

MISSISSIPPI STATE TEXTBOOK PURCHASING BOARD, JACKSON, MISS.

TEXTBOOKS

(a) The Mississippi textbook law provides that "The books herein provided by the Board shall be distributed and loaned free of cost to the children of the free public schools of the State, and all other schools located in the State which maintain educational standards equivalent to the standards established by the State Department of Education for the State schools.

"Teachers shall permit all pupils in all grades of any public school to carry to their homes, for home study, the free textbooks loaned to them, and to carry to their homes, for home study, all other regular textbooks used in the public schools of the state whether they be free textbooks or not."

This excerpt from the Mississippi textbook law, we feel, expressly states the position of our school system with regard to textbooks.

(b) Textbooks are provided for the school children of Mississippi through a biennial legislative appropriation. This appropriation is based on Average Daily Attendance in all schools of the State. Adequate funds have never available to supply textbooks as needed. A request for \$6,000,000.00 was made for the 1966-68 biennium, but the State Legislature could not anticipate enough revenue to grant this; therefore, the 1966-68 biennial appropriation is \$4,400,000.00 giving an average of \$3.60 per pupil.

(c) Textbooks are selected by Rating Committees of 7 members each who study the books in their various fields. The Mississippi textbook law provides for the Governor to appoint 4 of these 7 members and the State Superintendent of Education to appoint 3. They carefully screen the textbooks submitted by the various publishing companies and make their recommendations to the Mississippi State Textbook Purchasing Board which adopts and contracts for the highest rated books.

Books are purchased with funds as already outlined. The Textbook Board as authorized by law has set up its plan whereby the county superintendent of education and separate district superintendents have charge of assignment and distribution of books.

Yearly allocations are made to the various county and district superintendents based on Average Daily Attendance. These superintendents in turn apportion their allotments to the various schools under their supervision. Some base this on a per pupil quota while others build their programs from year to year by purchasing sets of textbooks.

(d) (e) (f) Since our office handles only textbook shipments based on the State legislative appropriation, we do not have information (1) as to how widely federal assistance has been used to increase the supply of textbooks in our state (2) on anticipated continued needs for this kind of support nor (3) proportion of federal funds in total school budgets for textbooks.