

**A FOUNDATION EDUCATION PROGRAM  
FOR VIRGINIA**

*Report of the*  
**COMMISSION**

*To*  
**THE GOVERNOR**

*and*  
**The GENERAL ASSEMBLY of VIRGINIA**



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A FOUNDATION EDUCATION PROGRAM FOR VIRGINIA

Report of the Commission

to the

GOVERNOR AND GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF VIRGINIA

RICHMOND, VIRGINIA

November 26, 1951

TO: HONORABLE JOHN S. BATTLE, GOVERNOR OF VIRGINIA  
and  
THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF VIRGINIA

In the preceding twenty years the State's expenditures for public schools in Virginia have risen from \$7,335,941 in 1931 to \$37,134,173 in 1950. This represents 38.79% of the State's general fund revenues,\* as compared with a figure of 37.56% at the beginning of the period.

Many factors have contributed to this increase in State school costs. During these years the State's population has greatly increased and the school population in Virginia has likewise showed marked growth. In addition, the General Assembly has materially assisted the localities in raising teachers' salaries, and the average salary of classroom teachers (which is paid from funds provided by the State and locality jointly) has increased from \$909 in 1931 to \$2,391 during the last fiscal year. The General Assembly has also provided substantial sums for teachers' scholarships, it has increased State assistance to localities by paying part of the cost of transporting children to school, and it has had other programs which have given financial aid to local schools.

The greatest single factor in the increased school costs has, of course, been inflation. Thus, while average salaries have gone up in dollars and cents, far beyond what might have been reasonably anticipated two decades ago, declines in purchasing power have to a major extent nullified this increase. A large part of the State's contributions toward school bus transportation has likewise been absorbed by inflated costs which the localities have experienced.

The considerable increase in the number of children attending school also has had an influence on the rising costs of public education. In the school year 1930-31 there were 473,077 children in average daily attendance in the schools. By 1950-51 this number had risen to 550,036, necessitating increases in the instructional staff and an expansion of school plant.

Another factor which has had some influence on school costs has been the broadening of curriculum offering of the schools. Whereas thirty-five years ago commercial and other vocational subjects were offered only in the larger cities and special subjects such as music and art were unheard of at public expense in most of the rural areas, today home economics and agricultural offerings are general throughout the State and a generally more diversified curriculum has become widespread.

\* Note: The general fund includes all revenues of the State which are not specifically earmarked for the operation of such State departments as the ABC Board, Department of Highways, Commission of Game & Inland Fisheries, Industrial Commission, Unemployment Compensation, etc.

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Because of this diversification, many persons have criticized the schools on the ground that they have been trying to do too much with the funds available. Opinions are frequently expressed that the schools' efforts are spread too thin, and that in an effort to afford a broader program which would appeal to and be valuable for all types of pupils, the schools are neglecting areas which in the opinion of such critics are more important.

In addition, a trend was noticed in higher salaries paid teachers in the vocational fields. Due to several causes, including federal participation in this program and in many cases difficulties in obtaining competent personnel, there was some indication that a higher salary incentive was being presented to teachers of these subjects than to teachers instructing in the traditional "fundamental" courses.

As a result of these and some other causes, many people were of the opinion that the schools were not adequately fulfilling their role in providing basic, fundamental training for all the children of the State. Complaints have been frequent that high school graduates going into business are not able to write, spell and punctuate correctly, and that those entering college are not able to cope with the college curriculum because of their inability to read well and to study.

The General Assembly in 1950 was confronted by an obvious need for increased appropriations for the public schools. Rising birth rates were overtaxing available school facilities in many localities. The need for more teachers was critical, and action to meet these conditions was imperative.

Each successive session of the General Assembly during recent years has been faced with the need for increased funds to maintain or enlarge important State services, but the resources of the State are not inexhaustible. In the face of such conditions, it was vitally important to insure that the State receive the utmost return in educational value for each dollar spent for public schools and that it discharge its obligation toward the schools in a manner which would insure, to the limit of its financial ability, adequate training in fundamental subjects. It was also desirable to know the extent to which the localities were bearing their proper part of the cost of the schools.

The General Assembly accordingly, at its 1950 session, adopted Senate Joint Resolution No. 26, which is as follows:

### SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 26

Creating a commission to study the establishment of  
a foundation program in education.

Whereas, the General Assembly should if possible define more clearly the responsibility of the State to finance public education; and

Whereas, the distribution of State school funds largely on the basis of average daily attendance, as at present may result in inequities in so far as educational opportunities offered in the various political subdivisions; and

Whereas, it seems that the State in cooperation with the localities should define a foundation program for education in the public free schools in terms of the services the people of the State consider essential

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for the children; now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the Senate, the House of Delegates concurring, that a commission be, and it hereby is, created to study and report upon the establishment of a foundation program containing the fundamental courses which are basic to education to be financed by the State, in cooperation with the localities, and the costs thereof including the distribution of school funds generally.

The commission shall consist of nine members of whom three shall be appointed by the Governor of whom one shall be from the State Board of Education and two shall be Professional Educators in the Public School System of Virginia, one shall be appointed by the President of the Senate from the membership of the Senate, and three shall be appointed from the House of Delegates by the Speaker thereof; the President of the Senate and Speaker of the House of Delegates shall, ex officio, be members of the commission. The commission shall advise and work with the State Board of Education in order to devise a foundation program in the fundamentals of education to be financed by the State and localities jointly. The commission shall complete its study and make its report to the Governor and General Assembly not later than November one, nineteen hundred fifty-one. The members of the commission shall receive no compensation for their services but shall be paid their necessary expenses incurred in the performance of their duties, for which there is hereby appropriated from the contingent fund of the General Assembly the sum of fifteen hundred dollars.

