

How much are we spending for
elementary library books?

	Average \$2.25	High Quarter \$3.33	Top Tenth \$4.63
Nation			
Region 1	1.42	2.06	3.33
2	2.50	3.41	4.58
3	2.50	3.87	6.00
4	2.66	3.33	4.40
5	1.50	2.43	3.50
6	1.50	2.00	2.28
7	2.38	3.15	3.89
8	3.20	4.00	6.20
9	3.04	4.17	7.40

How much are we spending for
secondary library books?

	Average \$3.27	High Quarter \$4.73	Top Tenth \$6.71
Nation			
Region 1	3.33	4.98	6.37
2	3.64	4.69	6.90
3	3.27	5.23	9.49
4	3.30	5.00	6.83
5	2.00	2.95	3.86
6	1.65	2.78	3.24
7	2.99	4.44	6.00
8	3.33	4.45	8.29
9	3.91	5.21	7.33

library books and \$4.73 for secondary school libraries. Only the top 10% districts are spending above minimum standards (\$4.63 at the elementary level, \$6.71 at the secondary). The obvious conclusion: Ninety percent of the nation's schools are not spending enough for library books to keep abreast of student needs.

Footing the bill

The local school district is paying for the great majority of textbooks purchased this year. It has become a burdensome load for many, so burdensome in fact that they have begun to ask students to absorb a growing portion of the costs.

While most districts still provide free textbooks to students (74% at the elementary school level, 60% at the secondary), more than ever districts are asking students to help defer the cost.

In 1959, a survey conducted by the National Education Association showed that 70% of the nation's high schools provided free textbooks to students. Today, that figure has dropped 10%. By contrast, seven years ago, only 19% of all districts rented books to high school students. Today's figure: 29%.

Distribution of textbooks

	NEA Survey 1959		SM Survey 1966	
	Elem.	Second	Elem.	Second
Free distribution	84.6%	69.3%	73.8%	60.3%
Student rental (No proviso for needy students)	1.8	2.6	13.5	16.4
Student rental (with free texts to needy)	15.0	16.9	10.7	12.5
Student purchase	3.6	15.2	2.0	10.8

And today, more than ever, the rule is, when one pays, everyone pays. Seven years ago, almost 17% of all high schools that rented books did so with the proviso that needy students got them free. Today, only 12.5% of the high school districts rent with this proviso.

The paperback revolution

The past seven years have witnessed a revolution in the schools of our nation—a paperback

revolution. Over 87% of all school districts now use paperbacks—one quarter of them as texts. And students are paying for them. Almost half the high school students that use paperbacks buy them. One-quarter of all elementary schools ask students to purchase them. And, in both elementary and secondary schools, students purchase or rent over half of the paperbacks they use.

Paperback distribution

	Elementary 48.6%	Secondary 45.0%
Free distribution		
Rental (no proviso for needy students)	4.0	4.2
Rental (proviso for needy students)	22.3	4.4
Student Purchase	25.1	46.4

Has the administrator found, in the paperback, an effective way to make the student bear the cost of textbooks? "To some extent, yes," says McCaffrey. "But there are a number of other reasons that students are buying their own paperbacks. In certain courses—like English literature—anthologies are rapidly being replaced by a variety of literature. These are generally available in paperback, and this is where a paperback pays dividends. A paperback reprint of a hardcover book *does* cost a lot less. The publisher recouped his investment in the hardcover edition.

"Most students can afford the price of a paperback. More than that, though, they prefer to own their own books, and paperbacks afford them that opportunity. As a result paperbacks have made fantastic gains in the classroom.

"Understand one thing. Textbook publishers have absolutely nothing against paperbacks. As a matter of fact, most textbook publishers also bring out paperback books. Our only quarrel is with those school people who see paper bindings solving all textbook problems—or paperbacks driving texts out of the schools. This will not happen. Certain courses must have basic texts available, and these texts must be put together in a form that will stand up and will be attractive to the student. Other courses don't demand basic texts. In these, supplementary material will be found in a paper binding.

"Incidentally, a lot of it will not be found in