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# New Or Enlarged High School Would Not Increase Costs, P. T. A. Claims

## Ninth Argument Of Series Devoted To Answering That Question

The following is the ninth of a series of articles sponsored by the Parent-Teacher Association of Chestertown High School in an attempt to answer arguments advanced against the improvement of school facilities for Chestertown High School pupils.

ARGUMENT NO. 9.—THAT A NEW BUILDING OR AN ENLARGED BUILDING WILL MEAN GREATLY INCREASED COSTS DUE TO ADDITIONS IN TEACHERS AND CURRICULUM CONTENT.

Opponents of improved high school facilities for Chestertown High School have pointed out repeatedly that improved building facilities would mean not only increased taxes for the retiring of bonds and interest on school bonds for the building itself, but also that increased building facilities would mean increased costs due to the employment of additional teachers and additions in curriculum content, particularly in the vocational field. It is in answer to the teacher-curriculum cost argument that this brief article is directed. Let us consider the two items of additional teachers and additional curriculum cost in order.

Chestertown High School is at present understaffed in the number of teachers employed in comparison to the number of teachers allotted to a school the size of Chestertown High School by the State Department of Education. Based on the enrollment of 295 pupils at the close of the school year, June 1934 (308 pupils enrolled October 1, 1934), Chestertown High School should have the services of fourteen full teachers and one half-time teacher,—one and one half teachers more than are now employed. Due to the lack of classroom space in the present high school it is not feasible to employ the additional teachers. Had the Kent County Board of Education employed the additional teachers, the total salary paid to the full time teacher for the first year of teaching would have been $1150 less the 10 per cent cut or $1035. The salary of the half time teacher would be proportionate, making an approximate addition of $1603 for the services of one and one half teachers to which the school is entitled. The salary of these additional teachers would be paid entirely by the State Board of Education without one cent of cost to Kent County. By reason of crowded conditions, Chestertown High School is not able to profit by this addition to the teaching staff and thus loses in efficiency. Were Chestertown High School to have additional space in a new building or in an enlarged school plant, there is no likelihood that the county educational authorities would employ any teachers over the number to which the high school is entitled, since the county would then be responsible for the entire salary of teachers over and above the given number to which the high school is entitled by the rulings of the State Board of Education. Who can deny that the lack of services of additional teachers has not crippled the effectiveness of the instruction in Chestertown High School?

With additional facilities, Chestertown High School would be able to offer courses in vocational education. In a previous article of this series, references was made to the desirability of agriculture in the local high school. The introduction of agriculture and other vocational courses would not mean the services of teachers in addition to those now employed, but rather that some of the academic teachers now employed would be replaced by teachers of vocational education. As now organized, children are compelled to elect academic subjects because no vocational subjects are available. With vocational subjects available many children would then elect agriculture, machine shop work, and extended work in home economics and industrial arts. Granting that the introduction of a course in agriculture or some other vocational subject would be desirable, the costs would not fall heavily on the county. Rather than theorize, let us examine costs in two of the Maryland Counties offering vocational subjects.

In 1917 Congress passed the Smith-Hughes Act, which gives federal aid to the schools in the various states, with a view to encouraging and promoting the teaching of vocational subjects. The federal government has dealt generously with the states. Many of the Maryland counties have profited by this federal aid, but not Kent County, for the simple reason that the high school buildings do not offer space and facilities for this work. Let us take two Maryland counties, Queen Anne's and Garrett counties, as illustrating the functioning of this work with respect to cost. The 1933 report of the State Department of Education, the latest available report, cites costs of vocational work in each county with specific costs for each type of work and the amount of money contributed by the federal government, the state, and the county. Using the figures for home economics and agriculture, the statistics are as follow:

| | |
|---|---|
| Queen Anne's County— | |
| Agriculture— | |
| Enrollment | 61 |
| Total cost | $4,630. |
| Federal aid | 2,315. |
| State Voc. Fund | 185.20 |
| County funds other than state aid | 2,129.80 |
| Home Economics— | |
| Enrollment | 48 |
| Total cost | $2,395. |
| Federal Aid | 1,197.50 |
| State Voc. Fund | 95.78 |
| County funds other than state aid | 1,101.72 |
| Garrett County— | |
| Agriculture— | |
| Enrollment | 173 |
| Total cost | $8,399.76 |
| Federal Aid | 4,199.88 |
| State Voc. Fund | 296.45 |
| County funds other than state aid | 3,863.88 |
| Home Economics— | |
| Enrollment | 181 |
| Total cost | $5.785.50 |
| Federal Aid | 2,892.73 |
| State Voc. Fund | 231.43 |
| County funds other than state aid | 2, 66.34 |

Examination of total costs for agriculture and home economics for each county with federal aid shows that the federal government pays half the cost. Why shall other counties in the state benefit while Kent County, decidedly an agricultural county, sits idly by and allows other Maryland counties to reap the benefits. The answer lies in the fact, as stated above, that none of the high schools of Kent County have the facilities. How long must the children of the county wait until vocational work can be introduced? Unquestionably this work should have a place in the county high schools, and the logical place to begin the work is in the largest high school of the county where the work can be carried on most effectively by reason of a large enrollment,—providing improved high school facilities are provided.

Examination of the above facts relating to additional subjects and additional curriculum content should be reasonably convincing that increased building facilities are not going to necessitate greatly increased csots if any, for additional teachers or additional curriculum content.

**Reports** reaching here from Rock Hall and the Sassafras river indicate that hook and line fishing on Swan Point bar and in the Sassafras for rock and blue fish is still good notwithstanding the lateness of the season. W. Belt Townsend and Billy Hadaway caught this week nine blue fish each weighing six pounds. They were beauties. A number of large trout, some of which weighed more than three pounds were caught by anglers last week in Chester river two miles below Chestertown.

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