

A CRITICAL STUDY OF PUBLIC SCHOOL COSTS  
IN KANSAS FROM 1926 TO 1936

A THESIS

SUBMITTED TO THE DEPARTMENT OF  
EDUCATION AND THE GRADUATE COUNCIL OF THE KANSAS STATE  
TEACHERS COLLEGE OF EMPORIA IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF  
THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF  
MASTER OF SCIENCE

BY

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JULY 1936

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## ACKNOWLEDGMENT

To Dr. Edwin J. Brown, Director of the Graduate Division of the Kansas State Teachers College of Emporia, who suggested this study and who has given much of his time in offering helpful suggestions and constructive criticisms, the writer wishes to express his sincere appreciation.

Acknowledgment is also given to Miss Dorothy Stika, for her assistance in collecting much of the data for the study.

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## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

#### The Nature of the Study

No doubt every school administrator in Kansas has had to answer the question of the worth of his school to the community in relation to its cost, in dollars and cents, some time during the past few years when the whole world has been in the throes of the worst depression of modern times.

Why are school taxes so high? How much salary do you get? What do you use all of your large building for? How much salary does the coach get? Why does he get more than the English or home economics teacher? Why don't you "cut out" athletics? Why not "cut out" music, art, or manual training and home economics? These are a few of the questions that disgruntled school patrons have asked of school superintendents and board members.

The purpose of this study is the investigation of school costs in Kansas from 1928 to 1936 to ascertain, in so far as possible, what has actually happened to salaries, total school cost, building costs, capital outlay, number of teachers, and how school costs compare with other governmental costs during the same period of time. Perhaps some light can be thrown on the oft discussed subject of our schools costing the taxpayers of Kansas too much money. Particularly in the years from 1932 to 1934 much complaint of high taxes for school purposes was heard, and many individuals and organizations advocated all kinds of reductions in school expenses,



from a very small reduction to total abandonment of all school functions.

#### PREVIOUS STUDIES

The present study is a continuation of an earlier study made by J. Kenneth Little<sup>1</sup> in which he covered the school costs in Kansas over a period from 1898 to 1928. The author has been aided in his study very much by the material presented by Mr. Little and comparisons will be made by using material from his work.

Althaus<sup>2</sup> in a bulletin published in 1930 lists some material that proved to be beneficial in this study. Also, some other addresses and reports such as the address by Woodring<sup>3</sup> to the Kansas Council of Administration in 1932, and the reply to his address by Mr. Newman,<sup>4</sup> of Manhattan, in which they were discussing the relative merits and short-comings of the "tax limitation amendment" that was to have been adopted as a part of the constitution of the state of Kansas.

Much of the data for this study came from the Biennial Reports of the State Superintendent of Public Instruction of Kansas. While dozens

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<sup>1</sup> J. Kenneth Little, "A Critical Study of Public School Costs in Kansas From 1898 to 1928," Bulletin Published by Kansas State Teachers College, Emporia, March 1932, 58 pp.

<sup>2</sup> Carl B. Althaus, "The Trend of School Taxes in Kansas," A Bulletin, Published by Kansas University Press, 1930.

<sup>3</sup> Harry H. Woodring, "The Proposed Tax Limitation Amendment--Its Purpose," in The Kansas Teacher, Vol. 35, No. 1, April 1932, pp. 9-10.

<sup>4</sup> P. J. Newman, "The Tax Limitation Amendment--Its Objections and Implications," in The Kansas Teacher, Vol. 35, No. 1, April 1932, pp. 11-15.

of reports on school finance have been written covering the entire United States, they will not be specifically mentioned because so little of the material will exactly apply to a study of school costs in Kansas.

Deffenbaugh<sup>5</sup> in one of the National Educational Association Reports presented some useful data for Kansas school finances and aided in comparisons of school costs with various other governmental unit costs.

#### THE SCOPE OF THE STUDY

This investigation includes comparisons of materials found in Little's<sup>6</sup> study with more recent material, obtained largely from the Biennial Reports of the State Superintendent of Public Instruction of Kansas. Also it will include material from various other sources in an attempt to show the status of finances of schools in Kansas since 1928, the date when the other study closed. This study covers one of the critical periods of our free school system. Probably it is the only period when the entire school system had to make a decided retrenchment, and the only time when the results of many years of effort and progress might have been lost.

This study divides schools into classes as follows:

1. One teacher schools.
2. Two or more teacher schools.
3. Schools in second class cities.
4. Schools in first class cities.

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<sup>5</sup> W. S. Deffenbaugh, "Effects of the Depression of Public Elementary and Secondary Schools," Bulletin of the United States Department of the Interior, 1937, No. 2, pp. 10-11.

<sup>6</sup> Little, op. cit.

(Rural high and community high schools are included in 2.)

A comparison will be made of reductions in school costs, cost of all commodities, cost of living, building costs, farm prices, and foods, as well as the average daily attendance in elementary, junior high and senior high schools, along with the division of school expenditures into teachers' salaries, building costs and other costs.

This study has been limited somewhat by the short period covered but sufficient data for school costs later than 1936 were not available.

#### METHOD OF PROCEDURE

The broad lines of inquiry upon which this investigation is based are:

1. Biennial reports of the State Superintendent of Public Instruction for Kansas in regard to teachers' salaries, total school costs, number of teachers, average daily attendance, etc.
2. A follow-up study of Little's<sup>7</sup> work to show the results of the last few years on our schools financially, in length of school term, average daily attendance, and service rendered.
3. Other editorials and articles of Kansas and U. S. schools have been utilized to some extent.

This study is largely a matter of locating data available and condensing it so that it can be found, easily, and interpreted by the use of tables, figures, and accompanying descriptions.

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<sup>7</sup> Ibid.

## TYPES OF DATA COLLECTED

Types of data included in this study are:

1. Current expenses of Kansas schools
2. Cost per pupil in average daily attendance
3. Cost of capital outlay
4. Average number of days schools were in session
5. Number of teaching positions in Kansas
6. Average annual salary of teachers, supervisors, principals and superintendents
7. Percentage analysis of public school revenue receipts
8. Comparison of school census, school enrollment, and average daily attendance
9. Division of school expenditures
10. Increase or decrease in attendance of elementary, junior high and senior high school pupils in Kansas
11. Cost per pupil per month in various type schools
12. Average daily attendance per teacher in various type schools
13. Comparison of school costs with cost of living, foods, farm products, building materials, and all commodities.
14. Distribution of the Kansas tax dollar
15. Per cent the school tax was of the wealth of Kansas

## DEFINITION OF TERMS

The term school census as used in this study is a term used to in-

clude all children in Kansas between the ages of five and twenty-one years.

Enrollment of a school is the total number of students that have attended that school at any time during the school year.

Retrenchment means lopping off or removing certain subjects or subject fields from the curriculum, as music or manual training.

Capital Outlay as used denotes all expenditures which result in an increase in the value of the school property, such as new land and buildings, new furniture and equipment, permanent improvement, or special taxes.

The term index is used to mean a number to point out a comparison among the amounts or values of things taken at different times or places, with one time or place used as 100% or a starting point for purposes of comparison.

Teacher Tenure refers to the legal ability of a teacher to hold her position indefinitely after holding the same position a prescribed number of years, and can be removed only for very good reasons, as law breaking, immorality, etc.

Economy is used to imply getting full value for the money expended, in present and future needs.

#### PRESENTATION OF DATA

This study is presented largely in tables and figures, with an analysis or discussion accompanying each, followed by conclusions and recommendations drawn from the material presented.

## CHAPTER II

### SOME EFFECTS OF THE DEPRESSION ON PUBLIC SCHOOLS IN KANSAS -- WITH SOME FACTORS THAT AFFECT SCHOOL COSTS

The severe economic depression beginning about 1929 and continuing for several years resulted in financial loss or reduced income or both to millions of people in the United States. Savings were wiped out by bank failures, factories were closed or operated at partial capacity while millions became unemployed and knew not where their next meal would come from. Practically all faced, not only financial loss, but the specter of fear, which in many cases was as bad or worse than the actual financial reduction or losses.

Every institution as well as every individual was affected by the depression. Of the public institutions, the schools were among the first to operate with reduced budgets, but reductions did not start until after 1930. However, by 1932 every state and national public institution was operating on a reduced budget and the "cut" had affected all items of the school budgets. The situation became so acute as to cause apprehension on the part of every person and every organization interested in the welfare of the schools of our country.

The greatest reductions came from 1932 to 1934 with a slightly favorable increase in 1935 and a larger increase in 1936 and 1937. What the present "recession" of 1938 will do to the small favorable increases will have to be determined later. In 1936 there was marked improvement over the two previous years. This improvement was shown by increases in

teachers' salaries, amount of money spent for current expenses and capital outlay; school terms were somewhat longer, and many school services such as music, kindergarten, etc., which had been curtailed during the worst of the depression, were restored.

During the years of the depression when aid was most needed by the local taxing units, federal and state aid to schools declined in practically all the states. In Kansas the amount of money spent per pupil in average daily attendance in elementary and high school decreased 35.1%. The largest per cent decrease coming in the high school.

Many nation-wide, highly-organized, well-financed attacks on the schools by greedy interests were made during the depression years.<sup>1</sup> These attacks have been supported by certain newspapers and periodicals. The following statements were taken from an editorial in a periodical of national circulation copied in the Journal of National Education Association and will serve to illustrate some of the attacks on our public schools.<sup>2</sup>

By 1914 the pedagogs began to fall upon the taxpayer in real earnest, and presently they had him down and were turning his pockets inside out. By 1920 they were taking a billion of his money; by 1926 they had advanced to two billions, and now they are somewhere between three and four billions. What do we get for all that money? We get a great array of expensive buildings, a huge horde of expensive quacks, and an immeasurable ocean of buncombe.

The notion that they have done and are doing any ponderable good is mainly a delusion. What they have actually done is a lot of harm. They have taken the care and upbringing of the children out of the hands of the parents, where it belongs, and thrown it upon a gang of irresponsible and unintelligent quacks.

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<sup>1</sup> Editorial, "The School and the Present Crisis." The Journal of the N. E. A., Vol. 22, March 1933, pp. 72-72.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., p. 71.

In all ages pedagogues have been the bitterest enemies of all genuinely intellectual enterprise, and in no age have they warred upon it more violently or to sadder effect than in our own.

The Journal of the National Education Association<sup>3</sup> makes the following summary of such propaganda:

In the light of the devotion, the sacrifice, and the sustained service of teachers, such statements are more than silly. They border on the criminal. Teachers have worked faithfully, with small salaries, given up summers and savings to improve their own education, and look at the thanks they receive. The teacher can stand on his own record. Unwarranted criticisms cannot stand the light of day. If teachers will do their part to interpret the services of the schools an informed people can be counted upon to stand by the children.

To illustrate, another method by which patrons tried to control the schools and especially the school costs<sup>4</sup> is shown by the following series of requests by a certain taxpayers' association.

To the honorable school board of the City of \_\_\_\_\_.

We have found school taxes burdensome to the extreme and request that you lower said school taxes at least 20% for the ensuing year.

That you make a typewritten copy each month of all receipts and expenditures for each separate department of your school. Same to be prepared by instructors in their respective departments.

That a typewritten report of bids for the purchase of supplies, equipment, repairs, etc., be made, giving the names of all parties bidding and the amount of each bid.

That you appoint a committee to make an inventory of all supplies, and value of buildings and equipment for the purpose of placing, if advisable, a lower insurance on same.

That these reports be presented to the executive committee of the taxpayers association not later than five days after each monthly meeting of the local school board. That a committee of three school board members and two members of the taxpayers association be appointed, together with the superintendent of schools, to confer and pass upon the school budget, before it is submitted

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<sup>3</sup> Ibid., p. 72.

<sup>4</sup> Editorial, "An Example of a Mistaken Economy Program," Elementary School Journal, Vol. 33, 1933, pp. 731-2.



for the regular approval of the school board.

That a typewritten statement of all bills to be paid be sent to the chairman of the executive board of the taxpayers association five days before date that bills are to be paid and no bills except those listed in the report can be paid at such meeting. We would like to have your signed statement that these requests will be complied with.

We would recommend the following:

1. Dismissal of paid watchmen at school street crossings. . . .
2. That the football coach be eliminated and all athletics be under the director of physical education at a salary no higher than that of any other teacher in the system.
3. That salaried doctors, dentists and nurses be eliminated.
4. That salaries of janitors, engineers, and assistants be reduced.
5. That, all other things being equal, resident teachers of this city be employed.
6. That a stenographer, who may be a student of the commercial department, be detailed to make notes of the proceedings of each school board meeting for the benefit of the taxpayers organization of this city.

This taxpayers' association desired to take away the freedom of the board of education and superintendent of schools in administering the finances of the schools in the manner in which they felt would do the greatest good to the largest number of students.

While such attempts by individuals and organizations to control and reduce school finances were many and varied, the average American still had confidence in the worth of the school to the youth of the land and was willing to sacrifice personal gain in some measure that the schools might not suffer too greatly from curtailments. The attitude of many will be aptly illustrated by the following statement: Obstacles may retard, poverty embarrass, a thousand foes may assail on every side, but none of these shall rob the child of his chance for an education.

In the interests of the general idea of more education, the depression caused labor unions, relief agencies, and public-spirited citizens dealing

with unemployment problems, to urge parents to keep their children in school longer. Again, inability of the young person to find employment has tended to keep many in school, and others who, in better times, would be in private schools were forced to attend public schools. This, in a way, threw a heavier than usual burden on the public school. However, with this increase in enrollment, teachers' salaries were lowered and the total number of teachers reduced about 10%. Then, too, many adults thrown out of work by machine developments in industry resumed school, usually some night school.

