

Commonwealth of Virginia
State Board of Education
Richmond, March 24 1933

To The Division Superintendent
To The Chairman Of The School Board
To The Chairman Of The Board Of Supervisors

My Dear Sir:

On yesterday, March 23, 1933, the State Board of education, after serious deliberation of the status of education in the state, instructed me to write you a very frank and positive statement dealing with plans for maintaining public schools of Virginia for the coming year, 1933-34.

Accordingly, I bring to your attention the following facts:

First – In view of the Constitutional mandate that elementary education or education in the primary and grammar grades be provided free for the children of the state, it is strongly advised that you make full provision for 1933-34. A full school term is to be interpreted as a minimum of eight months, but preferably nine months. The law clearly stipulates that an eight months term is the minimum on which State moneys are to be received.

Second – For a number of years it has been the practice in the State to maintain high schools for nine months while the elementary schools have been closing with less than this term. All of the regulations of the Department of Education, the Constitution of the State and the statutes passed by the Legislature demand that the elementary schools be given first consideration. It is fundamentally important that you in your planning arrange first for the maintenance of a full term of elementary schooling before giving consideration to the maintenance of your high schools. When you shall have made provision for your elementary schools, then naturally you should give serious consideration to high school education.

Third – The State Board noted especially in this deliberation on yesterday that in several counties reductions have been made in the levies for schools. The Board is fully cognizant of the financial crisis which is facing us but nevertheless it feels that it should urge very strongly that you not reduce your levies for school purposes, because by so doing you jeopardize the possibilities of educating the children of your county and community.

In this connection your attention is called to the section of the appropriation bill which demands that each locality must raise twenty per cent of the instructional costs of education. This means that of the total salaries paid teachers the county or city must raise a minimum of twenty per cent. This does not include other amounts which may be raised locally for other phases of the educational program.

Hoping that you will see the necessity of maintaining your elementary schools next year and that you will therefore maintain the necessary levy locally to provide for such schools, and with kind regards, I am

Yours very truly,
Sidney B. Hall
Superintendent of Public Instruction