SCHOOL BOARD REPLIES TO CRITICISMS

Reasons Why Per Capita Cost of Education Is Higher Are Told

RECENT attacks made upon the Portland Board of Education by John H. Haak and others of the Civic Council, have called forth from the members of the Board a statement as to their management of Portland schools. In this they give the reasons why the cost per pupil of maintaining the schools of the city is now higher than it was 10 years ago. The Board denies emphatically that it has mismanaged the taxpayers' funds. The members of the Board are Mrs. L. W. Sitton, chairman; I. N. Fleischner, J. V. Beach, H. C. Campbell and R. L. Sabin. The statement of the Board is as follows:

"Portland, Oregon, March 4, 1911.—To the taxpayers of school district No. 1: Within the past few months attempts have been made in certain quarters in the city of Portland to create the impression that the school directors of this district have been derelict in their duties, and that in consequence the cause of education has suffered. We have no fault to find with fair criticism, from whatever source it may emanate, of our acts as public officials; in fact, we invite such criticism as being beneficial to ourselves as officers, and to the department of city government under our control. Instead of just criticism, however, there has been misrepresentation, most of it, we believe, unintentional. It has not served to remedy any faulty situation that may be supposed to exist, but rather to confuse the minds of the taxpayers in regard to real conditions.

Increase to Be Expected.

"That you may judge whether or not the affairs of the district are being judiciously and economically managed, we submit he following statement for your consideration:

"One statement which has been made and upon which particular stress has been laid, is that the cost of education in Portland has been greatly increased in the past 10 years. Even admitting this to be true, it does not prove anything that is not already known to every resident of Portland. There is not a line of business in the city that is not paying higher prices for everything that it uses than it did 10 years ago. Every business house is not only paying a higher gross rent, but a greater rent per square foot of net rental area occupied. The same is true of advertising, labor and material of all kinds, without a single important exception. As to construction, relative wholesale prices of building material are substantially 20 per cent higher now than they were in 1900. In the general advance of prices in the past 10 years, it is only natural that education should be affected, and that it should cost more. Not only are the items which entered into expense 10 years ago more costly now than they were in 1900, but people have demanded, and the taxpayers have authorized, new departments of education which have contributed their share toward the increased cost. Among these departments which have either been installed or extended during the past 10 years, are manual arts, commercial courses, sewing, cooking, night schools, circulating libraries, additional High schools and trade schools.

Salary Increases Demanded.

"Other items of expense are increases in the salaries of teachers and janitors, in response to public demand; oil burning plants; vacuum cleaning in the new schools; additional help for the school clerk and the school superintendent; fire escapes, hose and standpipes; installation of electric lights in all buildings; new buildings; drinking fountains; playgrounds. Many new school buildings have been erected, all paid for principally with money raised by taxation. In many cities the size of Portland, bonds are issued for the cost of new buildings, and the tax is levied for maintenance, which includes interest on bonds. In Portland the only building bonds issued have been for two new High schools.

"A considerable source of expense is the old style buildings, some of which have been standing for many years. These are now showing the effects of age, and the cost of repairing and modernizing them is very great. It is absolutely essential that they should be modernized, for otherwise the children attending them would be in danger of epidemic arising from ancient plumbing. In a word, the entire school system of Portland, both as pertains to equipment and course of study, has been revolutionized in the past 10 years. The pupil who graduated from a Portland school in 1900 and who would today, for the first time, re-visit that same school, would be bewildered by the changes which have taken place. These changes have been for the best. They have all been authorized by the taxpayers, and in many instances were recommended by the Board. They are costing money, a great deal of it, but we do not think for a moment that the taxpayers would save that money if the saving would entail return to the primitive educational conditions of 1900. Ten years ago Portland's public schools were behind the times; they are now the equal of any public schools in the country.

Comparison Is Unfair.

