

The Public Looks at
Education

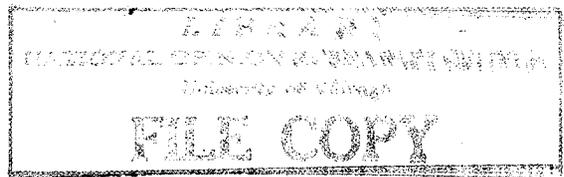


NATIONAL OPINION RESEARCH CENTER

UNIVERSITY OF DENVER

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Americans Look at Their Public Schools

This report serves two purposes:

1. It reveals nation-wide attitudes regarding our public schools and their problems.
2. It exposes areas of ignorance and misinformation regarding education in the United States.

It also indicates a need for more intensive surveys in various localities to determine public understanding of and reactions to specific educational policies.

Most Americans, in possession of varying degrees of information, are eager to express their opinions regarding educational problems. Some, however,—as is shown by comments on individual questions and by the rather high "Undecided" responses—are poorly informed and hesitate to voice their attitudes.

A rounded picture is presented by considering the opinions of various groups—men and women, old and young, rich and poor, white and Negroes, Democrats, Republicans, and non-voters, living in cities, towns, and rural areas in every part of the United States. That experts themselves disagree on many aspects of educational policy is shown by selected quotations from educators and legislators included to supplement the opinions of the layman.

Attitudes toward School Finance

Out of every 100 Americans—

- 54 think the public schools need more money to "do a good job,"
- 58 believe that teachers are "paid too little for the job they are expected to do,"
- 68 think that public school systems should be "mostly controlled" by the state rather than by the federal government, but
- 69 favor having "the federal government turn over a certain amount of money to the states every year for their schools."

Educational Policies and Practices

What do people think, specifically, about public education as it functions in schoolrooms in every part of the United States—in terms of what is taught and how it is taught, in terms of the children who emerge from these schoolrooms?

To ascertain these attitudes the National Opinion Research Center asked several questions—

"What do you think is the most important thing for children to get from their education in school?"

"Are you satisfied with what they [your children] are getting from their education in school?" (Asked only of parents)

"Is there any kind of change you would like to see made in the public schools?"

Because of differences in background and experience, because of variations in personal interests and habits of thought, people answer these questions in many different ways. Some look at the field of education very broadly indeed and reply in general terms. Many think chiefly of their own educational experiences or those of their children—of a particular school in a particular town.

Some people see education in terms of specific subjects and specific teaching situations. Many of this group express distrust, more or less articulate, of "progressive education" in its various aspects. A tendency to cling to known methods and subjects—to the good old "three R's," for example—and to distrust the new and modern is frequently apparent. What part accurate information and what part prejudice and rumor contribute to these opinions remains a matter for conjecture.

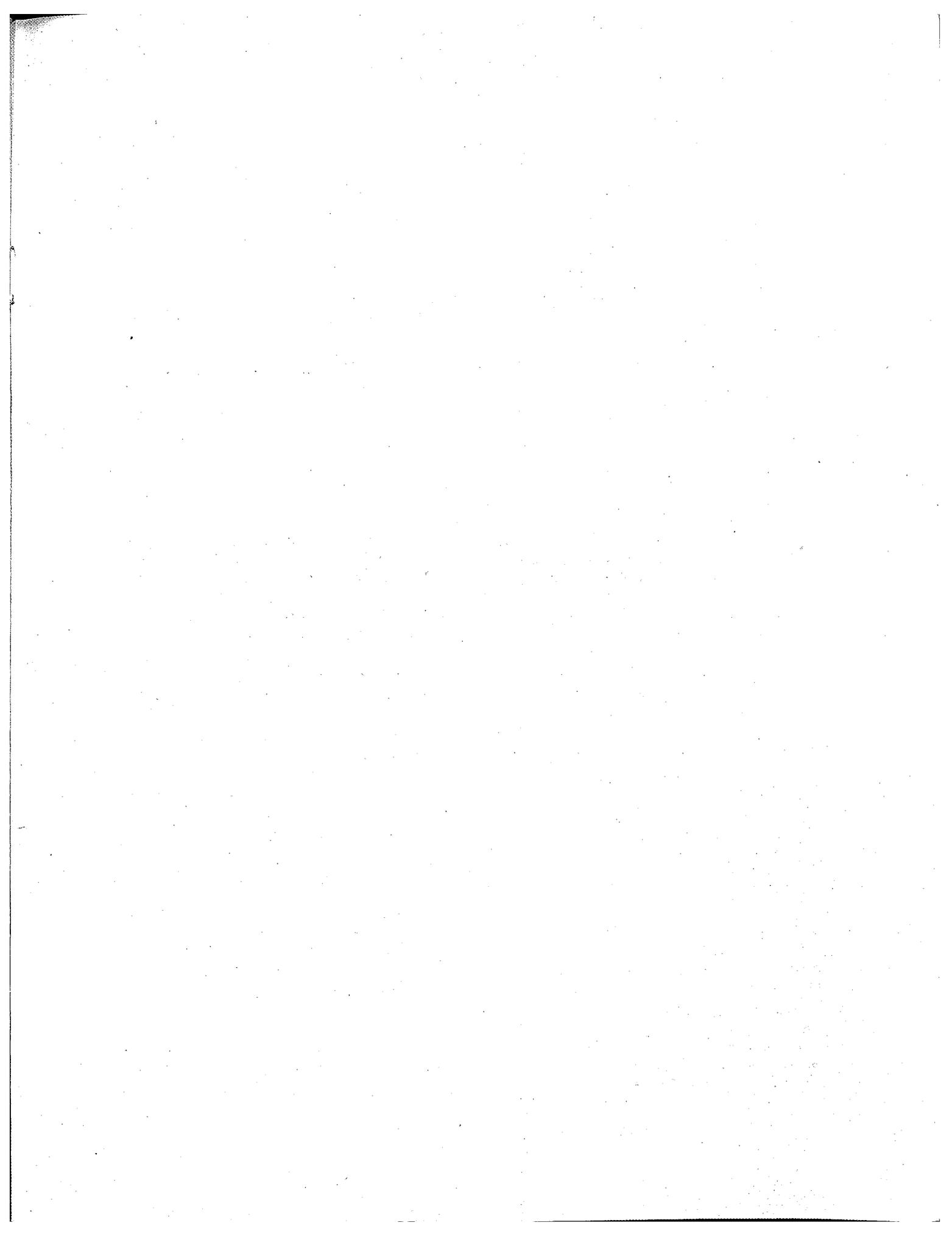
Still other people see education in terms, not of subject matter, but of individual children. These people are interested chiefly in habits and attitudes children acquire in the process of public education—in how well boys and girls learn to apply knowledge, to think for themselves, to get along with other people, to live as well as to earn a living. To some people, education is important chiefly in terms of schoolhouses and teachers, class schedules and marks, administration and politics.

Of parents with children in the public schools, eight out of ten report satisfaction with what their children are getting out of their schoolwork. While these parents are slightly more critical of public education than are persons without children in school, the differences in opinion are not, as a whole, significant.

When asked to name the most important things children should get from their public school education, an equal number of Americans rank **academic subjects** and **character education** of first importance. **Vocational training, citizenship education,** and experience in making **social adjustments** follow in order.

Of every 100 persons interviewed, 57 suggest **no changes** in the public schools as they are today. Most of these are noncommittal—replying merely "No" or "No changes" to the question, some indicate that they are definitely satisfied with the present system of education, while others feel they are too poorly informed to pass judgment regarding the schools.

Of those who do make suggestions, almost half mention changes in **curriculum** and **teaching methods**. A return to **traditional** subject matter emphasis and teaching methods would be more popular than more modern and "**progressive**" education. About a fourth of those with opinions mentioned changes in school **administration** and **organization** or the need for **improved physical equipment**. Almost as many stress the necessity for more **character** and **citizenship** education. A smaller number believe the greatest need is for **better qualified** and **better paid teachers**.



PART I

School Finance

Do the Schools Have the Money They Need To Do a Good Job?

More than half the public think that American schools need more money to do a good job. When only persons with opinions are considered, almost two out of three hold this belief:

"As far as you know, do all public schools in the United States have as much money as they need to do a good job?"

	All	Those with Opinions
Yes, they have enough.....	29 %	34 %
No, they need more.....	54	66
Undecided	17
	100 %	100 %

On this question, one person in six of the total cross-section is undecided, probably because of lack of information or lack of thinking regarding the problem.

The more education a person has, the more likely he is to express an opinion, and the more likely that opinion is to be that the schools need more money. More residents of the South and West than of other sections think the schools need more money. However, the New England and Middle Atlantic states are the only sections where less than a majority answer "No." Respondents in small towns are most convinced that schools have inadequate budgets. Persons in large metropolitan districts are most satisfied with the **status quo**. More Negroes than whites think the schools lack sufficient money to do a good job.

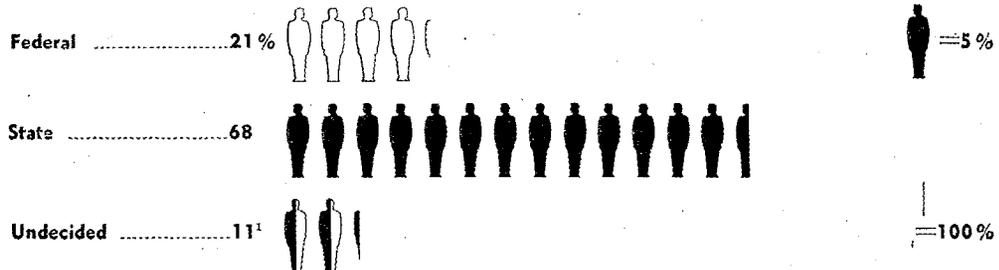
The chart on page 7 illustrates the most significant of these differences.

Federal Aid: Pro and Con

While public opinion definitely **opposes** federal **control** of education in the United States, a large majority of Americans as definitely **favor** federal **financial aid** to public education **through the states**.

NORC asked:

"Do you think that public school systems should be mostly controlled by the federal government, or mostly controlled by each state government?"



¹The 11 per cent "Undecided" include 1 per cent who say "Neither" and 1 per cent who say "It depends . . ."

Majorities of all groups within the population are agreed that the public school system should be mostly controlled by each state government. The largest minority favoring federal control of education—39 per cent—are found among Negro respondents.

A second question measured opinion on the specific issue of federal aid:

"Would you be in favor of or be against having the federal government turn over a certain amount of money to the states every year for their schools?"

	All	Those with Opinions
Favor	69%	77%
If the states control the actual expenditure.....	3	3
Against	18	20
Undecided	10	---
	100%	100%

THE OPPOSITION

The most striking difference of opinion on this question appears along political lines. More than twice as many Republicans as Democrats (30% to 14%) **oppose** federal aid to state public schools. Residents of the Midwest as a group are most against the proposal, with 23 per cent of those questioned in that area registering opposition, in contrast to a disapproving vote of only 11 per cent in the South.

The more educational background a person has, the more likely he is to oppose federal aid. By educational groups, the **opposition** vote divides: college — 25 per cent; high school — 18 per cent; grade school or less — 14 per cent.

WHAT THE PEOPLE SAY

Respondents were asked reasons for their attitudes on this issue. Of those **favoring** federal aid, most emphasize the need for equalizing educational opportunities, particularly between urban and rural schools and between the South and other sections. Some mention lower school taxes or higher salaries for teachers. A Baltimore housewife puts it this way: "The important thing is to get the education to the child, regardless of where the money comes from."

Of persons **opposed** to the idea, many suggest that there are too many federal taxes already. Some bring up the issue of states' rights — they feel that centralization of educational control would have dangerous implications. "We don't want the government subsidizing our children!" Others believe that the states are doing a satisfactory job now and further improvement is unnecessary.

WHAT EDUCATORS SAY:

PRO

In commenting upon NORC's findings, the February issue of the **New Jersey Educational Review** says in a leading editorial:

"It's about time that some attention is paid to the wishes of the people of America with respect to federal aid for education. This battle has been going on for a generation and the nation's educational leaders have been unable to convince the various United States Congresses that a system of disbursing federal funds to local school districts is essential to enable the schools of this nation to meet their many obligations to our citizenry.

"The old bogey of possible federal control has been depended upon through the years as a worthy stumbling block to every proposal for rendering federal assistance to inadequately financed school districts.

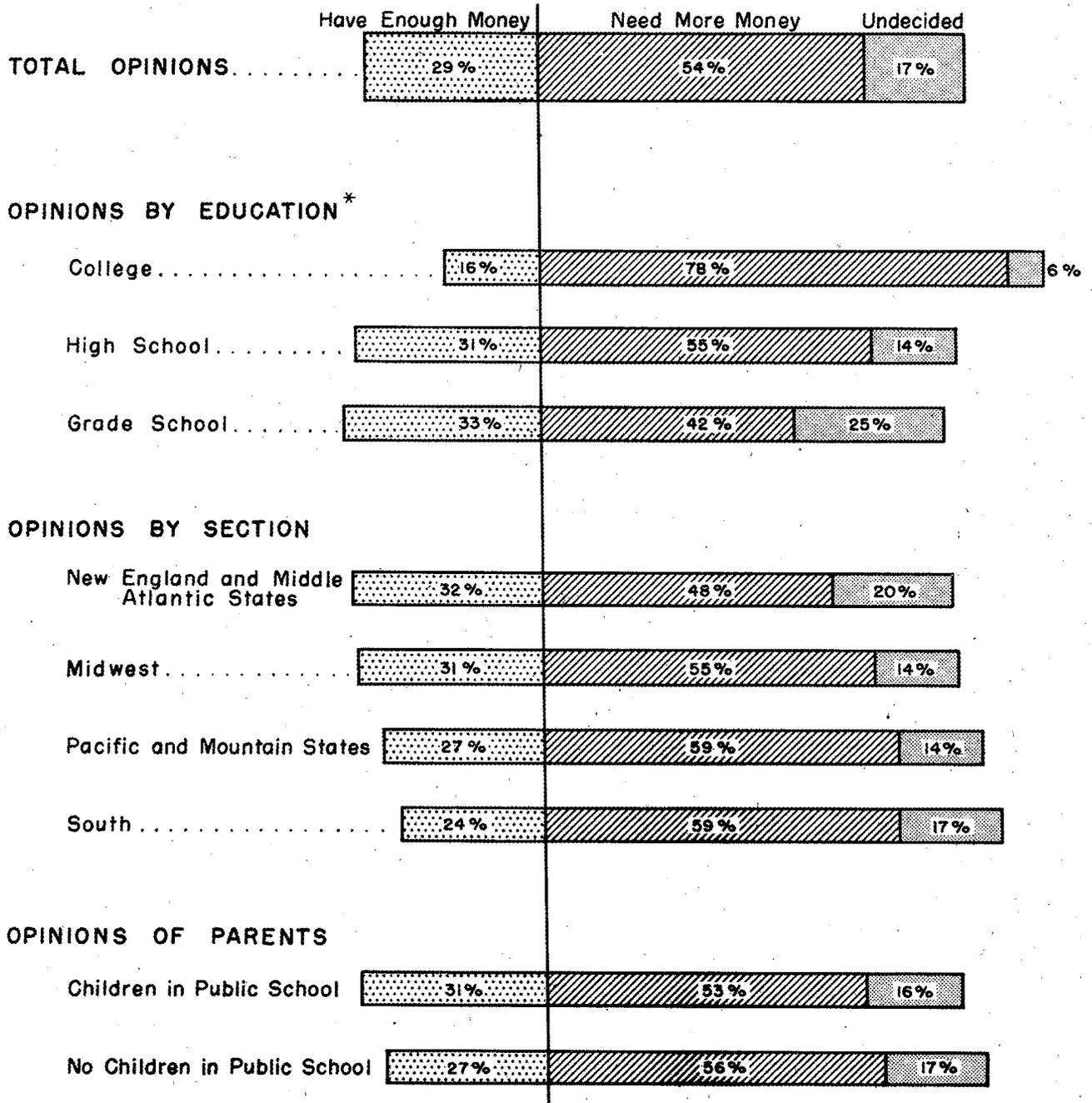
"This state is now suffering from the inadequate education of many of its adult citizens. Thousands have come here from poorer southern and western

states where they have not attended school at all, or for only a very few years. Many have not even completed the eighth grade. So long as citizens come to New Jersey from states that are unable to provide their children with the barest rudiments of knowledge and training necessary for a healthy life in a healthy democracy, just so long do we need to be interested in the educational standards of all 48 states.

