

Parents Alliance for Catholic Education

PACE News

Celebrating 10 Years — 1994 - 2004

Winter 2004

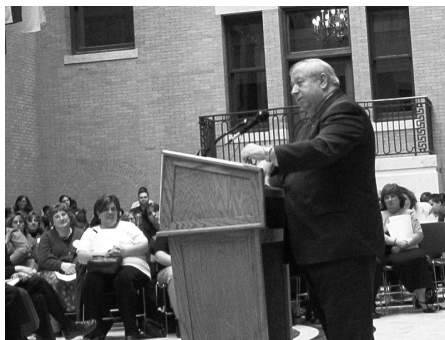
Speaker Finneran, Senate President Travaglini and others Addressed Catholic Schools Advocacy Day on March 16, 2004

The Parents Alliance for Catholic Education (PACE) held its annual Advocacy Day at the State House on March 16 where lawmakers expressed their support for Catholic education and parents advocated for issues important to the Catholic school community. Approximately 750 parents participated.

Featured speakers included House Speaker Thomas Finneran, Senate President Robert Travaglini, Senate Education Committee Chairman Robert Antonioni, Senate Health Committee Chairman Richard Moore, House Education Committee Chairwoman Marie St. Fleur, House Commerce and Labor Committee Chairman Michael Rodrigues, and House Ways and Means Assistant Vice Chairman Peter Larkin.

Advocacy Day guests and honorees were entertained with special performances by the Pittsfield Catholic School Chorus and students of St. Pius V School in Lynn.

“Advocacy Day showcased the wonderful accomplishments of our students, and gave our parents



Senate Committee on Health Care Chairman Richard Moore addresses Advocacy Day attendees, one of several lawmakers who spoke.

the opportunity to make our case with legislators,” said Steve Perla, executive director.

PACE presented awards to leaders and organizations who made a significant impact in supporting Catholic school students.

- ◆ **Catholic School Health Award** was presented to State Representative **Mary Jane Simmons** (D-Leominster).
- ◆ **Friend of Catholic Schools Award** was presented to **Frederick M. Kalisz, Jr.**, Mayor of New Bedford.

- ◆ **PACE Collaboration Award** was presented to the **Office of Child Care Services**.

Additionally, PACE offered special recognition to its chairman, **Charles McManus**, Superintendent of Schools for the Worcester Diocese as he retires from that post later this year.

Steve Perla was “surprised” with an award presented to him by Chairman McManus, honoring his tireless efforts over the past ten year on behalf of Catholic school students.

Revised Poverty Data Nearly Triples Catholic School Title I Support

Through the generosity of the Catholic Schools Foundation, PACE retained the services of the Center for Educational Partnerships (CEP) of Chicago, IL to conduct a major poverty data survey among Catholic schools. The survey of 72 inner city Catholic schools in Eastern Massachusetts found that an average of 68% of the students responding is living at or below the poverty level.

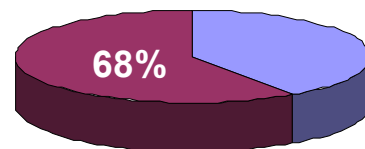
“The results demonstrated that Catholic schools are fulfilling our mission of serving the poor,” said Steve Perla, executive director, PACE.

“Accurate poverty data is important because at-risk students generate federal program grant funding,” said Maria Webb, chief executive officer of CEP. Early indications suggest that Catholic schools in Massachusetts should receive in excess of \$6.7 million in Title I money alone, a major increase over last year’s allocation of \$2.3 million, greatly enhancing services for students. Additionally, the improved data will result in more sizable allocations for other federal entitlements, such as the 21st Century Grants.

Catholic schools today serve children a diverse student population with varying needs. This new survey highlights just how significant our role has become in providing a nurturing education for the whole child.

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Students In Poverty*



Worcester Diocese Superintendent and PACE Chairman McManus Participates in NCEA Symposium; Briefing with President Bush

More than 250 of the nation's top leaders of Catholic education convened in Washington, D.C., Jan. 8-12 for a symposium to create a vision for the future of Catholic education in the United States. The symposium was a centennial-year activity of the National Catholic Educational Association.

Worcester Diocese Superintendent and PACE Chairman, Charles E. McManus was one of those delegates chosen to be part of this historic event. Delegates met in working sessions to discuss three major themes for Catholic education:

- ◆ *Identity*: How to proclaim and continue the Catholic identity of schools and religious education programs.
- ◆ *Leadership*: Where to seek and how to train the administrators, teachers and catechetical leaders of tomorrow.
- ◆ *Engagement*: How Catholic schools and programs interact with other segments of society.

Symposium attendees were invited to the White House on Friday for a private briefing with President Bush in the East Room. The President expressed his praise of the mission, values and success of Catholic education and its vital contributions to our country.

The President expressed his personal commitment and support of initiatives to advance parental choice in education, like the use of vouchers that parents can apply toward the cost of attending a private or parochial school of their choice.

"It was an honor to be part of a historic process that will usher in the next century of Catholic education and, of course, to hear from the President of the United States in such a special gathering," Mr. McManus said.

PACE is grateful for the tremendous effort undertaken through this symposium, and especially proud of our own Charlie McManus for his role in Catholic school history!

"It was an honor to be part of a historic process ... and to hear from the President of the United States in such a special gathering," Mr. McManus said

PACE Weighs in on FY05 State Budget

This fiscal year, Massachusetts faces another year of state budget deficits that can have a negative impact on those programs that support Catholic school students. As of this writing, Governor Romney's FY 2005 budget, submitted to the legislature, did not support any of our requests.

At this juncture, House, and later Senate, leaders will weigh-in on the Governor's budget and propose changes that become a matter of deliberation in the coming months. We have already begun to work with members of the House leadership to restore funding to those programs that mean so much to our students and families. PACE is optimistic that with active parental involvement, many of our priorities will, again, be funded.

In cooperation with our advocacy partners, PACE's FY05 priorities include:

- ◆ School Nursing Services through the Essential School Health Services Program, providing school nursing services, equipment and health screenings.
- ◆ Early Education and Out of School Time Vouchers, through the Office of Child Care Services budget
- ◆ School Breakfast Outreach, through the Dept. of Education budget, to start school breakfast programs.
- ◆ Passage of the Early Education for All legislation.

We ask that parents, teachers and administrators stand ready to affirm, through calls and letters to legislators and the Governor, the priorities of the Catholic school community when we alert you of that need. Thank you in advance for being your child's educational advocate on Beacon Hill!



Sign Up for the PACE Electronic Network Today

It's the easiest way to get informed and get involved!

We are now in budget season on Beacon Hill. PACE leaders work hard to secure resources in school health, transportation, technology and other areas of state funding that benefit our students. To be effective, we need many voices reinforcing our messages.

When we send you an action alert, all you have to do is phone or email your legislators and voice your support for our initiatives. It's that simple.

If you're not sure you're on our list, call or email us today at lalford@paceorg.net or (617) 723-9890.

The Parents Alliance for Catholic Education is a non-profit, public policy and advocacy organization dedicated to serving the 84,000 students attending Catholic schools in Massachusetts. For comments, questions or additional copies of this publication, contact PACE, 14 Beacon Street, Suite 510 Boston, MA 02108 (617) 723-9890 www.pacesite.org.