

**HISTORY AND PROGRESS OF THE  
PUBLIC SCHOOL DEPARTMENT OF  
THE CITY OF SACRAMENTO, 1849-  
1893. ALSO ANNUAL REPORT OF  
THE BOARD OF EDUCATION, 1894**

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649603435

History and Progress of the Public School Department of the City of Sacramento, 1849-1893.  
Also Annual Report of the Board of Education, 1894 by Winfield J. Davis

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Edited by Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd.  
Cover @ 2017

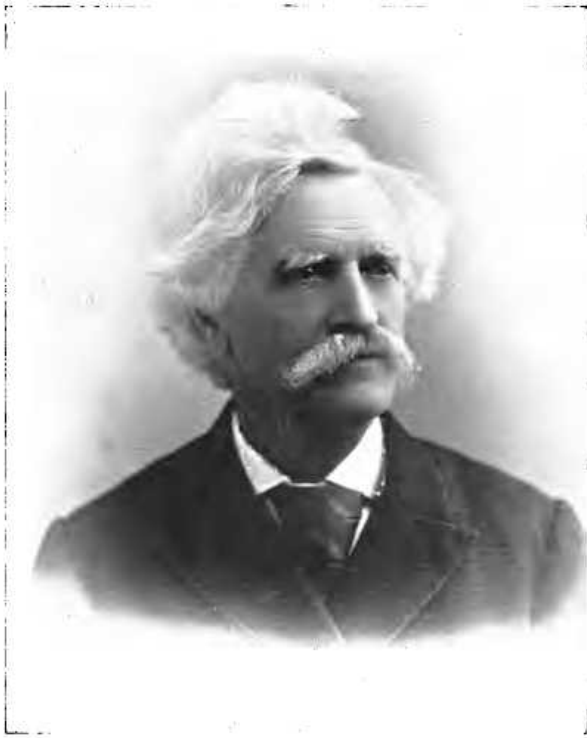
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**WINFIELD J. DAVIS**

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DR. H. W. HARKNESS,  
*First City Superintendent.*

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OF THE  
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OF THE  
CITY OF SACRAMENTO

1849 — 1893.

BY  
WINFIELD J. DAVIS,  
President of the Board of Education.

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1894.

SACRAMENTO:  
D. JOHNSTON & CO., PRINTERS.  
1895.



## PRELIMINARY NOTE.

*To the Honorable Board of Education of the City of Sacramento:*

I deem it opportune at this time, when the city of Sacramento has established its government under a new charter materially different from the laws that had governed it, to present a connected history of the department of the municipal government now under the control of this board, up to and including the year 1893. Such a history is of value, not only to the members of this board, and those who will follow, but, in my judgment, to the people, as illustrative of the advancement that has been made in public education in the city.

Much embarrassment has been encountered in gathering the facts necessary for a complete and satisfactory history of the schools, because of the exasperating meagerness of many of the records, and the mislaying or destruction of much material that was of value, and which should have been preserved. It suggests that a system should be inaugurated by the board, and such old papers as exist segregated and pigeon-holed, and future papers properly placed so as to be reasonably accessible. As it is, the papers that have come down to us are in a confused mass, absolutely "without form, and void."

Heretofore the annual reports have been very general and gave but little information of the condition of the schools. I have designed this report to cover, so nearly as possible, the transactions and progress of the department down to the time the present board took office, to be followed by the current report, which will set out the events and data of 1894.

WINFIELD J. DAVIS,

President Board of Education.

Sacramento, Dec. 26, 1894.

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The following table shows the results of the experiment. The first column is the number of trials, the second column is the number of correct responses, and the third column is the percentage of correct responses. The fourth column is the number of trials that were not completed, and the fifth column is the percentage of trials that were not completed.

Number of trials	Number of correct responses	Percentage of correct responses	Number of trials not completed	Percentage of trials not completed
10	8	80%	2	20%
20	15	75%	5	25%
30	20	67%	10	33%
40	25	63%	15	38%
50	30	60%	20	40%
60	35	58%	25	42%
70	40	57%	30	43%
80	45	56%	35	44%
90	50	56%	40	44%
100	55	55%	45	45%

As can be seen from the table, the percentage of correct responses decreases as the number of trials increases. This is due to the fact that the number of trials that were not completed increases as the number of trials increases.

## PART I.

### *SYNOPSIS OF THE LAWS WHICH HAVE GOVERNED THE SCHOOL DEPARTMENT.*

The first constitutional convention, on September 25, 1849, took up the report of the special committee on the constitution, relative to education. The committee had reported in favor of appropriating the five hundred thousand acres of land granted by Congress to new states for the purpose of internal improvements, to constitute a perpetual school fund, with a proviso that the Legislature might appropriate the revenue so derived to other purposes, if the exigencies of the State required it. An animated debate arose on the adoption of the proviso, and it was stricken out by a vote of 18 to 17. Thus was secured an inviolable fund for public school purposes. The constitution provided for the election by the people of a State Superintendent of Public Instruction, to hold office for three years; directed the Legislature to encourage, by all suitable means, the promotion of intellectual, scientific, moral, and agricultural improvement; provided that the proceeds of all the land granted by the United States to the State for the support of public schools, and the five hundred thousand acres granted to new states under the act of 1841, should constitute a perpetual fund, the interest of which, together with all the rents of the unsold lands, and such other means as the Legislature might provide, should be inviolably appropriated to the support of the common schools throughout the State; directed the Legislature to provide for

a system of common schools, to be kept up at least three months every year in each district; and made provision for the support of a State University.

Near the close of the first session of the Legislature, 1849-50, the committee on education reported that the taxes were so heavy that they did not consider it advisable to report a bill to tax the people still further for the support of public schools, and a school bill, of which no record remains, was indefinitely postponed.

It may here be proper to remark, as a matter of historical interest, that San Francisco was the first place in the State to organize, independently of State law, a free public school. The ayuntamiento, or city council, adopted, on April 8, 1850, the following ordinance, drawn by Hugh C. Murray, afterward Chief Justice of the State Supreme Court, and it was the first ordinance of the kind passed in California:

1. Be it ordained by the common council of San Francisco, that from and after the passage of this act, it shall be the duty of J. C. Pelton, who has been employed by this council as a public teacher, to open a school in the Baptist chapel.
2. Said school shall be open from half past eight o'clock A. M. to twelve o'clock M., and from two o'clock P. M. until five o'clock P. M., and it shall continue open from Monday until Friday at five o'clock P. M.
3. The number of scholars shall not exceed the number of one hundred; and no scholar shall be admitted under the age of four or over the age of sixteen.
4. All persons desirous of having their children instructed in said school, shall first obtain an order from the chairman of the committee on education; and all children obtaining said order shall be instructed in said school free of charge.
5. It shall be the duty of said Pelton to report to the council on the first of each and every month the number of scholars and the progress of said school.