

STATUS OF PUBLIC BROADCASTING IN N.J.

(as of March 13, 1969)

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BACKGROUND

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New Jersey was one of the first states to experiment with educational television. Montclair State College ^{105 W. State Street} ~~Montclair, N.J.~~ began to experiment with TV in the fall of 1950. During that same year, the New Jersey State Department of Education began an experimental project which lasted until 1954 when the Governor refused to recommend funds to continue the project. With the exception of an additional year's experimentation at Montclair and an effort to establish a TV station by administrators and board members in Bergen County nothing more has been done with television even though 48 states are now utilizing this medium of education.

GOVERNOR'S COMMISSION ON PUBLIC BROADCASTING FOR NEW JERSEY,

During October, 1967, Governor Richard J. Hughes appointed eighteen members to serve on the Commission on Public Broadcasting for New Jersey. The Governor charged this Commission to, "formulate plans and policies for the development of educational television and radio in New Jersey". This Commission consisted of the following members:

Edward J. Meade, Jr., Chairman
Program Officer in Charge of
Public Education
The Ford Foundation
Upper Montclair

William G. Bowen
Provost
Princeton University
Princeton

John Ciardi
Poetry Editor
The Saturday Review
Metuchen

Ralph A. Dungan
Chancellor
New Jersey Department of
Higher Education
Princeton

G. Edward Hamilton
Communications Consulting Service
Glen Ridge

Frederick L. Hipp
Executive Secretary
New Jersey Education
Association
Trenton

M. Harold Kelly
Publisher
Red Bank Daily Register
Lincroft

John A. Kervick
Treasurer
New Jersey Department of
Treasury
Short Hills

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Jose I. Lanza
Program Director of Spanish
Programming
Channel 47
Newark

Robert W. Locke
Senior Vice President
McGraw-Hill Book Company
Far Hills

Carl L. Marburger
Commissioner
New Jersey Department of
Education
Trenton

Carroll V. Newsom
Vice President for Education
Radio Corporation of America
Westwood

John R. Pierce
Executive Director for Research
Communications Sciences Division
Bell Telephone Laboratories
Warren

Pete Retzlaff
WCAU-TV
Philadelphia
Blackwood

Arthur J. Sills
Attorney General
Department of Law and Public
Safety
Metuchen

Dallas Townsend
CBS News
Montclair

Dionne Warwick
Entertainer
South Orange

Paul N. Ylvisaker
Commissioner
Department of Community
Affairs
Cranbury

On May 6, 1968, the Commission submitted its report to the Governor. Chairman Edward Meade, Jr. stated in the covering letter to the Governor, "We present this report knowing that if New Jersey should not act now, it may well lose the last opportunity for a statewide system of public broadcasting."

RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE COMMISSION

1. The Commission recommended that the Governor and the State Legislature act promptly to authorize and establish the New Jersey Public Broadcasting Authority--a state-chartered, publicly-supported, autonomous instrumentality, charged with the responsibility for administering and managing a system of public broadcasting in the State of New Jersey.

2. The Commission recommended a broadcasting complex so conceived as to provide the following services and facilities:
 - a. Deliver television signals to the New Jersey population via four UHF transmitters located in the vicinity of Atlantic City, Trenton, New Brunswick, and Glen Ridge.
 - b. A distribution center complex for the purpose of disseminating programs from each of the transmitter locations described above.
 - c. Studio and production facilities so that each of the above stations can be supplied programming.
 - d. Interconnection of each of the four television transmitters and production facilities with the distribution center complex.
 - e. Three mobile television units for originating programs at any location within New Jersey.
 - f. In addition to the four UHF transmitters described above, each transmitting site will include a cluster of four closed-circuit transmitters for distribution of public service programming to teacher education centers, hospitals, television to school buildings, police and fire training, etc.
 - g. The design of the public broadcasting facilities anticipates the continuing progress of the state of the art of communications technology. The facilities are designed to accommodate the broadcasting techniques of the future such as dial access, satellite transmissions, and information and retrieval systems.

