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SUGGESTIONS FOR THE  
REORGANIZATION OF THE SCHOOLS  
IN CURRITUCK COUNTY, NORTH  
CAROLINA

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## INTRODUCTORY STATEMENT.

This study of conditions of the school system of the County of Currituck, with suggestions for its improvement, is made at the request of the county board of education. It is inspired by the desire of the board to adopt a consistent policy as to buildings, organization, course of study, supervision, and instruction, which provides for present and future needs of the children and gives due consideration to modern educational standards and ideals.

It is recognized that it may not be possible to meet immediately all the recommendations. But it is possible to make gradual changes in harmony with the accomplishment of the ultimate plan for an efficient school system, and to avoid useless expenditure of money in temporary expedients which retard rather than further educational progress.

This inquiry aims to consider the system of schools for white children as it is and as it should be, in order to accord with progressive ideas and to offer the best possible educational advantages to the greatest number of children. It recognizes obstacles with which the county board must contend and aims to recommend the best and most economical means for improvement.

## SUGGESTIONS FOR THE REORGANIZATION OF THE SCHOOLS IN CURRITUCK COUNTY, N. C.

### GENERAL CONDITIONS.

Currituck County is located in the northeastern part of North Carolina, on the Atlantic coast. It is a peninsula, triangular in shape, 40 miles long, 14 miles wide at the north end, narrowing to 5 miles in the southern portion. It contains about 276 square miles. Besides the mainland, it includes several islands. Currituck Sound and the North River bound it on three sides. It joins Virginia on the north.

The soil is fertile; the leading crops are soy beans, cow peas, corn, potatoes, melons, and cotton. Potatoes particularly have brought splendid returns during the last few years. There are 984 farms in the county. The population is entirely rural. Practically all the people are engaged in farming or fishing. Hunting, while the regular occupation of only a few of the people, draws many to the county for recreation. A number of hunting clubs are located along the coast or on the islands. Currituck is the county seat, and Moyock the largest trading center; neither of these villages contains more than a few hundred people. The majority of the white farmers own their farms.

The county is old in history and tradition. Only a short distance to the south is Roanoke Island, where Raleigh made the first white settlement in the United States, in 1585, and where Virginia Dare was born. The white population is almost entirely of native birth and parentage. Most of the people are descendants of families who have made their homes in the county for many generations.

The total population is about 7,000, of which 60 per cent is white. The school census for 1919-20 was 2,748, of whom 74 per cent, or 2,080, were enrolled in school, and 72 per cent, or 1,494, in average daily attendance. The school population, enrollment, and attendance have not changed materially during the past five years.

### ADMINISTRATION OF THE SCHOOLS.

Currituck County conforms with the North Carolina plan in the administration of its schools. Nominally the county unit of organization prevails. There is a county board of education elected by the legislature, with considerable power and important duties, one of which is selection of the county superintendent. The county board also has general supervision over the schools of the county, the power to veto the selection of teachers, to locate buildings, to change dis-

trict lines, and, by recent legislation, to consolidate school districts. Until this was enacted the county board could not carry out a program for consolidating the schools and reorganizing the system. Six districts which failed to levy a special tax, have prevented this, with the result that actual conditions resemble more nearly those which prevail under the district unit plan of administration. In the special-tax districts school buildings are better, the term longer, and salaries of teachers higher than in the nontax districts. In the latter there are only such school facilities as satisfy the minimum requirements prescribed by State law and are furnished by State and county funds.

#### NUMBER OF SCHOOLS.

The white children of the county are taught by 48 teachers. They attend school in 20 school buildings as follows: Nine, one-teacher; four, two-teacher; four, three-teacher; one, four-teacher; one, five-teacher; and one, nine-teacher building. Of these, 15 schools have a school term of six months only; 2, seven months, the additional one month financed by private subscription; the three consolidated districts levy a special tax large enough to provide for a term of eight months.

In four of the schools some work of secondary grade is done. There is one accredited high school at Poplar Branch. At two other schools, Moyock and Currituck, four years' work of secondary grade is offered, but only one teacher in each school devotes full time to it. The school equipment is very meager, and there are practically no library facilities in the county. Poplar Branch has a few reference books and some laboratory equipment. The organization follows the North Carolina plan of seven elementary and four high-school grades.

#### SUPPORT.

It is apparently the intent of the North Carolina law that schools should be supported from State, county, and district funds in about equal proportion; that is, each contributing approximately one-third the cost of the school. But this ideal is not followed fully in the management of the schools of Currituck County. The budget for the present school year indicates that, of the total expenditure (exclusive of borrowed money), the State is supplying about 59 per cent, the county 26 per cent, and the local districts 15 per cent.

As compared with the county and local district the State's support is generous. The State is by no means contributing too much. North Carolina is rich. It ranks eighth among the 48 States in the payment of direct Federal taxes. It has, by inference at least through its State laws, adopted the policy that education is a State function and has assumed certain responsibilities toward carrying this out. The county and especially the local district are contribut-

ing entirely too little. They are not assuming the proportion of total support contemplated by the law. The total amount spent for education is therefore altogether inadequate.

For the year 1919-20 the per capita cost based on enrollment was \$11 per year for each child enrolled in elementary and high schools. The average cost in the United States for 1918 was \$36.62, varying in the different States from approximately \$10 in North Carolina to \$76 in Montana. During the years 1919 and 1920 expenditures in schools throughout the country increased materially. While complete data are not available, returns so far received by the Bureau of Education, as well as a study of certain communities made by the Russell Sage Foundation indicate that the increase in 1919 over that of 1918 was about 14 per cent and that of 1920 over that of 1919 about 33 per cent. If this estimate is correct, the comparison for 1920 is about as follows: The United States as a whole, \$55.56, varying from \$15.16 to \$115.25 as among the 48 States; for Currituck County, \$11—very far below the average for the United States and below the average for North Carolina.

Next year the present limitation on county millage will be removed and the county tax can be increased. It is impossible to tell at this time whether the amount received from the State will be larger or not. But in any case the local district can appropriate more money and should at least match the county in the amount of its contribution.

#### SCHOOL BUILDINGS.

The need for more money is apparent in the general appearance and equipment of the school buildings. With the exception of those at Poplar Branch and Currituck, they are either too small or otherwise unfit for schools. Even these two are not entirely satisfactory. According to the Strayer rural-school building score card, neither scores more than 650 on a scale of 1,000 points. Water for drinking and washing, some means of fire protection, and sanitary toilets are needed badly in both. The heating plant in Currituck School, not now used, should be repaired. Both need cement walks and other similar improvements. There is also need either for a good janitor or other definite provision for keeping rooms clean and in a better state of repair.

