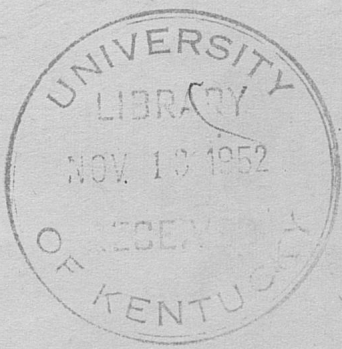


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● Commonwealth of Kentucky ●
EDUCATIONAL BULLETIN

**PRINCIPLES OF A
FOUNDATION PROGRAM
OF EDUCATION**
(A Handbook)



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DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Wendell P. Butler
Superintendent of Public Instruction



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Commonwealth of Kentucky
EDUCATIONAL BULLETIN

PRINCIPLES OF A
FOUNDATION PROGRAM
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DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
COLUMBUS, KENTUCKY

1950

OCTOBER 1950

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FOREWORD

May I take this opportunity to express the appreciation of the school people of Kentucky to Governor Lawrence Wetherby and Lieutenant Governor Emerson Beauchamp for their interest in the problems of education in Kentucky. Both Governor Wetherby and Lieutenant Governor Beauchamp have assisted in every way possible in giving encouragement to those who desired that a study of public education be made. I would also like to express gratitude to the Legislative Research Commission for its willingness to conduct a study on education in Kentucky. The General Assembly of 1952 gave the citizens of Kentucky the opportunity to amend Section 186 of the Constitution. If this amendment is successful, the General Assembly of 1954 will be able to enact into law a defensible program of education for the children of Kentucky.

WENDELL P. BUTLER
Superintendent of Public Instruction

PURPOSES

The purposes of this bulletin are:

1. To provide information about the present status of public education in Kentucky.
2. To supply the reader with information about a minimum foundation program. Some of the essentials in other states and the possibility of their adoption for Kentucky are considered. Also enumerated are some of the steps taken up to now in developing an understanding of foundation programs generally.
3. To make this information available to interested persons in the teaching profession and interested lay citizens.
4. To meet a need for information at the present time while the research study is getting under way.

Chapter I

BACKGROUND OF THE BULLETIN

For many years members of the teaching profession and interested laymen have been concerned about the status of education in Kentucky. This concern grows out of an interest in the educational future of Kentucky's children. One example of this may be found in the December, 1933, Bulletin of the Bureau of School Service of the University of Kentucky which contains the following statement from a speech by Dr. James W. Martin at the 10th Annual Education Conference:

"In order to meet the constitutional difficulty already referred to, the Constitution of Kentucky should be amended to render valid any plan of distributing state school funds which the legislature may adopt."

In recent years two amendments which partially followed the above recommendation have been passed. Both were designed to equalize more nearly educational opportunities. The first amendment permitted the General Assembly to distribute ten per cent of the school fund on a basis other than per capita. A few years later the second amendment was passed permitting the General Assembly to distribute up to twenty-five per cent of the school fund on a basis other than per capita. The passage of these two amendments indicates that the people of Kentucky desire to support a total program of education for the entire state.

The 1952 General Assembly made it possible for the voters of Kentucky to amend Section 186 of the Constitution in November, 1953. The enactment of this amendment would permit the General Assembly to determine the method of distributing the common school fund.

Immediately after the General Assembly adjourned, members of the State Department of Education, in session with leaders from five state colleges, planned a series of workshops to promote understanding of the kind of educational program Kentucky needs and should have.

The Delegate Assembly of the Kentucky Education Association in April of 1952 unanimously requested that a workshop be con-

ducted on the campus of the University of Kentucky so that public school people could study the essentials of a minimum foundation program. This workshop and the four others conducted at the state institutions of higher education were well attended and enthusiastically supported. The Kentucky Education Association Leadership Conference at Richmond in August had as its central theme, **The Development of a Foundation Program for Kentucky Schools**. The conference was attended by more than 400 persons who spent two and one-half days formulating recommendations relative to the important features of a foundation program.

The Kentucky Education Association and State Department of Education jointly sponsored a conference at the University of Kentucky on September 12 and 13. The purpose of this conference, which was attended by approximately 75 people, was to assist in developing the material for this bulletin. On September 15-16, ten persons from the University of Kentucky, State Department of Education, and the KEA met at the University of Kentucky to assemble this material. Many individuals and agencies have helped in the preparation of this bulletin.

The Legislative Research Commission, on June 23, 1952, authorized a study of education in Kentucky. In September, Lieutenant Governor Emerson Beauchamp appointed an advisory committee of eleven members to work with the Research Commission. This study is now in its initial stages. Dr. L. D. Haskew, Dean of the College of Education of the University of Texas, has agreed to serve as a consultant. The Legislative Research Commission and the Advisory Committee will meet together for the purpose of setting up a statewide organization to promote the study. Professional and lay organizations interested in improving educational opportunity for Kentucky's children have pledged their wholehearted support to this project.

