1936

Desirability of State-Adopted Textbooks for New Mexico High Schools

Reb Leroy Villard

DESIRABILITY OF STATE-ADOPTED TEXTBOOKS FOR NEW MEXICO HIGH SCHOOLS

by

Reb Leroy Villard

A Thesis Submitted for the Degree
of Master of Arts in Education

The University of New Mexico
1936

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Chapter Page

I. INTRODUCTION 1
Importance of the Study 1
Statement of the Problem 2
Definition of Terms 3
The Procedure 3

II. ANALYSIS OF SELECTED REFERENCES 6
United States Bureau of Education Specialists 6
Reeder's Views 8
Cubberley's Recommendations 9
Dutton and Snedden and State-Adopted Uniform Textbooks for High Schools . . . 10
Knowlton's Comments on State Adoption of Textbooks 11
Summary 11

III. PRESENT PRACTICES IN THE SEVERAL STATES . . 14
Present Status of Uniform State-Adopted Textbooks for High Schools 14
Number of Books Adopted 16
Methods of Selecting Textbooks 16
Length of Period of Adoption 18
States That Have Discontinued State Adoption 19

IV. OPINIONS OF SUPERINTENDENTS OF NEW MEXICO IN REGARD TO STATE-ADOPTED UNIFORM TEXTBOOKS FOR HIGH SCHOOLS 20
I. The Opinions of Superintendents 20
Number of Superintendents Favoring and Number Objecting to State Adoption of High School Textbooks . 20
Suggested Methods of Adoption 22
Suggested Length of Period of Adoption 23
II. Superintendents' Arguments for and Against State-Adopted Uniform Textbooks for High Schools 24
Reasons for Favoring State Adoption of High School Textbooks 25
Reasons for Opposing State Adoption of High School Textbooks 28

Chapter | Page
V. SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS 32
Summary 32
Conclusion 34
Limitations of the Study 35

APPENDIX 36
A. Copy of Questionnaire Sent to State Superintendents of Public Instruction . . 37

B. Copy of Questionnaire Sent to Superintendents of Public Schools of New Mexico 39

C. Key to Regional Grouping of States 41

BIBLIOGRAPHY 43

LIST OF TABLES

Table		Page
I.	Arguments For and Against Uniform State-adopted Textbooks For High Schools	12
II.	Regional Distribution of States Using State-adopted Textbooks in the High Schools . . .	15
III.	Methods of Selection of High School Textbooks in the Sixteen States Employing Plan of State Adoption	17
IV.	Length of Period of Adoption of Uniform Textbooks in the Several States	19
V.	Opinions of Superintendents of New Mexico in Regard to State Adoption of High School Textbooks	20
VI.	Methods of State Adoption of High School Textbooks Preferred by Superintendents of the Public Schools of New Mexico	22
VII.	Length of Period of Adoption of High School Textbooks Preferred by Superintendents of the Public Schools of New Mexico	24
VIII.	Reasons Advanced by New Mexico Superintendents For Favoring State Adoption of High School Textbooks	25
IX.	Reasons Advanced by New Mexico Superintendents For Objecting to State Adoption of High School Textbooks	29

DESIRABILITY OF STATE-ADOPTED TEXTBOOKS FOR NEW MEXICO HIGH SCHOOLS

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Importance of the Study. This study was suggested as a result of the difficulty experienced by high school supervisors of New Mexico in their attempt to supervise and evaluate instruction in the high schools of this state. Since each school determines its own courses of study and selects the textbooks that will be used, little or no uniformity exists among the several schools as to content and order or plan of presentation. This situation makes it difficult for supervisors to set up standards by which to measure the efficiency of instruction in the schools over which they exercise supervisory control.

State adoption of textbooks for high schools might be a step toward improvement of the situation described without sacrifice of other educational advantages. Textbooks differ so widely in the subject matter that they contain, and the arrangement thereof, that without some degree of uniformity of textbooks it is practically impossible to devise or adopt any basis of comparison for

evaluating properly the work being done in the several schools. Were it possible for all the high schools to use the same textbook or textbooks, within certain limits, in each subject taught, it would be a relatively simple matter to set up definite standards by which the achievement of the individual schools could be checked and compared.

Statement of the Problem. It is possible that uniformity of textbooks might tend to simplify the matter of supervision but there are other educational factors which should be considered before any plan of standardization should be attempted. It appears reasonable, therefore, to attempt to answer this question: Would uniform state-adopted textbooks for the high schools of New Mexico be desirable from an educational and practical point of view?

To present an answer to the above question is the main purpose of the present investigation. Answers to the following three specific questions would seem to furnish a substantial basis for answering the principal question indicated: (1) What is the opinion of leaders in the field of education with regard to state-adopted textbooks for high schools? (2) What are the practices among the states as to state adoption of high school textbooks? (3) Are the superintendents of the public schools of New Mexico in favor of state-adopted high school textbooks, and, if so, under what conditions?

Definition of Terms. For the purpose of this study the following terms are defined as follows:

The senior high school is that part of the public school system composed of grades ten, eleven, and twelve.

The four-year high school is composed of grades nine, ten, eleven, and twelve.

By junior high school is meant the intermediate unit of our public school system, usually consisting of grades seven, eight, and nine.

State-adopted textbooks are those textbooks that are adopted by some agency of the state and whose use is made mandatory in those units for which their use has been approved.

The state might, presumably, adopt one or more books and prescribe the use of such book or books in all schools of the state. This is the meaning of the term, uniform textbooks.

The Procedure. In studying the first of the three questions stated above a survey was made of current literature to determine the opinions of those who have written on the subject under discussion. This survey was not especially fruitful, as there is a paucity of published material on the topic of state-adopted textbooks for high schools.