In all of the others, especially the one-room buildings, various insanitary and unhealthful conditions menace the safety of the children. In a number of schools there are unsupported, ill-fitted joints of stovepipe, unprotected chimneys, and other careless arrangements which offer constant danger from fire. Five schools have no toilets, and several others only one. All toilets are in bad condition. Practically all of the schoolrooms are either unnecessarily large or too small to accommodate the children. In the school buildings

having more than one room thin partitions, some reaching only half way to the ceiling, and in one case curtains, separate groups of children. Even reasonable order and the quiet necessary for school work are not possible in such conditions. There are few cloakrooms, no closets, many double desks, and homemade benches. Lighting space is only one-tenth or one-twentieth of floor space in several rooms, instead of one-fourth or one-fifth, as it should be. Windows are on four sides in most of the one-room buildings; properly placed windows and enough light are provided only in the Currituck School. Nearly all buildings are in poor condition. They are rarely scrubbed or carefully cleaned.

There is little equipment beyond the bare necessities. There are no libraries or supplementary books for reading, history, or geography, and no illustrative material in the elementary schools; there is very little blackboard space and that of poor quality. In many cases blackboards are plain boards with paint almost or entirely worn off. Only two schools have any playground equipment. There are pianos in only four.

#### THE TEACHERS.

##### SALARIES.

The salaries paid white teachers in the county are shown in Table 1. They vary from \$390 to \$900 per year, salaries of principals not included. Teachers who do not live at home pay board at the rate of \$30 or \$35 per month. The salaries paid for six or eight months must cover living expenses for the 12 months of the year, as well as expenses for books, travel, attendance at summer schools, and other means of self-improvement. Prepared teachers can not be expected to work for salaries so small. There are, of course, other considerations, such as satisfactory living places, good working conditions, proximity to one's home, and the like. A few teachers will remain in the county because their homes are in it or near by, but the majority need the inducement of better salaries as well as more satisfactory working conditions.

TABLE 1.—Salaries of white teachers in Currituck County.

School term, in months.	Number of teachers.	Salary per month.	Salary per year.	School term, in months.	Number of teachers.	Salary per month.	Salary per year.
6	3	\$65	\$390	7	1	\$85	\$795
6	4	75	450	7	3	95	655
6	1	80	480	8	2	78	624
6	7	85	510	8	4	85	680
6	2	90	540	8	2	90	720
6	3	95	570	8	1	95	760
6	2	100	600	8	3	100	800
6	1	105	630	8	2	105	840
6	1	125	750	8	1	110	880
6	1	150	900	8	12	300	1,600
6 <sup>1</sup>	1	85	617 <sup>1</sup>	8	1	225	1,800

<sup>1</sup> Principals, \$1,600.

<sup>1</sup> Principals, \$1,800.

TABLE 2.—Per cent of teachers receiving certain salaries.

Annual salary.	Number of teachers receiving.	Per cent receiving.	Cumulative per cent.
\$400 or less.....	3	7	7
\$400 to \$500.....	5	11	18
\$500 to \$600.....	19	42	60
\$600 to \$700.....	7	15	75
\$700 to \$800.....	7	15	91
\$800 to \$900.....	4	9	100
Total.....	45	100	

## CLASSROOM WORK.

Teachers of the county give, on the whole, the impression of dignity, pleasing personality, and interest in their work. They lack definite preparation, unity of purpose, and well-defined standards of method and accomplishment. The majority of teachers are fairly well-qualified as to general education, but few have professional preparation. Table 3 shows this in detail.

Of the 48 white teachers (including 3 principals) employed, 9 are graduates of normal schools; 1 has three years of higher education; and 5 have been graduated from college. More than half the teachers, 54 per cent, have no training in addition to high-school work, and about one-third of these, or one-sixth of the total number, have not completed a full four-year high-school course.

Of the total number of teachers in the county, 18 per cent are teaching for the first time; 28 per cent have had no experience or only one year of experience before coming into the county; the remainder have from two to four or more years of experience in teaching.

TABLE 3.—Education of teachers in Currituck County.

Number of teachers having—	
Elementary education only.....	1
One year of high-school training.....	1
Two years of high-school training.....	2
Three years of high-school training.....	4
Four years of high-school training (graduates).....	18
One year in addition to high-school training.....	7
Two years in addition to high-school training (normal-school graduates).....	9
Three years in addition to high-school training.....	1
Four years in addition to high-school training (college graduates).....	5
Total.....	48

The length of time the teachers remain in the county and in the school is important, as well as their preparation and experience. At

the present time 82 per cent are teaching for the first time in their present positions. A few are teaching the second year, and only one has spent more than three years in the school in which now employed. This annual turnover of the teaching corps for the condition described is not confined to the present year, as examination of the records show—is perhaps the worst feature governing the efficiency of teaching in the county. The turnover is always important, but especially so when close supervision is impossible. There is continuity of neither practice nor procedure; nor is it possible for teachers who change every term of six or eight months to become familiar with the needs of the school and the progress of the children. Regardless of any consideration of the qualifications of teachers, the change in itself is a distinct loss to the progress of the children. It tends to make the county schools training schools for more or less inexperienced or indifferent teachers. Those who are successful soon leave and give the benefit of their experience to other communities.

#### THE SCHOOL TERM.

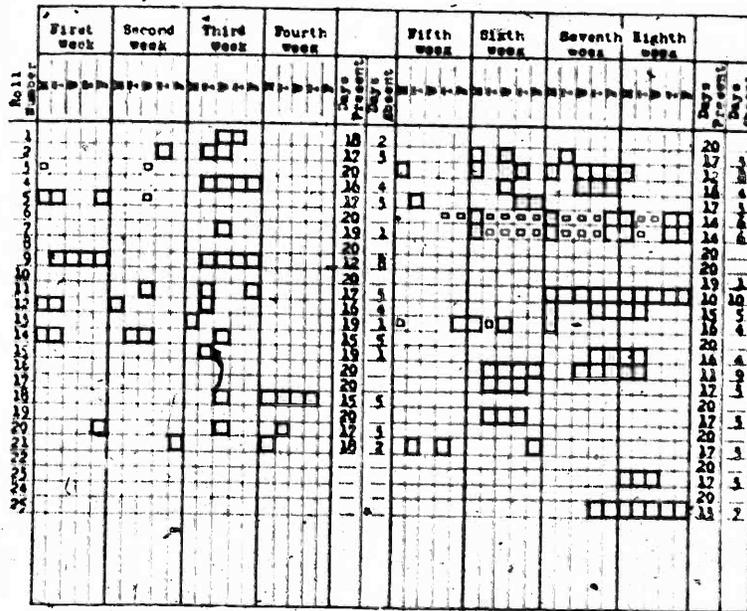
The school term varies in length from six to eight months, with an average of 127 days for the white schools of the county. In 15 schools the term is six months, in 2, seven; and in 3, eight. The special district levy is used for the purpose of paying teachers' salaries for the additional one or two months when held and for supplementing the regular salary paid by the State and county for the full term. This use of the funds is commendable, but the amount raised is quite inadequate. The standard school term should not be less than nine months. Several States now have an average term of 180 days. In North Carolina 43 counties had a longer average term than Currituck County in 1918. The average for the cities of the State was 165 days, nearly two months longer than in Currituck County.

