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Education/Schools - Historical Notes

Dear Reader:

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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,

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Board of Education

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

1. Private Acts of 1832, Chapter 86, established Raleigh Academy at or within one mile of the town of Raleigh. This act also named five trustees for the academy with additional trustees, up to a maximum of ten, to be appointed by the county court.
2. Acts of 1847-48, Chapter 75, divided the county academy of Shelby into two branches, one for each sex. Monies for the academy, drawn from the state treasury, were to be apportioned between the two branches, as the academy trustees might direct.
3. Private Acts of 1857-58, Chapter 107, incorporated the "Young Ladies' Collegiate Institute" at Forest Hill in Shelby County. It gave the faculty full power to prescribe the course of study and award degrees.
4. Private Acts of 1857-58, Chapter 59, established the Shelby Military Institute, to be located in the vicinity of Germantown.
5. Private Acts of 1857-58, Chapter 127, directed the school commissioners of the sixth civil district to pay \$45 to Peter D. Wynn and Ferdinand Smith, the sum overpaid by them to the county trustee.
6. Public Acts of 1885, Chapter 140, authorized the county court to donate the Bartlett courthouse and grounds to the directors of the seventh school district to be used for public educational purposes.
7. Acts of 1909, Chapter 327, amended the general school law found in Public Acts of 1873, Chapter 25, to establish a county board of education for Shelby County to be composed of one member from each civil district, the county court judge, and a superintendent of education to be elected by the voters. It also required a scholastic census to be taken during the month of July.
8. Acts of 1909, Chapter 458, transferred school property in areas of Shelby County which were annexed to Memphis in 1909 from the school board of Shelby County to the board of education of the City of Memphis as of September 1, 1909.
9. Private Acts of 1911, Chapter 36, authorized the board of education to supplement the salary of the president of the West Tennessee State Normal School in the amount of \$500 annually for five years. The school was to provide Shelby County teachers with all the privileges of an observation and practice school.
10. Private Acts of 1911, Chapter 430, amended the general law on school systems to provide that in Shelby County there would be seven school commissioners rather than five.
11. Private Acts of 1913, Chapter 239, provided that the chairman of the county board of education was to be the ex-officio chairman of the county high school board. This was amended by Private Acts of 1915, Chapter 105, to raise the salary of the chairman to \$900 per year.
12. Private Acts of 1915, Chapter 75, set the salary of each member of the board of education at \$240 per annum, payable monthly.
13. Private Acts of 1917, Chapter 469, was a general school law for Shelby County, creating a board of education and the office of county superintendent. This was amended by Private Acts of 1921, Chapter 792, which reduced the number of members of the board of education to five by abolishing the two at large positions.
14. Private Acts of 1917, Chapter 480, authorized the boards of education in Shelby and Davidson counties to install a system of free textbook distribution to public school pupils.
15. Private Acts of 1919, Chapter 333, set the salary of the secretary of the board of education at \$3,000 per annum.
16. Private Acts of 1919, Chapter 756, transferred to the Memphis Board of Education from the Shelby County Board of Education all school property in the territory just annexed to Memphis.
17. Private Acts of 1921, Chapter 89, provided that there should be two classes of schools in Shelby County. The first class would be elementary school composed of the first six grades with courses prescribed by law. The second class would be high schools, divided into junior high schools with three grades and senior high schools of three grades. The course of instruction in this class was to be prescribed by the county board of education.

18. Private Acts of 1921, Chapter 455, set the salary of members of the county high school board of education at \$240 per year.
19. Private Acts of 1921, Chapter 784, divided Shelby County into six school districts, with the county court to appoint the first representative from the sixth district, then all members to be elected for six years. This was repealed by Private Acts of 1923, Chapter 273.
20. Private Acts of 1925, Chapter 388, set the salaries of the chairman of the board of education at \$1,500 per year, the chairman of the building and grounds committee at \$1,200 per year and of the other members at \$900 per annum.
21. Private Acts of 1929, Chapter 752, amended the general law to provide that all school funds for Shelby County should be divided, one-half to the county board of education and one-half to the incorporated boards of education in the county.
22. Private Acts of 1929, Chapter 798, transferred to the City of Memphis Board of Education all school property within the territory annexed to the City of Memphis in 1929.
23. Private Acts of 1937, Chapter 488, required all school funds to be divided between the county board of education and the boards of education in any city, town or taxing district in Shelby County upon a per capita basis for each child in average daily attendance.
24. Private Acts of 1947, Chapter 711, provided that school funds from the state and federal governments were to be divided on a per capita basis between the county board of education and the Memphis Board of Education. County funds were to be divided 40% to the county board of education and 60% to the city boards. This was amended by Private Acts of 1955, Chapter 351, to provide that the county funds be divided equally between the two boards of education.
25. Private Acts of 1949, Chapter 496, transferred from the Shelby County Board of Education to the Memphis Board of Education all school property located in the area annexed to the City of Memphis in 1949.
26. Private Acts of 1961, Chapter 343, created a county board of school commissioners for Shelby County, but this act was repealed by Private Acts of 1970, Chapter 314.
27. Private Acts of 1970, Chapter 293, attempted to redefine the boundaries of the seven school districts in Shelby County, but its provisions were rejected by the quarterly county court.

Superintendent or Director of Schools

The act referenced below once affected the office of superintendent of education in Shelby County, but is no longer operative.

1. Public Acts of 1895, Chapter 155, prohibited county superintendents of public instruction from teaching in any of the public schools in counties which had a population of 30,000 and over.\

General Reference

The following act constitutes part of the administrative and political heritage of the educational structure of Shelby County but is no longer operative since it has either been superseded, repealed, or failed to receive local approval.

1. Acts of 1853-54, Chapter 160, authorized the trustees of the Male Academy at Raleigh, Shelby County, to pay Dempsey M. Sanderlin and Jefferson Messick, whatever sum may be due to them for building the house for said male academy.

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