

Handling of Non-Tax Funds in Schools Subject of Research

Eugene - The handling of non-tax funds in Oregon secondary schools has become "big business," and some of the schools have not been practicing "adequate knowledge, care, and skill in management and control" of these funds, according to a University of Oregon survey.

Report of the survey appears in the March issue of the Oregon School Study Council, published at the university school of education.

Some of the recommendations for improvement included in the report were found to vary from opinions held by local school board members and school superintendents, the article showed.

Farmer Graduate Student
Author of the article is Dr. Elwood Egelston, former graduate student at the university, who is now associate professor of education administration at Northern Illinois State university.

Although almost half of the secondary schools in the state handle less than \$10,000 each in non-tax funds each year, many small to medium-size schools reported \$30,000 to \$50,000 in annual expenditures, 23 schools have expenditures of more than \$50,000, and 16 schools spend more than \$80,000 annually.

The non-tax, or activity, funds come from three main sources, Dr. Egelston said. The largest amounts come from athletic and dramatic events, book rentals, cafeteria operations, and other use of school facilities.

Other Sources of Funds
Other sources are student body funds, raised by various school organizations and clubs and non-student funds held by the schools as a service to some individual or group, such as the Community Chest.

State legislation and Oregon state department of education policy on the handling of these funds are vague or completely lacking, Dr. Egelston wrote, and "in few schools have responsibilities for non-tax finance been clearly established by written statements of the school boards or the administration."

Good management practices are generally followed in the larger high schools, but this is not always true of the smaller high schools and junior high schools, he said.

Safeguarding Procedures
Procedures for expending and safeguarding the funds, delegating responsibility for their use, auditing the books, and performing other fiscal procedures vary widely among the schools, according to the report.

In most cases, the school superintendent is responsible for policy, and the management of the money is the responsibility of the school principal, with varying amounts of student participation, the survey showed.

"Less than 10 per cent of the school boards were reported to be concerned with expenditures from these funds," Dr. Egelston found.

The author recommended that "legislation should be proposed which simply defines the funds, establishes local school boards as the authorities responsible for their control, and delegates responsibility to the state department of education to establish minimum standards for their control and management..."

Are At Variance
These recommendations are at variance with the opinions of many school superintendents and local school board members, however, Dr. Egelston said, in reporting a poll conducted as a part of the over-all survey.

"A high percentage of both superintendents and board members believe that non-tax funds in the schools should be well managed and adequately controlled," he wrote. "Yet many respondents apparently do not believe that school boards have responsibilities for the management and control of these funds as a part of the school program for which they serve as trustees."

"A relatively high percentage of these groups believe that practices of control currently being followed are acceptable, and that a concern for these funds by a level of authority above the school principal is not essential."

PROGRESS
New York - (UPI) - Water de-salting will become a general commercial industry, as distinguished from a research industry, before the end of this year, believes President John W. Pike of Struthers Scientific and International corporation.

Women Should Style Products, Is Claim
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