

supplementary textbooks and instructional materials at a minimum annual rental, the State Board of Education is hereby authorized and directed to administer a fund and to establish rules and regulations necessary to—

(1) Acquire by contract or purchase such textbooks and instructional supplies which are or may be on the adopted list of the State of North Carolina, and to purchase materials, supplies, and equipment which the Board may find necessary to meet the need of the public school system of the State and to carry out the provisions of this article.

(2) Provide a system of distribution of said textbooks and supplies to the children in the public schools of the State, and distribute such books as are provided under the rental system without the use of any depository other than some agency of the State, to use warehouse facilities for the distribution of all the supplies, materials, and equipment authorized to be purchased in subsection (1) hereof.

(3) Provided for the free use, including the proper care and return thereof, of elementary basal textbooks to such grades, including the eighth grade of the elementary public schools of North Carolina as may be determined by the Board. The title to said books shall be vested in the State: Provided, that the Board may furnish basal elementary textbooks on a rental basis in any or all elementary grades when it is deemed necessary.

(4) Provide books for high school children in the public high schools of North Carolina on a rental basis. Said annual rental charge shall be collected in an amount not to exceed one-third of the cost of said textbooks: Provided, that free basal books may be furnished to high school children if sufficient funds are available and if the Board finds it advisable to take such action.

(5) Provide supplementary readers and other supplementary books for the elementary children in the public elementary schools of North Carolina on a rental basis. Said annual rental charge shall be collected in an amount not to exceed one-third of the cost of said textbooks: Provided, that the Board shall not charge a rental fee for books, supplies, and materials used in the public schools in excess of the actual cost to the State, including the handling and administration of such rentals. Provided, further, within funds available the Board may provide for the free use of supplementary readers and other supplementary books in the public elementary schools.

(6) Provide and distribute all blanks, forms, and reports necessary to keep a careful record of all the books, including their use, state of repair and such other information as the Board may require.

(7) Buy and sell library books to be placed in the public schools of this State from a list to be selected by the State Superintendent of Public Instruction with the approval of the Board and to be placed in such schools as may be designated by the Board: Provided, that such library books shall be purchased in accordance with the rules and regulations duly promulgated by the Board.

(8) Provide for the use of said textbooks without charge to the indigent children of the State.

(9) Cause an annual audit to be made of all transactions of the Board in administering said book funds, which audit shall show separately all items of cost for furnishing free basal textbooks and other items of cost and all rentals collected on rental books.

*115-217. Proper care of books; right to purchase.*—In the operation and management of both the free basal textbook system and the rental supplementary textbook system, plans shall be carried out whereby the same books, as far as possible, are assigned to the same school from year to year to the end that all children may be taught the proper care of books and that the cost of books for every school may be the more accurately determined. Those schools which reduce the cost of books by proper care may be given the advantage in additional new books to the amount of the saving: Provided, that nothing in this article shall be construed to prevent the purchase of textbooks needed for any child in the public schools of the State from said Board by any parent, guardian, or person in loco parentis.

*115-218. Legal custodians of books furnished by State.*—County boards of education of county administrative unit and city boards of education of city administrative unit are hereby designated the legal custodians of all books furnished by the State, either for free use or on a rental basis. It shall be the duty of the said boards of education to provide adequate and safe storage facilities for the proper care of said books.