

two years, with general satisfaction, which is an evidence that the people are willing to pay more tax for school purposes. Another evidence of the need of more school funds is the willingness of the people in this county to pay for a private term of a month after the regular term of four months has been taught. We need longer terms, and under the five mill maximum it is impossible to make the extension and necessary improvements.

Teachers.--I am glad to say that teachers, from a general standpoint, are improving in quality. I am proud that some of our teachers are an honor to their profession and do excellent work, having acquired for themselves a Teachers' Library in order that they may keep in touch with the progress and be better prepared for their work. I have some difficulty in securing teachers, more especially in filling the better places.

The salaries of teachers are based upon the grade of certificate, paying Third Grade not over \$25 per month; Second Grade certificates from \$25 to \$35 per month.

Grading Committee.--In my report for the two years ending July 1st, 1898, I favored a State Grading Committee, but I am now convinced that a change is not necessary. In the main I think our School Law, as it now stands (except the five-mill maximum), is as good as would be likely to get it should any change be made, therefore I have no suggestions.

Teachers Associations.--We have a Teachers' Association organized in June, 1897; have kept it in operation ever since, and it has proven to be a useful means of improving the methods of our teachers. It improves the good points of good teachers; it also strengthens poorer and inexperienced teachers by getting ideas, gaining knowledge and experience, thereby preparing them for better work in the school room.

I will say that in concluding this, my last report, that I thank the patrons and all citizens for their hearty support of the school system. They willingly pay more for school purposes. My aim has been to elevate the standard of education in Columbia county. While the progress has been slow it has been steady, an interest having been aroused among the people, and the way has been marked that my successor may lead on to a higher plane with the full assurance that we have a better system, better teachers, and more general satisfaction among teachers, patrons and school officers, all working in harmony together to advance the cause of education.

I am  
Respectfully,  
H. L. AVANT,  
County Superintendent.

#### DESOTO COUNTY

Dear Sir--Replying to your request, I herewith submit the following report of the public schools of DeSoto county for the year ending June 30, 1899 and 1900.

We have one high school situated at Arcadia with about 200 pupils and five teachers. The school is outgrowing the house and the question of erecting a larger and better one is now being agitated, and the prospects are that we will soon have better advantages for our advanced scholars at home. Our county