

SCHOOL

WORKSHOP

BOOKLET

(First Draft)

May, 1965

What problems in your school are you concerned about?

This booklet will help to point up some of the things that are wrong with the school system and how they can be changed. The booklet will help to tell who is responsible for the condition of the school system, how they got their position, and the power they have.

Hopefully, after parents and citizens have read and worked with this booklet, they will form committees to look into the basic problems and then begin to change Mississippi school system.

Before change can happen, people have to talk. But change will never happen if they only talk. One way to make talk lead to action is by asking questions and then going out to find the answers. What questions can we ask about schools? We can turn every school problem listed on page 1 into a question about who is responsible.

Who buys books?

Who decides on teacher qualifications?

Who decides on teachers' pay?

Now we have some specific questions to try to answer.
Let's talk for a while and try to answer some of the questions.

To find out the answers to these questions we need to talk about the structure of the school system. We need to discuss the different groups of people that are running the schools now.

The County School Board and the State Department of Education are responsible for almost everything that has to do with schools.

County School Board (also called the County Board of Education) The county school board consists of five members, one of whom is elected from each beat. The members hold office for six years with staggered terms. Members receive \$10 a day for service not to exceed 60 days in any one year. The Board has jurisdiction over all schools in the county except the separate districts.

Duties of the County School Board are:

1. Create, alter or abolish school districts of the county
2. Determine school transportation routes of the county
3. Establish policies for operating school transportation system of the county
4. Approving contracts for superintendents, principals and teachers
5. Distributing minimum education program funds provided for the support and operation of the county school system
6. Approving requests for student transfers
7. Acting as the central purchasing agency for supplies, materials, and other articles for those school districts in the school system requesting the same.
8. Fixing the date for opening of the school term of all schools in the county school system

State Department of Education (Including State Board of Education) This department adopts the course of study to be used in the public schools of the state. It establishes rules and regulations for the purchase of county owned transportation equipment and for the operation of a school transportation system. It allocates and disperses state funds for the current operation of the schools.

The department is organized into six divisions with a director for each division. These divisions include:

1. Division of Administration and Finance
2. Division of Instruction
3. Division of School Building Service and Transportation

In addition, there are three less important divisions dealing with special services.

County Superintendent of Education

The superintendent is a full-time employee of the County Board of Education. He carries out the policies of the County Board and of the State Department of Education.

It shall be the duty of the county superintendent:

1. to sign contracts in a manner provided by law with each superintendent, principal, and teacher of the public schools under his supervision.
2. to enforce the course of study adopted by the Board of Education, and the uniform textbooks adopted by the county.
3. to carefully preserve all reports of school officers and teachers.
4. to issue pay certificates to teachers and to issue pay certificates for school funds of the county.
5. to keep in his office and carefully preserve the public school records provided.
6. to visit the schools and require teachers to perform all their duties.
7. to distribute promptly all reports, laws, forms and instructions which he may receive from the State Department of Education.

With this information let us return to our questions on Page 2 and try to answer them.

For example, on Page 2 we asked: Who buys books? Let us turn back to Page 3. Under the State Department of Education we read: "This department adopts the course of study to be used in the public schools of this state." Then we notice that one of the divisions of the State Department of Education is the Division of Instruction. Above that, under the County School Board, we see under No. 7 that the Board acts as a purchasing agency. Then on Page 4 we read under No. 4 that the county superintendent issues pay certificates for school funds of the county.

The second question on Page 2 was: Who decides on teacher qualifications? Let us turn back to Page 3. The Division of Administration and Finance of the State Department of Education decides on teacher qualifications for the state. Under the County Board we see that, according to No. 4, the County Board approves contracts for teachers. In practice, the county superintendent knows what is needed and decides on qualifications for the local schools.

The third question on Page 2 was: Who decides on teachers' pay? Can you answer this yourself by looking back at pages 3 and 4?

Let's take some of the other questions on Page 2 and try to answer them.

Let's list some of the questions we haven't yet been able to answer.

The answers to all these questions can't be found on Page 3, but they can be found in the books from which the information on Page 3 was taken. These books are:

Mississippi Code 1942, Annotated. Recompiled Volume Five--
1952, Published by The Harrison Company, Atlanta, Georgia.

Financing Mississippi Public Schools, Revised, July, 1964.
Published by the Division of Administration & Finance,
State Department of Education, Jackson, Mississippi.

The information on the County Superintendent of Education was copied directly from the Mississippi Code. The other information was taken from Financing Mississippi Public Schools. Let's talk for a while about these books.

In order to find out the answers to some of the questions we couldn't answer let's set up a committee to work on finding some of the answers.

The committee to look into this is: _____

This committee will meet: _____

We've talked about the county superintendent.
In your county or community who is your superintendent?

How was he elected or chosen? When was he chosen? What are his qualifications? What is his salary?

Who is on your County Board of Education? How was it chosen? When was it chosen? What qualifications do they have?

Where is the State Department of Education located? How many people work there? What are their qualifications?

We'll need a committee to answer these questions.

The Committee will be: _____

This committee will meet: _____

Perhaps as this committee answers the questions above they will also discover other related questions, hopefully be able to answer these too.

When your committees find information, what will you use it for?

Should you start working for change in just the schools your children attend? Are there reasons for wanting to change all the schools in Mississippi?

Can we work on Negro schools and all the schools at the same time? The best way to decide is probably to list what we could do about each. And then choose what we want to do.

HOW TO IMPROVE PRESENT SCHOOLS

1. Take part in meetings with teachers.
2. Invite School Board members to our meetings.
3. Let principals and teachers know we're not satisfied with them.
4. Become registered voters and elect school board members.
5. Visit State Department of Education in Jackson.

HOW TO CHANGE WHOLE SYSTEM

1. File court suits against separate schools for Negro and white.
2. Try to talk with any white citizens who might share some of our worries. (A group of white people, Mississippians for Public Education might talk to us.)
3. Find out about school integration in other states.
4. Read and study about how to prepare both Negroes and white people for integration.

The last question to ask is "What will you really do?" Which of the above ideas will you start with? And how will you carry them out?

Your answer will help decide the future of your children,
and of Mississippi.

YOUR ANSWER:

This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal black ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are approximately 20 lines visible. A small dark speck is located near the bottom center of the page.