressive clubs which focused on teaching farming and gardening in school. It was through these agricultural clubs and their industrial counterparts that 4H, wood and machine shops, and other agricultural and technical education would become part of every school in the state.<sup>276</sup>

Increasingly under Stearnes new forms of education both in and out of the classroom were formalized. Tying in with the progressive pushes for physical education, the SBOE, in January 1912, announced that \$400 would be made available for schools to build playgrounds.<sup>277</sup> That same month the board approved the purchase of “scientific apparatus for all schools proposed”.<sup>278</sup> The State Board accompanied the introduction of formal technical sciences and laboratories for general schools with an expansion of

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<sup>276</sup> Minutes, 1917-1920, 14.

<sup>277</sup> Minutes, 1917-1920, 33.

<sup>278</sup> Minutes, 1917-1920, 45. Scientific apparatus included basic laboratory equipment which, aside from modern amenities such as computers, looked much like a high school chemistry laboratory of today. This equipment would be used for soils testing and agriculture or even machining or construction of materials, to surveying equipment such as used at the industrial schools like the Miller School.

specific schools for this purpose across the state. In 1917 the SBOE explored the possibility of and established an agricultural high school in Charlotte County.<sup>279</sup>

There was also a successful push to gain funds from the federal government to assist specific educational programs. On November 21, 1917, the SBOE secured funds from the federal government in the amount of \$16,059.97 for “Teachers of Agriculture”, \$5,633.75 for “Home Economics Teachers”, and \$11,248.28 for teacher training in these areas. The state approved an additional \$27,869.90 for agricultural schools and an additional \$23,997.65 to support requisitions for furnishing equipment. Rockingham County also applied for recognition of its new Agricultural High School at Harrisonburg High.<sup>280</sup>

The state used these new funds to support the adoption of a formal training program for agricultural teachers of secondary schools. The first year could be taken at The College of William and Mary, the University of Virginia, or Virginia Polytechnic Institute and included courses in English, Math, Physics, and Biology (Botany and Zoology). The second year was only offered at VPI and the curriculum included course offerings in General Chemistry, Field and Forage Crops, Farm Machinery, Animal Husbandry, Dairying, Veterinary Science, Economics, Rural Engineering, Poultry, Chemistry Lab, Farm Crops Lab, an Animal Husbandry Seminar, a Veterinary Science Lab, and a Farm Machinery Lab. The third year also was taken at VPI and consisted of courses in Geology, Agricultural Journalism, Agricultural Chemistry, Soils and Fertilizers, Farm management, General Horticulture, Vegetable Gardening, Plant

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<sup>279</sup> Minutes, 1917-1920, 13.

<sup>280</sup> Minutes, 1917-1920, 14-15.

Pathology, Plant Breeding, Dairy Industry, a Soils Lab, a Geological Lab, a Horticultural Lab, a Dairy Industry Lab, an Agronomy Seminar, and a Plant Pathology lab. The fourth year could be completed at either the University of Virginia or the College of William and Mary where the teachers would be instructed in Special Methods in Teaching Agriculture including extension work, Educational Psychology, Principles of Teaching, School Organization and Management, Government (US History and Civics), Rural Economy, Bacteriology, and Sanitation.<sup>281</sup> The federal funds necessary for establishing this curriculum were provided under the Federal Vocational Education Act approved by Congress on 23 February 1917, informally referred to as the Smith Hughes Act. This was the realization of a goal set forth at the third Capon Springs Conference in 1902.

The establishment of federally supported schools showed the widespread public support for the concept of education. In the first period of this study the locality essentially ran the schools. Then, in the second period, the state consolidated power and support for the schools. Now, in the early twentieth century, the federal government passed regulations and acts and provided funds to ensure compliance. Congress required the state board to submit their plans for vocational education through the Board for Vocational Education:

The act charges the federal board with the duty of seeing that the moneys allotted are spent in accordance with the plans submitted by [Virginia's] board and approved by the Federal Board. Furthermore the Federal Board is charged with the responsibility of ascertaining whether or not the states are prepared to use the money as contemplated by the Act. Consequently

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<sup>281</sup> Minutes, 1917-1920, 17-18.

