

PUBLIC SCHOOL ADMINISTRATION

A STATEMENT OF THE FUNDAMENTAL
PRINCIPLES UNDERLYING THE ORGANIZATION
AND ADMINISTRATION OF PUBLIC
EDUCATION

BY

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EDITOR'S INTRODUCTION

AN attempt has been made, in the space of this book, to state the fundamental principles underlying the proper organization and administration of public education in the United States; to state briefly the historical evolution of the principal administrative officers and problems; and to point out what seem to be the most probable lines of future evolution.

To do this, and to make a satisfactory textbook on school administration in so short a space, naturally required much condensation and the employment of a number of economies in presentation. In the body of the chapters these fundamental principles have been stated, often somewhat positively. At the same time an attempt has been made to base the statements on such well-established principles of action, tested by experience, and so to reinforce the presentation made in the body of the chapters by footnote extracts and suggestions as to supplemental reading, as will make the book a serviceable text for use in colleges and normal schools giving courses in educational administration. It is also hoped that the volume may prove useful, as an organization of principles, to supervisory officers of all kinds in service in our schools.

The book has naturally centered about the administration of city school systems, simply because almost all of the great recent progress in organization, administration, supervision, and adaptation to needs has taken place there. By showing the origin and relationship of all forms of

educational activity to the state purpose, as has been done in Part I, and by applying the results of the administrative experience of our cities to county and state educational organization and administration, as has been done in Part III, the author has tried to present, in one volume, the essential principles governing proper educational control for all types of public-school work, — city, county, and state.

In making the statement of principles of action the author has sought to avoid what seems to him to be the common defect of most of the books on school administration so far produced, and that is such a nice balancing of arguments that the book is, practically colorless. He has also tried to avoid the production of a book of mere facts and figures. Such facts can be obtained without difficulty, and as needed from public-school documents. Instead, he has endeavored to make a book containing such a clear statement of fundamental principles that either the lay reader or the student, on finishing it, shall know what ought to be done, and why. To give a student ideals for his work, and to establish in his mind proper principles of action, has always seemed to the writer an essential part of any course on public-school administration.

To make the book more useful to students in classes, a large number of questions for discussion, and topics for investigation and report, have been added to each of the chapters. These will serve to give concreteness to the presentation, and will enable students and instructor to question and discuss the principles laid down in the text. In the footnote extracts, opinions by representative thinkers and practical workers have been given by way of backing up the arguments presented in the text. In the bibliographies at the end of the chapters the author has shunned the

common practice of adding a large and unclassified list of references, good, bad, and indifferent, leaving the student to grope his way through them. Instead, a list of selected references has been given, and these have been classified as to content and value, and only the best of those most likely to be accessible in the smaller libraries have been cited. The aim has been to guide the student to a small number of easily accessible articles on each topic, written by those who have contributed most to its discussion.

The administration of public education centers about the work of three persons. The first of these is the classroom teacher, in the conduct and management of a single school. The second is the school principal, in the organization, administration, and supervision of a single building, or perhaps a group of buildings. The third of these is the superintendent of schools, in the organization, administration, and supervision of a group of schools. The principles underlying the successful work of the first constitute what is commonly known as classroom management, on which a volume is now in preparation for this series. The second will be presented in another future volume on the *Organization and Administration of a School*. The third is covered by the present volume. It is hoped to offer soon still another volume, on the *Supervision of Instruction*, as another number of the administrative division of this series.

As the author conceives a course in school administration, it should include the work of both the school principal and the superintendent, the course beginning with a study of the problems of organization, administration, and supervision as represented in the building unit, and being followed by a study of similar problems for the larger group. The present volume represents the second part of such a

course in school administration, and is in effect a digest of what he has for some years given at the university with which he is connected. Part II of this volume also covers the substance of a course of lectures on "City School Administration" given at Teachers College, Columbia University, during the summer session of 1914.

ELLWOOD P. CUBBERLEY

CONTENTS

PART I. OUTLINES OF STATE EDUCATIONAL ORGANIZATION

CHAPTER I. ORIGIN AND DEVELOPMENT OF SCHOOLS . . 3

Early attitudes — Schools at first community undertakings — The district unit — Evolution of district organization — Early district officers — Rise of state systems — Early state organizations — The first school laws — The change in attitude — The present conviction — Questions for discussion.

CHAPTER II. STATE AUTHORIZATION AND CONTROL . . 14

The State the unit — Court decisions — Delegated authority — The recovery of state sovereignty — Examples of such transference — Advantages of state control — Disadvantages of state control — The State's proper functions — A state educational policy — Questions for investigation and discussion.

CHAPTER III. STATE EDUCATIONAL ORGANIZATION . . 27

Evolution of forms of control — Chief state school officer — The office an evolution — Duties of such an official — New demands for leadership — State boards of education — Types of state boards — Good state educational organization — The problem at hand — Questions for investigation and discussion.

