



Advocacy Day 2020

Tuition Assistance: Lawmakers in 30 states have enacted various forms of tuition assistance programs enabling poor and working-class families to choose the educational setting best suited for their children. These programs have helped multiple generations achieve the kind of educational equality and economic opportunity on which New York State prides itself. Families desperately seek such opportunities for their children – so we urge enactment of a meaningful elementary and secondary tuition assistance program.

Mandated Services Aid (MSA): We are grateful to lawmakers for enacting Chapter 347 in 2018 to codify the long-standing use of “instructional time” in computing MSA. We urge adoption of SED’s technical amendment to implement the chapter. In addition, we seek \$9 million for the Immunization program compliance costs of schools located in the cities of Buffalo, Rochester and New York.

Health, Safety & Security: The State provides religious and independent schools with \$15 million for “services and expenses of health and safety equipment, security personnel and related assessments and training needs.” We seek additional funding as well as additional flexibility in the use of these funds to cover a broader range of critical health, safety and security initiatives including those related to health and mental health services; hazard remediation; and criminal background checks for school personnel.

STEM: The State’s \$30 million investment in the nonpublic school STEM program is recognition of the significant impact of our schools have on the economy and will help to ensure that our students have access to the kind of education needed in our evolving economy. Schools submitted some \$90 million in applications in the first year of funding -- evidence of the great demand for STEM resources. We urge and appropriation of \$100 million to support the growing demand for STEM education.

Critical Capital Needs & Energy Efficiency Projects: Some religious and independent schools face considerable facilities needs that threaten their ability to continue to operate, including major roof repair/replacement, necessary structural repairs/renovations, and boiler repair/replacement. In addition, energy efficiency technologies have proven to reduce energy usage and costs; improve the spaces in which we live, work, and learn; and reduce the burden on all utility rate-payers. We urge \$200 million in competitive grants for critical capital projects and a \$75 million energy efficiency grant and revolving loan fund to provide seed money to initiate multiple energy efficiency projects.

Transportation Services: Numerous families whose children live beyond the 15-mile limit within which their public school district would provide transportation services. In addition, families are left without district-provided transportation due to disparate school calendars and daily schedules. Moreover, school district efforts to be more cost efficient have resulted in transportation arrangements which are inappropriate, unreasonable and unacceptable. We urge \$25 million in reimbursement to schools or grants directly to religious and independent school organizations to transport students in the absence of public school district-provided transportation, as well as the restoration of 90 percent state aid to school districts for their transportation expenses of religious and independent school students.