the [Federal Board] will from time to time, require reports both on the expenditure of money and the progress of the work in the State.<sup>282</sup>

The minutes included pages of specifics on how the money was to be spent. The SBOE reported its plans and requested for the federal government to provide funds accordingly.<sup>283</sup> The SBOE requested the federal government “to provide minimum equipment and manual training dollars for an agricultural lab at \$250 each.” The maximum amount it was possible for districts to request for the aid of agricultural schooling was set at \$3500.<sup>284</sup>

### **Conclusion**

The minutes for 1920 provide an interesting epilogue for the state school system. The fervor of standardization in Stearnes’s tenure seemed to have given way completely to efficiency and maintenance as Harris Hart became the new superintendent of public instruction. Hart set aside one day to study the U.S. Constitution for all schools. He appointed a state supervisor for physical education and wanted to ensure that inspections were done so that all higher institutes of learning were “standardized.”

The future was coming quickly to education in Virginia as Hart also explored the purchase and use of motion picture reels in the classroom.<sup>285</sup> In his first month in office, Hart reviewed a list of the accredited and non-accredited high schools across the State. In the four Valley counties highlighted in this study, a clearer view can be perceived

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<sup>282</sup> Minutes, 1917-1920, 18. Text of the Smith Hughes act taken from the minutes of the SBOE.

<sup>283</sup> Minutes, 1917-1920, 21.

<sup>284</sup> Minutes, 1917-1920, 34-35.

<sup>285</sup> Minutes, 1917-1920, 2-19.

regarding the progress of schools in executing the new standard for high schools to achieve sixteen units or more of high school work. There were five high schools in Augusta County meeting the new requirement, with three coming one credit short and one with only thirteen hours. Bland County only had one high school which was unaccredited with only twelve units. Loudoun County had five accredited high schools and four non- accredited schools managing fourteen hours. Rockingham County, in the last year of Huvley's administration, had achieved six accredited high schools, including Harrisonburg Colored, and only had three operating between twelve and fourteen hours. In 1920, Rockingham County reported \$40,000 a month in "vocational" expenses.<sup>286</sup>

The state of Virginia's System of Public Free Schools had come a long way in its first fifty years of existence. Radical Republicans had installed this system into Virginia's 1870 Constitution in the hope that it might provide blacks and poor whites an education. These early leaders had clearly identified the need for education which John Dewey would later enunciate. They, like Dewey, realized that an education was necessary to ensure that "children should become full, individual participants in a democratic society."<sup>287</sup> This was apparent to both Radical Republican and Redeemer Democrat educators and champions of education in Virginia. Despite the routing of the Radical Republicans in 1869; education went forward in the Redeemers' 1870 Constitution. The System of Public Free Schools set about establishing and entrenching itself in the communities of Virginia between the years of 1870 and 1886. Its progress

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<sup>286</sup> Minutes, 1917-1920, 22-24.

<sup>287</sup> John Dewey, *The School and Society*, 1899.



was unaffected by the political polarization in the state during this period, as it easily weathered brief Readjuster rule and return to Democratic control of the state.

The State Board of Education, under the leadership of its Superintendent, William H. Ruffner, established the System of Public Free Schools as a mainstay of service and taxation across the state using a grassroots approach executed by local superintendents and district school boards of trustees. This approach was born of a necessary design, not just because of home rule politics, but also because the new system had no infrastructure or bureaucracy to execute its mandate. In the period between 1870 and 1886 Virginia's educators experimented with the very notion of what defined schools and teachers. Through trial and error, and much initiative on the part of its county superintendents, this period saw the rise in formal, uniform teacher training as a concept more than a mandate. It also involved a gradual shift towards greater centralization of the school system. Through taxation and regulation the System of Public Free schools sought to build its administration and its physical infrastructure. In passing years it relied more and more on taxation and public funding than on private philanthropy, which had been the practice prior to the Civil War.

