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Prepared by F. D. G.-

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Submitted to Gen. Education Board as
a criticism of their past appropriations as confused
and misdirected, with suggestions as to true method.
Suggestions Regarding Methods of Procedure.

Our suggestions regarding policy are in substance these:--

That the board should refrain so far as possible from making appropriations in any state, in advance of a comprehensive study of the whole educational system of the state, and that our appropriations should be guided when made by a definite written policy based on this comprehensive and comparative study. The secretary, in the paper entitled "Suggested Mode of Procedure", has embodied in part, our views. As a foundation for the procedure which we advocate, it seems desirable to briefly recapitulate a few familiar elemental facts and considerations upon which, so far as we know, all are agreed.

I. The state is the unit. Any survey of educational needs and conditions in the United States will have to proceed, by taking up the states singly, and studying each by itself. Matters educational, are practically left by Congress, wholly to the legislatures of the several states, and to the private initiative of philanthropic citizens, acting under the laws of the several states.

II. Educational conditions in the several states, while somewhat alike in general, are diverse in detail, and in all of them the system (if system it may be called) is more or less incomplete, ill-balanced, and wasteful.

III. While absolute uniformity is not only impossible, but undesirable, owing to permanent local differences in condition, there are certain general rules that ought to govern the character and distribution of schools, and of the whole educational apparatus from the lowest elementary education to the highest university education. These rules flow naturally from the end sought.

IV. The ideal to be sought in each state might be expressed perhaps as follows:-- The securing for all the youth of the commonwealth such an education both in kind and extent as each is capable of taking on and usefully employing.

V. The ideal involves, of course, not only common schools, but high schools, normal schools, colleges, universities, professional schools of law, medicine, &c., technical schools, and even, where possible, superimposed upon the whole, schools of investigation along the boundaries of knowledge.

VI. The system of education is a unit. It is a living, articulated thing, every part dependent upon every other part, and no single member or organ can be eliminated without the atrophy of some or all of the other parts.

VII. Not only is this true, but there is also a due and definite proportion of parts, and no one of these parts can be exaggerated out of its due proportion without wastefulness, nor can one part be neglected without loss to the other parts.

VIII. Not only should the various parts of the educational system be preserved and duly proportioned to each other, but they should be so distributed as not to overlap each other's territory, thus causing wasteful duplication, not only of funds, but of educational energy; for there is a certain definite territory, or sphere of influence pretty nearly uniform, for the academy, the high school, the normal school, the college. Within the limit of these spheres of influence, which are easily ascertained, it is wise to found them; beyond that, the multiplication becomes an evil.

IX. The question of the location of schools, particularly the schools of higher grade, is an extremely important factor in any scheme of education for a state. It is a general law that institutions must be patronized, supported, and managed mainly by local students, local wealth, and local talent. It is important that fit centers be chosen for the higher schools.

X. The laws of each state should not only invite the largest possible initiative on the part of philanthropists in founding and sustaining institutions, but they should be so broadly and liberally framed, as to build up at the expense of the state a universal, symmetrical, and balanced system of education from the lowest to the highest.

XI. Now, these obvious principles have generally been violated, with waste of money and loss to education. This is true in the north not less than in the south. The reason is mainly that in educational

matters the leaders have not acted together. Liberty of private initiative in matters educational, while it is a priceless boon, and while it has brought to us our most splendid educational institutions has also produced, as an inevitable secondary result, many costly failures and wasteful duplications. It has prevented system and balance of parts, and something approaching chaos has resulted, involving great waste.

Upon these facts, and others that might be enumerated, our suggestions as to policy have been based. We think the actual educational conditions of each state should be studied and mapped, and all of the factors entering into the situation should be concisely tabulated. This study should involve the number, character, and distribution of the common schools, of the high schools, industrial and other of the normal schools, of the colleges, of the universities (if they exist), with an estimate of the relative power and influence and permanence of each. The whole system in each state should be studied with reference to the question of universality of distribution, of unnecessary duplication, of efficiency in location, of inter-relation of parts, of due proportion everywhere; in fine, with reference to the perfection, balance, economy, and power of the machine as a whole, and our policy with reference to each state should be mapped out according to the situation thus disclosed. In gathering information and in mapping out our policies, and executing them, we shall need to keep in constant touch with the ablest local educators and the leaders of public sentiment. In this way

we can assist each state in gradually building up a real, efficient, and economical system of education; and although we can never hope to see perfection anywhere, we can be sure, and donors can be sure, that any money entrusted to us has been wisely, economically, and fruitfully used, and used with reference to far-seeing and permanent results.

Doubtless any money spent by this board would do more or less good, but in advance of a formulated policy based on accurate knowledge of the education^{al} situation in each state as a whole, and its relation to an economic and ideal system for that state, it would be quite impossible for us to act with any degree of confidence or certitude. It will not be necessary for us to wait until all the states have been studied before we can make any appropriations; we can begin our appropriations with any state which we have thoroughly canvassed and for which we have prepared our policy.

As we have already indicated, the suggestions presented by the secretary represent our general views. We would suggest, however, some slight modifications in detail; for illustration --

1. It seems to us that instead of a general educational conference for the whole south, it would be better for the secretary to confine himself to conferences with educators in the separate states, either private or, when found practicable, public conferences.

2. We think perhaps the secretary may find that he can do a greater service in any public conferences held, and that the public

conferences would be of greater service to him, if they were called in any state only after he has himself formulated, at least in a tentative way, his views of our best policy.

In addition to these slight modifications, we would suggest the following additions to the suggestions of the secretary:

First, that while the secretary assiduously continue his work of gathering the material from all the southern states through his office force, that he devote himself personally more especially to some one state chosen by himself until the conditions of that state have been thoroughly mastered, and proceed from state to state in this way.

Second, that when the secretary has prepared himself to do so, he shall make a written confidential report to the board on the state chosen, describing as fully as he may find convenient and necessary the educational conditions which he has found; this report to cover the entire educational situation from the lowest to the highest schools, as also the condition of the law. This report should review the situation, pointing out the elements of strength and the elements of weakness, and formulate and recommend to the board the outlines of a policy which, in the judgment of the secretary, this board should pursue, both in exerting its influence and in the appropriation of its funds.

Third, that we refrain from appropriations, as far as possible, in any state until our policy with regard to such state, arrived at as above, shall have been definitely formulated.

(Signed) John D. Rockefeller, Jr.

" F. T. Gates