PROVINCE OF BRITISH COLUMBIA

Report of the

Commission of Inquiry

into

Educational Finance

By Maxwell A. Cameron

1945

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1945.

To His Honour W. C. WOODWARD,

Lieutenant-Governor of the Province of British Columbia.

MAY IT PLEASE YOUR HONOUR:

By Order in Council approved by Your Honour on November 27th, 1944, I was appointed sole Commissioner under the "Public Inquiries Act," with the following order of reference:—

". . . to inquire into the existing distribution of powers and responsibilities between the Provincial Government and the school districts and to appraise the present fiscal position of the school districts in British Columbia, and, without restricting the generality of the foregoing, to inquire into and report upon:—

"(*a.*) The present responsibilities of the school districts; the character and extent of the services now provided by them; and the present costs of such services:

"(*b.*) The present resources of the school districts; the extent to which these revenue sources are utilized; the character and extent of any related municipal indebtedness; the character and extent of the Government assistance now provided to the school districts by the Provincial Government:

"(*c.*) The present method of administering the Public Schools System; the incidence of cost of education under the existing allocation of revenue sources;—

and to make such recommendations in regard to the premises as he may think advisable."

In pursuance of this charge, twenty-seven public hearings were held at various centres in the Province, and seventy-five briefs were received and examined.

I beg now to submit my report.

I should like to express my appreciation of the efforts and time of the many persons and organizations who have prepared and presented briefs.

I acknowledge with gratitude the courtesy and assistance of the Minister of Education, the Superintendent of Education, the Assistant Superintendent of Education, and the Chief Clerk of the Department of Education, the Surveyor of Taxes, and the Provincial Assessors.

I owe especial thanks to the Province's able and zealous corps of Inspectors of Schools.

I am greatly indebted to Inspector T. G. Carter for painstaking and patient service as Secretary; to Dr. C. B. Conway for competent statistical aid; and to Mr. D. J. S. Smith for invaluable assistance in the final preparation of this report.

All of which is respectfully submitted.

M. A. CAMERON,
Commissioner.

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Commission of Inquiry into Educational Finance.

CHAPTER I.

THE DISTRIBUTION OF SCHOOL COSTS IN BRITISH COLUMBIA.

In the school-year 1943–44 the schools of British Columbia enrolled rather more than 119,000 children. These were taught by about 4,160 teachers, about one for every thirty children enrolled, at a cost of around eleven and three-quarter million dollars, or a little less than a hundred dollars per pupil enrolled. This report investigates and makes recommendations concerning the raising and spending of this public money. The report also gives much attention to such matters as the areas of local administration and the relations of the Provincial Government to the local authorities or School Boards. These are so closely related to school finance as to be at times almost indistinguishable from it. The neglect of such matters would be unreal and would cause the investigation to lose much of whatever value it possesses.

Table I. shows that about 80 per cent. of the children of the Province attend schools in the thirty-three cities* and the twenty-eight district municipalities, although these account for less than one-half of 1 per cent. of the area of the Province. The great importance of Vancouver is also revealed.

TABLE I. ENROLMENT IN SCHOOLS OF BRITISH COLUMBIA, 1943–44.†

Enrolment.	Number.	Per Cent.
Vancouver	34,536	29.0
Other city municipalities	31,219	26.2
District municipalities	28,634	24.1
Total, municipalities	94,389	79.3
Rural school districts‡	24,654	20.7
Total, all school districts	119,043	100.0

The very difficult task of providing schools in the vast and sparsely populated part of the Province which is not organized into municipalities is attacked through more than eight hundred rural school districts. These will be discussed in Chapter III.

The Province's school system is usually known as decentralized, although this description is not very accurate, and the term is used only for want of a better. The system is partly decentralized, partly centralized.

In general most of the administration of the system is in the hands of local Boards of School Trustees, elected by popular vote for the one purpose of running the schools. Thus the Boards appoint and discharge teachers, fix salaries, and erect, maintain, and operate school buildings. In fact, however, the Boards have not as much freedom as this. Economic conditions and a strong teachers' association reduce the Boards' autonomy on salary matters; the "Public Schools Act" greatly restricts them in the discharge of teachers, and two Departments of the Provincial Government supervise them in erecting buildings.§

* This number does not include Kimberley, which was incorporated as a city in 1945.

† From the *Seventy-third Annual Report of the Public Schools of the Province of British Columbia, 1943–44.* This annual report is hereafter cited merely as *Schools Report.*

‡ *Including community school districts.*

§ No criticism is implied here. It may be that the supervision of building should be made even more stringent.

In decisions as to what the schools shall teach and how they shall teach it, the Boards take little part. The Department of Education allows local variation, but not much advantage has been taken of this.

The foregoing suggests that there is much centralization in our school system. This centralization has been increasing. The Provincial Government, through its Council of Public Instruction,* has the power to appoint an Official Trustee for any school district to replace the School Board. It has been necessary to wield this power to an increasing extent in the last few years. Further, two Educational Administrative Areas have been established in the Province. In these areas the two Inspectors of Schools are called Directors of Education, and themselves administer the schools of their areas. Associated with each of them is an Advisory Board, which, as the name suggests, has no power.

It is clearly one of the duties of the report to come to decisions as to whether or not this tendency towards centralization should proceed further, or should be arrested or reversed.

DIVISION OF THE COST.

Table II. shows how the expenditures for the public schools of British Columbia have been divided. Before commenting on this table, we should interject the remark that strict accuracy cannot be expected of all the statistics of this report. Where data relate to the Provincial Government, they can, of course, be used with confidence, although even there opinions will rightly differ as to what figures should be included under certain headings. Local expenditures, however, are not always reported with accuracy, as many of the hundreds of persons concerned have no great competence in accounting. Moreover, the fact that the financial years differ makes for error. However, many of the cities and district municipalities and some of the rural districts employ skilled accountants, and the Department verifies local reports in all possible ways. It therefore seems likely that in most cases errors are not large.

Returning now to Table II. and its illustration in Figure I., we call attention to some obvious conclusions.

In the early years of the Province's history the Provincial Government bore a very large share of total school costs. In fact, before 1888, all costs were paid by the Government.†

Since 1920 the Government contribution has hovered around one-third of the total expenditure. We may note in passing the substantial decrease in total school costs in the early thirties and hope that such reductions as are necessary in future periods of hard times will be neither so great nor spread so unevenly.

In the school-year 1940–41 the Government grant was increased by approximately the amount of the increased expenditure required of the localities by the new legislation regarding teachers' pensions. Since the expenditures on pensions lagged somewhat behind the grant, the Government share of the total increased. It has decreased slightly since.

We note in passing that until the current year, the Government of British Columbia bore in grants a much larger fraction of total school costs than that borne by the Government of any Province in Canada, except Prince Edward Island. It has recently been announced that Ontario will hereafter give grants which, while varying from place to place, will over the Province amount to one-half of school expenditures.

Table III. analyses in detail the expenditures made in the school-year 1943–44 by or through the school districts. In this table the half-million dollars of general (i.e., non-grant) expenditures made by the Department is distributed among the districts on the basis of $4.28 per pupil enrolled.

* The Executive Council or Cabinet, with the addition of the Superintendent of Education as secretary.

† For the relevant history, *see* H. B. King, *School Finance in British Columbia*, Chapter III.

TABLE II. SCHOOL EXPENDITURES IN BRITISH COLUMBIA.*

Year.	Provincial Government.				School Districts.		Total. Amounts.
	Grants.	Other School Expenditures.†	Total.	Per Cent.	Amount.	Per Cent.	
1899–1900	$280,434	$27,045	$307,479	79.0	$81,888	21.0	$389,367
1904–05	435,041	44,118	479,159	65.7	249,891	34.3	729,050
1909–10	739,031	79,545	818,576	42.7	1,098,660	57.3	1,917,236
1914–15	1,371,485	236,166	1,607,651	41.0	2,309,795	59.0	3,917,446
1919–20	1,707,246	448,689	2,155,935	39.4	3,314,346	60.6	5,470,181
1920–21	2,156,749	354,823	2,511,572	37.2	4,238,457	62.8	6,750,029
1921–22	2,290,633	406,105	2,696,738	36.4	4,691,840	63.6	7,398,578
1922–23	2,304,965	426,721	2,731,686	38.0	4,453,323	62.0	7,185,009
1923–24	2,305,946	411,824	2,717,770	35.1	5,023,302	64.9	7,741,072
1924–25	2,371,730	390,941	2,762,671	35.1	5,105,418	64.9	7,868,089
1925–26	2,380,668	336,072	2,716,740	34.8	5,095,420	65.2	7,812,160
1926–27	2,568,326	304,615	2,872,941	33.2	5,769,787	66.8	8,642,768
1927–28	2,692,382	302,637	2,995,019	34.3	5,728,576	65.7	8,723,595
1928–29	2,926,763	273,158	3,199,921	31.7	7,384,076	68.3	10,583,997
1929–30	2,719,103	421,014	3,140,217	33.4	6,264,939	66.6	9,405,156
1930–31	2,856,364	395,663	3,252,027	34.3	6,226,661	65.7	9,478,688
1931–32	3,089,206	467,716	3,556,922	38.4	5,704,259	61.6	9,261,181
1932–33	2,302,048	294,924	2,596,972	29.9	6,091,525	70.1	8,688,497
1933–34	2,052,294	304,644	2,356,938	29.6	5,601,431	70.4	7,958,369
1934–35	2,174,106	353,482	2,527,588	31.0	5,623,115	69.0	8,150,703
1935–36	2,268,969	355,136	2,624,105	31.1	5,802,969	68.9	8,427,074
1936–37	2,455,497	407,198	2,862,695	31.2	6,315,902	68.8	9,178,597
1937–38	2,612,281	428,089	3,040,370	28.4	6,668,404	71.6	10,708,774
1938–39	2,721,128	428,410	3,149,538	31.0	7,010,070	69.0	10,159,608
1939–40	2,661,123	425,655	3,086,778	30.8	6,935,916	69.2	10,022,694
1940–41	3,027,677	430,589	3,458,266	33.0	7,018,516	67.0	10,476,782
1941–42	3,059,078	456,145	3,515,223	33.1	7,092,404	66.9	10,607,627
1942–43	2,976,016	457,096	3,433,112	31.2	7,578,048	68.8	11,011,160
1943–44	3,173,325	510,257	3,683,582	31.6	7,986,131	68.4	11,669,713

* From School Reports.

† Does not include expenditures on Adult Education and on special grants to the University of British Columbia, Fairbridge Farm School, and Victoria College.

TABLE III. DISTRIBUTION OF SCHOOL EXPENDITURES, 1943–44.*

School Districts.	Provincial Government.				Local.		Total.	
	Grants.	Other Expenditures.†	Total.					
				%		%		%
Cities	$1,366,808.67	$281,431.14	$1,648,239.81	23.0	$5,522,661.15	77.0	$7,170,900.96	100
Districts	731,986.38	122,553.52	854,539.90	38.4	1,368,064.41	61.6	2,222,604.31	100
Rural	1,074,530.12	105,519.12	1,180,049.24	51.4	1,095,404.97	48.6	2,275,454.21	100
Totals	$3,173,325.17	$509,503.78	$3,682,828.95	31.6	$7,986,130.53	68.4	$11,668,959.48	100

* Based on Schools Report, 1943–44, and a memorandum provided by the Department of Education.

† Distributed on the basis of $4.28 per child enrolled.

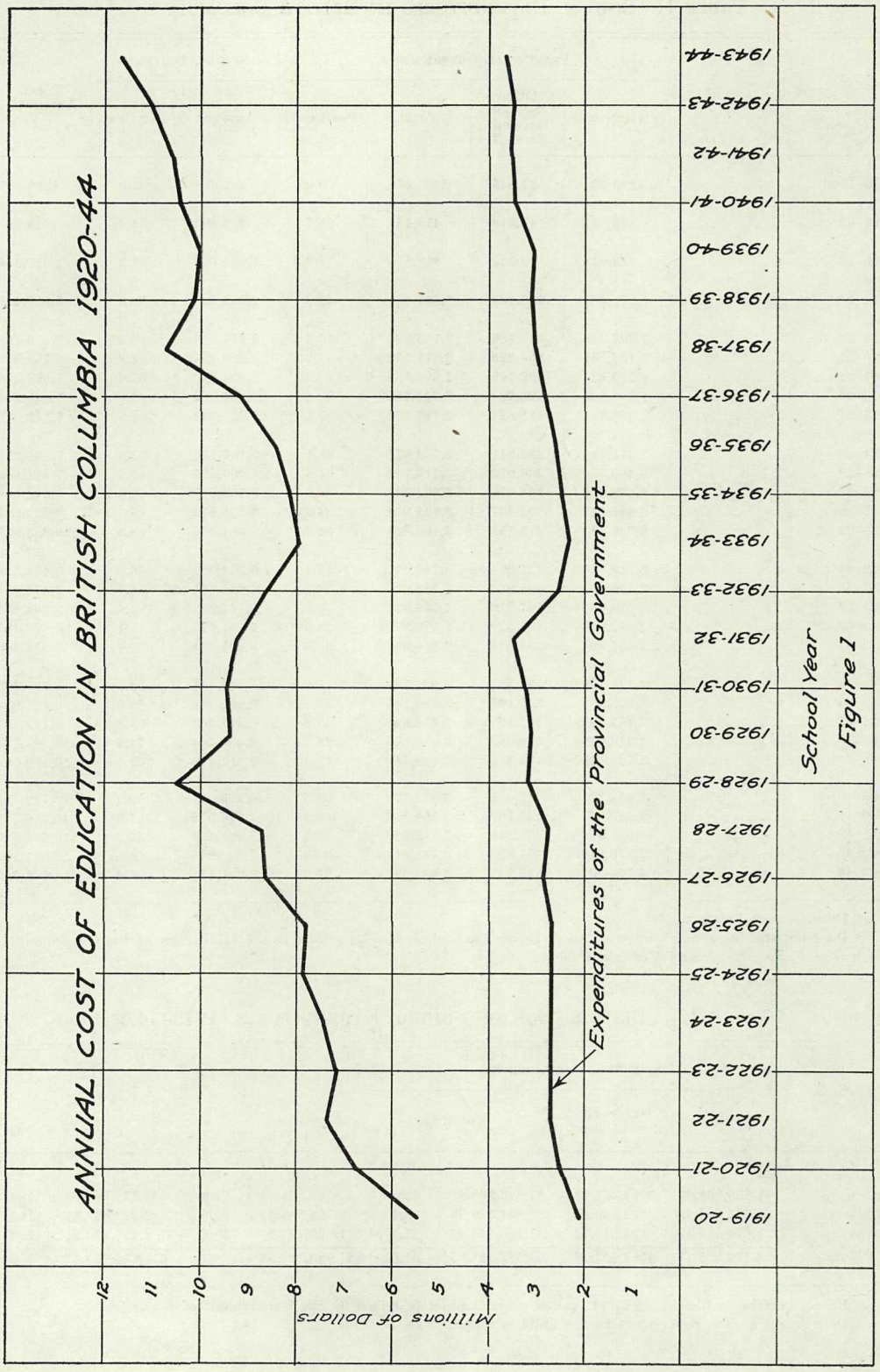
ANNUAL COST OF EDUCATION IN BRITISH COLUMBIA 1920-44
Millions of Dollars
12
11
10
9
8
7
6
5
4
3
2
1
Expenditures of the Provincial Government
1919-20
1920-21
1921-22
1922-23
1923-24
1924-25
1925-26
1926-27
1927-28
1928-29
1929-30
1930-31
1931-32
1932-33
1933-34
1934-35
1935-36
1936-37
1937-38
1938-39
1939-40
1940-41
1941-42
1942-43
1943-44
School Year

Figure 1

This table shows a special concern of the Provincial Government for the rural districts. This is typical of the Canadian Provinces, and is a reflection of the difficulties imposed by sparse settlement over vast areas. It is, of course, eminently proper that school grants take account of the great hindrances created by this condition.

The sums shown in the table are lump sums and conceal wide variations. We must expect to find grants well in excess of half of expenditure in many rural districts and well under a fifth in some cities.

ESTIMATED DISTRIBUTION OF COSTS IN 1944–45 AND 1945–46.

At the time of writing complete information for school-years later than 1943–44 has not been submitted to the Department. However, enough data are available to make estimates possible.

The grant for " Special Assistance in the Cost of Education " has made it necessary for the Department to collect very carefully information as to the amounts actually spent on teachers' salaries in a certain base month, usually February, of each school-year from 1942 to 1945, inclusive. The salary bill for these years can therefore be estimated with confidence, as follows:—

School-year.	Estimated Salaries.	Average Daily Attendance.	Salaries per Pupil in Average Daily Attendance.	Total Cost of Education.	Per Cent. for Salaries.
1941–42	$6,417,000	102,085	$62.86	$10,607,627	63.7
1942–43	6,406,000	93,473	68.53	11,011,160	58.2
1943–44	6,711,000	102,999	65.15	11,669,713	57.5
1944–45	7,444,000	107,599	69.18	.....	.....

If we assume that salaries and attendance in 1945–46 will increase at about the same rate as before, we arrive at the following:—

School-year.	Average Daily Attendance.	Salaries per Pupil.	Total Salaries.	Per Cent. Salaries is of Total Cost.	Total Cost.
1944–45	107,599	$69.18	$7,444,000	57.0*	$13,060,000*
1945–46	112,200*	73.25*	8,219,000*	57.0*	14,410,000*

* Estimated.

It is estimated that the expenditures of the Provincial Government will be approximately as follows:—

School-year.	Total Cost.	General.	Grants.	Total.	Per Cent.
1944–45	$13,060,000	$700,000	$3,500,000	$4,200,000	32.2
1945–46	14,410,000	800,000	3,770,000	4,570,000	31.7

These are only estimates and may be quite wide of the mark. For example, the estimates for the grants in 1945–46 rest on the assumption that because of the shortage of labour and materials and because the larger cities do not receive building grants, only one-quarter of the $800,000 set aside by the Government for school buildings in the fiscal year 1945–46 will actually be expended.

All in all, however, even when ample allowance is made for the insecurity of the grounds for these conjectures, it is safe to say that the Provincial Government's share of school costs in 1944–45 and 1945–46 will not exceed by much, if any, one-third of

the total. Government grants have been increasing, but total school expenditures and the amount borne by the localities have been increasing just about as fast.

EXPENDITURES ON SCHOOLS BY THE PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENT.

Table IV. shows the expenditure on schools by the Provincial Government since 1920. The school expenditures shown do not include grants for the University, Fairbridge Farm School, and the special grant for Victoria College. The salary grant for Victoria College is included, as part of this small expenditure is in fact incurred for classes on the Senior Matriculation level. Expenditures for Adult Education, for Recreational and Physical Education for Adults, for the Provincial Library, Museum, and Archives, and for the Post-war Rehabilitation Council have also been excluded, not because these, as well as some other enterprises of the Government, are not of an educational nature, but because they do not relate very directly to the financing of the public school system. No hesitation is felt in including expenditures for such purposes as normal schools, inspection, correspondence schools, the summer school, the text-book branch, and the like.

TABLE IV. PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENT EXPENDITURE FOR SCHOOLS AND OTHER PURPOSES, 1920–44.*

Fiscal Year.†	Expenditures for Schools.	Total Provincial Expenditure.	Percentage for Schools.
1919–20	$1,996,501	$11,310,073	17.6
1920–21	2,391,481	14,951,541	16.0
1921–22	2,647,754	17,070,619	15.5
1922–23	2,616,347	17,217,440	15.2
1923–24	2,697,649	18,389,814	14.7
1924–25	2,747,184	18,195,595	15.1
1925–26	2,650,473	18,209,814	14.6
1926–27	2,767,972	17,827,725	15.5
1927–28	2,939,881	18,667,860	15.7
1928–29	3,232,628	21,191,098	15.2
1929–30	3,047,427	22,762,745	13.4
1930–31	3,078,785	25,348,724	12.1
1931–32	3,599,691	24,762,046	14.5
1932–33	2,677,595	22,594,974	11.8
1933–34	2,319,984	19,975,177	11.6
1934–35	2,479,762	20,976,528	11.8
1935–36	2,557,358	22,592,388	11.3
1936–37	2,772,992	24,710,635	11.2
1937–38	2,962,448	26,922,953	11.0
1938–39	3,042,859	30,822,639	9.9
1939–40	3,126,096	28,565,659	10.9
1940–41	3,173,983	28,744,856	11.0
1941–42	3,389,807	30,415,323	11.1
1942–43	3,450,334	30,864,945	11.2
1943–44	3,673,492	31,469,707	11.7

* Compiled from *Public Accounts.*

† The fiscal year of the Provincial Government is from April 1st to March 31st.

Advances for rural school district taxes and for delinquent school taxes in extra-municipal areas are, of course, not included.

This table is presented largely for information and later reference. There is no discoverable reason why the amount which the Government spends on a certain service

should be any particular fraction of its total expenditures. The most we can say is that some increase in expenditure on schools, if desirable, may also be possible.

MUNICIPAL EXPENDITURES FOR SCHOOLS AND OTHER PURPOSES.

Table V. represents an attempt to discover what percentage of municipal expenditures was devoted to school support. The net totals shown for schools are the totals less grants and other School Board receipts, where available. The net totals for all expenditures are the total current revenue disbursements, less grants. A correction, admittedly rough, has also been made on account of public utilities. How this correction should be made or whether it should be made at all is perhaps debatable. If it were not made the percentage devoted to schools would be reduced by approximately 5 per cent. in most years. The figures shown are for all the municipalities combined. The next chapter shows that some municipalities spent for schools a much higher fraction than the quarter which seems characteristic of the municipalities as a whole in recent years.

TABLE V. EXPENDITURE FOR SCHOOLS AND OTHER PURPOSES, MUNICIPALITIES, 1920–43.*

Calendar Year.	Expenditures for Schools.	Total Municipal Expenditure.	Percentage for Schools.
1920	$3,512,455	$17,233,179	20.4
1921	4,111,916	18,314,097	22.5
1922	4,399,188	17,419,019	25.3
1923	4,550,342	16,321,886	27.9
1924	4,708,005	16,112,122	29.2
1925	4,864,190	16,990,564	28.6
1926	4,936,204	17,941,145	27.5
1927	5,300,136	18,540,609	28.6
1928	5,690,144	19,904,080	28.6
1929	6,150,343	21,516,361	28.6
1930	6,379,666	22,529,902	28.3
1931	6,219,864	23,890,207	26.0
1932	5,765,424	24,500,364	23.5
1933	5,027,384	23,840,948	21.1
1934	5,247,367	23,647,094	22.2
1935	5,137,337	22,825,328	22.5
1936	5,103,748	22,309,172	22.9
1937	5,467,078	22,683,999	24.2
1938	5,601,685	23,096,417	24.3
1939	5,788,397	23,171,821	25.0
1940	6,007,457	23,685,244	25.4
1941	5,992,663	24,173,679	24.8
1942	6,434,057	24,990,366	25.8
1943	6,680,056	26,046,945	25.7

* Based on *Report of Inspector of Municipalities* and on *Report of the Department of Municipal Affairs* for years noted. These are hereafter called *Municipal Report.*

SCHOOL EXPENDITURES AND TOTAL PUBLIC EXPENDITURES IN BRITISH COLUMBIA.

We cannot leave this chapter without including, if only for its interest, a picture of the part played by education in the total public expenditures of the Province.* We

* Neglecting, of course, the expenditures of the Dominion Government.

may summarize this table and those preceding something like this: The municipalities devote about a quarter of total expenditures and the Government about an eighth of total expenditures to schools. These two and that of the rural school districts amount to about a fifth of public expenditure in British Columbia. Of this fifth, the Government spends a little less than a third, the localities a little more than two-thirds.

TABLE VI. TOTAL PUBLIC AND SCHOOL EXPENDITURE IN BRITISH COLUMBIA.*

Year.	Provincial Government.		Municipalities.		Rural School Districts.		Total.	
		Per Cent.		Per Cent.		Per Cent.		Per Cent.
1943.†								
School expenditure	$3,673,492	11.7	$6,680,056	25.6	$1,095,405	100.0	$11,448,953	19.9
Other expenditure	27,796,215	88.3	19,366,889	74.4	.....	.....	47,163,104	80.1
Totals	$31,469,707	100.0	$26,046,945	100.0	$1,095,405	100.0	$58,612,057	100.0
1933.†								
School expenditure	$2,319,984	11.6	$5,027,384	21.1	$639,515	100.0	$7,986,883	17.9
Other expenditure	17,655,193	88.4	18,813,564	78.9	.....	.....	36,468,757	82.1
Totals	$19,975,177	100.0	$23,840,948	100.0	$639,515	100.0	$44,455,640	100.0
1923.†								
School expenditure	$2,697,649	14.7	$4,550,342	27.9	$477,639	100.0	$7,725,630	22.0
Other expenditure	15,692,165	85.2	11,771,544	72.1	.....	.....	27,463,709	78.0
Totals	$18,389,814	100.0	$16,321,886	100.0	$477,639	100.0	$35,189,339	100.0

* Data from Tables IV. and V. and *Schools Reports.*

† The Provincial Government's fiscal year 1943–44, 1933–34, 1923–24; the municipalities use the calendar year; the rural districts' school-year 1943–44, 1933–34, 1923–24.

CHAPTER II.

THE MUNICIPALITIES.

The populations of the thirty-three cities and twenty-eight district municipalities in British Columbia in 1943 are shown in Table VII.* These populations are those reported in the 1941 census; in a few instances the war has caused substantial changes.

TABLE VII. POPULATIONS OF BRITISH COLUMBIA MUNICIPALITIES, 1941 CENSUS.*

Population.	Cities.	Districts.	Total.
Over 10,000	3†	4‡	7
5,001–10,000	8	8	16
4,001–5,000	1	3	4
3,001–4,000	2	1	3
2,001–3,000	5	3	8
1,001–2,000	6	4	10
501–1,000	5	3	8
500 or less	3§	2‖	5

* From *Municipal Report.*
† Vancouver (275,353), Victoria (44,068), New Westminster (21,967).
‡ Burnaby (30,328), Saanich (20,535), Surrey (14,840), Richmond (10,370).
§ Kaslo (486), Greenwood (363), Slocan (183).
‖ Peachland (479), Glenmore (404).

The table suggests that some of the cities are cities in name only, and a few of the district municipalities are cities in all but name. Thus the cities include hamlets with normal populations of less than five hundred, while among the municipalities, Oak Bay, Esquimalt, West Vancouver, and Burnaby, at least, are urban rather than rural in character.†

Most of the city and district municipalities are school districts of themselves, and some of them have areas adjoining them—the extra-municipal areas—attached to them for school purposes. The district municipalities of Glenmore and Fraser Mills, although school districts, operate no schools, but contract with adjacent municipalities for the education of their children. Five municipal school districts‡ make such arrangements for secondary-school pupils. A few are joined to other municipalities for school purposes: the districts of Tadanac, Spallumcheen, and Salmon Arm are united to the cities of Trail, Armstrong, and Salmon Arm respectively. Chilliwhack, district, and Alberni, city, join with Chilliwack and Port Alberni, cities, for secondary education only. Part of the district municipality of North Cowichan is in the Duncan Consolidated School District; the rest forms the two school districts of Chemainus and North Cowichan. Finally, the district municipalities of Matsqui and Sumas, the village of Abbotsford and some rural areas are combined under the monstrous title of the Matsqui-Sumas-Abbotsford Educational Administrative Area.§

It will be seen that the vexing problem of establishing adequate school districts or units of administration areas is not confined to unorganized territory. A goodly number of the municipalities, as such, should not continue as individual school districts.

* Kimberley has since been added to the cities. The villages are treated as rural areas for school purposes.
† The same is true of such "rural" areas as, for example, Powell River, Ocean Falls, and Michel-Natal.
‡ Coldstream, Chemainus, North Cowichan, North Vancouver, and Pitt Meadows.
§ We shall hereafter call it the "M.S.A. Area."

TABLE VIII. TEACHERS' SALARIES PER PUPIL IN AVERAGE ATTENDANCE, MUNICIPAL SCHOOL DISTRICTS, 1943–44.

Expenditure.	High.			Junior High.			Elementary.		
	Cities.	Districts.	Total.	Cities.	Districts.	Total.	Cities.	Districts.	Total.
$125 and over	4	3	7	----	----	----	----	----	----
120–$124	2	1	3	----	----	----	----	----	----
115– 119	1	----	1	----	----	----	----	----	----
110– 114	4	1	5	----	----	----	----	----	----
105– 109	2	1	3	----	----	----	----	----	----
100– 104	1	3	4	----	----	----	----	----	----
95– 99	3	3	6	2	----	2	----	----	----
90– 94	4	3	7	----	1	1	----	----	----
85– 89	2	----	2	1	1	2	----	----	----
80– 84	4	----	4	3	2	5	----	----	----
75– 79	2	----	2	----	----	----	----	----	----
70– 74	2	----	2	3	----	3	----	----	----
65– 69	----	----	----	2	1	3	1	----	1
60– 64	1	1	2	3	2	5	1	1	2
55– 59	----	1	1	----	----	----	----	1	1
50– 54	----	----	----	2	1	3	6	2	8
45– 49	----	----	----	1	1	2	5	5	10
40– 44	----	----	----	1	----	1	7	4	11
35– 39	----	----	----	----	----	----	6	4	10
30– 34	----	----	----	----	----	----	6	6	12
25– 29	----	----	----	----	----	----	1	1	2
Totals	32	17	49	18	9	27	33	24	57
Medians	96.3	100.8	.....	70.0	67.5	.....	42.5	41.3	.....

TABLE IX. SALARIES OF OTHER EMPLOYEES PER PUPIL IN AVERAGE ATTENDANCE, MUNICIPAL SCHOOL DISTRICTS, 1943–44.

Expenditure.	High.			Junior High.			Elementary.		
	Cities.	Districts.	Total.	Cities.	Districts.	Total.	Cities.	Districts.	Total.
$24 and over	1	----	1	----	----	----	----	----	----
22–$23.9	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----
20– 21.9	2	2	4	----	----	----	1	----	1
18– 19.9	2	----	2	1	----	1	----	----	----
16– 17.9	4	2	6	----	1	1	----	----	----
14– 15.9	3	5	8	----	----	----	----	----	----
12– 13.9	3	2	5	2	1	3	1	----	1
10– 11.9	8	2	10	3	2	5	4	3	7
8– 9.9	6	3	9	6	2	8	8	9	17
6– 7.9	2	----	2	4	2	6	12	5	17
4– 5.9	1	1	2	2	1	3	6	7	13
2– 3.9	----	----	----	----	----	----	1	----	1
Totals	32	17	49	18	9	27	33	24	57
Medians	11.8	14.2	.....	9.0	9.5	.....	7.4	8.0	.....

TABLE X. MISCELLANEOUS CURRENT EXPENSES PER PUPIL IN AVERAGE ATTENDANCE, MUNICIPAL SCHOOL DISTRICTS, 1943–44.*

Expenditure.	High.			Junior High.			Elementary.		
	Cities.	Districts.	Total.	Cities.	Districts.	Total.	Cities.	Districts.	Total.
$45 and over	----	1	1	----	----	----	----	1	1
42–$44.9	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----
39– 41.9	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----
36– 38.9	1	1	2	----	----	----	----	----	----
33– 35.9	1	1	2	----	----	----	----	----	----
30– 32.9	2	2	4	----	1	1	----	----	----
27– 29.9	3	----	3	----	----	----	----	3	3
24– 26.9	2	1	3	----	3	3	----	----	----
21– 23.9	9	----	9	5	----	5	3	1	4
18– 20.9	1	5	6	5	----	5	3	1	4
15– 17.9	5	1	6	2	2	4	2	4	6
12– 14.9	3	1	4	2	2	4	8	4	12
9– 11.9	4	3	7	4	----	4	12	4	16
6– 8.9	1	1	2	----	1	1	4	2	6
3– 5.9	----	----	----	----	----	----	1	4	5
Totals	32	17	49	18	9	27	33	24	57
Medians	21.7	19.5	----	18.6	17.3	----	11.9	13.5	----

* Omitting transportation costs and debt charges.

TABLE XI. TOTAL CURRENT EXPENDITURE OTHER THAN TEACHERS' SALARIES, MUNICIPAL SCHOOL DISTRICTS, 1943–44.*

Expenditure.	High.			Junior High.			Elementary.		
	Cities.	Districts.	Total.	Cities.	Districts.	Total.	Cities.	Districts.	Total.
$70 and over	----	1	1	----	----	----	----	----	----
65–$69	----	1	1	----	----	----	----	----	----
60– 64	1	1	2	----	----	----	----	----	----
55– 59	2	1	3	----	----	----	----	----	----
50– 54	3	1	4	----	----	----	----	1	1
45– 49	3	----	3	----	----	----	1	1	2
40– 44	4	2	6	2	2	4	----	1	1
35– 39	4	2	6	2	2	4	2	1	3
30– 34	2	4	6	3	----	3	1	2	3
25– 29	7	3	10	5	2	7	6	3	9
20– 24	3	----	3	3	3	6	13	8	21
15– 19	3	1	4	3	----	3	7	5	12
10– 14	----	----	----	----	----	----	2	2	4
Under $10	----	----	----	----	----	----	1	----	1
Totals	32	17	49	18	9	27	33	24	57
Medians	38.8	36.3	----	28.0	28.8	----	22.5	23.1	----

* Omitting transportation costs and debt charges.

