



CT FEDERATION OF CATHOLIC SCHOOL PARENTS

Newsletter • SPRING 2015

May Catholic Legislative Roundtable

The Most Reverend Leonard P. Blair, Archbishop of Hartford, was the special guest speaker at the Catholic Legislative Roundtable meeting at the CT Legislative Office Building on May 27, 2015. Legislators in attendance included Sen. Fred Camillo, Sen. Henri Martin, Sen. Michael McLachlan, Rep. Al Adinolfi, Rep. Henry Genga, Rep. Kathleen McCarty, and Rep. Cara Pavalock. During the meeting, and amid discussion of several topics, Archbishop Blair emphasized the need for more support for parochial and diocesan schools, whether inter-district busing or tuition tax credits or (See Roundtable, page 2).

Connecticut Legislative Update

Improving School Security

In the spirit of bi-partisanship, Connecticut School Security Grant applications and reimbursements received an extension via House Bill 6912, which was passed and signed into law by Governor Malloy on May 11, 2015. The Federation extends its gratitude to the Governor and all the legislators that supported this bill to help improve the safety of all schools ([Senate Votes](#) and [House Votes](#)).

In past legislative sessions, CFCSP rallied support from legislators to allow Catholic Schools to apply for School Security Grants. As a result, (*School Security, page 2*)

Neighborhood Assistance Act: Potential Changes

For the 2015 legislative session of the Connecticut General Assembly, Senate Bill 323 proposes to increase the total amount of state business tax credits available, from \$5 million to \$10 million, to corporations that make cash investments in non-profit organizations, such as Catholic Schools, through the Neighborhood Assistance Act (NAA). Additionally, (NAA, page 2)

Legislative Goals

The Federation seeks to develop support for a bill that would allow allocation of state funds for inter-district transportation for non-public schools. In order to build support, the Federation is researching the current use of in-town bus transportation and the potential use of inter-district busing by CT Catholic school students. All CT Catholic school parents are asked to complete this very short survey, the results of which will provide useful data for the Federation's efforts.

Please complete the survey [here](#).

About CFCSP: CFCSP was established in 1992 by the Archbishop of Hartford and the Bishops of Bridgeport and Norwich. The office is located in the Chancery office in Hartford, but works with the Catholic school community throughout the state. The three Diocesan Superintendents, a Board of Trustees and the Executive Director of the Connecticut Catholic Conference help to oversee the activities of the Federation.

The Federation operates exclusively for charitable, religious, and educational purposes within the meaning of Section 501(c) of the Internal Revenue Code, by providing a vehicle for uniting the insights, resources, and efforts of the Roman Catholic Dioceses of Connecticut, while it advocates for Catholic and non-public education at the state Capitol.

New York: Education Investment Tax Credit

Gov. Cuomo and Cardinal Timothy Dolan are urging the New York state [legislature to pass educational tax credits](#) that would benefit all schools, including Catholic Schools. Assembly Speaker Carl Heastie insists, however, that the bill will not make it to the floor of the Assembly without a consensus of Democrat support, even with the potential for the bill to pass with votes from both parties. The New York state senate passed the bill in January. The Federation met with the Director of Education for the New York Catholic Conference, Jim Cultrara, to discuss how to use the New York legislation as a model for Connecticut.

Washington, D.C.: ESEA Reauthorization

The United States Conference of Catholic Bishops Associate Director of Education for the Secretariat of Catholic Education, Katharine M. Knight, has been working tirelessly on the reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act. This act, in part, provides eligible children attending private schools and their teachers Title I services and other benefits that are equitable to those received by eligible students in public schools and their teachers. Ms. Knight reports that the office is also supporting the D.C. Opportunities Scholarship Program, which awards underserved students scholarships to attend private schools in D.C., but this program is now facing budget cuts. For more information: <http://www.usccb.org/news/2015/15-077.cfm>.

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scholarships. Archbishop Blair drew upon his knowledge of Ohio and its voucher program as a possible model for Connecticut. At the end of the meeting, the legislators, eager to help with various initiatives, planned to reconvene in the fall with Archbishop Blair to discuss more specific plans for the next session.

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this new bill, Catholic Schools may apply for grants in fiscal years ending on June 30, 2015 and June 30, 2016 that cover up to 50% of the costs borne for security improvements on or after January 1, 2013. Catholic Schools are eligible to apply for 10% of the total funds available. Please see the [State of Connecticut Department of Emergency Management & Homeland website](#) for recently updated forms and guidelines.

Parents, are you looking for new ways to serve? You can help your children's schools plan and apply for these grants. Please share successes, concerns, and experiences with the

School Security Grant program by contacting [Anne LaMonica](#), CFCSP Director.

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Senate Bill 1080 sets a uniform 80% state business tax credit for contributions to all approved programs, energy conservation and non-conservation projects. Currently, contributions to energy-conservation projects qualify for 100% state business tax credits, and contributions to all other approved programs qualify for 60% state business tax credits. Both of these bills are pending.

Some Catholic schools have already taken advantage of the NAA to purchase and install new windows and doors, but there are many other projects can be funded through the NAA. The NAA provides an opportunity for parents, who may be short on time, to help fundraise and support their children's Catholic schools by networking through work and/or at home. To learn more about how the NAA program runs and how parents and schools can work together to improve Catholic Schools, please go to ct.gov/drs and ctcatholicparents.org.