

Citizen Control of the Citizen's Business

TORONTO'S CITIZENS CAN CONTROL TORONTO'S AFFAIRS ONLY
THROUGH FREQUENT, PROMPT, ACCURATE AND PERTINENT INFOR-
MATION WITH REGARD TO TORONTO'S BUSINESS.

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Preparation of Its Citizens
for Living
and the
Conservation of Their Health
are the two
most vital public services
of any community

Should Toronto attempt a fundamental reversal in
methods of financial control of Education without
a complete knowledge of all the facts obtainable?

POINTS TO BE CONSIDERED.

At least up to comparatively recent times the weight of progressive opinion has favored the complete independence of local education authorities in their relations with municipal governments. Recently in Great Britain and some American States greater or less power of financial supervision of education has been granted to municipal authorities. Particularly in the case of large cities, opinion is now more evenly divided on the question, but it is evident that for any city or province the method of financial control should be decided by local conditions, such as

the existence of only one school system supported by public taxation;

the stage of development in efficiency of municipal institutions;

the extent of the danger of sacrificing the best interests of the schools, i.e., the children and their parents, to local and temporary expediency or other extraneous considerations;

the extent of the danger of placing schools in competition for funds with the administration of justice, for jails and police stations; with the fire department, for fire-halls and pension funds; with public utilities such as the civic abattoir and car-lines; with the assessment department; the law department—in fine, all the manifold material requirements of a growing city.

TWO POINTS OF VIEW

Extract from "Our Schools—Their Administration and Supervision," by William Estabrook Chancellor, Superintendent of Schools, District of Columbia:

"In the first place, when there are two complete yet separate governments with taxing power over an entire community, jealousies and wrangles usually follow. A heavy city government rate followed (accompanied) by a heavy school rate, each imposed by independent taxing bodies, burdens and annoys the taxpayers, whose politicians are always in evidence. This separation is theoretically contrary to the best and most approved principles of American government. But the practical experience of the newer Western States displays the fact that education prospers best when isolated from government in its narrow sense by constitutional provisions."

"The best system is certainly not where the Board of Education is subordinate to the Council (or other city governing board). For, in such cases, the higher board, being charged with the care of streets, police, sewers, water, and countless other material affairs, sees its own needs and unsympathetically minimizes the needs of the schools, and the moral and intellectual interests of the community. Wherever this system prevails (it is very common), the school appropriations tend to be niggardly."

Extract from "The Administration of Public Education in the United States," by Samuel Train Dutton and David Snedden.

"At the present time nearly half of the more important cities regard their school systems as a part of the city government. In this list will be found Philadelphia, Baltimore, New Orleans, Newark, New York, Chicago, Providence, Worcester, Springfield, Mass., and others. In all such cities the school budget, showing what funds are desired for the several departments of the school system, is prepared by the Board of Education and submitted to the Common Council, or the Board of Estimate, which has the power to summon representatives of the Board for more detailed information and to modify or reduce estimates—if this is found to be expedient. While this plan of organization has often been in disfavor because of the political nature of many city governments, and the difficulty of securing just treatment of educational needs, the best authorities are inclined to feel that, under right conditions, it works better than any other. The city in all its fiscal affairs should act as a unit. The Board having in hand the matter of apportioning funds should consider all the items in the budget, not only in relation to each other, but in full view of the assessed valuation of property and the amount of tax which may justly and properly be assessed for all purposes. It certainly would be vicious to have different boards within the same city competing for the revenues derived from taxation.

"It is undoubtedly true that during the period when municipalities have been finding themselves and working out more thoroughgoing and efficient methods of doing business, cities like Cincinnati, Indianapolis, Toledo, Omaha, Utica, Duluth, Youngstown, and many others, have been able to act more independently and often more successfully than would have been the case under the plan of city domination. Boards of Education in some, at least, of these cities, have been not only most reputable, but competent and public-spirited. As city government improves, the tendency will undoubtedly be to centralize authority and to bring every department under the same power."

QUERIES

1. Has Toronto reached the stage of development where the administration of all public functions can be centralized with safety?
2. In view of the very apparent necessity of co-ordinating educational with municipal expenditures, especially in periods of financial stringency like the present, can co-operation be made to take the place of statutory domination by the City Council in effecting this co-ordination?
3. Could the necessary co-operation be brought about by the Board of Education selecting the city's Finance Commissioner as its chief financial advisor, the Board and the Council sharing in the expense of his office and giving him adequate assistance?
4. Would a Joint Financial Relations Committee be of assistance in securing co-operation?