Much of the high cost of schooling can be traced to the large number of one-teacher schools that still abound in Kansas. Many districts maintain their local one-teacher schools in spite of the fact that it would be possible to transport the few pupils and pay tuition to some other school at a lesser cost to the district. Again, with fewer teachers necessary the better trained ones could be retained and paid a higher average salary. The depression has brought about a decrease of about 20% in total expenditures for schools in the U. S. and almost 35% in Kansas. Some of this decrease has been effected by better buying methods on the part of school officials. Much waste and inefficiency has been eliminated so that the depression has brought some good to our schools as well as some harm. It has helped bring about an increase in the requirements for teacher certification, and has opened our eyes to many mistakes that we were not bothering ourselves about during the era of good times and easy money.

More specific data on the effects of the depression on Kansas schools will be given in following chapters of this study. This is imperative as

our school finances have been so closely related to and affected by the depression that almost any account or statistical summary must show some of the effects of the economic struggle the nation has undergone.

TABLE I

SOME EFFECTS OF THE DEPRESSION ON OUR PUBLIC ELEMENTARY  
AND SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN KANSAS<sup>5</sup>

Item of Study	1929-30	1933-34	Decrease in Amount	Decrease in %
Current expense of schools	\$33,857,923	\$22,125,448	\$11,732,475	34.7
Cost Per Pupil in A. D. A.	\$92.81	\$60.19	\$32.62	35.1
Decrease in Capital out- lay for High Schools	\$4,924,420	\$2,482,056	\$2,442,364	49.6
Average Number of days Schools Were in Session	169.8	165.7	4.1	2.4
Average Annual Salary of all Teachers	\$1159	\$858	\$301	26.0

Read table thus: In 1929-30 the current expenses of all public elementary and secondary schools in Kansas were \$33,857,923, in 1933-34 the current expenditures were \$22,125,448. The decrease in dollars from 1929-30 to 1933-34 in current expenditures was \$11,732,475, and the per cent of decrease was 34.7%. Read in like manner for other items.

This table presents some data as to the reductions in school expenditures made over a four-year period that covers the worst of the depression years. The expenses for schools for all purposes were cut more than one-

<sup>5</sup> Deffenbaugh, W. S., "Effects of the Depression on Public Elementary and Secondary Schools," Research Bulletin of the National Education Association, No. 2, 1937, pp. 10-11.

third, the salary of teachers more than one-fourth, and capital outlay for high schools practically one-half, while the average school term was four days less.

TABLE II

PERCENTAGE ANALYSIS OF KANSAS PUBLIC SCHOOL  
REVENUE RECEIPTS \*\*\*\*\* BY SOURCES<sup>6</sup>

Year	State	County	Local Dist.	Federal
1929-30	1.4	----	98.4	.2
1933-34	2.0	11.8	85.7	.5

Read table thus: In 1929-30 the Kansas public schools received but 1.4% of their financial income from state sources; in the same year, no aid was received from the county; 98.4% was derived from local district tax, and only .2% came from Federal Government sources. In 1933-34 the state furnished 2.0%, etc.

This table shows that the schools of Kansas are supported almost entirely by the local district and of course from property tax, as that is the only source of income that is available in appreciable amounts to any local district. There is an urgent need for more state aid and since 1934 Kansas has started on a program of helping poor rural and elementary schools with their burden. That phase will be discussed more fully in a later chapter. There has been considerable talk of large-scale federal help for schools but nothing definite has been accomplished as yet and many

<sup>6</sup> Deffenbaugh, op. cit., p. 16.

people, some educators among them, are afraid of too much federal regulation that might come with federal financial assistance. There is rather general agreement that some source of revenue to partially replace the property tax must be found, but there is little agreement as to where that aid shall come from.

#### SUMMARY

1. Every institution and every individual was affected by the depression that started in 1929. Financial losses and reduced incomes were on every hand, and the specter of fear was worse in some cases than the actual financial losses.
2. Schools were among the first public institutions to be forced to operate on a reduced budget.
3. The greatest reduction in school costs came in the period from 1932-34. The year 1936 showed a marked improvement in school finances over the two previous years.
4. The schools received many attacks, largely because of their cost, during the depression but they seemingly have been fairly successful in weathering the storms.
5. More children of high-school age remained in school, often due to the fact that work, for hire, was not available.
6. Teachers salaries were lowered about 25% on the average, the total number of teachers was reduced 10%, while school population increased, especially in the high schools.
7. Adult classes, usually night classes, were started in practically all cities.

8. Standards for teacher certification were raised during this depression period.

9. The average school is more efficiently run now than they were in 1929--one good result of the depression.

10. The decrease in total expenses for public schools was 34.7%, the largest decrease coming in the item of capital outlay.

11. Nearly all school funds come from local district taxes. We need more support for our schools from indirect taxes; more state aid for equalization purposes, and indirect taxes to cut down the amount raised by the local district property taxes.

### CHAPTER III

#### HAVE "ACTUAL" SCHOOL COSTS, IN KANSAS, INCREASED OR DECREASED?

The cost of public schools increased from almost four million dollars in 1898 to over \$39,000,000 in 1928 and continued to increase<sup>1</sup> until 1930 when the amount spent for public schools in Kansas was well over forty-two millions. The increase in dollars spent for schools in 1928 over 1898 is more than 900 per cent, while during the same period the average attendance increased about 39 per cent. This does not present a true picture of the situation, however, because 39 cents in 1898 would buy as much goods as a dollar would purchase in 1928, so that the decreased purchasing power of the dollar would necessitate spending two and one-half times as much money in 1928 to get the same material that could have been purchased at the cheaper rate in 1898.

The figures showing the school census, the school enrollment, and the average daily attendance are given in Table III. During this period from 1927 to 1936, the census figures dropped almost ten thousand, the enrollment dropped almost nineteen thousand, but the average daily attendance increased more than eight thousand. This shows that the holding power of the schools was better in 1936 than in 1927.

Due to the depression keeping some students from attending school, the per cent of enrollment, of the school census, dropped from 77.69 in 1927 to 75.57 in 1936. In the year 1927, the average daily attendance was

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<sup>1</sup> Little, op. cit., p. 9.

82.74% of the enrollment, in 1936 the average daily attendance was 88.6% of the enrollment, showing an increased holding power in Kansas schools.

TABLE III  
YEARLY CENSUS, ENROLLMENT, AND AVERAGE DAILY ATTENDANCE<sup>2</sup>

Year	Census	Enrollment	% of census enrolled	A.D.A.	% of enrollment in attendance
1927	543,399	422,187	77.69	349,298.2	82.74
1928	544,524	425,424	78.13	357,029.1	88.0
1929	546,368	428,214	78.39	357,095.7	83.93
1930	55,080	432,749	77.96	366,357.7	84.66
1931	55,209	432,653	77.92	370,713.9	85.68
1932	545,839	424,314	77.75	366,648.4	86.40
1933	554,536	427,324	77.05	369,467.5	86.46
1934	548,342	413,662*	75.43	362,289.8*	87.58
1935	540,431	407,777*	75.45	358,450.9*	87.90
1936	533,960	403,523*	75.57	357,877.3*	88.60

\*Kindergarten included.

Read table thus: In 1927 the school census in Kansas was 543,399; number of pupils enrolled in schools, 422,187; the enrollment was 77.69% of the census; the average daily attendance was 349,298.2; the average daily attendance was 82.74% of the enrollment. Read in like manner for 1928 and subsequent years.

The enrollment shows a small gradual increase until the depression started to affect it in 1930. From then until 1933 the enrollment per

<sup>2</sup> Twenty-Seventh to Thirtieth Biennial Reports of the State Superintendent of Public Instruction of Kansas, Topeka: State Printing Plant, 1928 to 1936.



cent shows a small decrease, and from that year another gradual rise started and continued to 1936. With the exception of the year 1928, the per cent of average daily attendance shows an increase each succeeding year, indicating less absence from all causes, such as sickness, work, etc.

The average daily attendance has neither increased nor decreased in any appreciable amount, and tends to be a very small factor in figuring costs of schools during the depression. Enrollment has decreased but that decrease is found largely in the lower grades, for the senior high schools and junior high schools have had increased enrollments in the past seven or eight years.

Table IV throws some light on the question of the costs of our schools by comparing the assessed valuation of property in Kansas with the amount collected for school taxes in the same years and calculating the per cent the school tax is of the assessed wealth.

Schools usually lag two or three years behind the rise and fall of commodity prices and that shows up clearly in Table IV. A moderate cut in school expenditures was made in 1932 and a larger cut in 1933 and again in 1934, while the depression really began to be felt in many industries by 1930, the schools had more money to spend for various purposes that year than any other year in the history of Kansas schools. In 1935 and 1936 the school costs began a slow rise, but in spite of the fact that the assessed valuation has decreased every year since 1929, the school costs are using a smaller per cent of the assessed valuation annually than they were in the years 1928 to 1933. The assessed valuation has decreased over a billion

TABLE IV

COMPARISON OF ASSESSED VALUATION OF KANSAS  
PROPERTY AND SCHOOL COSTS<sup>5</sup>

Year	Assessed valuation	School costs	% School costs are of valuation
1928	3,728,707,729	39,409,848.86	1.06
1929	3,813,393,791	40,256,832.98	1.06
1930	3,681,574,879	42,378,594.86	1.15
1931	3,656,912,773	41,163,702.12	1.12
1932	3,286,808,356	36,454,737.76	1.11
1933	2,742,260,819	31,762,584.66	1.15
1934	2,716,102,723	24,315,234.25	.89
1935	2,713,328,650	24,362,058.12	.90
1936	2,710,976,546	26,423,657.43	.97

Read table thus: In 1928 the assessed valuation of all property in Kansas was \$3,728,707,729; the amount spent for schools the same year was \$39,409,848.86; the school costs were 1.06% of the assessed valuation. In 1929 the assessed valuation was \$3,813,393,791, etc.

dollars and was in 1936 about 73% as large as it was in 1928. School costs over the same period of years have decreased about thirteen million dollars, which indicates they now are about 67% as large as they were in 1928. In 1936 less than one cent out of every dollars worth of assessed property wealth in Kansas was spent for the support of our public schools.

<sup>5</sup> Twenty-Seventh to Thirtieth Biennial Reports of the State Superintendent of Public Instruction of Kansas, Topeka: State Printing Plant, 1928 to 1936.

Some of the revisions that made this reduction of school costs possible are:

1. Refinancing of bonds at lower rate of interest
2. Reduction of items for physical equipment and maintenance
3. Increasing teacher load and size of classes
4. Alternating small classes of advanced subjects
5. Eliminating the poor teacher
6. Eliminating from schools those who cannot or will not profit from the school's offering
7. Lowering teachers' salaries

Tables V and VI show the amount of taxes collected in Kansas for all purposes and the per cent allotted to each department of government. Reductions were taken in all departments in almost the same amounts. Comparing percentages in 1928 with percentages in 1935, Table V shows that cities, counties, and the State soldiers bonus were each getting a little larger share of the tax money in 1935 than they were in 1928, while schools, the general state fund, townships, and the "specials" and improvements fund were each getting a little smaller portion of the state tax money in 1935 than they were in 1928. The counties received the greatest increase in percentage of the total tax money, an increase of 4.7%, while townships received the greatest decrease, a decrease of 3% of the state tax money. Schools received a decrease of 1.4% of the tax collected for all purposes, during this same period.

Taxes for all purposes dropped more than thirty million dollars from

TABLE V

YOUR TAX DOLLAR--WHERE IT GOES<sup>4</sup>

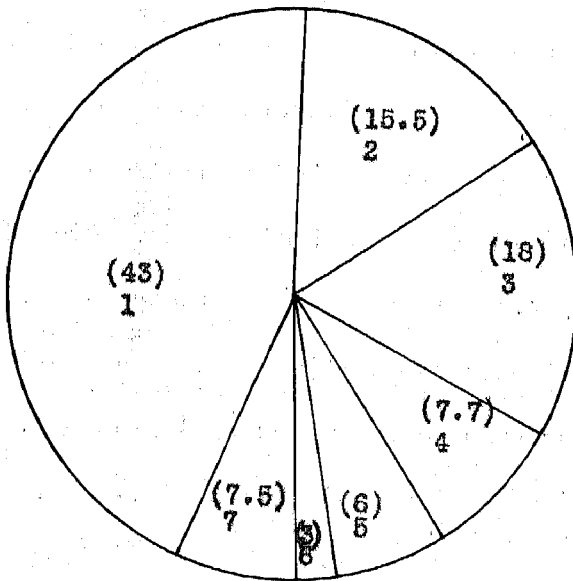
Year	Specials and Improvements	Schools	Cities	Townships	County	Soldiers Bonus	State General Fund
1928	7.5%	43.0%	15.5%	7.7%	18.0%	2.3%	6.0%
1929	7.0%	42.6%	15.5%	7.4%	19.6%	2.2%	5.7%
1930	6.9%	43.5%	15.7%	7.0%	19.1%	2.2%	5.6%
1931	7.1%	43.8%	15.8%	6.5%	18.6%	2.3%	5.9%
1932	7.7%	43.3%	17.0%	5.3%	17.9%	2.8%	6.0%
1933	7.3%	39.7%	17.9%	4.1%	20.2%	3.1%	7.7%
1934	6.2%	42.2%	17.3%	4.0%	22.1%	2.9%	5.3%
1935	5.4%	41.6%	16.9%	4.7%	22.7%	2.9%	5.8%

Read table thus: In 1928 of all taxes collected for use within the state, 7.5% was used for special purposes and improvements; 43% was used for the public schools; 15.5% was used by the city governments; 7.7% was used by the townships; 18% was used by the counties; 2.3% was used for the state soldiers' bonus payments; and 6% was used for the state general fund. Read in like manner for 1929 and for subsequent years.