"There are bills before our Congress in Washington today that would do much to overcome this condition. These bills are specific in their provisions AGAINST FEDERAL CONTROL. We now have a plan that will enable the schools to do the job that our citizens demand. If those who are opposing these bills do so because of their fear of federal control, they need have no worry on that score. They should rather worry more about federal emergency educational agencies that are inevitable in the post-war era if the schools are not given the proper financial encouragement at this time."

"As far as you know, do all public schools in the United States have as much money as they need to do a good job?"

PUBLIC SCHOOLS TODAY



NATIONAL OPINION RESEARCH CENTER
UNIVERSITY OF DENVER

*Persons interviewed in connection with NORC surveys are divided by education into three groups. The "college" category includes those who have attended college for a year or more. The "high school" group takes in those who have had one to four years of high school work. The third group includes all others—persons who have completed elementary school, persons who have attended, and some with no formal education at all.

Also commenting upon NORC's research, **The Elementary School Journal** for February, 1944, states:

"Almost anybody who knows about the great disparity among the states and among areas within a state in terms of their ability to support education and who also knows some of the facts about migration, especially since the war, believes that a procedure will have to be developed whereby the wealthier communities will partially support the educational programs in the poorer communities."

Richard L. Strout of **The Christian Science Monitor** (Quoted in the May 17 issue of **Scholastic**) puts it this way:

"Educational opportunities in the wealthier American States are the best in the world. But it is absurd to talk about equality where an American, because he is born in Mississippi, gets only 98 days of schooling a year, while an American, because he is born in Michigan, gets 171."

In a similar vein, John K. Moulton comments in **School and Society** (February 12, 1944):

"Passage of this bill [Senate Bill 637] or failure of passage, will not remove the need for intensive reappraisal of the ratio of liberty and equality in education today. . . . The new education must realize that a child born in Mississippi is as important to the nation as a child born in New York. The former State spends \$24 per pupil per year to educate its youth, the latter \$135. . . . A citizen of the United States (and children are citizens) must not be handicapped because he is born in a certain locality. Nor can the nation, in its self-interest, permit such sectional inequality."

In the May, 1944, issue of **Progressive Education**, Theodore Brameld, after referring to NORC's findings, postulates

"three premises which, among others underlie the case not only for federal aid but for control as well. These are (1) the desirability of equal educational opportunity for all citizens, regardless of race, creed, or economic status; (2) the necessity of an educated citizenry for the nation as a whole; and (3) the increasingly collective, interconnected structure of modern society. . . ."

"If any fact is established by our present economy, it is that educational equality is not and cannot be provided in large sections of the country—especially the South—unless the states are assisted by federal funds. Their own resources simply will not allow such equality with the richer states."

CON

In the **Illinois School Board Journal** (January-February, 1944) Paul J. Misner, Superintendent of Schools at Glencoe, Illinois, says in part:

"What evidence is there that federal aid begets federal control? As Al Smith would say, 'Look at the record.' Whether we like to face it or not the history of federal aid to education reveals a steady increase and expansion of federal control. . . ."

"We face now and must continue to face in the future the problem of more adequate support of public education in the United States. It is my deep conviction, however, that we should resist the temptation of depending too much on Washington for the solution of our problems. I have great faith that the people of the 48 states have enough ingenuity and resourcefulness to improve their schools without direction and dictation from the federal government."

William Montavon, Director, Department of Education, National Catholic Welfare Conference, in a letter to Senator Elbert D. Thomas, Chairman of the Senate Committee on Education and Labor, (quoted in the **Congressional Digest**, February, 1944) writes:

"Other factors than low salary schedules are responsible for the fact that teachers are leaving their positions and seeking employment elsewhere. In rural districts restrictions over the social life of teachers, unpleasant living conditions, lack of tenure, all contribute to dissatisfaction. . . ."

"Even though this bill [Senate Bill 637] specifically provides that no supervision or control over any school or State educational agency shall be vested in any agency or officer of the United States, experience proves that, wherever there is Federal aid, there must of necessity be some measure of Federal control. . . ."

"The Catholic position is one of opposition to any measure for Federal aid to education that would (a) interfere with local control of the purposes and processes of education, and (b) fail to make mandatory the inclusion of Catholic schools in its benefits."

In **Education** for September, 1943, L. E. Leipold of Minneapolis proposes a ten-point program of educational modernization and standardization for the purpose of

"forestalling the day when threatening federal control of our schools will otherwise become an actuality. Already the shadow of such control is falling over the schools of America, a shadow that will continue to become darker as the time goes on unless action takes place now before it is too late."

WHAT LEGISLATORS SAY:

The February, 1944, issue of the **Congressional Digest*** is devoted almost entirely to a discussion of the issue "Should Federal Financial Aid Be Extended to the Public Schools?" In the foreword the chief arguments for and against are quoted from a summary prepared by Charles A. Quattlebaum of the Legislative Reference Service of the Library of Congress:

"Proponents of Federal aid have pointed out:

- (1) that it is a necessary expansion of function of the Federal Government;
- (2) that it is Constitutional;
- (3) that precedents exist in appropriations such as those for land-grant colleges and vocational education;
- (4) that the Federal Government has an inescapable interest in public education based upon
 - (a) necessary training for citizenship,
 - (b) the mobility of the population, and
 - (c) the bestowing of citizenship on Negroes;
- (5) that Federal aid is necessary for the lessening of differences in educational opportunity due to
 - (a) differences among the States in wealth, income, and taxpaying ability,
 - (b) in the extent of absentee ownership of natural resources and industries, and
 - (c) in the proportionate number of educable children;
- (6) that Federal aid is compatible with the American economic system in general;
- (7) that it is compatible with the basic principle of democratic government that wealth should be taxed where found and services distributed where needed;
- (8) that Federal influence over education through existing programs is greater than such influence would occur through direct aid to the States; and
- (9) that existing 'surplus' funds of the States are temporary and are not generally available for the support of public schools.

"Opponents of Federal aid to the States for education have contended:

- (1) that public education is not a function of the Federal Government;
- (2) that Federal aid will inevitably result in Federal control;
- (3) that it will destroy local initiative;
- (4) that equalization of educational opportunity is impossible;
- (5) that the States should first 'put their financial houses in order';
- (6) that with a mounting national debt the Federal Government should not assume the additional obligation;
- (7) that Federal aid would be unfair to certain religious groups;
- (8) that it would require increased taxes falling most heavily on the 'poor' States;
- (9) that it would unfairly take money from 'rich' States to give to 'poor' States;

- (10) that it is unnecessary because the States are making the needed improvements;
- (11) that a majority of the States have large surplus funds, and that no State is unable to support its public schools."

PRO

Senator Lister Hill, Democrat, Alabama:

"There are very great differences in educational opportunity both among and within the States. These differences have been continuous over a long period of years, and all of the evidence available indicates that equally great differences will continue indefinitely into the future until and unless the Federal Government grants a reasonable amount of aid, at least to those States having the least financial ability to support public education and other public services.

"While the full significance of the differences in educational opportunity cannot be expressed in numbers, these differences at least are impressively reflected by such factors as school expenditures per pupil, average salary paid to teachers, per pupil value of school property, length of school term, and the ratio of high school enrollments to the number of persons of high school age. . . .

"Contrary to the opinion expressed by some people, the inequalities of educational opportunity pointed out above are not due primarily to differences in interest and effort among the States. Chief causes of these inequalities are differences in economic ability on the one hand and in the relative numbers of children to be educated on the other hand. . . .

"The distribution of economic resources in the United States makes an equitable distribution of public services supported by State and local taxes a matter of practical impossibility. Concentration in a few places of ownership, control, and taxpaying ability based on resources scattered throughout the Nation calls for an increasing degree of Federal participation in the support of educational services.

"The investigations of the Committee on Education and Labor have revealed that the type of Federal control that is most feared is the type which would permit Federal officials to interfere with or dominate the internal affairs of the schools such as the selection of teaching personnel, the determining of curricula, courses of study, and methods of teaching. All such interferences are positively prohibited by the provisions of the pending bill [Senate Bill 637]."

CON

Senator Robert W. Taft, Republican, Ohio:

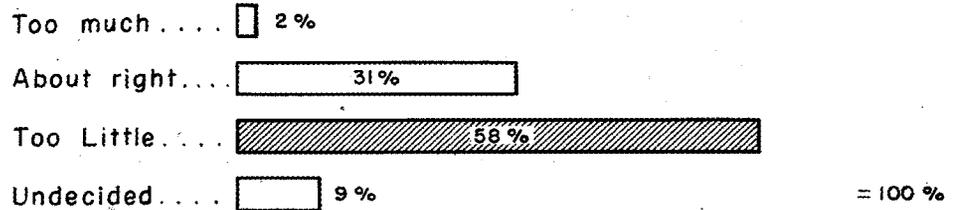
"Equalization . . . cannot be secured except by complete Federal control and direction. Everyone agrees that complete Federal control and direction are worse than the inequality which now exists. It may be fairly argued that if the States and local communities are to be left alone to run their schools as they see fit, and to spend Federal moneys for school subsidies as they see fit, such an arrangement is indefensible from the standpoint of the Federal Government and the taxpayers generally. Congress ought not to give away Federal funds to the States, with no Federal control over the spending of the funds. If, on the other hand, the Federal Government is to retain control over the expenditures and to dictate them, then it means Federal control of education—an alternative equally obnoxious. There is no middle ground."

*Congressional Digest, 23: 36, February, 1944.

Are Teachers Underpaid?

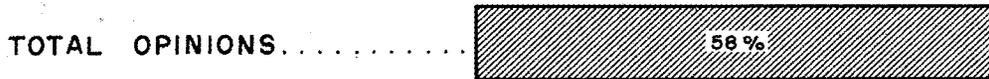
Nearly six out of ten people in the United States think teachers are paid **too little** for the job they are expected to do:

“In general, do you think teachers are paid too much or too little for the job they are expected to do?”

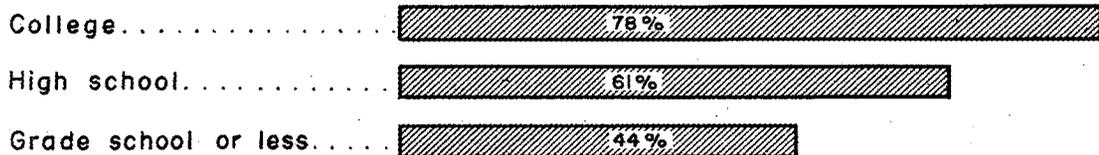


The spread of opinion occupationally and educationally is particularly significant. As can be seen by the charts that follow, persons with some college education and those in professional positions are most likely to consider teachers underpaid. As the scale descends occupationally and educationally, so the percentage thinking teachers are paid too little decreases. Possibly individuals tend to compare their own status with that of teachers and make their judgments accordingly.