Since the authorization of the amendment in March, thousands of interested school people and laymen have met and discussed the future of education in Kentucky. It is hoped that this bulletin will assist in presenting ideas, certain essentials of a foundation program, and suggestions for a plan of action that will be helpful in forwarding the work that is to be done by the Legislative Research Commission.

Chapter II

THE PRESENT SITUATION

What is the present situation in the public schools in Kentucky? What are the strong points? What are some of the weaknesses and inadequacies? The people of Kentucky want to know the answers to these questions.

STRONG POINTS IN THE PROGRAM

The people of Kentucky have worked for decades to improve their educational program. As a result, some of the strong points are:

1. Laws governing local district organization, for the most part, are adequate.
2. Local tax rates indicate the people's willingness to support education.
3. An outstanding program of teacher education is being carried on. A strong in-service training program has been developed to assist teachers.
4. A flexible and efficient system of certification has been developed.
5. Free textbooks are provided by the State for the first eight grades. A new textbook adoption law permits the local district to make its own adoption from the state multiple list.
6. Teachers are protected by tenure, sick leave, and retirement provisions.

Local District Organization

The County Administration Law of 1908 made the county, instead of the local district, the unit of school administration. This Act was one of the most outstanding and far-reaching pieces of school legislation in the history of the State. Under its provisions, many local school districts combined into larger units in order to improve their educational program.

The Report of the Kentucky Educational Commission in 1933 proposed a school code which was enacted into law by the 1934 General Assembly. This code gave Kentucky a local school district organization which is the envy of most states. Under it members of

local boards of education are elected on a nonpartisan basis and appoint the superintendent of schools. In turn, all personnel must be elected on the superintendent's recommendation.

The school code makes provision for the voluntary merger of independent districts with county districts. Under this provision, the total number of districts has decreased from 371 in May, 1933, to 228 in September, 1952. The majority of the present districts satisfy most of the criteria for a good school district.

Local Effort

A strong effort is being made by local boards of education to support education even though the low level of local assessments in some districts must be recognized. A local board of education has no control over assessments, although it does have control over the tax rate up to the statutory maximum of \$1.50. For the 1952-53 school year, 203 of the 228 school districts are levying the maximum tax rate.

Prior to the 1946-47 school year county school districts could levy a tax rate of only seventy-five cents. The General Assembly, in 1946, gave county districts the right to levy a school tax up to the \$1.50 maximum already permitted independent school districts. The first year after this law became effective, sixty-five county districts increased their levies above the old maximum and six districts went to the new maximum rate of \$1.50. In 1952-53, 102 county districts are levying the maximum rate and only one county district is levying less than one dollar.

The General Assembly in 1950 enacted a special voted building fund tax law. Under this law, a majority of the voters of a district may vote to levy a tax of from five to fifty cents for capital outlay purposes. The voters of eighteen districts have authorized these special levies.

Teacher Education Program and High Training Level of Teachers

A sound teacher education program is being carried on in our colleges. Kentucky's teachers are better prepared today than ever before to guide the education of her children. The median training level of teaching personnel is above the A. B. degree. Of the approxi-

mately 20,000 teachers employed in 1950-51, 53.5 per cent held the baccalaureate or master's degree.

The Division of Teacher Education and Certification of the Department of Education, working with the colleges, is conducting an in-service training program that is upgrading the training level of teachers. The professional growth of teachers is being forwarded by the Kentucky Education Association working through the local education associations. In addition, the Kentucky Commission for Teacher Education and Professional Standards is providing leadership in the area of teacher education and professional growth.

Flexible and Efficient System of Certification

In keeping with a nation-wide trend, all certification authority was placed in the State Board of Education by the General Assembly in 1950. Certificates, however, are issued only on curricula prescribed by the Council on Public Higher Education. This is a significant step in a long-range plan for the teaching profession to accept responsibility for setting its own standards, as do other professions.

Free Textbooks and New Textbook Law

Since 1934, the state has provided some free textbooks. At present, basal and some optional textbooks are provided for the first eight grades. Under a law enacted by the 1952 General Assembly, all local districts will be permitted to adopt their textbooks from a multiple list approved by the State Textbook Commission.

Tenure, Sick Leave, and Retirement

Teachers have the advantage of sick leave benefits which are cumulative up to twenty days. Teachers are members of an actuarially sound retirement system which is being gradually strengthened and expanded. Trained teachers are protected by a strong tenure law.