<sup>4</sup> Fifteenth Biennial Report of Kansas State Tax Commission, 1936, p. 164-5.

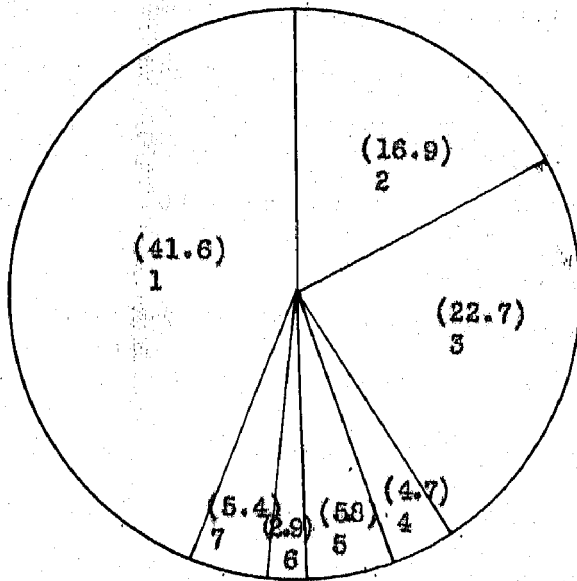
1928

22



1. School Tax - 43%
2. City Tax - 15.5%
3. County Tax - 18%
4. Township Tax - 7.7%
5. State General Fund Tax - 6%
6. Tax for soldiers Compensation - 2.3%
7. Specials and Improvements - 7.5%

1935



1. School Tax - 41.6%
2. City Tax - 16.9%
3. County Tax - 22.7%
4. Township Tax - 4.7%
5. State General Fund Tax - 5.8%
6. Tax for soldiers Compensation - 2.9%
7. Specials and Improvements - 5.4%

FIGURE 1

YOUR TAX DOLLAR--WHERE IT GOES<sup>5</sup>

<sup>5</sup> Tax Commission Report, op. cit., p. 154.

TABLE VI  
COMPARISON OF ALL TAXES AND SCHOOL TAXES  
FROM 1928 TO 1935<sup>6</sup>

Year	All taxes	School taxes	% school taxes are of all taxes
1928	\$92,378,043.43	\$39,671,645.65	43
1929	95,661,710.29	40,764,492.12	42.6
1930	93,880,159.22	40,804,902.54	43.5
1931	85,903,374.33	37,649,852.18	43.8
1932	71,730,356.03	31,051,638.47	43.3
1933	64,384,640.14	25,540,731.34	39.7
1934	65,138,466.21	27,494,294.11	42.2
1935	65,181,607.85	27,108,225.72	41.6

Read table thus: In 1928 all taxes levied and collected for all purposes in the state of Kansas amounted to \$92,378,043.43; the amount of taxes levied for school purposes was \$39,671,645.65; school taxes were 43% of all taxes levied. Read in like manner for 1929 and subsequent years.

the highest point in 1929 to the lowest point in 1934. In 1935 the amount of taxes collected for all purposes was 68.2% as much as was collected in 1929. Over the same period school taxes were 66.4% as large in 1935 as in 1929, thus showing that school taxes have decreased slightly more than taxes as a whole. At the highest point in 1930, schools were receiving 43.5% of all taxes; in 1935 schools were receiving 41.6% of all taxes.

In 1928 school taxes were 1.06% of the assessed wealth; this

<sup>6</sup> Tax Commission Report, op. cit., p. 154 and 164-5.

jumped to 1.15% in 1930, when school taxes were the highest, dropped a little the next two years and again hit 1.15% in 1933, when there was a drop in assessed valuation of more than \$500,000,000 from 1932 assessments. In 1934, school costs dropped more than \$7,000,000 while assessed valuations remained about stationary. As a result the part school costs were of assessed wealth dropped to .89%. In 1936, the percentage had raised to .97, but is still considerably smaller than the 1.06% at the start of the depression.

Table VII presents a picture of the costs of some other materials, as well as school costs, and taxes for other governmental purposes that have been used as the basis for Tables V and VI. Using 1926 as the base and counting the costs in that year as 100% one may see that school costs increased rapidly for the three years 1928 to 1930 inclusive, and not until 1933 did school costs get below the 1926 level, while all other costs: farm products, foods, building materials, all commodities, and cost of living, were all below the 1926 level as early as 1930. The lag of schools behind the rise and fall of commodity prices is clearly shown again by the index of prices from 1934 to 1936. In this case the schools are lower in amount of costs when based on the 1926 level than any of the other products. The lowest points reached by the different materials was: 48.2% for farm products in 1932; 60.5% for foods in 1933; 71.4% for building materials in 1932; 84.8% for all commodities in 1932; 73% for cost of living in 1933; and 68.8% for school costs in 1934. In 1935 school costs had raised only .3% over 1934 or stood at 69.1% of the 1926 level, while all the other

materials had gained back enough of the loss to range from 78% to 85.3% of their 1926 level, during the year of 1935.

TABLE VII  
INDEX NUMBERS OF WHOLESALE PRICES  
1926 = 100<sup>7</sup>

Year	Farm products	Foods	Building material	All commodities	School costs	Cost of living
1926	100	100	100	100	100	100
1928	105.9	101	94.1	96.7	111.6	97
1929	104.9	99.9	95.4	95.3	114.2	97
1930	88.5	90.5	89.9	86.4	120.1	94
1931	64.8	74.6	79.2	73	116.7	86
1932	48.2	61	71.4	64.8	103.4	77
1933	51.4	60.5	77	65.9	90.1	73
1934	65.5	70.5	86.2	74.9	68.8	76
1935	78.8	83.7	85.3	80	69.1	78
1936	80.9	82.1	86.7	80.8	74.8	79

Read table thus: With 1926 prices equaling 100 in 1928 farm products were worth 105.9; foods, 101; building material, 94.1; all commodities, 96.7; school costs, 111.6; and the cost of living, 97. Read in like manner for 1929 and ensuing years.

#### SUMMARY

1. Using 1926 costs as a basis for comparison, in the early years of the depression, 1929 to 1933, school costs were higher than other costs;

<sup>7</sup> A Table, Monthly Labor Review, 46:1029, April 1938.



but from 1934 to 1936, just the reverse was true and school costs were lower than costs of other materials.

2. The cost of public schools decreased more than \$18,000,000 from the high point reached in 1930. This decrease amounted to about 43%.

3. The school census decreased 1.7%, the school enrollment decreased 4.4%, while the average daily attendance increased 2.5% from 1928 to 1936.

4. Schools lag two or three years behind foods, commodities, cost of living, etc., in their rise or decline in prices. This fact is illustrated in Table VII.

5. Reductions in school costs were made possible by: refinancing of bonds at lower interest rates, the erection of fewer buildings and the purchasing of less equipment, larger and more classes for the individual teacher, alternating advanced classes, and reducing teachers' salaries.

6. A smaller per cent of the tax dollar collected in 1935 was spent on school costs than was the case in 1928.

## CHAPTER IV

### AN ANALYSIS OF SCHOOL COSTS IN KANSAS AND THE PART PLAYED BY TEACHERS' SALARIES

An analysis of the expenditures for the maintenance of the public schools of the state shows that in 1928 considerable more than one half of the entire amount went to pay the salaries of teachers. During the early years of the depression, the percentage for teachers' salaries decreased somewhat in relation to the entire amount spent, but in 1933 and from that time until 1936 the percentage spent for teachers' salaries has been slightly larger than in 1928. There is evidence that teachers' salaries were cut more quickly than were other expenses and are tending to move back sooner than are the other types of school expenses. By far the largest percentage of decrease in school costs came in the amount spent for buildings. The sum spent for building purposes in 1927 was \$3,522,566.25 and in 1931 was \$4,109,466.59; in 1932 this item had dropped below the million mark and by 1934 was only 4.1% as much as was spent in 1931. However, by 1936, the item for buildings was near the two million mark or more than 50% of what had been spent for buildings before the depression. The school building program was given a new "lease on life" by aid from the Federal Government, which would supply free 45% of the building costs.

Miscellaneous expenditures for school purposes used 31.3% of the school taxes collected in 1928; this percentage increased until in 1932, 41.1% of all money collected for schools was being used for purposes other

than teachers' salaries and buildings. However, since 1932 the amount spent for miscellaneous items has decreased until in 1936, 28.2% of all school money went for such purposes.

TABLE VIII  
ANNUAL EXPENDITURES FOR PUBLIC SCHOOLS OF KANSAS<sup>1</sup>

Year	All school purposes	Teachers' salaries	Buildings
1927	\$40,979,360.73	\$22,936,000.61	\$3,522,566.25
1928	39,409,848.86	23,265,511.35	2,813,431.18
1929	40,256,832.98	22,916,335.25	3,961,520.28
1930	42,378,594.86	23,714,621.22	3,065,462.58
1931	41,163,702.12	22,846,961.70	4,109,466.59
1932	36,454,737.76	20,731,125.80	733,331.85
1933	31,862,584.66	20,409,788.49	322,463.88
1934	24,315,234.25	16,199,266.99	170,342.00
1935	24,362,058.12	16,384,579.68	1,274,997.00
1936	26,423,657.43	17,002,116.07	1,983,901.00

Read table thus: In 1927, \$40,979,360.73 was spent for all school purposes; \$22,936,000.61 was spent for teachers' salaries; and \$3,522,566.25 was spent for building purposes. In like manner read for other years.

Table IX shows that the percentage allotted to each item of the budget varied somewhat over the period of years studied. Teachers' salaries were first to take a drop, because it was easier to see where cuts could be

<sup>1</sup> Twenty-Seventh to Thirtieth Biennial Reports of the State Superintendent of Public Instruction of Kansas, Topeka: State Printing Plant, 1928 to 1936.

TABLE IX  
DIVISION OF SCHOOL EXPENDITURES<sup>2</sup>

Year	% spent for salaries	% spent for buildings	% spent for other purposes
1928	61.6	7.1	31.3
1929	56.8	9.8	33.4
1930	55.9	7.0	37.1
1931	55.5	9.9	34.6
1932	56.9	2.0	41.1
1933	64.3	1.0	34.7
1934	66.6	.7	32.7
1935	67.3	5.2	27.5
1936	64.3	7.5	28.2

Read table thus: In 1928, 61.6% of the money collected for school purposes was spent for teachers' salaries; 7.1% was spent for building purposes; and 31.3% was spent for other purposes. Read in the same manner for other years.

made there than in some other departments; then as the depression continued, the building of new buildings and the repair of old ones almost entirely stopped for the years 1932-33 and -34. In 1935 and 1936 the per cent spent for miscellaneous items was the smallest of any time during the period studied. More money was spent for school purposes in 1935 and 1936 than in the two previous years, but most of the increase went for teachers' salaries and building costs.

Public property in Kansas is not taxed, therefore no attempt was made to lower the valuation of school property when the valuation of private

<sup>2</sup> Biennial Reports, op. cit.

property was lowered during the depression, in fact it would seem that with approximately twenty millions of dollars being the total amount that schools spent from their building funds from 1928 to 1936, and the difference in the estimated valuation in 1928 and 1936 (Table X, p. 31) amounting to twenty four millions of dollars, that the valuation on school property was raised rather than lowered during this period of time. The above figures allow nothing for depreciation over this eight-year period, when less than the average amount of building was being done. The index of school property continually increased while the index of school costs decreased until 1934, when it was 62% of school costs in 1928. In the year 1936 the index of school costs moved upward to 67% of the 1928 total school costs.

Althaus<sup>5</sup> gives the following data regarding school costs and all tax costs in Kansas:

In 1883 Kansas paid a total of \$7,000,000 taxes, which amounted to \$6.25 per capita; in 1928 Kansas people paid \$86,000,000 in taxes which amounted to \$46.76 per capita. The gain in all taxes from 1916 to 1928 was 141% while the gain in school taxes was 202%, and over the same period the gain in school enrollment was only 15%. Part of this increase in school costs was due to the decreased purchasing power of the dollar, part due to actual increase in teachers' wages, and a large share due to longer school terms, better school buildings, and an enriched curriculum.

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<sup>5</sup> Carl B. Althaus, The Trend of School Taxes in Kansas, Bulletin, Kansas University Press, 1930, pp. 4-6.

TABLE X

SHOWING ESTIMATED VALUATION AND INDEX NUMBERS OF SCHOOL PROPERTY IN KANSAS, AND INDEX NUMBERS FOR TOTAL SCHOOL COSTS BY TWO-YEAR PERIODS<sup>4</sup>

Year	Estimated valuation	Index of school property	Index of school costs
1928	\$ 86,355,515.00	100	100
1930	99,279,463.12	115	107
1932	105,737,787.00	122	90
1934	106,523,465.00	123	62
1936	110,229,802.00	128	67

Read table thus: In 1928 the estimated valuation of all school property in Kansas was \$86,355,515; the index of school property is 100 (1928 used as the basis) and likewise the index of school costs for 1928 is 100. In like manner read for other years.