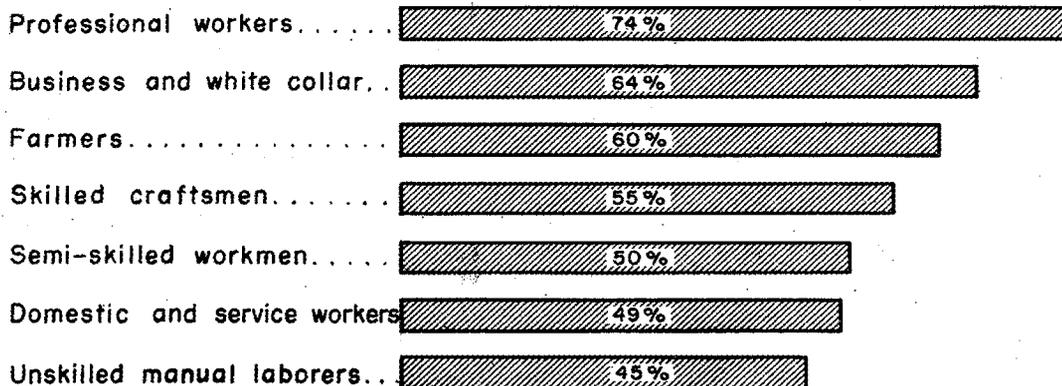
TEACHERS ARE UNDERPAID



OPINIONS BY EDUCATION



OPINIONS BY OCCUPATION



TEACHERS ARE UNDERPAID

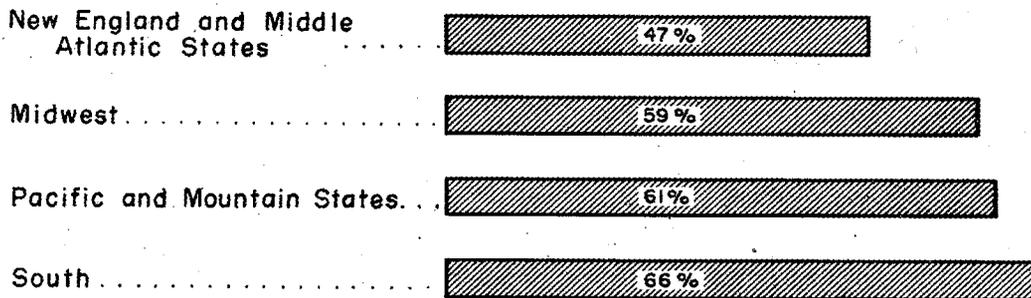


DIFFERENCES OF OPINION BY SECTION AND SIZE OF PLACE

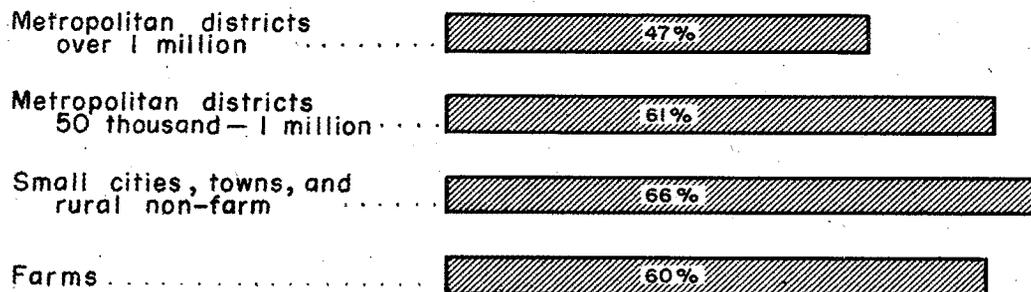
Residents of large metropolitan districts and persons living in the New England and Middle Atlantic states, where teachers' salaries average considerably higher than in the nation as a whole, are less inclined to think teachers underpaid than are residents of smaller communities or of other parts of the country.

Sectional and size of place break-downs divide as follows:

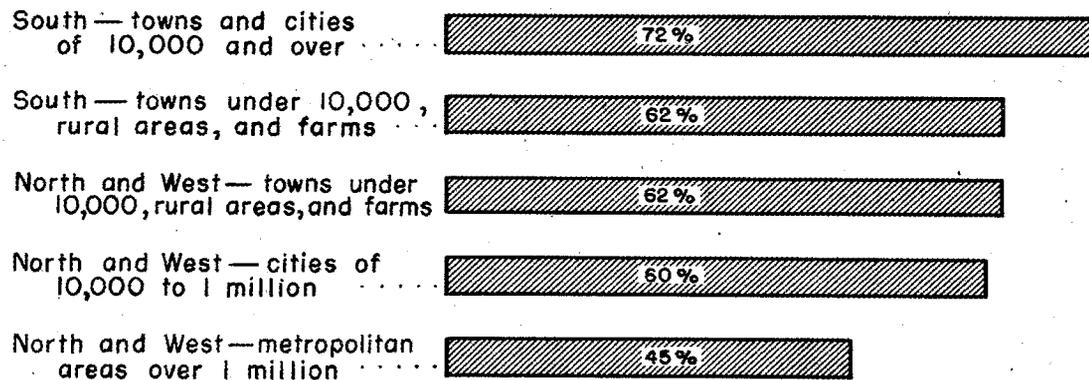
OPINIONS BY SECTION



OPINIONS BY SIZE OF PLACE



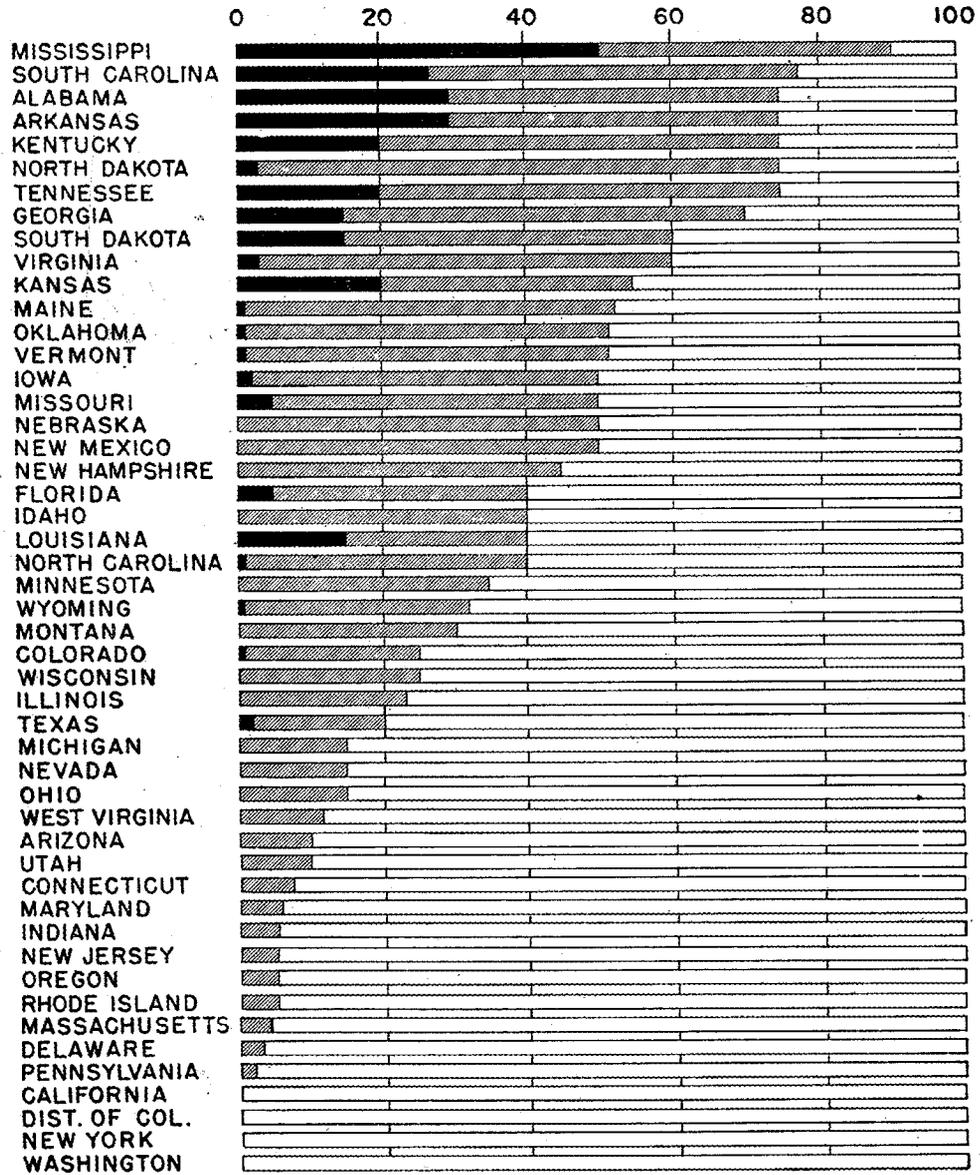
When the sectional and size of place figures are combined, the results are unusually interesting:



WHAT ARE THE FACTS?

The following charts, prepared by the National Education Association and used with their permission, give the most pertinent facts regarding teachers' salaries in the United States.

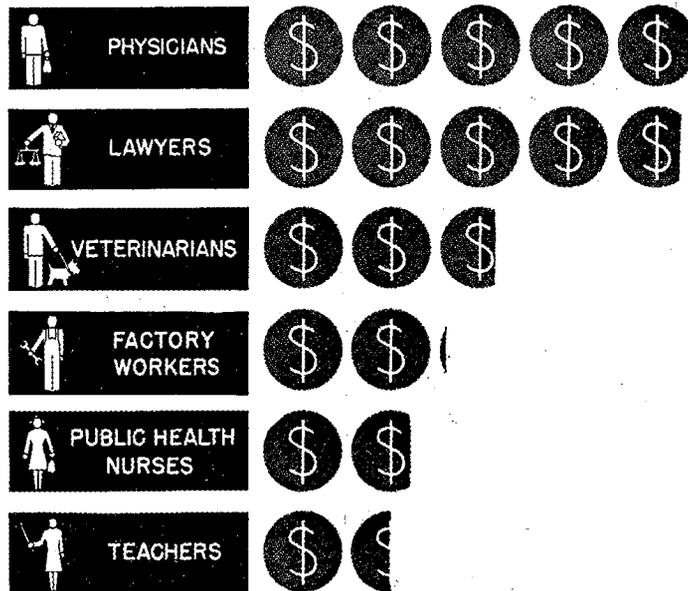
ESTIMATED PERCENT OF TEACHERS PAID LESS THAN \$600 AND LESS THAN \$1200 IN 1943 - 44



KEY: LESS THAN \$600 LESS THAN \$1200

Res. Div., Nat. Educ. Assn.

AVERAGE ANNUAL EARNINGS



EACH SYMBOL REPRESENTS \$1000

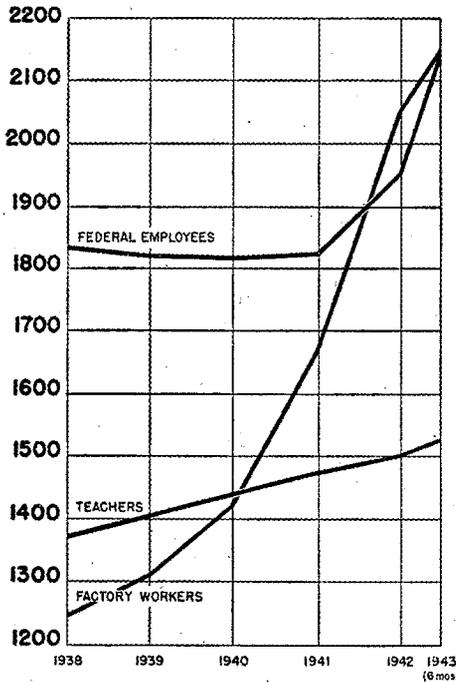
DATA ON FACTORY WORKERS, NURSES, AND TEACHERS FOR 1942; ALL OTHERS, 1941.

SOURCES: U. S. DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE, NATIONAL ORGANIZATION FOR PUBLIC HEALTH NURSING, AND N.E.A.

Res. Div., Nat. Educ. Assn.

ANNUAL INCOME FROM SALARIES AND WAGES 1938-1943

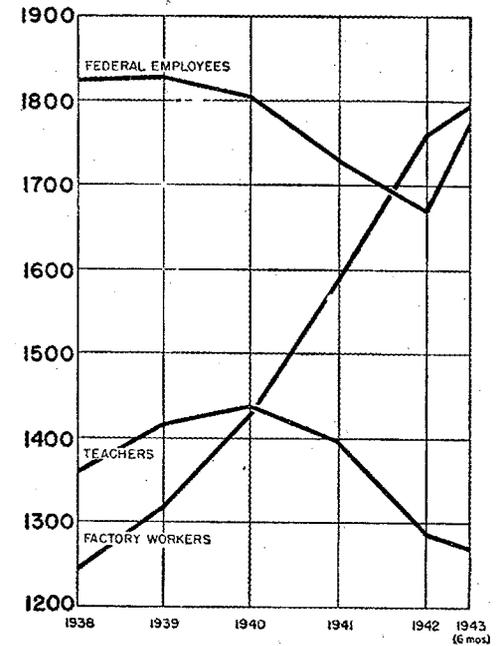
(In current dollars as paid)



Source: Teachers (teachers, principals, and supervisors) from U.S. Office of Education and N.E.A. Research Division; Federal and factory employees (salary and wage-earning) from Bureau of Foreign and Domestic Commerce, U.S. Dept. of Commerce.

PURCHASING POWER OF AVERAGE SALARIES AND WAGES, 1938-1943

(In 1935-39 dollars)



PART II

What Is Most Important in Education?

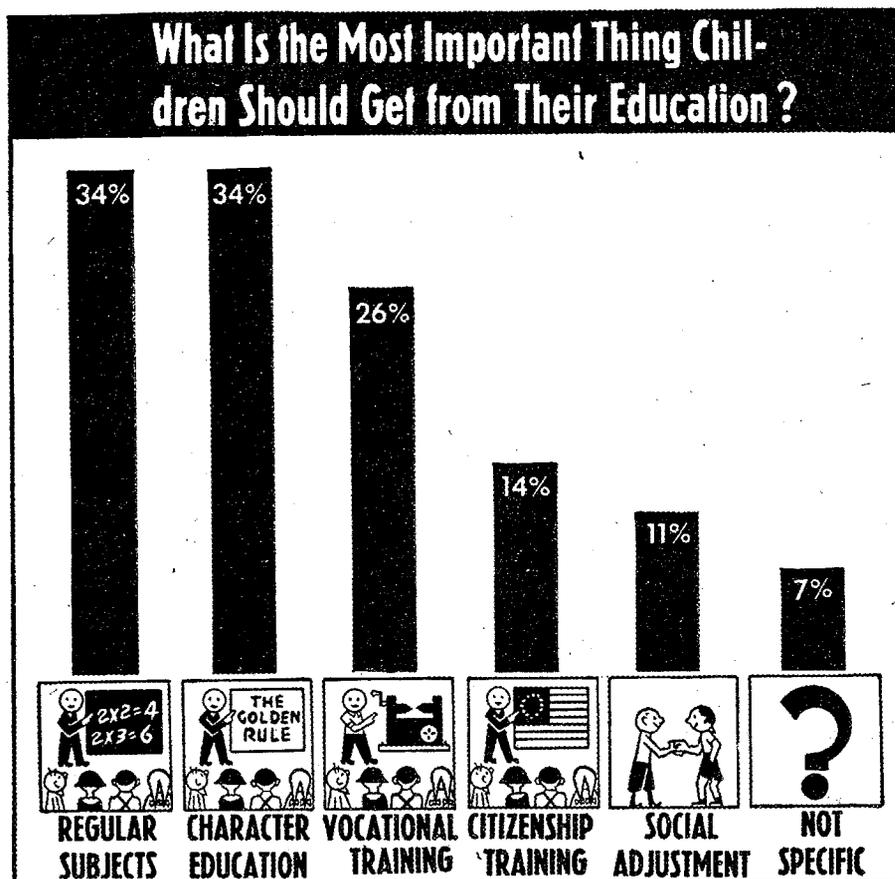
When asked to name the most important things children should get from their public school education, Americans rank a mastery of **academic subjects** and the development of desirable **character traits** of first and equal importance, followed by **vocational training**, **citizenship education**, and experience in making **social adjustments**.