UNMET NEEDS OF KENTUCKY'S CHILDREN

Education in Kentucky presents many problems, although much progress has been made in the last fifty years. The unmet needs of Kentucky's children are many. Some of these needs are:

1. The school housing situation and health conditions are deplorable.
2. Pupil transportation facilities are inadequate.
3. Attendance centers are too small for the most effective program.
4. Curricular offerings are limited.
5. Insufficient administrative and supervisory personnel are employed to provide educational leadership.
6. Lack of libraries and instructional materials indicates the poverty of the usual educational program.
7. The shortage of trained teachers is critical.

School Housing and Health Conditions

The school housing situation in Kentucky is deplorable. The needs brought about by the increased enrollments of the fifties, plus the backlog of construction carried over from the depression years and the war years, have created problems in practically every school district.

The School Facilities Survey in 1951 showed that at the beginning of the present school year 7,511 new classrooms were needed. Of these classrooms, 1,138 were needed to relieve overcrowding; 795 were needed to house increases in enrollment; and 5,578 were needed to replace obsolete buildings.

The survey also showed that 80 per cent of all the school buildings in Kentucky, housing 60 per cent of the elementary school children, do not have central heating systems. Twenty-five per cent of Kentucky's children are in schools with hand-operated water facilities. Thirty-eight per cent attend schools with outdoor toilets.

By nation-wide standards, **only 122** school buildings in Kentucky can be rated satisfactory.

The State Health Department's Division of Public Health Sanitation, in a survey of 259 schools in 16 counties, found that:

Toilets in 90.3 per cent of Kentucky's school buildings are inadequate or in bad condition.

Hand-washing facilities are deficient in 87.2 per cent.

Water supplies in 67.9 per cent are unsafe.

Water disposal in 74.1 per cent is substandard.

Walls are in bad condition in 71.8 per cent and floors in 55.9 per cent. Lighting is poor in 58.6 per cent and heating and ventilation poor in 57 per cent.

Conservative estimates indicate that present building needs total \$157,000,000. These estimates are for economical, efficient, and easily maintained buildings.

Transportation Facilities

Most Kentucky districts do not have enough school busses. Consequently, children must leave home early in the morning and return late in the afternoon. Overcrowding, with its attendant safety hazards, is another evidence of inadequacy.

Some Kentucky school children must board a bus at 5:45 a.m. to get to school . . . and they don't get home until 6:00 p.m.! The average bus picks up pupils between 7:00 a.m. and 7:15 a.m. and returns them between 4:30 p.m. and 4:45 p.m. Accordingly, many school children leave home before daylight and return after dark during much of the year.

The crowded condition of the busses and the number of trips made by busses is shown by the fact that in the 1950-51 school year five large county districts transported 329, 302, 213, 171 and 170 pupils respectively per bus daily.

The financial burden of pupil transportation falls, in the main, on county districts. A total of \$4,450,000 was expended by all districts for pupil transportation in 1950-51. Of this amount, \$4,300,000 was expended by county districts, and represented 12.60 per cent of their current expenditures, with a range from 1.33 per cent in Taylor County to 34.43 per cent in Livingston County.

Even these data do not reveal the full financial burden. When teachers' salaries are deducted from the total expenditures (since this revenue was already committed), the average county district spent 40.29 per cent of available funds for pupil transportation in 1950-51. Expenditures ranged from 7.81 to 67.47 per cent of available, uncommitted funds.

Attendance Centers

Attendance centers, both elementary and secondary, are not large enough to make possible a complete, modern educational program in an economical, efficient, and effective way.

Kentucky still has 3,004 one-teacher schools and 872 two and three-teacher schools. One fourth of the school children in the State attend these schools. A satisfactory program is extremely difficult to secure under these circumstances.

In 1951-52 there were 114 high schools, in 64 counties, with fewer than 100 pupils in grades nine through twelve. If a complete program is to be provided with the maximum of efficiency and economy, it is generally accepted that a secondary school should have an enrollment of at least 300. In 1951-52, only 105 of the total of 491 complete public high schools had an enrollment of 300 pupils or more.

Curricular Offerings

The size of attendance areas is one of the factors which determines the scope of the curriculum. The one-teacher school, as well as other small schools, finds it well-nigh impossible to have other than the most restricted program.

The small high school is seriously handicapped in regard to curriculum. For the most part, it is restricted to an academic program with a minimum of electives. Classes must be combined to secure a broader program. Small classes do not provide the best situation for the social and emotional growth of children.

Data are available on the needs of children for vocational training in agriculture and homemaking. From these data it can be estimated that at least one half of farm boys are not being given an opportunity to study agriculture. For homemaking, the story is better; 424 high schools have homemaking departments. But many high schools which have homemaking departments find it necessary to limit the number of girls who may take homemaking courses.

The poverty of the education program could also be shown for commercial subjects and shop work and for many other subject areas.

