

**New York State Coalition of Independent and Religious Schools
(NYSCIRS)**

Advocacy Days - March 3 and 4, 2014 - Albany, NY

The *New York State Coalition of Independent and Religious Schools (NYSCIRS)* organized a rally during the advocacy days for the State of New York, **March 3 and 4, 2014** in Albany.

As a member of the *NY City Standing Committee of Religious and Independent Schools*, Mrs. Makedon, director of the Direct Archdiocesan District Office of Education, was invited to participate at this rally in order to advocate along with other members of the Committee for the **Education Investment Tax Credit legislation**. Rev. Fr. George Passias and Mrs. Ethel Allegre, supervisor and principal respectively of St. Spyridon School in Manhattan, accompanied Mrs. Makedon to Albany representing the Greek Orthodox parochial schools in New York City, the principals of which were all in support of this legislation.

Members of NYSCIRS formed small groups and approached the senators and assembly members who voted favorably for the **Education Investment Tax Credit legislation**. The members thanked them and noted the importance of such legislation that will benefit all students of New York.

The **Education Investment Tax Credit Law** would increase private-sector investment in education by encouraging more charitable donations that benefit all students regardless of whether they attend public or private school. Among other benefits, it would provide scholarships to students attending pre-K through 12th grade in public and private schools through donations made to nonprofit scholarship organizations.

Of the proposed \$300 million in tax credits, at least half would be set aside to increase donations to public schools and their teachers; the rest would benefit students of nonpublic schools. Thus, lawmakers are poised to include various tax-relief measures within the 2014-15 State Budget. Inclusion of the **Education Investment Tax Credits** would ensure that all schools and school-age children would benefit directly.

The attached statement of support was issued by the Direct Archdiocesan Office of Education and was submitted to NYSCIRS.

STATEMENT OF SUPPORT OF
THE EDUCATION INVESTMENT TAX CREDIT LEGISLATION

The Greek Orthodox Archdiocese District Office of Education is earnestly dedicated to the NYSCIRS organization as an organization which unites all private and parochial schools by virtue of their common interests in children's education at all levels. This energetic group of school leaders and professionals is a breath of fresh air which brings together all faith-based parochial schools and private schools under one umbrella with the future of education and the best interests of the students as the very top priority. The full spectrum organization is in full support of the "Education Investment Tax Credit" proposal and the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese pledges its full support for this proposal imploring our elected officials for full support.

This is a proposal inclusive of both the public and private-parochial school systems. Public and private-parochial schools will benefit from this proposal since corporations and foundations will be enabled to offer collective financial support while enjoying the right to receive tax credit for their investments in the education of students. The Archdiocese urges full support for this proposal from the senate, state assembly, and the Governor. Believing that the Senate which has already passed this proposal the past two years, and also believing that the Governor has already pledged his support for this proposal, we collectively urge the members of the assembly and the speaker of the assembly, to consider and pass the proposal in this year's budget.

Maria Makedon
Director of the Office of Education
Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America