

The Consolidated Public Schools Act.

An important and much needed part of the legislation enacted at the last sittings of the Ontario legislature was the consolidation of the Public Schools Act. Numerous amendments to the statute, as contained in chapter 292, R. S. O., 1897, had been introduced by various enactments passed since the last statutory revision, and these are all now embodied in the Public Schools Act of 1901. Below we give in rotation and in detail the changes effected from time to time:

Sub-section 10 of section 2 is amended by striking out all the words after the word "Act" in the second line and substituting the following: "as amended from time to time by the legislature of this province."

CONTINUATION CLASSES.

Section 8 of the revised statute was repealed by section 1 of chapter 36, Ont. Statutes, 1899, and the following (which is section 8 of the Consolidated Act) substituted therefor:

8. The school corporation of any municipality or section in which there is no high school shall have power to establish in connection with the public school over which it has jurisdiction, such courses of study in addition to the courses already provided for the fifth form of public schools, as may be approved by the regulations of the Education Department. The classes established under such courses shall be known as "Continuation Classes."

(2) The trustees of any number of school corporations, may, by mutual agreement, determine that continuation classes shall be conducted in one only of the schools under the jurisdiction of the corporations entering into such agreement, and in all such cases the trustees shall have the same power to provide, by rates levied on the taxable property of their respective sections, for the tuition of pupils attending such continuation classes, as they possess under this Act for the tuition of pupils attending the schools under their immediate jurisdiction?

(3) No pupil shall be admitted to the course prescribed for continuation classes who has not passed the entrance examination to the high school or some higher examination, or whose qualifications for admittance have not been approved by the principal of the school and the public school inspector of the district in which the school is situated.

(4) Non-resident pupils and all other pupils who have completed the course of study prescribed for the fifth form of public schools whether resident or non-resident, may be charged such fees as the trustees may deem expedient.

(5) Any teacher, who, at the date of this Act, holds the position of principal of any school in which a continuation class has been established shall be deemed a qualified teacher of such school, but every teacher appointed principal after the date of this Act, whose classes consist entirely of pupils who have passed the entrance examination, shall be the holder of at least a first-class certificate.

(6) The Minister of Education shall apportion among the schools conducting continuation classes, such sums of money as may be apportioned by the legislature, subject to the regulations of the Education Department. The municipal council of the county shall pay for the maintenance of such classes, a sum equal to the legislative grant apportioned by the Minister of Education for such class, and any further sums the municipal council may deem expedient.

APPOINTMENT OF INSTRUCTORS IN AGRICULTURE.

Section 9 of the Consolidated Act, is a new section and was introduced by sec. 13 of chapter 36, Ontario Statutes, 1899, and is as follows:

(9) The council of every municipality may, subject to the regulations of the Education Department, employ one or more persons holding the degree of Bachelor of the Science of Agriculture or a certificate of qualification from the Ontario Agricultural College, to give instruction in agriculture in the public schools of the municipality, and the council shall have power to raise such sums of money as may be necessary to pay the salaries of such instructors, and all other expenses connected therewith. Such course of instruction shall include a knowledge of the chemistry of the soil, plant life, drainage, the cultivation of fruit, the beautifying of the farm and generally all matters which would tend to enhance the value of the products of the farm, the dairy and the garden.

(2) The trustees of any public school or any member of the boards of such trustees, may severally or jointly engage the services of any person qualified as in the preceding section for the purpose of giving similar instruction to the pupils of their respective schools, providing always that such course of instruction shall not supersede the instruction of the teacher in charge of the school, as required by the regulations of the Education Department.

(3) As far as practicable, the course of lectures in agriculture by such temporary instructor shall occupy the last school period of each afternoon and shall be open to all residents of the school section or municipality.

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Sub-section 2 of section 10, differs from section 9 of the corresponding section of the Revised Statutes, in that the words, "being residents" are inserted after the word "sons" in the sixth line thereof.

