EDUCATION ON AMERICA'S LAST FRONTIER (ALASKA)

APPROVED:

S.M. Alister
Major Professor

James H. Dougherty
Minor Professor

Director of the Department of Government
L.D. Sharp
Chairman of the Graduate Council
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FRONTIER (ALASKA)

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By

Martha Marie Gough Garner, B. S.

Sherman, Texas

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CHAPTER I

HISTORY OF EDUCATION IN ALASKA

Russian Occupation

The discovery of Alaska.--In 1728 Vitus Bering, on an expedition to Siberia, sailed through the Bering Strait, and discovered the St. Lawrence Island. Another Russian explorer was reported to have touched the coast of Alaska in 1732, but the mainland was not claimed for Russia until Bering made a second trip in 1741. The land we now know as Alaska was called Russian America.

The next forty years saw no permanent settlement, but Russians did engage in a destructive trade in furs. Finally, in 1784, Grigor Shelikof, a Siberian merchant, established the trading post of St. Paul, now Kodiak, on Kodiak Island. This trading post was near the western limit of the Eskimo population at the time and was the seat of Russian occupation in America for many years.

The establishment of the first school.--In addition to being the founder of Russian colonies in America, Shelikof was the first man to do something for the Alaskan natives.

1 Charles F. Reid, Education in the Territories and Outlying Possessions of the United States, p. 10.
2 United States Department of Interior, Public Education in Alaska, 1936, p. 25.
The first school was started at the St. Paul trading post and was maintained by the Russian missionaries.

Other Russian schools.—As more and more Russian colonists came, more schools were necessary and were established in the settlements along the shores of the North Pacific Ocean. Russia's agent for the government of Alaska, the Russian American Fur Company, was required by the terms of its charter to establish schools. The local trader at each post was the director of the school in his settlement.

A school for the higher grades was established in Sitka. The original purpose of the school was to train promising young men for service with the trading company, but it gradually enrolled girls as well as boys and employed competent teachers. The girls were trained for housework, and the boys were trained for work with the shipping industry carried on by the company.

Shelikof and Baranof, manager of the Russian American Company from 1799 to 1810, encouraged the mission schools. These apparently flourished, and, at the time the United States purchased Alaska in 1867, there were 17 schools in existence. These schools were for children of the white or mixed parentage, however, and very little had been done to educate the natives.

Mary Lee Davis, *Uncle Sam's Attic*, p. 320.

Period from 1867 to 1884

No form of government.--With the signing of the treaty of purchase on March 30, 1867, the United States became the legal owner of the Territory of Alaska. Because of the purchase of this apparently worthless land, Congress was criticized severely, and in an effort to quiet public opinion, it made no further plans for the new colony to the north.

A less prosperous period than that enjoyed during Russian occupation followed the purchase by the United States. There was no form of government in Alaska, and no provision was made for schools. A period of ruthlessness and corruption followed, and it was not until gold was discovered in fabulous quantities throughout the territory that the United States made any attempt to permanently develop the country.

Act of 1884.--As the result of pressure brought on Congress through memorials and petitions from various sections of the country, from the National Education Association, and from the United States Commissioner of Education, the Act of 1884 was passed making the Secretary of the Interior responsible for educating the children of Alaska, regardless of race. The Secretary of Interior assigned this responsibility to the Commissioner of Education.

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in 1885, and this marked the beginning of public education in Alaska.

Public Education under Federal Control 1884 to 1905

Establishment of the bureau of education.-- The Commissioner of Education at that time was John Eaton, and, fortunately for the people of Alaska, he realized the responsibility and importance of organizing schools. The difficulties confronting him were almost insurmountable. The territory was large, and many sections were icebound and inaccessible during a part of the year; the settlements and trading posts already established were isolated, and there was almost no means of communication except the very primitive types; and the population to be served was made up of backward natives.

The first step in the organization of this school system was to establish the Bureau of Education and to appoint a local Commissioner. The first Commissioner of Education in Alaska was Reverend Sheldon Jackson, a missionary who had seen much service in Alaska. It was under his direction that the Federal school system had its beginning.

Work of the Bureau.--Upon the recommendation of Reverend Jackson, the few mission schools which had been established since Alaska's purchase by the United States were continued

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as public schools. Other schools were established by missionaries of several denominations interested in the missionary field in Alaska and were conducted under contracts with the government.

Schools conducted by the Bureau of Education were for children of all races until 1905 at which time Congress made drastic changes in the government of Alaska. At that time two separate and distinct public school systems were established for the Territory of Alaska.

Alaska's two school system.—The Nelson Act of 1905 relieved the Bureau of Education of responsibility for the education of white children and those of "mixed blood leading a civilized life." It provided responsibility for the education and general welfare of the natives only. This change was brought about after the Bureau had successfully organized many schools. It began with 7 small schools, conducted by missionaries, and in 1905 it owned or rented buildings to 45 Federally owned and supported school organizations.

The act marked the beginning of a Territorial school system for white children under the direction of the District of Alaska and local municipal authorities.

7Ibid., p. 31.
1905 to 1930, Present System

Progress by the Bureau of Education.-- With increased Federal interest and appropriations, the Bureau was able to accomplish much. The Alaska Division with a division chief in charge was created. This division included also a general agent of education in Alaska, an assistant agent, and two clerks and stenographers in the central office in Washington. There were also three district superintendents of schools, who lived in Alaska. One of these superintendents was for southern and southeastern Alaska, one was for western central Alaska, and one was for northwestern Alaska.

As the years passed the number of superintendency districts and the number of superintendents increased with the growing number of schools and teachers. The system, however, remains the same.

The philosophy and achievements of Reverend Sheldon Jackson continued to be a partial basis for further work among the natives. He was followed by Harlan Updegraff, who was given the title of Chief of the Alaska Division. The new chief was responsible for the reorganization of the work of the Bureau of Education in the Territory of Alaska.

The primary aim of his program was to modify the life of the natives by their contact with the white man. He desired to develop a higher standard of living for them and to develop native initiative rather than reliance on

\[\text{Ibid., pp. 32-34.}\]
the Federal Government. His program for preparing the natives for civilized life included the following measures:

1. Enactment of a compulsory attendance law with discretionary enforcement provisions.
2. Instruction in English to develop the ability to speak, write, and read the language.
3. Instruction in arithmetic to insure the natives' ability to carry on business transactions.
4. Instruction in sanitation and personal hygiene.
5. Instruction in household economy.
6. Instruction in marketing.
7. Instruction in morality.
8. Development of existing native industries and introduction of new ones adapted to the region and to the ability of the natives.
9. Medical care and enforcement of sanitary measures in the native villages.
10. Protection of the property rights of the natives by enforcement of existing laws and, if necessary, by enactment of more stringent laws.

Beginnings were made based on the above principles in 1907-08, and they remain equally important to the present time.

Progress in Territorial system.—The creation of this new system for the education of the white children was brought about in response to the pleas of the local white residents for separate schools for their children. The years following the act of 1884 resulted in many new schools and increased enrollments. As rapidly as towns were incorporated, schools were established, and by 1916 there were 14 incorporated towns which maintained

Charles F. Reid, Territories and Outlying Possessions of the United States, pp. 54-55.
schools. A number of these schools offered instruction of high school level. Also by 1916 there were 37 schools outside the incorporated towns.