#### SCHOOL ATTENDANCE.

The school census, enrollment, and attendance for five years preceding the present are given in Table 4. It shows little change in the school population and practically no improvement in the success with which the schools are enrolling children who should be in school and keeping them in regular daily attendance. Yet this is one test of the real efficiency of the school system, and measures the interest of the people in their schools and their confidence in the value of education. There should be a continuing increase in the percentage of children of school age who enroll in school and in the percentage of this number who are in average daily attendance. Unless this is true the system is not improving as it should be. Unless the majority

of children who should be in school really attend regularly, much of the money spent to provide facilities for them is wasted. The accompanying diagram gives an indication of this irregularity in Currituck County.

PUBLIC SCHOOL REGISTER



In the above diagram the large squares represent absence, and the smaller squares represent cases of tardiness.

TABLE 4.—School population, enrollment, and attendance for Currituck County for five years.<sup>1</sup>

Years.	Census, 6 to 21 years.	Enrollment.	Average attendance.
1916.....	3,011	2,447	1,662
1917.....	3,037	2,381	1,576
1918.....	2,942	2,165	1,306
1919.....	2,796	2,070	1,288
1920.....	2,748	2,040	1,491

<sup>1</sup> See also Table 5.

TABLE 5.—School census, enrollment, and attendance for five years (arranged according to present and proposed districts).

Districts.	1916			1917			1918			1919			1920		
	Census.	Enrollment.	Attendance.												
Shawboro.....	33	13	12	71	70	43									
Griggsby.....	40	32	21	33	22	17	35	26	17	28	28	18	31	20	16
Corner Gum.....	58	49	24	63	38	21	55	33	13	65	45	25	68	43	29
Indian Town.....	66	57	35	71	70	43	67	68	42	72	59	35	82	67	41
Total.....	197	151	92	238	200	124	157	127	72	165	132	78	181	130	86
Currituck.....	136	92	74	111	89	62	114	77	56	113	86	59	100	86	62
Tulls.....	27	23	17	27	21	13	32	24	19	35	31	13	33	26	20
Belle Island.....	11	10	8	11	9	8	16	13	9	13	11	9	11	11	9
Total.....	174	125	99	149	119	83	162	114	84	161	128	81	117	123	91
Barco.....	36	21	10	43	26	17	45	18	10	32	31	22	32	27	22
Coinjock.....	45	34	26	53	43	31	41	51	44	64	55	32	74	48	39
Church's Island.....	27	32	16	35	23	14	31	18	13	34	29	14	31	29	20
Total.....	108	87	52	131	92	62	127	87	67	130	106	68	137	104	81
Moyock:															
No. 1.....	32	21	18	36	27	17	34	22	14	35	20	14	24	20	9
No. 2.....	69	45	35	72	62	47	73	74	57	84	68	55	76	62	55
No. 3.....	25	12	10	29	15	11	22	10	10	16	16	10	23	17	14
Total.....	126	78	63	137	99	75	129	106	81	135	104	79	123	89	78
Powels Point.....	85	69	51	96	73	52	100	80	52	105	75	45	110	77	60
Harbinger.....	132	100	81	124	116	90	127	115	78	127	100	67	128	134	78
Jarvisburg.....	137	128	74	137	124	64	138	92	49	114	89	40	108	81	52
Total.....	354	297	206	357	313	206	365	287	179	346	264	152	341	292	190
Poplar Branch:															
No. 1.....	29	25	16	25	19	16	28	15	13	26	15	13	25	19	15
No. 3.....	91	82	51	49	31	19	41	17	11	38	18	11	28	20	15
No. 4.....	54	45	31	61	42	32	63	44	35	53	40	30	62	42	30
No. 5.....	112	80	177	153	118	152	100	134	135	90	186	142	105	142	105
No. 6.....	49	28	18	105	96	68	100	80	42	94	78	43	106	89	74
Total.....	223	202	196	417	346	253	382	308	201	345	286	187	407	312	239
Fruitville or Knotts Island:															
No. 1.....	174	135	76	201	99	74	140	100	71	144	97	74	135	71	50
No. 2.....	20	17	14	18	14	12	15	13	8	14	10	7	13	5	4
No. 3.....	38	36	24	42	32	28	34	23	18	31	26	19	27	26	16
Total.....	232	188	114	261	145	114	195	136	97	189	133	100	175	102	70

An idea of the way children of the county attend school may be obtained from Table 6, which gives the actual number of days each of 498 children attended school during 1919-20. More than half this number, 54 per cent, were in school 100 days or fewer during the year. Only 1.8 per cent of the total number were in school 160 days (accurately 155 to 160 days) or the full term of eight months. The majority of the 498 children referred to above attended school at intervals throughout the term, continuing to remain on the roll, but attending irregularly. Such irregularity is particularly serious, because the absent child, besides missing work himself, retards the progress of the others in his class. He must either fall hopelessly

behind and go into a lower grade or consume the time of the teacher, receiving special attention to make up the work he has missed.

TABLE 6.—Number of days attended by each of 498 children during year 1919-20.

Number of days.	Number of children.	Sums of children from the beginning.	Number of days.	Number of children.	Sums of children from the beginning.
1-10	7	7	110-115	38	376
10-20	12	19	115-120	26	402
20-30	20	39	120-125	14	416
30-40	14	53	125-130	11	427
40-50	33	86	130-135	9	436
50-60	19	105	135-140	6	442
60-70	29	134	140-145	10	452
70-80	32	166	145-150	12	464
80-90	49	215	150-155	25	489
90-100	53	268	155-160	9	498
100-105	36	304			
105-110	34	338		498	

The course of study for North Carolina is based on a nine months' term, the standard accepted throughout the country. It is impossible for children to complete in six months the full amount of work prescribed for nine, even if they are present every day. If to the disadvantage of the short term we add irregular attendance so serious that more than half of the children attend school only five months in the year, it is apparent that normal progress through the grades can not be expected. Two years are needed to complete the work of one grade. The result is that a large number of children become gradually more and more over age for the grade in which they belong and drop out at the end of a few years, with little education above the mere ability to read and write a little.

The extent to which this is true is indicated in Table 7, showing the age and grade of 607 children in the schools of the county. Fewer than half the children are of normal age for the grade in which they are enrolled, making the liberal allowance of a two-year rather than a one-year span to the grade.