TABLE XII. TOTAL CURRENT EXPENDITURES PER PUPIL IN AVERAGE ATTENDANCE, MUNICIPAL SCHOOL DISTRICTS, 1943–44.*

Expenditure.	High.			Junior High.			Elementary.		
	Cities.	Districts.	Total.	Cities.	Districts.	Total.	Cities.	Districts.	Total.
$150 and over	12	6	18	----	----	----	----	----	----
145–$149	1	1	2	----	----	----	----	----	----
140– 144	3	----	3	1	----	1	----	----	----
135– 139	3	2	5	----	----	----	----	----	----
130– 134	----	4	4	1	1	2	----	----	----
125– 129	3	1	4	2	1	3	----	----	----
120– 124	2	1	3	----	----	----	----	----	----
115– 119	1	----	1	----	1	1	----	----	----
110– 114	1	1	2	2	----	2	----	----	----
105– 109	2	----	2	1	1	2	2	----	2
100– 104	2	----	2	1	----	1	----	----	----
95– 99	1	1	2	2	1	3	----	----	----
90– 94	----	----	----	1	1	2	----	1	1
85– 89	----	----	----	3	----	3	----	3	3
80– 84	1	----	1	----	2	2	1	1	2
75– 79	----	----	----	----	----	----	3	2	5
70– 74	----	----	----	2	1	3	5	3	8
65– 69	----	----	----	2	----	2	4	4	8
60– 64	----	----	----	----	----	----	7	2	9
55– 59	----	----	----	----	----	----	3	1	4
50– 54	----	----	----	----	----	----	7	3	10
Under $50	----	----	----	----	----	----	1	4	5
Totals	32	17	49	18	9	27	33	24	57
Medians	140.0	136.3	-------	97.5	97.5	-------	64.2	67.5	-------

* Omitting transportation costs and debt charges.

TABLE XIII. TRANSPORTATION COSTS PER PUPIL IN AVERAGE ATTENDANCE, MUNICIPAL SCHOOL DISTRICTS, 1943–44.

Expenditure.	High.			Junior High.			Elementary.		
	Cities.	Districts.	Total.	Cities.	Districts.	Total.	Cities.	Districts.	Total.
$30 and over	1	----	1	----	----	----	----	----	----
28–$29.9	----	1	1	----	----	----	----	----	----
26– 27.9	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----
24– 25.9	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----
22– 23.9	----	1	1	----	----	----	----	----	----
20– 21.9	----	1	1	----	----	----	1	1	2
18– 19.9	----	----	----	----	----	----	1	----	1
16– 17.9	----	----	----	----	1	1	----	1	1
14– 15.9	----	----	----	----	1	1	----	2	2
12– 13.9	1	----	1	2	----	2	----	----	----
10– 11.9	----	2	2	----	----	----	1	1	2
8– 9.9	1	2	3	----	2	2	1	1	2
6– 7.9	----	1	1	1	2	3	----	4	4
4– 5.9	1	2	3	1	----	1	1	5	6
2– 3.9	----	----	----	----	1	1	2	2	4
0– 1.9	----	1	1	----	2	2	----	2	2
None	28	6	34	14	----	14	26	5	31
Totals	32	17	49	18	9	27	33	24	57
Medians*	11.0	10.5	-------	7.0	7.5	-------	9.0	6.3	-------

* Omitting those municipalities with no transportation costs.

TABLE XIV. PERCENTAGE TOTAL GRANT IS OF CURRENT EXPENDITURE, MUNICIPAL SCHOOL DISTRICTS, 1943–44.*

Percentage.	High.			Junior High.			Elementary.		
	Cities.	Districts.	Total.	Cities.	Districts.	Total.	Cities.	Districts.	Total.
55–59	2	----	2	1	----	1	1	1	2
50–54	----	----	----	----	1	1	----	2	2
45–49	3	1	4	2	2	4	1	4	5
40–44	3	2	5	4	1	5	7	3	10
35–39	11	2	13	3	3	6	7	3	10
30–34	3	5	8	4	1	5	9	6	15
25–29	5	5	10	2	1	3	6	2	8
20–24	3	----	3	----	----	----	----	1	1
15–19	1	2	3	2	----	2	1	2	3
10–14	1	----	1	----	----	----	1	----	1
Totals	32	17	49	18	9	27	33	24	57
Medians	36.4	31.5	-------	35.8	39.8	-------	34.7	36.3	-------

* Omitting transportation costs and debt charges.

CURRENT EXPENDITURES.

Tables VIII. to XIV., inclusive, deal with the current expenditures per pupil of the municipal school districts in the school-year 1943–44.

These tables paint a picture of great inequality. Of course, some of this inequality is unavoidable, and would be found even if all the schools of the Province were under one spending authority. Where schools are small, costs per pupil tend to be high;

where teachers are inexperienced, expenditures for salaries tend to be low; where the schools are remote from the larger centres, costs are likely to be higher.

Nevertheless, some of the inequalities here shown cannot be accounted for in these ways, and to them correspond inequalities in the type of school programme made available. While few would be so optimistic as to suppose that any system of school finance devised by man could, or even should, remove such inequalities altogether, all would agree that a good system should aim at reducing them.

Let us note, too, a fact often neglected, the great importance of expenditures for other purposes than teachers' salaries. Expenditures per pupil for employees other than teachers amount to over $10 per year in most high schools, and are not greatly less in most of the other schools. Miscellaneous expenditures (such as those for heat, light, supplies, and general operations) bulk even larger than this. One valid criticism of the present grant system is that it fails to take account of these necessary costs.

The grant from the Provincial Government runs around 30 to 40 per cent. of total current expenditures in typical municipalities. This is, of course, quite consistent with our earlier finding that grants are almost a fifth of the expenditures of municipalities as a group, since the larger municipalities, where the enrolment is high, have higher assessments per teacher or per pupil, and therefore lower grants relative to their expenditures. The great variation in grant percentages is, of course, a natural and intended result of any grant system framed, as is British Columbia's, with a view to equalization. This will be discussed further in a chapter on the subject.

SCHOOL DEBT.

The debenture debt incurred by the municipalities on account of schools does not appear, on the whole, to be alarmingly great. Of the roughly $105,000,000 of municipal debenture debt report in 1943, only about $12,270,000, or 11.7 per cent.,* was for schools, and of this, 80 per cent. represented the school debt of the City of Vancouver. If Vancouver be disregarded, only 6 per cent. of municipal debenture debt can be charged to schools. Even Vancouver's large portion is only 15 per cent. of the city's total debenture debt.

If we look at the individual municipalities as we do in Table XV., we find that in about two-thirds of the municipalities of the Province the school debt is 10 per cent. or less of the total. Indeed, over a third of the municipalities have no school debt whatever.

TABLE XV. SCHOOL DEBT AND TOTAL MUNICIPAL DEBT, 1943.*

Per Cent. School Debt is of Total.	No. of Cities.	No. of Districts.	Total.
Over 20	7	7	14
11–20	6	2	8
1–10	8	7	15
No school debt	12	12	24
Totals	33	28	61

* In compiling this table we have allocated school debt of municipalities having consolidated their debt through refunding Acts on the basis of the last year in which debts were segregated.

Even in the fourteen municipalities in which the debt for schools is over 20 per cent. of the total, the situation is by no means serious. Three of these are accounted for by the fact that they have no debt except that for schools; all of them have unused borrowing power many times their school debts.

* This percentage would be slightly increased by making an allowance for refunding Acts.

The charges for carrying the school debt of the municipalities in the school-year 1943–44 were as follows:—

	Amount.	Per Cent.
Vancouver	$514,082	58.8
Other cities	220,733	25.3
Total, cities	$734,815	84.1
District municipalities	138,411	15.9
Total, municipal	$873,326	100.0

It should be added, however, that this relatively low scale of payments will not continue indefinitely in all cases. It is the writer's opinion that the Province is entering a period of extensive school building, affecting a large number of communities. While sound policy dictates the paying for as much as possible of the costs out of current revenue, a considerable increase in school debenture debt is inevitable.

ASSESSMENT AND TAX RATE.

We turn now to a consideration of the effort and ability to support schools of the municipalities in the Province. Of necessity, this consideration is incomplete and unsatisfactory, as we cannot avoid many practical and theoretical difficulties.

It is usual in investigations of this matter to take assessment per pupil or per teacher as a measure of local ability to support schools. Indeed, we cannot do otherwise, because no other index is available, and because our interest must be in ability to pay under the system of taxation in use. If a local income tax or a local sales tax were used or contemplated, an appropriate procedure for their study would have to be devised, and the findings might differ greatly from those herein reported. Assessment per pupil is not a measure of a municipality's ability to pay taxes in general, but only a measure, and not perhaps a very good one, of its ability to pay property taxes.

A full discussion of property taxation for school purposes is found in Chapter V. This discussion may be foreshadowed by the statement that where assessing is concerned, each municipality in British Columbia is almost a law unto itself. It may employ a full-time well-qualified assessing staff, consisting of several persons and ample clerical assistance, or it may be content with one part-time man with no training. The assessor may collect and make skilful use of many records or he may rely on rough and rule-of-thumb procedures. He may examine and reassess many or most parcels each year, or he may slavishly copy the preceding year's assessments, secure in the knowledge that they are not likely to arouse much complaint. These are only a few examples of the many ways in which assessing varies from municipality to municipality. Under such circumstances, we should be foolish if we viewed assessments and the tax rates based on them with child-like confidence. They can hardly be more than suggestive.

Nevertheless, to say that these data are quite useless is to go too far. Assessment ratios* in the Province may have ranged from forty to, say, one hundred and twenty, in 1943. This variation is not large enough to account for the inequalities discovered.

With this lengthy and tedious preamble we present Tables XVI. and XVII. which show the assessments per pupil enrolled in Grades I. to VI. in the municipalities of the Province. That great variations (ten or fifteen to one) exist is obvious. These inequalities cause corresponding inequalities in burden and in the quality of schooling provided.

* The assessment ratio is the ratio of assessed value to true value, and is usually expressed as a percentage. If the assessment ratio is fifty, property is carried on the assessment rolls at one-half its "real" value.

Table XVIII. shows the tax rates of the municipalities for schools in 1943 and in 1944, corrected, where necessary to bear on land and 50 per cent. of improvements, which is the typical arrangement.* Even allowing for the many objections which may properly be made to this use of tax rates, there seems to be some reason to suppose that the tax rate for schools is heavy in a considerable number of cases.

* An allowance is also made for the financing of debenture debt where necessary because of debt consolidation.

TABLE XVI. ASSESSMENT OF LAND AND OF IMPROVEMENTS PER PUPIL IN AVERAGE DAILY ATTENDANCE, MUNICIPALITIES, 1943.*

	Land Assessment.			Improvement Assessment.		
	Cities.	Districts.	Total.	Cities.	Districts.	Total.
$7,000 and over	.....	.....	.....	2	3	5
6,500–$6,999	1	1	2	1	.....	1
6,000– 6,499	1	1	2	1	2	3
5,500– 5,999	1	1	2	1	1	2
5,000– 5,499	.....	1	1	3	1	4
4,500– 4,999	.....	2	2	2	.....	2
4,000– 4,499	2	1	3	1	.....	1
3,500– 3,999	2	3	5	3	2	5
3,000– 3,499	2	.....	2	5	4	9
2,500– 2,999	5	3	8	5	3	8
2,000– 2,499	7	6	13	4	4	8
1,500– 1,999	4	4	8	3	4	7
1,000– 1,499	5	1	6	2	.....	2
500– 999	3	.....	3	.....	.....	.....
Totals	33	24†	57	33	24†	57
Medians	2,321	2,667	.....	3,250	3,125	.....

* Calculated from *Schools Report* and *Municipal Report*. Since some municipalities did not provide a complete school programme, the table is based on pupils enrolled in Grades I. to VI.

† Fraser Mills is omitted; Chemainus is added; Glenmore, Tadanac, and Spallumcheen are combined with Kelowna, Trail, and Armstrong respectively. Matsqui and Sumas are in the M.S.A. Area, which is included in the district municipalities.

TABLE XVII. TOTAL ASSESSMENT PER PUPIL IN AVERAGE DAILY ATTENDANCE, MUNICIPALITIES, 1943.

	Total Assessment (Land and 75% of Improvements).		
	Cities.	Districts.	Total.
$12,000 and over	2	3	5
11,500–$11,999	------	------	------
11,000– 11,499	1	------	1
10,500– 10,999	1	2	3
10,000– 10,499	------	1	1
9,500– 9,999	2	------	2
9,000– 9,499	------	------	------
8,500– 8,999	1	------	1
8,000– 8,499	1	------	1
7,500– 7,999	3	2	5
7,000– 7,499	1	2	3
6,500– 6,999	1	2	3
6,000– 6,499	2	2	4
5,500– 5,999	3	2	5
5,000– 5,499	4	------	4
4,500– 4,999	2	3	5
4,000– 4,499	2	3	5
3,500– 3,999	1	1	2
3,000– 3,499	4	------	4
2,500– 2,999	1	1	2
2,000– 2,499	1	------	1
Totals	33	24	57
Medians	5,750	6,500	6,062

TABLE XVIII. SCHOOL TAX RATES IN MUNICIPALITIES, 1943 AND 1944.*

Tax Rate in Mills.	Cities.		Districts.	
	1943.	1944.	1943.	1944.
29–29.99	1	1	------	------
28–28.99	1	------	------	------
27–27.99	------	1	------	------
26–26.99	------	------	------	------
25–25.99	1	4	------	------
24–24.99	------	------	------	------
23–23.99	2	------	------	------
22–22.99	1	1	------	------
21–21.99	1	1	------	1
20–20.99	2	3	------	------
19–19.99	1	1	1	1
18–18.99	6	3	------	1
17–17.99	2	3	1	2
16–16.99	1	1	1	1
15–15.99	4	3	4	3
14–14.99	1	3	2	3
13–13.99	2	------	3	2
12–12.99	1	3	1	1
11–11.99	3	5	3	2
10–10.99	2	------	4	6
9– 9.99	1	------	3	3
8– 8.99	------	------	3	1
7– 7.99	------	------	------	------
6– 6.99	------	------	------	------
5– 5.99	------	------	1	------
4– 4.99	------	------	------	1
Totals	33	33	27†	27†
Medians	17.75	17.50	11.83	12.50

* On the basis of land and 50 per cent. of improvements. An allowance was made for the few municipalities affected by refunding Acts. This allowance has little effect on the table.

† Three districts are omitted because of data not being comparable. Tax rates are included for Chemainus and for that part of North Cowichan not in the Duncan Consolidated District.

SCHOOL EXPENDITURES AND OTHER EXPENDITURES.

In an attempt to obtain some sort of picture of the relation of school expenditures to the other expenditures of the Province's municipalities, Tables XIX. and XX. have been compiled. The most interesting columns of these tables are, of course, those expressing the percentages which school expenditures were of the total. We should observe that these percentages are not to be accepted without question. A high percentage may mean that school costs eat up much of a community's tax resources, or it may mean only that other expenditures are unusually small. This latter is no doubt true of the districts in general as compared with the cities in general. Similarly, a low percentage may mean that school expenditures are jeopardized by other heavy charges, and therefore still represent a heavy burden. The City of North Vancouver is an obvious example of this.

TABLE XIX. EXPENDITURES FOR SCHOOLS AND OTHER MUNICIPAL SERVICES, CITIES, 1943.

City.	Schools.						Other Municipal Services.					Total Net Expenditure.	Per Cent. School Expenditure is of Total Net.	
	Total Expenditure.	Deductions.			Add Debt Service where Applicable.	Net Expenditure.	Total Expenditure.	Deductions.			Net Expenditure.			
		Grants.	Other Receipts.	Extra-municipal Portion.				Provincial Government Grants.	Utilities Correction.*	School Debt Service.			1943.	1938.
Alberni	$22,140	$8,304	$781	.....	.....	$13,055	$46,351	$2,451	$10,260	.....	$33,640	$46,695	28.0	38.7
Armstrong	7,249	.....	.....	.....	.....	7,249	23,934	1,459	5,980	.....	16,495	23,744	30.5	31.5
Chilliwack	63,463	21,886	6,846	.....	.....	34,731	74,868	9,351	.....	.....	65,517	100,248	34.6	32.4
Courtenay	37,581	14,069	2,379	$5,662	.....	15,471	124,306	2,710	71,123	.....	50,473	65,974	23.5	23.5
Cranbrook	56,108	18,194	343	9,787	.....	27,784	113,128	6,865	43,726	.....	62,537	90,324	30.8	20.2
Cumberland	31,957	12,305	8,669	6,480	.....	4,503	16,345	2,193	.....	.....	14,152	18,655	24.1	16.3
Duncan	51,635	19,348	20,479	.....	.....	11,808	32,426	2,930	.....	.....	29,496	41,304	28.6	27.9
Enderby	10,407	4,659	1,160	1,366	.....	3,222	15,565	498	3,109	.....	11,958	15,180	21.2	17.8
Fernie	49,197	17,318	1,685	7,238	.....	22,956	90,756	14,267	25,761	.....	50,728	73,684	31.2	17.4
Grand Forks	34,876	12,739	2,528	7,793	.....	11,816	40,155	3,361	16,385	.....	20,409	32,225	36.7	32.4
Greenwood	6,613	3,346	950	.....	.....	2,317	10,344	463	2,339	.....	7,542	9,859	23.5	32.4
Kamloops	95,904	25,353	5,975	3,435	.....	61,141	201,002	22,021	26,917	.....	152,064	213,205	28.7	25.5
Kaslo	11,701	4,458	2,221	998	.....	4,024	29,900	1,482	14,141	.....	14,277	18,301	22.0	19.2
Kelowna	93,163	34,303	11,377	3,124	.....	44,359	277,179	10,220	115,481	.....	151,478	195,837	22.7	24.2
Ladysmith	39,156	18,597	6,133	4,283	.....	10,143	50,841	5,399	20,317	.....	25,175	35,318	28.7	26.2
Merritt	13,810	5,318	300	1,484	.....	6,708	45,545	1,060	19,182	.....	25,303	32,011	21.0	20.9
Nanaimo	94,367	28,787	6,477	213	.....	58,890	236,012	20,279	44,675	.....	171,058	229,948	25.6	24.2
Nelson	126,600	32,636	5,620	9,629	.....	78,715	403,351	12,043	168,296	.....	223,012	308,727	25.5	23.2
New Westminster	369,085	75,180	14,228	5,929	.....	273,748	1,405,384	52,973	360,129	.....	992,282	1,266,030	21.6	22.4
North Vancouver	145,024	45,670	15,104	.....	$15,794	100,044	844,370	18,265	315,651	$15,794	494,660	594,704	16.8	19.0
Port Alberni	64,815	17,190	3,801	.....	.....	43,824	126,443	11,837	31,611	.....	82,995	126,816	34.6	31.4
Port Coquitlam	15,516	5,118	165	.....	2,052	12,285	52,943	4,130	5,953	2,052	40,808	53,093	23.1	20.6
Port Moody	18,873	7,940	195	.....	.....	10,738	38,932	2,299	910	.....	35,723	46,461	23.1	29.8
Prince George	35,508	12,529	2,030	.....	.....	20,949	139,738	6,127	75,656	.....	57,955	78,904	26.5	23.9
Prince Rupert	97,303	22,856	100	.....	.....	74,347	440,734	10,172	145,392	.....	285,170	359,517	20.7	23.5
Revelstoke	43,121	14,778	1,513	2,983	.....	23,847	106,196	3,070	63,268	.....	39,858	63,705	37.4	34.5
Rossland	57,846	21,471	50	.....	765	37,090	72,007	4,708	12,202	765	54,332	92,422	40.1	32.4
Salmon Arm	22,127	7,172	6,469	.....	.....	8,486	36,693	1,223	7,088	.....	28,382	36,868	23.0	26.6
Slocan	3,913	1,866	140	940	.....	967	1,895	169	590	.....	1,136	2,103	46.0	41.2
Trail	119,598	47,996	.....	7,325	.....	64,277	255,464	9,908	23,940	.....	221,616	285,893	22.5	28.5
Vernon	126,740	42,606	7,352	20,769	.....	56,013	208,370	9,905	42,374	.....	156,091	212,104	26.4	25.5
Vancouver†	4,028,416	411,082	.....	.....	.....	3,617,334	10,963,086	254,795	1,431,946	.....	9,276,345	12,893,679	28.1	25.6
Victoria	578,826	92,047	38,094	.....	39,647	488,332	2,506,520	92,896	413,030	39,647	960,479	2,449,279	19.9	21.1

* *See* note, Table XX.

† The figures for Vancouver may not be exactly comparable, since the accrual rather than the cash basis of accounting is used. The final percentage figure is believed to be accurate with one percentage point, as compared with other municipalities.

TABLE XX. EXPENDITURE FOR SCHOOLS AND OTHER MUNICIPAL SERVICES, DISTRICTS, 1943.

District.	Schools.						Other Municipal Services.					Per Cent. School Expenditure is of Total Net.		Total Net Expenditure.
	Total Expenditure.	Deductions.			Add Debt Service where Applicable.	Net Expenditure.	Total Expenditure.	Deductions.			Net Expenditure.			
		Grants.	Other Receipts.	Extra-municipal Portion.				Provincial Government Grants.	Utilities Correction.*	School Debt Service.		1943.	1938.	
Burnaby	$377,054	$131,637	$5,360	.....	$9,585	$249,642	$926,236	$82,298	$136,255	$9,585	$698,098	26.3	27.3	$947,740
Chilliwhack	110,504	37,971	413	.....	.....	72,120	111,078	13,196	.....	.....	97,882	42.4	29.9	170,002
Coldstream	10,535	2,049	12	.....	.....	8,474	21,148	1,082	3,378	.....	16,688	33.7	23.6	25,162
Coquitlam	47,270	20,192	1,163	$200	3,316	29,031	93,302	15,597	14,066	3,316	60,323	32.5	18.5	89,354
Delta	54,334	18,063	411	.....	.....	35,860	132,027	10,049	29,733	.....	92,245	28.0	21.9	128,105
Esquimalt	59,985	16,908	16,546	.....	.....	26,531	107,199	5,599	.....	.....	101,600	20.7	27.0	128,113
Fraser Mills	1,729	.....	.....	.....	.....	1,729	5,202	510	.....	.....	4,692	26.9	48.1	6,421
Glenmore	4,877	1,474	74	.....	.....	3,329	8,615	932	1,432	.....	6,251	33.7	46.3	9,580
Kent	18,739	8,189	856	643	.....	9,051	21,431	3,464	.....	.....	17,967	33.5	40.4	27,018
Langley	99,430	45,568	913	.....	.....	52,949	110,051	21,531	.....	.....	88,520	34.7	29.5	141,469
Maple Ridge	81,838	34,654	2,244	76	.....	44,864	77,250	9,421	7,210	.....	60,619	42.5	32.6	105,483
Matsqui	40,159	2,500	.....	.....	.....	37,659	60,144	9,574	.....	.....	50,570	42.7	22.4	88,229
Mission	78,268	24,840	675	9,875	.....	42,878	85,665	7,868	.....	.....	77,797	35.5	†	120,675
North Cowichan	42,915	6,792	1,025	.....	.....	35,098	50,322	8,672	.....	.....	41,650	45.7	39.5	76,748
North Vancouver	71,464	15,243	80	.....	.....	56,141	199,798	13,764	36,510	.....	149,524	27.3	19.3	205,665
Oak Bay	111,743	18,934	2,192	.....	.....	90,617	248,391	9,342	36,531	.....	202,518	30.9	31.1	293,135
Peachland	5,061	2,489	75	.....	.....	2,497	13,586	443	4,543	.....	8,600	22.5	26.7	11,097
Penticton	109,296	39,409	4,347	.....	.....	65,540	301,466	18,956	158,992	.....	123,518	34.7	35.0	189,058
Pitt Meadows	12,623	4,843	242	.....	.....	7,547	11,045	1,870	.....	.....	9,175	45.1	31.8	16,722
Richmond	123,214	45,198	1,772	.....	.....	76,244	221,739	16,085	86,329	.....	119,325	39.0	33.0	195,509
Saanich	199,571	59,853	.....	.....	.....	139,718	448,257	42,434	130,181	.....	275,642	33.6	29.6	415,360
Salmon Arm	19,179	6,847	27	.....	.....	12,305	26,237	4,374	.....	.....	21,863	36.0	28.2	34,168
Spallumcheen	19,334	.....	.....	.....	.....	19,334	23,452	2,862	.....	.....	20,590	48.4	46.3	39,924
Sumas	11,595	.....	.....	.....	.....	11,595	26,329	4,978	.....	.....	21,351	35.2	21.5	32,946
Summerland	31,289	12,262	398	.....	.....	18,629	90,251	2,112	70,080	.....	18,059	50.8	40.4	36,688
Surrey	178,985	78,809	831	.....	.....	99,395	276,192	40,934	6,124	.....	229,134	30.3	28.9	328,479
Tadanac	65,118	.....	.....	.....	.....	65,118	115,372	472	.....	.....	114,900	36.2	41.4	180,018
West Vancouver	103,043	26,465	613	.....	.....	75,965	453,813	12,095	213,385	.....	228,333	25.0	29.0	304,298

* If the utilities were operated at a profit, expenditures were deducted; if at a loss, the loss was added; i.e., the receipts were deducted from total expenditures.

† Information not available.

In the following observations those municipalities which have no schools are ignored. However, Matsqui, Sumas, Spallumcheen, and Tadanac are included, as each forms a part of a united school district. The following table shows the distribution of the percentages:—

Percentage of Municipal Disbursements devoted to School Purposes.	Cities.		Districts.	
	1943.	1938.	1943.	1938.
50–59	---	---	1	---
40–49	2	1	6	4
30–39	7	8	13	6
20–29	22	19	6	13
10–19	2	5	---	2
Not reported	---	---	---	1
Totals	33	33	26	26
Medians	26.6	26.0	35.4	28.1

This table shows that there has been no essential change in the position of the city school costs relative to total costs. However, in the districts where the figure was two percentage points higher on the average in 1938, the ratio has climbed another seven points.

The increases and decreases in percentage over the five-year period may be summarized as follows:—

	Cities.	Districts.
Increases—		
10 or more	2	7
5–9	2	7
Less than 5	17	3
No change or unreported	1	1
Decreases—		
Less than 5	7	6
5–9	4	2
10 or more	1	---

This summary shows that many of the district municipalities and some of the cities were especially hard hit by rising school costs during the period. Over half the district municipalities showed substantial increases. Practically all the Fraser Valley municipalities fall in this group.

It is important to remember that these data make no reference to years later than 1943. While data for a complete investigation are not available, information contained in many of the briefs presented to this Commission indicates that increases since 1943 have been substantial in many municipalities.

Be he ever so cautious, one cannot avoid the conclusion that the large part played by educational costs in most municipal budgets and the tendency of this part to increase in many communities must result in the curtailment of expenditures on other desirable municipal enterprises and an increase in the burden borne by property taxes.

SUMMARY.

Much of the information used in this chapter is open to objection on one ground or another. Particularly is this true of the data regarding assessment and tax rate, concerning which no great confidence is felt. Even conclusions regarding municipal expenditures must be arrived at cautiously. Nevertheless, we are justified in saying that costs per pupil vary so widely as to indicate great differences in the quality of the schooling provided, and that differences in ability to pay for education, and in the burden of school taxes, are undoubtedly substantial. Further, educational costs occupy a place which is large in all municipal budgets, and very large in some. In most cases the part played by school costs is increasing.

CHAPTER III.

THE RURAL SCHOOL DISTRICTS.

Approximately 25,000 children who live in the 99 per cent. of British Columbia which is not organized into municipalities are educated through several hundred rural school districts. In the school-year 1943–44 these were distributed about as follows:—

	No. of Districts.	
Schools closed—		
Not voting money	238	
Voting money	63	
		301
Schools open—		
Providing a one-room elementary school	392*	
Others	135	
		527
Total		828

* Districts with more than one one-room school are not included here.

It is not pretended that the total of 238 given for schools closed but not voting money includes all school districts which have ever operated and are now discontinued. The fruitless task of compiling a complete list of these is almost past the wit of man. It is thought, however, that the number given includes practically all school districts which have operated during the last ten years or so.

Sixty-three school districts (as nearly as could be ascertained) operated no schools in 1944–45, but raised money for school purposes by taxation. Some of these schools were closed only temporarily because of a reduction in enrolment or the inability to obtain a teacher. A number were closed more or less permanently and paid tuition for the education of their children in other districts.

It is obvious that the majority of rural school districts provide only one-room schools. The average attendance in these schools is shown in Table XXI. Naturally, the operation of very small schools is very expensive. A school enrolling only a few

TABLE XXI. AVERAGE ATTENDANCE IN RURAL SCHOOL DISTRICTS EACH OPERATING A SINGLE ONE-ROOM SCHOOL.

Average Attendance.	No. of Districts.
36–40	1
31–35	6
26–30	13
21–25	32
16–20	57
11–15	118
6–10	160
0– 5	5
Total	392
Median	11.9

children may cost more per pupil than even a large city school. Nevertheless, geographical conditions in British Columbia make inevitable the continuance of many small schools. It is hoped, however, that the plan for school administration proposed in this report will make the elimination of some small schools possible where this can be accomplished without loss to the children involved.

CURRENT EXPENDITURES.

In order to give some sort of picture of expenditures in the rural schools, we present Tables XXII., XXIII., and XXIV. In these tables the expenditures are in terms of class-rooms, this basis being the most suitable for comparisons which involve many small schools. Unfortunately, the records available did not allow a precise separation of high, junior high, and elementary school costs. Since only a relatively few districts maintain secondary schools, this failure is unimportant. Further, since our interest is in the typical rather than the exceptional, transportation costs, although very heavy in some districts, are not included in these particular tables.

A dozen rural school districts do not lend themselves readily to the comparisons made above. One operated no elementary schools; the others maintain secondary schools—high and junior high—larger than is typical. Expenditures for these schools were calculated on a pupil basis and were then converted to class-room figures by multiplying by twenty. Since this is a highly arbitrary device, open to many objections, it is fortunate that the number of districts so treated is very small.

That the expenditures of a great number of districts are meagre is at once obvious. Since the school-year under review the Provincial Government has continued to raise rural teachers' salaries, so that present and future conditions should undoubtedly be much better than those here depicted. Further improvement is certainly desirable.

TABLE XXII. SALARIES PER CLASS-ROOM, RURAL SCHOOL DISTRICTS, 1943–44.

Salary per Class-room.	Number of Districts.						Total.
	One-room Elementary.	Larger Elementary.	Superior.	Elementary and One-room High.	Elementary and Two-room High.	Other.	
$1,500 and over	1	....	1	....	4	4	10
1,450–$1,499	....	1	1	1	....	....	3
1,400– 1,449	2	....	1	....	2	....	5
1,350– 1,399	2	2	2	....	....	1	7
1,300– 1,349	2	3	6	....	....	2	13
1,250– 1,299	5	3	8	....	1	....	17
1,200– 1,249	28	5	4	2	4	1	44
1,150– 1,199	23	10	2	2	2	....	39
1,100– 1,149	46	10	1	1	2	....	60
1,050– 1,099	47	11	2	3	3	1	67
1,000– 1,049	124	11	1	1	1	....	138
950– 999	85	....	1	....	....	....	86
900– 949	23	1	....	1	....	....	25
850– 899	4	....	....	1	3	1	9
800– 849	....	....	....	....	2	2	4
Totals	392	57	30	12	24	12	527
Medians	1,034	1,125	1,275	1,100	1,175	1,325	1,051

The miscellaneous expenditures shown in Table XXIII. are also in many cases extremely modest. If we recall that these include such expenditures among others as those for fuel, light, class-room supplies, and library books, a sum of less than $250 a year per room seems difficult to justify. A part of these low expenditures may be due to ignorance or short-sighted parsimony, but a part is no doubt caused by the existing system of school finance which throws the whole of these costs on local resources, often very small.

The tables indicate great inequality in spending. Even if we concede that some inequality is inevitable and not at all reprehensible, we cannot help thinking that inequalities as great as here shown are undesirable in a service which is, in large part, provincial.

TABLE XXIII. MISCELLANEOUS CURRENT EXPENSES PER CLASS-ROOM, RURAL SCHOOL DISTRICTS, 1943–44.

