CSCICIO SCHOOL ADMINISTRATORS ASSOCIATION OF NEW YORK STATE

(518) 273-1205

THE STATE OF THE STATE?!

by Sister Mary Anne Brawley

406 Fulton Street . Suite 512 . Troy, New York 12180-3359

Most regional newspapers devoted considerable space in covering the New York State Report Cards which were compiled for 4,092 public schools in the state. It's not surprising that, in most cases, suburban districts scored higher than urban districts. Interestingly, the rural school in Wells had the highest score in 3rd grade reading. Five of the six third graders are reading 2 or more years above grade level!

Catholic School report card results have not been published. Each of our schools has the data necessary to compare its results with those of the local public school. You may be interested in doing just that for your own self analysis. In some cases an individual school may wish to circulate its "report card" results to the families of students in the school.

At the same time that Report Cards were being shared, the Commissioner's Committee on Raising Academic Standards was meeting in Albany. This committee is the "coalition" Commissioner Mills has attempted to bring together to agree on a plan for improving Pk-12 education in New York State.

Two representatives of the nonpublic school community have been attending these meetings. I use "attending these meetings" rather than "serving on this committee" because, in truth, the usual power brokers - NYSUT, NYSSBA, NEANY, UFT - control these deliberations and the rest of us are observers.

On January 6, 1997 Commissioner Mills sought consensus from the committee on a draft statement regarding the resources to reach higher standards. It was hoped that a unified educational community might be in a better position to gain attention for adequate funding.

The majority thought that the \$306 million proposed by the Board of Regents was far short of the mark. Thomas Hobart, president of New York State United Teachers said he thought NYSUT could get more money by itself. He said he was sure "a statewide strike would do it" but he'd hate to do that. Louis Grumet of the New York State School Board Association does not favor non-public school faculty participation in in-service training until all our teachers are certified and we are held to the same standards as public schools.

I have a sneaking suspicion that the newest excuse for failing to raise student standards in NYS public schools will be the lack of money! How do we manage, I wonder!

1997-98 BUDGET PROPOSAL

Governor Pataki's 1997-98 budget proposal issued on January 14, 1997 contains several items of interest to our schools. I remind you that this is the governor's <u>proposal</u> for the budget he'd like passed on April 1, 1997. Our track record in NYS for passing a budget on time is abysmal, so these numbers are not locked in stone. We'll keep you posted on the debate which is bound to ensue.

TEXTBOOK AID - proposes increase of \$4.00 from \$36. to \$40. for 97-98 with an overall plan to raise per pupil state textbook aid to \$72. by 2001-02.

COMPUTER SOFTWARE - proposes increase of .58 from \$4.00 to \$4.58 per pupil.

LIBRARY - proposses no change; remains \$4.00 per pupil

MANDATED SERVICES - proposes increase of \$1.5 million from \$48 million to 49.5 million.

ASBESTOS - proposes adoption of less stringent federal standards for removing asbestos roofing materials

CALENDAR - proposes the possibility for districts to adopt a year-round school calendar to remedy overcrowding.

CHARTER SCHOOLS - proposes authorization of state funded schools formed by parents, teachers, etc.

STAR (School Tax Relief) - proposes cutting local school property taxes gradually until 2000 -2001. This would provide some help to our over-taxed nonpublic school parents.

I remind you that the above are all proposals. There is bound to be immediate reaction from the education lobby here in Albany.

NYS Summer School of the Arts

The New York State Summer School of the Arts with its eight component summer residential schools marks its 27th season this year. All high schools should have received the booklet "Get Your Act Together" which contains descriptive information and application forms for each of the eight schools. If any high school has not received this publication contact Mary Daley 518-474-8773.



The School Office of the diocese of Syracuse is exploring the possibility of a group airfare to the NCEA in Minneapolis. If any CSAANYS member is interested you may contact Fr. Vavonese at 315-470-1450.

STATE ASSESSMENT SYSTEM

Please take note of the Nov/Dec School Executive Bulletin which contains important information on the new state assessment system and graduation requirements. If any CSAANYS member has not received a copy call and we'll send the appropriate pages. (518) 273-1205.

BIPARTISAN CHOICE

William Galston, former domestic policy adviser to President Clinton, and Diane Ravitch, former assistant secretary of education for President Bush, agree on school choice. The two current academicians call for "means-tested" scholarships to allow low-income children in poorperforming urban public schools to attend private schools.

They urge that the school choice initiatives currently underway in Wisconsin and Ohio be extended to "no fewer than 10 hard-pressed urban school districts for a period of no less than five years, with carefully designed monitoring and evaluation."

EARNED INCOME TAX CREDIT

The campaign to inform lowincome working people that they could qualify for an earned income tax credit (EIC) has begun.

Please give particular attention to Hispanic families. Many are eligible but are far less likely to apply. Workers with modest incomes can get free help preparing their tax forms. Call 1-800-829-1040 to find the site closest to you.



Blacks in Catholic Schools

AHERA Compliance

There is an observed increase in Notices of Noncompliance issue by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to nonpublic schools for the Asbestos Hazard Emergency Response Act (AHERA) regulation. The EPA by law has the ability to levy either serious criminal charges against school officials or heavy fines for AHERA noncompliance.

The 1989 AHERA regulation requires schools to carry out numerous asbestos-related quirements. The State Education Department as the AHERA state designee, develops and sends information and forms to public and nonpublic elementary and secondary schools for completing mandated asbestos triennial reinspections, Nonpublic schools, not having to report their asbestos activities to the State or Federal EPA, may believe that complying with AHERA is not essential. The number of Notices of Noncompliance issued by EPA obvious points to he misconception of this way of thinking.

Any nonpublic school that has not completed the federally mandated three-year asbestos reinspection is encouraged to do so as soon as possible. If you have any questions about the reinspection, contact Ms. Mae Timer of the SED., Office of Facilities Planning, Environmental/Occupational Health and Safety Unit, at 518-474-3906.

School uniforms and strict discipline are not the reasons Catholic schools have been historically successful in educating poor and disadvantaged children, according to Candler Professor of Urban Education Jacqueline Jordan Irvine, of Emory University. "Shared vision, values, mission, and commitment are the characteristics that make a difference," she says. Irvine is coeditor of <u>Growing Up African American in Catholic Schools</u>, in which 11 black educators present a historical overview and critique of Catholic school achievement in maintaining higher test grades and lower dropout rates for black children.