Sub-section 9 of section 15, is a new provision enacted by section 2 of chapter 36, Ontario Statutes, 1899, and is as follows:

15. (9) It shall be the duty of the municipal clerk to supply a list of the persons qualified to vote in any school section when required by the board of trustees or by the public school inspector in the case of any investigation or dispute with regard to the election of a school trustee.

Sections 32 and 33 are new sections introduced by sections 14 and 15 of chapter 36, Ontario Statutes, 1899, and are as follows:

READJUSTMENT OF SCHOOL SECTIONS IN SPARSELY SETTLED DISTRICTS.

32. On the report of any public school inspector that the attendance at the schools in the outlying and sparsely settled portions of his inspectorate is so small as to justify the consolidation of two or more of such sections with a view to the transportation of the pupils to some central school, thereafter to be determined upon, the lieutenant-governor in council may appoint a commission of not more than three persons, of whom the public school inspector shall be one, whose duty it shall be to re-arrange such school sections, having regard to the settlements and the facilities for transportation in order that the number of sections may be reduced and the pupils conveyed from their homes to school in the most convenient manner.

(2) On the receipt of the report of the com-

mission, the lieutenant-governor in council may cause the same to be published in the sections to be affected by such consolidation, in such manner as may be deemed expedient and on a day to be fixed by the said lieutenant-governor, the ratepayers shall vote "yea" or "nay" on said report.

(3) If a majority of the ratepayers vote "yea" then the boundaries of the section so settled shall be the legal boundaries of the school sections concerned, from and after the 25th day of December next following such vote, until altered as provided by this Act.

(4) The ratepayers of the sections so formed shall, on the date fixed by this Act for the annual meeting of rural sections, meet and elect three trustees for the sections so formed as in the case of the organization of new sections under this Act.

(5) It shall be the duty of the trustees in the case of all sections formed as herein provided, in addition to the other duties imposed by this Act, to provide for the transportation of all pupils to and from school who reside more than one half mile from such school, and the trustees shall have power to levy and collect the cost of such transportation as other expenses of the section are levied and collected.

ISSUE OF DEBENTURES IN UNORGANIZED DISTRICTS.

33. The trustees of any public school in the unorganized townships of the territorial districts of Algoma, Nipissing, Parry Sound and Muskoka, may issue debentures for the purpose of a school site and the erection of a school house, paying in ten equal annual instalments, or such other sums as the trustees may deem expedient, providing always that the proposal to issue such debentures has been sanctioned, by resolution, at a special meeting of the ratepayers of the section; such debentures shall be signed by the trustees of the section, and sealed with the corporate seal, and shall be a charge upon the assessable property of the school section. The debentures shall, as near as may be, comply with form A prescribed by this Act.

Sub-section 3 of section 37 is also new, and was enacted by section 3 of chapter 36, Ontario Statutes, 1899, and is as follows:

37 (3) It shall not be necessary for the trustees to build a wall or fence along any street or highway for the purpose of enclosing the school premises in any municipality in which a by-law has been passed by the municipal council prohibiting stock from running at large.

Sub-section 1 of section 42 (section 39 of the Revised Statute) is amended by inserting between the first and second words in the tenth line the words "form, unite, divide, or" and sub-section 3 is amended by striking out the words "revise and determine" in the fifth and sixth lines and by substituting therefor the words "form, divide, unite" (see section 4 of chapter 36, Ont. Stats., 1899).

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Sub-section 3 is further amended by inserting the words "if it thinks fit" after the word "may" in the first line thereof.

RECONSIDERATION OF AWARD FOR THE FORMATION OF UNION SCHOOL SECTION.

Sub-section 11 of section 46 (section 43 of the Revised Statute) is amended by section 5 of chapter 36, Ontario Statutes, 1899, by adding the following after the word "expedient" in the seventh line: "provided always that two-thirds of the ratepayers of any union school section may, at the expiration of three years from the date of the formation of such union section, petition the municipal council or councils concerned for a reconsideration of any award for the formation