In compliance with this resolution, the Governor appointed J. D. Meade, of Petersburg, Leonard G. Muse, of Roanoke, member of the State Board of Education, and H. H. Walker, of Charlottesville; the President of the Senate appointed Lloyd C. Bird, of Chesterfield; and the Speaker of the House appointed J. Maynard Magruder, of Arlington, W. Tayloe Murphy, of Warsaw, and Landon R. Wyatt, of Danville. The President of the Senate, L. Preston Collins, of Marion, and the Speaker of the House, E. Blackburn Moore, of Berryville, served as members ex officio.

The Commission organized and elected Mr. Moore Chairman and Senator Bird Vice-Chairman. John B. Boatwright, Jr., Director of the Division of Statutory Research and Drafting, served as Secretary.

The Commission consulted with Dowell J. Howard, Superintendent of Public Instruction, and members of his staff; it met jointly with the State Board of Education and at other times consulted with individual members of that Board. The Commission desires to express its sincere appreciation to Mr. Howard and to the members of the State Board of Education for their assistance in connection with this study. The State Department of Education cooperated in furnishing information requested of it and in compiling factual information for the use of the Commission. In addition, the Superintendent of Public Instruction and his staff and the members of the State Board of Education materially aided the Commission by their advice and counsel. The Commission was also greatly assisted by the staff of the Division of Statutory Research and Drafting and desires to record its appreciation for the services rendered by the personnel of this agency.

The Commission also sought the assistance of lay and professional individuals and groups concerned with the schools. It requested and obtained

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the written views of Parent-Teacher Associations, the Virginia Educational Association, the Virginia Teachers Association, and other organizations and persons upon those matters which it considered the gist of its problem and questions suggested by the resolution. The replies received will be dealt with later in this report. After due notice in the press it also held a public hearing to which all interested persons were invited.

The Commission has carefully considered the facts as it has been able to learn them and the views of those who were kind enough to submit them and now presents its report.

### FINDINGS

The Commission finds that:

(1) In 1944 the Virginia Education Commission (the "Denny Commission") recommended that increased emphasis be placed upon the teaching of the fundamental subjects; this was endorsed by the General Assembly by a resolution adopted March 26, 1945; the Commission finds that the State Board of Education and the Superintendent of Public Instruction have achieved much in this field and are continually working toward this end.

(2) The curriculum in use in the public schools in Virginia includes instruction in those subjects which are acknowledged to be fundamental to all education.

(3) The major impediments to the most effective teaching of the fundamental tool subjects are (a) lack of a sufficient number of adequately trained primary and elementary teachers, and (b) too heavy teacher loads. Some policies pursued in the past have contributed to teacher shortages in the elementary field.

(4) Present methods of financing have not eliminated inequalities in the basic instruction afforded in different school divisions.

(5) Present school facilities and instructional personnel in many school divisions are inadequate to maintain present programs; increases in school population and continued inflation will tax these severely; caution must be exercised to avoid over-expansion of the program beyond those areas which can be thoroughly taught and adequately financed.

### RECOMMENDATIONS

The Commission recommends that:

(1) The school authorities intensify their efforts to secure an adequate number of properly trained teachers in the primary and elementary grades; to this end, the present practice of allotting teacher training scholarships to freshman students only when preparing for elementary teaching should be continued and the scholarships for freshmen should be increased from \$300 to \$400; for shortage fields in high school the scholarships should be continued on the present basis; in addition, provision should be made that future recipients may repay one year's scholarship by one year's teaching.

(2) Where salary differentials exist between teachers of different subjects and on different grade levels, who have comparable training, experience and

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demonstrated efficiency, these should be eliminated; and salary increases should be based on training, experience and demonstrated efficiency as well as on length of service.

(3) Further expansion of the curriculum in individual schools beyond the present minimum requirements should be discouraged until the fundamental subjects are thoroughly taught and the present program is adequately financed.

(4) The basis on which State funds are to be allocated to aid local schools is now under study by the State Department of Education and the Commission does not have the information on which to recommend a definitive formula; but it believes that in the provision of additional funds consideration should be given to the accomplishment of specific aims such as the reduction in size of classes and equalization of educational opportunity among the several localities.

### OUR PRESENT SCHOOL SYSTEM

The first task which the Commission faced was to examine, in the light of its directive from the legislature, the situation in which the school system now finds itself. It could not "define a foundation program for education" in a vacuum. It had to ascertain the services which the schools are now giving the people of the State before it could evaluate the "services the people of the State consider essential for the children".

The Commission accordingly established a procedure to learn what the people want by actually questioning some of those most directly concerned with the schools. A later section of this report is devoted to an analysis of the result of that survey. At the same time it sought to learn what the schools have accomplished in the past and what they are now doing, as well as programs which are contemplated for the future. In this latter connection the Commission wishes again to state that the State Department of Education, the State Board of Education and the Superintendent of Public Instruction were of inestimable aid in giving full and frank replies to inquiries made of them and in supplying for the Commission's consideration carefully prepared material.

### The Teaching of Fundamentals in Virginia Schools

During the past twenty years there has been in terms of money expended a tremendous expansion in the public schools of the State. This was true both as to State appropriations and as to funds expended locally for the schools. During this period the schools also underwent radical changes in other respects. Prior to the early thirties the subject matter of instruction and methods of education had been to some extent traditional and new educational ideas had been adopted slowly by a more or less gradual evolutionary process.

