

MATERIALS AND EQUIPMENT SERIES

Kansas State Department of Education

INFORMATION REGARDING  
STATE ADOPTED TEXTBOOKS IN KANSAS

Issued by  
Adel F. Throckmorton

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The materials for this series of bulletins were developed in a summer session workshop at the University of Kansas during the summer of 1952.

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The Process of Adoption

"... The said state schoolbook commission shall adopt, print or publish a uniform textbook and/or workbook on each subject for each grade or class, including those in the junior high schools and high schools of the state..." (p. 350)

In 1945 the state schoolbook commission was abolished and its powers and duties transferred to the State Board of Education. The Kansas State Board of Education is a bipartisan board of seven laymen appointed by the governor. No more than four members may come from one political party; one person is appointed from each congressional district with one at large; no more than three members may live in first or second class cities. The law requires no educational qualifications.

At least seven months prior to the adoption of any textbook, the state superintendent is required to furnish publishers with necessary information relative to such adoption.

The state board is authorized to appoint three textbook advisory committees, elementary, junior high school, and senior high school to recommend textbooks for adoption.

Each committee is composed of not less than five nor more than seven persons, two of whom shall not be engaged in the teaching profession. Thus a majority membership of each committee shall be school persons representing all types of schools concerned with the textbooks under consideration. After careful study the committees submit to the state superintendent a list of at least three recommendations for each textbook to be adopted. On each list must be at least one book which can be printed by the state printer.

Generally the members of advisory committees request several persons to assist them in the evaluation of proposed

textbooks. Teachers and administrators perform a valuable service by acting as members of advisory committees or assisting committee members in the evaluation of books.

The initial adoption period for any textbook is five years and thereafter the adoption may be extended for a period of one to five years upon recommendation of the advisory committee. Textbook adoptions are staggered so approximately one fifth of all books are adopted each year.

"... When the state board has adopted more than one textbook or series of textbooks for any subject, the book or books to be used shall be chosen from the adopted list by the state superintendent of public instruction..." (p. 353)

In recent years the system of multiple adoptions, based upon the foregoing paragraph, has been used with most textbooks in junior and senior high schools and in one instance for elementary schools. In this system two or more books are approved by the state board for each grade or subject. Cities of the first and second class choose one book from this list for adoption. In other schools the adoption is on a county-wide basis, chosen by a committee appointed by the county superintendent. The local adoption is always for the state contract period. These local adoptions must be made before April 1 preceding the September in which their use is begun.

#### The Status of State Adopted Textbooks

- A. Adopted textbooks — these are the only books pupils may be legally required to purchase.
- B. Approved textbooks — those recommended for use. They may be purchased by school boards or pupils, but pupils cannot be legally required to purchase them. This classification includes supplementary textbooks in reading, geography, history, science, and literature which are purchased by the school board and remain the property of the school and are to be used by pupils with-

out cost to them. These supplementary textbooks may not be used as substitutes for the duly adopted textbooks.

- C. Reference books — approved by local school authorities and purchased by school boards for library use.

"... Whenever the commission (state board) shall issue an order requiring the exclusive use of any textbooks in the public schools of this state no public school superintendent, principal, teacher, or any other public school authority in this state shall have the power to use or authorize the use of any book or books for pupils other than those directed to be used by order of said commission: ..." (p. 357)

This is not meant to exclude the use of books purchased by school boards for reference purposes or textbooks designated by the State Board of Education on a trial basis for comparison with books currently in use.

### Free Textbooks

The Kansas law gives school districts the power to provide textbooks free of charge to all pupils, although it is rarely done.

"Each school district and each city may have the privilege of providing the pupils in said district, or city, with textbooks free of cost if so authorized by majority vote of the qualified electors in such city or school district voting at an election held for the purpose of determining how the books shall be distributed." (p. 358)

The law also makes provision for free textbooks to needy elementary pupils:

"Whenever the parents or guardian of any child attending any of the grade schools in the state of Kansas are unable to purchase textbooks for said child, the district board or board of education of the district in which said child resides shall, if written application is made and said board finds the

application meritorious, furnish said child with the regular adopted state textbooks free of cost." (p. 359)

### Distribution of Textbooks

"... The state schoolbook commission\* shall . . . appoint at least one schoolbook dealer or agent in each county seat and in each city of the first and second class in the state, and such other schoolbook dealers or agents as the state schoolbook commission\* shall see fit to appoint, for the handling and sale of the schoolbooks published by the state. . . ." (p. 354)

These appointed dealers are bonded and handle state published books on consignment. Clerks of boards of education and district clerks as well as unbonded dealers may purchase books from the textbook division of the State Board of Education on a cash basis. Cash purchasers may return unsold books for cash or credit. Thus local boards of education may, if they desire, act as dealers in state adopted textbooks. Books shall be sold to patrons at a price not to exceed that set by the commission. This maximum price allows and includes a twenty per cent markup on the cost for the handler of the books.

