



USCCB SECRETARIAT OF CATHOLIC EDUCATION
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CE NEWS

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Executive Director

"Our generation will show that it can rise to the promise found in each young person when we know how to give them space. This means that we have to create the material and spiritual conditions for their full development; to give them a solid basis on which to build their lives; to guarantee their safety and their education to be everything they can be.." - Pope Francis

As you can see by this edition of *CE News* the USCCB Secretariat of Catholic Education has been very busy with Federal policy initiatives. Please know you and the children you serve are in our thoughts and prayers.

Associate Director of Public Policy

ESEA Reauthorization!!!

There has been a great deal of activity regarding ESEA reauthorization since the November elections. On January 14, 2015, Senator Alexander, new Chair of the Senate HELP Committee, released his ESEA Reauthorization Discussion Draft. Several hearings have been held and Chairman Alexander and Ranking Member, Patty Murray (D), have agreed to work together to reach a bipartisan agreement on the Senate version.

On the House side, Chairman Kline, returning Chair of the House Education and Workforce Committee, introduced the House ESEA Reauthorization bill (HR5) on February 3, 2015. Eight days later, the bill went through markup and was voted out of the House education committee on a partisan vote. HR5 is expected to be put to a vote by the full House early next week so please watch out for an action alert from CQ Engage asking you to contact your Congressperson and urge them to vote yes for HR5.

Both education chairs are anxious and optimistic about obtaining floor time before the full Senate and House, and then conferencing the bills and eventually sending a bill for signature to the President's desk. It's not a slam dunk by any means, but there are reasons to be optimistic. First, both the House and the Senate have taken action within the first month of the new Congress. Last year, only the House took action. Second, the Secretariat of Catholic Education has been in full advocacy mode since before Christmas. Because of these early meetings, we were able to make substantial progress in improving the bills so as to restore private school's full and fair equitable participation under ESEA's Title I and Title II programs. Third, our advocacy includes direct input from all of you at the local level-the constituents. On January 29th (during National Catholic Schools Week), we coordinated a full day of Hill visits for the Superintendents and Government Programs staff from the Archdiocese of Baltimore, Archdiocese of Washington, and the Diocese of Arlington. A big thank you to Barbara Edmondson, Kelly Branaman, Sister Bernadette McManigal and Diane Elliott who were all outstanding in explaining and presenting the issues, concerns, and suggested fixes in the ESEA reauthorization.



On February 12, 2015, we conducted a second full day of ESEA Hill visits for Superintendents and Associate/Assistant Superintendents from Chicago, Los Angeles, Miami, New York, and Seattle, as well as a representative from NCEA. We were also joined by the State Catholic Conference Director of Indiana and the Director for Education at the New York Catholic Conference. Once again our Catholic leaders did a fantastic job of advocacy clearly illustrating the challenges that Catholic schools face with ESEA at the local level. A round of applause for Kevin Baxter, Kim Pryzbylski, Tim McNiff, Michael Coppotelli, Patrick Haggarty, Sandy Barton Smith, Glenn Tebbe, Jim Cultrara, Sister Mary Paul McCaughey (newly appointed Senior Relationship Manager for the Archdiocese of

Chicago), and Sister Dale McDonald.



Parental Choice

There has also been a flurry of positive activity in both Congressional chambers for full parental choice. On January 28th, Congressman Luke Messer sponsored a School Choice Hill Event in the Cannon Caucus Room. In attendance were approximately 200 children. Over half of them were students from our Catholic schools here in D.C. including students from St. Francis, St. Anthony's, St. Peter's, Sacred Heart, and Georgetown Visitation. Thank you to all who attended and to the St. Francis Choir for their performance. A special thank you to Marguerite Conley, Executive Director for the Consortium of Catholic Academies for the Archdiocese of Washington, for coordinating their attendance.

On February 9th, Senator Tim Scott hosted a School Choice Forum event for the Senate. Sister John Mary Fleming, our Executive Director for the USCCB Secretariat of Catholic Education was one of the panelists. Here's a link to the video from the event. If you fast forward to 1 hour 5 minutes in, you will reach the start of Sister's panel (45 minutes long) which includes a lively discussion with other panel members representing the charter school movement.

<http://www.c-span.org/video/?324251-1/discussion-education-choice&live>

We were privileged to have in attendance Catholic high schools students from Bishop Ireton and Bishop O'Connell from the Diocese of Arlington, Virginia, as well as Archbishop Spalding from the Archdiocese of Baltimore, Maryland. Thank you for representing our Catholic schools at this important event.

Permanent Annual Increase to E-Rate Program!

The last year of work on rulemakings, public notices, meetings and advocacy culminated in a huge success. The Secretariat of Catholic Education, in collaboration with the EdLINC coalition, obtained a permanent annual increase to the E-Rate program of \$1.5 billion. With the extra funding, there will be more awards to more applicants. Apply! Apply! Apply!