Although "vision and values" can be nebulous terms, Irvine says the religious fervor with which teachers approached their mission can be applied to the secular world. Having attended an all-black Catholic elementary school in the South herself, Irvine recalls, "Like our parents and the black community that supported and pushed me, the Catholics believe that African American students could learn and achieve. This small but significant point ran counter to prevailing mythology that African American children were destined to a life of failure and inferiority. There was no cultural incompatibility on this point. No subject was considered too difficult, esoteric, or irrelevant."

Irvine found that, "What the Catholic nuns and priests shared with my parents and the African American community were strong and dogmatic beliefs in the power of education over oppression and discrimination, and values such as discipline, resilience, achievement, and hard work. You could and would succeed."

C5QQ1745 DEN CATHOLIC SCHOOL ADMINISTRATORS ASSOCIATION OF NEW YORK STATE

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REMEDIAL FUNDS RETURNING?

The United State Supreme Court has agreed to review its 1985 ruling in Agular vs Felton which prohibits sending public school teachers into Catholic Schools to offer remedial services under the federal Title I program.

As a result of this ruling hundreds of millions of dollars have been spent on noninstructional costs reports U.S. Secretary of Education, Richard Riley. Here in New York State, \$16 million was budgeted in New York City alone!

Methods of delivery of services has been varied: public school sites, portable classrooms, mobile vans, and computer assisted instruction. Each has been a band-aid approach to a real need.

Hopefully, the present judges will reverse Aguilar-Felton, return the money to actual education costs and bring justice to children in parochial schools.

GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS

The Regents have reviewed three proposals for revising graduation requirements. SED staff will solicit comments from the field. Approval of evised graduation requirements will likely occur in late spring. The three proposals are:

- 1. Maintain current course-by-course study requirements and add performance and product requirements (i.e., Regents examinations, literary project, health and fitness plan, career plan, laboratory project);
- 2. Define study requirements by broad curricular areas (e.g., arts/ humanities, mathematics/science/technology/,health/physical education/ home economics, and career development/occupational studies) and add performance and product requirements;
- 3. Require units of study in core subjects until the performance requirements, both examinations and required products, are met, plus flexible units of credit in core areas, and add performance and product requirements.

For additional information contact the Office of Curriculum and Instruction at 518-473-4698.

ATTN: **Elementary Principals**

The State Education Department has disseminated to all schools the Early elementary Resource Guide to Integrated Learning to assist teachers in using an integrated curriculum approach to support student achievement of the learning standards at the arly elementary level.

The Guide is also available on the Internet. For additional information contact the Office of Curriculum and Instruction at 518-473-4698.

DIVERSITY

Given the current demographic characteristics of school-age children and youth, if they were evenly divided across the country, the typical American classroom would look like this:

- 10 would be racial & ethnic minorities
- 10 would be poor
- 6 of the above 10 would be from families where a language other than English is spoken
- 2-4 of the above 6 would be limited English proficient and;
- 50% of this last subgroup would be immigrant students.

AAA UPDATE & & &

406 Fulton Street . Suite 512 . Troy, New York 12180-3359

The New York State Education Dept. recently issued a guidance memorandum on Russman vs Sobol the Second Circuit ruled that the U.S. Constitution was not violated by a school district providing a teaching aide and a consultant teacher to a special education student attending a parochial school. The court further ruled that IDEA required these particular services to be provided on

The memo advises school districts that in determining whether a particular special ed service must be provided on the site of a parochial school, the district should consider: (1) whether it must be provided during school hours (2) whether providing it at a public school is possible without disrupting the child's program (3) whether the provision at the child's school would entail significant additional costs.

The Department's memo indicated that because the special education benefits in question flowed directly to the student and do not financially benefit the parochial school "the use of State and local funds to provide special education services is permissible under the New York State Constitution."

TECHNOLOGY GRANTS RECIPIENTS

Congratulations to the over 100 Catholic Schools in 25 BOCES or Public School Districts who are recipients of technology grants for the 1996-97 school year. This is one way in which all New York State schools work cooperatively and share the success!

CAREER PLANNING

The Career Options Institute, formerly known as the Equity Center, is dedicated to promoting opportunities for all students to develop their unique talents and prepare for careers leading to economic self-sufficiency.

If you are not receiving their newsletter, VOICE, contact CSAANYS 518-273-1205 and we will send you one.

Multicultural Materials

You can request a free catalog of multicultural posters, curriculum materials, biographies, video, and CD-ROM from the National Women's History Project, 7738 Bell Road, Dept. P, Windsor, CA 95492-8518. Or call 707-838-6000.

THE HEART OF THE MATTER



Institute on
Catholic Education
July 10 & 11, 1997
University of Rochester
(716)275-7833

PARENT POWER.

PARENT POWER a newsletter for Catholic School Parent Organizations is published quarterly by the USCC Department of Education. If you would like a copy of the January 1997 issue contact CSAANYS 518-273-1205. You are free to reproduce the newsletter for distribution to your parents.

GRATEFULLY HEARD: AN ENCOURAGING WORD

TEACHERS

A strong sense of community in schools, reflected by shared expectations and supportive relations among staff members, may facilitate teachers' instructional efforts and enhance their personal well-being.

In 1987-88 and 1993-94, SASS asked teachers across the country for information about the nature of their relations with other staff members in their schools. In both 1987-88 and 1993-94, greater percentages of private school teachers than public school teachers strongly agreed that:

- most of their colleagues shared their beliefs & values about the mission of the school.
- the goals of their school are clear
- · staff members are recognized for a job well done
- teachers participate in making decisions
- · administrator is supportive & encouraging

Such positive responses give us encouragement. Congratulations to all of you administrators for enabling your teachers to feel so much a part of our common mission.

PARENTS

The National Center for Education Statistics recently asked parents how well their schools were in involving them in their child's education. Parents were asked how well their schools:

- · let them know how their child was doing,
- made them aware of chances to volunteer at school,
- provided information about why their child was placed in particular classes.
- provided information about how to help with homework.
- provided advice on how to help their child at home,
- helped them understand children at their child's age and
- provided information on services to help the child or family.

The NCES then compiled the average number of times parents from different school types reported practices as being done "very well," as opposed to "just o.k." or "doesn't do it at all." <u>Private church-related schools reported an average of 4 practices done very well which was higher than any other sub-group.</u>

STUDENTS

Who's Who Among American High School Students asked parochial school students not only to grade their school but respond to myriad other questions covering attitudes and behavior of interest to CSAANYS members are the following:

- % grading their school as "excellent" 51.0%
- % saying "most" of their teachers enjoy their work 64.8%
- % saying "most" of their teachers challenge them to work hard 55.2%
- % saying "most" of their teachers take a personal interest in them 68.6%
- % saying they have felt unsafe at school 4.8%

FROM PROMISE TO PRACTICE

The U.S. Dept. of Education's From *Promise to Practice: Stories from the Regional Educational Laboratories* brings together examples that illustrate the work of the laboratories. The stories give a flavor of the variety, inventiveness, and value of the programs and services that have emerged from the labs.