This initial period also gave rise to actual professional educators, who in 1886, under the leadership of State Superintendent John Buchanan, would begin formalizing and standardizing education in Virginia. A study of the advent of progressive ideals of education, standardization, presentation, and training of educators, reveals that such innovations came from the ranks of the new educational professionals and leaders within Virginia in the period between 1870 and 1886. A period of standardization can be perceived between 1886 and 1900. Major progressive-style goals can be perceived as

beginning in this time period. Virginia implemented a program of teacher preparation, pushed for the establishment of facilities designed to highlight the importance of education and improve its efficiency through school consolidation, sought out ways to professionalize and stabilize its teaching force, and in general sought out ways to improve and streamline the actual implementation of education in Virginia. The move towards a professional teaching force, the shift from adequate to modern and sufficient facilities, and standardized state bureaucracy for education and the standardization of texts are all ideas which are hallmarks of the progressive education movement. Virginia implemented these reforms prior to the arrival of progressivism as a nationally recognizable movement at the turn of the century.

A further study of the period from 1900 to 1920 has demonstrated how Virginia had a greater part of the genesis and proliferation of progressive ideals in education nationally than has previously been accepted. The system that emerged prior to this period was influenced more from below and within than from externally and from above. As progressivism swept the national education movement in the early twentieth century, Virginia was not a passive recipient of progressive policies and ideals but an active leader and innovator in the movement across the nation and particularly in the South. In this final period leading up to 1920 the education had clearly grown from a nonexistent or unrecognizable system of one-room schools into a permanently established part of Virginia society. Many of the initial goals of those who sought to use education to bring up the masses to create a more productive and capable citizenry had been met especially in the establishment of technical education.

The only thing left to accomplish at this point was the desegregation of schools and the equalizing of education for blacks. This has been established as a goal of Virginia's progressives as early as the first Capon Springs Conferences in 1899 and was clearly a goal of Radical Republicans during Reconstruction. Virginia's educators clearly called for this review in Capon Springs and the federal government was providing it in the form of the Report on Negro Education.<sup>288</sup> Education would remain separate and unequal across the state and the South for over thirty years.<sup>289</sup> However, there can be no doubt that it was standardized and available to every child in the state by 1920. It had improved uniformly for all as well.

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<sup>288</sup> This report was designed to look at the state of education for blacks across the South and assess the best way to proceed with their education in a segregated South.

<sup>289</sup> Segregation of Virginia's public schools would exist in legal practice until the decision of *Brown vs. Board of education* in 1954. This was received by a period of "Massive Resistance" led by Senator Harry Byrd which would uphold segregated public schools through the Virginia Supreme Court and State Legislature until first-grader Mary Rose Foxworth and second-grader Daphne Perminter became the first African American pupils at the previously all-white Suburban Park School in Norfolk when they enrolled on September 8, 1959. Courtesy *Richmond Times-Dispatch*. This would follow a period of transition which would not see the full integration of Virginia's school system until 1964 when the Supreme Court of the United States ordered that state school systems which had been closed as part of massive resistance be reopened. It was also necessary to conduct a bussing plan as late as the 1970s to ensure the full integration of Virginia's schools.



## Appendix B, Virginia Constitutions

### Constitution of Virginia, 1870

#### *School districts.*

SEC. 3. Each township shall be divided into so many compactly located school districts as may be deemed necessary: *Provided*, That no school district shall be formed containing less than one hundred inhabitants. In each school district there shall be elected or appointed annually one school trustee, who shall hold his office three years: *Provided*, That at the first election held under this provision there shall be three trustees elected, whose terms shall be one, two, and three years, respectively.

## ARTICLE VIII.

### EDUCATION.

SECTION 1. The general assembly shall elect, in joint ballot, within thirty days after its organization under this constitution, and every fourth year thereafter, a superintendent of public instruction. He shall have the general supervision of the public free-school interests of the State, and shall report to the general assembly for its consideration within thirty days after his election a plan for a uniform system of public free schools.

SEC. 2. There shall be a board of education, composed of the governor, superintendent of public instruction, and attorney-general, which shall appoint and have power to remove for cause and upon notice to the incumbents, subject to confirmation by the senate, all county superintendents of public free schools. This board shall have, regulated by law, the management and investment of all school-funds, and such supervision of schools of higher grades as the law shall provide.

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## VIRGINIA.

SEC. 3. The general assembly shall provide by law, at its first session under this constitution, a uniform system of public free schools, and for its gradual, equal, and full introduction into all the counties of the State by the year eighteen hundred and seventy-six, or as much earlier as practicable.