The most desirable method of obtaining up-to-date information pertaining to practices in the several states on

the question of state adoption of high school textbooks was deemed to be by direct correspondence with school authorities. Consequently a check list or questionnaire was sent to the state superintendents of public instruction or to other comparable state school officials to determine whether or not a plan of state adoption was employed and, if so, the nature of the system used. A copy of the questionnaire form employed for this purpose is shown in Appendix A. This form and the one mentioned below were constructed in accordance with the standards advocated by Whipple and reported by Whitney.[1] Replies were received from every state in the Union. In some cases supplementary materials, such as state school laws and descriptive matter pertaining to methods of selecting textbooks, were included with the returns.

It was also necessary to employ a questionnaire in gathering opinions from New Mexico school superintendents on the advisability of state-adopted textbooks for New Mexico high schools and the plan that they favored.

A question arose as to how many and what class of superintendents should be consulted to make this part of the study valid. An examination of the educational directory for New Mexico showed that there are seventy-two school systems employing nine or more teachers and that there is a sharp drop in the number of schools employ-

---

[1] Whitney, F. L. Methods in Educational Research, p. 153.

ing fewer than nine. It would appear, therefore, that this number might be used as a convenient dividing line so far as the present study is concerned. It would seem to be reasonable to assume that the superintendents of the larger school systems represent a higher type of training, experience, and ability than is found among the administrators of the smaller schools. Also, the superintendents of the larger systems take a more active part in determining the educational policies of the state and are more prominent in the activities of the New Mexico Education Association. These officials, therefore, are in a better position to know the needs of the state and the feasibility of devising a plan of state-adopted textbooks that would be successful from an educational point of view.

Replies were received from fifty-seven of the seventy-two superintendents, or from approximately eighty per cent of those solicited. This is an adequate sampling it is believed, especially since the replies probably represent a favorable degree of selectivity, coming from those who would seem best qualified to give an opinion as to the advisability of state-adopted uniform textbooks for New Mexico high schools.

CHAPTER II

ANALYSIS OF SELECTED REFERENCES

An examination of educational literature discloses a dearth of material pertaining to the subject of state adoption of textbooks for high schools. This chapter presents a summary of the available material pertinent to a discussion of the subject.

United States Bureau of Education Specialists. In 1915 the Bureau of Education published a bulletin[1] which contained reasons for and against uniformity of textbooks. Cost was given as the most important reason for state adoption. According to the statement of the author of this publication, books bought in large quantities can be obtained considerably cheaper, since state adoption usually makes it possible for the state to buy a large number of the textbooks adopted from the publishers.

It was also stated that better books for all the districts of the state can be obtained by state adoption, as state commissions are usually better informed and more capable than local adopting authorities.

Saving of the expense of buying new books by the families that move from one section of the state to another

---

[1]Monahan, A. C. Free Textbooks and Uniformity.

was also mentioned as one of the advantages of state adoption of high school textbooks.

As a final argument often advanced for having the state adopt textbooks for the high schools the author contends that it would make possible a uniform course of study throughout the state.

On the other side of the question, three disadvantages of the plan were cited. (1) As state adoption usually involves large sums of money there is usually the chance of graft and undue influence entering into the letting of the contracts with the publishing houses. (2) Adoption for a period of years makes it impossible to change to newer and better books as soon as they are published, as the textbooks are usually adopted for a period of four to eight years. (3) In most instances it is impossible to select any one book that is suitable to the diversified interests or needs of all sections of the state.

In conclusion it was suggested by the author that most of the above objections can be met by adopting a multiple-list, or several textbooks for each of the subjects under consideration.

Another bulletin[2] published by the United States Bureau of Education devotes some space to the problem of state-adopted textbooks for the high schools of the nation. Again

---

[2]U. S. Bureau of Education. A Manual of State Educational Legislation.

the principal argument for state adoption pertains to cost. In some cases state adoption has been found to be cheaper for the reason given above.

According to the author of this bulletin, state adoption seems to give general satisfaction in most cases.

Two objections were listed: (1) state-adopted textbooks are not adapted to the diversified interests of the state, and (2) the state must adopt books for a definite period of time.

In conclusion the author sets up the following safe guards that should be included in the laws that provide for the adoption of textbooks by a state agency:

1. Cities of over 25,000 population should be exempt.
2. Adoption should be by a committee of professional educators large enough to embrace all the branches, but should not include state board members. Committee members should be paid sufficient salary for their services.
3. Merit of books should be sole consideration--price small matter.
4. Adoption should be made for five years. Change not more than one-third any one year.
5. Adoption should be made in executive session after year's study and trial.
6. Changes should be progressive.
7. New books should be adopted not less than four months before they are to be put into use.
8. Laws should include all necessary guarantees against political and financial influence in adoption.

Reeder's Views. In a book on public school administration, Reeder summarizes some of the advantages and disadvantages of state-adopted textbooks for high schools but he contributes only one idea in addition to those set forth in the foregoing paragraphs. He states: "It would help teachers

who transfer schools."[3]

Cubberley's Recommendations. Cubberley discusses at some length the desirability of uniform textbooks for high schools. He states:

> Uniformity is not, however, an educational possibility. Numerous studies have shown that children differ much, both in schools and in communities, in their ability to use books as tools and to acquire the knowledge that teachers try to impart. Our cities have found by experience that to have a variety of textbooks, rather than uniformity, is the most desirable plan, and that children in different classes and in different schools vary much in their ability to use different types of books..... Unprepared and beginning teachers in rural communities need a textbook that will largely carry the subject; the mature and capable teacher in a good city system, where there is good teaching equipment and professional supervision, has quite different textbook needs. Rural children, too, ought to have a somewhat different type of readers, arithmetics, language, and science books from those used by city children..... In all adoptions under state uniformity of textbooks plans, the best that can be done is to strike as nearly a general average as is possible, with the result that the books selected are usually too difficult for the backward portions of the state, and not up to what the better systems desire.[4]

Further on in his discussion he points out the particular disadvantages of state-adopted uniform textbooks for junior and senior high schools.