Administration and Supervision

The problem of inadequate administrative and supervisory personnel is closely connected with the lack of financial resources and the existence of some small, inefficient attendance centers and administrative units. In many districts, the superintendent is executive officer of the board of education, administrative officer of the dis-

trict, director of maintenance, director of a building program, director of transportation, supervisor of instruction, and co-ordinator of public relations. Many times he has no clerical assistance. The superintendent should be given enough assistants to free him of routine responsibility and allow him to devote his time to educational leadership in the school and the community.

Elementary principals in Kentucky spend most of their regular school day teaching, with their extra activities coming at noon and after school.

The need for supervision is critical in most school districts, especially in county districts with numerous one, two, and three-teacher schools. The greatest shortage of trained teachers is found in these small schools. Notwithstanding the great need for supervision in these districts, only about one-fourth of the county school districts have a staff member who devotes his full time to supervision of teachers and improvement of instruction.

Libraries and Instructional Materials

The adequacy of library facilities and instructional materials provide an important clue to the quality of the school program.

An index of this adequacy is the level of financial support. An average of fifty cents for each elementary pupil in average daily attendance was expended for library and supplementary books in 1950-51. The range, however, was from no expenditures in some districts to approximately \$4.00 per pupil in other districts. On the average, \$1.40 was expended for each high school pupil in average daily attendance for libraries in 1950-51. Again, the range was from no expenditures in some districts to over \$4.00 per pupil in other districts.

Data from the School Facilities Survey show that only 99 of the 491 high schools have library facilities that were planned and constructed for that purpose. Only 147 of the 4,514 elementary schools have rooms originally designed or suitably adapted for libraries.

Expenditures for instructional supplies in 1950-51 amounted to approximately eighty-five cents for each pupil in average daily attendance in both elementary and high schools. Since seventeen

districts reported no expenditures for educational supplies, the range was from zero to a probable level of adequacy.

Teaching Staff

The teacher shortage is one of the most critical problems of education in Kentucky. Each year, children in some districts are entering high school without ever having had the services of a qualified teacher.

For the 1951-52 school year, 2,971 of Kentucky's 19,739 teachers, or fifteen per cent, were teaching on emergency permits. The number of emergency permits has been decreasing annually from the total of 5,300 in 1947-48, but there is every indication that the number will increase in 1952-53.

Many teachers trained in Kentucky are going to other states to teach. A questionnaire returned by 186 districts indicates that at least 300 teachers have left Kentucky schools during the last twelve months to accept teaching positions in other states. The six public-supported teacher training institutions report that many of their graduates accept teaching positions outside the state because of more attractive salaries.

This constant competition for the services of trained teachers continues. Kentucky loses teachers to neighboring states, while economically unfavored districts lose to the wealthier districts. Between the close of the schools last spring and the opening of schools this fall, 700 Kentucky teachers changed districts and 1200 did not return to the classroom at all.

It is small wonder that there is such a great turnover in the teaching staff. At the beginning of the current school year twenty-five elementary teachers in the State had an enrollment of over seventy pupils in their classrooms, fifty teachers had an enrollment of from 60 to 69 pupils, 268 teachers had from 50 to 59 pupils enrolled, 1,892 teachers had from 40 to 49 pupils enrolled and 5,652 teachers had from 30 to 39 pupils enrolled.

The generally accepted maximum pupil-teacher ratio for the elementary school is 30. This year, 7,885 teachers have more than 30 pupils enrolled in their classrooms.

In Summary

Kentucky suffers from a number of serious liabilities because of its failure to provide an adequate educational program for all its school districts. This failure can be directly traced to Section 186 of the Constitution which makes it almost impossible to provide a defensible program, adequately financed.

Educational deficiencies of the adult population have hindered the economic and social well-being of Kentucky's citizens. The average adult in Kentucky, 25 years of age and older, in 1950 had completed only 8.4 years of schooling. In one county, the average male adult had completed less than six years of formal education.

The record for illiteracy is alarming. In 1950, there were 37,060 adults in Kentucky who had not completed even one year of school. At the same time, 223,060 adults reported that they had completed from one to four years of educational training.

The next generation may show little improvement in its training level if steps are not taken to remove the causes of these weaknesses. In April of 1952, there were over 88,000 children in the school census who were not enrolled in school. One of every eight children in the school census is not enrolled in any school and therefore not receiving the opportunity for an education.

Ignorance cannot be quarantined. Weakness in one part of the State or in one segment of the population weakens the whole state. All must enlist in advancing the educational opportunity of every child in the Commonwealth.

Chapter III

WHAT CAUSES THESE WEAKNESSES?

The framers of the present State Constitution wrote into it a strong mandate for an efficient state-wide system of public education. In Section 183 they directed that:

"The General Assembly shall, by appropriate legislation, provide for an efficient system of common schools throughout the State."

