



County Technical Assistance Service
INSTITUTE *for* PUBLIC SERVICE

March 31, 2025

Education/Schools - Historical Notes

Dear Reader:

The following document was created from the CTAS website (ctas.tennessee.edu). This website is maintained by CTAS staff and seeks to represent the most current information regarding issues relative to Tennessee county government.

We hope this information will be useful to you; reference to it will assist you with many of the questions that will arise in your tenure with county government. However, the *Tennessee Code Annotated* and other relevant laws or regulations should always be consulted before any action is taken based upon the contents of this document.

Please feel free to contact us if you have questions or comments regarding this information or any other CTAS website material.

Sincerely,

The University of Tennessee
County Technical Assistance Service
226 Anne Dallas Dudley Boulevard, Suite 400
Nashville, Tennessee 37219
615.532.3555 phone
615.532.3699 fax
www.ctas.tennessee.edu

Table of Contents

Education/Schools - Historical Notes	3
---	----------

Education/Schools - Historical Notes

Board of Education

The following acts once affected the board of education in Williamson County but are no longer operative. Also referenced below are acts which repeal prior law without providing new substantive provisions.

1. Private Acts of 1907, Chapter 236, created a Board of Education and a District Board of Advisors for every county in the State for the management and control of the schools and abolished the office of District Directors. The County Court was directed to divide the County into five school districts, as nearly equal in size and population as possible, composed of whole Civil Districts. If the county had less than five civil districts, one member of the Board of Education would come from each and the remainder elected at large. The County Superintendent would serve as Secretary to the Board. The County Court would appoint the first members of the Board to serve until September, 1908, when the members elected by the people for two year terms would take office. The duties of the Chairman, Secretary, and members of the Board were enumerated generally. Each member of the Board would be paid from \$1.50 to \$3.00 per meeting as set by the County Court. A three member Advisory Board would be elected in each Civil District for two year terms whose duties were likewise spelled out in the statute.
2. Private Acts of 1929, Chapter 612, amended Public Acts of 1925, Chapter 115, which is the general education law of the State and is codified as Title 49, of Tennessee Code Annotated, by striking a portion of the second paragraph of Section 6, which prohibited a member of the Quarterly County Court or any other county official from serving as a member of the Board of Education as the same applied to Williamson County.
3. Private Acts of 1931, Chapter 607, abolished the existing County Board of Education in Williamson County and created a three member County Board of School Commissioners to be called the County Board of Education, who would be elected by the people for two year terms. The Board would select one of their number as President and the County Superintendent of Public Instruction would be the Secretary. Each member must meet the State qualifications and could not be a county official or a member of the Quarterly Court. Each member would be paid \$8 per day up to 15 days a year while discharging the duties generally mentioned in this Act. The Act named J. A. Williams, Bennett W. Hunter, and A. W. Witner, as the first members of the Board. This Act was repealed by Private Acts of 1937, Chapter 608.
4. Private Acts of 1963, Chapter 94, created a seven member Board of Education, one member from each of seven school districts into which the county was divided, composed of whole Civil Districts. Terms were for six years but the election dates were staggered so that two members would be elected every two years, and each of the members of the present school board would serve until the successor in office was chosen. The entire Act was dependent upon popular approval in a referendum to be held within one year from the date of passage. This Act was repealed by Private Acts of 1972, Chapter 323.
5. Private Acts of 1967-68, Chapter 404, amended Private Acts of 1963, Chapter 94, by adding a provision at the end of Section One that in the event of a vacancy occurring on the Board of Education the Quarterly County Court would fill such vacancy for the unexpired portion of the term. This Act was repealed by Private Acts of 1972, Chapter 323.
6. Private Acts of 1970, Chapter 330, established a nine member Board of Education in Williamson County. The County was divided into seven school districts composed of whole Civil Districts from each of which one school board member would be elected by popular vote except District 4 and District 5 where two members of the Board would be elected by the people. Terms were for six years with a provision that present members of the Board would continue in office until their successors were elected and qualified to assume the position. This Act was not acted on by the Williamson County Quarterly Court and is not effective.

School Districts - Franklin School District

The following private acts have no current effect on the Franklin School District having been repealed, superseded, or not approved by local authorities.