Miscellaneous Current Expenses per Class-room.	Number of Districts.						Total.
	One-room Elementary.	Larger Elementary.	Superior.	Elementary and One-room High.	Elementary and Two-room High.	Other.	
$800 and over	8	3	1	1	4	1	18
750–$799	1	2	----	----	----	1	4
700– 749	2	1	----	----	1	----	4
650– 699	1	2	----	----	----	3	6
600– 649	3	----	2	----	----	1	6
550– 599	4	3	2	1	1	----	11
500– 549	7	3	2	1	3	----	16
450– 499	10	3	3	2	4	1	23
400– 449	11	12	3	4	3	2	35
350– 399	20	5	6	2	2	1	36
300– 349	32	7	3	----	3	1	46
250– 299	36	3	4	1	2	----	46
200– 249	59	4	1	----	----	----	64
150– 199	81	5	1	----	1	1	89
100– 149	56	2	1	----	----	----	59
50– 99	44	----	----	----	----	----	44
0– 49	17	----	----	----	----	----	17
Incomplete data	----	2	1	----	----	----	3
Totals	392	57	30	12	24	12	527
Medians	198.8	407.3	390.6	436.5	461.5	550.0	241.4

TABLE XXIV. TOTAL CURRENT EXPENSES PER CLASS-ROOM, RURAL SCHOOL DISTRICTS, 1943–44.

Total Current Expenses per Class-room.	Number of Districts.						Total.
	One-room Elementary.	Larger Elementary.	Superior.	Elementary and One-room High.	Elementary and Two-room High.	Other.	
$2,400 and over	----	----	----	1	3	4	8
2,300–$2,399	1	----	----	----	----	----	1
2,200– 2,299	3	2	1	----	1	----	7
2,100– 2,199	2	3	----	----	1	1	7
2,000– 2,099	3	2	3	----	1	1	10
1,900– 1,999	6	3	3	----	----	1	13
1,800– 1,899	7	4	5	1	5	----	22
1,700– 1,799	9	6	5	2	3	----	25
1,600– 1,699	21	11	3	3	1	2	41
1,500– 1,599	37	7	2	3	3	----	52
1,400– 1,499	64	7	6	1	3	1	82
1,300– 1,399	67	3	1	1	1	----	73
1,200– 1,299	95	6	----	----	2	1	104
1,100– 1,199	61	1	----	----	----	----	62
1,000– 1,099	15	----	----	----	----	1	16
900– 999	1	----	----	----	----	----	1
Incomplete data	----	2	1	----	----	----	3
Totals	392	57	30	12	24	12	527
Medians	1,334.8	1,541.9	1,799.0	1,632.3	1,766.7	2,000.0	1,408.5

One of our most interesting compilations is presented in Table XXV., which shows the fraction of total current expenditure* which Government grants represented in rural school districts. The table indicates that in a considerable number of one-room districts the grant has already reached a very high level. In nearly half of these districts the grant is now 70 per cent. of current expenditures; in over a third of them the fraction is three-quarters; and in nearly a fifth grants look after four-fifths of their current costs. While there is no doubt room for a modification of the grant system even in these cases, the chief remedy for their financial troubles is to be found in the creation, where possible, of school districts having larger financial resources.

TABLE XXV. PERCENTAGE OF TOTAL CURRENT EXPENDITURE MET BY GOVERNMENT GRANTS, RURAL SCHOOL DISTRICTS, 1943–44.

Percentage.	Number of Districts.						Total.
	One-room Elementary.	Larger Elementary.	Superior.	Elementary and One-room High.	Elementary and Two-room High.	Other.	
95–100	3	----	----	----	----	----	3
90– 94	4	----	----	----	----	----	4
85– 89	15	----	----	----	----	----	15
80– 84	54	----	----	----	----	----	54
75– 79	67	3	1	----	----	----	71
70– 74	57	2	1	----	----	----	60
65– 69	59	5	3	----	1	----	68
60– 64	52	4	4	----	----	2	62
55– 59	20	12	8	1	1	1	43
50– 54	24	5	4	2	3	----	38
45– 49	12	8	3	3	2	4	32
40– 44	6	10	4	2	4	1	27
35– 39	4	1	----	3	3	1	12
30– 34	4	----	----	----	4	1	9
25– 29	8	3	----	----	3	----	14
20– 24	2	2	1	1	2	----	8
15– 19	1	----	----	----	1	2	4
10– 14	----	----	----	----	----	----	----
Incomplete data	----	2	1	----	----	----	3
Totals	392	57	30	12	24	12	527
Medians	69.1	53.0	55.3	44.0	37.3	46.2	65.9

Table XXVI. shows the transportation expenditures in rural districts after subtraction of the Government's grant of 50 per cent. of the cost. The great majority of districts do not incur transportation charges, but of those that do, a number find these costs very heavy. The expenditure of the Province under this heading has been increasing and is bound to increase still further as more large districts are formed. The proper handling of these costs is, from the Government point of view, extremely perplexing.

While not forgetting the importance of debt service in determining final recommendations, we are justified in omitting a detailed discussion of them here, as only twenty-two of the rural districts report any debenture debt whatever, and even in some of these the amounts involved are so small as to be almost negligible. In 1943–44 the debt charges reported for all rural districts totalled only $37,680.

* Neglecting transportation costs and grants.

TABLE XXVI. NET TRANSPORTATION EXPENDITURE PER CLASS-ROOM, RURAL SCHOOL DISTRICTS, 1943–44.

Expenditure.	Number of Districts.							Schools closed.*
	One-room Elementary.	Larger Elementary.	Superior.	Elementary and One-room High.	Elementary and Two-room High.	Other.	Total.	
Over $500	9	----	----	----	----	----	9	4
$401–$500	----	2	1	----	----	----	3	2
301– 400	3	3	----	----	----	----	6	4
201– 300	1	2	2	1	3	1	10	6
101– 200	3	9	1	2	3	1	19	7
1– 100	10	3	1	2	4	5	25	3
None	366	38	25	7	14	5	455	----
Totals	392	57	30	12	24	12	527	----

* The expenditures in this column are the total expenditure on transportation.

ASSESSMENT AND TAX RATE.

Let us now look at Tables XXVII., XXVIII., and XXIX., which refer to assessment and tax rates, first prefacing our discussion with the obvious remark that he who attaches great significance to tables of this sort is very short-sighted indeed.

TABLE XXVII. ASSESSMENT OF LAND AND IMPROVEMENTS PER CLASS-ROOM, RURAL SCHOOL DISTRICTS, 1943–44.

Assessment.	Number of Districts.						Total.
	One-room Elementary.	Larger Elementary.	Superior.	Elementary and One-room High.	Elementary and Two-room High.	Other.	
Over $200,000	18	5	1	----	----	1	25
$190,000–$199,999	1	4	----	----	----	----	5
180,000– 189,999	1	1	1	----	3	----	6
170,000– 179,999	1	2	----	----	1	1	5
160,000– 169,999	4	1	----	----	1	----	6
150,000– 159,999	6	1	1	----	----	----	8
140,000– 149,999	5	3	3	----	----	----	11
130,000– 139,999	6	1	----	----	1	----	8
120,000– 129,999	7	3	----	----	1	1	12
110,000– 119,999	10	3	----	----	----	----	13
100,000– 109,999	11	7	1	----	2	----	21
90,000– 99,999	10	3	2	----	1	----	16
80,000– 89,999	19	1	1	----	4	1	26
70,000– 79,999	26	3	2	----	2	----	33
60,000– 69,999	26	3	6	1	4	2	42
50,000– 59,999	43	3	5	2	2	1	56
40,000– 49,999	47	5	4	4	1	2	63
30,000– 39,999	48	3	1	1	----	2	55
20,000– 29,999	54	3	----	----	----	----	57
10,000– 19,999	31	----	2	1	1	----	35
Less than $10,000	9	----	----	1	----	1	10
Not reported	9	2	----	2	----	1	14
Totals	392	57	30	12	24	12	527
Medians	50,581	105,000	65,000	45,000	85,000	52,500	56,518

However, we can have perhaps somewhat more confidence in these tables than in the corresponding tables dealing with municipalities, for the reason that all the assessing in rural areas is in the hands of Provincial Assessors. While there is little doubt that the practices and efficiency of these officials vary greatly, some tendency towards uniformity is to be expected.

There are some differences between the bases of property taxation in municipalities and unorganized areas. For example, improvements on farm land were exempt to the extent of $1,500 in the year under review; they have since been entirely exempted. Also land in Table XXVII. includes improvements, which are not reported separately.

The spread in assessed valuations is enormous. Forty-five districts, mostly one-room, have less than $20,000 behind each teacher; twenty-five have more than ten times as much. Obviously, too, most rural school districts of the Province cannot be called wealthy, at least as far as property taxation is concerned. A mill will produce less than $60 per teacher in the median district.

This paucity of taxable resources goes far in explaining why British Columbia still clings to the personal property tax, which is levied only in rural areas, and there only for school purposes. Table XXVIII. shows that while fifty-one districts (again mostly one-room) have no assessable personal property, and in most districts the personal property assessment is small, in a few cases this tax is very important indeed, one which could not be forgone without much sacrifice.

TABLE XXVIII. PERSONAL PROPERTY ASSESSMENT PER CLASS-ROOM, RURAL SCHOOL DISTRICTS, 1943–44.

Assessment.	Number of Districts.						Total.
	One-room Elementary.	Larger Elementary.	Superior.	Elementary and One-room High.	Elementary and Two-room High.	Other.	
$100,000 and over	20	5	----	----	2	2	29
95,000–$99,900	----	----	----	----	1	----	1
90,000– 94,900	1	----	----	----	----	----	1
85,000– 89,900	2	1	----	----	----	----	3
80,000– 84,900	2	----	----	----	----	----	2
75,000– 79,900	----	1	----	1	----	----	2
70,000– 74,900	1	----	----	----	----	----	1
65,000– 69,900	1	1	----	----	----	----	2
60,000– 64,900	2	2	----	----	----	----	4
55,000– 59,900	2	3	----	----	2	1	8
50,000– 54,900	2	----	2	----	----	----	4
45,000– 49,900	6	----	1	----	----	1	8
40,000– 44,900	6	1	2	----	1	----	10
35,000– 39,900	6	1	1	----	----	----	8
30,000– 34,900	11	1	6	----	1	1	20
25,000– 29,900	20	4	2	1	2	----	29
20,000– 24,900	28	4	----	1	3	----	36
15,000– 19,900	32	6	5	----	7	1	51
10,000– 14,900	45	8	5	3	4	1	66
5,000– 9,900	51	7	5	3	1	2	69
Under $5,000	96	10	----	1	----	2	109
No assessment	49	----	1	----	----	1	51
No report	9	2	----	2	----	----	13
Totals	392	57	30	12	24	12	527
Medians	9,559	17,083	19,000	11,667	20,000	15,000	12,461

To these wide variations correspond wide variations in tax rate as reported in Table XXIX. Twenty-two rural school districts levy no taxes, usually because the local industrial concern, itself, pays for the school; in many the school tax rate is very low. Even in the median district the rate is only eight mills. At the other end of the scale, however, appear many districts in which the local school tax cannot fail to be oppressive.

Variations as great as these are regrettable. Where the rate must be high, the opposition to even very desirable expenditure is great, and the children suffer. Further, inequality itself causes discontent, for many a taxpayer complains, not because he pays too much, but because a neighbour pays less.

TABLE XXIX. TAX RATES, RURAL SCHOOL DISTRICTS, 1943–44.

Tax Rate in Mills.	Number of Districts.							Schools closed, but voting Money.
	One-room Elementary.	Larger Elementary.	Superior.	Elementary and One-room High.	Elementary and Two-room High.	Other.	Total.	
30 and over	6	1	1	----	----	----	8	3
29–29.9	1	----	----	----	----	----	1	----
28–28.9	1	----	1	1	----	----	3	----
27–27.9	1	----	----	----	----	----	1	----
26–26.9	2	1	----	----	----	----	3	----
25–25.9	1	----	----	----	----	----	1	----
24–24.9	1	----	----	1	----	----	2	----
23–23.9	2	----	----	----	----	----	2	1
22–22.9	1	----	----	----	----	1	2	1
21–21.9	3	----	----	----	----	----	3	1
20–20.9	5	1	----	1	1	----	8	1
19–19.9	1	1	1	1	----	1	5	----
18–18.9	4	----	1	----	----	1	6	2
17–17.9	9	2	----	----	----	----	11	----
16–16.9	8	----	1	----	1	1	11	1
15–15.9	8	1	1	2	2	1	15	1
14–14.9	12	2	2	2	1	----	19	2
13–13.9	7	4	2	----	----	1	14	2
12–12.9	17	2	1	1	----	1	22	1
11–11.9	13	4	3	1	5	----	26	3
10–10.9	25	2	3	----	3	1	34	2
9– 9.9	21	1	3	----	2	1	28	3
8– 8.9	26	8	3	----	2	----	39	----
7– 7.9	34	7	1	----	1	----	43	6
6– 6.9	42	6	2	----	1	----	51	5
5– 5.9	38	4	3	----	1	----	46	6
4– 4.9	38	1	----	----	----	2	41	4
3– 3.9	31	3	----	----	----	----	34	5
2– 2.9	17	1	----	----	1	----	19	4
1– 1.9	5	----	----	----	----	----	5	7
0– 0.9	----	----	1	----	----	----	1	2
No mill rate	12	5	----	2	3	----	22	----
Not reported	----	----	----	----	----	1	1	----
Totals	392	57	30	12	24	12	527	63
Medians	7.4	8.2	10.7	15.0	10.3	13.5	11.3	6.3

THE ADMINISTRATIVE UNIT.

We have seen above that the expenditures, ability, and effort of rural school districts are characterized by extreme inequality. Inequality of another kind, inequality of opportunity also characterizes our school system, and to the educationalist is quite as regrettable, if not more so. The rural child has a much slimmer chance of receiving a good secondary education than the child residing in a municipality. The tables above show that the great majority of rural districts operate elementary schools only. Most of those which provide secondary education can do so only in superior schools or one- or two-room high schools. The only large rural high schools are found in these tables in the columns marked "other," and half of these schools serve communities which are essentially urban in nature.

We can show this lack of secondary-school opportunity by comparing the enrolments in Grades I., II., and III. with those in Grades X., XI., and XII., as in Table XXX. Of course the situation is not quite as bad as is suggested in this table, as

TABLE XXX. COMPARISON OF ENROLMENTS, 1943–44.*

	Enrolment.	
	Grades I.–III.	Grades X.–XII.
Cities	18,487	10,354
Index	100	56
Districts	9,755	3,054
Index	100	31
Rural Districts	9,497	1,553
Index	100	16

* Based on *Schools Report.*

some hundreds of rural children attend secondary schools in city or district municipalities. On the other hand, some of the large "rural" secondary schools are in communities which are really urban.

One of the greatest needs of our school system is that for good secondary-school opportunities for rural youth. The writer holds no brief for the large school as such and indeed contends that a school may become too large. In particular, the one-room elementary school has much to commend it, and should often be left untouched. A good secondary programme, however, cannot often be provided in a tiny school.

The difficulties in the way of providing secondary education in rural areas are not all insuperable. Most of them can be overcome through the use of transportation and the dormitories which have been so greatly successful in Alberta.

SUMMARY.

This chapter points to extreme and undesirable inequalities both financial and educational. These inequalities can be overcome in one of two ways: either the Provincial Government can take over and operate the whole school system, or it can create large school districts and support these by a carefully planned system of school finance.

CHAPTER IV.

THE FINANCE OF EDUCATION IN BRITISH COLUMBIA: GENERAL.

The preceding three chapters have attempted to present a factual background of the administration of education in our Province. It has been possible, so far, to avoid making recommendations, but it is desirable that when the information remaining is presented, proposals concerning it should be put forward. It is therefore necessary that we now lay down the general principles, framework, or pattern which, in our opinion, should govern the administration of the Province's school system.

EDUCATION A PROVINCIAL RESPONSIBILITY.

Section 93 of the " British North America Act " provides that, with certain qualifications not pertinent here, " In and for each Province, the Legislature may exclusively make laws in relation to Education . . ." This section has been quoted in some of the briefs presented to this Commission as an argument for considering education a responsibility of the Provincial Government. Surely, the plea is not valid. Education in British Columbia is a Provincial responsibility, but not for this reason. The section quoted can mean only that education in British Columbia is not a matter upon which the Dominion Government can legislate; it cannot lay upon the Provincial Government any legal responsibility to legislate on or take any cognizance whatever of educational affairs.

The conviction that education in British Columbia is a Provincial responsibility rests on a far firmer footing than any statute. It is based on the belief that the people of the Province have decided that it shall be so. They have made up their minds that their Government shall see to it that, as far as Nature permits, every child shall have a chance to obtain an adequate schooling, and that the cost of this schooling shall be apportioned with reasonable fairness, all relevant factors being considered.

CENTRALIZED ADMINISTRATION.

If this equality of opportunity and equality of burden cannot be attained unless the Provincial Government takes over the whole school system, then take it over it must, for these are of paramount value. If, on the other hand, it is possible to achieve these and still retain local control, the question of how much centralization we shall have must be considered.

It must be said at the outset that Nature, with an irritating disregard of the problems of school administration, has decreed that no system will produce perfect equality in British Columbia. Good schools exist or can be placed within the reach of the majority of our children, but the children in the vast and sparsely settled hinterland will continue to be at a disadvantage, no matter what system is adopted. The equality possible must be rough, but it may be substantial and in many places so great an improvement over present conditions that it may appear to be perfection.

There are some obvious advantages in complete centralization, or the placing of the whole school system in the hands of the Provincial Government. In the eyes of the Province the child in Telegraph Creek is as much entitled to a good schooling as the child in Vancouver, and everything possible would be done to see that he got it. The great merit of centralization is the equality it can produce.

Some improvement in efficiency might also be expected if complete centralization were to be adopted in this Province. Economies in purchasing would become possible, and accounting might be better handled; professional leadership might be made more widely available, and teachers might be more wisely placed.

Against these advantages of centralization—and it is admitted that the case may have been understated—must be placed some dangers. After the first few years there would be a danger of rigidity. It is almost inevitable that many promotions would be made primarily on the basis of seniority. Where mere length of service was not decisive, the opinion of the Inspector or other superior officer would be enormously important, so that conformity would be placed at a premium. Further, any employee of a large organization is forced to seek protection from criticism by hedging himself about with rules and regulations and the slavish adherence to precedent. Thus, the larger the organization, the more important is its machinery and the less important are the human beings who run it.

Now this mechanical, static, routine administration may not be regrettable, may even be desirable, in some public services. But in the delicate, sensitive affair which is a school system, human relationships are immensely important, and machinery must be kept to a minimum; and uniformity is almost the same as lack of progress. Especially is flexibility essential in the school system of this enormous Province, where distances are so great and conditions so varied that no central office, no matter how enlightened and well intentioned, could adjust its policies to them.

Moreover, complete centralization is almost certain to result in some loss of local interest in schools. Experience has demonstrated that the most strenuous efforts to enlist local interest by means of local advisory boards are futile. Many citizens will not serve on a board which is merely advisory. They must be given the power to *do* something for their community. It would be a great tragedy if our school system were to lose the services and support of our school trustees, who for the most part have done excellent work, often in spite of very irritating obstacles.

The administration of schools by local boards has other merits. For example, the present wish of schoolmen is to make the school the centre of as many community enterprises as possible. This laudable attempt to foster community schools would be hindered if the schools were removed from local control. Again experimentation is more likely in a system which is at least partially decentralized. The development of junior high schools in British Columbia has been effected by local initiative, encouraged by the wise leadership and stimulation of the Department. Among the most promising developments in British Columbia schools to-day are school lunch programmes and vocational agriculture courses. In these, both central authority and local initiative have large parts to play.

It has often been contended that local control is the more democratic than central control. In one sense this is surely not so, for in a centralized system the schools would still be responsible to the representatives of the people. Indeed if centralization brings about a much greater degree of equalization than decentralization can, it may be said that it is the more democratic. However, because local control results in greater public interest, because it enlists the voluntary services of an army of citizens, and because the local people can feel that, in part, they possess the schools, that they are doing things for themselves rather than having things done for them, it may be proper to call decentralization more democratic.

In the informal discussions accompanying the public hearings of this Commission it became clear that the majority of our citizens wish to retain local management of schools, if this can be done while achieving a substantial degree of equality of opportunity for our children and equality of burden for our taxpayers. In other words, we must have much more equality than we have; if we cannot have it without complete centralization, we shall have to have that too; if we can have it and still preserve local control, let us by all means do so, and let us do so even if equalization is not complete, as long as it is substantial.

SUPPORT AND CONTROL.

One of the briefs submitted during this survey objected in principle to grants from the Government in aid of locally administered services, and indeed the spending by one agency of money not raised by it is bound to engender suspicion. This separation, however, is an argument for care in the use of grants, not for abolition. If local control over education is to continue, grants cannot be avoided.

There is no very close correspondence between the amount of support which the Government gives to education by way of grant and the amount of control it must exercise. It is true that if the Government assumes the whole cost it would have to exercise all or nearly all of the financial control, and that if it gave no grants it could wield little control. But we are confident that a grant system can be devised which, while achieving much equality, will rightly leave to local boards a great deal of freedom, perhaps more freedom than they enjoy at present.

Specifically, we intend to recommend that a basic or Provincial programme or standard of schooling be set up, this programme to be described in financial terms, and to be made as nearly as possible available everywhere in the Province by means of a grant system which will require that all property in the Province be taxed at rates which are as nearly uniform as possible. The fact that the Provincial programme is available to all should make for a substantial degree of equality of opportunity, and the fact that the tax rates required are everywhere the same, or nearly the same, should make for equality of burden.

Since any School Board which wishes to go beyond this programme will be perfectly free to do so at its own expense, and since expenditures within the programme will not be a matter for local choice, there can be no question of local boards making free with funds derived from the Provincial Treasury.

In the interests of equalization this basic or Provincial programme should be set at a level typical of a considerable number of boards in the Province, so that many boards will not find it necessary to go beyond it by a great deal. Some items of expenditure—buildings, transportation of pupils, and the like—cannot be placed on this equalization basis, and must continue to draw special grants. For this reason and for the reason that some districts would wish to exceed the programme equalized, some inequality would continue, but this inequality would be very much less than exists at present. Some inequality there must be if local authority is to be retained.

THE SIZE OF THE SCHOOL DISTRICT.

It is hardly necessary to recite the many reasons why large school districts must be created in much of this Province if education is to be financed at all satisfactorily. Some of the present districts are quite acceptable and need not be disturbed. In others only slight changes are necessary. In many, however, nothing less than a thorough revision will suffice, if the equalization of opportunity and burden which so many of our people clamour for is to be attained.

It has been argued above that decentralization is to be preferred to centralization, but this position was taken only on the understanding that the school district or, as it is often called, the local unit of administration, is as nearly adequate to its task as distance and topography permit. Moreover, public opinion in the Province is now strongly in favour of this sorely-needed reform. Only financial barriers obstruct the way, and these will be of little importance if the financial scheme we advocate is implemented. It is therefore to be understood that all the recommendations of this report are based on the assumption of a reform in school districts. In a later chapter, a more detailed discussion of this matter will be undertaken, and a definite plan of reorganization will be proposed.

RECOMMENDATIONS.

This chapter leads to the following recommendations, all to be elaborated by detailed proposals later:—

1. That the administration of education through local School Boards be retained.

2. That a Provincial programme of education, defined in financial terms, be made available throughout British Columbia by means of a grant system requiring equal tax rates on all property.

3. That adequate local units or school districts be created wherever in the Province they do not already exist.

CHAPTER V.

PROPERTY TAXATION AND ASSESSMENT.

The major complaints regarding the present system of financing education in British Columbia fall under two headings. One group objects to the system because so much of the money required comes from sources which are local, and since local resources vary greatly, serious inequalities in the schooling offered and in the burden resting on taxpayers are inevitable. In earlier chapters it has been shown that these inequalities exist, and it has been stated that though they are in part unavoidable they should be greatly reduced.

The second group of objections, closely allied to but not identical with the first, is based on the fact that a very large part of school revenue is raised by taxation on real property, and contends that this form of taxation is not suited to the support of education. This chapter will be devoted to a discussion of this highly contentious and perplexing matter.

INCIDENCE OF PROPERTY TAXES.

An examination of property taxation for education in British Columbia requires a preliminary survey of the theory of property taxation in general.

In the great majority of cases the impact of property taxes is on the owner; that is, it is the owner who pays them in the first place. Later he may be able to shift part or all of them to his tenant by charging rents which repay him for the taxes he has paid. Even if he himself occupies the property, he is always potentially a tenant and potentially a landlord, and is therefore, so to speak, his own tenant. If the tenant uses the premises for business purposes, he in turn may be able to charge prices which will pass on or shift to his customers the tax charges and other charges that he must pay.

The majority of economists have come to the conclusion that in the long run in most cases taxes on improvements, which, of course, include buildings, are shifted or passed on in this way, so that their incidence, or the place where they finally come to rest, is on the consumer, or the tenant, who is a consumer of housing.

The reasoning on which this conclusion is based points out that if rents are not high enough to cover all charges, including taxes, and yield besides a fair return on the capital involved, the erection of buildings will cease to be a profitable investment, and old buildings will not be replaced. Eventually the scarcity so caused will cause rents to rise until they again cover taxes. On the other hand, if rents are more than high enough to yield a fair return, capital will be attracted to the building field, and the increase of accommodation resulting will cause rents to be lowered.

Clearly this is a long-run tendency only. Buildings wear out very slowly and if at any one time rents do not cover charges, it may be several years before they rise. Many building owners know that this was only too true in the nineteen-thirties. In a locality where the population is steadily diminishing rents will decline, perhaps indefinitely, as in our "ghost" towns. However, "in the meantime, when rentals do *not* cover all costs, there is no reason for saying that it is the tax portion of costs that they are not covering. Why not say that rentals are so low as to pay taxes but to leave depreciation uncovered, or repairs, or net return to the owner?"* On the other hand, rents are sometimes so high as to yield the owner a handsome surplus after all fixed charges have been covered. For example, if there were no rent control in Canada at present, rents in some cases would have risen to fantastic levels.

Much the same reasoning leads to the conclusion that property taxes on premises used for commercial or industrial purposes must eventually be shifted to the consumer. If such charges were not covered, the concern could not indefinitely stay in business.

* Report of the Saskatchewan Urban Assessment Committee, p. 60.

Taxes on land act differently from those on improvements. The supply of land is fixed. If rents rise or fall, the amount of land available cannot be increased or decreased correspondingly. Taxes on land, therefore, are not shiftable, since they have no influence on its rent.

All this will seem slightly unreal to many taxpayers and indeed no one would contend that these tendencies operate in a clearly recognizable fashion in all transactions.* A property-owner does not separate his taxes into taxes on land and taxes on improvements, the first to be shifted to his tenant and the second to pay himself. If he rents his property, he makes the best bargain he can. If rents are high, he is glad he owns property, whether he rents it or occupies it himself. If they are low, he is sorry. In the long run in most communities he is able to charge rents if he lets his property (or save paying rent if he occupies it himself) which will reimburse him for part but not all of his taxes. That he can shift part of his taxes in this way is due to the fact that part of his tax is on improvements; that he cannot shift them all is due to the fact that part is on land.

THE NON-PROPERTY-OWNER.

One of the reasons, but not the only reason, for this analysis is to expose the lack of validity of the argument that the person who owns no property pays no taxes for the support of the local school system. These taxes enter into most rents and to a certain extent into the prices of many goods and services. This diffusion of property taxes causes almost every one to help unwittingly in their payment. Indeed some non-property-owners pay indirectly more property taxes than some property-owners. That persons not owning property frequently do not know they are paying property taxes and that their payments may not have any relationship to their taxpaying ability are readily admitted. But that they make the payments nevertheless is incontrovertible.

CAPITALIZATION.

A tax, such as that on land, which cannot be shifted tends to be capitalized. If, for example, a parcel of untaxed land could reasonably be expected to yield an annual revenue of $50, it might be considered to be worth $1,000, as 5 per cent. interest on this is $50 per year. If now an annual tax of $10 is imposed on the property, its net return would be reduced to $40 per year, and its selling price to $800.† If the land were then sold, the buyer would have bought himself free of the tax, since the interest on the $200 saved would pay the tax. If the tax were then removed, the price of the land would rise correspondingly. At a subsequent sale the owner would pocket the increase and the purchaser would be no better off than if the tax had not been removed or reduced.

Now of course considerations of this sort do not influence the thinking of many taxpayers. After they have purchased a parcel of property, they forget, if they ever knew, the reduction in price that the taxes have caused. They are annually reminded, however, of the necessity of paying the tax, and the resulting discontent is just as real as if it were completely justified. Moreover, the operation of capitalization offers little comfort in a period of rising property taxes. The owner may then see the value of his land slowly being taken away from him. Again taxes are a fixed charge and therefore particularly onerous in times of depression or on farm land since the prices of farm produce fluctuate widely. Of course this fact will be somewhat less important in the future because of co-operative marketing and the possibility of permanent basic prices for farm produce. In some farming communities the discontent of many resi-

* A small but increasing number of leases guarantee the owner a rent which will cover all legitimate charges including taxes.

† One of our most interesting briefs argues that this property should continue to be assessed at $1,000.

dents appears to arise more through fear for the future revenue than through unrest with present tax burdens.

In many municipalities the principle of capitalization of taxes does not appear to be a very strong argument against the reduction of school taxes. In these communities, the councils do not propose that total local taxes be reduced by the whole amount of the relief in school taxes hoped for. They plan, instead, to devote much or all of the requested relief to other municipal services, many of which they insist now receive grossly inadequate support. Under these circumstances the prices of land would not rise by the capitalized value of the reduction in school taxes; that is, the land-owner would not be presented with a bonus at the government's expense.

In the unorganized part of the Province the principle of tax capitalization should not be lost sight of entirely. There the only property taxes except school taxes are imposed by the Provincial Government and are levied at rather low rates fixed by statute. Moreover, improvements on farm land are entirely exempt. Under the circumstances there will be a tendency for reductions in school taxes on land to result in free gifts to land-owners and no relief to future buyers. This fact should not be allowed to be decisive; that is, it is not in itself sufficient reason for perpetuating school taxes at their present rates in all cases. But if there is a case for continuing some school taxation on land, that case is somewhat strengthened by the existence of the tendency towards tax capitalization.

PROPERTY TAXES AND ABILITY TO PAY.

It is becoming more and more usual nowadays to judge a tax by its relation to the taxpayer's ability to pay. Perhaps before going further we should explain some of our terms, as these may not be familiar to all those to whom this report is addressed. Let us think of two men, neither having dependents, one having an income of $1,000 per year, the other of ten times as much. Let us suppose that a certain tax takes $10 per year from the first. If the tax on the second man is $100 per year, or ten times as much, it is said to be *proportional*, as the difference in the tax is proportional to the difference in the incomes. If it takes from the second only $50 a year, or less than ten times as much, it is *regressive*. If it takes two hundred, it is *progressive*.

Taxes according to ability to pay must usually be levied at progressive rates, since ability increases faster than income. It is obvious that taxes on property are regressive, in this respect resembling sales taxes, excise taxes, and customs duties, to which indeed in many ways they are not completely dissimilar. What a person pays depends on the housing he occupies and on the prices he pays for the goods and services he uses. Clearly a relationship of these to his ability to pay taxes exists, but is so haphazard as to be almost accidental.

To say that a tax is regressive is to say that it should be viewed with great suspicion, but it is not necessarily to condemn it outright and at once. Many charges in our society, interest, for example, are regressive and, as we shall argue presently, there may be a small place for regressive taxes too.

It is not very helpful to consider property taxes as taxes on persons. It may be better to think of them as charges on things, payments which a person must make to enjoy the property taxed directly, or the object or service taxed indirectly.

THE PROPERTY TAX AND THE INCOME TAX.

We have been so bold as to say above that there may be a proper place for some regressive taxes in our society. This unpopular view is based on the fact that even the income tax, although the fairest of all taxes with the possible exception of succession duties, is not without its imperfections. Some income, not being recorded anywhere, is not reported on income tax returns. Some goods and services, although valu-

able, do not result in a money payment and may not be taxed. The tax on small incomes is difficult and expensive to administer and collect. Such considerations suggest that some taxpaying ability is best reached through regressive taxes. Of course, it may very well be that we already have more than enough regressive taxes for this purpose.

In any case, property taxes make our heavy income taxes somewhat less burdensome. Where the owner occupies his own home, he is not required to pay tax on the income it represents. Where he rents his property to some one else, the law recognizes the fact that the rent he receives is intended to cover taxes by allowing him to deduct his property taxes when computing his taxable income. The net result is that the Dominion Government pays a portion of his property taxes. It follows, too, that an increased school tax on an income-taxpayer, such as a corporation, does not represent a proportionate increase in the total tax burden, since some of the increase will be passed on in a lowered income tax.