In the early thirties a departure was made from the subject matter and methods theretofore prevalent in the schools. The so-called "new curriculum" was offered which attempted to bring the schools of the State in line with "modern" education theories. Tried and successful methods were discarded and the school system embarked on what seems to have been too drastic a change in methodology and the subject matter of instruction. The results were unsatisfactory. Methods which, while they might have been eminently successful when tried with very small experimental classes, did not achieve satisfactory results in general application.

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Fortunately, this development proved to be a temporary phase. It did no lasting damage to the school system and it undoubtedly left much that is good. It is referred to here merely to emphasize and explain the desire of the people of the State to make sure that, in whatever direction development of curricula and teaching methods may go, adequate and thorough instruction in the fundamental tool subjects must never be lost sight of.

The Commission has examined the courses of study presently prescribed for the schools of Virginia to see if this is now the case. It finds that a carefully planned course of study designed to cover the tool subjects adequately has been set up by the State Board of Education for the use of the schools. This covers, among other subjects, mathematics, geography, history and civics, reading, writing and spelling. It is designed so that there will be presented to the child at each age level those concepts which pedagogical experience has demonstrated he can master. This course of study has had wide recognition throughout the nation and headed the list of curriculum materials used in developing the educational program in Japan in the early days of the occupation. To the extent, therefore, that proper facilities, proper instructional personnel and proper textbook material are available and to the extent that the guidance of the State Board of Education is followed by the localities, the present State program as developed by the State Board of Education under the direction of the State Board and under the supervision of the Superintendent of Public Instruction appears to be adequate and well adapted to providing fundamental learning.

### Where the System is Failing to Produce Maximum Results

As noted in the preceding section the Commission is impressed by the interest of the State Board of Education and the Superintendent of Public Instruction in the effective teaching of the tool subjects. Some reasons why better results are not produced will be next considered.

(1) There is a lack of a sufficient number of properly trained teachers in the primary and elementary grades. These grades are in a real sense the place where a foundation for education is laid. The most formative years of a child's life are spent in these grades. It is here that he first comes into intimate contact with the world outside his home, and acquires or fails to acquire the tools of learning which he will use in his later scholastic career and throughout his whole life.

Yet 89% of the substandard teachers (those who do not have the formal qualifications for proper certificates) are found in the elementary grades. In addition many teachers who have certificates to teach only in the upper elementary and secondary grades are found teaching in the lower elementary grades. The State Department of Education states that only 39% of degree teachers in grades one through five are properly certificated to teach in those grades. This has resulted in part from the fact that in the past lower salaries have been paid to elementary teachers than to teachers in high school and in the special fields. Such discrimination has now been generally eliminated except as to some teachers in special fields (who generally hold the highest certificates and are employed for twelve months), but the effects of this policy are still being felt. In addition there has been on the part of the public and on the part of some school administrators a feeling that while properly trained teachers are essential for high school, less rigid requirements are necessary in the elementary schools. Consequently efforts to recruit qualified elementary teachers have not been as strenuous as those to fill other vacancies.



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The Commission does not agree with this view. It does not wish to minimize the need for properly trained high school and special subject teachers but it feels that teaching in the elementary grades and particularly in the primary grades is as difficult as on any other level in the school system and that it is of vital importance to secure a sufficient number of properly trained primary teachers. It also feels that salaries paid the teachers in these grades should be the same as to those who teach, with the same qualifications, experience and efficiency in any other field.

The Commission is advised that the present policy of the State Board of Education is in favor of uniform salaries for teachers with the same qualifications, experience and efficiency regardless of subject matter or grade level. It commends the State Board on this policy and recommends it to the school boards of the several political subdivisions as a means of recruiting the needed teachers and improving the instruction now being offered at the primary level.

The problem of shortages of trained teachers for primary grades is an acute one. While providing uniform salaries for all teachers may in time tend to correct this condition, it is felt that merely removing this discrimination is not enough. The State has for some years been providing teacher training scholarships to attract students to the teaching profession. The administration of this program is vested in the State Board of Education which has discretion to grant these scholarships where the need is greatest. It is now allotting them to freshmen students only if they are planning to train for teaching in the elementary grades and to other students only for training to teach subjects in which there is a teacher shortage.

It has been estimated that there are now approximately four students training to teach in high school for every vacant position; and conversely that there are approximately four vacancies in the elementary grades for every trained teacher who is being graduated. While conditions such as these continue the Commission recommends that the State Board in allotting scholarships to students training for elementary teaching provide that the scholarships may be repaid by permitting cancellation by one year's teaching of the amount of one year's scholarship (these are presently fixed at \$300 for regular term scholarships and \$100 for summer term scholarships). It is felt that by thus doubling the present repayment credit there will be a much stronger incentive for a student to enter the field and for a graduate to remain in Virginia rather than to accept a position in another state at a higher entering salary. Furthermore it is recommended that these scholarships when given to freshmen be increased to \$400. (It is noted above that freshman scholarships are under present regulations awarded only to those students planning to teach in the elementary grades). The Commission is advised that the present appropriation is adequate to carry out the policy here recommended.

The Commission feels that there is one other improvement which could be made regarding teachers' salaries, applicable alike to all teachers, which would tend to improve the overall efficiency of instruction in our school system. In most localities a teacher receives an annual increment for a given number of years. The Commission does not believe that teachers should be granted this annual increment on years of service alone. In divisions where this may be true, this Commission recommends that salary increases should be based on training, experience, and demonstrated efficiency, as well as years of service. This policy is followed by the State with its employees, by

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industry with its employees, and by the armed services with their personnel. The Commission calls this to the attention of the several employing local school boards and suggests their consideration of adopting plans which will tend to place more emphasis on the demonstrated efficiency of the teacher, which in turn should increase the efficiency in instruction in their respective divisions.