CHAPTER IV. COUNTY EDUCATIONAL ORGANIZATION . . 35

The county in school administration — Evolution of a county school officer — Early duties of the office — New and changed duties — New demand for educational leadership — County boards of control — The educational problem involved — Questions for investigation and discussion.

CHAPTER V. TOWN, TOWNSHIP, AND DISTRICT ORGANIZATION 44

County subdivisions for administration — The town — Marked features of the town system — The township — Disadvantages of the township unit — The township unit not fundamentally necessary — The school-district unit — Bad features

of the district unit — District system not necessary — A fundamental reorganization needed — Questions for investigation and discussion.

CHAPTER VI. THE CITY SCHOOL DISTRICT 55

The city district a special case — The city district an evolution — Recent rapid growth of city school systems — Prominence of city administrative problems — The city's distinctive contribution — State *vs.* city control of the school district — Protection instead of bureaucracy — Other problems of relationship — To study the city first — Questions for investigation and discussion — Selected references covering Part I.

PART II. THE CITY SCHOOL DISTRICT AND ITS PROBLEMS

CHAPTER VII. EVOLUTION OF CITY SCHOOL ORGANIZATION AND ADMINISTRATION 71

The original town control — Subtracting powers from the towns — Rise of the school committee — Two centuries of evolution — Massachusetts a type — Types of development elsewhere — The separate school board — Development of the ward and committee systems — Evolution of professional supervision — Further differentiation of executive functions — Present conceptions as to school control — Selected references.

CHAPTER VIII. ORGANIZATION OF BOARDS FOR SCHOOL CONTROL 85

Special governing boards — Recent reorganizations — Tendencies in recent reorganizations — Size of school boards — Basis of selection, wards *vs.* at large — Appointment *vs.* election — Term of office, and elections — Pay for services — Origin of pay proposals — Commission form of government and the schools — Dependence on *vs.* independence of the city government — The ordinary citizen and the schools — Disadvantages of city control — Questions for discussion — Topics for investigation and report — Selected references.

CHAPTER IX. FUNCTIONS OF BOARDS FOR SCHOOL CONTROL 109

The board as a body — Boards continuous and changing — Types of school-board members — The committee form of control — Committee control applied to hospital management — Committee service time-consuming — Committee action illus-

trated — A confusion in functions — The real work of the board — Legislative and executive functions — Selection of executive officers — Bases for selection — Types of board members — Results of faithful service — Questions for discussion — Topics for investigation and report — Selected references.

CHAPTER X. THE SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS . . . 130

A new profession — Importance of this official — Large duties of the office — Education and training — The years of apprenticeship — Learning and working — Dangerous pitfalls — Personal qualities necessary — The qualities of leadership — Questions for discussion — Selected references.

CHAPTER XI. THREEFOLD NATURE OF THE SUPERINTENDENT'S WORK . . . 142

Three types of service — Time for the larger problems — Loss of balance and perspective.

1. The superintendent as an organizer — A policy for development — Educating a board — Importance of such service.

2. The superintendent as an executive — Proper personal and official relations — Mutual trust and confidence — Appealing to the community — Relations with the community.

3. The superintendent as supervisor — Dangers faced by the superintendent — Questions for discussion — Selected references.

CHAPTER XII. CITY SCHOOL DEPARTMENT ORGANIZATION 160

Size and distribution of cities — The small city school system — The comprehensive type of superintendent — Dangers of such a position — Organization in a small city — The place of the superintendent in the scheme — Expansion as the city grows — Proper administrative organization for the larger city — Guaranteed powers — Educational organization in the large city — Central position of the educational department — Executive heads of departments — Faulty educational organization — Questions for discussion — Topics for investigation and report — Selected references.

CHAPTER XIII. ORGANIZATION OF THE EDUCATIONAL DEPARTMENT . . . 177

The superintendent as a department head — He gives character to the department — Sensitiveness of teachers to leadership — Characteristics of a good supervisory organization — Responsibility of all for successful work — A weak supervisory organization — Personnel of the supervisory organization — Assistant

superintendent and supervisor — Cabinet solidarity — The personal equation — Relations of superintendent and assistant — The special supervisors — The school principals — Increasing their effectiveness — Underlying purposes of supervisory organization — Questions for discussion — Topics for investigation and report — Selected references.

CHAPTER XIV. THE TEACHING CORPS 198

I. SELECTION AND TENURE.

1. The selection of teachers — The early method — Defects of this method — Importance of guarding appointments — Fundamental principles of action — Standards which should prevail — Methods of selecting teachers — Right rules of action — Bases for selecting teachers — The competitive examination — Electing applicants *vs.* hunting teachers

2. The tenure of teachers — The usual plan — The uncertain tenure of teachers — The life-tenure movement — Effect of life-tenure on the schools — A middle ground — Terminating the contract — Supervisory officers and tenure — Assistant superintendents — Assignment of the teaching staff — Questions for discussion — Topics for investigation and report — Selected references.

