

NEW SCHOOL PLAN HINGES ON FUNDS

Board of Education Hard Put to Meet Regular Overhead Out of Appropriation

Members of the Board of Education are willing and ready to go ahead with the building program advocated by Superintendent Broome, which is to place the schools in a position to provide accommodations for all comers. They are deterred only by a lack of sufficient funds, and to find these funds the officials and members of the board are now bending every effort.

Placing a \$15,000,000 building program under contract in one year will require the expenditure in actual cash of about one-half that sum this year. If the board officials can find means to pay the sinking fund and interest charges on a loan of \$8,000,000 for the new building program, the Department of Superintendence is sure it can be successfully carried through in two years. Other programs, however, will have to follow if the schools are to be kept up to par.

The sinking fund charges and interest on a million dollar amount to about \$80,000 if the loan can be floated at 4 per cent. But as the board is determined that the tax rate fixed at nine and one-half mills shall suffice for the coming year it means that to carry out the program of development, \$10,000,000 must be available.

Increased revenue of the board for the coming year is estimated about \$1,000,000, based on the estimated increase of real estate assessments. In addition there will be \$200,000 available, especially borrowed this year for an administrative building, that will total \$1,200,000, however, first must be paid any deficiency caused by increased expenses this year.

Board Faces Deficiency

A deficiency of \$2,000,000 already faces the board through the increased number of teachers and greater number of evening classes. To complicate matters further, the real contractors have called for considerable more money than was set aside last year, and it is only because of the extremely warm weather so far this autumn that the board has not already overdrawn the amount set aside for the fall term.

Added to the money which must be provided there will have to be a sufficient sum set aside to take care of the teachers in the two new junior high schools and to pay the \$100 increase of salary which all teachers not yet at their maximum receive under the present salary schedule. There must also be money provided for a loan which will finance the completion of the buildings now under construction.

Under the act of the 1922 Legislature the board is commanded mandatorily to provide in its tax levy for an amount sufficient to pay the interest and sinking fund charges on all indebtedness of the school district. A levy of seven-eighths of a mill was sufficient for that item for the current year. In the levy money was provided for the start of the buildings now under way. There remains a quarter of the cost yet to be raised by loan and provided for in this item.

William Rowen, president of the board, is eager to authorize the new building program. "It is entirely a question of money," he said, "for we can find the funds we will gladly go ahead with the buildings proposed by Dr. Broome in his annual report which was submitted to the board's last meeting."

"We are facing an awkward situation. We are called by law to provide for many things. We do not want to increase the tax rate, and yet on all sides there is a demand for new school buildings. We are today making use of old structures that were built ninety or more years ago. They are totally inadequate for modern school houses. I have visited several of them lately and have found the children cramped in darkened and ill-ventilated rooms, straining their eyes, and their lungs, trying to get an education."

"If the money can be provided I am sure the board will be unanimous in adopting the program for new buildings, which is one of the largest and most comprehensive ever laid before school officials of any city in the Nation. Part time is increasing instead of decreasing. The work now being done will prevent its further increase. I am sure it will not go far to providing accommodations for the 41,000 pupils now attending schools for a few hours only each day. We must provide for these children and the board, I am sure, will back me up if we are told by our financial experts that we can provide all necessary funds."

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