The National Education Association<sup>5</sup> gives the following figures as the cost for educating the average child in 1932:

All services rendered in educating one child for one day--

1. Teaching services . . . . .	.33
2. Care of the building . . . . .	.07
3. New buildings . . . . .	.05
4. Interest and fixed charges . . . . .	.05
5. Special services . . . . .	.03
6. Text books and supplies . . . . .	.02
7. Administration . . . . .	.02
Total . . . . .	<u>.57</u>

This cost per child was given for the entire United States and is a

<sup>4</sup> Compiled from material given in Biennial Reports, op. cit.

<sup>5</sup> Booklet of the N. E. A., Schools and Taxes, 1932, pp. 4-5.

little higher than the average cost for Kansas schools. The largest per cent of this difference between what Kansas spends and the nation as a whole spends for school costs per pupil per day is in teachers' salaries. For the United States the average teacher's wage in 1935 was \$1226 and for Kansas only \$858 (See Table XI, p. 33). Kansas has supported schools almost entirely by local property taxes which fact accounts in some measure for the lower salary wage paid in Kansas. However, Kansas has been making some attempts during the past few years to substitute indirect taxes for the direct property tax and now has personal income tax, corporation income tax, tax on sales of tobacco products, inheritance tax, and a general sales tax. Part of the general sales tax was earmarked for the support of rural and graded schools that were weak financially, but the other indirect taxes are used to reduce the mill levy that the state makes for its general fund.

Until the period of depression, school progress was usually a mention of school growth in enrollment, longer school term, new buildings erected, and new courses offered but that will hardly explain the rapid increase in costs since 1900. Although the schools at present have an increased enrollment, greater average daily attendance, a longer school term, better trained teachers, a richer course of study, and a dollar with less value than in 1900, "actual" school costs are much higher than they were twenty or thirty years ago.

The Research Division of the N. E. A.<sup>6</sup> lists the following informa-

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<sup>6</sup> Research Bulletin of the N. E. A., State School Costs and Other Government Costs, Vol. 19, p. 162, May 1930.

in regard to taxes in Kansas in 1929:

Total cost of elementary, secondary and higher education, \$49,331,743; federal government taxes from Kansas, \$26,765,720; state government costs, \$19,776,417; and local government costs, \$79,858,000. Education cost about 27% of all taxes collected in Kansas for federal, state, and local purposes. Another bulletin of the Research Division lists school costs and some other expenditures in the United States for the year 1930 as follows:<sup>7</sup> Public school costs, \$2,615,000,000; life insurance, \$3,524,000,000; building construction, \$5,806,000,000; and automobile costs, \$11,817,000,000. The 1914 school costs were \$555,000,000, only about one fifth of the 1930 costs. Reasons given for part of the increase: \$860,000,000 due to the decreased purchasing power of the dollar; \$482,000,000 due to increased average daily attendance; and \$423,000,000 due to increased services.

TABLE XI

RECENT TRENDS IN TEACHERS AVERAGE SALARIES AND  
THEIR PURCHASING POWER -- 1928 - 29 = 100<sup>8</sup>

Average Salaries Received		Estimated Purchasing Power of the Average Salary		
All Teachers of the United States				
1	2	3	4	5
1928-29	\$1392	100	\$1392	100
1929-30	1420	102	1440	103.4
1930-31	1440	103.4	1570	112.8
1931-32	1417	101.8	1697	121.9
1932-33	1316	94.5	1702	122.3
1933-34	1222	87.8	1516	108.9
1934-35	1226	88.1	1460	104.9

Read table thus: In 1928-29, the estimated average salary of all teachers in the U.S. was \$1392; in 1929-30, it was \$1420 or 102% of the 1928-29 figure; in 1930-31, it was \$1440 or 103.4% of the 1928-29 salary, etc. The estimated purchasing power (in 1928-29 dollars) of the average salary of this group was \$1392 in 1928-29; \$1440 in 1929-30; or 103.4% of the 1928-29 figure; \$1570 in 1930-31, or 112.8% of the 1928-29 figure. Read in like manner for other years.

<sup>7</sup> Research Bulletin of the N. E. A., Facts on School Costs, Vol. 22,  
p. 18, Dec. 1932.

<sup>8</sup> Research Bulletin of the N. E. A., A Table, 13:239, August 1935.



These figures for the United States will not exactly apply to Kansas, for this shows a drop in teachers' salaries of \$170 annually, or only 12%, while in Kansas the drop was from an average of \$1159 in 1928-29 to \$858 in 1934-35, or a drop of 26%--more than twice as large a reduction in per cent for Kansas, and the Kansas wages never were as high as the national average was at its lowest point. In the United States as a whole the buying power of teachers during the depression was greater than before but such was not the case in Kansas.

In 1930 the average cost for elementary and high school students in the United States was 62.8¢ per day, while in 1933 the cost had dropped to 48.7¢ per day, a reduction of 14.1¢ or 22% in three years. The 1933 per pupil cost was lower than the per pupil cost in 1922 even though a larger per cent of the students were in high school where the average cost per pupil is higher. In 1932 the estimated cost of all education to each one of the 72,945,000 voters in the United States was \$36.42.<sup>9</sup>

Figure 2 pictures graphically the attendance and expenditures for school purposes from 1898 to 1936. (The material from 1898 to 1928 has been taken from Little.)<sup>10</sup> In 1930, Kansas school expenditures reached their highest peak, more than forty-two millions of dollars was spent and this amount showed an increase of 1130% over the expenditures for school purposes in 1898. However, school expenses by 1934 had dropped to about \$24,000,000,

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<sup>9</sup> Editorial, "Decrease in the Per Capita Costs of Education," School and Society, Vol. 37, pp. 180-1, Feb. 11, 1933.

<sup>10</sup> Little, op. cit., p. 13.

LEGEND: Expenditures —————  
 Attendance - - - - -

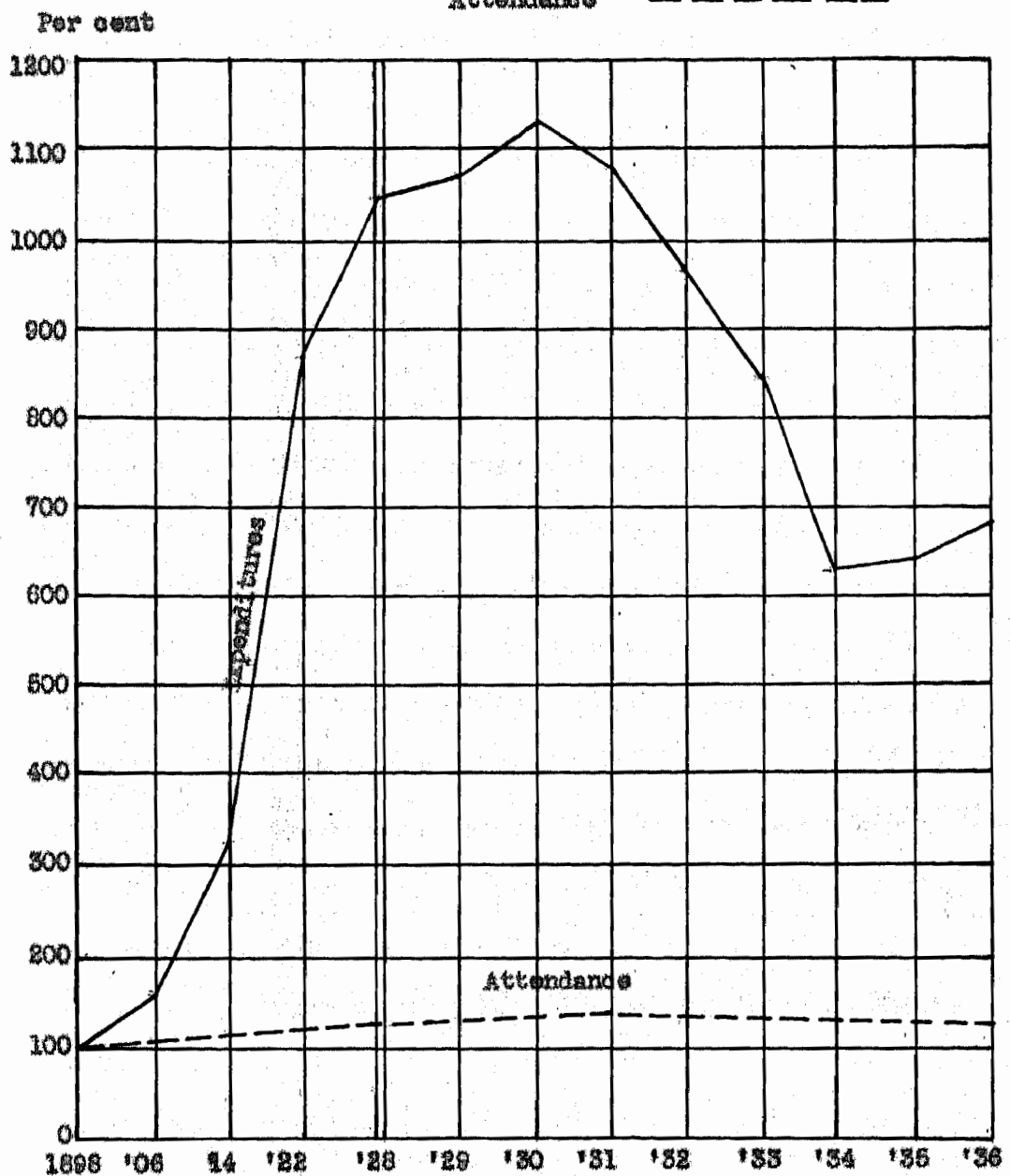


FIGURE 2

AVERAGE DAILY ATTENDANCE AND EXPENDITURES, 1898 TO 1936 USING 1898 FIGURES AS 100%<sup>11</sup>

Read figure thus: With the 1898 figures represented by 100%, expenditures in 1906 were 166%; in 1914, 321%; in 1922, 880%; etc. Read attendance figures in like manner.

<sup>11</sup> The 1898 to 1928 figures taken from Little, *op. cit.*, p. 13. The 1928 to 1936 figures from Biennial Reports of the State Superintendent of Public Instruction of Kansas. Twenty-seventeen to thirty-six Biennial Reports, 1928 to 1936.

and 650% of the 1898 figure. A slight increase took place during the two years following 1934.

While the attendance figures never were larger than 144% of the 1898 figure--reaching their maximum in 1931, and then declined slightly so that the 1936 attendance was 139% of that for 1898. By 1933 school expenditures were lower than in 1922 and dropped another 200% (based on 1898 expenditures) the next year. School expenditures were curtailed in about the same proportion as other state and local government expenditures, when the average is considered. However, many individual cases would show a different situation. The reductions that were made might well be listed under three headings: retrenchments, savings, and economies. Retrenchments are ruthless and reactionary, merely cuts in expenses without regard to actual needs of the case. Savings are more or less planned, but they may be only frugality and not economy in the end. Economy is the practice of getting one's moneys worth in terms of present and future needs and is the plan that should be followed by all school boards and administrators.

Frazier <sup>12</sup>presents the following in regard to the financial burden of education:

Our tax system is almost as bad as it could be. Why don't we change it? Is it easier to neglect our children? If those who are working to save taxes by curtailing education would give the same amount of energy to the remaking of our worn out tax systems we might get somewhere. When a state spends more each year on tobacco than on education, I maintain that education is not a burden that can't be borne; and a nation that spends as much for

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<sup>12</sup>George W. Frazier, "Education in a Time of Crisis," Journal of the National Education Association, Vol. 21, p. 174, June 1932.

wars, past and future, as on education, is not burdened with education. If the money that we spend each year on wars were used for education, every boy and girl could have had a good school and your local tax for schools entirely discontinued.

#### SUMMARY

1. During the early years of the depression, the per cent of total school costs used for teachers' salaries decreased; but from 1934 to 1936, the per cent of school expenditures allotted for teachers' salaries was larger than in 1928.

2. The sum spent for buildings decreased, until in 1934 approximately one-twenty-fifth as much was being expended on buildings as had been used for that purpose in 1930.

3. Government aid--allowing, as an outright gift, an amount of money covering 45% of the cost of building projects enabled many districts to build new buildings or repair and remodel old ones.

4. The value of school property increased \$24,000,000 from 1928 to 1936 or approximately 28%. During the same period of time annual expenditures for school purposes decreased 33%.

5. Kansas supports schools almost entirely by local property tax. The only indirect tax, of importance, used for school purposes is the \$2,500,000 of the retail sales tax that was earmarked for equalization of educational opportunity in the elementary schools of Kansas.

6. School costs are not high when compared with other major enterprises as: life insurance, construction projects, cost of automobiles, etc.

7. The average cost of elementary and secondary schools per pupil per day of attendance decreased 22% from 1928 to 1933. The trend since 1934 has been for increases.

8. The average daily attendance in elementary and secondary schools combined reached its highest peak in the history of the state in 1931.

9. Economy and not merely retrenchments should be the plan followed at all times by superintendents of schools and boards of education in Kansas.

## CHAPTER V

### SCHOOL COSTS IN DIFFERENT CLASSES OF SCHOOLS

There were in the state of Kansas in 1928, 8,757 school districts. Of these districts, 8,577 maintained schools, of this latter number 7,177 were one-teacher schools; 1,269 were two or more teacher schools; 76 were schools in cities of the second class; 11 were first class city schools; and 24 districts maintained community high schools.<sup>1</sup>

In the school year 1935-36, the state of Kansas had 8,679 organized school districts--77 less than in 1928--Of the total number of districts 8,198 maintained schools or 379 less than had maintained schools in 1928. Of the number maintaining schools, 8,777 were one-teacher schools--a drop of 400 schools from the 1928 figure--two or more teacher schools 1,000 and rural high schools 310. There is some overlapping in these districts but each is of course a separate school district. The total of the two would be greater than the 1,269 two or more teacher schools in 1928. The number of first class city schools remained at 11, and the number of second class city schools remained stationary at 77. The total number of community high schools had decreased one, from 24 to 23. This gives a total of 8,198 school districts maintaining school but there were 481 organized districts that were sending their pupils to other schools. This number 481 added to the number maintaining schools makes the total of 8,679 organized districts.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Little, op. cit., p. 29.

