

With regard to the condition of our schools, I am happy to report that it is encouraging and progressing—a very laudable interest is manifest in all having the charge of the schools—on the part of the trustees—to have comfortable rooms prepared and well fitted up, to provide competent teachers, and by personal observation and care to do all they can to encourage and help along the good intent of our state government, in the promotion of public instruction, and on the part of all our teachers to labor faithfully in the important work in which they are engaged. In all the districts, with one exception, schools have been kept regularly open, with the usual vacations during the year.

But while we bear testimony to the care and punctuality of those having the oversight and immediate care of the schools, it is to be regretted that on the part of parents a want of due care and interest has been observed, especially in the exacting that punctual attendance of their children, which is always so gratifying and encouraging to their teachers. A very general remissness in this respect has prevailed, and consequently in all the schools I hear the complaint that too many of the pupils are very irregular in their attendance. Is it the case that parents finding their children provided for in free schools think they have nothing to do but to leave them entirely to the care of their teachers? If so, as I fear it is in many instances, it certainly argues a great misapprehension of parental obligation, which must tend to the very great injury of the good cause, and in many cases, as far as the children are concerned, be worse than time and money thrown away. We hope this objection, if it be an objection to our free school system, may be done away with, when parents are awakened to feel their own responsibility in the momentous matter of their childrens' education.

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Superintendent.