> Both of these types of schools are new and rapidly changing institutions where method and particular content count for less, and the knowledge and personality of the teacher count for more than in the case of the elementary school. It is surprising that anyone who knows

---

[4]Cubberley, E. P. The State Publication of Textbooks. pp. 238-239.

> anything about the problems and purposes of high school work should advocate uniformity in textbooks for high schools. Progress in education and effective teaching do not come through superimposed uniformity and superimposed uniformity is what state publication of textbooks invariably means. Teachers trained by different methods, teachers teaching different types of classes and students, and teachers in small rural high schools and in large city high schools all have different textbook needs. It is the results of teaching that are important, not the tools to be used. It is the wrong conception of the educative process that underlies the whole textbook problem.[5]

Cubberley goes on to say that uniformity under state adoption of textbooks would delay the introduction of new books. It would be impossible to take advantage of the progress that is being made in the production of better textbooks for high schools and would mean the continued use of old and obsolete materials. If some form of uniformity is considered necessary he recommends an open-list plan with local adoptions, with sale prices fixed by the state board of education.

In summarizing the discussion of state-adopted textbooks for high schools Cubberley arrives at the following conclusions:

1. Retards progress and development.
2. Prevents use of new textbooks.
3. Would reduce cost so little as to be negligible.[6]

Dutton and Snedden and State-Adopted Uniform Textbooks for High Schools. Dutton and Snedden[7] discuss state-adopted

---

[5]Cubberley, E. P. The State Publication of Textbooks. p. 240.

[6]Cubberley, E. P. State School Administration. p. 563.

[7]Dutton, T. D. and Snedden, D. The Administration of Public Education in the United States.

textbooks extensively, but in as much as their book was published twenty-five years ago, and relates to all of the public school grades, little use of their findings can be made in this study. However, in the main, their materials and views agree with those reported by Cubberley.

Knowlton's Comments on State Adoption of Textbooks. Knowlton could find no advantages to be derived from any plan of state adoption of textbooks. In fact his article is a scathing denunciation of the plan. He seems to be more interested in the political implications of the problem, as the following extract indicates:

> ..... textbooks have long been recognized by the demagogues as having exceptional political possibilities. In half our states state adoption laws have been passed. These tend to keep the control of books in the hands of the politicians and keep the plums to be awarded or the economies to be capitalized, as the case may be, as large as possible; in a word, they keep the everyday teacher from choosing the books which she thinks best for her particular school.
>
> Promises of textbook savings, sometimes small and real but often impossibly large and therefore unreal, are dangled adroitly before the eyes of the voter.[8]

Summary. Table I is arranged to show at a glance the arguments found in the selected references both in favor of state adoption and in opposition to such adoption.

---

[8]Knowlton, P. A. Politicians, Teachers, and Schoolbooks.

TABLE I

ARGUMENTS FOR AND AGAINST UNIFORM STATE-ADOPTED TEXTBOOKS FOR HIGH SCHOOLS

Arguments	Sources a	b	c	d	e	f	Total
For State-Adopted Textbooks							
1. Has proved cheaper	x	x	x	x	x	x	6
2. Avoids cost due to shifting population		x	x	x	x		4
3. Makes available textbooks selected by experts		x		x	x		3
4. Adoption by state seems to give satisfaction	x						1
5. Makes possible uniform courses of study					x		1
6. Avoids loss of time due to shifting of pupils and teachers				x			1
Against State-Adopted Textbooks							
1. Not adapted to diversified interests of the state	x	x	x	x	x	x	6
2. Local adoption apt to be as good as state adoption		x	x			x	3
3. Competition for state business apt to cause graft		x			x	x	3
4. Would retard development and progress		x	x			x	3
5. Would stop production of new books		x			x	x	3
6. Stifles originality and adaptive thinking		x				x	2
7. Books adopted for a definite period of years	x					x	2
8. Would prevent use of new books		x				x	2
9. Uniform course of study not always desirable		x					1
10. Junior high school would be hindered		x					1
11. Would reduce cost very little		x					1

a. U.S. Bureau of Education. A Manual of State Educational Legislation.
b. Cubberley, E. P. State School Administration.
c. Dutton, T. D. and Snedden, D. The Administration of Public Education in the United States.
d. Reeder, W. G. The Fundamentals of Public School Administration.
e. Monahan, A. C. Free Textbooks and Uniformity.
f. Knowlton, P. A. Politicians, Teachers, and Schoolbooks.

Examination of the table shows that there is no general agreement among the writers quoted except in two respects. First, all believe that state-adopted textbooks result in lowered cost. Cubberley qualifies his statement on this point. Second, they are unanimous in the view that state adoptions are not adapted to the diversified interests of the state. Four of the authorities cited regard the avoidance of cost occasioned by shifting population of sufficient importance to be included in their report. One argument for and four against state adoption were mentioned three times. Three arguments against and none for the plan were given twice. The other arguments for and against uniform state-adopted textbooks for high schools were mentioned only once.

