



ARCHDIOCESE OF NEWARK
SECRETARY FOR CATHOLIC EDUCATION/SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS

Entering the Third
Millennium proclaiming
in faith and love the
mission of Christ the
Redeemer!

May 24, 2017

Dear Parents and Guardians,

Pope Francis wrote, "In her dialogue with the State and with society, the Church does not have solutions for every particular issue. Together with the various sectors of society, she supports those programs which best respond to the dignity of each person and the common good."

Parents, perhaps best of all, know that Catholic schools do the common good in providing sound education to New Jersey's children. I want to share with you our concern about the FY18 Proposed State Budget, which is being considered in Trenton right now. If left unchanged, the State Budget will keep transportation aid (including the \$884. aid-in-lieu payments) at the static level it has been for the past ten years, and cut nonpublic school funding by \$9 million. This includes the elimination of security funding, which our schools put to good use in keeping students safe in their school buildings. It also will impact the hours a nurse can be at school taking care of your children, and the technology teachers use routinely with students to enhance learning.

Just as you need to make decisions about what is important to your family when you look at your own finances, the NJ Legislature makes budget determinations that affect the entire state. If our legislators do not hear from us, we can expect these cuts to take effect July 1st. Just as it is important for all of us to play a proactive role in our children's lives, to be involved, to let them know that we care and we are invested in them, it is also critical that we advocate for them with our elected officials .

We encourage you to contact your legislators right away and then again once a week until the end of June to let them know that transportation aid needs to be increased and the \$9 million cut from nonpublic programs needs to be restored. In contacting legislators multiple times, we will keep our budget concerns in the forefront of their deliberations. The NJ Catholic Conference has created a Faith in Action – Voter Voice system that will make this easier for you to let your voice be heard. Please go to: <https://www.votervoice.net/NJCC/Campaigns/51277/Respond> and in just a few clicks you will have connected with your legislators to make a difference for your children in the next school year. Voter Voice will send you an email confirmation, and we ask you to send that on to your principal, so that they will be able to add their voice to yours in letting legislators know these issues are important to the entire school community.

We would like to close with a quote from the Catechism of the Catholic Church, "It is necessary that all participate, each according to his position and role, in promoting the common good. This obligation is inherent in the dignity of the human person...As far as possible, citizens should take an active part in public life."

Sincerely,

Margaret A. Dames, Ed.D.
Secretary for Catholic Education/
Superintendent of Schools

Sincerely,

Principal
Academy of Our Lady of Mount Carmel

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