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NEWS LETTER

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# RURAL SCHOOL COSTS COMPARED

Public school expenditures in North Carolina are steadily mounting. Twenty-five years ago the annual expenditure was less than a million and a half dollars; seven years ago it was twelve million dollars; the last year for which complete figures are available, 1926-27, the expenditure was more than 1926-27, the expenditure was more than thirty-six million dollars. Current ex-penses alone for 1926-27 were in excess of twenty-five millions. Since capital outlays fluctuate greatly from year to year and, moreover, are not a valid charge against any particular year, they should be eliminated in a table of commenting easts comparative costs.

The table which appears elsewhere in this issue shows how the counties of the state rank in current school costs per child enrolled in the rural school The city systems are excluded so as to make the counties more nearly comparable. It will be noticed that the cost per child is greatest, \$50.16, in the rural schools of Durham county, and least, \$17.98, in Alleghany county. The average for all the rural systems of the state is \$26.55, with counties exceeding this forty-five figure and fifty-five falling below it.

#### **Cities Have Advantage**

The corresponding figures for thirtyfour city systems range from \$68.12 in Asheville to \$32.95 in Smithfield. All are well above the state average for rural schools. Logically the per pupil cost should be less in the cities than in the country, for the item of transportation does not have to be included, and furthermore, the classes are more nearly uniform in size, all containing a full quota. Despite its advantages in particulars the expenditure per pupil in the city systems is considerably greater than in the rural schools. The explanation is simple. In both rite explanation is simple. In dota in the said that the constituence in North Caronia these three funda-city and country the limiting factor is the tax rate. The cities can afford to spend more on their schools be-term, which is "just around the corner." In North Caronia these three funda-ties afford ago, and and while nobody will say politics did not touch them in that state, they cause they have relatively more wealth The cities can provide longer terms, better teachers, and fuller equipment than the country districts and still enjoy a much lower tax rate.

Per pupil cost is not an absolute index of the quality and quantity of instruction, but there is usually some parallel. It will never be possible to give equality of educational opportunity to all the children of the state so long as the local district, or even the county, remains the unit of taxation. The steps that have been taken to mitigate the inequalities are encouraging but there is a long distance yet to go before the support of the six-months term, there is either equality of opportunity or an equalized tax.

#### **A SIX-MILLION FUND**

The matter of the eight-months school term is largely an economic question, involving the relative ability of the taxpayers to bear the financial burden necessary to support it. I have having the eight-months school term, felt, and still feel, that it would not only be unjust, but perhaps unmoral, to compel these less wealthy agricul-tural counties of the state to assume stantially in the present equalizing fund provided for the support of the six-months term. Many of the less the financial burden of an eight-months school term until the burden of the six-fourths to four-fifths of their children months school term has been fairly and in schools with an eight-months term. equitably distributed.

and presented by the Educational Com-mission and the consequent accelera-themselves are carrying the entire cost tion of public sentiment, the last of the last two months of the eight-General Assembly made a great for-months term. Many of these districts ward stride toward the goal of the eight-months term, when it more than doubled the equalizing fund, particular-are paying to the county fund for the ly in view of the fact that it had to support of the regular six-months provide substantial increases for all term. other services of the state government, including interest, sinking fund, and at the end of the present biennium on North Carolina Farmers' Federation serial payments upon the outstanding June 30, 1929, there will be a subpublic debr.

has meant a far-reaching reduction in A. W. McLean, in The N. C. Teacher. tem of warehouses at strategic points and the operation of a fleet of trucks ing their six-months terms which the poorest counties must bear. The base on which a county participates has aided only the payment of teachers' one decade, of 238 percent, against a began operation with one warehouse. salaries; now the state aids in the payment of salaries and of other current expenses. The million-and-a-half-dol- Carolina. Well, the way to stop hear-

SCHOOL COSTS COMPARED |lar fund provided slightly more than one-fifth of the seven-million-dollar salary fund (according to the state schedule) of the seventy-six counties participating in it; the three-and-a-quarter-million dollar fund provided three-tenths of the eleven-million-dollar current expense fund of the ninety counties now participating. In other words, the state is now paying an average of thirty percent of the current expenses of the six-months term of all except the ten wealthiest counties of the state. The public should bear in mind, however, that the state does not pay a flat thirty percent of current expenses of each of the ninety participating counties; it pays only a small proportion for the richer counties participating and the major part for the poorest counties where the tax rate for schools was highest. For example, the state pays only 0.6 per-cent of the current expenses of Rowan county, which was the last county to share in this fund; it pays only three fundamentally, that Georgia has not, percent of the current expenses of Graham, four percent of Pasquo-tank, and six percent of Wayne. On the other hand, it pays more than fifty percent of the current expenses of nine of the current expenses of nine for the state of the current expenses of nine for the state of the current expenses of nine for the state of the current expenses of nine for the state of the current expenses of nine for the state of the current expenses of nine for the state of the current expenses of nine for the state of the current expenses of nine for the state of the current expenses of nine for the state of the current expenses of nine for the state of the current expenses of nine advantage of its opportunities, realized of the poorest counties; and for the very poorest, Clay and Dare, it actual-

ly pays two-thirds of the current ex-penses of operating cost of their six-months school term. Instruction estimates that an increase by the next General Assembly of one million dollars in the equalizing fund for the first year, and one and one-half million dollars for the second year of the next biennium will complete the equitable distribution of the burden of financing the six-months term on the present basis.

