

and adopted the following: "Resolved, That a compulsory education law be enacted in the State of Florida, requiring every child between the ages of 6 and 14 to attend school at least 80 days in every year; Provided, That such limitations shall be attached to the law as will not make attendance a hardship upon any child."

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A compulsory law is needed more for its moral effect than for its rigor; a rigorous law or one containing much costly machinery, I would vigorously oppose. It is believed that a conservative law, such as obtains in some of the States, can be drawn which will inflict no hardship upon any parent really desirous of educating his children and will still preserve the effect of preventing any considerable number of youth from growing up in ignorance and vice to become either paupers or criminals and so to continue through life a constant tax upon the State.

The struggle for uniformity in textbooks was continuing in 1900. The State had no law on the subject since the law passed in 1893 was left out in the codification of the Revised Statutes. In annual convention, the county superintendents passed the following resolution favoring county unity but opposing state uniformity. The approval was not unanimous.

Resolved, That State Uniformity of Text Books is unwise, non-progressive and undemocratic; that County Uniformity is desirable, and it is hereby recommended that the next Legislature enact such laws as will legalize this plan; provide for the selection, adoption, purchase and sale of books by county school authorities, and protect pupils and patrons.

In his report the State Superintendent treated this same subject:

There are many in the State favoring Uniformity, others, the creation of a Book Commission whose duty it shall be to examine books and to recommend two or more texts on each subject from which County Boards shall make adoptions. I am somewhat inclined to the latter course, but make no such recommendation, as the textbook question is a very serious and complicated one, and any school officer taking a decided stand upon this question is liable to have his good name besmirched.

Notwithstanding the great amount of literature in opposition to State Uniformity, or State Advisory Committees, profusely and promiscuously circulated by capital invested in school book publications, I am unable to see why such provision, wisely, judiciously, conservatively, and incorruptably administered would prove a detriment to the State Every utterance on an educational platform in opposition to any species of State Uniformity seems to be more or less suggested by those engaged in the manufacture of books I find in me a spirit that resists to the utmost a seeming effort of organized capital or tutor the utterances of the educational press and speakers and to influence official recommendation and action as though the administration of schools were a partitive one, one factor being the book companies, the other the officers legally charged with school government.