The network of 10 Regional Educational Laboratories seeks solutions to the most persistent education problems within their regions. For descriptions of each laboratory, its current work, and contact information, a companion publication, *Profiles of the Regional Educational Laboratories*, is available. Single copies of *Profiles* and From *Promise to Practice* are available free from OERI's National Library of Education. (1-800-424-1616).

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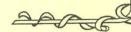


CSAANYS ANNOUNCES NEW DIRECTOR

The Executive Board of the Catholic School Administrators Association is pleased to announce the appointment of Sister Jennifer Votraw, SSJ, as Director of the Association, effective July 1, 1997. Sister Jennifer is presently the Major Superior of the Sisters of St. Joseph of Watertown.

Sister Jennifer served as Assistant Superintendent in the Diocese of Ogdensburg from 1984 to 1989 and was principal of Holy Family School, Watertown, from 1977-1984. Her teaching experience spans from kindergarten through high school in both Catholic and public schools.

Sister, a native of AuSable Forks, received her BA from SUNY, Plattsburgh, Masters degrees from SUNY Potsdam and Villanova University and advanced study at Fairfield and Fordham Universities.



CSAANYS Receives Law Grant

The New York State Bar Association has awarded a \$300 grant to CSAANYS to provide in-service training to nonpublic school personnel on applicable law governing nonpublic schools. Entitled "Freedom of Difference: The Law and Nonpublic School Personnel", the grant will enable CSAANYS to present a 2-hour workshop for teachers in the capital region at no cost to either the teachers or the schools.

With support from Albany Diocesan schools Asst. Superintendent Thomas Fitzgerald and NYSED Office of Nonpublic Schools director Tom Hogan, CSAANYS received the firstme award.

The workshops will be presented sometime in the Fall, and will include teachers from all nonpublics in the area.

Interscholastic Athletic Eligibility

At their February 1997 meeting, the Board of Regents approved an amendment to the Commissioner's Regulations.

Effective immediately, the Regulation will read as follows:

Duration (c)(7)(ii)(b)(1)competition. "...A pupil shall be eligible for interschool competition in grades 9, 10, 11 and 12 until the last day of the school year in which he or she attains the age of 19,..."

Bomb Threat Standards in School

All administrators are advised to closely the recent State Education Dept. communiqué from Emergency Management Coordinator, Mae Timer regarding Bomb Threat Standards in Schools. Vigilance is imperative!

EXTENDED-DAY PROGRAMS

A February 1997 report from the National Center for Education Statistics shows that nearly one-half of private schools offered extendedday programs in 1993-94.

Programs were more often found in private schools than in public schools and private schools had higher than participation rates schools; about 18% of private school students, compared to about 11% of public school students, participated in their schools' extended-day programs.

55.7% of Catholic schools had extended-day-care programs in 1993-94. This data illustrates that our schools are responding well to the needs of families.

Further questions worth asking are: how do these programs vary in focus, activities provided, and student populations served and how are the programs paid for and staffed.

SURVEY REVEALS TEENS YEARN FOR HIGH STANDARDS

American teenagers readily admit that they aren't working very hard in school and say that higher academic standards would give them the push they need to fulfill their potential. Public Agenda, a New York City-based public opinion research organization, conducted the study, "Getting By: What American Teenagers Really Think About Their Schools."

The responses not only show that students are their schools' toughest critics; they also dispute some commonly held beliefs about adolescents' attitudes. Despite the adolescents' professed support for higher academic standards, the report cautions that adults shouldn't assume that standards alone will do the job. The youths viewed their teachers as "the most important variable in whether they learn or not." Sixty-three percent of them said having more good teachers was key.

The students voiced strong support for close monitoring. Nearly 80% said students would learn more if schools made sure that students were on time and completed their homework. Seventy percent said schools should require after-school classes for youths earning D's and F's. Large numbers of teens reported that their schools allow them to muddle through.

Deborah Wadsworth, the executive director of Public Agenda, said the findings show that "students seem to be crying out for the adults in their lives to take a stand and inspire them to do more." A big majority of teenagers have absorbed the message about the importance of education. They didn't hold negative views about academic achievement. The proportion of respondents who said that their friends "look down on" someone who earns good grades - 19% - was not significantly different among white, black, and Hispanic students. But the figure was still large enough to be disturbing to the study's authors.

Also of concern were the teenagers' negative views about specific academic subjects such as history, science, and literature. Most viewed what they study in school as "tedious and irrelevant." The teenagers who said that they had enjoyed a specific course attributed their interest to the skills of a particular teacher, rather than the subject.

African-American students were much more likely than their white counterparts to say that studying American history, world history, biology, chemistry, and advanced mathematics is extremely important. Nearly 60% said it was "extremely important" compared with 25% of white students. "The majority of youngsters showed little curiosity or sense of wonder," "Most understood the value of 'being educated,' as 'getting a college degree"

Three-fourths of those surveyed said that students shouldn't be allowed to graduate unless they had mastered English. A similar proportion said they should only be promoted to the next grade if they had learned the material. Only 13% of public high school students - compared with 43% of private school students - said that their classmates were "very respectful" of teachers. Students also complained about teachers treating them with disrespect. "Some yell and talk to you like you're four years old. So you don't give them respect"

The young people also were disturbed about their peers' emphasis on clothing, about widespread cheating in their schools, and about cliques and teasing.

Copies of "Getting By" What American Teenagers Really Think About Their Schools" are available for \$10. plus shipping and handling, from Public Agenda, 6 E. 39th St., New York, NY 10016-0112 or by calling (212)686-6610.

♥ SHOW YOU CARE ♥

As I prepare this CSAANYS NEWS, our news programs are filled with reports on the Red River Valley floods ravaging Grand Forks, ND. and East Grand Forks, MN. These cities are virtually deserted and it will be days - maybe weeks - before people can return to their homes, jobs, etc.

A search of the 1996 Official Catholic Directory shows that there are 3 elementary schools in Grand Forks, ND: Holy Family, St. Mary's and St. Michael's and 2 schools - 1 elementary and 1 secondary in Sacred Heart Parish, East Grand Forks, MN. Perhaps a sister school here in New York might want to adopt a school in the Red River Valley. If you don't have an Official Catholic Directory, call CSAANYS and we'll give you addresses further information.

