

# THE VIRGINIA TEACHER

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## EDUCATIONAL COMMENT

### "A GREATER VIRGINIA THROUGH EDUCATION"

**T**HE objectives of the "May Campaign of 1925" should receive not only a careful reading and consideration, but should have the active support of every citizen who believes in and loves his State. It is therefore not sufficient to assent to these objectives, but it behooves every one who has a realization of the bearing of education upon the future of this Commonwealth to spread abroad the real significance of the slogan: "A Greater Virginia through Education." The objectives, as set forth by the campaign committee, are:

1. To interpret to the citizens of Virginia the educational development and needs of the Commonwealth.
2. To promote the fundamental considerations necessary for the future progress of the State—its economic welfare through a proper form of taxation and more adequate means of transportation, the furtherance of the public health program, and all other activities of the body politic that have a fundamental relation to schools from the first grade through the university.

3. To secure the reasonable consolidation of schools, equal educational opportunity for all the children, longer school terms, full and regular attendance, and a more adequate corps of professionally trained teachers with commensurate compensation.

4. To inform all citizens as to Virginia's assets in economic resources, in agricultural and industrial development, in her commercial and recreational possibilities and in the personnel of her citizenship.

5. The ultimate objective of the Campaign is to create among the people an intelligent public opinion which will demand progressive legislation leading to a greater Virginia and resulting in a Pan-Virginia patriotic leadership.

## HIGHER EDUCATION IN VIRGINIA

**D**R. EDWIN A. ALDERMAN, before the joint meeting of Committees of the General Assembly of Virginia, 1924, stated:

"Higher education simply means more education, and the more a man or woman gets, the better for the advancing life of the State, and for the quality of its leadership. At this particular moment in the life of Virginia the State is neglecting the higher education. Only 6-2/10 cents of the tax dollar is spent on higher education in this Commonwealth. This is the lowest allotment to higher education of any state in the Union except Georgia.

I beg leave to submit these primary fundamental facts about the situation in higher education to the people of this Commonwealth.

Virginia has the largest enrollment of regular college grade students of any of the eleven States (Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina, Tennessee, Maryland, Virginia, West Virginia), having 35% more students than any other State.

Virginia ranks second in the amount of State appropriations for maintenance; ninth in the amount of State appropriations for buildings, and fifth in the amount of total State appropriations.

Virginia ranks sixth in the amount of State appropriations per capita of white population.

Virginia ranks eighth in the amount of State appropriations per \$100 assessed valuation of property.

Virginia ranks tenth in the proportion of its maintenance income received from State appropriations.

On 35% less money Virginia cares for 35% more students than North Carolina.

Virginia is tenth lowest in proportion of State taxes expended for higher education—North Carolina 14.5, South Carolina 13.2, Virginia 6.2.

Eleven southern States, including Virginia, appropriated \$14,498,114 of State money for higher education in 1923-24, of which Virginia appropriated \$1,460,709 or 10.1%.

This represents an average of 95 cents per capita of white population; in Virginia it was 90 cents, being sixth in rank.

Maintenance appropriations made up 60.1% of the total and capital appropriations 39.9%; in Virginia, maintenance represented 76.6% and capital 23.4%.

A brief survey of material resources of Virginia as compared with those of Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Maryland, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina, Tennessee and West Virginia, indicates that, size and population considered, Virginia should be able to give adequate support to its State institutions of higher education in accordance with their needs, and should be able to support such institutions at least as well, comparatively, as any of the other States named.

State taxes in Virginia are comparatively high, but the proportion of State taxes expended for higher education is compara-

tively low, being 30% less than the average of eleven States and being less than eight out of eleven States.

Virginia is spending a larger portion of its current revenues on highways than any of the eleven States considered. The proportion of its current revenues expended for public health, agriculture and education is low compared with other States.

State indebtedness in Virginia is moderate as compared with other States.

Virginia has one-third more students enrolled in State supported institutions of higher education per one hundred enrolled in public schools than eleven southern States considered, but expends 40% less for higher education per dollar expended for public schools than the average of eleven States.

Virginia has the largest enrollment of students in State supported institutions of higher education of eleven States, having 40% more students per 10,000 of white population than the average; but in amount of State appropriations to these institutions, Virginia appropriates less per capita of white population, less per \$100 estimated wealth, and less per student enrolled, than the average, and much less than the maximum.