NORC asked:

"What do you think is the most important thing for children to get from their education in school?"

- 34% of the public say they consider a mastery of **regular school subjects**—with the "fundamentals" and the "three R's" most often mentioned—the most important part of education,
- 34 mention some aspect of **character** education,
- 26 believe **preparation for earning a living** most important,
- 14 speak of **citizenship** education,
- 11 think children should be taught **how to get along with other people**, and
- 7 are not specific in their suggestions.

Because a number of respondents rate more than one phase of education as "most important," the percentages total to more than 100.



CHART, COURTESY OF PM, NEW YORK CITY (JUNE 11, 1944)

DIFFERENCES OF OPINION BY POPULATION GROUPS

Most interesting of all the differences of opinion are those expressed by persons of various educational backgrounds. Persons with at least some college training place **twice** as much emphasis on character education and **five times** as much emphasis on proper social adjustment as do respondents with no more than a grammar school education.

On the other hand, persons with a grade school education or less are much more likely to consider academic subjects and vocational training the most important phases of education. The less education an individual has himself, the more likely he is to specify "the old fashioned three R's" as the most fundamental subjects of the academic curriculum.

Persons with and those without children in public school do not differ significantly in the emphasis they place on various phases of education.

These are the figures:

The most important thing for children to get from their education is:	BY EDUCATIONAL BACKGROUND			OPINIONS OF PARENTS	
	College	High School	Grade School or Less	Children in School	No Children in School
Regular school subjects.....	26%	35%	38%	35%	34%
Character education.....	51	35	24	32	34
Vocational training.....	20	23	32	28	25
Citizenship education.....	17	16	10	12	15
Social adjustment.....	21	12	4	10	11
Not specific.....	1	5	12	8	6

Because a number of respondents rate more than one phase of education as "most important," the percentages total to more than 100.

Negro respondents mention vocational training almost **twice** as frequently as do white people. Persons between 21 and 39 speak of good social adjustment as a primary educational objective considerably more often than do those 40 years of age and over. Farmers mention the teaching of religion more frequently than any other group.

IN THEIR OWN WORDS

These comments have been carefully selected to represent various shades of opinion regarding each educational objective. Most respondents talk freely with NORC interviewers, and it is believed that these replies are sincere and, in most cases, thoughtful expressions of opinion.

Training in Academic Subjects

34 per cent of the public say they consider a mastery of the fundamental subjects of the school curriculum the most important part of education.

A **general education** as a background for specialization is mentioned by about one person in ten:

COMMENTS

- "General education of all subjects used in daily life."
- "A broad general education should come first as a background for technical and vocational training."
- "Go through to the twelfth grade just as the books stand; then take up other things."
- "To learn all they can. Now me, I can't read nor write, but if'n I could, I could make some money."
- "A good academic foundation."
- "Just to get a good education on everything in general."
- "Knowledge to broaden their minds."
- "All the book learning they can get."

—HOWEVER—

"Common knowledge instead of book learning."

EXPRESSED BY:

- Farmer,* near Wilson, New York
- Woman Red Cross worker, Louisville, North Carolina
- Farmer's wife, near Stockton, California
- Streetcleaner's wife, West Virginia
- Wife of merchant, Detroit
- Farmer, near Ferncreek, Kentucky
- Wife of C.P.A., Helena, Montana
- Wife of railroad foreman, Trenton, New Jersey
- Owner of taxi company, The Bronx

*Respondents are male and white unless otherwise specified.

One person in four places emphasis upon the **subject matter** content of the curriculum.

The "three R's"—the "fundamentals"—receive special mention, somewhat as a reaction against modern educational methods:

COMMENTS

"The most important thing for school children is more individualized training in the fundamentals."

"Basic subjects rather than frills."

"The three R's will answer the whole business. They should specialize when they go to college."

"The old fashioned three R's, and the kids don't know much about them now."

"Plain things like reading, writing, and arithmetic."

"Well, my honest opinion is that they go to school to get an education. They learn to read and write. They need to get their common sense at home."

"Fundamentals. I don't like progressive education."

—HOWEVER—

"It should be run in a progressive way, and it will be modern like the times."

Every subject in the curriculum has its special advocates:

"A good foundation in English, reading, and mathematics, then special studies taken up in high school."

"Bear down more on requirements—writing, reading, math, history, and geography, especially."

"To figger and write. Those are the principal things. If a man can't do that he's out of luck."

"Speak good English and learn to write."

"Reading and understanding what they read."

"The art of reading and speaking the English language."

"Get a good knowledge of the English language. It would help in politics."

"Mathematics is most important for a farm child."

"More math if they have to earn a living."

"A true history—political and economic."

"History. Then they will know something about the past and can think for themselves."

"Geography, since we are in the war."

"A good foundation of language and history."

"Spanish is very important now. I hear the kids talking about it."

"Health education."

Opinions differ as to the amount of education necessary:

"Children should have at least a good grammar school education."

"High school at least."

"Twelve years of schooling."

"A high school education is enough for any child."

EXPRESSED BY:

Woman war worker, Middletown, Connecticut.

Department store executive, Aitua, Oklahoma

Loan company executive, Dallas

Retired farmer, Los Angeles

Farmer's wife, near Minneapolis

Waitress, Raleigh, North Carolina

Watchmaker, Denver

Wife of traveling salesman, The Bronx

Retired school teacher, Louisburg, North Carolina

War plant clerk, Minneapolis

Farmer, near Amherst, Ohio

Wife of grinding machine operator, New Britain, Connecticut

Negro war plant worker, Oklahoma City

Lawyer, Buffalo

Wife of stock supervisor, Orange, New Jersey

Farmer, near Tanner, Alabama

Book salesman, Denver

Boiler fireman, Los Angeles

War plant trucker, Halifax, Massachusetts

Wife of furniture salesman, Chester, South Carolina

Lawyer's wife, Milwaukee

Farmer, near Ferncreek, Kentucky

Negro butler, Baltimore

Wife of post office clerk, University City, Missouri

Farmer's wife, Ankeny, Iowa

Real estate broker, East Cleveland, Ohio

Railroad car inspector, Texarkana, U.S.A.

Character Education

34 per cent of those interviewed mention some phase of character education.

Among the total cross-section of responses, character education in its various aspects receives equal emphasis with the academic curriculum. Many suggestions are couched in rather comprehensive terms. Actual classroom application would depend in large part upon the individual teacher and the rapport she could develop between herself and her pupils.

Many of these comments apply to areas of education considered by some people the responsibility of the home and the church rather than the public school.

A considerable number of respondents—perhaps one person out of every seven interviewed—suggest that schools should encourage in their pupils the development of **character and good moral traits**:

COMMENTS

"The most important thing children should get in school is character. Without that, there is nothing worthwhile."

"Train them to become good men and women. Bring out their best character."

"A sense of high moral values and a sense of personal integration."

"Develop high ideals and learn to live up to them."

"Initiative, independence, and a sense of responsibility."

"Poise and confidence."

EXPRESSED BY:

Retired postmaster, northern Alabama

Butcher's wife, Stockton, California

Railroad switchman, Ogden, Utah

Wife of civil engineer, Pittsfield, Massachusetts

Woman teacher, Honey Brook, Pennsylvania

Dentist's wife, St. Albans, New York

Some place special emphasis upon **discipline**:

"I want 100 per cent discipline—not progressive training."

"Discipline. Learn how to take care of themselves properly. There'd be less delinquency if children were disciplined more."

"Character training. The children now somehow have the upper hand of the parents."

"Politeness and good manners. Good behavior first."

Welder, The Bronx

Wife of electrician, Peoria, Illinois

Housekeeper, Altus, Oklahoma

Negro woman, old age pensioner, Louisville

Others think the most important function of education is to teach people to **think . . . to apply their knowledge . . . to develop good intellectual habits . . . common sense**. About 8 per cent of those interviewed answer in these terms:

"The purpose of an education is to train a mind to think."

"The right approach to handling problems—the ability to think for themselves."

"The ability to make their own decisions."

"To learn to apply the knowledge they get."

"School should develop the habit of study and a yardstick for using source knowledge."

"Children should learn how to study . . . because you do forget facts, but you do remember how to find them."

"The power to observe, to think, and to know where to find information."

"Real intellectual curiosity and the ambition to learn more."

Wife of college president, western Pennsylvania

Wife of forest supervisor, Forest Grove, Oregon

Wife of railway mail clerk, Texarkana, U.S.A.

Wife of air line pilot, Denver

Insurance service supervisor, Dallas

Minister's wife, Raleigh, North Carolina

Retired income tax collector, Meadville, Pennsylvania

School superintendent, northern Massachusetts

Still others agree with John Dewey that through education students should **learn to live**. These responses are typical of some 8 per cent of the cross-section:

COMMENTS

- "To learn to meet the problems of life when they come up."
- "What life really is—not just the A B C's, history, and English."
- "Proper adjustment to the tangible and intangible factors in the process of living."
- "Ability to know how to live and deal fairly. Wisdom more than knowledge."
- "Happiness is the real reason for education. Children should gain a knowledge of how to live, to be contented in the place of life in which they are thrown."

EXPRESSED BY:

- Carpenter and machinist, Douglass, Kansas
- Wife of army corporal, Altus, Oklahoma
- Wife of advertising manager, Springfield, Massachusetts
- Manager of lumber yard, Waterloo, Indiana
- Teacher's wife, Buffalo

About one person in twenty-five specifically mentions **religious** training:

- "Religion is one of the main things for children to get—now more than ever."
- "Religious training, because they're going wild these days."
- "Religion. Put the fear of God in their hearts."
- "Why about the Lord, of course."
- "To love their God and next their land."

- Wife of power company employee, Seattle
- Housewife, Buffalo
- Catholic sexton, Brooklyn
- Farmer's wife, near Lavalette, West Virginia
- Housewife, Springfield, Massachusetts

Vocational Training

26 per cent believe that preparing for earning a living is the most important thing children should gain from their schooling.

Most of these phrase their thoughts in rather **general** terms. They advocate teaching students skills which will enable them to **support themselves** when they get out of school:

- "A training whereby they can support themselves—something they can carry over in their adult life. I don't care if they can't speak perfect English or know any world history if they can just learn to support their family themselves."
- "Background for whatever work they plan to do later in life for an honest living."
- "To be equipped for some specific life work is the most important thing."
- "The necessary knowledge and skill so that they may earn a successful livelihood."
- "To learn a vocation so they can make a living."
- "How to live and support yourself in a democratic society."
- "I have children who have finished high school and ain't able to do no work, so I think they should learn to work."

- Wife of clothing store owner, Oberlin, Ohio
- Wife of shipwright, Cornelius, Oregon
- Grocer, Chester, South Carolina
- Personnel manager, war plant, Buffalo (ex-school teacher)
- Teacher's wife, Lorain, Ohio
- Barber's wife, Wichita
- Wife of Negro farmer, Broken Arrow, Oklahoma

Others advocate education along **specific occupational lines**:

- "A good thorough understanding of business in all forms."
- "Some definite trade, not only knowledge, but experience."
- "Both boys and girls should learn a trade in order to earn a living."
- "A child should be taught a trade. A trade is more essential than education."
- "For a boy—a trade; and for a girl, if she wants to be a career woman, the same I guess. But if a girl wants to get married, she can just go along."
- "Either good business education or farming education—something to make a living."
- "Right now they could learn machines."
- "Learn to be a lawyer, or a good trade."
- "I want them to have educational background to be a doctor, engineer, lawyer, scientist, or some profession like that."

- Practical nurse, central Illinois
- Food store manager, Hillsboro, Oregon
- Paint company executive, Phoenix, Arizona
- Negro social worker, Chicago
- Department store clerk, Brooklyn
- Farmer, Collinsville, Oklahoma
- Retired dairy farmer, Milwaukee
- Negro machine operator, Detroit
- Tailor, northern Illinois

Some stress the need of education for securing **better or easier livelihoods**—with an echo of the desire that the children have something better in life than the parents had:

COMMENTS

"You have to have an education to make a good living."
"The better the education, the better the job."

"Education enough to make a good living without too much hard work."
"A way to get something to eat easier."

"I'd like my children to get a good education so they could make something out of themselves. I don't want them to have to farm."

"I'd like for them to get education so's they could make a living—so's they wouldn't be a common laborer."

"To work themselves up so they won't have to work so hard in factories."

A few respondents suggest **vocational guidance** as a specific school function:

"The schools should find out what the child is fitted for and adapt him to it."

"To decide and be trained for their future work. They should find out what they can do."

"Be prepared to do work they enjoy."

"To know how to pick out their life work."

"To find out what their particular talent is so they can develop it."

EXPRESSED BY:

Cafe owner, Clarksdale, Mississippi
Wife of office worker, Stickney, Illinois

Negro baker, Baltimore

Truck gardener, Woodinville, Washington

Farmer, near Talladega, Alabama

Truck driver, Austin, Texas

Wife of war worker, Toledo

Building material salesman, Peoria, Illinois

Janitor's wife, Chicago

Secretary, Meadville, Pennsylvania

Wife of county road worker, Auburn, Indiana

Salesman's wife, Birmingham

Citizenship Education

14 per cent of respondents stress the development of good citizenship as a primary educational objective.

A number mention **good citizenship** in general or specific terms:

"Fundamentals of good citizenship."

"The full meaning of citizenship."

"How to be good Americans."

"More idea of the citizenship required of an American."

"Appreciation of their rights and obligations as citizens."

"That they be honest, upright citizens and respect the rights of others."

"An appreciation of their American citizenship."

Dentist, southern Minnesota

Negro social worker, Oklahoma City

Wife of lumber yard worker, St. Louis

Meter reader, Pittsburgh

Personnel director, Pennsylvania

Cabinet maker, Paterson, New Jersey

Farmer, near Ellisville, Missouri

Some lay special emphasis upon the teaching of **patriotism**:

"Loyalty to our country."

"They should be taught more Americanism."

"One thing they should get is just what this country means to them and the value of living under the American flag."

"Respect for their country and its history."

Proprietor of antique shop, Syracuse, New York

Dairy service engineer, western Ohio

Fruit products businessman, Scranton, Pennsylvania

Wife of air corps groundman, Los Angeles

Others suggest the need for more curriculum emphasis on **American history** and the **functions of government**:

"Children should be educated in the knowledge of government and civic affairs."

"Understand the government of the United States and how they get their education—not just take it for granted."

