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● Commonwealth of Kentucky ●  
**EDUCATIONAL BULLETIN**

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THE  
KENTUCKY EDUCATIONAL  
COMMISSION



Published By

*Ky.* DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION.

JAMES H. RICHMOND,  
Superintendent of Public Instruction

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## EDUCATION IN KENTUCKY IS AT THE CROSS-ROADS

Twenty years ago, Kentucky stood fortieth among the states in educational ranking. Today she is **still** fortieth! It is true that great progress has been made in public education in Kentucky, but it has been no greater than that made throughout the nation. In other words, we have simply "held our own."

Today our educational system faces a crisis. We must choose whether it is to make progress or whether it is to go backward. Educational leaders of the State have been alert to Kentucky's educational problems, and upon their recommendation, the 1932 General Assembly created the Kentucky Educational Commission to make a searching analysis of the problems facing public education within our Commonwealth.

The Kentucky Educational Commission has been working diligently for several months. It is studying thoroughly every phase of public education. Its final report will point out the path that we must take.

This booklet, which tells something of the work that is being done, should be of interest to every citizen and taxpayer in Kentucky. **Constructive criticism and suggestions are invited.** Inquiries regarding the work of the Commission will receive careful consideration and attention. Your interest in this undertaking is solicited, and your cooperation in this great Kentucky enterprise is earnestly desired. Address all inquiries and suggestions to:

JAMES H. RICHMOND,  
Superintendent of Public Instruction,  
Frankfort, Kentucky.

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# PUBLIC EDUCATION IN KENTUCKY and the KENTUCKY EDUCATIONAL COMMISSION



## Education and the State

Kentucky's leaders of the past have recognized the State's responsibility for the support of public education. In 1821, the Kentucky Legislature made provision for a public school system by creating the Literary Fund, which was to receive a part of the earnings of the Bank of Kentucky. The preamble to the Act providing for the Literary Fund reads:

“Whereas the well-known and important influence of general education upon the habits, the morals, the religion and consequently the happiness of society cannot fail to present the subject to the present General Assembly as an object of primary importance to the State of Kentucky: Therefore, with a view to carrying into effect, as early as practicable, a system of diffusive education, which shall be calculated to meet the just expectations of the country, and the intentions of the Legislature in the establishment of the Bank of the Commonwealth of Kentucky—Be it enacted—”

One of Kentucky's most interesting documents pertaining to public education is the famous report submitted to the Legislature in 1822 by Messrs. Barry, Witherspoon, Pope, White and Roper. Eloquently and impressively it points out the importance of education:

“Popular education is the prop which sustains free institutions, and the lever which overturns the oppressor's throne.—It was not Caesar that overturned the liberties of Rome—it was ignorance. It was not Napoleon that made France a despotism—it was ignorance. Bind the minds of men in chains of ignorance, and it requires but a moderate portion of arts and talents to enslave their bodies. Wherever these chains exist, let us break them. Let us wage on the citadels of ignorance a perpetual and exterminating war. . . . It is the first

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of our political duties—we owe it to our principles, to our institutions, to our posterity, and to mankind!”

### **Progress of Education in Kentucky**

Education has made progress in Kentucky. In the year 1910, there were 510,000 boys and girls enrolled in the common schools of the State; in 1932 the total enrollment was 611,000, an increase of more than 100,000. The high school enrollment in 1932 was 72,000—more than *five times* the enrollment in 1910. Never before has there been so large a percentage of the State's population in school.

Within the decade 1920 to 1930 the average length of the school term increased from 123 days to 165 days. Within a decade also, the proportion of Kentucky's teachers equipped with two years or more of college training has increased from one-sixth to more than one-half. Progress has been made in the increased amounts of money expended for education, and in the increased valuation of school property.

*Measured by generally accepted standards, however, Kentucky's progress simply parallels (though on a much lower plane) the progress made in education throughout the United States. Kentucky's educational rank, relative to the other states, has not advanced during the past twenty years. Kentucky still ranks about fortieth among the states.*

Kentucky's prestige is enviable by virtue of her fine traditions, her pioneers, her statesmen, and her scholars. Kentucky has tremendous wealth in her relatively undeveloped rich natural resources. But—the Commonwealth's greatest potential wealth is in her boys and girls, who at the present time do not have educational opportunities on a par with the other boys and girls in the majority of the states of the Union. The problem of providing such opportunities becomes more serious when we realize that Kentucky is one of the poorer states. It is imperative, therefore, that Kentucky should obtain the largest possible return on the amount of money that can be devoted to her educational program.