It could not be said at this time, however, that a Territorial school system existed. The Governor was the ex-officio superintendent of schools, but there was no other central control, and there was no coordination between the schools, which were conducted by local school boards. There was no uniform course of study, and the curriculum changed with each new teacher.

In 1912 Congress granted Alaska Territorial status, and, although it specified that the establishment and maintenance of schools was not within the scope of the Territorial Legislature, the present Territorial school system is a product of the enactments of that body. All of the acts passed were invalidated, but they did serve to show that the people of Alaska had the desire for legal power to establish a school system.

Congress granted this right in 1917, and immediately the Territorial Legislature passed a series of laws which formed the basis of the present Territorial Educational system.

\[\textit{Ibid.}, \textit{p.} 46.\]

\[\textit{Ibid.}, \textit{p.} 47.\]
The Territorial Legislature of 1917 created the Territorial Board of Education, which was composed of the Governor and the four senior Senators. This board appointed the Commissioner of Education, who was given complete supervision of all Territorial education.

The Legislature provided for the incorporation of school districts in towns which were not incorporated. It also provided for the education of white children and "children of mixed blood leading a civilized life", who lived outside incorporated towns.

At the same time the first Territorial appropriation was made, and the Alaska Agricultural College received its charter.

Much improvement in the schools resulted from this change to Legislative control. School facilities were extended to many new localities, and the greatest growth was in schools outside incorporated towns.

Because of the scattered population, the providing of schools for all children had always been difficult. In 1924-25 a program of transportation was introduced along with a program of tuition fee per pupil in incorporated towns and districts for the education of children who lived outside the limits but attended schools therein.

\(^{12}\text{Ibid.}, \text{p. 49.}\) \(^{13}\text{Ibid.}, \text{p. 49.}\) \(^{14}\text{Ibid.}, \text{p. 50.}\)
It was not until 1922 that any attempt was made to revise the curriculum. A complete course of study was issued at this time for the high schools. Then in 1923 one was issued for elementary schools. There have been revisions in each since, but the traditional curriculum remains the same.

The years also saw a tremendous improvement in the teaching personnel. The system had been faced with the problem of "tourist" teachers, but in recent years the personnel has become more stabilized.

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15 Ibid., p. 51.
CHAPTER II

FEDERAL SCHOOL SYSTEM

Introduction

A brief review of the history of the Federal school system.-- A series of Congressional Acts led to the separate Federal school system for the native Indian population. The first step in this division of school systems came with the Act of 1900, providing for the incorporation of cities, but the legal basis for a school system for the sole purpose of educating the natives came with the enactment of the Nelson Law in 1905. "By the terms of this Act, the education of the natives was to be financed by Federal appropriations, and administered by the Department of the Interior."  

The "ultimate responsibility" for the education of the natives still remains with the Secretary of the Interior; however, in 1931 the administration was transferred from the United States Office of Education to the United States Office of Indian Affairs.

The purpose of educating the natives.--Missionaries,

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1 Charles F. Reid, Education in the Territories and Outlying Possessions of the United States, p. 101.
2 Ibid., 101-102.
like Sheldon Jackson, early in Alaskan history recognized the necessity for aiding the destitute Eskimos, especially those living in the regions of the Bering Sea and the Arctic Ocean. They found that many of these Eskimos were "asking out a bare living" on the few fish and animals they could catch.

Following the establishment of the Bureau of Education, further investigation into the living conditions of the natives revealed that mere knowledge of books would not solve the problems of the Alaskan natives. They must be prepared to live efficiently in a society composed chiefly of the white man. With this object in mind, the educators have proceeded through the years.

Administration

Administrative machinery.—The Education Division of the Office of Indian Affairs, which has an Alaska Section in the Department of the Interior at Washington, D. C., a purchasing office in Seattle, Washington, and a field headquarters in Juneau, composes the administrative machinery of the Alaska Federal school system. The Washington office is a link between the Secretary of the Interior, the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, "and the various divisions on the one hand and the Juneau head-

4 Ibid., p. 37.
quarters on the other." The Washington office handles all major administrative problems; the Seattle office acts as a purchasing and shipping agent; and the Juneau office handles all supervisory problems.

The following staff composes the Juneau office:

General Superintendent for Alaska
Assistant to General Superintendent
Education Staff
  Director of Education
  Associate Supervisors of Elementary Education
  Supervisor of Arts and Crafts
  Supervisor of Social Welfare
Medical Staff
  Medical Director
  Associate Dental Officer
  Supervisor of Nurses
  Supervising Construction Engineer
Indian Reorganization Service
  Credit Agent
  Senior Field Agent
  Chief Clerk

In spite of the fact that the various administrative offices are located in different sections of the country, there is a highly centralized administration. This plan works for closer cooperation and co-ordination of effort.

Financing.—"The educational, economic, medical, and social programs for the welfare of the natives are entirely financed by Congressional appropriations."

5 Charles F. Reid, Education in the Territories and Outlying Possessions of the United States, p. 102.
6 Ibid., p. 103.
7 Ibid.
8 Ibid.
Congress made its first appropriations for native education only in the school year 1905-06. The amount of the appropriations has been steadily increased from year to year, but the per-pupil costs are high because it is necessary to maintain so many schools with only a small enrollment.

Educational policy

The typical native school.—The typical Alaska Eskimo school is located in the center of a native village. In addition to the school building itself, there is a teacher's cottage, a home for the doctor or nurse, and a small hospital of the village is in a strategic location.

The schools are centers of economic, social and recreational life in the native communities. To an extent scarcely realized among persons living under highly civilized conditions the schools aim to fill all kinds of important needs in native life.

Curriculum.—The problem confronting the educators in selecting a curriculum for the native school was no small or usual one. They could not take native standards of culture and build on them. It was necessary to bring about a considerable change in their pattern of life. It was necessary to establish new standards rather than conserve old, and they had to influence not only the child but the adult.

9 Charles F. Reid, Education in the Territories and Outlying Possessions of the United States, pp. 103-107.

10 United States Department of Interior Bulletin, Public Education in Alaska, 1936, p. 49.

11 Ibid.
At the time the schools were transferred from the Office of Education to the Office of Indian Affairs the course of study was little adapted to the interests and learning capacities of the native Alaskan children. It was modeled after the usual curriculum of the schools of the states, but few of the teachers adhered strictly to the formal course of study. The curriculum was directed toward mastery of reading, languages, spelling, and arithmetic, and little attention was given to training in vocational training so vital to the problems of adjustment facing the natives.

Study and tests revealed that the curriculum was not adapted to the level of intelligence of these children. It was necessary to formulate a curriculum based upon the objectives of the entire Government program for preparing the natives for life in a society of white men.

Several vocational training schools have been established in the Territory, and "academic instruction is given in English, Mathematics, social studies, science, health, typing, and bookkeeping." The curriculum, however, is based upon vocational instruction, which included many activities that the native needs for making a living—"carpentry, boat building, gasoline engine operation and repair, fisheries, canneries, gardening, animal husbandry,"

homemaking, child care, housing, and radio." These schools have been very successful and have proved very valuable in preparing the native for his new life.

