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**EDUCATIONAL BULLETIN**

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**SCHOOL  
CENSUS AND ATTENDANCE  
ADMINISTRATION**



Published by  
**DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION**  
JAMES H. RICHMOND  
Superintendent of Public Instruction

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This edition of the Bulletin has been prepared, in the main, by Mr. Moss Walton. He, likewise, is responsible for the census and attendance forms which the superintendents have received, or soon will receive. Mr. Walton is to be commended for their excellence and completeness.

It is a pleasure, at this time, to announce Mr. Walton's appointment as *Director of Census and Attendance*.

At the fall meetings of the various district Educational Associations Mr. Walton, or some one from the Department delegated to represent him, will hold conferences with the Attendance officers of their respective educational association districts. It is highly essential that all Attendance officers attend these meetings. More complete information concerning these conferences will be sent out later.

JAMES H. RICHMOND,  
*Superintendent Public Instruction.*

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## SCHOOL CENSUS AND ATTENDANCE ADMINISTRATION

It has been said that the education of a child involves two factors, namely: (a) Securing his attendance at school; (b) providing the proper educational opportunities for him while in school.

It is the duty of the Commonwealth to insist that every child receive at least an elementary school education that he may become an intelligent and law abiding citizen and be intellectually equipped to earn a livelihood for himself and those who may be dependent upon him. If the parent will not urge the child to take advantage of the free educational opportunities offered, it becomes the duty of the Commonwealth to insist that the parent do his part, as a parent, to secure the education of the child. When the parent treats the child unjustly the Commonwealth steps in and protects him. The parent who would allow his child to grow to manhood or womanhood without at least a common school education is doing him a greater wrong than when he physically maltreats him. It is, therefore, that the child may receive his educational birthright and that a democratic government may assure itself of a citizenry sufficiently educated to appreciate and to be able to enter intelligently upon the responsibilities of citizenship, that there are laws requiring school attendance.

### The Work of the Attendance Officer

*The School Census.*—The School Code provides that each board of education shall maintain a permanent and continuing school census of all children between the ages of six and eighteen years that reside in the school district. The responsibility for instituting and maintaining this census is placed upon the attendance officer working under the direction of the superintendent of schools.

An accurate census enables school authorities to speak with definiteness concerning their enforcement of the law and replaces vague guesswork and pretense. It assures an opportunity, as intended by the Commonwealth, to the under privileged and makes it possible to carry out the present day intent of the law—the prevention of the neglect of children. The continuing census means the amendment of the census records from day to day in accordance with the changes made by the school population and places in the hands of school authorities facts which will show the number of children of census age residing in the school district, the number who are of compulsory school age, the number in each grade and the number in each age group.

The enforcement of the compulsory attendance laws depends upon the school census, since it furnishes the names of the children of school age living in the district who are not enrolled in school. It is

of vital importance in planning school building programs, indicating kindergarten and first grade needs and providing valuable statistics for the economical and efficient administration of the school program.

The State Board of Education, in accordance with the provisions of the School Code, has prescribed forms and rules and regulations for the administration of the census laws.

The area of each school district is to be divided into census districts which are coterminous with the areas served by the various schools. In county school districts the census districts will be the same as the subdistricts of the county. In independent school districts the census districts will usually be the same as the elementary school districts.

The census enumerating sheet (Form C-A-1)<sup>1</sup> is to be used when an actual enumeration is made of the number of census children in the school district. The principal or teacher in charge will assist the attendance officer in making the enumeration in their census district. It is not deemed necessary to make an enumeration at this time since the census was taken in April, 1934.

The permanent census record card (Form C-A-2) is designed to give to the school authorities important information concerning each child of census age residing in the school district. This card must be continually checked in order that the information of a changing character may be kept up to date. Space is provided for indicating the changes of residence and accompanying changes of census district and school with the dates of these changes. The census record of each child is to be filed in the district attendance office. In case of the transfer of a child to another school district, death of child, or his having passed the census age, this record will be placed in an inactive file to be retained indefinitely. Whenever a child moves to another school district a copy of this record shall be forwarded to the school district to which the child has moved.