1. Private Acts of 1925, Chapter 710, created the Franklin Special School District in Williamson County which included the city of Franklin. A six member Board of Education would operate the school district in conjunction with the Board of Mayor and Aldermen and Board of Education of Franklin. Members of the Board would be elected for two year terms. The Act named J. W. King,

Wirt Courtney, T. J. Gore, C. M. McDaniel, C. H. Kinnard, and Kirby S. Howlett, as the first Board members. The Board would choose a Chairman, a Vice- Chairman, a Secretary and a Treasurer from its members and proceed to enter into all essential contracts with the Town of Franklin to use its facilities. No compensation would be paid to the members but the Secretary could be given financial and clerical assistance for keeping records. The powers of the Board were generally stated in the Act, and the County Trustee was directed to apportion the school funds so that the District would receive its share. In addition, a special tax of 15 cents per \$100 of taxable property was levied for the year 1925 and in subsequent years which would be spent under the control of the Board. This Act would not affect any other school or school district. This Act was repealed by Private Acts of 1949, Chapter 616.

2. Private Acts of 1937, Chapter 870, amended Section 7, Private Acts of 1925, by Chapter 710, by reducing the tax levy in the Franklin Special School District from 15 cents to 5 cents per \$100 property valuation.
3. Private Acts of 1943, Chapter 450, amended Private Acts of 1925, Chapter 710, by returning the tax rate levy to 15 cents per \$100 every year to support the schools in the District. These school taxes would be due and collected as were other taxes with all school funds being placed under the supervision of the District Board of Education for the use and benefit of the schools therein.
4. Private Acts of 1947, Chapter 225, amended Private Acts of 1925, Chapter 710, by increasing the property tax rate for the schools in the District from 15 cents to 40 cents per \$100 applicable to all property within the District commencing in 1947.

School Districts - Hillsboro School District

The following acts were once applicable to the Hillsboro School District, but are no longer operative.

1. Private Acts of 1931, Chapter 129, created the Hillsboro Special School District which was composed of the Third, and portions of the Second, Fifth, and Sixth Civil Districts of Williamson County. The District would be operated and managed by a seven member Board to which the Act named as the first members C. D. Sweeney, Harold Meacham, Barney Beasley, M. W. Southall, Joe Pearre, P. O. Hassell, and M. T. Carlisle. Members of the newly created Board of Directors of the Hillsboro Special School District must be elected by the people for six year terms. Section 5 contained ten specific powers granted to the Board relating to the general management of the District. The Trustee was directed to apportion school funds in accordance with this Act. A special school tax of 20 cents per \$100 property valuation would be levied on those within the District. All resident children between ages of six and twenty-one could attend free of charge, others must pay the tuition rate set up by the Board.
2. Private Acts of 1933, Chapter 692, repealed Private Acts of 1931, Chapter 129, and provided further that no tax levy, or apportionment of school funds would be made in the District for 1933 but could be done for 1932. The County Board of School Commissioners were authorized and directed to pay the balance due on a note to the Harpeth National Bank in Franklin which money was borrowed and used to erect a school building in the District. Any surplus remaining would be used for maintenance and operation of any public school within the special school district.
3. Private Acts of 1935, Chapter 542, amended Private Acts of 1933, Chapter 692, so as to provide for the refund of donations to the School District in the pro-rated amounts stipulated in this Act payable to the people who were named herein. The amounts ranged from \$5 to \$100 to be refunded. This was in lieu of applying the surplus to the operation of the schools within the District.

School Districts - Nolensville School District

The following acts once applied to the Nolensville School District, but are no longer operative.

1. Private Acts of 1931, Chapter 818, formed the Nolensville School District which was composed of the Sixteenth, Seventeenth, Eighteenth and Nineteenth Civil Districts. The Act named H. J. Brittain, T. H. Guthrie and Ben Waller as the first Board of School Directors who would serve until their successors were elected by the people on the first Saturday in May, 1932, and every two years thereafter. The Board was given specific grants of power and assigned certain obligations essential to operating the School District, including the power to make contractual arrangements to have the children taught in private schools. A special school tax of ten cents per \$100 was allowed to be levied against the property in the District, the same to be collected by the Trustee as any other tax. The Trustee was charged with paying out that revenue and such other funds when lawful and proper so to do for the benefit of the school district.
2. Private Acts of 1931 (2nd Ex. Sess.), Chapter 57, amended Private Acts of 1931, Chapter 818, by adding after Section 6 another Section containing ten specific grants of power and authority to the

Board of Directors of the School District. The County Court was empowered to levy an additional tax if it determined that the special levy for the school district would be insufficient for meeting the needs of the District. Another Section was added which allowed the Directors to issue bonds for the District under certain conditions and limitations, and, if bond issues were considered undesirable, the Directors could issue warrants drawn on the County Trustee, which would be payable only from the funds belonging to the School District. This Act was declared to be constitutional when its validity was attacked in the case of Brittain v. Guthrie, 164 Tenn. 669, 51 S.W.2d 848 (1932).

