

Stresses Good Attendance Throughout School Year

Superintendent of Public Instruction Tells of North Carolina Schools

WELFARE DEPTS. ASSISTING EDUCATION

State Has Great Investment in Education Of Youth Of Carolina

BY CLYDE A. ERWIN, State Superintendent of Public Instruction

North Carolina's program of elementary education for all its youth cannot be effective without an adequate program of regular school attendance of children during the nine months school year. When the first compulsory attendance law was passed in 1907 the required term of

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presents an investment of \$129,000,000 in buildings, equipment and vehicles and is operated at a cost of approximately \$50,000,000 a year.

To get the fullest return from this investment and this operating cost, all children of the State between the ages of six and 21 who have not completed high school should take advantage of the full school term. Those children between the ages of seven and 15 (16 after this year) should, in accordance with the law, be required to attend school, unless they are excused under the rules and regulations governing compulsory attendance as adopted by the State Board of Education.

Parents themselves can do the most toward making certain that their children are in school for the required number of hours each day. Failure to attend school should be permitted only when there is a valid excuse such as illness or other unavoidable causes. The school law definitely places upon parents or guardians the responsibility of seeing that their children attend school regularly and provides a penalty of a fine for continued failure to do so.

In every county of the state, court officials are familiar with certain families of the community who are charged each year with wilful failure to send their children to school. There are certain instances in which families may not be able to provide the proper clothing for their children in view of limited family income. Because of this they may hesitate to send their children to school regularly, but for cases like this the county board of education may, under the law, give up to \$10 a month during the school term to help keep the child properly clothed.

The county department of public welfare also will cooperate in this respect and provide, within limitations of funds available for that purpose, whatever aid it can for the child. The welfare agency in has money contributed by the county, the State, and the national governments to give certain relatives with whom the child is living financial assistance for the child as long as the child remains in school up until 18 years of age. Those funds are provided under the Social Security Act for aid to dependent children when there is loss of the normal breadwinner. For example, if only the mother remains to support her family, she will not have to keep the oldest child out of school to care for the younger ones during the hours she might be working. These funds for aiding dependent children will be available as long as the children

of school age continue their education. This assistance may be obtained by application to the superintendent of public welfare in the county.

Recent modifications in the law permit school units to set up special officers to check truancy and absence cases and provide for their pay through fines or other local funds. Some school units have taken advantage of this new law and others, doubtless, will do so in the future. In most North Carolina counties, however, the county welfare superintendent is still the chief school attendance officer.

In the years following the first world war county superintendent of schools in all except a few more populous localities of North Carolina, was also the superintendent of public welfare; and from this time on one of the duties of the welfare head was enforcement of school attendance. In those instances where the two jobs were combined, it was not difficult for the welfare superintendent to keep in touch with the truancy cases because they were daily brought to his attention in his school duties. With the expansion of both the public education and the public welfare programs in the State in the past few years, however, the problem of enforcing school attendance has been increasingly greater. Where no special attendance officer has been employed the educational system has relied on the welfare units to handle truancy cases.

Sometime in the future, no doubt, a more effective enforcement system will be worked out in North Carolina, but until that is done the county welfare departments will share with the schools and special officers the job of keeping North Carolina's youth in the classrooms. Parents will help greatly in taking care of this problem by assuming their share of responsibility in making certain that their children are in school or that they have a reasonable excuse for not being there. All North Carolina public schools are now open for the 1945-46 school term. They offer our youth an opportunity for advancement that should not be disregarded, if the boys and girls of today are to develop into the leaders of the commonwealth tomorrow. Regular school attendance by each boy and girl is the first step in getting the most out of the opportunity which the school provides.

Civilians will now receive 136 million pounds of the 1945 canned salmon pack instead of the 55 million pounds previously allotted.

JOBS!

All of us believe in the future of America. We believe that the present uncertainty is only a temporary period between war prosperity and an era of peacetime plenty.

But believing is not enough. That, alone, is not the answer to unemployment and the other hazards of reconversion through which we are passing. The only solution for unemployment is—**JOBS.**

We, in this community, are fortunate. Of course, the national situation is bound to have some influence on each State and County of the nation, but by and large we have no reconversion problems here. Our farms and forests are producing commodities as necessary to the well-being of the country and as urgently needed now as during the crucial years of war. A job is waiting for almost anyone who wishes to work.

Of course, working on a farm or cutting pulpwood in the forests does not pay the swollen wages obtainable from some of the big city war industries before V-J Day. But living and working here does not cut wide gaps into a paycheck either, with everything from rent to recreation at inflated prices. In fact, taking all things into consideration, it is possible to live better and save more at current wages here than could be done with considerably higher big city wages.

Nor are current wages low. Current farm prices enable farmers to earn and pay good wages, while pay for pulpwood cutters and haulers and other workers in forest industries are higher than they have ever been.

If anybody wants good living, doing healthy and invigorating work at good wages, he can find it on one of our neighboring farms or in cutting urgently needed top quality pulpwood for one of our neighboring pulp mills.

There is no reconversion problem here.

ARRIVES HOME

John B. Warth, Jr., chief motor machinist mate on the aircraft carrier Bon Homme Richard, has returned to the United States and is now here with his wife, the former Miss Letha Arnold. For 45 days preceding the

end of the war the Bon Homme Richard, with accompanying vessels of the 3rd Fleet, steamed up and down the Japanese coasts, bombarding and bombing Japanese home islands.

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