"As might be inferred from what has already been said, any comparison between the Portland of 1900 and the Portland of 1910 is manifestly unfair in regard to the cost of education, or of anything else. In 1900, Portland was a slow-growing city, so slow that many regarded it to be at a standstill. Now it is developing faster than any other city of its class in the United States. In the five-year period ending with December 31, 1909, building permits issued in Portland were under $2,750,000, or less than one-seventh what they were in the single year of 1910. In the five years ending with June 1, 1906, Portland increased its population slightly over 9000, or at the rate of 150 per month. In the five-year period ending with June 1, 1910, the increase in population was over 96,000, or at the rate of 1600 per month. At the present time Portland is believed to be increasing its population at the rate of about 3000 per month, or 25 times the monthly increase of 10 years ago. In January, 1909, the School Board declared its policy to be to build one additional grade school per year. In 1910 we awarded 13 contracts for new schools and for the enlargement of old schools. Nearly all the complex problems of city life which Portland now confronts have developed in the past five years, and our educational system has had to bear its share of them. A few of our own citizens have been free to find fault with our schools, while all visitors have been unstinted in their praise. Dr. P. L. Campbell, president of the University of Oregon, says our High schools are the equal of any in the country. Dr. James Robertson, chairman of the Royal Commission of Education of Canada, who recently visited with us, says our High and trade schools are the equal of any similar institutions which he has investigated.

Cost of Construction Analyzed.

"Exact comparison of cost of construction of school buildings in Portland with cost in any other cities is impracticable, for the reason that no two cities have the same system of keeping accounts. Similarly, many cities have types of school buildings to which they adhere very closely, and architects have different methods of computing cubic contents of buildings. So, too, there is a difference of opinion as to what constitutes a room, when the room is the unit of cost, and for how many ordinary class rooms an assembly hall and its accessories in our Portland schools should be counted. All these variations in methods make differences in cost, per unit, which can be detected only by close investigation. For example, it has been sought in recent discussions to compare the cost of Portland High schools with that of the William Penn High school in Philadelphia. It was announced that Philadelphia was getting a fine, fireproof High school for 15 cents a cubic foot.

"When the matter was examined it was found that the Portland investigators had included in the cubic contents of the Philadelphia school some very large inside and outside light courts, and an unexcavated portion of the sub-basement. The more the cubic contents of the structure increased the more the cost per cubic foot decreased. The rule followed in arriving at the low cost of the Philadelphia school is precisely the same thing as figuring the cubic contents of the Hotel Portland by including the front and rear light courts. Comparison is inequitable when a school with an assembly hall and accessory rooms is placed side by side with a school devoted solely to class rooms. The grade schools built within the past few years in Portland include the assembly hall and accessory rooms, which are equal in cost to three and perhaps three and one-half completed class rooms.

Fireproofing More Expensive.

"A careful inquiry into the cost of fireproof grade buildings, containing class rooms, assembly halls and accessory rooms, fixes it at 75 per cent more than the wooden buildings in use in Portland and 60 per cent more than the cost of buildings devoted to class rooms only. It is doubtful if fireproof construction can be done as cheaply by 10 to 15 per cent in Portland as in the Eastern cities. This observation applies only to buildings of two stories and basement. In buildings of three stories and basement, the cost per cubic foot increases, as has been shown in the case of a school built at Elizabeth, N. J. This building is 74 by 94 feet, three stories and basement, 20 class rooms, assembly hall and manual training room. It contains 256,252 cubic feet and cost $60,000, or over 23 cents per cubic foot.

"A committee of the Portland Architectural Club which recently examined costs, reported that the Jefferson High School cost 9.4 cents per cubic foot, or at the rate of $197.50 per pupil. In respect to both these units of cost, the record of the Jefferson High was lower than the unit cost of high schools in St. Louis, Kansas City, Cincinnati, New York, Boston, Seattle, Grand Rapids, Washington, New Haven, Philadelphia, Spokane and Newark. The same was true of the grade schools of Portland as compared with the grade schools of the cities above named.

Building Details Given.

"In this connection, details of cost will be found interesting. Jefferson High cost, as already stated, 9.4 cents per cubic foot. There have lately been circulated reports to the effect that the cost was 17 cents per cubic foot. Had the building been built fireproof, as was originally planned, the cost would have been 17 cents per cubic foot, as shown by the bids received at the time. However, the original plans were not carried out. The cost of the Jefferson High includes heat, ventilation, plumbing, electric wiring and fixed furniture.

Year's Contracts Reviewed.