CHAPTER III

PRESENT PRACTICES IN THE SEVERAL STATES

Until recently no attempt was made to secure uniformity of textbooks in either the elementary or secondary schools in the United States. Each pupil brought to school for his own use the books which his parents had at home. Establishment of the graded system brought need for some degree of uniformity. An early Pennsylvania law illustrates a step in the evolution of a system of uniform textbooks for the public schools.

> Immediately after the annual election of teachers in each school district of the state, and before the opening of the ensuing term, there shall be a meeting of the directors or controllers, and the teachers of each district; at which meeting the directors and controllers shall decide upon a series of school books in the different branches to be taught in the ensuing year; which books, and no others, shall be used in the schools of the district during said period.[1]

Books thus adopted could not be changed within five years except by a three-fourths vote of the board of education, or in common school districts except by a three-fourths vote of a district meeting.

Present Status of Uniform State-Adopted Textbooks for High Schools. Compulsory uniformity of textbooks, especially

---

[1] Dutton, T. D., and Snedden, D. The Administration of Public Education in the United States. p. 211.

in the elementary schools, has come to be the rule in all the states to some degree. Since this study is concerned only with uniformity in high schools the following discussion will be confined to that division of the public school system.

Replies to a questionnaire recently sent to state departments of education show that sixteen states have state-adopted uniform textbooks for high schools, while thirty-two states use some other method of selecting textbooks. This information is shown in Table II. For convenience the states were divided into the commonly accepted geographical divisions. A study of the distribution of states adopting textbooks for the high schools justifies Cubberley's statement that the "rise of the demand for state uniformity is most evident in the South and West."[1] In fact, eleven of the thirteen southern states use this method of prescribing books for the use of their high schools.

TABLE II

REGIONAL DISTRIBUTION OF STATES USING STATE-ADOPTED TEXTBOOKS IN THE HIGH SCHOOLS*

Regional Division	Number of States	Number With State Adoption	Per Cent of Regional Division
New England States	6	0	0
Middle Atlantic States	5	1	20
Southern States	13	11	84
Middle Western States	13	2	15
Rocky Mountain States	8	1	12
Pacific Coast States	3	1	33
Total	48	16	33

*States included in each of the several regional divisions are shown in Appendix C.

[1]Cubberley, E. P. State School Administration. p. 557.

In the Middle Atlantic States, Delaware stands alone in using state adoption as a method for selecting textbooks for the high schools. No state was reported in the New England group as having state-adopted textbooks for high school use. Kansas and Indiana in the Middle West, Utah in the Rocky Mountain region, and Oregon in the Pacific Coast region have state laws requiring all high schools to use textbooks adopted by the state.

Number of Books Adopted. Eleven states, namely, Kentucky, Louisiana, North Carolina, South Carolina, Mississippi, Alabama, Florida, Oklahoma, Kansas, Tennessee, and Oregon adopt one book for each subject; but in Mississippi and Tennessee a supplementary list is also adopted. Texas adopts a multiple list for first-class high schools and one book in each subject for second-class high schools. Virginia and Indiana adopt one textbook in some subjects and optional lists in others. Utah selects two co-basal and several supplementary books. Delaware adopts an optional list in all subjects.

Methods of Selecting Textbooks. As the success or failure of uniform state-adopted textbooks for high schools hinges on the method used in their adoption, it was thought advisable to find out, if possible, the procedures for choosing books in the sixteen states employing state adoption. Table III gives a general summary of the methods in use.

TABLE III

METHODS OF SELECTION OF HIGH SCHOOL TEXTBOOKS IN THE SIXTEEN STATES EMPLOYING PLAN OF STATE ADOPTION

Methods of Selection	Number of States
State textbook commission	6
Committee of educators advises board	2
Committee of educators for each subject-matter field	2
State board as a whole	2
Committee of board	1
Member of board heads committee of lay members	1
Member of board heads committee of educators	1
Other methods	1

The State Board of Education of Texas adopts all textbooks but with the advice of a committee of professional educators. This system is also followed by North Carolina. The state boards of Kansas and Alabama adopt all textbooks but are advised by a committee of educators for each subject-matter field. Virginia's state board of education adopts the high school textbooks upon recommendation of a committee of three board members. In Kentucky a member of the board heads a committee of lay members, while in Utah a member of the board heads a committee of professional educators. Six states, namely, Florida, Delaware, Louisiana, Tennessee, Mississippi, and Oregon, set up special textbook commissions. In Mississippi a legal professional body is appointed by the governor. Oregon has a similar body appointed by the state board. No data were received per-

TABLE III

METHODS OF SELECTION OF HIGH SCHOOL TEXTBOOKS IN THE SIXTEEN STATES EMPLOYING PLAN OF STATE ADOPTION

Methods of Selection	Number of States
State textbook commission	6
Committee of educators advises board	2
Committee of educators for each subject-matter field	2
State board as a whole	2
Committee of board	1
Member of board heads committee of lay members	1
Member of board heads committee of educators	1
Other methods	1

The State Board of Education of Texas adopts all textbooks but with the advice of a committee of professional educators. This system is also followed by North Carolina. The state boards of Kansas and Alabama adopt all textbooks but are advised by a committee of educators for each subject-matter field. Virginia's state board of education adopts the high school textbooks upon recommendation of a committee of three board members. In Kentucky a member of the board heads a committee of lay members, while in Utah a member of the board heads a committee of professional educators. Six states, namely, Florida, Delaware, Louisiana, Tennessee, Mississippi, and Oregon, set up special textbook commissions. In Mississippi a legal professional body is appointed by the governor. Oregon has a similar body appointed by the state board. No data were received per-

taining to the appointment and composition of the special textbook commissions in the other states listed above. Other than "Other methods" no plan of selection of textbooks for the high schools was specified by Oklahoma. In the states of Indiana and South Carolina high school textbooks are selected by the state board as a whole. A complete statement of the procedure followed by one state may be found in Bulletin No. 256 published in July 1933 by the state department of education in Louisiana.