ONEROUS AND BENEFICIAL TAXES.

Much has been made, and rightly so, of the distinction between onerous and beneficial services. Onerous services are those of Province-wide importance and of no special local benefit. Local taxation to support these services is burdensome or onerous. Beneficial services are those which confer a special benefit on local property. Taxes to support these services impose no real burden.

We think this distinction to be to a large extent useful and valid, and education is an " onerous " service if any service is, as the term is used here. The Province will not allow any community to fail to provide schooling, and the schooling so provided benefits the whole Province, not just the local community.

But surely the distinction between the two is not much more than a matter of emphasis. Few services are " onerous " only or " beneficial " only. For example, police service is considered by many to be so clearly beneficial to local property as to be properly supported by local taxes. Yet it would not be a matter of indifference to a municipality if the police service in one near-by were such as to provide an easy refuge for the criminal. For many years, England has considered policing an " onerous " service and the central government bears through grants one-half of its cost. Many other services such as sewage, water-supply, and even garbage collection, though more localized, are not only local.

Specifically, it cannot be admitted that schools have no relation to property values and rents. Population is attracted to communities which maintain good schools. A great deal of the money which is made in a community depends on the existence of schools in the community, and property values must reflect this, although perhaps not in a very precise fashion.

It surely is not correct to argue that if a home-owner has no children and therefore does not use the schools, his property derives no financial benefit from their existence. He may not use the sidewalks or the running water or any of the many amenities the house possesses, but that is not to say that they are not valuable to him. The fact that the schools are available and potentially usable is surely a benefit that makes his property more valuable.

Of course, this is not to say that present conditions are satisfactory or that substantial changes are not desirable. This part of the case for property taxes for school support has been put as strongly as possible, perhaps more strongly than necessary, for the reason that it is so often disregarded. There are sound reasons for the reduction of school taxes on property, and there is little danger of their being overlooked. There are also sound arguments for continuing some of these taxes.

EDUCATIONAL COSTS AND PROVINCIAL AND MUNICIPAL FINANCE.

It has been shown in Chapter II. that educational costs bulk large in most municipal budgets and very large in some. Also, educational costs have risen since the relevant statistics were gathered. We are now going through a period of good times. Tax collections are high and municipal finances are, with a few exceptions, in a fairly healthy condition. This happy situation can hardly be expected to persist indefinitely, however, and municipal councils are justified in worrying about the future. The support of education, being a heavy charge not easily controllable, gives municipal budgets an undesirable inelasticity. It makes it difficult for a municipality to adjust its finances to changing conditions, to cut a smaller suit when the supply of cloth is diminished. It may thus easily be a major factor in creating a future crisis. This is one of the most cogent reasons for a reduction of school taxes on local property.

However, it is not in the interests of the people of British Columbia that all of this inelasticity be placed on the Provincial treasury either. The Provincial Government is enjoying at the moment a much-coveted surplus of over seven millions of dollars annually. To transfer all school costs to the Province would gobble up all of this surplus, as it almost exactly equals the educational costs now borne locally.* Since the Province faces large added expenditures in the post-war years, it would be forced to seek other revenues, and would naturally consider levying a small uniform tax on all the property in the Province. In other words, the Province is not now in a position to provide completely for the financing of education without using property taxes or other taxes probably quite as objectionable.

RECAPITULATION.

We may sum up this long discussion something like this: Because property taxes are regressive, because they result in inequalities of opportunity and burden, and because they impart to municipal finances an undesirable rigidity which in many cases is very serious and threatens to become more so, their use for school support should be reduced. However, Provincial revenues, although great, are not sufficient to allow the Province to remove entirely the necessity of obtaining some school support from these taxes, and besides some reliance on this source can be justified by the financial benefit to property that the school system confers. Moreover, some local support for education must continue if local control is to be retained.

It is therefore proposed that the Provincial Government's grants for schools be increased substantially and be distributed in such a way as to make it possible for each local school district to provide a standard or Provincial programme of education by imposing on its property a fixed low tax rate. Its tax rate for schools would then consist of this rate plus a rate to cover the amount by which it exceeded the Provincial programme, debt charges locally incurred, a share of the cost of buildings, of transportation if any, and perhaps of the operation of dormitories in some areas.

ASSESSMENT.

The proposal implies that the assessment ratio† shall be made roughly uniform throughout the Province, as it would be obviously unjust to grant larger sums to one community than to another only because it appeared poorer because it assessed at a lower rate or ratio. A municipality could knowingly or unknowingly increase its grants merely by underassessing.

More than that, if the assessment ratios vary much within the municipality, that is, if some properties are considerably underassessed or overassessed relative to others,

* *See* Table III.

† The ratio of assessed value to "true" value.

local taxes including school taxes are unfairly apportioned, and dissatisfaction results. The sense of justice of our taxpayers is so well developed that they can reconcile themselves to carrying a fairly heavy burden as long as they can be convinced that the burden is justly distributed.

Now each municipality in British Columbia is practically a law unto itself in the matter of assessing. Appeals to the Courts may be and are made but their number is very small in relation to the total number of properties assessed. The result is a very great variation in procedures and results. Some municipalities employ competent and fairly large staffs, some only one part-time man, some provide all the paraphernalia of a modern assessing office, others only very primitive and incomplete records. Some assessors collect carefully and analyse thoroughly such data as sales values, rentals, appraisals for mortgage and insurance, costs of replacement, costs of construction, and allowances for depreciation and obsolescence, so that their final appraisals are based on every measure of value obtainable. Most assessors cannot do this. Some assessors reappraise each year a large fraction of their properties, so that the whole municipality is continually being reassessed. Others have neither the time nor the resources for such a continuous reattack so that reassessments must be done, if done at all, by some outside agency. Assessments at values fixed during the real-estate boom which preceded World War I. are not unknown.

So far we have been talking about assessing in municipalities, but the assessments of the Provincial Assessors cannot be viewed without suspicion. We hasten to say that our casual observation provides no indication that these officials are not careful and conscientious. They were uniformly courteous and helpful in this investigation. Moreover, their problems are very great, for they are responsible for territories which are always large and sometimes enormous, territories in which conditions vary widely. However, most of them would agree that supervision and guidance would be beneficial. As they do not have access to building permits, new buildings sometimes escape assessment for two or three years. They have little in the way of training-in-service; they are very rarely brought together for instruction and discussion of common problems; the assessments they fix even for very valuable properties are hardly ever reviewed or called in question by their supervisors.

Although this survey did not make a thorough investigation of assessing, the subject is so closely related to school finance that it could not be entirely neglected. The most important information gathered is reported in Table XXXI., which is a collection of the ratios of assessed to declared value of the properties which changed hands in nine assessment areas in the years noted. Except for two areas, the ratios refer to the year 1940. The declared value is that reported to the Land Registry offices in order to fix the registration fee. In most cases the declared value is the selling price. Where the value declared was obviously the assessed value, or where for any reason it clearly did not represent the actual selling price, it was excluded. The areas were chosen mostly on the basis of convenience. Some of them are municipalities and some are Provincial Assessment Districts, and they are not all in one part of the Province.

TABLE XXXI. ASSESSMENT RATIOS FOR NINE ASSESSMENT AREAS IN BRITISH COLUMBIA.*

Assessment Ratios (per Cent.).	Assessment Areas.										Total.
	1.	2.	3.	4.	5.	6.	7 (Land).	7 (Houses).	8.	9.	
Over 150	31	34	16	38	13	33	12	1	8	30	216
141–150	8	7	3	9	2	2	5	3	3	9	51
131–140	3	9	4	7	6	4	10	8	----	10	61
121–130	4	7	5	4	5	7	11	13	4	11	71
111–120	9	16	2	9	12	1	16	23	6	14	108
101–110	7	9	6	5	19	3	23	41	10	17	140
91–100	6	5	1	10	15	5	15	40	3	13	113
81– 90	6	3	1	9	21	3	14	33	5	33	128
71– 80	4	7	----	9	19	4	14	9	11	11	88
61– 70	5	----	2	13	13	3	1	3	2	14	56
51– 60	4	1	1	7	3	2	1	----	2	8	29
41– 50	5	----	1	3	2	2	----	1	3	5	22
31– 40	3	2	----	----	2	3	----	----	2	3	15
21– 30	2	----	----	1	----	1	----	----	2	2	8
11– 20	3	----	----		----	----	----	----	----	----	3
Totals	100	100	42	124	132	73	122	175	61	180	1,109
Weighted averages†	112.4	128.0	135.5	102.8	92.0	117.1	106.4	99.1	94.7	100.4	102.5
Medians	116.5	131.0	136.0	116.5	95.0	137.2	108.0	101.4	101.5	101.6	107.6

* All ratios are for 1940, except for those in Area 4, which are for 1941, and Area 8, which are for 1939.

† This is not the average of the ratios, but the total of the assessed values, divided by the total of the declared values.

Now it is not intended to claim for these data a validity they do not possess. The year 1940 may not have been chosen wisely, as by that time property prices in many parts of the Province had hardly begun to recover from the Great Depression. Further, sales prices are only one of many indices of value and cannot be accepted without question. Often unwittingly the buyer pays more, or the seller gets less, than a property is worth in the market. Some "prices" are nominal only, as in transfers among relatives, or when the sale is forced or only part of a larger transaction. These facts and others make for inaccuracy in the attempt to discover the "true" value of the property.

However, the table has the value of giving some kind of a picture, perhaps hazy, of what happens. From it four conclusions are drawn.

First of all, there is a considerable variation in the assessment ratios of the areas here shown; over the whole Province it is likely that the discrepancies would be a good deal greater.

Second, on the whole these areas appear to have been overassessed relative to the sales prices of 1940.

Third, the spread within each area is enormous. Large numbers of properties were greatly underassessed or overassessed.

Finally, the fact that the weighted averages, which give more weight to the higher valued properties, are consistently smaller than the medians, which give equal weight to all properties, points to regressivity in assessing. In other words, the higher priced properties are assessed at a lower fraction of their value than the lower priced properties.

To criticize assessing on the basis of this single, sketchy investigation might not be justified, but the tabulation only confirms the findings of many hundreds of thorough studies of similar conditions elsewhere.*

For these reasons we can hardly avoid the conclusion that assessing is not very well done in many parts of the Province.

Data and inquiry also show that there exists in British Columbia a need of equalizing assessments wherever a school district falls in more than one assessment area. Thus, where a municipality has attached to it a rural area for education purposes, school taxes in the extra-municipal area are levied on assessments arrived at by a Provincial Assessor, although his assessments are sometimes on a quite different basis from those within the municipality. Much the same state of affairs obtains when a school district contains two municipalities or a rural area and a village. The problem will become more acute as more large school districts are established.

One of the tests of a good tax is its productiveness, for if a tax does not contribute large sums of money to public treasuries it is of little value even if theoretically sound. Property taxes in British Columbia raise well over $20,000,000 a year, which is much greater than the revenue of any other tax. It may be that we raise too much money by taxes on property, but even if a substantial reduction is effected, we must still lean heavily on it for many years to come. A healthy system of assessment is therefore a matter of great importance to the governments of our Province.

We therefore plan to recommend that an agency for the supervision of property taxation and assessment be created in the Province. We are strengthened in our resolve to make this recommendation by the knowledge that it has also been made by Dr. Haig in his Report in 1917, by the Harper Commission, and in the King Report, and by the conviction that such an agency is needed regardless of school grants.

The proposed agency should study the whole matter of assessment, including the possibility of increasing stability by using site value assessments. It should collect and

* A great number of these are reported in J. D. Silverherz, *Assessment of Real Property in the United States*, Albany, N.Y., J. B. Lyon & Co. 1936.

analyse sales and rental data, and determine assessment ratios by inspection and the use of sample evaluations. It should prescribe forms, field books, and records, and determine in manuals or bulletins the procedures for their use. It might have the power to make recommendations regarding appointments, and to arrange for conferences and short courses of instruction. It might well assess itself large or atypical properties.

Finally, the agency would be a source of much-needed advice and leadership in matters relating to the taxation of property in the Province.

The Provincial Assessors as well as the municipal assessors should come under the supervision of this agency.

Regarding the composition of the agency, bureau, or commission, a recommendation would not be proper. It is suggested that it contain at least one full-time, thoroughly competent official, with perhaps some municipal assessors and Provincial Assessors. Needless to say, it will also be necessary to provide an adequate staff.

THE PROPERTY TAX BASE.

Although there are many similarities between the bases upon which property taxes are levied in the municipalities and unorganized areas of the Province, there are also several differences. Among the most important of these appear to be the existence of a personal property tax in the unorganized areas, the treatment of improvements, and exemptions of mining and coal property under the "Taxation Act."

PERSONAL PROPERTY AND IMPROVEMENTS.

The personal property tax occupied at one time a fairly important place in the financial structure of the Province. It was general in its application; that is, it was levied on a wide range of property, both within and without the municipalities, and its product went into Consolidated Revenue. Now, however, the tax is not imposed within the municipalities and is imposed outside for school purposes only. Moreover, the personal property taxed in British Columbia is tangible personal property only; it does not include such intangible or representative personal property as stocks, bonds, and mortgages.* Also much tangible personal property is exempt. Furniture, clothes, and household effects, unless rented; farm produce, sawlogs and shingle-bolts on which the royalties have been paid, motor-vehicles, unless part of the stock-in-trade of a dealer; steamships, and personal property used for the working of coal mines, coke-ovens, smelters, and works for the treatment of ore are all exempt from tax. However, live stock, agricultural implements and machinery, and vehicles are taxable.†

Closely related to these provisions regarding personal property are the definitions of improvements. In municipalities improvements include ". . . buildings, structures, storage-tanks for oil or gasoline . . . and all machinery and fixtures annexed to any building or structure."‡ Outside the municipalities land includes ". . . improvements, buildings, fixtures, machinery, or other things erected upon or affixed to land or to any building thereon, but shall not include such improvements, fixtures, machinery, or things other than buildings as, if so erected or affixed by a tenant, would, as between landlord and tenant, be removable by the tenant as personal property."§

The effect of these two definitions is to make a great deal of machinery and fixtures taxable as improvements for all purposes, if it is located in a municipality, but taxable as personal property for school purposes only, if located in unorganized territory. If improvements are taxed at all—and the balance of opinion is in favour—it is just that

* "Taxation Act," R.S.B.C. 1936, section 2.
† "Taxation Act," section 43; "Public Schools Act," section 116.
‡ "Municipal Act," section 2.
§ "Taxation Act," section 2.

this machinery and fixtures be treated in the same way wherever situated. The recommendation regarding the personal property tax will accordingly include the qualification that fixtures and machinery outside municipalities continue to be taxed, at any rate for school purposes.

Clearly, too, the whole matter of defining and assessing improvements both within and without municipalities would provide a suitable subject for study by the agency for the supervision of property taxation suggested earlier.

It is evident that personal property, even although much watered down by exemptions, includes property other than the more or less immovable machinery so far discussed. The chief classes of this other property are live stock, agricultural implements, and stock-in-trade.

One of the chief objections to the taxation of live stock and agricultural implements is the very great difficulty of assessing them. It is physically impossible for the assessor to pay to each farm in his district a long enough visit to count and value each head of stock and each implement. He is forced to rely on returns or reports from the taxpayers for most of his information. The taxpayer knows that many of his neighbours make no pretence of providing accurate or complete information. Indeed, many of the reports are not even returned to the assessor. He knows that in most cases no check is likely. Under such circumstances, it is not surprising that the tax on agricultural personal property is a very inefficient means of obtaining school revenue.

It should be added that this inefficiency is due not so much to the inefficiency of the assessor as to the incongruity of attempting to tax live stock and implements, which can be assessed only with great difficulty, while freeing from tax farm buildings, which can be assessed with relative ease.

The tax on live stock has about it an added injustice. The cattle owned by a cattleman are his crop, so to speak, and this crop may be taxed two or three times before it reaches market, while farm produce and fruit-trees are exempt. This injustice is heightened where, as sometimes happens, a school district contains both stock-ranches and fruit-ranches. One cannot help agreeing that the personal property tax throws on the stockmen a disproportionate share of the local school burden.

The tax on stock-in-trade is not easy to evade, as most merchants make an inventory which the assessor can use in making his assessment. However, a merchant's stock tends to be small when his business is prosperous and vice versa, so that the tax hits him hardest when he is least able to bear it. It hits merchants such as those selling jewellery or hardware who have large stocks which turn over slowly, harder than those such as grocers or butchers who have small stocks turning over rapidly. These merchants must compete with others in municipalities who, while probably paying a licence, need pay no tax on their stocks.

Enough has been said to indicate some of the reasons for advocating the abolition of the tax on personal property except that which would be included under a more comprehensive definition of improvements.

PROPERTY TAX EXEMPTIONS.

Section 116 of the "Public Schools Act" provides that the exemptions allowed under the "Taxation Act" shall also apply to taxation for school purposes with the exception of land exempt by reason of some other tax being imposed in substitution for land taxes. Taxes on mines and minerals illustrate the operation of this section, for these are taxed either on their output or on their income, and the "Taxation Act" states* that these taxes are in substitution for land taxes. Land, which here includes improvements, used for mining is therefore taxable for school purposes.

* Section 61.

Property used for coal-mining is not treated in this way. Section 24 (*f*) of the "Taxation Act" exempts "buildings, structures, machinery and other permanent improvements upon the land necessarily and actually used for the purpose of operating coal-mines or coke-ovens," and section 43 (*g*) of the same Act exempts personal property similarly used. As these exemptions are not made by reason of some other tax being imposed in place of property taxes, they apply to school taxation. The school district may tax the houses provided by coal-mining companies to their employees, but these taxes are ordinarily shifted or passed on to the employees in rent. It may not tax the offices and other structures, the machinery, or even, it has been claimed, the company's lumber mill, since these are used in connection with the mining of coal. The consequence is that coal-mining areas are often greatly handicapped in their attempt to provide adequate schools.

Now surely it must be admitted that in so far as property taxes are justified at all, a company has a responsibility for the children of its employees and other residents of the community in which it operates. The fact that it engages in one pursuit rather than another or that it operates in unorganized territory rather than in a municipality should not be allowed to determine its treatment. If some such principle is not adopted, inconsistencies are inevitable. If coal-mining property is to be exempt, why not other mining property? Or canneries? Or pulp-mills? Or power plants? It may be that the mining of coal is not a specially lucrative enterprise at present, but property taxes for school support cannot be gauged by the income of the moment. If, in the long run, a property can produce little or no income, it should have little or no assessed value, but that is not to say that it should be exempt by statute.

The same considerations suggest that the treatment of exemptions within and without the municipalities should be as nearly alike as possible. For example, some machinery in a concentrator or smelter is, as personal property, exempted in unorganized territory by section 43 (*p*) of the "Taxation Act," but is, as improvements, taxable in municipalities. The difference would, of course, disappear if the recommendation regarding the personal property tax were adopted.

No doubt a proposal for change will arouse great opposition, but there is no escaping the conviction that it is the duty of this Commission to recommend the removal of such discrepancies, or failing this, special grants to the school districts affected. This conviction is somewhat strengthened by the knowledge that in many cases property taxes for school purposes should not be greatly burdensome if the other recommendations of this report are adopted, and can be treated as an expense of operation in the calculation of income tax.

To all of this discussion should be appended the qualification that it is meant to apply to school taxes only. This Commission has no power to express opinions regarding taxes for other purposes.

THE DISTRIBUTION OF THE SCHOOL TAX.

As was stated above, the grant system recommended will have the effect of levying a certain standard tax on local property. Of course the Provincial Government will not impose this tax, but since its grants will be framed in such a way as to require the locality to impose it, the result will be the same as if the Government itself imposed it. Consequently a method of calculation which will treat all localities alike must be devised.

The preceding section has taken the position that land should not, in general, be accorded special treatment because of the purpose for which it is used. Unfortunately, the adoption of this principle does not completely clarify the situation. Land, as defined in the "Taxation Act," includes improvements, and the treatment of these varies greatly both within and without the municipalities. In unorganized territory on farm land all improvements are exempt, but on other land they are taxed on 100 per cent.

of their assessed value. Municipalities may exempt improvements entirely or may tax them on any fraction of their value up to 75 per cent.* In practice thirty-one out of the sixty-one municipalities tax improvements at 50 per cent., four at over 50 per cent., five exempt improvements entirely, and the remaining twenty-one use various percentages below 50.

It is not proposed to tackle here the thorny problem of to what extent, if any, improvements should be taxed in municipalities. The question which concerns the Provincial Government at this point is one of distribution among municipalities rather than taxation policy within a given municipality, which has traditionally been a matter of local choice.

Where the Provincial Government levies a tax at a certain rate, it is to the advantage of the taxpayers to seek exemptions. For example, the "Taxation Act" sets a rate of 5 mills on farm land in unorganized areas. Naturally the owners of farm land will seek to have part or all of their improvements exempted, for the result will be a decrease in the tax they pay. For that matter they would be glad to have part or all of their land exempted from the operation of the tax. In other words, when the amount of the tax can vary, but the rate of the tax is fixed, exemptions are to no one's disadvantage.

It is quite otherwise when the total tax is fixed and the rate can vary. Let us illustrate by a specific example, purposely over-simplified. Assume a rural school district, entirely agricultural, consisting of one large farm and twenty small ones. The large farm is assessed at $50,000, two-fifths of this representing land and three-fifths being improvements. Each of the small farms has $2,000 of land and $500 of improvements. The total assessment of the district is then $100,000, and if it is desired to raise $600 for the school the rate required is 6 mills. Thus:—

	Land.	Improvements.	Total.
One large farm	$20,000	$30,000	$50,000
Twenty small farms	40,000	10,000	50,000
Total	$60,000	$40,000	$100,000

Tax rate = 6 mills. Payments: Large farm, $300; small farms (each), $15.

If improvements were exempt, the rate necessary on the $60,000 of land assessment would be 10 mills. The tax payments would then be $200 for the large farm and $20 for each of the small farms. In other words, when the amount to be raised is fixed ($600 in this case), the complete or partial exemption of improvements favours taxpayers whose assessment of improvements is large relative to their assessment for land, and works to the disadvantage of those whose land is high relative to improvements.

The example given illustrates the result of section 2 of the "Taxation Act Amendment Act, 1944," which exempted all improvements on farm land outside the municipalities rather than the $1,500 only which had been exempted before the passing of this statute. The amount by which the Provincial revenue suffers is not great—about $25,000 annually—but the effect in any school district containing farms with improvements valued at more than $1,500 is to throw some of the burden of school costs from those farms on to those of lower value, as in our example. The large farm profits in two ways: it pays less Provincial tax—almost $150 annually in the illustration;† it also pays less of the total local school tax. About the first there is some resentment, for many of the more valuable "farms" are not really farms at all, being country estates run by city dwellers. These estates qualify as farm land under the Act as they contain

* The legal limit in Vancouver is 50 per cent.

† Five mills on the amount by which $30,000 exceeds the previous exemption of $1,500, or $142.50.

2 acres under cultivation. About the second there is even more resentment; the great majority of farmers gain little or nothing in relief from Provincial taxes, as their improvements are worth little, if any, more than $1,500, but their local school tax is increased by the complete exemption of improvements.

It is therefore no more than common sense to recommend that an attempt be made to frame a more realistic definition of farm land, one which will exclude those who are not *bona-fide* farmers, and that improvements on farm land in unorganized areas be made taxable, at least in part, for school purposes.

THE UNIVERSITY HILL SCHOOL DISTRICT.

A special case of exemption is found in the University Hill School District. Improvements (in this case largely residences) are not taxed on the University Endowment Lands, although they are estimated to be worth nearly three times as much as the land now taxed for local school purposes. The assessment per teacher, being based on land only, is low and the district receives high per-teacher grants. Also, the district receives the other special aid given to rural school districts. Partly as a result, this area is undertaxed for school purposes relative to similar districts elsewhere. Although the district pays teachers' salaries on the Vancouver scale, its tax rate for schools is only 12 mills on land alone, or about 5½ mills on land and 50 per cent. of improvements.

It is therefore strongly recommended that grants for this district be calculated in the same manner as those for other districts in the Province; that is, on land and 75 per cent. of improvements.

This exhausts the list of discrepancies which have come to the attention of this Commission. If there are other, the principle of uniform treatment should be applied to them also.

TAX RATE FOR THE PROPOSED BASIC OR PROVINCIAL PROGRAMME.

The proposed Provincial programme will cost in the neighbourhood of $8,000,000 per year, and towards its support local taxes should contribute about $3,250,000 annually. The base for the raising of this tax is the total assessment of the Province, as estimated in Table XXXII. The table is based on 1943 statistics for the municipalities* and 1944 figures for the unorganized territories,† these being the latest available at time of writing. In any case, assessments change but little from one year to the next. The assessments given would obviously be changed by the supervision of assessments suggested earlier. It is the writer's opinion, for what it is worth, that the total assessment in the Province would not be revised downward by the supervision. Two other considerations prompt the belief that the totals given are probably conservative. For one thing, personal property is not here included, and while the personal property tax as such should be abolished, some of the assessment should be included under a new definition of improvements for school purposes. The other is that it may be possible to adopt the suggestion that some exemptions from school taxation now extended be removed.

* As in *Municipal Report*, 1943.

† Information furnished by the Surveyor of Taxes, Department of Finance.

TABLE XXXII. ASSESSMENT IN BRITISH COLUMBIA.

	Land.	Improvements.
Municipalities—		
Cities (except Vancouver)	$48,112,000	$93,600,000
Vancouver	111,205,000	200,266,000
District municipalities	52,375,000	112,842,000
Total municipal assessment	$211,692,000	$406,708,000
Unorganized territory—		
Extra-municipal areas—		
Cities	$3,213,000	$3,797,000
Districts	541,000	988,000
Total, extra-municipal	$3,754,000	$4,785,000
In school districts—		
Farm land	$34,039,000	$16,470,000
Improved land	12,050,000	33,200,000
Wild land	1,086,000	.....
Timber land	4,525,000	.....
Coal land " A "	1,193,000	.....
Coal land " B "	116,000	.....
	$53,009,000	$49,670,000
Outside school districts—		
Farm land	$10,782,000	$4,800,000
Improved land	2,800,000	7,800,000
Wild land	1,690,000	.....
Timber land	9,320,000	.....
Coal land " A "	714,000	.....
Coal land " B "	548,000	.....
	$25,854,000	$12,600,000
Total, unorganized territory	$82,617,000	$67,055,000
Total assessment for the Province	$294,309,000	$473,763,000

If land only were to be the measure of local resources, the local tax required would be at the rate of something like 11 mills. If 100 per cent. of improvements were to be included the local rate would be less than 4¼ mills. Let us look at the farm land in school districts in unorganized territory. If improvements were exempt, this land would represent 34 out of 294 millions of dollars or a little over one-ninth of the total assessment in the Province. To the Provincial programme it would therefore contribute, in taxes on itself, about $360,000 annually. If all improvements were included, it would constitute about 50 of the total of 768 millions, about one-fifteenth, and hence would be responsible for only about $220,000 per year.

The fraction of improvements to be taxed is a matter of opinion. However, since municipalities (except Vancouver) are now allowed to tax any fraction of the value of improvements up to 75 per cent., since over one-half of them now tax 50 per cent. or

more of improvements, since improved land in unorganized territory is now taxed at 100 per cent. of its value, and since the inclusion of improvements in this case would benefit farm land, it is assumed for the remainder of this report, that grants are to be arrived at on the basis of a local tax on land and 75 per cent. of improvements. On this basis, a rate of 5 mills would produce a little less than $3,250,000 a year.

All this does not mean that a municipality, for instance, must use land plus 75 per cent. of improvements as a base for its local school taxes. The amount of the local contribution to the Provincial programme will be determined on this basis, but it may raise this amount on any basis it pleases.

MINIMUM TAXES.

Section 63 (3) of the " Public Schools Act " gives to a municipal council the power to fix a minimum property tax for school purposes. It may also direct parents who own no property to pay taxes of at least this amount and up to one-half as much again. Further, it may order that every adult male or female or both who owns no property be similarly treated.

Section 122 (1) gives the same powers to the Board of School Trustees of a rural school district, provided the voters approve, but limits the amount of the minimum property tax to $5 and the amount of the tax payable by non-property-owners to $7.50.

These minimum taxes do not appear to be widely used. Many districts consider them impracticable. However, they do appear to have been imposed with success in some cases.

To the objection that they make the adult son or daughter living at home pay, although his parents may be already heavily taxed for school purposes, the rejoinder may be made that the amount is not likely to be greatly burdensome and, in any case, the statute does not require non-parents to be taxed in this way. The same answer applies to the argument that it is undesirable to tax needy old persons such as pensioners.

Of course, non-property-owners do tend to pay property taxes in rent. But the process of shifting which has this result is not as certain in rural areas, where the minimum taxes are most likely to be imposed, as in urban areas. Moreover, there are some persons, often parents, who live on property not reached by taxes. House-boats, fishing-boats, and Government Experimental Farms are examples. For these reasons, and for the reason that the imposition of minimum taxes is entirely a matter of local option, these sections of the Act are commended to the attention of local bodies.

In rural areas school taxes other than those on property must be collected by local persons. Since this may lead to friction, it has been suggested that they be collected by the Provincial Collectors. As there are many difficulties in the way of such an arrangement, particularly where the Provincial Collector has a large area to cover, no more can be done here than call the suggestion to the attention of the Government.

There does not seem to be any very good reason why rural districts should be limited to a minimum property tax of $5 or a minimum school tax for non-property-owners of $7.50. The amounts may be safely left to local decision, and the Government will therefore be requested to consider the possibility of removing these limits.

RECOMMENDATIONS.

1. That an agency for the supervision and equalization of assessments both within and without the municipalities be established in the Province.

2. That the personal property tax as such be discontinued, but that some of the property concerned remain taxable under a more comprehensive definition of improvements in the " Taxation Act."

3. That the exemptions now extended to coal-mining and other mining property be removed, or, failing this, that special grants be made to the school districts adversely affected by these exemptions.

4. That an attempt be made to frame a more realistic definition of farm land, and that improvements be made taxable, at least in part, for school purposes.

5. That grants to the University Hill School District be calculated on the basis of land plus 75 per cent. of improvements.

6. That grants be such as to require a property tax throughout the Province of 5 mills on land and 75 per cent. of improvements.

7. That consideration be given to the possibility of removing the limits of $5 and $7.50 to the minimum taxes provided for in section 122 (1) of the "Public Schools Act."

CHAPTER VI.

THE GRANT SYSTEM.

THE SALARY GRANT.

Of the $3,173,000 distributed in grants in the school-year 1943–44, over $2,300,000, or about 72 per cent., represented the so-called salary grant, provided for in sections 18 and 19 of the "Public Schools Act." The grant is based on "schedules of standard basic salaries" prepared and authorized by the Council of Public Instruction. The number of teachers in respect of which grant is paid is as prescribed in section 145 of the Act and will receive attention later. When the schedule was first proposed, a fairly comprehensive salary schedule was contemplated. However, the committee appointed to prepare such a schedule failed to agree, and the Government prescribed only these minima:—

For teachers in elementary schools	$780
For teachers in junior high schools, principals of superior schools, nurses, and dentists*	1,100
For teachers in high schools	1,200

In 1933 when these minima came into force, they had some relation to existing conditions.

The grant is also related to local taxable resources, these being defined as the assessed value of land and 75 per cent. of taxable improvements in cities and district municipalities,† and the assessed value of "property" in rural districts. This includes taxable land (including improvements) and personal property. From the time of the institution of this grant until 1944 the 1935 assessments were used. At present salary grants are based on 1943 assessments.

To illustrate the operation of the salary grant let us take the grant for elementary school teachers in a rural district or district municipality. The grant per teacher is the amount of the basic salary less an amount equalling the yield of a tax rate of 1 mill,‡ divided by the number of teachers, thus:—

$$\text{Grant per teacher} = \$780 - \frac{1 \text{ mill} \times \text{assessment}}{\text{number of teachers}}$$

or

Total elementary grant = $780 × number of teachers — product of 1 mill.

Similarly, high school teachers, for whom the basic salary is $1,200 and the required rate is 1¼ mills, draw grant as follows:—

Total high school grant = $1,200 × number of high school teachers — product of 1¼ mills.

Also:

Total junior high school grant = $1,100 × number of junior high school teachers — product of 1 mill.

Hence:

Total salary grant = Elementary teachers × $780
Junior high teachers × 1,100
Senior high teachers × 1,200
minus product of 3¼ mills.

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* Grants for nurses and dentists are now paid by the Health Branch of the Department of the Provincial Secretary.

† Including extra-municipal areas.

‡ In cities the rate is 1¼ mills.

The grant cannot exceed $680, $800, or $900 for elementary, junior high, and high school teacher respectively. The grant for a high school teacher must be at least $25 and $75 more than for a junior high and elementary teacher, respectively, in the same district. The grant for a junior high school teacher must exceed that for an elementary school teacher in the same district by $50.

