

On the whole, the schools have done well, considering that the county has been so badly handicapped for the want of funds.

Suggestions.--

1. County School Boards should be given the right to fix, within the legal limits, the county levy for school purposes.
2. The minimum levy should not be less than four mills.
3. Provision should be made for collecting taxes earlier than they are now collected.
4. There should be an educational qualification for County Superintendents.
5. He should also be made an ex-officio member of the School Board.
6. There should be a limit to second and third grade certificates. Second grade should not be renewed more than three times; third grade not more than twice.
7. A State Grading committee should take the place of county grading committees. Then the grading would be uniform; now it is not.
8. The law should require each county in the State to establish a graded high school.

GEORGE J. GRAHAM,
County Superintendent.

HERNANDO COUNTY

Hon. W. N. Sheats, State Superintendent Public Instruction:

Dear Sir--At your request I submit the following in regard to school affairs in Hernando county.

Financial.--In 1894 our school operations were seriously embarrassed by an old indebtedness, approximating \$3,000. In 1896 the last of that was paid. The grand jury of this county on January 15, 1897, made a thorough examination of school affairs, and, after giving facts and figures, reported in its presentment as follows: "In case collections are as good this year as they have been during the last year, the year will leave our School Board in better financial condition than it has been for some years past, a condition of affairs which should give pleasure to all good citizens."

Interest and Course of Study.--Interest in education has been steadily increasing. The course of study, rules and regulations prescribed by the Board have been heartily endorsed by the people generally; all active opposition has died out. The increase of agricultural labor required of the children, consequent upon the freeze, has lowered the average attendance, but the enrollment in many localities has largely increased.

School Houses, Furniture, etc.--We are well supplied with frame school houses. Two houses have been built and one purchased during the past two years. Cisterns have been built and wells dug where needed, and all the schools have been supplied with good stoves. Patent desks are in use in three school