<sup>2</sup> Thirtieth Biennial Report of the State Superintendent of Public Instruction of Kansas, Topeka: State Printing Plant, 1936, pp. 302-5.

TABLE XII

SCHOOL COSTS, AVERAGE DAILY ATTENDANCE, AND NUMBER OF DAYS TAUGHT  
FOR VARIOUS CLASSES OF SCHOOLS FOR THE YEARS 1929-33-36<sup>5</sup>

	1929	1933	1936
<b>Building costs:</b>			
One teacher	\$ 458,401.78	\$ 30,747.52	\$ 45,457.00
Two teacher	1,424,127.38	99,167.00	341,503.00
Second class city	956,219.13	65,304.19	187,000.00
First class city	995,457.51	192,559.56	972,235.00
<b>Other costs:</b>			
One teacher	7,203,271.64	5,536,940.17	4,561,162.30
Two teacher	12,482,652.62	11,141,464.17	9,617,492.85
Second class city	7,436,498.24	6,405,036.61	4,888,120.95
First class city	8,323,222.07	8,549,239.19	5,612,706.33
<b>A. D. A.:</b>			
One teacher	91,374.94	89,877.83	75,759.10
Two teacher	113,864.97	122,870.46	122,818.90
Second class city	75,185.17	79,631.70	79,099.60
First class city	78,020.50	78,369.60	79,495.50
<b>Length of term:</b>			
One teacher	156.6	157 - 180	157
Two teacher	177.9	173 - 180	170 - 177
Second class city	176.8	176	178
First class city	175	174 - 190	176
<b>Total school costs:</b>			
One teacher	7,661,673.37	8,667,687.69	4,604,599.30
Two teacher	13,906,990.00	11,240,621.17	9,958,995.85
Second class city	8,392,717.37	6,405,036.61	5,075,120.95
First class city	9,318,679.58	8,549,239.19	6,784,941.33

Read table thus: Expenditures for buildings for one teacher schools were \$458,401.78 in 1929, \$30,747.52 in 1933, and \$45,457.00 in 1936. Read in the same manner for two teacher and other schools, and for other items.

<sup>5</sup> Twenty-Seventh, Twenty-Ninth, and Thirtieth Biennial Reports of the State Superintendent of Public Instruction of Kansas. Topeka: State Printing Plant, 1930, 1934 and 1936.

From the material given in Table XII, the conclusion may be drawn that the schools in the first class cities were affected less by the depression than those of any other class and that the one teacher schools were affected most by the hard times. Building expenditures for one teacher schools in 1936 were still less than 10% of the amount spent for the building purposes by the same types of schools in 1929; building expenditures, in two or more teacher schools for 1936, were 24% of the expenditures for the same purpose by the same type schools in 1929; for second class cities the 1936 expenditures for building purposes were 19% of the 1929 expenditures; and first class cities spent for buildings in 1936 almost as much as was spent for the same purpose in 1929.

In average daily attendance the one teacher schools show a decrease from over 91,000 in 1929 to less than 76,000 in 1936. This is more than 17% decrease. During the same period of time all of the other classes of school gained in total average daily attendance. This gain in the latter classes of schools is due largely to an increase in enrollment in the high schools. (See Chapter VI, Table XVI.) The length of school term has varied little for any of the classes of schools but the one teacher school still has an eight months' term, so the students that attend such a school get one month less schooling as far as number of days is concerned. The variation shown in the length of term for two teacher schools is due to the fact that rural high schools, community high schools, two or more teacher elementary, and two or more teacher elementary and high schools combined are all included in this class. They were originally listed under one class in the Biennial Reports of the State Superintendent but are now



listed separately. For purposes of comparison in this study, they are considered in one class.

The reduction in total school costs in one teacher schools and schools in cities of the second class are almost identical in percentage. The 1936 costs in the one teacher schools were 60.1% as large as in 1929, and in second class cities the 1936 costs were 60.6% of the costs in 1929. The two or more teacher schools were spending 70.2% as much in 1936 as in 1929, and schools in cities of the first class were spending 72.8% as much in 1936 as in 1929.

TABLE XIII

COMPARISONS OF A. D. A. PER TEACHER AND COST PER PUPIL  
PER MONTH FOR THE VARIOUS CLASSES OF  
SCHOOLS FOR THE YEARS 1929-33-35-36  
ELEMENTARY SCHOOL PUPILS ONLY <sup>4</sup>

Type of school	Average daily attendance per teacher				Cost per pupil per month			
	1929	1933	1935	1936	1929	1933	1935	1936
One teacher	12.5	12.6	11.5	11.1	\$9.95	\$5.88	\$6.50	\$7.20
Two teacher	21.2	20.8	19.6	21.3	10.05	4.95	5.79	6.06
2nd class city	28.3	31.6	26.4	29.5	6.56	4.77	5.13	5.37
1st class city	29.0	34.8	28.4	30.8	7.51	6.09	6.60	7.26

Read table thus: The one teacher school in 1929 had an average daily attendance per teacher of 12.5; in 1933, an average daily attendance of 12.6; in 1935, of 11.5; and in 1936, of 11.1. The cost per pupil per month in the one teacher school in 1929 was \$9.95; in 1933, was \$5.88; in 1935, was \$6.50; and in 1936, was \$7.20. In like manner read for other types of schools.

<sup>4</sup> Twenty-Seventh, Twenty-Ninth and Thirtieth Biennial Reports, op. cit.

Table XIII shows that the average daily attendance per teacher for the one teacher schools is much smaller than in any other type of school. It is little more than half the average daily attendance in the two or more teacher schools, and is from one-third to two-fifths the average daily attendance per teacher in schools located in first and second class cities. However, when the cost per pupil per month is considered, the result is quite the opposite. In 1928 the cost per pupil per month in the one teacher school was higher than in any other type except the two teacher school, then again in 1933 the one teacher school spent more per pupil, per month than any type of school except the schools in first class cities. The same is true in 1935 and 1936, the one teacher school was spending more per pupil per month than was being spent in any other type of school, except for schools in cities of the first class, and the rural schools were spending only a few cents less per pupil per month than were the first class city schools.

Through all the years taken for comparison, the expenditure per pupil per month in Elementary Schools located in second class cities was less than in any other group of schools. While the costs per pupil in two teacher schools were high in 1928 they dropped sufficiently that, for the other three years studied, they were below the costs per pupil per month for one teacher schools and schools in cities of the first class. Table XIV and Figure 5 show that a larger per cent of the costs for one teacher schools goes for salary than is the case with any of the other types of schools, this in spite of the fact that teachers in one teacher schools are

TABLE XIV  
 COST OF INSTRUCTION AND TOTAL SCHOOL  
 COSTS FROM 1929 TO 1936<sup>5</sup>

Type of school	Cost of instruction	Total school costs
1929		
One teacher	\$5,296,363.57	\$7,661,673.57
Two teacher	8,848,949.61	13,906,980.00
2nd class city	4,588,386.26	8,392,717.57
1st class city	4,182,636.61	9,318,679.58
1933		
One teacher	4,170,060.25	5,567,687.69
Two teacher	7,518,464.98	11,240,621.17
2nd class city	3,881,602.14	6,405,036.61
1st class city	4,799,641.17	8,549,259.19
1936		
One teacher	3,197,287.02	4,604,699.30
Two teacher	6,206,742.69	9,868,995.65
2nd class city	3,437,679.16	5,075,120.96
1st class city	4,160,237.20	6,784,941.53

Read table thus: The cost of instruction in the one teacher schools in 1929 was \$5,296,363.57, while the total school costs were \$7,661,673.57. Read in like manner for other types of schools and for other years.

paid less salary on the average than any other class of teachers. The average annual salary of teachers in one teacher schools in 1936 was \$471.78; in two teacher schools, it was \$605.55; in second class city schools, it was \$1129.02; and in first class cities the average salary was

<sup>5</sup> Biennial Reports, op. cit.

LEGEND: 1. Represents teachers' salaries  
 2. Represents building costs  
 3. Represents costs for other purposes

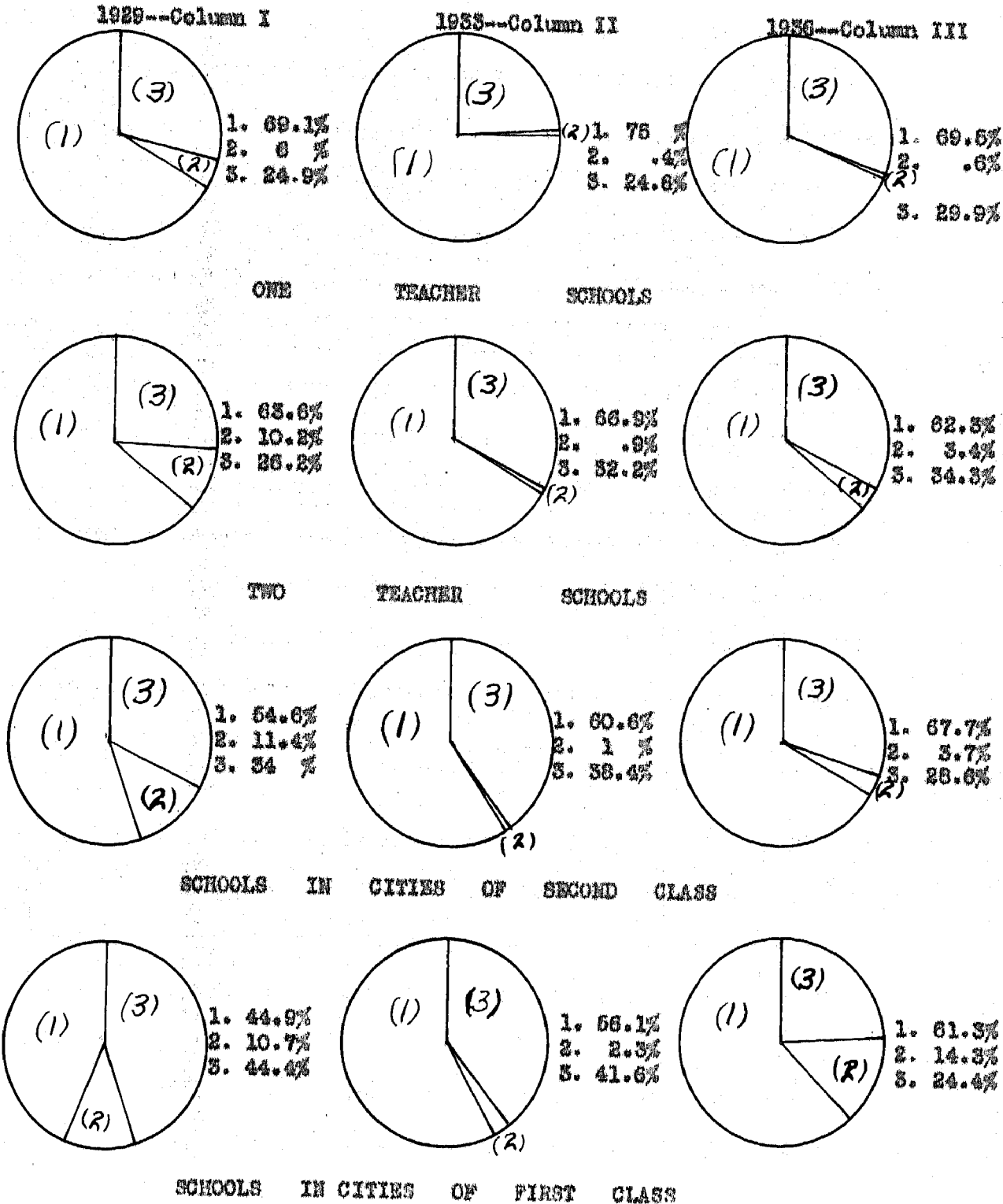


FIGURE 36

<sup>6</sup> Biennial Reports, op. cit.

\$1541.97; the average for all teachers of Kansas was \$858. (Figures from Thirtieth Biennial Report.) The above figures emphasize the small salary that is paid to one room school teachers and the fact mentioned before, that salaries take a larger share of total expenses in the one teacher schools than in any other type, the amount of money left for educational services is necessarily very small. In 1933 all schools were using a larger percentage of total expenditures for the payment of salaries than they were in 1929. In comparing expenditures in 1933 with those in 1936, there is a tendency in the one teacher, and two or more teacher schools for the per cent used for salaries to become less; however, in the first and second class city schools the per cent used for salaries in 1936 exceeded the per cent used for that purpose in 1933. It is perhaps safe to assume that wages were raised earlier in the larger schools after the depression cuts than they were in the smaller ones. The salary schedules used in the larger cities give them a basis for increase in pay for their teachers that is lacking in the smaller schools.

#### SUMMARY

1. In 1936 there were 77 fewer organized school districts in Kansas than were recorded in 1928, and 379 fewer districts were maintaining schools in 1936 compared to the number holding schools in 1928. Four hundred eighty-one organized districts were sending their pupils to neighboring schools in 1936.

