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HARD TIMES AND GREAT EXPECTATIONS; AN ACCOUNT TO THE COMMUNITY OF THE CONDITION OF THE ST. LOUIS PUBLIC SCHOOLS.

Saint Louis Public Schools, Mo.

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Described in this report are the problems faced by the St. Louis public schools. Financing difficulties, the poverty of about 70 percent of public school pupils, the inadequacy of state aid, the shortage of well-qualified teachers, the exodus of whites to the suburbs, and the concentration of Negroes in the inner city are some of the issues which are noted. However, it is pointed out that Federal aid, legislative efforts for additional support, foundation grants, and some innovative programs are helping to improve educational quality in the schools. St. Louis is also trying to integrate faculties and classrooms by teacher assignment policies and by busing and free choice transfer programs for students. (NH)

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HARD TIMES

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EXPECTATIONS

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SEPTEMBER, 1967

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“Good-by, my lad,” said Mr. Whitney. “I hope to hear good accounts of you sometime. Don’t forget what I have told you. Remember that your future position depends mainly upon yourself, and that it will be high or low as you choose to make it.”

HORATIO ALGER: *Ragged Dick*

The St. Louis Public Schools have been in pain for ten years. The City is in pain, too, for the school system is a reliable barometer of the community which it serves. We are in good company. Every big city school system, and, consequently, every big city in the United States hurts. In fact, most of them hurt worse than we do.

Our pains are familiar ones:

Helplessly bound to the local property tax for 70 cents of every dollar we get, we find that while costs and salaries were skyrocketing and the school enrollment was increasing from 90,327 in 1953 to 116,500 in 1967, the value of assessed property per pupil in St. Louis plummeted about 20 per cent.

Each year there were fewer St. Louisans who could pay their property taxes comfortably. The 1960 census figures show that the number of people over 65 had increased 16 per cent while the income producers between 20 and 64 had declined 25 per cent. In 1960 about one of eight people in St. Louis were living on small, fixed incomes which shrink as the cost of living rises. In contrast the number in suburban St. Louis County was one in fourteen. The average family income in St. Louis was \$5,355. In St. Louis County it was \$7,523. We have increasingly become a city of low-income, elderly people.

About 70 per cent of our public school children now live in poverty areas. A poverty area is a school district in which 14.7 per cent or more of the families get Aid to Dependent Children.

About 35 per cent of the people in St. Louis support an extensive and increasingly expensive parochial school system in addition to the public schools. Rising parochial school costs, a sharply increasing ratio of higher salaried lay teachers, and the irritation caused by legislative defeats of the bus and shared time proposals reduce the enthusiasm of many voters to tax themselves additionally for the benefit of the children of their neighbors.

“The thing generally raised on city land is taxes.”

CHARLES DUDLEY WARNER: *My Summer in a Garden*

And the schools must share the shrinking local property tax base with the city government, which despite more than \$28,000,000 a year in earnings tax, is

plagued with similar financial problems. The malady of municipal overburden weighs heavily upon the St. Louis taxpayer. To the school tax of \$2.51 must be added \$1.98 (including 16 cents imposed in 1967) for municipal operations, 3 cents for state operations, 17 cents for the Junior College District, 15 cents for the Public Library, 4 cents for the Art Museum, 4 cents for the Zoo, and 19 cents for the Metropolitan Sewer District.

“Is there no balm in Gilead? Is there no physician there?”

JEREMIAH VIII, 22

When we look to the State for help with our troubles, as other communities do, we get no substantial relief. We receive 26 cents of each of our school dollars from Jefferson City. The other Missouri school districts get 33 cents. Nationally, the local school districts average 40 cents. Our per pupil cost in St. Louis is \$520. We get only \$135 of this from the State. Kansas City gets \$186, the other districts in the state average \$166.

Our teachers have to teach too many pupils in the classroom to do the more effective job they could do with smaller numbers. Our classroom teacher-pupil ratio in the elementary schools last year was approximately 35. We have had many classes in the 40's. We have high school classes in English and Social Studies which peak at 35. The county average in elementary and in high schools is considerably lower.

To attack this most rudimentary of our instructional problems, we need massive infusions of money in a school system of 116,500 pupils and we need rooms which we do not have to house the pupils. To reduce our elementary school pupil-teacher ratio by one pupil per teacher would now cost an additional \$1,000,000 a year for teachers and require five additional schools, which would cost about \$7,500,000.

St. Louis has an abnormally increasing number of handicapped pupils who need more expensive special education programs with small classes and specially trained teachers—who are in short supply. Last school year we had 8,200 pupils in our special education classes. We have at least that many more in our regular classrooms who ought to be in the special classrooms we do not have and with the trained teachers we cannot hire.

“The harvest truly is plenteous, but the laborers are few.”

ST. MATTHEW IX, 37

Like all other large city systems, we have not enough competent and consecrated teachers to give us the high quality instructional programs the times

and our competition demand. Teachers are in short supply. We have struggled and scabbled to keep our salaries competitive with the suburban school districts. But it is more pleasant and comfortable to teach in suburbia—closer to home, with cleaner, better nourished, more respectful smaller classes, with strong family support for dutiful book learning. With the exception of Harris Teachers College graduates and a few idealistic young people, we find it hard to attract teachers into the city schools. Last school year 407 of our 4,036 classroom teachers were substitutes in regular assignments.

“I was as well convinced then, as I am now, that nothing effectual can be done for the elevation of the poor in England, until their dwelling-places are made decent and wholesome. I have always been convinced that this reform must precede all other Social Reforms, that it must prepare the way for Education, even for Religion; and that, without it, those classes of the people which increase the fastest, must become so desperate and be made so miserable, as to bear within themselves the certain seeds of ruin to the whole community.”

CHARLES DICKENS: Preface to the 1866 Edition of *Oliver Twist*

The steady flight to the suburbs by whites and the immigration of Negroes from the South has continued steadily during the last decade. For thirteen years, approximately 3,000 Negro pupils have come annually into the city schools and 1,000 whites have gone, largely into the 26 suburban school systems. Between 1953 and 1967 the number of white pupils decreased from 59,142 to 45,042, a loss of 14,100, or 24 per cent, whereas the number of Negro pupils increased from 31,185 to 72,300, a gain of 41,115, or 132 per cent.

In the 1966-67 school year we had 44,490 white pupils and 72,010 Negro pupils from kindergarten through college. If this progression continues the St. Louis schools will become a totally Negro school system, irrevocably and tragically segregated at the core of surrounding and equally segregated white suburban school systems. It requires little wisdom to perceive that such a large metropolitan community cannot long survive under such conditions.

With 64 per cent of our elementary school population Negro, living in a concentrated and largely segregated housing tract through the center of the city, as far as twelve miles from outlying city white schools, it is obvious that the stereotyped panaceas for segregated schooling—redistricting, bussing, and the creation of mammoth educational plazas—will not ease our pain.

“Creeping like snail, unwillingly to school.”

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE: *As You Like It*.

Much of our academic curriculum, dilute it though we may, is ill-suited to a



third of our secondary school youth who are compelled by law, or by the constraint of a civilization which no longer tolerates the semi-literate, to go to school. Because they can see no relationship between traditional textbook learning and the business of making a comfortable living, they are apathetic and desultory students who lower the achievement standards, retard the learning of others, and drive teachers into more rewarding or less vexatious occupations.