Incidentally in New York State we have <u>18</u> Holy Family Schools, <u>44</u> St. Mary's Schools, <u>8</u> St. Michael's Schools, and <u>32</u> Sacred Heart Schools.

TREE HISTORY VIDEOS

The Germans: Portrait of a New Nation and Berlin: Journey of a City are 2 one-hour documentary videos available free to high school teachers of social studies, world history, global studies, European literature, and contemporary events classes.

In the first, 4 German families (2 from former East Germany, 2 from former West Germany) look at how unification has affected that nation's people. The second explores Berlin's role as the focal point of the conflict between East and West, using unique historical film and the voices of those who actually lived it.

For free copies of the 2 videos, write on school-letterhead stationery to Free Educational Videos, Video Outreach, Inc., P.O. Box 12057, Hauppauge, NY 11788.

GRANTS HOTLINE

A new publication, <u>Grants Hotline</u> although intended for public school districts, might offer Catholic school development offices valuable information on federal and private grant opportunities. For further information contact Quinlan Publishing Co., 617-542-0048.

TAX CREDIT FOR TUITION

A new Arizona law presents an interesting approach to private funding of school vouchers. The law will grant taxpayers up to \$500 in incometax credits for donating money to non-profit groups that, in turn, provide scholarships for students to attend private schools, including religious ones

The law also offers taxpayers up to a \$200 credit for money given to public schools to support extracurricular activities that require a fee. This may be proposed legislation to consider in New York State.



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LIFE AFTER FELTON

On June 23, 1997, the Supreme Court, in a rare reversal of itself, overturned the 1985 ruling known as <u>Aguilar v. Felton</u>. Justice Sandra Day O'Connor wrote the opinion for the 5-4 majority: "...[W]e have abandoned the presumption...that the placement of public employees on parochial school grounds inevitably results in the impermissible effect of state-sponsored indoctrination of constitutes a sybolic union between government and religion."

With this decision, 12 years of tremendous expenditure on vans, computers, temporary buildings in order for districts to comply with the Felton ruling are at an end. The result has been, as any administrator knows, the denial of ESEA Chapter 1 remedial

services to hundreds of thousands of poor children who happen to be in Catholic and other sectarian schools.

The input is that the reversal of Felton was pursued by the school district of New York City and the U.S. De

The irony is that the reversal of <u>Felton</u> was pursued by the school district of New York City and the U.S. Department of Education, with the collaboration of the Archdiocese of New York and the U.S. Catholic Conference. New York City alone has spent over \$100 million to lease vans that served as mobile classrooms.

Schools ought to be seeing the results of <u>Agostini v. Felton</u> (as the case to overturn <u>Felton</u> came to be known) as soon as September. In fact, in phone calls we received in June from Upstate, districts started planning for on-site remediation almost immediately after the ruling.

Fallout from the reversal, of course, is conjecture at this writing. However, there are some points to ponder as we consider "life or Felton".

1. What will happen to the portable classrooms and the computers that were used in computer assisted instruction? Perhaps a nominal amount could be used to purchase these. It may be in the districts' best interest to sell rather than store these. In reality, districts which have long-term leases on vans and portables, will continue to use them to provide services.

Many more parents may wish to have their children assessed for Chapter 1 services, now that they don't have to leave their school. This may create a backlog and a delay in the delivery of services to these children.

3. With the 1985 Felton decision, many more services, such as remedial speech, language, psychological and social work services, were removed from the large number of our schools. Post-Felton may result in the restoration of these services on-site.

4. Justice O'Connor invited this reversal when she wrote the opinion in another nonpublic school case. It may be the time to pursue other issues from the court interested in other ways to aid children in sectarian schools.

5. As school voucher cases proceed through the judicial systems of Vermont, Ohio, Wisconsin and other states, the Supreme Court's decision strongly suggests that a school voucher plan could be upheld. <u>Agostini</u> provides religion-neutral relief; as this is the basic for current voucher proposals, we have reason to hope that the Court's new-found common sense will eventually end the educational finance monopoly.

"May you live in interesting times," reads the Chinese proverb. If there were any doubt about the times in which we administer Catholic schools, all of this puts them to rest. It will be very interesting to watch the fallout of this court decision; we'll keep an eye out.

WHOLE LANGUAGE PHASE-OUT

California lawmakers are continuing their efforts to end the state's decade-long commitment to whole language instruction. According to Education Week (July 9, 1997) California and Louisiana scored last among states on a 1994 national reading assessment - a fact that California lawmakers attribute to whole language instruction which emphasizes literature rather than phonics.

We found it interesting to note that the \$46 million California bill, which expands on legislation which set aside \$150 llion last year, would provide teacher training in phonics, an area of instruction that is already in place in our Catholic schools! This "phase in - phase out" pattern of various public school systems when dealing with teaching methods only serves to highlight something our Catholic schools have managed to do so well throughout the years and that is to be eclectic in choosing instructional methods which best serve our children, rather than to succumb the "method of the moment"!

THE CATHOLIC SCHOOL ADMINISTRATORS ASSOCIATION OF NEW YORK STATE

Presents

ATA A WORKSHOP ON LAW FOR NONPUBLIC SCHOOL TEACHERS +

Two dates and places to choose from:

Tuesday October, 7, 1997 from 1:00 to 3:00 at Catholic Central High School 625 7th Ave., Troy, NY 12182

OR

Wednesday, October 15, 1997 from 3:30 to 5:30

St. Teresa of Avila 8 Hollywood Ave., Albany, NY 12208

Topics covered include negligence, abuse, confidentiality, supervision, search and seizure, corporal punishment, and many others of interest to classroom teachers and aides.

THERE IS NO CHARGE TO ATTEND EITHER OF THESE WORKSHOPS

The workshops will be conducted by Sister Carol Cimino, Executive Director of the Catholic School Administrators Association of New York State. Sister Carol has taught courses in nonpublic school law, and has been conducting workshops since 1987.

The workshops are made possible by a grant from the <u>Law, Youth and Citizenship Program of the New York State Bar Association</u> and with the cooperation of the <u>Roman Catholic Diocese of Albany</u>.

Teachers and administrators are asked to call CSAANYS at (518)273-1205 one week prior to the workshop date selected to report the numbers of persons attending so that sufficient materials may be provided.

TECHNOLOGY ALONE IS NOT ENOUGH

If computer technology is to be a cost-effective aid to improving schools, educators must focus as much on supporting and training the people who use it as they do now on buying hardware and software, a private foundation concludes in a recent report.

