

ANNOUNCEMENTS

STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Public Education in Virginia, 1927-28

A BRIEF review of educational progress during the year which ended June 30, 1928, indicates satisfactory development along all lines and unusual progress in certain respects. The enrollment of children in the schools shows an increase of approximately 4,500 pupils, 553,717 being enrolled last year as compared with 549,317 for 1926-27. Still more encouraging information is contained in the fact that 437,861 pupils were in regular daily attendance as contrasted with 429,161 for the previous year—a gain of nearly 9,000 pupils in average daily attendance.

In length of school term, there was a gain of three days. The average term in Virginia for 1927-28 was 165 days, or eight months and one week. This is an unusual increase in length of term for a one-year period.

The school building program has gone forward perhaps more rapidly than during any previous year, the total value of school buildings and sites being now estimated at \$61,941,197—a gain of nearly \$6,000,000 during the year. In addition to the actual increase in value of school property, there is an ever-increasing demand for school buildings of better type. The work of the School Building Division of the State Department of Education has become increasingly heavy.

In measuring educational efficiency, naturally one of the most satisfactory methods is to make a study of the training of teachers. In 1927-28 12,430 teachers held the Elementary Certificate, or a certificate of higher grade, whereas during the previous year, only 10,874 such certificates were held by members of the teaching force. The number of one-teacher schools in the State has decreased during the year by seventy-five—an indication of the continued

development of consolidated schools, with superior advantages for the pupils.

The enrollment in accredited high schools was 63,045 as compared with 59,323 for the previous year. In this connection there was a decrease in the number of three-teacher high schools and a corresponding increase in high schools with four teachers or above. The reorganization of the high school program of studies was put into effect during the year, and the large majority of schools are operating for the first time on a sixty-minute class basis, which it is generally agreed provides a better opportunity for efficient instruction.

The State Board adopted new standards for the organization and operation of school libraries. It is believed that the carrying out of these rules and regulations will mean not only larger and better organized libraries, but more satisfactory use of the libraries. School libraries now contain approximately three-quarters of a million books, and the plan of purchasing books for school libraries through the Division of Textbooks in the State Department of Education seems to be proving exceedingly satisfactory.

The Division of Research, in the Department of Education, completed a number of surveys of county school systems during the year. Several of these have been printed as bulletins of the Department, and it is believed that this work is proving very helpful as a guide for developing county and city school systems.

The plan for carrying on the program of physical and health education, under the system of district directors, responsible to the State Supervisor of Physical Education, was continued during the year, and there has been substantial progress made in this work.

Vocational education in agriculture and in trades and industries continued to expand, with particular emphasis placed upon school instruction in agriculture and part-

time classes and foremanship conferences in the industries. In home economics, while there has been marked improvement in the efficiency of instruction, funds have not permitted the development of the program in additional communities.

All of the progress enumerated in the above paragraphs has been brought about at no additional cost to the State and localities. The total amount, including balances, expended during the year was \$25,602,134—this being slightly less than the amount expended during the previous year.

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LIBRARIES IN VIRGINIA PUBLIC SCHOOLS

State Aid and Discounts Stimulate Growth

THE State Board of Education of Virginia has recognized for a long time the need for library books to supplement the content of textbooks and to challenge the resourcefulness and interest of teachers and pupils in the public schools of this state. Twenty years ago, the State Superintendent of Public Instruction, Dr. J. D. Eggleston, secured the passage of a state aid law which carried a state appropriation of \$5,000 for the biennium to supplement private donations and local school funds for the purchase of books for public school libraries. These libraries now contain three-quarters of a million books. The last general assembly appropriated \$30,000 for public school libraries for the biennium. The State Board of Education will buy \$120,000 worth of books at wholesale during this two-year period. At least \$40,000 will be saved in discounts on this amount of business. Books are purchased in \$40.00 library units. If \$15.00 is raised in a community from private sources, the county or city school board will add \$15.00 and the state will contribute \$10.00. Printed order lists are distributed by the division superintendent of schools in each county and city.

Progress This Year

The most encouraging developments this year have been the adoption of standards for libraries in accredited high schools by the State Board of Education, an increase of fifty per cent in the annual state appropriation, and the publication of a school library bulletin. The accredited high schools are divided into four groups according to the number of pupils enrolled. Each group is required to meet different standards as to the number and kind of books, the kind of equipment, the duties of the librarian, and the amount of the local appropriation. Twelve lessons in the use of the library are required to be given to the pupils in the first-year class of the high school. The new school library bulletin contains complete instructions covering the proper use and care of books and suggested rules and regulations regarding the management of the public school libraries in addition to an approved book list of more than six thousand titles. The books are listed alphabetically by authors for each grade and for the high school. The wholesale price is quoted, and a brief annotation is printed under each title.

Co-operation With Public Libraries

The Henrico county school board has agreed to appropriate \$3,000 to cover library extension service from the Richmond city library for a period of three years, provided a satisfactory arrangement may be made with the Richmond city library board. It is proposed to use school buses to deliver packages of books at four schools in different parts of this county twice a month. A trained librarian from the Richmond city library will visit these schools when new books are delivered.

If such an arrangement proves successful in Henrico county, it is likely that other libraries in the cities of this state may undertake extension service through school li-