

I recognize the transition to general aid cannot be accomplished this year. But the planning for such could commence. During the planning period I would recommend that:

1. The objectives of all Federal aids to elementary and secondary schools should be reviewed. Those which are critical to the national interest and which could not otherwise be achieved should be continued.

2. Those categorical aids whose purposes are not critical to the national interest should be discontinued and replaced with a general aid formula.

3. The Federal resources should be reviewed to determine the amount of supplementary moneys which could reasonably be added to item 2 for distribution through a general aid formula.

4. Appropriations should be made to the U.S. Office of Education for the purpose of planning its transition from a basically administrative unit to one capable of providing to the Nation dynamic educational leadership through extensive field services.

Recommendations for immediately needed amendments to existing legislation:

1. Simplify the application and reporting procedures under titles I and II of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act. Under these titles, allocations are developed for each school district.

Presently it is necessary for a district to apply for these funds and to develop lengthy proposals for each of a series of discrete projects whose budgets equal the amount of the allocations. Complete and discrete records and evaluations must be made.

These proposals are reviewed and judged by the respective State education departments and funded or rejected. The Federal interests could be safeguarded with much less redtape through the existing regulatory and supervisory powers of a State. This could be accomplished by having the local educational agency claim its allocation from the State through a resolution of its board of trustees indicating among other things that it would spend the allocation according to the federally developed criteria.

The supervisory personnel now used to read and judge proposals could be released for working directly with local educational agencies in stimulating and planning new educational procedures and for evaluating existing ones. A brief annual report on the use of funds should be required of each district as should a financial audit. The present emphasis on evaluation should be continued.

2. Make appropriations for school aid earlier. Most school districts operate on the same fiscal year as does the Federal Government, and like the Federal Government they must plan their programs, expenditures, and revenues well in advance of the beginning of their fiscal year.

The nature of education is such that the bulk of expenditures goes for securing the services of professionally trained personnel. When additional personnel are required to carry out a program they must be recruited several months prior to the assuming of their respective positions.

All of this adds up to the fact that the availability of Federal moneys should be known by local school districts no later than the January preceding the fiscal year in which the moneys are to be used.