



CE NEWS

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News from the Secretariat of Catholic Education

Greetings from the Secretariat of Catholic Education at the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops.

With this e-message we launch an effort to communicate with Superintendents and Catholic Conference Directors about issues and items that impact our Catholic schools at the federal level.

It is our hope that by communicating on a regular basis about what is or is not happening on Capitol Hill, we can keep you

informed and up to date in a direct way.

This bulletin is intended to address public policy items at the federal level. It will, at times, address state issues

such as parental choice and other selected topics that tend to have a national impact.

This bulletin will be sent electronically to Superintendents and Catholic Conference Directors.

It is our great hope that by having a regular communication from the USCCB on federal policy issues, we can facilitate working together on behalf of children and families in our Catholic schools.

Please know of our prayers and support for all you do for the children in our Catholic Schools.



USCCB Building on 4th Street
in Washington, DC.

News from the Hill - Associate Director for Public Policy

ESEA Reauthorization-
There has been no action since the House of Representatives passed its version (HR5, *The Student Success Act*, Rep. John Kline). The Senate's version (S. 1094, *Strengthen-*

ing America's Schools Act, Sen. Tom Harkin), was passed by the Senate HELP Committee. The timing of the bill's consideration by the full Senate body is not clear. Education advocacy groups continue to press

for Senate action on the Harkin bill, and Senator Harkin maintains that he would like to move his bill early next year. In the interim, we will continue to monitor this legislation.

Pope Francis
No. 134

....Catholic schools, which always strive to join their work of education with the explicit proclamation of the Gospel, are a most valuable resource for the evangelization of culture, even in those countries and cities where hostile situations challenge us to greater creativity in our search for suitable methods.

*Evangelii Gaudium
The Joy of the Gospel*

Child Care (S. 1086) *The Child Care and Development Block Grant Act of 2013.*
(Sen. Barbara Mikulski, D-MD).

- ◆ Proposed reauthorization of the 1990 Act. Goal is to promote high quality child care.
- ◆ Key points impacting Catholic schools include additional requirements for workforce training, early learning & developmental guidelines, and licensing.
- ◆ **Action Requested: Look for an email from USCCB later this month with a list of questions soliciting input on the fiscal impact of these provisions on child care programs in your diocese or state.**
- ◆ Movement on Hill: We expect hearings on this legislation in January in both the Senate and the House. We will use the information you provide us to demonstrate the impact of this legislation on our Catholic schools.



Universal Pre-K (S. 1697) *The Strong Start for America’s Children Act* (Senator Tom Harkin, D-Iowa). It is reported by some that this bill is unlikely to move because it has a large price tag and no funding mechanism. But there is some overlap between this and the Child Care bill, and so the Universal Pre-K bill will be part of the Child Care bill discussion.

Consider Representative John Kline’s statement on the universal pre-k bill:

“...before investing in new federal early childhood initiatives, we should first examine opportunities to improve existing programs designed to help our nation’s most vulnerable children, such as Head Start and the Child Care and Development Block Grant.”

Representative Kline is the Chairman of the House Education and Workforce Committee.

Emergency Epinephrine Act (HR 2094/now Public Law 113-48) *The School Access to Emergency Epinephrine Act.* On November 13, 2013, President Obama signed this bill into law. This law:

- ◆ Amends the Public Health Service Act to increase the preference given to states in awarding certain asthma-related grants.
- ◆ Gives preference to those states that require public elementary and secondary schools to maintain on hand “stock” epinephrine auto-injectors and allow trained school personnel to administer the epinephrine.

This law may carry implications for our Catholic schools because the terms “elementary school” and “secondary school” are already defined (by cross-reference) in the original law (42 U.S.C., §280(g)(d)(3)(A)) to include both public and private schools. Be on the lookout for legislation in your state that may be prompted by this new law.

State and Local News

Legal Challenge to LA Scholarship Program

In August, the Department of Justice filed a lawsuit to block the Louisiana Scholarship Program claiming that the voucher program violated pending federal desegregation orders. DOJ requested an injunction to block Louisiana from issuing any more vouchers.

Louisiana retained an expert to analyze the vouchers’ impact on school desegregation. The study’s conclusion: no negative impact. The DOJ withdrew its request for injunctive relief.

However, the case is not over. The judge held that

the federal government should still have some oversight when vouchers are used in those parishes where there still are pending desegregation cases. The judge ordered the two sides to come up with a process that will allow the Justice Department to ensure that vouchers do not promote segregation.

See [Brumsfield, et al. v. Dodd, et al.](#), No. 71 Civ. 1316, (E.D.La, Nov. 22, 2013).

“Every form of authentic evangelization is always ‘new’.”

-Evangeliu Gaudium n. 11

