

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

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OFFICE OF EDUCATION

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COMPULSORY
SCHOOL ATTENDANCE LAWS
AND THEIR ADMINISTRATION

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BULLETIN, 1935, No. 4

UNITED STATES
GOVERNMENT PRINTING OFFICE
WASHINGTON : 1935

For sale by the Superintendent of Documents, Washington, D. C. - - - Price 10 cents

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FOREWORD

Since 1918 laws requiring school attendance have existed in all States of the Union. These laws had their conception in the faith that education is essential to the perpetuity of popular government and social justice. This faith continues unabated. Although the problems of nonschool attendance, together with child labor, do not exist to the same extent as formerly, they still are in need of solution. There is now, perhaps more than at any previous time, widespread opinion that a more satisfactory solution to the problems relating to school attendance will afford vital aid in solving other social problems.

Numerous inquiries concerning school-attendance laws in different States, educational requirements for labor permits, their enforcement, etc., are addressed to the Office of Education. This publication is designed to answer these inquiries and to give information which will be helpful to those who seek the further development or improved administration of laws relating to school attendance.

BESS GOODYKOONTZ,
Assistant Commissioner.

VII

COMPULSORY SCHOOL ATTENDANCE LAWS AND THEIR ADMINISTRATION

PURPOSE

THIS STUDY has been prepared to help answer questions frequently asked regarding certain features of the compulsory school attendance laws in the several States, as compulsory school ages, exemptions provided, amount of attendance required, qualifications of attendance officers, State supervision of attendance enforcement, and other provisions for administering the attendance laws.

The legislative enactments on certain features of school attendance are summarized in the text and a digest of some of the features of the attendance law in each of the States is appended.

THE PROBLEM OF SCHOOL ATTENDANCE

MAGNITUDE OF NONATTENDANCE

The ideal of having all the children of elementary and secondary school age (6 to 17, inclusive) attend school has not been attained. According to the 1930 United States Census, 4,173,951, or 14.3 percent, of the 29,066,072 children 6 to 17 years of age were not attending school. Of the number not attending school, 1,658,965, or 39.7 percent, were of elementary school age (6 to 13, inclusive) and 2,514,986, or 60.3 percent, were of high-school age (14 to 17, inclusive).

The foregoing figures, which show the total number of children 6 to 17 years of age not in school at all, do not present the entire picture of the problem of school attendance since they do not take into account the average daily attendance of those who were enrolled. Considering attendance in relation to enrollment in the public schools 4,413,129, or 17.2 percent, of the 25,678,015 children enrolled were absent each day. Adding this number to the number of children not in school at all, the grand total number of children not

in school on any one day during the school term was 8,587,080. This figure, however, is only approximate, since the enrollments and attendance in private and parochial schools are not included, and since some of the children included in the average daily attendance figures are 5 years of age and some are 18 or more years of age, but it is plainly evident that a huge army of children are out of school each day—in round numbers 8,500,000, or approximately 27.5 percent, of the school population 6 to 17 years of age.

There are thus evidently two parts to the problem of school attendance—one is that of enrolling all the children of elementary and secondary school age and the other is that of keeping those enrolled in regular attendance.

The first-named problem has been solved in large part for children of compulsory school attendance age. Of the total number of children of the usual absolute compulsory attendance age, that is the age where very few exemptions are allowed (7 to 13, inclusive), 95.3 percent of the total number of children of this age group were enrolled in schools, and 88.8 percent of the children 14 and 15 years of age who are usually subject to the compulsory attendance laws but who may be exempted for reasons in addition to those provided for children 7 to 13 years of age were attending school, while only 66.3 percent of the children 6 years of age and only 57.3 percent of those 16 and 17 years of age were enrolled.

If the compulsory school attendance age were extended to 18 the percentage of children 16 and 17 years of age attending school would doubtless be greatly increased. It is significant to note that in the five States, Idaho, Nevada, Ohio, Oklahoma, and Utah, in each of which the upper compulsory school attendance age limit with certain exemptions is 18, the percentage of children 16 and 17 years of age attending school is much higher than the average for the country, 57.3 percent. In Idaho, 72.3 percent of the children of these ages were attending school; in Nevada, 75.7 percent; in Ohio, 67.7 percent; in Oklahoma, 63.2 percent; and in Utah, 80.9 percent.

The following table shows by age groups the percent of children attending school in each of the States:

COMPULSORY SCHOOL ATTENDANCE LAWS

TABLE 1.—Percent of children attending school at various age levels¹

| State | 6 years | 7 to 13 | 14 and 15 | 16 and 17 | 18 to 20 |
|---------------------------|---------|---------|-----------|-----------|----------|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| United States..... | 66.3 | 95.3 | 88.8 | 57.3 | 21.4 |
| New England..... | 81.8 | 98.2 | 90.9 | 54.9 | 22.3 |
| Maine..... | 82.6 | 98.0 | 91.7 | 59.8 | 23.1 |
| New Hampshire..... | 69.3 | 97.9 | 93.5 | 55.5 | 22.2 |
| Vermont..... | 63.7 | 97.3 | 90.6 | 55.7 | 21.3 |
| Massachusetts..... | 83.6 | 98.3 | 92.9 | 59.5 | 25.0 |
| Rhode Island..... | 79.9 | 98.1 | 87.9 | 40.4 | 17.0 |
| Connecticut..... | 86.0 | 98.3 | 86.1 | 47.3 | 17.8 |
| Middle Atlantic..... | 75.7 | 97.6 | 92.4 | 53.3 | 18.7 |
| New York..... | 79.5 | 97.7 | 93.9 | 59.4 | 20.4 |
| New Jersey..... | 85.6 | 98.1 | 91.1 | 47.6 | 16.9 |
| Pennsylvania..... | 68.0 | 97.3 | 91.2 | 48.6 | 17.2 |
| East North Central..... | 76.3 | 97.9 | 93.5 | 62.2 | 21.1 |
| Ohio..... | 74.3 | 97.9 | 96.6 | 67.7 | 22.8 |
| Indiana..... | 67.8 | 97.8 | 95.8 | 62.4 | 21.7 |
| Illinois..... | 75.0 | 97.7 | 92.4 | 57.1 | 19.9 |
| Michigan..... | 83.6 | 98.1 | 94.2 | 61.7 | 20.2 |
| Wisconsin..... | 80.4 | 98.0 | 86.3 | 63.4 | 21.5 |
| West North Central..... | 79.6 | 97.7 | 89.3 | 59.2 | 24.3 |
| Minnesota..... | 80.1 | 96.0 | 91.1 | 57.0 | 24.4 |
| Iowa..... | 91.2 | 98.3 | 89.8 | 63.9 | 25.1 |
| Missouri..... | 74.1 | 96.8 | 85.7 | 51.6 | 20.0 |
| North Dakota..... | 66.1 | 97.2 | 88.2 | 58.4 | 25.1 |
| South Dakota..... | 69.9 | 97.4 | 88.8 | 62.8 | 27.9 |
| Nebraska..... | 90.0 | 98.4 | 91.1 | 63.2 | 24.7 |
| Kansas..... | 76.4 | 98.0 | 92.1 | 66.4 | 28.9 |
| South Atlantic..... | 51.1 | 91.4 | 79.5 | 48.0 | 18.1 |
| Delaware..... | 65.1 | 97.1 | 91.4 | 52.0 | 18.1 |
| Maryland..... | 62.5 | 96.4 | 80.6 | 42.2 | 16.2 |
| District of Columbia..... | 80.5 | 97.6 | 95.5 | 67.7 | 29.8 |
| Virginia..... | 36.7 | 90.7 | 81.3 | 48.3 | 18.1 |
| West Virginia..... | 61.8 | 94.1 | 86.2 | 49.8 | 20.3 |
| North Carolina..... | 50.4 | 93.0 | 79.1 | 49.3 | 19.2 |
| South Carolina..... | 44.8 | 86.4 | 73.8 | 46.7 | 18.1 |
| Georgia..... | 55.0 | 88.6 | 73.7 | 43.6 | 14.3 |
| Florida..... | 59.8 | 91.7 | 84.1 | 55.0 | 19.7 |
| East South Central..... | 49.4 | 90.6 | 83.8 | 53.1 | 19.9 |
| Kentucky..... | 47.3 | 91.2 | 82.5 | 49.2 | 19.1 |
| Tennessee..... | 46.6 | 91.7 | 85.2 | 53.2 | 19.9 |
| Alabama..... | 39.0 | 88.6 | 82.6 | 51.5 | 18.0 |
| Mississippi..... | 66.9 | 91.3 | 85.3 | 59.6 | 23.1 |
| West South Central..... | 44.1 | 90.3 | 84.4 | 57.4 | 21.1 |
| Arkansas..... | 57.3 | 90.6 | 84.9 | 59.5 | 22.6 |
| Louisiana..... | 55.3 | 89.4 | 78.3 | 49.5 | 17.8 |
| Oklahoma..... | 65.7 | 94.3 | 88.9 | 63.2 | 25.8 |
| Texas..... | 26.1 | 88.7 | 84.6 | 57.2 | 19.8 |
| Mountain..... | 64.7 | 95.8 | 91.2 | 66.8 | 28.2 |
| Montana..... | 67.2 | 97.4 | 92.9 | 67.9 | 29.6 |
| Idaho..... | 59.8 | 97.9 | 94.1 | 72.3 | 32.9 |
| Wyoming..... | 71.1 | 98.0 | 93.0 | 68.4 | 26.5 |
| Colorado..... | 70.9 | 96.8 | 90.3 | 63.2 | 28.4 |
| New Mexico..... | 59.3 | 90.7 | 84.8 | 57.4 | 22.1 |
| Arizona..... | 57.2 | 90.8 | 85.4 | 56.6 | 22.6 |
| Utah..... | 63.8 | 97.9 | 97.1 | 80.9 | 32.7 |
| Nevada..... | 70.8 | 95.7 | 93.6 | 75.7 | 31.2 |
| Pacific..... | 77.1 | 97.6 | 96.5 | 79.7 | 32.9 |
| Washington..... | 65.5 | 97.7 | 96.6 | 76.8 | 33.6 |
| Oregon..... | 69.5 | 97.7 | 94.5 | 72.8 | 33.3 |
| California..... | 81.7 | 97.6 | 97.2 | 82.1 | 32.7 |

¹ Compiled from U. S. Census report, 1930.

The other phase of the attendance problem is that of keeping the children enrolled in regular attendance. Of course, perfect attendance cannot be expected of every child enrolled,

but there is, nevertheless, the problem of unnecessary absences. In every community there are some parents who will keep their children out of school for a day or two at a time to assist with chores and with farm work. Data are not available to show for the entire country how many pupils are unlawfully absent, but that many children are absent from school without lawful excuses is evident according to data compiled by the Pennsylvania State Department of Public Instruction.¹ In 1933 the number of sessions of absence in that State amounted to 36,861,941. Of this number 1,731,631 were unexcused. There were in that year 57,409 pupils, or 2.8 percent, of the total enrollment unlawfully absent on first offense and 24,412, or 1.2 percent, of the enrollment unlawfully absent on the second offense. If these percentages of unlawful absences may be regarded as average, the total number of unlawful absences for the first offense in the country as a whole amounts to 735,712 and for the second offense to 315,305.

CAUSES OF ABSENCES FROM SCHOOL

Absences are due to several causes. In Pennsylvania, for example, of the unexcused absences in 1933, 84.8 percent was due to parental neglect; 14.4 percent to truancy; and 8 percent to illegal employment. In Philadelphia in 1931-32 the cause of absences both unexcused and excused of the cases investigated was distributed as follows:²

Parental neglect, 33.5 percent; illegal employment, 0.3 percent; truancy, 9.3 percent; illness of child, 37.1 percent; illness in family, 3.9 percent; death in family, 0.5 percent; quarantine, 0.9 percent; inclement weather, 0.7 percent; other, 13.8 percent. These figures are probably representative of causes of absence in the large cities.

In the rural school districts farm work is responsible for many absences from school. "Many country schools", the Children's Bureau reports,³ "are almost emptied of their pupils during the busy season on the surrounding farms. Cotton picking, beginning in the late summer, is often not

¹ Keeping in Touch With the Schools, Statistical Research Studies, Apr. 1934, no. 7, pp. 8, 11.

² Compiled from data in Report of the Division of Compulsory Education, Philadelphia, Pa., 1931-32.

³ U. S. Department of Labor, Children's Bureau, Children in Agriculture. Publication No. 187. Washington, Government Printing Office, 1929, pp. 25-26.

completed until after Christmas, so that many cotton pickers do not enter school until 'along in January.' Many farmers' children in sugar-beet growing districts do not even enroll in school until after the middle of November when the beet harvest is over. Truck farming has much the same effect on children's schooling. * * * Child agricultural workers in almost every locality in the Children's Bureau surveys had been absent from school during the year of the survey for farm work, and farm work was almost universally the chief cause of absence."

EFFECTS OF ABSENCE FROM SCHOOL

Theoretically irregular school attendance tends to cause a pupil to achieve less than he is capable of achieving in the subjects that he is studying. He may, however, make up the lost time by home study or by being coached by his teacher or by his parents, but if he does not make up the lesson assignments his achievement is no doubt less than it would have been if he had been in regular attendance. If the pupil is coached by the teacher during class period he takes some of the time that the teacher should be devoting to the class.

Anyone who has had experience as a teacher or as a school principal would agree with the foregoing statements, but many parents may not be entirely convinced for they often see their children who have been irregular in attendance promoted at the end of the school term. They fail to realize that their children might have achieved more if they had attended school more regularly.

Unfortunately there have been few or no studies showing the relationship between school attendance and possible achievement. The studies that have been made are concerned chiefly with the relation between attendance and marks given by teachers, or between attendance and progress through school. In very few studies have attempts been made to eliminate or to take into account factors other than marks or progress through school. Absentees who have been coached should doubtless be eliminated from any study purporting to show the relation between attendance and advancement. Studies using only progress through school as the

basis of showing the relationship do not take all factors into consideration. Children of high ability may be irregular in attendance and they may still be promoted. The question that needs to be answered is "what might the pupil have achieved had he been in regular attendance?" If he is absent 20 days a term and makes a score of 70, what would his score have been if he had attended school every day?

However, such studies as have been made on the relation between attendance and marks and attendance and progress show, upon the whole, that there is a positive relationship. For example, Ziegler⁴ in a study of the records of 307-junior high school pupils found a positive correlation of 0.34 between school attendance and school marks and a positive correlation 0.35 between attendance and progress through school. A study by Rosenberry⁵ quoted in Ziegler's study shows a correlation of +0.38 between habitual absence and marks of 3, 4, and 5. Cooper⁶ in his study of progress and attendance of rural school children in Delaware found that as the mean percentage of attendance in 1 teacher, 2 and 3 teacher, and in fully graded schools decreased the slower was the progress of the pupils. For example, pupils in the fully graded schools making normal progress had a mean attendance percentage of 90.6, those retarded a year 82.9, those retarded 2 years 82.7, and those retarded more than 2 years had a mean attendance percentage of only 73.4.

DEVELOPMENT OF COMPULSORY SCHOOL ATTENDANCE LAWS

The problem of nonattendance at school was one that confronted school administrators at an early date, and in order to help solve it State after State enacted compulsory school attendance laws. The first State to enact such a law was Massachusetts.

When the development of the factory system began in Massachusetts in the early part of the nineteenth century

⁴ Ziegler, Carl W., *School Attendance and its Significance*, Teachers College, Columbia University, Contributions to Education, no. 297, New York City, 1933, p. 26.

⁵ Rosenberry, E. E., *A Master's Thesis*, University of Southern California, Los Angeles, 1924.

⁶ Cooper, Herman, *An Accounting of Progress and Attendance of Rural School Children in Delaware*, Teachers College, Columbia University, Contributions to Education, no. 422, p. 92.

and the population began to concentrate in villages and cities, it was found that children could do much of the work in factories and that they were taken away from school for that purpose. In order to remedy this condition, a "factory law" was enacted in 1842, but it was practically a dead letter, at least in its relation to school attendance. So great had the evils of nonattendance and truancy become that Horace Mann gave especial attention to it in his reports, and by 1850 public sentiment had become sufficiently aroused to pass a truancy law. A compulsory attendance act followed in 1852, and that was amended in 1859 to read as follows:

SECTION 1. Every person having under his control a child between the ages of 8 and 14 years shall annually during the continuance of his control send such child to some public school in the city or town in which he resides at least 12 weeks, if the public schools of such city or town so long continue, 6 weeks of which time shall be consecutive, and for every neglect of such duty the party offending shall forfeit to the use of such city or town a sum not exceeding \$20; but if it appears upon the inquiry of the truant officer or school committee of any city or town, or upon the trial of any prosecution, that the party so neglecting was not able, by reason of poverty to send such child to school, or to furnish him with the means of education, or that such child has been otherwise furnished with the means of education for a like period of time, or has already acquired the branches of learning taught in the public schools, or that his bodily or mental condition has been such as to prevent his attendance at school or application to study for the period required, the penalty before mentioned shall not be incurred.

SECTION 2. The truant officers and the school committees of the several cities and towns shall inquire into all cases of neglect of the duty prescribed in the preceding section, and ascertain from the persons neglecting the reasons, if any, therefor; and shall forthwith give notice of all violations, with the reasons, to the treasurer of the city or town, and if such treasurer willfully neglects or refuses to prosecute any person liable to the penalty provided for in the preceding section he shall forfeit the sum of \$20.¹

The failure of these early laws to secure attendance was apparent, and Superintendent White took up the subject in 1870, saying:²

I am fully convinced, after many years of observation and inquiry, that the several enactments relating to this matter (absenteeism) are ill-adapted to their purpose, discordant, and incapable of execution, and therefore need a careful and thorough revision, to which ample time and thought should be given. I therefore respectfully recommend that

¹ Report of the United States Commissioner of Education, 1888-89, p. 472.

² Ibid., pp. 473-474.

8 . COMPULSORY SCHOOL ATTENDANCE LAWS

the present legislature be requested to pass a resolve directing the board of education or such other competent body as may be deemed proper to take into consideration all existing laws relating to school attendance, truancy, absenteeism, and the employment of children in manufacturing establishments, and inquire what alterations and amendments are needed to combine said enactments into a uniform, consistent, and efficient code adapted to the present views and wants of the public.

By 1890 the law had been so amended that it was well enforced, according to Supt. J. W. Dickinson, who at that time reported to the United States Bureau of Education that "the compulsory law operates well and is generally obeyed."⁹ The obedience which seemed to satisfy Mr. Dickinson would probably fail to meet the approval of the officers of the present day; but constant improvement has been made since then both in the laws and in the method of their enforcement.

The next State to enact an attendance law was Vermont (1867). The District of Columbia, however, enacted such a law in 1864. By 1900, 32 States and the District of Columbia had enacted compulsory school attendance laws. From 1900 to 1910, 10 more States fell into line, and by 1918 every State in the Union had an attendance law. The following shows the date of the enactment of such laws in each of the States:

| | | | | | |
|---------------------------|------|--------------------|------|---------------------|------|
| Massachusetts..... | 1852 | Rhode Island..... | 1883 | Iowa..... | 1902 |
| District of Columbia..... | 1864 | Illinois..... | 1883 | Maryland..... | 1902 |
| Vermont..... | 1867 | North Dakota..... | 1883 | Missouri..... | 1905 |
| New Hampshire..... | 1871 | South Dakota..... | 1883 | Tennessee..... | 1905 |
| Michigan..... | 1871 | Montana..... | 1883 | Delaware..... | 1907 |
| Washington..... | 1871 | Minnesota..... | 1885 | North Carolina..... | 1907 |
| Connecticut..... | 1872 | Nebraska..... | 1887 | Oklahoma..... | 1907 |
| Nevada..... | 1873 | Idaho..... | 1887 | Virginia..... | 1908 |
| New York..... | 1874 | Colorado..... | 1889 | Arkansas..... | 1909 |
| Kansas..... | 1874 | Oregon..... | 1889 | Louisiana..... | 1910 |
| California..... | 1874 | Utah..... | 1890 | Alabama..... | 1915 |
| Maine..... | 1875 | New Mexico..... | 1891 | Florida..... | 1915 |
| New Jersey..... | 1875 | Pennsylvania..... | 1895 | South Carolina..... | 1915 |
| Wyoming..... | 1876 | Kentucky..... | 1896 | Texas..... | 1915 |
| Ohio..... | 1877 | West Virginia..... | 1897 | Georgia..... | 1916 |
| Wisconsin..... | 1879 | Indiana..... | 1897 | Mississippi..... | 1918 |
| | | Arizona..... | 1899 | | |

¹ The Texas law of 1873 establishing a free public-school system contained a compulsory school attendance provision. This law was somewhat ineffective and unsatisfactory at that time and was superseded by other legislation in 1876 which omitted the compulsory school attendance provision.

Although every State in the Union has enacted a compulsory attendance law, each State had to overcome much opposition on the part of those who considered such a law un-American in principle, in that its provision interferes with

⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 486.

the personal liberty of the parents. In 1891 and in 1893 Governor Patterson, of Pennsylvania, vetoed compulsory education bills on these general grounds. In 1895 when Governor Hastings signed a similar bill, he did so only because he did not wish to obtrude his judgment in the matter, which was against the bill.

In 1872 when Connecticut was considering the enactment of a compulsory school attendance law, some of the arguments against its enactment that the secretary of the State board of education discussed in his annual report, were: (1) A new crime is created; (2) it interferes with the liberty of parents; (3) new powers are abrogated by the Government; (4) it is un-American and not adapted to our free institutions; (5) compulsory education is monarchical in its origin and history; (6) attendance is just as great without the law. In practically every State, such contentions had to be met when bills providing for compulsory school attendance were introduced in the State legislature.

As might be expected, the constitutionality of compulsory school attendance laws was a question that found its way into the courts. Decisions on the constitutionality of such legislation have been rendered in at least four States—Indiana, New Hampshire, Ohio, and Pennsylvania. In each instance the courts affirmed the constitutionality of the attendance law. In none of these cases was the question of attendance at private or parochial schools involved since attendance at such schools was permitted.

Court decisions on numerous other aspects of the attendance laws have been rendered¹⁰ and the principle that the State may require children to attend some school has been firmly established.

IMPROVEMENT IN SCHOOL ATTENDANCE

Although the ideal of having every child of elementary and secondary school age, and especially all children from 7 to 16 years of age, attend school has not been realized, the percentage of such children enrolled in school has been

¹⁰ Bender, John Frederick, *The Function of the Courts in Enforcing School Attendance Laws*. New York, Bureau of Publications, Teachers College, Columbia University, 1927.

steadily increasing and attendance on the part of those enrolled has greatly improved. The following shows by age groups for the entire country the percent of children attending school in 1910 and in 1930:

| Ages | 1910 | 1930 |
|----------------|------|------|
| 5..... | 17.0 | 20.0 |
| 6..... | 52.1 | 66.3 |
| 7 to 13..... | 86.1 | 95.3 |
| 14 and 15..... | 75.0 | 88.8 |
| 16 and 17..... | 43.1 | 57.3 |
| 18 to 20..... | 15.2 | 21.4 |

No data are available to show by ages the increase in regularity of attendance on the part of the children enrolled, but the percent of public-school children enrolled, attending each day, increased from 72.1 in 1910 to 82.8 in 1930 and to 84.7 percent in 1932.

The increase in the percentage of children attending school and the percentage of increase in average daily attendance are due to several causes. The compulsory school attendance laws have become more effective not only by causing more children to enroll in school, but by causing better attendance on the part of those enrolled. Many of the compulsory attendance laws have been strengthened by requiring attendance for the full length of the school term, the compulsory attendance age span has been increased in many States, and fewer exemptions are allowed, thus tending to keep more children in school.

Better school attendance cannot, however, be attributed entirely to improved attendance laws and improved attendance service. As may be noted in the foregoing data, attendance of children below and above the usual compulsory attendance age has greatly increased. The percent of children 6 years of age attending school increased from 52.1 in 1910 to 66.3 in 1930, and the percent of children 16 and 17 years of age attending school increased from 43.1 in 1910 to 57.3 in 1930. Evidently the compulsory attendance laws were not responsible, at least not directly, for the increased attendance at these ages.

