



May 18, 2024

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,

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Board of Education

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

1. Private Acts of 1927, Chapter 243, created a board of education and the position of superintendent of education, provided for the election of the seven members of the board and the superintendent in the November election of 1928. Thad C. Smith, J. Crit Sharp, William Booker, Jacob Butcher, Conrad Irwin, G. S. Stiner, and James Roe Shelby were named to the board of education until their successors could be elected and James C. Davis was nominated as superintendent. This act was tested and declared unconstitutional by the state supreme court in the case of State Ex rel, Thomas v. Davis, 159, Tenn. 693, 21 S.W.2d 623 (1929).
2. Private Acts of 1959, Chapter 312, would have amended Private Acts of 1953, Chapter 95, so as to provide for the election of county school board members on a staggered basis in Union County; however, this act was not approved by the county and therefore never became law.

Superintendent or Director of Schools

The acts referenced below once affected the office of superintendent of education in Union County, but are no longer operative.

1. Private Acts of 1925, Chapter 264, as amended by Private Acts of 1943, Chapter 405, and Private Acts of 1947, Chapter 874, provided for the election of the county superintendent of public instruction in counties of the state having a population of not more than 11,620 and not less than 11,610 according to the federal census of 1920 for a term of four (4) years beginning September 1, 1928.
2. Private Acts of 1943, Chapter 81, as amended by Private Acts of 1947, Chapter 117, provided that in the event the office of school superintendent became vacant, such vacancy was to be filled by the quarterly county court of Union County.

General Reference

The following acts constitute part of the administrative and political heritage of the educational structure of Union County but are no longer operative since they have either been superseded, repealed, or failed to receive local approval. Also referenced below are acts which repeal prior law without providing new substantive provisions.

1. Private Acts of 1901, Chapter 236, created a school district out of portions of Anderson and Union counties, the same described and bounded in the bill. An election would be held on the fourth Saturday in May, 1901, to elect by popular vote the school directors of the district who would serve without compensation. The clerk would provide a scholastic census enumeration for the district to the county trustees for the distribution of funds and a teacher with a certificate from either Anderson or Union County would be permitted to teach.
2. Acts of 1905, Chapter 483, was a compulsory school attendance law for Union and Claiborne counties, which required children between eight and fourteen years of age to attend school for at least fourteen weeks in a year, unless excused under the conditions stated in the act. Fines for violation of the requirement and for employers who hired children in these age brackets while school was going on were scheduled in the law. District clerks must report their names as soon as they knew in their reports and the superintendent was to make recommendations on methods of improving school attendance.
3. Acts of 1907, Chapter 322, established the "Independent School District of Loyston" in the fourth civil district of Union County bounded by the description in the act. At the August, 1908 election three school directors for the district were elected and performed all the duties of other school directors.
4. Private Acts of 1911, Chapter 332, was a compulsory attendance school law which applied to Union, Claiborne, Grainger and Hancock counties. This act included children from eight to sixteen years old and the attendance period was set to sixteen weeks, or 80 days, in the school year.
5. Private Acts of 1911, Chapter 566, applied to Union, Claiborne and Hickman counties. The act made each school a separate and distinct school district which would have three trustees elected by the people of the district. The county boards of education were given some powers and duties of teacher selection and their wages with the advice and consent of the majority of the trustees of the district. This act was amended by Private Acts of 1919, Chapter 448, so that Claiborne and

Union counties were removed from its application leaving only Hickman under its terms.

6. Private Acts of 1947, Chapter 808, authorized \$100,000 to build a high school in Maynardville which were to mature in no more than ten years from the date of issue at such interest rate as the county court might determine. These were general obligation bonds with the requisite details included. The authority to accept or negotiate for matching funds from other governmental departments was granted. The "High School Building Commission" consisted of Thomas L. McDonald, Chairman, Charles E. Sexton, Secretary, Clifford Steiner, Evan Shelby, and Ottis Wright, members. This act was repealed by Private Acts of 1949, Chapter 649.
7. Private Acts of 1949, Chapter 651, allowed the quarterly county court of Union County to issue \$200,000 in 3%, 10 year bonds, to erect a quality high school in Union County. There were no other details as were contained in the 1947 act which was repealed.
8. Public Acts of 1980, Chapter 847, directed the Tennessee Department of Transportation to erect a sign to indicate the location of the pioneer school in Union County

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