(2) On a State-wide basis the teacher-pupil ratios do not appear to be excessive. The average teacher load throughout the State is 27.2 pupils, which compares very favorably with the teacher-pupil ratios recommended as possible of attainment by the State Board of Education. This low average figure however is the result of peculiar local conditions and does not reflect the true situation in some localities. A teacher load of in excess of fifty pupils is not unusual in many areas. It is obvious that under these conditions, little can be accomplished by even the most expert teacher in imparting the basic fundamentals of learning to the pupils. It is a tribute both to the patience and perseverance of teachers who have these classes and to the desire of pupils in the classes to learn that schools where such conditions exist succeed as well as they do in teaching the bare essentials.

In this connection the joint State - local responsibility for the public schools should be emphasized. The traditional policy in Virginia is for the State to assist the localities in order that the localities may have the kind of schools which meet their needs. It must be recognized that the present method of distributing the major portion of State aid for schools offers a temptation to the localities to permit high teacher-pupil ratios. These funds are distributed on the basis of the number of children in average daily attendance. A locality receives the same amount of money for sixty children whether they are in one classroom with one teacher or whether they are in two classes with thirty pupils each. But in the latter case the cost of instruction to the localities is doubled. The subject of distribution of school funds will be considered in a later section of this report but attention is called to the fact that State funds should be distributed on a basis which will tend to improve conditions in those schools which now have high teacher-pupil ratios rather than be influential in perpetuating or aggravating such conditions.

Attention is also called to the crowded conditions in some school divisions. At the present time there are 35,674 elementary pupils who attend school on the basis of two shifts a day. This condition prevails in 44 school divisions and is not conducive to adequate teaching.

The need for additional school buildings and the difficulties which lie in the way of furnishing the same need not be labored. During the biennium 1950-52 the General Assembly, upon recommendation of the Governor, made available \$45,000,000 to assist the localities in the construction of needed school buildings. Although shortages of materials have severely hampered the building programs of the localities, some of the more critical conditions are being alleviated. The figures cited above indicate the difficulties which still persist.

(3) Another deficiency in the teaching of fundamental subjects in the Virginia school system which was called to the attention of the Commission is the inadequacy of text and other instructional material in certain fields. A previous study of the teaching of history and government in the public schools of the State revealed the inadequacy of material in these subjects. Remedial action instigated by the General Assembly is now being taken by a

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legislative Commission working with the State Board of Education.

Particular dissatisfaction was expressed to the Commission as to instructional material relating to reading. It was suggested at the public hearing held by the Commission that the old McGuffey's readers, so long the most important text used by the schools throughout the nation, would be an improvement in content over some of the material now being used.

The Commission recognizes that the selection of text books is a highly technical matter. The lay observer can only evaluate the results which are being obtained by whatever materials and methods are adopted. However sufficient sentiment was expressed to the Commission to indicate that a re-examination of teaching materials available for instruction in all of the tool subjects is in order. The Commission suggests that the attention of the Department of Education and the State Board of Education should be directed to this criticism and it is recommended that, if remedial action is found to be indicated, the State Board of Education continue to take whatever steps are necessary to correct the deficiencies found to be present.

(4) Even if an adequate supply of thoroughly trained teachers were available, if classes were kept to reasonable sizes in all schools in the State, and if the best teaching materials were in hand, there would still be some pupils who would not be able to profit from instruction. These are those who are handicapped by physical or mental impediments which limit the profit which they can secure from instruction of the type which is satisfactory to the majority of pupils in our schools.

The Commission has been impressed by the large number of pupils who may thus be classified. The hard of hearing, those with sight impairments, and the mentally retarded constitute an unfortunately large group of the school age population of the State.

Much is being accomplished for the benefit of this class of pupils at the present time. In a few localities limited facilities for special classes are available for some of the pupils who need them, although the Commission is not advised that the situation is being adequately handled in any locality in the State, due to lack of funds or lack of facilities. Much more general is a program for early detection of children with physical handicaps. In past years such a child frequently was merely regarded as dull because he did not appear to benefit from instruction whereas in fact there was an impairment of sight or hearing which rendered it impossible for him to participate fully in the activities around him.

Public health officers and other members of the medical and dental profession have taken steps in many localities to alleviate these conditions. Clinics are held at which all children are examined and physical defects are determined at ages early enough to allow them to be remedied thus allowing a child to overcome his handicap and participate normally in activities. Generally speaking the correction of conditions which are found is left to the parent of the particular child. Many civic organizations, such as service clubs, have been aware of this problem. Programs have been instituted by such organizations designed both to diagnose physical deficiencies in the early stages and to assist the parents of children having such defects in securing the necessary medical or other treatment directed toward the correction of these defects.

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The Commission is gratified to find how much is being done along these lines. It commends the school authorities, the public health authorities, the civic organizations and the medical and dental profession on their efforts to aid the handicapped children of the State. It urges citizens of the several political subdivisions of the State to consider the intensification of such efforts and the adoption of similar programs where these are not now in force. It recommends to the school authorities that they explore the possibilities of having programs for the correction of physical deficiencies sponsored by local civic and service clubs and similar organizations. It also suggests that the State Board of Education give consideration to the best means by which the State can foster and encourage such activities in the hope that a long range program may be developed which will result both in better health and in better education for the children of the Commonwealth.

In connection with the above discussion of the retarded and handicapped children, it should also be mentioned that our school system is not as effective as it should be in dealing with the child who has exceptional intelligence. If instruction is planned for the average intelligence level the brighter children run the risk of being bored and losing interest. To develop such children fully they must be properly stimulated; otherwise poor learning habits will result. To some extent a reduction in teacher-pupil ratios will benefit these children. Of more importance is providing teachers who are sufficiently competent to provide the opportunity for children to advance in proportion to their ability, without at the same time disrupting the program of instruction for the average or below average pupils.