*In one important respect the cause of education within the State has gone backward during the past few years. The proportion of State revenue going to education has de-*

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*creased from 37.8 per cent in 1916 to 15.8 per cent in 1929. Moreover, the ratio of the total cost of education in Kentucky contributed to by both local support and State revenue, to all State and local taxes collected, declined from 44.67 per cent in 1924 to 37.71 per cent in 1930. In other words, the proportion of tax monies going to education has decreased considerably in recent years.*

Every child in Kentucky is entitled to the same opportunity for an education. Nevertheless, enormous differences in educational opportunity exist under present conditions. Picture a county in which the average annual expenditure per child enrolled is only *one-tenth* of that in another county where more nearly adequate educational advantages are afforded the children. There are many counties in Kentucky—counties with large numbers of children—where educational opportunities are so meager that they can scarcely be said to exist.

Kentucky's progress in education is dependent upon the financial support which the citizens of Kentucky are able and willing to give to her public schools. The present emergency in public finance presents a challenge to the thoughtful and patriotic citizenry of the State. Kentucky's greatest mistake would be to make retrenchments at the expense of her children in the public schools. The cause of education in Kentucky is identical with the cause of the welfare of Kentucky's children. The development of Kentucky's wealth depends upon the advancement of public education. Natural resources will be developed—wealth will be increased—if we provide the children with adequate educational opportunity. Kentucky's citizens of tomorrow need educational opportunities today. "The situation calls for neither panic nor despair. It does call for careful study and courageous action on the part of civic, business and educational leadership; a real need for local and State study and action to meet the crisis."

### **What Are Kentucky's Educational Needs?**

Kentucky's educational needs are many. They may be summarized in seven brief statements, as follows:

1. Kentucky's system of education is not adequately supported when viewed as a whole; too much of the cost is borne by local districts.
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2. Equality of educational opportunity for all Kentucky children does not exist.

3. There are too many school districts in existence today in Kentucky to allow for the most efficient and economical administration. There are too many types of districts. The program as a whole is improperly controlled and supervised.

4. Certain provisions of the Constitution, pertaining to education, and many provisions of the school law actually work as a detriment to educational efficiency in Kentucky.

5. Kentucky's educational ranking is low in average length of school term, in percentage of children of school age enrolled, in regularity of attendance of those enrolled, and in the holding power of the schools.

6. Kentucky is behind in the training of teachers. The curricular offerings of the public schools are often inadequate and poorly planned. There is a lack of libraries and other instruction materials.

7. Kentucky's school buildings are inadequate and poorly equipped.

### **Why Make a Study of Public Education in Kentucky?**

The defects in Kentucky's educational system are not new discoveries. They have long been the concern of educational leaders and public-spirited citizens. Attention has been focused on them by the Special Planning Committee of the Kentucky Education Association. School administrators have worked hard to make inadequate appropriations meet ever-increasing needs. Teachers have cheerfully labored in antiquated schools for salaries far below the national average. As far as possible, provision has been made for the education of handicapped and underprivileged children, but this provision has been woefully inadequate. Kentucky's educational system has with great sacrificial effort literally tried to "lift itself by its own bootstraps."

With the already inadequate facilities strained further toward the breaking point by recent economic conditions, it became vital that steps be taken to meet the impending crisis. But—what steps should be taken? What course should be followed? Public education is the largest single enterprise of the Commonwealth, and it must not be endangered by hasty or ill-advised action. Realizing these things,

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educational and legislative leaders decided upon a course of action that seems destined to be one of the most important events in Kentucky's educational history.

### **The Kentucky Educational Commission Is Created**

Upon the recommendation of educational leaders, the 1932 General Assembly made provision for an educational commission to make a thorough study of public education in Kentucky, and to recommend a revision of the school laws. The purpose of the Commission is best explained by Section 2 of the Act passed on January 20, 1932, which reads—

*“It shall be the duty of this commission to direct a study of public education in Kentucky and report its findings to the Governor and the General Assembly of this Commonwealth at the opening of its next regular session, with recommendations of such measures and such revision of our school code as may be found necessary for increasing the efficiency and equalizing the benefits of public education throughout the Commonwealth.”*

The Commission Act also provided that not more than four of the appointed members should be actively engaged in school work. On April 9, 1932, Governor Laffoon appointed the following persons as members of the Commission:

**Honorable James H. Richmond**, Superintendent of Public Instruction and chairman of the Commission, in accordance with Section 3 of the Commission Act.