The school enrollment card (Form C-A-3) shall be used by the principal or teacher in charge of reporting the enrollment in his school. A card shall be filled out for each child enrolled and sent to the superintendent of schools of the district in which the school is located. The attendance officer shall file these cards by schools in alphabetical order for each school.

This enrollment record will be used by the attendance officer to check the permanent census records of the various census districts in order to determine whether or not all pupils of compulsory school age are enrolled. The information on the reverse side of the school enrollment card will enable the attendance officer to determine if all children of census age are included in the census.

The membership of each school for each month must equal that of the preceding month, with pupils gained added and pupils lost subtracted. The number of such pupils gained or lost, as shown by the monthly attendance report (Form R-145 or R-150), must balance the

<sup>1</sup> This is the form which has been used heretofore in taking the school census.

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names and amendment facts reported during the month for the amendment of the census.

Changes of residence in any school district will soon render the census inaccurate unless it is constantly amended. The main sources of facts for such amendments are the schools. Notice of transfer (Form C-A-4) shall be used by the principal or teacher in charge to report immediately the transfer or discharge of any pupil whether within the school district or to another school district. This notice shall be made in duplicate and both copies sent the attendance office. The principal or teacher in charge will retain the stub. The attendance officer shall trace each transfer to its completion before changing the record on the permanent census card. In case the transfer is to another school district the attendance officer shall mail the duplicate of the transfer notice to the attendance officer of the school district to which the child is moving. The attendance officer of the school district to which the child moves shall locate the child and return the duplicate transfer properly filled in to the attendance officer of the school district sending the transfer notice. Attendance officers shall change their census records when the above procedure has been completed.

The withdrawal of a pupil without a transfer notice shall be immediately reported to the attendance officer by the principal or teacher in charge (Form C-A-5). The attendance officer shall promptly start an investigation to locate this child.

The principal or teacher in charge shall report to the attendance officer the reentrance of a child who had been previously reported as withdrawn (Form C-A-6).

The principal or teacher in charge should develop a plan whereby the attendance office would be informed when a family moves in the district or moves out. The pupils could be organized so that each child or group of children would be responsible for a certain area and report to the teacher the changes of residence. In no better way can the interest of school children in the district where they live be developed and maintained than by asking them to report the changes that take place in the membership in the school "family", made up of its parents and children. Various modifications of the above plan are possible.

*School Attendance.*—Good attendance is essential to successful work in school. If the schools are to educate a child we must see not only that he is enrolled but also that he attends school regularly. Experience has shown that the child who is present during only a part of the term is frequently not promoted at the close of the school term. The cost of re-educating these children who have already been over the work is a very large item of expense to the school district and the cost in the loss of many years of time to the children involved can not be reckoned. Improved attendance would prevent much of this loss both to the district and to the children.

If, then, attendance is of such vital importance it is essential that,

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in so far as possible, we prevent absence. We must consider not only absence with valid excuse but all absence. From the standpoint of the loss of educational opportunity to the child, it probably makes little difference what the cause of the absence may be.

Absence is an effect not a cause, therefore, all absences should be investigated to determine the cause. An investigation may bring to light causes which may be corrected, and thus prevent future absences. Since actual violations of the law constitute but a small proportion of the total sessions of absence, the actual enforcement of the law should be but a small part of the duty of the school with respect to attendance.

The School Code designates as an attendance officer the person who in many school districts is the only person who investigates absences. This person is really the point of contact between the home and the school and is often the only point of contact. He must know how to investigate causes of absence without arousing opposition; how to get the facts and, at the same time, build up and strengthen at each contact the belief in the minds of parents, pupils and in all with whom he comes in contact, that he is fair and just, impartial and sincere in his efforts to fulfill the duties of his position. Since he is to go as a representative of the schools to homes of the taxpayers who support the schools, he should go not as a militant representative of the law but rather as an ambassador to establish the best possible relations of cooperation and helpfulness between the school and the home. He must feel himself to be an essential part of the educational organization of his district, not an arm of the law injected into the educational field.

