

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
BUREAU OF EDUCATION

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MINIMUM SCHOOL-TERM  
REGULATIONS

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## LETTER OF TRANSMITTAL.

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR,  
BUREAU OF EDUCATION,

*Washington, August 18, 1916.*

SIR: The efforts of county, State, and National officials and of States in all parts of the country to provide opportunities of education for children outside the cities and larger towns have stimulated a general interest in the required length of the school term, and the desire for the requirement of a minimum school term sufficient to enable all children in all communities to acquire at least a good elementary education. For the purpose of giving information as to the present laws and regulations in regard to this subject, I recommend that the manuscript prepared by Mr. J. C. Muerman, specialist in rural education, in this bureau, be published as a bulletin of the Bureau of Education.

Respectfully submitted.

P. P. CLAXTON,  
*Commissioner.*

The SECRETARY OF THE INTERIOR.

## MINIMUM SCHOOL-TERM REGULATIONS.

Forty-four States have established by law a minimum term of from 60 to 180 days' schooling for each organized school district. Four States—Louisiana, Alabama, Rhode Island, and Georgia—have no minimum requirement laws, but one of these, Rhode Island, has for over 10 years maintained the longest average term in the United States. While the minimum number of days required is almost invariably much less than the actual average number of days in the school term for the State, a majority of the States still report many schools unable to meet even these low minimum requirements. Within the past three years, 12 States—Arizona, Colorado, Idaho, Kansas, Maine, Nebraska, Nevada, New York, North Carolina, North Dakota, Vermont, and Wyoming—have added from 10 to 60 days to the legal requirement of a minimum school term.

Some of the factors that have operated in favor of a longer school term, aside from the general awakening of public sentiment, are the phenomenal growth of the public high schools, the development of State financial aid for weak districts, equalization funds, and penalties for not maintaining a minimum term required by law.

The growth of the public high schools has tended to lengthen the term in the elementary schools by setting up standards of admission by certificate or examination which can ordinarily be met by grade schools with a term of at least eight months.

Lack of provision for adequate funds is perhaps the greatest hindrance to a longer school term. A majority of the States have fully realized the necessity for more State financial assistance and have enacted laws giving State aid to weak districts to enable them to maintain a minimum school term. A wise provision in most of these laws makes the levy of a specified minimum rate of local taxation necessary and provides for a certain specified standard of school before aid becomes available. These laws are, as a rule, intended to help only those who first help themselves. The necessity of greater local cooperation and aid is urged in the 1912 report of the State superintendent of public instruction for Georgia. This report calls attention to a tendency to lean too heavily upon State aid, and cites the laws of another State which require a county levy of not less

than 3 and not more than 7 mills before State aid can be secured. The superintendent declares—

If we have enough money for longer terms and better-paid teachers, we can rely upon our system of public schools to do the work expected.

Numerous bills introduced in recent legislatures show a growing sentiment favoring laws enforcing a higher rate of taxation upon the local districts in order that they may maintain a longer school term. In the State of Minnesota and in a few other States some school districts contain public State lands that yield no revenue whatever for the school fund, State lands not being taxed. When there is a considerable amount of this land in the district the school fund is low. To meet this condition the State of Minnesota appropriates the sum of \$50,000 annually to aid these special districts, and contributes from this special sum an amount equal to a tax of 5 cents upon each acre of public-school lands, but no district may receive from this fund an amount in excess of \$250 during any school year. In the year 1910 the State of Ohio appropriated a sum of \$50,000 to aid school districts which could not by the maximum levy permitted by law maintain a public school eight months, paying teachers \$40 a month. In the State of Tennessee for several years 10 per cent of the general education fund (the education fund being one-fourth of the revenue of the State) was set aside for the purpose of helping the several counties of the State to maintain schools more nearly equal in quality and length of term, the requirements upon the part of the county being a tax of not less than 40 cents upon the \$100 of taxable property, \$2 on each poll, and the full amount of privilege taxes which the laws permit counties to levy for school purposes. This equalization fund was distributed among the counties meeting these requirements according to scholastic population and inversely as the ratio of taxable property to scholastic population. In this way the poorer counties received a larger amount in proportion than the richer counties. At the 1913 session of the legislature the general education fund was increased to one-third the revenues of the State, and the method of distribution of the 10 per cent was changed.

The State of North Carolina sets aside annually 5 per cent of the annual ad valorem tax levied and collected for State purposes on each \$100 value of real and personal property in the State, and this fund, separate and apart from other funds, is known as the State equalizing fund. The object of the fund is to provide a six months' school term for each district in the State. The need of an equalization fund is well shown in the annual report of the State superintendent of Nebraska for 1912. The superintendent describes two school districts only 5 miles apart, one of which on account of a large tax

on railroad property, can easily maintain its schools 180 days with a 5-mill levy, while the other can maintain its schools only 100 days with a levy of 25 mills.

