



Diocese of Pittsburgh

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Office of the Bishop

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Dear Pastors, Principals and Parents:

The *Catechism of the Catholic Church* teaches us that “the role of parents in education is of such importance that it is almost impossible to provide an adequate substitute. The right and duty of parents to educate their children are primordial and inalienable” (CCC 2221). The *Catechism of the Catholic Church* goes on to state that “parents have a right to choose a school for their children which corresponds to their own convictions. Public authorities have the duty of guaranteeing this parental right and of insuring the concrete conditions for its exercise” (CCC 2229).

Many of our Catholic parents want to choose Catholic schools for their children, but they are forced to pay twice for this fundamental right. It is truly unfair and unjust that poorer parents in particular are not able to “sculpt the souls of their children.” So often it is our families with economic struggles who have no choice at all.

I am urging all Catholics in our diocese to support the concept of school choice. I believe that parents must have the right and ability to send their children to the school they believe meets their God-given responsibility to educate their children.

The passage of school choice legislation would allow parents to choose the best school for their child. Not every eligible student will choose a Catholic school, but it is likely that many will. Our Catholic educators can already attest how the Educational Improvement Tax Credit (EITC) has helped many families make the choice for a Catholic school education for their children. This school choice legislation will allow even more families the opportunity to receive a quality, faith-centered education. In Pennsylvania, nonpublic schools already save taxpayers \$4 billion annually in education costs, and school choice will allow nonpublic schools to continue to educate even more students at an even larger savings to the state. To read more about this issue, please visit www.pacatholic.org.

You can also join the *Catholic Advocacy Network* at this website and receive all the latest news and information about school choice and other issues important to the Church and your life.

Pennsylvania is on the cusp of a significant era for giving parents a choice in education. This legislative session brings the bright promise of meaningful education reform. Please sign up for the *Catholic Advocacy Network* today, and circulate this request to everyone you can within our community so that they may have the opportunity to subscribe to these important services.

Grateful for our belief that “Nothing is Impossible with God,” I am

Your brother in Christ,

Most Reverend David A. Zubik
Bishop of Pittsburgh

DAZ:jkb

cc: Reverend Kris D. Stubna
Dr. Ronald T. Bowes