The meaning of this is clear. Yet the inadequacies already pointed out offer conclusive evidence that an efficient system has not been provided.

Why?

What has caused the General Assembly to fail in carrying out this Constitutional mandate? Undoubtedly, there have been many contributory causes; but the primary cause has been Section 186 which has made impossible the economical attainment of the goal of Section 183.

A census-pupil distribution may have been a fairly equitable plan in 1892 because, in the predominantly rural economy of that day in Kentucky, there were not the great extremes of local ability which exist today. The variations that did exist have increased so greatly with social and economic changes during the last sixty years that a census-pupil distribution, with no concern for ability or need, is now obsolete.

The State's contribution to the total cost of education in 1892 was comparatively small and hence did not affect the inequities greatly. As the state school fund has been increased, the census-pupil distribution has become more inefficient, unfair and ineffectual.

Section 186, providing for the distribution of the state school fund on the basis of a census of pupil children, ignored completely local ability to finance education. This failure to consider equality of educational opportunity was soon recognized by the educational leaders of the State and a movement was undertaken to correct it. In 1930, the General Assembly passed an equalization law which was declared unconstitutional by the Court of Appeals.

Realizing that a constitutional change was necessary, the General Assembly submitted an amendment to the voters in 1941 that ten per cent of the state school fund could be distributed to equalize educational opportunity. It was approved by an overwhelming vote of 312,986 to 53,924. Again, in 1949, by a vote of 232,890 to 125,697 the voters approved an amendment that made possible the distribution of 25 per cent of the state school fund on some basis other than census-pupil.

Section 186, even as amended, makes impossible the development of an efficient, economical, state-wide program of education.

Wealth and Children are Unequally Distributed

School districts in Kentucky vary widely in their ability to support education; and, generally speaking, the poorer districts have the most children to educate. One county district has an assessed valuation of \$680 back of each census child while real property is assessed at 50.4 per cent of fair cash value. This district has 818 children in the school census per 1,000 adults over 25 years of age. Another county has an assessed valuation of \$11,098 per census child, with real property assessed at approximately 38 per cent of fair cash value. This county has only 255 children in the school census per 1,000 adults over 25 years of age.

A wealthier county shows even a more favorable picture. This county has an assessed valuation of \$16,460 per census child, while real property is assessed at approximately 34 per cent of fair cash value. This county has only 413 children in the school census per 1,000 adults over 25 years of age.

From these examples it can be seen that the second county has 16 times the ability to support education and has only one third as many children per 1,000 adults over 25 years old as the first county. The third county has 24 times the ability to support education and has only one half as many children per 1,000 adults over 25 years of age as the first county.

Inequities are Accentuated

These inequities between districts are increased by a distribution under Section 186.

The Governor's Committee on Functions and Resources of State

Government has shown this point clearly in its discussion of teachers' salaries. That Committee's Final Report on Page 18 stated in part:

"The General Assembly requires that local districts' share of the state per capita fund be used only for teachers' salaries. This year's \$26,212,500 per capita fund **averages** \$1,354 per teacher, but in 25 districts it amounts to an average of less than \$1,000 per teacher, and in 37 other districts it amounts to an average of over \$1,500 per teacher. To be more specific, one district's share of the per capita fund amounts to \$2,710 for each of its teachers, while another's is only \$801 per teacher. Similarly, one county district's share of the per capita fund amounts to only \$1,096 per teacher whereas another's is \$1,960 per teacher. If, for example, \$5,000,000 were added to the per capita fund the effect on average salaries per teacher for these four districts would be respectively, \$516; \$153; \$209; and \$374. A \$5,000,000 increase in the per capita fund would mean almost three and one-half times as much per teacher in one of the independent districts referred to as in the other.

Cost of an Adequate Program Prohibitive

The present method of distribution makes the cost of an adequate program prohibitive. A district has been discussed that had an assessed valuation of only \$680 per census-pupil. This district could raise only \$10.20 per census-pupil by levying the maximum tax rate of \$1.50. Since this district is assessing real property at approximately 50 per cent of fair cash value, the amount of money that would be available locally would be only \$20.40 per census-pupil if property were assessed at fair cash value and the maximum tax rate of \$1.50 were levied. It can be seen that any additional money which is made available for the education of the children of this district must be provided by the State. If this additional revenue is apportioned on a census-pupil basis, the same amount per census-pupil sent into this economically unfavored district would have to be sent into the wealthiest district. Accordingly, under a census-pupil distribution, it is necessary to raise the level of the highest expenditure district in order to attempt to build a floor under the needy district. The amount of money that would be necessary to develop an adequate program for the entire State, even with 25 per cent distributed on other than per capita basis, is staggering.