#### Just around the Corner

I have said that the constructive

would be sufficient to distribute the financial burden of an eight-months term fairly and equitably in all the counties of the state. This fund, if apportioned according to the present equalizing fund, would go a long way toward reducing the total school tax rate (speaking in terms of county and district combined) in all of the districts uitably distributed. The state is, at present, aiding sub-With the illuminating facts found stantially in the support of the first

It appears reasonably certain that The increase of the equalizing fund the state, which will aid materially in from one and one-half million dollars to providing the means for the necessary three and one-quarter million dollars

# TIRED OF NORTH CAROLINA

**RICH LOCAL MARKETS** Manufacturers who sell their products in the South know that-North and South-the Carolinas must be numbered among their most active markets.

People there, supported by busy factories as well as richly yielding fields, have money to spend and the disposition to buy. These markets, following economic

laws, naturally fall to the manufacturer whose product, quality for quality, is lowest in price. That is why this rich at-the-door

consuming market offers the greatest opportunity to the Piedmont Carolinas manufacturers with their admitted advantages and econ in overhead, labor, raw material, and power.-Piedmont Carolinas.

ing about North Carolina is to help give Georgia such a big jump in every way that everybody will talk about Georgia. And of course it can be done. There is nothing in North Caroline, fundamentally, that Georgia has not, and there is much in Georgia that advantage of its opportunities, realized its fundamental assets, while Georgia has not. Maybe that is not a palatable fact, but it is a fact nevertheless

Do you know what are the greatest assets a country can have? That is, in nonths school term. The State Superintendent of Public addition to the ones bestowed by nature. They are simply good educa-tional facilities for its children, good methods and means of communication, and good health. That does seem very simple, doesn't it? But there is not one of them that does not get tangled up in politics. Even health matters in Georgia have suffered from that blight. Even school matters have done so. And as for roads!

In North Carolina these three funda-I hope and believe that the corner may be turned and the longer term made an accomplished fact by the next General Carolina claims to rank third in the Assembly. It should not be done unless provision is made at the same time to distribute the financial burden fairly and equitably, in all the counties of the state, by increasing the equaliz-time to distribute the same equilar. ing fund to such an amount as will there is always a reason why a state stands out in some particular. But State Superintendent Allen has esti-mated that an equalization fund of six million dollars for the first year of the next biennium and six and one-half And it has paid more attention to the primary educational system.

R

The Morning News is just about as tired as any private citizen in Georgia of hearing so much about North Caro-lina. But that state has a habit of making itself talked about. Nothing would please The Morning News more than to hear Georgia talked about in North Carolina in the same tone of voice and for the same reasons North Carolina is talked about in Georgia. And that can happen.

It all depends on Georgians.

They can realize the value of schools,

roads and health, and translate that realization into actualities if they want to. If they fail to do so they are like-ly to hear a lot more even than they have heard about North Carolina. Savannah News.

#### **THE FEDERATION PROSPERS**

As a result of seven years of united Carolina are solving the problem marketing the surplus products of the farms of the section. The Western June 30, 1929, there will be a sub-stantial surplus in the general fund of 1921 at \$4,000, now has a capitalization of \$250,000 and handles a large part of the produce of the mountain farms.

Through the establishment of a sys the farm products are gathered, graded and stored to await shipment to mar-North Carolina claims a per capita kets where the most advantageous wealth increase between 1912 and 1922, prices may be secured. The federation

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48 51

Modern methods of production of figures from the biennial census of high-class goods on a large scale are being promoted by agents of the federation. A substantial sum has been accumulated for this purpose, \$100,000 being donated toward the work by New York financiers. The poultry products of the section were formerly estimated as worth about \$3,000,000. Under- modern methods this annual sum can be increased, according to leaders of the federation, to nearly \$75,000,000 through the establishment of poultry fattening plants and egg collecting stations throughout the mountain region.