Many parents are not acquainted with the modern educational system and the advantages which the school has to offer to their children. The attendance officer should have a comprehensive knowledge of the school and what it is trying to do so that he may carry to the home, when necessary, the story of the advantages of education in general and be able to explain in particular the opportunities offered by the local school system.

It is equally important that the teacher be informed of conditions existing in the home. Often this knowledge will bring about a more sympathetic and helpful attitude on the part of the teacher. Some teachers do not take advantage of the opportunity to visit the homes. In such instances it falls to the lot of the attendance officer to bring to them the information in regard to home conditions.

Nearly every case investigated will present its special problem which must be analyzed to determine the cause. The ability to diagnose a situation is of fundamental importance in work of this nature. Having determined the cause for the existing situation the remedy must be applied. The nature of the remedy varies as much as the nature of the cause.

There are in general two aspects to attendance work:

1. The preventive measures that help to keep children well

adjusted in their school work. These include providing the child with a well trained and competent teacher, the use of modern, well written text books, a course of study adjusted to modern needs and flexible enough to make provision for individual differences in pupils, a study of the individual child to determine his needs and make adjustments to satisfy these needs. This phase of the work belongs largely to the superintendent, the principal and the teacher but requires the cooperation of the attendance officer to make it most effective.

2. The corrective measures that remedy more or less permanently conditions deterrent to the child's normal development and to his regular attendance at school. These will be largely the problem of the attendance officer.

In addition to the above there is a more technical type of work required. Only a very small percent of absences are due to deliberate violations of the law, and are readily disposed of. In this connection the suggestion is pertinent that a threat should not be made unless there is every intention to have it carried out promptly.

The attendance officer's duties, then, will also include :

1. The investigation and treatment of poverty, parental incompetency, and social and economic difficulties in families any one or all of which may contribute toward depriving children of educational opportunity. The difficulty frequently lies in the fact that the adjustments must be *immediate* where the child's attendance at school is concerned.
2. Investigation of absences that are due to alleged valid excuses, but are scattered absences, and have been accumulated by a child who is not interested in school. It requires skill to find the *real* cause of the condition. Sometimes excuses do not reflect the real reasons for irregular attendance. The child's physical condition, his inability to succeed in tasks assigned him in school, or lack of interest at home, may be responsible for this problem. If the *habit* of irregular attendance is fairly well fixed before it comes to the attendance officer's attention, the problem is all the more difficult.
3. Investigation of all cases of illness causing irregular attendance or continued absence from school. A large portion of absences are due to illness and need to be a matter of as much concern as the absences without valid excuse, particularly, if the parents are unable to secure the services of a physician. Due caution must be exercised, of course, not to require a child's attendance at school when he is not in physical condition to do so. The cooperation of a school

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- nurse or family physician will be necessary in some of these cases.
4. Securing regular attendance on the part of pupils of non-compulsory attendance age. This is important from the standpoint of worthwhile habit formation, and conformity with a group requirement, as well as from the standpoint of the pupil's progress.
  5. The investigation and treatment of maladjustments of children including the truants, and the use of agencies that might help in dealing with such problem children. This sometimes requires a careful analysis of home and neighborhood situations, with a solution arrived at cooperatively with parents, teachers, principals, and superintendents.

In each of the tasks enumerated above the child is the center of concern, and of interest. Routine work can be done quickly, and without much, if any, knowledge of the child. But where adjustments are needed, one must get a complete picture of the child including his reactions in school, on the playground and at home with brothers, sisters and parents.

The work of the attendance officer should be closely supervised by the superintendent of schools. He should set up a definite procedure for the attendance officer to follow in receiving cases of absence for investigation. All cases of absences coming to his attention should be investigated promptly and if possible a report made upon them the day they are assigned. Nothing gives greater value to the work of the attendance officer than promptness.