2. There has been no change in the number of first or second class cities maintaining schools, but the number of rural high schools has increased.

3. One-teacher schools reduced school costs more proportionately than any other group of schools, and the first class city schools reduced costs the smallest per cent.

4. The erection of new buildings and the repair of old ones and the purchasing of new equipment almost ceased during the worst depression years of 1933 and 1934.

5. The average daily attendance has steadily decreased in the one-teacher schools and increased slightly in the three other classes of schools.

6. The length of school term remained practically stationary for all four types of schools; the one-teacher school still maintaining school for eight months and the other types having a nine months term.

7. Throughout the period from 1928 to 1936, the cost per pupil per month in one-teacher schools has been consistently high when compared to the other types of schools. If one-teacher schools paid their teachers as high an average wage as the other schools do, their cost per pupil per month would be much higher than any of the other three classes of schools.

8. The average daily attendance per teacher in the one-teacher schools was 52% of that of the two or more teacher schools, 38% as large as in schools located in second class cities, and 36% as large as average daily attendance in schools in cities of the first class.

9. One-teacher schools use a larger per cent of their total school costs for salaries than do the other schools, and first class city schools use the smallest per cent for salaries.

10. The teacher in the one-teacher school gets little more than half the average salary paid to all teachers in Kansas, and that average salary in 1956 was only \$858.

## CHAPTER VI

### HAVE WE GAINED OR LOST IN EDUCATIONAL SERVICES?

One important question which is not as yet settled or generally agreed upon by educational authorities is the question of the gain or loss to educational services during the depression when drastic financial reductions were affecting all school systems. It was a difficult problem to make adjustments in salaries with the minimum of destructiveness to morale of teachers, to schedules, to retirement plans, and to the welfare of the child. School supplies which were seriously curtailed should be adequate in both quantity and quality to insure a successful school.

The cheapest time to construct buildings is in a time of depression, but for a period of two or three years from 1932 to 1934 the building of new school houses or the repair of old ones almost ceased. (See Table VIII, p. 28.) Fear of the future kept the people from attempting to build at

TABLE XV

#### LIBRARY FACILITIES IN KANSAS SCHOOLS<sup>1</sup>

Year	Number of libraries	Number of volumes
1929	8625	1,675,806
1933	8334	2,153,693
1936	8341	2,409,294

Read table thus: In 1929 the number of school libraries was 8625, and the number of volumes in these libraries 1,675,806. In like manner read for 1933 and 1936.

<sup>1</sup> Twenty-Seventh, Twenty-Ninth, and Thirtieth Biennial Reports of the State Superintendent of Public Instruction of Kansas, Topeka: State Printing Plant, 1930, 1934, and 1936.



the period when it could have been done for the least cost.

During the depression the total number of libraries diminished between three and four per cent, but the number of volumes increased from 1,675,806 in 1929 to 2,409,284 in 1936, an increase of approximately 44%.

The depression has helped along in the "fight" to raise the standards of teacher certification. At present it is impossible for a teacher to become an administrator in a Class A or B high school unless he holds a Master's degree, and after 1939 it will be impossible for anyone to secure a teaching certificate from a county. The state will then be the only certifying agent. A few high schools still have the old normal training course but many of them are voluntarily dropping it. In 1928, 2,159 took the normal training examination and 1,299 received certificates; in 1936 the numbers were 587, with 483 getting certificates. Thus it appears that we have gained ground in regard to teacher certification standards and in teacher personnel during the depression years, for better trained teachers should be better class-room teachers.

Mort<sup>2</sup> lists four outstanding types of retrenchments that were used by various schools during the years when reductions in school costs were necessary.

1. A major retrenchment representing a definite curtailment of educational opportunities, such as: shortened school year, eliminating nursery schools, kindergartens, health service, special teachers, guidance personnel, vocational education, evening schools, supervision, transportation, etc.

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<sup>2</sup> Paul R. Mort, "The Investigation of Plans to Reduce School Budgets," School Review, Vol. 40, pp. 533-4, May 1932.

2. A second type of curtailment may be justified; that is a larger teacher-pupil ratio, curtailment of building and repairs, and reduction of salaries, especially for new teachers.
3. A bad move is elimination of school clerks, free text books and supplies, shortening of bus routes, increase in charges for towels, lockers, tuition, etc., also eliminating sick leave for teachers, and cutting extra-curricular activities.
4. It is good business to make careful check on all supplies delivered, make specifications in regard to intended purchases, and efficiently plan any new building program.

Some school enrollment figures are given for the years 1930 and 1936 in a National Education Association Research Bulletin.<sup>5</sup> These enrollments are for the United States.

The 1930 elementary enrollment was 24,000,000; by 1936 it had dropped 4.2% to just under 23,000,000; during the same period the high school enrollment increased from 4,800,000 in 1930 to 6,500,000 in 1936, and the college enrollment increased from 1,100,000 in 1930 to 1,200,000 in 1936.

In the State of Kansas, a somewhat similar situation as was found in the United States was also found to exist. In 1928-29 the average daily attendance in the Kansas elementary schools was 256,840; by the year 1936-37 the figures had decreased to 230,415, a loss of more than twenty-six thousand pupils and a percentage loss of 10.2. Over the same period the junior high school attendance increased from 27,241 in 1928-29 to 33,069 in 1936-37--an increase of nearly six thousand or 21.4%. The high school enrollment also showed an increase from 71,662 in 1928-29 to 86,707 in 1936-37--an increase of more than fifteen thousand or 21%.

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<sup>5</sup> Research Paper, "Some Facts of School Enrollment," Research Bulletin of the National Education Association, Vol. 16, No. 1, p. 38, January 1938.

Another interesting feature of the average daily attendance is a comparison of attendance according to sex. During every year in the elementary school attendance, the boys outnumber the girls by from eight to ten thousand. In other words, there are about seven or eight per cent more boys. In the junior high school group, the larger number favors the girls, but only from 60 to about 600 more girls than boys were in attendance in any one year in this group. In senior high school attendance the girls outnumber the boys to a noticeable degree, especially in the earlier years of the period of this study before the effects of the depression were fully felt. Before the depression many boys had left high school and secured jobs or had never started to high school, but from 1932 to 1935 the girls had very little advantage over the boys in number enrolled in high school. In 1928-29 the girls outnumbered the boys almost five thousand or about 15%, while in 1932-33 the girls outnumbered the boys only about seventeen hundred or but 4.3%.

The average daily attendance in elementary schools has decreased, but in both junior high and senior high schools it has increased. However, when all students are thrown together there is a slight decrease. This decrease approximates 1.6%.

The number of pupils in attendance in the elementary, junior high schools and senior high schools, and the total of all public elementary and secondary schools in Kansas is listed in Table XVII. A survey shows that there are more senior high schools than junior high schools in operation in the state of Kansas. The Thirtieth Biennial Report of the State Superintendent lists in 1936, only 77 junior high school principals while

TABLE XVI

AVERAGE DAILY ATTENDANCE FOR KANSAS ELEMENTARY, JUNIOR  
HIGH, AND SENIOR HIGH SCHOOLS FOR YEARS 1929 TO 1937<sup>4</sup>

Year	Male	Female	Total
Elementary schools			
1928-29	132,593.72	124,446.80	256,840.52
1930-31	134,539.83	124,998.17	259,538.00
1932-33	129,288.64	120,623.62	249,912.26
1934-35	122,468.60	113,519.70	235,988.30
1936-37	119,546.71	110,869.15	230,415.86
Junior high schools			
1928-29	13,496.11	13,745.00	27,241.11
1930-31	14,267.96	14,318.63	28,586.59
1932-33	15,023.61	15,119.84	30,143.45
1934-35	16,066.83	16,719.42	32,786.25
1936-37	16,384.40	16,665.51	33,050.91
Senior high schools			
1928-29	33,409.06	38,253.47	71,662.53
1930-31	37,432.67	40,368.99	77,801.66
1932-33	40,155.89	41,876.84	82,032.73
1934-35	41,548.66	42,664.71	84,213.37
1936-37	42,533.20	44,174.19	86,707.39

Read table thus: The number of elementary pupils attending schools in Kansas in the school year 1928-29 were: males, 132,593.72; females in average daily attendance, 124,446.80; the total in average daily attendance, 256,840.52. In like manner read for other years and for junior and senior high schools.

there were 514 senior high school principals. There were 1,055 junior high school teachers compared to 4,150 senior high school teachers. Many of the smaller towns still have the 8-4 plan of organization and have no organized

<sup>4</sup> Twenty-Seventh, Twenty-Eighth, Twenty-Ninth, and Thirtieth Biennial Reports of the State Superintendent of Public Instruction of Kansas, Topeka: State Printing Plant, 1930 to 1938.

junior high school; thus for the entire state the senior high school enrollment is more than double the junior high school enrollment. In the first class city school systems, where junior high schools are well organized, during the school year 1935-36, there were 17,862 junior high school students in average daily attendance, while there were only 15,460 senior high students in average daily attendance. In 1936 there were 61 three-year junior high schools and 43 two-year junior high schools.

TABLE XVII

SHOWING GROWTH OF SECONDARY SCHOOL ATTENDANCE<sup>5</sup>

Year	Grades	Jr. H. S.	Sr. H. S.	Total
1929	256,840.52	27,241.11	71,662.53	354,704.16
1931	259,338.00	28,576.79	77,801.66	365,716.45
1933	249,303.56	30,143.36	82,032.73	361,479.64
1935	235,783.30	32,806.25	84,230.37	352,819.92
1936	230,415.86	33,069.91	86,707.39	350,193.16

Read table thus: During the school year ending in 1929, the average daily attendance in the grade schools in Kansas was 256,840.52; the junior high school average daily attendance was 27,241.11; and the senior high school average daily attendance was 71,662.53; the total attendance was 354,704.16. In like manner read for other years.

In a small city it is undoubtedly more expensive to adequately provide for a junior high school or change the type of organization from an 8-4 plan to a 6-3-3 or some other plan. Some smaller schools were making the change but the retrenchments necessary during the depression halted the movement, and it has gained little momentum since that time.

<sup>5</sup> Biennial Reports, op. cit.

Foster in his Statistical Summary of Education<sup>6</sup> lists Kansas as having 9,047 public elementary and 749 public high schools in the school year 1933-34. The following table, Table XVIII, is taken from the same source.

TABLE XVIII

THE DISTRIBUTION OF PUPILS IN FOUR YEARS OF  
HIGH SCHOOLS--1910 TO 1936<sup>7</sup>

Year	1910	1920	1924	1926	1928	1930	1934	1936*
1st	42.9%	40.1%	36.9%	36.4%	36.3%	35.4%	32.5%	33.4%
2nd	27.1%	27.0%	27.4%	27.0%	27.2%	27.4%	27.4%	27.3%
3rd	17.8%	18.8%	20.0%	20.1%	20.1%	20.6%	21.9%	21.2%
4th	12.2%	14.1%	15.7%	16.5%	16.4%	16.6%	18.2%	18.1%

Read table thus: In the United States, students in the first year of high school were 42.9% of the total high school enrollment in 1910, 40.1% of the enrollment in 1920, 36.9% of the enrollment in 1924, 36.4% of the enrollment in 1926, 36.3% in 1928, 35.4% in 1930, and 32.5% in 1934. In like manner read for the other years of high school.

The growth in the holding power of the high schools is well illustrated by Table XVIII. In 1910, the freshman classes had 42.9% of the total enrollment, while the senior classes had but 12.2% of the total enrollment. There were three and one-half times as many students in the freshman classes as in the senior classes. However, the percentage of students in the

<sup>6</sup> Emery M. Foster, "Statistical Summary of Education," Bulletin of the United States Department of Education, No. 2, 1936, p. 2.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid, p. 3.

\* 1936 - Harvey, O. L., "Enrollment Trends and Population Shifts," Elementary School Journal, 36:655-62, May 1936.

freshman classes continually decreased until 1934. There is a slight increase from 1934 to 1936. In 1936 the freshmen enrollment had dropped to a point where it was only 1.8 times as large as the senior enrollment. In 1910 more than two-fifths of all high school students were freshmen, but in 1936 only one-third were freshmen. The freshmen dropped from 42.8% of the total in 1910 to 33.4% in 1936, a drop of 9.5% of the total enrollment in high schools; the sophomores remained almost stationary as far as enrollment was concerned, registering a gain of .2% from 1910 to 1936; the juniors gained 3.4% and the seniors increased their enrollment 5.9%. The freshman classes were the only groups to lose in per cent of enrollment during this period. From 1930 to 1934, the sophomore percentage of enrollment did not change, but decreased .1% between 1934 and 1936; the freshman percentage dropped 2.9 points between 1930 and 1934, but increased .9% from 1934 to 1936; the junior percentage increased 1.3 points from 1930 to 1934 but dropped .7 points from 1934 to 1936; the seniors gained 1.6 percentage points from 1930 to 1934, and lost .1% from 1934 to 1936. The depression caused the holding power of the high schools to become greater, but that holding power seemed to be lessening in 1936 when economic conditions were somewhat improved.

Foster<sup>6</sup> gives the high school enrollment for the United States in 1910 as 915,061, the 1934 enrollment as 5,245,332, the 1936 enrollment as 5,974,537, and the estimated 1938 enrollment as 6,155,252. The same article also lists the percentage of children between the ages of fourteen and

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<sup>6</sup> Foster, op. cit., p. 13.

seventeen who are in school in different sections of the United States. The far west leads with 75% of this age group in school, the southeast is at the bottom of the list with only 34%. Other sections of the country range in between these two figures giving a total for the country as a whole of approximately 67%.