The educational unrest that is sweeping this community and this province indicates that changes are impending. Whether these changes are made blindly and foolishly, as the result of impatience, anger and distrust, or are made clear-sightedly and wisely, as a result of a complete knowledge of the salient facts, depends upon whether or not we insist on making at once a thorough study of our educational needs and resources, and of the actual educational processes going on in our schools.

Such a study would indicate:

1. Whether all the educational resources of the community were being used in the interests of education;
2. To what extent the needs of childhood are being met by our schools;
3. To what extent and why children drop out of our schools before receiving the minimum allowable education for a future citizen of no mean city;
4. How far the business departments of the Board dominate the purely educational departments, and with what results to pupils, teachers, principals and school neighborhoods;
5. What influence the Board's educational specialists—inspectors, supervisors, principals and teachers—have in determining the Board's educational policies;
6. What the schools and community lose through the lack of co-ordination of the three or four school systems under the Board;
7. Whether the internal organization of the Board and its relation to its responsible officials are on a business-like basis;
8. Whether the building of school buildings and the purchase of supplies are made with due regard, on the one side, to the needs of the schools, and, on the other, to the requirements of economy consistent with those needs;
9. Whether the heating, ventilating and caretaking services of the schools are efficient, economical and adequately supervised.

SOME FACTS

as to the
Amount of Taxation Levied for General City Purposes and for Education
in Toronto—1908-1917.

Year.	Population	Amount of Taxation Levied ‡ For General City Purposes	For Education	Taxation Levied for Purposes Other Than Education, per head of population.	Taxation Levied for Education, per head of population.	Tax Rate for General City Purposes.	Tax Rate for Education
1908	287,201	\$2,574,079.00	\$1,238,605.00	\$ 8.96	\$4.31	12.50 mills	6 mills
1909	325,302	2,912,868.00	1,301,432.00	8.95	4.00	12.80 "	5.70 "
1910	341,991	3,153,249.00	1,567,963.00	9.22	4.59	11.70 "	5.80 "
1911	374,667	3,611,931.00	1,904,467.00	9.64	5.09	11.80 "	6.20 "
1912	417,250	4,252,502.00	2,099,931.00	10.19	5.03	12.40 "	6.10 "
1913	445,575	5,702,142.00	2,792,263.00	12.80	6.26	13.10 "	6.40 "
1914	470,144	6,784,621.00	3,080,447.00	14.43	6.55	13.25 "	6 "
1915	463,705	9,025,003.00*	3,391,891.00	19.46	7.31	16 "	6 "
1916	460,526	8,711,482.00*	3,783,139.00	18.92	8.21	15 "	6.50 "
1917	473,829	10,382,966.43*	3,924,928.01	21.91	8.28	17.80 "	6.70 "
% of Increase in 10 years	65 %	303.4 %	217 %	144.5 %	92.1 %	42.4 %	11.6 %

‡ This does not include Revenue from Sources Other than Taxation, and does not allow for Uncollectable Taxes, etc.
* Exclusive of 1 mill Provincial War Tax.

EXPENDITURES PER INHABITANT, FOR SCHOOLS IN 19 CITIES

for 1914—the last year for which complete comparative figures are available.

(From the Cleveland Foundation Survey Report and School Story No. 3, of the Toronto Bureau of Municipal Research).

CITY	Estimated Population 1914	Expenditure for operation and maintenance.	
		Total	Per Inhabitant
Los Angeles.....	438,914	\$3,706,519	\$8.45
Boston.....	733,802	5,516,762	7.52
Newark.....	389,106	2,699,239	6.94
Washington.....	353,378	2,391,976	6.77
TORONTO.....	470,144	3,058,042	6.50
Pittsburg.....	564,878	3,602,303	6.38
Minneapolis.....	343,466	2,147,856	6.25
Kansas City.....	281,911	1,761,389	6.25
Seattle.....	313,029	1,759,998	5.59
Cleveland.....	639,431	3,569,504	5.58
St. Louis.....	734,667	4,084,693	5.56
Indianapolis.....	259,413	1,409,504	5.43
Buffalo.....	454,112	2,449,533	5.39
Jersey City.....	293,921	1,421,147	4.84
Detroit.....	537,650	2,553,488	4.75
Milwaukee.....	417,054	1,794,796	4.30
San Francisco.....	448,502	1,879,187	4.19
Baltimore.....	579,590	1,954,670	3.37
New Orleans.....	361,221	1,097,552	3.04
Average - - -		\$5.64	

These costs have largely increased in nearly all cities since that time and it is probable that more recent figures would alter the relative position of a number of the cities on the list.

“Good school education
is essentially a matter of sufficient money
properly spent.”

Do Toronto Schools get sufficient money and is school money properly spent, or could they do more and better work for less money ?

There is an answer.
Why not find it ?