“Carpenters will be drawing \$7.61 an hour at the end of a three-year contract in 1969, compared with a pre-bargaining hourly wage of \$5.31. In late April building trades unions won wage jumps that averaged a whopping 40% spread over a three-year period.”

THE WALL STREET JOURNAL

The Negro community, inured to having its youth blocked off from the skilled trades, is reluctant to permit competent Negro youngsters to take the vocational or technical training which can qualify them for the remunerative job opportunities that are now opening for them. As a result, many youngsters who could profit from such training and perform competently with it have instead attended regular high school and have emerged without marketable skills, swelling the numbers of the city's unemployed.

When the vocational and technical schools like O'Fallon become predominantly or totally Negro, white youngsters who could profit from vocational training withdraw and deprive themselves of it. The Trade and Industrial teachers, with long and familiar contacts with white employers, have shown that they can place white and Negro graduates in jobs, but they have much greater difficulty in placing exclusively Negro graduates. It is apparent that O'Fallon Technical High School can be successful only if it is a healthfully integrated institution. In the 1966-67 school year we had 629 white youngsters and 2,069 Negro youngsters enrolled in the technical high schools. The handwriting is on the O'Fallon wall.

“Weird dress . . . strange talk . . . odd customs . . . In city after city, young people are bewildering their elders.”

U. S. NEWS & WORLD REPORT

All large city schools are struggling to make adjustments and to deal understandingly with a generation of youth which appears to be rebellious and increasingly resentful of authority. Teachers and principals in the inner city find it more difficult to teach their classes and to maintain the kind of discipline which they have traditionally exercised. The parental support for the teachers and of

the formal school program which conspicuously characterizes the typical suburban school district has been noticeably weakened in the big cities, including St. Louis. We deplore also the growing indifference of parents to the activities of the parent organizations, which were once formidably constructive forces in support of the schools.

This is a melancholy account of the school system's ailments. Indeed, it reads like the school system's obituary. But the St. Louis Public Schools are far from being fatally afflicted. They are still vigorously alive and gaining strength. With understanding and help and cooperation they can again serve with distinction a healthy and reinvigorated community that need not wither on the vine — if we have the courage and the determination to prevent it.

“Virginia, your little friends are wrong.”

FRANCIS PHARCELLUS CHURCH: *The New York Sun*

Although local funds for schools are still hard to come by, we have been substantially helped by federal dollars. In the 1966-67 school year, the St. Louis Public Schools got these sums from the following federal sources:

School Lunch Act 1945	\$ 75,103
Federally Impacted Area Act of 1950	611,029
National Defense Education Act of 1958	86,697
Manpower Development and Training Act of 1963	295,574
Vocational Education Act of 1963	190,993
Economic Opportunity Act of 1964	76,489
Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965	5,260,816
	<hr/>
	\$6,596,701

Although the federal appropriations are not synchronized with the school system's budget year and the erratic federal income therefore cannot be accurately predicted, there is reason to believe that substantial grants will continue to be made for our Title I, II, and III programs, including the Rooms of Twenty, the Diagnostic Center for emotionally disturbed pupils, the Study Learning Resources Centers, the vocational school projects, the teacher aides, and the

Lincoln High School. The Impacted Area legislation will again provide an estimated \$625,000 and some additional support may be forthcoming from the Teacher Corps funding.

“True it is that politics makes strange bedfellows.”

CHARLES DUDLEY WARNER: *My Summer in a Garden*

Although the St. Louis Public Schools still do not get the paternal kind of state support which other local school districts do, we made some significant gains in the 1967 session of the State Legislature. We will get an estimated additional \$987,434 from the State of Missouri Foundation Program and approximately \$748,762 for the kindergartens. The legislation providing for state aid on the basis of current enrollment instead of the previous school year will bring in an estimated \$106,795. We have also received \$574,000 to help sustain the Harris Teachers College program this year. In the 1966-67 school year our state income totaled \$15,810,220. We estimate that this figure will rise to \$17,965,395, an increase of \$2,155,175. This increase will not substantially change the unfair percentage of income which comes to us from the State, but it is an encouraging sign.

We are optimistic about getting additional state help in the future. We have, this year, succeeded in securing support for the first time for our venerable kindergartens, which have been wholly supported by local funds since Susan Blow started it all in 1873. After a half-century of consistent failures in Jefferson City, we have succeeded in gaining unified administration for the school system, which should result in more education per dollar.

Reapportionment has given the City 28 Representatives in the State Legislature instead of 14, has given St. Louis County 26 instead of 12. Our Senators and Representatives have generally been sympathetic with our legislative efforts, and have supported them with a greater warmth than ever before. We have school employees in substantial numbers living in every city and county legislative district. We have active employee legislative chairmen in every city and county district, and have parent legislative chairmen for every city school district. They have communicated effectively and cooperatively with our legislators.

“Better is halfe a lofe than no bread.”

JOHN HEYWOOD: *Proverbs*

We are beginning to make some gains in the relatively high pupil-teacher ratios. During the past school year, 554 pupils, with 28 teachers, were placed in Rooms

of Twenty in 21 elementary schools, in addition to the 44 Saturday classes in 20 schools. Federal Title I funds have provided for the construction of eight primary schools of eight rooms each. Thus, in the 1967-68 school year, 92 teachers will be teaching 1,840 pupils daily in small classes of twenty, rather than thirty-five.

Located in the overcrowded school districts, these eight schools will enable us to reduce somewhat the pupil-teacher ratios in the regular classrooms.

Teachers with full teaching loads were assisted with their chores by the employment of 50 school-community coordinators, 31 school-home aides, 64 attendance counselors, 110 elementary teacher assistants, and 284 elementary and secondary teacher aides. Twelve additional elementary school and 24 high school remedial reading teachers were assigned to poverty area schools.

During the summer of 1966, instruction was provided for 9,600 elementary pupils and 2,325 high school students. During the past summer 8,252 high school students and 9,720 elementary school pupils attended summer classes. These classes included courses for credit and remedial and special work. Thus about 18,000 youngsters, more than 15 per cent of the total St. Louis Public School enrollment, had additional learning opportunities in the basic skills. In addition, more than 10,000 pupils in poverty areas were given their breakfasts.

Greatly expanded library facilities and services meet the challenge for better scholarship.



There are some indications that the pupil-teacher ratios may begin to ease somewhat in the next few years. After 14 years of an annual net increase of 2,078 pupils, the increase for last school year dropped to 544. And while the total number of pupils increased 30 per cent since 1954, the number of teachers increased 41 per cent.