"School contracts awarded by the board in 1910 show the following details of aggregate and unit cost:

School—	Class r'ms.	Total r'ms.	Cubic feet.	Total cost.	Cost. Cubic foot.	Cost rooms.
Albina Homestead	8	8	360,524	$30,240.81	8.2c	$3,780.10
Brooklyn	4	4	189,504	21,055.13	11.1c	5,258.78
Clinton Kelly	4	4	188,808	21,926.13	11.6c	5,481.53
Creston (a)	2	5	257,070	20,412.92	7.9c	4,082.58
Hudson	4	4	217,003	19,968.10	9.2c	4,992.02
Lents	8	8	413,298	33,264.69	8.0c	4,158.11
Llewellyn	4	4	197,615	18,887.29	9.5c	4,721.82
New Mt. Tabor	4	4	217,003	19,928.98	9.2c	4,982.24
Peninsula (a)	2	5	264,845	25,139.76	9.5c	5,026.15
Portsmouth (b)	4	5	190,216	16,724.65	8.8c	4,181.13
Vernon	8	8	326,211	32,511.96	9.9c	4,063.99
Woodlawn (c)	10	12	544,158	39,100.36	7.2c	3,258.36
Woodstock	8	8	413,298	32,889.24	7.9c	4,112.40

a—Have assembly halls and accessory rooms equal to three additional classrooms in cost.
b—Has office and hall equal to one additional classroom.
c—Has assembly hall equal to two additional classrooms.

"Lincoln High School, now under construction, will cost, including general construction, heating, ventilating, plumbing, linoleum flooring, electric wiring, hardware and electric fixtures, $453,885, or at the rate of 20 2-3 cents per cubic foot. This is a fireproof building.

"Washington High School contains 1,587,600 cubic feet and cost $222,572, or at the rate of 14.1 cents per cubic foot. Had it been built fireproof throughout, in accordance with the requirements of present ordinances, it would have cost a little less than $290,000, or at the rate of 18.3 cents per cubic foot. Washington High is somewhat similar in plan to a new, entirely fireproof high school at Burlington, Ia., which contains 988,000 cubic feet. This building cost $200,000, or nearly 20¼ cents per cubic foot.

"In measuring cubical contents, everything excavated under is counted, and the roof is figured at one-half its height.

"The Brooklyn and Clinton Kelly improvements are four-room additions to old buildings. At the Brooklyn School a large portion of the money expended was used to modernize the old building. At Clinton Kelly, the plumbing installed was nearly equal to that required for a complete school of 18 rooms and assembly hall. Modern plumbing increased the aggregate and unit cost, also, at the Vernon, Lents, Woodstock, new Mount Tabor and Hudson schools.

"At the Peninsula School, the contract included a concrete wall all around the block at a cost of $1049. At the Brooklyn School the old toilets were discarded and new ones installed at a cost of $5414. At the new Mount Tabor School the contract included a cesspool, for which an excavation of 50 feet was made, partly through quicksand. The costs shown in detail above are as near as can be calculated until all accounts are closed up. Cost of extras was practically nominal.

Architects' Opinions Cited.

"On the subject of cost and method of construction the following letter addressed to the Civic Council by J. Jacobberger, Ellis F. Lawrence, John Wilson and J. Andre Fouilhoux will prove interesting:

"Portland, Or., Nov. 18, 1910.—Mr. John H. Haak, President Civic Council. Dear Sir: The committee appointed by the Portland Architectural Club to make investigations of the cost of schoolhouses throughout the country, as per your request, hand you herewith a tabulated schedule showing the results of its investigations. The great variety in the cost per cubic foot is no doubt caused by the different interpretations of fireproof structures and the different methods used in computing the cubical contents. At best it seems unwise to place too much weight on these cubical costs. While several cities have claimed to have complete fireproof schoolhouses, there have been but four cities which have given much time to this form of construction. These four cities are New York, Boston, Chicago and St. Louis. St. Louis has increased its cost from 11 and 12 cents a cubic foot up to 18 cents a cubic foot in the last ten years, steadily giving more attention to sanitation and ventilation. The very strong building ordinance which will be in effect after the first of the year in this city means that the schools erected should be on a par with those in these four cities. It is the opinion of the committee that no attempt should be made to construct grammar schoolhouses in this city for less than 16 cents a cubic foot, or a cost of $150 per pupil, a method of computing the cost which in the judgment of the committee is much more fair than the cubical method. It is the consensus of opinion, also, of the committee that no high school, even of the simplest character, should be erected for less than 18 cents per cubic foot, if the auxiliary requirements are to be carried out strictly to date.