Other factors have been at work. Teachers are now better trained than formerly and know better how to appeal to the interests of children, thus making school a more desirable

place than it was 20 years ago. Courses of study have been improved more nearly to meet the needs of individual pupils, thus helping to hold children in school. Transportation of pupils has also contributed to better school attendance. In many communities children who live some distance from school are transported and need no longer remain at home on account of inclement weather. Improved health conditions may be mentioned as another factor. On the whole the increased interest of the public in general in education may be regarded as the predominant cause of better school attendance.

SCHOOL ATTENDANCE REQUIREMENTS

COMPULSORY ATTENDANCE AGES

In only 2 States is the minimum compulsory school attendance age placed at 6 years. These States are New Mexico and Ohio. The minimum compulsory attendance age in 30 States is 7 years, and in 16 States it is 8 years. Of the 42 States that had compulsory attendance laws in 1914, none had a minimum age of 6 years, 16 had a minimum age of 7 years, 25 a minimum age of 8 years, and 1 had a minimum age of 9 years.

The maximum compulsory attendance age in 1934 was less than 16 years in only 6 States, 16 years in 31 States, 17 in 6 States, and 18 in 5 States. In 1914, 22 of the 42 States having compulsory attendance laws placed the maximum compulsory attendance age at less than 16 years; 19 at 16 years; and only 1 at 18 years. The following shows for 1914 and 1934 the minimum and maximum compulsory attendance ages for full-time schools and the number of States having each of the ages indicated:

| Minimum compulsory attendance age | Number of States ¹ | | Maximum compulsory attendance age | Number of States ¹ | |
|-----------------------------------|-------------------------------|------|-----------------------------------|-------------------------------|------|
| | 1914 | 1934 | | 1914 | 1934 |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 6..... | 0 | 2 | 12..... | 3 | 0 |
| 7..... | 16 | 30 | 14..... | 10 | 5 |
| 8..... | 25 | 16 | 15..... | 9 | 1 |
| 9..... | 1 | 0 | 16..... | 19 | 31 |
| | | | 17..... | 0 | 6 |
| | | | 18..... | 1 | 5 |

¹ 6 States did not have compulsory school attendance laws in 1914.

The compulsory attendance ages for both full-time and continuation schools and the work-permit ages are shown in table 2.

TABLE 2.—Compulsory school attendance and work-permit ages

| State | Compulsory attendance ages | | Work-permit ages |
|---------------------|----------------------------|---|------------------|
| | Full-time school | Part-time continuation | |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| Alabama..... | 7-16 | | 14-17 |
| Arizona..... | 8-16 | 14 to 16..... | 14-16 |
| Arkansas..... | 7-16 | | 14-16 |
| California..... | 8-16 | Under 18..... | 14-16 |
| Colorado..... | 8-16 | | 14-16 |
| Connecticut..... | 7-16 | 14 to 16..... | 14-16 |
| Delaware..... | 7-17 | 12 to 16..... | 14-16 |
| Florida..... | 7-16 | 14 to 16..... | 14-16 |
| Georgia..... | 8-14 | | 14 |
| Idaho..... | 8-18 | | 14-16 |
| Illinois..... | 7-16 | 14 to 18..... | 14-16 |
| Indiana..... | 7-16 | do..... | 14-16 |
| Iowa..... | 7-16 | 14 to 16..... | 14-16 |
| Kansas..... | 7-16 | | 14-16 |
| Kentucky..... | 7-16 | 14 to 16..... | 14-16 |
| Louisiana..... | 7-14 | { 14 to 16, boys..... 14 to 18, girls..... } | 14-16 |
| Maine..... | 7-17 | | 15 |
| Maryland..... | 7-16 | | 14-16 |
| Massachusetts..... | 7-16 | 14 to 16..... | 14-16 |
| Michigan..... | 7-16 | Under 17..... | 15-16 |
| Minnesota..... | 8-16 | | 14-16 |
| Mississippi..... | 7-17 | | 14-16 |
| Missouri..... | 7-16 | Under 18..... | 14-16 |
| Montana..... | 8-16 | | 14-16 |
| Nebraska..... | 7-16 | 14 to 16..... | 14-16 |
| Nevada..... | 7-18 | 14 to 18..... | 14-18 |
| New Hampshire..... | 8-16 | | 14-16 |
| New Jersey..... | 7-16 | 14 to 16..... | 14-16 |
| New Mexico..... | 6-16 | do..... | 14-16 |
| New York..... | 7-16 | 14 to 17..... | 14-17 |
| North Carolina..... | 7-14 | | 14-15 |
| North Dakota..... | 7-17 | | 14-16 |
| Ohio..... | 6-18 | 16 to 18..... | 16-18 |
| Oklahoma..... | 8-18 | do..... | 16-18 |
| Oregon..... | 7-16 | do..... | 14-18 |
| Pennsylvania..... | 8-16 | 14 to 16..... | 14-16 |
| Rhode Island..... | 7-16 | | 15-16 |
| South Carolina..... | 8-14 | | 14 |
| South Dakota..... | 8-17 | | 14-16 |
| Tennessee..... | 7-16 | 14 to 16..... | 14-16 |
| Texas..... | 8-14 | | 12-14 |
| Utah..... | 8-18 | Under 18..... | 14-18 |
| Vermont..... | 8-16 | | 14-16 |
| Virginia..... | 7-15 | | 14-16 |
| Washington..... | 8-16 | 14 to 18..... | 14-18 |
| West Virginia..... | 7-16 | 14 to 16..... | 14-16 |
| Wisconsin..... | 7-16 | do..... | 14-17 |
| Wyoming..... | 7-17 | | 14-16 |

¹ For exemptions, see pp. 15-22.

² 7-16, inclusive, after May 6, 1935.

TABLE 3.—Amount of attendance required and the minimum legal school term, by States

| State | Attendance required | Legal minimum school term in months |
|---------------------|---|-------------------------------------|
| Alabama..... | Full term..... | (1) 8 |
| Arizona..... | do..... | 8 |
| Arkansas..... | 100 days..... | 6 |
| California..... | Full term..... | 8½ |
| Colorado..... | do..... | 6 |
| Connecticut..... | do..... | 9 |
| Delaware..... | do..... | 8 |
| Florida..... | do..... | 8 |
| Georgia..... | 6 months..... | 6 |
| Idaho..... | Full term..... | 7 |
| Illinois..... | do..... | 8 |
| Indiana..... | do..... | 6 |
| Iowa..... | 24 consecutive weeks ² | 8 |
| Kansas..... | Full term..... | 8 |
| Kentucky..... | do..... | 7 |
| Louisiana..... | 140 days..... | 7 |
| Maine..... | Full term..... | 7½ |
| Maryland..... | do..... | 9 |
| Massachusetts..... | do..... | 8 |
| Michigan..... | do..... | 7 |
| Minnesota..... | do..... | 7 |
| Mississippi..... | 80 days..... | 4 |
| Missouri..... | Full term..... | 8 |
| Montana..... | do..... | 39 |
| Nebraska..... | do ³ | 19 |
| Nevada..... | do..... | 6 |
| New Hampshire..... | do..... | 9 |
| New Jersey..... | do..... | 9 |
| New Mexico..... | do..... | 7 |
| New York..... | do..... | 9½ |
| North Carolina..... | do..... | 8 |
| North Dakota..... | do..... | 7 |
| Ohio..... | do..... | 8 |
| Oklahoma..... | Two-thirds of term..... | 3 |
| Oregon..... | Full term..... | 8 |
| Pennsylvania..... | do..... | 8 |
| Rhode Island..... | do..... | 9 |
| South Carolina..... | 80 days ⁴ | 7 |
| South Dakota..... | Full term..... | 8 |
| Tennessee..... | do..... | 8 |
| Texas..... | 100 days ⁵ | 6 |
| Utah..... | 20 weeks ⁶ | 5 |
| Vermont..... | Full term..... | 8½ |
| Virginia..... | do..... | 8 |
| Washington..... | do..... | 6 |
| West Virginia..... | do..... | 9 |
| Wisconsin..... | do..... | 8 |
| Wyoming..... | do..... | 6 |

¹ Not fixed by law.
² Board may require full term.
³ 4 months in third-class districts.
⁴ In metropolitan city.
⁵ 6 months, districts with fewer than 10 pupils.
⁶ District may require full term.
⁷ The 1935 legislature required attendance from 7 to 16, inclusive, and required attendance for 120 days, effective May 6, 1935.
⁸ 30 weeks in first- and second-class districts.
⁹ 8 months in first-class districts.

AMOUNT OF ATTENDANCE REQUIRED

NUMBER OF YEARS

The number of years of school attendance required varies from 6 years in Georgia, South Carolina, and Texas to 12 years in Ohio. The usual number of years' attendance required is 9; 10 States require 8 years, and 22 require 9 years. (Texas required 9 years after May 6, 1935.)

The tendency has been to increase the number of years of required attendance. Of the States that had compulsory attendance laws in 1914, 7 required children to attend school for 9 years. In 1914, 16 States required attendance for less than 8 years and 6 had no attendance laws; in 1934, only 5 States required less than 8 years. The following shows for 1914 and 1934 the number of years' attendance required and the number of States requiring the years specified:

| Number of years' attendance required | Number of States | |
|--------------------------------------|------------------|------|
| | 1914 | 1934 |
| 0 | 6 | 0 |
| 4 | 2 | 0 |
| 5 | 1 | 0 |
| 6 | 4 | 3 |
| 7 | 9 | 2 |
| 8 | 18 | 10 |
| 9 | 7 | 22 |
| 10 | 1 | 9 |
| 11 | 0 | 1 |
| 12 | 0 | 1 |

AMOUNT OF ATTENDANCE REQUIRED EACH YEAR

One of the defects in many of the early compulsory school attendance laws was that they did not prescribe a definite time for attending school each year, but instead specified a certain proportion of the time, or a certain number of days, or a certain number of consecutive weeks without stating when the period was to begin. This led to confusion, and it was often difficult to determine when a child had attended the prescribed time. Most States, however, now require attendance for the full period school is in session in the district, which in some districts exceeds the minimum term prescribed by law.

The amount of attendance required and the legal minimum school term are shown in table 3.

EXEMPTIONS

Every compulsory attendance law provides for exemptions within the compulsory age limits on several conditions. The principal ones are: A minimum amount of education, as the completion of certain grades; distance from school; dependent children; physical or mental incapacity; attendance at private or denominational schools; and work permit in certain conditions.

MINIMUM AMOUNT OF EDUCATION

In most of the States the educational requirement for exemption is the completion of the elementary school course. Eight States have, however, made the twelfth grade the standard for educational exemption. Some States provide that a child may be excused from school attendance only after reaching a certain age and provided he completes certain grades. Table 4 shows the provisions of educational exemptions in each of the States from full-time attendance:

TABLE 4.—Minimum education required by State laws

| State | For exemption from school attendance on account of education acquired (grades completed) ¹ | For labor permits to minors within compulsory school attendance ages (grades completed) ¹ |
|--------------------|---|--|
| 1 | 2 | 3 |
| Alabama..... | 8th grade, if 14 years of age..... | 8th grade, if 14 years of age. |
| Arizona..... | 8th grade..... | 8th grade. |
| Arkansas..... | do..... | 4th grade. |
| California..... | 12th grade..... | 8th grade, if 14 years of age; or 7th grade, if 15 years old. |
| Colorado..... | 8th grade, if 14 years of age..... | Read and write. |
| Connecticut..... | | 6th grade. |
| Delaware..... | 8th grade, if 14 years of age..... | 8th grade. |
| Florida..... | 8th grade..... | Read and write. |
| Georgia..... | 7th grade..... | Read and write simple sentences. |
| Idaho..... | 8th grade, if 15 years of age..... | Literacy and some knowledge of geography and arithmetic. |
| Illinois..... | | 8th grade. |
| Indiana..... | 8th grade..... | Do. |
| Iowa..... | do..... | 6th grade. |
| Kansas..... | do..... | 8th grade. |
| Kentucky..... | 12th grade..... | 8th grade, if 14 years of age; or 7th grade, if 15 years of age. |
| Louisiana..... | Elementary course of study..... | 6th grade, or 8 years' school attendance (Orleans Parish). |
| Maine..... | 8th grade, if 15 years of age..... | 8th grade. |
| Maryland..... | 7th grade, if 14 years of age and employed. | 7th grade (6th grade in Baltimore). |
| Massachusetts..... | 6th grade, if 14 years of age and employed. | 6th grade. |

¹ Blank spaces indicate no educational requirement noted.

16 COMPULSORY SCHOOL ATTENDANCE LAWS

TABLE 4.—Minimum education required by State laws—Continued

| State | For exemption from school attendance on account of education acquired (grades completed) | For labor permits to minors within compulsory school attendance ages (grades completed) |
|---------------------|--|---|
| 1 | 2 | 3 |
| Michigan..... | 8th grade and employed in nonhigh-school districts; must be 16 in high-school districts. | 6th grade. |
| Minnesota..... | May be excused upon completion of 8th grade. | 8th grade. |
| Mississippi..... | Common school course of study..... | 6th grade. |
| Missouri..... | do..... | 8th grade. |
| Montana..... | 8th grade, if 14 years of age. | 8th grade, or literacy in English. ¹ |
| Nebraska..... | 12th grade in high-school districts; otherwise graduation from school maintained. | |
| Nevada..... | 12th grade..... | Elementary school course, ¹ |
| New Hampshire..... | 8th grade, if 14 years of age and legally employed. | Literacy in English. |
| New Jersey..... | | 8th grade, if 14 years old; or 6th grade, if 15 years old. |
| New Mexico..... | | |
| New York..... | 12th grade..... | 8th grade, if 14; 6th grade, if 15. |
| North Carolina..... | | |
| North Dakota..... | 8th grade..... | 8th grade, or school attendance for 9 years, ¹ |
| Ohio..... | 12th grade..... | 7th grade. |
| Oklahoma..... | 8th grade, if 16 years of age and employed. | Read and write simple sentences in English. |
| Oregon..... | 8th grade, 14 years of age and employed. | 8th grade, if under 16 years of age. |
| Pennsylvania..... | 6th grade, if 14 years of age and employed. | 6th grade. |
| Rhode Island..... | | 8th grade. |
| South Carolina..... | | |
| South Dakota..... | 8th grade..... | Read and write simple sentences in English. |
| Tennessee..... | do..... | |
| Texas..... | 7th grade, if 12 and if services necessary for support. | 5th grade. |
| Utah..... | 12th grade..... | None mentioned. |
| Vermont..... | 8th grade..... | 8th grade. |
| Virginia..... | 7th grade, if employed..... | |
| Washington..... | 8th grade..... | 8th grade, if 14 years old. |
| West Virginia..... | 8th grade, unless high school within 2 miles from residence. | 6th grade. |
| Wisconsin..... | Completion of most advanced course in district, if 14 years of age. | Completion of most advanced course in district. |
| Wyoming..... | 8th grade..... | 8th grade. |

¹ Plus attendance at evening or continuation school.

WORK PERMITS

In every State children between certain ages, usually 14 to 16 (table 2), may be excused from attending school if legally employed, but generally on condition that certain educational requirements have been met. Of the 48 States,

21 require the completion of the eighth grade; 3, the seventh grade; 9, the sixth grade; 1 requires the completion of the fifth grade; 1 requires the completion of the fourth grade; 7 require the ability to read and write; and in 6 States no provision is stated. The educational requirements for work permits are given by States in table 4.

ATTENDANCE AT PRIVATE OR PAROCHIAL SCHOOLS

The compulsory school attendance laws of each of the States express or imply that children may attend private or parochial schools instead of public schools. Some of the State laws, however, contain the proviso that such schools must be approved by the appropriate public-school officials.

† That children may attend other than public schools is a well-established principle and one that has been upheld by the courts. For example, there arose in the State of Oregon a case from a law passed in November 1922, by the voters of Oregon under the initiative provision of the constitution of that State. This law required that all children between 8 and 16 years of age should attend public schools. This act was, therefore, in effect a prohibition of patronage to private schools of children within said ages. This law was to become effective September 1, 1926. On March 31, 1924, the Federal district court of the District of Oregon issued an injunction (296 Fed. Rep. 928) restricting the State of Oregon from enforcing the act upon the ground that it was unconstitutional. The issuance of this injunction was approved by the United States Supreme Court on June 1, 1925 (268 U. S. 571).

1 Hence the Oregon law was never put into operation, as it was declared unconstitutional before the date it was to become effective. This decision plainly establishes the principle that children of compulsory school age may attend private schools.

DISTANCE FROM SCHOOL

The attendance laws of 22 States provide for exemption on account of distance from school. Eighteen of these States exempt children living beyond certain specified distances and 4 States provide that the school authorities may excuse

children on account of distance. The distance specified in miles in the 18 States are:

| State: | Miles |
|---|-------|
| Oregon and Virginia..... | 1½ |
| California, Florida (2 for children 7 to 9 years of age; 3 for children 10 to 16), Iowa, Georgia, Pennsylvania, South Carolina (2 for children under 12 years of age; 2½ for others), West Virginia, Wisconsin..... | 2 |
| Alabama, Michigan, Mississippi, Texas, Utah..... | 2½ |
| New Mexico and Tennessee..... | 3 |
| North Dakota..... | 6 |

These distances do not apply if free transportation is provided. The 4 States in which the school authorities may excuse children from attending school on account of distance are Minnesota, Montana, Nevada, and North Carolina.

It is obvious that the school attendance laws in the States exempting children living beyond a specified distance from school make it possible for many children to be excused, since transportation is seldom provided for children attending one-room schools. Distance being a factor influencing school attendance, it would seem that in order to improve school attendance in rural communities transportation should be provided for children living beyond a specified distance. Gaumnitz reports ¹¹ that nontransported children living within a mile of their schools attend more days per year and more of them attend more regularly than do children living between 1 and 2 miles or 2 and 3 miles. He also shows that when rural children are transported to their school at public expense they make a much better attendance record than when no transportation is furnished.

Reavis found ¹² that, in the absence of transportation, distance is the strongest single factor influencing the attendance of country children, and that children living more than 2 miles from school attend only half as many days as children living within a quarter of a mile of school.

What distance should children live from school before transportation is provided? is a question not easy to answer. Climate, condition of roads, age of children, and other factors

¹¹ Gaumnitz, W. H., *Availability of Public-School Education in Rural Communities* U. S. Office of Education, bulletin, 1930, no. 34, pp. 23, 30.

¹² Reavis, George H., *Factors Controlling School Attendance in Rural Schools*. New York Teachers College, Columbia University, 1920, Contributions to Education No. 108, pp. 12-13.

should be considered, but, in general, the distance should not be so great as to cause children to attend school irregularly. Reavis, in his study, concludes:¹³

If all children living beyond a given distance are to be transported, that distance should be one-fourth of a mile rather than a mile or more. In the absence of some means of conveyance, country children living beyond a quarter of a mile from school do not have equal educational opportunity with those living near school.

Whatever the walking distance decided upon by legislation or school administrators, those children living beyond this distance should not be excused from attending school, but should be transported at public expense.

CHURCH OBSERVANCE

Eight States provide by legislation exemption from school attendance in order to attend confirmation classes or other church observance. These States are Illinois, Iowa, Michigan, Minnesota, North Dakota, Oregon, South Dakota, and West Virginia. This provision is usually subject to certain limitation. For example, in Illinois and Michigan, exemptions for church observance are limited to children between 12 and 14 years of age; in Minnesota, a child may be exempted for not more than 3 hours a week, and in Oregon, for not more than 2 hours a week in order to receive religious instruction.

CHILDREN OF INDIGENT PARENTS

Whether children should be excused from school attendance because of poverty is a question that legislators in enacting compulsory attendance laws must face. Nineteen of the States have under certain conditions provided for exemption from school attendance for poverty reasons, but these exemptions do not as a rule apply where financial relief to enable them to attend school is publicly or privately granted. These States are Arkansas, Colorado, Connecticut, Florida, Idaho, Louisiana, Michigan, Montana, Nebraska, Nevada, North Dakota, South Carolina, South Dakota, Tennessee, Texas, Utah, Vermont, Washington, and West Virginia. In Colorado, Michigan, Montana, and Nevada a child must be 14 years of age to be excused on account of poverty of parents;

¹³ Ibid.

in Idaho and Washington, 15; in Vermont, 15 and completion of rural school course; in South Carolina, 12 years of age; in Texas, the completion of the seventh grade is required. It is noted that 33 States have mandatory laws which provide under certain conditions relief for dependent or neglected children. These States are:

| | | |
|------------|----------------|----------------|
| Alabama | Maryland | North Dakota |
| Arkansas | Massachusetts | Ohio |
| California | Minnesota | Oklahoma |
| Colorado | Mississippi | Pennsylvania |
| Florida | Missouri | Rhode Island |
| Georgia | Montana | South Carolina |
| Illinois | Nevada | South Dakota |
| Indiana | New Hampshire | Tennessee |
| Iowa | New Jersey | Texas |
| Kansas | New York | Vermont |
| Kentucky | North Carolina | Virginia |

Fourteen States have laws of a permissive type which authorize public educational relief for dependent or neglected children. They are:

| | | |
|-------------|------------|---------------|
| Arizona | Maine | Utah |
| Connecticut | Michigan | Washington |
| Delaware | Nebraska | West Virginia |
| Idaho | New Mexico | Wisconsin |
| Louisiana | Oregon | |

Since such laws usually make provision only for the furnishing of clothing or textbooks, the children of indigent parents may still be unable to attend school. If parents of children of compulsory school age need assistance it would seem that it is not the duty of the children, but of the State to give such assistance. It is just as necessary for children in poverty to attend school as for children of wealth. An argument that might be offered for public relief of indigent parents who need the support of their children of school age is that the benefit arising from the labor of children of compulsory school ages is short-lived, since their earning capacity is small, and if they are allowed to work during their immature years their opportunities for earning will as a rule be limited; and in view of the fact that there is little opportunity for children under 16 years of age to obtain employment, it is obvious that they cannot do much to help earn a living for their families, especially children living in cities. In the

rural districts, they can still help by working on the farm, but any farm tenant or farmer who needs financial aid should not have to keep his child out of school to earn a few dollars. There should be some other form of relief.

Dr. Franklin H. Giddings raises and answers this question:¹⁵ "Is it right to take a strong, overgrown boy 13 years of age from money-earning employment and force him to attend school when, by so doing, we compel a widowed mother to apply to private or public school agencies for help, thereby making her, and perhaps the boy also, a pauper?" Professor Giddings concludes that the only answer consistent with the policy of compulsory education itself is the proposition that in such cases adequate public assistance should be given, not as charity, but as a right. He also points out a deeper difficulty which has received but little attention. That is the matter of "race suicide." He says:

Large families are no longer seen, especially in the so-called "middle class." It is strange that no one has pointed out the connection between the increased demand upon parents to maintain their children in school, foregoing the earning that children might add to the family income, and the diminishing size of the average family. * * * The question, therefore, that we shall have to face and to answer is this: Shall the State pay parents for keeping their children in school between the ages of 10 and 14?

Since there is no work for children under 16 years of age the question may be asked, Shall the State pay indigent parents for keeping their children in school up to 16 years of age?

INDEFINITE EXEMPTIONS

In 17 States children may be exempted from attending school for reasons satisfactory to the school authorities, board of education, superintendent, teacher, or attendance officer. These States are:

Arizona, Colorado (if 14 years of age), Delaware, Florida, Georgia, Idaho (if 15 years of age), Illinois, Indiana, Maine, Massachusetts, Mississippi, New Hampshire (if 14 years of age), North Carolina, Rhode Island, South Carolina, Vermont, and West Virginia. The laws of these States usually state for "best interests of child or for good reasons." In Georgia, however, a child may be temporarily exempted by

¹⁵ Proceedings of the National Education Association, 1906, p. 112.

the local board of education, which is authorized to take into consideration the need of farm labor in granting excuses for children in farming districts.

It would seem that after certain exemptions have been named, the provision "for good reasons" is not necessary. Such a provision may be wisely administered, but it doubtless affords an opportunity to excuse children for reasons not recognized in the laws of many States.

PROVISIONS FOR ADMINISTRATION

THE SCHOOL CENSUS

FUNCTION

Originally the purpose of the school census was to afford a basis for the distribution of State school funds. This purpose still obtains in a number of States, but since the tendency is to distribute State school funds on bases other than the number of children of specified age, the early purpose is not the sole reason for a school census. Other important purposes of the census are:

1. To ascertain the amount of educational service that the school district must provide.
2. To provide a basis for developing a school building program.
3. To assist in the enforcement of the compulsory attendance law.