Normally a child is expected to enter school at 6 years of age and to finish one grade a year. Children in the first grade should be 6 years old, in the second grade 7 years, and so on. Children alike in tastes, inclination, and general development are grouped together, and may easily be dealt with by the teacher in the same or a similar way. Each group can reasonably be expected to finish about the same amount of work in a given time. When, however, the difference in age becomes too great, group work is not feasible and can be done only at the expense of the individuals who make up the class. The table shows that there are children in the first grade ranging from 6 to 12 years of age; in other grades ranging from 8 to 13 years, from 10 to 15 years, from 8 to 17 years, from 11 to 18 years, with a

span of from 5 to 9 years in each group. It is apparent that this condition makes good class work difficult and tends to shorten the school life of many children.

TABLE 7.—Ages and grades of 607 children in Currituck County.

Grades.	Ages.													Total.	
	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18		19
1.	43	30	22	8	4	5	1								113
2.	3	12	19	13	5	3	3								58
3.		3	15	26	16	9	3	6	6						84
4.			2	6	17	8	14	9	5	1	2				64
5.			2	2	10	14	8	6	7	2	4	1			56
6.					4	3	13	10	11	5	3	4	1		54
7.							11	18	16	9	7	4			65
8.							1	4	14	10	9	6	3		47
9.								1	5	9	10	5	3	1	34
10.									1	2	5	6	1	1	16
11.										7	4	5			16
Total.	46	45	60	55	56	42	34	54	65	38	47	30	13	2	607

Total pupils..... 607.  
 Number under age..... 19, or 0.3 per cent.  
 Number of normal age..... 287, or 47 per cent.  
 Number over age..... 301, or 49 per cent.

HOLDING POWER OF THE SCHOOLS.

Table 8 shows how many children are in attendance in each of the grades for every 100 enrolled in the first grade. The rapid decline from the first to the second grade and the continued, though more gradual, decline throughout the grades shows how serious the whole question of attendance is. Apparently, only those children with exceptional ability and opportunity finish the upper grades and high school, while the majority of children in the county are satisfied with the limited education offered in the first few grades. This condition is due in large part to the short term and to the fact that the law concerning compulsory school attendance is not stringently enforced. It also indicates laxity among the people concerning the importance of education, indifferent methods of instruction, and general ineffectiveness of the whole school system.

TABLE 8.—Number of children in each grade, based on 100 in the first grade.

	Grades.										
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
Enrolled in Currituck schools, September, 1920.....	100	42	47	45	25	28	22	9	7	3	3
Same, January, 1921.....	100	42	51	40	22	27	21	7	5	2	2
Expectancy survival.....	100	100	100	90	61	68	54	40	27	17	12

Thorndyke.

### THE COURSE OF STUDY.

The course of study quite generally throughout the county consists in following the order of lessons in the textbooks. The same books are used in all schools. Aside from this there is no unity of procedure nor generally accepted standards of practice or accomplishment.

Textbooks are the only source of information and the only working equipment furnished. This means that the rich stores of material in the worlds of nature, literature, history, science, and the like are disregarded in both elementary and high school. Music, art, industrial and manual work, agriculture, nature study, physical education, playground activities, games, and dramatization are entirely ignored in the course.

The high-school courses are of the old classical type; very little science, no home economics, and no agriculture is offered. There are no electives. Neither of the high schools has a good working library nor a reasonable supply of reference books. Training in the use of a library and in ability to use source material and to gather and organize information are therefore neglected in the high school.

At Poplar Branch there are a few books of the kind appropriate for a "circulating" library.

### SUPERVISION.

In a rural county like Currituck, with a system of schools not yet so well organized as to run without friction, with a high percentage of relatively unprepared and inexperienced teachers, supervision is of greater importance than administration. However, pressing administrative problems and clerical duties now occupy and probably in the immediate future at least must continue to occupy the time of the superintendent to the exclusion of any possibility of close supervision. There is, therefore, little evidence of professional supervision in the schools of the county. Each school is a separate entity and each teacher a law unto herself, as to organization, discipline, methods, and course of study.

Lack of systematic supervision is apparent in the methods and technique of teaching. Daily programs or schedules showing the order of work for the day were found in only one school. Classes were called and dismissed with no apparent plan or thought-out purpose to be accomplished. Many teachers did not know how many recitations they heard during the day, and had not considered the necessity of distributing time among grades or subjects according to the needs of the children or the importance of the subject. The teachers have no regular schedule but merely call classes and hear recitations, as they happen to remember them, without well-defined plans for the ground to be covered and the time to be spent in doing it. They

use from 5 to 30 minutes in recitation, often giving entirely disproportionate amount of time to some classes to the neglect of others. This results in poor work for the schools and leaves the child with no definite or orderly arrangement of the few facts he happens to remember from the day's work. Satisfactory education is impossible under such conditions.

The appearance of the schoolrooms is another evidence of the need of close supervision. Almost without exception they are disorderly and unclean. Cloakrooms, when there are any, are used for storage of unused and useless articles, and are dusty and dirty. Results from poor facilities are made worse by lack of care and attention to those that are furnished. Sweeping is done at recess periods and without any thought of sanitary requirements. Disregard of the simplest hygienic regulations is general. Whether janitors are furnished or not, the teachers assume little responsibility for the condition of the rooms.

#### SUMMARY OF SCHOOL CONDITIONS.

1. The people of the county are spending very little money on their schools. More than half the principal expenditure is paid by the State. Only three districts levy a special tax; the others make no effort to improve schools from local funds, but depend entirely on the State and county.
2. The term is far too short to enable children to complete the work of any grade according to the standard prescribed for schools in other parts of the country.
3. Teachers are underpaid and not well prepared. In most cases they remain only one year in a school.
4. The percentage of enrollment and the percentage of attendance are low. Attendance is irregular; compulsory law is not rigidly enforced.
5. Buildings are inadequate and insanitary; they have no modern school equipment.
6. There is no well-organized course of study. That followed is not adapted to the needs of the community and does not engage the interest of the children.
7. High schools are not accessible to many children.
8. There is a high percentage of overage children in all the grades and few complete the full course.
9. Supervision is inadequate.

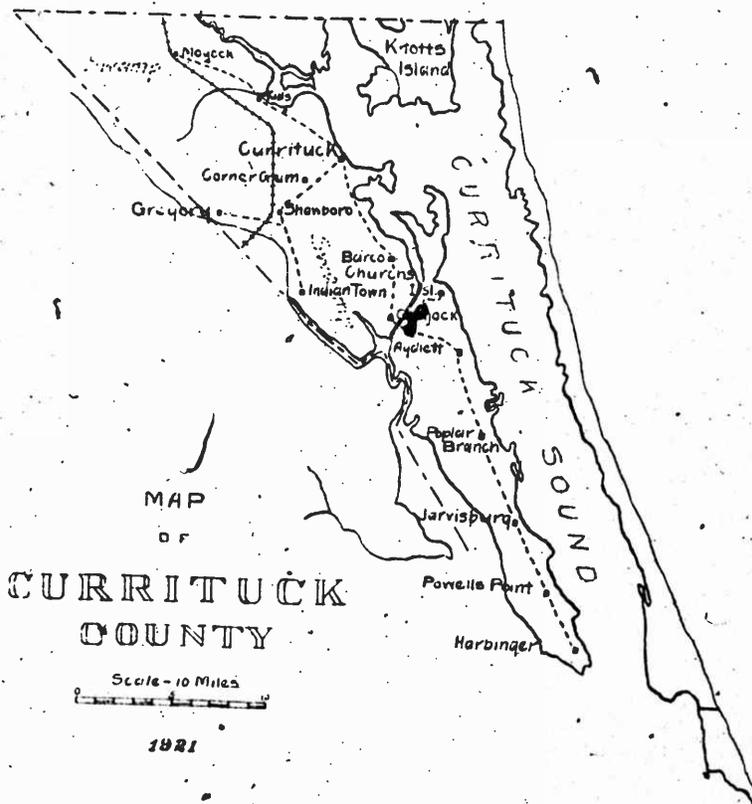
#### SUGGESTIONS FOR REORGANIZATION.

