Education Costs Continue to Rise

A Pennsylvania Department of Education study has reaffirmed what many administrators have known for a long time: it is becoming harder to finance quality education in our public schools.

The study, prepared by the Bureau of Information Systems, was presented in summary form to the State Board of Education at a recent meeting and offered, among other "possible recommendations," that financing of public education be re-examined.

According to Dr. Seon Cho, bureau director, the study was based on population growth and points to some significant trends.

"In general," Cho said, "public school enrollments are declining while both school expenditures and Commonwealth revenues are going up."

"Education's share of the total budget, therefore, will remain at present levels," he said.

School districts should be encouraged to keep the pupil-teacher ratio from dropping further;

School districts should be encouraged to hold the line on total staff per 1,000

School districts should be encouraged to hold the line on non-salaried items, and, Financing of public education should be re-

examined.

The first three recom-

policies are not certain in terms of what happens to children.

For those reasons, a reexamination of the financing of education was included in the study, he pointed out.

Research indicates, according to Cho, that increasing expenditures on traditional educational practices is not likely to improve student performance.

'There is no such thing as an optimum class size for all

ticularly in culturally deprived areas, require more specialized instruction to permit them to reach their level of expected performance.

"Our primary concern," said Cho, "must be to maintain quality education for all students." "We should be more concerned with how we spend our money.'

According to the study, subject matter, the age and ability level of pupils, the home environment and the availability of mass media for instruction are all factors which must be considered.

"Public financing," said

Cho, "should be re-examined to provide incentive to teachers and administrators to improve the attitudes and performance of pupils at a reasonable cost to society."



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