Other than from authorized dealers, books may be purchased from the following sources:

School Book Division, State Department of Public Instruction, 201 West Tenth, Topeka. The adopted elementary reading series and books published by the State Printer are obtained from this source.

Kansas Book Company, 911 Adams Street, Topeka. A central depository for publishers of books on the adopted and approved lists that are not state printed.

Publishers. A complete list of publishers may be found in the annual price list.

\* Now the State Board of Education.

The Kansas State Department of Public Instruction receives numerous inquiries from local school administrators and boards of education concerning state adopted textbooks. This publication answers the most frequent inquiries. Unless otherwise stated, the quoted material is taken from Kansas School Laws Revised, published by the state superintendent of public instruction, Topeka, 1947. A discussion very similar to this one may be found in Chapter VI., Article 5 of the School Board Handbook by L. W. Chesney, published by the League of Kansas Municipalities, Topeka, in 1951.

A listing of state adoptions and approvals, along with contract prices, retail prices, and adoption periods may be found in the current Price List published July 1 of each year by the State Department of Education.

This bulletin was prepared by Herbert I. Bruning, former principal of Emporia High School with assistance by George L. Cleland, textbook analyst for the State Department of Education.

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Kansas State Department of Education

TRENDS IN CLASSROOM SEATING

A Guide for the Selection of Classroom Furniture

Issued by  
Adel F. Throckmorton

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The materials for this series of bulletins were developed in a summer session workshop at the University of Kansas during the summer of 1952.

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This publication offers some suggestions for planning seating in elementary schools.

Literature of more than fifteen manufacturers of school seating equipment and more than 30 authorities were used in writing this pamphlet. The trend in schoolroom seating is toward table and chair combinations, movable and adjustable. Little justification exists for the common type of fixed seats.

It is not possible to discuss in detail many types of movable furniture and equipment for the modern classroom. We urge a careful local study by teachers and administrators of activities which will go on in the classroom, together with a listing of supplies and materials to be used and stored there. This information, together with the ages of the children to be served, will determine the types, sizes, and shapes of furniture and equipment needed. Consultation with other school systems and a study of manufacturers' catalogs, will be helpful.

This bulletin was prepared by Glenn E. Peer, Spring Hill elementary principal, and Alden Simpson, Doniphan county superintendent.



## TRENDS IN CLASSROOM SEATING

### What's Needed in Regular Classroom Furniture?

Kinds of furniture and equipment in a school room and the ways they are used affect the appearance of the room, the attitude of children toward school, and the learning process itself. The same room may be formal, austere, and institutional; or it may be friendly, interesting, and relaxing.

A school room may be a true learning laboratory or a place of confinement and drudgery, depending partially upon the furniture and equipment and the way they are used. The development of a school program based upon self-contained classroom units emphasizes the necessity for careful attention to room furnishings. (7)

A good elementary school environment provides the following features:

Good arrangement of furniture and the decoration of rooms. Furniture, equipment and instructional materials for the age, size, interests, and maturity level of all children. Space in classrooms for good working conditions for the number and age of pupils to be accommodated. (6)

In selecting seating for a modern school, check on whether it is movable, light in weight, sturdy, stackable, suitable to the user, comfortable, good for posture. Seating which is good for health allows the feet to rest flat on the floor, distributes weight over the whole seat area, has back of seat support for the hollow of the back only, has both vertical and horizontal clearance between front edge of the seat and the inside angle of the knees, and it should be finished to avoid glare and to reflect light.

"Some of the modern desks are arranged with adjustable tops and backs. Adjustable seats offer some advantages in a rural or ungraded schoolroom, yet they are not a dire necessity if sufficient physical activity within the room is

permitted. It is equally important from an educational point of view that seats be movable as well as adjustable. The same principles apply to tables and chairs." (9)

Surfaces made of light, unselected woods should have a clear finish, free of opaque pigments which obscure the grain. Wood should have a slightly warm or suntan appearance. Metal parts and surfaces should have slightly warm but neutral-appearing finishes.

If seats and desks are used, the seats should be separate from the desks. In all ways they should conform to the descriptions previously given.

Tablet armchairs are not recommended for use where students spend much time in reading or writing.

Every elementary classroom needs at least one large table surface for pupils to use when they work together on activities.

Individualized or small group activities require differentiated equipment for individuals and groups. Schools in the past have furnished identical equipment for each child, but now they attempt to provide for many types of activity. In many schools today group tables and individual tables are used in the same room. If individual tables are selected, choose those which may be combined for group discussions and activity.

