

The Question of Home Study

School Trustees Discuss the Subject and Pass a Resolution.

Large Increase in Attendance of Pupils—Two Teachers Appointed.

At the regular meeting of the Board of Trustees of the public schools last night, the following were present: R. L. Drury, acting chairman; Trustees J. Huggert, (Mrs.) Grant and Belyea. Communications were received from recently appointed teachers accepting the positions. Filed.

From several teachers thanking the board for the increase to their salaries. Filed.

From Miss Sprague, tendering her resignation from the teaching staff, to date from October 31. Laid on the table.

Applications for positions as teachers from Donald A. Fraser and Miss Bernice Cook. Laid on the table.

The finance committee recommended payment of accounts amounting to \$413.10, which was adopted.

Superintendent Eaton presented the following report:

The attendance at the city schools for the month of September, as compared for the same month of the preceding year, by a considerable percentage. In fact the increase is the largest for any month. September returns this year show that the total number present was 2,686, against 2,298 in September last year and the daily average 2,397.98, against 2,207.18.

The summary for the past month follows:

School	Present	No. of Pupils	Daily Average	Percentage
High	103	153.39	92.4	47
Boys' Central	42	370.9	83	49
Girls' Central	43	370.75	83	49
South Park	43	376.20	87.7	49
North Park	43	376.20	87.7	49
Victoria West	315	283.03	80.8	49
Spring Ridge	173	107.43	91.5	49
Kingston	140	127.19	90.8	49
Hillside	84	127.19	90.8	49
Rock Bay	84	127.19	90.8	49

Total 2,686.27, 98.88-91.55 235

The following table shows the increase in attendance for the past four years:

Year	No. of Pupils	Daily Average	Percentage
Sept., 1897	2,298	2,207.18	47
Sept., 1898	2,427	2,427	49
Sept., 1899	2,427	2,427	49
Sept., 1900	2,427	2,427	49
Sept., 1901	2,686	2,397.98	52

Average increase for four years was 107. The average increase for the year 1901 was 47.0 and this year it is 49.

Mr. Eaton pointed out that although the board had endeavored to reduce the number of pupils to the class, and notwithstanding the increase in the number of teachers, the average this year was larger than it was in 1897.

He also mentioned the overcrowded condition of the Central school and suggested that the board should consider the advisability of renting a building in the neighborhood to relieve the pressure.

He pointed out that during the month, according to the number of children on the roll, 800 had absented themselves without due cause.

Trustee Huggert stated that complaints had reached him from parents of the excessive amount of home work expected of children.

Trustee Drury had looked into the matter, and from his observations he thought too much home work was assigned. He thought the chief cause of trouble was caused by giving children too much to learn on one subject. The lessons might be made shorter.

Trustee Huggert said the teachers should use discretion in giving home study.

Mr. Eaton suggested that parents complaining to trustees should be referred directly to him. Such a course would very much facilitate his securing an understanding of the matter.

Trustee Jay concurred in the remarks of Messrs. Drury and Huggert, and stated that there was a tendency to give too much home study in the higher grades. He suggested that the superintendent act upon the subject from the principal of each school a report of the home studies assigned in the higher classes, and report the result of his observations to the board.

Trustee Belyea considered that the complaint was not a general one, and he deprecated the suggestion that the board should take action on a few isolated and vague complaints, unsupported by evidence of any kind. Such a course would open a very large question—that of individual fitness—which it would be quite impossible to deal with.

Trustee Jay moved, seconded by Trustee Huggert, that the superintendent be instructed to obtain from the principal of each school a report of the home studies assigned in the higher classes, and report the result of his observations to the board.

Trustee Belyea said the motion was a familiar one, having occurred previously for the last six years. He would like to know how many complaints had been made and who were the complainants.

Superintendent Eaton informed the board that just before the meeting a teacher had told him that some parents had asked why more home work was not given to the children.

Trustee Belyea asked Trustee Huggert to submit a list of the complaints or of the names of the teachers complained of. He held that the members of the board had no right to bring vague, hearsay complaints before the board. Such complaints should be investigated by the superintendent, whose business it was to regulate the work in the schools.

Trustee Drury also thought it desirable that the superintendent should investigate the matter and report to the board.

Trustee Belyea pointed out that the matter was wholly outside the jurisdiction of the board and the resolution was mere waste of time.

Superintendent Eaton would like the resolution to be more specific, and might report his own impressions on the subjects or he might provide a table of subjects and hours of home study assigned by each teacher. He read from the school regulations the clause bearing on the subject in which the matter of home lessons was left to the discretion of the teacher. He did not consider the subject one which came within the province of the board.

After some further discussion the motion was adopted.

Mr. Belyea, who had objected to the resolution as out of order, gave notice that he would report the matter to the Superintendent of Education for his ruling.

APPOINTMENTS.

Superintendent Eaton notified the board that he had appointed the following to the positions of teachers:

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World's Mechanical Skill Seeks to Make Practical Submarine Boat and Airship.

From London Spectator.

The mechanical skill of the world, the very greatest, perhaps, than its originality in scientific investigation, is directing itself for the moment to two definite ends—the construction of an efficient submarine boat and the invention of a machine that can travel with at least two persons on board through the air.

The former object, we think, be attained with less difficulty—that of building a machine to support life under water—has been surmounted, and the remaining difficulties of constructing a machine that will be able to travel with at least two persons on board are of a more difficult nature.

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THE SEPTIC TANK QUESTION

Meeting of Spring Ridge Electors Passes Resolution Endorsing the By-Law.

Several Speakers Dile on the Great Merits of the System.

Three scores of the people of Spring Ridge gathered in the Odd Fellows' hall last night to discuss the sewerage by-law to be voted upon today. Mr. S. P. Mills took the chair, and addresses were given by him, Ald. Stuart, and Messrs. G. H. Barnard, W. Marchant and Mr. Noor.

The meeting passed a resolution put forward by Mr. Marchant unanimously endorsing the by-law, after the different speakers had expressed their views.

Mr. Mills, who was the first speaker, expressed regret that so few of the people of Spring Ridge had turned out to discuss a question of such vital importance to the community.

He pointed out that the sewerage system was a question of life and death. The doctor had been called to the homes of small property owners who could ill-afford to pay him, as a result of the bad condition of the sewerage system.

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PROVINCIAL PRESS.

PHOENIX WATERWORKS.

From Phoenix Pioneer.

The force of 28 men, under Foreman Patterson, employed in opening up the streets for the new water system, has been at work for some time.

The line runs from the Old Ironsides mine down to Knob Hill avenue and thence to the city.

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