"Get a knowledge of the government and how it is run."

"They should know the laws of the United States."

"Learn as much as possible about handling the affairs of their own country."

Wife of millwright, Lorain, Ohio

Pharmacist, Hillsboro, Oregon

Ticket agent, Ogden, Utah

Rooming-house keeper, Minneapolis

Wife of retired businessman, Ogden, Utah

A few respondents emphasize the need of education for **world understanding** and peace:

COMMENTS

- "Students should understand conditions in the world as a whole, not just the United States."
- "United States history and a thorough understanding of world cooperation."
- "World citizenship, not just national."
- "They should learn how to recreate a better world."
- "Children today should have a realistic knowledge of how the world works."
- "Keep them smart so there won't be another war."
- "To make good peaceful citizens."

A number stress the encouragement of **democratic attitudes** through school experience:

- "The most important thing for children to learn in school is the democratic way of life."
- "I think they should be taught more about democracy and its advantages and their own rights."
- "To realize that they are living in a free country and that everybody is equal."
- "Students should be taught to live up to the Bill of Rights."
- "The true meaning of democracy — racial and religious tolerance and the best methods of applying them."
- "Freedom of religion and fair play."
- "To respect other races."
- "No racial or color difference should be taught."
- "Not to let politics interfere with justice."
- "The how and why we fight for what we have."

EXPRESSED BY:

- Tool setter, arms plant, Ankeny, Iowa
- Unemployed Negro, Oklahoma City
- Wife of mechanical engineer, Boston
- Drug store manager, Austin, Texas
- Wife of aircraft inspector, Kearney, New Jersey
- Wife of machine operator, northern New York
- Farmer, near Wichita
- Banker, St. Paul
- Wife of army captain, Ogden, Utah
- Municipal employee, Brooklyn
- Wife of business executive, Cleveland
- Newspaperman, New York City
- Cab driver, The Bronx
- Woman machine operator, clothing factory, Chicopee, Massachusetts
- Wife of accountant, Detroit
- Wife of Farm Bureau executive, northern Ohio
- Civilian navy instructor, Livingston, Texas

A few respondents believe that **military training** should be an integral part of public school curriculum:

- "The schools should have military training to safeguard ourselves if there is another war."
- "I'm especially in favor of military training for boys."

- City official, Orange, New Jersey
- Farmer, near Anchorage, Kentucky

Education for Social Adjustment

11 per cent consider learning to get along with other people the most important part of a child's education.

Most comments are couched in terms similar to these:

- "Cooperation is even more important than book learning. Children should be taught how to find themselves so they will not be square pegs in round holes. They should be free and easy any place."
- "A good background which will enable them to meet other people with proper poise and self-assurance."
- "The training in association with people—to give and take with all people. What they learn in textbooks is important, but to be unselfish is of greatest importance."
- "Children should acquire the ability to get along with people and understand human nature."
- "To learn to live with other people and to respect their rights."
- "Good will and how to get along with others."
- "The ability to live with other people and to respect others' opinions."

- Farmer's wife, near Amherst, Ohio
- War worker, Jamaica, New York
- Housewife, Chester, South Carolina
- Foundry worker, St. Louis
- Widow, living on independent income, University City, Missouri
- Negro maid, Oakland, California
- Wife of investment broker, Springfield, Massachusetts

Less typical, but of special interest, are these suggestions:

- "Learning to get along with other kids."
- "The ability to play with other children and regard them as fair."
- "A sense of social responsibility."
- "Development of personality."
- "It's a sharing of ideas and experiences for the enrichment of life."
- "Sex education in the upper grades."

- War worker, South Bend, Indiana
- Lawyer, The Bronx
- Wife of apartment house manager, Seattle
- Salesman, Fort Dodge, Iowa
- Baptist minister, Houston
- Veteran of World War II, Brooklyn

PART III

What Should Be Changed in Education?

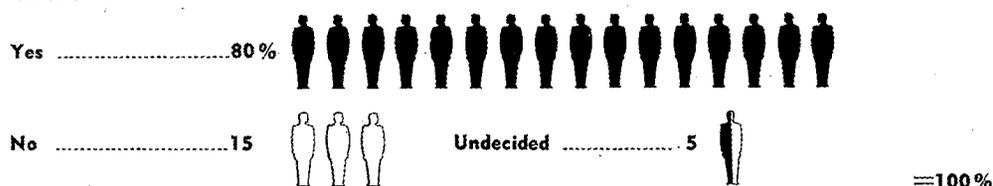
When asked specifically, more than half of the American public suggest no changes in the public schools as they are today. Some of these indicate that they are definitely **satisfied** with the present system of education, others are **noncommittal**, while still others feel that they are too **poorly informed** to pass judgment.

PARENTS

Persons **without** children in school say that they are **uninformed** regarding education **three times** as frequently as those **with** children in public school.

A large majority of parents, however, say they are satisfied, when asked this question:

"Are you satisfied with what they [your children] are getting from their education in school?"*



SUGGESTED CHANGES

When the national sample of adults were asked what changes they would suggest, almost half mentioned modifications in **curriculum** and **teaching methods**. A return to **traditional** subjects and methods would be more popular than increased emphasis on more modern and **progressive** education.

About a fourth of those with opinions mention changes in school **administration** and **organization** or the need for **improved physical equipment**. Almost as many stress the necessity for more **character** and **citizenship** education. A smaller number believe the greatest need is for **better qualified** and **better paid teachers**.

The survey question read:

"Is there any kind of change you would like to see made in the public schools?"

57% suggest no changes.

Some are definitely satisfied with public education today, but

Most of these are noncommittal, saying merely "No" or "No changes,"

Still others feel they are too poorly informed to judge.

Of Those Who Do Suggest Changes:

- 44% would like to see changes in **curriculum** and **teaching methods**, frequently in a direction away from "progressive" education,
- 23 believe improvements can be made in the **administration** and **organization** of public school education and in the **physical equipment** of schools,
- 19 think more attention should be given to developing desirable traits and attitudes in the areas of **character** and **citizenship** education,
- 10 stress the need for **better qualified** and **better paid teachers**, and
- 4 suggest other changes.

100%

DIFFERENCES OF OPINION BY POPULATION GROUPS

Persons with children of school age are more critical of public education than are those with no sons or daughters attending school. Respondents with a college background—the most critical group of all—make nearly three times as many suggestions as do those who have never gone beyond grammar school. Sectionally, residents of the Rocky Mountain and Pacific states are most critical and Southerners least. Farmers suggest fewer changes than do persons living in towns and cities.

The chart on page 23 indicates the most important differences of opinion among population groups.

*This question was asked only of the 40 per cent of the total cross-section who have children in public schools at the present time.

IN THEIR OWN WORDS

These are samples of verbatim replies made by persons interviewed in response to the question: "Is there any kind of change you would like to see made in the public schools?"

Changes in Curriculum and Teaching Methods

44 per cent of those with opinions see a need for modification in the subject matter of the school curriculum or the way in which that subject matter is presented to students. A greater proportion of college people than of those with less education, of Westerners than those of other sections, and of women than men emphasize this point.

Replies of respondents fall rather definitely into one of two groupings—those who tend to favor the "traditional" tendencies in contemporary education and those who favor the "progressive" tendencies. Clear differences of opinion, regarding both general principles and specific practices in education are indicated.

TRADITIONAL TENDENCIES

The largest single group mentioning some aspect of curriculum modification would prefer to have the schools adopt a more conservative and **traditional** type of education. Comments represent every section of the United States:

COMMENTS

"I think they should go back to old style education, not so many new fangled ideas."

"My daughter just graduated from high school, and it's amazing how little she knows of fundamentals. I'd like the frills cut out."

"I'd like to have more emphasis on the basic subjects and not so much on outside activities."

"I don't like modern education. They should get back to the fundamentals and the old fashioned ways of teaching."

"I'd like to see less experimentation with crackpot progressive ideas."

"I'd like to see more emphasis on the old three R's—not so much of this new-fangled 'progressive' education."

EXPRESSED BY:

Welder, The Bronx

Office manager, Los Angeles

Dairyman's wife, Kent, Washington

State Highway Department foreman, Orange, New Jersey

Architect, Middletown, Connecticut

Salesman, Wauwatosa, Wisconsin

A number suggest in rather general terms a more **practical** and less crowded curriculum:

"In high school they should concentrate on one or two subjects, not five or six—and not learn them anything—the way they do now."

"Simplify the curriculum and get it back to essentials."

"A more practical high school course is needed."

"Cut out the nonsense."

"They teach too many unnecessary things that should be left out. Foolishness, I call 'em."

Yard superintendent, Chicago

Farmer, near Britton, Oklahoma

Drug clerk, Cuyahoga Falls, Ohio

Mortician, St. Joseph, Missouri

Widow, Clarksdale, Mississippi

Others level criticism at specific subjects as being impractical "**frills.**" Athletics and physical education are most often mentioned, followed by dancing, dramatics, music, and home economics:

"Too much stress has been laid on athletics."

"Have more school and less ball games."

"I don't think it's necessary to have gym. They get plenty of exercise outside of school. That period should be put to use for something they're lax in."

"Too many trimmings. Do away with swimming."

"Cut out all this new-fangled dancing and art."

"Eliminate such foolish subjects as music, dramatics, and gym."

"They shouldn't teach subjects like music appreciation that no one benefits from."

"I don't approve of cooking courses."

"Leave off home economics and other fancy things. Stick to plain learning."

"Not so much shop work and more lessons."

Farmer, near Clarion, Iowa

Farmer, near Collinsville, Oklahoma

Woman singer, Peoria, Illinois

Wife of bank president, Detroit

Housekeeper, Hillsboro, Oregon

Negro stock clerk, New York City

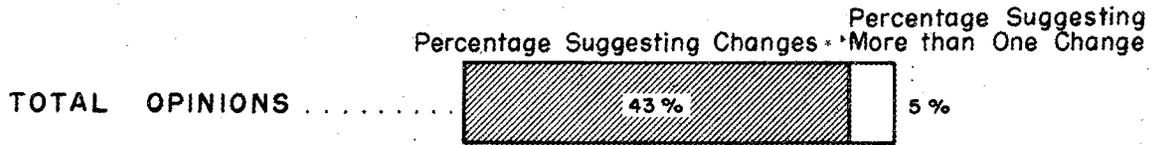
Government auditor, Brooklyn

Farmer, near Honey Brook, Pennsylvania

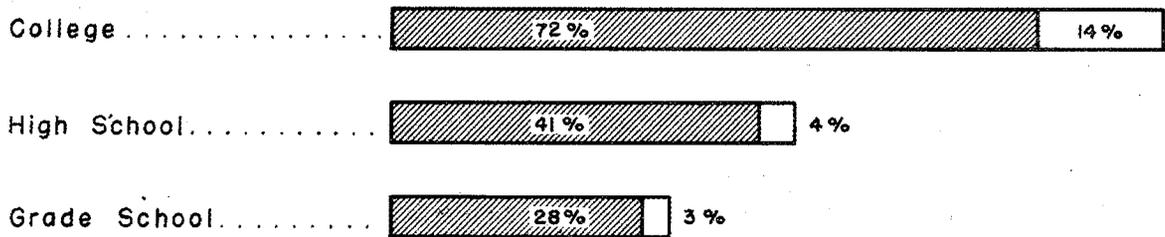
Fireman, Chester, South Carolina

Wife of oil company employee, Baltimore

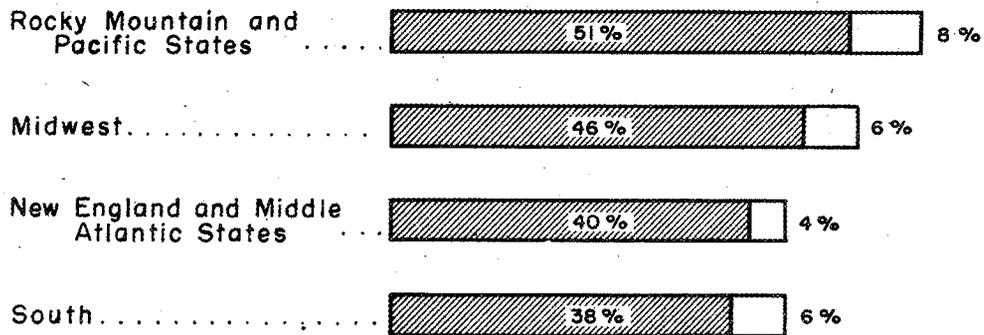
WHAT GROUPS WANT CHANGES IN EDUCATION ?



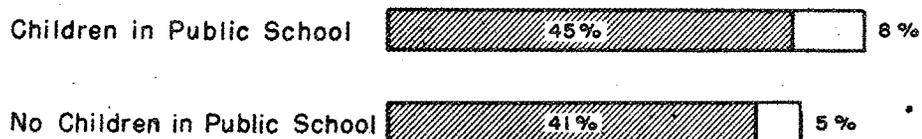
OPINIONS BY EDUCATION



OPINIONS BY SECTION



OPINIONS OF PARENTS



NATIONAL OPINION RESEARCH CENTER
UNIVERSITY OF DENVER

*The shaded portion of the bar is based on the total number of persons suggesting changes. The entire length of the bar is based on the total number of changes suggested, including cases where a single person suggests more than one change.

"Pet peeves" rather than typical reactions are comments such as these:

COMMENTS

EXPRESSED BY:

- "Stop 'em from operating on grasshoppers and learn 'em to cook."
- "Wish we could change the scantiness of dress in public school entertainments."
- "I think biology should be cut out because it leads to a study of evolution."
- "They waste a lot of time on unimportant things like boys cutting out paper dolls [in home-making classes] in high school."
- "I'd like to see them quit letting the kids out of school to collect scrap."

- Wife of Negro truck farmer, Green Pastures, Oklahoma
- Wife of plane factory worker, Phoenix, Arizona
- Farmer, near Clarion, Iowa
- Wife of apartment house superintendent, Brooklyn
- Newspaperman, Peoria, Illinois

Among subjects respondents would like to see stressed more, **the three R's**—specified in interview after interview—rank first, along with suggestions that schools return to the old fashioned methods of teaching spelling, writing, and reading:

- "The schools need more reading, writing, and arithmetic. Cut out the modern methods."
- "I want more emphasis on reading, writing, and arithmetic—not so much on social problems."
- "I'd like to see them get down to fundamentals and not do so much experimenting. They should at least learn to spell."
- "I'd like for them to change their way of teaching spelling. Children can't spell anything today."
- "I don't think they really get down to business and make children get the fundamentals. They don't really know anything—how to spell or write letters."
- "I'd like to see them teach the kids to write. We run into some awful hen-scratching."
- "Even high school children can't write so you can read it."
- "Children should learn their A B C's in first grade."
- "I think they should teach the alphabet before teaching a child to read. Children read from memory too much."
- "In reading they don't teach them phonetics and the alphabet the way we did."

