

How to budget and purchase textbooks and other educational materials . . .

Modern educational practices no longer rely on a single textbook, or even its adjuncts of teacher's guide, pupil workbook, anthology, and reference work — important as these tools are and will remain. Rather, the use of multi-texts are widespread, and new understandings of how different children learn — at different rates and from varied materials — have brought into being new families of instructional media. Many of these are products of print — paperbacks, programmed books, maps, atlases, picture files and encyclopedias. Others stem from new technological innovations — overhead projectors and transparencies, 8mm single-concept films, tapes and recordings.

The responsibility of the educational publisher to the educational community — of which he is a vital part — has been summed up as follows: "It is the function of the publisher to make the best products of ingenuity available to all. It is his job to build into products good design, flexibility and utility. It is his job to add directions so that the teacher can make most effective use of the product. And it is his job to supply the materials promptly and at prices as low as modern technology will permit."

The next steps depend on the initiative of the school administrator: to examine and evaluate the publisher's products; to create conditions for their wide and wise use; and above all to propose realistic budgets — using local, state and federal money — for the acquisition of adequate supplies of instructional materials to serve the ever-growing and ever-changing needs of learners.

Guidelines and practices

Pointers from local school systems in budgeting for educational materials

Planning ahead — in a typical school district:

Providing textbooks and other instructional materials for 83 elementary and secondary schools in a large county system is an on-going task. This is also true for the smaller system.

Planning begins as long as five years in advance. Looking into the future, the superintendent and his staff prepare enrollment projections for each of the five years ahead. These data prove valuable for long-term planning of acquisition and replacement of materials.

A basic book allotment of \$10 appears in the current budget for each secondary student enrolled at the close of school in June. In addition, there is an allotment of \$30 for each additional student expected in September. When a new secondary school is to be opened, a \$9,000 item is included in the budget to provide basic instructional materials not included in capital outlay. The new school also receives the \$10 per pupil allotment indicated above. Finally, a cushion fund is held at the county level to provide for emergency situations in any school, old or new.

For students in the elementary schools, a basic allotment of \$6 per previously enrolled pupil is included in the budget and \$20 for new pupils. An additional item of \$10,000 is included for capital equipment in new elementary schools.

In addition to the above textbook allotment, \$2.25 is budgeted for each secondary student and \$1.75 for each elementary student for library books; 50 cents per elementary and secondary student is further budgeted for audio-visual materials. Both funds are administered through the library.

For replacement and repair of instructional equipment already in the schools, \$1.75 per pupil has been allotted. These funds will aid in keeping equipment in the older schools comparable to that in the new ones. Both of these funds are to be increased in the future.

Having materials ready to go doesn't just happen; it requires the combined efforts over a period of time of various departments — of planning, budget, finance, curriculum, instruction — as well as of the staffs in each of the 83 schools.