These provisions may be summarized thus:—

Teacher.	Basic Salary.	Tax Rate deducted.	Maximum Grant.	Minimum Grant.
		Mills.		
High school	$1,200	1¼	$900	Must exceed elementary by $75; junior high by $25.
Junior high Superior school principal	1,100	1	800	Must exceed elementary by $50.
Elementary school (cities)	780	1¼	680	$305.
Elementary school (non-city)	780	1	680	$305.

Before pointing out the many defects of this grant scheme, we should emphasize that the principle behind it is sound and should be retained. This principle is to make available everywhere in the Province a standard or fixed or basic school programme at a uniform local tax rate. Every district levies a tax of 1 mill* for its elementary school. The Government grants to each district the difference between the yield of this 1 mill and $780. Thus, every district is guaranteed $780 per teacher by imposing on itself a tax of 1 mill. The $780 is therefore equalized or made everywhere available on the basis of a uniform tax rate.

There are, of course, few details of the scheme which can not be criticized, and criticized severely, but the fundamental idea or principle is sound.

The local tax required is the exact equivalent of a Provincial tax on property for school purposes. The Government might grant to a district $780 for each of its elementary school teachers. For a number of reasons, the chief of which is the limited sum of money it has available, it does not do so, but grants instead the difference between $780 and the local yield of a 1-mill tax. The result is the same as if the Government granted the $780 and itself levied the tax.†

An examination of this method of apportioning grants shows that it is decidedly more beneficial to the poor than to the wealthy school district if the total Government funds for grants are limited. Suppose that the Government has $1,000,000 to be used for the support of 1,000 class-rooms, and that circumstances are such that an adequate schooling cannot be provided for less than $1,500 per class-room. Let us compare a district with an assessment of $25,000 per teacher with another of assessment of $250,000 per teacher.

One method of distributing the $1,000,000 would be to allow $1,000 to each of the 1,000 teachers. The poor district in this case would have to levy 20 mills to raise the extra $500 necessary, while the rich one would need to levy only 2 mills.

If the grant were $1,500 per room less the product of 4 mills, the poor district would receive $1,400 and the rich one $500. Each upon levying 4 mills would be able to spend $1,500 per room.

Of course, if there were no limit to the Government's money for grants, it could give each district $1,500, and no local tax would be necessary. But if it cannot do this, a grant based on the subtraction of a local tax can distribute the total grant money so as to obtain the maximum equalization possible.

* 1¼ mills in cities.

† Except that in a few rural districts the 1 mill would raise more than $780 per teacher.

DEFECTS OF THE SALARY GRANT.

SALARY COSTS.

One of the most serious criticisms of the salary grants is the fact that the basic salaries prescribed are very far below the salaries actually paid in recent years. Most large school districts pay their teachers according to schedules which allot to even the beginning teacher salaries well in excess of those prescribed, and which frequently provide for maxima for experienced teachers twice as high as these salaries fixed for grant. Indeed the Government has itself fixed new minimum salaries for rural districts* at a much higher level than these, and has provided "Supplementary Aid" to enable these districts to pay them. Now except for the assistance of the Supplementary Aid and the Supplementary Salary Grants, both described below, local resources must bear the whole cost of salaries beyond the minima. This burden is spread so unevenly and has been increasing so steadily that it has become one of the major causes of the present intense dissatisfaction.

OTHER CURRENT EXPENSES.

The bulk of the expense of a school system arises in the payment of teachers and the necessity of making other expenditures closely connected with the provision of instruction. Some millions of dollars must be spent each year in the schools of our Province on heating, lighting, cleaning, supplies, etc. There are only few qualifications necessary to the statement that these items of costs receive no consideration in the grant system. They are quite unequalized, bearing with greatly differing weights on local resources, so that some localities must impose high tax rates in order to provide even the most meagre of services, while others have little difficulty in making a fairly rich provision. Equalization can hardly be hoped for from a grant system which takes no account of these unavoidable expenditures.

MAXIMUM GRANTS.

It will be recalled that the yearly grant for an elementary school teacher in a non-city school is $780 minus the product of a 1-mill tax, the maximum grant being $680. For example:—

(1) Assessment per Teacher.	(2) Standard Salary.	(3) Product per Teacher of One-mill Tax.	Difference (2)-(3).	Grant.
$300,000	$780	$300	$480	$480
200,000	780	200	580	580
100,000	780	100	680	680
90,000	780	90	690	680
50,000	780	50	730	680
10,000	780	10	770	680

In other words, all districts with assessment below $100,000 per elementary school teacher are treated alike for grant purposes.† When we couple this with the fact that four-fifths of rural one-room districts have assessments below $100,000,‡ it is easily seen why these grants fail to equalize even the impossibly low sum of $780 per elementary school teacher. The high school maximum of $900 and the junior high school maximum of $800 have the result of treating alike all districts with assessments below

* To go into effect September, 1945.

† Or $80,000 per teacher in cities.

‡ *See* Table XXVII., Chapter III.

$240,000 per high school teacher and $300,000 per junior high school teacher. Tables XXXIII., XXXIV., and XXXV. show the distribution of the salary grants in 1943–44. The Supplementary Aid and Supplementary Salary Grants have the effect of raising the maxima, particularly in rural districts, where they are most oppressive. However, the tables indicate that maxima, unless very generous, cannot fail to affect many poor districts adversely.

From the foregoing discussion the conclusion emerges that there is no room for maxima in a system of equalization grants.

MINIMUM GRANTS.

The minimum grant for an elementary school teacher is $305. The minimum grants for the high school teachers and for junior high school teachers or principals of superior schools are respectively $75 and $50 more than the elementary grants in the same district. That is, if the grant for an elementary school teacher is the minimum of $305, the high and junior high minima are $355 and $380. If the elementary grant

TABLE XXXIII. SALARY GRANTS FOR ELEMENTARY SCHOOL TEACHERS, 1943–44.

Grants.	Number of Districts.		
	Rural.	Cities.	Districts.
$680 (maximum)	331	6	1
650–$679	64	1	4
600– 649	45	6	7
550– 599	39	8	4
500– 549	10	7	6
450– 499	10	3	-----
400– 449	8	-----	-----
350– 399	3	-----	1
306– 349	2	1	1
305 (minimum)	15	1	-----
Totals	527	33	24
Medians	680	578	600

TABLE XXXIV. SALARY GRANTS FOR JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL TEACHERS, 1943–44.

Grants.	Number of Districts.		
	Rural.	Cities.	Districts.
$800 (maximum)	4	4	2
750–$799	1	1	2
700– 749	-----	2	-----
650– 699	-----	3	1
600– 649	-----	3	1
550– 549	-----	2	3
500– 549	1	-----	-----
450– 499	1	-----	-----
400– 449	-----	-----	-----
360– 399	-----	1	-----
355 (minimum)	2	1	-----
Totals	9	17*	9
Medians	-----	625	625

* One city in which the junior high school was not established until July, 1943, was omitted.

TABLE XXXV. SALARY GRANTS FOR HIGH SCHOOL TEACHERS, 1943–44.

Grants.	Number of Districts.		
	Rural.	Cities.	Districts.
$900 (maximum)	22	5	-----
850–$899	6	5	-----
800– 849	6	5	4
750– 799	2	2	1
700– 749	1	6	3
650– 699	3	2	4
600– 649	2	4	3
550– 599	2	1	1
500– 549	1	-----	-----
450– 499	-----	-----	-----
400– 449	-----	-----	1
381– 399	-----	1	-----
380 (minimum)	5	1	-----
Totals	50	32	17
Medians	875	775	694

is some larger sum (for example, $500) the high and junior high minima are correspondingly increased ($550 and $575). The minima are thus of two kinds: one absolute or irrespective of local wealth, and one relative or tied up with the elementary grant. Let us deal with these separately.

Reference to Tables XXXIII., XXXIV., and XXXV. shows that there are not very many districts in the Province earning only the minimum grants, but surely it is unjust to subsidize unnecessarily even these few. There are school districts in British Columbia with large enough assessments to support their schools on a local tax of only 1, 2, or 3 mills. Such districts should receive no school aid whatever.

RELATIVE MINIMA AND MULTIPLE DEDUCTIONS.

The relative minima are made necessary by what may be called for convenience the "multiple deductions." The elementary grant is based on the yield of a 1-mill tax. The junior high grant is based on the yield of an additional mill, and that for high school teachers on the yield of a further 1¼ mills. One result is that as the assessment per high or junior high school class-room is usually much more than that per elementary school class-room, the high or junior high grant per teacher would often be less than that per elementary teacher, unless some kind of check were imposed.

If a district with $600,000 employs three elementary school teachers and one superior school principal, its grant for each elementary teacher will be $780 less $200 or $580. Its grant for the superior school principal would be $1,100 less $600 or only $500, in spite of the fact that the superior school principal draws a high salary. The statute therefore lays down that the superior school principal grant shall be $50 more than the elementary grant, or $630 in this case.

The result of these rules for relative minima is to tie the high, junior high, and superior grants to the elementary grants in about half the localities which operate more than one type of school. Such provisions are certainly necessary in the present grant system.

The fact that a separate tax deduction must be made for each type of school may also result in an actual decrease of grant in certain cases. If the school district taken as an example above operated four elementary class-rooms, grants per teacher would be $780 less $150 which is $630, or $2,520 all told. If it operated three elementary and

one superior room, it would receive $630 and 3 × $580, or a total of $2,370. Thus it would receive less grant although it was put to more expense and had the same tax resources.

The problem raised by this double or triple deduction is fundamental. The deduction of the product of a local tax is exactly equivalent to the imposition of a Provincial tax on local property. Should the Province, through its grant system, impose an extra tax on communities which maintain high schools or junior and senior high schools or superior schools in addition to that imposed for elementary schools?

There is something to be said for this extra deduction of local tax. The provision of extra facilities does confer an extra benefit on the local community, and it may be said that it is proper that the Province should require an extra local contribution to help pay for them.

The logical implications of this proposition are, however, quite unacceptable. It would imply that there should be no Provincial grants whatever for secondary schools. It would imply that there should be no school taxation of property outside a school district. Further it should be pointed out that localities maintaining secondary schools already bear a local tax, sometimes heavy, for these schools.

For such reasons as these the grant arrangements proposed in this report provide for only one local tax to help support the Provincial programme. All property in the Province will pay this tax. The Government through its grants will supplement the yield of this tax to an extent sufficient to provide a common programme of schooling, freely available to all. If, for one of a number of reasons, a pupil attends school in a community in which he does not reside or in which his parents do not own property, no tuition fees will be payable on his account so long as his schooling is at the level of the common programme. If it is above the level, he will be liable only for his share of the excess.

TREATMENT OF JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOLS.

When the salary grant was first established, it discriminated against communities operating junior high schools. Since these schools include two grades which are taught in the elementary schools of the traditional system, their introduction reduces the number of elementary school teachers, and therefore usually the grant per teacher. Of course, the grant per junior high school teacher is greater than that per elementary school teacher, but since the number of junior high school teachers is less than the number of elementary school teachers, the gain falls short of offsetting the loss. As a result of a recommendation in the King Report* the " Public Schools Act " was amended to allow the number of elementary teachers for grant purposes to include two-thirds of the junior high school teachers of the same district.

The effect of this amendment cannot be foreseen in general as it depends on the distribution of teachers among the grades, the application of the minima and maxima, and the amount of the extra tax deduction for junior high schools. However, a study of particular cases indicates that the amendment has achieved the purpose for which it was intended; that is, that the total grant for a district operating junior high schools is roughly the same as what it would receive if it maintained only elementary and high schools.

The distinction between junior and senior high schools is in many cases quite artificial anyhow. The two are frequently under one roof and one administration. Their time-tables and staffs are often merged, so that some teachers work now in one, now in the other. It is not uncommon for a teacher whose work is entirely in the upper grades to be designated as a junior high teacher for grant purposes.

It might be wise to regard the two institutions if combined as one, avoiding the cumbersome title of junior-senior high school by using " secondary school."

* H. B. King, School Finance in British Columbia, pp. 23–24.

NUMBER OF TEACHERS ALLOWED.

A system which apportions grants on the number of teachers employed or classrooms operated must regulate the number of teachers to be allowed for certain numbers of students, else some districts will employ more teachers than others for a given number of students, and will therefore receive unfairly large grants. Section 145 of the "Public Schools Act" prescribes the numbers of teachers for grant purposes as follows:—

	Pupils in Regular Attendance.	Teachers allowed for Grant Purposes.
Elementary schools	1–35	1
	36–80	2
	Over 80	One for each 40 or fraction of 40
Other schools (superior, junior high, high)	1–25	1
	26–50	2
	51–80	3
	80–120	4
	Over 120	One for each 30 or fraction of 30

Teachers of home economics and industrial arts are added to those allowed under the above scheme, and the Department also adds the principals of large schools.

In practice many classes are larger than those here laid down, because of the shortage of teachers, limited accommodation, small classes in optional subjects, and inadequate financial resources. There can be no question that the Department is on solid ground in favouring a reduction in class size. At present, however, neither buildings nor the supply of teachers available is sufficient to enable the school system of the Province to embark on an extensive programme of this nature. The present regulations do embarrass some small elementary schools, particularly those in isolated places. It is very difficult to obtain a teacher to handle all eight grades for thirty-five pupils, or two teachers to teach between them all the grades in a school of eighty youngsters. It will therefore be recommended that, as a first step preliminary to a later programme for the reduction of class size, the number of teachers allowed for grant purposes in elementary schools be as follows:—

Pupils.	Teachers.
1– 25	1
26– 75	2
76–120	3
Over 120	One for each 40 pupils or fraction of that number

NON-RESIDENT PUPILS AND THE AMOUNT OF LOCAL ASSESSMENT.

There are a few places in the Province where a school district operates no schools or no secondary schools of its own, but sends all of its pupils or all of its senior pupils to a neighbouring district and pays fees for their tuition. This very sensible arrangement sometimes causes an unfair apportionment of grants. The district which receives the pupils may require extra staff to handle them. Hence its assessment per teacher is less and its grant per teacher is more than it would be if it handled only its own children. In other words, it may appear for grant purposes to be poorer than in fact it is.

There is no convenient way out of the problem thus presented. If we consider combining the assessments of the two districts for grant calculation, we are at once

faced with facts that some districts send their pupils to more than one outside district, and that some send only their senior pupils away for tuition. Again the receiving district cannot say what its assessment per teacher really is, for it cannot determine with any exactness which of its teachers are employed for the teaching of non-resident pupils.

The difficulty will be aggravated if the idea of a standard Provincial programme is accepted, and is one of the reasons—although not of course by any means the only or most important one—why all parts of the Province should as far as possible belong to a school district with schools in operation.

ASSESSMENT.

It is not necessary here to elaborate further on the statement of Chapter V. that any system of equalization grants cannot be permanently satisfactory without a Provincial equalization of assessments.

SUPPLEMENTARY AID RE TEACHERS' SALARIES IN RURAL SCHOOL DISTRICTS.

In the fiscal year 1943–44 the sum of $180,000 was appropriated to enable rural school districts to pay increased salaries. The Province prescribed a scale for rural teachers which commenced at $840 and increased by $60 per year to a maximum of $1,140. The grant was apportioned as follows:—

On assessment:

Assessment per Teacher.	Grant per Teacher.
$40,000 or less	$195
40,001–$80,000	175
80,000–120,000	155
120,001–160,000	135
160,001–200,000	115
200,001–240,000	95
240,001–280,000	75
280,001–320,000	55
Over $320,000	*Nil*

On tax rate:

Tax Rate for School Purposes (Mills).	Grant per Teacher.
8– 9.99	10
10–11.99	20
12–13.99	30
14–15.99	40
16–17.99	50
18–19.99	60

And on each addition of 2 mills, a further grant of $10 per teacher.

The maximum supplementary aid was set at $225 per teacher.

Under these provisions well over one-half the rural schools receive grants per teacher of $175 or more, and about three-quarters draw grants per teacher of over $150.

An additional $45,000 is to be apportioned in 1945–46 to enable rural school boards to pay at least the following salaries:—

Elementary school teachers not holding permanent first-class certificates	$1,100
Elementary school teachers holding permanent first-class certificates	1,200
Junior high school teachers and principals of superior schools	1,400
High school teachers	1,500

This supplementary aid has been of great benefit to our rural schools. It has helped where help was most needed, and has done much to mitigate the oppressiveness of the maxima in the salary grant. It is, of course, a temporary measure only, and should be unnecessary in a reorganized system of school finance.

SUPPLEMENTARY SALARY GRANTS.

For the fiscal year 1944–45 the amount of $344,000 was appropriated for supplementary salary grants. This appropriation was distributed to the districts on the basis of 13.5 per cent. of the regular salary grants for the year. The grant is to be repeated during 1945–46.

This aid, while undoubtedly beneficial, suffers from the same defects as the salary grants upon which it is based, and hence it is to be regarded as an important temporary measure.

SPECIAL ASSISTANCE IN THE COST OF EDUCATION.

In each of the fiscal years 1942–43 to 1945–46 the sum of $450,000 has been set aside as a "Special Assistance in the Cost of Education." This has been distributed as a fraction of the salaries paid in a chosen base month as follows:—

1942–43: 70 per cent. of the salaries paid in January, 1942, or approximately 7 per cent, of the salary cost in the school-year 1941–42.

1943–44: 70 per cent. of the salaries paid in February, 1943, or approximately 7 per cent. of the salary cost in the school-year 1942–43.

1944–45: 66⅔ per cent. of the salaries paid in February, 1944, or approximately 6⅔ per cent. of the salary cost in the school-year 1943–44.

1945–46: 60 per cent. of the salaries paid in February, 1945, or approximately 6 per cent. of the salary costs in the school-year 1944–45.

The opinion is widespread that this special assistance was intended to compensate the school districts for the 7 per cent. of teachers' salaries which they were required to pay towards pensions by the revision which became operative about the time these grants were introduced. However, there is no point in dwelling at length on a subject which can arouse so much undesirable acrimony. The simple fact is that this payment towards pensions is exactly the kind of payment which the Provincial Government itself should bear. It is in no way controllable locally, being fixed by statute, and there is no reason why it should be a charge on local revenues. It will therefore be recommended that special assistance as such disappear and that the Government assume the pension payments now borne by the local school districts.

Two points should be made here. The first is that the grants recommended in this report are based on a standard local tax. If the grant were increased the local rate could be lowered. The fact that the Government carries the load of pension payments means that it will pay a smaller amount in grants and that the tax rate required is slightly higher than would otherwise have been necessary.

The second is that much time, effort, and confusion will be saved if the pension payments are transferred from the school districts to the Provincial Government. Instead of the Government calculating hundreds of payments and issuing hundreds of cheques to local boards, and these boards calculating in turn other hundreds of payments and sending hundreds of cheques to the Superannuation Commission, the Government will merely transfer from time to time to the credit of the Commission amounts to cover the required payments.

THE PLAN PROPOSED FOR THE DISTRIBUTION OF GENERAL AID.

The Salary Grants, Supplementary Salary Grants, Supplementary Aid *re* Teachers' Salaries in Rural School Districts, and the Special Assistance in the Cost of Education

are, so to speak, "general" grants. They absorb the great bulk of the Government's grant money and are given for the general day-to-day costs of operating schools. It is, therefore, appropriate here to discuss the arrangements which it is recommended should replace them.

THE IMPERFECTIONS OF PERCENTAGE GRANTS.

A fairly common suggestion to this Commission was that the Province bear some fraction over half of the total cost, but that the percentage chosen should vary from district to district, according to local resources. It has already been demonstrated that even the present grants amount to 80 or 90 per cent. of total expenditure in some cases, and if the recommendations of this Commission are adopted, the grants received by very poor districts will be increased rather than decreased. But that is a very different thing from granting to poor districts 80 and 90 per cent. of local expenditures, however great these may be. If the residents knew that for every dollar they raised the Government would contribute nine, all constraints leading to the prudent handling of public money would be removed. Even if the percentage granted were smaller, say 30 or 40 per cent., the temptation to increase expenditure would be indefensibly great in wealthy districts. Even without this spur, some districts now spend on a level much higher than is possible for the Province as a whole. It is quite possible that these districts should receive 30 or 40 per cent. of the expenditure which they now make or even of those they are likely to make in future, but that is not to say that the Province should be asked to underwrite expenditures incurred by a district, whatever these may be.

The Government could, of course, fix standards of cost and rule that expenditure to draw grant must not exceed certain amounts per pupil or per teacher. However, if it is possible to arrive at cost standards which the Province considers fair and reasonable, they might better be supported by equalization grants, thus making them generally available regardless of local wealth.

For these reasons this survey rejects the idea that all or even most Provincial aid should be given through percentage grants. Nevertheless, this kind of grant should have a place in our grant system. When an expenditure is made by some districts but not all, when it is made not regularly but infrequently, or when the circumstances which govern it vary so widely that cost standards cannot be arrived at, grants must be on a percentage-of-expenditure basis. Even then the percentage granted should be not unduly high, and the expenditures should be carefully scrutinized before being accepted for grant.

MAIN ITEMS OF EXPENDITURE.

The main items of cost in our school system are as follows:—

		Approximate Expenditure in School-year 1943–44.
(*a.*)	General administration of the system—Minister's and General Office; Text-book Branch; Correspondence Schools; Industrial Education Office; Inspection; Normal Schools; School for the Deaf and the Blind; Examination, curriculum revision, summer school, etc.	$510,000
(*b.*)	Contribution to Teachers' Pensions Fund	470,000
(*c.*)	Teachers' salaries	6,710,000
(*d.*)	Other current expenditures (by School Boards), including night-schools	2,733,000
(*e.*)	Debt charges (by districts)	911,000
(*f.*)	School buildings (grants)	40,000
(*g.*)	Transportation	296,000
	Total	$11,670,000

The Provincial Government now carries (*a*) and should carry (*b*).* Items (*e*) and (*f*) are reserved for later reference. The continuous heavy expenditures occur under (*c*) and (*d*), and to these let us now direct our attention.

A PROVINCIAL OR BASIC PROGRAMME OR ALLOWANCE.

The grant system should equalize, or make possible at a fixed tax rate, a large proportion of the expenditures under these two headings. In other words, a basic or Provincial programme which includes an allowance for salaries and one for other current expenditures should be established, and the grant to each school district should be the cost of this basic programme in the district less the amount which would be raised by a tax of 5 mills on its land and 75 per cent. of its improvements.

NECESSITY OF A PROVINCIAL SALARY SCHEDULE.

Table XXXVI. shows that twenty-six† of the thirty-three cities and seventeen of the twenty-four district municipalities operating schools in 1944–45 paid their teachers according to salary schedules. Moreover, most of those which did not were very small, so that they employed a total of only 100 teachers. Since these figures were compiled schedules have been agreed to by one city and two district municipalities (as well as the newly consolidated district of Salmon Arm). This will leave only the cities of Enderby, Greenwood, Merritt, Port Moody, and Slocan, and the district municipalities of Coldstream, North Cowichan, Peachland, and Pitt Meadows, employing a total of forty-five school teachers, without salary schedules for the forthcoming school-year. It is clear, therefore, that the principle of salary schedules is accepted in the municipalities.

TABLE XXXVI. TEACHERS' SALARY SCHEDULES IN BRITISH COLUMBIA, JUNE, 1945.

(Municipal Districts only.)

	Having Schedules.		Not having Schedules.		Total.	
	No. of Districts.	No. of Teachers.	No. of Districts.	No. of Teachers.	No. of Districts.	No. of Teachers.
Cities	26	2,234	7	49	33	2,283
District municipalities	17	870	7	57	24	927
Totals	43	3,104	14	106	57	3,210

Schedules are in operation in many of the larger rural school districts. However, by far the larger number of these districts are too small for an adequate schedule. Under the existing circumstances it requires even in the average district about 1 mill on the tax rate to provide $50-increments for its staff. In many districts a much higher rate would be required. The median difference between minimum and maximum salaries on schedules in operation in municipalities is $675 in the elementary schools. It is obvious, therefore, that it is completely beyond the financial ability of the small rural district to pay increments to its teachers in the same amounts as do municipal districts. The same condition is noted in some of the smaller municipalities. Surely one effect of our recommendations should be to make it possible for these districts to offer teachers something like the inducements now offered by municipal school districts.

* If the Special Assistance grants are considered as applicable to these payments, it already carries almost all of (*b*).

† Port Coquitlam has no schedule for its two high school teachers.

In short, grants for salaries should take account of the fact that salaries do vary with experience and qualifications, and we can hardly quarrel with this, as it is in harmony with all modern tendencies in the remuneration of public servants.

Nevertheless, let it be admitted frankly that this Commission would gladly avoid a Provincial salary schedule if it could conscientiously do so. In its opinion, however, such a schedule must be recommended, not necessarily because it is desirable in itself, but because a sound system of school finance for the Province cannot be constructed otherwise.

If the typical school district in British Columbia could employ a large number of teachers, a salary allowance on a per-pupil basis might be feasible. If, for example, the Province were willing to accept for grant calculation a level of salaries which would average, say, $40 per elementary pupil and $60 per secondary pupil, an allowance of these amounts to a district employing 200 teachers would be sound enough for all practical purposes. Such a district would ordinarily have on its staff teachers at several different levels of experience, so that its teaching body was reasonably representative of that of the whole Province. Grants of the amounts stated would therefore probably give the district about the amount which the Province would be willing to allow for that particular group of teachers.

Consider now a district with only a few teachers. Grants of $40 and $60 per pupil might easily produce salaries much more or much less than what would be fair for the teachers concerned. And this is the typical case. Even the rather drastic reorganization of school districts proposed in the next chapter will leave about three-quarters of the districts employing fewer than fifty teachers each, and only one, Vancouver, with over 200. Where the number of teachers per district is smallish, the salary allowance should vary with the experience of teachers, which is to say that a Provincial salary scale is desirable.

PURPOSE OF THE SCALE PROPOSED.

The fundamental purpose of the schedule proposed must be to provide for an equitable distribution of school costs. Its primary purpose is not to ensure that the teachers of the Province are rewarded adequately. It can be argued with cogency that even the highest scale in the Province to-day—that of Vancouver—is inadequate from some points of view. It can also be argued with equal cogency that the payment of salaries everywhere according to this scale is beyond the means of the Province. Such arguments, although interesting and important, are not entered into here, because they do not fall within the scope of this inquiry, which is empowered to make recommendations concerning the distribution of costs, rather than what the expenditures should be.

Nevertheless, the distribution of costs cannot be completely dissociated from their amount. Any increase in Government grants is likely to result in increased expenditures by the local districts. Moreover, if the Provincial salary scale were grossly inadequate, many districts would have to supplement it greatly, so that inequality in tax rates would be nearly as great and inequality in local resources nearly as important as ever. Again, a Province-wide scale will obviously result in greater expenditure on salaries, unless it is very low indeed.

It follows that the salary scales at present in use furnish an important source of guidance in the formulation of a Provincial scale.

EQUAL PAY OF MEN AND WOMEN.

There is in the Province a heated controversy as to whether or not women should receive the same pay as men for work on the same level. Since strong arguments support both sides of this question, an answer satisfying to all has not yet been formulated. However, the controversy must be regarded as irrelevant as far as the

construction of a Provincial salary schedule is concerned. Public opinion in favour of equal pay for men and women is so strong that it would not be reasonable to ask the Provincial Government to enter the arena against it.

The School Boards should, of course, continue to be perfectly free to adopt staffing and salary policies which seem proper to them.

ZONING.

A number of the best briefs presented at the hearings, including the excellent submission of the British Columbia School Trustees' Association, suggested a Provincial salary scale adjusted according to zones; that is, a scale which would pay different salaries in different parts of the Province. It is suggested later that a modest bonus might well be paid to the teachers in the very isolated portions of the Province. Beyond that, it is regretted that it is not possible to follow this particular suggestion. If equalization is to rule our system of school finance, it would be illogical for the Province to subsidize higher salary scales in the larger cities than elsewhere. Indeed, if zoning were adopted, a good case could be made out for placing these cities in the lowest rather than the highest zone.

CREDIT FOR EXPERIENCE.

It is the view of this inquiry that a Province-wide schedule should allow full credit for experience gained anywhere in the Province. The less desirable places in which to work would be greatly handicapped if experience gained in these localities were not allowed to count elsewhere. Table XXXVII. confirms the common belief of a flow of experienced teachers towards the municipalities. In part this is for practical purposes unavoidable, as it is part of the general movement of workers from country to city. It is probable that even a high salary differential would not have arrested or reversed this movement. Certainly, however, a Provincial salary scale should encourage teachers to remain in rural districts by allowing them to carry their experience with them when they move.

TABLE XXXVII. EXPERIENCE OF TEACHERS IN BRITISH COLUMBIA.
(On the basis of data available.)

Elementary School Teachers. (No. of Years.)	City.	District.	Rural.	Total.
Less than 1	62	77	282	421
1	47	63	144	254
2	60	59	73	192
3	65	37	51	153
4	37	16	34	87
5	39	19	34	92
6	46	27	39	112
7	36	19	24	79
8	40	15	22	77
9	33	6	17	56
10	25	13	18	56
11	20	13	11	44
12	36	8	24	68
13	30	12	17	59
14	37	10	15	62
15	50	12	7	69
16	47	16	9	72
17	35	16	7	58
18	40	11	8	59
19	36	10	6	52
20 or more	398	90	47	535
Totals	1,219	549	889	2,657
Medians	14.9	6.1	3.9	7.2

A REVIEW OF PRESENT PRACTICES.

As has been said earlier the construction of a schedule which has as its chief purpose the equitable distribution of costs must pay great attention to the schedules at present in use. Let us look at these here, for simplicity's sake confining our attention to the municipalities, where most of the scales are found, and where the great bulk of the salary cost is incurred. In calling attention to Table XXXVIII., which deals with minimum salaries, we must bear in mind that partly because of an effort to meet the new minima fixed by the Government ($1,100*, $1,400, $1,500, for elementary, junior high, and senior high school teachers respectively), many of the scales carrying the lowest minima are either now being revised or promise to be revised within the coming school-year. If it is remembered that one aim of a Provincial scale must be to be characteristic of a fairly large number of districts and to provide for the bulk of salary costs in many others, the conclusion that the Provincial minima might well be $1,000, $1,200, and $1,300 seems reasonable.

Table XXXIX. deals with maxima. In spite of the great range, maxima round $1,650, $2,000, and $2,150 seems defensible. The junior high maxima lose some of their significance because many teachers in the systems affected are promoted to senior high when they reach or approach the junior high maxima.†

TABLE XXXVIII. MINIMUM SALARIES‡ IN MUNICIPAL SCHOOL DISTRICT SCHEDULES, 1944–45.

Minimum Salary.	Elementary.		Junior High.		High.	
	No. of Districts.	No. of Teachers.§	No. of Districts.	No. of Teachers.§	No. of Districts.	No. of Teachers.§
No schedule	14	75	2	5	10	26
Less than $1,000	11	440	----	------	----	------
$1,000–$1,049	20	503	----	------	----	------
1,050– 1,099	2	18	----	------	----	------
1,100– 1,149	5	826	6	134	----	------
1,150– 1,199	----	------	1	15	----	------
1,200– 1,249	5	47	5	72	5	111
1,250– 1,299	----	------	----	------	1	15
1,300– 1,349	----	------	6	94	15	158
1,350– 1,399	----	------	1	15	1	3
1,400– 1,449	----	------	2	14	7	66
1,450– 1,499	----	------	2	21	1	5
1,500– 1,549	----	------	3	178	7	348
1,550– 1,599	----	------	----	------	1	12
1,700– 1,749	----	------	----	------	1	9
Totals	57	1,909	28	548	49	753
Medians (by districts)	$1,026		$1,308		$1,345	

* $1,200 for teachers with permanent first-class certificate.

† Many of the recently negotiated schedules make no distinction between junior and senior high school teachers.

‡ Where the minimum for women is below that for men, the former is taken.

§ These are, of course, not the number of teachers at the salaries stated, but the number on the schedules which have these minima.

TABLE XXXIX. MAXIMUM* SALARIES IN MUNICIPAL SCHOOL DISTRICT SCHEDULES, 1944–45.

