

N.C. Schools Have Higher Enrollment Figures Than Most Other States

North Carolina has one of the largest public school enrollments in the country. About 1.1 million students attended our schools in 1980-81. Only nine states have a larger pupil population. Across the nation, more than 40 million students attend our public schools.

Has public school enrollment boomed during the recent years of declining confidence in public education? No. Only a slight shift over the past few years to private schools is evident in our state. Compared to the total school enrollment in 1975, 96.9 per cent of our students attended public schools. Figures for 1978 indicated that public school enrollment would drop to 95 per cent. Nationally, 89.3 per cent of our elementary and secondary students attend public schools.

As of 1979-80, North Carolina provided educational services for almost 115,000 handicapped children—9.28 per cent of all children. Only 10 states had more youngsters receiving such services, which points up the good job our state is doing in locating the handicapped. Nationally, more than 4 million handicapped children received educational services, some 8.25 per cent of all children.

Teacher salaries are improving. In fact, North Carolina ranked 5th among the states with a 12.33 per cent increase in average salaries of public school teachers, 1979-80 to 1980-81. When we compare the per cent increase in average salaries of public school teachers, 1970-71 to 1980-81,

North Carolina ranks 13th among the states with a 104.04 per cent gain. The estimated average annual salary of a public school teacher in an elementary or secondary school in North Carolina in 1980-81 was \$15,858 ranking our state 27th among the states. The estimated national average salary was \$17,264.

Public education is largely financed from state revenues—funds collected primarily from the state income tax and the state sales tax. According to 1980-

81 estimates, North Carolina's state government allocates about 65 per cent of its revenue for the public schools. Only eight states provide a larger state contribution.

North Carolina's public schools fare better than most states when it comes to federal financial aid. North Carolina receives 13 per cent of its revenues from the federal government, according to 1980-81 estimates. It ranks 7th among the states in receiving federal funds. The national average

for federal revenues to public schools is almost 9 per cent.

In 1980-81, it is estimated that North Carolina received about 21 per cent of its financial assistance from local revenues—primarily property taxes—ranking it 44th among the states. The average local public school revenue nationally is about 41 per cent. New Hampshire, who leads the states in local support of the schools, provided local revenues amounting to almost 89 per cent last year.

Per pupil expenditures in North Carolina have increased more than 200 per cent over the past 10 years. In 1980-81, North Carolina's estimated expenditures per pupil in average daily membership were \$1,905. Thirty-two states spent more per child, with Alaska paying the most—\$4,731. The national average was \$2,288 per child.

Figures from the 1980 fall Gallup Poll of Public Attitudes Toward the Public Schools point out that even during a time of diminished

confidence in education, the public's belief in the importance of education has markedly increased. In 1973, 76 per cent of the public viewed the importance of the schools to future success extremely important; 19 per cent viewed it as fairly important; 4 per cent as not to important; and 1 per cent had no opinion. In 1980, 82 per cent of the public viewed the schools as extremely important and 15 per cent saw the schools as fairly important.

Figures from the 1980 fall

Gallup Poll of Public Attitudes Toward the Public Schools show a steadily upward turn in the number of people with no children in school—1969, 50 per cent; 1977, 66 per cent; 1980, 60 per cent. Today's school "public" is much different from that of a few years ago.

The top five problems of the US public schools as identified by the public in the 1981 Gallup Poll were lack of discipline, 23 per cent; use of drugs, 15 per cent; poor curriculum and standards, 14 per cent; lack

of proper financial support, 12 per cent; and difficulty of getting good teachers and integration-busing, each 11 per cent. Let's put the concerns in perspective—77 per cent of the public did not list lack of discipline as a problem; 85 per cent did not mention drugs; 86 per cent did not list poor curriculum and standards; 88 per cent did not think financial support was a problem; and 89 per cent did not mention the difficulty of getting good teachers or integration-busing.

Honey Collection Is Donated

N. C. State University is going to be a sweeter place in the future.

Mr. and Mrs. James Dickson of Horse Shoe have given NCSU's Agricultural Extension Service their honey collection—all 213 jars from 39 states and 60 countries.

Dr. John Ambrose, associate professor of entomology and extension apiculturist, said the collection would be put on display and used in teaching, research and extension programs. The display will be at 1403 Varsity Drive, and it should be ready soon after the first of the year.

"You won't find any two (jars) alike," Dickson said proudly. The honey is the product of different places, different flowers and different times of year. The colors and packages also differ. There is good Western North Carolina sourwood honey, wild raspberry from Maine, heather from Scotland, and fire weed from Alaska.

Dickson, who has kept bees for most of his 76 years, also gave NCSU his collection of bee memorabilia. Included are such things as old smokers, photos of North Carolina honey queens and a copy of the senate bill that made the honey bee the state insect.

Sharing Ambroses' professional interest in apiculture at NCSU is Stephen Bambara, an extension specialist. Ambrose and Bambara conduct research on such things as diseases of bees and the pollination of various crops. They also carry out statewide educational programs for beekeepers and farmers who must depend upon bees to pollinate their crops. Ambrose also teaches Entomology 201, a course in beekeeping that attracts from 50 to 60 students each fall.

North Carolina has an active beekeepers association with many county chapters. The state produces about six million pounds of honey each year, and bees add an estimated \$35-million annually to the value of apples, blueberries, cucumbers and other crops they pollinate.

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