

April 1st (time taxes are due) there will remain for this year an unexpended balance of several hundred dollars, which can be most laudably spent on buildings and furniture.

Our Board of County Commissioners without any hesitancy grant us the meager legal limit (five mills) for educational purposes, and the Collector of Revenue has so faithfully discharged his duty that less than seven per cent. of our levy is charged to the account of errors and insolvencies.

Need of County High School.--While the faithful non-resident teachers who have labored in the public schools of this county are to be commended, it is an indisputable fact that, as a rule, home teachers are more thorough in methods, more painstaking in reports, more careful in grading and promoting pupils, and more satisfactory in almost every particular to Superintendent, to Board and to patrons, and by being with us at all times exert a greater influence for good, both in and out of school work.

A scarcity of teachers necessitates a constant change of teachers, which is largely detrimental to school progress. More than 40 per cent. of our schools are taught by teachers residing in other counties and States. The need of a High School in which our young men and women can, in a large measure, acquire the qualifications necessary to fit them as teachers, is imperative.

Public School No. 1, Santa Rosa Academy, was some years ago set apart as the High School, to which pupils of sixth and higher grades might come from all parts of the county to obtain advantages not offered in home districts.

By a special act of Congress this school was given a Public Library, and receives from time to time all government publications, including Smithsonian contributions to knowledge, and many other very valuable publications, besides private contributions of books. A competent principal, with able assistants, is usually placed in charge of this school, yet it does not have a longer term than other schools, and does not perform the functions of a county High School.

This school and Public School No. 2, both for whites, located in the town of Milton, and only about one-half mile apart, are now, and have been for years, without any good reasons, running in open defiance of limits fixed by law.

These schools should be consolidated, and a nucleus for a High School for 1899-1900 formed.

Sub-Districts.--There are no sub-districts in the county, and very few places in which to create them; but it is to be hoped that the next Legislature will enact a law whereby school sub-districts can be made and revenue assessed and collected.

Length of School Term.--For two years past the school term was, for the first time in the history of the county, five months, instead of four.

This longer term was effected by numerous causes, chief among which were better collection of taxes, increased payment of polls, inability of Board to secure teachers for some schools when new school law (which is a blessing to our State) first went into operation, the small salary paid third-grade certificate holders to decrease in amounts paid for operating negro schools (largely due to negro teachers holding lowgrade certificates) and to the consolidation of schools that were within the three-mile limit.