3. Private Acts of 1933, Chapter 762, expressly repealed Private Acts of 1931, Chapter 818, as amended, and provided further that any funds belonging to the District would be used to pay any obligations owned by the School District. The Trustee was allowed to pay these obligations on the proper warrant of the Board of Education. Any funds remaining after the payment of the obligations of the District would become a part of the general school fund of the County to be used for schools within the District.

School Districts - Thompson Station District

The following acts once applied to the Thompson Station District, but are no longer operative.

1. Private Acts of 1921, Chapter 255, delineated a special school district in the Fourth and Eleventh Civil Districts of Williamson County which would be called the Thompson Station Special School District. The District would be controlled and operated by a seven member Board which was incorporated. The Act nominated Sam Aaron, A. D. Gillespie, Kernan Akin, John B. Ridley, C. B. Alexander, J. E. Johnston, and Dr. A. Gibbs, as the first Board members. The members would elect one of their number as President, one as Secretary and one as Treasurer. Those Directors named would serve until their successors, elected in the August, 1921 election for 6 year terms, could take office. Section 5 was composed of ten grants of specific powers to the Board. The District must levy a thirty cent per \$100 of valuation property tax on all property located therein and would be eligible for its pro rata share of other funds. All resident children between the ages of 6 and 21, could attend the school free of charge, but all others must pay the tuition amount determined by the Board.
2. Private Acts of 1921, Chapter 645, amended Private Acts of 1921, Chapter 255, so as to reduce the authorized tax rate from thirty cents to ten cents per \$100 property valuation.
3. Private Acts of 1923, Chapter 48, specifically repealed Private Acts of 1921, Chapter 255, and Private Acts of 1921, Chapter 645.

School Districts

The private acts listed below concerned the early efforts to improve the quality and control of local school systems by the creation of independent special school districts in Williamson County.

1. Acts of 1891, Chapter 219, formed a new school district out of portions of Davidson and Williamson Counties embracing an area generally described in the Act. The District was granted all the rights and privileges possessed by other school districts. A three member Board of Directors was to be elected to manage and control the schools.
2. Private Acts of 1905, Chapter 143, established School District #25 in Williamson County as the same was delineated in the Act. J. W. Hendrix, G. A. Green, and Reuben Anglin were named as Directors for the area until their successors could be elected in the next general county election.
3. Private Acts of 1905, Chapter 148, established School District #24 in Williamson County as the same was described in the Act. F. P. Brumbach, William Veevers, and Tom Jones were to continue in office as the Directors of the District until their successors could be elected at the next general August election in the county.
4. Private Acts of 1905, Chapter 242, created School District #26 in Williamson County as described in the Act. S. M. Fleming, E. B. Anderson, and S. G. Gary were nominated to serve as the Directors for the District until their successors could be elected and qualified.
5. Private Acts of 1905, Chapter 328, created School District #27 in Williamson County as described in the Act. The Act named R. L. Ezell, R. S. Crowles, and W. L. Hood to serve as Directors for the newly formed school district until their successors could be elected at the next general August election.

Superintendent or Director of Schools

The acts referenced below once affected the office of superintendent of education in Williamson County, but are no longer operative. Also referenced below is an act which repeals prior law without providing new substantive provisions.

1. Private Acts of 1931, Chapter 394, stated that in Williamson County the County Superintendent of Schools would be elected by the people at the regular August election for a two year term, assuming office on September 1 following the election, but that person elected in August, 1932, would not take office until January 1, 1933. The Superintendent must be at least twenty-five years of age, have a minimum of 36 months experience as a principal, teacher, or supervisor in the State of Tennessee, and meet all the other standards and qualifications established by the State. The compensation of the office would be determined by the County Board of School Commissioners and could not be reduced during the term. It was unlawful for the Superintendent to be the beneficiary of any school contract and he must perform all the duties prescribed by the State. This Act was repealed by Private Acts of 1937, Chapter 609, but Section 2 permitted the present Superintendent to continue in office until the next regular election to be held under the school laws of the State.
2. Private Acts of 1955, Chapter 205, provided that in Williamson County the Superintendent of Education would be elected by popular vote beginning at the regular August, 1956, election and would occur every four years thereafter. The first person elected would hold office until September 1, 1960. The Secretary of State's Office reported that this Act was not acted on locally which would preclude it from becoming a law.

