

Textbook Selection Is Mammoth Task

The textbook selection process probably is one of the least understood aspects of North Carolina education. Amidst national controversy and debate about textbook selection, North Carolina's State Textbook Commission spends thousands of hours of study and deliberation before selecting books to be used in Tarheel classrooms.

submitted. These reports are delivered to the State Superintendent. At the next meeting of the State Board of Education after evaluation reports are filed, the members of the Commission meet with the Board for joint review and considerations of the reports. In the evaluation of textbooks, the members of the Commission do not concern themselves in any way with the prices of the book or its physical features.

Following the joint session of the Textbook Commission and the State Board of Education to consider the findings and recommendations of the Commission, the Board officially calls for sealed bids on those books which the Commission found to be most appropriate. Bids are customarily received on five to eight books. At the next meeting the bids are open

and contracts awarded. Where significant differences in the appropriateness of books were noted by the Commission, the Board traditionally has placed priority on securing the best materials available. The textbook selection process normally takes four to six months.

North Carolina carries a massive inventory of text-

books. According to Claude Warren, director of the Division of Textbooks for the State Education agency, the State has an inventory of about 10 million basic textbooks. In an average year, about 3 million new books are added.

The current trend is for multiple titles to be adopted at each grade level, Warren said. Selecting texts from the multiple listing is the

responsibility of each school unit. The Division of Textbooks purchases and distributes textbooks to the schools.

North Carolina's textbook selection system has become a model for the nation and people from other states often visit to see how the system works. "It has given us the best possible textbooks at the lowest possible price," noted Warren.

Masonic Class To Get Degrees

The Entered Apprentice degree will be conferred on a class of candidates at a stated communication of Dunn's Rock lodge, No. 267 AF & AM, to be held in the Masonic Temple on East Main Street, Thursday, Jan. 9, beginning at 8 p.m.

This announcement comes from W. C. Morris, the worshipful master. Degree will be conferred by John C. Nicholson, senior warden and

will be assisted by Robert L. Parker, Senior Deacon.

John Bishop of Skyland, past master of Biltmore lodge No. 446, and an "Honorary Member" of the local lodge, will give the lecture and the charge will be delivered orally by James Whitnire.

A cordial invitation is extended by the master to all visiting Masons and the members are urged to attend.

And contrary to a commonly held misconception, those books are not picked arbitrarily by the 12 members of the Textbook Commission.

"It just doesn't work that way," according to Ms. Joyce Wasdell, assistant superintendent in Durham County Schools and chairman of the Textbook Commission. "On a particular text, each commission member will have several people reading the book and giving their advice. On a single book, we will have input from 75 to 100 people. Twelve people just don't pick a text arbitrarily."

The job of the Textbook Commission is a tough one. Ms. Wasdell's office is often crammed to the ceiling with textbooks set aside for nothing but Textbook Commission work. And it isn't unusual for Commission members to devote their Saturdays to textbook work.

Here, in simplified terms, is a step-by-step description of the textbook adoption process in North Carolina:

The first step is the appointment of the Textbook Commission. Members are named by the Governor, on the recommendation of the State Superintendent of Public Instruction. The law provides that the Commission shall be composed of 12 members, 7 of whom shall be outstanding teachers or principals in the elementary grades, and 5 outstanding teachers or principals in the high schools. There is an added proviso that one of the members will be a county or city superintendent.

The State Board of Education authorized textbook adoptions as set forth in the State law. The State Superintendent notifies members of the Commission that there is to be an adoption in a given subject area. The State Superintendent also notifies all textbook publishers of the adoption call and invites them to submit any materials they would like to have considered.

Before books are considered, members of the Commission and the professional staff of the Department of Public Instruction develop a thorough overview of the program of studies and develop a concise statement of philosophy, goals and objectives for the subject area under consideration. This statement reflects any changes or innovations in the program and takes into account current trends and emphasis stemming from sound, authoritative research and experimentation.

During the review and evaluation process the Commission members secure the help of as many advisers as they wish. The number will vary, but the usual practice has been for each member to select 8 to 12 such advisers. Each member tries to secure a representative group including classroom teachers, college personnel, supervisory and administrative personnel, lay persons, and students.

Once the review process is completed, each Commission member files a written evaluation of every book

Shrine Club Meets Monday

The Transylvania Shrine Club will hold its meeting Monday, Jan. 13, at 7 p.m. at Berry's Restaurant.

The club will install officers and host ladies night at its meeting.

All members, their wives, and widows of Shriners are urged to attend and an invitation is extended to visiting Shriners.

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