"These opinions have been backed by conversations with several of the leading architects in the city. The committee feels that if more time were given it for investigating, some of the so-called fireproof buildings reported would be found to have either no fireproof roofs or floors in classrooms; for instance, the Seattle school listed was found on investigation to have only fireproof corridors and stairs. This was classified as a fireproof building when their report first reached us.

"The committee hopes that this information will be of service to your Council in its work to secure fireproof construction in all schoolhouses at an economical figure."

Frame Buildings Protected.

"As to whether or not the frame school buildings in use in Portland are safe, it can be said for them that every one has doors opening outward, numerous stairways and exits, wide and well-lighted corridors, a principal and a janitor in each school, and a teacher in each room. Fire-escapes, standpipes and hose are additional means of protection. Each school is required to hold a fire drill once a week, and a fine of $5 is visited upon the principal for failure to comply with the rule of the Board in this respect. The efficency of the drill was amply attested by the alarm at the Sellwood School on October 27th last, when the building was emptied of every child within its walls in less than one minute. With the children in the building only a portion of the day, and then continually under the eye of principal and teachers, and trained to respond to the fire drill, it can safely be said that the danger to life from fire is very remote. Whatever opinions may be entertained in regard to the architectural appearance of the exterior of the buildings, we can submit in confidence that our school buildings, in respect to light, heat, ventilation, sanitation and convenience of arrangement, have no superiors in cities of the class of Portland anywhere in the country.

Architects' Fees Reduced.

"Reference has been made to our custom of compensating architects for building work, and we will therefore state the policy of the Board in regard to architecture and quote from our records on the subject of payments. In the case of the Jefferson High School, architects' fees were $14,438.30, being 5 per cent of the contracts, which were $288,765.97. Architects' fees added to the contracts make the total cost of the school $303,204.27. During the year 1910 the Board architect received from the district $8229.55 on account of 1910 contracts, and $3770.45 on account of 1909 contracts, a total of $12,000. This was 3 per cent of the aggregate cost of $400,000, and was for architecture and supervision, as against a possible cost of $20,000 if the work had been handled on a 5 per cent basis, the regular charge for architecture. The saving to the school district by the method employed by the Board was $8000 in 1910. The Board architect furnishes his own office for carrying on his work, and pays his own draughtsmen, office help and inspectors, with the exception of the concrete inspectors, whose salaries are paid by the Board.

"For all building work required by the district, plans and specifications are prepared and bids invited by advertisements duly published in the newspapers. It is the desire of the Board that there shall be full and free competition between bidders for all work. Each bidder must submit his bid in writing and accompany it with a certified check; otherwise he merits no consideration and receives none. Contracts are always awarded to the lowest and most responsible bidders who comply with the conditions of the proposal. There never has been any complaint of the period of advertising and there has never been any discrimination in favor of or against any bidder. As an example, we will refer to the bids received for the Woodlawn school last year. In each instance the contract was awarded to the lowest bidder who met the requirements of the Board in regard to responsibility. The bids follow, the successful ones being marked with a star.

Building (Including maple floor)—	
W. B. Griffith	$ 38,357.00
J. F. Hand	37,790.00
*J. H. Sprague	36,250.00
Heating—	
*W. G. McPherson	3,672.00
J. C. Bayer	3,965.00
Burkhart & Weaverson	4,315.00
Glass and glazing—	
Central Door & Lumber Co.	1,050.00
*W. P. Fuller & Co.	1,049.00
Plumbing—	
Fox & Co.	6,955.00
*William Muirhead	6,116.00
Ruedy Brothers	6,440.00
Williams & Beggs	6,341.00

Jefferson Contracts Explained.