"there s life in the old dame yet"

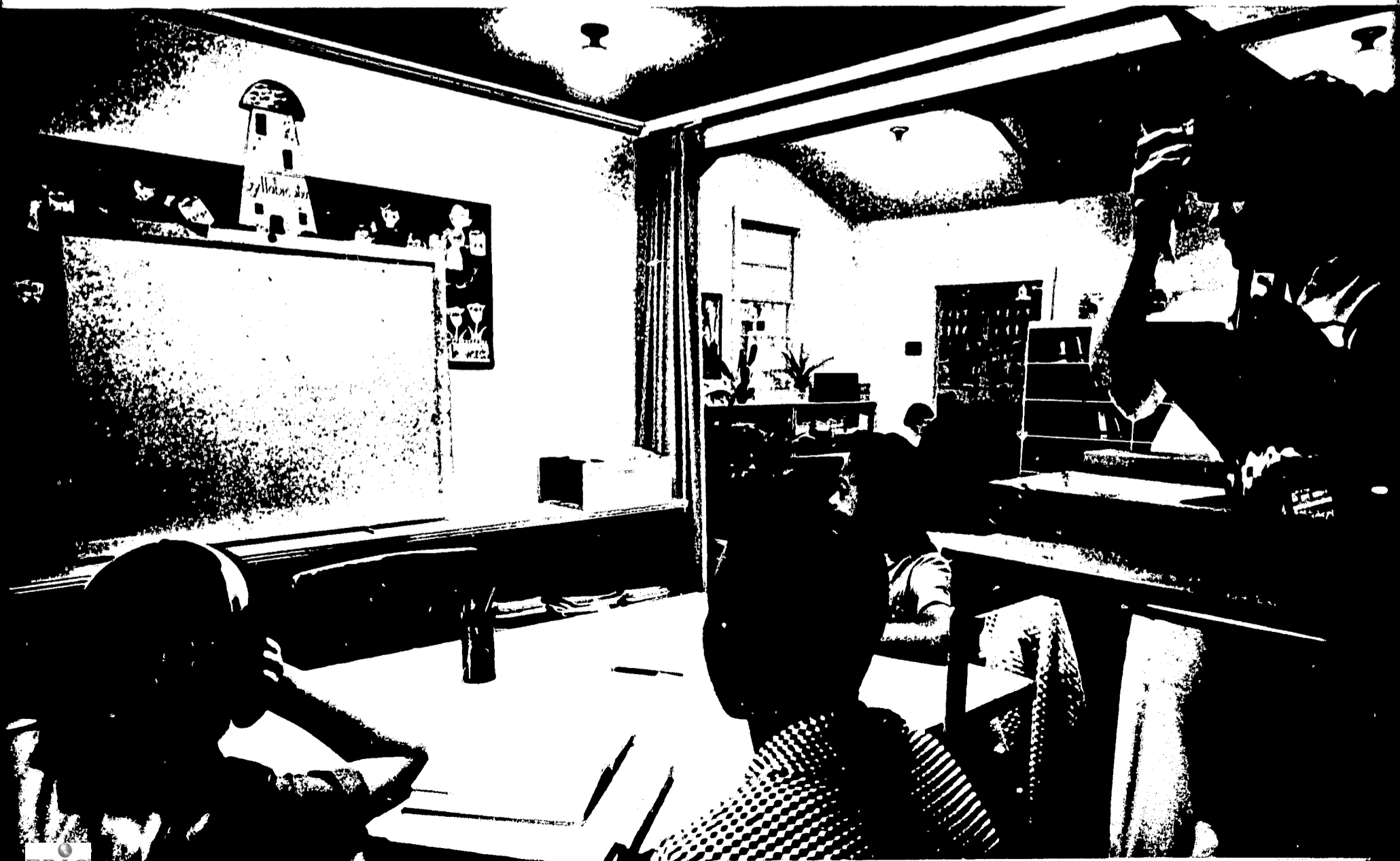
DON MARQUIS: *archie and mehitabel*

In daily operation at Vashon, Bates, Waring, and Williams Schools are model Study Learning Resources Centers, where children and adults in poverty areas have well-equipped and competently staffed libraries to compensate for the cultural and educational deficiencies of the community.

In the Banneker Community Project, the administrators and teachers, with the aid of \$750,000 in grants from the Human Development Corporation, have vigorously motivated parents and children to new aspirations and hope for success.

In the coming school year the Board of Education will boldly and creatively modify and extend the lunch program to all schools in the city and guarantee that children will not go to school hungry.

Remedial reading clinics in each of the six elementary districts help 2,300 children yearly gain literacy skills.



Central High School will be using a new field house and additional classrooms, and Northwest High School will have some needed additional classrooms. Two new 30-room schools in overcrowded areas will help reduce ratios and the eight new primary schools will provide facilities for 64 additional Rooms of Twenty.

Some 150 volunteers, many from the suburbs, will continue their dedicated services in supplementing the work of teachers in art, music, elementary libraries, and remedial reading.

The poverty area schools will be using \$338,578 worth of new audio-visual equipment and materials, and all schools will have \$503,000 worth of new library books to make their learning programs more effective.

St. Louis teachers will continue to instill in their pupils a pride in their community through the use of *Heritage of St. Louis*, an unusual textbook written by St. Louis teachers for St. Louis children.

Through the use of the newly revised *We Elect*, also written by local teachers for city pupils, the teachers will again familiarize their pupils with the workings of the City and State governments and acquaint them with the living men and women who run our community.

More than a hundred Physical Education teachers will be at work in the elementary school physical fitness program which is now producing scores above the standards of the President's Physical Fitness prescriptions.

Widely traveled women who serve as part-time "travel teachers" will bring stories of far-away places to thousands of children in the poverty areas.

"Public opinion is stronger than the legislature, and nearly as strong as the Ten Commandments."

CHARLES DUDLEY WARNER: *My Summer in a Garden*

The tab for 8,204 special education pupils in St. Louis now comes to \$4,051,626 a year. The State pays only \$749,435 of this cost. Although we failed in the last two sessions of the State Legislature to increase state support and to broaden the categories of physically and psychologically handicapped children, which would enable us to extend special education to some 8,000 more children who need it, we have made our citizens and our representatives sharply aware of the problem. Our Special Education House Bill No. 388 of the 1967 session of the Legislature successfully progressed through the House Education Committee and through the House without a dissenting vote, failing by one vote in the Senate Education Committee.

We are determined to push this legislation again at the next legislative session. Successful passage will mean an additional \$750,000 for the St. Louis schools, and a lowering of the regular classroom size, and will provide benefits to handicapped children throughout Missouri.

Meanwhile we have, through a Title III grant of \$239,214, organized a diagnostic and adjustment center and five pilot classes for pupils with emotional and psychological problems so severe that their disruptive behavior makes regular school attendance impossible. The grant has been renewed for the 1967-68 school year.

“Slavery is but half abolished, emancipation is but half completed, while millions of freemen with votes in their hands are left without education. Justice to them, the welfare of the States in which they live, the safety of the whole Republic, the dignity of the elective franchise—all alike demand that the still remaining bands of ignorance shall be unloosed and broken, and the minds as well as the bodies of the emancipated go free.”

ROBERT CHARLES WINTHROP: *Yorktown Oration*

Laymen, particularly businessmen who employ high school graduates, are commonly critical of the reading, spelling, language, and arithmetic skills of their job applicants.

The traditional high school curriculum was designed for students who already had mastered these tools of learning. Yet at least a third of the human race apparently can achieve only a limited facility with them. We live in a civilization in which one finds it hard not only to make a bare living without them, but also to live the life of a freeman in a democracy. These skills are the sword and buckler of freedom.