Jessen<sup>9</sup> gives the following figures in regard to number of pupils between the ages of 14 and 17 who attended high school: in 1890, 6.7%; in 1900, 11.4%; in 1910, 16.6%; in 1920, 37.9%; in 1930, 51.1%; and in 1934, 64%. The increase in the four years 1930 to 1934 was almost as large as any previous ten year period, and about two-thirds of the boys and girls of high school age were in high schools in 1934.

The length of school terms in weeks has changed but little during the past few years. The following information was secured from the Twenty-Seventh to Thirtieth Biennial Reports of the State Superintendent of Public Instruction for Kansas.

<u>Year</u>	<u>Weeks</u>	<u>Year</u>	<u>Weeks</u>
1929	32.39	1933	32.3
1930	32.58	1934	32.2
1931	32.8	1935	32.4
1932	32.5	1936	33.2

The length of school term in weeks fluctuated somewhat from year to year but ended with a longer school term in 1936 than the average school term of 1929.

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<sup>9</sup> Carl A. Jessen, "Trends in Secondary Education," Bulletin of the United States Office of Education, No. 2, 1937, p. 6.



Deffenbaugh<sup>10</sup> in his article entitled Effects of the Depression upon Public Elementary and Secondary Schools gives the following information:

In 1930, 69.9% of all children from 5 to 20 years of age were in school. During the depression economy was necessary but misguided where it replaced good competent teachers with cheap, incompetent ones, did away with all or nearly all expenditures for increasing the efficiency of our schools, decreased the length of school year, and reduced supervision. There was a decrease in supervisors of approximately 36.5% from 1930 to 1934, and a decrease of 48% in elementary school principals, while curtailment of staffs for health, attendance and dental work was quite apparent.

On the whole qualifications of teachers in the later depression years seems to be higher than in 1930. Educational legislation during the depression increased entrance standards to the teaching profession and caused many already in the profession to complete additional professional training.

One of the most serious effects of the depression was the elimination or curtailment, by over 20% of the schools, of instruction in various fields as music, art, physical education, etc. Why these were eliminated as an economy measure cannot well be explained, since these classes were usually larger than in other subjects, thereby making the cost per pupil-recitation less. The eliminations were probably due to the fact that many people began thinking of schools in terms of the old 3 R's. There was a decrease of 30% from 1930 to 1934 in the value of text books and educational supplies bought by schools; however, part of this value decrease was absorbed by cheaper prices on text books and supplies. Special schools and classes for exceptional children seemed to weather the depression better than most other educational departments.

What is important in education? Namely: the things that make a difference in the life of the child, be it mathematics, foreign language, music, or some other subject.

Changes in the curricula of many schools, the dropping of music, art, and similar subjects during the worst of the depression years undoubtedly caused a lessening of educational opportunities and educational services in some of the schools; however, by the close of the school year

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<sup>10</sup> W. S. Deffenbaugh, Effects of the Depression upon Public Elementary and Secondary Schools, Bulletin of the United States Office of Education, No. 2, 1937, pp. 13-14

in 1936 most of the subjects had been restored where they had been dropped. The schools continued to enroll a larger and larger number of high school students during the depression, in fact the depression seemed to be an aid in that direction rather than a hindrance, and this increase was made on reduced budgets. Also, during the last few years the number of standard and superior rural schools has increased. It seems to be the accepted policy, that once a standard or superior school rating be obtained, it must be kept. Local school pride in the school will not let it be lowered, thus the total number of "rated" schools has increased.

Not all happenings during the depression can be put on the credit side of the ledger. There were some cases of mismanagement and unwise expenditures of school money. The number of rural school districts which held on to their local schools in spite of high taxes and poor, inexperienced, teachers, that their limited budgets forced them to hire, is a good example of the amazing desire of the communities to hold on to old habits and customs. This fact caused many inequalities in educational opportunities in the rural districts of Kansas. In 1936, Kansas had 39 districts with an average daily attendance of one pupil; 131, with 2 pupils; 202, with 3 pupils; and 3,655, with less than 10 pupils.<sup>11</sup> It is obvious that schools with such small average daily attendance would have an enormous cost on a per pupil per month basis, when compared to larger schools, and with one in a grade there would be no element of competition to aid the teacher in interesting the child in its work. Nineteen districts had a census of one

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<sup>11</sup> Thirtieth Biennial Report of the State Superintendent of Public Instruction of Kansas, Topeka: State Printing Plant, 1936.

or no pupils at all and 885 districts had a census (from 5 to 21 years of age) of ten or less pupils. Some schools paid as low as \$280 for an annual salary but levied, in some cases, less than 2 mills school tax. On a twelve months' basis, such a salary would be \$23.33 per month. In many cases it would have been much cheaper to have sent their children to another school, and paid tuition and transportation charges.

Another help to some financially poor high school students was the aid given by the National Government through the National Youth Administration. Through this a certain number of very needy students, over 16 years of age, were enabled to work and make part of the expense of attending high school. Continued aid depended upon carrying their school work in a successful manner.

#### SUMMARY

1. The number of libraries decreased slightly but the number of volumes increased 44% from 1928 to 1936.
2. Teacher certification standards were raised during this same period.
3. Grade school enrollment decreased, while junior high school and high school enrollments increased. When considering all three types of schools the total enrollment decreased 1.6%.
4. There are more boys than girls in grade schools, but more girls than boys in junior high and high schools.

5. The majority of the smaller towns still have the 8-4 type of school organization and do not have junior high schools. The eleven first class cities have more than half of the junior high school enrollment and only about one sixth of the senior high school enrollment.

6. The holding power of the high schools increased during the depression years, especially in the junior and senior years.

7. From 1910 to 1936 enrollment in the high schools of the United States increased nearly 600%. In Kansas the per cent increase is nearer 500% over the same period of time.

8. Approximately two thirds of the boys and girls of high school age are now attending schools. (High school age considered as 14 to 17 inclusive.)

9. There was some loss in educational services when music, art, home economics, kindergarden, health and dental services, extra-curricular activities etc., products of the changing times, were removed from the programs of many schools; however, most of the schools that made these retrenchments have now replaced what they discontinued during the years of worst financial depression.

10. N. Y. A. aid helped many students to remain in school when without it they would not have been able to enter or would have been forced to drop out during the school term.

## CHAPTER VII

### DO KANSANS STILL QUESTION THE VALUE OF THEIR SCHOOLS ?

The schools of Kansas are a part of her very structure. They began with her life, have grown with her growth, and have been woven into all her history. Lawrence was settled in 1854 and in less than four months a school was opened, and in 1857 a high school was established there. Topeka was settled in November of 1854 and early the next summer a school was opened and the "Topeka Academy" was founded<sup>1</sup> January 2, 1856. What happened in these two places was repeated in one form or another in every town and hamlet in the territory. Kansas from her large stock of New England emigrants obtained an intense desire for schooling. These early schools were all voluntary movements as Kansas when a territory had no school laws compelling the establishment of schools. From these voluntary movements have come our present day school systems.

Kansas' first constitution, the "Wyandotte Constitution," provided that the legislature should establish "A uniform system of common schools, and schools of higher grade, embracing normal, preparatory, collegiate and university departments."<sup>2</sup>

Practically every town in Kansas has a large brick or stone school building, often the largest building in the town, built by self-imposed taxes, and her teachers paid by the same self-imposed method. From such

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<sup>1</sup> Richard Cordley, "The Schools of Kansas," Publication of the Kansas Historical Society, 1886, Vol. 1, p. 168-72.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid, p. 171.

evidence it seems probable that Kansas is strongly in favor of her educational program and believes in her schools.

In considering the cost of schools to the public, an institution is being dealt with that contributes to the preservation and enhancement of a national resource of primary importance. If the school does its work poorly, intellectual heritage is depleted. If the school is strong, this heritage is enhanced. Upon this fundamental consideration rests the claim of the public school for a share of the state income. Schools should not be considered on cost alone. The amount of services furnished and the importance of the enterprise to the future of our nation should be considered, along with cost.

Much of the increased cost of schools since the World War has resulted from the fact that about one fourth of the men called in the draft were for all practical purposes, illiterate and almost helpless in a great cooperative undertaking. Thus our country launched a program of spending for better, more efficient schools and naturally this has cost more money.<sup>3</sup>

Another reason for increased school costs over twenty or thirty years ago is the improvement in the quality of educational opportunity. The addition of new subjects, the introduction of kindergartens, junior high schools, and junior colleges into the free public educational system could not be accomplished without some added expense. In 1930 about 5% of our national income was expended for all public schools.<sup>4</sup> In the same year the purchase and operation of the nation's passenger automobiles cost five times as much as education. The relation between the national income, the cost of commodities, and the cost of schools has been nearly constant for the last twenty years, even through the depression years. (See Tables VII and X.) The same author gives the cost of a year's schooling

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<sup>3</sup> John E. Norton, "The Cost of Education From the Viewpoint of the Schools," School and Society, Vol. 31, pp. 385-9, March 22, 1930.

<sup>4</sup> Norton, op. cit., p. 387.

in our public schools: elementary, high school, and college as \$115 for the 1930 average for the United States.

Ray Lyman Wilbur has aptly stated:<sup>5</sup>

The teacher now jointly rocks the cradle with the mother and the future of our democracy depends upon the thoroughness with which this job is accomplished. Each citizen must become a contributor or a burden upon the others. To be a contributor, one must be wanted, to be wanted one must be prepared, and the teacher's job is to look after that preparation. We must prepare minds to meet whatever problems may arise in our rapidly changing present day civilization.

In the school year of 1927-28 the ten public junior colleges of Kansas enrolled 1,725 students while in 1935-36 with the addition of one more college the enrollment was 3,486. In 1927-28, the kindergartens in the first and second class cities of Kansas had an enrollment of 5,649 pupils and in 1935-36 the same groups of cities had 9,020 pupils enrolled.<sup>6</sup>

These enrollment figures given for kindergartens and junior colleges of Kansas tend to show a desire for increased educational services and increased educational opportunities for the youth of Kansas, even in the face of increased costs that naturally would come as a result of adding these two branches of our educational system.

In January of 1936 a joint program was instituted, by the Kansas State Teachers Association and the State Department of Education of Kansas, in financing a long time program for the improvement of instruction in the elementary schools of the state. They secured help from the curriculum consultants of Peabody College of Nashville, Tennessee. The

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<sup>5</sup> Ray Lyman Wilbur, "The Teacher Now Rocks the Cradle With the Mother," School Life, Vol. 17, p. 110, February 1932.

<sup>6</sup> Twenty-Seventh and Thirtieth Biennial Reports of the State Superintendent of Public Instruction of Kansas, Topeka: State Printing Plant, 1930 and 1936.

intensive phase of this work will occupy approximately five years' time, but the extensive phase will be continued as a permanent function of the State Department of Education.

New courses of study were formulated with the advent of the social studies program. Formerly courses of study were written in terms of page text book assignments. The social studies course of study was written in terms of social studies units. The social studies units resulted in changing teaching practice from the recitation of lessons from basal texts to a type of procedure where social activity dominates. Teachers are learning to organize a social school, to coordinate activities, to use texts, library materials, and community resources as aids in solving problems. The life of the child is influenced directly by the equipment and supplies, housing and sanitation, community resources, teacher training, and size of classes. The teacher's big problem is the development, under our new social studies program, of healthy, happy, efficient citizens, each one developing according to his own capacity.

Another indication that the people of Kansas are interested in better schools is shown by the report on the number of classified elementary schools of the state. In 1935-36 there were 363 Class A elementary schools, in Class B, there were 763, and in Class C, there were 146--a total of 1,272; in 1936-37, there were 431 in Class A, in Class B 814, in Class C 197--with a total of 1,442 schools in the classified lists.

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<sup>7</sup> Thirtieth Biennial Report of the State Superintendent of Public Instruction of Kansas, Topeka: State Printing Plant, 1936.



The legislature of Kansas passed a 2% retail sales tax and earmarked \$2,500,000 for the support and equalization of educational opportunities in the elementary schools of the state. Another \$2,400,000 was earmarked for social security and the balance was pro-rated back to the counties, 50% on valuation and 50% on population, to be divided among all of the tangible property tax levying political sub-divisions, and the school districts are in line to receive considerable refund on their property tax, as more money is levied for schools than for any other taxing sub-division in the various counties.

The Kansas State Constitution provides that the state legislature shall make no distinction between males and females in providing educational opportunities for the youth of the state. The estates of persons dying without heir or will, money paid for exemption from military duty, fines for any breach of penal laws, and tax on dogs shall be applied to the support of schools.<sup>8</sup> Education is compulsory for all--even the deaf, mute, and blind have schools provided for them, and a program of education is carried on in asylums for children and in state institutions of correction for the youth of the state. School boards may establish night schools and pay for them from the public school funds of their district. These above mentioned laws indicate in some degree the interest of the state of Kansas in providing educational opportunities for her children. It is much cheaper for the state to provide public schools for her youth<sup>9</sup> than to provide train-

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<sup>8</sup> Revised School Laws for the State of Kansas, 1937, pp. 4-5.

<sup>9</sup> "Yearly Expense of the Juvenile Delinquent in the Kansas Industrial School," National Education Association, Research Bulletin, Vol. 10, September 1932, p. 153.

ing on the state industrial farms. It has been found that the yearly expense of the average juvenile delinquent in the Kansas Industrial school is \$406, for an adult in the penitentiary \$550.09, and for the average child in school, \$107.23.