Length of Period of Adoption. As Table IV shows, the length of period of adoption of uniform textbooks for high schools varies from four years in Delaware to eight years in Florida. Two states, Kentucky and Louisiana, adopt for an indefinite number of years. Texas adopts textbooks for a period of from one to six years. The adoptions are, in other words, for a maximum of six years. Eight states, or one-half the total number using state-adopted textbooks, adopt the books for a period of five years. This group is composed of Tennessee, Mississippi, Kansas, Indiana, North Carolina, South Carolina, Virginia and Oklahoma. Oregon, Alabama, and Utah adopt high school textbooks for six years.

TABLE IV

LENGTH OF PERIOD OF ADOPTION OF UNIFORM TEXTBOOKS FOR HIGH SCHOOLS IN THE SEVERAL STATES

Length of Adoption	Number of States
3 years	0
4 years	1
5 years	8
6 years	4
7 years	0
8 years	1
Indefinite period of years	2

States That Have Discontinued State Adoption. The state of Washington has, within recent years, discontinued the use of state-adopted uniform textbooks for high schools. The reasons reported for so doing were: (1) adoptions not suited to all parts of the state; (2) irregularities and charges of graft. No report was obtained from the other states.

CHAPTER IV

OPINIONS OF SUPERINTENDENTS OF NEW MEXICO IN REGARD TO STATE-ADOPTED UNIFORM TEXTBOOKS FOR HIGH SCHOOLS

I. The Opinion of Superintendents

As stated in Chapter I, a questionnaire was used to obtain information from the superintendents of the public schools of New Mexico. The results of the replies will be discussed in this chapter.

Number of Superintendents Favoring and Number Objecting to State Adoption of High School Textbooks. As shown by Table V, some difference of opinion obtains among school

TABLE V

OPINIONS OF SUPERINTENDENTS OF NEW MEXICO IN REGARD TO STATE ADOPTION OF HIGH SCHOOL TEXTBOOKS

Type of School	For Adoption	Against Adoption
Three-year senior high school	17	29
Three-year junior high school	21	21
Four-year senior high school	30	27

superintendents of New Mexico concerning the advisability of uniform textbooks, especially with respect to the type of school for which the uniform books should be adopted. Sixty-three per cent of the replies were opposed to uniform text-

books for three-year senior high schools, while a majority, 52.6 per cent, favored adoption of uniform textbooks for four-year high schools.

Why thirteen superintendents were partial to state-adoption of uniform textbooks for four-year high schools but not for the three-year senior high school is not evident from their replies. The fact that only forty-six of the fifty-seven superintendents replying expressed themselves in regard to the three-year high schools may be a partial explanation. In other words, some may have felt uncertain as to the advsiability of adoptions for this class of schools. Twenty-nine superintendents looked with disfavor upon adoptions for three-year senior high schools while only twenty-seven were opposed to state adoptions for four-year high schools. No reasons were given for answering as they did.

Fewer replies were received on the three-year type of junior high school than either of the other two types of organization listed in the questionnaire. The fact that there are relatively few schools of this class in New Mexico may explain, in part, the apparent lack of interest in these schools by the administrators. The majority of the superintendents, in the absence of any practical experience with the junior high school, probably feel that they are not qualified to advance intelligent opinions as to adoptions in these institutions. Only forty-two re-

plied. Twenty-one were for state adoption and twenty-one against.

Suggested Methods of Adoption. The questionnaire submitted contained a list of six methods of selecting textbooks; and, in order to provide for the full expression of opinions to the method of adoption preferred, provision was made for writing in a description of any other method favored.

Fifty-seven superintendents gave answers to this part of the inquiry sheet. Table VI shows the preferences expressed by the executives. Several duplications occur--that is, some of the superintendents specified more than one method. These duplications are listed under "Other methods" in Table VI.

TABLE VI

METHODS OF STATE ADOPTION OF HIGH SCHOOL TEXTBOOKS PREFERRED BY SUPERINTENDENTS OF THE PUBLIC SCHOOLS OF NEW MEXICO

Methods Used in Adoption	Number Favoring
Committee of educators for each subject	29
Committee of educators advises board	13
Member of board heads committee of educators	8
State board as a whole	5
Other methods	3
Member of board heads committee of lay members	2
Committee of board	0
State textbook commission	0

The most favored plan for adoption is "Committee of educators for each subject". Twenty-nine expressed a

preference for this plan. The next most favored plan for adopting high school textbooks is "Committee of educators advises board". There were thirteen votes in favor of it. Eight superintendents indicated that they prefer that high school textbooks under a state adoption plan be selected by a committee of educators headed by a member of the board. The total number of preferences expressed is sixty, indicating that some superintendents checked more than one method. The replies would seem to indicate that the superintendents of New Mexico believe that the State Board of Education should not rely upon its own judgment alone in the selection of textbooks since no superintendent replying favored either "Committee of board" or "State textbook commission". On the other hand it will be noted that "State board as a whole" received five votes. This may be partially explained by the fact that in most states final legal authority for the selection of textbooks rests with that body.

Suggested Length of Period of Adoption. Provisions were made in the questionnaire sent to the superintendents of the public schools of New Mexico for registering their judgments in regard to the desirable length of the period of adoption of textbooks. The results are shown in Table VII.