One of the first steps in the enforcement of a compulsory school attendance law is the taking of a school census in order to ascertain what children of compulsory school age are not in school. That such a census is necessary is obvious. Every year children move from one school district to another, and others reach the minimum compulsory attendance age. If a school census has been taken, the public, private, and parochial schools should be able to check off promptly those children not enrolled. The attendance officers can then easily locate them and discover the cause of their nonattendance.

As early as 1873 Supt. John D. Philbrick, of Boston, called attention to the needs of a school census thus:

In a large city it is extremely difficult to execute the law respecting the attendance of children between 8 and 14 years of age without the

aid of some new instrumentality. The truant officers have no means of knowing the whereabouts of those nonattendants who are not found wandering about the streets and public squares. What is needed is a register of the names, ages, and residences of all children of the prescribed school age. Such register is found necessary wherever compulsory education is fully carried out.

Every authority on school administration since that time has advocated the need of an adequate school census. For example, the Commissioner of Education of New York¹⁶ recently wrote:

The basis for enforcement of the school attendance laws is found in an accurate census of the child population. An attendance bureau cannot function properly without a record of the essential facts concerning each child in its territory. It is necessary to know what children there are in the community, the date when each child becomes of compulsory school age, and who is responsible in case he fails to enter. A school census eliciting this information should be mandatory in all States. The law requiring it should be clear and specific, providing for accuracy and efficiency.

Every State now provides by law for a school census. Of the 48 States 33 provide for an annual census, 7 for a biennial census, 1 for a census every 3 years, 1 for a census every 4 years, 3 for a census every 5 years, and 3 for a continuous census.

Although every State provides for a school census, many school districts of the country do not make use of it in the enforcement of their compulsory attendance laws. In some States it is used chiefly as a basis for securing State school funds. It is evident that unless the census is continuous or taken at least annually it is of little value to the attendance officer. According to the White House Conference Report:¹⁷

The advantages of checking an annual enumeration of all persons of specified age against school enrollment is apparent. Such use of the census, however, is the exception rather than the rule. It is surprising to find in one city where there is an annual enumeration as a part of the child accounting system that data are not even filed alphabetically. * * * Unless there is a central file in which every individual's current record is available there is no assurance that every child in the community will be served according to his individual need.

Other reports treating of the enforcement of the school attendance laws, especially of surveys of school systems, fre-

¹⁶ Graves, Frank P., *The Administration of American Education*. New York, The Macmillan Co., 1932, p. 143.

¹⁷ White House Conference on Child Health and Protection, *The Delinquent Child*, section II. New York, The Century Co., pp. 388-390.

quently call attention to the lack of an adequate school census and to the fact that often little use is made of such census records as are available.

The committee on uniform records and reports, for example, discovered the following weaknesses in the administration of the school census:¹⁸

1. Incomplete and inaccurate information regarding total school population.
2. The information is temporary and collected spasmodically. There is no definitely organized continuing census.
3. The actual school population is not adequately or regularly checked with the school enrollment.
4. There is lack of full cooperation between the school authorities and the nonpublic schools, making the so-called continuing census in most cities merely a continuing registration of public-school enrollment.
5. The school rather than the home is made the basis of information for the so-called census.
6. The State school census laws are not mandatory in some States; so no census is now taken in most of the cities in those States.
7. The school census is used as a basis for a State appropriation for school funds rather than for the full enforcement of the compulsory school laws and child labor laws.
8. Many school authorities see no necessity for more accurate, continuing information regarding the school population for which they are legally responsible.
9. Often there is failure on the part of school and community agencies to cooperate with the administrative officers in maintaining accurate school population statistics: (a) because they do not understand and appreciate the significance of a continuing census; (b) because the careless or inefficient administration of the schools does not inspire confidence and cooperation.

A school census to be effective must be continuous. If the annual school census is taken as it is in many States a month or more before the opening of school it will not be accurate when school opens, since some children will in the interim move into the school district and others will move to other communities.

After a complete census has been taken by a house-to-house canvas it should be kept up-to-date by adding the names of the children moving into the school district and by removing from the census files the cards of the children who have moved to other districts. The attendance officer, school nurses, and others connected with the school will be

¹⁸ Report of Committee on Uniform Records and Reports. U. S. Office of Education, bulletin, 1929, no. 24, p. 40.

able to learn of many such changes, but it will still be necessary to obtain information from other sources regarding change of residence, as chambers of commerce, welfare associations, and public utility companies.

CENSUS AGES AND OTHER DATA

There are 15 different census age limits used by the 48 States. The greatest number of States having the same census ages is only 14. These ages are from 6 to 21 years. In 8 States the census ages are from 6 to 18 years, and in 6 States from 5 to 21 years. The following table shows for each of the States the school census age and the frequency of enumeration:

TABLE 5.—School census ages and frequency of enumeration

| State | Age of children enumerated | Frequency of enumeration |
|---------------------------|---|--|
| Alabama..... | 6 to 21..... | Biennially. |
| Arizona..... | do ¹ | Annually. |
| Arkansas..... | do..... | Do. |
| California..... | Under 18..... | Every third year. |
| Colorado..... | 6 to 21..... | Annually (implied). |
| Connecticut..... | 4 to 17..... | Annually. |
| Delaware..... | 5 to 18..... | Biennially. |
| District of Columbia..... | do..... | Annually. |
| Florida..... | 7 to 18..... | May be continuous. |
| Georgia..... | 6 to 18..... | Every 5 years. |
| Idaho..... | 6 to 21..... | Annually. |
| Illinois..... | 7 to 16..... | Do. |
| Indiana..... | 6 to 21..... | Do. |
| Iowa..... | 5 to 21..... | Biennially. |
| Kansas..... | 6 to 21..... | Annually. |
| Kentucky..... | 6 to 18..... | Continuing. |
| Louisiana..... | do ¹ | Every 4 years. |
| Maine..... | 5 to 21..... | Annually. |
| Maryland..... | 6 to 18..... | Biennially. |
| Massachusetts..... | 5 to 18..... | Annually. |
| Michigan..... | 5 to 20..... | Do. |
| Minnesota..... | 6 to 16..... | Do. |
| Mississippi..... | 5 to 21 ¹ | Biennially. |
| Missouri..... | 6 to 21..... | Annually. |
| Montana..... | Under 21..... | Do. |
| Nebraska..... | 5 to 21..... | Do. |
| Nevada..... | Under 21 (must show number between 6 and 18). | Annually or oftener, as directed by State superintendent. |
| New Hampshire..... | 5 to 16..... | Annually. |
| New Jersey..... | 5 to 18..... | Every 5 years. |
| New Mexico..... | 5 to 21..... | Annually. |
| New York..... | Under 18..... | Continuous in 1st-, 2d-, and 3d-class districts; annually elsewhere. |
| North Carolina..... | 6 to 21..... | Continuous. |
| North Dakota..... | do..... | Biennially. |
| Ohio..... | 5 to 18..... | Annually. |
| Oklahoma..... | 6 to 21..... | Do. |

¹ School admission age; no specific ages noted in school census provisions.

TABLE 5.—*School census ages and frequency of enumeration—Con.*

| State | Age of children enumerated | Frequency of enumeration |
|---------------------|----------------------------|--------------------------|
| Oregon..... | 4 to 21..... | Annually. |
| Pennsylvania..... | 6 to 16..... | Do. |
| Rhode Island..... | 4 to 21..... | Do. |
| South Carolina..... | 7 to 16..... | Do. |
| South Dakota..... | 6 to 21..... | Do. |
| Tennessee..... | 6 to 18..... | Biennially. |
| Texas..... | do..... | Annually. |
| Utah..... | do..... | Do. |
| Vermont..... | do..... | Do. |
| Virginia..... | 7 to 20..... | Every 5 years. |
| Washington..... | 5 to 21..... | Annually. |
| West Virginia..... | 6 to 21..... | Do. |
| Wisconsin..... | 4 to 20..... | Do. |
| Wyoming..... | 6 to 21..... | Do. |

In only 1 State, Illinois, are the census ages the same as the compulsory school attendance ages. In 45 States the minimum census age is less than the minimum compulsory attendance age, and in 4 States it is the same. In 39 States the maximum school census age is greater than the maximum compulsory attendance age, and in 9 States it is the same. In 22 States the school census ages are the same as the legal school ages. In 33 States the minimum school census age is the same as the minimum legal age for admission to school, in 11 States it is less, and in 4 States it is greater than the admission age. In 31 States the maximum census age is the same as the maximum legal age for school attendance, in 15 States it is less, and in 2 States it is greater than the maximum legal school age.

The foregoing data show a great difference among the States with respect to the school census ages and with respect to the relation of such ages to the compulsory and the legal ages for school attendance. Several questions arise. Should the census ages be the same as the compulsory attendance ages? Or should they be the same as the legal school ages? Or should they not be the same as either the legal compulsory or legal attendance ages?

With respect to the minimum census age, attention may be called to the fact that unless the census age is less than the legal entrance age, school administrators cannot have at hand population data to assist them in determining building programs and other policies.

As to the maximum census age it would seem that since there is little opportunity for boys and girls under 18 or

even 20 years of age to obtain employment the school authorities should know something about the youth above the compulsory attendance age as well as about those within

| DIXON PUBLIC SCHOOLS DEPARTMENT OF CENSUS AND ATTENDANCE | | | | | | | | | |
|--|--|------|-------|--------|-------|--------------|----------------|--|--|
| NUMBER AND STREET | | DATE | BLOCK | SCHOOL | GRADE | DATE ENTERED | CODE FOR CHECK | | |
| 1 | | | | | | | | | |
| 2 | | | | | | | | | |
| 3 | | | | | | | | | |
| 4 | | | | | | | | | |
| 5 | | | | | | | | | |
| 6 | | | | | | | | | |
| 7 | | | | | | | | | |
| 8 | | | | | | | | | |
| 9 | | | | | | | | | |
| 10 | | | | | | | | | |

| | | | | | |
|------------------------|----------|-------------------------------------|-------------|--|-----------------|
| HOME CONDITIONS | | LANGUAGE IN HOME | | CODE FOR MATURITY OF CHILD, FATHER, AND MOTHER | |
| EL | W. F. P. | ENG. V | WRITE OTHER | 1. U. S. | 11. SCOTLAND |
| FATHER | | OCCUPATION | | 2. IRELAND | 12. FRANCE |
| MOTHER | | OCCUPATION | | 3. GERMANY | 13. ROMANIA |
| PARENTS SEPARATED | | FATHER REMARRIED | | 4. RUSSIA | 14. NORWAY |
| CHILD LIVES WITH: NAME | | MOTHER REMARRIED | | 5. ITALY | 15. SWEDEN |
| YEAR VACCINATED | | BIRTH C. B. BIRTH C. B. BIRTH C. B. | | 6. ENGLAND | 16. CHINA |
| NAME OF CHILD | | DATE OF BIRTH | | 7. CANADA | 17. BELGIO |
| LAST | | MO. DAY YEAR | | 8. AUSTRIA | 18. JAPAN |
| FIRST | | C. F. M. | | 9. HUNGARY | 19. BELGIUM |
| MIDDLE | | NATIVITY | | 10. POLAND | 20. SWITZERLAND |
| LAST | | C. F. M. | | 21. ALABAMA | 22. ALABAMA |
| FIRST | | C. F. M. | | 23. ALABAMA | 24. ALABAMA |
| MIDDLE | | C. F. M. | | 25. ALABAMA | 26. ALABAMA |
| LAST | | C. F. M. | | 27. ALABAMA | 28. ALABAMA |

| | | | |
|---------------------------------------|--------------|-------------------------------|---------------|
| CODE FOR CHIEF CAUSE OF NONENROLLMENT | | CODE CHECKED IF OUT OF SCHOOL | |
| 1. PHYSICAL C | 5. LEFT CITY | 1. PHYSICAL C | 1. PHYSICAL C |
| 2. MENTAL C | 6. MARRED | 2. MENTAL C | 2. MENTAL C |
| 3. HOME C | 7. COLLEGE | 3. HOME C | 3. HOME C |
| 4. EMPLOYED | 8. DEAD | 4. EMPLOYED | 4. EMPLOYED |
| CODE CAUSE OF PERMANENT WITHDRAWAL | | DATE CHECKED IF OUT OF SCHOOL | |
| 1. PHYSICAL C | | 1. PHYSICAL C | |
| 2. MENTAL C | | 2. MENTAL C | |
| 3. HOME C | | 3. HOME C | |
| 4. EMPLOYED | | 4. EMPLOYED | |
| 5. LEFT CITY | | 5. LEFT CITY | |
| 6. MARRED | | 6. MARRED | |
| 7. COLLEGE | | 7. COLLEGE | |
| 8. DEAD | | 8. DEAD | |
| 9. FINISHED 8TH GRADE | | 9. FINISHED 8TH GRADE | |
| 10. 8th CERTIFICATE | | 10. 8th CERTIFICATE | |
| 11. INSTITUTION | | 11. INSTITUTION | |
| 12. DEETS | | 12. DEETS | |

| | | | |
|--|-----------------|-------------------------------|-----------------------|
| CODE FOR MATURITY OF CHILD, FATHER, AND MOTHER | | CODE CHECKED IF OUT OF SCHOOL | |
| 1. U. S. | 11. SCOTLAND | 1. PHYSICAL C | 1. PHYSICAL C |
| 2. IRELAND | 12. FRANCE | 2. MENTAL C | 2. MENTAL C |
| 3. GERMANY | 13. ROMANIA | 3. HOME C | 3. HOME C |
| 4. RUSSIA | 14. NORWAY | 4. EMPLOYED | 4. EMPLOYED |
| 5. ITALY | 15. SWEDEN | 5. LEFT CITY | 5. LEFT CITY |
| 6. ENGLAND | 16. CHINA | 6. MARRED | 6. MARRED |
| 7. CANADA | 17. BELGIO | 7. COLLEGE | 7. COLLEGE |
| 8. AUSTRIA | 18. JAPAN | 8. DEAD | 8. DEAD |
| 9. HUNGARY | 19. BELGIUM | 9. FINISHED 8TH GRADE | 9. FINISHED 8TH GRADE |
| 10. POLAND | 20. SWITZERLAND | 10. 8th CERTIFICATE | 10. 8th CERTIFICATE |
| 21. ALABAMA | 21. ALABAMA | 11. INSTITUTION | 11. INSTITUTION |
| 22. ALABAMA | 22. ALABAMA | 12. DEETS | 12. DEETS |
| 23. ALABAMA | 23. ALABAMA | | |
| 24. ALABAMA | 24. ALABAMA | | |
| 25. ALABAMA | 25. ALABAMA | | |
| 26. ALABAMA | 26. ALABAMA | | |
| 27. ALABAMA | 27. ALABAMA | | |
| 28. ALABAMA | 28. ALABAMA | | |

FIGURE 1.

such age. The school people's interest and responsibility should not be confined merely to the youth in school, but to all the youth of the community. A census of all children

above the compulsory attendance age would reveal certain facts regarding them as whether in school or whether em-

| | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|-----|---|---|-----|----|----|-----------------|----|--------------------------|--------------------|----|----|-------------------|----|----|--------------|--------|---------|--------------------|---------|-----|------|
| 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 | 12 | 13 | 14 | 15 | 16 | 17 | 18 | 19 | 20 | 21 | 22 | PUBLIC | PRIVATE | PAROCH. | COLLEGE | OUT | WORK |
| CONDENSED REMARKS | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| REPORTED TO OTHER AGENCIES (CHECK AGE) | | | | | | | | | | | RECORD OF OTHER AGENCIES | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| MENTAL TEST | | | | | | | | | | | PHYSICAL DEFECTS | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| FILED ON CHILD | | | | | | | | | | | FILED ON PARENT | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| DATE | | | | | | | | | | | DATE | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| I.O. | | | | | | | | | | | PSYCHIATRIC EXAMINATION | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| DATE | | | | | | | | | | | DATE | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| EMPLOYMENT RECORD | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| EMPLOYED TO | | | Wk. | | | Cl. | | | EMPLOYER'S NAME | | | EMPLOYER'S ADDRESS | | | KIND OF WORK DONE | | | WEEKLY WAGES | | | REASON FOR LEAVING | | | |
| FROM | | | TO | | | | | | | | | | | | START | | | FINISH | | | | | | |
| NIGHT OR PART-TIME SCHOOL RECORD | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| DATE ENTERED | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| GRADE | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| DATE COMPLETED | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |

FIGURE 2.

ployed. It is doubtful if many communities know much about the young men and women above the compulsory attendance age who are not in school.

The question may be asked, Why should the census age span be 18 years in some States and only 9 years in other States? If the census is to serve any purpose, this purpose, it would seem, should be the same for all the States. In order to have complete information regarding the young children and the youth of a community the census enumeration should include all persons under 21 years of age.

The school census should make available information on at least the following points:

1. The number of children of compulsory school age, or better, children of all ages up to 21 years living in the school district and in each attendance district.
2. Where the children live—street and number.
3. Who is responsible for the children.
4. Date on which the children become of compulsory school age.
5. How many should be in school.
6. How many are in public schools, private and parochial schools, or not in school.
7. Whether employed and other reasons for nonattendance.
8. Number of physically and mentally handicapped children.

The following census record card used in Denver, Colo., illustrates the types of information that a school census department should collect and compile regarding each child in the city.

CENSUS ENUMERATORS

In several States the school laws provide that the attendance officers take the school census. In most States, however, the board of education is designated, but the actual work of making the enumeration is done by persons employed by the board, as, attendance officers, teachers, and special enumerators.

It would seem that the enumeration of children in large cities especially should be one of the duties of the attendance department, since this department is responsible for the enforcement of the compulsory attendance law. Several school survey reports in discussing the school census recommend that it be under the direction of the attendance department. For example the school survey report of Holyoke, Mass., states:¹⁰

The keeping of the school census should be considered one of the major responsibilities of the department of attendance. The officer in

¹⁰ Strayer, George D., and others, Report of the Survey of the Schools of Holyoke, Mass. New York, Teachers College, Columbia University, 1930, p. 32.

charge of the whole program of attendance service should be responsible for seeing that the enumerations are made, that supplementary information is obtained from time to time, and that the census is so managed that it is readily accessible to all school agencies which may have occasion to use it. The actual clerical work of keeping the census records should be in the hands of a census clerk. This clerk may be the same person who has charge of the other clerical work of the attendance department. This clerk should also be responsible for seeing that the census information is complete and continuing at all times.

Attendance officers in some communities are, however, probably not qualified to take an accurate census. Dr. Mosher, director of the attendance division; New York State Department of Education, says regarding attendance officers as enumerators:²⁰

Where the officer is well equipped for such work by a definite understanding of its purpose and of the need of accuracy, speed, and completeness, he can often perform a great service in causing a census of superior qualities to be taken. The usefulness in this work of his knowledge of the school district is clear. Taking the census is no job for anyone who is physically unfit, who is illiterate, or who lacks tact and judgment. In many instances an understanding of statistical work and work with lists and card catalogs is necessary.

As to the special enumerator, Dr. Mosher says:²¹

Unless they are under constant and competent supervision and are carefully trained the results are sure to be disappointing.

In many communities the enumeration is efficiently made by teachers or principals. In regard to teachers taking the census, Dr. Mosher states:²²

As a method it contains valuable elements not found in other plans. The teachers of Binghamton have taken the school census for their city for a number of years and recently in Troy notably successful use was made of the plan, while in Baldwin, Bronxville, Elmira, Lawrence, Lansingburg, Lynbrook, Mount Vernon, Patchogue, Pelham, Port Chester, Port Washington, Poughkeepsie, Roslyn, Tonawanda, Water-vliet, Waverly, and presumably other cities and villages, teachers have taken the census completely or have done the work assisted by attendance officers and special enumerators.

Teachers understand census taking better than most others available as enumerators. By it they are brought into touch with the parents of their pupils without any element of criticism or complaint as the reason for their visit but presenting to the parent an opportunity for coopera-

²⁰ Mosher, Charles L., Albany, N. Y., University of the State of New York, Bulletin No. 928, 1929, p. 9.

²¹ Ibid., p. 9.

²² Ibid., pp. 6-7.

tion. Knowledge of the census and of the help it can give in bringing promptly to school for registration those children required to attend arouses the interest of teachers and results in more effective use of the census by them.

Teachers are glad to give evidence of their confidence in their superintendent by following his leadership and effectively carrying out his plans in this connection and find themselves surprised, when the work has been completed, at its value to them and the enjoyment that the task has afforded them.

Whatever method is used the enumerators should be persons who are intelligent, who understand the importance of a school census, who will make a thorough canvas of the district assigned them, and who can organize the work thoroughly.

ATTENDANCE OFFICERS

Selection and qualification.—School attendance officers are usually selected by district or county boards of education. In some States both methods are used, the county officials selecting the attendance officers except in city and other districts independent of the county school system.

In three States, Florida, Maryland, and West Virginia, the county school boards select attendance officers for the entire county. In 18 States county school officials select attendance officers except for independent districts. These States are Alabama, Arizona, California, Georgia, Illinois, Indiana, Kansas, Michigan, Missouri, Nebraska, Ohio, Oklahoma, Oregon, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas, Virginia, and Washington. In the following 20 States the attendance officers are selected by the district, town, or township school boards: Arkansas, Colorado, Connecticut, Iowa, Kentucky, Maine, Massachusetts, Minnesota, Montana, Nevada, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, North Dakota, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, South Dakota, Utah, Vermont, and Wisconsin. In Delaware; with the exception of the independent districts, the attendance officers, known as school visitors, are appointed by the State board of education. In Idaho, the attendance officers are appointed by the probate court with the approval of the county commissioners. In Louisiana, the law provides that reports on truancy be made direct to the juvenile court. In Mississippi, the county superintendent

is authorized to act as attendance officer and trustees of municipal school districts with 10,000 population may employ attendance officers. In New Mexico, the school officials are authorized to enforce the law. In Wyoming, the deputy sheriff and constables are authorized to enforce school attendance, but districts with more than 2,000 population may appoint attendance officers.

Comparatively few States prescribe educational qualifications for attendance officers, the matter being left to the boards that appoint such officers. Eight States have, however, set up educational standards that may well be emulated by the other States, namely, Alabama, California, Illinois, Indiana, Kentucky, Maryland, Oregon, and Pennsylvania. In Pennsylvania, however, the law does not specify qualifications for attendance officers, but it does provide that school districts may employ home and school visitors in addition to attendance officers, and that such home and school visitors shall be legally certificated.

The educational requirements for attendance service in each of the aforementioned States are as follows:

ALABAMA

Each attendance officer must have a certificate from the State department of education. Attendance officers must furnish proof of having met requirements set by the State department of education before they can receive a certificate. The requirements are graduation from a standard college; a year of training in social work, school attendance, and related subjects; 3 years' successful experience either in teaching or in social work. Three months' training in social work is accepted in lieu of the year of social work at present and experience is not required of assistants.

CALIFORNIA

In California, an applicant for a credential in child welfare and supervision of attendance must present:²³

I. A certificate from a physician licensed to practice medicine and surgery certifying that the applicant is physically and mentally fit to engage in child welfare and supervision of attendance.

²³ California State Department of Education, Division of Teacher Training and Certification, Bulletin No. H-2, p. 51.

II. Verification of a valid California certificate, credential, or life diploma of elementary or secondary grade.

III. A recommendation from the department of education of a college or university accredited by the California State Board of Education, verifying:

- A. Two years of successful teaching or social-service experience.
- B. Bachelor's degree from an accredited college or university.

The department of education may at its discretion recommend candidates for the credential who have secured standing equivalent to that required for the degree or who have had at least 3 years of experience as a principal, supervisor, or executive officer in some school system of more than five teachers.

C. Fifteen semester hours of work relating to child welfare and supervision of attendance.

1. Required courses:

- (a) School organization and administration including California school law.
- (b) Growth and development of the child.
- (c) Methods of social investigation.

2. General electives:

- Social and economic problems.
- Control of poverty.
- Care of dependents.
- Social institutions.
- Immigration.
- Social case work.
- Studies in standards of living.
- Crime as a social problem.
- The rural community—its organization and institution.
- Social psychology.
- Tests and measurements.

