



USCCB SECRETARIAT OF CATHOLIC EDUCATION
3211 4TH STREET NE, WASHINGTON, DC 20017

CE NEWS

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Executive Director

The Committee on Catholic Education

The Committee on Catholic Education meets this March under the new chairmanship of Archbishop George Lucas. Archbishop Lucas is the archbishop of the Diocese of Omaha in Nebraska. The Committee has seven new bishop members and four new consultants. The names of the members and consultants to COCE are listed on the USCCB Website under Catholic Education.

COCE provides guidance for the educational mission of the Church in the United States. COCE guides, directs, and coordinates this task, working closely with the Committee on Evangelization and Catechesis.

The scope of the committee's work includes Catholic elementary and secondary schools, certification for lay ecclesial ministry, Catholic colleges and universities, and college campus ministry. The committee advocates for federal public policies in education that are consistent with Catholic values and that uphold parental rights and responsibilities regarding education.

Please keep the bishops and consultants of this committee in your good prayers.

Associate Director of Public Policy

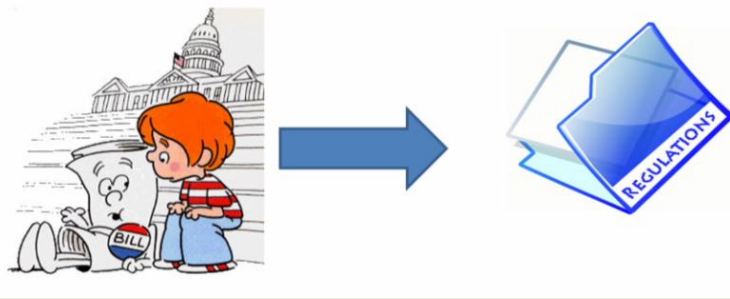
ESEA Reauthorization Update

We finished another round of meetings with Congressional staffers working for members of the two Education committees. These meetings have

provided a great opportunity to get to know the staffers and brief them on public policy issues affecting Catholic schools, as well as set the stage for the future FAAC advocacy event. These meetings also confirmed the sentiment that no action will take place on ESEA Reauthorization until after the elections. In light of this, we have decided to postpone the FAAC advocacy event that was originally scheduled for March 4 and 5 to a later date when this issue is on Congress' calendar. This will allow us to maximize the benefit of the transportation and hotel cost involved in hosting the FAAC advocacy event. This timing will also ensure that the Hill visits we coordinate will be with actual Representatives and Senators instead of their staff. In the interim, we will continue our meetings with Congressional staffers and will also continue working on this effort in collaboration with NCEA, CAPE, ACE and USCCB.

Early Ed

One of the great things about being up on the Hill on a regular basis is the opportunity to pick up on changes in strategy. We had a meeting 2 months ago on S. 1086 (the Child Care Development Block Grant Act of 2013-now 2014). At that time it looked like the legislation would proceed without any amendments. Since that time, both the House and the Senate education Committees have conducted hearings on this bill and it appears that this bill will be considered by the full Senate next week. We were asked to provide comments (in the form of proposed amendments) addressing any concerns we have about the impact of this legislation on Catholic schools. We provided these comments in the form of a consolidated response prepared in collaboration with our CAPE colleagues. The comments clarified and highlighted that the parental choice component of the program (through child care certificates) remain a guiding principal of the program.



From Legislation to Regulation

Remember these words? "But what I offer tonight is a set of concrete, practical proposals to speed up growth, strengthen the middle class and build new ladders of opportunity into the middle class. Some require congressional action, and I'm eager to work with all of you. But America does not stand still, and neither will I. So wherever and whenever I can take steps without legislation to expand opportunity for more American families, that's what I'm going to do." This is an excerpt from President Obama's 2014 State of the Union speech. True to his word, we have seen a flurry of rulemaking activity by federal agencies. This has provided an interesting shift in our Public Policy office from just legislative advocacy to more of a regulatory framework. The variety is challenging, but stimulating. Just this week, we received notice of the following rulemakings:

E-Rate: Notice of Public Comment

- FCC Wireline Bureau will be issuing this week
- Short response time of 30 days
- Will seek input on approaches to modernizing E-Rate with focus on distributing P2 funding more equitably and predictably
- Will be much more focused and shorter than the July 2013 Notice of Proposed Rulemaking

School Nutrition Personnel-Hiring Standards & Continuing Training

- Department of Agriculture just issued this Notice of Proposed Rulemaking
- Deadline for comments is April 7, 2014
- Involves hiring standards for State and local

- nutrition program directors
- Involves annual continuing education training for all personnel in these programs

We will be filing comments in response to both rulemakings. And with each rulemaking, your individual input is greatly appreciated. Feel free to call me or email me with any relevant data or experiences you wish to share. I would also encourage you to file your own individual comments if you desire. And if you do so, we would appreciate a courtesy copy of your filing. The sharing of information is vital to our success in advocating for the students in our Catholic schools.

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