### VIEWS OF PARENTS, TEACHERS AND OTHERS

The resolution creating the Commission, citing the desirability of defining "a foundation program for education. . . in terms of the services the people of the State consider essential for the children" directed the Commission to study and report upon "a foundation program containing the fundamental courses which are basic to education". In order to carry out the requirements of the resolution the Commission attempted to determine with the aid of lay and professional groups throughout the State, (a) the purposes of education in Virginia; (b) the subject matter offering essential to achieving these purposes; (c) the extent to which the basic purposes of education are being met; and (d) the best means of financing a foundation program. An analysis of the view of these organizations and individuals is set forth below.

The analysis of questionnaires was made under the direction of Dr. Arthur M. Jarman, Professor of Education at the University of Virginia. The Commission commends and thanks Dr. Jarman for the thoroughness with which this task was accomplished and it expresses to Dr. Jarman and to the President of the University of Virginia, who made his services available to the Commission, its sincere appreciation.

In the next section of this report are set forth excerpts from Dr. Jarman's report to the Commission. A limited number of copies of the full text of the report are available and the Commission has authorized that these be released for the consideration of interested persons.

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### Excerpts from Consultant's Report

#### 1. Sources of Information

Questionnaires were sent to all Parent-Teacher groups in the State; to organizations of professional educators; to departments of the Virginia Education Association; to the Virginia Teachers Association; to the Virginia Federation of Women's Clubs; to the Virginia Division of the American Association of University Women; and to several other groups.

Since business firms employ many high school graduates, information was solicited from persons connected with organizations which employ large numbers of people. The returns from this inquiry, however, were not sufficient to be significant, and are not reflected in the following analysis.

#### 2. Procedure Used in the Analysis of the Questionnaire

Requests were made as follows -

\*\*\* This commission is seeking information from interested groups as to the courses that should be taught in the public schools, and what the schools should seek to accomplish generally.

"The commission is making a sincere effort to ascertain what is a foundation program for public education. The thinking of interested citizens on this point will greatly aid the commission and in the opinion of the commission is vital. Consequently, your group is being asked to render a service to the commission and the Commonwealth by making the same type study on the basis of the enclosed resolution as your commission has been asked to make. \*\*\*

"At two previous meetings of the commission the following questions have been discussed at length and we would appreciate, in addition to your study of the resolution, your comments specifically on these questions?

- (1) What courses are most important for the public schools to teach? Please list these alphabetically and give your reason as to why each course should be taught.
- (2) What, in your opinion, are the objectives of the public schools? That is, should the schools attempt to educate our children for all possible conditions that they may encounter in life, or should the schools offer thorough training in selected courses which will provide the basis on which the pupil may continue his education, either in college or through his daily life experience?
- (3) What are the respective responsibilities of the home and the school? That is, is it the responsibility of the home or the school to teach courtesy, living with one's fellow citizens, and other matters which historically are the responsibility of the home?

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"The commission is most anxious to have your opinions on these matters and we sincerely hope you will find it possible to cooperate with us. \*\*\*"

All but a very small number of the replies were from organizations representing memberships ranging from relatively small numbers up to several hundred. No accurate estimate can be made of the total number of persons who have had a part, directly or indirectly, in this survey, but a very conservative figure would certainly be in excess of 20,000.

Tabulation procedure. Any reply which did not give details was eliminated. A reply which was specific on some questions but not on others was tabulated only as to those matters concerning which definite replies were given. A reply which contradicted itself in answering any question was not tabulated as to that particular question. On the other hand, every effort was made to include in the tabulation all replies which might conceivably be construed as setting forth a specific point of view. As an extra precaution an attempt was made to select for special study those responses which seemed to reveal evidence of careful consideration and thoughtful comment. There were 85 responses included in this group. These replies are used in Table II.

Seeking a working basis. One of the purposes of the questionnaire which was sent to several hundred lay and professional groups was to try to determine or define what the function of the public school should be.

What the people think. Table I summarizes roughly the opinions expressed in the responses of 379 lay and professional organizations.

In Table II are analyzed and summarized 85 replies which were selected because of their significant comments, concerning the objectives of the public schools. There were 49 P. T. A. groups, 23 professional groups, six other organized groups, and seven individuals represented in this tabulation.

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TABLE I

Objectives of the Public Schools as Indicated  
by the Responses Submitted by 379 Lay  
and Professional Organizations

Classification of responses	No. of Responses
The schools should attempt to educate children for all possible conditions that they may encounter in life.	111
The schools should offer thorough training in selected courses which will provide the basis on which the pupil may continue his education, either in college or through his daily experiences.	124
The objectives of the schools should not be restricted to either of these, but should offer opportunities to prepare for higher education or life activities.	144
Total of classifiable responses	379

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TABLE II

How Eighty-five Selected Groups and Individuals  
Responded to Questions about the  
Objectives of the Public Schools

Classification of responses	Number of responses by				Total
	P. T. A. groups	Professional groups	Other groups	Individuals	
1. Listed objectives but ignored the second part of the question	8	6	3	1	18
2. Schools should "attempt to educate our children for all possible conditions they may encounter in life."	17	4	1	1	23
3. The schools should "offer thorough training in selected courses which will provide the basis on which the pupil may continue his education, either in college or through his daily life experiences."	13	7	1	5	26
4. Statement of the schools' objectives should not be limited to either of the statements above	9	5	0	0	14
Not classified	2	1	1	0	4
Total	49	23	6	7	85



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The conclusions of the Consultant with respect to this portion of the questionnaire were:

"The task of trying to classify and analyze 430 reports from lay and professional groups in an attempt to get one or more general patterns of thinking with respect to the objectives of the public schools was a difficult one, and for a time seemed an impossible one. However, the tabulation of all responses and a careful examination of a selected group of 85 reports seemed to justify the following conclusion:

"An impressive majority of parents and teachers in Virginia do not believe that the purpose of public education can be served best by emphasizing the mastery of 'selected courses which will provide the basis on which the pupil may continue his education, either in college or through his daily experience', if such an emphasis interferes with the all-round development of the child to the end that he may be prepared, so far as possible, to meet life situations as they arise.

