

Five-Point School Legislative Program Ready for Submission to Kansas Legislators

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GROWING slowly but strongly like the stalwart oak of the forest, the Five-Point School Legislative Program received finishing touches at the final meeting of the Kansas Legislative Council on November 10 to 13. The legislature two years ago created the background for the program by passing the high school measure in different forms in the two houses, and by enacting a resolution instructing the Legislative Council to give further work to the school code, with special emphasis to rural school problems.

For two years very intensive work has been given to each of the five points of the proposed program. The Legislative Council, that most progressive agency of Kansas state government, has devoted extensive research which has outdistanced anything done before in the state to the rural school. The final report, Bulletin No. 113 "Closed Schools in Kansas" points the problem and offers the way for solutions which are incorporated in the proposals to the 1943 legislature.

POINT ONE: Adoption of the New School Code.

A new proposed school code in the form of Legislative Council Bill No. 30 is ready for submission to the legislature. It provides for definite improvements in the legal framework as applied to common school districts and cities of the first and second classes. The code removes duplicate, obsolete and troublesome sections of Kansas school law. It avoids controversial issues and brings logic and legal soundness to the code. Many administrative impediments are removed by the new code, though the adoption of it alone will not solve the glaring school problems of the state. Early enactment of the school code in the coming legislature is a logical expectation (Copies of the school code, Bill No. 30, will be available for wide study when the printed report of the Legislative Council is available in December.)

POINT TWO: Improved Elementary Schools for Rural Children.

The understanding necessary for a solution of the rural school problem is contained in Legislative Council Research Bulletin No. 113, "Closed Schools in Kansas." This study reveals gross inequalities in educational opportunities and tax loads in every county of the state. The bulletin which is massive in its presentation of details and somewhat technical in treatment is, however, not too formidable for wide study. The facts of the survey are shown in map form for ready digestion. (Copies of "Closed Schools in Kansas" bulletins are available for reference study in the offices of superintendents of counties and first, second and third class cities of the state.)

The problems presented in the comprehensive rural school study have ready solution through county unit and state aid support. A bill carrying these provisions has been carefully drafted and has been referred to the education committee of the Senate and House. The proposals of the county unit bill are new. They are applied in many states with highly satisfactory results. A similar proposal was offered the people of Kansas many years ago by C. E. Rarick, the pioneer rural educational leader of Hays. State aid features of the bill are but an expansion of the elementary state aid now on our statute books.

The proposed county unit bill follows substantially the suggestions offered by Ass't State Supt. W. A. Stacey in the October, 1942, KANSAS TEACHER pp. 46-47. That report with substantiating information may be used for study until the bill appears in printed form.

The county unit bill contains a formula that is logical and easily understood. First of all, there is to be an over-all county tax (exclusive of cities of 15,000 population) of 1 mill. The returns from this tax shall be divided among the

THE FIVE-POINT PROGRAM

Recommendations to the 1943 Kansas Legislature for Needed Improvement of Kansas Schools.

- 1. The New School Code.**
- 2. Improved Elementary Schools for Rural Children.**
- 3. Uniform High School Measure.**
- 4. Improvement of Office of County Superintendent.**
- 5. Strengthening State Department of Education.**