

# Wealth and education in North Carolina, 1900

COMMENTARY AND SIDEBAR NOTES BY DAVID WALBERT

*Second Annual Catalogue of the North Carolina State Colored Normal Schools for 1905-'06* (Raleigh: E. M. Uzzell & Co., for the North Carolina State Board of Education, 1906), pp. ii, 2, and 4.

## As you read...

These tables of data appeared at the front of a 1903 State Board of Education report on the State Colored Normal Schools. They compare the wealth of black and white North Carolinians and provide information on the “colored schools” — the state’s free public schools for African Americans.

## QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER

### Data on schools (section 3)

1. What was the average class size in the colored public schools? How does that compare to your classes today? How do you imagine that education took place with such large classes?
2. What percentage of African American children were enrolled in school? Why might fewer city kids have been in school? (What other opportunities were there for children in cities? And note the length of the school terms.)
3. What percentage of children attended school each day? Why might this have been lower than enrollment?
4. How did teachers’ salaries compare to those of industrial workers?
5. What percentage of all school expenses in the state went to colored schools? What percentage of all pupils attended those schools?
6. How big were rural schools? City schools?

### Data on wealth (section 4)

1. Between 1891 and 1901, which was rising faster — the total wealth of whites or the total wealth of blacks? Between 1901 and 1904?
2. Why do you think the editors of this report chose to include this information? What point were they trying to make?

1. Value of property in North Carolina, 1903

	Amount	Percent of total
White property	\$332,978,471.00	76.8
Colored property	\$14,852,811.00	3.4
Railroads, etc.	\$85,856,527.00	19.8
Total	\$433,687,809.50	100.0

2. North Carolina population, 1900

	Population	Percent of total
White	1,263,603	66.7
Colored	630,207	33.3
Total	1,893,810	100.0

3. Facts about colored public schools, 1904-05

	Rural.	City.	Total.
Colored school population	192,720	34,256	226,976
School enrollment	132,363	16,458	148,821
Average daily attendance	73,958	9,432	83,390
Percentage of enrollment in daily attendance	.56	.57	.56
Percentage of school population enrolled	.68	.48	.65
Average number of children enrolled with each teacher.	54	61	55
Teachers employed	2,413	269	2,682
Percentage of teachers women	60.9	72.9	62.1
School term in days	80	159	82
Average monthly salary of teachers	\$22.20	\$31.40	\$25.62
Average annual amount paid each teacher	\$89.08	\$248.85	\$105.10

	Rural.	City.	Total.
Salary per school day	\$1.11	\$1.57	\$1.28
Salary per week while employed	\$5.55	\$7.85	\$6.41
Salary per week (52 weeks)	\$2.41	\$6.57	\$2.85
Total amount paid teachers	\$214,951.91	\$66,940.69	\$281,892.60
Total amount spent for buildings	\$17,825.64	\$4,677.58	\$22,503.22
Total expenditures for colored schools	\$232,777.55	\$71,618.27	\$304,395.82
Percentage of total expenditures spent for colored schools.	16.3	13.5	15.5
Percentage of total school population colored	31.7	38.3	32.5
Spent for each child enrolled	\$1.76	\$4.35	\$2.05
Spent for each child in daily attendance	\$3.14	\$7.59	\$3.65
Number of schools	2,284	52	2,336
Schools having only one teacher	2,168	2	2,170
Schools having two or more teachers	116	50	166
Average area covered by each rural school			21.3 sq. m.
School-houses	2,198	63	2,261
Log houses	293		293
Value of school property	\$273,368.00	\$197,438.00	\$470,806.00
Average value of each house	\$124.37	\$3,133.93	\$208.23

4. Increase in property values by races, 1891–1904

Year.	Total Assessed Value of all Property.	Railroads, Telegraph, etc.	White Property.	Colored Property.
1891	\$262,796,816	\$16,668,802	\$234,109,568	\$8,018,446
1901	\$342,222,009	\$58,780,200	\$271,981,493	\$11,460,316
Increase ten years	\$79,425,193	\$42,111,398	\$37,871,925	\$3,441,870
Percentage increase ten years.	30.2	252.6	16.1	42.9
1904	\$442,418,677	\$87,022,746	\$339,969,769	\$15,426,162
Increase three years	\$100,196,668	\$28,242,546	\$67,988,276	\$3,965,846
Percentage increase three years.	29.2	48.0	24.9	34.6
1903	\$433,687,809	\$85,856,527	\$332,978,471	\$14,852,811
Increase one year	\$8,730,868	\$1,166,219	\$6,991,298	\$573,351
Percentage increase one year.	2.0	1.3	2.1	3.8

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