

close to the people to be served. Our system of education, founded on the principle of State and local responsibility and control, is best adapted to planning and evaluation at the State and local levels, with the primary focus at the State level. State educational agencies now set minimum standards in such areas as school accreditation and teacher certification, while local boards of education are directly responsible for the local school. State programs administered in a manner which will permit maximum local initiative and flexibility would best meet the need for comprehensive planning systems.

If State and local educational agencies are to continue to carry out their present responsibilities, if Federal programs are to meet the needs Congress intends, and if the Nation's schools are to continue to meet the demands made of them, systematic planning must be encouraged. It is for this reason that we are proposing an amendment to Title V of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, to authorize State agencies to establish and improve their programs for educational planning and evaluation.

Our proposed amendment would authorize \$15 million for Fiscal Year 1968 to initiate a 5-year program of grants to the States to assist them in the establishment of programs for comprehensive, systematic, and continuous planning and evaluation of education at all levels. These programs would be designed to assure the achievement of opportunities for high quality education for all segments of the population throughout the State.

Seventy-five percent of the appropriation would be allotted among the States to support State programs. The other 25 percent of the appropriation would be held in reserve for special projects provided in Section 524.

Any State desiring to participate in the program would designate or establish a State agency to submit an application to the Office of Education and to administer the program within the State. Higher education programs may be included in the planning and evaluation system if the State includes higher education as a part of its application. If higher education is included in the program, the State may designate a separate agency to deal with higher education, but it must coordinate its planning in higher education with its precollege planning.

State applications would include provisions for setting educational goals; establishing priorities among and developing means of achieving those goals; improving present programs and planning new programs; the strengthening of the capacity of the State to conduct objective evaluations of the effectiveness of education programs; and maintaining a permanent system for obtaining the information necessary for the assessment of the State's progress in attaining its educational goals. The agency would give assurance that the funds would be used primarily for strengthening the competency of its planning and evaluation staff. However, the agency would be permitted to employ consultants or, by contract, utilize the services of public or private institutions and organizations in certain specialized fields.

State planning and evaluation systems would serve the State's education program by:

- Developing procedures for monitoring progress toward educational objectives;

- Evaluating the effects on equality of educational opportunity resulting from patterns of school district organization, State and local financing arrangements, and related factors such as the problems of districts too small to offer comprehensive or efficient educational programs, the disparities in educational expenditures per pupil, both among districts and among schools within the same district, and the special problems of racial and socio-economic minorities;

- Evaluating the effectiveness of ongoing programs of compensatory education, with special attention to problems of coordination among programs operated by different agencies or funded from different sources, and to an analysis of pilot projects, model school programs, or other special efforts by local educational agencies which appear to offer promise of more effective education for disadvantaged groups;

- Surveying existing programs for occupational training, with an assessment of the adequacy of these programs in the light of present and projected employment opportunities;

- Analyzing the relationships between occupational training programs and other programs at the elementary, secondary and post-secondary level;