CHAPTER XV. THE TEACHING CORPS 225

II. TRAINING AND SUPERVISION.

1. The training of teachers — Leavening the teaching corps — Professional standard for entrance — The local training-school — Limitations to such training — Effect of such courses on the school system — Training *vs.* attracting teachers — Training of teachers in service — Teachers' meetings — Reading-circle work — Leaves of absence for study.

2. The supervision of teachers — Deficient supervision — Supervision of the wrong type — Need for helpful supervision — Purpose of all supervision — Means to this end — Distribution of time and effort — Demonstration teaching — Placing for effective work — Questions for discussion — Topics for investigation and report — Selected references.

CHAPTER XVI. THE TEACHING CORPS 251

III. PAY AND PROMOTION.

Low standards and compensation — Adequate pay necessary — What such pay is worth — Reasonable salary demands — Automatic increases — Rewards for growth and efficient service — Stimulating industry and individual improvement.

1. Graded salaries based on positions — Defects of such schedules.
2. Additional salary grants for study.
3. Salary grants based on grades in service — Promotions on recommendation — Promotional examinations.
4. Salary grants based on efficiency — Criticism of the plan — Plan right in principle — Type plans for estimating efficiency — Incentives to growth — Essential features of a good salary schedule — Questions for discussion — Topics for investigation and report — Selected references.

CHAPTER XVII. THE COURSES OF INSTRUCTION . . . 274

I. CONSTRUCTION AND TYPES.

The superintendent and the courses of study — The superintendent's guiding hand — The construction of courses of study.

1. Information or knowledge courses — Dependence on textbooks — The administration of such courses — Effect on the instructing body.
2. The development type of courses — The principal and teacher in such a school system — Such courses growing courses — Coöperation of all needed — Variations between schools — Experimental rooms or schools — Study of local problems and needs — Economy of time in education — Questions for discussion — Topics for investigation and report — Selected references.

CHAPTER XVIII. THE COURSES OF INSTRUCTION . . . 294

II. ADJUSTMENTS AND DIFFERENTIATIONS.

1. Retardation and acceleration — The average course of study — A poorly adjusted course of study — The results of non-promotion — The effect of such conditions. — The super-normal child.
2. Promotional plans — More frequent promotions — The Batavia plan — The Pueblo plan — The new Cambridge plan — The differentiated-course plan — The Baltimore experiment — The Mannheim plan of grading.
3. Differentiations in school work — New types of schools.
4. Fundamental reorganizations — Reorganizing the upper grades — Theory of the intermediate school — A reorganized and expanded school system — A reorganized and redirected school system — The Gary plan — Questions for discussion — Topics for investigation and report — Selected references.

CHAPTER XIX. EFFICIENCY EXPERTS; TESTING RESULTS 325

A new movement — Meaning of the movement — The scientific purpose — Measurement by comparison — Units or stand-

ards for measurement — Need for standards as guides — Importance of such standards — Efficiency departments — Lines of service; experimental pedagogy — The clinical psychologist and his work — A continuous survey of production — Questions for discussion — Topics for investigation and report — Selected references.

CHAPTER XX. THE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH SUPERVISION 344

Health supervision a necessity — Three stages of development — Scope of the work — Control of the work — The large-city plan — The smaller-city plan — The teacher and health service — Importance of the service — Questions for discussion — Topics for investigation and report — Selected references.

CHAPTER XXI. THE ATTENDANCE DEPARTMENT . . . 357

The compulsion to attend — Differences and difficulties — The attendance department — Increased school attendance — The registration of school children — A continuing school census — Further obstacles and needs — Types of schools needed — The educational opportunity — Questions for discussion — Topics for investigation and report — Selected references.

CHAPTER XXII. BUSINESS AND CLERICAL DEPARTMENT 375

Department organization — Work of such a department — Purpose of the department — Misdirection of the business department — Purpose and position of such departments — Intelligent expenditures — Topics for investigation and report — Selected references.

CHAPTER XXIII. THE SCHOOL-PROPERTIES DEPARTMENT 384

The superintendent of school properties — Purpose and place of this department — Responsibility of the superintendent of schools — A new type of building needed — The new Pittsburg type of building — Larger use of school-buildings — Costs for buildings — Payment for by tax or by bonding — Large future educational needs — Questions for discussion — Topics for investigation and report — Selected references.

CHAPTER XXIV. AUXILIARY EDUCATIONAL AGENCIES . 397

1. The public library — Efforts toward coöperation — Administrative control — Unity of the work of library and school — The library in the future school.