Clearly, we must persist—whatever else we do in training youth in marketable skills—in our efforts to give all youth as much competence in the skills of literacy as they can absorb.

And there is evidence in our St. Louis schools that this chore is at least modestly productive. For twenty-four years now we have been gnawing at the fringes of the problem with the six remedial reading clinics which serve the six elementary school districts. More than 12,000 non-reading children have been taught to read with decent competence and more than 35,000 others have had their problems diagnosed and have been helped. Competent St. Louis clinic teachers have repeatedly demonstrated that, working about 40 clock hours over a period of three and a half months with an average 12-year-old with three and a half



years of retardation and a low 90 I.Q., a full year's progress in reading as measured by standardized tests can be made. Our present discomfort would have been cumulatively greater without this service.

The St. Louis Public Schools' Ungraded Primary program, which defines the skills of literacy by sequential stages, requires mastery of one level before another is begun, and enables children to progress at individual rates, has been in operation for nearly a decade, has the approval and support of the teachers, and has clearly reduced, by thousands of pupils, the numbers who enter the fourth grade without the basic skills to learn from the middle grade textbooks. We would have been hurting worse without this program.

Our earlier experiences with the Rooms of Twenty—in which the basic skills were stressed and the teachers had less traditional and more effective material to use with twenty instead of thirty-five children—indicated that we could in this manner get twice the normal rate of achievement in basic skills. We cannot do that well when we expand the program as quickly as we did under Title I and confine it to the poverty areas. However, with a mean I.Q. below 90, these pupils, who had never made normal progress in school and who were already severely retarded, made average gains of 3.4 months in a 3.5 month period. Next school year we shall have 92 such Rooms of Twenty in operation, where, hopefully, we will make better gains.

We have made determined and productive efforts to improve the high school learning conditions. We have assigned security guards to prevent outside interference with the learning program, have reduced late registration to a minimum, have cut down significantly tardiness, excessive absence, and class cutting. With federal funds we have made the new Lincoln High School a rehabilitation center for 300 youngsters who have been suspended from the regular high schools. Classes are ungraded and small. The staff of 32 has been carefully hand-picked on the basis of interest in helping these students. An important part of the program is the work-study unit. Work-coordinator counselors find jobs that give the youngsters constructive training and then supervise them on the job. Many of these boys and girls have been returned to the other high schools with hopes of finishing school successfully.

In the days of segregated school systems, achievement in the Negro schools and also in poverty area white schools was never given the concerned attention it needed, and thousands of students went through the secondary schools and sometimes the colleges without the competence in basic skills which was required of middle and upper class whites. Today business and industry is opening work

opportunity for Negro youth as it never has before. But employers, who must make a profit if they are to stay in business, will not long buy incompetence. Equal work opportunity will require equal work performance. We must, in simple justice, make the high school diploma, now the passcard to fill out work applications, represent at least that level of competence in reading, spelling, language, and arithmetic which will enable one to hold an ordinary job. To perpetuate the phoney school diploma is to cling to the double standard which will perpetuate second class citizenship.

The Board of Education has therefore begun the use of the Proficiency and Review tests, setting a passing score in reading, language, spelling, and arithmetic which will assure a modest competence in these necessary skills sufficient to hold a job. Students are tested first at the end of the eighth grade. Those who fail are given free summer school instruction to make up their deficiencies. Each student will have a chance to take the tests at least eight times before high school graduation and a chance to go to free summer schools for four years. The St. Louis community has a right to expect this reasonable degree of performance from all St. Louis Public High School graduates.

“Let me emphasize firmly that I am not proposing vocational and technical careers for all Negro youngsters. A growing proportion of disadvantaged children should and can be encouraged and trained toward academic higher education and professional careers. But I am concerned here mainly with those whose needs are not now being met in academic preparatory programs. My premise is that the most immediate and pressing need of the great majority of disadvantaged Negroes and members of other low-income groups is the capability of taking full advantage of economic opportunity as it is won.”

MARVIN J. FELDMAN: *Public Education and Manpower Development*
A Ford Foundation Reprint

We think we can lick the vocational education problem. With the help of a federal Title III planning grant, we are expecting to expand the vocational and technical offerings at O'Fallon. With the signs pointing to O'Fallon's becoming an all-Negro school within the next few years, we propose to convert the institution into an integrated ancillary school for the other city high schools, where the Negro-white enrollment is equally divided. Under the proposal, all academic work will be conducted in the local high schools, and students who can profit from vocational training will be bussed to and from O'Fallon for a half-day and returned to the local high school in time to participate in the extra-curricular activities which tend to attract students to their district high

schools. Expansion of offerings for both slow-learning and gifted students will hopefully balance and increase the student population racially and numerically, and make job placement realistic and successful. We expect a more substantial federal grant and state support to implement the program.

“And gladly wolde he lerne, and gladly teche.”

GEOFFREY CHAUCER: *The Canterbury Tales*

The big cities, hard pressed for school dollars, have generally passed the buck of teacher training to state or independent institutions until only two large city systems maintain such institutions. One is St. Louis. Confronted with the disillusionment of recruiting teachers from other teacher training institutions for the big city schools in competition with the more seductive suburban schools, we rationally conclude that our remaining hope of supplying the inner city schools with adequate numbers of competent and consecrated teachers in these critical times lies in reinvigorating and strengthening our local Harris Teachers College.

All of the big cities will probably again have to operate their own teacher-producing schools if they hope to secure enough good teachers to improve the quality of their instructional programs. Such an institution will have to be flexibly geared to the needs of the city schools. Not only will the apprentice work have to be done in the inner city schools, but when the percentage of special education pupils increases, for example, corresponding teacher-training activity will have to materialize promptly. Above all, such an institution must be alert and sensitive to the needs of the school system for a wide variety of in-service offerings to help the thousands of tenure teachers to cope with a school population and learning conditions which are vastly and disconcertingly different from those which they were prepared to deal with.

We have assigned to the college this fall a group of young administrators who have been dealing with the frightening problems of the city schools. Because the Board of Education must necessarily devote the major part of its concern and deliberations to the problems of the elementary and secondary schools, a special board committee will maintain liaison with an advisory board of seven members who will concern themselves exclusively with the problems of the college. These advisory board members are respected citizens who have a stake in the future of the inner city. We hope to make the college the hub of the school system and, with federal or foundation support, to repackage its physical facilities in the inner city to such an extent that we can attract, as we never adequately

have, the graduates of the city and suburban high schools to careers of service where they are so desperately needed—in the St. Louis Public Schools.

We need to pay our teachers a decent salary and to make their working conditions as tolerable as possible. We believe that we can do so. Big city teacher salaries ought to be substantially higher and the pupil-teacher ratios ought to be lower than those in the suburban school systems. In the 1967-68 school year

A testing program from kindergarten through high school seeks to discover each child's abilities and needs.



we shall make only modest progress, but it is some progress. The average increase in salaries starting this September will be \$1,015. The average salary of St. Louis teachers will be \$8,786. We are generally in line with median salaries in the large cities and are tentatively competitive with the local suburbs.