This credential is issued for a period of 2 years and may be renewed thereafter for periods of 5 years upon verification of at least 5 months of successful experience in the public schools of California.

ILLINOIS

The county superintendent of schools in each county shall appoint a county truant officer who shall be an assistant county superintendent of schools and who shall possess qualifications as such. Assistant county superintendents shall be persons of good attainment, versed in the principles and methods of education, familiar with public-school work, and competent to visit schools.

INDIANA²⁴

Specific requirements.

A. One-year licenses.

Attendance officers' licenses valid for 1 year may be issued to high-school graduates who have completed an approved course in attendance work in an accredited Indiana State college or university, or the equivalent.

B. Two-year licenses.

Attendance officers' licenses valid for 2 years may be issued to the following:

(1) Graduates from an approved 4-year college course (120 semester hours) including at least 6 semester hours in social subjects. In lieu of 6 semester-hours' credit in social subjects, the applicant may offer 1 year (12 months) of experience in active social work other than service as attendance officer.

(2) Graduates from an accredited 4-year college course with service of 1 or more years in attendance work under the acts of 1921, and with a minimum success grade of 87 percent.

(3) Persons who have had experience as attendance officers under the acts of 1921 of not less than 8 years, and who have attained a success grade of not less than 95 percent.

(4) Attendance officers who have served under the acts of 1921 not less than 4 years, who have attained a success grade of 90 percent or more, and who offer a minimum of 2 term-hours (or 1½ semester-hours) credit in an approved course in attendance work.

C. Five-year licenses.

Attendance officers' licenses valid for a period of 5 years may be issued to graduates from a 4-year college course who have had 5 or more years' experience as attendance officers under the acts of 1921, and who have attained a success grade of 95 percent or above.

KENTUCKY

The State board of education has set up 64 semester hours of college training as the requirement for an attendance officer's certificate.

MARYLAND

Completion of standard 3-year normal course or equivalent. The attendance officer's certificate is valid for 3 years, renewable for 4 years upon evidence of successful experience

²⁴ Teacher Training and Licensing in Indiana, Legal Provisions and Regulations of State Board of Education, prepared under the direction of George C. Cole, State Superintendent of Public Instruction, 1932.

and professional spirit and completion of a 6-week summer term and renewable subsequently for 4-year periods upon the same conditions.

OREGON

Any person in a district of any class who shall be or who has been the holder of a certificate valid for teaching in the public schools of Oregon, and who shall submit evidence of knowledge of the common social problems which relate to school attendance, and of Oregon laws relating to compulsory education, child labor, and registration of minors, and ability to keep the records of the office and to make such statistical records as may be required of such supervisors, may qualify for the position of attendance supervisor; provided, that any person now holding the position of truant officer shall be given 1 year in which to qualify for the position of attendance supervisor.

PENNSYLVANIA

All home and school visitors shall be legally certificated as such by the department of public instruction upon meeting such requirements as shall be prescribed by the State council of education. The regulations regarding their certification are as follows:

1. A certificate of standard grade (college provisional or permanent, temporary or permanent standard, normal school certificate or diploma) may be validated authorizing the holder to act as home and school visitor on the completion of 6 semester hours in approved courses of college grade selected from the following list, or equivalent approved courses:

| | |
|------------------------------------|--|
| Applied sociology. | Social psychology. |
| Sociology of educational problems. | Methods of social investigation. |
| Principles of family social work. | Society and the child. |
| Problems of poverty. | Principles and problems of child welfare. |
| Social problems of the family. | School administration, including records and reports and school law. |
| Social control. | |
| Social hygiene. | |
| Social maladjustment. | |

2. A temporary standard certificate authorizing the holder to act as home and school visitor may be issued to an applicant who has completed 4 years of approved high-school preparation and at least 2 years of an approved college or post high-school curriculum including 6 semester hours from the list of subjects given above. This temporary

standard certificate is valid for 2 years. The first renewal of this certificate is dependent upon a rating of "low" or better. Subsequent renewals require a rating of "middle" or better. This certificate will be made permanent on evidence of 4 years of experience on a State certificate, including 2 years of experience as home and school visitor on a temporary standard certificate in the public schools of the Commonwealth.

Some cities have set up certain educational standards for attendance officers. Among such cities are the following, together with the qualifications required in each: ²⁵

| | |
|-------------------------|---|
| AKRON, OHIO..... | Civil service examination. |
| ALBANY, N. Y..... | Appointed on certificate of municipal civil service commission. |
| BALTIMORE, MD..... | High-school diploma, 2 years' training beyond high-school graduation. |
| BOSTON, MASS..... | Required to pass an examination given by the Massachusetts Civil Service Commission on the State law with reference to compulsory school attendance and the employment of minors. |
| CHICAGO, ILL..... | Civil service examination under civil service requirements. High-school diploma. |
| CLEVELAND, OHIO..... | High-school diploma. The same requirements approved by civil service—2 years' training beyond high school with preference given to college graduate. |
| DENVER, COLO..... | High-school diploma, plus 2 years' training. No one without A. B. degree has been employed. |
| DETROIT, MICH..... | A. B. degree. |
| INDIANAPOLIS, IND..... | A. B. degree; experience in case work. |
| LOS ANGELES, CALIF..... | State and county certificate. |
| MADISON, WIS..... | No stated requirement, but attendance officers have university degrees and have had experience as social workers. |
| MEMPHIS, TENN..... | All new officers must hold a high-school diploma. |
| MILWAUKEE, WIS..... | High-school diploma, normal-school training. |
| MINNEAPOLIS, MINN..... | College graduate, plus a minimum of 1 year teaching experience and 1 year paid social work experience. |
| NEWARK, N. J..... | High-school diploma, 2 years' successful social welfare work. |

²⁵ Los Angeles City Schools, division of Attendance and Employment of Minors, circular 1930.

| | |
|----------------------------|---|
| NEW YORK, N. Y. | High-school diploma, 60 hours' social work certificate. |
| OAKLAND, CALIF. | State credential. |
| PATERSON, N. J. | Local examination. |
| PHILADELPHIA, PA. | Elementary teachers requirement, i. e., at least 2 years of post high-school work. |
| PROVIDENCE, R. I. | Try to have them as graduates of some school of social work. |
| ROCHESTER, N. Y. | College graduate or graduate of 2-year normal course and 2 years' teaching experience. Social service work desirable. |
| SAN FRANCISCO, CALIF. | State requirements. |
| SEATTLE, WASH. | A. B. degree; social service training. |
| ST. LOUIS, MO. | Civil service examination. |
| WASHINGTON, D. C. | High-school diploma, 2 years' college or normal school. |

In general, definite educational attainments are not required of persons appointed to the position of attendance officer. According to the White House Conference Report:

Attendance service has suffered as the place to which political appointments are made. It is also utilized to care for superannuated personnel from other fields as well as other school departments. In one city it was explained that one of the attendance officers had been a teacher for a number of years, but finding teaching too strenuous she had been asked to be transferred to a less arduous assignment. In the places visited (17, including 7 large cities), with one exception the majority of attendance officers were over 45 years of age. In most cases, moreover, those in their fifties and sixties had not had an extended period of attendance service but had entered the field late in life.

With possibly four exceptions, there are attendance officers in the places visited who have not completed an elementary education. From material on school attendance secured from the county study it was found that in some counties all the attendance work is done by the marshal, members of the school board, the sheriff, the constable, or the policeman on his regular beat. By and large a definite educational standard is not required of those selected to do attendance work.

In a study²⁶ of the qualifications of attendance officers by Liebler, he found practically the same conditions as described in the White House Conference Report. "In one section of the country" (Eastern), he states, "it was found that 36 percent of the compulsory education officers were 51 years of age or older; 35 percent had been engaged in this type of work for 10 or more years, and not one had spent a day during that time on professional improvement although 60 percent

²⁶ Liebler, Charles C., Qualifications and Compensation of Persons Charged with the Enforcement of Compulsory Education, *Elementary School Journal*, vol. 27, p. 705.

had only an elementary education or less, while the last previous occupation of the 43 persons replying to the questionnaire included police officer, real estate dealer, factory worker, meat-cutter, expressman, glass blower, printer, electrician, and cotton mill worker. Only 6, or 14 percent, could by any means be classified as professionally trained; these 6 included 3 superannuated teachers, a music teacher with 2 years of high-school work and 2 years in a conservatory of music."

Formerly attendance service rested almost entirely upon the idea of compulsion, thus emphasizing the police power of attendance officers. There was little or no suggestion as to the social service that attendance officers might render. The police power of an attendance officer, while still necessary, is less emphasized, more emphasis being placed upon corrective and curative measures.

Since school attendance service involves more than the chasing of truants—as the keeping of children in regular attendance, the discovery of the causes of absence, and the study of some and other conditions affecting children—attendance officers should be well equipped for their duties through general education and by special training in social and child welfare work. The standards set by several of the States, as California, Indiana, Oregon, or Maryland, should be adopted in every State of the Union if attendance service is to be regarded as a social problem rather than one of forcing children to attend school.

There has, however, been a tendency to improve attendance service by requiring higher qualifications of attendance officers. In 1926, the laws in only 3 States provided for the certification of such officers, while in 1934 the laws of 8 States provided for their certification.

The number of cities prescribing minimum educational requirements for attendance officers has been increasing, and in many instances the minimum requirements have been raised. In Philadelphia, for example, there was no scholastic requirement until 1915 when a high-school education was required. Since that time the requirements have increased to several years of post high-school work. As shown by the change of the type of the examination questions used

in that city, it is obvious that its attendance officers must be much better qualified for the work than they were not so many years ago.²⁷ In 1917, the examination was loaded with questions which would seem that work of the attendance officer was still largely of a police character. Later examinations included questions on child welfare in relation to school attendance, social case work, mental testing. Judged by the examination questions used, the position of attendance officer in Philadelphia has grown "to that of a social worker and educator, ranking close to teachers in the grade and high schools."²⁸ The increase in the requirements for the position of attendance officer in some of the other cities has been equally marked, but in too many instances there are now few requirements for the position.

Improvement in service.—National and sectional conferences of attendance officers are doubtless helping school executives and attendance officers recognize more fully the scope and importance of attendance work. For example, the National League of Compulsory Attendance Officials at its annual meetings has been considering the attendance problem in its broad aspects as an educational and social problem. In the State of New York "conferences are held in nine districts, in each of which an association of attendance and child adjustment workers has been organized. Talks by school administrators, psychiatrists, and others of experience in the field of child welfare are presented. Discussion is had of questions sent in prior to the meeting or presented at that time. Particular attention is given the matter of contact with community groups and organizations to which attendance workers must often turn when the child's trouble is found to lie in fundamentally bad or weak home conditions."²⁹

In Indiana there is a State Attendance Officers Association which has been affiliated with the State Teachers Association. The State superintendent in his report for 1931 says regarding the conferences of this association and of sectional groups:³⁰

²⁷ Davis, Frank G., and Wheeler, Charles A., *The Development of the Work of the Attendance Officer*, Vocational Guidance Magazine, vol. II, April 1933, pp. 310-313.

²⁸ Ibid.

²⁹ Twenty-eighth Annual Report of the Education Department, Albany, N. Y., The University of the State of New York, 1932, p. 200.

³⁰ Annual Report of the Department of Public Instruction of the State of Indiana, 1930-31, p. 140.

The percent of attendance at the annual meeting is always high. The members elect their own officers, appoint committees, initiate discussions, secure speakers, and listen to various reports such as those of school administrators in their efforts made to so modify the school program as to adequately care for the maladjusted. These State meetings contribute to the understanding of the purpose of compulsory school attendance—namely, to serve boys and girls of the school population who are not physically or mentally adjusted to the regular school routine, or those who lack books, clothing, or parental care. Furthermore, the State organization fosters in the officers an assurance of the worthwhileness of their work and a confidence in their ability to carry on—attributes essential to successful leadership.

In addition to the State conference there are organized sectional groups which hold 1-day sectional meetings 3 or 4 times a year. Ten or a dozen officers attend each meeting, participate in round-table discussions and studies. These sectional meetings are to the attendance workers what the county institutes were to the teachers before the latter were required to take professional training. Other school officials frequently attend these meetings and are asked to contribute to the program.

Maryland is another State in which there are conferences of attendance officers at which such topics as the following have been discussed: Problems growing out of poverty and pauperism; problems resulting from low intelligence or indifference of parents or children; problems resulting from broken homes; the relation of overage to attendance; incentives and devices that may be used by attendance officers for securing better school attendance; underprivileged children and special education; and other topics of equal import.

Number of attendance officers.—It is difficult to say what the pupil-attendance officer ratio should be. The White House Conference Report says, however, "that if an attendance officer for every 1,500 or 2,000 children enrolled in public, private, or parochial schools were provided it would be possible to do more intensive work in every case for which such work is needed." This standard has not been attained in cities having a population of 10,000 or more. In the small cities where the enrollment is about 1,500 to 2,000 and where an attendance officer is employed on full time, as is often the case, the ratio suggested has been attained, but in many such instances the attendance officers are not qualified for social case work.

The following shows for 1932 the ratio of pupil enrollment in the public school to attendance officer by groups of cities having a population of 10,000 or more:

| Population group | Ratio of pupil enrollment to attendance officer |
|---------------------------|---|
| 1,000,000 and more..... | 3,483 |
| 500,000 to 1,000,000..... | 4,330 |
| 100,000 to 500,000..... | 5,372 |
| 30,000 to 100,000..... | 4,425 |
| 10,000 to 30,000..... | 2,902 |

If the ratios were based upon both public and private or parochial school enrollments there would be more children per attendance officer. If a ratio is used the number of children of compulsory school age should be used as the base. However, in determining the number of attendance officers needed, other factors should be considered, as the area to be covered and the attitude of the parents toward school attendance.

Salaries of attendance officers and cost of attendance service.—The laws of most of the States provide that salaries of attendance officers be fixed by the body that appoints such officers. The laws of a few States provide for fees or a per diem. The per diem rates in these States are \$1 to \$3 in Georgia, \$2 in Kansas, \$3 in Oregon, and \$2 in Vermont.

In some of the cities of the country the salary of attendance officers is equal to the salary of elementary school teachers. The following shows the median salary of attendance officers and elementary school teachers in 1933 in cities grouped according to population: ³¹

| Population | Median salary of attendance officers | Median salary of elementary school teachers |
|------------------------|--------------------------------------|---|
| 100,000 and over..... | \$1,971 | \$1,947 |
| 30,000 to 100,000..... | 1,617 | 1,526 |
| 10,000 to 30,000..... | 930 | 1,360 |
| 5,000 to 10,000..... | 600 | 1,217 |
| 2,500 to 5,000..... | 600 | 1,089 |

³¹ Special salary tabulations, Research Division of the National Education Association—Tabulations I-B, II-B, III-B, IV-B, V-B, 1933.

No data are at hand to show the salary of attendance officers in places having a population of less than 2,500. It is well known, however, that in the smaller communities the salary of such officers is very small.

No data are available showing the total cost of attendance service in the United States. However, in 1932, 28 States reported an expenditure of \$3,278,439 for compulsory school attendance service. The amount expended by each of the States reporting was:

| | | | |
|---------------------------|-----------|--------------------|----------|
| Alabama..... | \$131,822 | New Mexico..... | \$20,752 |
| Arizona..... | 12,858 | North Dakota..... | 422,050 |
| Connecticut..... | 57,129 | Ohio..... | 234,180 |
| Delaware..... | 16,767 | Oregon..... | 18,371 |
| District of Columbia..... | 35,583 | Pennsylvania..... | 903,698 |
| Florida..... | 35,053 | Rhode Island..... | 72,504 |
| Georgia..... | 36,807 | Tennessee..... | 85,563 |
| Idaho..... | 11,058 | Utah..... | 23,227 |
| Illinois..... | 318,492 | Vermont..... | 4,616 |
| Kentucky..... | 30,371 | Virginia..... | 15,699 |
| Maine..... | 12,300 | West Virginia..... | 79,002 |
| Maryland..... | 73,702 | Wisconsin..... | 67,107 |
| Montana..... | 20,129 | Wyoming..... | 5,990 |
| Nebraska..... | 1,898 | | |
| New Jersey..... | 528,641 | | |

If the States not reporting expended in the same proportion for attendance service, the total was more than 5½ million dollars. This is, however, probably a low estimate, for according to data compiled regarding expenditures for attendance service in 215 cities having a population of 10,000 or more, the amount expended in 1931-32 for such service in these cities was \$3,540,226.

The following shows the total amount expended for attendance service, the amount expended per pupil in average daily attendance, and the amount expended per attendance officer for several cities reporting for the different population groups in 1931-32:

| Size of city | Number of cities reporting | Total amount expended for attendance service | Amount expended per pupil in average daily attendance | Amount expended per attendance officer |
|---------------------------|----------------------------|--|---|--|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 1,000,000 or more..... | 5 | \$1,840,507 | \$0.85 | \$2,615 |
| 500,000 to 1,000,000..... | 8 | 523,303 | .67 | 2,492 |
| 100,000 to 500,000..... | 61 | 838,418 | .43 | 1,968 |
| 30,000 to 100,000..... | 84 | 277,307 | .36 | 1,594 |
| 10,000 to 30,000..... | 57 | 64,691 | .31 | 912 |
| Total..... | 215 | 3,540,226 | .61 | 2,233 |

The higher pupil cost in the larger cities may be due to several causes: (1) The problem of attendance may be greater and it may be taken more seriously than in the smaller cities; (2) salaries of employees, in general, are higher in the larger cities. If data were available for cities of less than 10,000 population, the cost of attendance service per pupil in these cities would be far less than the 31 cents for cities having a population between 10,000 and 30,000.

REPORTING TRUANCY

In only 29 of the State laws is mention made as to when truancy shall be reported. In 13 States, reports of absences are required immediately or promptly—Indiana, Iowa, Maryland, Montana, Nebraska, Pennsylvania, Tennessee, Texas, Vermont, Virginia, Washington, Wisconsin, and Wyoming; in 5 States, weekly—Alabama, Florida, Kentucky, New Mexico, and South Carolina; in 1 State, South Dakota, every 2 weeks; in 7 States, monthly—Arkansas, Georgia, Idaho, Kansas, Missouri, Ohio, and Oregon; and in 3 States, from time to time—Illinois, Michigan, and Mississippi. Clearly, if absentees are reported but once a month a parent may keep his child out of school as many as 20 days before he is called to account.

In a well-administered school system no child is out of school for more than a day or two without the teacher's making an effort to ascertain why such child is absent. In many instances the teacher herself is not in a position to ascertain the cause of absence, but she should be held responsible for reporting absences when the cause of absence is not known. The White House Conference Report reads regarding teachers' reporting absences:³²

Few systems hold the teachers sufficiently responsible in the matter of attendance. Where effort is made to judge of the efficiency of the teacher, attention should be given to her record of attendance. It is frequently true that cases come to the attention of the attendance department from outside sources which reveal the fact that certain children have been absent from school when the cause was illegal and avoidable without being reported. Even a legal absence may be the beginning of a tendency toward avoidable absences. One of the most frequent types of such cases is children excluded from school because

³² The White House Conference on Child Health and Protection, *The Delinquent Child*. New York, The Century Co., 1932, pp. 391-392.

of skin and head conditions. It is imperative that these cases immediately be followed to secure needed care so that the child may be returned to school at the earliest possible time.

Failure to report truancy may, however, be due to the fact that in many States the laws do not define truancy or indicate how many days a pupil may be absent from school before he should be reported. Truancy should be defined either in the law or provision should be made to have it defined by the State department of education.

Only 21 States have incorporated in their compulsory attendance laws any definition of truancy. These definitions are almost as numerous as the States that attempt a definition, as may be noted from the following, which shows what constitutes truancy in the States defining it:

| | |
|--|--|
| Habitually absent..... | New Jersey, South Dakota, Wisconsin, Wyoming. |
| Without reasonable excuse..... | Iowa, Louisiana, Rhode Island. |
| 1 week..... | Connecticut, Virginia (in any school month). |
| 7 days, or 14 half-days in any 6-month period. | Massachusetts. |
| 4 days unexcused absence any month. | Florida. |
| 3 days, or parts of 3 days..... | California, Nevada, Kentucky. |
| 3 days, or equivalent..... | Pennsylvania, Maryland (within 8 consecutive weeks). |
| 2 or more consecutive days..... | Kansas. |
| More than 1 day..... | Mississippi. |
| One-half day or more..... | Maine. |
| 8 unexcused half-day absences in any 4 weeks. | Oregon. |
| Defined by State board..... | North Carolina. |

WHEN TRUANCY MUST CEASE

It would seem that truancy or absence, after a specified number of days' absence without lawful excuse, should cease as soon as the parent has been notified by the attendance officer. Yet only 30 States' laws specify when the child must return to school, and the specifications are far from being uniform, varying from at once to 10 days, or to a reasonable time, as may be noted in the following which shows the time allowed for returning to school the child without legal excuse, in those States specifying when truancy must cease.

| | |
|--|--|
| Within 10 days..... | Georgia. |
| Within 5 days..... | Arkansas, Colorado, Connecticut, Nebraska, New Jersey, Oklahoma, Virginia, Wisconsin, Wyoming. |
| Within 3 days..... | Alabama, Delaware, Mississippi, Missouri, Pennsylvania. |
| Within 2 days..... | Montana. |
| 1 day, or at once..... | Florida, Indiana, Kansas, Kentucky, Michigan, Nevada, North Carolina, Ohio, Oregon, Tennessee, Texas, West Virginia. |
| Within reasonable time, or as soon as practicable. | Idaho, Illinois. |

PENALTIES FOR NONENFORCEMENT

Penalties for the nonenforcement of the compulsory attendance laws apply to attendance officers, parents or guardians, and teachers. Nineteen States provide penalties for attendance officers for failure to act in truancy cases. The fines vary considerably within these States. For example, in Illinois the fine provided is not less than \$25, in Minnesota not over \$10, in Washington from \$20 to \$100, in Tennessee removal from office, in North Dakota \$10 and removal, as may be noted from the following which shows the penalties that may be imposed upon attendance officers for neglect in the enforcement of the attendance laws:

| | |
|--|---------------------------------|
| Removal from office..... | California, Florida, Tennessee. |
| \$10 and removal..... | North Dakota. |
| Not over \$25 and removal..... | Iowa. |
| Not less than \$25..... | Illinois. |
| Not over \$10..... | Arkansas. |
| Not over \$10 or not over 10 days in jail. | Minnesota. |
| Not over \$25..... | Pennsylvania. |
| Not over \$50..... | Colorado. |
| Not over \$100..... | Vermont. |
| \$3 to \$20..... | West Virginia. |
| \$5 to \$20..... | Oregon. |
| \$5 to \$25..... | Wisconsin. |
| \$10 to \$50..... | Maine, South Dakota. |
| \$20 to \$50..... | Ohio. |
| \$20 to \$100..... | Washington. |
| \$25 to \$50 and removal..... | Kentucky. |

The question may be raised whether removal from office rather than a fine should not be the penalty. In the 32 States

that do not specify a penalty for failure of attendance officers to act on truancy cases or to perform the duties assigned them, they can doubtless be removed from office in the same manner as other employees of the board of education.