Penalties for not providing a school term as provided by law vary from mandatory, as in North Carolina, where the county commissioners are liable to indictment if they fail to maintain a public district school at least four months in each year, to no penalty specified. A majority of the States provide that the State appropriations shall be withheld for noncompliance with the law. The opinions of some of the State superintendents indicate how interest in this vital matter has increased. One superintendent says:

It seems too bad that in a young State like ours we did not begin right. It has only been a few years since the rural schools sprang up in our State, and all the undesirable features have been adopted, the terms are short, etc. We have accomplished at least one thing—we have a revenue law which provides that no school shall be entitled to county tax unless it is maintained for at least 120 days.

One State superintendent, who was formerly a county superintendent, advocates outlining the work for a definite period of time and says:

I outlined the work of the grades for 160 days' continuous work, and this did more than anything else to bring the farmer to see that if he wanted his boy in his district to keep up with his neighbor's boy in the adjoining district he would need to have 160 days of school, because the work was planned for 160 days, and if he gave his boy but 140 days he was simply 20 days short in his school work. This concrete example did more than any words of mine to increase the length of term in every district to 160 days, and in many cases to 180 days.

Another State superintendent, writing of a difficulty in his State, remarks:

It is going to mean an immense amount of work to wake up those wealthier communities that have now lost all of the young progressive spirit. Our rural communities are chiefly inhabited by the middle-aged and the aged, and to work on them is a very difficult proposition.

One-half of all the State superintendents have expressed a willingness to cooperate in securing a uniform 160 days' term for the rural schools, which will materially increase the present average of 137.7 days.

#### GENERAL CONDITIONS IN THE STATES.

*Alabama.*—Although no minimum term is provided by law, the average length of the school term for the year 1911-12 as given in the annual report of the department of education was 132 days, an increase of 5 days over the average for the preceding year.

*Arkansas.*—The report of the State superintendent shows that in 1913 the average length of term for the rural schools was 127.1

days, an increase of 9.2 days over the 1912 report. In the report for the year 1900, the average for all schools was only 77.4 days. The recent amendment to the State constitution increasing the State school tax from 2 to 3 mills has greatly aided the poorer districts in increasing the school term.

*Connecticut.*—The minimum school term of 180 days is evidently not too long for pupils in this State. The report for 1910 shows an average of 181.2 days for the rural schools, while the urban schools report an average of 3.8 days more. The average number of school days for 1912 was 188 for the urban and 186 for the rural schools. The report for 1910-11 compares the report for 1888 with the year 1902, showing an increase of 9.35 days.

*Florida.*—The average length of term for all schools of the State in 1913 was 120 days. The lowest average length of term in any county was 80 days. Only one county had so short a term.

*Georgia.*—In the report for the year 1912 the State superintendent urges the enacting of a minimum-term law of 120 days for each school year and an extra appropriation of \$100,000 as a State equalization fund to aid counties and districts that are unable to comply with this proposed limit. He refers to many communities where only a 100 days' term is maintained.

*Indiana.*—The report of the State superintendent for 1912 calls attention to the inadequacy of the revenue law and recommends an increase in the local rate of taxation to 40 and 50 cents on the \$100 valuation in order to maintain a minimum school term. The following from the report shows increases in average length of terms for years named:

In townships:		Days.
1910-11		139
1911-12		140
In towns:		158
1910-11		162
1911-12		183
In cities:		187
1910-11		
1911-12		

*Kansas.*—An appropriation of \$150,000 was made by the State to aid weak districts in maintaining a minimum term of 140 days, but the biennial report of the State superintendent shows that for the year 1912 only \$11,000 was needed and the present year (1913) for the same purpose only \$29,657.83, leaving a balance of over \$106,000 in the biennial appropriation. The annual appropriation for 1914-15 was \$35,000. The necessary levy to receive aid from this State fund is 4½ mills. The average school term in 1862 was 64 days; in 1912, 155 days. This does not include cities of the first or second class.

MINIMUM SCHOOL-TERM REGULATIONS.

*Kentucky.*—The report of the superintendent of public instruction for 1911 gives 7,293 schools having the minimum term of 120 days; 759 reported a term above and 66 below the minimum.

*Louisiana.*—While no minimum is required, the report of the department of education for 1911-12 states that the average length of the school term for white children was 157.2 days and for colored children 61.2 days. For the year 1912-13 it was 155 days for white children and 88 for the colored.

*Maryland.*—The report for the year 1912 gives the average term for white children 180.7 days, for all schools, and 121.8 days for colored children.

*Michigan.*—The average number of days for the school year 1912 was 170 for ungraded and 189 days for graded schools, an increase of 9 days in the ungraded schools and 8 in the graded over the report of 1902.

*Minnesota.*—The average term for rural schools for 1909-10 was 132.5 days. For the purpose of receiving State aid the rural schools are divided into three classes: Class "A" must employ a teacher who holds a first-grade certificate and must maintain a term of school for not less than 160 days, \$150; Class "B," the teacher must hold at least a second-grade certificate. The term must not be less than 160 days, \$100; Class "C," a session of not less than 140 days, employing a teacher having a second-grade certificate, \$75.

State aid during the year 1912 was given to 555 school districts, Class "C"; 1,396, Class "B"; and 2,153, Class "A." A deficit in the fund for State aid was noted in the sum of \$101,247. One thousand two hundred and fifty-nine more schools received aid during the year 1912 than during the preceding year.