The reindeer service.—Formerly, in the days before the coming of the white man, the natives had made their living from hunting, fishing, and trapping. After his coming, their food supply depleted so rapidly that many were destitute.

In Siberia, just across the Bering Strait, thousands of natives were supporting themselves by raising domestic reindeer. Dr. Jackson, then the head of the Bureau of Education, proposed a plan to establish reindeer raising as an industry in connection with the schools. Such an arrangement, it was believed, would afford a means of support to the Alaskan Eskimos, would advance them beyond the nomadic stage, and be an important factor in the economic development of northern Alaska.

Dr. Jackson brought the matter to the attention of the Commissioner of Education, Dr. William F. Harris, in Washington. Dr. Harris gave the project his enthusiastic support and made immediate efforts to secure an appropriation from Congress to begin this program. Congress did not

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13 Ibid.
15 Ibid.
make its first appropriations, $6000, until 1894, but operations were carried on with funds contributed by individuals. Little success was made in forming a permanent herd, but this experimental period did prove the possibility of the plan. Work began in earnest immediately upon receipt of the first Federal appropriation.

Each year for nine years following, the Revenue Cutter, Bear, carried representatives of the Bureau of Education to the coast of Siberia to purchase reindeer. They brought herders from Lapland to Alaska to instruct the Eskimos in the care and management of the reindeer. Many serious difficulties confronted them on their journeys, but their efforts were rewarded, and, at the end of nine years, 1200 reindeer had been imported. Several stations had been permanently established, and the industry had become a successful part of the educational program.

The purpose of the reindeer industry was to give the Eskimo economic independence, and early arrangements were made for distributing these reindeer among the natives. They were distributed under a system of apprenticeship which covered a period of four years. At the end of a successful apprenticeship the native was given a certain number of

16 Ibid.

17 W. Hamilton, "From Barbarism to Civilization in 46 Years," School Life, XVI (1931), 143.

18 United States Department of Interior Bulletin, Public Education in Alaska, 1936, p. 43.
reindeer with which to start his own herd. This same plan of apprenticeship applied to natives trained at the mission schools. Year after year this program spread, and in 1930, there were several thousand reindeer distributed among the natives. 19

The district superintendent of schools had as one of his duties the supervision of the reindeer herds. Each herd was under the immediate supervision of the teacher. The industry thrived and became an important means of making a living and a source of food for a large portion of the Eskimo population. 20

In 1929 an organization was created under the control of the Governor of Alaska to handle all business connected with the industry, and the teachers remained the local supervisors. In 1937 the Governor recommended that the care of the industry be transferred to the United States Office of Indian Affairs. At the time of the transfer on July 1, 1937, there were five reindeer unit managers who worked with the Office of Indian Affairs' teachers in 39 stations, and 67 percent of the 544,000 reindeer in the Territory were owned by the natives. 21


20 United States Department of Interior Bulletin, Public Education in Alaska, 1936, p. 44.

21 Charles F. Reid, Education in the Territories and Outlying Possessions of the United States, pp. 58-59.
Cooperative stores.--The establishment of cooperative stores was another attempt to increase the economic independence of the natives. This policy for stores conducted by the natives was inaugurated in 1911. They were operated by the natives but were under the direction of the teachers and superintendents. The purpose of their establishment was to protect the natives from the traders who charged exhorbitant prices for food and paid almost nothing for furs.

The first experiment was conducted when natives of two villages in southeastern Alaska migrated to Prince of Wales Island. They founded the town of Hydaburg, and the teacher of the Federal school supervised the formation of a cooperative company, which transacted the business of the community. The company made a loan from the Bureau of Education to buy machinery for a saw mill, and formed the Hydaburg Lumber Company. This company became the center of the community and opened a community store. The store showed a profit of 125 per cent at the end of a year, and at the end of five years, the lumber company paid $12,000 in profits and paid off its original loan.

A second experiment was conducted on Amnette Island at

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22 Ibid., p. 59

23 United States Department of Interior Bulletin, Public Education in Alaska, 1936, p. 44.
the town of Metlakatla. The success of these two towns led to the establishment of many other cooperative stores, and "the importance of these two villages is that they illustrate that, when protected from white competition and properly guided, the natives can achieve economic independence."

**Medical Service.**—At the time the Bureau of Education began its work with the Eskimos there was practically no medical service available for the natives. The officials immediately realized the absolute necessity of making medical treatment available to them without charge. Epidemics swept villages, and the coming of the white man had brought diseases to which the natives had built up no resistance.

At first the Bureau was unable to secure appropriations to carry on an adequate service, but it furnished temporary emergency service for a period of years. The first step was the care of destitute natives under the direction of school officials with funds from regular school appropriations. The Bureau also employed physicians who could also serve as teachers. They also brought into service on contract basis regular practicing physicians who were located near

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24 Charles F. Reid, _Education in the Territories and Outlying Possessions of the United States_, p. 59.

25 Ibid., pp. 59-60.
the Eskimo communities. Medical supplies and medical textbooks were furnished the teachers by the Bureau so that they were able to help in all situations except the most serious.

The Bureau continued to give as much aid as possible, and the Commissioners continued to plea for appropriations from Congress. In 1912 the first hospital for the natives was founded in Juneau, and another was established a little later the same year in Nushagak.

In 1911, at the request of the Secretary of Interior, the Surgeon General sent a member of the Public Health Service to Alaska to work under the direction of the Commissioner of Education. His reports revealed the critical situation, and in 1912, a member of the Surgeon General's staff was detailed to serve in Alaska for an indefinite period. "He trained teachers and advised superintendents of education in Alaska in all matters pertaining to health and sanitation."

The first appropriation was made in the school year 1915-16 for the sum of $25,000. At the close of that year there were four hospitals. The amounts of the appropriations have steadily grown until in 1936 they reached $378,000.

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27 Ibid., p. 47.
28 Ibid., p. 48.
In that year the Medical Service consisted of one Director, one Dental Supervisor, one Supervisor of Nurses, ten full-time physicians, six part-time physicians, 30 field nurses, and 20 hospital nurses. The Service operates seven hospitals, and has contract arrangements with 12 private hospitals to provide facilities to natives. The Government hospital operated by the Alaska Railroad, and the Army Hospital provide service without contract. Two Indian Service hospitals in the states furnish hospitalization to a number of natives without charge.

It is impossible to over-estimate the importance of the medical service because health is basic to the entire government program, and health education forms an important part of the Medical Service. The objectives are given as follows:

1. To educate families and individuals to protect their own health.
2. To assist in adjustment of family and social conditions that affect health.
3. To make arrangements for hospitalization consistent with the local needs and facilities available.

In spite of the Medical Service's rapid growth and its tremendous success, it is still without facilities to reach the entire native population.

Conclusion.---

Although some of the Eskimos feel the children would be better off without this education, the great majority believe that as long as the Eskimos are


\[31\] *Ibid.*, 137
living with the whites they are made happier by getting some sort of a white education. 82

After a half century and more, there remains no doubt but that the natives have been developed in education and in industry and have become an important part of the economic life of the Territory.