"This statement does not imply that 'courses' may be eliminated or that they may be carelessly selected. In view of the evidence which has been accumulated from the questionnaire study, the following statement is just as defensible as the one given above.

"The education for citizenship in a democracy requires the careful selection and use of basic courses, activities, teaching materials, facilities, and teaching personnel with a view to achieving the purpose of education and should be considered of merit only in terms of contribution made to that end."

### 3. Subjects and Courses in the Public Schools

The first question listed in the questionnaire previously mentioned was stated as follows: "What courses are most important for the public schools to teach? Please list these alphabetically and give your reason as to why each course should be taught."

It should be noted that the respondent was not limited to courses for the elementary grades or to the high school. As a result no attempt was made to classify the replies except in terms of courses or subjects.

No checklist or other guide was furnished with the questionnaire, except to request the respondent to list alphabetically. Since the same course was often referred to by several names, the alphabetical list was very long, e. g., the same course was listed by different organizations as industrial arts, mechanical arts, shop, woodwork, etc. The original alphabetical listing included 179 different "courses" ranging in frequency of mention from one to 342. Since there may be some significance in the tendency to use common terminology for some courses and a variety of names for others, a separate tabulation was made where more than 100 respondents indicated a course by a particular title, e. g., "Reading". Table III gives this list of courses and the frequency of each. In this table, where any addition has been made to the number of replies under the specific title of the course, the additional titles have been placed in parenthesis along with their frequencies.

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TABLE III

Courses Suggested as "Most Important" by 100 or more  
of the 430 Groups Responding to the Questionnaire

Name of Course	Number Advocating the Course
Arithmetic	342
Art (including Drawing 32) *	212
Civics (including Government 79) *	229
English	245
Geography	250
Health and Physical Education (including safety 46 and Hygiene 27) *	325
History	295
Home Economics (including Sewing 2 and cooking 2) *	140
Music	213
Reading	316
Science	223
Spelling	210
Writing (including penmanship 2) *	269

\* The material included in the parenthesis has been added to the first  
title of the course.

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Organization of related courses. Table IV represents an attempt to organize the courses, which were listed alphabetically by the respondents, into related areas. For example, in addition to Arithmetic, Mathematics was listed by one name or another 162 times. A more adequate picture of the Mathematics situation may be had, if immediately after "Arithmetic" we observe that other Mathematics courses were listed which were not included under Arithmetic, i. e., Algebra, Plane and Solid Geometry, Trigonometry, and Business Mathematics.

Related subjects have been brought together so far as possible in the tabulation. For example, the social studies group has been listed as "Civics and Government", "Geography", "History", and Social Studies other than Civics, Government, Geography, and History". Under the latter heading, subtitles have been given. It should be noted that where subdivisions of a subject area are given in the tabulation, the total frequency of listing is indicated in the second column. The totals of frequency of subdivisions are given in the final column.

TABLE IV

General Classification of Responses Submitted by 430 Groups

Classification	Number responses by sub-division	Total Responses
Arithmetic		342
Mathematics other than Arithmetic		
Algebra	43	
Business Math	16	
Geometry	6	
Plane Geometry	38	
Solid Geometry	23	
Trigonometry	28	
Other Mathematics	8	162
Art		212
Civics and Government		229
Geography		250
History		295
Social Studies other than Civics, Government, Geography and History		
Citizenship	50	
Economics	15	
Human Relations	26	
Sociology	13	
Other social studies	59	163
English		245
Reading		316

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TABLE IV (continued)

Classification	Number responses by sub-division	Total Responses
Spelling		210
Language Arts other than English,		
Reading and Spelling		
Dramatics	43	
Journalism	14	
Language Arts	61	
Language and Literature	41	
Speech	86	
Other Classifications	12	257
Commercial Subjects		
Bookkeeping	29	
Business Education	39	
Commercial Courses	42	
Shorthand	28	
Stenography	10	
Typing	42	
Office Training	9	199
Guidance (including Child Guidance and Vocational Guidance)		25
Industrial Arts, (including manual arts, shopwork and handcrafts)		165
Foreign Languages		
Latin	54	
Modern foreign language	73	
French	33	
German	14	
Spanish	34	
Other	6	214
Health and Physical Education (including Safety and Hygiene)		295
Home Economics		140
Music		213
Science		
Biology	58	
Chemistry	58	
Physics	51	
Science	223	390
Vocational Education other than Home Economics & Commercial Subjects		
Agriculture	70	

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TABLE IV (continued)

Classification	Number responses by sub-division	Total Responses
Distributive Education	16	
Painting	15	
Vocational training	80	
Other (26 other classifications)	85	266
Writing		269

Interpretation of responses. We find Arithmetic, Reading, and Health and Physical Education heading the list in terms of frequency of the listing. Others that were listed by more than 200 respondents were Art, Civics, English, Geography, History, Music, Science, Spelling, and Writing.

