



League of Women Voters of Minnesota Records

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November 21, 1952

REPORT ON STATUS OF STATEWIDE EDUCATIONAL TELEVISION PLANNING, as of Nov. 7, 1952

The people of Minnesota must decide now whether or not we want education television. Channels made available by the Federal Communications Commission for educational purposes must be picked up by June 1, 1953, or they will be allocated for commercial usage. Since any request for channels has to be accompanied by guarantees of funds for construction and operation, this places the decision with the 1953 Legislature.

On November 7 a meeting was held to hear proposals for a statewide educational television network. Dean Schweickhard, State Commissioner of Education, who has been serving as chairman of the planning committee, called the meeting. The League of Women Voters was one of several organizations asked to send representatives to join with educators from all parts of the state.

Burton Paulu, manager of University Radio KUOM, presented the plan, which has been worked out on the basis of the population and topography of Minnesota. Two major channels are available, one in Minneapolis and one in Duluth. The plan also calls for eight satellite stations connected by microwave relays in Morris, Detroit Lakes, Brainerd, Thief River Falls, Marshall, Rochester, Mankato and Hibbing. The total cost of building the statewide system would be about five million dollars. Yearly operating costs would average \$500,000; in other states, some of this cost has been raised from private sources. With this system nearly all parts of the state could be reached.

Educational programming would be on the elementary, secondary, and college levels as well as in the area of adult education. This last could include cultural, civic, and informational programs, sports events and farm and market reports. It would also be possible to retelecast programs from the commercial networks.

The FCC requires that requests for educational channels come from a single authority. It was thought that the most logical "person" for this purpose would be the University of Minnesota. The University would make the request and serve in a managerial capacity. As manager, it would be responsible to a policy board, which would govern programming and administration. Members of this board would be selected from among educators and persons representing various citizens organizations.

Mr. Samuel C. Gale, member of the National Citizens Commission for the Public Schools, was elected temporary chairman of a Citizens Committee for Educational Television. This proposed three point program was adopted at the November 7th meeting.

1. Establishment of a statewide educational television network in the following order of priority:
 - a. Channel #2 in the Twin Cities;
 - b. Channel #8 in Duluth
 - c. Eight Sub-Stations
2. Formation of a policy board.
3. Application for a license in the name of the University of Minnesota.

The State Board of the League of Women Voters of Minnesota felt that the League should take a position on this proposal. The establishment of educational television would have at least two specific results for the League: 1.) the availability of a new, effective medium to implement the League's purpose of developing a more informed citizenry; and 2.) the opportunity to reach into areas of the state where it has heretofore been difficult to make the League's influence felt.

The effectiveness of this type of communication is illustrated by a pre-election project of the Minneapolis and St. Paul Leagues. A daily 15 minute television show, "Know Your Candidates", was presented as part of its voters' service work, from

November 21, 1952

September 10th through November 3rd. The program reached a far greater audience than has been reached through the use of more traditional League channels and received enthusiastic praise from many sources. This experience has prompted the Minneapolis League to devote a larger portion of its time and efforts to television programming.

Representatives of the League who attended the educational television meeting have prepared this information for you. We are asking you to discuss it with your membership and let us know whether or not you would support such a plan.

These are some of the considerations to be kept in mind during such discussions:

1. The cost of such a network. The initial cost of such a network is roughly equivalent to the cost of two or three modern schools, serving only a fraction of the potential audience of a television network, yet the cost is high and must be weighed against possible benefits to accrue, and against other possible uses of that same amount of money.
2. The managing agency. The questions will arise as to whether the University is the best possible managing agency. Could another authority handle it more efficiently or more fairly? Or could the policy board be set up in such a way as to guarantee equitable programming and administration through the University as agent?
3. Is television an appropriate field in which state government should participate?

THIS IS A NOW OR NEVER DECISION.

There is a set number of television channels. Certain of these have been set aside for educational uses. This is a technical limitation; once these have been assigned, no more will ever be available.

The State Board will meet again on December 4th and will take action on the basis of your recommendations at that time.