In Virginia the State bears 11% less of the maintenance expense of its institutions of higher education than the average of eleven States. The State ranks fifth in the amount of appropriation to these institutions for capital purposes. Enrollment in these institutions has increased 120% in ten years, but value of plant and property only 77%. Less than one-half of the amount invested in property in these institutions has been provided by the State.

Total taxes of all kinds in Virginia are moderate as compared with other States, comparative size, population and resources considered. State taxes, however, are high, the State tax burden in Virginia being higher than in any other of the eleven southern States considered.

Virginia spends more of its fiscal tax revenues for State expense and for highways than other States, but less for public health, agriculture and education."

At this time there is urgent need for more money for operating expenses.

Appropriations to the ten higher institutions of learning for the last four years has been as shown in Table I.

the appropriation for 1924-1925 was less than for the two previous years, so that for the past session the institutions of higher learning have been barely able to live.

The total enrollment in all of these institutions last year regular session was 9,089. The total enrollment in summer schools was 8,066.

For operating expense there is need for

TABLE I. APPROPRIATIONS DURING LAST FOUR YEARS

	APPROPRIATION			
	1922-23	1923-24	1924-25	1925-26
University of Virginia .....	\$ 304,880.00	\$ 276,700	\$ 296,595	\$ 350,395
Virginia Polytechnic Institute .....	178,167.80	188,167	244,930	318,060
Virginia Military Institute .....	136,657.00	167,873	91,165	104,265
College of William and Mary .....	208,925.00	222,621	176,870	263,130
Medical College of Virginia .....	102,000.00	96,500	90,500	90,500
State Teachers College, Farmville .....	124,090.00	122,160	91,305	178,030
State Teachers College, Fredericksburg .....	74,930.00	82,381	62,935	71,150
State Teachers College, East Radford .....	78,705.00	137,447	68,055	85,130
State Teachers College, Harrisonburg .....	91,525.00	109,648	76,710	76,475
Virginia Normal and Industrial Institute .....	54,215.00	95,265	34,500	136,025
Total .....	\$1,354,093.80	\$1,498,762	\$1,233,565	\$1,673,420

In the biennium 1922-1924 the General Assembly appropriated for the higher institutions of learning for all purposes \$2,852,856.80 and for the biennium 1924-1926 \$2,906,725, an increase of \$53,868.20. When we consider that in 1922 the higher institutions were very poorly equipped and did not have professors enough to meet all the classes, and that since then the increase in enrollment has been most rapid, we can

an increase of at least 50% if the type of work done in the Virginia institutions is to be kept up to the standards of other southern States.

In capital outlay the needs are disclosed in Table II.

The above estimates for capital outlay relate to the nine institutions of higher learning conducted in the State for the benefit of our white population. The Virginia

TABLE II. CAPITAL OUTLAY NEEDED BY VIRGINIA INSTITUTIONS OF HIGHER LEARNING

	Immediately	In Five Years Time (Including Immediate Needs)
University of Virginia .....	\$1,835,000	\$4,785,000
Virginia Polytechnic Institute .....	1,216,000	3,500,000
College of William and Mary .....	700,000	1,800,000
Virginia Military Institute .....	250,000	500,000
Medical College of Virginia .....		1,500,000
State Teachers College, Farmville .....	325,000	825,000
State Teachers College, Harrisonburg .....	380,000	800,000
State Teachers College, Fredericksburg .....	148,000	622,000
State Teachers College, East Radford .....	512,000	824,000
	\$5,366,000	\$15,156,000

see that this increase of a little less than \$27,000 a year does not provide for the increased demands upon the institutions of higher learning. It will also be noted that

Normal and Industrial Institute at Petersburg is a State institution conducted for the benefit of the colored population of the State. The board of visitors and those in

authority at this institution report that it is absolutely inadequate for the purposes for which it has been established because of lack of accommodations and equipment. They claim that a conservative estimate of the needs of the institution within the next five years is \$1,121,500.00.

#### DOES THE PUBLIC KNOW ITS SCHOOLS?

**I**T IS A far cry from the ox cart to modern transportation, from the tallow dip to the electric light, from the sickle to the mower and binder. The public at large knows this progress intimately and knows, too, the multitudinous changes that have taken place in the whole field of invention and material progress. It may be fair to say, furthermore, that the public is conversant with many of the changes that have come to all of our modern social institutions. It can be said, however, that the general public knows all too little about the one great institution of society which daily touches one-quarter of the total population either as students, teachers, or school executives.