*Missouri.*—A plan for the approval of rural schools that conform to specific requirements, the first of which is a 160 days' term, at least, is fully explained in the sixty-third report (1912) of the State superintendent of public schools, and over 300 schools are reported approved, filling the requirements for the year 1912. State aid to provide for a minimum term of 160 days was given 286 districts in 1911 and 373 in 1912.

*Montana.*—In the report for the biennium ending August 31, 1912, of the State superintendent, the average length of the rural school term was shown to be 140 days; one-fifth of the districts reported a term less than 120 days; and a few districts reported less than 80 days.

*Nebraska.*—The report for the school year ending January 8, 1912, shows that 2,048 districts had a school term of 180 days or over, 4,413 districts from 120 to 180 days, 469 districts from 90 to 120 days, and 223 districts less than 90 days.

State aid is given weak districts to enable them to continue schools to a minimum of 140 days.

*New Hampshire.*—The average term for the State was 169 days. In 1881-82 it was 91.15 days.

By a regulation of the State department public schools, approved high schools, and academies must maintain the schools at least 180 days.

*New Mexico.*—The sum of \$42,768.47 was expended during the school years 1912-13 and 1913-14 for maintaining a minimum school term of 109 days in weak districts of the State. Of this amount \$30,837.89 was used for this purpose during the year ending September 1, 1914.

The State superintendent says that, as the income from common school lands is constantly increasing, it is probable that the minimum term may reach 140 days during the next biennial period.

*New York.*—The school act of 1812 required a district to operate a school for at least 60 days. In 1847 this was increased to 80 days by special act of the legislature, and in 1851 a further increase was made to 120 days. Again in 1861 the term was lengthened to 140 and in 1890 to 160, and finally by act of the recent legislature, 1913, to 180 days.

In the annual report for 1913 a recommendation was made to have all schools open upon a uniform date, the first Tuesday in September, and that the term minimum be 190 days, inclusive of legal holidays.

*North Carolina.*—The recent legislation making 120 days a minimum term has raised a very vital question of securing the necessary funds for the maintenance of the schools for this term. In the biennial report of the State superintendent for the year 1911-12 a recommendation which was enacted into a law by the legislature was made to increase the present school fund by increasing the State levy.

The average length of the school term for 1912 in rural white schools was 97.7 days and for urban white schools 181.3. The average for all white schools of the State was 112.8 days. In the rural colored schools the average was 81.7 and in the urban 172.9, an increase in the average number of days in the rural white schools of 5 days and in the colored 3 days.

In the local tax districts the rural white schools maintained an average of 133 days.

*North Dakota.*—The legislature in the year 1911 revised the entire school law and fixed the minimum term at 140 days. The State superintendent in the twelfth biennial report, under date of June 30, 1912, recommends a minimum term of 160 days. The same report shows the average term in the rural schools for the year 1912 was about 150 days.

*Ohio.*—The fifty-eighth annual report of the State school commissioner for the year ending August 31, 1911, gives the average number of days of the school term in the elementary township schools as 160 and in the separate district schools as 170 days. In the separate districts, elementary and high, they have an average of 170 and 175 days, respectively.

*Oklahoma.*—A minimum term of 120 days was suggested for the rural schools in the fourth biennial report for 1911-12 and 180 days for the city schools.

The average term for the 5,859 district schools of the State was 122 days for 1912.

*Oregon.*—The average number of days in the school year of 1913 for all schools was 150.8 days. The following lengths of terms by districts is given: 551, term of 180 days; 572, term of 160 days; 328, term of 140 days; 667, term of 120 days.

The sentiment in this State seems to be very strong for an average term in the rural schools of 160 days.

*Pennsylvania.*—The report of the State board of education for the year ending December 31, 1912, states that 24 townships having a total of 149 schools could not maintain their schools for the minimum term 140 days, even with the maximum tax levy. A special State aid fund is recommended to provide sufficient funds for these special cases.

*South Carolina.*—The forty-fourth annual report of the State superintendent of 1912 gives the average term of school for white children for the entire State, all schools, 117.5 days, for country children, 111, and town children, 157.5 days; for colored children, all schools 69, country children, 65.5, and town children 106.5. The State superintendent urges increased local taxation to lengthen the school term.

State aid of \$200 per year is given districts employing two certified teachers for a school term of not less than 120 days, after a local levy of not less than 4 mills has been made, also State aid in the sum of \$300 annually is given when a local levy of 4 mills has been made and three or more certified teachers employed for a school term of not less than 140 days.

*South Dakota.*—The eleventh report for the biennium ending June 30, 1912, states that 4,472 districts maintained their schools for a period of 120 days or more, 245 for a less period and 293 failed to maintain any school.

The State superintendent recommends increasing the minimum term from 120 to 140 days.

*Tennessee.*—The biennial report of the State superintendent for 1911-12, gives the average length of the school term for the year 1912 in the elementary schools as 114 days and for the year 1911,

121 days. The decrease was explained to be due to a change in appropriation of the school funds from an annual to a semi-annual distribution, some districts not providing for this in equalizing the funds found a shortage in the amount of money, and the consequence was a shorter term of school. The State superintendent invites attention to the large amount used by some districts for buildings, repairs, etc., and the shortening of the school term in consequence, and urges a consideration first of length of the school term.

