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# 3 STATE COLLEGES MAY GRANT A. B. DEGREES

*Capital*  
Permission Given by State  
Board of Regents.

June 8, 1930  
Emporia, Hays, and Pittsburg  
Schools Granted Permits. No  
Action on K. S. A. C. Request.

The state board of regents yesterday approved the application of the three state teachers' colleges to be permitted to issue Bachelor of Arts degrees. A delegation of business men from Manhattan asked the board to grant the same privilege to the Kansas State Agricultural college, but no action was taken on the request at yesterday's meeting.

The new order creates four state universities, Kansas university being the only state institution heretofore granting the A. B. degree. There will be a new arrangement of faculties and course of studies by the teachers' colleges to provide the A. B. degrees for those students desiring them. It was not said whether or not additional expense would be incurred, but students of the educational system have predicted a higher budget for each of the teachers' colleges as a result of the additional degree.

Under the new order, students attending the Emporia, Pittsburg, or Hays Teachers' colleges, may study for their A. B. degrees while pursuing courses for other degrees, or for teachers' certificates. The convenience was put forth as one of the needs for the higher rating by the colleges.

The salary budgets for the educational institutions were approved, but showed little or no increases over the last year, it was said by members of the board.

## 'TO BE CONGRATULATED'

Pittsburg, Kan., June 7.—(A. P.)—President W. A. Brandenburg, of the Pittsburg Teachers' college tonight said the state board of regents was to be congratulated upon its decision today empowering the three teachers colleges to grant bachelor or arts degrees.

The president said it would not be necessary to change the curriculum of the college to grant the degree and only a slight rearrangement of student schedules will be necessary.

## Lawrence Journal W: YIELDED TO PRESSURE

In granting to the state Teachers' College the right to confer the bachelor of arts degree, the board of regents appears to have succumbed to pressure by the Chambers of Commerce of the school towns concerned, altho one of the prominent members of the board declared at a recent meeting that it was not a Chamber of Commerce matter but an educational matter that was being considered, and voiced resentment that it should be made a town boosting proposition.

"The new order creates four state universities," says the Topeka Capital in announcing the decision of the regents. The full significance of that statement will appear later when greatly increased appropriations are asked by the normal schools to enable them to live up to their responsibilities as A.B. colleges. Statements now made that the schools will need no additions to their faculties to comply with the new order doubtless will be forgotten by the men making them before the next legislature convenes.

It is significant that President Butcher, who heads the leading normal school of the state at Emporia, did not join in the request for authority to confer the A.B. degree.

It is also significant that at Hays the state has constructed an educational plant which has never been used to its full capacity. Log rolling in the legislature rather than any educational need, brought that about.

In making an order thus revising the state's system of higher education, the board of regents almost certainly has contributed to a situation that will call for further revision in a few years in the interests of the people who must pay the bills of higher education.

## Is Kansas Ready for This Action?

The action of the Kansas board of regents in extending the power of the three teachers' colleges of the state to award the degree of bachelor of arts has more the appearance of a political trick rather than a move founded upon an intelligent understanding of the educational requirements of the state. Such action should have followed only after a very careful survey of the situation as it pertains to Kansas. That would have been the course of any ordinary business institution before taking such a serious step in the way of expansion.

The action of the board of regents has much the appearance of the "rush act," and of being founded upon the sectional pride of the colleges involved. The action of the board no doubt is highly satisfactory to the friends of the three teachers' colleges—at Emporia, Pittsburg and Hays.

But what about Kansas? The action means a demand for more revenues to maintain the standard to which the three schools have been lifted. The action of the board means that the state either must rob its state university and its agricultural college in order to make up the additional funds, or else the state must appropriate more money. For many years the expenses of the state schools have been a big burden on Kansas taxpayers. At every session of the legislature the really great problem has been to get appropriations sufficient to keep the schools at the standard already fixed. Kansas hardly knew that the question of permitting the three colleges to award the bachelor of arts degree was being contemplated. The board of regents were not in harmony on the subject. The authority on which the action was taken was granted by a vote of only four members of the board of regents. It was rushed through over the protest of those members who thought it unwise to take hasty action. It was voted by men whose terms on the board are soon to expire.

The Star has no interest in the matter other than the interest of all the educational institutions. The Star desires merely to call the attention of the people of the state to the situation as it exists, and the decision must rest with them. If Kansas desires to enlarge its educational institutions and is willing to meet the additional expense, then the action of the board of regents is not so serious. But if the state has been rushed into a situation against its will merely to satisfy the local pride of the communities where the schools are located, then the action of the board is a serious matter.

June 9 1930

June 10, 1930  
Tuesday Morning Star



## THE REGENTS SHOULD RE-CONSIDER.

In granting the State Teachers Colleges the right to grant the degree of Bachelor of Arts the Board of Regents have, in the opinion of the great majority of competent educators, made a mistake which they should take early occasion to correct.

From time immemorial, as the Register has previously pointed out, the A. B. degree has been conferred only by colleges of the liberal arts and sciences. It does not belong to professional or technical or vocational schools for the reason that such schools do not, and if they are properly managed should not, carry the broad cultural courses of instruction which are understood to have been followed by one upon whom the degree of Bachelor of Arts is rightly conferred. There is no more reason why a normal school should confer the degree than there is why a medical school or a school of technology or a school of law or of engineering should confer the degree.