##### THE SCHOOLS ON THE MAINLAND SHOULD BE CONSOLIDATED.

The board should immediately adopt a plan for consolidating the schools of the county. There are now few really suitable school

buildings, and the time is favorable to adopt the new plan before additional money is wasted in replacing or repairing buildings now in use.

The shape of the county, long and narrow except at the extreme north end, and the probability that the new system of improved roads will include only the one main road east from Moyock and south from Currituck, necessitate two high schools. In addition



to enlarged buildings at Poplar Branch and Currituck, four new school buildings, six in all, will be needed on the mainland. For the present the schools on the islands in Fruitville township must remain as they are, and while the road is in its present condition the one-teacher school on Church's Island must be continued. The children attending this should be transported to Coinjock as soon as satisfactory arrangements can be made. All other schools can be consolidated according to the plan outlined and diagrammed.

The diagrams show two successive steps toward complete consolidation. The names used indicate the approximate location of consolidated buildings and are for convenience only. They are not intended to represent the exact location of any building. Diagram I represents the first step.

#### HIGH SCHOOL DISTRICT A—POPLAR BRANCH.

According to Diagram I (p. 19) the schools now at Powells Point, Jarvisburg, and Harbinger are consolidated in one school building located in a central location to be agreed upon by the board and the people of the three districts. This school should include the elementary and junior high-school grades. Six teachers will probably suffice for the first year. There will be pupils for only two of the junior high-school grades, the seventh and eighth. The course should be so modified that subjects requiring laboratory work or expensive equipment may be given in the senior high school grades. Two teachers working on the departmental plan should be assigned to the junior high school. Through alternation of the work of the two grades and some combination of classes, part of the time of one of the teachers can be given to assist the four teachers assigned to the six elementary grades. To illustrate: The teacher of geography or of mathematics in the seventh and eighth grades should arrange his program so as to have one hour a day to teach these same subjects in the fifth and sixth grades also. Such a division of work would avoid crowding the teacher's time in any of the grades.

The Bareo and Coinjock schools are consolidated at a central point; an elementary school is retained at Churchs Island with junior high-school pupils transported to the central school building at Coinjock, in which an elementary and a junior high school is maintained. It is necessary to retain the elementary grades at Churchs Island until the road can be made better. This should be done as soon as possible, since the school building is badly located and unfit for school use. Children in the junior high-school grades are older and can be transported or transport themselves to the consolidated school. With an arrangement similar to that suggested above for Powells Point, five teachers will suffice for this school. The enrollment is small. One teacher can take care of two of the elementary grades with some help in the fifth and sixth grades from the junior high-school teachers.

The school at Aydlett is discontinued and the children in all grades are transported to Poplar Branch.

All the territory above should be included in one district for high-school purpose with the high-school building at Poplar Branch. It is designated in the diagram as High-School District A. This large territory can support a first-class high school. It is not possible



## HIGH-SCHOOL DISTRICT B.

In the northern part of the county the one-room schools at Tulls and Belle Island should be discontinued and the children sent to an enlarged building at Currituck. A junior high school, in addition to the six elementary grades, should be maintained here.

The two-teacher school in Shawboro and the one-room schools at Grigsby, Corner Gum, and Indian Town should be consolidated at the most central point, designated on the diagram as Shawboro. Only the six elementary grades should be maintained.

The Moyock district now includes the adjacent territory. A new building and improved high-school facilities are immediate needs, however. Pupils in the junior high-school grades from the Shawboro consolidated territory may attend at either Moyock or Currituck. The county board can fix the boundary lines so that children may attend the school nearest their homes. Few children live as far as 3 miles from Shawboro. If this were made a meeting place for children, and one large truck sent from here to Currituck or Moyock, probably no additional transportation would be needed for junior or senior high-school pupils.

This combined territory should maintain one senior high school located at Moyock or Currituck (the former is designated on the diagram). Probably the latter can be more easily reached by the majority of children in the consolidated district suggested. The tax valuation of the combined territory constituting this high-school district is \$3,300,000. The enrollment is 342.

The second step is shown in Diagram II.

The junior high-school grades at Powells Point and Coinjock are discontinued, and all pupils above the sixth grade attend the central high school at Poplar Branch.

The elementary school at Shawboro is discontinued also, and the district divided so that children may attend at either Currituck or Moyock, whichever is nearer their homes.

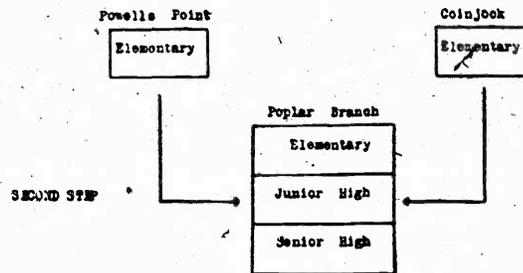
This final complete consolidation will make possible increased efficiency in school work and economy in management. The history of consolidated schools shows in nearly every case that the total enrollment and the number of children who remain and finish the upper grades increase materially; that transportation, given a fair trial, is eminently successful; that roads are improved; and that neither patrons nor children would willingly return to the old system. The people of Currituck, after trying consolidation according to the first step outlined will, it is believed, be anxious to take the additional one, which insures still greater efficiency in the education of the children. As the enrollment in the grades above the sixth continues to increase, the central high-school building can be enlarged.

to meet the needs more economically than two buildings. Larger groups make the work more interesting and can be taught effectively with fewer teachers. The rooms vacated by the pupils in the seventh and eighth grades will be needed by the children in the six elementary grades. No space will be wasted.