*Texas.*—The State superintendent reports: "The constitution and statutes of the State contemplate at least 120 days of schooling for each child, while the facts show conclusively that Texas is not giving one-half of 120 days of schooling to each of the country children of Texas."

*Vermont.*—In the forty-second biennial school report the superintendent of education says: "There is no justice in any law or system that permits one child to have 180 days of schooling in an inspiring school atmosphere which is produced by a pleasant schoolroom and a well-trained and highly cultured teacher while it allows another child only 140 days of schooling and requires him to receive that in a depressing atmosphere which is produced by an unkept schoolroom, unwholesome surroundings, and a mercenary amateur as a teacher."

The average school term for the year, 1912 was 100 days. Sixty-seven districts reported a term less than 140 days, and 273 districts report from 140 to 145 days. The report for the year ending June 30, 1913, shows 116 schools unable to maintain their schools up to the minimum required (150 days).

*West Virginia.*—The biennial report of the State superintendent of schools for 1910-1912 reports their average term of school for the year 1912 was 137 days, an increase of 2 days over the report for the preceding year.

The superintendent prefers some other method of augmenting the school fund without increasing the school levy in order to have the minimum term of 120 days for the elementary schools.

He suggests as one method an endowment fund to be created by placing a very small royalty on the water power still owned and controlled by the State, also a production tax on gas, all to be placed in a State fund for the benefit of the schools.

*Wisconsin.*—The fourteenth biennial report for the biennium ending 1910 gives the average term for the rural schools of the State as 173 days, and for the entire State 180 days. For the purpose of receiving State aid, State-graded schools are divided into first and second classes. The first class, maintaining three or more departments and a minimum term of 180 days, will receive \$300; the second class, maintaining two departments for a minimum term of 180 days, re-

ceives \$200. State aid of \$10 a month is also given to a rural school of one department that maintains a school for 180 days and employs a teacher who is a graduate of a State normal school or of another school of equal standard, and \$5 a month to any rural school which employs a first grade teacher for 180 days. In both cases the State aid must apply to the salary of the teacher, and a daily attendance of between 30 and 40 must be maintained.

Length of session in days.<sup>1</sup>

States.	In all schools, 1911-12.	In all schools, 1909-10.	In urban schools, 1909-10.	In rural schools, 1909-10.	Urban excess over rural, 1909-10.
United States.....	158.0	157.0	184.3	137.7	46.6
North Atlantic Division.....	180.9	179.7	188.5	139.7	28.8
South Atlantic Division.....	131.5	132.4	178.7	119.5	59.2
South Central Division.....	129.5	125.7	174.0	117.6	56.4
North Central Division.....	164.8	164.7	184.1	152.7	31.4
Western Division.....	184.1	161.8	180.7	145.0	35.7
North Atlantic Division:					
Maine.....	164.2	159.0	177.4	142.5	34.9
New Hampshire.....	169.0	164.0	176.0	149.7	26.3
Vermont.....	160.0	160.0	185.0	147.0	38.0
Massachusetts.....	186.0	186.0	188.5	160.7	27.3
Rhode Island.....	194.1	193.0	194.0	190.2	3.8
Connecticut.....	184.2	184.7	185.0	181.2	3.8
New York.....	187.5	187.5	189.9	178.6	11.3
New Jersey.....	187.8	184.0	186.5	176.7	9.8
Pennsylvania.....	171.0	170.0	187.6	140.4	38.2
South Atlantic Division:					
Delaware.....	170.0	172.5	183.0	157.0	36.0
Maryland.....	179.5	185.0	191.0	179.8	11.2
District of Columbia.....	179.2	181.2	181.2	181.2	0.0
Virginia.....	138.9	140.0	177.8	130.5	47.3
West Virginia.....	137.0	134.0	176.0	127.5	28.5
North Carolina.....	109.2	101.9	161.8	83.3	68.5
South Carolina.....	92.0	105.1	183.0	94.5	88.5
Georgia.....	142.0	144.4	180.0	141.5	38.5
Florida.....	122.2	115.1	159.2	100.1	59.1
South Central Division:					
Kentucky.....	139.2	125.0	181.8	110.6	71.2
Tennessee.....	127.8	136.0	172.5	122.0	50.5
Alabama.....	132.4	117.3	178.3	108.5	69.8
Mississippi.....	123.0	135.0	170.5	131.0	39.5
Louisiana.....	132.0	135.6	170.2	124.1	46.1
Texas.....	132.0	131.0	173.0	119.2	53.8
Arkansas.....	117.8	106.5	174.0	98.0	76.0
Oklahoma.....	130.0	136.0	171.2	128.5	43.2
North Central Division:					
Ohio.....	165.5	170.0	184.7	155.0	29.7
Indiana.....	168.0	147.0	177.2	130.3	46.9
Illinois.....	158.0	171.0	185.8	154.8	31.0
Michigan.....	172.0	171.0	185.5	161.6	23.9
Wisconsin.....	175.7	180.0	191.0	173.0	18.0
Minnesota.....	162.0	149.0	184.0	132.5	51.5
Iowa.....	172.0	172.0	181.0	168.0	12.4
Missouri.....	157.4	155.0	190.0	137.7	52.3
North Dakota.....	146.3	147.3	182.8	143.2	39.6
South Dakota.....	167.1	165.9	178.0	163.8	14.2
Nebraska.....	158.5	173.0	180.5	170.5	10.0
Kansas.....	172.0	163.5	174.1	160.0	14.1
Western Division:					
Montana.....	165.4	158.0	181.5	138.5	43.0
Wyoming.....	147.5	140.9	173.5	136.0	37.5
Colorado.....	178.0	156.0	180.3	123.8	56.5
New Mexico.....	125.0	100.0	163.9	90.1	73.1
Arizona.....	155.5	135.5	174.6	105.0	69.6
Utah.....	155.8	164.8	173.7	157.0	16.7
Nevada.....	145.0	145.3	170.0	131.8	38.2
Idaho.....	152.0	137.0	179.5	112.5	67.0
Washington.....	174.0	172.0	183.8	164.0	19.8
Oregon.....	143.8	138.0	173.5	118.7	54.8
California.....	174.4	152.0	186.0	178.0	8.0