The reason for this state of affairs is at hand. The average individual can readily keep up with the changes that have come to transportation, to invention, and the like because these changes are paraded before the public through their advertisement on a commercial basis, and through their daily use. Likewise, the changes in many of our social institutions are well known because the routine activities of our citizenship takes them to these institutions or brings them in contact with them. In the case of the schools, on the other hand, the adults are seldom present to learn of their operation. Instead, their children represent them in the schools, and as long as affairs are administered without the development of local antagonism, the schools are more or less ignored or forgotten.

It must be said that the up-to-date school executive makes a serious attempt to inform the public with regard to the conduct of the schools, but this information is to such a large degree incomplete or second-hand that the public at large does not really know its schools. The average individual, for example, when he hears or reads of any school activity, thinks of it naturally in terms of his experience with the same activity of those days when he was in attendance upon the schools.

Some school folks have begun to believe that the public knows in reality less about its schools than any other social institution. For this the school folk are partly responsible and the public is partly responsible.

If transportation and communication, if methods of farming, of merchandising, banking, and processes of manufacture have changed across the years, it is quite as natural that changes should have come to the teaching process and to the administration of schools. In fact, were the schools of today but repetitions of the schools of yesterday, no more serious indictment could be brought against them. Inevitably when the public thinks soberly upon this consideration it will understand the numerous changes that have come to the teaching process, to the course of study, to the qualifications of teachers insisted upon, to the type of school architecture employed, etc.

All the changes that have come to education in the last generation cannot be successfully defended, nor do the experts in every instance agree as to the next steps, but this is not a condition that prevails alone in the field of education. It is characteristic of every field of activity.

The public ought to know its schools and know them intimately, because the next generation will be just about as good as the home, schools, and churches of the present generation. To acquaint the public with its schools, superintendents, principals, and teachers all have their part. The public, too,

has its responsibility and should meet the school folks half way in an effort to understand and contribute to the advancement of education.

—*Campaign Handbook.*

## BOOKS

### SCIENCE TEXTS FOR JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOLS

EARLY STEPS IN SCIENCE, by Hanor A Webb and John J. Didcoct. New York: D. Appleton and Company. 1924.

THE SCIENCE OF EVERYDAY LIFE, (revised and enlarged), by Edgar F. Van Buskirk and Edith Lillian Smith. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company. 1925. \$1.60.

The General Science Movement has taken a strong hold upon the minds of educators, not only because of its intrinsic values, but also because it furnishes one of the best means of satisfying the popular demand for a type of training that is of the highest practical value to the boy or girl after he leaves school, whether or not he or she enters a higher institution for more advanced cultural or professional work. It has been only a few years since physics was grudgingly granted as one of the subjects that could satisfy entrance requirements offered to the colleges by the high school. In rapid succession, however, chemistry, biology, and several of the other specialized sciences have come to be looked upon as wholly proper offerings for the secondary school; and now general science is considered very generally the best training the preparatory schools can furnish as a single unit of credit in science.

But this is only part of the present science situation in the schools. Not only has a year's work in introductory science of a non-differentiated nature become an established feature of the best secondary school curricula, but the needs and opportunities for an elementary treatment of general science have become so patent in the grades, that now admirable texts specially designed

for the elementary schools are appearing without the slightest suggestion of apology or any need of establishing their right among the younger children's textbooks.

*Early Steps in Science*, by Webb and Didcoct, which appeared a few months ago, and the revision of Buskirk and Smith's *The Science of Everyday Life* are two of the more recent texts that furnish evidence of the trend of the science movement of our schools. These texts are intended for students in the seventh, eighth, and ninth grades, but could be advantageously used in either a year above or a year below these grades. Both these texts use the psychological rather than the logical method of handling the material of science, and are typical of the best in the field of science for the junior high school.

The Webb and Didcoct text is thoroughly fresh and virile. Its essential features may be stated as follows:

1. Early steps in science are to be taken in the home and community.
2. The experiments are of a type which the student can readily arrange, and which therefore will be done.
3. The topics, both for study and experiment, are presented at the proper season of the year.
4. Hygiene is an intimate, inseparable part of every topic.
5. The human mind is a topic of study and experiment.
6. The continuation of species receives vital, yet impersonal treatment.
7. It has the fundamental purpose of creating a widespread interest in science as a thing of personal importance.

Buskirk and Smith's *The Science of Everyday Life* is a thoroughly socialized text book, which has had every effort expended upon it to make it teachable. It is well organized and presents the generally accepted material for such a course. It is built upon definite principles, which may