2. The public playgrounds — Playground organization — Importance of directed play.

3. School gardening — School gardening and the school — New educational agencies and purposes — Questions for discussion — Topics for investigation and report — Selected references.

CHAPTER XXV. COSTS, FUNDS, AND ACCOUNTING . . . 408

Constantly increasing costs — A cheap school system — The problem of increased funds — Funds independent of the council — The competition for city funds — A better school budget — Better accounting methods — School accounts and unit costs — Questions for discussion — Topics for investigation and report — Selected references.

CHAPTER XXVI. RECORDS AND REPORTS 425

Good records a necessity — Pupil records — School-system records — The annual school report — Effective presentation of information — Enlightening the public — Selected references.

PART III. CITY ADMINISTRATIVE EXPERIENCE APPLIED

CHAPTER XXVII. CITY ADMINISTRATIVE EXPERIENCE SUMMARIZED 433

The city an educational unit — Administrative organization — Diversity as a result of unity — Teaching and supervisory organization — Business organization and finance — Initiative and educational progress — Clear and unmistakable lessons.

CHAPTER XXVIII. APPLICATION TO COUNTY EDUCATIONAL ORGANIZATION 441

City and county administration contrasted — District trustee control — Need for a fundamental reorganization — Rudimentary county-unit organizations — The county superintendency — Why trained men go to the cities — The way out — Details of a county-unit plan: (1) General control — (2) Educational Control — (3) Business and clerical control — (4) Powers and duties of the superintendent — Such a reorganization not easy — Steps in the process — Questions for discussion — Topics for investigation and report — Selected references.

CHAPTER XXIX. APPLICATION TO STATE EDUCATIONAL ORGANIZATION 458

State organization undeveloped — The chief state school office — Potential importance of the office — State departments of education — Controlling principles: (1) General control — (2) Educational control — (3) The chief state school officer — Purpose of such an organization — State administrative problems — The State to establish minima — State stimulation *vs.* state uniformity — Questions for discussion — Topics for investigation and report — Selected references.

INDEX 473

PUBLIC SCHOOL ADMINISTRATION
PART I
OUTLINES OF STATE EDUCATIONAL ORGANIZATION

PUBLIC SCHOOL ADMINISTRATION

CHAPTER I

ORIGIN AND DEVELOPMENT OF SCHOOLS

Early attitudes. Everywhere, with us, the school arose as a distinctively local institution, and to meet local needs. The Federal Constitution made no mention of any form of education for the people, nor does the subject occur in the debates of the Federal Constitutional Convention. By the terms of the Tenth Amendment to the Federal Constitution,¹ ratified in 1791, education became one of the many unmentioned powers "reserved to the States."

Of the fourteen state constitutions framed by 1800, six made no mention whatever of schools or education, and in a number of the others the mention was very brief and indefinite.² Nothing which could be regarded as even the beginnings of a state system or series of systems of education existed. Nine colleges,³ a few private secondary schools, and a number of private and church schools offering some elementary-school instruction of an indifferent character, constituted the educational resources of the new nation. Even in New England, where a good beginning had

¹ "ARTICLE X. The powers not delegated to the United States by the Constitution, nor prohibited by it to the States, are reserved to the States respectively, or to the people."

² See Cubberley and Elliott, *State and County School Administration*, vol. II, *Source Book*, pp. 12-17.

³ Harvard, William and Mary, Yale, Princeton, Pennsylvania, Columbia, Brown, Rutgers, and Dartmouth. Thirteen additional colleges were founded between 1776 and 1800.

been made in the seventeenth century, the educational enthusiasm of the people had largely died out and the schools had sadly degenerated. In the rural districts, where the greater number of our people then lived, there were practically no schools of any kind, while in the towns and cities ignorance, vagrancy, and pauperism went hand in hand.

Schools at first community undertakings. For some decades after the establishment of our Republic this condition and attitude continued. The apprentice system and the school of experience, rather than the school of books, ministered to the needs of the people of the time. We were a simple and a homogeneous people, devoted chiefly to a subsistence type of agriculture; the old aristocratic conception of education still prevailed; and there was little in the political, economic, or social life of the time which made education at public expense seem important.

Many of the earlier schools were private undertakings, though, not infrequently, these were aided by public support. Sometimes the people of a community built a school-house and then permitted a teacher to conduct a private school in it, and later on the school was taken over and made a public school. In still other cases the first schools were distinctively voluntary community undertakings, owing their origin and maintenance to the voluntary action and contributions of parents who sent their children to them. In still other cases the first of the early schools were established as public schools in response to direct legislative permission, though many of these were at first only subsidized private schools, or the "rate-bill" — a *per-capita* tax levied on the parents of the children attending — was for years used to supplement the tax levied by the community for their support. Many of the city school systems in the territory north of the Ohio and the Potomac and east of the Missis-