General Reference

The following acts constitute part of the administrative and political heritage of the educational structure of Williamson County but are no longer operative since they have either been superseded, repealed, or failed to receive local approval.

1. Acts of 1806, Chapter 8, appointed Trustees for the Academies in all the counties of the State and conferred upon them certain duties and responsibilities. In Williamson County Daniel Perkins, John Sappington, Nicholas T. Perkins, Chapman White, and Abraham Maury, Sr., were named as the Trustees for Harpeth Academy. All meetings of the Trustees of Harpeth Academy were to be held in Nashville.
2. Acts of 1807, Chapter 56, appointed additional Trustees for the Academies throughout the State. Garner Meconico, Albert Russell, and William McNeilly were added to the Trustees of Harpeth Academy in Williamson County. Chapman White, who was appointed in the 1806 Act, was removed as Trustee having declined the appointment.
3. Acts of 1811, Chapter 11, appointed Charles M. Asher, Stephen Childress, Robert P. Curran, James Gordon, Hinchey Petway, Abram Maury, Sr., and David Squier, as Trustees and managers of a lottery to raise a sum not to exceed \$8,000 for the use and benefit of Harpeth Academy in Williamson County. The lottery must be conducted under specified rules and regulations after the Trustees had made a sufficient bond to guarantee payment of prizes.
4. Acts of 1811, Chapter 69, confirmed the appointments of Charles McAlister, John H. Eaton, John Reid, and Dr. Samuel Crockett, to the Board of Trustees for Harpeth Academy in Williamson County.
5. Acts of 1817, Chapter 75, stated that great inconvenience has resulted from the Act incorporating the Trustees of Harpeth Academy in Williamson County by requiring a certain number of Trustees to be present to transact the business of the Academy which could not be done in the case of an emergency, or in a speedy manner. Henceforth five or more Trustees were competent to transact the business of the Academy. The Act then confirmed the appointments of William Smith, Andrew Campbell, John Watson, John Bell, and John White to the Board of Trustees of the School.
6. Acts of 1826, Chapter 162, directed the Cashier of the bank of the State of Tennessee to pay to Phillip Maury, of Williamson County, the sum of \$152.62 out of the interest which may be due and coming to the said County, arising from the interest accruing in the said bank on the Academy fund.
7. Acts of 1829, Chapter 16, incorporated William S. Webb, Nathan Adams, Thomas D. Porter, Alexander Ralston, and Newton Cannon, as the Trustees of the Harpeth Female Academy in Williamson County who were given the power to organize, operate and adopt by-laws for the operation and management of the school and its students.
8. Acts of 1829, Chapter 17, incorporated William King, John N. Russworm, John Bostick, Jr., John M. Watson, and Bailey Hardeman, as the Trustees of Harpeth Male Academy, granting to them the authority to adopt such rules and regulations as might be essential to the orderly conduct of the school.
9. Acts of 1829, Chapter 157, was the authorization for the Trustees of the Harpeth Male and Female Academies in Williamson County to conduct a lottery to raise up to \$4,000 for the use and benefit