Bids for the Jefferson High School were taken in the manner provided by the district for all building work. In each instance here, also, the lowest bidder was a responsible bidder and the contracts awarded were the best that could be made for the district. The bidders were as follows, the successful ones being marked with a star:

General Bids—	
*McInnis & Reed, frame work, painting, etc.	$152,000.00
Portland & Seattle Construction Company, frame work	219,710.00
Phil E. Dunnavant & Co., carpenter work, ornamental iron	71,899.00
J. M. Wallace, carpenter work, ornamental iron	79,998.00
Lundstrom & Jefferson, foundation and brick work	58,137.50
Litherland & Abry, masonry	99,869.77
Reimers & McBride, foundation, brick and stone work	119,750.00
G. Zanello & Co., masonry	97,000.00
E. E. Angell, part of the work	218,000.00
Heating and ventilating—	
*W. G. McPherson & Co.	32,000.00
J. C. Bayer & Co.	40,148.00
Plumbing and gas fitting—	
*T. E. Hulme & Co.	12,300.00
Jacobsen & DeTemple	17,250.00
Whitehouse & Honeyman	19,400.00
Robert Gillan	18,000.00
Hassalo Engineering Company	23,900.00
Muirhead & Murhard	19,732.00
Ruedy Brothers	25,350.00
W. Muirhead	17,846.00
Williams & Beggs	22,000.00
J. F. Shea	18,812.00
Sheet metal work and roofing—	
*J. C. Bayer	11,974.00
Portland Sheet Metal Works	11,550.00
Lathing and plastering and exterior work—	
*John O'Hare	22,500.00
M. Harris	26,909.00
O. Mathiesen	23,775.00
J. D. Tresham	24,530.00
Glass—	
*W. P. Fuller & Co.	3,890.00
Central Door & Lumber Co.	4,008.00
Painting—	
P. A. Deane	6,598.00
J. A. Graef	8,168.00
Sheehy Brothers	7,584.00
W. Harrischou	7,240.00
R. Williamson	8,838.00
Ernest Miller & Co.	9,400.00
Sutcliffe & Bried	7,300.00
Blaesing & Co.	7,300.00
Doyle & Knoll	7,000.00
N. C. Tochie	6,412.00

The contract for painting was included in the bid of McInnis & Reed for the general work.

Fire Insurance Satisfactory.

"The Board nearly two years ago adopted the blanket form of insurance under which, in case of fire, each company is liable for such proportion of the loss as the amount of insurance allotted to it bears to the whole amount carried by the district. Each building is appraised, and when a loss occurs the adjustment is prompt and satisfactory. It is the aim of the Board to divide the insurance as nearly as can be among the insurance agencies of the city; provided always, that the companies patronized by us are well rated by the insurance authorities. Under this plan every company is behind any loss, however, large or small. The district has been enabled to obtain a rate which has effected a saving of about $2000 per year in premiums. This is not a large sum, but it illustrates the policy of the board in avoiding any unnecessary expenses.

"Ten years ago there was hardly a school in Portland that was properly ventilated. Now it is impossible to find a school in the city that is not properly ventilated. Then years ago it was seriously proposed to put the toilets of the schools in buildings separated from the main schools, simply because it was believed that they could not be installed in the basements of the schools without jeopardizing the health of the pupils. Our Board took the view that there was no more to be feared from a toilet within a school building than from one within a dwelling or a hotel. The plan was made practicable by the great improvement in the character of the plumbing. Accordingly, the toilets were installed in the basements. It has cost much money, but the results have justified the expenditure. In respect to modern plumbing, Portland is far ahead of most American cities. In a visit to a Pacific Coast city some time since, our city superintendent found the school authorities installing plumbing of the type discarded from the Portland schools long ago.

Purchasing Agent Employed.

"For nearly two years a purchasing agent has been employed by the district and it is his special duty to make purchases authorized by the Board of such materials and supplies as are required; to receive and inspect the same and to account to the Board regularly for the conduct of his office. His duties include inspection of fuel and supplies. He makes a daily report of stock received and distributed. He may not purchase any article except upon requisition signed by a member of the Board. Most of the commodities used are purchased under yearly contracts, and in respect to these the duties of the purchasing agent pertain merely to receipt, inspection and distribution.

"Upon the recommendation of the Board and the approval of the taxpayers, the grounds surrounding our school building are being enlarged and improved and brought up to good grade for drainage. Ample concrete walks are being provided, thus insuring dry footing for the children when the weather is inclement. We hope that in time every school in the city will be made to present the neat, well-kept appearance that should be characteristic of all public property. At the two most recent annual meetings the taxpayers authorized an expenditure of $20,000 annually for the improvement of school grounds.