82 Mary Lee Davis, *Uncle Sam's Attic*, p. 243.
CHAPTER III

TERRITORIAL SCHOOL SYSTEM

Introduction

The origin of the territorial system.--The Nelson Act of 1905 created a new and separate school system for the education of the children of white and those of "mixed blood leading a civilized life." By this act the Governor of the Territory of Alaska became the ex-officio superintendent of public instruction and supervises the public schools and dictates their rules and regulations.¹

The transfer of the system to Territorial Legislative control.--In spite of the fact that Congress had placed this new school system under the direction of Territorial authorities, it specified, when Alaska was given Territorial status in 1912, that the establishment and maintenance of schools was not within the scope of the Territorial Legislature. The Territorial School system as it exists today, however, is largely a product of the enactments of this legislature. Even though the laws were invalid, they expressed the desire of the Alaskans to have legal power to establish a school system.

Congress granted the Territory the power to establish

¹The Compiled School Laws of the Territory of Alaska, Part I, Art. 1, Sec. 1.
and maintain a school system in 1917, and that body immediately passed a series of laws which formed the basis of the present structure of the Territorial School system.

Administration

Introduction.--"The public school system shall be administered by the following authorities, to-wit, the Territorial Board of Education, the Territorial Commissioner of Education and local school board."

The Territorial Board of Education.--The Governor of the Territory of Alaska appoints five members, one from each judicial division and one at large, to serve on the Board of Education for the Territory. These appointments must be approved by a majority of all of the members of the Senate and House of Representatives of the Legislature met in joint session, and each member serves for a period of six years.

A member of the Board of Education must be a citizen of the United States, must be thirty years of age, must be a resident of the Territory, and must have been a resident continuously for at least three years immediately preceding his appointment.

\[^2\] Charles F. Reid, Education in the Territories and Outlying Possessions of the United States, pp. 46-47.
\[^3\] The Compiled School Laws of the Territory of Alaska, Part I, Art. 1, Sec. 3.
\[^4\] Ibid., Part I, Art. 2, Sec. 5.
No member of the Board shall during his term of office be engaged as a professional educator. A member automatically loses his membership upon failure to attend two consecutive meetings unless he has secured consent authorizing his absence from a majority of the members, and the Governor, with the consent of a majority of the Board, may remove any member for conviction of a felony or of a misdemeanor "involving moral turpitude to perform the duties of the office, or for malfeasance or misfeasance in office."  

The Board meets in regular session once each year, and it may be called to a special session by the Commissioner of Education at the request of a majority of the Board. It requires three members to make a quorum, and no action may be taken without three affirmative votes.

It is the Board of Education which supervises the public school system of the Territory, and its duties are as follows:

a. Adopt rules and regulations not inconsistent with law, for its own government and the government of its employees and appointees.

b. Manage, control and prescribe rules and regulations for the conduct of all public schools for the education of white children and children of mixed blood who lead a civilized life, in this Territory;

5 Ibid., Part I, Art. 2, Sec. 6.
6 Ibid., Part I, Art. 2, Sec. 8.
7 Ibid., Part I, Art. 2, Sec. 9.
c. Establish, discontinue or combine schools;
d. Provide for citizenship night schools when and where deemed expedient;
e. Establish, increase, decrease or abolish schools districts and provide for the election or appointment of rural school boards and prescribe their powers and duties;
f. Construct, build or rent the necessary schoolhouses or school rooms and maintain and equip same;
g. Provide for the sale or other disposition of abandoned or obsolete school buildings and other school property;
h. Provide for the transportation of pupils who reside a distance from established schools;
i. Determine the amount to be paid by the Territory for tuition of non-resident pupils in city and other schools and provide for the payment thereof.
j. Prescribe rules and regulations for the certification of teachers and shall have authority to establish minimum standards for certificates, which standards shall not be less than the minimum prescribed by law. Such standards as prescribed by the Board of Education shall not affect the validity of certificates issued before such standards become effective. The Board, however, may require that renewal of certificates be made in accordance with the standards established by it.
k. Classify teachers and officers and items of expense of schools in incorporated cities and incorporated school districts and fix the maximum salaries and maximum items of expense that will be allowed in calculating such refunds;
l. Prescribe the qualifications and classification of all teachers; appoint, discharge and prescribe the duties of teachers and other persons employed in the rural schools and fix their compensation;
m. Constitute the final court of appeals in all educational controversies, and shall delegate to the Commissioner of Education the execution of all policies decided upon;
n. Supervise the expenditures of the funds appropriated for the use of the schools of the Territory, except those appropriated for the University of Alaska, and its decision in these matters shall be final;

c. Do and perform every other thing necessary to secure the efficient and economic administration of the rural public schools, including the establishment of special schools and correspondence schools.

p. Study the educational conditions and needs of the public schools of the Territory and adopt or recommend plans for the improvement of the administration and efficiency thereof, and shall incorporate into the biennial report of the Commissioner of Education the report of its activities, which shall include recommendations for the enactment of such legislation as it may deem necessary for the improvement of the Territorial school system.

The Commissioner of Education.--The Board of Education appoints a Commissioner of Education to serve for a period of four years. The Commissioner is the executive officer and secretary of the Board of Education and is responsible to them.

No one shall hold the office of Commissioner of Education who is not a citizen of the United States and who has not the qualifications required of a teacher in the high schools of the Territory.

"The Commissioner is charged with the responsibility of properly administering the schools, keeping accurate records and reports, issuing teachers' certificates,

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8Ibid., Part I, Art. 3, Sec. 11-12.
inspecting and accrediting the public schools, issuing a school bulletin, and submitting a biennial report to the Governor."

**Local administration.**—The law provides for five classes of schools for the purpose of local administration in their respective locations. There are school districts in incorporated cities, known as city schools; incorporated district schools in incorporated school districts; rural schools in communities outside incorporated cities and incorporated districts; and special schools in communities where there are too few children for the organization of regular school districts.

Each incorporated city constitutes a school district, and it is the duty of its city council to provide the buildings and funds for the maintenance of the public schools. Local supervision and control is under an elective school board of three members, and it is the duty and power of these boards to employ teachers, provide for the maintenance of the school buildings, submit reports to the Commissioner of Education, and prepare a budget for the city council.

The people of a town or settlement outside of an incorporated town, if there is a population of 100 or more and 30 children of school age, may incorporate a school.

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district. An elected board of five members is the administrative authority in incorporated school districts.

An independent school district may be incorporated by the residents of an incorporated city and the adjacent territory, provided they do not include more than 50 square miles. This district likewise is under the direction of a board of five members, who levy property taxes and control school affairs. 14

The Commissioner of Education may establish rural schools in localities where there are only twelve children of school age, and he may also provide for special schools where there are only six children of school age. 15

Financing

Source of funds for public school support.-- Territorial schools are supported mainly from two funds-- the Alaska Fund and the current public school fund. The Alaska Fund consists of funds from Federal license collected outside incorporated towns and set aside for use outside incorporated areas. The current public school fund consists of proceeds from the Territorial school tax of $5.00 on all able-bodied male residents between the ages of 21 and 50, of twenty-five

13 Ibid., Part I, Art. 5, Secs. 29-44.
14 Ibid., Part I, Art. 6, Secs. 45-59.
15 Ibid., Part II, Art. 3, Secs. 5-6.
per cent of receipts of National Forest Reserves of Alaska; of fifty percent of receipts of Alaska Game Commission; and of appropriations especially for the public education of the Territory made by the Legislature.  

