



ACTION ALERT

Nonpublic School Transportation

ISSUE: Nonpublic school transportation continues to be problematic for many students with the result being that parents receive aid-in-lieu payments instead of transportation. Parent's aid-in-lieu does not help in getting their children to and from a nonpublic school because many parents have no alternative other than busing. Our parents are at the mercy of private bus contractors who provide over 85% of nonpublic transportation.

OUR POSITION: The New Jersey Catholic Conference and the New Jersey Network of Catholic School Families fully support an increase in the statutory ceiling of \$1,000 per pupil for transportation. The increase should at least be \$50.00 per pupil in order to have transportation routes run for our students.

ACTION: Call, write or email the Office of Governor Phil Murphy and ask for the requested increase to \$1,050. See Talking Points on nonpublic school transportation enclosed with this Alert.

Mailing Address The Honorable Phil Murphy
Governor of the State of New Jersey
The State House
P.O. Box 001
Trenton, NJ 08625

Phone: (609) 292-6000

Email: <https://nj.gov/governor/contact/all/>

You can also contact Governor Murphy through the NJCC Voter Voice System

<https://www.votervoice.net/NJCC/campaigns/70952/respond>

Talking Points on Nonpublic School Transportation

- Transportation is the lifeblood of our schools. Many times, when children cannot get a ride, their parents cannot get them to school and they will transfer to public school at greater expense to the taxpayer.
- Nonpublic transportation routes cost more than public school routes because they involve fewer children traveling more miles. Catholic school students, for example, normally do not live in enclaves, so the population is more spread out throughout a given region.
- We are at the mercy of private bus contractors who basically can charge whatever they want, and our parents are held hostage by that figure. These private contractors currently serve over 85% of the nonpublic school routes.
- No public school child is ever denied a ride to school because of transportation costs.
- In order obtain rides within the per-pupil amount, we have tried cluster stops, asking districts to mix public and nonpublic school students on the same buses where feasible (this is permitted by the New Jersey Department of Education), and even reducing the number of days for which a route is bid in order to get a ride for the majority of school days. We have also eliminated half-days in our schools wherever possible because half-days are more costly for bus operation and affect the amount of the bid for transportation.
- The per-pupil amount for nonpublic school transportation was frozen for 17 years and we are trying to recover from that freeze. Given the fact that legislation was enacted in 2003 which provided for an increase in the nonpublic transportation ceiling commensurate with the Consumer Price Index figure, the figure now should be at least \$1,125.00. Therefore, we are asking for an increase of \$50.00 per pupil to \$1,050.00 in an attempt to get more transportation for our children.