- Farmer, near Goshen, Indiana
- Machinist, Stickney, Illinois
- Wife of high school teacher, Chicago
- Wife of Internal Revenue agent, Dallas
- Restaurant cook, Chicago
- Accountant, West University Place, Texas
- Apartment house owner, Santa Ana, California
- Steel worker's wife, Washington, Pennsylvania
- Machinist's wife, Chicago
- Salesman's wife, Lincolnwood, Illinois

Other academic subjects also have their special advocates:

- "The schools have to get back to the humanities. They're a better foundation for practical experience."
- "Greater emphasis should be placed on correct English and a firmer foundation in fundamentals, and not spread so many subjects so thin."
- "I'd like to see a true history put in the schools as a compulsory study."
- "They should devote more time to history, geography, and civics."
- "The schools are way behind on their arithmetic."
- "There should be greater emphasis on science."
- "They need more Latin—it's the foundation of much else."
- "They need more languages."

- Methodist minister, Mississippi
- Social worker, Rockville, Indiana
- Film technician, Los Angeles
- Inspector's wife, Chicago
- Gardener, Toledo
- Personnel manager, Buffalo
- Salesman's wife, Waltham, Massachusetts
- Woman war worker, Boston

Differences of opinion exist as to the amount of **home work** that should be required:

- "I'd like to see children do studying at school—not have so much home work to do."
- "Less homework. There is too much to do at home."

- Teacher's wife, Raleigh, North Carolina
- Postman's wife, Kearney, New Jersey

—BUT—

- "The teachers should send more homework home."
- "They should have more discipline and more homework and learn a lot more. We knew more in the old country than they do here."

- Truck driver, Ohio
- Wife of layout man, Forest View, Illinois

A rather strong feeling exists against **extra-curricular activities** of all sorts:

COMMENTS

- "Schools in this country have too much amusement."
- "They have too much monkeying around, too many shows and meetings. They should spend more time on their studies."
- "Quit having so many weiner roasts and hayrack rides! There's an awful lot of playing going on."
- "More time and stress should be given to their studies, less to programs that don't amount to anything."
- "Cut out all social clubs and have more real studying."
- "Do away with fraternities and sororities."

---HOWEVER---

- "The schools need more supervised recreation."
- "It's impossible for children in small schools to get extra-curricular activities."
- "Children in rural districts need more recreational opportunities."

PROGRESSIVE TENDENCIES

A trend toward **modern** educational methods is indicated by replies such as these:

- "I'd like to see more group activity and progressive training in our schools."
- "We need progressive education—more freedom for individual tastes."
- "I'd suggest a more cultural and liberal and intensive educational program."
- "I'd like for our schools to be more modern—to keep up, like when something is taught in other schools have it here, too."
- "The schools are still too academic. They should strive for a more practical curriculum."

EXPRESSED BY:

- Wife of pharmacist, Stockton, California
- Veteran's widow, Bloomington, Minnesota
- Farmer's wife, near Oklahoma City
- Oil company executive, Nashville, Tennessee
- Woman timekeeper, Los Angeles
- Woman musician, Nashville, Tennessee
- Clerk's wife, New Britain, Connecticut
- Farmer, near Clarion, Iowa
- Policeman's wife, Toledo

A number of respondents feel that more provision should be made for **individual differences**:

- "The schools shouldn't be so concerned with only teaching subjects; they should be more concerned with teaching children."
- "There should be more chance for individual attention in classes."
- "They shouldn't try to make all pupils in the same pattern."
- "Spend more time with the individual child in the subject they're most apt at doing."
- "Children should be taught subjects according to their capacities."
- "The work should be planned more as to what each child needs."
- "I'd like to see more emphasis placed on letting children study what they want."
- "They should give more attention to children who are slower than others."
- "I'd tear them to pieces. Northwestern has the idea. They have too many examinations. Let each child progress as he can."
- "Provide more advantages for the child that doesn't fit in with the average group."
- "Have the children grouped better according to their abilities."

- Teacher's wife, The Bronx
- Hospital technician, Philadelphia
- Retail store manager, Arvenne, New York
- Wife of shipyard worker, Mauriceville, Texas
- Teacher, Toledo
- Merchant's daughter, Brooklyn
- Realtor, Seattle
- Carpenter's wife, Santa Ana, California
- Woman laborer, Des Moines
- Attorney, Oakland, California
- Secretary, Cairo, Illinois
- Telephone employee, Shorewood, Wisconsin
- Bendix foreman, South Bend, Indiana
- Teacher's mother, Stockton, California
- Wife of insurance man, Shorewood, Wisconsin
- Wife of plumbing contractor, The Bronx

Some respondents would like to see **more** attention given to the same "frills" the "traditionalists" would eliminate:

COMMENTS

- "I think more subjects should be added."
- "I'd like to see them more elastic in the school curriculum."
- "They need more athletics."
- "They need physical exercises every day to 'clear the cobwebs.'"
- "I'd like to see more music appreciation classes."
- "Children need more actual creative experiences—applied music, dancing, domestic arts."
- "Our school has no art or music."
- "All schools should have a special course in first aid and home economics."
- "All first class schools should have manual training and domestic arts classes."

Others would prefer **less emphasis** on academic fundamentals:

- "I'd like to see a lot of obsolete subjects thrown out."
- "I don't know unless it's to have English out. Who in the h— gives a d— about a participle or a split infinitive."
- "They should have less frills like learning dates that are past and gone, and dead languages. Let them teach that up in college."
- "I can't see any sense in ancient history."
- "There shouldn't be so many subjects required like algebra and geometry which they never use."
- "Some subjects could be left out, such as algebra. I don't see what good it does. How many people use it after they get out of school?"
- "More emphasis on modern languages and less on dead ones."
- "'Old' history, Greek mythology, Latin, and remote geography are a waste of time."
- "Abolish languages. It's a drain on their brain."

Others believe the curriculum should provide more **vocational** and trade classes:

- "The schools should provide more vocational training, particularly for children who don't learn easily."
- "I'd love to see a more definite program to fit them for a career."
- "Let the rules be flexible enough to allow a child to study the things that he will need in the business world for a living."
- "Stick more to studies that will help to prepare them for the outside world."
- "High school should give more technical and vocational training, particularly for pupils who will not attend college."
- "I'd like to see vocational schools a part of the public school system."
- "They should put in more mechanical and commercial courses so the kids can hold their own when they get out on their own."

Some suggestions are quite specific:

- "If they had proper equipment and instructors, they should have more industrial courses."
- "Definitely more trades and crafts and less art."
- "Make them learn a trade instead of dabbling in so many subjects."
- "Industrial arts should be encouraged—radio, welding, agriculture, and others."
- "The country schools should pay more attention to teaching agriculture."
- "They should put more stress on vocational work. Every school should have a well trained vocational counselor."

EXPRESSED BY:

- English teacher, Fort Dodge, Iowa
- Life insurance agent, Iowa
- Bar tender and college boxing instructor, Pennsylvania
- Farmer, near Halifax, Massachusetts
- Foreman, war plant, Paterson, New Jersey
- Aircraft engineer, Seattle
- Steel worker's wife, Pomeroy, Pennsylvania
- Nurse, Alabama
- Wife of mine clerk, Pittston, Pennsylvania

Engineer's wife, Ogden, Utah
Gardener, Oberlin, Ohio

Wife of truck driver, Oregon

Janitor's wife, Springfield, Massachusetts
Bank official's wife, Seattle

Shoe store manager, Louisiana

Banker's wife, Milwaukee

Salesman, Brooklyn

Saleswoman, The Bronx

Machinist, Lorain, Ohio

U.S.O. Director, Wisconsin

Fireman's wife, Nashville, Tennessee

Miner, Scranton, Pennsylvania

Public welfare worker, Valdosta, Georgia

Farmer, near Lima, Ohio

Farmer's daughter, near Arcadia, Texas

Defense plant inspector, Skokie, Illinois
Health inspector, Los Angeles
Negro teacher, Texas

Farmer, near Edmond, Oklahoma

Retired farmer, Kent, Washington

Credit company investigator, Birmingham, Alabama

Improvements in Administration, Organization, and Physical Equipment

23 per cent of those with opinions offer a wide variety of suggestions as to improvements in the administration and organization of public school systems and in the physical equipment of schools. White respondents mention such modifications only **half** as often as do Negroes, residents of the West less than half as often as those in other sections of the country, and persons in small towns and cities less frequently than either farm residents or those in large metropolitan districts.

The express demand for a **longer school term**, especially for rural schools in the South, is often accompanied by a suggestion that **more years of schooling** be made compulsory. A Negro woman farmer near Alpharetta, Georgia, for example, says: "Looks like the kids ought to go to the ninth grade and have nine months of school. Now it's seven months and seven grades."

Others suggest changes in **school hours**. A janitor's wife in Minneapolis believes: "Schools should have longer hours. It seems like all they have is recess and holidays." A St. Joseph, Missouri, plumber gives a more typical reply: "Don't make children go to school so darn early." A number of respondents advocate adjustments that will do away with split sessions, staggered hours, and half-day sessions—emergency measures largely due to crowding and lack of teachers.

Still others would like to see **extensions of compulsory and free education**. Most frequently mentioned are providing kindergartens and high schools or even junior colleges for everyone. According to an Alabama social worker, "The schools should be enlarged to include nursery schools, kindergartens, lunch rooms, and play centers." An Illinois lithographer suggests: "Add college to the regular curriculum for all youngsters and have the state or federal government pay for as much as possible." The junior high school has its supporters and its critics.

A few consider school **finances** burdensome. Others speak of the "crying need" for more funds, particularly in rural areas.

Some advocate the **consolidation of all rural schools**. Others definitely oppose the measure:

COMMENTS	EXPRESSED BY:
"Consolidate the small schools and make the one school a good one."	Farmer's wife, near Wichita
"Rural children need special education more than city children, and rural schools should be consolidated so teachers could be more specialized."	Rural school teacher, Pennsylvania
"We need consolidation. One room schools should be eliminated."	Farmer, near Hillsboro, Oregon
—BUT—	
"Consolidation makes schools too large, and the children lose the personal touch."	Farmer's wife, near Oklahoma City
"Schools should be less centralized—more a community affair."	Farmer, near Parkersburg, West Virginia

A number of those interviewed speak of the need for **smaller classes** and **more teachers** in the public schools:

"Teachers can't give their best when they have 50 kids in one room."	Farmer, near Goshen, Indiana
"I'm violently opposed to two classes in one room."	Woman shopkeeper, New Iberia, Louisiana
"There should be more teachers for the number of pupils."	Florist, Paterson, New Jersey
"Limit classes to a certain number so the pupils will get more individual attention."	Owner of variety store, South Bend, Indiana

Some respondents believe one teacher for all subjects is best. Others hold an opposite view. Several speak of separating class groups on the basis of ability. Some think the **grade placement** too advanced for the curriculum, others consider it retarded.

A number of those interviewed feel that **promotion** and **marking systems** are too severe; others, that they are too easy. A South Bend, Indiana, shipping clerk thinks the schools should "quit passing children when they don't deserve it." One Wisconsin housewife answers: "I'd like to see good old fashioned report cards again," but another says: "Place less emphasis on grades and more on growth and results—in fact do away with grades entirely."

A few mention definite **administrative changes** they would like to see made, either in personnel or policies:

COMMENTS

- "I'd like to see the county superintendent fired."
- "More pay for teachers and less hours, no evening work. We need a more human superintendent."
- "They ought to install an educational system. Teachers don't have time to teach. They are too busy attending meetings and making reports."
- "A lot of theory and paper work should be taken out of the executive department and put to practical use."

EXPRESSED BY:

- Farmer, Oklahoma
- Farmer's wife, Oregon
- Salesman, Chicago
- Negro doctor, Baltimore

A dissatisfaction with **political interference** in local school affairs is frequently expressed:

- "Take politics out of the school system. Have the welfare of the children at heart."
- "Divorce public school appointments from both political and religious organizations."
- "Local politics should be gotten out. Teachers should be elected for their ability to teach."
- "I'd like to see the county boards and county school superintendents hire the teachers."
- "Local independent school boards should be done away with. The schools should be put under a non-partisan state group."

- Librarian, Chicago
- Psychologist, Chicago
- Baptist minister, Tennessee
- Farmer, near Texarkana, U.S.A.
- Gauge inspector, Iowa

Some demand exists for **uniform educational standards** throughout the nation—even for **federal control** of the public schools:

- "We need nation-wide conformity—a more uniform course of study."
- "All our schools should be the same, so when children are transferred from one to another it wouldn't make so much difference."
- "Schools should be standardized throughout the country."
- "A standard grading system should be used all over the nation."
- "All schools should use the same textbooks."
- "I'd like to see the schools under some centralized control so there wouldn't be such a vast difference in training methods throughout the country."
- "I'd like to see federal control or federal subsidy which would equalize educational opportunities throughout the United States."
- "All public schools should be put under the control of the Federal Government."

- Breadman, Toledo
- Welder's wife, Atlanta
- Wife of navy officer, Louisiana
- Farmer, near Ankeny, Iowa
- Negro maid, Homewood, Alabama
- Wife of army officer, Utah
- Wife of Negro chaplain, New York City
- Shoe salesman, Baltimore

—HOWEVER—

- "The chief trouble is the mass production form of education. There's too much standardization."

- Newspaper editor, South Carolina

A few whites in both North and South would like to see **Negro** and white children separated in all public schools. Negroes in all sections ask for more equal educational opportunities and for more equal distribution of school funds: "In the South schools for Negroes are a joke . . . Cut out Jim Crow schools in the South . . . We need more colored administrators and teachers . . . I'd like to really equalize the money spent or abolish separate systems in regards to white and colored . . . Our children ought to have a chance to ride the bus to school like the white folks do."

The need for better **physical equipment** and **special services** in the schools is expressed in comments from all parts of the country. Rural districts feel the need most keenly, apparently, but respondents in large cities also voice dissatisfaction. Most frequently mentioned are free textbooks, hot lunches, and more classroom space. These replies are typical:

- "I'd like to see the book system revised. Do away with so many and such poor ones that cost so much."
- "Children should have free books in every state. Some states have free books. I think they all should have."
- "They should run the school so the mothers and fathers aren't asked to give so much money they don't have, to buy extra things."
- "Folks who aren't able to pay for books and lunches should have them given to them."
- "Every school in the U.S.A., and especially in the state of Tennessee, should have hot lunches."
- "I'd like to see the schools furnish free milk and lunches."