We are aware that we must ultimately achieve a greater degree of faculty integration than we now have if we hope to get to the stage of objectivity in which teachers are valued for their competence without regard for their color or creed. We are resolutely determined not to assign teachers to all schools solely on the basis of race and not to disregard length of service, travel distance, and adaptability to new teaching situations. Many older white teachers are fearful of teaching in all-Negro schools and many Negro teachers are reluctant to volunteer for service in distant all-white schools. We do, nevertheless, make slow but persistent progress, and when these teaching assignments are made with wisdom and with consideration for the teachers involved, we erode much of the emotional prejudice which exists on both sides.

Last school year, in the elementary schools, the number of all-white faculties was reduced from 36 to 22, the number of all-Negro faculties from 46 to 40, and the number of integrated faculties increased from 58 to 81. Every high school faculty in the city system is an integrated faculty, ranging from almost equal balance in some instances to almost tokenism in others. In all cases, however, the gains are consistent and they have been made without violent disturbance or even sullen unrest.

Pupil integration is restricted by the St. Louis housing patterns and by the substantial majority of Negro pupils. Three of the high schools, McKinley, Central and Northwest, continue to hold integrated school populations, as do the special schools and the college. Most of the elementary school integration has been accomplished by the bussing program and, to a limited extent, the permissive transfer policy.

Numerically the bussing program, involving 2,400 elementary school pupils, will not be materially reduced despite the new school facilities. The permissive transfer policy has been progressively liberalized during the past several years. Vacant seats are listed in all schools, including unused rooms in south and north St. Louis. Applicants have opportunity for all of the children in a family to transfer, and any pupil who has been transported may continue in such a school at the travel expense of the Board of Education. St. Louis Negro pupils are not locked into schools in the ghetto.

“Historians of the future may look upon the 1960’s as the period when our society really began to take education seriously. Whether they will record us as equal to the challenge will depend largely upon the wisdom, determination, and energy with which we approach our task in the years ahead.”

THEODORE R. SIZER: *Remaking the World of the Career Teacher*

Bussing will never solve our problems of pupil distribution. Actually, we have only 2,663 elementary school classrooms in the entire city, and only 49 in the extreme fringes of the city are still vacant. Many of our south side schools with these vacant rooms are old and outmoded structures. We also need some equality of school facilities, and we are now planning the details of a bond issue for additional school construction. Hopefully, we will be able to pass bond issues with a 60 per cent majority in the future instead of the almost impossible two-thirds.

“No man is an island, entire of itself; every man is a piece of the continent, a part of the main; if a clod be washed away by the sea, Europe is the less, as well as if a promontory were, as well as if a manor of thy friends or of thine own were; any man’s death diminishes me, because I am involved in mankind; and therefore never send to know for whom the bell tolls; it tolls for thee.”

JOHN DONNE: *Devotions*

The St. Louis Board of Education has made a proposal to eight contiguous St. Louis County school districts to discuss the feasibility of placing some city Negro pupils in suburban schools in which there is extra space and to inaugurate a teacher exchange program. The board made this overture in order to initiate consideration of a problem which merits the deep concern of the entire community—not just of city residents or the city school board.

Sooner or later the expanding masses of American metropolita must come to the point of wisdom to perceive that the business of educating all of our American youth for a precarious and uncertain future requires a deep common concern for survival, and that we cannot much longer find security in geographical flight or in religious or sociological insulation.

“I have trodden the winepress alone.”