**Mrs. James G. Sheehan**, president of the Kentucky Congress for Parents and Teachers, Danville.

**Dr. Frank L. McVey**, president of the University of Kentucky, Lexington.

**Dr. H. H. Cherry**, president of Western Kentucky State Teachers College, Bowling Green.

**Mr. J. W. Bradner**, superintendent of city schools, Middlesboro.

**Mr. H. W. Peters**, superintendent of Christian County Schools, Hopkinsville.

**Honorable W. J. Webb**, attorney, Mayfield.

**Mr. Yancey Altsheler**, wholesale grocer, Louisville.

**Honorable Ben Williamson**, former U. S. Senator, Ashland.

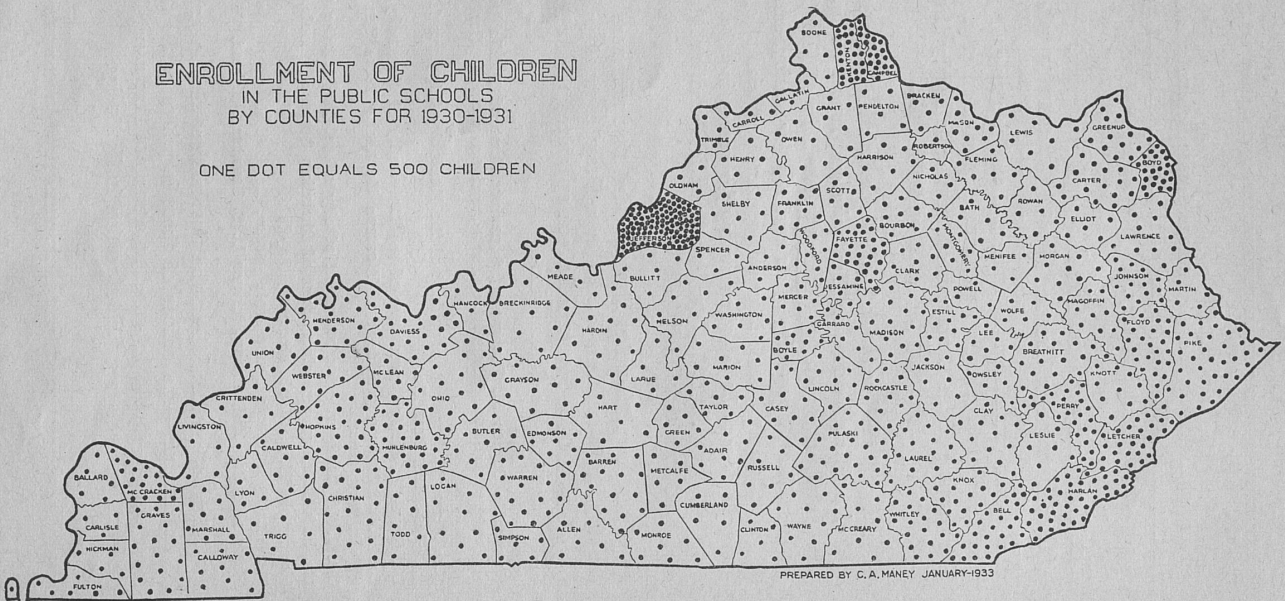
If no other facts about the Commission were known, the names of its members—the caliber of those in whose hands the work has been placed—should be sufficient assurance that a notable contribution will be made to public education in Kentucky.

