



Catholic Conference of Ohio

Larry Keough
Catholic Conference of Ohio
Senate Finance Primary & Secondary Education Subcommittee (HB 166)
May 16, 2019 1:30 pm

Good afternoon Chairman Terhar, Vice Chair Lehner, Ranking Member Fedor and Committee Members. My name is Larry Keough. I am an associate director of the Catholic Conference of Ohio and legislative advocate for 374 schools educating more than 114,000 students.

Following are our budgetary and policy recommendations:

Increase funding for Administrative Cost Reimbursement and Auxiliary Services --

We offer this request for compelling reasons. First, these services/funds are essential for students in Catholic schools. Our schools enroll students who are in need of wellness subsidies and wrap-around services too. An increase in AS would allow select children to benefit from these services while also allowing sufficient funds for other services that students need from Auxiliary Services.

In addition, currently 2.6 million is allocated annually from Auxiliary Services for Catholic and other chartered nonpublic school students who participate in College Credit Plus. We are hearing the demand for CCP will require the 2.6 million to be increased. Without an increase in this line item, less money will be available for students in lower grades.

Parental Choice in Education -- We believe parents are the first and foremost educators of their children and as such, know which schools are best suited for their children. We have advocated for all five of Ohio's state sponsored scholarship programs and our schools participate in the Cleveland Scholarship Program, Ed Choice Pilot Scholarship Program, Ed Choice Expansion, Jon Peterson Special Needs Scholarship Program and the Autism Scholarship Program.

Alternative Assessments for K-8 Scholarship Students – Allow Catholic and other chartered nonpublic schools to administer state-approved standardized alternative assessments in lieu of state tests to K-8 students on state-sponsored scholarships. This would resolve the problem of double testing and would be good public policy because alternative assessments such as the Iowa, Tera Nova, Star and Map have longstanding credibility.

College Credit Plus (CCP)—Current law states that secondary schools are responsible for providing textbooks to students who are participating in CCP. Request: replace this arrangement with cost-sharing involving families whose household income is over 200 percent of poverty, secondary schools, and universities and colleges.

Early Childhood – Support the additional dollars in the Governor’s Budget and the House Budget to improve the quality of *Ohio’s child care* system. We also ask the Senate to support increasing the federal poverty level to 200 percent for families to be eligible for publicly funded child care.

Special Needs – Increase the category of multi-handicapped/orthopedic impairment from \$17,390 to \$27,000. Many of these children in this category have severe cognitive disabilities, heart defects, speech and language disabilities, fine motor skill issues, as well as vision and hearing impairments. The current funding cap simply is insufficient.

Thank you. At this time, I would be pleased to answer any questions.