



Action Alert (10/09) **Restore Budget Cuts to Chartered Nonpublic School Students**

The state budget bill, as passed by the House and Senate and signed by the Governor, cut \$59 million over the biennium in aid to students attending chartered nonpublic schools. The cuts were in:

- Direct reimbursement to our schools (Administrative Cost Reimbursement)
- Resources and services such as guidance counselors, remedial assistance, and textbooks (Auxiliary Services).

As a result, a Catholic school of 350 students is now receiving, on average, \$43,500 less in state-funded assistance in 2009/2010; a high school of 800 students is receiving, on average, \$99,000 less in 2009/2010.

The Catholic Conference of Ohio, which represents the bishops in matters of public policy, strongly advocated that our school students be treated as equitably as other students during these difficult economic times. In previous budgets, funding support for chartered nonpublic students rose or fell proportionately with basic aid to public school students. In this budget, aid to Catholic school students was reduced by 15 %, while aid to public schools was reduced by only 0.25%. In addition, public schools received federal stimulus monies.

The legislature is reconsidering budget revenues. Two bills, HB 268 (Driehaus-D) and SB 177 (Seitz-R & Cates-R), propose restoring funds to students in our schools. Our message, irrespective of the funding mechanisms in these two bills, is this: "Find common ground for restoring funding to Catholic school students."

**Please contact your State Senator and Representative
& Governor Strickland**

Ask that funding be restored to Catholic school students

Legislative Call Line: 800-282-0253

Governor Strickland: 614-466-3555

To locate contact information for your state representative and senator, go to:

www.legislature.state.oh.us

To e-mail the Governor, go to:

www.governor.ohio.gov/Contact/tabid/153/Default.aspx

Restore Budget Cuts for Students in Chartered Nonpublic Schools

The cuts hurt.

Fewer dollars mean fewer teachers for students needing remedial reading and math instruction and special education. Fewer dollars mean fewer guidance counselors and speech and hearing therapists. Fewer dollars mean less technology, fewer teaching materials and instructional supplies. Fewer dollars mean less reimbursement for government-required expenditures.

The cuts are unfair.

Ohio's state budget used to treat students equitably. For the past 25 years, funding for Auxiliary Services and Administrative Cost Reimbursement increased or decreased by the same percentage as basic aid for public schools. ***Not in this state budget . . .***

When this cut is added to those imposed last year (when basic aid for public school students was held harmless), students in chartered nonpublic schools will receive 17.4 percent less in state-funded assistance than they received 12 months ago.

At the same time, Ohio could have allocated aid for nonpublic school students in the \$ 325 million Governmental Services package it secured through the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA). But it didn't.

The cuts slash funding to schools that save Ohio taxpayers billions of dollars.

The average cost to educate a student in a public school is \$10,000. For every \$900 Ohio invests to educate a student in a chartered nonpublic school, it saves more than \$9,000 in state and local taxes. **Chartered nonpublic schools saved taxpayers \$1.7 billion during 2009/2010 alone.**

The cuts harm the quality of education in schools that serve thousands of Ohio students every year (195,000 in 2008/2009)

Catholic schools have a long track record of excellence.

- Many have been in existence since the 1800s.
- Almost 100 percent of the students graduate.
- Over 90 percent of their students pass the Ohio Graduation Tests in reading, writing, math, science, social studies on the first try.
- There is a high rate of parent involvement and parent satisfaction.
- There is a long history of educating low-income and immigrant families in economically challenged neighborhoods.
- Catholic school students on EdChoice scholarships, who have been tracked by independent researchers, show steady academic gains, and these gains increase for every year students remain in a Catholic school.

Ohio claims that education is the state's #1 priority . . . but not for its nonpublic school students.

Ohio used to be committed to supporting the education of all of its students -- no matter where they went to school. By restoring funding, Ohio can once again become a model for other states.