



NEW JERSEY
CATHOLIC CONFERENCE

ACTION ALERT

149 North Warren Street • Trenton, New Jersey 08608
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ISSUES:

PRIORITY #1 - Nonpublic school transportation. The ceiling for nonpublic school transportation has been frozen at \$884.00 since the 2007-2008 school year. This situation means that districts and/or private bus operators cannot bid routes at beyond \$884.00 per pupil. Please note the enclosed Talking Points for discussing nonpublic school busing with legislators and other interested individuals.

PRIORITY #2 - Governor Christie's proposed 2018 Budget cut \$9 million from nonpublic school aid reducing if from \$95.5 million to \$86.5 million. Included in the cuts were the elimination of the entire Nonpublic School Security Program which had been funded at \$50.00 per student and the elimination of increases in nonpublic school nursing services and technology aid. Please note the enclosed talking points for discussing these accounts with legislators and other interested individuals.

OUR POSITION: The New Jersey Catholic Conference and the New Jersey Network of Catholic School Families seek:

1. To increase the \$884.00 by moving funds currently in the Fiscal Year 2018 Governor's Budget. **This is the major issue for the Catholic schools.**
2. To restore the \$9 million removed from the nonpublic school accounts in the Governor's Budget at least to the level of funding in the Fiscal Year 2017 Appropriations Act.

ACTION TO BE TAKEN:

1. Call, write, or email the members of the Senate Budget and Appropriations Committee and the Assembly Budget Committee (see enclosed list) and ask them to increase the \$884.00 to compensate for the Consumer Price Index (CPI) increases over the last 11 years. If your district does not have legislators on either of the Committees, call, write, or email your legislator and ask that they speak with members of those two committees in order to increase the funding. This task could be accomplished by shifting funds in the current Governor's Budget without increasing the overall budget.
2. Call, write, or email the members of the Senate Budget and Appropriations Committee and the Assembly Budget Committee (c.f. enclosed list) and ask them to restore the cuts in nursing, technology, and security for the 2017-2018 school year. If your district does not have legislators on either of the Committees, call, write, or email your legislator and ask that they speak with members of those two committees in order to restore this aid.

THIS IS NOT A ONE AND DONE CAMPAIGN. WE WILL NEED TO FOLLOW-UP A NUMBER OF TIMES OVER THE NEXT THREE MONTHS IN ORDER THAT THE ISSUES REMAIN A PRIORITY IN THE MINDS OF THE LEGISLATORS.

You may use the New Jersey Catholic Conference Faith in Action - Voter Voice system
which can be accessed at:

<https://www.votervoice.net/NJCC/Campaigns/51277/Respond>

Talking Points for Nonpublic School Transportation

- Nonpublic school transportation must currently be provided at \$884.00 per student or less. The ceiling has not been raised since the 2007-2008 school year and continues at that figure under the Governor's proposed Budget for Fiscal Year 2018.
- Most nonpublic school transportation is provided by private bus companies. Many of the companies either do not bid on a route at \$884.00 or less or have already indicated that they can only bid at a higher rate.
- Without transportation, parents are often unable to get their children to school, even though an aid-in-lieu amount is paid to the parent for \$884.00. Many of these parents work two and three jobs in order to cover the nonpublic school tuition. When a bus route is cancelled because of the bid ceiling, many nonpublic school students are forced to transfer to a public school at greater taxpayer expense. **It is important to note that no public school student is ever denied transportation as a result of the cost.**
- It would be possible to shift money from another Budget account that is over-funded and transfer it to the cost of increasing nonpublic school transportation. Districts and private bus company operators indicate that the reason for their inability to run a route at or below the maximum per-pupil amount is that, in spite of reductions in fuel costs in recent years, drivers' salaries and insurance premiums have increased.

The effort to increase the ceiling for nonpublic school transportation can be made in various ways including class projects for letter writing and visits to appropriate legislators.

Any trips to Trenton made between now and June by individual classes should include an opportunity to speak to legislators about the status of nonpublic school transportation.