Principals or teachers in charge shall use the absence Report Blank (Form C-A-7) to notify the attendance officer of absences or cases of tardiness in need of investigation and adjustment. The absences are indicated by encircling on the calendar the proper dates. Space is provided for the attendance officer to make a report of the results of the investigation. The attendance officer will make a copy of this report for his files. It is not expected that the attendance officer will be notified of all cases of absence or tardiness. To do so would usually nullify his efforts. The principal or teacher in charge should make an investigation of all absences and report to the attendance officer only those absences without valid excuse and in all instances absences which have continued for three consecutive days.

Attendance officers should remember that the attendance of school children is primarily a matter for school authorities to handle and that the assistance of the courts should be involved only when necessary. Resort to the courts should be made only when defiance of law on the part of parents or children makes such a course necessary.

The district superintendent should make it possible for an attendance officer faced with a troublesome case to summon parents and children to a hearing where the superintendent may hear the



facts and secure, if possible, the cooperation of the parents concerned in bringing about the enforcement of the law.

The fact that attendance is primarily a school matter and that the losses due to irregular attendance are felt particularly by the child and his teacher, should result in the cooperation of all school agencies. The school nurse, principal and teacher can often give valuable assistance. They are glad to do so if opportunity is given them, and a wise attendance officer will, by his tact and willingness to assist them in their problems, merit and secure their assistance in helping boys and girls in their charge.

The school authorities and the attendance officer are interested in the regular attendance of all pupils enrolled. Absence on the part of pupils over 16 should be reported to the attendance officer and investigated by him. The officer should make clear to the parents that regular attendance is necessary for the welfare of the child, the teacher, and the school. The right of children to attend school is not to be interpreted as a right to be in and out of school at will to the detriment and loss of all concerned.

A very important item of the work of the attendance officer in the early part of the school year is the investigation of failure to enroll and attend on the part of children of school age in the census. Vigorous action at this time on the part of the attendance officer will save the pupils and the school considerable loss and will incidentally save the officer much useless labor later on. The teacher can give valuable assistance in this connection.

It is highly important that the attendance officer keep an accurate record of his activities together with the various tasks he is called upon to perform. A monthly report (Form C-A-11) shall be made to the district superintendent and state attendance officer.

### **Rules and Regulations of the State Board of Education for the Administration of the Compulsory Attendance and Continuing Census Laws**

*Census Enumerating Sheet, Form C-A-1.*—This form is to be used when an actual enumeration is made of the number of census children in the school district. This form will be prepared later in the year.

*Permanent Census Record, Form C-A-2.*—This form is to be used for the purpose of keeping a continuous census record of each child between the ages of 6 and 18 in the school district. This record is to be kept up to date for the entire census life of the child and is to be kept on file in the district attendance office. This card is to remain in the files of the attendance office as a permanent record. In case of the transfer of a child to another school district, death of child, or his having passed the census age, this record will be placed in an inactive file to be retained indefinitely. Whenever a child moves to another

school district a copy of this record will be forwarded to the school district to which the child has moved.

*School Enrollment Card, Form C-A-3.*—This form is to be used by the principal or teacher in charge of any school to report to the district superintendent. The principal or teacher in charge of any school shall have this card filled out for each child enrolled and sent to the superintendent of schools of the district in which the school is situated. These enrollment cards shall be filed by schools in alphabetical order for each school. These cards will enable the attendance officer to check the school enrollment against the permanent census record.

*Notice of Transfer, Form C-A-4.*—The principal or teacher in charge of any school will use this form in reporting any transfer of pupils. This form is to be made out in duplicate. Both copies are to be sent to the attendance office. The stub of the original will be retained by the principal or teacher in charge.

*Report of Withdrawals, Form C-A-5.*—The principal or teacher in charge of any school will use this form in reporting withdrawals when the withdrawals have occurred without a transfer notice. This form is to be made out in duplicate. The original is to be sent to the attendance office and the duplicate retained by the principal or teacher in charge.

*Reentrance Report, Form C-A-6.*—This form is to be used by the principal or teacher in charge of any school to report to the attendance officer the reentrance of a child who had been previously reported as withdrawn.