SEC. 4. The general assembly shall have power, after a full introduction of the public free-school system, to make such laws as shall not permit parents and guardians to allow their children to grow up in ignorance and vagrancy.

SEC. 5. The general assembly shall establish, as soon as practicable, normal schools, and may establish agricultural schools and such grades of schools as shall be for the public good.

SEC. 6. The board of education shall provide for uniformity of text-books, and the furnishing of school-houses with such apparatus and library as may be necessary, under such regulations as may be provided by law.

SEC. 7. The general assembly shall set apart, as a permanent and perpetual "literary fund," the present literary funds of the State, the proceeds of all public lands donated by Congress for public-school purposes, of all escheated property, of all waste and unappropriated lands, of all property accruing to the State by forfeiture, and all fines collected for offences committed against the State, and such other sums as the general assembly may appropriate.

SEC. 8. The general assembly shall apply the annual interest on the literary fund, the capitation-tax provided for by this constitution for public free-school purposes, and an annual tax upon the property of the State of not less than one mill, nor more than five mills, on the dollar, for the equal benefit of all the people of the State, the number of children between the ages of five and twenty-one years in each public free-school district being the basis of such division. Provision shall be made to supply children attending the public free schools with necessary text-books, in cases where the parent or guardian is unable, by reason of poverty, to furnish them. Each county and public free-school district may raise additional sums by a tax on property for the support of public free schools. All unexpended sums of any one year in any public free-school district shall go into the general school-fund for redivision the next year: *Provided*, That any tax authorized by this section to be raised by counties or school districts shall not exceed five mills on a dollar in any one year, and shall not be subject to redivision, as hereinbefore provided in this section.

SEC. 9. The general assembly shall have power to foster all higher grades of schools under its supervision, and to provide for such purpose a permanent educational fund.

SEC. 10. All grants and donations received by the general assembly for educational purposes shall be applied according to the terms prescribed by the donors.

SEC. 11. Each city and county shall be held accountable for the destruction of school property that may take place within its limits by incendiaries or open violence.

SEC. 12. The general assembly shall fix the salaries and prescribe the duties of all school officers, and shall make all needful laws and regulations to carry into effect the public free-school system provided for by this article.

## Virginia Constitution, 1902, ARTICLE X

### EDUCATION AND PUBLIC INSTRUCTION.

Section 1. The General Assembly shall establish and maintain an efficient system of public free schools throughout the State.

Sec. 2. The general supervision of the public free school system of the State shall be vested in a State Board of Education to be composed of the Governor, Attorney-General, Superintendent of Public Instruction, and three experienced educators, to be elected by the Senate of Virginia, once every four years, from a list of eligibles, one each, to be furnished respectively by the Boards of Visitors or Trustees of the University of Virginia, the Virginia Military Institute, the Virginia Polytechnic Institute, the State Female Normal School, at Farmville, School for Deaf and Blind, at Staunton, and William and Mary College (so long as the State shall continue its annual appropriation to this last named institution). The said list of eligibles shall be made up of one name from the official corps or faculties of each of the institutions indicated; and the board thus constituted shall associate with it two division superintendents of public schools, one of whom shall be from one of the cities and the other from one of the counties of the State, whose term of office shall be for two years, and whose powers and duties shall be identical with those of the other members, except they shall not participate in the appointment of any public school official.

Sec. 3. The Superintendent of Public Instruction, who shall be an experienced educator, shall be elected by the qualified electors of the State; and after his first term, which \*shall be fixed by law, he shall be elected at the same time as the Governor and hold office for a term of four years. His duties shall be prescribed by the State Board of Education, and his compensation shall be fixed by law, and he shall be ea-officio president of the State Board of Education.

Sec. 4. The duties and powers of the State Board of Education shall be as follows:

First. It may, in its discretion, divide the State into appropriate school divisions, and shall, subject to the confirmation of the Senate, appoint one superintendent of schools for each of such divisions, who shall hold their office for four years, and prescribe their duties, and may remove such superintendents for cause and upon notice to the incumbent: provided, no such division shall comprise less than one county or city, nor shall any county or city be divided in the formation of any such division.