To Local League Presidents
From Mrs. Robert Anderson, Education Chairman

November 21, 1952

This is an emergency call for League opinion! We have prepared for your consideration information outlining a proposal for a state-wide educational television network. The State Board felt that this was a decision that you might want them to be in a position to act upon at the coming legislative session. (Since it is a matter which has come to our attention between state conventions, it could not get on the State Agenda through the usual process.) The State Board's action is dependent on your decision to support or oppose such a plan. Since the Board wants to discuss your reactions at their next meeting on December 4th, will you please bring this to the attention of your members and send in the attached form by December 3rd.

League of Women Voters of Minnesota -- EDUCATIONAL TELEVISION QUESTIONNAIRE -- 11/21/52

1. Does your membership favor or oppose this plan?
2. Does this decision represent a unanimous or partial opinion?
3. What were some of the questions or qualifications expressed by your members?
4. What action, if any, do you want the State Board to take in your behalf?

Ed TV

THE MINNEAPOLIS COUNCIL OF PARENT-TEACHER ASSOCIATIONS

INCORPORATED

A Council of the Minnesota Branch of the National Congress of Parents and Teachers

WEST HIGH SCHOOL

TWENTY-EIGHTH STREET AND HENNEPIN AVE.

KENWOOD 4518

MINNEAPOLIS 8, MINN.

March 27, 1953

Mrs. K. K. McMillan
President
League of Women Voters of Minnesota
84 South Tenth Street
Minneapolis 3, Minnesota

Dear Mrs. McMillan:

I received a copy of the letter you wrote to Mr. Finke. I am enclosing resolutions passed by the Minneapolis Council of Parent-Teacher Associations which will show you the point of view of many persons who are definitely interested in educational television. There has been a great deal of controversy about the licensee and the operation of such a station, and I am sure that Mr. Finke is pursuing the wise course with the legislature in not asking any controversial figures to speak to the legislators.

Very truly yours,

Bernadette Parker
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Mrs. H. J. Parker, President

BP:mrđ

RESOLUTIONS CONCERNING EDUCATIONAL TELEVISION

Passed by the Minnesota Congress of Parents and Teachers, October, 1952
and by the Minneapolis Council of Parent-Teacher Associations, November, 1952

State

The Resolutions Committee of the State Convention brought in a resolution asking the PTA to "urge institutions of higher learning" to apply for educational channels. A delegate presented a substitute resolution in which the University of Minnesota was named instead of "institutions of higher learning". There was opposition to both of these resolutions, and the motion was made and passed that the president, Mrs. Aronson, appoint a committee to re-write the motion so that public schools and all educational institutions would be included as well as colleges. The re-written resolution as passed reads as follows:

"Be it resolved that television is potentially one of the greatest mediums for education of both children and adults, and that, therefore, this body goes on record as approving the use of channels set aside by the Federal Communications Commission for educational purposes; and be it further resolved that we make our position known to the already appointed committee of representatives from various educational institutions and bodies and to the state legislature."

Minneapolis

At the November 20 meeting of the Minneapolis Council of Parent-Teacher Associations, the vice-president, Mrs. Ingram, presented the state resolution and information concerning the three different plans which may be used in applying for an educational television station. The Federal Communications Commission has allocated one channel to the Minneapolis-St. Paul area and one to the Duluth-Superior area to be used exclusively for educational television. The channels are reserved only until June, 1953. St. Louis, Detroit, San Francisco and several other areas are applying as a corporation; the station then will belong to all the educational institutions in that area. On November 20, the Minneapolis Council passed the following resolution:

"That this body go on record as recommending the corporation or third type of organization and application for an educational television channel; and that we further recommend that representatives of all educational institutions in the greater Twin City area and representatives of local lay organizations connected with education, such as the Minneapolis and St. Paul Parent-Teacher Councils, meet to plan such a corporation and to explore local and foundation sources of funds to support an educational television station."

Barbara *Could you send on D Mrs. McKillop when you're ready this —*

State Citizens Committee on Public Education

MINNESOTA

Chairman
Mrs. H. K. Painter
4817 Fremont Avenue South
Minneapolis, Minnesota

Vice Chairman
Morris Bye
Anoka, Minnesota

Secretary-Treasurer
Mrs. Fred L. Paul
864 Sherwood Avenue
St. Paul, Minnesota

file
March 27, 1953
Minneapolis 9, Minnesota

Dear Mrs. McMillan:

I read with interest your letter to Mr. Finke. In view of it I am taking it upon myself to write you, since there are some things which Mr. Finke would certainly not say about himself. The rest of the letter is based on observations on the situation at close hand.