The leader of the federation during The leader of the federation during the eight years of its existence is J. G. K. McClure, of Asheville, pres-ident of the organization. The suc-cess of the federation, which is in-corporated under the laws of North Carolina, with its membership com-posed mainly of farmers, has been due to the service rendered the members

manufactures, announced yesterday by Wade H. Phillips, director of the state Department of Conservation and Development. These figures were compiled by the

State Department, which, by special arrangement, took the census for the U. S. Bureau of the Census, and are the first to be completed for any of the forty-eight states. The totals have been verified and approved by the federal bureau. The enumeration shows that North

Carolina advanced well beyond the billion-dollar class in which she was placed following the 1925 census, which showed a total value of \$1,050,434,117 or \$102,048,047 less than the latest

che eight years of Asheville, pres-ident of the organization. The suc-cess of the federation, which is in-corporated under the laws of North Carolina, with its membership com-posed mainly of farmers, has been due to the service rendered the members. Farmers who before the coming of the federation sold their produce by the vagonload on local markets at low prices, now market their goods by the carload at more distant locations and at higher prices. A still greater scope in marketing can be secured, it is said, by the estab-tishment of a system of canneries for small fruits and vegetables and creameries to take care of milk and butter produced. —News and Observer.
INDUSTRIAL OUTPUT GAINS North Carolina industries in 1927; turned out products valued at \$1,162, 482,164, an increase of approximately ten percent over 1925, it is revealed by EUDAL SCHOOL EXPENDICIPIERS IN NORTH CARDING EUD

# RURAL SCHOOL EXPENDITURES IN NORTH CAROLINA Current Expense per Child Enrolled, 1926-27

In the following table based on State School Facts, Vol. IV, No. 24, the rural school systems of the one hundred counties are ranked according to annual current expense per child enrolled. The expenditures of the city school systems are omitted so as to make the counties more nearly comparable. Capital outlays are omitted for the reason that they fluctuate greatly from year to year and are not a proper charge against a particular year. In 1926-27 there were 615,488 children enrolled in the rural schools of the state and the total current expenditures of the rural systems was \$16,339,730. This is an average of \$26.55 per child. There were forty-five counties in which

This is an average of \$26.55 per child. There were forty-five counties in which the cost per pupil was greater and fifty-five counties in which it was less. The range was from \$60.16 in Durham county to \$17.98 in Alleghany.

State average current cost of schools per rural child enrolled, \$26,55. Department of Rural Social-Economics, University of North Carolin

					AL 011110
		Current	Ĭ		Current
		expense			ATDORSO
nk	County	per child	Rank	county	nor shild
		enrolled	1	- country	enrolled
1	Durham	\$50.16	51	Requirent	chroneu
2	Currituck	47 04	52	Ondom	\$25.73
3	Buncombe	AA 71	52	Cranville	
4	Transvivania	44 70	54	Lobraton	
5	New Henover	19 88	55	Mosthermeter	
6	Polk	38.20	56	Depresion	
7	Carteret	38 14	57	Longe	
8	Craven	35 38	50	Columbus	24,90
g	Dero	35.25	50	Mostin	24.66
ğ	Guilford	25.25	60	Macon	24,37
1	Handerson	95.20	61	Encelation	24,13
0	Catawha	35.09	20	Franklin	23.79
2	Forevth	33 60	62	Wadison	23.62
ю. Л	Caston	49 57	64	Edgecombe	23.53
5	Vanco		09	Duplin	23.41
6	Wilson	29 07	60	Lenoir	23,38
7	Pamlico	29 40	60	Randolph	23.21
. 4 D	TT-J.		67	Nash	23.19
0	T - 2		68	Chatham	23.18
9	M.D		69	Mitchell	23.09
0	Detherford	01.17	70	Liee	23.03
0	Nutherford		171	Clay	
2	Washington		72	Gates	22.92
3	Mecklenburg		73	Stanly	22.89
4	Camden		14	Warren	
b	Davidson		75	Person	22.53
0	Moore		76	Greene	22.40
7	wayne		) 77	Bertie	22.11
8	Pasquotank	. 29.03	178	Pitt	22.04
9	Avery		79	Stokes	21.92
0	Burke		80	Yancey	21.66
1	Wake		81	Halifax	21.60
2	Cumberland		82	Sampson	21.50
3	Pender		83	Anson	21.28
4	Rowan		84	Robeson	
5	Montgomery	28.88	86	Union	20.92
ő .	Rockingham		86	Cleveland	20.54
7	Haywood	28.64	87	Brunswick	20,14
β.	Alexander	.28.60	88	Surry	20.13
Э.	Alamance		89	Cabarrus	20.05
) (	Orange	.28.30	90	Richmond	19.73
. (	Graham	.28.02	91	Chowan	19.68
2 (	Tyrrell		92	Yadkin	19.38
3 ]	Davie	.26.89	93	Watauga	19.34
E (	Caldwell	.26.69	94	Wilkes	19.20
5 1	Bladen	.26.58	95	Hoke	19.13
	Swain	.26.46	96	Scotland	.18.73
' I	redell	.26.20	97	Cherokee	18.71
1	.incoln	.26.13	98	Ashe	.18.68 -
H	Hertford	.25.99	99	Caswell	.18.17
F	-arnett	26.94	300	Alleghany	17 09