The Benton report says "Even the staunchest advocates of computer networking in education concede that in most places technical problems, inadequate training, and insufficient time for teachers to figure out ways to integrate technology with the curriculum have combined to thwart the dreams of reformers for a technology-driven overhaul of the education system."

Educators, the report says, must also address five other issues when it comes to using computers in the classroom: the content of the Internet, curriculum reform, assessment of student learning, equitable availability of technology, and community involvement.

NEW YORK EDUCATOR NAMED

Monsignor Vincent DePaul Breen, Vicar for Education for the Diocese of Brooklyn, has been named Bishop of Metuchin, NJ by Pope John Paul II.

A product of Catholic schools himself, Bishop Breen taught at St. Edmund's H.S., and then, in 1966 was named Assistant Superintendent, and has been Vicar since 1994.

CSAANYS has worked closely with Bishop Breen over the past few years as comembers of the State Coordinating Committee, which determines the education legislative agenda of the NYS Catholic Conference.

A tip of the CSAANYS coif to Bishop Breen; we'll miss your valuable contributions to Catholic education in New York State!

Each year the National Association of Elementary School Principals and the U.S. Dept. of Education sponsor the National Distinguished Principals Program. The program honors one public school principal from each of the 50 states and five private school principals nationwide.

We are very proud that former CSAANYS Executive Board member Sister Harriet Hamilton of St. Mary's School in Cortland is one of only 5 nonpublic school principals to be selected.

Congratulations and a tip of the CSAANYS coif to you!

SCHOOL CHOICE

For school choice, 1996 was a very good year, concludes a recent report from the Heritage Foundation.

The year saw growth of states adopting laws to establish charter schools and the growth of schools in states that had passed charter school legislation early on, according to the Washington-based think tank that supports public and private school choice. That year also saw studies of publicly financed private-school-voucher programs in Milwaukee. And polls showed that 43 governors supported some form of school choice.

The report charts state-by-state progress on charter schools and school choice, offers state contacts, and tracks legislation through last December.

"School Choice Programs: What's Happening in the States," \$7 plus \$3 shipping & handling; 800-544-4843. The report is also available on the World Wide Web at http://www.heritage.org/heritage/schools.

PHONE SCAM!

If you receive a FAX message or phone call from a St. James School and a Robert Peters rerequesting information about your school because there are students interested in attending, you shouldn't respond. Bob Kealey at NCEA has never heard of this school, nor have they contacted NCEA. Watch for this fax number: 809-540-5124. You may end up with an excessive phone bill.



Regents Graduation Requirements



On July 17 Commissioner Mills and Board of Regents met to discuss. long other issues, the revision of graduation requirements for secondary schools. In an attempt to raise standards of learning across the State while providing for flexibility in local programming, the Board considered six major areas: course requirements. flexibility in programming, timing of new requirements, provisions special education students, provisions for students with limited English proficiency and diplomas Some aspects considered under course requirements were: :increase the minimum number of credits required for graduation from current requirement of 20.5 to approximately 22-24; set a common core of study requirements for all students, and require a concentration or career major (beyond core requirements) of all students with opportunity for in-depth, applied learning in an area of choice. Commissioner Mills stated that students should know some things in oth and that having core requirements or requiring a career major should help accomplish this.

Regent Cohen raised concerns regarding what constitutes a "core" of credits and Regent Meyer questioned whether or not high school students were expected to narrow their career choices at too early an age. His comments and questions seemed to stem from a belief that high school is a time for a wider range of experiences and study in order that the student receive a broad, eclectic base of study so as to decide on a career choice.

The question arises as we reflect on this recent meeting: where do religion courses fit into this revision? Will our school experience still another round of variances and waivers? What happens to the non-college bound student? Further discussion on this topic will continue at the September meeting. If you have similar concerns and/or other questions, please contact or local regent before the September 17th meeting.

Youths' Lack of Values, Character Worries American Public

The study, "Kids These Days: What Americans Really Think About the Next Generation" was conducted by Public Agenda, a research and citizen-education group.

It found that Americans are anxious about an apparent crisis in the moral well-being of children and teenagers, and parents and schools are largely to blame, a national survey has found. Six in 10 adults said youngsters' failure to learn honesty, respect, and responsibility is a very serious problem. Only 37% believe today's children, once they're grown, will make the United States a better place.

The report says, "The public believes values are a vaccine; if you inoculate teens with them, they will be able to resist the world's many troubles."

The public's disdain extended to children ages 5 to 12 with 53% describing children negatively in such terms as lacking discipline or being rude or spoiled.

Parents are primarily responsible for the sad state of today's young people, according to those surveyed. Only 22%, said it's very common to find parents who are good role models for their children but at the same time, those surveyed were sympathetic to the plight of parents. 51% said that parents who sacrifice and work hard for their offspring are very common. 55% said more flexible work schedules would be effective in helping families.

Respondents placed little stock in the ability of government programs to help children; they looked to schools as a critical point of contact with young people. But they also voiced the criticism that schools need to beef up their teaching of societal ethics and values.

Supreme Court and IDEA

On June 27 the Supreme Court vacated three lower court rulings involving special education services to students in private schools. At issue in each case was whether IDEA requires equitable services for private school students.

The three cases are "K.R. v. Anderson Community School Corp." "Fowler v. Unified School District #259," and Watervliet Board of Education v. Russman." In "Anderson" a federal appeals court ruled that IDEA did not require an aide for a student with special needs in a religious school; In "Watervliet" a NY case a different federal appeals court ruled that IDEA did require an on-site, full-time aide for a religious school student, and in "Fowler" a third appeals court said a school district had certain discretion under IDEA regarding the extent of services to private school students.

The supreme court ordered the lower courts to take a new look at their rulings in light of the recently reauthorized IDEA. In an analysis presented last month to the High Court, the Justice Dept. said the new IDEA "sharply limits a school district's obligations under IDEA to disabled private school students." The Justice Dept. pointed out that the new law only requires that such services "shall be equal to a proportionate amount of federal funds" [estimated at about \$500 per year]. The Department further noted. "IDEA makes clear that it imposes no obligation on states and localities to spend their own money on services for such children."

TELECOMMUNICATIONS DISCOUNTS

(Snowe-Rockefeller-Exon-Kerry Amendment)

All eligible schools and libraries will be able to purchase all commercially available telecommunication services, Internet access, and internal connections at discounted rates. While discounts do not apply to equipment such as computers, fax, machines, modems, etc. Non-content Internet access (which includes e-mail) as well as installation and maintenance of internal connections may be eligible for discounts from 20-90%. Schools and libraries are encouraged to "aggregate" their request for funding to create a consortium with sufficient demand to attract competitors and negotiate lower rates. For further information and a copy of the entire 11 page document contact Joe McTighe at CAPE, 18016 Mateny Rd. #140, Germantown, MD 20874. (301)916-8460 or CONNECT: cape@connectinc.com.