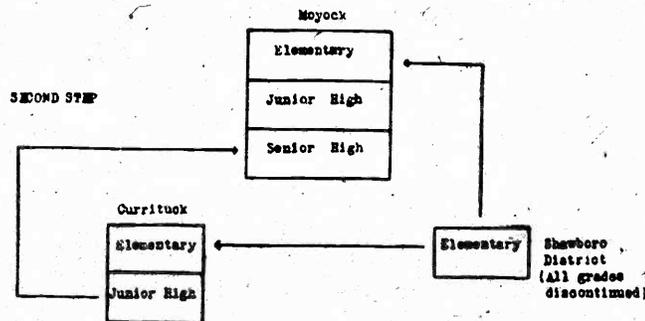
If it were not for the fact that the roads are in bad condition, and there is little prospect of immediate improvement, the final plan

Diagram II. Permanent.

POPLAR BRANCH HIGH SCHOOL DISTRICT -A-



MOYOCK HIGH SCHOOL DISTRICT -B-



Notes: Diagram I - II.  
 High block represents a school building.  
 Small sections separated by vertical lines represent rooms.  
 Larger sections separated by horizontal lines represent departments of the 6-3-3 organization.

would be recommended for the first step. Time will be necessary to get good roads. In the meantime the children must not lose the opportunity for an education. If one-story unit buildings, as herein-after recommended, are built, there will be no loss. Changes can progress more rapidly as prospects for good roads get brighter.

According to the plan the county would be divided into two high-school districts, one with a valuation of \$2,200,000; the other with a

valuation of \$3,300,000. Both districts would be amply able to support schools as recommended, whether combined for all schools or for high-school purposes only.

The best method to pursue in Currituck County is to consider the whole county as one district for the purpose of school support, locating schools as suggested. If this is impossible or inexpedient, the two districts is the next best plan. Greater equality of school opportunity and more equitable support is possible with one district only.

#### NEW AND ENLARGED BUILDINGS ARE NEEDED.

It is very important that the county board, before making definite arrangements for any new buildings, secure the services of an architect experienced and skilled in planning school buildings. The plans should be submitted to the State board of education and be approved by that body.

All buildings should be planned with a view to appearance, utility, convenience, sanitation, fire protection, and adaptation to the requirements of improved methods of teaching. One-story buildings on the unit plan are most suitable and economical in Currituck County, especially as they will in all probability be of wood. Ground is easily obtained and inexpensive. Such buildings can be enlarged as needs increase and the complete plan may be initiated at a minimum of cost and paid for gradually. Each building should have an auditorium large enough to accommodate the people of the community for meetings of general interest and entertainment. There should be at least one extra room for industrial work in each building.

Two-story buildings like those at Poplar Branch and Currituck, with no means of egress except that afforded by an inside stairway, are dangerous. When the needed rooms are added to these buildings, whether they are of one or two stories, adequate protection from fire should be installed in both old and new sections.

Homes for the principal and the teachers should be erected in connection with the consolidated schools wherever they are needed. It is becoming more difficult year by year for teachers to find satisfactory boarding places in the country. Good homes where teachers are welcomed and can have wholesome food and comfortable rooms, affording the quiet and privacy which they need in order to do satisfactory school work, are difficult to find. School boards find one or two cottages on or near the school grounds an economical investment. The teachers or principals in charge of the agriculture and home economics work should live in the county throughout the year. For them, at least, homes are essential.

The cost of such homes to the school board in Currituck County will not be great. In most cases the abandoned school buildings can be made over into very satisfactory houses. Some of them might

be made over into garages or barns for protecting the automobiles or wagons and horses, if the latter are used for transportation. Since shelter for such purposes must be provided, this use of old buildings is probably more economical than selling them.

A REASONABLE SALARY SCHEDULE SHOULD BE ADOPTED BASED ON PREPARATION AND SUCCESSFUL EXPERIENCE.

The board should employ a staff of well-prepared and, when possible, experienced teachers and retain them during good service. To this end they should establish a standard of academic and professional attainment which all applicants for positions are expected to meet, and adopt a salary schedule planned to recognize preparation, success in teaching, and special individual merit, and to encourage self-improvement.

The minimum requirement should be graduation from a standard normal school or its equivalent in academic and professional preparation. The minimum salary should be based on this, and an increment allowed for successful experience within and without the county system. Entering teachers should have a probationary status for at least one year. After that their positions should be considered permanent during good service, with regular promotions when requirements of the board are met.

Teachers who enter with higher qualifications than the prescribed minimum should begin at a higher salary, and should probably have larger increments of increase in salary. Marked success may be recognized by skipping a grade or by establishing a bonus for meritorious service. Salaries should be on a yearly basis, paid in 10 or 12 installments. Teachers should hold themselves in readiness during vacation periods to follow any regulations the board makes for attendance at summer schools, supervision of home work, or other activities in line with their regular work.

Following is a schedule embodying these principles and recommended to the board for its consideration. The beginning salary of \$1,000 is not as high as it should be. It is given here because the present scale is so much lower that it may seem difficult to the board to raise salaries as much as it should immediately. The North Carolina State Board of Education has established a minimum of \$1,200 per year for "prepared" teachers. Certainly Currituck County should not be content until this minimum is established and only prepared teachers are employed. If any child anywhere in the State needs well prepared teachers, all children, including those in Currituck County, do, and for the same reasons. Money spent on those below standard in efficiency is wasted. Certainly it is not possible and can not be expected that efficient teachers will remain in the county unless the salaries paid justify them in doing so.

A proposed salary schedule.

Teachers.	Length of time of appointment.	Salary schedule for each group.				Yearly salary increase.		Year in which group maximum can be reached.
		Normal-school graduates.		College graduates.		Normal school graduates.	College graduates.	
		Minimum.	Maximum.	Minimum.	Maximum.			
One-year teachers (probationary for 3 years).....	1	\$1,000	\$1,150	\$1,200	\$1,350	75	\$125	Third
Three-year teachers.....	3	1,225	1,375	1,425	1,575	75	125	1st.
Five-year teachers.....	5	1,450	1,600	1,650	1,800	50	100	Fifth.
Permanent teachers.....		1,700	2,000	1,900	2,200	50	100	Seventh.

† Until retired.

When the maximum of each group is reached the following alternative courses should be open to the board of education:

1. Termination of the contract (permissible each year in group No. 1).
2. Reappointment annually at the group maximum.
3. Promotion to the next higher group.

The promotion from group to group beyond that of the three-year teachers should be granted only to those who have shown special merit and have given evidence of valuable professional study. To satisfy the latter condition, the board might require the candidate for promotion to spend a year in study at some recognized college or university; or a year in teaching in some good school system in another part of the country, or perhaps a year in study and travel combined. In this connection a system of exchanging teachers might well be established.