No Incentive for Sound Pupil-Teacher Ratio

Under Section 186, at least 75 per cent of the state school fund is distributed on a census-pupil basis, and does not provide an incen-

tive for a reasonable pupil-teacher ratio. A local district can ignore the number of pupils per teacher and pay higher salaries to fewer teachers than a district that is determined to maintain adequate staffing. One school district may have a pupil-teacher ratio of 24 while a second and a third district have ratios of 36 and 48 respectively. In this case, the first district receives from the State only two thirds as much per teacher as does the second district, and only one half as much as the third district.

Attendance is not Encouraged

The state school fund should be distributed so as to provide incentives for a good education program. A good attendance program is one of the prime requisites of a good educational program. Yet, a distribution on the basis of census pupils, discourages to high attendance, since the fewer children in school, the more money will be available for the education of those who do attend. As the number of pupils enrolled decreases, so does the need for teachers, school busses, and classrooms.

Mobility of Population

The population of Kentucky is becoming increasingly mobile. According to the 1950 census, 5.6 per cent of the population one year old or older moved into their present county during the preceding year. For one county, 21.9 per cent of the population one year old or older had moved in during the period of one year.

Since the children in one district may be attending school in another district within a short period of time, it becomes the concern of all to see that an adequate educational program is maintained everywhere. There can be no stronger argument for providing educational opportunity for all children.

In Summary

Section 186 is the roadblock which prevents an adequate educational program for all the children of Kentucky. Since children and wealth in Kentucky are unequally distributed, the distribution plan for the state school fund must be based on ability and need if educational opportunities are to be provided for all children on an economical and fair basis. The present method actually accentuates the

inequities and provides a most inadequate program. Kentucky's resources are limited and the cost of an adequate program would be prohibitive under the present method.

The present method of distribution does not provide incentives for an attendance program; in fact, it rewards nonattendance. There is no incentive for a sound pupil-teacher ratio. Instead, the more pupils placed under one teacher, the more money will be available for that teacher's salary.

The increasing mobility of the population of the State has, to a large extent, broken down district lines and made imperative the implementation of the constitutional mandate for an efficient educational system throughout the State.

Chapter IV

SOLUTION TO THE PROBLEM

Section 186 of the State Constitution must be amended in order for the citizens of Kentucky to provide an adequate system of education for their children. By such amendment the people, through their elected representatives, may enact legislation to comply with Section 183 of the Constitution. The Governor and members of the 1952 General Assembly recognized the need for this change. Accordingly, a measure was enacted submitting to the people an Amendment to Section 186 to be voted upon at the regular election in November, 1953. The proposed amendment would make Section 186 of the Constitution read as follows:

All funds accruing to the school fund shall be used for maintenance of the public schools of the Commonwealth, and for no other purpose, and the General Assembly shall by general law prescribe the manner of the distribution of the public school fund among the school districts and its use for public school purposes.

This amendment would make it possible for the General Assembly to establish a sound method for financing all parts of the educational program. A sound program of school finance will provide joint support of educational services through state and local funds. The quantity and quality of these educational services to be provided for all children must be determined by the people of the state. After the nature of the educational services to be provided has been determined, each district would be expected to provide a reasonable portion of the cost in accordance with its ability to pay. The state would then pay the remainder of the necessary cost. Such a program is called a minimum foundation program of education in a state.

It should be understood that a minimum foundation program of education does not provide the maximum educational services in any district. Each district should be expected to go beyond the minimum program. It may be said, then, that a minimum foundation program makes provision for all essential school services through a partnership plan utilizing both state and local revenues.

Many states have developed minimum foundation programs of education. Although the people of Kentucky must determine for

themselves the nature of the educational services to be included in their foundation program, the programs in other states usually provide that:*

- (1) Each child should have the services of a well qualified devoted classroom teacher.
- (2) Each 30 children should have one regular classroom teacher.
- (3) Each child should have health service provided by a school nurse.
- (4) Each child should have the services of a well stocked library with a well qualified librarian.
- (5) Each child should have available educational and vocational counseling services.
- (6) Each child should have access to usable adequate instructional supplies.
- (7) Each child should have the benefit of a 180-day school term.
- (8) Each child should have the advantages of a well rounded elementary and high school program.
- (9) Each child should have a safe and healthful school plant in which he can study, work, play, eat, and rest.
- (10) Each child should go to school in a building that has at least a minimum custodial service, provided by people employed to render that service.
- (11) Each child living beyond a reasonable walking distance from school should be provided safe transportation to school.
- (12) The services provided for the children of each district should be coordinated by well qualified superintendents, principals, and supervisors.

