

by the Inspector of Schools if a pupil is over fourteen years and has been in regular attendance at a public school up to a date not more than six months prior to the date of admission to the technical classes.

Senior free places are tenable at secondary schools, district high schools, and technical high schools up to the age of nineteen, and at technical classes other than technical high schools for three or in some cases four years. The means of qualification for senior free places are the Intermediate or other equivalent examinations, or the recommendation of the Principal or Director of the school or classes attended based on the school records and examination results, or the recommendation of an Inspector of Secondary Schools, or in the case of district high schools of the Senior Inspector of the district, or in part on such a recommendation and in part on the results of a special examination.

The provision for qualification for senior free places on the recommendation of the Principals of secondary schools is becoming increasingly applicable, the number receiving senior free places in this manner in 1918 being 1,702, as compared with 1,047 in 1917; the number represents about two-thirds of the total number of senior free places awarded. In addition, ten pupils were granted partial exemption from examination, being required to submit to a test in English and arithmetic only.

The following are some of the figures for 1917 and 1918 in regard to free places in secondary schools :—

	1917.	1918.
Number of secondary schools giving free tuition ..	32	32
Roll number of these schools	7,106	7,871
Number of free-place holders at end of year ..	6,231	6,966
Average number of free-place holders during year ..	6,468	7,177
Free-place holders as a percentage of roll number ..	91 per cent.	91 per cent.
Total annual payment by Government for free places ..	£78,567	£85,422
Cost to Government per free pupil	£12 2s. 11d.	£11 18s. 0d.

In order to arrive at the total number of pupils in New Zealand receiving free secondary instruction, it will be necessary, however, to include also 87 holders of scholarships or exhibitions carrying free instruction not otherwise enumerated, which are granted by the secondary schools included above or by endowed secondary schools not coming under the conditions for free places, 2,123 free-place holders at district high schools, 103 Maori pupils receiving free education in Maori secondary schools, and 2,504 holders of free places in technical high schools. Consequently, there were approximately 11,783 pupils receiving free secondary education in the Dominion, exclusive of those holders of free places in technical schools (mostly evening students), who, while not taking full-day courses, were nevertheless receiving free education of secondary grade.

The following table gives a summary of the various secondary free places in 1917 and 1918 for which payment was made by Government :—

FREE PLACES IN DECEMBER, 1917 AND 1918.

(i.) Secondary schools—		1917.			1918.		
		Boys.	Girls.	Total.	Boys.	Girls.	Total.
(a.) Junior free pupils ..	..	2,327	2,257	4,584	2,503	2,405	4,908
(b.) Senior free pupils ..	..	910	737	1,647	1,081	977	2,058
Totals ..	..	3,237	2,994	6,231	3,584	3,382	6,966
(ii.) District high schools—							
(a.) Junior free pupils ..	..	836	971	1,807	876	977	1,853
(b.) Senior free pupils ..	..	103	134	237	103	167	270
Totals ..	..	939	1,105	2,044	979	1,144	2,123
(iii.) Maori secondary schools ..		41	55	96	45	58	103
(iv.) Technical high schools—							
(a.) Junior free pupils ..	..	906	1,005	1,911	1,053	1,160	2,213
(b.) Senior free pupils ..	..	102	137	239	109	182	291
Totals ..	..	1,008	1,142	2,150	1,162	1,342	2,504
Grand totals ..	..	5,225	5,296	10,521	5,770	5,926	11,696