

P.-T. A. Will Hear Discussion Proposed State "Basic School Support" Initiative, Of Coming Election

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ly \$455. This is a ratio of 1—an extreme example, setting up an existing circumstance. The high Oregon county valuation of \$34,801 per child; the low county valuation of \$3,502—a ratio of 10 to 1. Tax rates also vary as depending on the circumference of school districts. The district pays 61.9 mills as to a low of 1.0 mills. The ratio is 61.9 to 1.

ugh a system of state support which provides for some of these great initiatives could be eliminated. Initiative measure for a Basic School Support Fund prepared with care to meet conditions point out. On the \$50 per census child, it is estimated that the measure will cost approximately \$15,000,000 for the schools of Oregon. If passed, the measure would supplant the present forms of school revenue from the state, except for the small amount of the irrevocable school fund — about \$10 million annually.

represent the state is provided about 10 million dollars annually of state support. This fund is up of the 5 million of the support fund, 3 million is a biennial appropriation, about 2 million from the elementary school fund. All of this is currently offset by income tax receipts.

basic school support fund would require only about \$10 million dollars beyond the amount which the state is already expending. It could be offset by income tax receipts.

basic objectives of the pro-

posed measure are:

1. To give every child an even chance by equalizing Oregon's educational opportunities.

Article VII, Section 3, of the Oregon constitution says that "The legislative assembly shall provide by law for the establishment of a uniform and general system of common schools." Actually, the state has never made adequate provisions to carry out this mandate of the framers of the constitution.

2. To eliminate the uncertainty that comes from the year-to-year financing, and to stabilize school support to permit long-range planning.

3. To finance the program with state funds so that support need not come through the property tax alone, but can be drawn from the income tax receipts or from such other sources as the legislature may provide. The property tax is the only source of funds available to the county and local school district.

4. To attract and keep qualified teachers by establishing the schools on a sound financial basis.

The method of apportionment of the funds is left to the legislature to decide. But the bill specifically states that the distribution shall be designed to equalize education opportunities and conserve and improve the standards of public elementary and secondary education throughout the state.

Oregon's schools are good, but they could be made better through sound financing. We are proud of our system of public education, yet we know that the schools are facing a period of crisis—just as are all the schools throughout the

nation. We must take what steps we can to assure the continuance of a sound, general system of education to assure the educational future of our youth.

Our schools are not expensive. They have been so well managed that the actual per-pupil cost of education is surprisingly low. In its fourth preliminary research report dated June, 1946, the Oregon Tax Study commission says that of the 11 Western states, "Only one state, Arizona, had a lower per capita cost for schools in 1942 than Oregon's \$18.52." Of our state and local governmental expenditures in the 1943-44 fiscal year, school expenditures accounted for only 22%, or about one-fifth of the total cost for state and local governmental functions.

These facts should re-assure the general public. Our school costs are very reasonable; our school systems are well managed. But good management alone cannot avert the crisis which is bound to come if our system of financing public schools rests on a shaky foundation. The state basic school support fund measure is that badly needed firm foundation.

(Local explanation of this measure will be heard at the forthcoming P.-T. A. meeting, billed for Thursday night at the high school. Wide attendance is urged.)

Butter Labels Must Be On All Sold

Labeling of butter must be brought in line with the actual butter quality, officials of the department of agriculture, at Salem, said, Monday, in asserting that insistence will be placed upon the correct and proper labeling of this commodity.

Kenneth E. Carl, assistant chief of the division of foods and dairies in charge of dairy enforcement, pointed out that 50 per cent of a quality butter is picked up in Portland stores was mislabeled as to grade.

"We failed to find single pound labeled as grade B butter in the stores where purchases were made. But when the samples had been analyzed, just about half of that butter marked or labeled as Grade A, was actually grade B."

This condition is not confined to Portland and as rapidly as possible the department is moving to correct the situation, which is a

quality defect brought about so much by war-time conditions. The greatest emphasis in correction will be placed before the creamery operators and butter graders and makers because through a

program of this type officials will be able to realize in quickest possible time their insistence upon proper labeling.

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