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# KENTUCKY'S SCHOOL CHILDREN ARE EVERYWHERE IN THE STATE

## ENROLLMENT OF CHILDREN IN THE PUBLIC SCHOOLS BY COUNTIES FOR 1930-1931

ONE DOT EQUALS 500 CHILDREN



This map shows where Kentucky's school children are located. Although there are a few centers where the school population is more dense than the average, the striking fact shown by this map is the comparatively even distribution of children in all

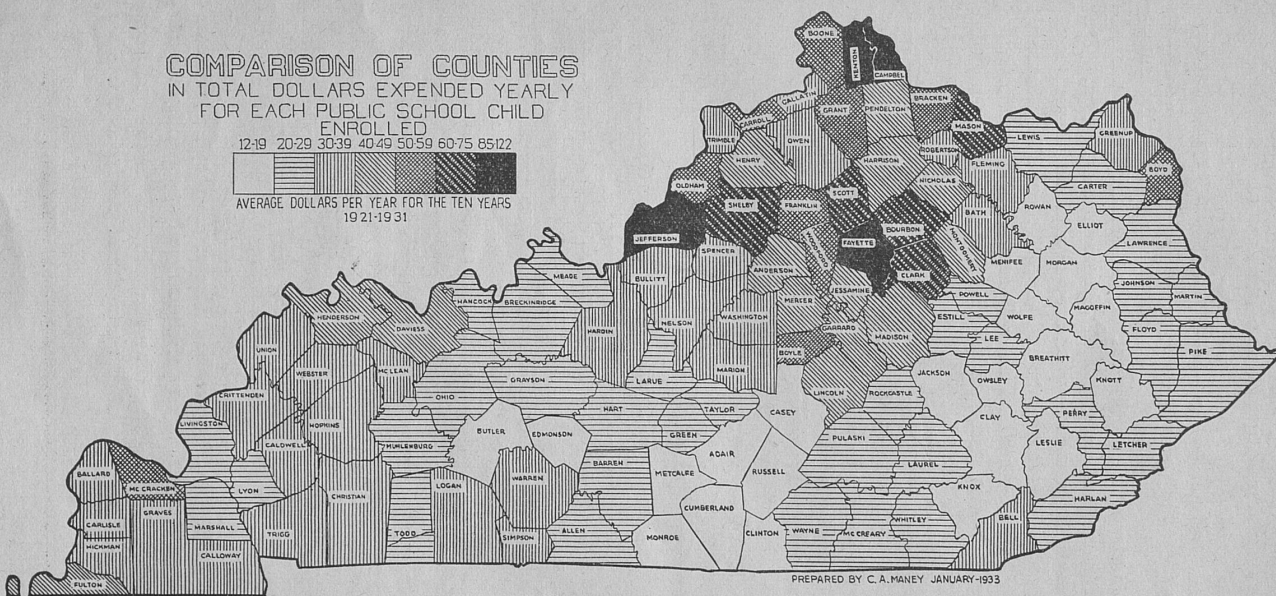
**BUT—KENTUCKY'S EDUCATIONAL DOLLARS ARE NOT EVENLY DISTRIBUTED**



This map shows where Kentucky's school children are located. Although there are a few centers where the school population is more dense than the average, the striking fact shown by this map is the comparatively even distribution of children in all

### BUT—KENTUCKY'S EDUCATIONAL DOLLARS ARE NOT EVENLY DISTRIBUTED

COMPARISON OF COUNTIES  
IN TOTAL DOLLARS EXPENDED YEARLY  
FOR EACH PUBLIC SCHOOL CHILD  
ENROLLED  
12-19 20-29 30-39 40-49 50-59 60-75 85-122  
AVERAGE DOLLARS PER YEAR FOR THE TEN YEARS  
19 21-19 31



This map shows that Kentucky's educational dollars are not distributed according to the needs of Kentucky's children. In some sections, education receives only one-tenth as much support as in others. Under these conditions, equality of educational opportunity is impossible. It should be noted that the shading shows total dollars per child, and not total dollars per county.

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### **The Plan of Organization**

The usual plan of employing a few experts to carry on a program of this kind was not adopted, because it was felt that this should be a Kentucky enterprise in so far as possible. The work of the Commission is carried on by various committees composed of schoolmen and laymen. The major divisions of the committee work are (1) aims and functions of public education, (2) organization and control of public education, (3) financing of public education, and (4) recodification and revision of the public school laws. The membership of the various committees is shown on pages 12, 13 and 14.

Every phase of public education is being subjected to careful analysis. Preliminary reports already made give indication of the exceptional thoroughness of the study. Bias and prejudice have been cast aside. The sole objective of the Commission is to offer recommendations that will effect economies, increase efficiency, and insure every child equity of opportunity for an education.

