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TOWNSHIP HIGH SCHOOL IN ILLINOIS**

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HORACE A. HOLLISTER

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PRINCETON TOWNSHIP High School, BREWSTER Co., FIRST ONE ESTABLISHED IN ILLINOIS

PREFACE

This bulletin has been prepared in response to frequent calls for literature on the part of those interested in establishing township high schools, and those who are studying the Illinois type of these schools. In this second revision we are including the law for consolidation of school districts. (See p. 34).

We are under obligations to high school authorities for statistics and photographs furnished. There are many other notable buildings in the State, but it is impossible to show all in a brief bulletin like this. Hence an effort has been made to select typical schools from different sections of the state.

Urbana, Ill., December 2, 1912.

H. A. HOLLISTER,

THE TOWNSHIP HIGH SCHOOL

INTRODUCTION

As Americans we are all justly proud of our system of free public schools. This is true alike of those who live within the influence of the "little red school house" of the rural district and of those whose children are educated in the more imposing structures which house our city schools. The intimate relation existing between a successful democracy and the intelligence of the people who compose it is now generally recognized. No one longer questions, therefore, the right of taxing all for the support of schools.

More and more, as we advance in the experiment of government by the people, do we realize how definitely and inevitably are the success and perpetuity of our free institutions dependent upon the efficiency of our schools. No longer is it considered enough that a free citizen be able to read and write, necessary and fundamental as are these acquirements known to be. The increasing complexity of the problems confronting us and calling for clear, intelligent thought on the part of each individual voter demands a broader training than this. Equally emphatic and insistent is the demand for a knowledge of science and history which is called for in successfully carrying forward our agriculture, commerce and other industries in such a way as to enable us to provide for the competitions of the future and the strain upon our productive resources which our rapidly increasing population is sure to bring.

Putting these two demands together we see that the schooling which we should seek to provide for our children ought to include, at least, that of high school grade. Doubtless this will mean high schools better adapted to the two purposes of training for citizenship and for the successful conduct of our industries; but a training which stops short of this in time and extent can scarcely be expected to give us intelligence in the application of principles sufficient for the wise direction of these two fundamental aspects of the future life of a great continent teeming with a vast population of free, self-governing people.

The idea of a free common elementary school has become generally fixed and recognized, so that few children in this country are now so situated that, as far, at least, as the provision of schools is concerned, they may not have the advantages of such an education at public cost. As regards the free common high school, however, the situation is not so gratifying. In this respect our own state has been somewhat of a laggard as compared with many other states.

Section 1 of Article VIII of the Constitution of Illinois, which is in the nature of a referendum, reads as follows: "The General Assembly shall provide a thorough and efficient system of free schools, whereby all children of this State may receive a good common school education."

A decision of the higher court of the State with reference to this provision (See *Russell vs. High School Board of Education*, 212-217) declares that "this section of the Constitution is both a mandate to the Legislature and a limitation upon its power to establish schools except for the purpose of a good common school education. But a high school for the education of the more advanced pupils is a school of the character required by the Constitution. Any school district may establish and maintain a high school department."

The Legislature has seen fit to leave the establishment of high schools to the option of communities. This is necessary on account of the varying conditions in different localities; but this provision should hardly be construed to mean that such schools are not to be established in communities where they are needed and can be supported. The spirit of the Constitution, itself the expressed will of the people, as it has been interpreted by the courts, seems to require that free high schools should constitute an essential part of our public schools wherever practicable. In other words, it does not appear that in Illinois we are quite living up to the spirit and meaning of our Constitutional requirements in regard to free schools of the higher grades.

VARIOUS METHODS FOR PROVIDING FREE HIGH SCHOOLS

One reason for such a state of things is that we have not yet fully realized the possibilities of the law providing for the organization of township high school districts, thus making the high school free for all those otherwise eligible within such territory.

Various methods have been tried by the different states for properly distributing the cost of the higher schools so as to make them free to all and yet at the same time distribute the burden of cost equitably.

In those sections of the United States where such plans are in operation the fact that high schools minister to a larger group than the local districts in which they are situated seems to be generally conceded. The high school trains more directly for service in the various vocations than does the elementary school. It is there that the people look for the training of those who are to become more intelligent and skilled in carrying on the work of the modern world than is possible in the elementary schools.

In New England the prevailing plan is to let districts not able to support high schools send the children who are prepared for the work to the nearest high schools and then pay over to those schools the tuition of all pupils so educated. In some cases this tuition is rebated to the districts paying it out of the state treasury, thus making it a form of state aid and distributing the cost over the state as a whole. Such a method can hardly be said to be equitable, since the districts already supporting high schools must also help to pay this tuition.

Another method is that of a general scheme for state aid. Among the states in which this plan is in use are: Maine, Vermont, Massachusetts, Rhode Island, New York, Pennsylvania, Delaware, Virginia, South Carolina, Wisconsin, Minnesota, North Dakota, Kansas, California. The method is operated differently in different states but results in the distribution to the high schools of a special sum out of the state treasury. Thus the burden of local support is lightened by distributing part of the cost of the schools over the entire state.

