



THE EPISCOPAL
DIOCESE OF
NEW YORK

The Council of Episcopal Bishops of New York State

October 29, 2009

The Honorable David A Paterson, Governor
Executive Chamber
Capitol
Albany, New York 12224

Dear Governor Paterson,

Last year we, Bishops of the six Episcopal Dioceses in the State of New York met with you to discuss issues of mutual concern. We remember with pleasure your graciousness in receiving us and your openness and authenticity in our conversations.

We appreciate the difficult situation in which you now find yourself in having to make drastic budgetary cuts in the midst of the current economic downturn. Nevertheless, we feel that in good conscience we must write to you now to oppose the proposed budget cuts to education.

Our reasons are manifold but primary among them are the following:

1. We believe that it is immoral to work out the consequences of adult behavior on the backs of our children. Ideally we should give more resources to better prepare this generation to inherit the world we are leaving them.
2. The proposed cuts disproportionately affect poor and minority children, further entrenching institutional racism in our society.
3. The lack of resources will reinforce the school to prison pipeline. Such cuts are a false economy, as keeping a child in school is a fraction of the cost of keeping him in prison.
4. These cuts will reverse the hard-won progress made in recent years.

We fully understand that it takes more than money to provide a good education. At our triennial General Convention this past July we passed a resolution to encourage every parish in the nation to establish a relationship with a local public school and challenging every Episcopalian to give forty hours a year in direct service (tutoring, after school programs, ESL etc.), advocacy and teacher support. We are working with other organizations to help strengthen families in every way possible.

THE RIGHT REVEREND MARK S. SISK
BISHOP OF NEW YORK



We are doing our part. We urge the state to do its part by restoring the cuts that will do irreparable harm to our most vulnerable children. As Frederick Douglass so wisely said, "It is easier to build strong children than to repair broken men."

On behalf of the Council

Handwritten signature of Mark Sisk in cursive script.

The Rt. Rev. Mark S. Sisk

Handwritten signature of Catherine Roskam in cursive script.

The Rt. Rev. Catherine Roskam

Council Members,

The Rt. Rev. Gladstone B. Adams III, Bishop of Central New York

The Rt. Rev. David Ball, Bishop of Albany, ret

The Rt. Rev. Michael Garrison, Bishop of Western New York

The Rt. Rev. William Love, Bishop of Albany

The Rt. Rev. Prince Singh, Bishop of Rochester

The Rt. Rev. Lawrence Provenzano, Bishop of Long Island.