The entire expense of the rural and special schools is borne by the Territory, and a refund of from seventy to eighty percent is made to the incorporated areas for expenditures of teachers' and janitors' salaries, heat, water, light, and textbooks. The local communities supply the remainder of the support for incorporated schools from local taxation - usually property.  

Objections to the present system of financing.—The chief objection that has been raised to the present way in which the Territorial schools are financed is that persons living outside incorporated areas contribute nothing to the support of their schools even though in many instances they are entirely financially able to contribute. This system not only deprives the Territory of a source of revenue for its schools, but leads to an attitude of indifference to public education.

There is also a great deal of criticism of the system of refunds to the incorporated cities and districts because

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16 Charles F. Reid, Education in the Territories and Outlying Possessions of the United States, p. 63.
they are mechanical rather than based upon a principle of equalization. The different cities are not equally able to contribute toward the support of education. Some of them have industries which easily supply the necessary funds, while others find it very difficult to raise their share of school costs.

In 1934, in an effort to remedy this situation, the Commissioner of Education recommended a plan for basing the year's refund on the average daily attendance for the previous year. This would supply the local boards with reliable information "as to the amount of money available, would encourage the securing of better attendance, and would eliminate the delay in making refunds."

Educational Policy and Curriculum

Educational policy. -- The Territorial Board of Education has never made any statement of definite policy, but the Territorial school system resembles the state systems of the United States in general organization, curriculum, and school practices. The system in general is hindered by small enrollments, limited funds, and lack of constant curriculum construction.

18 Charles F. Reid, *Education in the Territories and Outlying Possessions of the United States*, p. 66.
Curriculum.--Since the origin of the Territorial school there have been four formal courses of study issued. Two of these, in 1923 and 1926, were for elementary schools, and two, in 1922 and 1929, for high schools, and all four were prepared by Lester D. Henderson, the Commissioner of Education from 1917 to 1929.

The program of the larger elementary schools lists the subjects as follows: "reading and literature, English, arithmetic, hygiene and physiology, geography and nature study, history and citizenship, spelling, penmanship, music, art, manual and household arts, and physical training and supervised play." In the smaller schools there is a lack of curricular offerings because most of them are served by one teacher, and there is very little equipment.

Because of the large percentage of native enrollment in the rural schools, the curriculum is not adequate to the needs of the pupils. This factor probably has caused the dropping out and retardation of the pupils in rural districts.

Mr. Henderson recognized, in his course for secondary schools, that preparation for college was not the only aim of high schools; however, this is the dominant aim in his course of study.

The secondary course includes academic subjects such as English, social science, world history, United States
history, civics, economics, algebra, plane geometry, solid geometry, trigonometry, general science, biology, physics, chemistry, Latin, French, and Spanish. There are also commercial subjects and subjects of utilitarian nature, such as home economics and manual arts. The course of study is fine, and the subjects are many; but in this instance, as in all schools in Alaska, there is the obstacle of small enrollment and teaching personnel. This fact makes it necessary to rotate the subjects in a cycle extending over a period of years.

There remains a great improvement to be made in the curricula, especially along lines of recent developments in the educational theory.

In the smaller schools the teachers use the course of study and the textbooks to which they have become accustomed before coming to Alaska. As a result there is no uniformity of textbooks or equipment. There is also a delay in securing supplies and books because, in many instances, the board does not purchase these until the arrival of the new teacher.

In an effort to remedy this situation the Commissioner of Education established the Territorial Textbook Commission to adopt books to be used over a period of four years. Non-

\[Ibid., p. 85.\]

\[Ibid., p. 86.\]
adopted books are unlawful and cannot be used except as supplementary material.24

Vocational Education

Origin of vocational education in Alaska.--In 1917, Congress passed "An Act to provide for the promotion of vocational education; to provide for cooperation with the States in the promotion of such education in agriculture, home economics and trades and industries; to provide for the cooperation of the States in the preparation of teachers of vocational subjects; and to appropriate money and regulate its expenditures."25 By the terms of this Act, the Federal Vocational Act, the Territorial Legislature matched the Federal funds with an appropriation of its own.

The Federal Government, until 1937, under the George-Ellzey Act supplied half of the salaries of supervisors and teachers. Since 1937 two-thirds of the salaries and one-half of the supervisors' and teachers' travel and per diem expenses has been paid by the Federal Government, under the provisions of the George-Deen Act.26

In 1937, the first time in twenty years, the Territorial

24 Ibid., pp. 100-101.
Legislature failed to appropriate the funds to match the Federal appropriation. This prevents the Territory of Alaska from deriving full benefits from the George-Been Act, and means that, if a vocational education program is to be continued, it must be financed by Territorial and municipal funds.\textsuperscript{27}

**Importance of a vocational program to Alaska.**—The great need for vocational education cannot be over-estimated, and this need may be shown by the 1930 census. At the time of that census 93.9 percent of the people of Alaska were employed in trades and industries, and only 6.1 percent were employed in professions. If vocational education is not continued, it would mean that the entire educational program of the Territory was for only 6.1 percent of the population. It would be neglecting the training for the other 93.9 percent.

During 1937 hundreds of boys went to the states to receive education in one trade or another because they could not get that training in the Territory. Hundreds of boys and girls leave off their education with no training for a job. If the people of Alaska want to keep their boys and girls at home, they must make some provision to train them for positions in their native Territory. These

\textsuperscript{27} Charles F. Reid, *Education in the Territories and Outlying Possessions of the United States*, pp. 96-97.

positions require vocational training.

The following table shows the types of vocational classes which were conducted in 1936-37, their location, the number of meetings or number of hours the classes were taught, and the enrollment in each:

