1859

1858-59 Report of the Committee on the Reorganization of the Public Schools of the Town of Bridgewater

The Town of Bridgewater

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REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE

ON THE

Reorganization of the Public Schools

OF THE

TOWN OF BRIDGEWATER.

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1859.
REPORT.

The inhabitants of this town have long been desirous of providing better accommodation for the pupils in our town schools, and for a better system of instruction and discipline. They have long desired more equitable provision for the education of the children in all parts of the town; that schools of equal length should be maintained in every part of the town, taught by teachers having suitable qualifications for their office. For a long time many have thought that these desirable things can be attained in no way so effectually as by the relinquishment by the School Districts of their claims to proprietorship in the schoolhouses, and to control over the schools, and the commitment of the whole matter of public education to the town. Within a few months, what has long appeared so just, profitable and practicable to many, has engaged the attention of nearly all of our townsmen, and a great degree of unanimity prevails. It appears that the people of Bridgewater are prepared to entertain a proposition for the dissolution of School Districts, and to consider, as a town, the subject of providing equal schooling for all the children of the town.
At the annual town meeting in March, 1859, the object was presented in a resolution under the appropriate article in the Warrant, and a Committee was appointed to consider and report a plan for reorganizing our system of public education. That Committee have carefully attended to their duty, and respectfully submit the following

**REPORT.**

We recommend that the School Districts be dissolved; that a Committee be appointed to appraise the present schoolhouses and their appurtenances, and that the value of the property be credited to the respective owners, the inhabitants of the present School Districts, in the apportionment of taxes which may be required for carrying into effect the new plan for public education; that a Committee be appointed to purchase land for any new schoolhouses that may be needed, to build said houses and to furnish them, and to repair and refurnish such schoolhouses as may need repairing and refurnishing to make them commodious.

The Committee present the following plan for the location of schoolhouses. That the schoolhouse in what is now called District No. 1, remain where it now stands: That the schoolhouse in what is now called District No. 2, be removed so as to accommodate the inhabitants of that vicinity and the inhabitants of what is now called District No. 4, and to be suitably enlarged: That the schoolhouse in what is now called District No. 3, remain where it now stands, and that it be enlarged so as to accommodate a
primary school: That a new schoolhouse be built in a location which will accommodate the inhabitants of the places now called respectively District No. 5 and District No. 6: That the schoolhouse in what is now called District No. 7, remain where it now stands, and that it be enlarged and refurnished to accommodate such part of the inhabitants of what is now called District No. 6, as will probably find it convenient to send their children to that schoolhouse: That the schoolhouse in what is now called District No. 8, remain where it now stands, subject to enlargement and refurnishing, or rebuilding, as occasion may require: That the schoolhouse in what is now called District No. 9, remain where it now stands: That a new schoolhouse be built in a location so as to accommodate what are now called respectively District No. 10 and District No. 11: That the schoolhouse in what is now called District No. 12, remain where it now stands, and be repaired and refurnished, and that a school in that schoolhouse be kept for the six Fall and Winter months in every year; and that in Summer time the pupils be sent to the nearest schoolhouses in the adjoining districts, under the direction of the school committee, according to the law in such cases made and provided.

The Committee recommend that the work be commenced immediately, so that the system may go into operation in the spring of the year 1860.

The Committees of Appraisal and Building, hereafter to be appointed, will have the necessary expenditure in their province, but it has been thought well to offer an
estimate of the probable cost of alterations, repairs and refurnishing, and of new buildings, as follows:—

For repairs on Central Schoolhouse, -  $100 00
For removing Paper Mill Schoolhouse, and enlarging the same, &c. - 400 00
For altering Sprague’s Hill Schoolhouse, - 500 00
For repairing and refurnishing Scotland Schoolhouse, - 200 00
For building new Schoolhouse near Samuel Leonard’s, - 1400 00
For building new Schoolhouse near Seth Washburn’s, - 1400 00
For repairing Schoolhouse near Geo. W. Bates’, - 150 00
For repairing Great Woods Schoolhouse, - 200 00
Total expense, - 4850 00
Deduct the avails of the sale of five old schoolhouses, - 300 00
Leaving the expense of alterations, &c. -  $4050 00

In the preamble to their Report, the Committee have alluded to the disadvantages of our present arrangement, and to the expected advantages of the contemplated new plan; we need not enlarge on these subjects. It is well known that since the appointment of your Committee the Legislature of this Commonwealth have made provision for the dissolution of School Districts, and for the ownership of school property by towns as towns, to take effect in 1861; it is evident, therefore, that in devising some
new plan at present, we are only beginning at an early day a work which will be required to be completed at no distant date.

This subject will be considered at an adjourned town meeting, to be held on the last Saturday of this month; but the Report is now printed and distributed to give ample time for being read and considered by every inhabitant, before the time of that meeting.

Respectfully submitted.

SAMUEL LEONARD,
CALEB HOBART,
THOMAS P. RODMAN.

BRIDGEWATER,
May 3, 1859.
Local history
Bridgewater
Schools