In discussing this question some time ago the Register remarked that in taking this action the Board of Regents was in effect creating four State universities, and that the inevitable result would be either to carry on all these institutions, including THE University on a starvation basis or enormously to increase present expenditures. In support of this statement the fact was noted that the current appropriation for the State university is \$1,353,443.94 (exclusive of fees) while the appropriations for the State Teachers Colleges are as follows: Emporia \$434,313.88, Pittsburg \$417,631.02, Hays \$249,815.67 (also exclusive of fees). With the Teachers Colleges raised to the rank of Colleges of Arts and Sciences, as they virtually are by this action, is it to be expected that they will long be content with the modest appropriations they are now receiving?

From some quarters has come the answer that already the teachers colleges are giving courses which entitle their graduates to receive the degree of Bachelor of Arts. If that is the case then these colleges have expanded their courses a way beyond the limit that was intended

by the law which created them, and the Regents, instead of encouraging them to still wider expansion by authorizing a degree which does not belong to them, should have required them to bring their courses within the intent of the law.

It is extremely significant that President Butcher of the old State Normal School at Emporia, the parent of all the others and the most important, did not join in the request of the other teachers colleges for authority to confer this degree. Neither did President Farrell, of the State Agricultural College, join in the request. If these experienced and able educators do not consider the degree properly belongs to their schools, or that it is necessary to give adequate standing to their graduates, is not their judgment entitled to greater weight than the opinion of the town boosters who are responsible for the pressure, most of it at least, which has been brought to bear upon the Board of Regents?

We do not refer to "the pressure of the town boosters" in any critical sense. To boost his town is the business of the town booster. But why have the boosters been so active in this case? Obviously because they believed that if the right to confer this degree were bestowed upon the colleges in their

midst more students would be attracted to those colleges. But more students mean more professors, and more professors mean bigger appropriations. How does the eagerness of the boosters in support of this measure accord with their argument that no additional appropriations would be involved? If no additional appropriations were involved would they be so much concerned? It is no reflection upon the chambers of commerce of Pittsburg and Hays that they should get busy in support of a proposal that will bring more State money to their towns. The reflection is upon the Board of Regents that yielded to this pressure. Every friend of all our State schools protests most vigorously against the introduction of politics into the management of these schools. But is not the introduction of commercialism into this management equally intolerable?

There is another feature of this change of policy which deserves to

be called to public attention. When the proposal was brought to the attention of the Regents some time ago one member of the Board proposed that the Government be asked to send one or more experts from the Federal Division of Education to Kansas to make a careful survey of our educational situation and render an opinion upon the desirability or otherwise of the suggested change in policy. The suggestion seemed to meet with approval. But it happened at a meeting of the Board that two members were absent, both of whom were understood to be against the change. Thereupon the demand was made that the matter be put to a vote then and there. So the vote was taken and the proposal was declared carried with four members of the Board voting for it and three against it. If the two absent members had been present their votes would have been cast in the negative and the proposal would have been defeated five to four. That the vote should have been forced when it was seems unfortunate to say the least. It smacks too much of snap judgment. A measure of such importance as a complete and revolutionary change in the educational policy of the State certainly should not have been acted upon except by the full Board. Since it was acted upon under such circumstances it would seem to be clearly the duty of the Board to reconsider the whole matter at an early meeting at which all the members can be present. If a matter so vitally important as this is to be acted upon by a board of only nine members, then the people of the State have a right at least to insist that all of the nine participate in the decision.



## JUST SWIMMING POOLS!

The Mugwump muses in the Concordia Blade:

"The board of regents doesn't seem to have made itself very popular with Kansas editors when it granted to three state institutions of higher learning the privilege of awarding the A. B. degree. About a week ago this department too was on the verge of writing a stinging editorial on the subject. We had intended to say something about Kansas Aggie school which also wants to give an A. B. Manhattan has undisputed standing and, for many of its courses, enjoys an international reputation. But that isn't enough. Manhattan has also, it appears, an inferiority complex, and it must needs try to be something which it isn't. We had intended to quote the Emporia Gazette which said something about perfectly good teachers' colleges turning themselves into diploma mills. And we were going to quote the Chanute Tribune in regard to the expense of creating new courses and acquiring new faculty members to teach these courses. We were, at that time, convinced that one institution properly equipped to confer the A. B. degree was about all one could manage; and we had intended to say so in no uncertain terms.

"But something came along which demanded immediate attention, a kind of rush order for indignation. And we shelved our board of regents idea. Then an unexpected intervened. We noticed where the University of Minnesota had tried to deprive a co-ed of her A. B. degree because she couldn't swim 106 miles (was it 106 feet?), and because she couldn't fall into the water without choking. All of a sudden it dawned on us that the trouble with Kansas editors is that they don't know an A. B. degree when they see it. They are laboring under the delusion that it has something to do with the fine arts, that somehow four years of preparatory Latin are involved and then a choice between scanning the odes of Horace or riding a pony thru a year of Greek. They think it has something to do with majors in French literature and minors in Greek philosophy with seminars which you never attend. But that's where these editors are mistaken. It just shows how antiquated they

are. If they will take a look at the latest Webster's International they will find that A. B. stands for able-bodied seaman.