**TABLE 1**

**VOCATIONAL CLASSES CONDUCTED IN ALASKAN SCHOOLS 1936-1937**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Name of Course</th>
<th>No. Meetings or Hours</th>
<th>Enrolment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Evening Agricultural Classes</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ketchikan</td>
<td>Home Gardening</td>
<td>11 Meetings</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Palmer</td>
<td>Diversified Farming</td>
<td>8 Meetings</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Experimental</td>
<td>Diversified Farming</td>
<td>8 Meetings</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Latto</td>
<td>Diversified Farming</td>
<td>8 Meetings</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>All-Day Agricultural Classes</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kodiak</td>
<td>Vocational Agriculture</td>
<td>Daily</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Palmer</td>
<td>Vocational Agriculture</td>
<td>Daily</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bay View</td>
<td>Vocational Agriculture</td>
<td>Daily</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Evening Trade and Industrial Classes</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Juneau</td>
<td>Carpentry</td>
<td>20 Meetings</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Douglas</td>
<td>Carpentry</td>
<td>16 Meetings</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>All-Day trade and Industrial classes</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Juneau</td>
<td>Carpentry</td>
<td>Daily</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seward</td>
<td>General Shop</td>
<td>Daily</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Ibid., pp. 20-23
### Part-Time Trade Extension Classes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Name of Course</th>
<th>Meetings or Hours</th>
<th>Enrollment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Juneau</td>
<td>Cooking (CCC)</td>
<td>240 Hours</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ketchikan</td>
<td>Cooking (CCC)</td>
<td>240 Hours</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ketchikan</td>
<td>Navigation</td>
<td>84 Hours</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kodiak</td>
<td>Marine Engines</td>
<td>24 Hours</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nome</td>
<td>Radio Repair</td>
<td>60 Hours</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Petersburg</td>
<td>Navigation</td>
<td>120 Hours</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seward</td>
<td>Navigation</td>
<td>40 Hours</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sitka</td>
<td>Diesel Engines</td>
<td>40 Hours</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Skagway</td>
<td>Basket Making</td>
<td>120 Hours</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wrangell</td>
<td>Navigation</td>
<td>40 Hours</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Evening Home Economics Classes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Name of Course</th>
<th>Meetings or Hours</th>
<th>Enrollment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Anchorage</td>
<td>Knitting</td>
<td>40 Hours</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Douglas</td>
<td>Foods and Clothing</td>
<td>32 Hours</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Douglas</td>
<td>Foods Demonstration</td>
<td>6 Hours</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Juneau</td>
<td>Foods for the Family</td>
<td>23 Hours</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Juneau</td>
<td>Foods Demonstration</td>
<td>42 Hours</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Juneau</td>
<td>Knitting</td>
<td>20 Hours</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nome</td>
<td>Knitting</td>
<td>40 Hours</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nome</td>
<td>Household Problems</td>
<td>44 Hours</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Petersburg</td>
<td>House Furnishings</td>
<td>44 Hours</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Petersburg</td>
<td>Clothing for the Family</td>
<td>20 Hours</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seldovia</td>
<td>Knitting</td>
<td>40 Hours</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seldovia</td>
<td>Household Problems</td>
<td>40 Hours</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sitka</td>
<td>Foods for the Family</td>
<td>20 Hours</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sitka</td>
<td>Art Metal</td>
<td>20 Hours</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sitka</td>
<td>Clothing for the Family</td>
<td>14 Hours</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wrangell</td>
<td>Clothing for the Family</td>
<td>34 Hours</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Part-Time Home Economics Classes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Name of Course</th>
<th>Meetings or Hours</th>
<th>Enrollment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cordova</td>
<td>Knitting</td>
<td>40 Hours</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cordova</td>
<td>Knitting</td>
<td>32 Hours</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Douglas</td>
<td>Foods for the Family</td>
<td>24 Hours</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fairbanks</td>
<td>Knitting</td>
<td>30 Hours</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ketchikan</td>
<td>Household Problems</td>
<td>30 Hours</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### TABLE 1--Continued

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Name of course</th>
<th>No. Meetings or Hours</th>
<th>Enrolment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ketchikan</td>
<td>Foods Demonstration</td>
<td>33 Hours</td>
<td>424</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Metlakatla</td>
<td>Foods Demonstration</td>
<td>6 Hours</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nome</td>
<td>Knitting</td>
<td>44 Hours</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nome</td>
<td>Foods for the Family</td>
<td>20 Hours</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nome</td>
<td>Knitting</td>
<td>48 Hours</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seward</td>
<td>Clothing for the Family</td>
<td>40 Hours</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sitka</td>
<td>Clothing for the Family</td>
<td>20 Hours</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sitka</td>
<td>Tailoring</td>
<td>20 Hours</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wrangell</td>
<td>Foods Demonstration</td>
<td>15 Hours</td>
<td>61</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**All-Day Home Economics Classes**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Name of course</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Enrolment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Anchorage</td>
<td>Foods and Clothing</td>
<td>Daily</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bethel</td>
<td>Foods and Clothing</td>
<td>Daily</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fairbanks</td>
<td>Foods and Clothing</td>
<td>Daily</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Juneau</td>
<td>Foods and Clothing</td>
<td>Daily</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kodiak</td>
<td>Foods and Clothing</td>
<td>Daily</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Palmer</td>
<td>Foods and Clothing</td>
<td>Daily</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seward</td>
<td>Foods and Clothing</td>
<td>Daily</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wrangell</td>
<td>Foods and Clothing</td>
<td>Daily</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The previous information indicates that much has already been done in vocational education, but it proves most conclusively that much more needs to be done, and many more subjects need to be introduced.

### Conclusion

This new education system rapidly grew from its first four schools of 1901. Nome became an incorporated school district in 1902, and four more were incorporated in 1903. By 1916 there were 14 incorporated towns which maintained their own schools, and the total enrollment
was 1,693. The years following 1916 saw little growth in the number of new incorporated schools, but a gradual increase year by year in enrollment.  

Statistics were not kept until 1927, but the following table is interesting in that it shows the increase in city school enrollments from that time.  

| TABLE 2 |
| INCREASE IN ALASKA'S CITY SCHOOL ENROLLMENTS 1927-1938 |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>City</th>
<th>1927-1928</th>
<th>1935-1936</th>
<th>1937-1938</th>
<th>Per cent Increase</th>
<th>Per cent Decrease</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Anchorage</td>
<td>339</td>
<td>467</td>
<td>519</td>
<td>53.09</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cordova</td>
<td>213</td>
<td>231</td>
<td>218</td>
<td>1.04</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Craig</td>
<td>97</td>
<td>98</td>
<td>98</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Douglas</td>
<td>128</td>
<td>88</td>
<td>76</td>
<td></td>
<td>39.06</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eagle</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>8</td>
<td></td>
<td>11.11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fairbanks</td>
<td>293</td>
<td>355</td>
<td>432</td>
<td>47.78</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Haines</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>58</td>
<td></td>
<td>2.85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Juneau</td>
<td>573</td>
<td>822</td>
<td>841</td>
<td>46.77</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ketchikan</td>
<td>653</td>
<td>838</td>
<td>867</td>
<td>32.77</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nome</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>11.82</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nome</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>160</td>
<td>143</td>
<td>58.88</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Petersburg</td>
<td>233</td>
<td>278</td>
<td>294</td>
<td>26.18</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seward</td>
<td>131</td>
<td>176</td>
<td>170</td>
<td>29.77</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sitka</td>
<td>104</td>
<td>121</td>
<td>135</td>
<td>29.80</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Skagway</td>
<td>96</td>
<td>88</td>
<td>101</td>
<td>5.21</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Valdez</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>68</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wrangell</td>
<td>173</td>
<td>207</td>
<td>199</td>
<td>15.03</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Charcoal Point</td>
<td>82</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>67</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

30 Charles F. Reid, Education in the Territories and Outlying Possessions of the United States, p. 45.

CHAPTER IV

THE UNIVERSITY OF ALASKA

Introduction

The Road to Higher Education begins in Fairbanks, too, and winds out from town four miles to the Hill of Birches which one climbs to "The Farthest North College in the World," a going concern for several years past. Everything here is farthest, you see, and so we are not content with merely a comparatively "higher" education, but must call it highest! The college seal shows the profile of Denali, the mountain which is faced across the wide Tanana from that Hill of Birches, and it bears the ambitious motto Ad Summum - to the very top. To live up to the rarified atmosphere of McKinley's summit may tax our poor human lungs; but here at the Alaska Agricultural College and School of Mines, the last of the land grant colleges, we take our fling at it.  