Second. It shall have, regulated by law, the management and investment of the school fund.

Third. It shall have authority to make all needful rules and regulations for the management and conduct of the public free schools, which rules and regulations, when published and distributed, shall have the force and effect of law, but all rules and

regulations of said board may be amended or repealed by the General Assembly, and when so amended or repealed, shall not be reenacted by said board.

Fourth. It shall select text books and educational appliances for use in the public free schools of the State, exercising such discretion as it may see fit in the selection of books suitable for the schools in the cities and counties, respectively.

Fifth. It shall appoint a board of directors consisting of five members, who shall serve without compensation, in which shall be vested the management of the State library, and the appointment of a librarian and other employees therefor, subject to such rules and regulations as the General Assembly shall prescribe; but the law library shall be under the control of the court of appeals.

Sec. 6. Each magisterial district shall constitute a separate school district, unless otherwise provided by law. In each school district there shall be selected, in a manner provided by law, three school trustees whose term of office shall be prescribed by law.

Sec. 6. The General Assembly shall set apart as a permanent and perpetual literary fund, the present literary funds of the State; the proceeds of all public lands donated by Congress for public free school purposes; of All escheated property; of all waste and unappropriated lands; of all property accruing to the State by forfeiture, and all fines collected for offenses committed against the State, and such other sums as the General Assembly may appropriate.

Sec. 7. The General Assembly shall apply the annual interest on the literary fund; that portion of the capitation tax provided for in the Constitution to be paid into the State treasury, and an annual tax on property of not less than one nor more than five mills on the dollar to the public free schools of the primary and grammar grades, for the equal benefit of all of the people of the State to be apportioned on a basis of school population; the number of children between the ages of seven and twenty years in each school district being the basis of such apportionment : provided, that in case the subjects of State taxation shall be made separate from the subjects of county and city taxation, the General Assembly may otherwise provide for a fixed appropriation of State revenue to the support of the public schools not less than that provided in this section. Provision shall be made to supply children attending the public free schools with necessary text-books in cases where the parent or guardian is unable, by reason of poverty, to furnish them. Each city, town (if the same be a separate school district), county, and school district is authorized to raise additional sums by a tax on property not to exceed in the aggregate five mills on the dollar in any one year, to be apportioned and expended by the local school authorities of said cities, towns, counties, and districts in establishing and maintaining such schools as in their judgment the public welfare may require: provided, that such primary schools as shall be established in any school year shall be maintained at least four months of that school year before any part of the fund assessed and collected may be devoted to the establishment of schools of higher grade. The boards of supervisors of the several counties, and the common councils of the several cities and towns (where the same be



separate school districts) shall provide for the levy and collection of the said local school taxes.

Sec. 8. The General Assembly may establish agricultural, normal, manual training and technical schools, and such grades of schools as shall be for the public good.

Sec. 9. The General Assembly may, in its discretion, provide for the compulsory education of children between the ages of eight and twelve years, except such as are weak in body and mind, or can read and write, or are attending private schools, or that are excused for cause by the district school trustees.

Sec. 10. White and colored children shall not be taught in the same school.

Sec. 11. No appropriation of public funds shall be made to any school or institution of learning not owned or exclusively controlled by the State or some political sub-division thereof: provided, first, that the General Assembly may, in its discretion, continue the appropriations to the College of William and Mary: and provided, second, that this section shall not be construed as compelling or prohibiting the continuing or discontinuing by the General Assembly of the payment of interest on certain bonds held by certain schools and colleges as provided for by an Act of the General Assembly passed February 23, 1892, relating to bonds held by schools and colleges: and provided, third, that cities, towns, counties and districts may make appropriations to non-sectarian schools of manual, industrial, or technical training, and also to any school or institution of learning owned or exclusively controlled by such municipality, county, or school district.

Sec. 12. Members of the boards of visitors or trustees of educational institutions required by law to be appointed by the General Assembly or the Governor, shall hold their position for the term of four years.

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Before the Waterford School fell under the purview of the Virginia State Board of Education it was supported by the Society of Friends in Philadelphia. Sarah Steer was required to write a monthly report to her benefactors. She provides a great deal of insight into the goings on of the school.

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