<sup>1</sup> Column 1 from Rep. of the Commissioner of Ed. for year ending June 30, 1912; columns 2 to 6 from Bul., 1912, No. 8. No later data on urban and rural schools, separately, are available.

## MINIMUM SCHOOL-TERM REGULATIONS.

*Minimum-term regulations in the various States.*

States.	Session.	Minimum term.
Alabama.....		No minimum school term provided by law. It is the duty of the State superintendent of education to apportion all public-school moneys raised by the State as a unit among the several counties in the State in proportion to the number of school children of school age therein—ages 7 to 21. The county board of education shall apportion the funds awarded to their county to the several school districts in their county, so as to provide, as nearly as practicable, school terms of equal duration in such school districts.
Arizona.....	8 months.....	Boards of trustees for the districts must maintain all schools for a period of not less than 8 months. (S. L., 1912, p. 28, sec. 54.) After July 1, 1913, no school district, except one newly formed, is entitled to receive any apportionment of State or county school moneys, which has not maintained a public school for at least 8 months during the next preceding school year. A district which is prevented by fire, flood, prevailing epidemic, or other unavoidable circumstances from maintaining a school for the length of time herein designated is nevertheless entitled to its apportionment of State and county school moneys. (S. L., 1912, p. 41, sec. 105.)
Arkansas.....	3 months.....	Electors determine amount of money sufficient for a school term of 3 months, provided no tax for school purposes to be greater than seven-tenths of 1 per cent of assessed valuation of all taxable property of the district: Provided further, If sufficient revenue can not be obtained for a 3-months term they (the electors) may determine by ballot that no school be taught for that year and the revenue accrue for the year following. (Digest of S. L. 1910, p. 145, sec. 7390.) When a county has no high school, the tuition of a pupil is paid in some other public high school when the district is financially able to maintain its schools for at least 6 months during each year. Tuition paid by district \$1.50 a month for each pupil. (Supplement to S. L., 1911, p. 31, sec. 10.)
California.....	6 months.....	No school district except one newly formed is entitled to receive any apportionment of State or county school moneys which has not maintained a public school for at least 6 months during the next preceding school year. (Exceptions made in case of fire, flood, or epidemics.) (S. L., 1911, p. 178, par. 1829.)
Colorado.....	6 months.....	Except that by and with the consent of the county superintendent of schools, school districts in altitudes of 8,000 feet and upward may limit, for climatic reasons, their school term to not less than 4 months. (S. L., 384 [a], sec. 1.)
Connecticut.....	36 weeks.....	Public schools shall be maintained for at least 36 weeks in each year in every town and school district. (Conn. School Dec. No. 3, chap. 3, p. 17, par. 40; Gen. Stat., chap. 131, p. 51.)
Delaware.....	140 days.....	The school committee shall keep the school open for at least 140 days in each school year. (S. L., 1909, p. 22.) In case any district or school shall fail to employ a teacher or teachers for which money was apportioned for at least 140 days during the succeeding school year, the trustees of the school fund shall deduct out of the apportionment of such district or school for the succeeding year a sum equal to that which such district or school obtained, because of the nonemployment of such teacher.
Florida.....	4 months.....	It is the duty of each county board of public instruction to locate and maintain schools in every locality where needed for all the youth between the ages of 6 and 21 years during not less than 4 months in each year. (Digest of School Laws, 1909, p. 18, sec. 35; [Second] G. S., 317.)
Georgia.....		No minimum school term provided by law. The several county boards of education have full power and authority to regulate the length of the public school terms of their respective counties. (S. L., 1911, p. 18, sec. 11.) Practically all counties in the State have a school term of 6 months. Through local taxation 33 counties add from 1 to 4½ months to this period. In addition, 80 cities and towns and 600 districts, through local taxation, supplement the State funds and have terms varying from 6 to 9½ months.