A schedule such as the one prepared would have teachers who enter the first group looked upon as being on a probationary status, subject to reelection each year for three years. Those who are rated as "successful" at the end of this period may be promoted to the group of three-year teachers, where they will advance automatically according to the given increments for a period of three years. Those who are rated as "unsatisfactory" can in turn be continued from year to year at the maximum of the probationary group or dropped from the corps. When a teacher has reached the maximum of the three-year group, the board can then promote her to the five-year group if she has met the requirements demanded for promotion; reelect her from year to year at the maximum she has reached, or dismiss her. And so, when the maximum of the five-year group is reached, the teacher who has won promotion by her success in the classroom and by her efforts at self-improvement can be made a member of the "permanent teacher" group, where

she will remain until she retires. If, in the judgment of the officials, a teacher has not merited this promotion, she can be retained for a time at the maximum salary granted to the group she is in or be dropped. In this manner an adjustment can be worked out between the teachers' proper desire for security of tenure and the board's proper desire to eliminate the teachers who do not continue to grow in efficiency. At the same time the teacher knows that efforts at self-improvement will find tangible reward in terms of salary increase.

#### ADEQUATE SUPERVISION SHOULD BE PROVIDED.

The plan suggested for reorganizing the schools contemplates the engagement of four principals.<sup>1</sup> Each should have at least half his time free for supervision. One of these principals should be prepared to direct the introduction of and supervise work in home economics; another should do the same for agriculture; another for physical education; and another for music. The board should have in mind, when selecting the principals, special preparation and fitness for such work. In addition to their duties in the schools of which they are in charge, they should supervise their special subjects in all the schools of the county.

For the present at least a primary supervisor is needed to have general charge of the first six grades. After the new buildings are completed, the new organization well established and well prepared, experienced teachers are secured who remain in the system from year to year; the superintendent and the principals together will constitute an adequate supervisory staff.

#### A NEW COURSE OF STUDY SHOULD BE PREPARED.

The county is entirely rural. Farming is the one important industry. The school, if it meets the needs of the community, must connect its work closely with farm and home life in the elementary grades and establish in the upper grades courses which directly prepare for farming and home making.

This does not mean that the curriculum should be so narrow as to confine itself to education in agriculture or to make a vocational school of the elementary course. It does mean that all education must be based on life and in a rural community on country life; that children who, because of inclination, ability, and circumstances, expect to remain in the county and be farmers need the chance to prepare to be intelligent ones, and that the school should offer them this opportunity. The fact that the present population is made up

<sup>1</sup> The distribution of work contemplated is, one principal for high school and one for elementary grades in each district. Another basis, that of location, for example, might be adopted if preferable.

of persons whose families have long lived in the vicinity leads one to believe that most of the children now at school will remain and make their homes in the county. Moreover, a school course of the kind described would appeal alike to the practical minds of boys and girls at the age when they are most inclined to leave school, and to their parents, who have learned by experience to realize the necessity of progressive scientific methods of farming. Children come longer and more regularly to school when their interests are engaged and their welfare affected in a way which is evident to them.

The schools should be organized on the six, three, and three plan-- six elementary, three junior high, and three senior high-school grades. This is economical as well as efficient in the country because older children can walk or be transported somewhat farther than younger ones and concentration of groups is more feasible. Senior high schools and, to a less extent, junior high schools need more expensive equipment, larger buildings, and teachers who have specialized in the subjects they teach, and should not be unnecessarily multiplied.

The North Carolina State course of study will form a good basis but should be adapted to local conditions. The first six grades are concerned chiefly with fundamentals and should, in addition to the tool subjects, provide for nature study, gardening, play and recreation, sanitation and hygiene, dramatization and story telling. Music, literature, the fine and industrial arts should be taught with emphasis on appreciation.

The junior high-school course may include electives, one or two in the first year, increasing the number allowed in the second and third years. In the junior high school three years each of English, history, and mathematics, one year of civics, two of geography, and natural science, one year of hygiene and sanitation, and three years each of physical education, music, and current events should be required. Other required and elective subjects may be selected from the following: Home economics, fine and industrial arts, animal husbandry, agriculture, one or two other sciences, commercial subjects, Latin, and at least one modern language.

In the senior high school a higher degree of specialization should be expected and the number of electives increased. Courses which prepare for college and courses which prepare for vocations should be offered, affording as wide a selection as the size of the school and resources of the community warrant.

#### A NEW SYSTEM OF KEEPING ACCOUNTS AND RECORDS IS NEEDED.

The systems of accounting and of record keeping do not show the things about the business conduct of the system and the school conditions which they should. The records kept now show the cash

balance, the amount of indebtedness, etc., and check items of expenditures roughly for the county. They do not show the cost per child in average daily attendance in each school; the amount per capita which the board is spending, expressed in terms of salaries, repairs, equipment, supplies, etc. An account should be opened with each school, so that the board can know how the children in each are faring in terms of money expended. If this were done in Currituck County, it would show a very wide variation among the schools in the amount spent per child on education.

The records should also show such things as the following:

1. Age-grade distribution for each school and for the whole system taken annually to determine facts about retardation and acceleration of pupils.

2. A table compiled annually showing how many children in each grade and school have attended for 100 days, 110 days, 120 days, and so on up to the full number of days the school has been in session.

3. A table showing the facts about promotion and failures in each grade and in each school:

4. A table showing the number of children who dropped out before the term closed and why.

5. A card catalogue of those who have completed the grades and the high school, showing the important facts about their school history, where they go and what they do.

6. A card catalogue of teachers showing training, experience, certification, and other facts of importance.

7. Chart showing seating capacity and number of children assigned to each room.

8. The annual reports of the superintendents of other school systems should be secured, examined, and a card index compiled of references to those which the superintendent foresees may be of use in connection with some of his projects. A similar file of publications from the State department, leading educational journals and the like, would be useful.

#### THE COST OF CARRYING OUT THE PLAN NOT PROHIBITIVE.

Estimates for the present school year indicate that the county is spending for all purposes about \$15.50 per child enrolled on the upkeep of the schools. The corresponding figure for the United States (average as estimated in another paragraph) is \$55.65. As the given amount in Currituck County is spent almost entirely on teachers' salaries, we may confine ourselves to that in this estimate.

If the per capita expenditure is increased \$9.50 per year, making a total of \$25, the county will still be spending much less than the average for the United States and can not be considered extravagant.

or even liberal in providing for schools. Such an increase will be approximately equal to that amount raised by a levy of 3 mills on the total tax valuation of the county, or \$18,632. The salary budget for the present year is \$41,244. If to this is added \$18,632, estimated as above, the total available for salaries will be approximately \$60,000.

If the plan proposed were carried out the following teachers would be needed:

For the consolidation at—	
Powell's Point.....	6
Coinjock.....	5
Poplar Branch.....	9
Shawboro.....	4
Currituck.....	5
Moyock.....	7
For the schools in Fruitville.....	4
Total.....	40

Forty teachers, with four principals and one supervisor, will constitute a staff large enough to allow one teacher for each grade, in most cases, with not more than two grades for any teacher, with three teachers for one and four for the other senior high school devoting full time to high-school subjects. The cost of this staff is estimated below. Salaries suggested, while much higher than those now paid in the county, are not better than good teachers should expect. A term of nine months is contemplated. Of the \$59,500 estimated as necessary, the State can be expected to pay half or nearly half. The amount received from that source the present year is \$25,000. Some increase is probable.