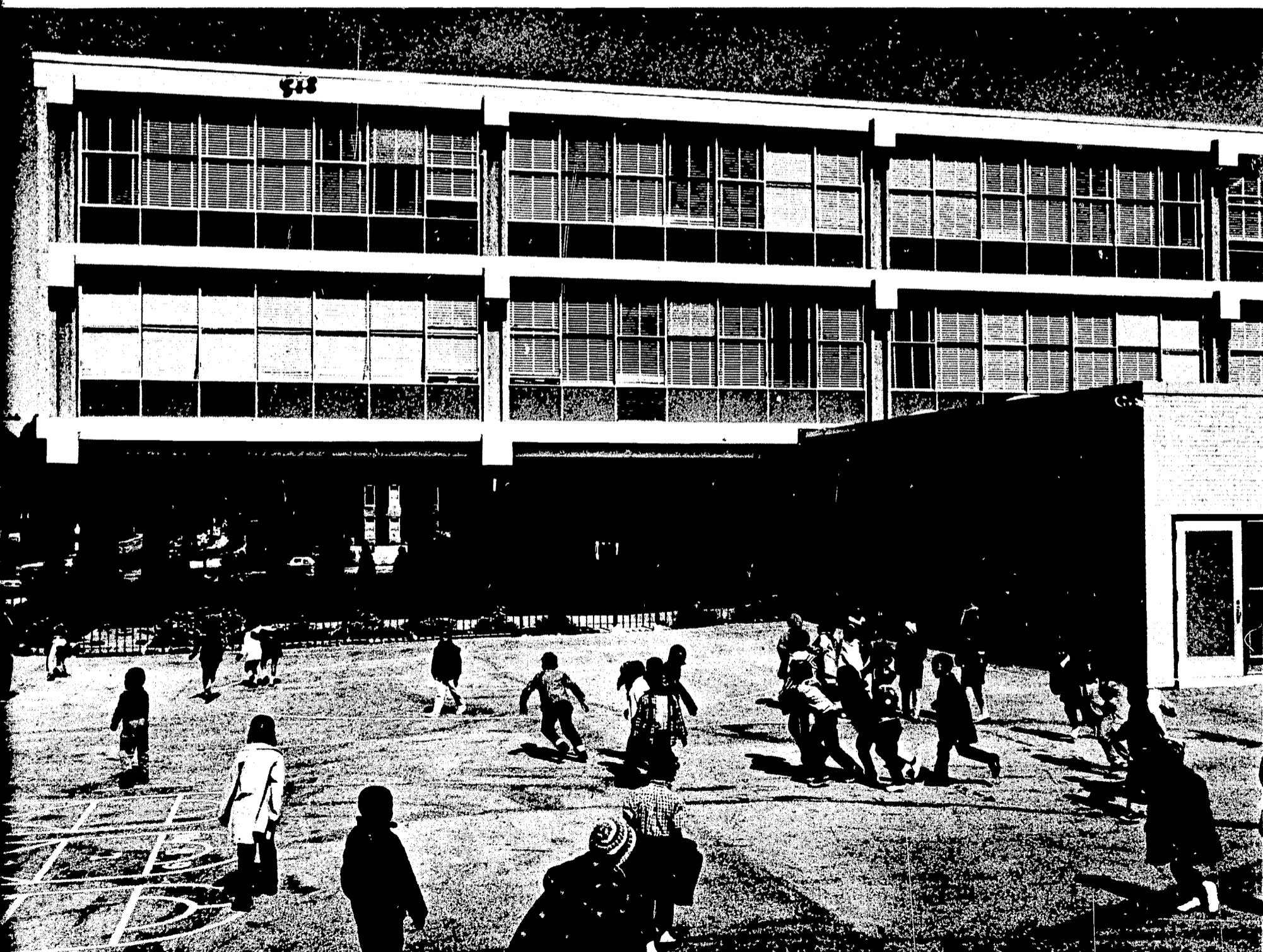
ISAIAH LXIII, 3

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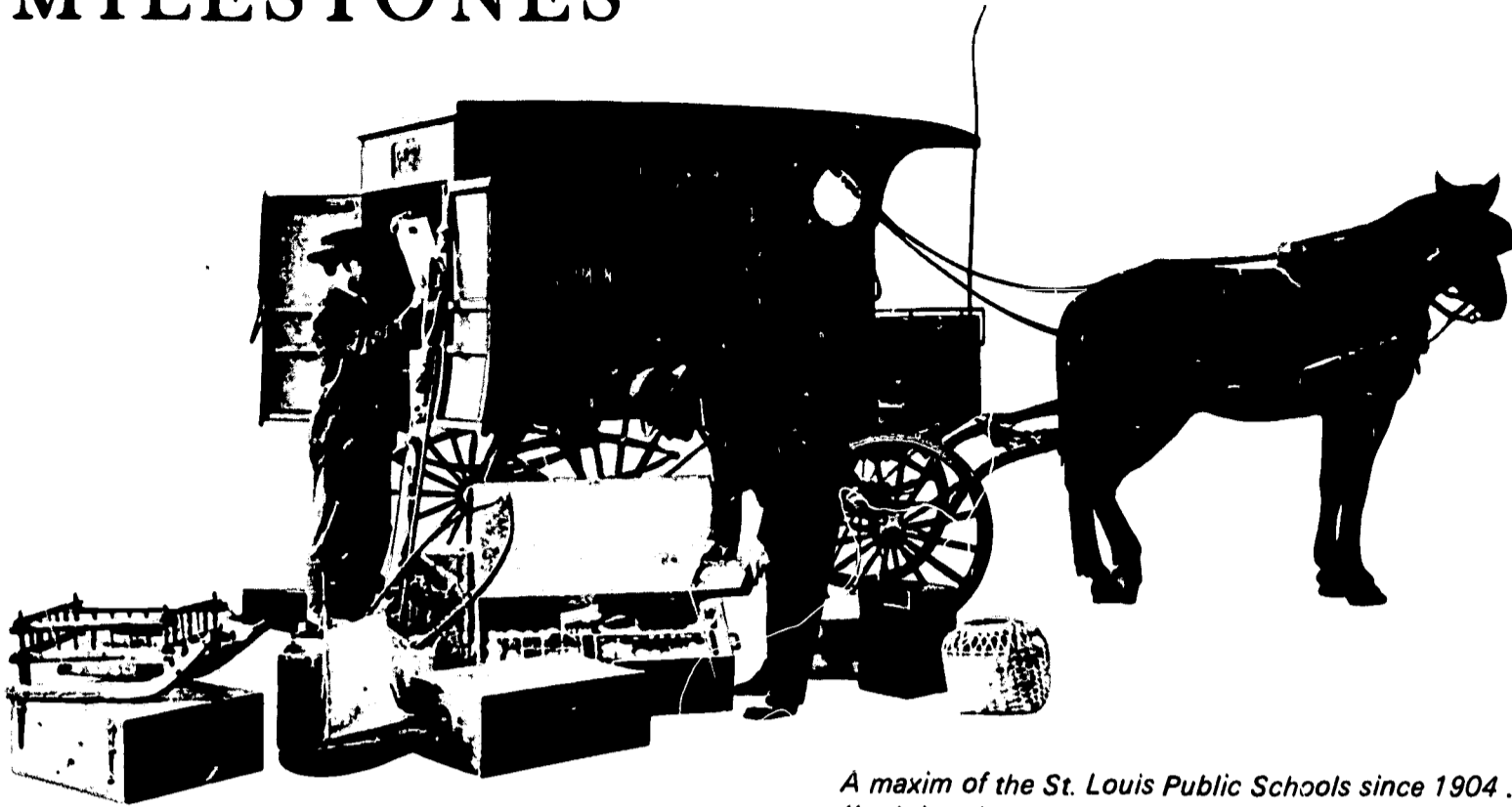
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years of retardation and a low 90 I.Q., a full year's progress in reading as measured by standardized tests can be made. Our present discomfort would have been cumulatively greater without this service.

The St. Louis Public Schools' Ungraded Primary program, which defines the skills of literacy by sequential stages, requires mastery of one level before another is begun, and enables children to progress at individual rates, has been in operation for nearly a decade, has the approval and support of the teachers, and has clearly reduced, by thousands of pupils, the numbers who enter the fourth grade without the basic skills to learn from the middle grade textbooks. We would have been hurting worse without this program.

Our earlier experiences with the Rooms of Twenty—in which the basic skills were stressed and the teachers had less traditional and more effective material to use with twenty instead of thirty-five children—indicated that we could in this manner get twice the normal rate of achievement in basic skills. We cannot do that well when we expand the program as quickly as we did under Title I and confine it to the poverty areas. However, with a mean I.Q. below 90, these pupils, who had never made normal progress in school and who were already severely retarded, made average gains of 3.4 months in a 3.5 month period. Next school year we shall have 92 such Rooms of Twenty in operation, where, hopefully, we will make better gains.

We have made determined and productive efforts to improve the high school learning conditions. We have assigned security guards to prevent outside interference with the learning program, have reduced late registration to a minimum, have cut down significantly tardiness, excessive absence, and class cutting. With federal funds we have made the new Lincoln High School a rehabilitation center for 300 youngsters who have been suspended from the regular high schools. Classes are ungraded and small. The staff of 32 has been carefully hand-picked on the basis of interest in helping these students. An important part of the program is the work-study unit. Work-coordinator counselors find jobs that give the youngsters constructive training and then supervise them on the job. Many of these boys and girls have been returned to the other high schools with hopes of finishing school successfully.

In the days of segregated school systems, achievement in the Negro schools and also in poverty area white schools was never given the concerned attention it needed, and thousands of students went through the secondary schools and sometimes the colleges without the competence in basic skills which was required of middle and upper class whites. Today business and industry is opening work

opportunity for Negro youth as it never has before. But employers, who must make a profit if they are to stay in business, will not long buy incompetence. Equal work opportunity will require equal work performance. We must, in simple justice, make the high school diploma, now the passcard to fill out work applications, represent at least that level of competence in reading, spelling, language, and arithmetic which will enable one to hold an ordinary job. To perpetuate the poney school diploma is to cling to the double standard which will perpetuate second class citizenship.

The Board of Education has therefore begun the use of the Proficiency and Review tests, setting a passing score in reading, language, spelling, and arithmetic which will assure a modest competence in these necessary skills sufficient to hold a job. Students are tested first at the end of the eighth grade. Those who fail are given free summer school instruction to make up their deficiencies. Each student will have a chance to take the tests at least eight times before high school graduation and a chance to go to free summer schools for four years. The St. Louis community has a right to expect this reasonable degree of performance from all St. Louis Public High School graduates.

“Let me emphasize firmly that I am not proposing vocational and technical careers for all Negro youngsters. A growing proportion of disadvantaged children should and can be encouraged and trained toward academic higher education and professional careers. But I am concerned here mainly with those whose needs are not now being met in academic preparatory programs. My premise is that the most immediate and pressing need of the great majority of disadvantaged Negroes and members of other low-income groups is the capability of taking full advantage of economic opportunity as it is won.”

