

ESSEX COUNTY.

CHARLES M. DAVIS, SUPERINTENDENT.

To Hon. E. O. Chapman, State Superintendent:

In obedience to law, I have the honor to present this report concerning the schools of Essex county.

The statistical report accompanying this, shows that the children of the county are distributed as follows:

	Newark.	Orange.	Townships.	Total.
On census roll	51,519	5,238	12,657	69,414
On school register	24,548	1,776	7,981	34,305
Average attendance	16,602	1,262	5,277	23,141
Private and parochial schools	7,931	1,700	2,134	11,765
Attending no school	19,040	1,762	2,542	23,344

The percentage of attendance of children of school age is as follows:

	Newark.	Orange.	All other Districts.
On school register	48	34	63
Average attendance	32	24	41
In private and parochial schools	15	32	17
Attending no school	37	34	20

The number of children on the school register has increased two per cent. since my last report; the average attendance is the same; the number in "no school" has increased three per cent. The percentage of those attending private and parochial schools has decreased, having been for the previous year twenty-two per cent. in Newark; thirty-four per cent. in Orange; eighteen per cent. in the townships. I am not able to explain, the reason for this decrease.

The number of regular teachers in Newark, is 422; in Orange 36; in the townships, 173. This does not include special teachers in music, drawing and penmanship, of whom from twelve to fifteen have been employed. The average salary paid male teachers was \$145.35; female teachers, \$60.03.

It is unnecessary to repeat what I have so often said in my reports about the high qualifications of the teachers. Most of them have had special training for their work. Of the 173 under my supervision during the year, there were but eight who had had only district school opportunities for an education. Of these, one holds a first grade county certificate; four, a second grade; and three, a third. Six have charge each of an ungraded district school, without any assistant; and the other two assist in schools where there is but one other teacher.

I find that the position of teacher in an ungraded school is the most difficult one to fill. Not that there are not candidates enough; but the qualifications needed in scholarship, government and tact are more varied than in any graded school. This county, however, has been fortunate in securing many excellent teachers for these places.

The following amounts have been received to maintain the schools during the year:

	Newark.	Orange.	All other Districts.	Total.
From the State	\$294,376 29	\$30,620 18	\$76,666 01	\$401,662 48
From district and township tax		2,248 04	55,697 53	57,945 57
	\$294,376 29	\$32,868 22	\$132,363 54	\$459,608 05

The continued increase of children of school age has made our school houses so crowded that the erection of new buildings has become necessary. District No. 8, Montclair, has built a school house in the lower part of the district, and has voted money for another in the upper part. No. 7, Bloomfield, has voted \$8,000 to enlarge one of its buildings. No. 10, Upper Montclair, has increased the capacity of its building, and has introduced the Smead system of heating and ventilation. No. 23, Washington Place, has voted money to buy a lot and put up a new building in place of the old one. No. 26, Washington, in Milburn, has enlarged its house. No. 39, St. Mark's, W. Orange, has begun a new building to cost \$20,000. No. 42, St. Cloud, W. Orange has enlarged its house to more than double its former size. Other districts have been compelled to make temporary arrangements, by hiring rooms in other buildings.

In May, the citizens of the three school districts in East Orange, availed themselves of the opportunity offered by the Act of 1886, see School Law, 1889, Section 24 b.-24 h., and applied through their trustees to the State Board of Education for consolidation. The new District, No. 45, consists of four wards, each of which elects two trustees, the eight trustees forming a Board of Education for the whole town. A lot has been bought for a High School building, which will be put up and furnished in the spring. The advantages secured by this action of the people, which was unanimous, are already beginning to appear, and will be still more appreciated when the crowded school-houses of the town are relieved by the opening of the High School.

Industrial Work and Manual Training are receiving increased attention in most of our graded schools, and the latter to some extent in the ungraded district schools.

Montclair District No. 8 led the way in industrial work in 1882; since which time regular reports have been published in the annual report of the State Board of Education. For the boys a work shop with turning lathes and other machines has lately been added to the valuable stock of tools. The line of work pursued by the girls has also been extended. A brief history of the work and a statement of the course pursued and subjects taught have been published by the "College for the Training of Teachers," of University Place, New York City, in their "Educational Leaflet" No. 38.

The schools of East Orange have made great progress in this line, although the industrial work of the boys has not reached the advanced stage attained by Montclair. But what they have done in this line, as well as the girls in theirs, is admirable.

The leaven has been working throughout the county, and trustees who have been waiting to learn from the experience of others are persuaded of its success, and have entered in the work of manual training. In this may be included kindergarten work which in one modified form or another is getting a strong hold on trustees and teachers. Many teachers were anxious for it.