### **How This Work is Being Financed**

In another respect, the Kentucky Educational Commission is unique. Not one cent of the taxpayers' money was appropriated by the Legislature for its work. The members of the Commission and of the various committees are not receiving salaries of any kind. It is estimated that the work they will do, if done by outside experts, would cost the Commonwealth of Kentucky more than \$50,000.

The only salaries paid are those for stenographic and clerical services. In order to carry on the work, three agencies—the Kentucky Education Association, the General Education Board of New York City, and the Kentucky Negro Education Association—have appropriated \$7,500.00, \$5,000.00, and \$500.00, respectively, a total of \$13,000.00. Again Kentucky's teachers have demonstrated in a practical way their interest in the educational welfare of the children of Kentucky.

### **What Will Be Accomplished?**

It goes without saying that the Commission will prepare a constructive report. What the Commission's work will actually be worth to Kentucky, however, will depend upon the desire of the people for a more efficient school system, with equity of educational opportunity for all.

Our leaders today are searching for solutions to the problems forced upon us by three years of economic stress. As far as this State

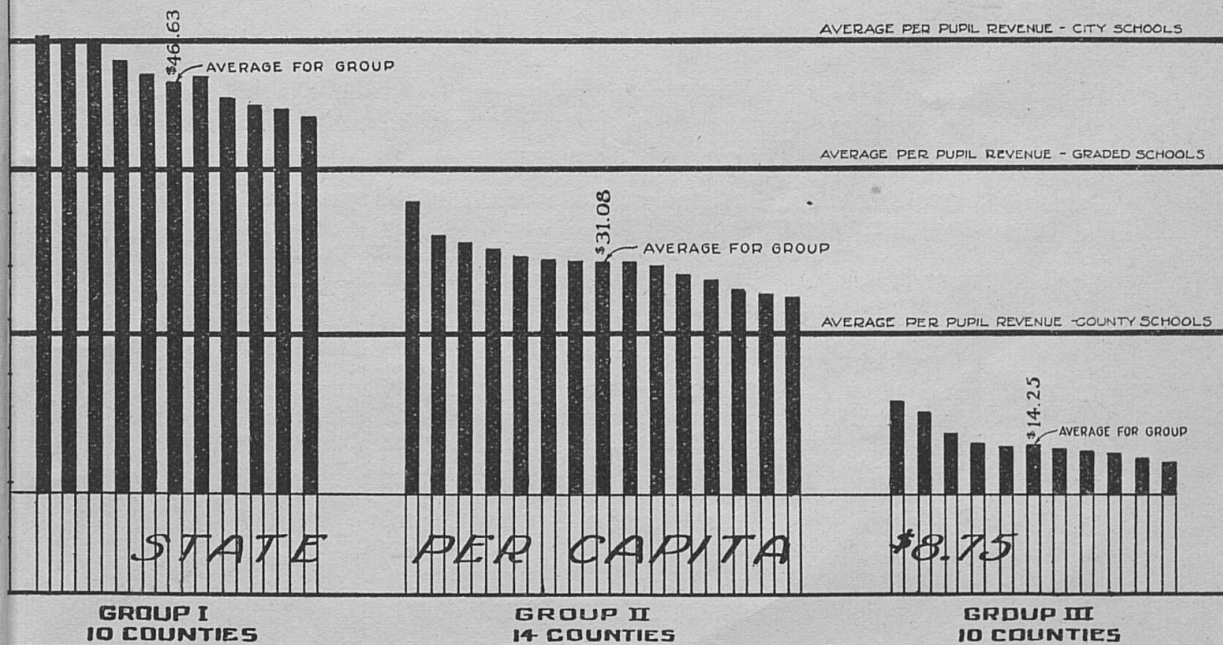
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is concerned, the course is clear—there must be no moratorium in education in Kentucky!

Tomorrow's business men, professional men and legislators are sitting in today's inadequate school buildings, being taught by poorly paid and sometimes poorly trained teachers. Kentucky in 1933 can hardly go farther than Kentucky's 1933 schools prepare her to go. Public education affects every citizen because it affects the wealth and well-being of the Commonwealth; it therefore behooves every taxpayer to familiarize himself with the work that is being done by our Commission.