TABLE VII

LENGTH OF PERIOD OF ADOPTION OF HIGH SCHOOL TEXTBOOKS PREFERRED BY SUPERINTENDENTS OF THE PUBLIC SCHOOLS OF NEW MEXICO

Length of Period of Adoption	Number of Superintendents
Three years	7
Four years	7
Five years	11
Six years	4
Seven years	4
Eight years	0
Indefinite number of years	17

Of the fifty superintendents checking this section of the questionnaire seventeen were in favor of adoption for an indefinite period of years. Eleven preferred a five-year period. The votes for the three and four-year periods were equal, seven for each. Four superintendents favored the six-year period and four favored the seven-year period. None of the superintendents preferred adoption for a period of eight years.

II. Superintendents' Arguments For and Against State-Adopted Uniform Textbooks for High Schools

In reply to the request for reasons for their opinion in favor of or in opposition to state-adopted uniform textbooks for the high school, numerous comments were made by the superintendents. These comments will be presented and discussed in the paragraphs which follow.

Reasons for Favoring State Adoption of High School Textbooks. The five main reasons for advocating state adoption of textbooks for high schools are shown in Table VIII.

TABLE VIII

REASONS ADVANCED BY NEW MEXICO SUPERINTENDENTS FOR FAVORING STATE ADOPTION OF HIGH SCHOOL TEXTBOOKS

Reasons	Number
Facilitates change of schools	10
Better books could be obtained	8
Decreases loss due to transfers	7
Makes for uniformity	5
Books could be bought cheaper	4

Ten of the superintendents reporting on this section of the questionnaire believe that state adoption of uniform textbooks for high schools would make it possible for pupils to change schools without undue loss of time or without causing too much confusion in adjusting their courses to the requirements of the school to which they transferred.

"Better books could be obtained", which was checked eight times, is based on the assumption that state adopting boards are apt to be more efficient and capable of selecting better books than local boards.

Under state uniformity, pupils moving from one school to another would not have to buy new books as all the high schools in the state would be required to use the same books in each subject taught. This would result in the saving of

the cost of textbooks for each pupil transferring to another school.

A statement made by a superintendent is typical of most of the replies referring to transfers and textbook costs.

> Pupils are constantly changing schools during the year and should not be forced to buy a complete set of textbooks every time they make a change. As a rule such people are least able to buy books. Alamogordo and Tularosa are located in the same county and are only fourteen miles apart. We have pupils constantly changing schools and the schools are not using the same text in any single high school course. This is an absurd situation and cannot be excused or defended. To claim special local situations that call for any particular text is absurd.

The superintendent quoted above goes on to say:

> Under the system or lack of system under which each school selects its own books we have some schools using texts that are hopelessly out of date and are unable to change because of local objection to buying new books of later date. Other schools will change without valid reasons. Under some system of adoption we can have the selection made by the best and most experienced school people of the state.

In practically every case the recommendations for state-adopted textbooks for high schools were qualified with suggestions as to the machinery to be used in selecting the books. For instance one superintendent had the following ideas to offer:

> I believe that certain criteria should be set up for evaluating texts and each book submitted for adoption be measured by these criteria. The committee selected should be composed of one or more individuals, lay or professional, a member of the state board or not, best fitted to apply the measuring stick. Identity of the

> committee should not be known to any representative of the publishers competing for adoption. All samples should be submitted to the board and distributed by them to the proper person or persons. Number of years of adoption depends upon subject matter. Science and history would become inadequate before mathematics and language. No text should be kept too long or abandoned on a whim or high pressure salesmanship. I favor adoption for reasons of efficiency and economy, but only if suitable criteria are set up first and if application of the criteria is safeguarded.

The matter of adapting textbooks to the varying needs of the different parts of the state received considerable attention. Those superintendents making comments on the questionnaire in favor of state-adopted uniform textbooks for the high schools agreed, more or less, that the diversity of interests did present a problem but they did not consider this point of great importance. On this point, however, we find contradictory statements. For instance one superintendent believes:

> The argument is frequently raised that each school should be privileged to select books that fit the needs of the community. This argument is valid within certain limits, but our community needs vary so little we cannot pin too much faith in this argument.

It would be interesting to see the reaction of the person quoted above to the statement of another superintendent as given below:

> If a uniform system of high school textbooks were adopted it would seriously cripple many high schools. There is too great a variation in the environment and needs of the different schools. The Pecos valley schools are much alike, but consider Dawson, Gallup, Las Vegas, etc. I am un-

alterably opposed to uniformity of high school textbooks by state adoption.

Five of the superintendents replying to this section of the questionnaire indicated that they believed the uniformity resulting from state adoption of high school textbooks would be desirable. This question of uniformity is one phase of the problem of diversity of interests, which was discussed in the foregoing paragraphs.

The writer finds it difficult to understand the attitude expressed by one superintendent who says:

> I favor adopted texts for junior high schools only because: the subjects are given to less rapid change due to new thought and discovery, hence there is less tendency for the text to become stale. The enrollment is greater, therefore inconvenience and expense occasioned by transfer between schools would be greater. Pupils of junior high school age need the greater protection from radical material made possible under promiscuous selection.

The writer of this paragraph seems to emphasize the importance of subject matter and to regard lightly changes in organization of subject matter and in methods of presentation. It would seem that pupils in the junior high school should be given the advantage of such improvements as soon as the pupils of other units.

Reasons for Opposing State Adoption of High School Textbooks. A fairly wide variety of reasons were advanced by the superintendents for opposing the adoption of high school textbooks by the state. In many cases these reasons contradicted those given by the superintendents who favored

the plan. It was made plain by several of the comments that these indications of preference were based upon personal opinions with little or no factual evident. Such expressions as "I think", or "I believe", were commonly used.