Every minimum foundation program is based upon certain fundamental principles. Some principles which the people of Kentucky should consider in developing their program are :

- (1) The state aid now being provided to any district should not be decreased.
- (2) Provision for state financial support for public education should be determined by statute and not by the Constitution.
- (3) The financing of the school program should be shared by both the state and the local districts. Such a partnership plan should

* Adapted from an address delivered by Dean L. D. Haskew, University of Texas, on June 23, 1952, at University of Kentucky summer conference.

assure the financing of an acceptable educational offering in all local school systems regardless of their tax paying abilities.

- (4) Each district must exert a reasonable effort based on its ability to furnish educational services.
- (5) Tax leeway should be allowed each local district so that it may provide services in addition to those specified in a minimum foundation program.
- (6) The program should make provision for all essential school services and facilities for every educable child in the state.
- (7) The program should be as good as the people of the state are willing to support on a partnership basis.
- (8) Education is a state responsibility but a large measure of local control must be maintained.
- (9) All state funds for schools should be distributed on strictly objective bases that can be computed as readily by the local school systems as by the state department of education.
- (10) Local responsibility and control of the public schools should not be weakened by state support for specific educational services.

Other states which have developed successful minimum foundation programs of education have kept the above principles foremost in their thinking and planning. Certainly, a program of this importance cannot be developed if established guiding principles are not followed.

Chapter V

SUGGESTIONS FOR A PLAN OF ACTION

The minimum foundation program approach starts with a level of educational services. The manner in which this minimum level is defined determines more than any other one thing whether or not the program will be successfully adopted. The conviction has been voiced many times that public participation is a vital force in building public understanding and that it will make for better schools. If this conviction is to be followed lay citizens must be given the opportunity of saying what "we want" and what "we are going to have" as an educational program for our children. People buy what they want and if given the opportunity and the time to study their needs usually want what they need. Too often school administrators and staff members conceive the job of school planning as one for professional people only and follow out this conception by excluding lay people from school planning.

A minimum foundation program of education in Kentucky must be the program of the people. The amendment to Section 186 can be passed only by the people and a minimum foundation program cannot be had unless this amendment is passed. There are many problems that must be overcome if we are to have lay participation. Channels of communication between educational and lay citizens must be improved. This, in turn, will lead to a better understanding between lay and professional people of the problems of educating Kentucky's children. Lay people must be asked to do things. Those asking must do so in the belief that people enjoy working together to solve common problems. Parents, patrons and taxpayers must be given an opportunity to answer such questions as "Who are we going to educate?", "What length school term are we going to have?", "What kind of teachers do we need?", "What supplies and instructional materials are needed?", "What type buildings do we want?" Kentucky's minimum foundation program must develop as the result of lay and school people working together.

The details of a plan of action must grow out of the policies adopted by the Advisory Committee which has been appointed by Lieutenant Governor Beauchamp. Since this Committee has not yet

had an opportunity to establish these policies, it is possible to deal only in generalities at this time. Lay groups should be organized throughout the state, starting at the state level and reaching down to the local level until there is an organization in every county and independent school district. The efforts of these organizations will have to be coordinated through a central office working in conjunction with the Advisory Committee and the Legislative Research Commission. Information will be needed for these two groups. It is desirable that the people help provide this information. Questionnaires and study guides must be developed by which lay groups can gather needed information and express themselves concerning the type of program desired. It is hoped that lay people will become better acquainted with the problems which confront education at the local and at the state levels.

Various state groups such as the Kentucky Farm Bureau, the Kentucky Congress of Parents and Teachers, Kentucky Council for Education, Kentucky Education Association, State Department of Education, colleges, School Board Association, Kentucky Chamber of Commerce, civic clubs and citizens' committees will need to work together to secure the assistance of lay people in developing the program.

Each of the fall conferences of the district education associations has presented the Minimum Foundation Program for Kentucky schools by a speaker, a panel, a workshop type program. Local education associations should conduct workshops of at least two days on the Minimum Foundation Program. There should be committees in every school to study their local school needs and to assist district committees in gathering information for the entire school district. Teacher groups, Parent and Teacher Associations, civic and service clubs should form committees at the local level to study their own school systems and furnish information necessary to formulate a state program.

Publications of business and industrial organizations could be asked to carry information about the Minimum Foundation Program. Maximum use of the radio, television and newspapers should be made. A statewide meeting with representatives from each of the above should be conducted to acquaint these people with the Minimum Foundation Program in order that they may make effective and intelligent use of the material which comes to them.

APPENDIX

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

1. What is Section 186 of the Constitution?

Section 186 provides that at least seventy-five percent of the State Common School fund shall be distributed on the basis of the number of census pupils in the school district.

