

New Jersey Catholic Conference

149 North Warren Street · Trenton, New Jersey 08608
(609) 989-1120 · Fax (609) 989-1152

Patrick R. Brannigan
Executive Director

A C T I O N A L E R T

NONPUBLIC SCHOOL BUSSING FOR 2007 – 2008

ISSUE: On page D-117 of the Governor's Budget for FY'08, the amount of the ceiling for nonpublic school transportation is frozen at the 2006 – 2007 figure (\$826.00). This language nullifies the effects of the legislation passed in 2001 by which nonpublic school transportation is to increase or decrease based on the higher of two factors: The increase of state aid for school transportation in the public school transportation account or the change in the Consumer Price Index (CPI). The CPI figure for this year is 3.99%.

OUR

POSITION: The New Jersey Catholic Conference and the New Jersey Network for Catholic School Families have consistently supported increases in the ceiling for nonpublic school transportation because of a variety of factors. The number of eligible nonpublic school students statewide who are receiving aid-in-lieu payments instead of transportation is still growing (up to 44.1% of the eligible population last year). Please see the enclosed Fact Sheet for additional information with respect to the details of this issue.

ACTION: The Appropriations Act which will be the Legislature's response to the Governor's Budget will not be passed until mid-June at the earliest. Therefore, it is necessary for all parents and supporters to contact appropriate members of the Senate Budget and Appropriations Committee and the Assembly Appropriations Committee (see attached lists) in order to determine membership on these Committees. In order for the CPI increase of 3.99% to take effect, the necessary action is that the Appropriations Act must not contain the language currently on page D-117 of the Governor's Budget (you may see this language for yourself by examining the Department of Education section of the Governor's Budget on the Department of Treasury's website).

Please call, E-mail, or fax your support for the removal of this language to the members of the Senate Budget and Appropriations Committee and the Assembly Appropriations Committee. **Additionally, even though you may live in a district where your legislators are not members of either Committee, please make your feelings known to them, and ask that they relay your concerns to their colleagues on the respective Budget Committees.**

Remember that this is not a one-time contact, but the request should continue until the

Appropriations Act is drafted (tentatively in mid-June to meet the deadline of a balanced State Budget by July 1).

Thank you for your immediate cooperation with this request.

*Representing the Archdiocese of Newark, Diocese of Camden, Diocese of Metuchen,
Diocese of Paterson, Diocese of Trenton, Byzantine Catholic Eparchy of Passaic and
Our Lady of Deliverance Syriac Catholic Diocese*