MINIMUM SCHOOL-TERM REGULATIONS.

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Minimum-term regulations in the various States—Continued.

States.	Session.	Minimum term.
Idaho.....	4 months.....	At the annual meeting of the board of trustees of the districts (third Monday in April) the length of the school term is decided. It shall not be less than 5 months in a district having less than 20 pupils; nor less than 6 months in districts having between 20 and 75, inclusive; nor less than 9 months in districts having more than 75 pupils. No State funds to be received unless above act complied with. (R. S., 1913, art. 6, p. 27, sec. 54 (d). School district lapses if district fails to maintain 4 months in a year. (S. L., 1912, art. 5, p. 24, sec. 52 (1).)
Illinois.....	6 months.....	Board of directors shall establish and keep in operation for at least 6 months in each year a sufficient number of free schools for the accommodation of all persons in the district over the age of 6 and under 21 years. (S. L., 1912, p. 35, par. 114 (9).)
Indiana.....	6 months.....	Apportionment of funds by county superintendent depends upon compliance with above. (S. L., 1912, p. 9, par. 14.) School trustees shall maintain in each school corporation a term of school at least 6 months in duration. Must authorize levy sufficient, providing said levy does not exceed limit provided by law. Donations may be received by school authorities to extend term of school. (S. L., 1911, p. 77, sec. 71.) (R. S., 1908, par. 6411.)
Iowa.....	24 weeks.....	Each school regularly established shall continue for at least 24 weeks of 5 school days each, unless the county superintendent should authorize the board to shorten this period when in his judgment there are sufficient reasons for so doing. (S. L., 1912, pp. 58-59, sec. 2773.)
Kansas.....	7 months.....	All school districts must maintain a public school for not less than 7 months each school year. Cities of the first and second class must maintain school for a period of not less than 8 months of each school year, the school year beginning Sept. 1 and ending June 1. If full assessment has been made the State and the county are to aid district in making up the amount that is necessary for 7 months' term. Appropriation withheld if above is not complied with in full. (R. S., 1911, pp. 492-493, ch. 268.)
Kentucky.....	6 months.....	County board of education has power to distribute the school fund for school purposes, but no school district is entitled to any part of this fund unless it has maintained a school in the district for at least six months. (S. L., 1912, p. 49, par. 137, ch. 10.)
Louisiana.....		No minimum requirement, except for State approved high schools. These are required to maintain sessions for 180 days.
Maine.....	30 weeks.....	Public school must be maintained for at least 30 weeks annually. Any town failing to meet this requirement is debarred from drawing its State school moneys until provisions are made for future maintenance. (S. L., 1915.)
Maryland.....	9 months.....	In every schoolhouse district in each county there shall be kept for 10 months in each year, if possible, one or more schools according to population. (S. L., 1912, p. 23, sec. 43.)
Massachusetts.....	32 weeks.....	In any county where schools have been maintained for less than 9 months the comptroller shall withhold from said county the March installment of the State school tax. (S. L., 1912, p. 57, sec. 138. R. S., 1904, ch. 534.) Every city and town (township) shall maintain, for at least 32 weeks in each year, a sufficient number of schools for the instruction of all the children who may legally attend a public school therein, except that in towns whose assessed valuation is less than \$200,000, the required period may, with the consent of the board of education, be reduced to 28 weeks. (R. S., ch. 42, p. 466, sec. 1.) No town shall receive any part of the income of the Massachusetts School Fund unless it shall have complied, to the satisfaction of the board of education, with all laws relating to the public schools. (Acts, 1904, ch. 107, sec. 1.) Every city and every town containing according to the latest census, State or national, 500 families or householders, shall, and any other town may, maintain a high school, adequately equipped, which shall be kept by a principal and such assistants as may be needed, for at least 40 weeks, exclusive of vacations, in each year. (Revised Laws, ch. 42, sec. 2, p. 466.)

<sup>1</sup> For white children only.