It is evident that most of the superintendents whose ideas are considered in this section of the study look with suspicion on our present method of selecting textbooks for the lower grades. For instance, one superintendent said: "My reason for not being in favor of any kind of state adoption of high school texts is that there is too much political maneuvering practices on the committee selected for the adoption of texts ....." Another superintendent reported that he believed that: "At the present time the state has no adequate machinery for the adoption of any kind of books."

Table IX shows the eight arguments given against state-adopted uniform textbooks for high schools, together with the number of times each argument was mentioned.

TABLE IX

REASONS ADVANCED BY NEW MEXICO SUPERINTENDENTS FOR OBJECTING TO STATE ADOPTION OF HIGH SCHOOL TEXTBOOKS

Reasons	Number
1. Not adapted to all parts of the state	3
2. Adoption too permanent	3
3. Prevents use of new books	3
4. No adequate machinery for adopting	3
5. Local adoption apt to be better	2
6. Stifles originality	2
7. Too much waste	1
8. Reduces cost very little	1

As the table shows, no consideration was given to the problem resulting from children transferring from one school to another. The argument that "Better books could be obtained" is denied in items 3 and 5. In suport of the items mentioned above one administrator has the following to say:

> I am not in favor of state-adopted textbooks for high schools if it is compulsory to use them because: first, it does not allow progressive schools to use new textbooks when the time presents itself; and second, state adoption allows no freedom to individual schools to make use of better materials in the case of texts. Furthermore, state adoption of textbooks is stifling to school interest at the best.

At least one superintendent who did not favor adoption by the state of one textbook for each subject could see some merit in the multiple-list plan. He believes that two or more books should be recommended by the state board and that the schools should be forced to stay within narrow limits by the high school inspector and accrediting agencies. According to his argument, recommendation is more flexible than adoption and would eliminate many of the undesirable features of the latter plan.

The fact that state adoption would likely result in state wide uniformity of courses of study was not mentioned directly but was implied in some cases.

One superintendent believes that state adoption of high school textbooks would cause too much waste. He believes that instead of being more economical educationally and financially this plan of adoption would prove to be

just the opposite.

Any reduction in cost of textbooks made possible under state adoption would be so slight as to be negligible is the belief of another superintendent.

With the exceptions listed above the superintendents in their comments covered the objections listed in Table I, page 12, of this study.

CHAPTER V

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

Summary. Comparatively little has been written on the subject of state-adopted uniform textbooks for high schools and most of the authorities consulted in this study are opposed to this method of selection.

At the present time sixteen of the forty-eight states have laws requiring the selection of high school textbooks by some central authority. Most of these states are in the South and West.

Eleven states adopt one book for each subject; two states adopt one textbook in some subjects and an optional list in the others. Two states adopt one book for each subject, and in addition also adopt a supplementary list. Each of the following methods obtain in some one state: multiple-list in first class high schools and one book in each subject for second class high schools; two co-basal and several supplementary books; an optional list in all subjects.

The most common practice is to rest the power to adopt textbooks in a state textbook commission. Two states use one of each of the following methods in their selection of textbooks for high schools: "Committee of educators ad-

vises board"; "Committee of educators for each subject-matter field"; and "State board as a whole". Other methods in use in some one state are: "Committee of board"; "Member of board heads committee of lay members"; "Member of board heads committee of educators." One state in which no particular method was reported was listed under "Other methods".

The length of period of adoption in the several states varies from four to eight years with two states reporting that textbooks are selected for an indefinite number of years. One state adopts textbooks for eight years. In eight states adoption is for five years; in four for six years; and in one adoption is for a period of four years.

Only one state, Washington, was reported as having, within recent years, discontinued state adoption. This action was taken because state adoption was not suited to all parts of the state and there were charges of irregularities and graft.

A majority of the superintendents in New Mexico reporting were opposed to the selection of textbooks for three-year senior high schools by the state and a bare majority were in favor of the plan for the four-year high school. Opinions were evenly divided for the three-year junior high school.

The method of adoption considered most desirable by a majority of the superintendents of New Mexico was that of

"Committee of educators for each subject". Next in order was "Committee of educators advises board." None of the superintendents reporting would recommend adoption by "Committee of board" or "State textbook commission".

Eleven superintendents recommend five years as the most satisfactory period for adoption. Seventeen are in favor of an indefinite period of years. Seven superintendents voted for three years and seven for a four year period. Four superintendents were in favor of a six year and four were in favor of a seven year period. None were in favor of an eight year period of adoption.

A wide variety of reasons for favoring or opposing state adoption of uniform textbooks for the high schools was offered by the superintendents. Their comments represent such a divergence of opinion that, in most cases, it is impossible to reduce them to a tabular or other systematic summary.

Conclusion. On the basis of the facts presented in this study, it seems reasonable to conclude that state adoption of uniform textbooks for the high schools of New Mexico would not be advisable, and might even be detrimental to the continued progress and welfare of these institutions. The educational leaders of the United States, for the most part, do not favor state adoption of high school textbooks. While they point out several advantages for the plan, they seem to believe that the disadvantages resulting from state adoption overbalance the good that might be expected to

to result. Present practices support the above conclusion, since only one-third of the states select uniform textbooks for their high schools. The superintendents of New Mexico are opposed to the plan for the three-year high schools. In the case of the three-year junior high school and the four-year high schools the evidence relating to the three-year junior high school is inconclusive and for the four-year high school the favorable replies exceeded the unfavorable ones by only four per cent.