In Mr. Finke, we have the most experienced person we could get, a man who understands thoroughly how to work with the legislature and with people. I feel quite sure that he is doing all that can be done to get results. He took hold of a committee which was sharply divided, and has welded into a unified committee. That work was basic for any undivided approach to the problem. He still has the problem of keeping the group united.

For that reason, I believe he can not safely follow your first two suggestions. Mr. Paul has been the center of a sharp controversy. There is a sharp difference of opinion as to his qualifications. I am not in a position to be able to express an opinion as to his qualifications, but the fact that he is decidedly controversial indicates that such use as you suggest might not bring the results you anticipate. Your second suggestion again, would split the group in half. There is a sharp division there as to where the money should come from. I believe again that Mr. Finke was most wise in presenting the need for TV without splitting the group. It is really the legislature's duty to decide on a program of taxation. We present the need, they find the ways of meeting the need. Experience with varying opinions on taxation convinces me that you get division along political lines when you specify forms of taxation. To try to advise the legislature on that would be to destroy the harmony that has been so carefully and painfully established.

As to getting widespread support from constituents to the legislature, such support takes much much time. The people who have been facing this question have realized that it takes, normally, at least a full year to get public understanding on a state wide basis actually operating in a way to affect legislative action. When you add to the usual slow progress of public action the fact that much of the state is without TV, you realize

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how very hard it is to affect legislative action quickly. Things just don't move that fast. Information has to percolate. I am sure the League could help greatly in speeding up the percolating.

I am writing you so fully because there is such a lot of background to be understood, and because I want to assure you that in my opinion Mr. Finke has been most wise both in what he has done and in what he has not tried to do, and I wanted to let you know how I felt about his leadership and also about the things that have been bothering you. The situation has been a complicated one. To get extensive legislative interest in the time at our disposal requires a miracle. I am amazed that we have been able as a committee to create as much interest as does exist. One thing I have learned, maybe, in working for education is, that it takes time, and patience, and that legislatures react slowly. Organizations likewise require time in which to get up steam.

"Now have a united committee. I am sure that in the end we shall get results, though we may not get all we should like at this session. I hope this has been helpful in explaining a point of view on the questions you raised. I hope the League will take hold, it is one organization that is geared to fairly quick action.

Cordially yours,

Clara S. Painter

Minnesota Citizens Committee
for
Educational Television

file

March 26, 1953

Mrs. K. K. McMillan, President
League of Women Voters of Minnesota
84 South Tenth Street
Minneapolis 3, Minnesota

Dear Mrs. McMillan:

Thanks for your letter of March 23 on Educational Television. I am appreciative of the suggestions that you make.

The question that you raise as to sources of revenue is a most difficult one. Our general committee has taken the stand that we should request financing from the general revenue fund. At a meeting of our Executive Committee on March 23, I again raised the revenue question. The decision was again made that we should not deviate from our previous position as to the general revenue fund as a financing source. As you probably know, there is considerable variance of opinion within the committee on the subjects of diversion and special revenue sources. It would appear, therefore, that the committee, as such, prefers to stand on the general revenue approach. This, however, does not mean that individual organizations could not make such revenue suggestions to the Legislature as they might desire.

With reference to the dissemination of information, our Committee must necessarily rely on its member organizations. The future of Educational Television actually rests with the individual organizations whose representatives constitute our Citizens Committee. As a matter of fact, we have no Speakers' Bureau as a separate entity. Here again we rely upon the speakers from the member organizations. Kits and information have been made available to the member organizations so that they can make this information available to those of their members who are willing and able to speak in behalf of this project.

With respect to Mr. Paulu, we have endeavored to use his talents wherever possible. All requests for speakers in or near the Twin City area have been referred to Mr. Paulu and his associates. They have been most helpful in this regard. We shall continue to make use of them wherever possible.