The report of the Kentucky Educational Commission will be not an achievement, but an opportunity. Let us hope that Kentucky will recognize this—and act.

## REVENUE PER PUPIL THREE GROUPS OF COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICTS EACH HAVING A CENSUS OF APPROXIMATELY 36,000 1930 - 1931



PREPARED BY W.C. BELL - STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION -  
FRANKFORT KENTUCKY - OCTOBER 1932.

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## COMMITTEE ORGANIZATION FOR THE STUDY OF EDUCATIONAL PROBLEMS IN KENTUCKY

### EDUCATIONAL COMMISSION

James H. Richmond, Superintendent of Public Instruction, Chairman  
Mrs. James G. Sheehan, President of the Kentucky Congress for Parents  
and Teachers  
Frank L. McVey, President of the University of Kentucky  
H. H. Cherry, President of Western State Teachers College  
J. W. Bradner, Superintendent of Middlesboro City Schools  
H. W. Peters, Superintendent of Christian County Schools  
W. J. Webb, Mayfield  
Yancey Altsheler, Louisville  
Ben Williamson, Ashland  
Secretary: James W. Cammack, Jr., Division of Research, State Depart-  
ment of Education

### COORDINATING COMMITTEE

James H. Richmond, Superintendent of Public Instruction, Chairman  
James W. Cammack, Jr., Division of Research, State Department of Educa-  
tion, Secretary  
H. L. Donovan, President of Eastern Kentucky State Teachers College  
Leo M. Chamberlain, Bureau of School Service, University of Kentucky  
H. H. Hill, Superintendent of Lexington City Schools  
R. E. Jagers, Division of Teacher Training, State Department of Education

### COMMITTEE ON AIMS AND FUNCTIONS

H. L. Donovan, President of Eastern Kentucky State Teachers College,  
Chairman  
W. L. Matthews, Teacher Training School, Western Kentucky State Teach-  
ers College  
M. E. Ligon, Professor of Education, University of Kentucky  
John Howard Payne, President of Morehead State Teachers College

### CODE COMMITTEE

James W. Cammack, Jr., Division of Research, State Department of Educa-  
tion, Chairman  
Gordie Young, Assistant Superintendent of Public Instruction  
Leo M. Chamberlain, Bureau of School Service, University of Kentucky  
William R. Attkisson, Assistant Attorney General

### COMMITTEE ON ORGANIZATION AND CONTROL

R. E. Jagers, Division of Teacher Training, State Department of Educa-  
tion, Chairman  
J. B. Holloway, Professor of Education, University of Kentucky  
A. C. Burton, Professor of Education, Western Kentucky State Teachers  
College  
D. Y. Dunn, Superintendent of Fayette County Schools  
J. W. Brooker, Division of School Buildings and Grounds, State Department  
of Education

### COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

H. H. Hill, Superintendent of Lexington City Schools, Chairman  
J. W. Martin, Bureau of Business Research, University of Kentucky  
F. D. Peterson, Division of Finance, State Department of Education

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#### Subcommittee on Administration

J. B. Holloway, Professor of Education, University of Kentucky, Chairman  
N. O. Kimbler, Superintendent of Henderson County Schools  
Maurice F. Seay, Dean of Union College  
P. H. Hopkins, Superintendent of Somerset City Schools  
T. W. Oliver, Superintendent of Pikeville City Schools

#### Subcommittee on Curriculum

A. C. Burton, Professor of Education, Western Kentucky State Teachers College, Chairman  
G. Ivan Barnes, Division of Vocational Education, State Department of Education  
W. C. Jones, Division of Research, Eastern Kentucky State Teachers College  
H. C. Taylor, Superintendent of Elizabethtown City Schools

#### Subcommittee on Employed Personnel

D. Y. Dunn, Superintendent of Fayette County Schools, Chairman  
L. F. Jones, Professor of Education, Western Kentucky State Teachers College  
R. E. Sharon, Superintendent of Pendleton County Schools  
Glenn O. Swing, Superintendent of Covington City Schools  
Warren Peyton, State Department of Education  
J. O. Lewis, Superintendent of Fulton City Schools