History and Laws

Origin.—The Congress of the United States has made many grants of public lands to states and territories for the purpose of establishing colleges. The University of Alaska was the last of these land grant colleges.

When, in 1917, the Legislature of the Territory of Alaska, was extended the authority to establish and maintain a public school system for the Territory, it accepted these lands which had been set aside by Congress for the use of a Territorial College and School of Mines, and it accepted

1 Mary Lee Davis, Uncle Sam's Attic, pp. 324-325.
the "monies appropriated for the benefit of State and Territorial Colleges of Agriculture and Mechanic Arts." 2

The same year the Legislature established a corporation under the name "The Alaska Agricultural College and School of Mines" and appropriated a sum of $60,000 to erect the necessary buildings. In 1921 an additional appropriation of $41,000 was made to complete the buildings, and in the fall of 1922, the Agricultural College and School of Mines opened its doors.

The University of Alaska succeeded to all rights of the Alaska Agricultural College and School of Mines in 1935. This new University consists of the College of Agriculture, the School of Mines, the Department of Agricultural Experiment Station, and the Department of Agricultural Extension.

Administration.—The governing body of the University of Alaska is the Board of Regents. This Board is composed of eight men, citizens of the United States and of the Territory, who have been appointed by the Governor and approved by a majority of the members of the Senate and House of Representatives of the Territory.

The Board appoints a president of the University, who

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2 Charles F. Reid, Education in the Territories and Outlying Possessions of the United States, pp. 88-39.
3 Ibid., p. 39.
4 The Compiled School Laws of the Territory of Alaska, Part I, Art. 15, Sec. 127.
acts as an ex-officio member of the Board, and who is the
general director of the institution in all of its departments.
He appoints the heads of the departments and other professors
and officers to the positions established by the Board of
Regents.

Financing.--The Federal Government and the Territorial
Government share about equally in the financing of the
University through annual appropriations. The University
also receives grants for its extension courses and its
agricultural experiment stations.

Curriculum and Service

Curriculum.--"The University offers four-year curricula
leading to bachelor's degrees in arts, science, agriculture,
business administration, and education." A science degree
is given for four years' work in civil engineering, chemistry,
geneneral science, home economics, pre-medicine, mining,
metallurgy, and geology.

There is a specialized bachelor's degree after a five
year course in civil engineering, mining and metallurgy
engineering, and geology and mining.

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4 Charles F. Reid, Education in the Territories and
Outlying Possessions of the United States, p. 89.

5 The Compiled School Laws of the Territory of Alaska,
Part I, Art. 15, Sec. 132.

6 Charles F. Reid, Education in the Territories and
Outlying Possessions of the United States, p. 89.

7 Ibid.
Fortunately, the University is conducted to serve the practical needs of the Territory. It emphasizes scientific education and professional training, and usual college subjects are rather neglected.

The following table shows that 90 per cent of the students of 1938-39 were enrolled in specialized courses.\(^8\)

**TABLE 3**

PUPILS' SELECTED COURSES OF STUDY IN THE UNIVERSITY OF ALASKA 1938-1939

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course</th>
<th>Enrolment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Agriculture</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arts and Letters</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Business Administration</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chemistry</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Civil Engineering</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General Science</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Home Economics</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School of Mines</td>
<td>74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Specials</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>216</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Services.**—The University offers the above full-time courses and charges only a community fee of $15 per semester for the privileges of the University. It offers Territorial scholarships which are equal to two years' dormitory rent to the highest ranking student at each Territorial school, but it fails to interest the youth of Alaska. The majority

of the students who attend the University are residents of Fairbanks, where the school is located, or are students of the states.\(^9\)

In addition to offering extension and short courses, the University operates two experiment stations in the field of agriculture. One of these is located at Fairbanks and the other is at Matanuska\(^{10}\). Both are proving to the citizens of Alaska and the entire world the tremendous possibilities for agriculture in the future development of the Territory.

\(^9\)Ibid., pp. 90-91

\(^{10}\)Ibid., p. 91
CHAPTER V

ALASKA'S TEACHERS

Teachers in the Territorial Schools

Certification.—Those persons who hold teaching positions
in any of the Territorial schools must hold a certificate
issued by the Commissioner of Education.

The law provides for four kinds of certificates —
elementary school certificates, high school certificates,
life certificates, and temporary certificates, and the
Commissioner is authorized to honor certificates which have
been issued by any of the states and which have equivalent
requirements.

Elementary teaching certificates are presented to
those who have completed a two-year normal course or who
have completed a two- or three-year course in any approved
college, if the course included twelve semester hours of
education. These certificates are valid for three years
and may be renewed if the holder has been engaged in
educational work during one-half of this period. These

1 The Compiled School Laws of the Territory of Alaska,
Part 1, Art. 10, Sec. 75.
2 Ibid., Part I, Art. 10., Sec. 77.
certificates entitle the holders to teach any grade from kindergarten to the ninth grade inclusive.

High school certificates are issued to those who have completed a four-year course in an approved college or university. These certificates are valid for five years and may be renewed if the holders have been engaged in educational work during one-half of this period.

Life certificates are issued to the holders of elementary or high school certificates upon the completion of five years' successful teaching in Alaska and one year's study beyond the minimum requirements of either of the certificates.

The Commissioner of Education may also issue temporary certificates for a period of a year to competent persons. These certificates are subject to renewal in instances when an emergency exists.

The teaching staff.---The local boards of education in incorporated cities make the appointments of teachers, principals, and superintendents, and in the rural and special schools the Commissionery of Education makes the appointments.

The teaching staff compares favorably in academic and professional qualifications, salaries and the like to those in small rural schools in the Western States. The

3 Ibid., Part I, Art. 10., Secs. 78-81.
4 Ibid., Part II, Art. 3, Sec. 5.
5 United States Department of Interior Bulletin, Public Education in Alaska, 1936, p. 32.
following table shows that considerable improvement has been made in preparation and experience on the part of the teachers during the past ten years.\(^6\)

**Table 4**

**Comparisons of Teachers' Qualifications**
1937-1938 to 1937-1938

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Qualifications</th>
<th>1937-38</th>
<th>1937-38</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>High School Teachers</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Per cent with M. A. or B. S. degrees</td>
<td>8.00</td>
<td>24.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Per cent with A. B. or B. S. degrees</td>
<td>89.65</td>
<td>100.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Per cent with graduate training</td>
<td>56.29</td>
<td>76.37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average years teaching experience</td>
<td>5.58</td>
<td>3.37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average years teaching experience in</td>
<td>1.96</td>
<td>4.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alaska</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elementary Teachers (Cities)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number with M. A. or B. S. degrees</td>
<td>3.00</td>
<td>3.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Per cent with A. B. or B. S. Degrees</td>
<td>12.79</td>
<td>35.61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Per cent who were 3-year Normal Graduates</td>
<td>77.90</td>
<td>77.22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Per cent with graduate training</td>
<td>33.53</td>
<td>45.55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average years teaching experience</td>
<td>7.29</td>
<td>10.37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average years teaching experience in</td>
<td>3.95</td>
<td>4.95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alaska</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teachers, Rural Schools</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number with M. A. or B. S. degrees</td>
<td>3.00</td>
<td>3.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Per cent with A. B. or B. S. degrees</td>
<td>16.00</td>
<td>49.61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Per cent who were 3-year Normal Graduates</td>
<td>43.67</td>
<td>66.08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Per cent with graduate training</td>
<td>25.22</td>
<td>45.67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average years teaching experience</td>
<td>7.38</td>
<td>9.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average years teaching experience in</td>
<td>3.56</td>
<td>5.46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alaska</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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This Table proves that the teaching personnel is well trained and quite experienced. It also indicates that the rural teachers are better trained than the city elementary school teachers.

