

## **Parents Alliance for Catholic Education's (PACE) FY' 05 State Budget/Legislation Recommendations**

### **School Nursing Services (DPH Budget):**

**Please Restore Funding for School Nursing Services in Public and Non-Public Schools from \$12 million to \$16.1 million (earmark within 4590-0250).**

The FY'04 budget cut funding for school health services (essential school health services program and school based health clinics) from \$21.2 million to \$12 million – a 55% reduction in funding from FY'02. The \$12 million is an earmark within DPH Line Item 4590-0250.

The **Essential School Health Services Program** pays for school nurses, equipment, and health screenings in public and non-public schools. One hundred and six public schools districts were directly funded through this program, serving 1,141 public schools and 561,794 students and 293 non-public and charter schools serving 77,571 students. An additional 298 schools serving 159,327 students received consultation advice on how to improve their school health programs. In all, 1,732 schools with 798,762 students received vital school nursing services through the school health program. **Thirty percent of students attending Catholic schools in the Greater Boston area are from low-income families and for many, the only consistent health care they receive is through their school nursing services program.**

A 55% reduction in funding has meant that **hundreds of school nurses have been laid-off statewide and thousands of school children will no longer have access to basic school nursing services.** Since school nursing services is one way in which cities and towns receive revenue through Massachusetts Municipal Medicaid, **millions of additional federal dollars will be lost.** In FY'02, Massachusetts' cities and towns received \$42 million in federal reimbursement through Municipal Medicaid.

### **Child Care Services (Office of Child Care Services Budget):**

**Maintain child-care subsidies for low-income families at \$282 million (OCCS 4130-3050).**

This funding pays for vouchers for low-income children, so that they can participate in early education and school age programs. The Catholic school community is committed to expanding the availability of such programs in their schools to serve low-income children.

PACE also supports the Early Care and Education Coalition's efforts to increase funding by 4% to improve school readiness and achievement through expanding literacy initiatives for children and professional development opportunities for the early education workforce.

### **School Breakfast Outreach (DOE Budget):**

**Maintain Summer Food and School Breakfast Outreach Line Item Language and Funding for Students in Public and Non-Public Schools at \$2.3 million (DOE 7053-1925).**

These funds provide outreach to low-income families whose children are nutritionally at risk and could benefit from school breakfast and summer food programs.

### **Legislation Recommendation:**

Support the passage of the **Early Education for All** legislation, which supports the current mix system of early childhood education providers.

**For further information, please contact Steve Perla at 617-723-9890/[sperla@PACEorg.net](mailto:sperla@PACEorg.net) or Mary Ann Hart at 617-864-1996/[mahcamb@aol.com](mailto:mahcamb@aol.com).**