

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.

This legislation does not envision the development of anything which could be characterized as a national plan. It does anticipate that as States increase their capability for identifying problems and for pinpointing needs, there will emerge some fairly systematic procedures for comparing findings, for ascertaining the extent to which a national consensus exists on important issues of educational policy, and for assisting the States to develop increasingly more effective planning procedures.

One of the functions of the planning and evaluation program would be to extend technical assistance and services to local educational agencies to assist them in evaluation of their present school program, the study of critical local educational needs, the assessment of the financial resources available to the school, the planning of new programs, and the coordination of Federal, State, and local programs.

Some States may elect to give local educational agencies financial assistance to help the local school district in the establishment of a planning and evaluation system at the local level.

It is expected that States in which there are large city school districts will prefer having the city school board carry out a program especially designed to deal with the problems of the cities.

Section 524 authorizes grants to and contracts with public and private agencies, institutions, or organizations for special planning and evaluation projects such as: metropolitan planning in areas covering one or more States; the improvement and expansion of the planning and evaluation capacities of large city schools; comparative and cooperative studies; conferences to promote educational planning; and the publication of materials to disseminate information concerning the planning of better educational services and programs.

The authority given to the Commissioner in this proposed section will provide the opportunity to utilize the technology and brainpower of both profit and nonprofit organizations capable of making a significant contribution to the solution of problems.

In addition, this arrangement would enable the Commissioner to develop and fund special projects with various commissions and professional associations.

One such project is now being funded out of the salaries and expenses appropriation of the Office of Education. In this study, the