"Important pieces of school equipment which affect the health of pupils include desks, chairs, tables, toilet facilities, fire extinguishers, playground equipment and first aid supplies. The seating of pupils has a very definite influence on their physical and mental health. The seat should be constructed so the pupil's knees, hips and spine will not be thrown out of alignment when he turns in his seat, and the support for the back should be placed low enough to prevent the shoulder blades from being thrown forward." (9)

"The most important factor in proper seating is the seat

height. This measurement should be such that the feet rest firmly on the floor with no pressure on the back of the knees or thighs where the nerves and blood vessels are located. To relieve this pressure completely, the seat is curved downward at the front. Other measurements must be in correct proportion. Most desks and chairs are made in a carefully graduated range of sizes to meet the correct seating needs of all age groups." (4)

Desk and Chair Chart

Seat heights	10 in.	11 in.	12 in.	13 in.	14 in.	15 in.	16 in.	17 in.	18 in.
	20 in.	20 in.	21 in.	22 in.	24 in.	25 in.	26 in.	27 in.	29 in.
Desk heights		21 in.	22 in.	23 in.	25 in.	26 in.	27 in.	29 in.	30 in.
% by grades	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Kindergarten	20	60	20						
First		20	50	30					
Second		10	40	50					
Third			20	60	20				
Fourth			10	40	50				
Fifth				20	60	20			
Sixth					30	40	30		
Seventh					10	40	50		
Eighth						20	40	40	
Junior High							40	50	10
Senior High							30	50	20
College							20	50	30

Sufficient floor space is allowed for freedom of movement around each seat and for free space for construction activities when seats are moved to provide such space.

There has been a tendency to plan classrooms too small to allow for proper use of good equipment and desirable instructional activities. Modern planning tends toward larger classrooms to provide for activities which are essential for good educational practices. Some of these activities are:

Science interest center  
Reading corner  
Social studies activities

Many educators recommend a minimum of 35 square feet per child for the elementary school room. Others say for practical purposes this should be tempered to approximately 30 square feet per pupil because of construction costs as related to the financial condition of school districts. This space is not to include toilets or workshops adjoining the classroom. (17)

### SUMMARY

The preferred type of seating for kindergarten children is group tables and chairs for from four to eight pupils. For the first and second grades, group tables and chairs are better probably than individual tables. For the third grade through the eighth, some teachers prefer individual tables or desks, while others like tables which seat two or three. Some teachers like a combination of different size tables.

Decide upon furniture which will serve best the activities to be carried on in the room. The equipment needs to be substantial but not cumbersome. Give attention to the design, color, and finish, as well as the construction. Use simple designs with rounded corners. Hard finishes last longer. Furniture should be easy to clean and repair.

The actual gain in the use of table-and-chair equipment for schoolrooms is probably much larger than sales show because many school systems have built their own classroom tables and have purchased chairs that were probably not listed as sold for such use. In general, the trend during the last few years has been toward tables and chairs and away from fixed classroom seating and toward the movable or more informal types of equipment.

"In general, furniture and equipment should have the following characteristics:

It should be sturdy and durable and of first-class material.

It should be light-colored with a flat finish.

It should be movable.

It should be sized to fit the ages of the children to be served in the room.

It should be designed in terms of the activities to be carried on in the room.

There should be a variety of kinds of seating, tables, and desks.

It should be designed for easy cleaning.

Possibly some of the seating should be stackable to allow for clearing the room for some space-demanding activities.

It should be safe. Units should have a firm base. Attention should be paid to operation of drawers, doors, and lids to prevent pinching of fingers."

(12)

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**SCORE CARD - CHECK LIST CRITERIA  
FOR CLASSROOM SEATING**

	<u>Superior</u>	<u>Good</u>	<u>Poor</u>
1. Is furniture movable?	—	—	—
2. Is it good for posture?	—	—	—
3. Is it light in weight?	—	—	—
4. Is adequate space provided for books?			
5. Is the furniture adjustable?			
6.			
7.			

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## SEATING COMPANIES

1. Precision Equipment Company  
3712 North Milwaukee Avenue  
Chicago 41, Illinois
2. Clarin Manufacturing Company  
4640 West Harrison Street  
Chicago 44, Illinois
3. Crown Institutional Equipment Company  
218 South Wabash Avenue  
Chicago 4, Illinois
4. Franklin Lee Company  
217 West 68th Street  
Chicago 21, Illinois
5. The Norcor Manufacturing Company  
Green Bay, Wisconsin
6. Hicks-Ashby Company  
210 West Eighth Street  
Kansas City 6, Missouri
7. Milton Bradley Company  
Springfield 2, Massachusetts
8. The Peabody Seating Company,  
Inc.  
North Manchester, Indiana
9. The Globe Wernicke Company  
Cincinnati 12, Ohio
10. E. H. Fording Company  
6434 Baltimore Avenue  
Kansas City 5, Missouri
11. National Store Fixture Com-  
pany, Inc.  
2301 Hollins Street  
Baltimore 23, Maryland
12. American Desk Manufacturing  
Company  
Temple, Texas
13. Heywood-Wakefield Company  
Gardner, Massachusetts
14. American Seating Company  
Ninth and Broadway  
Grand Rapids, Michigan