*Absence Report Blank, Form C-A-7.*—This form is to be used by the principal or teacher in charge of any school in reporting absences to the attendance office. Absences will be indicated by encircling on the calendar the proper dates. The attendance officer will report the results of his investigation to the principal or teacher in charge. Further absences of the same child will be reported on the same blank. The absence of a child shall be reported when the teacher is not certain that such absence is with valid excuse; also, in all instances when the absence has continued for three consecutive days. Records on absence report blanks are to be kept in duplicate. The duplicate copy is to be retained by the attendance officer and the original is to be kept by the principal or teacher in charge.

*Record of Case in Court, Form C-A-8.*—The attendance officer will use his form to keep an office record of court cases.

*Physician's Statement, Form C-A-9.*—The attendance officer shall require the parents or guardians to secure the statement of a physician in all cases of protracted illness and in the cases wherein the attendance officer is in doubt as to the accuracy of the information given by the parents or guardian concerning the physical condition of the child. The attendance officer shall furnish the parents or guardian with the form to be used in securing a signed statement by the physician as to the illness of the child. The attendance officer shall send a

copy of this statement to the principal or teacher in charge of the school. This statement of illness will also be accepted when signed by any public health officer.

*Final Notice, Form C-A-10.*—This is to be used only in extreme cases after repeated efforts have failed to secure the compliance to the provisions of the attendance law.

The following are reasons which may be accepted as valid excuse for the absence of a child from school:

1. Illness of child.
2. Illness in family.
3. Death in family.
4. Quarantine.
5. Reporting to court.
6. Lack of sufficient clothing.
7. Weather conditions.

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SCHOOL CENSUS DATA, APRIL, 1934  
School Population at Each Age<sup>1</sup>

Ages	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	Total
Boys	31,257	31,550	32,253	32,877	33,732	32,602	33,064	32,335	30,218	28,000	26,939	23,652	368,489
Girls	30,399	30,462	30,869	31,850	32,187	31,495	31,838	31,107	29,054	26,403	25,278	21,842	352,784
Total	61,656	62,012	63,122	64,737	65,919	64,097	64,902	63,442	59,272	54,403	52,217	45,494	721,273

Percentage at Each Age

Ages	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	Total
Boys	8.48	8.56	8.75	8.93	9.15	8.85	8.97	8.78	8.2	7.6	7.31	6.42	100
Girls	8.62	8.63	8.75	9.03	9.12	8.93	9.03	8.82	8.23	7.48	7.17	6.19	100
Total	8.55	8.6	8.75	8.98	9.14	8.89	9	8.8	8.21	7.54	7.24	6.3	100

<sup>1</sup>First class city districts were not required to take census. Data adjusted from latest available report.

MISCELLANEOUS CENSUS DATA, APRIL, 1934

PHYSICAL DISABLED CHILDREN

Sex	Physical Disability		
	Blind	Deaf	Crippled
Boys .....	167	257	1,330
Girls .....	102	161	889
Total .....	269	418	2,219

Number enrolled in private or parochial schools ..... 18,950

Number over 10 years of age unable to read or write ..... 7,364

Number who have completed eighth grade... 68,368

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## The State Purchases School Books for Children in the Lower Four Grades

Purchase orders have now been placed with the various publishing companies, in accordance with requisitions from superintendents for free textbooks for children in the lower three grades of the public schools of the state, with the exception of two districts from which requisitions have not been received.

At a meeting of the State Board of Education held in the office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction on August 28th, an order was passed authorizing the Superintendent of Public Instruction to purchase reading, writing, arithmetic and language textbooks for the children of the fourth grade of the public schools of the state. The order also stated that in so far as funds were available copies of spelling texts should be ordered for those districts where needed. Since this date requisition forms have been mailed to superintendents and orders have been placed for reading, writing, arithmetic and language textbooks for all districts for which requisitions have been made by the superintendents. Forty-five districts have not yet requisitioned free textbooks for the fourth grade.