Education Savings Incentives for Catholic School Families

An amendment by Sen. Paul Coverdell (R-Ga.) added a tax-free incentive to the pending tax bill to families who place money in special education savings accounts for expenses related to elementary and secondary schooling as well as higher education costs.

For a child attending public school, this money could be used for a home computer or for transportation costs or tutori.

Likewise, Catholic school children could also use this money to receive such benefits as well as for tuition/fees. Children with special needs could apply these funds for expenses required for their enrollment at a public, private, or religious school, or for home schooling.

ISSUE(S): 1) First, the Coverdell amendment recognizes the critical needs in K-12 education and provides savings incentives to improve educational opportunities for children during these foundational years.

2) Of parallel importance, the Coverdell amendment provides equitable support for every family's own educational priorities, whether their children attend a public, private, parochial or home school.

ACTION: TO CO 8-18

CONTACT: members of the Conference Committee - Senator Moynihan (D-NY), Rep. Rangel (D-NY-15), by phone 202-224-3121 - Capitol switchboard, mail or e-mail and share your commitment to all of this nation's children and encourage them to support in conference the inclusion of Senator Coverdell's amendment to the final House/Senate conference committee bill which allows the use of these parental education savings for necessary educational expenses at the elementary and secondary levels. Contact your own congressional delegation (District Representatives and Senators)

Put A Little Spice In Your Life

CSAANYS Executive Director Sister Carol Cimino attended the second annual "Conversations in Excellence" July 10-14 at Boston College. This event is the highlight of the NCEA program known as **SPICE**: Selected Programs for Improving Catholic Education.

Twelve schools from around the U.S. were invited to share the program's 1997 focus: meeting the special needs of children and their families. The schools presented their programs in light of alliances they have made with agencies outside the schools, such as Catholic hospitals, social service agencies, government agencies and Catholic Charities. Although no NY schools participated, the Seton Program in Jersey City outlined how the Sisters of Charity of Conversation have combined an educational program with a variety of outreach services to meet the extensive needs of the population whom they serve.

A fuller description, along with dissemination steps, will be available in book form by April. For information on the SPICE program, contact Regina Haney at NCEA 202-337-6232. The 1998 focus will be: creative financing of Catholic schools.

PROGRESS ON ABSTINENCE EDUCATION FUNDS!

Congratulations on a major victory! On July 14, 1997, Governor George Pataki announced a new state initiative to promote sexual abstinence among unmarried adolescents.

The Governor's plan calls for \$2.6 million in new state money, \$3.4 million in promised federal money from the welfare reform act of 1996, and an additional \$1 million in in-kind resources to establish abstinence-centered, community-based educational programs and a statewide media campaign to support these programs.

While the Governor's Division of the Budget will propose the abstinence education funds to the legislature, the plan still requires legislative approval. It is crucial for the Assembly Speaker and the Senate Majority Leader to hear messages of support for this program, as both houses must approve the final State Budget. Contact them at the following addresses:

Hon. Sheldon Silver

Speaker of the Assembly

Room 932

Legislative Office Bldg.

Albany, NY 12248

speaker@assembly.state.ny.us

Hon. Joseph Bruno

Senate Majority Leader

Room 330

State Capitol

Albany, NY 12247

bruno@senate.state.ny.us

There appears to be time remaining prior to the final negotiations on a 1997-98 State Budget. Most observers believe some time in August to be the <u>earliest</u> possible time a budget could be passed.









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MATTERS OF PRINCIPAL:

Crossing the Final Frontier

by Sister Carol Cimino, Executive Director

"Space: The Final Frontier" That's how the TV show "Star Trek" was introduced weekly as viewers were invited to explore the mysteries of the universe with the crew of the starship "Enterprise".

While I realize that not everyone shares my passion for all things "trekkie", I believe that we need to consider the "final frontier" for our schools. For the 10 years that I've been with CSAANYS, I've watched our schools' academic successes multiply; enrollments have increased and observers have continued to marvel at our effective-"..let us not lose sight of who we ness. There remains, however, that elusive quality that is, perhaps, our "final frontier"

the authenticity of our schools as Catholic.

are, what we do and why we do it."

Judging from the requests for talks and workshops we have received for this first semester, principals are concerned, too, about authenticity. In fact, this year, for the first time, 78% of the requests for presentations have centered on the theme of the ministry of teaching, the Catholicity of the school and the spirituality of the Catholic educator.

As we experience teacher and student turnover, increased demands on our time, changing financial forecasts and tougher standards and expectations, let us not lose sight of who we are, what we do and why we do it. The "final frontier" continues to call us to "boldly go where no one has gone before".

1997-98 State Budget Items Affecting Nonpublic Schools

Learning Technology Grants: Govenor's plan adopted to continue this grant program at \$3.29 million

Textbook Aid: Governor's plan adopted to increase aid from \$36/pupil to \$40/pupil for 97-98 with a gradual increase to \$78/pupil by 2001-02.

Computer Software: Governor's plan adopted to increase aid from \$4/pupil to \$4.58/pupil for 97-98 with a gradual increase to \$24/pupil by 2001-02.

Library Materials Aid: remains at \$4/pupil.

Mandated Services Aid: Governor's plan not adopted to increase to \$49.5 million. Expected claims for 96-97 = \$49.5, but there will be a \$3.0 million lag resulting from 95-96 claims, MAKE SURE YOUR CLAIMS GET IN ASAP!!!

Teacher Centers: Restored for a \$20 million school year program.

Aids/School Health: Governor's plan not adopted to transfer more that \$1 million from SED to DoH. Funds will remain in the State Ed. Dept. budget.

Abstinence: \$2.6 million appropriated for abstinence-based ed. programs. Coupled with \$3.37 in federal funds, the total program is \$6.0 million. We expect that only \$4 million will be provided as grants to fund perhaps only 10 projects.

Save the Dates!

13th Annual Conference for Administrators of Nonpublic Schools November 3-4, 1997 Omni Hotel, Albany, NY

THEME

Excellence In A Changing Environment

There will be a meeting of the Commissioner's Advisory Council for Nonpublic Schools on November 3 at 10:30a.m. This has always been a lively exchange with the Commissioner.

