

universities. UNESCO is publishing a booklet on the Brussels seminar under the title, *Better History Textbooks*.

### UNESCO Looks Ahead

UNESCO's plans for 1951 include considerable attention to implementing the suggestions of the Brussels seminar. For instance, experiments will be made in providing teachers' colleges with circulating exhibits of selected foreign history and geography textbooks for comparative study. All possible encouragement will be given to the projected mu-

tual textbook studies. Publications are now in preparation which are intended to assist authors and editors in improving history and geography textbooks.

Textbook improvement is inevitably a slow, laborious and unspectacular process. UNESCO has made a beginning, building upon past efforts of such organizations as the Institute for Intellectual Cooperation. Given a decade of relatively favorable international conditions, UNESCO may be able to achieve, through its member states, an enduring improvement in textbooks.

## The Listening Post

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### Issues in Financial Support

AS state legislatures assemble and as Congress begins another session, one of the issues before each will likely be that of financial support at the federal, state, county and local levels.

At the present time, federal support ranges from no support in Massachusetts to 7.7 per cent of the total cost of education in North Carolina. State support to local schools ranges from the high of 89.5 per cent in Delaware to 0.7 per cent in Nebraska (2.9 per cent is added from the permanent fund, but this is still the *lowest* among the states). Conversely the percentage of local support is highest in Nebraska (95.9) and lowest in Delaware (8.3). The median percentages are: federal—1.6, state—37.9, and local—60.5. The average percentages are: federal—1.9, state—42.7, county—5.6, and local—49.8. The NEA Research Division estimates that the percentage of current revenues from

state sources will be 44.8 for the school year 1950-51.

### Local Revenue Receipts Declining

The trend in the percentage of revenue receipts over the past two decades is reflected in the reports of the U. S. Office of Education:

	1929-30	1939-40	1949-50
Federal	.4	1.7	1.9
State	16.9	30.3	42.7
County	10.4	6.7	5.6
Local	72.3	61.3	49.8

These percentages indicate that over the period of twenty years there has been a sharp decline in the amount of financial support by the county and local communities. The sharp increase has been at the state level. It is at this point that questions regarding future trends will be raised. What percentage of support shall be shared by the respective governing bodies?

## Problems of Federal Aid

Those who fear that federal control will result from federal support will want to keep low the percentage of federal assistance to schools in order to maintain a maximum of local control. The equalization factor, because of low valuations and high enrollments, will need to be considered; for this reason percentages of support will vary among the states.

The issue as to whether or not the federal-aid program should be made in terms of assistance in school building construction or of assistance for operational budgets is of major concern to Congressmen. This question needs to be settled if any substantial federal program is to be forthcoming. Will the proposed three-point plan of the NEA be acceptable to Congress? Will the administration of the NEA plan be relatively free from controversy? Statesmanship must be practiced if there is to be any satisfactory solution to these problems.

## Trends in State Aid

The national trend among states to share equally with local communities in the financial support of schools is fast becoming a reality. In some states, the structure of government prohibits legislatures from increasing taxes to the point where sufficient funds can be provided to equal local resources. In other commonwealths, state sources are the only means by which local communities have been able to increase budgets and make more adequate provisions for increased costs of education.

Differentiations in valuations, tax structures and sources of income make it difficult to analyze and interpret state

programs. Tax programs are antiquated in many states and this often accounts for the failure of legislatures to increase appropriations for equalized aids. If education is to become an increasingly efficient and effective means for preservation of the democratic way of life, legislatures of the various states must of necessity insure adequate financial aid to schools. This can be done only after studying thoroughly the needs of the schools and then making realistic provisions for support.

## Element of Security in Local Support

The taxpayer in the local community is looking for tax relief. Increases in taxes can be more easily stopped on the local level because the voice of the individual can be heard more distinctly in the local community. He may protest plans for matching funds (tempting as they may be) because in so many instances these may be subsequently withdrawn by the federal and state administrative units, thus leaving the burden on the resources of the locality.

The citizen is now inclined to ask Congress and his state legislature to insure stability in support for schools. The citizen wants to know what will be forthcoming over a number of legislative sessions. He wants to be able to plan for a new school building or the renovation of an older building. He wants to be able to say that his school system can maintain special departments, vocational education and operational functions; and to know that over the years provisions for a reasonable percentage of support will be forthcoming. He wants the element of security in his community school.—*Leslie W. Johnson*, Superintendent, Public Schools, Superior, Wisconsin.

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