Up to the time of this writing, September 10th, 3,029 purchase orders have been placed with the various publishing houses for free textbooks for the lower four grades. It is estimated that these purchase orders, together with transportation charges and the cost of administration, will total approximately \$445,000.00. Purchase orders are being mailed the publishing companies as soon as the requisitions reach the Department of Education, and it appears probable that orders for the remaining districts will consume a large portion of the balance of the \$500,000.00 appropriation for free textbooks. A small amount of the fund may remain for the purchase of additional spelling texts.

A great many receipted invoices are being received daily by the Department of Education indicating that prompt deliveries are being made by the publishing companies. Proper forms for administering the distribution of the free textbooks have been mailed each superintendent of the state and within a very short time each child in the lower four grades should be furnished with free school books.

Mr. Harry W. Peters, who has served as Superintendent of Schools of Christian County for the past nine years, has been appointed by Superintendent Richmond as Director of Free Textbooks in the State Department of Education. Mr. Peters has made an enviable record in school administration in Christian County and is well qualified to discharge the duties of his new office. Supt. Richmond is to be commended and the school people of the state are to be congratulated upon his selection for this important position. Under date of September 11th, Mr. Peters sent a circular letter to each superintendent in the state in which he made the following suggestions relative to the distribution of the free textbooks.

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1. Read carefully the Free Textbook Law.

2. *Purchase Orders*.—The duplicate purchase order which has been sent you from this office should be carefully kept in your files and checked against invoices and books received from the publishers.

3. *Invoices*.—The publishers should send you two invoices with your shipment of books. As soon as you receive them, check the shipment of books against the purchase order and invoice, and if correct, receipt one invoice and mail it to this office, keeping the remaining invoice in your files.

4. *Bond*. (Form FT-3).—Make your bond *immediately* and equal in amount to the value of the books you have ordered or expect to order. Have the bond approved by your Board of Education and send the three copies to this office for approval of the State Board of Education.

5. *Book Labels*.—Paste the label on the inside of the front cover of each book. Give the book a number beginning with one and continuing consecutively until you have reached the total number of books sent you. Write or stamp the name of your school district and the name of the county on the label. (Todd County School District, Todd County; Paducah School District, McCracken County.) Label forms FT-4W are for books to be used by white pupils. Label forms FT-4C are for books to be used by colored pupils.

6. *Teacher's Receipt*.—The teacher or principal's receipt was printed to cover the first three grades. It will be necessary for you to write in the fourth grade list. Issue books to your teachers as soon as possible, even though you have not received the complete list of books from the publishers. As the books come in and are issued, they may be added to the teacher's receipt.

7. *Form FT-6*.—This form is made in duplicate. Both the original and duplicate are kept by the teacher until the close of the school term. As there is no place for the parent to sign printed on this card, I would suggest that the parent be required to sign across the face of the original, as his receipt for the books issued to his child.

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## PREPARE FOR AMERICAN EDUCATION WEEK

November 5-11, 1934.

Theme—EDUCATING FOR TOMORROW

Monday—Planning for Tomorrow

Tuesday—Developing New Types of Schooling

Wednesday—Continuing Education Throughout Life

Thursday—Financing Our Schools

Friday—Quickening the Sense of Civic Responsibility

Saturday—Preparing for New Kinds of Service

Sunday—Enriching Character Through Education

**AMERICAN EDUCATION WEEK HANDBOOK**—A 32-page manual that should be in the hands of every teacher in the school system as a guide to planning the observance. Contains suggestions for organizing school and community. Outlines day-by-day programs and things to do. Presents material for preparation of articles, addresses, and local publications.

**THE AMERICAN SCHOOL**—The 1934 special message to the home. An attractive 4-page leaflet ready for distribution to parents and other citizens. Send one to every home in your community.

**GOOD SCHOOLS IN BAD TIMES**—A 4-page leaflet emphasizing the importance of maintaining the schools at a high standard of excellence even when times are not prosperous.

**THE SCHOOL HOME OF YOUR CHILD**—Emphasizes the school as the child's larger home. An artistic 4-page leaflet printed on high quality cream-colored stock, illustrated by an architect's drawing of a beautiful school building.

The pamphlets listed above may be secured from The National Education Association, 1201 Sixteenth Street, N. W., Washington, D. C.