#### Special Subcommittee on Extension Work

Ezra L. Gillis, Registrar of the University of Kentucky  
James Pearce, Division of Extension, Western Kentucky State Teachers College  
John W. Carr, Acting President, Murray State Teachers College  
W. C. Jones, Division of Research, Eastern Kentucky State Teachers College  
W. H. Vaughan, Dean of Morehead State Teachers College  
Warren Peyton, State Department of Education

#### Subcommittee on School Buildings and Grounds

J. W. Brooker, Division of School Buildings and Grounds, State Department of Education, Chairman  
K. R. Patterson, Superintendent of Mayfield City Schools  
E. V. Hollis, Professor of Education, Morehead State Teachers College  
L. C. Caldwell, Superintendent of Boyd County Schools  
Hugh Meriwether, Division of School Buildings and Grounds, State Department of Education

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E. C. Blom, Assistant Superintendent of Louisville City Schools  
A. B. Crawford, Principal of Bryan Station High School  
J. A. Dotson, Principal of Benham High School  
Moss Walton, Division of Research, State Department of Education

#### Subcommittee on Financial Support

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O. J. Jones, Public School Supervisor, State Department of Education  
Bert R. Smith, Professor of Education, Western Kentucky State Teachers College  
W. J. Moore, Professor of Economics, Eastern Kentucky State Teachers College  
John W. Manning, Professor of Political Science, University of Kentucky  
H. C. Burnette, Superintendent of Nicholasville City Schools

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#### Subcommittee on Financial Administration

F. D. Peterson, Division of Finance, State Department of Education, Chairman  
L. E. Meece, Bureau of School Service, University of Kentucky  
J. L. Foust, Superintendent of Owensboro City Schools  
A. D. Owens, Superintendent of Newport City Schools

#### Committee on Special Problems in Negro Education

R. B. Atwood, President of Kentucky State Industrial College, Chairman  
L. N. Taylor, State School Agent, State Department of Education, Secretary  
Rufus E. Clement, Dean of Louisville Municipal College  
H. R. Merry, Principal of Covington Colored High School  
A. S. Wilson, Secretary of Kentucky Negro Education Association  
S. L. Barker, Principal of Owensboro Colored School

#### Advisory Committee on School Laws

Frederick Archer, Superintendent of Louisville City Schools  
H. C. Burnette, Superintendent of Nicholasville City Schools  
J. L. Foust, Superintendent of Owensboro City Schools  
Glenn O. Swing, Superintendent of Covington City Schools  
W. M. Wesley, Principal of Burgin High School  
N. O. Kimbler, Superintendent of Henderson County Schools

#### Advisory Committee on the Education of Handicapped Children

James H. Richmond, Superintendent of Public Instruction, Chairman  
Homer W. Nichols, Division of Vocational Rehabilitation, State Department of Education, Secretary  
Miss Marian Williamson, Director of Kentucky Crippled Children Commission  
Miss Catherine Moriarty, Superintendent of School for the Blind  
Mrs. Viola McDonald Morey, Secretary of Kentucky Society for Crippled Children  
H. V. McChesney, President of Kentucky Society for Crippled Children  
Madison J. Lee, Superintendent of School for the Deaf  
A. W. Fortune, Pastor of Central Christian Church, Lexington  
C. N. McAllister, Dean of Department of Education, Berea College  
W. S. Taylor, Dean of College of Education, University of Kentucky  
Sherman G. Crayton, Director of Training School, University of Kentucky  
A. M. Lyon, Superintendent of Feeble-Minded Institute  
E. C. Hardin, Superintendent of Kentucky School of Reform  
H. V. Bastin, Superintendent of Ormsby Village  
D. B. Waller, Manager of Kentucky Children's Home Society

