

STATE FEDERATION OF DISTRICT BOARDS OF EDUCATION
NEW JERSEY

407 WEST STATE STREET, P. O. BOX 909, TRENTON, NEW JERSEY 08605
PHONE 695-3469 (AREA CODE 609)

OSCAR W. KNADE, JR.
ASSISTANT EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

MRS. RUTH H. PAGE
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

ROBERT R. LUSE
DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC RELATIONS
AND PUBLICATIONS

Copies

M E M O R A N D U M

TO: ALL BOARDS OF EDUCATION

FROM: MRS. RUTH H. PAGE, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

SUBJECT: INTERIM REPORT OF PUBLIC AND SCHOOL EMPLOYEES' GRIEVANCE
PROCEDURE STUDY COMMISSION AS IT APPLIES TO BOARDS OF
EDUCATION

We anticipate that the interim report of the Public and School Employees' Grievance Procedure Study Commission may be implemented in legislation very shortly. The report recommends legislation to require all public employers to meet with employees through representatives of their own choosing for mutual resolution of grievances and proposals. In other words, local boards of education will be required to negotiate with teachers and other employees. The report recommends that boards be required to develop effective procedures for the settlement of disputes. Legislation suggested in the report would empower local boards to use public and/or private agencies and individuals to assist in the peaceful resolution of disputes. The report recommends such agencies as the American Arbitration Association, the State Commissioner of Education, the New Jersey State Board of Mediation and the New Jersey Civil Service Commission.

The interim report's recommendations, if translated into law, are to be in effect until June 30, 1968 when legislation implementing a full and final report from the Commission could be expected to become operative.

The Federation's position as presented before the Study Commission appears in SCHOOL BOARD NOTES for April. Boards having questions or comments about the testimony should write or call the office for clarification.

If and when the interim report becomes implemented in law, boards of education can expect to have requests from teacher organizations to provide an agreement for conducting negotiations. The Federation offers the following suggestions:

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Interim Report of Public and School Employees'
Grievance Procedure Study Commission as it
Applies to Boards of Education

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1. The first agreement is of utmost importance. Boards should not rush into agreements without fully understanding what is being proposed. Items once included in an agreement can seldom be dropped and can remain to plague boards in future negotiations. Boards would do well to use trained consultants to work out initial agreements with teacher organizations. They will save themselves much difficulty in the long run.
2. Agreements should emphasize that the board must retain the ability to administer the schools.
3. Subjects for negotiations should be limited to economic affairs. Educational matters must not be part of the pressure and conflict which accompanies negotiations. Boards should initially set up procedures whereby good use is made of the expertise of teachers in planning the curriculum. SCHOOL BOARD NOTES for April makes suggestions for such consultation.
4. The Federation believes impasses in public employment should be referred to a new agency - a Public Employment Relations Board - rather than to existing agencies which function in private employment. The interim report leaves the choice of mediating parties up to the board of education. Members of the New Jersey Education Association are adamantly opposed to the State Board of Mediation and urge appeal to the State Board of Education. Members of the American Federation of Teachers oppose appeal to the State Department of Education and recommend use of the State Mediation Board. The interim report purposely leaves the choice broad and includes both existing agencies and individuals. Boards and teachers should be able to find common ground in agreeing on an agency or individuals for appeal. In cases where expense is involved in an appeal, both parties to the dispute should share the expenses equally.

Sent to: Presidents of Boards of Education
Secretaries of Boards of Education
District Superintendents
County Superintendents
County Association Presidents
Federation Executive Committee Members and Alternates
Federation Legislative Committee Members