Mrs. K. K. McMillan

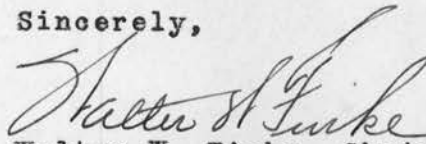
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March 26, 1953

A number of our member organizations, through their own relevant committees, have undertaken the task of talking individually to members of the Education Committees and to other members of the Legislature. In view of the League's interest in this program, I am hopeful that you may also be able to assist in this way.

May I express, too, my appreciation for the excellent statement that Mrs. Bagley made on behalf of the League at the public hearing before the Education Committees.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Walter W. Finke".

Walter W. Finke, Chairman
Minnesota Citizens Committee
for Educational Television

WWF:be

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TV Bld

A BILL

FOR AN ACT TO CREATE AN EDUCATIONAL TELEVISION COMMISSION; TO DEFINE ITS POWERS, DUTIES AND FUNCTIONS; AND TO APPROPRIATE FUNDS FOR THE CONSTRUCTION AND OPERATION OF EDUCATIONAL TELEVISION STATIONS IN THE STATE OF MINNESOTA.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF MINNESOTA:

Section 1. To provide for the development of suitable plans for educational television in Minnesota and to insure the continuing formulation of sound state-wide policies therefor, there is hereby established a state Educational Television Commission.

Section 2. The Minnesota Educational Television Commission shall be composed of the following members:

(a) Serving ex officio:

The Chairman of the Education Committee of the Minnesota Senate.

The Chairman of the Education Committee of the Minnesota House of Representatives.

The Commissioner of Education.

The Commissioner of Agriculture.

The President of the University of Minnesota.

The Chairman of the Board of Regents of the University of Minnesota.

The Superintendents of Public Schools in those cities in which television channels have been allocated for educational purposes.

The President of the Council of Minnesota Colleges.

The President of the Minnesota Congress of Parents and Teachers Associations.

The President of the Minnesota School Board Association.

The Chairman of the Minnesota Citizens Committee on Public Education.

- (b) Seven additional members appointed by the Governor, these members to be chosen from, and to be representative of, educational, labor, agricultural, business and civic organizations having a recognized interest in education; four of the seven additional members to be appointed for a term of four (4) years, three to be appointed for a term of two (2) years, and thereafter all to be appointed for four (4) year terms.

Section 3. The Commission shall have the power to organize, to elect a chairman and secretary from among its members, and to keep minutes of its proceedings. The Commission shall likewise have the power to employ an executive officer who shall hold office during the pleasure of the Commission. Nine (9) members of the Commission shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business. The members of the Commission shall serve without compensation except that they shall be reimbursed for actual and necessary expenses incurred in the performance of their duties.

Section 4. The Commission shall have the following powers, duties and functions:

- (a) To develop plans for the continuing advancement of Educational Television as an instrument of service to all the people of Minnesota;
- (b) To determine and establish state-wide policies on Educational Television programming, including policies on allocation of program time and nature of program content;
- (c) To transmit such policies to the University of Minnesota for the operation of such Educational Television stations as may be licensed to the University;
- (d) To report annually to the Governor and biennially to the Legislature on the progress of Educational Television in Minnesota, and on pertinent developments in the field of Educational Television throughout the United States.

Section 5. The sums hereinafter named, or so much thereof as may be necessary, are hereby appropriated to the University of Minnesota from any moneys in the State Treasury not otherwise appropriated, for the purposes specified in the following sections of this Act.

Section 6. For the acquisition, construction and operation of state Educational Television facilities, during the next biennium in the following amounts:

- (a) For the securing of the necessary licenses from the Federal Government, for the acquisition of sites, the construction of necessary buildings, studios and transmitters, and for the purchase or lease of necessary equipment and facilities for a key Educational Television station located in or near the Twin Cities, for a second station located in or near Duluth, and for a third station located in a rural section of the state not now served by television.....\$1,519,000
- (b) For operating costs of the three Educational Television stations set forth in the preceding paragraph..... 673,000

Provided, that from the above appropriations in Section 6-Subdivision (b) hereof, the sum of \$25,000. is to be used to cover the expenses of the operations of the state Educational Television Commission for the next biennium.

Section 7. This Act shall take effect and be in force from and after its passage.