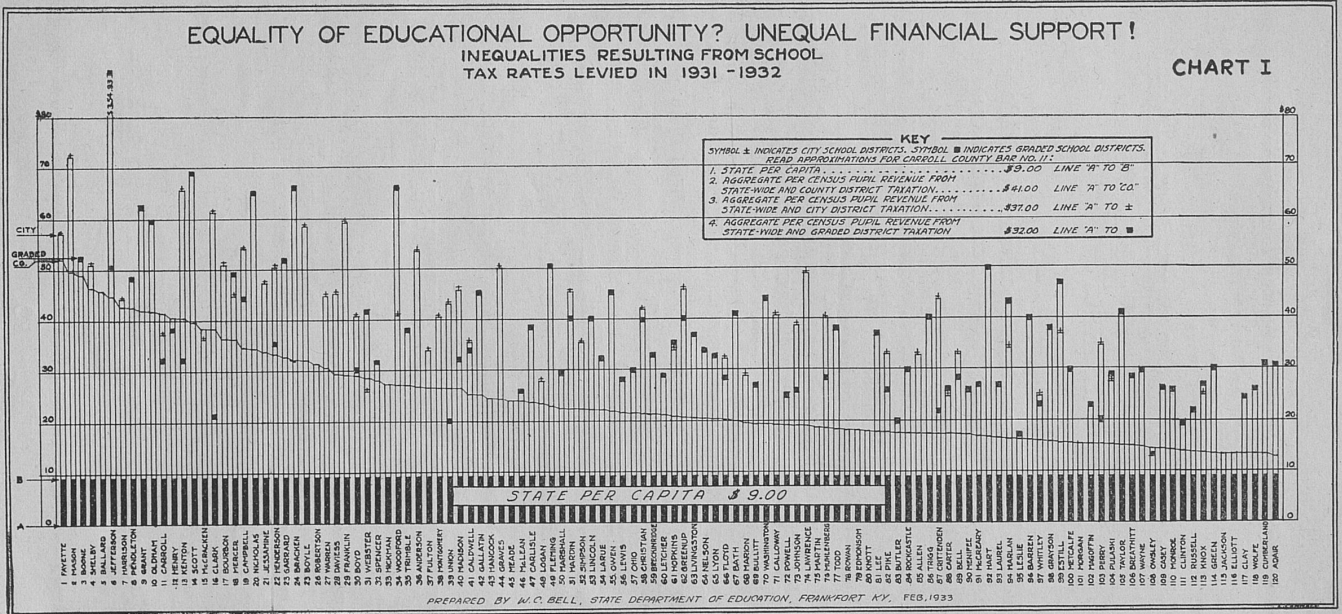
#### Advisory Committee on Adult Education

Raymond A. Kent, President of University of Louisville, Chairman  
Olney M. Patrick, Division of Vocational Rehabilitation, State Department of Education, Secretary  
Mrs. Frank L. McVey, Lexington  
Miss Lula Hale, in charge of Homeplace, Ary  
Miss Lena B. Nofcier, Secretary of Kentucky Library Commission  
Lee Kirkpatrick, Superintendent of Paris City Schools  
Louis Clifton, Extension Department, University of Kentucky  
R. E. Daugherty, Assistant Superintendent of Industrial Education, Louisville Public Schools  
Jesse Baird, Dean of Foundation-Junior High School, Berea College

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EQUALITY OF EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITY? UNEQUAL FINANCIAL SUPPORT!  
 INEQUALITIES RESULTING FROM SCHOOL  
 TAX RATES LEVIED IN 1931 - 1932

CHART I



This chart shows the disparities in financial support of the public schools in county, city, and graded school districts. Each bar extending to the continuous line running across the chart represents the amount of money available per pupil in the school census from the State per capita and local taxation in each of the county districts. Figures for city and graded school districts represent averages for these types of districts in the counties in which they are located.

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## A RESOLUTION

Adopted by the Kentucky Educational Commission on  
the Financial Needs of Kentucky School  
Districts

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WHEREAS, The extreme economic conditions facing public schools in many parts of the state have placed them in a desperate plight; and

WHEREAS, The lack of wealth in many school districts of the State makes it impossible to support schools from local funds; and

WHEREAS, There was a decrease in the Common School Fund this year over last year; and

WHEREAS, There will, in all probability, be a material decrease in this fund next year unless some provision is made for stabilizing it; and

WHEREAS, It is impossible to provide for a special equalizing fund because of the decision of the Court of Appeals in the Equalization Fund suit last year; and

WHEREAS, The welfare of the State demands an efficient system of public education at all times, though there may be other needs of the State which may be delayed temporarily;

BE IT RESOLVED, THEREFORE, That it is of paramount importance that relief be brought to many Kentucky Schools and that definite effort be made to supplement means of support now given Kentucky school districts which are unable to maintain the minimum requirements of a standard school after having exhausted their taxing powers.

Kentucky Educational Commission

(Signed) JAMES H. RICHMOND,

February 21, 1933

Chairman

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16 p.