



Ohio Legislative Alert

Special Education Scholarship Program

April 18, 2008

The Ohio Senate has proposed a bill (SB 57) to create a Special Education Scholarship Program. It would operate much like Ohio's Autism Scholarship Program, but offer scholarships for students with a wider range of needs.

Under the proposed program, an identified disabled child in pre-kindergarten through grade 12 can receive a scholarship to attend a special education program other than that offered by his or her school district. The scholarship may be used to pay an approved provider (including a Catholic school) to implement the student's individualized education program (IEP). The scholarship is worth the lesser of:

- (1) The total fees charged by the provider or;
- (2) The combined state and local shares of funding (both base cost and special education amounts) for the child under state formulas.

A similar special education scholarship program was included in the biennial budget and approved by the General Assembly last June. However, it was line-item vetoed by Governor Strickland when the bill reached his desk.

Many parents of children with special needs already educate their youngsters in Ohio's Catholic schools. Other parents wish their local Catholic school could provide the education and special services their child requires. The Special Education Scholarship can make that wish a reality.

Action Request

Please contact your Ohio Senator and Representative. We especially encourage parents of children with special needs to tell their story – and their child's story – to their elected officials.

For the name and contact information of your Representative or Senator link to <http://www.legislature.state.oh.us>