Limitations of the Study. The necessity of using questionnaires in gathering the information for this study limits its scope. While these questionnaires were carefully constructed, not all the desired information was obtained. Some of the recipients of the inquiry form failed to make clear the exact meaning of their replies, and in some cases whole sections were omitted.

A portion of the study is based on opinions and, admittedly, opinions are sometimes formed without adequate factual bases. But the opinions of the leaders in any given area are of importance when considering the practical implications of a question and practicality was one aspect of the present study.

APPENDIXES

APPENDIX A

COPY OF QUESTIONNAIRE SENT TO STATE SUPERINTENDENTS OF PUBLIC INSTRUCTION

The State Superintendent of Public Instruction

Dear Sir:

I am investigating the desirability of state adopted textbooks for high schools. In order to complete this study, it is essential that I obtain certain information from state departments of education. Your assistance will be greatly appreciated. I should like to have your answer to the following questions:

1. Does your state have state adopted texts for high schools? Yes _____ No _____

2. If state adopted texts are used, is only one book adopted for each subject or do you prescribe an optional list? One _____ Optional _____

3. If state adopted texts are used, what is the method of selection?
   A. Selection by state board of education as a whole _____
   B. By a committee of the board _____
   C. Member of the board heads a committee of lay members _____
   D. Member of board heads a committee of professional educators _____
   E. General committee of professional educators advises board _____
   F. Special committees of professional educators are appointed for each subject matter field _____
   G. Other method

4. For how long a period are books adopted? _____ years.

5. Has your state at any time adopted texts for high school use and later discontinued the practice? Yes _____ No _____

6. If so, what were the principal reasons for this action?

If you have published a bulletin which gives the information requested above, I would like to have a copy of the same and will be glad to pay for it if there is a charge.

Would you like to have a summary of the results of this investigation? Yes _____

This study is being carried on under the direction of Dr. J. W. Diefendorf, Professor of Secondary Education, The University of New Mexico.

I wish to assure you in advance of my appreciation of your cooperation.

Very truly yours,

APPENDIX B

COPY OF QUESTIONNAIRE SENT TO SUPERINTENDENTS OF PUBLIC SCHOOLS OF NEW MEXICO

Dear Sir:

In making a study under the direction of Dr. J. W. Diefendorf I find that we need the opinions of the leading school people of the state. Please check the following list using the reverse side of this sheet for any additional information that you care to add in explanation or elaboration of your answers.

I. Do you favor State Adoption of textbooks for — Yes / No

1. FOUR YEAR HIGH SCHOOLS ___ ___
2. THREE YEAR JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOLS ___ ___
3. THREE YEAR SENIOR HIGH SCHOOLS ___ ___

II. On the reverse side of this sheet give your reasons for your answers.

III. If Item I is answered in the affirmative, which of the following methods do you consider the most desirable:

1. State Board of Education as a whole ___
2. Committee of the Board ___
3. Member of the Board heads a committee of lay members ___
4. Member of the Board heads a committee of professional educators ___
5. Committee of professional educators advises the Board ___
6. Committee of professional educators for each subject matter field ___
7. Other methods (Indicate on reverse side of this sheet) ___

IV. For how long a period should high school texts be adopted:

1. Three Years ___
2. Four Years ___
3. Five Years ___
4. Six Years ___
5. Seven Years ___
6. Eight Years ___
7. Indeterminate number of years ___

I wish to thank you in advance for your courtesy and assistance.

Very truly yours,

Principal, Roswell Junior High School

APPENDIX C

KEY TO REGIONAL GROUPING OF STATES

New England States	Middle Atlantic States	Southern States
Maine	New York	Louisiana
Massachussetts	Pennsylvania	North Carolina
Connecticutt	Maryland	South Carolina
Vermont	New Jersey	Mississippi
New Hampshire	Delaware	Alabama
Rhode Island		Florida
		Texas
		Tennessee
		Virginia
		Kentucky
		Oklahoma
		Arkansas
		Georgia

Middle Western States	Rocky Mountain States	Pacific Coast States
Indiana	New Mexico	Washington
Kansas	Utah	Oregon
Illinois	Colorado	California
Ohio	Arizona	
West Virginia	Montana	
Nebraska	Wyoming	
Michigan	Idaho	
Iowa	Nevada	
Wisconsin		
Minnesota		
Missouri		
South Dakota		
North Dakota		

BIBLIOGRAPHY

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Cubberley, E. P. State School Administration. Boston: Houghton-Mifflin Co., 1927, 773 pp.

Cubberley, E. P. "The State Publication of Textbooks". National Society For the Study of Education, 30th Yearbook, Part II, Chapter XIII, Bloomington, Ill.:Public School Publishing Co., 1931, 364 pp.

Dutton, T. D. and Snedden, D. The Administration of Public Education in the United States. New York:Macmillan Co., 1909, 614 pp.

Knowlton, P. A. "Politicians, Teachers, and Schoolbooks". Scribner's Magazine, Vol. XCV, June 1934.

Monahan, A. C. Free Textbooks and Uniformity. Washington, Government Printing Office, 1915. 67 p. (U. S. Bureau of education. Bulletin. 1915. No. 36)

Reeder, W. G. The Fundamentals of Public School Administration. New York:Macmillan Co., 1928, 579 pp.

U. S. Brueau of Education. A Manual of State Educational Legislation. Washington, Government Printing Office, 1919. 68 pp. (U. S. Bureau of education. Bulletin. 1919. No. 5)

Whitney, F. L. Methods in Educational Research. New York: D. Appleton and Co., 1931, 335 pp.

Thesis accepted:

J. W. Diefendorf
Major Professor

J. E. Seyfried

Vernon S. Sorell