- of the Academies. The lottery must be under the general conditions of the law and the specific restrictions imposed upon the Trustees by this Act. The proceeds were to be divided equally.
10. Acts of 1832, Chapter 139, incorporated William Hadley, Ferdinand Smith, James N. Wilson, Joseph Crockett, and Andrew Crockett as the Trustees of Williamson County's Boiling Spring Academy conferring upon them all the powers granted in Acts of 1806, Chapter 8.
 11. Acts of 1832, Chapter 146, incorporated John N. Russworm, Bailey Hardeman, Hartwell H. Hyde, Wilford H. Rains, Thomas D. Porter, and Josiah Fleming, as the Trustees for the Porter Female Academy in Williamson County.
 12. Acts of 1835-36, Chapter 90, incorporated William Hadley, Benjamin D. Smith, Joseph Crockett, Everett Owen, James Crockett, Herbert Owen, Sutherland M. Mayfield, David Johnson, and Dennie P. Hadley, as the Trustees for Elm Wood Female Academy which would be located on the Little Harpeth River in Williamson County.
 13. Acts of 1835-36, Chapter 93, incorporated all stockholders and officers of the Franklin Female Academy prescribing certain rules and regulations for the formation, operation, and control of the same. Until an election can take place on the first Monday in May next, the corporation would be managed and controlled by Nicholas Perkins, Thomas Hardeman, James Park, William Maney, Henry Baldwin, Jr., Robert P. Currin, and Benjamin S. Tappan. Nicholas Perkins was named as the President of the Academy.
 14. Acts of 1837-38, Chapter 305, incorporated the Arrington Male Academy in Williamson County, conferring upon the same all the powers necessary and incidental to corporate educational organizations, and naming Marcus Boyd, James Elliott, Howell Webb, John Elliott, Jacob Morton, William R. Peebles, Samuel Morton, Isham Matthews, and James A. Bostick, as Trustees, for the School.
 15. Acts of 1847-48, Chapter 47, organized and incorporated Franklin Female Institute in Williamson County which would have and exercise all corporate powers and privileges and placing the management and control of the organization under William Maney, Meredith P. Gentry, Richard Alexander, William O. N. Perkins, R. C. Foster, Lemuel B. McConnico, John H. Otey, Richard A. Graham, Tilman F. Atkinson, Abram P. Maury, Mark Andrews, and William Park.
 16. Acts of 1849-50, Chapter 63, named Dr. James B. Owen, Robert L. Currin, Lorenzo D. Primm, Robert Hill, John M. Winstead, and Thomas Holt, as the incorporators of Beech Grove Male and Female Academy in Williamson County, to be located in the 16th Civil District and established for the instruction of boys and girls in the branches of English, Classics and Mathematics.
 17. Acts of 1851-52, Chapter 270, named Frank Hardeman, H. B. North, John Cowles, S. A. Jefferson, J. G. Core, F. G. Ratcliffe, Obediah Fitzgerald, E. Thompson, Thomas S. Boxley, and P. W. Baugh, as the managers of Thompson Male Academy in Williamson County.
 18. Acts of 1855-56, Chapter 267, formed the Oak Hill Academy in Williamson County into a corporation, naming Sidney P. Smith, Moses E. Cator, Samuel E. McCutcheon, Samuel Northern, James Marshall, W. J. Tucker, Ennis Murry, W. Hulm, and M. T. Byrns, as Trustees.
 19. Acts of 1857-58, Chapter 91, incorporated the Trustees of the Mount Carmel Academy in Williamson County, granting to them all the power and authority normally required for the operation of an educational corporation, and naming Samuel B. Lee, R. A. Blythe, Jesse W. Alexander, John C. Wylie, William Crutcher, Thomas A. Crow, and Edwin A. Reams as the first Trustees of the School.
 20. Acts of 1859-60, Chapter 126, formed Thomas Holt, Major C. P. Sneed, Thomas J. Moulton, D. P. Scales, James C. Owen, Henry Edmondson, Rufus Waller, Hon. William Ewing, William G. Hill, James H. M. Hale, and Hon. Andrew Ewing, into a corporation to be known as the Brentwood Male and Female Institute. All the usual and normal corporate powers were granted to them.
 21. Acts of 1866-67, Chapter 49, organized and incorporated A. G. Scales, James S. Ogilvie, J. P. Allison, W. W. Hendrix, W. A. Haley, W. Baker Dobson, and F. F. P. Allison, as the Trustees for the College Grove Female Institute at College Grove in Williamson county.
 22. Acts of 1869-70, Chapter 19, incorporated E. B. Cayce, H. P. Figures, James D. Park, William House, N. R. Marr, J. T. Love, and R. N. Richardson, as the "Franklin Lyceum" in Williamson County to cultivate a correct literary taste among its member by reading, composing, debating, and through other exercises of a similar character. The Charter was for 50 years, and the corporation could hold title to property up to \$50,000 in value.
 23. Private Acts of 1907, Chapter 44, named R. H. Bradley, Randall M. Ewing, A. W. Moss, L. W. Buford, George H. Armistead, E. E. Green, and Green Williams, as the Trustees for Harpeth

Academy in Williamson County.

24. Private Acts of 1909, Chapter 32, recited in the preamble that Porter Female Academy was incorporated in Williamson County and the Trustees previously appointed for the Academy have died from time to time and the vacancies thereby created have not been filled. The Academy was then being operated by Trustees appointed by the Chancery Court at Franklin, the validity of such action having been questioned and doubted. This Act amended Acts of 1832, Chapter 146, to give the General Assembly the authority to appoint Trustees for the Academy, if the Board of Trustees did not, and named Joseph T. Jordan, George W. Waller, A. S. Floyd, F. A. Scales, and W. H. Bostick, to become the Board of Trustees for the School.

Source URL: <https://www.ctas.tennessee.edu/private-acts/educationschools-historical-notes-21>