All the State laws provide for the punishment of parents or guardians upon conviction of failure to keep their children in school as provided by the compulsory attendance laws. In 5 States, Alabama, Idaho, Oklahoma, Rhode Island, and Utah, the amount of fine is not stated in the law, but the failure of a parent to keep his child in school is punishable as a misdemeanor. The fines that may be imposed upon parents or guardians vary considerably. For example, in Pennsylvania the fine for first offense is \$2; in Indiana from \$20 to \$200; and in Mississippi from \$1 to \$10. The following shows the amount of fines that may be imposed for first offense and the States imposing such fines:

| | |
|------------------------|---|
| \$2..... | Pennsylvania. |
| \$5..... | Texas. |
| \$10..... | New Hampshire. |
| Not over \$5..... | Connecticut, Florida, Maryland, New Jersey, New York. |
| Not over \$10..... | Arkansas, California, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Nevada. |
| Not over \$20..... | Massachusetts. |
| \$1 to \$10..... | Mississippi. |
| \$2 to \$10..... | Tennessee. |
| \$5 to \$20..... | Illinois, Iowa, Montana, North Dakota, Ohio. |
| \$5 to \$25..... | Colorado, Delaware, Kansas, North Carolina, Oregon, Vermont, Wyoming. |
| \$5 to \$50..... | Arizona, Michigan, Wisconsin. |
| \$5 to \$100..... | Nebraska, New Mexico. |
| \$10 to \$25..... | Missouri. |
| \$10 to \$50..... | South Dakota. |
| \$10 to \$200..... | Indiana. |
| Amount not stated..... | Alabama, Idaho, Oklahoma, Rhode Island, Utah. |

In 16 States, principals and teachers may be fined for failure to report absences. Three States, Alabama, Idaho, and Kansas, provide for withholding the month's salary. The fines that may be imposed upon principals and teachers and the States imposing such fines are as follows:

| | |
|------------------------------|-------------------------|
| Monthly salary withheld..... | Alabama, Idaho, Kansas. |
| \$5..... | South Carolina. |
| Not over \$10..... | Arkansas, Minnesota. |
| Not over \$25..... | Pennsylvania. |
| \$3 to \$20..... | West Virginia. |
| \$5 to \$20..... | Iowa, Oregon. |
| \$5 to \$25..... | Vermont, Wisconsin. |
| \$10 to \$50..... | South Dakota. |
| \$20 to \$50..... | Ohio. |
| \$20 to \$100..... | Washington. |
| \$25 to \$50..... | Kentucky. |

COURTS OF JURISDICTION

Various courts have jurisdiction over truancy or failure of parents to comply with the provisions of the attendance law. In some States several courts may have jurisdiction, but the justice of the peace court has jurisdiction more often than has any other court. The following is a list of the courts having jurisdiction, together with the States in which such courts have jurisdiction over truancy:

| | |
|--------------------------------------|---|
| Court of competent jurisdiction..... | Alabama, Arkansas. |
| County court..... | Arizona, Colorado, New York, South Dakota, Texas, Utah, Virginia. |
| Proper court..... | California, Nevada. |
| Justice of the peace..... | Connecticut, Delaware, Maryland, Michigan, Mississippi, Missouri, New Mexico, Oklahoma, Oregon, Pennsylvania, Tennessee, Virginia, Washington, West Virginia, Wisconsin, Wyoming. |
| Juvenile court..... | District of Columbia, Indiana, Kansas, Maryland, Missouri, Nebraska, New York, Ohio, Tennessee, Virginia, Wisconsin. |
| Any court of jurisdiction..... | Florida, Minnesota. |
| Probate court of county..... | Idaho. |
| Court of peace..... | Illinois. |
| Circuit court..... | Indiana, Missouri. |
| Superior court..... | Indiana, Washington. |
| Nearest court of jurisdiction..... | Kentucky. |
| Court of jurisdiction..... | Georgia, Montana, Ohio. |
| A magistrate..... | Maine, South Carolina. |
| Courts of special session..... | New York. |
| Police magistrates..... | Do. |
| State attorney..... | North Dakota, Vermont. |
| District courts..... | Rhode Island. |

ORGANIZATION FOR ATTENDANCE SERVICE

The organization for attendance service varies from a part-time attendance officer in small school districts to large department bureaus or divisions in the large cities.

Generally the attendance officer or the attendance department is responsible to the board of education through the superintendent of schools. If, however, the attendance division is part of a bureau, it is responsible to the superintendent of schools through the director of the bureau. In a few instances, especially in small school systems, attendance service is performed by the supervising principal and in a few instances the service is performed by an agency outside the school system. The only type of organization acceptable to authorities on school administration is the one in which the attendance work is delegated by the superintendent of schools to an attendance officer or a department of school attendance or a division within a department, since this type of organization recognizes the principle of delegated authority and responsibility. If there is but one attendance officer, he should be responsible directly to the superintendent of schools; if there is a department, the chief attendance officer should be directly responsible to the superintendent of schools and the other attendance officers to the head of the attendance department. If, however, the attendance work is part of a larger bureau of child welfare or of a service bureau, the chief attendance officer should be responsible to the director of the bureau.

In the States having the county unit form of school administration the organization of the school attendance service should follow the same general plan used in the cities of the county. In the States not organized on the county unit plan of school administration, but in which county superintendents are employed, the attendance work should also be under the general direction of the county superintendent. In other words, there should be county attendance officers directly responsible to the county superintendent of schools to look after all matters relating to nonattendance in the several school districts of the county.

In the organization of attendance service provision should be made for the closest cooperation with other departments

and agencies. It is doubtful whether any other department of a school system has relationships with as many other departments or agencies as does the attendance department, which, for example, has relations with the superintendent of schools, the principals, the teachers, the children, the parents, the courts, the school and city health departments, employers, welfare agencies, correctional institutions, and nonpublic schools. These relationships hold for any city or county school system whether it be large or small. The one attendance officer of a small school system has practically the same relationship to other school officials and to various agencies as has a large attendance department.

To illustrate the organization and some of the services performed by attendance departments in the large cities the following brief descriptions of the attendance departments in Philadelphia, Pa., Denver, Colo., and Boston, Mass., are presented:

*Philadelphia.*³³—The following is a summary of the services rendered by the division of compulsory attendance:

1. Taking the school census.
2. Investigation of cause of absence referred to the attendance department.
3. Visits to homes, to the schools, and to employers.
4. Furnishing information to social service agencies and to many persons outside the school system requesting information in regard to children in school.
5. Interviews with children and parents with a view to making adjustments in the home and in the school.
6. Investigation by a special social service staff of children who are serious behavior problems in the school, of the homes employing children for domestic service on exemption permits, study of children referred for admission to the parental school.
7. Referring cases to magistrates' court.
8. Referring cases to juvenile court.
9. Supervision of street trades.
10. Filing records of pupils' withdrawal from school.
11. Preparation of the monthly and annual reports on enrollment and attendance.
12. Investigation of cases of damage to school property by school children.
13. Assisting with relief work for needy families having children attending school.

³³ Report of the Division of Compulsory Education, Philadelphia, Board of Public Education, June 30, 1933.

14. Junior placement service, including registration of young people 14 to 21 years of age, educational and vocational counseling, issuing employment certificates, vocational guidance and follow-up, and visiting employers.

*Denver, Colo.*³⁴—The attendance department known as the census and attendance department enforces three State laws: Compulsory school attendance law, the child labor law, and the school census law. Thus the work is organized into three definite divisions: Census, attendance, and work certification and placement. Supt. A. L. Threlkeld commenting upon the work of the Denver attendance department says:

In addition to such traditional functions as enumerating pupils of school age in the district, enforcing the compulsory school law, and the like, functions important in themselves, the work of this department includes that type of social service which ascertains the causes of irregular school attendance and attempts to bring about the necessary changes—in the individual, his home, or the community at large—for the removal of these causes. In general, it may be said that the removal of the causes of irregular attendance often removes the obstacles to the pupil's success in school. Therefore, the work of this department increases in significance as it develops techniques in social service for making those adjustments which are essential to good school work.

The information concerning the pupils of school age in every block of the city which this department keeps on file and which is available at a moment's notice, is of incalculable value in planning an economical building program.

These newer functions of the department of census and attendance demand a higher type of training on the part of its personnel, training in various sociological fields in addition to a broad educational background. This fact the board of education has recognized by adopting a salary schedule for the personnel of this department which recognizes training and experience as these factors are recognized in the schedule for teachers.

Boston, Mass.—The attendance department comprises a head supervisor of attendance and 32 supervisors of attendance.

Thirty supervisors are³⁵ assigned to the work in connection with the elementary, intermediate, high, continuation, and evening schools. One supervisor is assigned to supervise the enforcement of the laws pertaining to continuation and evening school attendance and the em-

³⁴ Organization and Work of the Department of Census and Attendance, Denver Public Schools, Monograph no. 8, 1930.

³⁵ Public Schools of a Metropolis, General Federation of Women's Clubs, Department of Education, Boston, Mass., 1932.

ployment of illiterate minors. He also makes special investigations pertaining to employment and educational certificates. One supervisor is assigned as supervisor of licensed minors and enforces the general laws pertaining to street trades, and the rules and regulations of the school committee regarding the same.

The head supervisor of attendance is also in charge of the certificating office, which issues working certificates to all minors between the ages of 14 and 21 who seek employment. A new certificate is issued with every change of employment.³⁶

STATE SUPERVISION OF SCHOOL ATTENDANCE

State school administrators seeing the lack of enforcement on the part of many local school officials have from time to time recommended State supervision. The following may be cited as examples of such recommendations:

There should be connected with the State superintendent's office a special attendance officer whose duty it should be to cooperate with school superintendent, committees, and local attendance officers to the end that all children between the ages of 7 and 15 may give regular attendance at school. This is necessary if the full spirit of the law is observed.³⁶

Administration of the law is entirely in local hands and, hence, is subject to all kinds of neighborhood limitations. It is doubtful whether the law will ever be effective until ultimate authority to direct its enforcement is placed in the State department of education and provision made for following it up throughout the State. This would be in harmony with the power now vested in the Department of Labor in the administration of the child labor laws.³⁷

The appointment of truant officers should be made compulsory upon boards of education, and in order to get the best results there should be made provision for a State attendance officer whose duty would be to check up on attendance throughout the State.³⁸

In several States, however, the State departments of education are endeavoring to keep in touch with the attendance work in the various communities of their respective States. In Alabama, there is a State attendance officer; in Delaware, the State board of education employs visiting teachers; in Connecticut, the State department exercises supervision over attendance through an attendance office; in Indiana, there is a State board of attendance, which employs a State attend-

³⁶ Report of the State Superintendent of Schools of Maine, 1920-21, p. 22.

³⁷ Twenty-first Biennial Report of the Department of Education, State of Minnesota, 1919-20, p. 11.

³⁸ Biennial Report of the State Superintendent of Free Schools of West Virginia, 1922-24, p. 67.

ance officer as its executive; in New Hampshire, the director of child welfare of the State department of education has general supervision of attendance; in Kentucky, there is a State supervisor of attendance; in Maryland, the State department of education assigns a member of the staff to act as adviser on attendance problems; in New York, there is an attendance and child accounting division in the State department of education; in North Carolina, the State department of child welfare supervises the enforcement of the attendance laws; in Ohio, the enforcement of the compulsory attendance laws, studies of their effects, and the planning of the annual school census centers in the director of child accounting; in Pennsylvania, the supervision of the enforcement of the attendance law is centered in the child accounting and statistics division of the State department of public instruction.

The following are brief descriptions of the organization and work of the attendance offices and bureaus in several of the State departments of education:

ALABAMA

The State school attendance office of Alabama was organized in 1928. The function of the office is to administer the biennial school census enumeration, the apportionment of the attendance fund, to supervise attendance programs, and to make statistical reports. It supervises attendance by advising with city and county attendance officers, by requiring reports, and by assisting in the selection of attendance officers. Monthly and annual attendance reports are required.

CONNECTICUT

In 1869 a member of the Connecticut State Board of Education was appointed to see that there was no illegal employment of children and that each child had at least 3 months' schooling. In 1872 a regular agent was appointed.

There are 17 employees connected with the State attendance office: 1 director of attendance, 7 supervisors of attendance, and 9 clerks. The function of the State office is the securing of attendance in accordance with the statutes of the

State. The leaving certificates to children are issued by the State attendance office.

No supervision is exercised by the State office in cities and in villages and rural districts having attendance officers unless complaints are received. Where there are no local truant officers the State office takes care of the entire situation based upon monthly reports from each teacher. During the year 1933-34 the State office investigated cases of irregular attendance, visited 5,836 families and 2,757 schools.

INDIANA ³⁹

In 1921 a State board of attendance was created in the State of Indiana. The personnel of this board is the same as that of the State board of education, which consists of the State superintendent of public instruction, the presidents of Purdue University, the State university, and the State normal school, superintendents of schools of the the 3 cities having the latest enumeration of school children, 3 citizens actively engaged in educational work in the State, at least 1 of whom shall be a county superintendent of schools, and 3 persons actively interested in and of known sympathy with vocational education; 1 of whom shall be a representative of employees and 1 of employers.

Although the personnel of the State board of attendance and the State board of education are identical, the official organization may not be the same. When matters relating to school attendance are considered, the State board of education convenes as the State board of attendance.

The powers and duties of the State board of attendance are:

1. Appoint a State attendance officer and fix his salary at a sum not to exceed \$3,000 a year and his duties not otherwise provided for.
2. Fix the qualifications of attendance officers.
3. Remove attendance officers from office for incompetence or neglect of duty.
4. Design and require the use of a uniform system of attendance reports, records, and forms needed for the full enforcement of the compulsory school attendance act.
5. Perform all other duties necessary for the full and complete interpretation and enforcement of the compulsory school attendance act.

³⁹ State of Indiana, Department of Public Instruction, Bulletin No. 110, Compulsory Education, Related Laws, and Comments, 1931.

The State attendance officer is appointed by the State board of attendance for a period of 4 years to act as its executive officer. His powers and duties are:

1. To have general supervision over the attendance officers of the State.
2. To visit the various attendance districts of the State, inspect the work of the attendance officers, and investigate the manner in which the compulsory attendance act is being enforced.
3. To institute court action wherever necessary.
4. To make such reports and perform such other duties as are required of him by the State board of attendance.

The general supervision of the attendance officers is accomplished by the State officer carrying to the local officers the rules and regulations and wishes of the State board of attendance, by counseling with them and meeting with them in conference groups, and by encouraging attendance officers to employ approved social service technique. Although the law makes it the province of the State board of attendance to "fix the qualifications of attendance officers", the board assigns to the State attendance officer the duty of passing upon the applicant's credentials before the licensing division is authorized to issue the license.

All attendance officers are required to make a report to the State board of attendance semiannually. This report includes an accounting of all children moving into or out of an attendance district, of all children of compulsory school age not enrolled, number of children who have been absent legally or illegally, number of days of absence and causes, efforts of attendance officers to keep children in school, and notes on court action.

NEW YORK

The attendance and child accounting division of the New York State education department was organized in 1904 to see to it that all the children of the State are assured the American birthright of an education, whether their parents favor it or not.

There are 10 employees connected with the division—1 director, 1 assistant to director, 1 secretary-stenographer, 4 field supervisors, and 3 clerks. The functions of the State attendance office are:

A. Central State office:

1. Directs school census and attendance procedure in the school districts comprising the State.
2. Provides census forms and reports, school registers, and other material for school districts.
3. Receives monthly attendance reports from school districts.
4. Receives monthly reports from attendance officers and checks on the employment of the same by town boards and boards of education as required by statute.
5. Cooperates in the management of the State association of attendance and child adjustment workers. Arranges also for regional and county conferences of attendance workers.
6. Provides pamphlets on attendance and child accounting matters; i. e., school census (compulsory law, attendance digest, pupil records, school records, qualifications of attendance officers, responsibility of school authorities in connection with children exempted from attendance, and others).
7. Directs the procedure of superintendents of schools who are designated by statute as certificating officers to issue employment certificates, vacation work permits, and age certificates.
8. Cooperates with other State departments in cases of combined responsibility.

B. State field workers:

1. Each supervisor is assigned 15 counties.
2. He supervises procedures therein through contacts with superintendents and district superintendents in charge and through visits to schools. He attends teachers' and other conferences.
3. He analyzes the reports from his territory.
4. He assists school administrators in difficult attendance cases which warrant special attention.
5. He assists with school census planning where needed.

The attendance division and other State departments cooperate closely. The labor and education departments have mutual responsibility in connection with employment of children which is met by consultation and interchange of reports. In particular, the labor department reports cases of violations found. Health, education, and mental hygiene departments have frequent common interest in cases of crippled or otherwise handicapped children, epidemics, special health needs, and the like.

The child guidance clinics of the mental hygiene department held in nearly all sections of the State each month advise the attendance division and local school authorities concerning school children examined. This service is particularly important where small school systems or districts

have no psychiatric service. Need of special class, special course, or institutional care is often discovered.

The child welfare council appointed at the suggestion of the Governor includes a representative from each department particularly concerned with children: Correction, education, labor, mental hygiene, and social welfare. It serves as a clearing house.

The State attendance office supervises attendance in cities and in villages having superintendents of schools through monthly reports of attendance and attendance officers, by correspondence and by visitation by the director or a supervisor. In the rural districts contact is made with the district superintendent. Special cases are taken up as warrant is found therefor.

The following reports are required from local school attendance officers or boards of education:

1. Monthly report of attendance.
2. Monthly report of attendance officers. These reports include information on transfers, tardiness, and other items.
3. Annual report on census and enrollment comparison.
4. Annual report on compulsory education.

PENNSYLVANIA

In 1919 the attendance bureau was organized in the Pennsylvania Department of Public Instruction. In 1925 the name was changed to child helping and accounting bureau and in 1933 to child accounting and statistics division.

Originally the bureau was organized to standardize attendance regulations and to supervise the observance of the attendance and child labor laws.

The office staff comprises 4 staff members and 11 clerical employees. The office is charged with the duty of

1. Cooperating with school districts in—
 - (a) Utilizing child helping agencies in the study and solution of problems of child care, treatment, and retardation.
 - (b) Local coordination of contacts between the school and the home.
 - (c) Securing compliances with the laws regulating the employment of minors.
2. Compiling and preparing—
 - (a) Statistical data and reports.
 - (b) Answers to questionnaires.

3. Making available statistical data for graduate students, taxpayers, associations, and other organizations.
4. Conducting research studies.

This division cooperates in a number of ways with the division of medical inspection and the bureau of vital statistics in the State department of health, the division of family and children's work in the State department of welfare, the bureau of women and children in the department of labor and industry, and the State emergency relief board. It provides blanks for and supervises the issuance of employment certificates, farm and domestic service permits, and age certificates. Attendance officers, the department of labor and industry, and local police are charged with the enforcement of the provisions of the child labor law. When employment certificates are issued for occupations that are not prohibited, minors 14 to 16 years of age are examined by school physicians to determine their physical condition. In districts having a total population of less than 5,000 these physicians are appointed by the State department of health. In districts having a total population of 5,000 or more boards of school directors select the physicians who examine such pupils.

Representatives of the division visit school districts as often as possible. Each district submits attendance reports to the county or district superintendent monthly and to the State department three times a year through the office of the district or county superintendent of schools. A summary of enumeration is sent to the State office annually by each district and an employment certificate report semiannually.

SUMMARY AND IMPLICATIONS OF COMPULSORY SCHOOL ATTENDANCE LAWS

One of the original aims of compulsory school attendance laws was to abolish illiteracy. While this aim continues, there is an increasing awareness that it is no longer enough that the masses know merely how to read. Education for modern life requires much more than literacy; it requires some knowledge and understanding of the fundamental and unavoidable social problems which sooner or later confront the great majority of young people. In order to achieve the practical knowledge and understanding exacted by modern

civic obligations it is essential that the education of youth should be a regular and continuous process free from interruptions resulting from irregular school attendance.

The extent to which children attend school and the regularity of their attendance are determined by many factors, and for this reason it is difficult to estimate the relative importance of various features of school attendance laws. Social, economic, racial, and geographical conditions influence school attendance. Also the type of school buildings, equipment, roads, transportation, health, teaching methods, personality of teachers, and the maintenance of kindergartens and part-time schools are all influencing factors. Moreover, popular recognition by parents and children of the value of an education is now apparently the strongest factor in promoting school attendance. If in any community the public generally or the school authorities are indifferent with respect to school attendance, the best attendance law will fail to produce adequate results.

Educational history shows that nonattendance and illiteracy keep rather close company. A study of the compulsory education laws, nonattendance, and illiteracy strongly indicates interesting relationships. A study⁴⁰ of compulsory education laws in effect in 1928, together with the 1930 census, revealed that:

(1) The 10 States which ranked lowest in the percent of literacy of persons between 10 and 20 years of age had, apparently, less rigid and less definite compulsory school attendance laws.

(2) These 10 States also ranked far below the average percent in school attendance.

(3) The 2 States which ranked lowest in percent of literacy of persons within the stated ages were also the same 2 States which had, apparently, the weakest laws.

(4) Illiteracy and nonattendance were largely affected by racial differences.

(5) Nine of the 10 States having apparently less rigid and definite laws also manifested an unusually high rate of nonattendance and illiteracy among the native white population between 10 and 20 years of age.

Table 6 has been prepared for the purpose of summarizing in a comparative manner the main features of State compulsory school attendance laws as are found to exist at the

⁴⁰ Can Better Laws Reduce Illiteracy, *School Life*, vol. XVI, no. 7, March 1932.

beginning of 1935. The 20 features here summarized are listed preceding the table. The total number of States having each of the features listed is shown in parentheses (), respectively.

*Provisions Relating to Attendance, Age, Exemptions,
Term of Attendance*

| | |
|--|------|
| 1. Minimum compulsory attendance age less than 8 | (32) |
| 2. Maximum compulsory attendance age 16 or more | (42) |
| 3. No exemptions allowed for poverty | (29) |
| 4. No exemptions allowed for distance | (26) |
| 5. No exemptions allowed for indefinite reasons | (31) |
| 6. Eighth grade or more required for work permit | (20) |
| 7. Attendance required for full term | (39) |
| 8. Nine years or more attendance required | (33) |
| 9. School term of 8 or more months | (25) |
| 10. Attendance officers certificated | (8) |

Provisions for Enforcement

| | |
|--|------|
| 11. Annual or continuous school census | (36) |
| 12. Truancy defined | (21) |
| 13. Provides when truancy shall cease | (29) |
| 14. Penalty on principals or teachers for failure to report truancy .. | (16) |
| 15. Penalty on attendance officers for neglect of duty | (19) |
| 16. Requires truancy to be reported immediately | (11) |
| 17. Requires attendance officers to act immediately | (16) |
| 18. Provides who shall grant exemptions | (38) |
| 19. Provides who shall report truancy | (37) |
| 20. Regular attendance officer required | (45) |

The States which have any of the features above listed are indicated in table 6 by X marks placed in the columns numbered to correspond with the order in which the features are listed. For example, the X marks in column 2 indicate the States having a maximum compulsory attendance age of 16 or more, which corresponds to feature no. 2 above.

