

Annual Message of Superintendent of Schools

to County School Board - March 29, 1921

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1. The chief purpose of this meeting is the approval of the budget for the school year 1921-22. Some of the district boards have worked their budgets out in detail in consultation with the superintendent. The budget for other districts is my own. I hope every trustee will closely scrutinize the budget for his own district so that he will be in a position to defend it before the supervisors. Changes can be made here before approval. A supplementary statement is attached herewith showing the rate of county and district tax necessary to meet the figures in this budget. I have taken the new real estate assessment and used the 1920 personal property assessment in determining this rate. It is very essential that some definite plan for placing this budget before the supervisors be adopted. The financial condition has not been good of late and there is a tendency to want to lower taxes. Of course, we school people believe that after bare subsistence the most important material need of our civilization is the education of our youth. My own study of the situation in Virginia and elsewhere indicates that we cannot afford to offer our teachers lower salaries and the 5% increase indicated in the budget is needed to replace our poor teachers with better ones. I suggest that a copy of the budget be mailed to each super-



visor and that one or more members of the district board call on the supervisor at some time prior to their meeting in Monday April 25. Let it be remembered that this year each supervisor is free to levy the district school tax he wishes, except that the total county and district tax may not be less than fifty cents. In view of the increase in the district tax I recommend that this board by resolution request the supervisors to increase the county school tax from fifteen to twenty cents. This would still be lower than in nearly all counties of Virginia.

2. For your information I state that the average pay of all teachers in Loudoun in 1914-15 was \$354. This year it will be about \$695. This is an increase of about 96%.

3. The plan adopted last year for the supervision of our white one and two-room schools should be continued. That is, one supervisor should work in Broad Run and Leesburg districts and a second in Mercer, Mt. Gilead, Jefferson, and Lovettsville. This salary and expense allowance should be \$1500.00. The cost would be shared with the state and home by each district in proportion to the number of teachers supervised.

4. I hope the board will be constrained to continue the colored supervision at a net cost of \$300.00 to the entire county.

5. At a recent meeting the county board requested me to work out and recommend a salary schedule for adoption. I am not doing this now for three reasons. First, several teachers of the county have already been employed at stated and fixed



salaries some of which would not fit a schedule. Second, until conditions become entirely normal a schedule could not be followed and exceptions in a few cases are breeders of gross dissatisfaction among teachers. Third, a schedule to be of maximum value should be in effect along the same basic principle in the entire state. A number of counties are using a schedule basing salaries on certificate and experience. This leaves out at least one important factor. My plan now is to recommend to this board at its July meeting a schedule for use in 1922-23. I propose to base salaries on certificate, experience, and effort, and to include in the latter term the teachers general interest in her school and her native ability as a teacher. This schedule depends upon the classification of the teachers into Class A, B, etc., using their certificates, etc., as credit bases for determination of the class. It would then be the function of the superintendent, supervisor, and principal to classify the teacher and of the board to adopt a fixed ~~at~~ salary for each class. Any schedule will work only when the supply of teachers exceeds the demand. This will not be the case 1921-22 but should be in 1922-23.

6. Let me urge all trustees to report vacancies to me as they occur. A large number of application are filed with me each year and I can be of most service to trustees by knowing of their vacancies. I immediately investigate the ability of each applicant and file the papers.



7. One of our most serious errors of the past has been to wait too long for teachers to decide about accepting offers. Let me urge that only in exceptional cases teachers be given more than two weeks to accept an offer. Principals of larger schools ought to be selected earlier and to be given some part in the selection of assistants.

8. It is necessary each year for this board to make the appropriations for the superintendent's office. I suggest that the same sum of \$750.00 be appropriated for travelling expense, postage, office rent, and supplies, etc. It would seem just that the clerk employed receive an increase from \$300.00 to \$360.00 per year. A number of counties are paying \$75.00 to \$100.00 per month for the superintendent's clerk.

conditions next session.



9. The State Board has recently set up some regulations for the standardization of elementary schools not connected with high schools. Among requirements for standardization are - Salary of not less than \$85.00 for the teacher, term of nine months, building and grounds to be good and suitable, all teachers to hold a first grade or high certificate. \* A liberal appropriation will be given each standardized school each year. It is my present plan to require all seventh grade pupils from non-standardized schools to take an entrance examination for high schools but to admit those from standard schools without examination. This will probably be put into effect for the session 1921-22. Several of our schools, at least one in each district should meet these standardization conditions next session.



10. The question of my own salary is a very vital one to me. On July 1st of this year I shall begin, deus volens, the second term of my office as superintendent of schools. During my first four years my net income from this office will be less than my living expenses. I have now arrived at what should be the real earning period of my life and having the responsibility of a family and the prospect of children to educate, I should be saving money. At the same time this county has not the right to expect that its superintendent of schools should live on the same plane as a hired man in order to make ends meet or even to save money.

My relations with this board have been most cordial and this is not a complaint but merely a preliminary statement of fact. We want now to get down to questions of justice, merit, and relative values.

There was a day, not beyond the memory and experience of many of you, when the public schools seemed to exist for the poor, the financial support given the system was niggardly, and those who held such an office as the one I hold had to have other income than from salary in order to serve. We have passed that age.

What is the most important function of the organized government of Loudoun County? Is it not the perpetuation of a high order of civilization through the education of our children. This should make the office of superintendent of schools generally regarded as the most responsible and most important in the county. But it is not now so regarded and will

not be so long as the incumbent is kept a near pauper by a small salary.

The State Board of Education recently re-elected a division superintendent for this county. I was the only applicant. This must have resulted from either of the following causes. 1. The pay was too ~~small~~ small to attract anyone to dare assume the responsibilities. Or 2. The work done this term was so generally satisfactory as to discourage all others. Either of these causes argues for salary increase.

What salary should be fixed?

Take three of our county banks which are semi-public in their nature. Select the three chief whole-time executive officers of these institutions. Add to these the county clerk and county treasurer. In this group of five officials we have a salary range from about \$3000.00 to \$6000.00 per year. My own present salary of \$2035 is not only less than any of these, but less than that paid the teller in one or more banks, less than that paid to a garage mechanic in one of our smaller towns, and less than is now paid the superintendent in the nearby counties of Arlington, Fairfax, Fauquier, and Frederick counties. It is just \$35 more than is paid one teacher in Loudoun and the same amount in excess of the salary of one principal. Both of these work normally five days a week during the school year.

The public school system employs more people than any other enterprise in Loudoun. The cost of operation is greater than that of any other enterprise in the county. The combined requirements for education and experience of the superintendent are surely