Two principals for the senior high schools, at \$2,000 each.....	\$4,000
Two principals for the junior high schools, at \$2,000 each.....	4,000
Forty teachers, at \$1,000 each per year.....	40,000
One primary supervisor.....	1,500
Total.....	59,500

It is not intended that this estimate shall be more than a tentative one or give more than a general idea of the cost. When the levy is actually made, it will probably come in part from county and in part from special district sources. The county levy can be increased the next year without exceeding the maximum prescribed in the law at the present time, regardless of any provision the legislature now in session may make. However, a 3-mill increase over this year's levy probably represents the minimum amount which will be needed to carry out the new plan the coming year. As salaries increase according to the schedule suggested, the annual expense will increase somewhat. The county tax rate this year is 1.9 mills. If we add to this the 3 mills suggested for increasing salaries and qualifications of

teachers, the total would not exceed 5 mills. A 6-mill levy would doubtless cover the maintenance expense of all the improvements recommended. Many counties in other States have a far higher rate for schools; 50, 75, and even 100 mills are not uncommon.

The money needed for buildings and equipment, including trucks or wagons for transportation, should be raised by a bond issue. Automobile busses for schools or auto trucks have proved most satisfactory for transporting children in different parts of the country. Generally the cost per child is less than if horse-drawn vehicles are used. The initial cost is greater and should be included in the bond budget, while the maintenance expense should be included in the annual tax levy estimate. The interest and a sinking fund for meeting the annual payments should be provided for also when the levy is made.

#### CAN CURRITUCK COUNTY AFFORD BETTER SCHOOLS?

It has been indicated elsewhere that Currituck County is not poor in natural resources, value of products, native ability of its people, or tax valuation. Intelligence and prosperity are indicated by the quality of farm homes and buildings, machinery, and general improvements. Many of the homes are equipped with electric or other lighting plant and have other modern conveniences. Tractors and other farm implements show that progressive ideas of farming prevail. There are 400 automobiles, valued at approximately \$400,000, a per capita investment of \$55, more than four times the amount (\$12) invested in school property. Estimating upkeep of these automobiles at the conservative figure of \$15 per month, more money is spent annually on automobile repairs, oil, and gasoline than for the maintenance of all the schools in the county. If we consider only the money spent by the county itself, exclusive of State funds, it is safe to say that the people of Currituck are spending this year twice as much on keeping up automobiles as on educating children. Only in the schools are the people of the county willing to continue the methods and standards of living adopted by their fathers and grandfathers to meet the needs of many years ago. The old homemade benches (not desks) still in use in some schools bear the initials of the grandparents of children who now attend, and if not in the same buildings, at least in those which are similar in kind and construction.

The State's favorable laws and liberal assistance in funds do much for the educational interests of the county. Recently property valuation for taxing purposes has been raised, conforming with progressive ideas on this subject. In short, the county gives every indication of being in a favorable position for the establishment of a modern system

of schools. It is necessary only for the people actively to interest themselves in the education of their children and to contribute more generously to the support of the schools.

It is not necessary that an amount be added to the present school expenditures which shall be burdensome to taxpayers, or that it shall be more than a slight expense to the majority. Table 9 shows the number of persons paying taxes on given valuations, ranging from \$500 to more than \$10,000, arranged in intervals of \$500.

TABLE 9.—Number of persons paying taxes on given valuations.

Persons.		Persons.	
On \$500 or less.....	886	On \$6,001 to \$6,500.....	12
On \$500 to \$1,000.....	246	On \$6,501 to \$7,000.....	20
On \$1,101 to \$1,500.....	142	On \$7,001 to \$7,500.....	15
On \$1,501 to \$2,000.....	117	On \$7,501 to \$8,000.....	23
On \$2,001 to \$2,500.....	107	On \$8,001 to \$8,500.....	16
On \$2,501 to \$3,000.....	71	On \$8,501 to \$9,000.....	10
On \$3,001 to \$3,500.....	61	On \$9,001 to \$9,500.....	8
On \$3,501 to \$4,000.....	56	On \$9,501 to \$10,000.....	11
On \$4,001 to \$4,500.....	45	On \$10,000.....	119
On \$4,501 to \$5,000.....	44		
On \$5,001 to \$5,500.....	30		2,065
On \$5,501 to \$6,000.....	32		

Valuation of hunting clubs, \$337,036; number of clubs, 8; N. S. Railroad property, \$469, 202.

Of the 2,067 taxpayers in the county, more than 40 per cent pay taxes on \$500 or less and approximately 55 per cent (54.7 per cent) pay on a valuation of \$1,000 or less. A flat increase in the levy of 3 mills recommended in this report means an increase in total taxes paid annually of \$1.50 or less for 40 per cent of the people and \$3 or less for more than half the people in the county. For 88 per cent of the taxpayers, the increase amounts to \$15 or less. Only 110 persons and corporations, including a number of clubs, railroad and other corporations, as well as nonresident individuals, would have increased taxes of \$30 or more per year. Surely this amount is negligible in view of the fact that this slight increase on the property of the county would make possible the maintenance of vastly improved schools.

The total cost of building and operating good schools is always greater than that of poor ones. Good buildings, good teachers, longer terms, high schools, and transportation facilities cost money. So indeed do modern homes, harrows, disks, tractors, automobiles, lighting systems, and telephones, and yet few intelligent people contend that we should discard these modern means of comfort and convenience. Economy does not necessarily follow small investments but depends rather on the returns on the investment, the

value received for money expended. The present school system costs very little, but the returns are meager also. Indeed, many schools now cost more than their value in educational returns actually justifies. A good school system will enroll a higher percentage of the children of school age; will keep them at school regularly for a longer period each year and for the completion of the full course; will provide the kind of education that makes better and more useful citizens; add to land values and productive possibilities of the county; and encourage desirable and progressive citizens to make homes within its borders. Returns on the investment measured in money will be much larger than from the same amount invested in any other way. If measured in terms of the permanent influence on the lives of the children and the higher welfare of the community, they will be greater still.

#### SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS.

1. Substantial increase of school funds.
2. Consolidation of schools according to plan outlined.
3. New buildings which meet modern requirements in appearance, arrangement, and equipment.
4. Reorganization on the 6-3-3 plan; a course of study based on the life and needs of the community and harmonizing with such reorganization.
5. Adequate staff of prepared supervisors, principals, and teachers.
6. Salary schedule based on preparation, experience, and meritorious service, applying alike to all parts of the county.
7. Provision for enforcement of compulsory attendance law and systematic effort to promote regularity of attendance.
8. The school term of nine months for all schools.
9. Adoption of effective system of cost accounting and of collecting data and keeping records.