MARVIN J. FELDMAN: *Public Education and Manpower Development*
A Ford Foundation Reprint

We think we can lick the vocational education problem. With the help of a federal Title III planning grant, we are expecting to expand the vocational and technical offerings at O'Fallon. With the signs pointing to O'Fallon's becoming an all-Negro school within the next few years, we propose to convert the institution into an integrated ancillary school for the other city high schools, where the Negro-white enrollment is equally divided. Under the proposal, all academic work will be conducted in the local high schools, and students who can profit from vocational training will be bussed to and from O'Fallon for a half-day and returned to the local high school in time to participate in the extra-curricular activities which tend to attract students to their district high

schools. Expansion of offerings for both slow-learning and gifted students will hopefully balance and increase the student population racially and numerically, and make job placement realistic and successful. We expect a more substantial federal grant and state support to implement the program.

“And gladly wolde he lerne, and gladly teche.”

GEOFFREY CHAUCER: *The Canterbury Tales*

The big cities, hard pressed for school dollars, have generally passed the buck of teacher training to state or independent institutions until only two large city systems maintain such institutions. One is St. Louis. Confronted with the disillusionment of recruiting teachers from other teacher training institutions for the big city schools in competition with the more seductive suburban schools, we rationally conclude that our remaining hope of supplying the inner city schools with adequate numbers of competent and consecrated teachers in these critical times lies in reinvigorating and strengthening our local Harris Teachers College.

All of the big cities will probably again have to operate their own teacher-producing schools if they hope to secure enough good teachers to improve the quality of their instructional programs. Such an institution will have to be flexibly geared to the needs of the city schools. Not only will the apprentice work have to be done in the inner city schools, but when the percentage of special education pupils increases, for example, corresponding teacher-training activity will have to materialize promptly. Above all, such an institution must be alert and sensitive to the needs of the school system for a wide variety of in-service offerings to help the thousands of tenure teachers to cope with a school population and learning conditions which are vastly and disconcertingly different from those which they were prepared to deal with.

We have assigned to the college this fall a group of young administrators who have been dealing with the frightening problems of the city schools. Because the Board of Education must necessarily devote the major part of its concern and deliberations to the problems of the elementary and secondary schools, a special board committee will maintain liaison with an advisory board of seven members who will concern themselves exclusively with the problems of the college. These advisory board members are respected citizens who have a stake in the future of the inner city. We hope to make the college the hub of the school system and, with federal or foundation support, to repackage its physical facilities in the inner city to such an extent that we can attract, as we never adequately

have, the graduates of the city and suburban high schools to careers of service where they are so desperately needed—in the St. Louis Public Schools.

We need to pay our teachers a decent salary and to make their working conditions as tolerable as possible. We believe that we can do so. Big city teacher salaries ought to be substantially higher and the pupil-teacher ratios ought to be lower than those in the suburban school systems. In the 1967-68 school year

A testing program from kindergarten through high school seeks to discover each child's abilities and needs.



we shall make only modest progress, but it is some progress. The average increase in salaries starting this September will be \$1,015. The average salary of St. Louis teachers will be \$8,786. We are generally in line with median salaries in the large cities and are tentatively competitive with the local suburbs.

We are aware that we must ultimately achieve a greater degree of faculty integration than we now have if we hope to get to the stage of objectivity in which teachers are valued for their competence without regard for their color or creed. We are resolutely determined not to assign teachers to all schools solely on the basis of race and not to disregard length of service, travel distance, and adaptability to new teaching situations. Many older white teachers are fearful of teaching in all-Negro schools and many Negro teachers are reluctant to volunteer for service in distant all-white schools. We do, nevertheless, make slow but persistent progress, and when these teaching assignments are made with wisdom and with consideration for the teachers involved, we erode much of the emotional prejudice which exists on both sides.

Last school year, in the elementary schools, the number of all-white faculties was reduced from 36 to 22, the number of all-Negro faculties from 46 to 40, and the number of integrated faculties increased from 58 to 81. Every high school faculty in the city system is an integrated faculty, ranging from almost equal balance in some instances to almost tokenism in others. In all cases, however, the gains are consistent and they have been made without violent disturbance or even sullen unrest.

Pupil integration is restricted by the St. Louis housing patterns and by the substantial majority of Negro pupils. Three of the high schools, McKinley, Central and Northwest, continue to hold integrated school populations, as do the special schools and the college. Most of the elementary school integration has been accomplished by the bussing program and, to a limited extent, the permissive transfer policy.

Numerically the bussing program, involving 2,400 elementary school pupils, will not be materially reduced despite the new school facilities. The permissive transfer policy has been progressively liberalized during the past several years. Vacant seats are listed in all schools, including unused rooms in south and north St. Louis. Applicants have opportunity for all of the children in a family to transfer, and any pupil who has been transported may continue in such a school at the travel expense of the Board of Education. St. Louis Negro pupils are not locked into schools in the ghetto.

“Historians of the future may look upon the 1960’s as the period when our society really began to take education seriously. Whether they will record us as equal to the challenge will depend largely upon the wisdom, determination, and energy with which we approach our task in the years ahead.”

THEODORE R. SIZER: *Remaking the World of the Career Teacher*

Bussing will never solve our problems of pupil distribution. Actually, we have only 2,663 elementary school classrooms in the entire city, and only 49 in the extreme fringes of the city are still vacant. Many of our south side schools with these vacant rooms are old and outmoded structures. We also need some equality of school facilities, and we are now planning the details of a bond issue for additional school construction. Hopefully, we will be able to pass bond issues with a 60 per cent majority in the future instead of the almost impossible two-thirds.

“No man is an island, entire of itself; every man is a piece of the continent, a part of the main; if a clod be washed away by the sea, Europe is the less, as well as if a promontory were, as well as if a manor of thy friends or of thine own were; any man’s death diminishes me, because I am involved in mankind; and therefore never send to know for whom the bell tolls; it tolls for thee.”

JOHN DONNE: *Devotions*

The St. Louis Board of Education has made a proposal to eight contiguous St. Louis County school districts to discuss the feasibility of placing some city Negro pupils in suburban schools in which there is extra space and to inaugurate a teacher exchange program. The board made this overture in order to initiate consideration of a problem which merits the deep concern of the entire community—not just of city residents or the city school board.

Sooner or later the expanding masses of American metropolita must come to the point of wisdom to perceive that the business of educating all of our American youth for a precarious and uncertain future requires a deep common concern for survival, and that we cannot much longer find security in geographical flight or in religious or sociological insulation.

“I have trodden the winepress alone.”

