

CSAANY'S NEWS

CATHOLIC SCHOOL ADMINISTRATORS ASSOCIATION OF NEW YORK STATE
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News from New Orleans

On September 12, CSAANYS Executive Director Sister Mary Anne Brawley and Associate Director Sister Carol Cimino attended two meetings with Pope John Paul II in New Orleans. Both had spent the major part of the week attending NCEA CACE/SPC meetings and the Papal visit coincided with this gathering.

The morning meeting included persons involved in elementary and secondary Catholic education on all levels. While the Pope lauded the historical accomplishments of Catholic schools in this country, he stated that "parents should not be penalized for choosing that education which is according to their beliefs", referring to the double financial burden borne by parents of Catholic school students. He also exhorted religious communities not to lose their charism to education and to continue to work in the schools "as true partners with the laity."

The evening meeting at Xavier University with the Catholic college and university presidents had a different tone entirely. The Pope reminded everyone that although "the Catholic university is dedicated to the service of the truth...in its research and teaching, it proceeds from the vision and perspective of faith...".

Sister Mary Anne commented that the Holy Father was at his best when he departed from his prepared text at the educators' meeting. "He addressed us as brothers and sisters", she said, "but stopped, looked around and said, 'I think I should say sisters and brothers.' That really won the crowd over."

AIDS Education Mandated

Sr. Mary Anne Brawley, DC

At their meeting on Friday, Sept. 18, 1987, the Board of Regents approved regulations which require all public and nonpublic elementary and secondary schools to provide their students with accurate information concerning the nature of Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS), methods of transmission, and means of prevention. The regulations require that instruction stress abstinence as the most appropriate and effective protection against AIDS.

The regulations are effective immediately. The AIDS Instructional Guide Grades K-12 will not be issued in its final form until the Board has discussed it at greater length at a future meeting.

Because of the controversial nature of this topic, many questions have been addressed to me regarding the position of the Catholic schools on this mandate. Having attended five meetings devoted solely to the development of this curriculum, I feel strongly that AIDS instruction must be incorporated since it is a recognized public health issue. Actually, we in

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Syracuse Hosts Voucher Proponent

On Tuesday, Sept. 29, the Syracuse Diocesan Education Office sponsored a dinner for administrators, teachers and parents, at which Msgr. James Habiger of the Minnesota Catholic Conference was the principal speaker. CSAANYS staff members Sr. Mary Anne Brawley and Sr. Carol Cimino were the guests of Brother John McGovern, Superintendent of Schools.

Msgr. Habiger outlined the history of court confrontations between Catholic school parents and U.S. or state governments which have resulted in the Constitutional rule of law which claims that parents are the primary educators of children and have a choice in the form that education will take. Habiger explained that Minnesota has had tuition tax credits since 1974 and that, contrary to predictions, public education has not suffered while Catholic school parents have found tax relief.

Currently, Msgr. Habiger is rallying Catholic school parents to exert pressure on the Minnesota legislature for a voucher system. Last year, according to Habiger, 25,000 parents gathered on the steps of the Minnesota state capitol to demonstrate for vouchers on a "lobby day" for Catholic schools.

Msgr. Habiger stated that the Catholic schools of Minnesota have the full support of the

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NEWS BRIEFS

FREE SOFTWARE AVAILABLE

The NYS Power Authority has made available to junior high schools and high schools free software dealing with energy awareness. For more information or to order software, call toll-free at 1-800-332-NYPA.

AWARENESS OF GERMAN CULTURE

The NYS Education Dept. in cooperation with the Goethe House and the Friedrich-Neumann Foundation, is providing 23 Multinational and Comparative Education Scholarships to high school principals to enhance the teaching of German language and culture in NYS. Catholic school administrators may obtain an application and further information from their diocesan superintendent. Applications are due Nov. 6.

ENERGY GRANT

Cycle 10 of the ECM grants program has been funded for up to \$15 million for the 1987-88 school year. \$5 million has been earmarked for K-12 schools only. We encourage Catholic schools to apply for these grants. Applications are due Dec. 3, 1987 and may be obtained by calling toll-free 1-800-342-3722.

ASBESTOS ABATEMENT GRANTS

The NYS Legislature has approved a grant of \$2 million to aid those schools which demonstrate a high degree of hazard from asbestos. This is the principle criterion for funding. Applications are due no later than Dec. 1, 1987 and may be obtained from Brian P. Walsh, State Education Dept. - Educational Facilities & Management Services.

Public Favors Parent Power

Recent polls have shown, over and over again, that the American public supports the notion of "parent power" in the schools. As reported in Education USA (Aug. 31), a Gallup poll revealed that, overall, 41.2% feel that parents ought to have more power in areas such as school curriculum, instructional materials and values and ethical behavior. The Brookings Institute, in a report of May, 1987, found that public and private schools with a high degree of parental involvement had the highest degrees of overall achievement among their students. Add to this that fact that James Coleman's updated Public and Private Schools (1986) cites the community-based shared value system as the most important factor in the success of Catholic schools, and you have a basic key to the effectiveness of our Catholic schools.

If we truly believe in the primacy of parents as educators, then we must acknowledge their influence on the schools. Catholic schools represent the free choice of parents; they exist, in great part, due to the financial sacrifice of parents, and in transmitting the doctrinal heritage of the Church, work hand-in-hand with parents to execute their responsibilities as Catholic parents.

Let us celebrate our "community of value" with the mothers and fathers of our students by seeking new ways to work together. By strengthening these ties, we strengthen Catholic schools.

(AIDS, cont.)

the Catholic school community are in a better position to implement these regulations since our schools operate from a single moral value position.

In all my experience as a Catholic educator, I have never seen an issue in which the Catholic schools' existence has been more evidently important. We are fortunate to have some "absolutes" in our lives which allow us to hold fast to our values.

REMINDER: SURVEYS

Please return your 1987-88 CSAANYS survey in the envelope provided by October 15. After results are tabulated, a Board Committee will use the information to formulate goals for CSAANYS. These, in turn, will help prioritize activities needed to be pursued by staff. Thanks in advance for your cooperation.

SED OCC-ED CONFERENCES

The State Education Department will host regional conferences for teachers of business/marketing, home economics, health occupations and technical programs from October to early Spring, 1988. Write to James Kadamus at SED for registration.

(Vouchers, cont.)

Bishops, who have, in turn, been responsible for funding the tremendous effort necessary to put pressure on the Minnesota State Legislature.

A data base was established as a result of the awarding of a U.S. Dept. of Education grant, which funded a state-wide survey of attitudes toward a voucher system. The survey found that an overwhelming majority of both Catholic and public school parents are supportive of a state-wide voucher system.

Msgr. Habiger concluded calling on parents and educators in New York State to carry on a similar effort.