

of their own on texts. This is partially a result of low textbook purchasing, partially a result of student purchases and partially a result of bookkeeping practices. Districts receiving free texts from the state should account for them in their budgets, but many don't.

Textbook costs are a real problem in this deep south region. One administrator summed it all up when he pointed out: "The cost of textbooks is becoming prohibitive

under the system of state purchase for loan to students. The amount of state allocation remains the same, but prices sky-rocket."

Library book purchasing in Region 6 is shamefully low. The median district spends just \$1.50 per student on elementary books and \$1.65 on high school library books. Only the top 10% of the district's schools spent at or above the national median for library books.

for example, objected to the new biology texts for having "some drawings (illustrating sex organs) that are not necessary." A Texas superintendent remarked that "too many American history books fail to teach real Americanism."

Distribution patterns

The large majority of Region 6 districts provide students with free textbooks. In fact, on the elementary level all districts do. On the secondary level 69% do, with the remainder asking students to purchase them.

The free textbook figures are quite a bit higher than comparative national figures (26% higher in elementary school, 9% higher in high school) and can be attributed in large part to the fact that in Texas it is the state, not the local district that makes the books available. However, 30% of all high school districts ask students to buy their own texts, a figure that is three times as high as the national purchase figure. Textbook rent is virtually non-existent in Region 7.

Three-quarters of all Region 6 districts have begun to use paperback books, one quarter of them basic texts.

How do Region 7 districts distribute paperbacks? They ask students to purchase them in high school (65% of all districts distribute them this way compared to only 46% nationally). On the elementary level free distribution leads, 55% to 45%, over student purchase. In other words, most districts in Region 7 lean toward the free distribution of textbooks (which the state largely pays for).

REGION 7

■ The median district in Region 7 spends 85 cents per pupil on elementary texts, 9 cents on high school texts. How is this money being spent?

The four states that make up Region 7 all control textbook adoption procedures. This state control is reflected in the district buying patterns.

A glance at the chart on the right reveals that textbook adoptions run very unevenly throughout the region. This year almost half the region's districts adopted new biology texts, almost 40% adopted new math texts. By contrast, only 8.3% of the districts purchased new reading books, only 9.7% bought new history texts.

Do state adoption cycles hurt local purchasing? In region 7, the answer appears to be a definite "yes."

For example, in 1963 the new biology curriculums were introduced to the nation's school districts. Judging by the buying chart, these

texts are only now finding their way into the classroom. They are three years late. Worse, almost 25% of the region's districts have adopted no new biology texts in the last four years. Among this group, 64% blame cycling for their failure.

Cycling is an even bigger factor among the districts that have not adopted history, general science, reading or mathematics texts since 1961. And in each case, a sizable percentage of the region's districts are using obsolete books.

Among non-buying districts, only one other "reason" looms large in the region—"We're satisfied with the texts we have." And this exceeds 10% in only two cases, history and biology texts. Judging from the comments received, it's apparent that both the new biology texts and those on American history were considered too "controversial" by a number of school boards.

One respondent from Louisiana,

REGION 7 SPENDING BOXSCORE

	Low 25%	Median	High 25%	T 10
ETB	\$ 0	\$.85	\$4.00	\$4.
STB	0	.09	1.26	4.
ELB	1.53	2.38	3.15	3.
SLB	2.17	2.99	4.44	6.

ETB Elementary textbooks, STB Second textbooks, ELB Elementary library books, SLB Secondary library books.