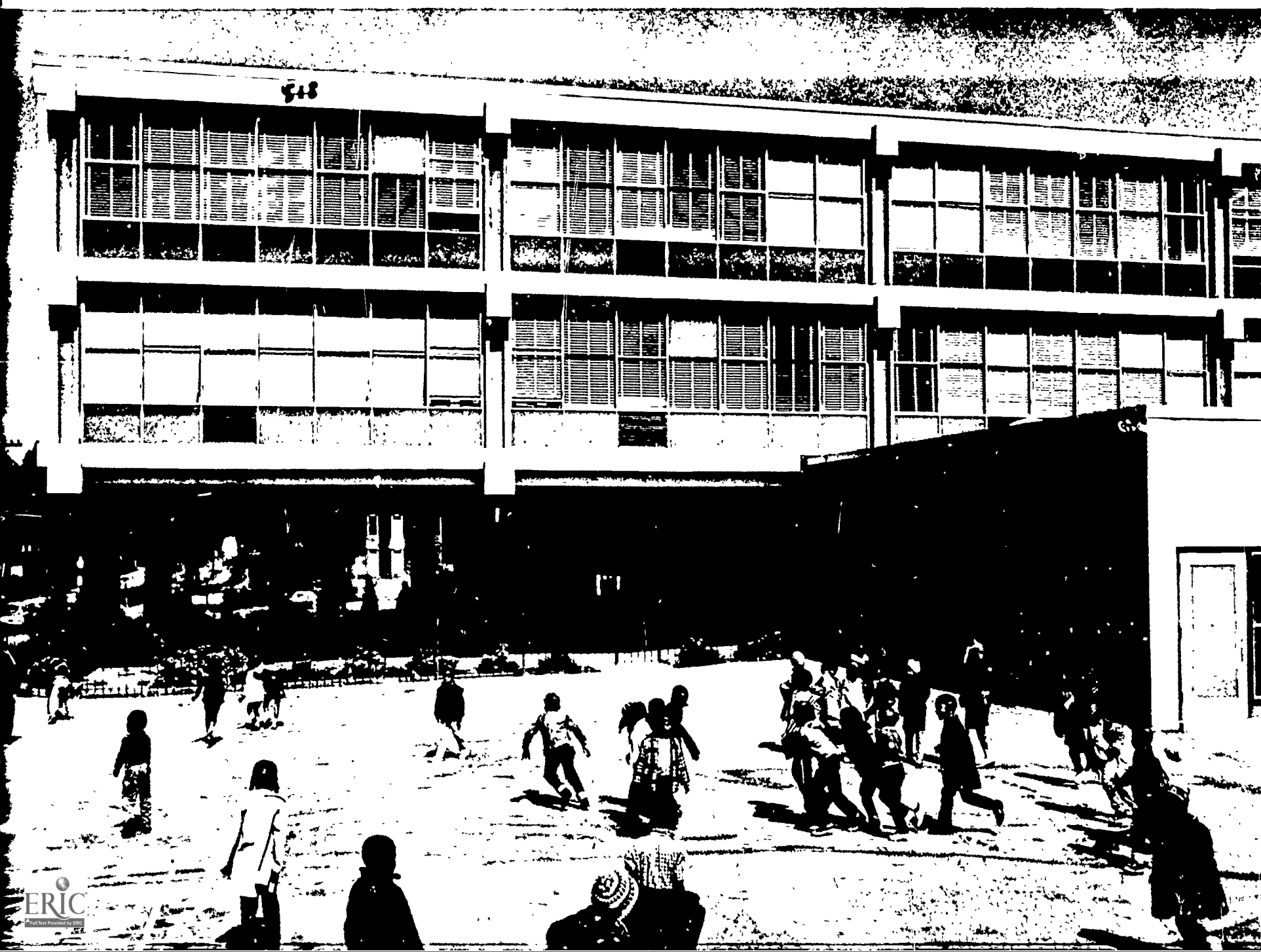
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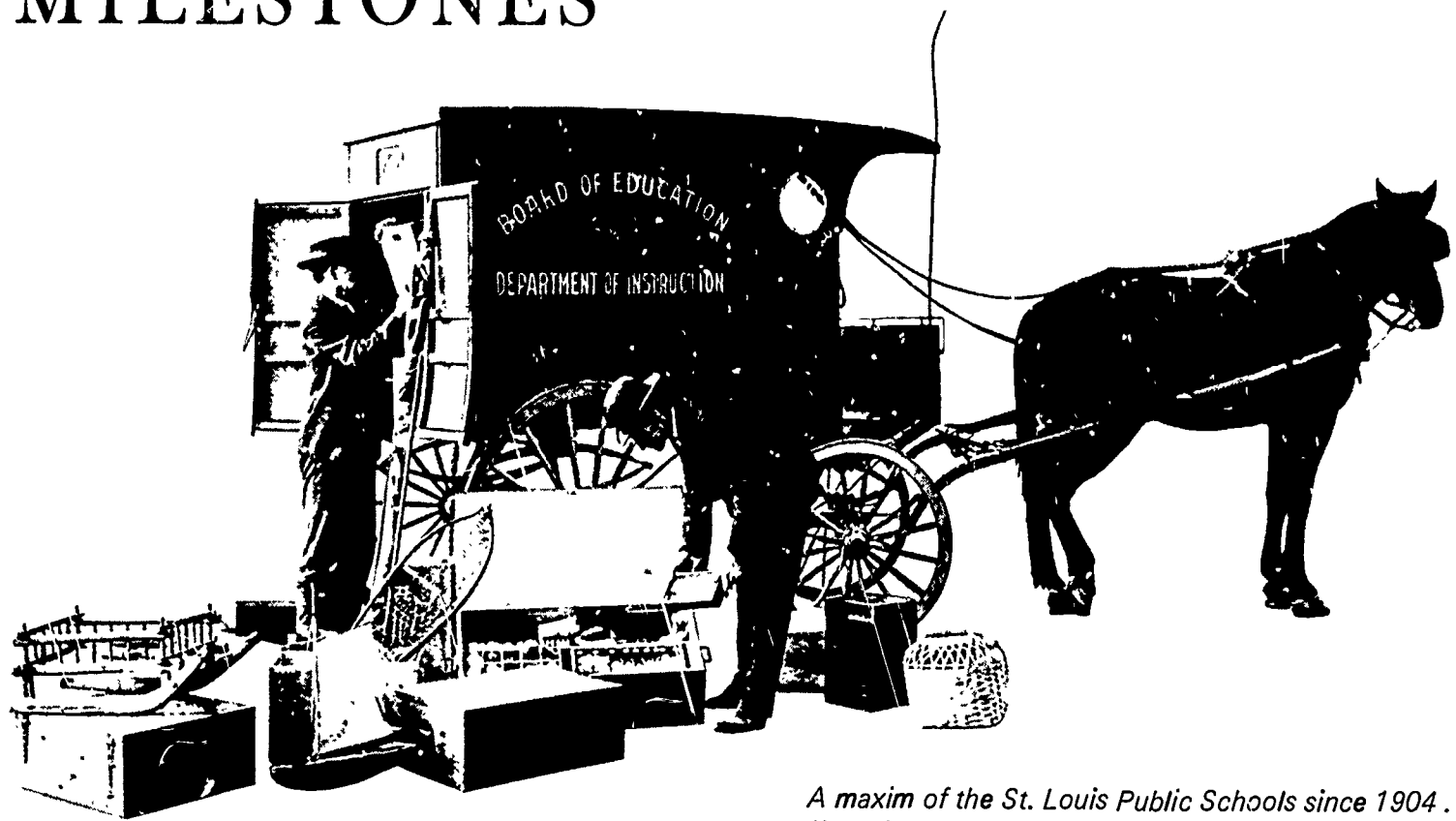
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