- Farmer, near Edmond, Oklahoma
- Cotton buyer, Alabama
- Negro farmer, near Chester, South Carolina
- Farmer, near Dunwoody, Georgia
- Farmer's wife, near Doyle, Tennessee
- Wife of laundry salesman, Philadelphia

COMMENTS

- "Every school should have a cafeteria."
"The schools here are overcrowded."
"The schools are too overcrowded."
"Schoolhouses should be large enough to accommodate the children, with proper heating and ventilation. They should serve good school lunches at reasonable prices."
"We need better school buildings."
"We need plumbing and building repair."
"They should grant opportunities for cleanliness by leaving towels and soap for every child. Adequate rest rooms for teachers should be furnished."
"We need more schools so children can go all day."
"I wish they'd have enough seats in school."
"Some schools ain't got enough ground [playground space]."
"Our children need bus service—some way to get to school without walking so far."

EXPRESSED BY:

Musician's wife, Chicago
Defense worker, Phoenix, Arizona
Negro handyman, New York City
Housewife, Halifax, Massachusetts

Negro paperhanger, Louisville, Kentucky
Farmer's wife, Georgia
Teacher, Brooklyn

Dentist's wife, Detroit
Laundryman, Brooklyn
Veteran of World War I, Louisiana
Negro farmer, South Carolina

Greater Emphasis on Character and Citizenship Education

19 per cent of respondents with opinions would like to see the public schools place greater emphasis on character and citizenship education. Persons in the lower economic and educational brackets and residents of the Midwest mention these problems more frequently than do others.

Most often stressed is the need for much **stricter discipline**. Some definitely advocate corporal punishment. Negro parents make these suggestions about twice as frequently as do white parents:

- "The teachers should discipline the kids more. Right now they sure need it."
"Looks like de teachers ain't particular as they ought to be to teach de children to behave."
"Stricter discipline is definitely needed. We should see that teachers are allowed to teach children without interference from parents."
"We should have more discipline. My children don't want to study and the teachers just let them sit. The old fashioned spankings are good."
"I think school children should be whipped as we were years ago."
"The teachers knock out the children, and the children knock each other. They oughtn't to do that."
to see children treated more like adults, not spoiled
"led the way they are now."
"I'd like to see some of the honor system taken out and good old correction administered."
"We have had the trend toward liberal and progressive education. Now we must swing back to discipline."
"Truancy should be wiped out. They call parents and tell them the child is absent, but something else should be done."
"I'd like to see a stricter rule for truancy."
"Boys should not be allowed to smoke, carouse, and play slot machines out of school hours."

Wife of purchasing agent, South Bend, Indiana

Negro farmer, near Chester, South Carolina

Negro carpenter, New York City

Wife of steel plant worker, Sheffield Lake, Ohio

Wife of Negro brakeman, Louisville, Kentucky

Negro storekeeper, Oklahoma

Publisher's wife, Wilmette, Ill.

Storekeeper, Ankeny, Iowa

Wife of steel mill executive, Lorain, Ohio

Repairman, North Atlanta, Georgia

Negro housewife, Louisville, Kentucky

Salesman, central Iowa

—HOWEVER—

- "The teachers should not be permitted to slap the children."
"Lead children instead of driving. Don't bribe and persuade a child. Try to reason with him."

Machinist's wife, Cleveland

Farmer, near Bloomingdale, Indiana

Others speak in terms of **character building** and the development of **desirable attitudes:**

COMMENTS

EXPRESSED BY:

"Teachers should do more in regard to character building. They should teach more respect for authority."

Farmer's wife, near Sloan, Iowa

"I'd like to see them taught more self-control."

Housewife, Oberlin, Ohio

"I'd like to see courtesy and good manners stressed more."

Wife of war worker, Middletown, Connecticut

"The schools should teach higher moral standards and right principles—honesty, fair play."

Wife of insurance man, Barberton, Ohio

"There's no real moral training in the schools. We're afraid of hurting some one's feelings in religion."

Oil company bookkeeper, West University Place, Texas

"The schools need more training to teach children to understand other people."

Negro housewife, Detroit

"Children should be taught to think for themselves."

Physician's wife, New York City

A number of respondents would like to see **religious education**, specifically a study of the Bible, incorporated into the school program. Residents of rural areas, the people of the Rocky Mountain and Pacific states, and Negroes mention religion most frequently. Here are a few typical replies:

"Religion should have its place along with other subjects."

Farmer, near Goshen, Indiana

"I'd like to see more religious training without stressing any one sect."

Wife of industrial engineer, Chicago

"Religion should be taught under the auspices of their religious institution, with school credit given."

Factory representative, Baltimore

"I'd just like to have 'em tell more about the Lord."

Farmer's wife, near Harveysville, West Virginia

"The schools oughta bring 'em into God a little more; oughta teach the Ten Commandments."

County pensioner, Taylor, Texas

"Some form of religious training should be provided in every school, not have any certain faith, but just an outline of the Bible."

Church official, Denver

"I think they did wrong when they took the Bible out of the school. Everyone should study it."

Housewife, Peoria, Illinois

"I would like to see the Bible taught in every classroom."

Minister, Washington state

—HOWEVER—

"Keep the church out of the school."

War worker, Santa Ana, California

Under the heading of **citizenship education** are grouped somewhat divergent suggestions. Approximately half concern the need for military training as an integral part of the educational program. Some respondents would like to see the schools do more to create a background of factual knowledge and civic attitudes for children who will some day assume the responsibilities of citizens. Others would like emphasis placed on education for peace and tolerance.

"The schools ought to have army training for both boys and girls instead of physical education and ball teams."

Wife of milk truck driver, Marshall, Indiana

"High schools should have two years of military training so we will be prepared."

Woman salesclerk, Jamaica, New York

"All boys should have one year of military training in the regular army."

Electrical contractor, Denver

"Give military training or R.O.T.C. in the public schools."

Negro porter, Alabama

—BUT—

"In peace time take all military training out."

Wife of postal clerk, St. Joseph, Missouri

"Stress and teach politics; give the children an interest in local government."

Lumber company executive, Orange, New Jersey

"Give them good citizenship training. Teach them respect for the law."

Physician's wife, Illinois

"We should revise the history and cut out the legends of history and give more facts, reasons, and causes that might avert future wars."

Civil engineer, Kent, Washington

"Teachers should be instructed to teach children more tolerance toward other races."

Accountant's wife, Detroit

Better Teachers

10 per cent of those expressing an opinion say they would like to see **better qualified and better paid teachers** in the public schools.

Most often suggested is the need for **better pay**. Many respondents see a close connection between salaries paid teachers and the type of service secured. These are only a few of the replies:

COMMENTS

- "I believe we should pay our teachers more for the type of work we expect them to do."
- "If more pay were provided for teachers, the students would obtain a better grade of teachers who would put more into their teaching."
- "Pay teachers a living wage all over the United States."
- "Provide more adequate salaries for teachers, so a better type of person would teach."
- "Instructors in schools should be paid enough to get the best educated people to teach."
- "Teachers should get more money, so other schools won't take good teachers away from rural schools."
- "All teachers, both in rural and city schools, should receive equal pay."
- "I think it's awful the way teachers give their life to their work for so little pay. And they should be given better pensions, too."
- "I'd like to see a pension system for teachers."
- "Get more competent teachers and pay them more."
- "Teachers should draw salaries the whole year—through the summer, too."

EXPRESSED BY:

- Department store buyer, North Carolina
- Field engineer, Indiana
- Civil service investigator, Baltimore
- Foreman in aircraft plant, Washington state
- Cotton firm technician, Tennessee
- Dairy farmer, near Arcadia, Texas
- Surveyor, western New York
- Woman teacher, Pennsylvania
- Chemist's wife, Fort Dodge, Iowa
- Business executive, Atlanta
- Line inspector, war plant, Peoria, Illinois

The second most frequently mentioned point is the **retirement of older teachers**; next, the **replacement of incompetent ones**. Tenure plans, as at present administered, come in for sharp criticism. These comments are typical:

- "Replace old teachers with younger ones."
- "They should take out all the old teachers and put in young ones from 40 on down."
- "Teachers that are too old to be good teachers should be pensioned."
- "Some of the teachers teach too long. They are too old. They should be retired younger."
- "Retirement age of old teachers should be lowered and enforced. Tenure is all wrong."
- "Teachers' tenure should be eliminated. There are too many incompetent teachers."
- "Teachers should be placed on a competitive basis. They shouldn't be tied to a job just because they've been there so long."
- "I'd like to see some provision made for replacing teachers who are not or have ceased to be good teachers."
- HOWEVER—
- "The schools should have older teachers. The boys just sit and look at the girl teachers' legs."
- "These young teachers here ain't learning our children nothing. They's jest runnin' 'round looking pretty!"

- Baker's wife, St. Joseph, Missouri
- Gas station manager, Houston
- Woman dental assistant, Birmingham, Alabama
- Grocer, Chicago
- Newspaperman, New York state
- Vice-president of bank, San Francisco suburb
- Glazier, Southern California
- Housewife, Oberlin, Ohio
- Machine operator, Detroit
- Negro laundress, Chester, South Carolina

The **sex of teachers** and the pros and cons of allowing **married women** to teach are also the subject of comment:

- "Have women teachers only—not young girls or men."
- BUT—
- "I'd like to see more men teachers. They need enough money to hire good men."
- "Make married teachers resign. A lot of single girls need jobs."
- "When a woman marries, she should stop teaching. There should be an age limit and a marriage limit."
- BUT—
- "Let the married women continue to work."
- "I'm definitely against hiring older women in preference to married women."

- Drill operator, Pittsfield, Massachusetts
- Wife of sales executive, Newark, New York
- Wife of liquor dealer, Upper New York
- Carpenter's wife, Chicago
- Surveyor, St. Louis
- Accountant, Dallas

Some respondents speak in rather general terms of the need for "better . . . more capable . . . higher calibre teachers." Others suggest the need for greater care in the choice of qualified teachers:

COMMENTS

- "A higher type teacher is called for."
- "Give the children a new teacher occasionally."
- "The board should be a little more careful about hiring teachers, especially for the primary grades."
- "Boost standards for both teachers and school boards."
- "Instructors should be chosen for their personality as well as their ability to impart knowledge."
- "Scholarship and character should balance each other in securing teachers."
- "They should have more strict teachers' exams before they are permitted to teach."

EXPRESSED BY:

- Tailor's wife, Chester, Pennsylvania
- Negro domestic, Dyersburg, Tennessee
- Engineer's wife, Ohio
- Accountant, Milwaukee
- Farmer, near Tulsa, Oklahoma
- Retired school teacher, North Carolina
- Woman clerk, Ankeny, Iowa

Teachers with **better training**, especially in child psychology, would be appreciated:

- "After the war raise the standards of teachers' training."
- "We need better trained teachers."
- "Every school teacher should have a real knowledge of the psychology of handling children."
- "All teachers should have a required amount of child psychology."
- "We need higher literary training for teachers."
- "I'd like to have teachers pass an intelligence test. Grade them according to where they fit best."
- "Teachers should be sent back to school at regular intervals."
- "Teachers should be educated in democratic principles more than they are—have a world vision."

- Druggist, Marshall, Indiana
- Farmer, near Tanner, Alabama
- Salesman's wife, Baltimore
- Woman production clerk, Denver
- Farmer, near Valdosta, Georgia
- Wife of liquor dealer, The Bronx
- Rag merchant, Massachusetts
- Widow of attorney, Seattle

A variety of rather **personal comments** regarding teachers as individuals and their conduct and attitudes, both inside and outside the classroom, are also made. Here are a few:

- "I'd like to see all the kids get treated the same by the teachers."
- "Don't let teachers homestead on the job."
- "I'd like teachers to be more psychologists, not nervous wrecks."
- "There should be less profanity among teachers."
- "Teachers should be more efficient."

- Wife of factory worker, Ogden, Utah
- Farmer, Georgia
- Wife of taxi driver, The Bronx
- Accountant's wife, Detroit
- Insurance man, Dyersburg, Tennessee

Other Suggestions

Of answers classified under this heading, a number suggest closer **cooperation** between parents and teachers, the home and the school:

- "I'd like to see closer cooperation between parents and teachers."
- "The parents should go and get acquainted with the school."
- "Put more emphasis on what P.T.A. stands for—a closer relationship between teachers and parents."
- "Every school should have parent-teachers' meetings."

- Railroad switchman, Minneapolis
- Wife of telegraph operator, Helena, Montana
- Realtor, Cornelius, Oregon
- Woman war worker, Syracuse
- Wife of railroad switchman, Atlanta

—BUT—

- "Do away with P.T.A. They cause our schools to be in bad shape. They band together to elect somebody for office."

Others would like to see the public schools do more in the field of **sex education:**

COMMENTS

- "There should be more preparation for marriage in general."
- "Sex should be taught understandingly."
- "Children need more training in sex education."

—HOWEVER—

"I don't like schools where they teach them sex. It puts wild thoughts in their heads. They can learn that from their family."

EXPRESSED BY:

- Accountant's wife, Detroit
- Wife of doctor, New York City
- Negro stenographer, Raleigh, North Carolina
- Wife of bootblack, Brooklyn

Other answers include such varied ideas as these:

- "Have children wear uniforms so they'll all feel the same."
- "School children should not be compelled to have vaccination and inoculations forced on them."
- "Every public school should be open at nights and all its facilities made available to the public."

- Woman production manager, Connecticut
- Chiropractor, Eastern Texas
- Paint company executive, Phoenix, Arizona

"No Change"

Most of those who have no definite changes to suggest are noncommittal. They merely reply "No," "None," or "No changes."

A number express definite satisfaction with the schools as they are:

- "No, there's nothing I'd change."
- "Not that I know of. My children get along mighty nice, I think. I never have had any trouble with them."
- "No. We have the most wonderful educational system in the world."
- "I don't think of any changes. I think everything is real nice the way they have it."
- "No. They're doing better than they did when I was a kid."
- "No. The schools are all right. Education is there for them if the children will apply themselves."
- "Our school system is very fine."
- "No. My child has done wonderful."
- "To my mind they are doing their work very well considering the terrific tasks they have. I think they are doing much better than they were 25 years ago."