ATTN: NONPROFIT MAILERS

US Postal Service has requested a one-cent increase in the first-class mail rate and increases averaging about 4.5% for all other types of mail. For nonprofit mailers, this hike would mean severe increases in some areas and small drops in prices in other areas. According to the Alliance of Non-profit Mailers, the rates for nonprofit basic presort letters and flats soar some 15-19%.

The Postal Rate Commission has 10 months in which to deliberate the request. The Alliance of Nonprofit Mailers will participate. New rates are expected no sooner than May, 1998. For more information call the Alliance at 202-462-5132.

Respect Life Sunday

Respect Life Sunday is Oct. 5. Complimentary copies of the Respect Life program have been sent to all secondary schools. If you are considering incorporating the Respect Life Program into your planning for next year, further information can be obtained from the Secretariat for Pro-Life Activities at 202-541-3070.

On September 10, CSAANYS Director Sr. Jennifer Votraw gave testimony on behalf of the Catholic schools to the NYS Board of Regents. The following is an excerpt from her text:

One could assume that the Charter schools are a logical outgrowth of these goals; one could also assume that school choice might be equally appropriate here. Legislation that would enable a parent to select the most instructionally and financially effective school would seem to be a natural extension of the above goals. The Catholic school system in NYS has already proven itself to be academically excellent and financially viable, (readily apparent when one compares per-pupil costs and test scores) as well as consistently effective when educating the minority and/or marginalized child. It causes me to wonder why immense amount of effort and dollars are expended to launch legislation for charter schools (read "alternative" and "choice" here) to create untested and untried schools when an alternative choice which is time-tested and proven - and available, remains out of reach for many parents due to lack of support and legislation. It is an equal source of wonderment and consternation - to me to hear and read how often some members of our state and nation fight for the freedom of choice for the individual, whether it be the freedom to terminate the life of an offspring, or of a criminal, or even to choose one's own demise - yet pale when faced with the possibility that parents might exercise the freedom to choose what school their children attend! Freedom of choice in education will not destroy life or the 'fabric of our society" but, rather, should provide a healthy competition, mutuality and higher quality of education.

A VOTE FOR CHASTITY

In New York and across the nation, states are lining up to apply for federal funds to be used for teaching abstinence - and only abstinence - as the cornerstone of sex education programs. What a revolutionary idea!

Gov. George Pataki announced that NYS will inaugurate a \$7 million program to teach teens the benefits of abstinence. "We need to support our children and provide them with the ability, courage and confidence to stand up to peer pressure and take personal responsibility for their actions," the governor explained. Cardinal O'Connor, praised Pataki and those who backed him for providing the kind of "leadership and support" that parents want and need.

Acknowledging the governor's initiative, John Kerry, executive director of the NYS Catholic Conference, pointed to an important reason behind it - one that critics usually decline to concede: "The traditional response of pouring more money into contraceptive-based sex education programs for young people has failed. Abstinence education programs in other parts of the country have proven the effectiveness of this approach in preventing early sexual activity and resulting pregnancy and welfare-dependency."

IRS Sued Over Tax-Exempt Audit

The Landmark Legal Foundation has filed a lawsuit on June 27 charging the IRS with failing to comply with requests sent by the Landmark Legal Foundation since early 1992. The foundation is investigating whether recent IRS audits of certain 501(c)(3) organizations were politically motivated. The Foundation is seeking an order compelling the IRS to release the requested records declaring that the IRS wrongfully withheld records under the Freedom of Information Act.

IRS investigations of tax-exempt organizations have drawn the attention of lawmakers as well. House Ways and Means Committee Chairman Bill Archer (R-TX) and Senate Finance Committee Chairman William Roth (R-DE) expressed concern that IRS may be conducting such audits for political reasons and targeting groups with conservative political agendas.

Education IRA's Shot Down

This summer, during budget negotiations in Washington, an amendment by Sen. Paul Coverdell (R-GA) was included in the final House/Senate compromise

con't next column

legislation for the largest tax cut in 16 years. This provision would have allowed all families to utilize tax-free savings accounts to pay for necesary elementary and high school expenses. This modest, yet historic tax reliemeasure had solid backing in the US Senate, and had survived epic congressional budget negotiations, only to be ripped out by the President at the last minute.

Catholic school children could have used this money to purchase books, computers, tutoring as well as tuition/ fees. Children with special needs could have applied these funds for expenses required for their enrollment at the school of their parent's choice.

Although excised from the tax bill by the President, educational savings incentives remain alive. Saying families need more educational choices, Congress' heavy-hitters reintroduced a similar plan to give families a tax break on up to \$2,000 in annual savings. This stand-alone bill (H.R. 2373/S. 1133) has been introduced in both chambers by House Speaker Newt Gingrich and Sen. Coverdell.

GRANT TRAINING SEMINAR

The Council on Opportunities for Professional Excellence (COPE) is offering two grant training seminars that will focus on teaching participants how to write a successful grant proposal, and how to utilize gramt funding. The cost for this 1-day seminar is \$125/ person and will be held on Oct. 28 in New Rochelle & Nov. 19 in Albany. For application write to COPE, 1429 Rte. 9, Tivoli, NY 12583or call 914-756-2673.

IDEA Reauthorization Passage

After working through an unprecedented bipartisan, bicameral process, the House and Senate passed by overwhelming margins identical legislation to reauthorize the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act.

To the extent consistent with law, IDEA funds may be spent to provide service to students in private and parochial schools. However, local education agencies would be obligated to pay only the proportionate share of federal funds provided per student for these placements.



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MATTERS OF PRINCIPAL

Righteous Rage

by Sister Carol Cimino, Executive Director

When the President struck the Coverdale Amendment from the Federal Budget package, we were outraged. The amendment, which would have allowed parents to contribute up to \$2000 per year to an IRA-type account, held the promise of a Constitutionally acceptable program for Catholic school parents to maintain a tax-free fund for tuition, tutoring, purchase of school supplies and even home computers for their elementary and/or secondary school-age children. Even better, the bill would have benefited both public and nonpublic school parents, since the use of the fund covered any K-12 expenditures.

"I will not allow any legislation which will take anything away from public school," said a President who chose to send his daughter to private school but would deny that choice to other parents.

This is not to say that it is only Democrats who have thwarted programs to provide school choice, for Republicans are also to blame. Both New York governor George Pataki and New Jersey governor Christine Whittman promised that they would support school choice if elected. Neither they, nor the Republican-controlled New York Senate, nor the Republican-controlled US Congress, has made good on these promises.