TABLE 6.—Principal features of school attendance laws

[The features indicated by the numbers in columns 1 to 20 are shown on page 59]

| State | Provisions relating to attendance age, exemptions, term of attendance, etc. | | | | | | | | | | Provisions relating to enforcement | | | | | | | | | | Total | |
|---------|---|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|------------------------------------|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|-------|----|
| | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 | 12 | 13 | 14 | 15 | 16 | 17 | 18 | 19 | 20 | | |
| Ala. | x | x | x | | x | x | x | x | | x | | | x | x | | | | | x | x | 12 | |
| Ariz. | | x | x | x | | | | x | x | | x | | | | | | | | | x | x | 7 |
| Ark. | x | x | | x | x | | | x | | x | | | x | x | x | | | | x | x | x | 12 |
| Calif. | | x | x | | x | x | x | x | x | x | | | x | | | | | | | x | x | 12 |
| Colo. | | x | | x | | | | x | | | | | x | | x | | | | | x | x | 8 |
| Conn. | x | x | | x | x | | | x | x | x | | | x | x | | | | | | x | x | 12 |
| Del. | x | x | x | x | | x | x | x | x | | | | x | | | | | | | x | x | 11 |
| Fla. | x | x | | | | | x | x | | | | | x | x | | x | | | | x | x | 11 |
| Ga. | | | x | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | x | x | 5 |
| Idaho | | x | | x | | | x | x | | | | | x | x | | | | | | x | x | 10 |
| Ill. | x | x | x | x | | x | x | x | x | x | | | x | | x | | | | | x | x | 15 |
| Ind. | x | x | x | x | | x | x | x | | x | | | x | | | x | | | | x | x | 14 |
| Iowa | x | x | x | | x | | | x | x | | | | x | | x | x | x | | | x | x | 14 |
| Kans. | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | | | | x | x | x | | | | | x | x | 16 |
| Ky. | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | | x | | | x | x | | | | | | x | x | 17 |
| La. | x | | | | x | | | | | | | | x | | | | | | | | | 3 |
| Maine | x | x | x | x | | x | x | x | | | | | x | | | x | | | | x | x | 12 |
| Md. | x | x | x | x | x | | | x | x | x | | | x | | | x | | | | x | x | 14 |
| Mass. | x | x | x | x | | | | x | x | x | | | x | | | | | | | x | x | 11 |
| Mich. | x | x | | | x | | | x | x | | | | x | x | | | | | | x | x | 12 |
| Minn. | | x | x | | x | x | x | | | | | | x | | x | | | | | x | x | 12 |
| Miss. | x | x | x | | | | | x | | | | | x | x | | x | | | | | | 8 |
| Mo. | x | x | x | x | x | | | x | x | x | | | x | | | | | | | x | x | 14 |
| Mont. | | x | | x | x | x | x | x | | x | | | x | | | | | | | x | x | 11 |
| Nebr. | x | x | | | x | x | x | x | x | | | | x | | | | | | | x | x | 13 |
| Nev. | x | x | | | x | x | x | x | | | | | x | | | | | | | x | x | 11 |
| N. H. | | x | x | x | | | | | x | | | | | | | | | | | x | x | 8 |
| N. J. | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | | | | x | x | | | | | | x | x | 13 |
| N. Mex. | x | x | x | | x | | | x | x | | | | x | | | | | | | | x | 8 |
| N. Y. | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | | | | | | | | | | | x | x | 12 |
| N. C. | x | | x | | | | | x | | | | | x | | | | | | | x | x | 8 |
| N. Dak. | x | x | | | x | x | x | x | | | | | | | x | | | | | x | x | 10 |
| Ohio | x | x | x | x | x | | | x | x | x | | | x | | x | x | | | | x | x | 16 |
| Okla. | | x | x | x | x | | | x | | | | | x | | x | | | | | x | x | 11 |
| Oreg. | x | x | x | | x | x | x | x | x | x | | | x | x | x | | | | | x | x | 17 |
| Pa. | | x | x | | x | | | x | x | x | | | x | x | x | x | | | | x | x | 15 |
| R. I. | x | x | x | x | | x | x | x | x | | | | x | x | | | | | | x | x | 12 |
| S. C. | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | x | x | 5 |
| S. Dak. | | x | | x | x | | | x | x | x | | | x | x | x | | | | | x | x | 13 |
| Tenn. | x | x | | | | | | x | x | x | | | | | x | x | | | | x | x | 12 |
| Tex. | | | | | x | | | | | | | | x | | | x | | | | x | x | 6 |
| Utah | | x | | | x | x | | x | | | | | x | | | | | | | x | x | 9 |
| Vt. | | x | | x | | | | x | x | | | | | | x | x | x | | | x | x | 12 |
| Va. | x | | x | | x | | | x | | | | | x | x | | x | | | | x | x | 11 |
| Wash. | | x | x | x | x | x | | x | | | | | x | x | x | | | | | x | x | 13 |
| W. Va. | x | x | | | | | | x | x | x | | | x | | x | | | | | x | x | 13 |
| Wis. | x | x | x | | x | x | x | x | x | | | | x | x | x | x | | | | x | x | 17 |
| Wyo. | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | | | | | x | x | | x | | | | x | x | 16 |
| Total | 32 | 42 | 29 | 26 | 31 | 21 | 39 | 33 | 25 | 8 | 36 | 21 | 29 | 16 | 19 | 11 | 16 | 38 | 37 | 45 | | |

† Home and school visitor.

From a study of principal provisions of compulsory school attendance laws, together with considerable various problems of nonattendance, one might expect some definite conclusions as to what legal provisions give the best results or are the most desirable. However, anyone who is familiar with the varying circumstances which affect the degree of

success or failure of school attendance provisions will understand the hazards accompanying attempts to formulate any definite conclusions.

Notwithstanding the difficulty of determining what provisions should be included in an efficient compulsory education law, the task ought not to be regarded insurmountable. It is obvious that some attendance laws are in themselves better than others; and it is also obvious that nonattendance problems are more complex and difficult in some communities than in others. The greatest need for an efficient attendance law is where nonattendance is most difficult to overcome. It is apparently axiomatic that certain features tend to raise while others tend to lower the efficiency of such laws and the standard of education which they embody. For example, it is logical to expect that:

(1) A compulsory school attendance system which begins with children 6 years of age is likely to secure more school attendance than a system which begins with children 8 years of age.

(2) A law which requires attendance until 17 or 18 years of age may be expected to produce more attendance than one which requires attendance only until 14 or 15.

(3) A law which requires an eighth-grade education for labor permits may be expected to produce more attendance or at least more education than a law which authorizes the issuance of labor permits upon completion of the fifth or sixth grade.

(4) More attendance is expected from a minimum school term of 9 months than from a minimum term of 7 months.

(5) A law which defines truancy and prescribes prompt and definite procedure on the part of teachers and truancy officers in dealing with indifferent parents whose children are delinquent in school attendance is likely to promote more school attendance than a law which is vague concerning truancy and the procedure for enforcement.

(6) A law which allows few exemptions and only for definite reasons may be expected to produce more attendance than one which exempts for numerous, vague, or indefinite reasons.

(7) A law which provides for a continual or at least an annual school census will enable better enforcement of school attendance than one which provides for a biennial school census.

(8) A law which requires that all attendance officers shall be certified by the State and qualified to deal sociologically with individual nonattendance problems may be expected to promote better relationship between the home and the school than a law which permits local school boards the freedom to select unsuitable and unqualified attendance officers.

(9) A law which provides for State supervision of the enforcement of school attendance requirements may be reasonably expected to promote better school attendance than one which leaves the matter exclusively in the hands of local school officials.

If certain provisions in compulsory education laws are regarded as embodying high or fairly high standards, it follows that certain other provisions may be regarded as embodying low or fairly low standards; if certain ones are regarded as satisfactory others may be regarded as unsatisfactory. It is indeed interesting to contrast the varying standards found in compulsory attendance laws. In 30 States the compulsory school attendance laws apply to children under 8 years of age, but in only 2 of these to children under 7 years of age.

Compulsory school attendance laws which require attendance until 17 or 18 (exemptions under certain conditions) have been operating apparently satisfactorily in approximately a dozen States, and 31 States require attendance until 16 years of age. On the other hand, 5 States still require attendance only until 14 years of age. Children who are permitted to leave school at 14 or 15 are as a rule deprived of the benefits of a high-school education and much of the training in the social sciences. Thirty-two States require 9 or more years of compulsory school attendance (11 States require 10 or more years). This insures to those normally promoted one grade a year some high-school training. In contrast, 5 States still require only 7 years of school attendance or less.

Nine States require full-time attendance for 9 months each year, and as many States provide for only 6 months or less compulsory school attendance annually. Most States require full or consecutive school attendance while some States require 80 or 100 days' attendance annually.

In 8 States it appears that children may not be exempted from school attendance on account of education unless they

have completed the twelfth grade; while in 6 States it appears that children may be exempted under certain conditions upon completion of the seventh grade.

In 23 States the completion of the eighth grade is required for labor permits, while in 14 States it appears that the laws stipulate no more than a fifth grade education or they are silent on the subject.

In some States it appears that the State school superintendent or the State board of education is expressly empowered to supervise and enforce the administration of school attendance laws. Among such States are Alabama, Connecticut, Delaware, Indiana, Kentucky, Maryland, New Hampshire, and New York. Under the laws in many other States it is reasonable to suppose that school officials may exercise supervisory or administrative authority over school attendance. For example, many State laws vest State boards of education or State superintendents of public instruction with authority to enforce the general laws relating to education, and in a few States it appears that State school officials may withhold the distribution or apportionment of State school funds for failure on the part of local school officials to carry out the provisions of the State school law. In a majority of the States there is little or no State or county supervision over school attendance or the administration of school attendance laws.

Some implications.—Before compulsory attendance laws were enacted or strictly enforced a parent was entirely at liberty to keep his child out of school for as long a time as he might choose without its being necessary for him to give a reason for the child's absence. When there were no compulsory attendance laws a parent could keep his child at home if he thought the school building was unsafe or unsanitary, or the teacher poorly prepared for her work, or the course of study not adapted to the needs of his child. Today, such excuses are not accepted. The child is required to attend the school provided, no matter how inferior it may be. Parents, however, have the option of sending their child to a private school, but comparatively few parents are financially able to enroll their children in such schools. Moreover, it should never be necessary for them to do so because of a lack of public-school facilities.

The enactment of compulsory attendance laws immediately placed a responsibility upon the State and upon every school district within the State to provide the very best of school facilities. The upward extension of the compulsory attendance ages from 14 to 16 or 18 has also placed additional responsibilities upon the schools. Many of the children between 14 and 16 years of age who have not met the requirements of the course of study and who are overage for their grades would not be in school if they were not compelled to be. The schools are thus faced with the problem of caring in newer and better ways for such children.

It is obvious that the State should not compel a child to attend school in a building that is unsafe or unsanitary, or a school taught by an unqualified teacher, or a school that does not make provision for caring for the child who varies seriously from the normal type but who is not an institutional case. Among such children may be mentioned the hard-of-hearing, the partially seeing, the crippled, the speech defective, the mentally retarded, the mentally gifted, those of lowered vitality, and the socially maladjusted. For such, special types of instruction should be provided. In brief, the school system should accommodate itself to those compelled to attend school. As forcibly stated by Dr. Charles H. Judd:⁴¹

The school system which is unable or unwilling to accommodate itself to the young people who are compelled by law to attend school is out of harmony with the general social order. I dare say others in this country have heard, as I have, secondary school teachers and principals complaining about certain pupils whom they describe in the most opprobrious terms—pupils who come into their institutions as a result of compulsory school attendance laws but are unable to do the work required. I have heard these pupils described as "impossible." I have heard it said that they are uninterested, that they disrupt the school, and that they render impossible the maintenance of standards of scholarship. What impresses me, when I hear such comments, is the complacency with which members of the faculties of secondary schools throw off all responsibility of these pupils. It seems curious that any one who accepts a position, as a servant of the public on the staff of a secondary school, should overlook the fact that he is em-

⁴¹ Judd, Charles H., Education and the General Social Order, The North Central Association Quarterly, vol. IX, July 1934, pp. 31-32.

ployed by society to solve the problem which confronted the State when it passed the compulsory school attendance law.

Another problem that has arisen because of the compulsory attendance laws is what shall be done to keep children of indigent parents in school. Obviously children cannot go to school without clothes, or even without textbooks. The problem has, however, been met to the extent of authorizing boards of education to provide textbooks and clothing for children of indigent parents so that their children may attend school. One or two States provide that such financial assistance shall be given as will equal about what the child might earn if he were working. Michigan, for example, provides that if the services of a child, who is under duty to attend school, are absolutely required for support of himself or parents the school district is authorized, in its discretion, to grant such relief as will enable the child to attend school.

Another implication of the compulsory attendance law that may be noted is that if all children are to attend school, provision should be made for the transportation of those who live beyond a reasonable walking distance from school.

In general, the problems that have arisen as a result of the compulsory attendance laws cannot be satisfactorily solved until the schools make better provisions than they now do to care for each and every type of child compelled to attend school. It may be that when such provision is made there will be less need for compulsory attendance laws or at least for fewer attendance officers, since the attractive power of the school may be such that every child will want to be in attendance at least 200 days a year.

COMPULSORY SCHOOL ATTENDANCE PROVISIONS BY STATES

The following digest shows for each State important legislative provisions relating to attendance in the regular day and continuation schools in force January 1, 1935:

ALABAMA

1. *Compulsory attendance age.*—Between ages 7 and 16.
2. *Minimum school term required.*—No minimum term fixed by law.
3. *Minimum attendance required.*—Full term.

4. *Exemptions.*

- (a) A child whose physical or mental condition is such as to prevent or render inadvisable attendance at school or application to study. Before issuing such certificate of exemption, the superintendent shall require a certificate from the county health officer in counties which have a health unit, and from a regularly licensed, practicing physician in counties which do not have a health unit, that such child is physically or mentally incapacitated for school work.
 - (b) A child 14 years of age and upward, who has completed the course of study of the public schools of the State through the eighth grade as now constituted.
 - (c) Where because of the distance a child resides from school and the lack of public transportation such child would be compelled to walk more than 2½ miles to attend a public school.
 - (d) Where the child is legally and regularly employed under the provisions of the law relating to child labor, and who holds a permit to work granted under the terms of said child labor law.
- 5. *Age for admission.*—Over 6 years of age before July 1 of that scholastic year.
 - 6. *Age for labor permit.*—Fourteen to sixteen.
 - 7. *Minimum education required for labor permit.*—Eighth grade.
 - 8. *Continuation school attendance.*⁴²—No provision.

ARIZONA

- 1. *Compulsory attendance age.*—Eight to sixteen.
- 2. *Minimum school term required.*—Eight months.
- 3. *Minimum attendance required.*—Full term.
- 4. *Exemptions.*—
 - (a) Completed grammar-school course.
 - (b) Instruction at home by competent teacher in branches taught in common schools; or attendance at private or parochial school taught by competent teachers for full time public schools of the district are in session.
 - (c) Because physical or mental condition renders attendance inexpedient or impracticable.
 - (d) For reasons satisfactory to board, consisting of president of local board of trustees, teacher of the child, and probation officer.
 - (e) Children 14 to 16 lawfully employed and attending continuation school. (Attendance at continuation or part-time school is required for exemption only where such schools are provided.)
 - (f) Sixteen years of age and employed with the consent of its parents at some lawful wage-earning occupation.
- 5. *Age for admission.*—Six to twenty-one.
- 6. *Age for labor permit.*—Fourteen to sixteen.

⁴² Provisions for continuation school attendance taken from State Compulsory Attendance Standards Affecting the Employment of Minors, U. S. Department of the Interior, Office of Education, Vocational Education, Washington, D. C., 1935.

7. *Minimum education for labor permit.*—Fifth grade.
8. *Continuation school attendance.*—Required of child between 14 and 16 regularly employed, for 5 hours per week, 150 hours per year, and between 8 a. m. and 6 p. m.

Part-time schools must be established by districts in which there shall have been issued 15 employment certificates, unless district is exempted.

ARKANSAS

1. *Compulsory attendance age.*—Seven to sixteen.
2. *Minimum school term required.*—Six months.
3. *Minimum attendance required.*—One hundred consecutive days; full time if in session less than 100 days. Required to enter not later than 2 weeks after opening of session.
4. *Exemptions.*—
 - (a) Children who have completed the common-school course of study, including the eighth grade as outlined by the commissioner of education.
 - (b) Instruction in approved "private or parochial school."
 - (c) Children mentally or physically incapacitated to perform school duties.
 - (d) Children whose services are needed to support widowed mothers.
5. *Age for admission.*—Six to twenty-one.
6. *Age for labor permit.*—Fourteen to sixteen.
7. *Minimum education required for labor permit.*—Fourth grade.
8. *Continuation school attendance.*—No provision.

CALIFORNIA

1. *Compulsory attendance age.*—Eight to sixteen.
2. *Minimum school term required.*—One hundred and seventy days.
3. *Minimum attendance required.*—Full term.
4. *Exemptions.*—
 - (a) Instruction in private full-time day school by capable teachers; provided that such schools teach in the English language and offer instruction in the branches of study required to be taught in public schools and provided that record of attendance of pupils be kept.
 - (b) Instruction by private tutor, in study and recitation, for at least 3 hours a day for 160 days each calendar year, in branches of study required to be taught in public schools; provided that such instruction be given in the English language and by person holding a valid State credential for the grade taught and that the instruction shall be given between 8 a. m. and 4 p. m.
 - (c) Children (certified by licensed physician) whose physical or mental condition prevents or renders inadvisable school attendance or application of study.
 - (d) Children residing more than 2 miles from school house by nearest traveled road; provided that such children shall be exempted.

only upon written approval of the superintendent of schools of the county; notice whereof shall be filed with the board of education of the school district.

- (e) Children between 14 and 16 who hold labor permits.
5. *Age for admission.*—Six to twenty-one.
 6. *Age for labor permit.*—Fourteen to sixteen if child is graduate of elementary school.
 7. *Minimum education required for labor permit.*—Seventh grade, if child is 15 years of age; eighth grade if child is 14.
 8. *Continuation school attendance.*—Required of child under 18 not subject to day-school attendance law, and of child excused from regular school attendance on work certificate for 4 hours each week between 8 a. m. and 5 p. m., during regular school term, except: Child who has been graduated from 4-year high school; child physically or mentally incapacitated; child who must render personal service to his dependents; any minor who would suffer if he were compelled to attend.

Schools must be established in high-school district having high-school enrollment of 50 persons and 12 minors subject to continuation school attendance.

COLORADO

1. *Compulsory attendance age.*—Eight to sixteen.
2. *Minimum school term required.*—Six months.
3. *Minimum attendance required.*—Full term; from 8 to 14 years of age may be 12 weeks (sec. 266).
4. *Exemptions.*—
 - (a) Children over 14, if completed eighth grade or eligible to enter high school in district.
 - (b) Instruction in private or parochial school for entire school year during which public schools are in session in district. Sufficient instruction in public-school branches at home by person qualified to teach; child so instructed shall be subject to same examination as other pupils in district.
 - (c) Children whose "bodily or mental condition does not permit" attendance at school, as certified by reputable physician.
 - (d) Fourteen years of age and where child's "help is necessary for its own or its parents' support."
 - (e) Fourteen years of age and "where for good cause shown it would be for the best interests of such child to be relieved from the provisions of this act."
 - (f) Compulsory attendance requirements do not apply in districts where there are not sufficient accommodations in public schools to seat children.
5. *Age of admission.*—Six to twenty-one.
6. *Age for labor permit.*—Fourteen to sixteen.
7. *Minimum education required for labor permit.*—Read and write (or attend day school one-half day per day or an evening school).
8. *Continuation school attendance.*—No provision.

CONNECTICUT

1. *Compulsory attendance age.*—Seven to sixteen.
2. *Minimum school term required.*—One hundred and eighty days of actual school sessions.
3. *Minimum attendance required.*—Full term.

Exemptions.—

- (a) If 14 and lawfully employed and if school authorities deem education sufficient to warrant leaving school to work.
 - (b) Where child receives approved instruction elsewhere during hours and term of public school.
 - (c) "Mental or physical condition is such as to render its instruction inexpedient or impracticable."
 - (d) Where "child is destitute of clothing suitable for attending school, and the parent or person having control of such child is unable to provide such clothing."
5. *Age for admission.*—Open to all over 6; school officials may admit, to any school, children over 5 years of age.
 6. *Age for labor permit.*—Fourteen to sixteen.
 7. *Minimum education required for labor permit.*—Completion of sixth grade or equivalent. (School authorities may require higher qualification.)
 8. *Continuation school attendance.*—Required of child between 14 and 16 having employment for 4 hours weekly during school year between 8 a. m. and 5 p. m., unless he has completed the eighth grade or has been excused by secretary or agent of the State board of education.

DELAWARE

1. *Compulsory attendance age.*—Seven to seventeen (7 to 16 in Wilmington city).
2. *Minimum school term required.*—One hundred and sixty days.
3. *Minimum attendance required.*—Full term. Children 7 to 14 must attend 160 days; children over 14 and not having completed eighth grade must attend not less than 100 days.
4. *Exemptions.*—
 - (a) Where satisfactory evidence is furnished to the proper public-school authorities "that such child is elsewhere receiving regular and thorough instruction during said minimum school year" in subjects prescribed for the elementary schools, and "in a manner suitable to children of the same age and stage of advancement."
 - (b) Fourteen years of age and completed eighth grade and "legally employed."
 - (c) Where mental or physical condition is such as to render instruction inexpedient or impracticable.
 - (d) "Cases of necessity and legal absence."
5. *Age for admission.*—Six to twenty-one.
6. *Age for labor permit.*—Fourteen to sixteen.

7. *Minimum education required for labor permit.*—Completion of eighth grade.
8. *Continuation school attendance.*—Establishment of continuation schools not compulsory. (Applicable only to Wilmington.) Required for 4 hours a week for 36 weeks (20 hours weekly while temporarily unemployed) of child between 12 and 16 who has been granted employment certificate. Attendance required between 8 a. m. and 5 p. m. (8 a. m. to 12 noon on Saturday). Schools maintained during full period when public schools are in session. District having 15 or more children between 12 and 16 years of age to whom employment certificates have been issued, must establish continuation school, unless released by the State board of vocational education.

DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

1. *Compulsory attendance age.*—Seven to sixteen.
2. *Minimum school term required.*—Nine months (approximately).
3. *Minimum attendance required.*—Full term.
4. *Exemptions.*—
- (a) Where instruction in private or parochial school, or private instruction is deemed equivalent by board of education to the instruction given in the public schools.
 - (b) Any child 14 years of age who has completed satisfactorily the eighth grade or equivalent may be excused by superintendent, provided such child is actually, lawfully, and regularly employed.
 - (c) Excused if it is found upon examination that any child is "unable mentally or physically to profit from attendance at school: Provided, however, that if such examination shows that such child may benefit from specialized instruction adapted to his needs, he shall attend upon such instruction."
 - (d) May be excused for reasons defined as valid by board of education.
5. *Age for admission.*—Six. If 6 by November 15, may enter first grade; if 5 by same date, may enter kindergarten.
6. *Age for labor permit.*—Fourteen to eighteen.
7. *Minimum education required for labor permit.*—Eighth grade if under 16.
8. *Continuation school attendance.*—No provision.

FLORIDA

1. *Compulsory attendance age.*—Seven to sixteen.
2. *Minimum school term required.*—Four months; "few schools in the State have so short a term."
3. *Minimum attendance required.*—"Substantially" full term.
4. *Exemptions.*—
- (a) Any child who has satisfactorily completed the eighth grade or the equivalent acceptable to the county superintendent.

- (b) Residence more than 2 miles for children 7 to 9 and more than 3 miles for children 10 to 16 from school and no free transportation.
 - (c) Instruction in an approved private school where record of attendance is kept.
 - (d) Provided that child may be taught by parent or guardian or private tutor upon written authority from county superintendent. (The county superintendent is authorized to grant such permission only in cases of necessity.) Person receiving such instruction must report to county school authorities for examination twice each year; if such child fails to make satisfactory progress, authority for private instruction may be revoked.
 - (e) Mentally or physically incapacitated to perform school duties, proof of such to be shown attendance officer.
 - (f) Any child whose services are necessary for support or assistance of widowed mother or other dependent shown by affidavit and other proof to satisfaction of attendance officer.
 - (g) Any child whose parent or guardian can make satisfactory proof that he or she is unable to provide necessary books and clothing, unless necessary books and clothing shall be furnished by other means.
 - (h) "Any unusual case acceptable to the attendance officer."
 - (i) "Occasional nonattendance * * * amounting to not more than 4 days, unexcused absence in any school month shall not render any parent or guardian" liable to penalty.
 - (j) Any child 14 properly employed and enrolled in a part-time school may at the discretion of board of education be exempted from regular school attendance. (Boards must exempt where Federal funds and corresponding State funds are available for salaries of teachers of part-time schools.)
5. *Age for admission.*—Six to twenty-one.
6. *Age for labor permit.*—Fourteen to sixteen.
7. *Minimum education required for labor permit.*—Read and write, proficiency in certain subjects required.
8. *Continuation school attendance.*—Required during regular employment hours for 144 hours per school year of any child under 16 exempted from regular school attendance for any cause except physical or mental disability or completion of eighth grade (attendance at public night school giving equivalent instruction accepted). Schools must be established wherever there are 15 such children exempted from regular school attendance at any school or schools 3 miles or less apart, and who reside or are employed within the attendance area of such school or schools.

GEORGIA

1. *Compulsory attendance age.*—Eight to fourteen.
2. *Minimum school term required.*—Six months.
3. *Minimum attendance required.*—Six months.

4. *Exemptions.*—

- (a) Completion of seventh grade.
 - (b) Temporarily excused where, "for good reasons, the sufficiency of which shall be determined by local board of education." (Boards, in granting excuses to children in farming districts, are authorized to consider the seasons for agricultural labor and need of such labor.)
 - (c) Attendance at "some other school giving instruction in ordinary branches of English education."
 - (d) May be temporarily excused by principal or teacher in charge "because of bad weather, sickness, death in the child's family, or other reasonable cause."
 - (e) *Provided*, That no guardian shall be compelled to send such child or children to school out of any other than the funds belonging to the ward or wards."
5. *Age for admission.*—Six to eighteen.
6. *Age for labor permit.*—Fourteen to sixteen.
7. *Minimum education required for labor permit.*—Ability to read and write simple sentences.
8. *Continuation school attendance.*—No provision.