## MINIMUM SCHOOL-TERM REGULATIONS.

*Minimum-term regulations in the various States—Continued.*

States.	Session.	Minimum term.
Michigan.....	5 months.....	If any school district shall neglect to maintain a school within its borders as prescribed by law for at least 5 months or neglect to provide for the education of its pupils in another district, it shall be deprived for the ensuing year of its proportion of the primary school interest fund. (Constitution, art. 11, sec. 9, Gen. School Laws [Revision, 1911], p. 6.)
Minnesota.....	5 months.....	Schools with more than 400 children on the census list must have 9 months; with less than 400 and more than 30, 8 months; 30 or less, 5 months. No district is entitled to receive any apportionment of school funds of the State that has not had at least 5 months of school term within the year. (Laws of Minnesota relating to school systems, 1911, p. 45, ch. 9, sec. 104.) Exception made in new districts which for first year have provided for 4 months' term and have maintained for 1 month a legal school. (S. L., c'r 9, p. 46, sec. 107.)
Mississippi.....	4 months.....	Constitutional provision for at least 4 months in each year. (State constitution, art. 8, secs. 205 and 206.) Mayor and board of aldermen must provide for any levy for more than 4 months provided by State. (S. L., 1912, p. 23, R. S. 4011, 4311.)
Missouri.....	8 months.....	Municipal and rural separate districts must maintain school at least 7 months each year. (Sec. 439, Code, 1906.) Any district containing not less than 12 square miles may levy taxes on its property to extend term. (N. B., No. 22, Laws, 1911.) The board of directors empowered to continue public school or schools in each district for a period of 8 months in each scholastic year, providing maximum levy provided by law has been made and teachers paid maximum salaries for grade of certificates held. Any deficit will be provided for by the State in a sum of not to exceed \$100 for each district for each year. Districts must have an area of not less than 6 square miles. (S. L., 1913, sec. 1046.)
Montana.....	4 months.....	Schools must be in session not less than 4 months in all districts of the third class (under 1,000 in population); Districts of second class (over 1,000, but less than 8,000) and districts of the first class (over 8,000) must maintain a free public school for at least 8 months in each year. Not entitled to receive any apportionment of school moneys for noncompliance with above provision. (S. L., p. 58, s. 607.)
Nebraska.....	4 months.....	The legal voters shall determine at each annual meeting the length of time a school shall be taught in the district the ensuing year, which shall not be less than 4 months in a district having less than 20 pupils of school age (8 months in districts having between 20 and 75 pupils of school age and 9 months in districts having over 70 pupils of school age), provided school shall be taught in such district for 9 months in the year when the same can be supported by levy of 15 mills on the dollar valuation in such school district, when supplemented by the district apportionment from the State fund, and for at least 8 months in the year by a similar levy of 20 mills supplemented as above. Penalty, withholding State funds. (R. S., secs. 11540 and 11544 [in effect July 16, 1913]. Supp. to S. L., pp. 1 and 2.)
Nevada.....	6 months.....	State aid is given to weak districts for the purpose of providing at least 7 months' school each year in the first 8 grades. (R. S., sec. 11549, Supp. to School Law, p. 3.) Duty of school trustees to provide for at least 6 months of free school in each district, must make levy sufficient to support school for this number of months, and, if funds permit, must maintain a school for 8 months. County commissioners shall make the levy sufficient for a 6 months' term in case of failure to do so upon the part of the trustees. (School Code, p. 27, sec. 67 [13].)
New Hampshire.....	20 weeks.....	No town shall receive any benefit from the "literary fund" (school fund known as literary fund) unless proper returns have been made to superintendent of public instruction and its schools have been maintained at least 20 weeks during the school year next preceding. (S. L., 1891-1911, p. 9. R. S., ch. 77, par. 7, 1890.) Further aid is provided when towns are under equalized valuation of \$7,000 per pupil of average attendance or when population is not in excess of 3,500, nor when tax rate is over \$1.50 on each \$1,000 valuation or when schools are maintained over 30 weeks for school year. (S. L., 1891-1911, p. 7. R. S., ch. 158, sec. 1, 1909.) High school in a special district must be maintained for at least 34 weeks in each year. (S. L., 1891-1911, p. 18. R. S., ch. 64, par. 1, 1891.)

Minimum-term regulations in the various States—Continued.