Maximum Salary.	Elementary.		Junior High.		High.	
	No. of Districts.	No. of Teachers.†	No. of Districts.	No. of Teachers.†	No. of Districts.	No. of Teachers.†
No schedule	14	75	2	5	10	26
$1,300–$1,349	1	8	----	-----	----	-----
1,500– 1,549	2	50	----	-----	----	-----
1,550– 1,599	----	-----	----	-----	----	-----
1,600– 1,649	19	490	1	8	----	-----
1,650– 1,699	2	26	----	-----	----	-----
1,700– 1,749	2	30	----	-----	----	-----
1,750– 1,799	2	21	----	-----	----	-----
1,800– 1,849	2	58	2	36	1	5
1,850– 1,899	2	30	5	49	----	-----
1,900– 1,949	6	88	1	27	2	6
1,950– 1,999	1	109	----	-----	1	7
2,000– 2,049	2	59	2	28	9	84
2,050– 2,099	----	-----	----	-----	----	-----
2,100– 2,149	----	-----	1	7	1	3
2,150– 2,199	1	102	3	49	6	55
2,200– 2,249	----	-----	----	-----	1	5
2,250– 2,299	----	-----	2	26	----	-----
2,300– 2,349	----	-----	1	6	1	4
2,350– 2,399	----	-----	1	21	----	-----
2,400– 2,449	----	-----	2	32	5	49
2,450– 2,499	----	-----	----	-----	----	-----
2,500– 2,549	1	763	2	22	4	33
2,550– 2,599	----	-----	----	-----	2	74
2,600– 2,649	----	-----	2	73	2	21
2,650– 2,699	----	-----	----	-----	----	-----
2,700– 2,759	----	-----	1	159	----	-----
2,800– 2,899	----	-----	----	-----	1	18
2,900– 2,999	----	-----	----	-----	1	34
3,000– 3,099	----	-----	----	-----	----	-----
3,100– 3,199	----	-----	----	-----	1	33
3,600– 3,699	----	-----	----	-----	1	296
Totals	57	1,909	28	548	49	753
Medians (by districts)	$1,637		$2,166		$2,196	

* When all maximum salaries for men exceed those for women, only the former are recorded here. In the few cases where extra allowances are made for married men or for teachers with dependents, the extra allowances are neglected. So too are payments for special qualifications and cost-of-living bonus.

† Not the number of teachers at this salary, but the number on schedules with these maxima.

Tables XL. and XLI. show the ranges and numbers of increments in the schedules under review.

TABLE XL. RANGE BETWEEN MINIMUM AND MAXIMUM IN SALARY SCHEDULES OF MUNICIPAL SCHOOL DISTRICTS.

Range.	Elementary.	Junior High.	High.
$400– $499	2	1	1
500– 599	6	1	1
600– 699	20	6	7
700– 799	7	2	4
800– 899	4	5	10
900– 999	1	4	3
1,000–1,099	2	2	7
1,100–1,199	----	2	1
1,200–1,299	----	----	1
1,300–1,399	----	2	1
1,400–1,499	1	----	1
1,500–1,599	----	----	1
1,600–1,699	----	1	----
2,100–2,199	----	----	1
Totals	43	26	39
Medians	$675	$860	$865

TABLE XLI. NUMBER OF INCREMENTS IN SALARY SCHEDULES OF MUNICIPAL SCHOOL DISTRICTS.

No. of Increments.	Elementary.	Junior High.	High.
6	2	1	1
7	7	1	----
8	8	----	5
9	5	5	3
10	7	4	5
11	6	2	----
12	5	6	14
13	----	1	----
14	2	2	5
15	----	2	4
16	----	----	----
17	1	----	----
20	----	2	1
21	----	----	1
Totals	43	26	39
Medians	9.4	11.5	12.1
Average increment*	$71.81	$74.78	$71.48

* Range divided by number of increments.

THE SCHEDULE PROPOSED.

The following Provincial salary schedule is suggested:—

SUMMARY.

	Elementary.	Junior High.	High.
Minimum	$1,000	$1,200	$1,300
Range	650	810	870
Maximum	1,650*	2,010	2,170
No. of increments	9	11	12
Average increment	72.22	73.63	72.50
Size of increments	1× 50 3×100 5× 60	1× 50 4×100 6× 60	1× 50 4×100 7× 60

* Reached only by teachers holding first-class or higher certificates.

The Schedule.

Years of Experience.	Year of Teaching.	ELEMENTARY.	JUNIOR HIGH.	HIGH.
		Second-class or Higher Certificate.	Academic A or B Certificate or Equivalent.	Academic A Certificate or Equivalent.
Interim certificate—				
0	1st	$1,000	$1,200	$1,300
1	2nd	1,050	1,250	1,350
Permanent certificate—				
2	3rd	1,150	1,350	1,450
3	4th	1,250	1,450	1,550
4	5th	1,350	1,550	1,650
5	6th	1,410	1,650	1,750
6	7th	1,470	1,710	1,810
		1st Class or Higher.		
7	8th	1,530	1,770	1,870
8	9th	1,590	1,830	1,930
9	10th	1,650	1,890	1,990
10	11th	.....	1,950	2,050
11	12th	.....	2,010	2,110
12 or more	13th	.....	.....	2,170

NOTES.

1. Grants for teachers holding temporary or third-class certificates to be the minima only.

2. Maximum grant for teachers holding second-class certificates in the elementary school to be based on a salary of $1,470.

3. Teacher whose interim certificate is not made permanent after two years of experience to proceed no further on the scale until a permanent certificate is isssued to him. This should apply only to the first certificate; e.g., the holder of a permanent first-class certificate should not necessarily start at the high school minimum if his Academic A certificate is interim.

4. Specialist certificates and other qualifications to be equated to the general certificates.

5. Inspectors to have the power to withhold increments. It is hoped that Inspectors will exercise this power unhesitatingly when the circumstances justify it.

6. Policies regarding teachers who transfer from one type of school to another to be formulated.

7. Grants for principals of superior schools to be calculated on the elementary-school scale plus a bonus.

8. For purposes of grant calculation, in the remainder of this chapter teachers are to be assigned either to the salaries to which their experience, qualifications, and positions entitle them, or to the salary next above that received during the preceding school-year, whichever is lower. However, it is recognized that this procedure may cause injustice where existing scales are low.

ALLOWANCE FOR PRINCIPALS AND OTHER POSTS OF SPECIAL RESPONSIBILITY.

Another salary cost which all but the very smallest districts must meet is the extra payment of principals and often vice-principals, counsellors, and coaches. The extra payment for principals is usually at least $50 per room supervised. A small allowance for these extra payments would not increase the cost of salaries a whit, but would merely recognize the existence of a cost which all must meet. Hence it is recommended that there be included in the scale an allowance for posts of special responsibility of $1 per pupil in average attendance in all but one-room schools to be distributed by the Boards in their discretion. It is recognized that this allowance is very modest.

BONUS FOR ISOLATION.

The discussions at the public hearings, the examination of teachers' qualifications, and the experience of Government officials all lead to the conclusion that School Boards in the remote parts of the Province find it much more difficult and costly to obtain teachers than do those in the more favoured localities. While it is not possible to take account of this in a precise and unassailable fashion, the grant system should obviously go some way in the direction of recognizing the condition. It is proposed that a bonus of $100 per year be added to the scheduled salary of the teachers in these districts. The areas concerned are best described in the chapter on school districts. Here let us say that no municipal schools are included, and that most of the districts to be specified lie in the northern part of the Province, although a very few others should also qualify. Since the number of teachers in these districts totals 230, the annual cost of the bonus would be $23,000.

NORMAL SCHOOL FACILITIES.

The difficulty of obtaining an adequate supply of trained teachers is in part caused by the barriers which young people from the northern parts of the Province must overcome if they wish to attend normal schools. It has therefore been suggested that the Government establish a normal school in the North. Since a further diffusion of training facilities would not be in the interests of the good health of the school system, and since prospective teachers from remote points benefit greatly from a few months in a city, this suggestion cannot be accepted, and in fact should be strongly opposed.

It is suggested, however, that the Government might well give thought to a return to the policy of paying the railway fares of normal-school students.

APPRAISAL OF THE SCALE.

It may be fairly claimed that this schedule falls somewhere around the middle of the ground occupied by the many who have given thought to the problem of teachers' salaries. Even the most parsimonious could hardly contend that this scale is too generous, and it would not be difficult to find arguments to support the view that it is

by no means generous enough, although the plan is to allow full credit for experience wherever obtained.

However, such questions are to a large extent irrelevant. The primary purpose of the Provincial salary scale is the equitable distribution of salary cost, and therefore in so far as the two can be dissociated, the Provincial schedule should follow current practice, not current practice the Provincial schedule.

ALLOWANCE FOR CURRENT EXPENDITURE.

The defect that the present grant system takes no account of salary expenditures above the minima will be removed if the Provincial salary scale is inaugurated. The defect that the system neglects other current expenditures* demands that an allowance be made for these.

In order that School Boards will be encouraged to exercise reasonable prudence in the spending of public money, the allowance should be at the amounts which experience has demonstrated to be the minima for which schools can be operated, leaving the districts to exceed these amounts at their own expense.

Let us now refer to Table X. on page 17, which details with these expenditures in municipal school districts in 1943–44. We do not wish to cause embarrassment by naming the municipalities concerned, and can only say that almost all the very low expenditures are made in schools so small that expenditures per pupil have little meaning. If only schools with three or more class-rooms are considered, we have:—

Expenditure per Pupil in A.D.A. (to Nearest Dollar).	High.	Junior High.	Elementary.
Under $10	---	---	---
$11	---	---	---
12	---	---	---
13	---	---	---
14	---	---	3
15	---	---	---
16	---	---	5
17	---	---	5
18	---	1	---
19	---	1	2
20	---	1	7
21	1	---	5

It is suggested that the allowance per pupil in average attendance for current expense be $13, $17, and $20 a year in elementary, junior, and senior high schools respectively.

It was said above that expenditures per pupil have little meaning in very small schools. An allowance of $13 per pupil per year would give the typical one-room rural school only about $150, but would give to the ordinary municipal school nearly $400 per class-room. In very small schools, expenditures depend to a large extent on the number of class-rooms. Expenditures per pupil in these schools usually equal or exceed those in the cities, but a school having ten pupils will be nearly as expensive as one having twenty. A glance at Table XXIII., page 30, shows that current expenses per class-room in rural schools are very much lower than in municipal schools. Since the average attendance in municipal elementary schools is almost exactly thirty pupils per room, an expenditure of $400 is practically the minimum, and this is reached by only a relatively few rural schools. It must follow that equalization demands an increase.

Nevertheless, it can hardly be advocated that the allowance per class-room in all rural schools be raised to the amounts characteristic of municipal schools. For one thing, in many small rural schools the amounts expended are small for very good

* Except for a small amount referred to later.

reasons. They can not have electric lighting and janitor service, and fuel is cheap. For another, tax rates, although often higher, are usually lower than the school rates of municipal districts. For a third, it would surely be unsound to present them suddenly with amounts several times what they have ever had before.

To do justice to our small schools and at the same time be properly solicitous of the public purse is not easy. The suggestion is ventured that the minimum allowance per class-room to any district for any type of school be $250.

SUPERIOR SCHOOLS.

Since the expenditures of superior schools are much more closely akin to those in elementary than in junior high schools, it is assumed that the allowance for them will be on the elementary school basis. A small bonus for the pupils above Grade VIII. might be desirable.

THE COST OF THE BASIC PROGRAMME.

If in 1943–44 all teachers had been placed on the Provincial schedule proposed at the salary suitable to their position, experience, and qualifications the cost would have been very close to $6,600,000. However, some teachers would, at first, receive less than their schedule salaries, as it is proposed that those below the stated salary should start from where they are, so to speak; that is, should rise to it by the stated increments. The initial cost would probably have been but $6,200,000, but if the same teachers had remained in the profession and no new ones had been added the expenditures under the schedule would after four or five years approximate $6,600,000. Since 1943–44, however, the school system has been expanding, so that the total cost of the basic or Provincial programme can be estimated as follows:—

	1943–44.	1944–45.	1945–46.
Number of pupils	102,999	107,599	112,200
Salaries*	$6,200,000	$6,600,000	$7,000,000
Other expenses†	1,555,000	1,614,000	1,685,000
Cost of basic programme	$7,755,000	$8,214,000	$8,685,000

* According to Provincial schedule and including allowances for posts of special responsibility and bonus for isolation.

† At $13, $17, and $20 per pupil in average attendance at elementary, junior and senior high school respectively; the minimum being $250 per class-room.

The grant for this programme would be decreased by about $3,100,000 annually, this being the product of 5 mills on the land and 75 per cent. of the improvements now in school districts. An additional $175,000 would be collected by taxing at the same rate property not in school districts.

The net grants for the basic programme follow:—

	1943–44.	1944–45.	1945–46.
Cost of the basic programme	$7,755,000	$8,214,000	$8,685,000
Less	3,100,000	3,100,000	3,100,000
Basic grants	$4,655,000	$5,114,000	$5,585,000

METHOD OF PAYMENT OF BASIC GRANTS.

At present the salary grants, which correspond in a rough way to the projected basic grants, are paid monthly to the School Boards in municipal school districts, but direct to the teachers in rural school districts. All other grants are paid to the Boards.

The Department obtains from each of the Province's 4,000 teachers a monthly report of attendance, enrolment, days school was in session, etc. On the basis of this information the grants are calculated, vouchers made out, and several hundred cheques issued.

It is recommended that with a view to simplicity and economy the following plan be adopted:—

1. Normally all grants to be paid to the School Board, but the Superintendent of Education may order that the portion which is on account of a teacher's salary be paid direct to the teacher.

2. The grant for a given school-year to be paid in about four instalments, not necessarily equal, the first to reach the Board before the end of September, the last before the end of June.

3. The total grant for a school-year to be estimated, and each payment to be a fraction of the estimated grant. In most cases the actual grant earned in a certain year should become the estimated grant for the following year.

4. The payment made in September to contain a reconciliation or balancing addition or subtraction of the amount by which the actual grant earned during the preceding year is less or greater than that estimated and already paid. In most cases this difference would be very small.

TECHNICAL AND VOCATIONAL SCHOOLING.

It is unnecessary for this report to deal specifically and at length with the financing of technical education. Most, perhaps all, technical education will be provided either in technical departments of composite high schools or in technical high schools under local control. It will therefore draw support under the usual arrangements respecting school finance in the Province. To the extent that technical education does not fit into the general scheme, special treatment may be accorded it under the wide powers conferred by section 25 of the Act. It is, however, impossible at present to make a specific recommendation regarding the use of these powers. The future development of this enormously important branch of our school system is so intricate, so much a matter on which even enlightened opinions vary, and so much a matter of public policy not yet finally crystallized that even a cursory discussion of it would take us far beyond our terms of reference.

The Province may receive grants from the Dominion Government in aid of technical and vocational education. Much of this money can be distributed to the school districts through the usual channels and will therefore lighten slightly the burden imposed on the Government if the recommendations of this report are accepted.

SPECIAL GRANTS.

In addition to grants for the general support of schools, there are numbers of special grants in aid of certain classes of schools or certain specific services. Before going into detail, a few general principles concerning them should be laid down.

In the first place almost all special grants must be on a percentage basis. The services supported are undertaken either by only a relatively few districts (for example, transportation of pupils), or, if by all or most districts, only irregularly or occasionally (for example, buildings). Further, uniform cost standards are difficult or impossible to arrive at. Road conditions, grades, means of travel, density of population, and other factors vary so greatly that uniform allowances per pupil or per pupil transported or per pupil-mile cannot be set. Under such circumstances the actual expenditures must be the basis of grant.

It follows, second, that these expenditures should be carefully scrutinized by the Department, and that it should hold the power to disallow for grant expenditures disapproved of, or to withhold grant for services deemed inadequate.

Finally, all school districts should be treated on the same basis for special grants. For example, in the school system of British Columbia, the term "rural" does not mean "agricultural," nor yet "non-urban," but merely "not municipally organized." This meaning causes many inconsistencies. For example, Powell River, Ocean Falls, and many other similar areas are, although "rural," more akin to the cities than to most of the other rural school districts. Obviously, too, rural school districts are not necessarily poor. Most of them are, but some of them are wealthier than any city. Surely it follows that any arrangement, however well-intentioned, that treats rural school districts more generously than municipal districts, or small districts more generously than large districts, is sure to cause injustices. Some of the wealthiest communities in the Province, being rural, receive school desks and grants toward lunch equipment, while some of the poorest, being municipal, do not.

GRANTS FOR THE TRANSPORTATION OF PUPILS AND OTHER SIMILAR SERVICES.

From what has been said above, it is concluded that no change can be recommended for the transportation grant, which is 50 per cent. of expenditure on this service. Even this fraction, although no more than adequate, requires that the Department exercise scrutiny of expenditures lest it encourage carelessness in some districts in this matter.

There may be established in the Province other services closely akin to transportation in that their purpose would be the making available of school facilities to children who could not otherwise attend. The most obvious of these is the dormitory or hostel for high school children in very sparsely-settled areas. Another is the railway school-car. These are to be discussed in the next chapter, and there it will be made clear that an immediate extensive provision is not proposed. However, the grant system should make these possible where they are clearly desirable.

Let us group transportation and other services of a similar nature under the heading "special services" and recommend that they draw a grant of 50 per cent. of approved net expenditure.

SCHOOL BUILDINGS.

The present policy of the Provincial Government is to grant for elementary schools 20 per cent. and for secondary schools 40 per cent. of the approved cost of constructing or altering buildings, except in the first-class cities of Vancouver, Victoria, and New Westminster. This grant, at one time reasonably generous, is no longer adequate. Increases and shifts in school population, the obsolescence of some existing buildings, and high costs of construction combine to present the school districts of the Province with the necessity of undertaking a formidable building programme in the next few years. While precise calculations are of course not possible, it is not very daring to prophesy that school buildings of the value of $3,000,000 will be erected in each of the five or six years following the return of something like normal conditions in the supply of labour and materials.

Moreover, it is not logical to vary the treatment of school districts according to population or according to their municipal classification. For example, if Burnaby were a city, it would receive no building grant. Again, one result of the amalgamation of the district municipalities of South Vancouver and Point Grey with Vancouver was that the new city lost the building grants formerly received by the two district municipalities. If a Greater Victoria school district is established, the district would, under the present regulations, not draw the building grants now receivable by Oak Bay, Esquimalt, and Saanich. Finally, there are some rural districts and district municipalities which, as far as assessment is concerned, do not deserve building grants any more than, say, New Westminster.

It is, consequently, urged that the building grant be one-half the approved expenditure for all types of schools and for all school districts, and that the cost of fundamental new equipment be included. In this case also the supervision and leadership of the Department is essential not only in refusing grant for exorbitant expenditures but in calling attention to inadequacies and poor planning and in requiring that these be corrected.

In distributing building grants the Government should exercise, if necessary, a system of precedences or priorities, the more important projects receiving first attention, so that building can be spread more or less evenly over a period of years, or so that school building can be synchronized with a programme of timed public works if one is established.

It has been suggested that the Provincial Government make easier and less costly the financing of the local share of building costs by guaranteeing debentures issued for this purpose or by itself loaning at a low rate of interest the funds required. Since the Government has already had wide experience, some of it not altogether happy, in loaning money to local bodies, a definite recommendation in this matter would be presumptuous, and we can only commend it to the Government's consideration. It should be pointed out, however, that the fact that large amounts of money are distributed in school grants would provide an easy method of protection if local districts neglected their obligations.

There would seem to be no reason why the Government should not raise part or all of the large amounts required for school buildings by the issuing of debentures, or why the Government, if it wishes, should not acquire joint ownership of the buildings constructed with its aid.

NIGHT-SCHOOLS.

The existing regulations base grants for night-schools on salary expenditure, as follows: For cities 25, 32, 37, or 42 per cent.; for district municipalities, 35, 42, and 52 per cent.; for rural school districts, 52, 62, and 75 per cent. In the Province's fiscal year 1943–44, $9,687.18 was distributed in these grants. Vancouver received nearly $6,000 or almost two-thirds of the total. No other district received as much as $1,000, and about one-half the grants were of less than $100 each, the smallest being $5.04. Altogether only twenty-nine districts earned grants, and only five of these were rural.

Since the number of districts concerned and the amount involved are so small, no logical principle can be formulated and no recommendation can be made.

SPECIAL AID.

Section 29 of the "Public Schools Act" allows the Council of Public Instruction to grant such additional aid to any district as it deems necessary. In the Provincial fiscal year 1943–44 some $40,000 was distributed under this section. This power should be retained, as no system of school finance can ensure that every possible unusual circumstance is dealt with. The granting of Special Aid is, however, dangerous; the grants tend to flow to the more aggressive and vociferous of the local districts and once given can be discontinued only with great difficulty. It is hoped that the need for Special Aid will be greatly reduced by the suggested changes, and it is recommended that all grants of this nature be carefully reviewed if the suggestions are adopted.

GRANTS IN AID OF EQUIPMENT IN CERTAIN SPECIAL COURSES OF INSTRUCTION.

In the fiscal year 1943–44 the sum of $3,139 was spent under section 23 (1) of the "Public Schools Act." The section provides for a grant of 50 per cent. (to a maximum

grant of $500 per course) of the expenditure for the equipment for instruction in manual training, home economics, physics, chemistry, and agricultural, commercial, technical, and vocational education. The other recommendations of the report should have the result of making this grant no longer necessary and it is suggested that it be discontinued.

Miscellaneous Grants.—Libraries; School Lunch Equipment in Rural Schools; Tuition Fees for Rural Pupils attending Secondary School; Provision of Desks for Rural Schools.

There remains for brief consideration a group of grants which might well be discontinued.

There are three reasons for this suggestion. First is the now familiar one that the preferred treatment of any particular class of school district is certain to cause injustices, for the classification of school districts as rural, district municipal, and city is to some extent, although not completely, irrelevant to the purposes of school finance. Rural school districts and small school districts do tend to be poorer than others, but there are too many exceptions for the rule to be useful. The treatment of districts may properly vary with their assessment, but hardly with their classification.

The second is that the spreading of small amounts of money thinly over large areas is almost bound to be futile. The grant in aid of school libraries is a good example of this. Section 24 (1) of the "Public Schools Act" empowers the Council of Public Instruction to grant to any school district 50 per cent. of its expenditure on a school library, the maximum grant being $50 per year to a district operating only one school and $25 per school to a total of $150 in other districts. The total amount distributed in this way is between $9,000 and $10,000 per year.

Table XLII. indicates that this highly laudable attempt to stimulate interest in school libraries has not been successful, as about one-half the rural school districts earn no library grant whatever, and few earn more than $10 per teacher. The effect of the grant on the policies of the really large rural schools and most of the municipal schools is, of course, negligible.

Finally, such grants as these should be quite unnecessary in the revised system proposed.

TABLE XLII. LIBRARY GRANT PER TEACHER IN RURAL SCHOOLS, 1943–44.

Amount of Grant.	No. of Districts.					
	One-room Elementary.	Larger Elementary.	Superior.	Elementary and One-room High.	Elementary and Two-room High.	Total.
$50	21	----	----	----	----	21
45–$49	1	----	----	----	----	1
40– 44	4	----	----	----	----	4
35– 39	6	----	----	----	----	6
30– 34	6	----	----	----	----	6
25– 29	13	1	----	----	----	14
20– 24	21	2	----	----	----	23
15– 19	10	4	----	1	----	15
10– 14	17	2	2	2	3	26
5– 9	29	7	7	3	7	53
Under $5	91	5	3	1	----	100
None	170	36	18	5	14	243
Not reported	3	----	----	----	----	3
Totals	392	57	30	12	24	515

RECAPITULATION AND APPRAISAL.

This chapter recommends the following readjustments in the Provincial Government's grant system:—

Grants.	*Treatment.*
1. Salary Grants; Supplementary Salary Grants; Supplementary Aid *re* Teachers' Salaries in Rural School Districts.	1. To be replaced by "basic" grants which embody a Provincial Salary Schedule and allowances for other current expenditures, the whole to be based on a single tax rate of 5 mills.
2. Special Assistance in the Cost of Education.	2. To be replaced by the assuming by the Provincial Government of teachers' pensions payments now made by School Boards.
3. Transportation of Pupils.	3. To be unchanged, but "Special Services" to be included.
4. School Buildings.	4. To be raised to 50 per cent. of the approved cost of all school buildings in all school districts, and the approved cost of fundamental new equipment to be included.
5. Special Aid.	5. To be unchanged, but a reduction in the amount necessary is expected.
6. Night-schools.	6. To be unchanged.
7. Grants for equipment in special courses of instruction; Libraries; School desks; Tuition fees; School lunch equipment.	7. To be discontinued.

In Chapter I. it was estimated that the school system would cost about $14,410,000 in 1945–46, although it was emphasized that because of the present unstable conditions this may be quite wide of the mark. The estimate includes $200,000 for buildings paid directly by Government grants.

In each of the next five or six years about $3,000,000 will be spent on school buildings, although it is unlikely that this programme will be much more than started by the summer of 1946. In order to obtain a picture of the division of costs in the years immediately ahead, let it be imagined that buildings of this cost are to be erected in 1945–46. Let it be assumed that the Government bears one-half of this by outright grant, and that the school districts pay for the other half by issuing fifteen-year serial bonds at 5 per cent. Let it be supposed that because of debt retirement, total local carrying charges, now estimated at $900,000 annually, would increase only to $975,000.

The cost of education in the year would then be:—

Previous estimate	$14,410,000
Increase in grant for buildings	1,300,000
Increase in local debt charges	75,000
Total	$15,785,000

The Government's share of this expenditure would be:—

General administration	$800,000
Pension payments	575,000
Basic grants	5,585,000
Special services*	200,000
Special aid	10,000
Night-schools	10,000
Building grants	1,500,000
Total Government expenditure	$8,680,000
Total cost of education	$15,785,000
Fraction borne by Provincial Government	55%

* Including transportation.

This would represent an increase over the Government's contribution in 1943–44 of about $5,000,000. The increase over its estimated share in 1945–46 would be some $4,100,000 if only $200,000 of the $800,000 appropriated for school buildings were actually spent in that year.

It is of course obvious that actual conditions even in the near future may be quite different from those here anticipated. However, calculations applied to other years indicate that the Government's share under the system proposed would always be well over half. This would be a larger Government contribution than that in any other Province except Prince Edward Island.

The system would be equalizing, as it would allow all districts to provide a basic or core programme at a cost to itself of 5 mills on land and 75 per cent. of improvements. If buildings and such special services as transportation are disregarded, 80 per cent. of school expenditures would be either placed on this equalization basis or borne directly by the Provincial Government. In addition 50 per cent. of approved expenditure on building and special services would be granted.

The system would have the merit of simplicity. Only three really important grants would remain: basic grants, transportation grants, and building grants. Most other grants would disappear.

The system would be flexible. The actual amounts to be chosen are, after all, matters of opinion and policy. If circumstances made it desirable, the grants could be increased in amount by making the salary scale more generous, by increasing the allowance for other expenditures, or by decreasing the standard tax rate. If an economic catastrophe hit the Province, the system could be easily adjusted to distribute fairly the sacrifices required.

The system would provide for the expansion of the school system with increasing population. As enrolment increased, the Provincial Government's financial contribution would be increased through increased pension payments and increased grants on account of salaries and other expenditures.

Dominion aid for vocational or technical schooling could be fitted smoothly into the system.

WARDS OF THE CHILDREN'S AID.

Two briefs complain of the burden imposed by the necessity of providing schooling for wards of the Children's Aid in foster homes. Since an investigation shows that the financial arrangements already proposed will make this burden practically negligible, no recommendation concerning these children is considered necessary.

RECOMMENDATIONS.

1. That the Salary Grants, Supplementary Salary Grants, Supplementary Aid *re* Teachers' Salaries in Rural Districts, Special Assistance in the Cost of Education, Grants in Aid of Equipment for certain Special Courses on Instruction, Aid for School Libraries, Rural School Lunch Equipment, Grants for Tuition Fees for Rural Pupils, and the Provision of Desks in Rural Schools be discontinued.

2. That the Provincial Government assume the payments for teachers' pensions now made by School Boards.

3. That the basic or Provincial programme to be supported by basic grants consist of:—

(*a.*) A Provincial salary schedule;
(*b.*) An allowance for posts of special responsibility;
(*c.*) A bonus for teachers in especially remote schools;
(*d.*) An allowance for current expenditures other than teachers' salaries, transportation, and debt charges.

4. That the basic grant to each school district consist of the actual expenditures for each of the items of (*a*), (*b*), (*c*), and (*d*) above, or the amounts allowed for these items, whichever is less, *minus* the amount which would be raised by a tax of 5 mills on the land and 75 per cent. of the improvements in the district, as shown on the last completed assessment roll.

5. That property not within a school district be required to pay to the Provincial Government a tax of 5 mills on land and 75 per cent. of improvements.

6. That the provisions for basic grants contain no maximum or minimum amounts above or below which the grants cannot go.

7. That the basic grants, no matter for what types of school, require the deduction of the product of only the one tax rate of 5 mills.

8. That the provisions for basic grant contain no requirement that the grant for junior or senior high schools exceed that for elementary schools by certain fixed amounts.

9. That as a small first step in a programme for the reduction of class size to be implemented when the supply of teachers and buildings permits, an increase in number of teachers for very small elementary schools be allowed for grant purposes.

10. That in so far as possible all parts of the Province belong to a district with schools in operation.

11. That the basic grants be paid to the School Board, unless otherwise directed by the Superintendent of Education.

12. That the basic grants be paid in about four instalments, not necessarily equal, each being a fraction of estimated total grant for the year, the first payment being made in September and the last before the end of June.

13. That the amount by which the actual basic grant for a given year is greater or less than the estimated grant be subtracted from or added to the payments of the following September.

14. That the grant for the transportation of pupils remain unchanged at one-half the approved net expenditure.

15. That any other arrangements which have the same purpose as transportation—that is, the placing of schooling within the reach of pupils geographically isolated—be grouped under the heading, "Special Services," and draw grant at the rate of 50 per cent. of approved net expenditure.

16. That a grant of 50 per cent. of approved expenditure on buildings and fundamental new equipment for them be made for all types of schools and to all school districts.

17. That the Provincial Government establish a system of precedence or priorities so that expenditures on school buildings can be distributed over a period of years.

18. That the Government give consideration to the possibility of making loans to school districts for the construction of buildings.

19. That the Department of Education re-examine and, if necessary, readjust its machinery for the supervision of expenditures which draw grants on a percentage basis, to the end that its scrutiny will be as stringent and its leadership as helpful as possible.

20. That the power of the Council of Public Instruction to grant special aid to any district be continued, but that all grants of this nature be carefully reviewed.

21. That the Provincial Government consider the advisability of returning to the practice of paying the railway fares of students attending normal schools, thus making these schools more easily available to persons in remote parts of the Province.

CHAPTER VII.

THE SCHOOL DISTRICTS.

Some of the preceding chapters have suggested the necessity of establishing adequate school districts in British Columbia. Thus, the number of school districts is as follows:—

Rural school districts*	590
City school districts	33
District municipality school districts†	26
Total	649

To put it mildly, this seems a large number of school districts for about 120,000 pupils. If the two city school districts of Vancouver and Victoria are excluded, 647 districts remain to serve fewer than 80,000 pupils.

The rural school districts as a group are, of course, much less populous than the municipal school districts. The rural school districts enroll only 23,000 children.

The small school district is not only a rural phenomenon. Of the fifty-seven operating municipal school districts, eleven contained fewer than 1,000 people according to the 1941 census. Two districts operate no schools and several have voluntarily combined for all school purposes or for secondary school purposes. As the thoughtful brief of the Union of British Columbia Municipalities points out, the existence of extra-municipal areas shows that municipalities are not necessarily satisfactory school districts.

The smallness of most of our school districts is regrettable because of its inevitable consequences. Elsewhere in this report it has been shown that the proportion of children from rural districts attending secondary schools is much smaller than from municipal districts. Not only so, but most of the secondary schools available to these pupils are so small that the programme offered can be only the barest minimum, and not at all suited to the communities in which they are located. In some of the smaller municipalities the same inadequacy exists. The first and by far the most important argument for a reform in school districts is, therefore, that only in this way can adequate schooling be provided for the children of our Province.

This investigation has stressed the well-known fact of great variations in taxable resources among the local school districts, and has directed attention to the many cases of great poverty. The proposed system of grants has been framed with a view to the removal of the effects of these differences in so far as the basic cost is concerned. Nevertheless, complete equalization is not possible if local authority is to be retained. Since school districts bring all local taxable resources to bear on the problem of educating all local children, enlarged school districts will effect equalization within their areas with a completeness and simplicity not attainable by any system of grants.

Further, the large school units should take in much property not now in any school district. To exclude this is about as reasonable as the exclusion of business sections of cities on the ground that they contain few or no children.

That the present system of administering the rural schools of British Columbia is slowly but steadily breaking down is shown in Table XLIII. Little imagination is needed to prophesy that unless something fundamental is done, the great majority of our rural Boards will have been replaced within a measurable period of time by Official Trustees appointed by the Council of Public Instruction. We shall have centralization without its attendant advantages of equalization and efficiency, and without

* Omitting districts not voting money and operating no schools.

† Including districts voting money, but operating no schools.

ever having consciously sought it. The step from decentralization to centralization is too fundamental to take unintentionally.

TABLE XLIII. ADMINISTRATION OF RURAL SCHOOL DISTRICTS WITH SCHOOLS IN OPERATION.