IDAHO

- 1. *Compulsory attendance age.*—Eight to eighteen.
- 2. *Minimum school term required.*—Seven months.
- 3. *Minimum attendance required.*—Full term.
- 4. *Exemptions.*—
 - (a) Any child 15 having completed eighth grade or eligible to enter high school in district.
 - (b) Attendance for similar period at an approved private or parochial school.
 - (c) Any child 15 whose help is necessary for its own or parents' support or "where for good cause shown it would be for the best interest of such child to be relieved from the provision of this article."
 - (d) Where it is shown that "child's bodily or mental condition does not permit its attendance at school."
- 5. *Age for admission.*—Six to twenty-one.
- 6. *Age for labor permit.*—Fourteen to sixteen.
- 7. *Minimum education required for labor permit.*—Proficiency in certain subjects, no grade specified.
- 8. *Continuation school attendance.*—No provision.

ILLINOIS

- 1. *Compulsory attendance age.*—Seven to sixteen.
- 2. *Minimum school term required.*—Eight months.
- 3. *Minimum attendance required.*—Full term.

4. *Exemptions.*—

- (a) Instruction for a like period in the elementary branches in a private or parochial school.
- (b) Where child's physical or mental condition renders his or her attendance impracticable or inexpedient.
- (c) Excused for temporary absence for cause by the principal or teacher of school which child attends.
- (d) Children over 14 years of age who are necessarily and lawfully employed during hours when public school is in session may be excused from attendance at school by county or city superintendent on the recommendation of board of education of district in which such children reside.
- (e) Any child from 12 to 14 while attending confirmation classes conducted not less than 5 months in year.

5. *Age for admission.*—Six to twenty-one.

6. *Age for labor permit.*—Fourteen to sixteen.

7. *Minimum education required for labor permit.*—Completion of eighth grade.

8. *Continuation school attendance.*—Required, where schools are established, of child between 14 and 18 regularly and lawfully employed (employment includes service or assistance at home) for 8 hours weekly between 8 a. m. and 5 p. m. on regular business days (except Saturday afternoons) for 36 weeks (or for 300 hours if attendance is confined to 3 months) except minor who has completed a 4-year secondary course. Establishment of continuation schools is optional, not compulsory.

INDIANA

1. *Compulsory attendance age.*—Seven to sixteen.

2. *Minimum school term required.*—Six months. "The practice is 8 months."

3. *Minimum attendance required.*—Full term.

4. *Exemptions.*—

(a) Any child 14 years of age and employed on employment certificate,* which cannot be obtained until completion of eighth grade. Any child so exempted must return to school within 5 days after the termination of the employment for which employment certificate was issued.

(b) Attendance for similar time at "other school taught in the English language which is open to the inspection of local and State attendance and school officers."

(c) "Any child found mentally or physically unfit for school attendance."

(d) Upon request of parent, employment certificate issuing officer may issue temporary permits for causes other than employment.

5. *Age for admission.*—Six to twenty-one.

6. *Age for labor permit.*—Fourteen to sixteen; granted only when the labor of the child is necessary for the support of himself or his immediate family.

7. *Minimum education required for labor permit.*—Completion of eighth grade.
8. *Continuation school attendance.*—Local boards of education or township trustees may require attendance at continuation school of child between 14 and 17 or between 14 and 18 not less than 4 hours or more than 8 hours a week between 8 a. m. and 5 p. m. during the school term. No provision requiring establishment of continuation school.

IOWA

1. *Compulsory attendance age.*—Seven to sixteen.
2. *Minimum school term required.*—Thirty-two weeks.
3. *Minimum attendance required.*—Twenty-four consecutive school weeks each school year. The board may require attendance for full-time when school is in session.
4. *Exemptions.*—
 - (a) Those who have completed the eighth grade or whose education qualifications are equivalent.
 - (b) Those who are over 14 and are regularly employed.
 - (c) "Anyone who is excused for sufficient reason by judge of any court of record."
 - (d) "While attending religious services or receiving religious instruction."
 - (e) Receiving instruction in approved private school for like period, or instruction by a competent teacher elsewhere than at school.
 - (f) Any child physically or mentally unable to attend school. Deaf and blind must attend State institution for such persons.
 - (g) If school is more than 2 miles from child's home, unless free transportation is furnished.
5. *Age for admission.*—Five to twenty-one.
6. *Age for labor permit.*—Fourteen to sixteen.
7. *Minimum education required for labor permit.*—"Completed a course of study equivalent to 6 yearly grades in reading, spelling, English language, geography, and arithmetic."
8. *Continuation school attendance.*—Required, where schools are established, of minors between 14 and 16 not regularly attending full-time day school or not graduated from an approved 4-year high school, for 8 hours weekly between 8 a. m. and 6 p. m. Establishment of continuation school required in independent school districts situated in whole or in part in any city having a population of 12,000 or over in which there reside or are employed 15 such children. Establishment in districts in cities of less than 12,000 population optional.

KANSAS

1. *Compulsory attendance age.*—Seven to sixteen.
2. *Minimum school term required.*—Eight months.
3. *Minimum attendance required.*—Full term.

4. *Exemptions.*—

- (a) Child physically or mentally handicapped.
 - (b) Completion of eighth grade.
5. *Age of admission.*—Six to twenty-one.
6. *Age of labor permit.*—Fourteen to sixteen.
7. *Minimum education required for labor permit.*—Eighth grade.
8. *Continuation school attendance.*—No provision.

KENTUCKY

1. *Compulsory attendance age.*—Seven to sixteen.
2. *Minimum school term required.*—Seven months.
3. *Minimum attendance required.*—Full term.
4. *Exemptions.*—
- (a) Graduation from an accredited or approved high school.
 - (b) Attendance regularly at private or parochial school approved by State board of education for a period each year equal to the term of the public school and when reports of attendance of all children in such schools are submitted in the manner required of common schools.
 - (c) Any child who is physically or mentally unfit for school attendance as certified by public health officer.
 - (d) Any child 14 and lawfully employed.
5. *Age for admission.*—Six to eighteen.
6. *Age for labor permit.*—Fourteen to sixteen.
7. *Minimum education required for labor permit.*—Completion of seventh grade if 15 years of age, eighth grade if 14 years of age.
8. *Continuation school attendance.*—Required of child between 14 and 16 lawfully and steadily employed on employment certificate for not less than 4 or more than 8 hours per week, between 8 a. m. and 5 p. m. (but not Saturday afternoon or Sunday), during public-school term, except child who has completed elementary school course. Establishment of continuation schools is not compulsory.

LOUISIANA

1. *Compulsory attendance age.*—Seven to fourteen.
2. *Minimum school term required.*—Seven months.
3. *Minimum attendance required.*—One hundred and forty days; entire session if less than 140 days.
4. *Exemptions.*—(The parish school board to be sole judge in all cases.)
- (a) Completion of elementary course of study.
 - (b) "Children mentally or physically incapacitated to perform school duties."
 - (c) "Children living more than 2½ miles from a school of suitable grade and for whom free transportation is not furnished by the school board."
 - (d) "Children for whom adequate school facilities have not been provided."
 - (e) "Children whose services are needed to support widowed mothers."

5. *Age for admission.*—Six to eighteen.
6. *Age for labor permit.*—Fourteen to sixteen.
7. *Minimum education required for labor permit.*—Orleans Parish requires sixth grade or 8 years school attendance; no amount State wide minimum education expressly required.
8. *Continuation school attendance.*—Attendance may be required by ordinance of city, town, or village of boys between 14 and 16 and girls between 14 and 18 who are employed and who have not completed high school. Instruction shall be given for 144 hours per year. Establishment of continuation schools not compulsory. Incorporated cities, towns, and villages may establish such schools.

MAINE

1. *Compulsory attendance age.*—Seven to seventeen.
2. *Minimum school term required.*—Seven and one-half months.
3. *Minimum attendance required.*—Full term.
4. *Exemptions.*—
 - (a) Sixteen years of age and can read and write legibly simple sentences in English language.
 - (b) Fifteen years of age and has completed the eighth grade.
 - (c) Attendance at private school for a like period of time the public school is in session and whose course of study and methods of instruction have been approved by the State superintendent of schools.
 - (d) Any child whose physical or mental condition makes it "inexpedient" for him to attend.
 - (e) Fifteen years of age and has permit to work during school hours.
 - (f) May be excused for necessary absence.
5. *Age for admission.*—Five to twenty-one.
6. *Age for labor permit.*—Fifteen, unless mentally unable to make reasonable progress in school, in which case work permit may be granted at 14 for nonhazardous occupations.
7. *Minimum education required for labor permit.*—Completion of eighth grade or equivalent.
8. *Continuation school attendance.*—Attendance is not compulsory but schools may be established for minors between 14 and 18 engaged in industrial occupations who have not completed the elementary school course. Instruction shall cover 144 hours per year. Law defines "continuation" school as such school or class as is conducted during regular working hours of person employed. No provision requiring establishment of such schools.

MARYLAND

1. *Compulsory attendance age.*—Seven to sixteen.
2. *Minimum school term required.*—One hundred and eighty actual days.
3. *Minimum attendance required.*—Full term.

4. *Exemptions.*—

- (a) Fourteen and fifteen years of age, completed the elementary school course (6 grades) and regularly and lawfully employed (Baltimore city). Fourteen and fifteen years and regularly and lawfully employed (23 counties). Since an employment certificate is issued to those only who have completed the elementary school course (7 grades in the counties), those 14 and 15 years old who have not completed the course may be excused for regular and lawful employment in agriculture or at home in the 23 counties.
 - (b) Where physical or mental condition renders instruction inexpedient or impractical.
 - (c) May be excused for "necessary and legal absence."
 - (d) Where weather is dangerous to safety of child when in transit to and from school.
 - (e) Special employment permits may be issued to children 14 years or older who are incapable of completing the elementary school course who secure employment. Such children are under supervision of the State board of labor and statistics until 18 years of age.
5. *Age for admission.*—Six to twenty for colored; 6 to 21 for white.
 6. *Age for labor permit.*—Fourteen to sixteen.
 7. *Minimum education required for labor permit.*—Completion of elementary school, which means in Baltimore the sixth grade and in the counties the seventh grade.
 8. *Continuation school attendance.*—No provision.

MASSACHUSETTS

1. *Compulsory attendance age.*—Seven to sixteen.
2. *Minimum school term required.*—One hundred and sixty days of elementary; 180 days high school actually in session.
3. *Minimum attendance required.*—Full term.
4. *Exemptions.*—
 - (a) Fourteen years of age and meets requirements for completion of sixth grade and is lawfully and regularly employed.
 - (b) Town superintendent may excuse child 14 years of age for profitable employment at home.
 - (c) Where physical or mental condition is such as to render attendance inexpedient or impracticable.
 - (d) Otherwise instructed in a manner approved in advance by the superintendent or the school committee; instruction may be in private school so approved.
 - (e) Superintendent, or teachers authorized by him or by the school committee, may excuse cases of necessary absence for other causes not exceeding 7 day sessions or 14 half-day sessions in any period of 6 months.
5. *Age for admission.*—Any age.
6. *Age for labor permit.*—Fourteen to sixteen.

7. *Minimum education required for labor permit.*—Completion of sixth grade.
8. *Continuation school attendance.*—Required of child between 14 and 16 regularly employed on certificate, or temporarily unemployed, or excused for employment at home on home permit. Attendance required 4 hours a week for employed children (20 hours a week if unemployed) between 8 a. m. and 5 p. m. on school days. Continuation schools must be established wherever there are 200 or more minors under 16 who would be required to attend. Schools may be established elsewhere and, if so, attendance becomes compulsory.

MICHIGAN

1. *Compulsory attendance age.*—Seven to sixteen.
2. *Minimum school term required.*—Seven months.
3. *Minimum attendance required.*—Full term; three-fourths of term if school is maintained entire year.
4. *Exemptions.*—
 - (a) Children in non-high-school districts who have completed the eighth grade or who are entitled to eighth-grade diploma; if in high-school district, they must attend school until 16, unless authorized to leave by local authorities.
 - (b) Receiving regular instruction in private or parochial school in branches taught in public school.
 - (c) Children under 9 years of age and who do not live within 2½ miles by nearest traveled road of some public school, unless free transportation is furnished.
 - (d) Any child who is regularly employed as a page or messenger in either branch of the legislature.
 - (e) Any child who is physically unable to attend school.
 - (f) Any child over 14 years of age who has completed the sixth grade and whose services are essential to the support of his parents may be excused by local school authorities, providing the work the child is to do does not require a labor permit; or if the child is 15 years of age and is granted a labor permit.
 - (g) Children 12 to 14 while attending at confirmation classes, which attendance is not to exceed 5 months in any year.
5. *Age for admission.*—Five to twenty.
6. *Age for labor permit.*—Fifteen to eighteen.
7. *Minimum education required for labor permit.*—Completion of sixth grade.
8. *Continuation school attendance.*—Required of unmarried minors under 17 not attending full-time school, 8 hours a week, except child who has completed 2 years of high school; child who would be deprived of wages essential for own or family support and child physically incapacitated or mentally unable to pursue the school work. Schools must be established in districts with a population of 5,000 or more having 50 children eligible for attendance. Schools may be established in other districts.

MINNESOTA

1. *Compulsory attendance age.*—Eight to sixteen.
2. *Minimum school term required.*—Seven months.
3. *Minimum attendance required.*—Full term; provided that no child shall be required to attend more than 10 months.
4. *Exemptions.*—
 - (a) Any child who has completed the eighth grade may be excused by the local school board.
 - (b) Child attending private or other school for similar period, provided all the common branches are taught in the English language by teacher or teachers qualified.
 - (c) District board of education may excuse any child whose bodily or mental condition is such as to prevent attendance at school with profit.
 - (d) May be excused not more than 3 hours per week to attend religious instruction.
 - (e) "That there is no public school within reasonable distance of his [child's] residence, or that conditions of weather and travel make it impossible for the child to attend; provided, first, that any child 14 years of age or over, whose help may be required in any permitted occupation in or about the home of his parent or guardian may be excused from attendance between April 1 and November 1 in any year; but this proviso shall not apply to any city of the first and second class; provided, second, that nothing in this act shall be construed to prevent a child from being absent from school on such days as said child attends upon instruction according to the ordinances of some church."
5. *Age for admission.*—Five to twenty-one; school boards may exclude children under 6.
6. *Age for labor permit.*—Fourteen to sixteen.
7. *Minimum education required for labor permit.*—Completion of common-school course or its equivalent in private school.
8. *Continuation school attendance.*—No provision.

MISSISSIPPI

1. *Compulsory attendance age.*—Seven to seventeen.
2. *Minimum school term required.*—Four months.
3. *Minimum attendance required.*—Eighty days; full term in city districts.
4. *Exemptions.*—
 - (a) Completion of grammar-school course or equivalent.
 - (b) Instruction in "private, denominational, or parochial day school by competent instructor for like period."
 - (c) Where there are "no schools of suitable grade within 2½ miles, by the nearest traveled road, * * * unless free transportation is furnished."
 - (d) That "the trustees of any school, with the approval of the county superintendent of education, shall have the authority in

the exercise of their discretion to permit the temporary absence of children from school * * * in extreme cases of emergency."

- (e) All children who are mentally and physically incapacitated for school work.
- (f) "All counties that have heretofore voted from under the provisions of the compulsory school law shall be exempt from the provisions of this chapter." These counties are Franklin, Jefferson, Claiborne, and Wilkinson.
- 5. *Age for admission.*—Five to twenty-one.
- 6. *Age for labor permit.*—Not specifically mentioned.
- 7. *Minimum education required for labor permit.*—None mentioned.
- 8. *Continuation school attendance.*—No provision.

MISSOURI

- 1. *Compulsory attendance age.*—Seven to sixteen.
- 2. *Minimum school term required.*—Eight months.
- 3. *Minimum attendance required.*—Full term.
- 4. *Exemptions.*—
 - (a) Completion of common-school course or equivalent and has received a certificate of graduation therefrom.
 - (b) Receiving instruction in a private, parochial, or parish school for like period; or regular daily instruction at home as approved by a court of competent jurisdiction.
 - (c) Any child who is mentally or physically incapacitated to attend school.
 - (d) Any child who is 14 years of age and is regularly and lawfully engaged for at least 6 hours each day in some useful employment or service.
- 5. *Age for admission.*—Six to twenty.
- 6. *Age for labor permit.*—Fourteen to sixteen.
- 7. *Minimum education required for labor permit.*—Completion of sixth grade.
- 8. *Continuation school attendance.*—Required of child under 16 lawfully engaged in regular employment and of minors under 18 who have not completed the elementary school course and who are not attending regular day school, for not less than 4 hours per week between 8 a. m. and 5 p. m. for a period not less than the regular school term. Schools must be established in districts wherein there are in force 25 employment certificates for children under 16. Establishment of school may be waived by State board of vocational education.

MONTANA

- 1. *Compulsory attendance age.*—Eight to sixteen.
- 2. *Minimum school term required.*—Nine months in first- and second-class districts; 4 months in third-class districts. (The constitution requires 6 months of school in any district before that district can qualify for a share in the apportionment of State school funds.)

3. *Minimum attendance required.*—Full term.
4. *Exemptions.*—
 - (a) Children 14 years of age or over who have completed the eighth grade.
 - (b) Children 14 years of age whose wages are necessary to the support of the family.
 - (c) Attending for a like period at a private or parochial school, or receiving instruction at home in required branches by competent teacher.
 - (d) Any child whose bodily or mental condition does not permit attendance.
 - (e) If in the judgment of the county superintendent the distance of the school makes attendance an undue hardship.
5. *Age for admission.*—Six to twenty-one.
6. *Age for labor permit.*—Fourteen to sixteen.
7. *Minimum education required for labor permit.*—Completion of eighth grade; but if it is shown that the wages of such child are necessary to the support of the family of such child, the principal or superintendent of schools may, upon production of satisfactory evidence of such necessity, issue a certificate permitting employment of such child even though the child may not have completed the eighth grade.
8. *Continuation school attendance.*—Attendance is not compulsory but continuation schools may be established in any high-school district for pupils between 14 and 21 years who have left regular full-time day school for work. Establishment of continuation school not compulsory, but board of trustees of any high school may establish such school.

NEBRASKA

1. *Compulsory attendance age.*—Seven to sixteen.
2. *Minimum school term required.*—Six months in districts with less than 10 pupils; 9 months in districts with 10 or more pupils.
3. *Minimum attendance required.*—Six months; in city school districts full-term attendance is required.
4. *Exemptions.*—
 - (a) Any child who has graduated from high school, or if no high school is maintained in the district, has graduated from the school maintained in the district or from a school of equal grade.
 - (b) Regular attendance at an approved private, denominational, or parochial day school for a like period.
 - (c) Any child physically or mentally incapacitated for the work done in school.
 - (d) Any child 14 years of age whose services are necessary for his own support or the support of others actually dependent on him, provided such child has completed the eighth grade.
5. *Age for admission.*—Five to twenty-one.
6. *Age for labor permit.*—Fourteen to sixteen.

7. *Minimum education required for labor permit.*—Completion of eighth grade or literacy in English plus attendance at evening or part-time school.
8. *Continuation school attendance.*—Required of child between 14 and 16, in districts where continuation school is maintained, who is regularly and legally employed, for not less than 8 hours a week, except child who is mentally or physically incapacitated and child who has graduated from high school. Continuation school must be established in district having 15 children between 14 and 16 who are employed.

NEVADA

1. *Compulsory attendance age.*—Seven to eighteen.
2. *Minimum school term required.*—Six months; 8 months if funds permit.
3. *Minimum attendance required.*—Full term.
4. *Exemptions.*—
 - (a) Completed the elementary and high-school courses.
 - (b) Any child whose bodily or mental condition or attitude is such as to prevent or render inadvisable attendance at school.
 - (c) Any child who is receiving under private or public tutelage, at home or in school, equivalent instruction approved by school trustees.
 - (d) Any child 14 years of age or more who must labor for its own or its parents' support.
 - (e) Where the deputy superintendent shall determine that a child's residence is located at such distance from public school as to render attendance impracticable or unsafe.
 - (f) Any "student" between 14 and 18 years of age who has completed the eighth grade may be excused from full-time school attendance and be permitted to enter proper employment or apprenticeship, by authority of the board of trustees.
5. *Age for admission.*—Any age.
6. *Age for labor permit.*—Fourteen to eighteen.
7. *Minimum education required for labor permit.*—None mentioned.
8. *Continuation school attendance.*—Required of employed children between 14 and 18 for 4 hours a week between 8 a. m. and 6 p. m. during public-school term, except child who has completed 12 grades of the grade and high-school course; child who has completed the eighth grade and attendance would endanger the security of employment in a highly desirable and respectable position; child who has completed eighth grade and is bound to an apprenticeship under a satisfactory contract; child who works at such distance from school as to make attendance impossible or impracticable; and child physically or mentally incapacitated. Establishment of continuation school is required by districts in which 15 children between 14 and 18 are employed or reside unless district is released by State board for vocational education.

NEW HAMPSHIRE

1. *Compulsory attendance age.*—Eight to sixteen.
2. *Minimum school term required.*—Nine months.
3. *Minimum attendance required.*—Full term.
4. *Exemptions.*—
 - (a) Any child more than 14 years of age who has completed the elementary school course.
 - (b) Any child who has attended an approved private school for period equal to that of public school.
 - (c) Where "physical or mental condition is such as to prevent his attendance or to make it undesirable."
 - (d) May be excused for part of session on stated days to receive instruction in music.
 - (e) Fourteen years of age and excused by commissioner of education "for such period as seems best for the interest of the child" on ground that his "welfare" will be best served by withdrawal from school.
5. *Age for admission.*—Five to twenty-one.
6. *Age for labor permit.*—Fourteen to sixteen.
7. *Minimum education required for labor permit.*—Read and write simple sentences in English.
8. *Continuation school attendance.*—No provision.

NEW JERSEY

1. *Compulsory attendance age.*—Seven to sixteen.
2. *Minimum school term required.*—Nine months.
3. *Minimum attendance required.*—Full term.
4. *Exemptions.*—
 - (a) Where a child receives equivalent instruction elsewhere than at school.
 - (b) Any child who is above 14 and has completed a course of study equivalent to 5 yearly grades, and has been granted an age and schooling certificate and is regularly and lawfully employed in some useful occupation.
 - (c) Where it is shown that the mental or bodily condition of the child is such as to prevent attendance at school.
5. *Age for admission.*—Five to twenty.
6. *Age for labor permit.*—Fourteen to sixteen.
7. *Minimum education required for labor permit.*—Eighth grade if 14 years old, or sixth grade if 15 years old.
8. *Continuation school attendance.*—Required of child between 14 and 16 regularly and lawfully employed on certificate, for 6 hours a week for 36 weeks a year; and of child between 14 and 16 temporarily unemployed, for 20 hours per week. Hours of attendance must be regular on school days between 8 a. m. and 5 p. m. Establishment of continuation school required in any school district having 20 employed children between 14 and 16 to whom certificates have been issued.

NEW MEXICO

1. *Compulsory attendance age.*—Six to seventeen.
2. *Minimum school term required.*—Seven months.
3. *Minimum attendance required.*—Full term.
4. *Exemptions.*—
 - (a) Child attending approved private or denominational school for a like period.
 - (b) Any child residing more than 3 miles from public school and no free transportation furnished.
 - (c) Any child physically or mentally unfit.
 - (d) Any child 14 and excused by issuance of employment certificate.
5. *Age for admission.*—Five to twenty-one.
6. *Age for labor permit.*—Fourteen to sixteen.
7. *Minimum education required for labor permits.*—None mentioned.
8. *Continuation school attendance.*—Required of child between 14 and 16 to whom employment certificate has been issued for 5 hours a week and not less than 150 hours per year between 8 a. m. and 6 p. m. Continuation schools must be established by districts in which there have been issued 15 employment certificates to children between 14 and 16 unless district is released from establishment by State superintendent of public instruction.