In a few states, notably Kansas, Nebraska and Nevada, a special county high-school tax is levied, thus creating a county fund for distribution among the high schools of the county. In a few cases county high schools are provided for. This latter pro-

vision makes a free high school in the county for those not otherwise provided for but it does not distribute the general cost of all high schools over the county as does the county high school fund.

THE ILLINOIS PLAN

A fourth plan is that of the union district or township high school. Sixteen states make provision for such schools, and among them Illinois.

By a special act of the Legislature in 1867 a township high school established the previous year at Princeton, Illinois, was legalized. This school is still managed under the same special act, and has grown to be one of the great high schools of the state. The enrollment last year was 370 with 16 teachers employed. The ministration of this school appears in the fact that the tuition collected from pupils attending from outside the township district amounts to about \$3,000 annually.

In 1872 a general revision of Illinois school law was made and there was included in this a general provision for the establishment of township high schools. In 1879 the law was amended, and again in 1911. The latter amendment, with additional legislation, is very important and really supercedes the original township law.

TOWNSHIP HIGH SCHOOLS OF ILLINOIS. TABLE OF STATISTICS

Following is a list of township high schools established under the laws of 1872 and 1911 giving date of establishment, initial cost of building, present rate of levy for all purposes, number of tuition pupils and income from same, present general condition, number of teachers employed, total enrollment, and relative number of rural pupils enrolled:

Name of School	Date of Establishment.	Present general condition.	Initial cost of building.	Rate of levy per \$100.	No. of teachers employed.	Total enrollment.	Relative number enrolled from rural schools.	Number of tuition pupils.	Approximate annual income from tuition.
Princeton Twp.	1857	Good	\$ 36,000	.68	16	362	28%	75	\$2850.00
Streator	1875	"	50,000	.90	14	314	26%	32	960.00
Ottawa	1878	"	20,000	.78	17	395	15%	47	2000.00
Evanston	1883	"	105,000	.70	32	703	none	19	1700.00
Nauvoo	1883	Fair	Rented	1.00	2	31	30%	7	126.00
Lyons (La Grange)	1888	Good	30,000	1.24	23	460	5%	12	1200.00
Deerfield (Highland Park)	1890	"	52,500	.97	20	315	5%	20	800.00
Taylorville	1890	"	41,000	.60	9	223	12%	17	700.00
Pontiac	1894	"	30,000	.72	12	234	34%	62	2240.65
Bigsville	1896	"	22,000	1.00	4	45	75%	5	137.50
Sterling	1897	"	32,000	.43	13	232	20%	32	800.00
J. Sterling Morton (Clyde)	1898	"	123,000	.90	17	229	small	4	360.00
Roseville	1899	"	42,200	1.75	7	62	50%	12	400.00
New Trier (Kenilworth)	1899	"	61,000	3.00	28	445	none	2	750.00
Thornton (Harvey)	1899	"	60,000	1.42	17	328	10%	16	650.00
La Salle-Peru	1899	"	64,000	.72	16	300	20%	47	1400.00
Oak Park and River Forest	1899	"	350,000	1.74	49	972	none	9	900.00
Joliet	1899	"	224,000	1.03	52	1067	small	75	3250.00
Savanna	1900	"	40,000	1.15	10	146	15%	14	400.00
Bloom (Chicago Heights)	1900	"	60,000	.90	12	218	10%	17	800.00
Gilson	1900	Fair	5,000		2	35	80%	5	48.00
Murphysboro	1901	Good	21,735	.93	8	162	42%	6	108.00
Hittle (Armington)	1902	"	7,500	.35	3	24	33 1/2%	0	0.00
Harrisburg	1902	"	20,000	.70	8	178	18%	22	350.00
Maine (Des Plaines)	1902	"	23,000	1.00	9	152	small	7	280.00
Centralia	1903	"	48,000	.81	12	270	15%	10	300.00
De Kalb	1903	"	70,000	.90	15	345	20%	40	1600.00
Marshall	1903	"	30,000	1.05	87	117	22%	20	350.00
Morton	1903	"	24,000		3	43	60%	9	270.00
Mt. Vernon	1904	"	30,000	.75	98	248	10%	12	300.00
Du Quoin	1904	"	35,000	1.50	6	110	20%	15	300.00
Blue Island	1904	"		1.50	8	150	10%	15	400.00
Waukegan	1905	"	120,000	.84	20	322	4%	27	1228.50
Bellflower	1905	"	11,000	.34	4	48	80%	4	108.75
Mazon	1905	"		.70	3	62	55%	5	135.00
Lovington	1906	"	47,250	.89	7	89	47%	17	510.00
Kilbourne	1906	"	6,000	4.00	2	25	17%	3	24.00
Stockland	1907	"	6,000	.32	3	33	100%	2	60.00