"For 1910 and 1911, the sum of $20,000 or $10,000 for each year has been appropriated by the taxpayers for circulating libraries. Under the system in vogue the School Board pays for the books, while the free public library takes care of them, distributes them and pays a librarian. By the operation of this system the pupils enjoy the advantages of a library in each school.

Teachers' Salaries Increased.

"Upon the recommendation of the Board in 1910, the taxpayers at their annual meeting in that year authorized an increase in the salaries of teachers amounting to about 10 per cent, thus placing salaries in Portland about on a par with those in other Pacific Coast and Rocky Mountain cities, in the same class with Portland in respect to population. Salaries of teachers constitute the largest item of expense in school maintenance. They have increased very largely in aggregate in the past ten years, the disbursement for the fiscal year 1910 being $701,632.25 as compared with $298,745.10 in 1900. In 1900 the maximum salary of a teacher in the elementary schools was $700 per year, and in the high schools $950 per year. Now the maximums are $1100 per year in the elementary schools and $1600 in the high schools. A young teacher entering the Portland schools now after the required two years' experience in other schools, is paid the minimum rate of $725 per year for the first five months of her service. This is $25 more per year than the maximum salary of the best grade teachers ten years ago. After the probationary period of five months, teachers are paid such additional sum as their certificates and experience warrant under the schedule in force. Following is the schedule of salaries for grade and high school teachers, as adopted by the taxpayers:

FIRST, FOURTH, FIFTH AND SIXTH GRADES.

After two years' experience	$ 775.00
After three years' experience	825.00
After four years' experience	900.00
After five years' experience	1000.00
After six years' experience	1050.00

SECOND AND THIRD GRADES.

After two years' experience	725.00
After three years' experience	775.00
After four years' experience	850.00
After five years' experience	925.00
After six years' experience	1000.00

SEVENTH, EIGHTH AND NINTH GRADES

After two years' experience	$ 825.00
After three years' experience	875.00
After four years' experience	950.00
After five years' experience	1050.00
After six years' experience	1100.00

HIGH SCHOOL.

Less than three years' experience	$1150.00
After three years' experience	1200.00
After four years' experience	1250.00
After five years' experience	1300.00
After six years' experience	1350.00
Heads of departments	1600.00

Cost Per Pupil Is $38.19.

"In figuring the cost of instruction per pupil the items which enter into the computation are salaries of teachers, janitors, superintendents and supervisors, fuel, light, water and supplies and materials of all kinds which perish with their use.

"On this basis the cost of maintenance of our schools for the entire year 1910 was $855,591.72. The total enrollment of pupils for the calendar year was 27,796; average number belonging 21,341.6; maximum average number belonging 23,190.8. The latter figure is the fairest and most equitable divisor to be used in arriving at the cost of instruction per pupil as is it the number of pupils to be provided for. Whether they attend school or not, teachers and all other necessary accommodations must be provided for them, and if not so provided, there is instant complaint from the public. An epidemic or a spell of unfavorable weather will cut down the attendance for a period long or short, but the maximum average number belonging must always be taken care of. On this basis, the cost of instruction per pupil in 1910 was $38.19. In 1900 the total cost of maintenance was $253,175.55. Following are comparisons of cost between 1900 and 1910, based upon whole number registered and average number belonging:

	1900	1910
Cost of maintenance	$253,175.55	$855,591.72
Whole number registered	12,674	27,796
Average number belonging	10,238.9	21,341.6
Cost per pupil, based upon whole number registered	$ 19.97	$ 31.86
Cost per pupil, based upon average number belonging	$ 24.68	$ 41.49

"The computation for 1900 is based upon a fiscal year ending in June, compared with a fiscal year ending in December for 1910.

"It is not proper accounting to charge against the cost of instruction, money invested for the purchase of land, erection of buildings, installation of furniture, improvements to grounds and street and sewer assessments. These are permanent investments and are so regarded in every city in the country which keeps detailed account of its school expenditures. The city owns them and they become more valuable each year, subject only to a percentage for depreciation.

Manual Arts Courses Added.