2. Why cannot we develop a program without repealing Section 186?

This question has been answered by such statements as, "It would take too much money," or "The cost under the present system would be prohibitive," or "Present inequities would be multiplied." All of these statements are true and can probably be explained by giving one simple illustration. At the present time the state is sending, under the per capita method of distribution, approximately \$800 per teacher to some school districts and as much as \$2700 per teacher to other school districts. If, under the present Section 186, a minimum program calling for a minimum teacher's salary of \$2400 should be adopted, the state would have to send three times as much to the \$800 district and also three times as much to the \$2700 district. It can be readily seen that a program which would compel the state to send \$8100 to one district in order to be able to maintain \$2400 in another district is neither practical nor feasible. With such an inefficient method required by the Constitution, the only hope for efficiency is to change Section 186 of the Constitution.

3. What happens if Section 186 is amended and no new statutory provision for distributing funds is made?

The present statute would apply. The act proposing an amendment to Section 186 says in part, "All funds accruing to the school fund shall be used for the maintenance of the public schools of the Commonwealth, and for no other purpose, and the General Assembly shall by general law prescribe the manner of the distribution of the public school fund among the school districts and its use for public school purposes." This amended Section 186 of the Constitution will fit in with the present Section 183 which states that the General Assembly shall provide for an efficient system of common schools. In view of the provision of Section 183 and the amended Section 186, the General Assembly is charged with the responsibility of providing for an efficient system of schools. In order to carry out this mandate, it becomes necessary to establish an efficient and objective method of distributing the State Common School Fund.

4. Why is there no guarantee in the proposed amendment not to reduce state support to any school district?

Such a provision is regarded as statutory material by many persons. A guarantee that no district would receive less money than it did in 1951-52 would assume a stable economic structure. In view of the fact that economic conditions could change considerably, it is entirely possible that the state would find itself with a constitutional guarantee which could not possibly be met in times of recession. It should be noted that past experience in administering the Common School Fund shows that no district has lost funds as a result of the equalization program. This is true even though it has meant that less money is made available for equalization than could be used under the present constitutional provision. The Legislature has consistently refused to raise the equalization fund to its maximum if such a raise would reduce the per capita allotment to any school district.

5. What do you mean by "Minimum Foundation Program?"

A Minimum Foundation Program is an educational program which assures to every child, wherever he lives, an opportunity to secure a defensible minimum of education.

6. What does Minimum Foundation Program mean to my children?

It means that my children, regardless of where I live in the State, will have the advantage of a defensible educational program. It would mean that in case I moved to another district I would find an educational program which provided the essentials for my children.

7. What will it mean to my district?

It will mean that when my district has made a fair and reasonable effort to finance education the balance needed to guarantee a minimum foundation program will be provided from State funds. It would mean that all available local funds would not be used for the minimum essentials, but some local revenue would be available for enrichment of the educational program.

8. What better returns or dividends will we have in a new program?

A sound pupil-teacher ratio will be encouraged. Attendance will be rewarded. Better facilities, improved transportation, more supplies, and better services will be possible.

9. Will the wealthy districts be penalized to help the poor ones?

It cannot be emphasized too much that the minimum foundation program is not an effort to take from some districts to give to other

districts. That would be utterly unwise and indefensible from every standpoint. Every school district has developed salary scales, prepared transportation programs, and developed capital outlay and/or debt service programs on the basis of anticipated revenue over a period of years. The stability of these financial programs must not be disturbed.

10. Will this mean increased state control?

There must, of necessity, be certain regulations imposed by the state. The purpose of these, however, will be to insure that the money is spent for the purpose for which it was intended, and not to take away any local control from the school district.

11. **When** can we expect results from Minimum Foundation Program?

If the amendment to Section 186 is approved by the voters on November 3, 1953, it will be possible for the General Assembly to enact into law a Minimum Foundation Program in January, 1954. If the General Assembly enacts the program into law, it may become effective with the 1954-55 school year.

12. How can I help promote the Minimum Foundation Program?

By getting acquainted with the program, taking a part in its development, and encouraging my co-workers and friends to do likewise. If there are parts of it that I do not understand, I should go to competent people for an explanation. I can help promote it by assisting in gathering information in the local school district that may be requested of me by the Advisory Committee.

13. How can my organization help promote the Minimum Foundation Program?

By planning programs of a panel, speaker, or workshop type about the Minimum Foundation Program. By having committees ready to assist in surveys of the local school system. By encouraging meetings in every school in the school district to study the Minimum Foundation Program. By working with other organizations in the school district in developing an understanding at the local level.

14. How much will it cost?

The citizens of Kentucky will answer this question when the program has been developed. If the youth of Kentucky are to have better advantages than in the past, it will cost more money. However, under a minimum foundation program more services can be purchased for each additional dollar invested.

15. Where is the money coming from?

This question will be answered by the Legislature. If the people of Kentucky actually want the program put into operation, the Legislature will find money for it.

16. Who will develop this program?

This program will be developed by the people of Kentucky through the direction of the Legislative Research Commission and an Advisory Committee composed of both school people and interested lay people.