From this we observe that the courses which we generally think of as basic, e. g., Reading, Writing, Spelling and Arithmetic are popular in the minds of the people represented in this study. It is probably surprising to see so much interest expressed in the social sciences -- Civics, Government, Geography, History, and others --, Art, and Music. In spite of the fact that Art and Music are not among the required courses in Virginia, they seem to have a place on a par with Spelling according to the listing of the "most important" courses.

Grammar, as a course separate from other language art courses, was not listed as a definite subject. That does not mean that those responding intended to eliminate Grammar from the curriculum of the schools. More likely they have become familiar with the more functional approach in which correct usage of speech is taught in relation to other language arts courses.

It should be noted that in Table IV Home Economics, Industrial Arts, Commercial Subjects, and Vocational Education showed considerable popularity in comparison with such courses as might be regarded high school mathematics courses, high school science courses, or foreign language courses.

The Consultant concludes, as to these replies:

"Probably the most important observation which one can make from the listing of the most important courses by 430 lay and professional groups is that there is very little that is unusual about it. If one should use the information in Tables III and IV to develop curricula for an elementary school and a high school, he would likely come out with such a program as he would find in one of better school systems where the schools are large enough to make possible a variety of courses and funds are available to provide the necessary teaching staff and facilities."

Comparison with legal requirements. The State law requires the teaching in the elementary schools of spelling, reading, writing, arithmetic, grammar, geography, physiology and hygiene, drawing, civil government, history of the United States, and history of Virginia, accident prevention, evils of alcohol

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and narcotics, physical and health education, and morality. Allowed by statute, but not required, are handcrafts and domestic arts. (See Virginia School Law, 1950, Sections 22-233 to 22-240). Music is taught in most of the public schools with the approval of the State Department of Education. Out of local funds, a few localities provide for kindergarten and junior primary classes; and, in a few instances, prevocational shop work is offered in elementary schools.

On the secondary school level, the following are required by statute: Study of documents of Virginia history and United States Constitution, accident prevention, physical and health education, and moral education. (See Virginia School Laws, 1950, Sections 22-234, 22-235, 22-237, 22-238.)

The following courses are authorized by statute but not required: industrial arts, agriculture, home economics, and commercial subjects, (See Virginia School Law, 1950, sec. 22-239).

The official course of study, approved by the State Board of Education, provides for eight units of required courses, including the following: English, 4 units; Virginia and U. S. history, 1 unit; science, 1 unit; mathematics, 1 unit; government, 1/2 unit, vocational civics, 1/2 unit. Beginning with the school session, 1953-1954, government and vocational civics will be replaced with 1 unit of Virginia and U. S. government. Physical education is required each year in high school but carries no unit credit. The remainder of the courses required for graduation are chosen from a list of electives approved by the State Board of Education.

These electives may involve the academic subjects such as foreign languages, chemistry, physics, algebra, geometry and trigonometry; or subjects in the areas of vocational education and general education, such as agriculture, home economics, art, music, history and business education; or the program of electives may be made up of some combination of the academic and the practical courses.

An examination of the requirements and authorizations by statute, of the requirements and authorizations of the State Board of Education, and of the practices among the schools does not indicate any conflict between legal requirements and authorizations and the expressed opinions of the majority of the 430 organizations and individuals responding to the questionnaire.

#### 4. Responsibility of the Home and School

The third and last item in the questionnaire which was sent to several hundred lay and professional organizations throughout the State was concerned with the following:

What are the respective responsibilities of the home and the school? That is, is it the responsibility of the home or the school to teach courtesy, living with one's fellow citizens, or other matters which historically are the responsibility of the home?

A summary of the replies is given in Table V. It is clear that only a small minority, 29 out of 179, would have the responsibility for teaching "courtesy, living with one's fellow citizens, and other matters which

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historically are the responsibility of the home" limited to either the home or the school. These groups believe that it is a joint responsibility and that the school should assume its share of the responsibility along with the home and the church.

Our General Assembly has not been unmindful of public opinion on the teaching of citizenship traits. Section 22-238 of the Virginia School Laws, 1950, reads as follows: "The entire scheme of training shall emphasize moral education through lessons given by teachers and imparted by appropriate reading selections."

TABLE V

Is It the Responsibility of the Home or the School to Teach Courtesy, Living with One's Fellow Citizens, and Other Matters which Historically are the Responsibility of the Home?

Type of response	Number of responses
Responsibility of the home	18
Responsibility of the school	11
Responsibility of both the home and the school	126
Responsibility of the home, the school and the church	24
Total responses on this question	179

STATE SUPPORT FOR SCHOOLS DURING PAST TWENTY YEARS

To indicate the extent to which the General Assembly has been conscious of the needs of public school education and to which it has devoted available State revenues to providing support for the public schools, the Commission has compiled the table set out below. It shows over a twenty-year period the general fund revenues of the State, which are the source from which the general purpose programs of the State are supported, and the amounts expended for public free school purposes during the same years. These figures indicate a tremendous increase in absolute amounts expended for public schools and show that these expenditures have constituted a relatively uniform percentage of the available funds.