"The Chanute Tribune needn't be alarmed about the expense of additional courses. All that will be necessary is a couple of new swimming pools. That won't hit the taxpayer so hard. And if it does, what of it?"

## COLLEGES WIN A. B. RIGHTS

*Cedar Vale Messenger*  
Three state teachers' colleges at Emporia, Hays and Pittsburg Monday had authorization by the Kansas board of regents to issue bachelor of arts degrees. **135e 1930**

Favorable action on the matter was taken by the regents at a meeting in Topeka, Saturday. No action was taken, however, on a similar application in behalf of the Kansas State Agricultural college at Manhattan.

Heretofore, only one state educational institution, the University of Kansas, has authority to issue the A. B. degree.

This action by the board of regents should mean a greatly increased scholarship to the Teachers' colleges and southeast Kansas will probably send more students to Pittsburg.

Chanute Tribune June 18 1930



# CONGRATULATIONS.

The State Board of Regents is to be congratulated on voting to give the Pittsburg State Teachers' College the privilege of conferring the Liberal Arts degree upon such students as meet the customary requirements. Their action is certain to redound to the benefit of south-eastern Kansas.

According to Professor W. A. Brandenburg, president of the Pittsburg college, fully half of the graduates of that college have been meeting the requirements for the A. B. degree, without the college being able to confer the degree upon them. Knowing of the college's handicap in this respect, prospective students have been discouraged from enrolling, and have entered other schools which promised students such a degree when they earned it. The action of the Regents will no doubt attract many additional students to the Pittsburg State Teachers' College.

Prior to this action, the University of Kansas was the only state school that could award the Liberal Arts degree. About five years ago the former board of administration, in charge of the state schools, gave the teachers' colleges the privilege of awarding the degree, but shortly afterward, when the board of regents took control of the state institutions, they rescinded the action of the old board. Under the new ruling the 1931 senior class at Pittsburg can receive the new degree.

Since that time the state schools have been working for the return of the privilege. They have realized that they were at a disadvantage, in view of the fact that such institutions as the University of Wichita, McPherson College, Park College, Sterling College, College of Emporia, Southwestern College, Baker University were conferring the Liberal Arts degree.

It will not be necessary, according to Professor Brandenburg, to add to, or subtract in the least from the curriculum of the Pittsburg college. A slight differentiation of work, he says, that is, giving the student permission to select his work along certain routes for the A. B. degree, and along other routes for the B. S. degree.

The action of the Board of Regents puts the Pittsburg college abreast of other educational institutions of the middlewest, and puts it in a position to attract students who otherwise would enroll in oth-

The Pittsburg State Teachers' College as well as the Board of Regents, deserve congratulations.

## A. B.

The state board of regents has granted the privilege to three state institutions of higher education to give their graduates the degree of A. B. The regents, we hope we do them no injustice, so acted to avoid alienating the faculties, students and friends of the three colleges in question. Their action will cost them little or nothing but it will the taxpayers of the state, we believe, for years to come.

Off-hand it might seem that all there was to awarding the degree of A. B. was to award it. The direct expense is nothing more than that of printing a slightly different type of diploma and the direct result to the graduate, so far as obtaining a job is concerned, is equally negligible. But it is the indirect cost that counts.

The authorities of the schools in question will not be content to let the new degree mean so little. They will insist, and in a sense quite properly, that their A. B.'s be equally as valuable and backed by equally as good instruction as those awarded by any other universities. And that will mean new courses added to their curricula, new professors to teach the new courses and new buildings to house the new professors to teach the new courses. All of which will cost money. And old John J. Taxpayer, as usual, will be called on for it.

## MORE A. B.

There is, of course, another side beside that which The Tribune has upheld in one or two recent editorials on the matter of permitting the state teachers colleges to give their graduates A. B. degrees. From President W. A. Brandenburg of the college at Pittsburg comes information which the petitioning institutions used to support the request they made of the state board of regents. Three principal points were made. First that the colleges in question already were giving work which was the equivalent of that leading to the A. B. degree so that the permission to award that degree would involve no new courses or additional expense. Second, that many normal schools in other states already are entitled to call their graduates A. B.'s. Third, that many colleges (principally small denominational ones) require little language work and permit a considerable amount of normal school subjects in their course leading to A. B. degrees.

Our inference from Dr. Brandenburg's points is that the A. B. degree as indication of the completion of a classical education doesn't mean much in a good many colleges any more and so it can make very little difference whether a few more institutions are empowered to grant it or not. The prevailing opinion seems to be that the A. B. degree should be nothing more than proof that the recipient of it has been enrolled in some college for four years, and so we with draw all of our previous criticisms. Who are we to stand in the way of the juggernaut of progress?

Fort Scott Tribune June 10 1930

Chambers Tribune June 11 1930

Chambers Tribune June 12 1930