Only a small portion of the teachers in Alaska are either born or trained in the Territory. In 1937-1938, of the 319 teachers in the Territorial System, only 28 were born in Alaska, and only 17 were educated in Alaska. There are several reasons why more teachers whose homes are in Alaska are not selected for positions. One of these is the fact that most of the school boards require that their teachers have at least two years experience. Another is the fact that a good many of the superintendents fill their vacancies with persons who make application to them while they are at summer schools in the states.

The Territorial Board of Education is encouraging the city school boards to accept at least one teacher without experience. They believe that with proper supervision these persons will develop into strong teachers.

The Board is also advocating that the University of Alaska offer summer schools in order to draw more Alaskan teachers in contact with the University. They believe also that this might attract a number of superintendents who would profit by the courses and who would select teachers while in attendance there. It is not desired that all of

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Charles F. Reid, *Education in the Territories and Outlying Possessions of the United States*, p. 93.
the teachers be educated at the University, but it is desired that many more teachers and superintendents attend this University and learn of the institution and the Territory.\textsuperscript{8}

Teacher associations.--The long distances between communities make Territory-wide parent-teacher organization impossible. There is, however, an Alaska Education Association organized after the first Teachers Institute in 1922. Also in 1922 there was an Inter-School Association formed in southeastern Alaska, and in 1923 the Alaska Council of Parent-Teacher Associations was formed.\textsuperscript{9}

Teachers in the Federal Schools

Qualifications.--Until recently the requirements for teachers in Federal schools were quite low. When the Board of Education was in charge of the schools, the minimum qualifications were only two years of normal school training and one year of experience, and a large percentage of the teachers were found to have only high school education. In 1937 the United States Office of Indian Affairs set the requirements at the completion of a four-year college course or a three-year course in a teacher-training school.


\textsuperscript{9} Charles F. Reid, Education in the Territories and Outlying Possessions of the United States, p. 98
12 semester hours in education, and two years of experience in teaching and some rural community work.

In 1938, the standards were again revised, and the teachers were placed under Federal Civil Service. The minimum of formal qualifications was the completion of a four-year college course. The teachers must show that they know something of rural problems and are sympathetic with the people. They must have two years of teaching experience in which they have developed an educational program similar to the needs in the local areas. They are also required to take an oral examination to determine whether they have the following qualifications:

1. Ability to plan and carry through original programs.
2. Ability to adjust quickly to changing conditions and programs.
3. Ability to co-operate with others.
4. Attitude of appreciation of, and respect for, primitive cultures.
5. Ability to build an educational program on needs, customs, and activities of the local area.
6. Ability to discuss intelligently the social and economic problems of low-income groups.
7. Ability to discuss the influence of natural resources upon the local standard of living.
8. Ability and willingness to lead and participate in community enterprises.
9. Ability to adjust to association with a limited number of people in isolated situations.

There has been considerable sign of improvement in training and length of experience, and the change of qualifications in 1938 will result in more improvement.

Ibid., pp. 126-128.
within the next several years.

The teaching staff.—Vacancies in the Indian Service positions are, as indicated previously, made from eligibles on the Civil Service registers. Qualified Indians of one-fourth degree or more Indian blood are given preference for positions, and a program of apprenticeship has been arranged so that they may obtain the required experience.

Because many of the schools are in primitive villages, remote from civilization, the Service prefers married teachers without children. In many instances both the husband and wife are employed— one as a teacher and the other as a Special Assistant.

The teacher must widen the scope of his activities far beyond the schoolroom. He assumes the duties of "a community leader, an arbitrator in disputes, a censor of morals, a preserver of peace, and a public nurse and a medical advisor. He must have the courage and resourcefulness to cope successfully with all manner of emergencies."

The majority of the teaching personnel come from the Western states, but with the training of more natives, a more effective administration of native welfare and educational program may result. It is not desired to

11 Ibid., p. 128.
completely eliminate the whites in native schools, but more natives are desired to teach the crafts.

The entrance salary in the Service is $1800 per annum. The Office of Indian Affairs pays the transportation from Seattle to the destination, and in most instances, the teachers are provided with a residence or with rooms in the school building. A deduction of $20 a month is made from the teacher's salary. In the most remote places, it is often necessary to take a year's supply of food, and it is impossible to make any general statement as to the cost of living. They are allowed twenty-six days' leave with pay and fifteen days' sick leave with pay.

The school term is usually nine months, but in most cases the teachers remain on duty the entire year, devoting their attention to community work during the summer months.

14 Charles F. Reid, Education in the Territories and Outlying Possessions of the United States, p. 129.
16 Ibid., p. 2.
CHAPTER VI

THE FUTURE OF ALASKAN EDUCATION

It is difficult to predict the future of education in Alaska because it depends to such a great extent on population. At the present time sparsity of population in that area accounts for most of the problems in control and administration. These problems include the small average enrollment in the schools, the light teacher-per-pupil load, the large proportion of one-teacher schools, many schools which do not offer instruction in the upper grades of the elementary school, the virtual limitation of high school facilities to the cities, fairly large expenditures for transportation of pupils who live within convenient distances from the city schools, inadequate supervision, and difficulties in the enforcement of the compulsory school attendance law.¹

While the population has decreased since 1910, indications are that Alaska is getting rid of the final vestige of boom days and is settling down to a slow, steady, permanent growth. In order to insure this growth the territory needs immigrants, a reformed transportation system, a simplification of government, and capital.

¹Charles F. Reid, Education in the Territories and Outlying Possessions of the United States, p. 139.
Improved transportation will attract more people to Alaska, and they will be more likely to remain there through the winter months because the closer contact with the outside world will make living conditions there more attractive.\(^2\)

This problem of transportation has faced the territory since its purchase, and it seems that as a result of Alaska’s strategic location in the present war, it is at last being solved.

The United States Government is now building a highway to Fairbanks through Canada and is discussing plans for extending The Great Canadian Railroad to the same city. Once these projects are completed and the war is over, it is likely that much development will result.

A new system of government and adequate capital are needed to further develop this country. A solution to these problems is also likely to follow after the war if present interest continues.

Not until these other vital problems confronting Alaska are solved is Alaskan education likely to progress. The present system, however, will have to be revised in order to meet the demands of an increasing population.

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