Year.	School Boards.		Official Trustees.	
	No.	Per Cent.	No.	Per Cent.
1929–30	690	93.9	45	6.1
1934–35	570	75.8	182	24.2
1939–40	465	70.7	193	29.3
1944–45	321	61.1	204	38.9

The truth is that the small district, administered by a three-man Board elected at an annual school meeting, usually very poorly attended, is less and less compatible with present ways of doing things. To say that many rural School Boards have done well, sometimes astonishingly well, is to pay a well-deserved compliment, but it is not to say that the present system should be continued. There just are not enough people with sufficient time and interest to provide Boards for this multitude of school districts. Further, the financial resources of many of our school districts are so meagre and the difficulty of providing anything like an adequate schooling so great that it cannot be a cause for wonder that a growing number of trustees abandon the task in discouragement and disgust.

All this is no disparagement of the rural electorate. A system which made it necessary to find many hundreds of school trustees in, say, Vancouver, would work no better and might not work as well.

Enlarged school districts should result in increased efficiency and economy. Business management, the purchase of supplies, insurance, the placing of buildings, and the transfer and continued use of equipment from closed schools are only a few examples of the many ways in which improved efficiency could result.

The disadvantages characteristic of most small districts, both rural and municipal, in the securing and retaining of teachers can be considerably reduced when larger units are introduced. Good working conditions and supervision, the prospect of promotion, and the possibility of easy transfer from one school to another when desirable increase the attractiveness of teaching positions in these areas.

Large school districts and central secondary schools tend to remove sectarianism and local jealousies. It has been noticed that when a consolidated secondary school is established, the children from one little school will not at first play with those from another. In districts containing small foreign groups central secondary schools have been found to exert a strong Canadianizing influence.

Finally, an abundance of evidence gathered from much experience is unanimous in showing that the many benefits from larger units are not mere possibilities, but come immediately and inevitably. England reformed her school areas in 1902 and provides for even further progress in her new Education Act. Since 1920, Scotland has administered her schools through counties rather than small school districts. In every Canadian Province and in many American States large school districts have been established. Nova Scotia and New Brunswick have instituted extensive reorganizations. Alberta has placed almost all her rural schools in large divisions, with benefits which are little short of startling.

In our own Province considerable progress towards adequate school units has been made. As early as 1906 the Government abolished the many school districts into which

the district municipalities had been divided and decreed that henceforth each municipality was itself to be a school district. Also, many municipalities are united for all school purposes or for secondary school purposes only with other municipalities or with extra-municipal areas. However, some of the remaining municipalities are quite inadequate as school units.

In those parts of British Columbia which are wholly "rural" the best known larger unit is probably the Peace River Educational Administrative Area. The opinion is advanced with deference but conviction that its conspicuous success and that of its municipal twin, the M.S.A. Area, are due more to their largeness than to the fact that they are not managed by School Boards. This conviction arises from the knowledge that success has attended the creation of all large school districts regardless of the method of control. Three other large units are operating in rural British Columbia: the Creston Valley, South Okanagan, and Nanaimo-Ladysmith United Rural School Districts. Inquiries have revealed nothing but satisfaction with the educational effects of these reorganizations. Another, the Central Okanagan United Rural School District, has been established in 1945 and begins operations in September, 1945.

However, British Columbia, which once led the Provinces in this matter, is now lagging towards the rear.

Since the need is so great and the remedy so obvious the recommendation that the Province undertake a thorough reorganization of its school districts is one of the most urgent and important in this report. Our way is clear. It is to create school districts large enough and powerful enough that their work will be a challenge to the trustees who control them, and to see to it that these districts have financial resources adequate to their responsibilities. If we do this, we shall have a school system sound and solid and worthy of loyalty and support. If we cannot, let us have complete centralization and its advantages, and say good-bye to local control.

METHODS OF ESTABLISHMENT.

Discussions at public hearings and perusal of the briefs presented to this inquiry have made it gratifyingly clear that public opinion in so far as it has expressed itself, is ready for an enlargement of school districts. Of course, many of the details are, and should be, matters for debate, but the principle itself is widely accepted. It is especially satisfying to report that the great majority of the Province's school trustees, led by their thoroughly public-spirited association, are solidly behind the principle.

The main barrier in the way of change is a financial one. If a district enjoys a low tax rate, its people naturally hesitate to join districts in which the rate is high. This barrier should practically disappear if the financial proposals of this investigation are implemented. No really high tax rates will remain, and it will make little financial difference to a district whether or not it becomes part of a larger unit.

To this point another is closely allied. The grants to all except a few wealthy districts should increase. There is a grave danger that the new grant system will merely entrench still further an already deeply rooted system of inadequate school districts. It would be a great tragedy if financial equalization made educational equalization impossible or unlikely.

It has been said frequently and forcibly that education is at root a Provincial responsibility, and to this all must agree. If the statement has any meaning whatever, the size and powers of the local district cannot be left to local decision. It is the duty of the Provincial Government to put into operation the school districts which it thinks will best serve the Province's children, just as it would be the duty of the Government to abolish school districts entirely if it were convinced that centralized administration would provide the best service.

For these reasons it is recommended that the Government, through its Council of Public Instruction, proceed to redistrict the school system without seeking local approval of its proposals.

This does not mean that the Government should put the plan chosen into operation without consultation with local bodies. Such a procedure would be highly undemocratic as well as very unwise. What the recommendation does mean is that the Government should allow no district or districts the option of voting itself out of a larger unit. It should announce a tentative plan by circular letters and other means of publicity; it should make this plan widely known; it should encourage full discussion of it, and invite frank comments on it; and finally, after carefully weighing all information and opinion gathered, it should evolve and put into effect a revised system. In other words, the principle of larger districts should not be a matter of debate; the details should.

CHARACTERISTICS OF A SATISFACTORY SCHOOL UNIT.

Before stating the criteria which should, in our view, be characteristic of adequate school units in British Columbia, two explanations are necessary.

The first is that we are here discussing school districts as administrative units, not as attendance units. The administrative unit is the whole area over which a School Board has jurisdiction. The attendance unit is the area served by a particular school. Thus, a large city is an administrative unit, being governed by one local authority or School Board, but containing many attendance units or areas served by certain particular schools. Most small school districts are both, the district maintaining only one school.

The second explanation follows from the first. The proposal to enlarge school districts does not necessarily imply consolidation of schools, transportation of pupils, and the elimination of small schools. It is true that some of the districts probably would, and certainly should, transport some of their older pupils to central points. But most districts could not transport any pupils whatever. British Columbia will always have many small schools, and these can be very effective if properly equipped and supervised. They are certainly preferable to transporting very young pupils long distances. The Peace River Area is an excellent example of a highly successful large administrative unit in which most of the schools continue to have only one class-room. The enlargement of the school district, then, will not necessarily produce school consolidation, but it will make consolidation easily possible where clearly desirable.

If possible, the area chosen as a school district should be large enough to justify a reasonably adequate schooling from Grades I. to XII. If one test is more important than the others, it is this one and it has been kept constantly in mind in the preparation of the detailed plan presented below. Nevertheless, many of the districts must fall short of reaching this ideal.

A second characteristic of adequate school districts in British Columbia is the fact that they must disregard municipal boundaries. This necessity has already shown itself in the formation of extra-municipal areas. These should be extended.

There are limits to largeness as well as to smallness of districts. The unit should be understandable or comprehensible to the local people. It should, if possible, be a community, an economic entity, or a trading area. This does not mean that the unit need always be small in extent. In some parts of the Province the local people are accustomed to travelling great distances on relatively minor matters. Further, the boundaries of districts should on occasion be pushed well out in order not to leave some small school dangling.

Since as much as possible of the Province's area should be included in school districts, a great deal of the territory in the proposed school districts is at present unpopulated, and most of it will remain so. However, future developments cannot

always be foreseen, and it is desirable that as population spreads each school-age child find himself within the jurisdiction of an authority charged with the responsibility of providing him with school facilities. Further, all financial arrangements, including the payment of tuition charges, will be greatly simplified if the districts are made as inclusive as possible. There is, after all, no convincing reason why property by not being in a school district should escape all school taxation except the 2-mill tax now imposed.

Some idea of the size of school districts contemplated may be gathered if we say that it is hoped that many of the new units will employ at least forty or fifty teachers and that districts which employ about a hundred teachers approach the ideal.

DUTIES OF THE SCHOOL DISTRICT.

The duties imposed on a school district are very simple and very important. The district should do all that geography and the distribution of population allow to provide adequate schooling for the children under its care. If settlement is sparse, it should consider the possibility of transporting some of its pupils to central schools. If this is impossible, it should consider the establishment of a dormitory or hostel either at some point within its area or at a near-by secondary school. Districts spread out along a railway might well explore the possibilities of equipping a railway-car as a school, and moving it from place to place, so that some of its isolated children can go to school for a few days each month.* It may be that buses could be used in the same way in some places. It should take full advantage of the Provincial Government's efficient correspondence instruction.

In the preceding chapter it was stated that an immediate and complete programme of dormitories was not to be advocated. Nevertheless, devices of this sort may be essential if our isolated children are to have the chance of attending secondary schools. The creation of large school districts will set free our sparsely settled areas so that experiments in this direction can be attempted. A reasonable expectation is that two or three such dormitories would make their appearance shortly. If these prove beneficial, a fairly large number might eventually develop.

It should be obvious that these are not the kind of institutions for which the Government can assume responsibility other than the placing of them on the same footing as transportation for grant purposes. It is essential that they be under local control and supervision. In the majority of cases the School Board will rent or build and operate the dormitory; in some cases local service groups may do this.

In Alberta, where there are already twenty-nine dormitories housing some 700 pupils, experience has shown that the cost has not been great. The average board is about $12.50 per month and some or all of this can be paid in farm produce.† The same extensive experience has as yet discovered no difficulties in the delicate problem of supervision, and has found considerable educational values.

No new legislation is required to permit districts to acquire and operate dormitories, as subsections (6), (7), and (8) of section 135 of the "Public Schools Act" already make ample provision in the matter.

It should be re-emphasized here that proposed grants will reduce greatly the tuition fees exacted by a district from students outside its borders. The basic programme should be free to all. If a non-resident pupil attends a certain school, he will already have paid his 5 mills, so to speak, and therefore the fee paid on his behalf by his home district should be only his share of the programme provided him in excess of the cost of the basic programme.

* This particular device has worked well in Ontario.

† The Government grant would not, of course, apply to board, but only to the approved net expenditures of the School Board.

THE PLAN SUBMITTED FOR CONSIDERATION.

We now put forward for discussion a plan of reorganization for the school districts of British Columbia:—

Proposed Reorganization of School Districts in British Columbia

No.	District.	No. of Teachers.	No.	District.	No. of Teachers.
1.	Fernie	42	38.	Richmond	52
2.	Cranbrook	29	39.	Vancouver	1,238
3.	Kimberley	40	40.	New Westminster	118
4.	Windermere	12	41.	Burnaby	177
5.	Creston	34	42.	Maple Ridge	43
6.	Kootenay Lake	15	43.	Coquitlam	51
7.	Nelson	55	44.	North Vancouver	94
8.	Slocan	19	45.	West Vancouver	40
9.	Castlegar-Brilliant	29	46.	Sechelt	20
10.	Arrow Lakes	13	47.	Powell River	44
11.	Trail-Rossland	109	48.	Howe Sound	18
12.	Grand Forks	22	49.	Ocean Falls	18
13.	Kettle Valley	17	50.	Queen Charlotte	5
14.	South Okanagan	22	51.	Portland Canal	3
15.	Penticton	54	52.	Prince Rupert	44
16.	Keremeos	13	53.	Terrace	9
17.	Princeton	23	54.	Smithers	21
18.	Golden	15	55.	Burns Lake	16
19.	Revelstoke	34	56.	Vanderhoof	13
20.	Salmon Arm	42	57.	Prince George	47
21.	Spallumcheen	33	58.	McBride	13
22.	Vernon	63	59.	Peace River South	58
23.	Kelowna	81	60.	Peace River North	24
24.	Kamloops	61	61.	Greater Victoria	197
25.	Barriere	9	62.	Sooke	22
26.	Birch Island	10	63.	Saanich	34
27.	Williams Lake	21	64.	Saltspring	13
28.	Quesnel	21	65.	Duncan	46
29.	Lillooet	12	66.	Cowichan Lake	17
30.	Ashcroft	13	67.	Ladysmith	26
31.	Merritt	8	68.	Nanaimo	65
32.	Fraser Canyon	13	69.	Qualicum	17
33.	Chilliwack	94	70.	Alberni	40
34.	Abbotsford-Mission	93	71.	Courtenay-Cumberland	54
35.	Langley	43	72.	Campbell River	17
36.	Surrey	108	73.	Alert Bay	8
37.	Delta	26	74.	Quatsino	10

Unattached Schools operating.

School.	No. of Teachers.	Electoral District.
Bamfield	1	Alberni.
Kildonan	1	Alberni.
Kyuquot	1	Alberni.
Tofino	2	Alberni.
Ucluelet	1	Alberni.
Zeballos	1	Alberni.
Atlin	1	Atlin.
Telegraph Creek	1	Atlin.
Westbranch	1	Cariboo.
Port Renfrew	1	Esquimalt.
Dumaresq	1	Mackenzie.
False Bay	1	Mackenzie.
Maple Grove	1	Mackenzie.
Tucker Bay	1	Mackenzie.
Fort Nelson	1	Peace River.
University Hill	7	Vancouver-Point Grey.

Unattached Schools closed.

School.	Electoral District.
Clayoquot	Alberni.
Clo-oose	Alberni.
Big Creek	Cariboo.
Chezacut	Cariboo.
Tatla Lake	Cariboo.
Tatlayoko	Cariboo.
Beaver Cove	Comox.
Jackson Bay	Mackenzie.
Rivers Inlet	Mackenzie.
Gowlland Harbour	Nanaimo and The Islands.
Granite Bay	Nanaimo and The Islands.

Lists of the present school districts included in each of the proposed districts will be found in Appendix B. The plan is illustrated in the accompanying map.

It is admitted at once that the reorganization here set forth is drastic, so drastic that we have no intention of recommending it without qualification, and think that further consideration is necessary before final action.

However, the plan has been very carefully drawn up. Each district has been discussed at great length with the Department's able staff of Inspectors. The plan is therefore no doctrinaire programme, but rests on wide practical experience and thorough knowledge of the geography and school problems of the Province.

The feeling of many will be that this scheme does not go far enough, and indeed many of the proposed districts are small, over one-third having fewer than twenty teachers, and more than one-half requiring fewer than thirty. The seventy-four enlarged districts are distributed as follows:—

No. of Teachers.	No. of Districts.
100 or more	6
90–99	3
80–89	1
70–79	0
60–69	3
50–59	6

No. of Teachers.	No. of Districts.
40–49	11
30–39	4
20–29	13
10–19	21
Less than 10	6
Total	74

SECONDARY SCHOOL FACILITIES.

The following thirty-four districts each contain one or more centres in which adequate or reasonably adequate secondary school programmes can be maintained:—

Vancouver.
Greater Victoria.
Burnaby.
New Westminster.
Surrey.
Chilliwack.
Abbotsford-Mission.
North Vancouver.
Trail-Rossland.
Richmond.
Nanaimo.
Kamloops.
Nelson.
Kelowna.
Vernon.
Penticton.
West Vancouver.
Maple Ridge.
Kimberley.
Powell River.
Prince Rupert.
Creston.
Ladysmith.
South Okanagan.
Fernie.
Cranbrook.
Alberni.
Courtenay-Cumberland.
Duncan.
Prince George.
Spallumcheen.
Revelstoke.
Coquitlam.
Langley.

Owing to the limited school population in each of the following seven districts only a fairly adequate secondary school programme is likely:—

Salmon Arm.
Delta.
Princeton.
Ocean Falls.
Saanich.
Grand Forks.
Castlegar-Brilliant.

In each of the following twenty-five districts there are one or more small high schools capable of offering only a very limited secondary school programme:—

Windermere.
Kootenay Lake.
Slocan.
Arrow Lakes.
Kettle Valley.
Keremeos.
Golden.
Williams Lake.
Quesnel.
Lillooet.
Merritt.
Fraser Canyon.
Sechelt.
Howe Sound.
Terrace.
Smithers.
Burns Lake.
Vanderhoof.
McBride.
Peace River South.
Cowichan Lake.
Qualicum.
Saltspring.
Alert Bay.
Quatsino.

In the following eight districts there are no high schools established at the present time:—

Barriere.	Portland Canal.
Birch Island.	Sooke.
Ashcroft.	Peace River North.
Queen Charlotte.	Campbell River.

SOME DETAILS OF THE PLAN.

Of the seventy-four enlarged districts, seven are already in existence: South Okanagan (14)*, Langley (35), Delta (37), Richmond (38), Vancouver (39), New Westminster (40), and Burnaby (41). No change in the boundaries of these districts is proposed at present. Eventually an improvement of transportation between Delta and Richmond may make it desirable to unite these municipalities for school purposes.

THE LOWER MAINLAND.

Under the proposal, Barnston Island (one teacher) is joined to the District Municipality of Surrey (36)* for school purposes. The area of West Vancouver (45) is enlarged, but no schools are added. North Vancouver District is joined with North Vancouver City (44). These changes are not radical and their value is self-evident.

The combining of the cities of Port Coquitlam and Port Moody; the District Municipalities of Coquitlam and Fraser Mills; Ioco, Essondale, Sunnyside No. 2, and Lake Buntzen into the one district of Coquitlam (42) is more far-reaching. However, the populated part of this district is compact and can support a good secondary school without difficulty. We have no hesitation in advocating this unit or one closely approaching it.

There is little question of the desirability of uniting Pitt Meadows with Maple Ridge (42), and Mission with the adjacent rural area which includes Dewdney, Deroche, Hatzic Prairie, McConnell Creek, and Nicomen Island. The plan also suggests combining this whole Mission area with the present M.S.A. Area, which comprises the village of Abbotsford, the District Municipalities of Matsqui and Sumas, Huntingdon, and certain sparsely populated rural areas. The reasons for suggesting this are that the people of Mission and Matsqui already have much in common, and that the secondary schools of Mission and Abbotsford, being only 6 miles apart, could easily enrich their programme if they could share facilities. However, one could not be very critical of a scheme which left the M.S.A. Area untouched, as long as Mission and Nicomen Island are united with the area adjacent and north of the Fraser River.

There seems to be little doubt that Chilliwack City and Chilliwhack District Municipality should join for elementary school purposes as they are now joined for secondary schools, and that for school administration the new district should be extended to include some neighbouring rural schools (33). Whether or not the District Municipality of Kent should also be included is a nice question.

VANCOUVER ISLAND.

Vancouver Island contains some districts so obviously desirable as to need no defence. Thus the concensus of informed opinion is that only disparity in the rates impedes strong local approval of the obviously desirable large unit around Courtenay, Cumberland, Comox, and Tsolum (71). The same is true of the Albernis (70). The rural districts surrounding Nanaimo and Ladysmith are now united in the Nanaimo-Ladysmith United Rural School District, but experience indicates that the northern and southern parts of this district might well be separated and joined with the cities of Nanaimo and Ladysmith respectively (67 and 68). The case for units at Cowichan Lake and Duncan seems clear enough (65 and 66).

* The numbers in parentheses are those given to the proposed districts.

One of the most important and interesting possibilities in the Province is the proposed Greater Victoria School District (61). The proposal is to unite Victoria, Oak Bay, the Inner Wards of Saanich, Esquimalt, and a small amount of unorganized territory to the west. The advantages following such a union would be very great, and we wish to add a strong endorsement to the recommendations in its favour of the Harper Report and the "Survey of the Schools of the Greater Victoria Area" by Inspectors Gray and MacKenzie.

If Greater Victoria (61) is formed into one school unit, the remainder of Saanich District Municipality, North Saanich, James Island, and Highland will form a new Saanich School District (63).

There remain the districts of Campbell River (72), Alert Bay (73), Quatsino (74), Saltspring (64), and Sooke (62), all units of large area, small population, and poor means of transportation. In these as in other similar areas throughout the Province the crucial question is not what should be the boundaries of the enlarged districts, but whether such districts should be formed at all. The argument that in such areas the population is too small and scattered for larger school units is impressive. However, each contains either a small high school or a superior school, and it may be that some arrangement can be made whereby these or larger schools in other centres will become available to some of the older pupils. The Peace River Area has shown that much progress can take place even under very unfavourable conditions. Since no harm is possible, some good is certain, and much good not unlikely, the districts are included in the scheme suggested.

THE REST OF THE PROVINCE.

Enough has now been said to indicate the general pattern of the proposed reorganization, and tedious repetition can be avoided by discussing together the other districts suggested.

The first group consists of large and sparsely settled areas similar to, say, Alert Bay or Quatsino. This group consists of:—

Windermere (4).
Kootenay Lake (15).
Arrow Lakes (10).
Fraser Canyon (32).
Golden (18).
Barriere (25).
Birch Island (26).
Lillooet (29).
Ashcroft (3).
Queen Charlotte (50).
Portland Canal (51).
Terrace (53).
McBride (58).

In such districts the best schooling possible is not likely to be very good, at least on the secondary level. However, for the reasons mentioned above even this will not be possible if the larger districts are not formed. To these reasons we might add the fact that a great number of the school districts involved are now administered by the Inspectors acting as Official Trustees. If School Boards are to continue to be unavailable, the districts should be administered in groups, in any case. It is therefore advocated that most or all of these districts be established.

In a second group of districts the population is somewhat more compact and each district has one or more natural centres, all of these containing some provision for secondary education:—

Kettle Valley (13).
Slocan (8).
Keremeos (16).
Williams Lake (27).
Quesnel (28).
Merritt (31).
Sechelt (46).
Howe Sound (48).
Ocean Falls (49).
Smithers (54).
Burns Lake (55).
Vanderhoof (56).
Peace River South (59).
Peace River North (60).

There will be differences of opinion as to whether some of these belong here or in the others, and indeed there is much in common among the groups.

Here again there may be disputes concerning the proper boundaries of these districts, but those suggested merit consideration. We foresee little objection even locally to the Kettle Valley, Keremeos, Smithers, Burns Lake, and Vanderhoof districts.

The Williams Lake district looks enormous on the map. Yet the inhabitants of this district are accustomed to travel long distances for even fairly minor matters, and few will disagree that Williams Lake is commonly recognized as a natural centre for the whole area. The boundaries have been somewhat extended to take in a few isolated schools, most of them now administered by the Inspector, which would profit greatly from inclusion in the district. We are surely on firm ground in proposing the district.

It may be that the proposed Quesnel district should be divided in two by a boundary in the neighbourhood of Wingdam, as there are many miles of uninhabited country between Quesnel and Wells-Barkerville. This has not been done here because the future of Wells-Barkerville depends on local mining properties and hence may be somewhat uncertain.

Much the same proposal should be entertained concerning the Ocean Falls district, although contacts between Ocean Falls and Bella Coola are not so infrequent as one might suppose.

Only in the Peace River are the suggested districts smaller than those already existing. The position here taken is that the Peace River divides the Block into two parts with different needs and problems, and between which communication is not frequent. Although the Williams Lake and Prince George districts are about the same size as the Peace River Block, each has a single centre. However, although the division suggested seems preferable, we cannot quarrel too much with the present arrangement, provided Rolla, Fort St. John, and Dawson Creek are included, and provided the local people are allowed to control their own schools if they wish.

The third group of districts contains more or less urban centres, most of them relatively large and most of them municipalities. It is recommended that they be combined with the rural areas around them. The districts in question are these:—

Fernie (1).
Cranbrook (2).
Kimberley (3).
Creston (5).
Nelson (7).
Castlegar-Brilliant (9).
Trail-Rossland (11).
Grand Forks (12).
Penticton (17).
Revelstoke (19).
Salmon Arm (20).
Spallumcheen (21).
Vernon (22).
Kelowna (23).
Kamloops (24).
Powell River (47).
Prince Rupert (52).
Prince George (57).
Princeton (17).

In many of these districts the population around the large centres is fairly compact. Often a system of transporting pupils already exists or will develop shortly. In two or three, dormitories will probably make their appearance shortly, regardless of this report. These districts contain many of the best schools and School Trustees in the Province. If enlarged districts will work anywhere, they will work in these areas. In some cases large districts have already been formed, and only a relatively slight further enlargement is suggested. In others, strong local movements for enlargement exist. Many centres already receive many tuition pupils from outside. In all, however, little hope for the secondary education of many rural pupils can be held out if large districts are not established.

The reasons for including Wells-Barkerville with Quesnel are the reasons for combining Michel-Natal and its environs with Fernie, and these reasons are open to the

same objections. Yahk should be combined with Cranbrook or Creston, preferably the latter, and it is suggested that the excellent Creston unit be extended to include Kitchener and Sirdar.

It may be that the Nelson district goes too far up the West Arm of the Kootenay Lake and too far down the Kootenay River. It may also be that the Salmo-Ymir area should not be included, but the educational advantages of including it are great.

Although one hesitates to disturb the happy financial arrangements of the Trail-Tadanac school district, it cannot but be advocated that all the school districts contributary to Trail be combined. The new district would be one of the best in the Province. It would be an admirable economic and social unit, well served by transportation facilities. Its size would be ideal and it might have a Municipal Inspector. We urge its establishment.

No comment regarding the proposed districts of Castlegar-Brilliant, Grand Forks, Princeton, Revelstoke, Kamloops, Powell River, Prince Rupert, and Prince George are necessary save the obvious one that the details should be carefully reviewed before final action is taken. For example, the necessity of including Westview, Wildwood, Cranberry Lake with Powell River, and Fort George and Fort George South with Prince George, is hardly open to debate. Concerning Blubber Bay or Penny, however, even enlightened opinions will differ.

There is no doubt that Naramata, Kaleden, and Allen Grove should unite with Penticton. Perhaps, however, Summerland should remain separate. Similarly, Glenmore should combine with Kelowna, Coldstream with Vernon, and Enderby with Armstrong and Spallumcheen. In all probability Peachland and Westbank should be in the Kelowna district. We think also that the children of the lovely Salmon Valley and Lumby areas would profit greatly from unions with Salmon Arm and Vernon respectively. However, the way should be left open for a new Okanagan United to comprise the present Okanagan United, the newly created Central Okanagan United, Benvoulin, Okanagan Mission, Okanagan Centre, and Joe Rich Valley.

THE COMMUNITY SCHOOL DISTRICTS.

The report makes no special provision regarding Doukhobor schools, treating them in the same way as the other schools of the Province. It is possible that this is an error, and the Commission is quite prepared to defer to the judgment of those with longer experience in the matter.

However, the decision to make no differentiation between community and other school districts has behind it some good reasons. First there is the belief that every effort should be made to get them into the ordinary scheme of things. Then there is the fact that the Doukhobor population is becoming gradually diffused, so that some school districts, particularly those in the Slocan Valley, are finding their Doukhobor enrolments steadily growing. It is, of course, quite impracticable to create new community school districts wherever Doukhobor children attend.

A further and important point must be brought out. A feeling of stewardship is growing, so that an effort, necessarily incomplete, to sound out opinion in some of the parts of the Province concerned discovered no objection to the proposal to eliminate community districts as such.

It might be wise if the school districts of the Province were reorganized to retain the Official Trustee of the community school districts as adviser to School Boards for a year or two.

THE CLOSED SCHOOL TRUST FUND.

The moneys in this fund, amounting in all to over $10,000, should be made available to such of the new districts as include territory within the districts formerly served by the schools closed.

BONUS FOR ISOLATION.

The bonus of $100 per year per teacher for especially isolated school districts is intended to be given to the teachers in the following districts:—

No.	District.	No. of Teachers.
—	Unattached districts (except University Hill)	16
26.	Birch Island	10
27.	Williams Lake	21
28.	Quesnel	21
50.	Queen Charlotte	5
51.	Portland Canal	3
53.	Terrace	9
54.	Smithers	21
55.	Burns Lake	16
56.	Vanderhoof	13
58.	McBride	13
59.	Peace River South	58
60.	Peace River North	24
	Total	230

UNATTACHED SCHOOLS.

In the proposed scheme sixteen school districts are not attached to any large school area.

One of these, University Hill, might perhaps be added to the list of large units, since it employs seven teachers and maintains a secondary school. Under present conditions this district should perhaps be added to Vancouver, as it is desirable that Queen Mary elementary school be open to the children in its western section. However, plans for the future call for such an extensive development of this area as will make it an entirely adequate school unit, and for this reason no recommendation concerning the district is here advanced.

For the children in the other fifteen unattached districts and for those in no school district whatever, the officials of the Department should feel a special solicitude. They should visit these schools as often as possible, and should do all in their power to arrange for the older pupils to attend a secondary school elsewhere.

FORMATION OF BOARDS.

At present the Board of School Trustees in a rural school district consists of three members, one elected each year at the annual school meeting in July, to hold office for a three-year term. However, the school meeting in many districts is falling into decay, partly because the district is so small that really important problems cannot be effectively attacked, and partly because it is not in tune with present-day conditions. Larger districts should revive public interest in school affairs, but he would be a hardy optimist indeed who expected the annual school meeting to function well in them.

Section 80 (2) of the "Public Schools Act" provides for the election of Boards by delegates. In each attendance area a meeting would elect, or if necessary the Inspector would appoint, one, two, or three delegates. All these delegates would then meet to elect a seven-man Board, each trustee so elected holding office for one year. To the representatives or delegates, all the powers of the annual or other school meeting would be entrusted.

This subsection of the Act was added only recently, and has been used in only one district. There it appears to be working very well. This method of forming a Board solves the problem of finding a substitute for the annual school meeting, which, how-

ever much we may regret it, appears to be growing obsolescent. However, the method has not been sufficiently tested to warrant recommending its adoption everywhere without qualification. The Council of Public Instruction should have power to make an order in respect of any district, specifying the number of trustees, the method of choosing them, and their terms of office.

In districts containing parts or all of one or more municipalities, Boards should continue to be chosen as at present—i.e., by ballot—the part of the district not organized being considered extra-municipal area. However, in respect of any of these the Council of Public Instruction should have power to issue orders specifying any changes considered necessary.

The Council of Public Instruction should, of course, retain the power it now possesses to appoint Official Trustees to replace School Boards, but it is hoped that it will be possible to exercise this power only sparingly.

THE INSPECTOR AND THE BOARD.

As a matter of ordinary good sense, the Boards of the enlarged districts will avail themselves of the experience, training, and knowledge of the local Inspector of Schools. However, it must be made clear that when an Inspector attends a Board meeting or tenders advice, he does so, not on sufferance or by courtesy, but as a right which inheres in his position and in his one all-embracing duty to further the interests of the children in his area. It is recommended that the Inspector have the legal right to be informed of and, if he thinks wise, to attend all Board meetings in his territory, to speak and make recommendations, but not to vote. The Board, subject to the approval of the Superintendent of Education, should have the power to delegate to the Inspector such of the powers of a Municipal Inspector as it thinks wise.

VOTING ON MONEY BY-LAWS.

One of the briefs pointed out that present statutes prevent property-owners in extra-municipal areas from voting on school money by-laws, although they are, of course, taxed for the debenture debt incurred. This injustice should be removed.

THE COLLECTION CHARGE FOR RURAL SCHOOL TAXES.

In accordance with section 124 of the " Public Schools Act " the amounts voted by the annual school meeting to be raised by taxation in a rural school district are advanced by the Minister of Finance from the Consolidated Revenue Fund. The fund is reimbursed by the taxes collected plus an amount fixed by the Assessor of up to 15 per cent. of that voted. This extra charge is to cover costs of assessment and collection, interest on money advanced, and losses from uncollected taxes. The common practice appears to be to fix this collection charge at 12 per cent., save in a few districts containing only a small number of large taxpayers.

We cannot subscribe to the opinion frequently expressed that this charge should be abolished. Taxpayers in municipalities pay taxes which must cover such costs, and it is not right that they, as supporters of the Provincial Government, should also help to defray these costs in rural areas. However, much of the cost is caused by the personal property tax, which is imposed only in rural areas and only for school support. The abolition of this tax and the enlargement of school districts should decrease considerably the cost of collecting school taxes, and the Government should review the matter with the object of ascertaining by how much the collection charge can be reduced.

PROVISION OF TEXT-BOOKS ON A RENTAL BASIS.

It has been suggested that parents of pupils in grades not now provided with free text-books might pay a rental fee varying from, say, $1 to $7 or $8, according to the grade attended. In return for this the Department, through its Text-book Branch,

would provide for use by the pupils during the year all text-books prescribed for the courses taken. Calculation shows that the plan need not add to governmental expenditure. The scheme would, of course, be voluntary, that is, no pupil would be compelled to rent books if he wished to buy them.

The proposal is very attractive. Parents would be saved much inconvenience and expense. Transfer from school to school would be expedited. In time reserves would allow rentals to be reduced or book dividends to be declared. The text-books prescribed could be changed more easily than at present.