Talking Points on Cuts in Nursing, Technology, and Security

Governor Christie's Budget eliminated \$9 million in nonpublic school aid in the areas of nursing, technology, and security, in effect negating the increases provided by the Legislature in the Appropriations Act of July 2016 for the 2016-2017 school year.

- Nursing is essential to nonpublic schools because the Legislature keeps adding more requirements for the schools, which are the responsibility of the school nurse.
- It is important to tell legislators the story of how needed the nurse is in your own school and how these cuts will affect that service.
- The Nonpublic School Technology program has been funded in a sporadic fashion since the 1998-1999 Budget cycle.
- The effects of the cuts in the technology program should be described to legislators when asking at least for return to the funding levels of this school year.
- The Nonpublic School Security Program, funded at \$50.00 per pupil in June 2016, was completely eliminated in the Governor's Fiscal Year 2018 Budget.
- Nonpublic school pupils deserve the same security provisions as their public school counterparts. Security provisions have already been put in place by the nonpublic schools with the previous year's funding. Please describe in detail these uses to the legislators when arguing the case for restoring the funding and note what security provisions are still lacking.

The effort to increase Nursing Services funding, the Nonpublic School Technology Initiative, and the Nonpublic School Security Program to their previous level of support can be made in various ways including class projects for letter writing and visits to appropriate legislators.

Any trips to Trenton made between now and June by individual classes should include an opportunity to speak to legislators about the status of Nursing Services, the Nonpublic School Technology Initiative, and the Nonpublic School Security Program.

Senate Budget and Appropriations Committee

<p>Paul Sarlo Chair (D), Chair 496 Columbia Blvd., 1st Floor Wood-Ridge, NJ 07075 (201) 804-8118 FAX: (201) 804-8644 SenSarlo@njleg.org</p>	<p>Archdiocese of Newark, Diocese of Paterson PART OF BERGEN COUNTY: Carlstadt, Cliffside Park, East Rutherford, Little Ferry, Lyndhurst, Moonachie, North Arlington, Ridgefield, Ridgefield Park, Rutherford, South Hackensack, Teterboro, Wallington, Wood-Ridge PART OF PASSAIC COUNTY: Passaic City</p>
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<p>Nilsa Cruz-Perez (D) 231 Market Street Camden, NJ 08102 (856) 547-4800 FAX: (856) 547-5496 SenCruzPerez@njleg.org</p>	<p>Diocese of Camden PART OF CAMDEN COUNTY: Audubon, Audubon Park, Barrington, Bellmawr, Brooklawn, Camden, Gloucester City, Haddon Heights, Lawnside, Magnolia, Mount Ephraim, Runnemede, Woodlynne PART OF GLOUCESTER COUNTY: Deptford, Harrison, Mantua, Wenonah, Westville, Woodbury</p>
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<p>Linda R. Greenstein (D) 1249 South River Rd., Suite 105, Cranbury, NJ 08512 (609) 395-9911 FAX: (609) 395-9032 SenGreenstein@njleg.org</p>	<p>Dioceses of Trenton, Diocese of Metuchen PART OF MERCER COUNTY: East Windsor, Hightstown, Hamilton, Robbinsville PART OF MIDDLESEX COUNTY: Cranbury, Jamesburg, Monroe, Plainsboro, Spotswood</p>

Senate Budget and Appropriations Committee

<p>Kevin J. O’Toole (R) Wayne Plaza II 155 Route 46 West, Suite 108 Wayne, NJ 07470 (973) 237-1360 FAX: (973) 237-1364 SenOtoole@njleg.org</p>	<p>Archdiocese of Newark, Diocese of Paterson</p> <p>PART OF BERGEN COUNTY: Little Falls, Pompton Lakes, Totowa, Wayne, Woodland Park, PART OF ESSEX COUNTY: Cedar Grove PART OF MORRIS COUNTY: Pequannock, Riverdale, PART OF PASSAIC COUNTY: Allendale, Franklin Lakes, Ho-Ho-Kus, Midland Park, Ridgewood, Waldwick, Wyckoff</p>
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April 11, 2017

**ASSEMBLY BUDGET COMMITTEE
2016-2017**

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