- Federal employee, Brooklyn
- Wife of ice plant operator, North Carolina
- Pharmacist, Baltimore
- Wife of parish (county) employee, Louisiana
- Woman power machine operator in shirt factory, St. Louis
- Wife of oil company executive, Birmingham, Alabama
- Woman merchant, Oregon
- Woman defense worker, Halifax, Massachusetts
- Retired professor, Chicago

Others say that they know too little about the schools to suggest any specific changes:

- "Having no school-age children, I don't feel qualified to answer."
- "It's been seven or eight years since I have had any children in school. I don't know anything about the present system."
- "I can't suggest any changes now, though when my boy is ready for it, I'll probably think of loads of them."
- "I just really don't know about that. We've lived in so many places in the past several years, I couldn't say."
- "I should leave that to the school officials."
- "My daughter went to Catholic school, and I never went to public school in this country, so I don't know."

- Engineer, Huntington, West Virginia
- Housewife, Dallas
- Minister's wife, Raleigh, North Carolina
- Wife of army major, South Carolina
- Mechanic, Pontiac, Michigan
- Janitor, Chicago

WHAT EDUCATORS SAY:

In order to present the educator's viewpoint as well as the layman's regarding certain educational problems, a number of quotations from prominent educators are included at this point. The first group come from advocates and critics of:

Progressive Education

PRO

"It is significant that most of the changes that are being suggested for post-war education are the product of the progressive school of thought. Such fields as the study of international relationships, understanding social and economic interdependence, the democratization of school life, the revitalization of the liberal arts, modern child care, adequate health programs, the use of new testing devices, and the introduction of work programs are but a few examples of such proposed changes. . . .

"The Eight-Year Study of the Progressive Education Association . . . demonstrated beyond any reasonable question that progressive curricula and methods are not only as effective as the traditional fifteen units in preparing pupils for college, but can besides give them a direct and positive preparation for citizenship. . . .

"Progressive education . . . is a vigorous, adaptable set of basic ideas about human development, mental, physical, and spiritual. . . .

"The crucial point in all discussion of what direction education should take is that the new democratic world order which we hope will exist after this war will require of the oncoming generation of youth an inventiveness, a capacity for clear thinking, and a habit of vigorous action, the lack of which, in the education of today's adults has led to disastrous consequences."

—Burton P. Fowler, Past President, Progressive Education Association (*New York Times Magazine*, June 27, 1943)

"Any honest person can know that, as practiced in the best progressive school, . . . progressive education does develop disciplined pupils, does teach the foundation facts and processes of the natural curriculum, does make the most effective men and women for peacetime or for the uniformed forces of men and women in wartime."

—A. Gordon Melvin, College of the City of New York, (*School and Society*, December 11, 1943)

"What is the purpose of education? I take it to be to furnish young people with the means of gaining as complete a mastery as possible of the technique of the supreme art—the art of living; the art of living together in a great cooperative effort to develop a better world. . . .

"Too many of us are concerned with . . . teaching a subject for itself alone rather than for the way in which it may contribute to a mastery of the techniques of the art of living."

—Alice Howard Spaulding, Brookline, Massachusetts, High School (*Education*, January, 1944)

"What kind of schools do the people of Louisiana want? Laymen and teachers alike, they want schools which will help children to develop wholesomely and healthily, which will give them creative outlets and opportunities to express their inner potentialities,

which will limit academic learning to those aspects which will be of real value to all, and which will develop in each child a genuine sense of responsibility for the well-being of the community, the state, the Nation, and humanity. It is a broad and comprehensive ideal which goes a long way beyond the days of the little red schoolhouse."

—Carleton Washburn, summarizing Louisiana Looks at Its Schools, (*Educational Digest*, March, 1943)

"Nothing in education is so astonishing as the amount of ignorance it accumulates in the form of inert facts."

—Henry Brook Adams (*The Education of Henry Adams*)

"The American school system has been democratic in origin, concept, and purpose. It has tried to be democratic in its oral and printed teachings and in the verbalization of the history and idealism of our republic. It has been democratic in its practice to the extent that it has actually included all the children of all the people and offered them equal opportunity. It has served the purposes of a free, self-governing people so far as it has given them wide information and broad horizons, and has encouraged critical thinking and the experimental approach to problems. And it has been a disappointment to the extent that it has failed in these objectives. . . .

"We may teach about democracy in an authoritarian and autocratic school atmosphere, but we cannot teach democracy itself until we democratize our schools in concept, in purpose and organization, and in the derivatives of its practical and philosophical ideology. Our youth must be permitted to live democratically in their schools. . . .

"We suggest that traditional education assumes that if the student is schooled and developed to the maximum of his individual capacities in certain curricula, he is trained to take whatever place he is able in society. The new education believes that the individual must be trained for social living by participating in it from the time he is born until and after he takes his full place in adult society."

—Charles M. MacConnell, Ernest O. Melby, Christian O. Arndt (*New Schools for a New Culture*)

CON

"So-called progressive education has run its course today. And in the long post-war period, the longtime interests of the race bid fair to be given some long-needed protection against the devastation of rampant adolescents and sub-adolescents. . . .

"Catastrophe lies ahead unless American education returns to essentials—to the disciplined education of our students. The orderly, well-taught mind is the major objective of education. Why be so foolish as to seek it through an undisciplined curriculum?"

—Robert G. Sproul, University of California (*Coronet*, July, 1944)

"All too few children are learning at school a passion for precision, concentrating, and learning by heart . . . During their activity, many children have not learned enough inner response and self-control to calm down sufficiently to do hard mental work. . . ."

"More than anybody else, I think, the extremist in 'progressive education' is responsible for the lack of emphasis on direct character education in recent years, in school and home. If what I have already said be true, then the extreme doctrines of this progressive movement, so widely accepted throughout America, especially among the intelligentsia, must have made some contribution to our national disgrace of mounting juvenile delinquency."

—Dr. Garry Cleveland Myers, Editor, *Children's Activities*, (School and Society, April 22, 1944)

"'Democracy' does not mean letting people under your authority do what they please. On the contrary, it requires that everyone to whom authority has been delegated should really exercise it, without fear or favor, as no respecter of persons. . . . The very opposite of democracy is exhibited when authority is turned over to pupils who are manifestly unprepared to exercise it justly or intelligently."

—Louis Foley, Western Michigan College of Education (*School and Society*, January 22, 1944)

"True progress does not necessarily consist in finding out what traditional education did—and then doing the opposite."

—F. Alden Shaw, Chairman, Essentialist Committee for the Advancement of American Education (*School and Society*, August 21, 1943)

"Some values of the education of the past and present that should be conserved for the future. . . ."

1. Schools are to educate children, not merely to amuse them.
2. The means of communication are the hub of the educational wheel.
3. A mastery of the tools of education is essential.
4. We must teach in the most effective and economical ways, using both old techniques that work, as well as new techniques that work.
5. We must teach something positive about respect for, and obedience to, social customs, moral law, and civil law."

—E. A. Cross, North Central Association, (*Educational Forum*, January, 1943)

According to reports of a survey conducted by Robert A. Davis, Director of the Bureau of Educational Research, University of Colorado:

"More than one thousand Colorado teachers believe that 'the "newer" education is cheapening the general quality of the education process;' that 'education is being made too easy;' that 'pupils do not have enough discipline in the school and the home;' and that 'the school is spending too much time in trying to educate the "whole" child, mentally, physically, socially, and emotionally.'

"These teachers also asserted that 'schools today are so overcrowded with extra-curricular activities that it becomes necessary to shirk the formal subjects of the school,' and 'that the organization and methods of the school encourage too rapid coverage of subject-matter, a condition resulting in a high degree of superficiality in reading and learning in general.'"

—*School and Society*, April 6, 1940

The "Three R's"

"No educator and no layman is satisfied with the achievement levels of children taught in either the older or the newer schools. In both types of schools we are far short of giving the facility or the adequacy in the use of the traditional three R's; and there are many new skills that are demanded by a technological age that must be added to the curriculum."

—Paul R. Hanna, Stanford University (*Educational Leadership*, December, 1943)

"Upon the elementary school falls the chief responsibility for developing a sound foundation in fundamentals—the traditional '3 R's' so necessary for later specialization. The importance of better preparation in the 'fundamentals' has long been recognized, although there are still differences of opinion as to what the real 'fundamentals' are."

—Lowry W. Harding, Ohio State University (*Progressive Education*, November, 1943)

Standardization

"The fact that minimum standards in such things as curricula and term schedules do not exist in the common schools throughout the United States is completely unreasonable and out of line with a country that thinks it is now ready to step out of isolationism and become a real force in protecting the peace of the world. The absence of certain minimum national standards brings on a long list of inconveniences, extravagancies, omissions, and inefficiencies in the conduct of the schools."

—Carl J. Miller (*Education*, January, 1944)

Teacher Tenure

"Teacher tenure legislation should recognize that teachers are entitled to protection against whims of the electorate or political machinations of any community group. However, such legislation should recognize that children cannot re-live any one year of their lives, and that they are entitled to efficient service at all times. . . ."

"Teachers, above all, should be interested in so modifying existing tenure laws that they return to adequate protection for the well-trained, professional, competent teacher, and for no one else."

—H. S. Hemingway, Superintendent of Schools, Shorewood, Wisconsin (*Progressive Education*, January, 1944)

"Proved to be sound public policy in every place where it has been tried, tenure should be extended until its benefits reach all children and young people, all school boards, all administrators, all school districts, and all teachers."

—Frances Jelinek, Chairman, Committee of Tenure, Department of Classroom Teachers, National Education Association (*Progressive Education*, January, 1944)

PURPOSES OF THE NATIONAL OPINION RESEARCH CENTER

- 1 . . . to establish the first non-profit, non-commercial organization to measure public opinion in the United States. Through a national staff of trained investigators, representative cross-sections or samples of the entire population are personally interviewed on questions of current importance.
- 2 . . . to make available to legislators, government departments, academicians, and non-profit organizations a staff of experts in the science of public opinion measurement and a highly trained nation-wide corps of interviewers.
- 3 . . . to analyze and review the results of surveys made by other polling organizations.
- 4 . . . to create a research center to discover, test, and perfect new methods, techniques, and devices for ascertaining the status of public opinion.

SPONSORS

The National Opinion Research Center has been established by a grant from the (Marshall) Field Foundation, Inc. of New York City, in association with the University of Denver.

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The National Opinion Research Center was incorporated on October 27, 1941, as a non-profit organization under the laws of Colorado. Its Board of Trustees consists of these seven members:

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How Is a Public Opinion Survey Made?

The subjects for the Center's surveys are determined in consultation with its Board of Trustees and other experts. Members of the Center's staff collaborate in drawing up a questionnaire. The individual questions are carefully "pre-tested," that is, tried out on various types of respondents in order to eliminate, insofar as possible, the chance of more than one interpretation and to produce wordings universally understandable and capable of measuring all shades of opinion relative to a specific attitudinal area. "Specifications," or sets of directions for interviewers, are also compiled to insure uniform interviewing procedure. Each member of the Center's personally trained interviewing staff is sent a set of questionnaires and assigned a quota of interviews he is to secure, together with the distribution by sex, age, economic or rent level, and general place of residence.

When the completed questionnaires are returned to the Center the answers are classified and given code numbers for transfer to a punched card. A separate card is punched for each questionnaire, with a punch for the answer to each question. The punched cards are then run through a special tabulating machine which can be set to count the answers, to separate the cards into categories, and in other ways materially to assist the statisticians.

The final percentaged results—the responses to the various questions—are reported not only for the total cross-section interviewed, but also for comparisons between various population sub-groups, such as men and women, young people and older people, groups of people with varying educational and economic backgrounds, farm and

city dwellers, and residents of various sections of the country. The differences of opinion shown in these breakdowns are often of even greater significance than the opinions of the entire cross-section.

The results of the Center's surveys are published in news releases and reports which are utilized by educators, scientists, government officials, publishers and broadcasters, businessmen, and others especially interested in keeping up-to-date on public opinion trends.

Comparisons of NORC's results with those of other opinion-finding organizations are frequently published in *OPINION NEWS*—the Center's fortnightly digest of outstanding polls and surveys.

Factual Information

The Cross-Section The population samples upon which NORC surveys are made are representative, within a small degree of error, of the national population 21 years of age and over. That is, the samples used are stratified according to certain sociological characteristics of the adult population of the United States.

Geographical Distribution Within each of the nine Census Divisions of the country, interviews are properly apportioned among the adult civilian population in the metropolitan districts, towns, and rural areas of that division. For the urban population the interviews are apportioned to metropolitan districts, with the proper proportion between central city and suburbs, and towns in various size groups, while in the rural areas the interviews are properly apportioned among farm and non-farm residents.

Size of Cross-Section As a result of statistical research, it is now known that a poll will not be accurate, no matter how large a sample is taken (short of a total census of the entire population), if the cross-section is not an **accurate miniature** of the whole population.

According to a statistical table copyrighted by the President and Fellows of Harvard College, the number of interviews in a national survey necessary to be within 3 per cent correct on questions that divide evenly is 2,500. This number is sufficient 997 times in 1,000. The Harvard table adds that HALF this sample, or 1,250 interviews, would be within 3 per cent correct 962 times in 1,000. NORC surveys used in this report are based on over 2,500 interviews.

Age and Sex Before the war, the adult population for the entire country could be said to be split approximately equally between persons 40 years of age and over and

those between 21 and 39 years. Today NORC interviews only the adult civilian population. The resulting sex split is 47 per cent men and 53 per cent women. On the age distribution, 56 per cent are 40 and over, with the remainder between 21 and 39.

Race Within each Census Division are obtained a number of Negro respondents proportional to the Negro population in that area. These interviews are properly apportioned among the urban, rural non-farm, and farm residents.

Economic Status Within each sex group the interviews among the white population are assigned on the basis of four standard-of-living categories. For purposes of tabulation the two upper groups are combined in this report. The economic characteristics of persons in each one of these three groups can be defined roughly as follows:

Upper (16 per cent of the sample)—Those persons who have all the necessities of life and some of the luxuries characteristic to their community. Two per cent of the sample is made up of what is understood as the wealthy group. The remaining 14 per cent is made up of persons who can afford some luxuries, but must choose rather carefully which ones to buy.

Middle (52 per cent of the sample)—This group is called the great middle class of America. They have incomes large enough to maintain an adequate standard of living but can seldom afford luxuries.

Lower (32 per cent of the sample)—This group has difficulty in maintaining an adequate standard of living. Included are the lowest income non-relief families and also those receiving government aid.

Publications

The National Opinion Research Center, University of Denver, offers the following publications:

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