"In manual arts in elementary schools 11 instructors are employed whose salaries aggregate $1120 per month. In the high schools five instructors are employed whose salaries amount to $625 per month. In the school of trades there are 11 instructors and their salaries amount to $1411 per month. Public school instruction in the manual arts is a development of the past five or six years. Evening schools, when first installed, consisted of two or three rooms in which the principal elementary branches were taught. Now elementary evening schools are taught in five buildings and an evening school for high school students is held in the Lincoln High School building. Besides there are evening sessions for males and females in the school of trades. The attendance is very large and the cost correspondingly increased compared with ten years ago.

"In the high school the course has been strengthened in other directions than manual arts. It includes, in addition to the course in cooking, dressmaking, departments for girls and a practical high school manual training department for boys, strong commercial departments in bookkeeping, shorthand and typewriting and kindred commercial studies. The trade school offers systematic courses for girls in cooking, dressmaking and millinery; and for boys courses in machine shop, patternmaking, moulding, electrical construction, plumbing and gas fitting, brick laying and plastering and carpentry and cabinetmaking and mechanical and architectural drafting.

Bookkeeping Methods Systematic.

"Our books are well kept and our system of cost distribution is up to date. Tables which are compiled by the clerk, show not only the cost of instruction per pupil in the whole district, but the per capita cost in any school in the district. These tables can be reduced to show the per capita cost for any item of expense. For two years past our books have been experted not only annually, as the state law requires, but monthly, in accordance with the requirements of our Board. No private business in Portland is guarded more closely in this matter of expert accounting than is the business of the school district. The auditors for 1910 were: S. Grutze, deputy city auditor; John M. Lewis, County Treasurer, and Mrs. L. D. Fleming, accountant. For 1911 they are: Mrs. L. D. Fleming, Charles Wiegand, Deputy City Auditor, and J. B. Tanner, accountant. The reports of the auditors are on file in the office of the Board in the Tilford building and are open to the inspection of any person. As illustrating the thorough manner of checking the books of the district, we quote as follows from the report of the auditors: Messrs. Grutze and Lewis and Mrs. Fleming, dated December 17, 1910:

"'We, the undersigned, appointed by your honorable body as an auditing committee to examine the financial books, vouchers and papers in relation thereto and journal of Board meetings, in custody of R. H. Thomas, school clerk, beg to report that we have carefully checked, each month, the receipts and disbursements and find that all moneys received have been properly accounted for and that all disbursements made were in pursuance of authority granted by the Board. The balances in the various banks as reported by the clerk were also verified each month and in every instance found to be correct. The system of accounting employed is modern and so arranged as to give all necessary information.'

"The report of the clerk, which was audited as stated above, showed total receipts from December 14, 1909, to December 15, 1910, of $1,925,019.58; disbursements during the same period, $1,838,090.83; balance, $86,928.70.

"We take pleasure in saying that we will be glad to meet at any time with any one interested in the schools and discuss with him any subject relating to educational work. Likewise, we will be pleased to show any interested person through any school building in the district and supply him any information that may be desired in regard to buildings or the method of instruction."

MEMBERS OF PORTLAND BOARD OF EDUCATION WHO ANSWER IN DETAIL ATTACKS MADE ON THEIR POLICIES.

Mrs. L. W. Sitton, Chairman.

I. N. Fleischner.

J. V. Beach.

H. C. Campbell.

R. L. Sabin.

SALIENT POINTS MADE BY BOARD OF EDUCATION IN ITS ANSWER TO CRITICISMS.

Cost of construction and maintenance of schools has increased heavily in the last ten years. Hence, a comparison in the cost of education of Portland in 1910 and Portland in 1900, without due consideration of the increase in the price of materials, is unfair.

Portland schools were behind the times ten years ago. They are now the equal of any in the country.

Thirteen contracts for new school buildings, or for the enlargement of old ones, were awarded last year.

The cost of buildings per cubic foot, and cost of instruction per pupil, is less than in several Eastern schools.

The danger to the life of the pupils on account of fire is very remote in Portland public schools.

Ten years ago no school in Portland was properly ventilated. Now it is impossible to find one which is not properly ventilated.

The system of employing a board of architects and paying them 3 per cent, instead of 5 per cent, the customary charge, saved the district $8000 last year.