There are some difficulties. The teaching body might object to making the initial collections, and the School Boards might find their part troublesome. Pupils might be inclined to neglect books which were not their own. For these reasons the Teachers' Federation and the Trustees' Association should be consulted before final action is taken.

RECOMMENDATIONS.

1. That the Provincial Government reorganize its present system of school districts without seeking local approval.

2. That the particular plan of reorganization to be put into effect be arrived at only after much public discussion and the gathering and weighing of all possible opinions.

3. That the plan be arrived at in the light of the characteristics of an adequate school district enunciated in this report.

4. That tuition fees to non-resident pupils be based on the amount only by which local expenditures exceed the cost of the basic programme; that is, that Government grants and the product of the standard tax rate be not included in the calculation of tuition fees.

5. That the plan for local units outlined in this report become the basis for the discussion which should precede the formulation of a final plan.

6. That careful consideration be given to the proposal that community school districts should cease to exist as such.

7. That most of the moneys in the Closed Schools Trust Fund be made available to the appropriate large school districts.

8. That normally the Boards of Trustees in districts entirely rural be chosen by representatives or delegates as provided for in subsection (2) of section 80 of the "Public Schools Act."

9. That normally trustees in districts containing municipal territory be elected by ballot as at present.

10. That the Council of Public Instruction be empowered to order any variations deemed desirable in respect of the formation of School Boards in any district.

11. That the Council of Public Instruction retain the power to replace School Boards with Official Trustees.

12. That the Inspector be given the right to be informed of any Board meetings in his area, and the right to attend any such meeting, and to speak and make recommendations, but not to vote.

13. That with the approval of the Superintendent of Education, a School Board be allowed to delegate to the Inspector in its area any or all of the powers now exercised by Municipal Inspectors.

14. That property-owners in extra-municipal areas be given the right to vote on school money by-laws.

15. That the matter of the collection charge for rural school district school taxes be reviewed by the Government with a view to its possible reduction.

16. That the possibility of providing prescribed text-books in upper grades on a voluntary rental basis be explored.

APPENDICES.

APPENDIX A.

Public Hearings and Briefs.

	Date.	Place.	Organization.
1.	Jan. 30	Vancouver	B.C. School Trustees' Association.
2.	Jan. 30	Vancouver	B.C. Parent-Teachers' Federation.
3.	Jan. 31	Vancouver	Vancouver School Board.
4.	Feb. 1	Vancouver	Associated Property Owners of Vancouver.
5.	Feb. 2	Vancouver	B.C. Teachers' Federation.
6.	Feb. 6	New Westminster	Delta Municipality.
7.	Feb. 7	Chilliwack	Chilliwack Township.
8.	Feb. 7	Chilliwack	Kent Municipality.
9.	Feb. 7	Chilliwack	Women's Canadian Club.
10.	Feb. 9	Abbotsford	M.S.A. Advisory Board.
11.	Feb. 9	Abbotsford	Matsqui Municipality.
12.	Feb. 9	Abbotsford	Langley School Board.
13.	Feb. 14	Prince Rupert	Prince Rupert Municipal Council and School Board.
14.	Feb. 14	Prince Rupert	Prince Rupert Parent-Teacher Association.
15.	Feb. 14	Prince Rupert	Prince Rupert Teachers' Association.
16.	Feb. 16	Smithers	Smithers Committee of Educational Finance.
17.	Feb. 19	Prince George	Prince George School Board.
18.	Feb. 19	Prince George	Quesnel Board of Trade and School Board.
19.	Feb. 21	Dawson Creek	Dawson Creek Chamber of Commerce.
20.	Feb. 21	Dawson Creek	Peace River Block, Alberta Farmers' Union.
21.	Feb. 21	Dawson Creek	Pouce Coupe Local, Alberta Farmers' Union.
22.	Mar. 5	Haney	Langley Municipality.
23.	Mar. 5	Haney	Maple Ridge Municipality.
24.	Mar. 5	Haney	Port Coquitlam City.
25.	Mar. 5	Haney	Maple Ridge School Board.
26.	Mar. 5	Haney	Coquitlam District.
27.	Mar. 5	Haney	Pitt Meadows School Board.
28.	Mar. 13	Penticton	West Summerland School Board.
29.	Mar. 13	Penticton	Penticton Municipal Council.
30.	Mar. 13	Penticton	Penticton Local, B.C.F.G.A.
31.	Mar. 13	Penticton	Stockmen, Southern Interior of B.C.
32.	Mar. 15	Kelowna	Kelowna City Council.
33.	Mar. 17	Vernon	Coldstream School Board.
34.	Mar. 17	Vernon	B.C. Federation of Agriculture.
35.	Mar. 17	Vernon	B.C. Fruit-growers' Association.
36.	Mar. 17	Vernon	Vernon School Board.
37.	Mar. 17	Vernon	City of Vernon.
38.	Mar. 17	Vernon	District G Farmers' Institute.
39.	Mar. 17	Vernon	Vernon and Coldstream Locals of B.C. Fruit-growers' Association.
40.	Mar. 17	Vernon	Oyama Citizens' Forum.
41.	Mar. 21	Creston	Creston Valley School Board.
42.	Mar. 21	Creston	W. J. Truscott.
43.	Mar. 21	Creston	Creston Board of Trade.
44.	Mar. 22	Nelson	Nelson City Council.
45.	Mar. 22	Nelson	F. A. Jewett.
46.	Mar. 23	Rossland	Rossland School Board.

PUBLIC HEARINGS AND BRIEFS—*Continued.*

	Date.	Place.	Organization.
47.	Mar. 23	Rossland	Castlegar School Board.
48.	Mar. 23	Rossland	Trail Board of Trade.
49.	Mar. 23	Rossland	Central Farmers' Institute.
50.	Mar. 23	Rossland	Rossland City Council.
51.	Mar. 27	Grand Forks	Grand Forks Board of Trade.
52.	Apr. 9	Nanaimo	Nanaimo Council and School Board.
53.	Apr. 9	Nanaimo	Mid-Island Branch B.C.T.A.
54.	Apr. 10	Port Alberni	West Coast Branch B.C.T.A.
55.	Apr. 11	Courtenay	Comox District Educational Council.
56.	Apr. 11	Courtenay	R. U. Hurford.
57.	Apr. 17	Vancouver	Union of B.C. Municipalities.
58.	Apr. 20	Victoria	Victoria City Council and School Board.
59.	Apr. 20	Victoria	Saanich Municipality.
60.	Apr. 20	Victoria	Saanich School Board.
61.	Apr. 20	Victoria	Oak Bay Municipality and School Board.
62.	Apr. 20	Victoria	Henry George Club.
63.	Apr. 20	Victoria	Cowichan Agriculture Society of District A, Farmers' Institute of B.C.
		Miscellaneous.	
64.			North Vancouver City Council.
65.			North Vancouver School Board.
66.			Japanese Federation Parent-Teachers' Associations.
67.			Wells-Barkerville School Board.
68.			Richmond Municipality.
69.			Cloverdale Ratepayers' Association.
70.			Nanaimo Gyro Club.
71.			Chemainus Parent-Teacher Association.
72.			National Economic Order in Canada.
73.			Richmond School Board.
74.			B.C. Beef Cattle Growers' Association.
75.			E. S. Woodward.

APPENDIX B.

Proposed School Districts.

No.	District.	No. of Teachers.	No.	District.	No. of Teachers.
1.	Fernie	42	38.	Richmond	52
2.	Cranbrook	29	39.	Vancouver	1,238
3.	Kimberley	40	40.	New Westminster	118
4.	Windermere	12	41.	Burnaby	177
5.	Creston	34	42.	Maple Ridge	43
6.	Kootenay Lake	15	43.	Coquitlam	51
7.	Nelson	55	44.	North Vancouver	94
8.	Slocan	19	45.	West Vancouver	40
9.	Castlegar-Brilliant	29	46.	Sechelt	20
10.	Arrow Lakes	13	47.	Powell River	44
11.	Trail-Rossland	109	48.	Howe Sound	18
12.	Grand Forks	22	49.	Ocean Falls	18
13.	Kettle Valley	17	50.	Queen Charlotte	5
14.	South Okanagan	22	51.	Portland Canal	3
15.	Penticton	54	52.	Prince Rupert	44
16.	Keremeos	13	53.	Terrace	9
17.	Princeton	23	54.	Smithers	21
18.	Golden	15	55.	Burns Lake	16
19.	Revelstoke	34	56.	Vanderhoof	13
20.	Salmon Arm	42	57.	Prince George	47
21.	Spallumcheen	33	58.	McBride	13
22.	Vernon	63	59.	Peace River South	58
23.	Kelowna	81	60.	Peace River North	24
24.	Kamloops	61	61.	Greater Victoria	197
25.	Barriere	9	62.	Sooke	22
26.	Birch Island	10	63.	Saanich	34
27.	Williams Lake	21	64.	Saltspring	13
28.	Quesnel	21	65.	Duncan	46
29.	Lillooet	12	66.	Cowichan Lake	17
30.	Ashcroft	13	67.	Ladysmith	26
31.	Merritt	8	68.	Nanaimo	65
32.	Fraser Canyon	13	69.	Qualicum	17
33.	Chilliwack	94	70.	Alberni	40
34.	Abbotsford-Mission	93	71.	Courtenay-Cumberland	54
35.	Langley	43	72.	Campbell River	17
36.	Surrey	108	73.	Alert Bay	8
37.	Delta	26	74.	Quatsino	10

UNATTACHED SCHOOLS OPEN.

School.	No. of Teachers.	Electoral District.
Bamfield	1	Alberni.
Kildonan	1	Alberni.
Kyuquot	1	Alberni.
Tofino	2	Alberni.
Ucluelet	1	Alberni.
Zeballos	1	Alberni.
Atlin	1	Atlin.
Telegraph Creek	1	Atlin.
Westbranch	1	Cariboo.
Port Renfrew	1	Esquimalt.
Dumaresq	1	Mackenzie.
False Bay	1	Mackenzie.
Maple Grove	1	Mackenzie.
Minstrel Island	1	Mackenzie.
Tucker Bay	1	Mackenzie.
University Hill	7	Vancouver-Point Grey.

UNATTACHED SCHOOLS CLOSED.

School.	Electoral District.
Clayoquot	Alberni.
Clo-oose	Alberni.
Big Creek	Cariboo.
Chezacut	Cariboo.
Tatla Lake	Cariboo.
Tatlayoko	Cariboo.
Beaver Cove	Comox.
Jackson Bay	Mackenzie.
Rivers Inlet	Mackenzie.
Gowlland Harbour	Nanaimo and The Islands.
Granite Bay	Nanaimo and The Islands.

NO. 1. FERNIE DISTRICT.

Schools open.—Baynes Lake, Cool Creek, Crows Nest, Elk Bridge, Elko, Elk Prairie, Fernie City, Galloway, Grasmere-Roosville, Hosmer, Jaffray, Michel-Natal, Newgate, and Waldo.

Schools closed.—Cokato, Corbin, Flagstone, Burlingham, Morrissey Mines, and Big Sand Creek.

NO. 2. CRANBROOK DISTRICT.

Schools open.—Bull River Bridge, Cranbrook City, Fort Steele, Mayook, Moyie, Wardner, and Wycliffe.

Schools closed.—Lumberton, St. Eugene Mission, and Wanklyn.

NO. 3. KIMBERLEY DISTRICT.

Schools open.—Kimberley United, Moyase, and Sheep Creek.

Schools closed.—Larchwood and Wasa.

NO. 4. WINDERMERE DISTRICT.

Schools open.—Athalmer-Invermere, Brisco, Canal Flat, Edgewater, Wilmer, and Windermere.

Schools closed.—Glena, Sparkling Creek, and Radium Hot Springs.

NO. 5. CRESTON DISTRICT.

Schools open.—Creston Valley United, Kitchener, Sirdar, and Yahk.

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No. 6. Kootenay Lake District.

Schools open.—Ainsworth, Argenta, Boswell, Crawford, Gerrard, Johnson's Landing, Kaslo City, La France Creek, Retallack, and Shutty Bench.

Schools closed.—Cooper Creek, Florence Mine, Gray Creek, Lardeau, Mirror Lake, Riondel, and Sanca.

No. 7. Nelson District.

Schools open.—Balfour, Belford, Bonnington, Harrop, Lodore, Longbeach, Nelson City, Park's Siding, Procter, Salmo, Sproule Creek, Taghum, Willow Point, and Ymir.

Schools closed.—Erie, Hall Siding, Meadow Spur, Queen's Bay, and Sitkum Creek.

No. 8. Slocan District.

Schools open.—Appledale, Crescent Valley, Hunter Siding, Krestova, New Denver, Passmore, Perry Siding, Silverton, Slocan City, Slocan Park, Slocan South, Vallican, and Winlaw.

Schools closed.—Lemon Creek, Roseberry, and Sandon.

No. 9. Castlegar-Brilliant District.

Schools open.—Brilliant, Castlegar United, Champion Creek, Deer Park, Gibson Creek, Glade, Kamanoe, Kinnaird, Ootischenia, Pass Creek, Renata, Robson, Shoreacres, and Thrums.

School closed.—Landis.

No. 10. Arrow Lakes District.

Schools open.—Arrow Park United, Burton, Edgewood, Nakusp United, Fauquier, Inanoaklin Valley, Mount Ingersoll, and Needles.

School closed.—Syringa Creek.

No. 11. Trail-Rossland District.

Schools open.—Beaver Falls, Blueberry Creek, Casino, Columbia Gardens, Fruitvale, Patterson, Rossland City, Tadanac District Municipality, and Trail City.

School closed.—Birchbank.

No. 12. Grand Forks District.

Schools open.—Brown Creek, Christina Lake United, Fruitova, Grand Forks City, and Outlook.

Schools closed.—Berrydale, Carson, Gilpin, Kettle Valley North, and Sand Creek.

No. 13. Kettle Valley District.

Schools open.—Beaverdell, Boundary Falls, Bridesville, Carmi, Crouse Creek, Greenwood City, Kettle Valley, Midway, Rhone, Rock Creek, Rock Creek Upper, Rock Mountain, and Westbridge.

Schools closed.—Anarchist Mountain, Anaconda, Christian Valley, Myncaster, Norwegian Creek, Wallace Mountain, and Ingram Mountain.

No. 14. South Okanagan District.

Schools open.—Oliver, Okanagan Falls, and Osoyoos.

School closed.—Testalinda Creek.

No. 15. Penticton District.

Schools open.—Allen Grove, Kaleden, Naramata, Penticton District Municipality, and Summerland District Municipality.

School closed.—Meadow Valley.

No. 16. Keremeos District.

Schools open.—Cawston, Hedley, Keremeos, Nickel Plate Mine, and Olalla.

School closed.—Sterling Creek.

No. 17. PRINCETON DISTRICT.

Schools open.—Allenby, Copper Mountain, Coalmont, One Mile Creek, Princeton, and Tulameen.

Schools closed.—Blakeburn, Five Mile Creek, Jura, Killarney, Manning, and Nine Mile Creek.

No. 18. GOLDEN DISTRICT.

Schools open.—Castledale, Field, Golden, Harrogate, Horse Creek, McMurdo, Moberley, Mountain Ridge, and Parson.

Schools closed.—Beavermouth, Blueberry, Donald, and Forde.

No. 19. REVELSTOKE DISTRICT.

Schools open.—Arrowhead, Beaton, Begbie, Big Eddy, Cambie, Cartier, Crawford Creek, Glena Bay, Glacier, Greenslide, Hall's Landing, Malakwa, Mount Cartier, Revelstoke City, Solsqua, Sproat, and Twelve Mile Ferry.

Schools closed.—Albert Canyon, Canborne, Clan William, Comaplix, Craigellachie, Ferguson, Mount McPherson, Taft, Three Valley, and Trout Lake.

No. 20. SALMON ARM DISTRICT.

Schools open.—Balmoral, Blind Bay, Broadview, Canoe, Canoe South, Carlin Siding, Celista, Deep Creek, Eagle Creek, Falkland, Gleneden, Glenemma, Heywood's Corner, Larch Hill, Magna Bay, Meadow Bay, Mount Ida, Notch Hill, Salmon Arm City, Salmon Arm District Municipality, Salmon Bench, Salmon Arm West, Salmon Valley, Silver Creek, Sicamous, Sorrento, Sunnybrae, Tappen, Tappen Valley, and White Lake.

Schools closed.—Adelphi, Anglemont, Anstey Arm, Eagle Bay, Hendon, Hillcrest, Lee Creek, Paxton Valley, and Seymour Arm.

No. 21. SPALLUMCHEEN DISTRICT.

Schools open.—Armstrong Consolidated, Ashton Creek, Enderby North, Grandview Bench, Grindrod, Enderby City, Hupel, Mara, Trinity Creek and Springhead.

School closed.—Kingfisher.

No. 22. VERNON DISTRICT.

Schools open.—Coldstream District Municipality, Hilton, Kedleston, Lavington, Lumby, Mabel Lake, Reiswig, Richlands, Shuswap Falls, and Vernon City.

Schools closed.—Creighton Valley, Medora Creek, Mount Aberdeen, Sugar Lake, and Trinity Valley.

No. 23. KELOWNA DISTRICT.

Schools open.—Benvoulin, Black Mountain, Ellison, Joe Rich Valley, Kelowna City, Kelowna East, Kelowna South, Mission Creek, Okanagan Centre, Okanagan Mission, Oyama, Peachland District Municipality, Rutland, Westbank, and Winfield.

Schools closed.—Bear Creek, Ewing's Landing, Fir Valley, and Glenmore District Municipality.

No. 24. KAMLOOPS DISTRICT.

Schools open.—Adam's Lake, Barnhart Vale, Bestwick, Brocklehurst, Chase, Duck Range, Fruitlands, Heffley Creek, Holmwood, Kamloops City, Long Lake, Martin's Prairie, McGillivray, Monte Lake, Pemberton Range, Pinantan, Pritchard, Red Lake, Savona, Tranquille, Vinsulla, Westwold, and Westsyde.

Schools closed.—Anderson Creek, Beresford, Campbell Ranch, Chase Creek Lower, Clifton, Criss Creek, Deadman's Creek, Edith Lake, Fish Lake Road, Heffley Creek Upper, Knutsford, Mamette Lake Road, McLure, Monte Creek, North Thompson W., Robbins Range, Rose Hill, Savona Road, Seven Lakes, Shuswap, Sullivan Valley, Tranquille Upper, Trapp Lake, and Turtle Valley.

No. 25. BARRIERE DISTRICT.

Schools open.—Barriere River, Chinook Cove, Chu Chua, Darlington, Floral Creek, Forks, Little Fort, Louis Creek, and Squam Bay.

Schools closed.—Blucher Hall, and Cahilty.

No. 26. Birch Island District.

Schools open.—Avola, Birch Island, Blackpool, Blue River, Clearwater, Lempriere, Round Top, Star Lake, and Valemount.

Schools closed.—Albreda, McMurphy, Signal Butte, and Vavenby.

No. 27. Williams Lake District.

Schools open.—Alexis Creek, Bridge Lake North, Buffalo Creek, Dog Creek, Enterprise, Forest Grove, Harper's Camp, Lac La Hache, Lone Butte, McLeese, 150 Mile House, Miocene, Quesnel Dam, Roe Lake, Rose Lake, Soda Creek, Springhouse, and Williams Lake.

Schools closed.—Big Lake, Black Creek, Bradley Creek, Bridge Lake, Chimney Creek, Felker Lake, Glencoe, Lilypad, Meldrum Creek, 144 Mile House, 100 Mile House, Pablo, Riske Creek, Sheridan Lake, Watch Lake, and Willowford.

No. 28. Quesnel District.

Schools open.—Alexandria, Alexandria North, Bouchie Lake, Dragon Lake, Gravel Ferry, Landsdowne, Menzinger Creek, Moose Heights, Quesnel, Quesnel West, and Wells-Barkerville.

Schools closed.—Australian, Baker Creek, Castle Rock, Macalister, Narcosli Creek, Sister's Creek, Ten Mile Lake, and Wingdam.

No. 29. Lillooet District.

Schools open.—Bralorne, Bridge River, Lillooet, Pachelqua, Pavilion, and Pioneer Mine.

Schools closed.—Brexton, Goldbridge, and Minto Mine.

No. 30. Ashcroft District.

Schools open.—Ashcroft, Big Bar Creek, Cisco, Clinton, Foster's Bar, Lytton, Spences Bridge, and Walhachin.

School's closed.—Black Canyon, Bonaparte North, Bonaparte Valley, Cache Creek, Eagan Lake, Empire Valley, Green Lake, High Bar, Jesmond, Lytton North, and Vidette Mine.

No. 31. Merritt District.

Schools open.—Brookmere, Merritt City, and Pine.

Schools closed.—Aspen Grove, Canford, Juliet, Mamette Lake, Nicola, and Nicola Lower.

No. 32. Fraser Canyon District.

Schools open.—Boston Bar, Concord, Hope, Keefers, North Bend, St. Elmo, Stout, and Yale.

No. 33. Chilliwack District.

Schools open.—Cheam View, Chilliwack City, Chilliwhack District Municipality, Columbia Valley, Cultus Lake, Kent District Municipality, and Popcum.

Schools closed.—Chilliwack River, Slesse Creek, and Vedder River.

No. 34. Abbotsford-Mission District.

Schools open.—Abbotsford, Deroche, Dewdney, Hatzic Prairie, McConnell Creek, Matsqui District Municipality, Mission District Municipality, Nicomen Island, and Sumas District Municipality.

No. 35. Langley District.

Schools open.—Langley District Municipality.

No. 36. Surrey District.

Schools open.—Barnston Island, and Surrey District Municipality.

No. 37. Delta District.

Schools open.—Delta District Municipality.

No. 38. Richmond District.

Schools open.—Richmond District Municipality.

No. 39. VANCOUVER DISTRICT.

Schools open.—Vancouver City.

No. 40. NEW WESTMINSTER DISTRICT.

Schools open.—New Westminster City.

No. 41. BURNABY DISTRICT.

Schools open.—Burnaby District Municipality.

No. 42. MAPLE RIDGE DISTRICT.

Schools open.—Maple Ridge District Municipality and Pitt Meadows District Municipality.
School closed.—Pitt Lake.

No. 43. COQUITLAM DISTRICT.

Schools open.—Coquitlam District Municipality, Essondale, Ioco, Port Coquitlam City, Port Moody City, and Sunnyside No. 2.
Schools closed.—Fraser Mills and Lake Buntzen.

No. 44. NORTH VANCOUVER DISTRICT.

Schools open.—North Vancouver City and North Vancouver District Municipality.

No. 45. WEST VANCOUVER DISTRICT.

Schools open.—West Vancouver District Municipality.

No. 46. SECHELT DISTRICT.

Schools open.—Bowen Island, Egmont, Elphinstone Bay, Half Moon Bay, Howe Sound United, Irvine's Landing, Kleindale, Pender Harbour, Port Mellon, Sechelt United, and Silver Sands.

No. 47. POWELL RIVER DISTRICT.

Schools open.—Blubber Bay, Cranberry Lake, Lund, Powell River, Stillwater United, Van Anda, Westview, and Wildwood.
Schools closed.—Bliss Landing, Galley Bay, Okeover Arm, and Southview.

No. 48. HOWE SOUND DISTRICT.

Schools open.—Birken, Britannia Beach, Britannia Mine, Pemberton, Pemberton Meadows, Squamish, and Woodfibre.
Schools closed.—Alta Lake.

No. 49. OCEAN FALLS DISTRICT.

Schools open.—Bella Bella, Bella Coola United, and Ocean Falls.
Schools closed.—Firvale and Noosatsum.

No. 50. QUEEN CHARLOTTE DISTRICT.

Schools open.—Masset, Port Clements, Sandspit, and Skidegate Inlet United.

No. 51. PORTLAND CANAL DISTRICT.

Schools open.—Premier and Stewart.
Schools closed.—Alice Arm, Anyox, and Big Missouri.

No. 52. PRINCE RUPERT DISTRICT.

Schools open.—Digby Island, Essington, Inverness, Port Edward, Prince Rupert City, and Simpson.
Schools closed.—Claxton Cannery, Copper City, Lewis Island, Oceanic Cannery, Oona, Osland, and Sunnyside Cannery.

No. 53. Terrace District.

Schools open.—Hazelton, Hazelton New, Kispiox, Kitwanga, Pacific, Terrace, Usk, and Woodcock.

Schools closed.—Cedarvale, Dorreen, Four Mile, Hazelton South, Remo, and Sealey Lake.

No. 54. Smithers District.

Schools open.—Barrett Lake, Driftwood Creek, Evelyn, Glentanna, Houston, Quick, Smithers, and Telkwa.

Schools closed.—Duthie Mine, Hubert, Round Lake, Walcott, and Woodmere.

No. 55. Burns Lake District.

Schools open.—Alexander Manson, Burns Lake, Danskin, Decker Lake, Endako, Francois Lake, Grassy Plains, Omineca, Palling, Perow, Tchesinkut Lake, Tintagel, Topley, and Wistaria.

Schools closed.—Bulkley North, Cheslatta, Colleymount, Forestdale, Francois Lake West, Nithi Mountain, Nithi River, Savory, Sheraton, Southbank, Streatham, Tatalrose, and Uncha Valley.

No. 56. Vanderhoof District.

Schools open.—Ellesby, Fort Fraser, Fort St. James, Fraser Lake, Lakes District, Mapes, Meadowdale, Vanderhoof, and Willowvale.

Schools closed.—Bearhead, Braeside, Chilco, Engen, Finmore, Fort Fraser North, Fraser Lake North, Hulatt, Lily Lake, Marten Lake, Naltesby, Orange Valley, Pinchi Lake, Prairiedale, Stuart River, and Webber Lake.

No. 57. Prince George District.

Schools open.—Aleza Lake, Beaverley, Chief Lake, Cranbrook Mills, Crescent Lake, Ferndale, Fort George, Fort George South, Fraser Flats, Giscome, Hansard, Isle Pierre, Mud River, Newlands, Penny, Prince George City, Reid Lake, Salmon River, Shelley, Sinclair Mills, Stone Creek, Strathnaver, Tabor Creek, Thompson, Willow River, and Woodpecker.

Schools closed.—Bednesti, Cale Creek, Camp Creek, Canyon Creek, Fort George Canyon, Hutton, Longworth United, Ness Lake, Newlands North, and Sylvan Glade.

No. 58. McBride District.

Schools open.—Beaver River, Bend, Croydon, Dunster, Lamming Mills, Lee, Loos, McBride, and Snowshoe.

Schools closed.—Dome Creek, Kidd, Mountain View, Red Pass, Shere, and Tete Jaune.

No. 59. Peace River South District.

Schools open.—Arras, Bon Accord, Carpio, Coleman Creek, Dawson Creek, Dawson North, Dawson South, Devereaux, Doe River, Groundbirch, Kelly Lake, Lake View, Landry, Moberly Lake, McLeod, Parkland, Pouce Coupe, Pouce Coupe Central, Pouce Coupe East, Progress, Rolla, Rolla North, Saskatoon Creek, Seven Mile Corner, Shearer Dale, Springhill, Sunnybrook, Sunrise Valley, Sunset Prairie, Swan Lake North, Swan Lake South, Sweetwater, Tate Creek, Tayloe South, Tuscolla Mountain, Willow Brook, and Willow Valley.

Schools closed.—Alderdale, Belle View, Bissette, Farrel Creek, Hays, High Ridge, Lone Prairie, Pine East, Riverside, Tupper Creek, Upper Cutbank, and Valley View.

No. 60. Peace River North District.

Schools open.—Airport, Baldonnel, Cecil Lake, Charlie Lake, Crystal Springs, Fish Creek, Fort St. John, Hudson Hope, Montney, Murdale, Pine North, Pine Upper, Pine View, Rose Prairie, Sunrise, Taylor Flats, and Transpine.

Schools closed.—Bear Flats, Clayton, Erinlea, Forfar, and Peace View.

No. 61. Greater Victoria District.

Schools open.—Esquimalt District Municipality, Oak Bay District Municipality, Saanich District Municipality (Inner Wards), and Victoria City.

No. 62. Sooke District.

Schools open.—Albert Head, Colwood, Happy Valley, Jordan River, Langford, Metchosin, Muir Creek, Otter Point, Rocky Point, Shirley, Sooke, Sooke East, and Sooke North.

Schools closed.—Goldstream, Kapoor, and Prospect Lake.

No. 63. Saanich District.

Schools open.—James Island, Saanich District Municipality (Outer Wards), and Saanich North.

School closed.—Highland.

No. 64. Saltspring District.

Schools open.—Beaver Point, Galiano, Galiano North, Isabella Point, Mayne Island, Pender Island, and Saltspring United.

Schools closed.—Pender Island South, Retreat Cove, Saturna, and Savary.

No. 65. Duncan District.

Schools open.—Bamberton, Bench, Cobble Hill, Cowichan, Cowichan North District Municipality, Crofton, Duncan City, Fairbridge, Glenora, Koksilah, Mill Bay, Sahtlam, Shawnigan Lake, Solarium, Sylvania, and Westholme.

Schools closed.—Lakeshaw, Malahat Station, and Shawnigan Lake West.

No. 66. Cowichan Lake District.

Schools open.—Cowichan Lake, Mayo, Nixon Creek, Rounds, Shaw Creek, and Yount.

No. 67. Ladysmith District.

Schools open.—Chemainus and Ladysmith City.

Schools closed.—Diamond Crossing, Oyster North, Oyster South, and Silvey.

No. 68. Nanaimo District.

Schools open.—Brechin, Cedar North, Gabriola United, Harewood, Lantzville, Mountain, Nanaimo City, Northfield, and Wellington South.

Schools closed.—Cassidy, Cedar East, Cedar South, Chase River, Departure Bay, Extension, Nanoose, Nanaimo Bay, Waterloo, and Wellington.

No. 69. Qualicum District.

Schools open.—Bowser, Deep Bay, Errington, French Creek, Hillier, Parksville, Qualicum Beach, and Qualicum Little.

Schools closed.—Horne Lake, Montrose, and Redgap.

No. 70. Alberni District.

Schools open.—Alberni City, Beaver Creek, Cherry Creek, Franklin River, Gill, Great Central, Port Alberni City, and Sproat Lake.

School closed.—Bainbridge.

No. 71. Courtenay-Cumberland District.

Schools open.—Bevan-Puntledge, Comox, Courtenay City, Cumberland City, Denman Island, Fanny Bay, Hornby Island, Oyster River, Tsolum, and Union Bay.

Schools closed.—Comox Lake, McGuigan, Minto, and Royston.

No. 72. Campbell River District.

Schools open.—Bloedel, Campbell Falls, Campbell River, Cape Mudge, Cortes Island, Heriot Bay, Owen Bay, Oyster Bay, Quathiaski Cove, Redonda Bay, Sayward, Squirrel Cove, Stuart Island, and Whaletown.

Schools closed.—Blind Channel, Elk Bay, Hardwicke Island, Menzies Bay, Palmer Bay, Read Island, Rock Bay, Seymour Narrows, Sayward Upper, Seaford, Surge Narrows, and Thurlow.

No. 73. Alert Bay District.

Schools open.—Alert Bay, Englewood, Malcolm Island, Port McNeill, and Minstrel Island.
Schools closed.—Claydon Bay, Gilford Island, Kaleva, and Kingcome Inlet.

No. 74. Quatsino District.

Schools open.—Coal Harbor, Jeune Landing, Port Alice, Port Hardy, Quatsino, and Winter Harbour.
Schools closed.—Fort Rupert and Holberg.

VICTORIA, B.C.:
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1945.

1,805-1145-9333

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4.	Windermere	12	41.	Burnaby	177
5.	Creston	34	42.	Maple Ridge	43
6.	Kootenay Lake	15	43.	Coquitlam	51
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8.	Slocan	19	45.	West Vancouver	40
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15.	Penticton	54	52.	Prince Rupert	44
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18.	Golden	15	55.	Burns Lake	16
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21.	Spallumcheen	33	58.	McBride	13
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23.	Kelowna	81	60.	Peace River North	24
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26.	Birch Island	10	63.	Saanich	34
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29.	Lillooet	12	66.	Cowichan Lake	17
30.	Ashcroft	13	67.	Ladysmith	26
31.	Merritt	8	68.	Nanaimo	65
32.	Fraser Canyon	13	69.	Qualicum	17
33.	Chilliwack	94	70.	Alberni	40
34.	Abbotsford-Mission	93	71.	Courtenay-Cumberland	54
35.	Langley	43	72.	Campbell River	17
36.	Surrey	108	73.	Alert Bay	8
37.	Delta	26	74.	Quatsino	10

ERRATA.

Page 12, third paragraph, line 3: "$958,677,053" should read "$58,677,053."

Page 85, second paragraph under table: Line 3 should read: "to 1,331,760 acres or a total of 1,678,600 acres. I should add that destruction"

Page 103, third paragraph, line 4: "unemployment" should read "employment."