I, for one, am tired of being misled by both parties. Even though a bill has been introduced which would achieve what the original amendment had proposed, our elected leaders will now be subject to the vast expenditures of those who would rather that our schools of quietly into that good night. Let's start holding politicians accountable, not to moneyed interests, but to those of us who vote for m. Let's start reminding them of the promises they made when they were desperate for our votes. Let's let them know that we mave long memories, not to be jogged only in electoral years, but in between, too.

NYS Immunization Requirements

The NYS Public Health Law requires public and nonpublic elementary and secondary school students of all ages to be immunized against diphtheria, polio, measles, mumps and rubella. Children enrolled in day care centers, nursery schools and pre-kindergarten programs between the ages of 18 months and 5 years must also be immunized against Hemophilus influenza type B (HIB).

If you require additional information regarding immunization guidelines, contact Judith Harrigan, School Health Services Consultant, NYS Ed. Dept., 3599 Big Ridge Rd, Spencerport, NY 14559 (716)352-2490 to receive a copy of the State Education Department pamphlet en-

ed Immunization: A Handbook for Schools.

SURPLUS COMPUTER EQUIPMENT

'CREATE" (the computer Recycling for Education & Technological Enhancements provides for the establishment of a program to take computers that are no longer needed by the state and private industry, refurbish them if needed, and distribute them to schools, libraries and other educational institutions.

Each private school receiving surplus computer equipment under the CREATE program shall use such equipment solely for secular educational purposes. Distribution of surplus equipment to private schools shall also be subject to the following requirements:

- A private school shall use surplus computer equipment to provide learning technologies that supplement, and in no case supplant, the level of services that would, in the absence of the CREATE program, be available to students in private schools.
- A private school shall use surplus computer equipment to meet the individual needs of participating students in the private school, but not for the needs of the private school
- In sectarian private schools, equipment must be disabled to prevent diversion for sectarian purposes and only be made available for individual use by students and teachers and not for direct general classroom instruction by sectarian school teachers.
- A private school receiving equipment shall assure the Commissioner and State Ed Dept. that such equipment will be used solely for secular educational purposes.

Contact Mark Kneidinger, Information Technology Coordinator, NYS Ed. Dept, Rm. 573 Education Bldg. Annex, Albany, NY 12234.

Protecting the Privacy of Student Records

The US Dept. of Education's National Center for Education Statistics announces the release of Protecting the Privacy of Student Records. These guidelines present model policies and procedures to prevent the improper release of information about students and their families, while satisfying the need for school officials to make sound management, instructional, and service decisions. They cover relevant federal privacy legislation and procedures and govern parent notification, record release, record amendment, and other areas.

Copies of this publication are available from New Orders, Superintendent of Documents, PO Box 371954, Pittsburgh, PA 15350-7954, stock #065-000-01037-2, and the price is \$13.

GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS

By now most of you have seen and are familiar with the Revised Graduation Requirements. For those of you who did not see or receive the School Executive Bulletin, Summer, 1997. which contained rationale, goals and general directions, please call our office for a copy. On Nov. 19, 1997 the Non-Public School Advisory Committee [Sister Jennifer CSAANYS representative! Commissioner Mills and some select Regents will be attending a retreat/workshop which will examine these Graduation requirements in light of the impact and implication for the non-public schools. Specific recommendations and action shall result form this meeting. We will keep you posted!

CSAANYS Executive Director Sr. Carol Cimino will be collaborating with Sr. Remigia Kushner to offer a summer Institute on Issues in Administration & Curriculum for Catholic school administrators. The institute will take place at Manhattan College June 29-July 7.

PARENT POWER

The National Coalition of Catholic School Parent Associations, a division of USCC, published a newsletter entitled Parent Power. It's a practical useful handout for your parents who wish to receive timely information on legislative issues and action. To receive a sample copy, contact Raymond Burnell, Office for Catholic School Parent Associations, 3211 4th St. NE, Washington DC 20017, 202-541-3009. Parent Choice is a newsletter for "advocates of educational freedom" and is available from Citizens for Educational Freedom, PO Box 410546, St. Louis, MO 63141, 314-434-4171.

VOLUNTARY NATIONAL TESTS

Voluntary national test development is under way to test every 4th grader in reading and every 8th grader in math.

Every parent has the right to know how well his or her child is doing compared with students in other schools, states, and countries. Voluntary national tests in math and reading will help states and local communities raise standards of excellence for teaching and learning in every classroom, and provide parents with accurate information about their children's academic performance.

Beginning in 1999, these tests will show if students have mastered critical basic skills. The content will be based on the content frameworks developed for the National Assessment of Educational Progress.

GRAND FORKS FOLLOW UP

Mr. David Andrys, Sacred Heart School, East Grand Forks, MN and Mrs. Litchy, St. Michael's, Grand Forks wrote to CSAANYS to thank us -and you- for all your prayers, help and encouragement. Although both schools have temporary facilities that enable them to conduct school sessions, both principals feel optimis-tic about their progress and feel that support and prayers have made significant impact on their recovery. from the recent floods. Please continue to keep them in your good prayers; letters of encour-agement are most welcome!

GOING STRONG

Throughout the U.S., the percentage of minorities in Catholic schools has more than doubled since 1970-81. and continued to increase in 1996-97 to almost 25%.

In Catholic schools nationwide 10.4% of students were Hispanic, 8.2% were African-American and 4.1% were Asian, with Native Americans and other groups composing about 1.04%. Non-Catholics made up 13.5% of Catholic school enrollment throughout the country.

The NCEA reported that Catholic schools enrolled 2,645,462 students, an increase of 10,244 students over the previous year. Enrollment was 1,996,172 in elementary schools, 18,100 in middle schools and 631,190 in high schools.

Partnership Offers Easy High School Access

Lockport's DeSales Catholic School Principal Sr. Roberta Thoen, SSMN, the Niagara Catholic Board of Trustees, and Niagara Catholic H.S. President Ronald Buggs recently announced plans to form a new educational partnership beginning in 1997-98 school year.

The partnership will give DeSales students easier access to a Catholic high school.

The development of this stronger relationship between DeSales and Niagara Catholic will occur through shared curriculum, a joint in-service program between faculty and staff, joint student activities, joint events for parents, shared resources, social events, shared staff, and shared experience.

FIRE SAFETY

The Kids Room Fire Safety site is now on the NYS Dept. of State's home page (www.dos.state.ny.us). This site is designed to educate students from K-3 about fire safety through interactive games, puzzles, stories and problem solving. As the site evolves it will also provide educational information for students from 4-12. If you have any questions contact Gwenn Lee, 518-486-9846.