All contracts were awarded to the lowest bidder, after bids had been regularly advertised for.

The chief cost of school maintenance is the salaries of principals and teachers. The minimum salary of the youngest teacher is now $725 a year; ten years ago the maximum salary of the teacher in the elementary schools was $700.

The cost of instruction, based on the average number belonging, has increased in the last ten years from $24.68 a pupil a year to $41.49 a pupil a year. The increase is largely due to increases in salaries and to improvements.

The bookkeeping is now so arranged that the per capita cost of instruction in the district as a whole or in any school in the district, or the cost of any particular item of expense, can be given at once.

EX-POSTMASTER AWAITS UNWINDING OF RED TAPE

Complaint of Lewisville Official, Whose Office Has Been Abolished, Still Goes Rounds—People Who Spit on Government Furniture Cause Woe.

MORE than eight years ago the postmaster at Lewisville, Or., appealed to the Government for aid in assisting him to break up a custom patrons of the office had of spitting on the floor, counters and everywhere else except in the boxes filled with sawdust which the postmaster provided for that purpose. Patiently the postmaster waited for official action, until his postoffice was abolished. Now that the office has been out of existence for some time, the complaint and correspondence again appears in the local office of postoffice inspectors, and, after proper indorsements and marginal notations, will be hurried on through official channels until a ruling is obtained on the complaint and the ex-postmaster may be told what he should have done eight years ago.

Under date of December 22, 1902, the postmaster addressed the United States Marshal in Portland as follows:

"Dear Sir: Allow me to ask you for information as we are running a small store,, and keeping the postoffice in same building,, has anyone any right to come in and spit around on the floor and counters,, then if I ask him to please spit in the boxes for that purpose,, he goes to cursing me and says he will spit where he pleases,, will you please advise me as I am going to have it stopped."

To make the case doubly strong and let Government officials know just who they were dealing with besides a postmaster, the complainant inclosed a note, written on the flashing letter-head of one of those old, world-wide detective agencies, with the name of the postmaster, in big letters, as local representative. The note reads:

"This is my letter head I passed 97 1-2 in corresponding through the mail,, and have my graduation papers."

A circle is drawn in the upper right-hand corner of each manuscript to make it official.

The United States Marshal denied jurisdiction and, under date of December 26, 1902, turned the papers over to the postoffice inspector with the following notation:

"The letter is referred to you for the necessary information. As this is a very important matter, your early attention is earnestly solicited. The gentleman has certainly passed a very creditable examination as a detective and the information no doubt is wanted, that he may act accordingly."

The postoffice inspector started off the year 1903 by sending the correspondence to Boston, with this additional note:

"I understand this man was a witness in green goods case in Boston some time ago, and is possibly a friend of yours. Happy New Year."

The Boston office took a month to digest the contents of the complaint and correspondence and then returned the package to the local office with this information:

"I have the honor to return herewith papers relating to complaint of the postmaster at Lewisville, Or., that some one spits on the furniture in the office.

"I have given the matter careful personal attention and find it is absolutely forbidden by the Board of Health of the City of Boston, who claim jurisdiction over the universe outside of New Jersey. The penalty is $100 if it is plain spit, with 10 per cent discount if the offender uses Boot Jack tobacco, but 20 per cent additional if Battle Ax is used. The complaint has been duly entered here and will be immediately taken up by the Society for for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals, including, of course, Jackasses, like this fellow at Lewisville.

"The Ossified Old Maids' Club of New England has voted that the offender is 'very naughty' and should be labored with but not injured.

"We of New England very much regret that the West should have a person so made as to be charged with spitting around on the counters and floor of the postoffice. It is not only unsanitary but has a tendency to mar the woodwork. We have societies here for the protection of almost everything except Oregon postmasters, but you will please tell this gentleman to be a little patient, and just as soon as we get through with Lynch's trouble in England and the Venezuela question, this case will receive additional attention."

Where the correspondence has been during the last eight years and to whom it has been "refferred" is not known, as indorsements are lost. The case has just been passed up to the local office again and the correspondence started on another quest of authority, with the notation:

"Postoffice at Lewisville abolished. Don't know why. Advise what steps should be taken next, at your earliest convenience."