States.	Session	Minimum term.
New Jersey.....	9 months.....	State school tax shall not be apportioned to any district which shall not have maintained a public school for at least 9 months during the preceding school year: <i>Provided</i> , That the commissioner of education may, for good cause shown, remit said penalty. (S. L., 1911, p. 24, par. 44.)
New Mexico.....	5 months.....	A public school shall be maintained for at least 5 months in each year in every school district. (State constitution, art. 12, p. 28, sec. 4.) (Mention made in Report of State Superintendent, June 15, 1910, p. 28.) Act of first legislature to provide funds to secure minimum number of months (5) by State aid and also for buildings. (Laws of New Mexico, 1913, ch. 74, p. 93, sec. 2.)
New York.....	180 days.....	No district shall be entitled to any portion of school moneys unless the report of the trustees for the preceding year (school) shows that a common school was supported in the district and taught by a qualified teacher for at least 180 days, inclusive of legal holidays that may have occurred during the term and exclusive of Saturdays. (Laws of New York, ch. 611, sec. 2, enacted May 14, 1913, amending ch. 21, subdvs. 2 and 4, sec. 492, Laws, 1909; and ch. 140, Laws, 1910.)
North Carolina.....	4 months.....	The county board of commissioners upon estimate of the county board of education are required to levy not to exceed 15 cents on every \$100 value of property, real and personal, to secure a term of 4 months; unless this levy is made where necessary for a four months' term no county shall receive any part of the equalizing fund of the State. (S. L., 1913, pp. 8-12.) Law passed same year making equalizing fund greater in order to have 6 months of school, and providing for an annual setting aside of 5 cents of the ad valorem tax levied and collected for State purposes was passed. (S. L., 1913, p. 8, secs. 3 and 4; Laws, 1911, p. 425, par. 109. See Laws, 1911, p. 419, par. 83.)
North Dakota.....	7 months.....	The district boards determine and fix the length of the term for the common schools, which shall be kept in session for not less than 7 months in each school year. (Laws of North Dakota, p. 419, par. 83, art. 6, 1911.) Provision for additional school term if a majority of the patrons of any school having 8 or more pupils in daily attendance for its last term shall petition the board to continue such school for that length of time, providing funds are available. (Laws of North Dakota, 1911, p. 420, par. 85, art. 6.)
Ohio.....	32 weeks.....	Every elementary day school shall continue not less than 32 nor more than 40 weeks in each school year. (S. L., 1912, ch. 3, sec. 7644. R. S., 4007, p. 97.) A high school of the first grade covers a period of 4 years of 32 weeks each; second grade 3 years of 32 weeks each; third grade 2 years of 28 weeks each. (S. L., 1912, ch. 3, secs. 7652-7654. R. S., 4004-7.)
Oklahoma.....	3 months.....	Qualified voters at each annual meeting or at any special meeting duly called fix the length of school term, which shall not be less than 3 months for the ensuing year. (S. L., art. 4, sec. 57, p. 20; R. S., 8057.) The compulsory attendance law requires pupils to attend school at least 3 months which may be increased to 6 months by order of the district board.
Oregon.....	6 months.....	Districts shall not be entitled to their proportion of the county school fund at the disposal of the county superintendent unless they shall report to him within 15 days after the annual school meeting and shall have had a school taught in their districts at least 6 months in each school year. * * * (Sec. 214, School Laws, 1912.)
Pennsylvania.....	7 months.....	Districts of the first and second class must keep school open for at least 9 months (first class dists., pop. 500,000 or over; districts of the second class, pop. 30,000 but under 500,000). Districts of the third class (pop. of 5,000 but under 30,000), for at least 8 months. Districts of the fourth class (pop. of less than 5,000), for at least 7 months. (S. L., 1911, art. 16, p. 85, sec. 1601.)
Rhode Island		No minimum school term provided by law.
South Carolina.....	3 months.....	The free public schools of the State shall be kept open in each school district of the State for a period of at least 3 months in each and every school year. (S. L., 1912, p. 29, par. 1782. See Acts S. C., No. 497, p. 924 of 1912, and Acts, 1913, No. 131, p. 194.)
South Dakota.....	6 months.....	If a school district fails to hold at least 6 months of school in any school year, no warrant for the amount due from the apportionment fund can be drawn. (S. L., 1911, p. 38, sec. 120.)

## MINIMUM SCHOOL-TERM REGULATIONS.

*Minimum-term regulations in the various States—Continued.*

States	Session.	Minimum term.
Tennessee.....	5 months.....	When the money derived from the permanent school fund and State taxes left in the county treasury is not sufficient to keep up a public school for 5 months in the year in the school districts in the county, the county court shall levy an additional tax sufficient for this purpose, or they may submit this proposition to a vote of the people. (S. L., 1911, p. 29, sec. 39.)
Texas.....	6 months.....	Available school funds arising from all sources shall be sufficient to maintain and support the public free schools for a period of not less than 6 months in each year. (Constitutional provision, S. L., p. 1. Constitution, Art. VII, sec. 3.)
Utah.....	20 weeks.....	Any district failing to maintain a public school for at least 20 weeks during the year next preceding that in which the apportionment is made, the number of school children shall be subtracted from the total school population of the State and county before making the apportionment. (S. L., 1913, p. 9, sec. 1775 [2].)
Vermont.....	120 days.....	The term "legal school" applies to any public school maintained at least 150 days, including holidays and others allowed by law, during any school year. (Act approved Feb. 22, 1913. Laws of Vermont, 1912, par. 70, sec. 1, p. 89.)
Virginia.....	5 months.....	No State funds paid to any district for school purposes unless there is filed with the division superintendent a written statement signed by the chairman and clerk of the board of district trustees certifying that school has been kept in operation for 5 months during the current school year. (S. L., 1911, p. 39, sec. 50.)
Washington.....	6 months.....	All school districts in this State shall maintain school during at least 6 months each year. (S. L., 1909, p. 32, sec. 94. Laws of Wash., 1909, p. 263, ch. 97, sec. 7.)
West Virginia.....	6 months.....	Duty of school officers to fix levy so that a public school shall be maintained for at least 6 months. No school funds can be drawn unless the above provisions are complied with. (Revised S. L., 1911, pp. 18 and 19, sec. 21, p. 31, sec. 42.)
Wisconsin.....	8 months.....	At least 8 months, 100 days, of school taught by a legally qualified teacher must be maintained in order that the district may be entitled to share in the apportionment of the State and town school money. (S. L., 1911, p. 253, sec. 560.) Constitutional provision not less than 3 months. (Art. 10, sec. 5. See p. 251, School Law, 1911, sec. 551 [a], p. 254, sec. 560f.)
Wyoming.....	6 months.....	Clerk of district certifies to number of teachers, providing that after the year 1913 every teacher for whom credit shall be claimed in such certificate must have been engaged in teaching in said district for at least 6 months during said school year, or in conjunction with a predecessor shall have taught for said period. (S. L., 1913, ch. 52, sec. 1, p. 21.)