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EXPENDITURES FOR PUBLIC SCHOOLS  
 Compared with  
 GENERAL FUND REVENUES \*

For Fiscal Years Ended June 30, 1931 through 1951

<u>Year</u>	<u>General Fund Revenues</u>	<u>Expenditures for Public Schools</u>	<u>Per Cent for Public Schools</u>
1931	\$ 19,532,839	\$ 7,335,941	37.56
1932	16,602,196	7,267,111	43.77
1933	14,423,392	6,752,719	46.79
1934	12,771,539	5,757,747	45.08
1935	16,744,883	7,335,387	43.81
1936	18,872,891	7,245,119	38.39
1937	21,523,564	8,009,837	37.21
1938	22,721,021	8,217,358	36.17
1939	23,156,654	9,467,635	40.89
1940	23,804,168	9,633,175	40.47
1941	29,819,214	10,519,566	35.28
1942	37,052,304	10,276,568	27.74
1943	42,162,363	12,074,812	28.64
1944	42,761,660	14,047,623	32.85
1945	49,098,125	15,336,118	31.24
1946	53,291,544	18,533,632	34.78
1947	59,623,105	25,906,719	43.45
1948	67,713,260	30,064,599	44.40
1949	86,788,482	34,618,656	39.89
1950	95,729,628	37,134,173	38.79

\* Note: The general fund includes all revenues of the State which are not specifically earmarked for the operation of such State departments as the ABC Board, Department of Highways, Commission of Game and Inland Fisheries, Industrial Commission, Unemployment and Compensation Commission, etc.



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### ADDITIONAL STATE AID FOR SCHOOLS

The figures cited above indicate the strides made in Virginia during the past two decades in support of the public schools by the State. The replies to the questionnaires sent out by the Commission indicate that the people of the State want such subjects as arithmetic, art, civics, English, health and physical education, history, home economics, music, reading, science, spelling and writing taught in the schools. These subjects are embodied in the present courses of study promulgated by the State Board of Education.

The Commission was interested to learn that high schools are now accredited by the State Board of Education primarily on the basis of offering and not on an arbitrary enrollment figure. To be accredited, a high school must offer thirty units. Eight of these are prescribed. These are

English - 4 units	Social Studies - 2 units
Mathematics - 1 unit	Va. & U.S. History (1 unit)
Laboratory Science - 1 unit	Va. & U.S. Government (1 unit)
Health and Physical Education - 4 years	

The remaining twenty-two units are in elective subjects which may be adjusted to meet local needs. The entire thirty need not be offered in a single year, but must be available to a student during four years of high school.

The accrediting of Junior High Schools is based on the same standards which apply in the case of four and five year high schools and senior high schools except in the matter of offering. The standard relating to minimum program of studies or scope of offering which requires that a minimum of 30 units of credit be provided during the last four years does not apply for junior high school.

The expansion of the school system in Virginia has left some areas which are earlier referred to in this report in which there is much room for improvement. The Commission feels that the State Board of Education and the Superintendent of Public Instruction are aware of the needs of our public school system. It believes that the time has come for the schools to consolidate their gains and to strengthen the present program before embarking on new ventures in education. In short the Commission believes that the State's responsibility is to insure that schools throughout the State are rendering adequate services in accordance with the present program before the State becomes committed to the support of additional major educational endeavors.

There are many localities in which the schools at the present time are far ahead in many respects of the State school system as a whole. The Commission is gratified at the initiative displayed in these localities and feels that the State should assist these localities in the provision of a basic program leaving to the localities the decision as to whether to go ahead and broaden their public school activities. For this reason the Commission does not believe that a complete equalization program is desirable or feasible. Equalization would have the effect of cutting off all State support from some counties and increasing State aid to others.

The Commission accordingly recommends that some State aid to all local schools be continued. This will insure that the localities which are presently receiving State funds and are able to go far beyond the State's contribution in support of their own schools will continue to receive such aid.

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The Commission feels that some of the additional funds which may be provided for public schools should not be on an "across the board" basis but should be directed towards achieving certain specific ends. The first of these ends is a greater measure of equalization of educational opportunity throughout the State. Increased aid along this line, however, should not be merely a gift from the State but should be given in such a manner as to encourage increased local effort in support of schools.

The Commission does not believe that any person or any group is wise enough to establish a formula which will be perfectly equitable by which local effort can be measured. It is well aware of some of the defects in the standard which has been used in the past - that of a certain amount of revenue derived from true real estate values. At the same time it feels that this standard, inadequate as it is, is becoming more uniform throughout the State. Reassessments made by localities with the assistance of the State Department of Taxation have been made in 73 counties and 17 cities at the present time. This program is continuing and the Commission feels that in time this standard will be relatively uniform throughout all the counties and cities of the State.

In the distribution of State funds in addition to the equalization factor and the incentive to local effort, the Commission feels that reduction of excessive teacher-pupil ratios is one of the aims which should be sought. There has been some unhappy experience in the past in connection with the allocation of State funds based on numbers of teacher-units and minimum salaries for teachers. However, the Commission feels that since State funds are provided primarily for teachers' salaries the method of distribution should be so related to the number of teachers in a school division that at least the locality will not be able to save money on teachers' salaries and at the same time participate on a normal basis in equalization funds.

### CONCLUSION

By way of summarization the Commission desires to point out that in accordance with the relationship which has existed between the Commonwealth and its political subdivisions in the management, control and support of the public schools for many decades, the State's responsibilities are two. The first is to provide leadership with very limited control to the end that the local school divisions will be able to call upon the State and receive advice and assistance in connection with their problems. The second phase of the State's responsibility is to assist the localities in financing their school systems. The Constitution of Virginia provides that certain funds are to be distributed to the localities on the basis of population. Some State funds have for many years been distributed upon an even more accurate indication of need - average daily attendance in the schools.

The Commission feels that in providing additional funds consideration should also be given to remedying the deficiencies which are found in the State-wide school system and to equalizing the opportunity afforded every child in the State to secure an education which is adequate to enable him to take his

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rightful place, perform his obligations and enjoy his benefits as a citizen of the Commonwealth.

Respectfully submitted,

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