

6. The responsibilities of the U.S. Office of Education should be increased in the areas of providing leadership and reduced in the areas of administering categorical aid programs.

The nature of the U.S. Office of Education role should be one of influencing educational adaptation through field service leadership activities rather than through administering acts of financial coercion. This means the massing of a considerable body of knowledgeable persons in the U.S. Office of Education which would be available to States and local school districts at their request to assist them in educational planning and evaluation.

Long-term recommendation: I contend that the greatest immediate need for Federal funds lies in making available in all States a general level of financial support adequate to provide acceptable levels of educational services. A large number of States do not have the resources necessary to provide such programs even with confiscatory tax efforts. Federal funds are the only solution for these States. Providing general tax relief to all States is of secondary importance.

I would like to recommend for your consideration a formula developed by the Committee for Economic Development. It is reported in their publication entitled "Paying for Better Public Schools," September 1961. The illustration is based on 1957 data.

It is a program designed to aid education in States with personal income per student in average daily attendance in public schools that is below 80 percent of the national average. For each student in average daily attendance this program would pay such States an amount equal to the product of (1) the amount by which its personal income per student in average daily attendance falls short of 80 percent of the national average, and (2) the national ratio of current school expenditures to personal income.

For example, personal income per student in average daily attendance in the Nation as a whole was \$11,446. Eighty percent of this was \$9,157. In Mississippi, personal income per student in average daily attendance was only \$4,893.

Subtracting \$4,893 from \$9,157 give \$4,264. In the Nation as a whole, current school expenditures equalled 2.83 percent of personal income. For each student in average daily attendance Mississippi would get 2.83 percent of \$4,264 or \$121. With 444,200 students, Mississippi would thus receive a total grant of \$54 million.

Such a program would permit any State to reach the 80-percent level in current expenditures by devoting the same proportion of its residents' income to current school expenditure as the Nation as a whole. And they could do better by providing more.

The specifics of the formula may be altered to satisfy your analysis. For example, it would make good sense to me to use the national average personal income per student as the reference figure rather than 80 percent of it. Thirty-three States fell below this figure in 1965.

If it is Congress' desire to provide general assistance to all States, and it might be politically expedient to do so, this could be accomplished by making a minimum grant to all States of say, \$100 per student. Any general aid formula should carry with it a provision requiring the maintenance of State and local effort.