ACTION TAKEN ON COMMISSION'S RECOMMENDATIONS

The Governor accepted the report of the Commission and agreed to support the request for the 15.8 million needed to implement this report. At the same time, Senate Bill 771 was introduced to create the Authority recommended by the Commission.

The Legislature reduced the amount requested by the Commission from 15.8 million to 7.5 million and agreed to include this amount of money in the bond issue submitted to the voters on November 5, 1968. The voters approved this sum by a 2 to 1 majority.

Senate Bill 771 passed both houses of the Legislature and was signed into law by Governor Hughes on January 17, 1969.

PUBLIC BROADCASTING AUTHORITY

The Authority is a fifteen member body with the State Treasurer, the Attorney-General, the Commissioner of Community Affairs, the Chancellor of Higher Education and the Commissioner of Education as members by virtue of office. Ten additional members were nominated by the Governor and are awaiting confirmation by the Senate. Nominees for the Authority are:

Mrs. Anne Martindell - Princeton
Hilliard T. Moore - Lawnside
Edward J. Meade, Jr. - Montclair
George Connett - Mendham
Eugene Francis - Washington Twp., Bergen Co.
Merv Griffin - Califon
Ross Sackett - Glen Ridge
Maurice Veneri - Nutley
Donald M. Wilson - Princeton
John F. McDonald - New Brunswick

POWERS OF THE AUTHORITY

Senate Bill 771, known as the NEW JERSEY PUBLIC BROADCASTING AUTHORITY ACT OF 1968 gives these powers to the Authority:

1. Establish, own, and operate noncommercial educational television or radio broadcasting stations, one or more public broadcasting and public broadcasting telecommunications

networks or systems, and interconnection and program production facilities.

2. Provide co-ordination and information on matters relating to public broadcasting telecommunications among the agencies of the State Government, all facets of New Jersey public education and individuals, associations, and institutions working in these fields both within and without the State.
3. Establish State-wide equipment compatibility policies.
4. Provide appropriate advisory assistance to other agencies of the State and local and regional groups regarding public broadcasting techniques, planning, budgeting, and related issues.
5. Receive and administer gifts, contributions and funds from public and private sources.
6. Cooperate with Federal agencies for the purpose of obtaining matching and other Federal funds.
7. Contract with program production organizations, individuals, and noncommercial educational television and radio stations within and without the State to produce, or otherwise to procure, educational television or radio programs for use by noncommercial stations within the State.
8. Establish and maintain a library and archives of educational television and radio programs and related materials, disseminate information about such programs and make suitable arrangements for the use of such materials.
9. Conduct explorations, research, demonstrations, or training in matters related to public broadcasting and public broadcasting telecommunications in the State, directly; or through contracts with appropriate agencies, organizations or individuals; or by grants to nonprofit, non-

commercial organizations such as colleges, universities, schools and noncommercial television and radio stations.

While there are other administrative duties and powers listed in the Act, the above powers are the ones of most concern to schools. Two safeguards are provided in the Act:

1. "The Authority shall be prohibited from supporting or opposing any political party or candidate for public office, elective or otherwise, and from attempting to influence the enactment of legislation. The Authority shall not, however, be precluded from promoting full discussions of public issues."
2. "Nothing in the Act concerning the Authority's activities in the field of instructional television shall be deemed to supersede the responsibilities of the Commissioner of Education, the Chancellor of Higher Education and local school governing bodies with respect to the determination of educational policies or curriculum content."

FUNDS FOR THE AUTHORITY

The Bill states, "There is hereby appropriated to the Authority such sums as shall be included in any annual or special appropriations act."

THE PRESENT SITUATION

No one knows for sure when the Senate will confirm the nominees for the Authority. Until this is done, no action can be taken.

The Commissioner of Education will soon name a State Television Advisory Committee.