NEW YORK

1. *Compulsory attendance age.*—Seven to sixteen in all districts; until 17 where continuation schools are provided.
2. *Minimum school term required.*—One hundred and ninety days, including legal holidays.
3. *Minimum attendance required.*—Full term.
4. *Exemptions.*—
 - (a) Any child who is not in proper physical or mental condition to attend school.
 - (b) Child receiving instruction in the English language in public-school subjects in approved private or parochial school for like period; or receiving instruction elsewhere equivalent to that given in the public school.
 - (c) Fourteen years of age and regularly and lawfully employed.
5. *Age for admission.*—Five to twenty-one.
6. *Age for labor permit.*—Fourteen to seventeen.
7. *Minimum education required for labor permit.*—Completion of eighth grade if child is 14 years of age; completion of sixth grade if child is 15 years of age.
8. *Continuation school attendance.*—Required of child between 14 and 17 not attending day school or who is regularly and lawfully employed in cities of 20,000 or more and in school districts having 200 or more employed minors under 17, except high-school graduate; minor physically or mentally incapacitated. Attendance required for not less than 4 or more than 8 hours per week (20 if temporarily unemployed) between 8 a. m. and 5 p. m. (on Saturdays between 8

a. m. and 12 noon). Continuation school must be established in cities and school districts in which attendance is required as above specified. Other places may establish such schools and may require attendance.

NORTH CAROLINA

1. *Compulsory attendance age.*—Between the ages of 7 and 14.
2. *Minimum school term required.*—Length of term not stated.
3. *Minimum attendance required.*—Full term.
4. *Exemptions.*—
 - (a) Attendance at approved private school for like period is acceptable in lieu of public-school attendance. (This is not a statutory provision, but a State board ruling.)
 - (b) The principal, superintendent, or teacher in charge shall have the right to excuse any child from temporary attendance on account of sickness or distance of residence from school, or other unavoidable cause which does not constitute truancy as defined by the State board of education.
 - (c) "The board shall prescribe what shall constitute truancy, what causes may constitute legitimate excuses for temporary nonattendance due to physical or mental inability to attend, and under what circumstances teachers, principals, or superintendents may excuse pupils for nonattendance due to immediate demands of the farm or the home in certain seasons of the year in the several sections of the State."
5. *Age for admission.*—Six to twenty-one.
6. *Age for labor permit.*—Fourteen to fifteen, inclusive.
7. *Minimum education required for labor permit.*—No educational requirements mentioned, but employment certificate is to be issued "under such conditions" as child welfare commission may prescribe. The hours of labor are subject to the following education restrictions: Under fourth grade, 8 hours per day; above fourth grade, 10 hours per day.
8. *Continuation school attendance.*—No provision.

NORTH DAKOTA

1. *Compulsory attendance age.*—Seven to seventeen.
2. *Minimum school term required.*—Seven months.
3. *Minimum attendance required.*—Full term.
4. *Exemptions.*—
 - (a) Completion of eighth grade.
 - (b) Instruction in private or parochial school approved by the county superintendent.
 - (c) If child is in such physical or mental condition as to render attendance inexpedient or impracticable.
 - (d) If child is actually necessary to the support of the family as determined by the State's attorney, subject to appeal.
 - (e) May be excused under certain conditions on account of distance from school.

5. *Age for admission.*—Six to twenty-one.
6. *Age for labor permit.*—Fourteen to sixteen.
7. *Minimum education required for labor permit.*—Shall have completed eighth grade or attended school for 9 years, excluding kindergarten.
8. *Continuation school attendance.*—No provision.

OHIO

1. *Compulsory attendance age.*—Six to eighteen.
2. *Minimum school term required.*—Eight months.
3. *Minimum attendance required.*—Full term. (Not less than 32 weeks per school year.)
4. *Exemptions.*—
 - (a) Graduate of first-class high school.
 - (b) Receiving similar instruction for like period at home by person qualified to teach subjects taught in public school or in approved private or parochial school. Instructions elsewhere than in public school must be equivalent to that given to children of like age and advancement, and for equivalent number of hours as given in public school.
 - (c) "Upon satisfactory showing that the bodily, or mental condition of the child does not permit of its attendance at school."
 - (d) Any minor 16 years of age and employed on age and schooling certificate. (Must continue in employment or attend school, unless high-school graduate.)
 - (e) Local boards of education may by resolution change age limits to 7 to 18 years.
 - (f) A child may not be required to attend high school more than 4 miles from his or her residence unless transportation is furnished. (Attorney general's opinion.)
5. *Age for admission.*—Six to twenty-one.
6. *Age for labor permit.*—Sixteen to eighteen.
7. *Minimum education required for labor permit.*—Completion of seventh grade.
8. *Continuation school attendance.*—Required of employed minor between 16 and 18 for not less than 4 hours per week while in session and not less than 144 hours per year between 7 a. m. and 6 p. m. on school days, except child who would be exempt from full-time school attendance for causes other than employment. Establishment of continuation school not mandatory, but if established minor must attend.

OKLAHOMA

1. *Compulsory attendance age.*—Eight to eighteen.
2. *Minimum school term required.*—Three months.
3. *Minimum attendance required.*—Two-thirds of term.

4. *Exemptions.*—

- (a) If prevented by mental or physical disability.
 - (b) Any child 16 years of age or more and regularly and lawfully employed and having completed the eighth grade or equivalent.
 - (c) Any child 16 years of age or more and having completed the full course of instruction provided by the public schools of the district where he resides.
 - (d) Attendance at approved "private or other schools" for a like period.
5. *Age for admission.*—Six to twenty-one.
6. *Age for labor permit.*—Fourteen to sixteen.
7. *Minimum education required for labor permit.*—Can read and write, or child shall have attended some school during the year preceding employment for time attendance is required under the law.
8. *Continuation school attendance.*—Required of employed minor between 16 and 18, whenever part-time or continuation school is established in district in which minor is employed, for 144 hours per year, except minor who has completed common-school course plus 2 years of high school. Continuation school must be established in district where 20 minors between 16 and 18 are employed.

OREGON

1. *Compulsory attendance age.*—Between the ages of 8 and 16.⁴³
2. *Minimum school term required.*—One hundred and sixty days, exclusive of holidays, unless specific permission of the county district boundary board is given for a less number of days.
3. *Minimum attendance required.*—Full term.
4. *Exemptions.*—
 - (a) Children who are "being taught for a like period of time in a private or parochial school such branches as are usually taught" in the public schools.
 - (b) Children who are receiving instruction for a like period of time by the parent or private teacher upon written permission of the county superintendent of schools in subjects usually taught in the public schools.
 - (c) Children who have already acquired "the ordinary branches of learning offered in the first 8 grades."
 - (d) Children who are "physically unable to attend school."
 - (e) Children under 10 years of age who reside more than 1½ miles from school and children over 10 years of age who reside more than 3 miles from public school, unless transportation is furnished.
 - (f) Fourteen years old, completed grammar grades and lawfully employed, and no part-time school provided.

⁴³ The act authorizing the creation of parental schools in districts with 20,000 (Portland school district only) or more children of school age (acts of 1917, ch. 242), by defining an habitual truant to be "A child between 7 and 16 years of age who wilfully and habitually absents himself from school" apparently lowers this age from 8 to 7 years.

- (g) May be excused, on application of parents or guardian, for a period not to exceed 120 minutes per week "to attend week-day schools giving instruction in religion."
5. *Age for admission.*—Six to twenty-one.
 6. *Age for labor permit.*—Fourteen to eighteen.
 7. *Minimum education required for labor board permit.*—Can read and write simple sentences; is familiar with the fundamental operations of arithmetic to and including fractions; and attended school not less than 160 days during school year previous to arriving at the age of 14 years.
 8. *Continuation school attendance.*—Required of employed child between 16 and 18 for not less than 5 hours a week or 180 hours a year between 8 a. m. and 6 p. m., except child who has completed the eighth grade; child who is attending an evening school for an equivalent time. Continuation school to be established by school district in which there reside or are employed, or both, 15 employed children between 14 and 18, unless district is excused by the State superintendent of public instruction.

PENNSYLVANIA

1. *Compulsory attendance age.*—Eight to sixteen.
2. *Minimum school term required.*—One hundred and sixty days; districts having a total population of 5,000 or more, 180 days; all high schools, 180 days.
3. *Minimum attendance required.*—Full term.
4. *Exemptions.*—
 - (a) Any child who is 14 or more, "has completed a course of study equivalent to 6 yearly grades of public school", is regularly employed, and whose employer holds an employment certificate for him.
 - (b) Attends for like time an approved private school and receives instruction equivalent to that given in public schools. Instruction in the required subjects must be given in the English language.
 - (c) Receives regular daily instruction given in the English language for like time by a properly qualified private tutor, if satisfactory to local superintendent.
 - (d) Has been excused "on account of any mental, physical, or other urgent reasons" by board of school directors.
 - (e) Lives 2 miles or more from the nearest public school, by the nearest traveled road, unless free transportation is furnished.
 - (f) Is 14 or more and is engaged in farm work, or domestic service in a private home on permit issued by school board or designated school official. The State department requires that such child must have "completed a course of study equivalent to 6 yearly grades of the public schools."
5. *Age for admission.*—Six to twenty-one.
6. *Age for labor permit.*—Fourteen to sixteen.

7. *Minimum education required for labor permit.*—Completion of a course of study equivalent to 6 yearly grades of the public school.
8. *Continuation school attendance.*—Required of employed child between 14 and 16 for the equivalent of not less than 8 hours a week between 8 a. m. and 5 p. m. on school days.

RHODE ISLAND

1. *Compulsory attendance age.*—Seven to sixteen.
2. *Minimum school term required.*—One hundred and eighty actual days.
3. *Minimum attendance required.*—Full term.
4. *Exemptions.*—
 - (a) Fifteen years of age and lawfully and regularly employed.
 - (b) Those excluded "by virtue of some general law or regulation."
 - (c) Any child whose physical or mental condition is such as to render attendance inexpedient or impracticable.
 - (d) Attending private day school, or private instruction, approved by the school committee of the city or town.
5. *Age for admission.*—None stated.
6. *Age for labor permit.*—Fifteen to sixteen.
7. *Minimum education required for labor permit.*—Completion of eighth grade or attendance at school 8 years.
8. *Continuation school attendance.*—No provision.

SOUTH CAROLINA

1. *Compulsory attendance age.*—Eight to fourteen.
2. *Minimum school term required.*—Seven months, except in districts where school tax is less than 8 mills and monthly attendance is less than 15, in which case 3 months are required.
3. *Minimum attendance required.*—Eighty days. (District may require attendance for full term.)
4. *Exemptions.*—
 - (a) Any child attending an approved private or parochial school for like period.
 - (b) Any child who receives similar instruction for a like period from a competent tutor, subject to the approval of the county superintendent.
 - (c) Any "child whose physical, mental, or moral condition unfits it for attendance."
 - (d) For "providential cause or causes, or to such cause or causes as would seriously endanger the health of child." Attendance officer may, in his discretion, grant excuses.
 - (e) "In case of a widowed mother or of a crippled father any child above 12 years of age whose labor may be necessary for the support, in whole or in part, of any person, may be excused."
 - (f) Any child living more than $2\frac{1}{2}$ miles (2 miles if under 12 years of age) from any public, private, or parochial school; provided, that any pupil living within 1 mile of any regular route of a school wagon may not claim exemption.

5. *Age for admission.*—Six to twenty-one.
6. *Age for labor permit.*—Fourteen to sixteen.
7. *Minimum education required for labor permit.*—None stated.
8. *Continuation school attendance.*—No provision.

SOUTH DAKOTA

1. *Compulsory attendance age.*—Eight to seventeen.
2. *Minimum school term required.*—Eight months.
3. *Minimum attendance required.*—Full term.
4. *Exemptions.*—
 - (a) Completion of eighth grade or equivalent.
 - (b) Physical or mental condition such as to render attendance unsafe, impracticable, or harmful to himself or others.
 - (c) Serious illness in immediate family, making child's presence at home an actual necessity or his presence in school a menace to the health of other pupils.
 - (d) Attendance at an approved private school for a like period.
 - (e) Otherwise instructed by competent person for a like period in public-school branches; provided, that such instruction be given entirely in the English language.
 - (f) Between April 1 and November 1, should there exist an extreme need for child's assistance at home, he may be excused from attendance for a time not to exceed 40 school days; provided that such child has completed the sixth grade or its equivalent.
 - (g) May be excused for 1 hour per week to attend religious instruction conducted by some church or churches.
 - (h) All applications for excuse from school attendance must be in writing.
5. *Age for admission.*—Six to twenty-one.
6. *Age for labor permit.*—Fourteen to sixteen.
7. *Minimum education required for labor permit.*—Read and write.
8. *Continuation school attendance.*—No provision.

TENNESSEE

1. *Compulsory attendance age.*—Seven to sixteen.
2. *Minimum school term required.*—Eight months.
3. *Minimum attendance required.*—Full term.
4. *Exemptions.*—
 - (a) Completion of eighth grade and holds a certificate of promotion to high school.
 - (b) Mentally or physically incapacitated to attend school.
 - (c) Where school is more than 3 miles from child's residence, unless free transportation is provided.
 - (d) Attendance for like period at approved private or parochial school.

- (e) Where parent or guardian is not able, through extreme destitution, to provide clothing for child to attend school.
- (f) Fourteen years old, literate and regularly and lawfully employed.
- 5. *Age for admission.*—Six or over.
- 6. *Age for labor permit.*—Fourteen to sixteen.
- 7. *Minimum education required for labor permit.*—Not stated. (To read and write implied.)
- 8. *Continuation school attendance.*—Required of child between 14 and 16 to whom employment certificate has been issued. Continuation school or classes to be in session for 15 hours a week between 8 a. m. and 6 p. m. during the weeks in which other public schools are maintained. Establishment of continuation school not compulsory.

TEXAS

- 1. *Compulsory attendance age.*—Eight to fourteen. (Seven to sixteen, inclusive, after May 6, 1935.)
- 2. *Minimum school term required.*—Constitution requires that the legislature provide 6 months, but this requirement has not been met by the legislature.
- 3. *Minimum attendance required.*—One-hundred days.
- 4. *Exemptions.*—
 - (a) Attendance for a like period at approved private or parochial school which gives instruction in all subjects in the English language and which shall include in its course a study of good citizenship.
 - (b) Physically or mentally incapacitated.
 - (c) Where child lives more than 2½ miles by direct and traveled road from nearest public school and no free transportation provided.
 - (d) Twelve years old, completed seventh grade, and services necessary to support parent or others standing in parental relation to the child.
- 5. *Age for admission.*—Six to twenty-one. (School trustees may admit pupils under or over scholastic age. Where kindergarten schools are provided, children may be admitted at the age of 5.)
- 6. *Age for labor permit.*—Twelve to fourteen.
- 7. *Minimum education required for labor permit.*—Completion of fifth grade.
- 8. *Continuation school attendance.*—No provision.

UTAH

- 1. *Compulsory attendance age.*—Eight to eighteen.
- 2. *Minimum school term required.*—Five months.
- 3. *Minimum attendance required.*—Twenty weeks, 10 of which shall be consecutive; 30 weeks in first- and second-class cities, 10 of which must be consecutive; 30 weeks for part-time school students, and all between 16 and 18 years of age who have not been excused to enter employment.

4. *Exemptions.*—

- (a) Where child receives instruction at home in required branches for same length of time as required to be taught in district school.
- (b) Any child who "has already acquired the branches of learning taught in the district schools."
- (c) Where physical or mental condition is such as to render attendance inexpedient or impracticable.
- (d) Where no school is taught within 2½ miles of child's residence or employment by nearest road, unless free transportation is furnished.
- (e) "That the services of such child are necessary to the support of a mother or an invalid father."
- (f) Instruction for like period in approved private school.

5. *Age for admission.*—Six to eighteen.6. *Age for labor permit.*—Fourteen to eighteen, if eighth-grade graduate, otherwise 16 to 18.7. *Minimum education required for labor permit.*—None mentioned.8. *Continuation school attendance.*—Attendance required of minor under 18 legally employed, for at least 144 hours a year (classes to be in session 4 hours a week between 8 a. m. and 6 p. m.), except child for whom adequate opportunities for education are provided in connection with his employment; child who is taught at home for required number of hours; and child who would be exempted from regular day school attendance for causes other than employment. Board of education in any district in which there shall reside or be employed not less than 15 employed minors is required to establish a continuation school unless excused by the State department of vocational education.

VERMONT

1. *Compulsory attendance age.*—Eight to sixteen.2. *Minimum school term required.*—Thirty-four weeks for elementary schools; 36 weeks for high schools.3. *Minimum attendance required.*—Full term, if session is more than 170 days; local school superintendent may excuse any child from attending more than that period.4. *Exemptions.*—

- (a) Any child who has completed the elementary school course or the rural school course and the first 2 years of junior or senior high-school course.
- (b) If 15 years old, having completed the work required in the rural school course, and whose "services are needed for the support of those dependent upon him, or for any other sufficient reason", may be excused by superintendent.
- (c) Mentally or physically unable to attend school.
- (d) Any child who "is otherwise being furnished with the same education."

- (e) May be excused for a definite time not to exceed 10 consecutive school days in cases of "emergencies or for absence from town."
5. *Age for admission.*—Six to eighteen. However, "a person who has become 18 years of age shall not be deprived of public-school advantages on account of age."
 6. *Age for labor permit.*—Fourteen to sixteen.
 7. *Minimum education required for labor permit.*—Completion of elementary school course. (May not be employed in hotel, billiard or pool room, or bowling alley, or in delivering messages, or in rail-roading or manufacturing, except during vacation or before and after school, unless having completed elementary school and the first 2 years of junior high-school course.)
 8. *Continuation school attendance.*—No provision.

VIRGINIA

1. *Compulsory attendance age.*—Seven to fifteen.
2. *Minimum school term required.*—Eight months.
3. *Minimum attendance required.*—Full term.
4. *Exemptions.*—
 - (a) Any child who has completed the elementary school course and who is regularly and lawfully employed.
 - (b) Any child who lives more than 2 miles by the nearest traveled road from a public school, unless public transportation is provided within 1 mile of walking distance from the place where such child lives.
 - (c) Child receiving instruction for a like period in a private denominational or parochial school, or in a home by a tutor or other teacher.
 - (d) Any child who is physically or mentally incapacitated for the work of the schools.
5. *Age for admission.*—Six to twenty.
6. *Age for labor permit.*—Fourteen to sixteen.
7. *Minimum education required for labor permit.*—None mentioned.
8. *Continuation school attendance.*—No provision.

WASHINGTON

1. *Compulsory attendance age.*—Eight to sixteen.
2. *Minimum school term required.*—Six months; 8 months in first-class districts.
3. *Minimum attendance required.*—Full term.
4. *Exemptions.*—
 - (a) Attendance at an approved private or parochial school for the same length of time.
 - (b) Any child whose physical or mental condition is such as to render child unable to attend.
 - (c) Any child who "has already attained a reasonable proficiency in the branches required by law to be taught in the first eight grades of the public schools."

- (d) For "some other sufficient reason."
 - (e) Fifteen years of age and "the needs of the family or the welfare of such minor require" that he be regularly employed.
 - (f) Fourteen years of age, completed the eighth grade, or in the judgment of the superintendent cannot profitably pursue further regular school work, may be excused to enter employment.
 - (g) "This office [attorney general's] has held that that section vests in the county superintendent power to excuse a child for non-attendance on account of extraordinary conditions. It may be that the county superintendent would have the right to excuse children who live where there are no transportation facilities and the child is unable to walk the distance. However, the law itself makes no exception for distances, the lack of ability of a child to walk to the schoolhouse, or the lack of means of transportation."
5. *Age for admission.*—Six to twenty-one; 5 to 24 in certain districts.
 6. *Age for labor permit.*—Fourteen to eighteen.
 7. *Minimum education required for labor permit.*—Completion of eighth grade if under 15 years of age; no special requirement if 15 years of age.
 8. *Continuation school attendance.*—Required of minor between 14 and 18 not attending full-time day school, for 4 hours a week between 8 a. m. and 5 p. m. on school days and between 8 a. m. and 12:30 p. m. on Saturday, during the public-school term, except child who cannot profitably pursue further school work; child who is high-school graduate; child excused because attendance would be injurious. Establishment of continuation school is not compulsory. Board of school directors in organized district having 15 minors who would be required to attend may, on request of 25 adult residents, establish such school.

WEST VIRGINIA

1. *Compulsory attendance age.*—Seven to sixteen.
2. *Minimum school term required.*—Eight months.
3. *Minimum attendance required.*—Full term.
4. *Exemptions.*—
 - (a) Instruction for equal time "in a private, parochial, or other school approved by the district board of education."
 - (b) Instruction for equal time "in the home of such child or children or elsewhere by a person or persons" judged by the district board of education to be qualified to give the instruction required.
 - (c) "Physical or mental incapacity for school attendance and the performance of school work."
 - (d) "Death or serious illness in the immediate family of the pupil."
 - (e) "Extreme destitution of parents" or guardian. (If destitution is relieved by public or private means, exemption is not allowed.)
 - (f) "Conditions rendering school attendance impossible or rendering it hazardous to the pupil's life, health, or safety."
 - (g) Residence more than 2 miles from school by shortest practicable road or path, unless free transportation is provided.

- (h) For "observance of regular church ordinances."
 - (i) "Other causes that are accepted as valid by the county superintendent" or by the district.
 - (j) Fourteen years old and engaged in regular employment for at least 6 hours per day or excused by local superintendent to enter employment at home.
 - (k) Fourteen years of age, completed the eighth grade, no junior or senior high school within 2 miles, and no free transportation furnished.
5. *Age for admission.*—Six to twenty-one.
 6. *Age for labor permit.*—Fourteen to sixteen.
 7. *Minimum education required for labor permit.*—Completion of sixth grade.
 8. *Continuation school attendance.*—Required of child between 14 and 16, who is not attending full-time school or who is regularly and lawfully employed, for from 4 to 8 hours a week between 8 a. m. and 5 p. m. until attendance amounts to 144 hours for the school year, except child who has completed the eighth grade, or who has been exempted from day school attendance. Continuation schools shall be established in any city having a population of more than 10,000 and in any city, town, or subdistrict where there are 50 or more minors between 14 and 16 years of age not in regular attendance upon approved instruction.

WISCONSIN

1. *Compulsory attendance age.*—Seven to sixteen.
2. *Minimum school term required.*—Eight months.
3. *Minimum attendance required.*—Full term in cities of first class; 8 months in all other cities; 6 months in towns and villages.
4. *Exemptions.*—
 - (a) Completion of most advanced course in district.
 - (b) Attendance during the required period in approved parochial or private school.
 - (c) Equivalent instruction during the required period elsewhere than at school, by a teacher selected by the person having control of such child.
 - (d) "Any child not in proper physical or mental condition to attend school."
 - (e) Children who live in country districts more than 2 miles by the nearest traveled road from the schoolhouse, unless free transportation is offered; provided, that children between 9 and 14 who live between 2 and 3 miles from school must attend 60 days.
 - (f) Fourteen years of age and regularly and lawfully employed.
5. *Age for admission.*—Four to twenty; school board may admit to school free of tuition persons 20 to 30 years of age.
6. *Age for labor permit.*—Fourteen to seventeen.
7. *Minimum education required for labor permit.*—Completion of most advanced course in district.

8. *Continuation school attendance.*—Required of child between 14 and 16 not attending regular school, for one-half day each school day, and of minor between 16 and 18 at least 8 hours each week, for 8 months a year (or entire term if longer), except child who has completed high school and child physically or mentally incapacitated. Continuation school must be established in places of over 5,000 population whenever 25 persons qualified to attend request such establishment; schools may be established elsewhere.

WYOMING

1. *Compulsory attendance age.*—Seven to seventeen.
2. *Minimum school term required.*—Three months; 6 months to receive share of Government royalty funds.
3. *Minimum attendance required.*—Full term.
4. *Exemptions.*—
 - (a) Attendance for a like period at a private or parochial school.
 - (b) Any child who has "completed the work of the eighth grade."
 - (c) Mentally incapable of doing the work of the school.
 - (d) "Invalids or others to whom the schoolroom might be injurious" may be excused by district board.
 - (e) Pupils to whom attendance might work a hardship may be excused by district board.
 - (f) "Pupils who for legal reasons have been excluded from the regular schools and no provisions made for the schooling of such children."
5. *Age for admission.*—Six to twenty-one.
6. *Age for labor permit.*—Fourteen to sixteen.
7. *Minimum education required for labor permit.*—Completion of first 8 years of the public school or the equivalent.
8. *Continuation school attendance.*—No provision.