TABLE XIX

RATIO OF EDUCATIONAL STATUS OF PRISONERS (IN 1923) TO THE GENERAL POPULATION OVER TWENTY-ONE YEARS OF AGE<sup>10</sup>

Last school attended	Per cent in general population	per cent in commitments to prison
Elementary school	61.1	67.5
High school	25.1	16.4
College	6.7	3.4
School not reported	---	3.0

Read table thus: In the general population 61.1% of the people attended the elementary school the last place they were in school, while 67.5% of the prisoners left school while in the elementary section. Read in like manner for other schools.

Table XIX indicates that an education is of some benefit in enabling a person to become a better, more efficient citizen. There were about three-fifths as many prisoners, who had attended high school, as there was on the average in the general population. The students who attended college had a still greater per cent in their favor as only about half as many prisoners attended college as there were people who attended college in the general population.

<sup>10</sup> "Ratio of Educational Status of Prisoners, in 1923, to the General Population over Twenty-One Years of Age," Research Bulletin of the National Education Association, Vol. 10, September 1932, p. 160.

From evidence presented, the inmates of prisons are not as intelligent on the average as those outside of prisons. This same article lists the median intelligence quotient of all prisoners tested as 77.4, where the general average would, of course, be 100.

TABLE XX  
EDUCATIONAL ACHIEVEMENT OF FOUR HUNDRED  
FIFTY-FOUR PRISONERS<sup>11</sup>

Grade reached	Reformatory group
Never attended school	2.4%
5th grade or less	42.6
6th to 8th grade	45.8
9th grade	4.6
High school (One year or more)	4.4
Completed high school	.2
Total	100.0%

Read table thus: Of the 454 prisoners 2.4% never attended any school, 42.6% reached the 5th grade or less. Read in like manner for other groupings.

Table XX indicates the importance of education in training the youth of the nation to become useful, self-supporting citizens. More than 90% of the 454 prisoners studied had not gone above the eighth grade in school and nearly half of them were fifth graders or below.

Expenditures for education in the United States in 1924 was \$2,336,000,000. In the same year the people spent more than ten billions

<sup>11</sup> Research Bulletin, loc. cit.

of dollars for automobiles, tobacco, soft drinks, theaters, candy, jewelry, and other articles listed as luxuries.<sup>12</sup> Some comparative expenditures for 1930 are listed in the "Educational Events," in School and Society;<sup>13</sup> Costs of public schools, \$2,500,000,000, life insurance, \$3,000,000,000, luxuries, \$6,500,000,000, building construction \$7,000,000,000, and automobiles \$12,500,000,000. These 1930 figures tend to indicate that schools are not overburdensome as far as costs are concerned. However, by 1930 automobiles could no longer be classed as a luxury but were really in the necessity class and around 20% of the total income of the United States was spent for the purchase and upkeep of cars.

A Research Bulletin of the National Education Association for 1928 makes the statement that, "Health as a rule is a purchasable commodity and the price is education."<sup>14</sup> It lists the following facts to support the statement. From 1815 to 1850 the average death rate per 1,000 people was 28; from 1850 to 1900 the death rate was 26; in 1900, it was 17.6; in 1905, 16; in 1910, 15; in 1915, 13.6; in 1920, 13.1; in 1925, 11.8. Probably there were other factors as well as education involved in this decrease in the death rate, but education was the most important factor in preparing doctors, scientists, and specialists for their various fields of

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<sup>12</sup> "Costs of Luxuries and Education in the United States in 1924," Industrial Arts Magazine, Vol. 18, p. 293, August 1929.

<sup>13</sup> "Expenditures for Public Education in the United States," School and Society, Vol. 33, pp. 581-2, May 2, 1931.

<sup>14</sup> "The Foundation for Healthful Living Is Laid in the Public Schools," Research Bulletin of the National Education Association, Vol. 6, 1928, p. 53.

labor. Whether or not the people in general realize the value of education in promoting health, the people of Kansas are willing to support their free public school system. However, Kansas is lagging far behind some of the other states in state support of education and only recently with the introduction of the retail sales tax with a portion of it earmarked for elementary schools has Kansas started on the road to state support of education and equalization of educational opportunities.

The ten social-economic goals listed as most desirable for the individual "American" and towards which our schools should strive,<sup>15</sup>

1. Heredity strength
2. Physical security
3. Participation in skills, technics, knowledge values, standards, outlooks
4. An active flexible personality
5. Suitable occupation
6. Economic security
7. Mental security
8. Equality of opportunity
9. Freedom
10. Fair play

No matter what the vocation, an education is valuable. Bigger and better opportunities present themselves to the man with an education, and efficiency comes as a result of education.

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<sup>15</sup> "Ten Social Economic Goals Most Desirable for the Individual American," Research Bulletin of the National Education Association, Vol. 13, May 1935, p. 73.

## SUMMARY

1. Early pioneers of Kansas founded schools as soon as they had settled, and their example and spirit still lives today.
2. Kansas' first constitution provided for a complete system of schools.
3. Surveys made during the World War brought to light the fact that many men were practically illiterate, and the nation thereafter instituted a program of education free to all.
4. About 3% of our national income has been and is being spent for schools.
5. In our present day civilization, the job of the teacher is much more important than it was in the days of the 3 R's when progress and change went on at a much slower rate.
6. The number of students in kindergartens and junior colleges has doubled since 1926. This is an indication of increased educational opportunity.
7. A five year program for the improvement of instruction in Kansas was instituted in January 1936 under the direction of the State Board of Education.
8. The social studies program has replaced the old text book method of teaching, and the emphasis now is on attempting to fit the child to function in a changing environment.
9. The number of "classified" elementary schools has been steadily increasing.

10. The sum of \$2,500,000 was earmarked from the 2% retail sales tax for the support and equalization of educational opportunity in the elementary schools of Kansas. The schools get further aid from the surplus that is refunded to the counties and distributed to the various taxing bodies to reduce the general property tax.

11. It is much cheaper to educate a child in the public schools than it is in the state reform school.

12. Expenditures for education are not out of proportion to our income or the cost of other important enterprises.

13. Education is a great aid to healthful living. .

## CHAPTER VIII

### GENERAL SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

In the period from 1928 to 1936, schools in Kansas were forced to make drastic reductions in their budgets. The easiest place to start cuts was in teachers salaries, and salaries were reduced 26% on the average. However, the decreased cost of living kept the actual reduction in teachers' salaries from being as large as the dollars and cents reduction.

The erection of new school buildings and the repair and upkeep of old ones, almost ceased during the years 1933 and 1934, but with Federal Government aid available to pay approximately one half of the cost of construction many new projects have been undertaken since 1935.

Approximately two thirds of the total school expenditures are used for teachers' salaries. This per cent varied in only a small degree during the period of this study.

The school year 1935-36 showed a definite upward trend in school costs, and this trend has continued for the past two years. What effect the recession of 1938 will have on school costs of the future is hard to determine at this time.

The valuation of school property continued to increase during the depression years, really out of all proportion when the building program over the same period of time is considered, the valuation increase being larger than the amount spent for building purposes.

A smaller per cent of the total taxes collected in the state of



Kansas for all purposes was being spent for schools in 1936 than in 1928.

Many educational services were lost during the years of the depression, by eliminating from the program such things as the kindergartens, curtailing capital outlay and salary expenditures, removing many out-of-class activities, and such subjects as music and art--the very subjects that had been added in an attempt to teach the child how to cope with a changing environment.

School costs tend to change more slowly than commodity costs or living costs, usually lagging two or three years behind other costs, whether the trend is up or down. The total school costs decreased \$18,000,000 during the depression and about one-third of that decrease had been restored by the close of the 1937-38 school year.

The people of Kansas are willing to support an educational program, and the State Legislature passed a retail sales tax in 1937, earmarking \$2,500,000 of the proceeds from the tax for the equalization of educational opportunities in the elementary schools of the state.

During the years of this study, the average daily attendance in the elementary schools of the state decreased yearly. The junior high school and senior high school attendance increased yearly during the same period of time, and when both elementary and secondary schools are considered there was a drop of 1.6% in average daily attendance for the state of Kansas.

The length of the school term has remained practically constant for the period that this study covers.

Night schools, attended principally by adults, were opened in many of the cities of the state and were well attended. Many who had been denied the privilege of schooling or who had not cared for school when they were younger were now anxious to attend night classes. This phase of the educational program has become of less importance since 1936.

Requirements for teacher certification were increased and the State became the sole certifying agent. The full benefit of this change will not be apparent until the school year 1939-40, when all county certificates will be invalidated.

The number of libraries did not increase from 1928 to 1936; however, the number of volumes increased 44%. This would seem to be significant as the increase was probably in new books.

During the time of this study four hundred rural schools closed their doors and transported their pupils to neighboring schools.

The social studies program, instituted about the middle of the period covered by this study, has revolutionized the teaching procedure in the elementary schools of the state. Text books are now used merely as reference materials and the course of study is written on the unit plan in place of so many pages per month in a text book, as was the case formerly.

The five year program, of the State Department of Education, for the improvement of instruction in Kansas was begun in January 1936 and will not be completed until January 1941. In reality it will continue as a permanent part of the program of the State Department of Education; however, it is difficult to determine at this time the value it has had and will have for education in Kansas.

## CONCLUSIONS

1. The Kansas tax system is bad. Local property must bear most of the burden of all taxes collected for State and local purposes. This fact is shown by:

- a. Attacks on school expenditures by periodicals and various organizations. (Pages 8-9.)
- b. Percentage analysis of Kansas public school revenue receipts--by sources (Table II, page 13.)
- c. Kansas' poor tax system. (Quotation pages 36-37.)

2. The cost per pupil per month in one-teacher schools is consistently high. One-teacher schools are the weakest part of our educational system but have survived, in most cases, attempts to consolidate or close them. This is evidenced by:

- a. High cost of one-teacher schools in Kansas. (Page 11.)
- b. Comparison of average daily attendance and cost per pupil per month. (Table XIII, page 42.)
- c. Length of term and total school costs of one-teacher schools. (Table XII, page 40.)
- d. Decrease in average daily attendance in one-teacher schools. (Page 41.)
- e. Number of one-teacher districts in Kansas. (Page 39.)

3. Rural schools "cut" expenditures more than any other type of school and are now paying their teachers about half as much as is received by the average Kansas teacher, and the average would be much higher if it

were not for the low salary paid to the rural teachers. These facts are manifested by:

- a. Costs of one-teacher schools. (Table XII, page 40.)
- b. Cost of instruction and total school costs. (Table XIV, page 44.)
- c. Salaries paid Kansas Teachers. (Pages 44-45.)
4. Teacher certification standards were raised during the depression.

This is shown by:

- a. Qualifications for teacher certification raised. (Quotation page 58.)
- b. Teacher certification standards, in Kansas, raised. (Page 50.)
5. There was considerable loss of educational services during the

depression. This is revealed by:

- a. Some effects of the depression on our public schools in Kansas. (Table I, page 12.)
- b. Annual expenditures for public schools of Kansas. (Table VIII, page 28; Figure 2, page 35.)
- c. Division of school expenditures. (Table IX, page 29.)
- d. Estimated valuation of Kansas property and index numbers for school property and school costs. (Table V, page 31.)
- e. Teachers' salaries, building costs, and other costs. (Figure 3, page 45.)
- f. Decrease in supervisors, elementary school principals, and curtailment of health, attendance, and dental staffs. (Quotation, page 58.)
- g. Retrenchments in art, music, kindergarten, etc., and decrease in educational supplies purchased. (Quotation, page 58.)
- h. Retrenchments listed by Mort. (Pages 50-51.)

6. The holding power of the high school increased during the depression. This is shown by:

- a. Average daily attendance in junior high and senior high schools. (Table XVI, page 53; Table XVII, page 54.)
- b. The distribution in the four years of high schools. (Table XVIII, page 55.)
- c. High school enrollment. (Quotation, page 51; also, pages 56-57.)

7. The job of the teacher is much more important, and she has much more to do with shaping the future lives of the children in her care than did the teacher of two or three decades ago. This is evidenced by:

- a. The teacher rocks the cradle with the mother. (Quotation, page 64.)
- b. Educational achievement of prisoners. (Table XX and accompanying discussion, page 68.)
- c. Education and health. (Pages 69-70.)
- d. Social-economic goals. (Page 70.)
- e. The teachers big problem is development of healthy, happy, citizens. (Page 65.)

8. The five year program of the State Department of Education, for the improvement of instruction, is making teachers more conscious of their tasks and duties and enabling them to conduct better schools. This is disclosed by:

- a. The five year program. (Page 64-65.)

9. The social studies program in the elementary schools of today will more nearly prepare children to take their place in the rapidly changing world than would the old text book method of teaching facts.

This is shown by:

a. The social studies program. (Page 65.)

10. Expenditures for education are not out of proportion to our income or ability to pay. This is revealed by:

a. Comparison of assessed valuation of Kansas property and Kansas school costs. (Table IV, page 19.)

b. Your tax dollar--where it goes. (Table V, page 21; Figure 1, page 22.)

c. Comparison of all taxes and school taxes from 1928 to 1936. (Table VI, page 23.)

d. Expenditures for schools and some other industries. (Page 69.)

e. Self-imposed school budgets. (Pages 62-63.)

f. Three per cent of income expended for public schools in 1930. (Page 63.)

11. Nearly one half of the one-teacher schools of Kansas had, in 1936, an average daily attendance of ten pupils or less. This is shown by:

a. Average daily attendance in one-teacher schools in Kansas. (Pages 59-60.)

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