

February 28, 2019

To Whom It May Concern:

We the undersigned are writing in support of a \$100 million increase in the Opportunity Scholarship Tax Credit (OSTC) Program in the 2019-20 budget. This program is a vital lifeline for thousands of students stranded in Pennsylvania's lowest-achieving schools.

Last year, more than 55,000 PreK-12 scholarships were awarded to students through the OSTC and Educational Improvement Tax Credit (EITC) programs. Across the Commonwealth, families use these scholarships to send their children to private or participating public schools that best meet their needs. Unfortunately, the scholarship programs are so popular that tens of thousands of students are turned away each year by scholarship organizations because the state-mandated caps have been reached.

These scholarships are a lifeline for Pennsylvania families who are seeking an educational opportunity outside of their assigned school. This is especially true for participants in the OSTC Program, which serves economically disadvantaged students who are stranded in Pennsylvania's lowest-achieving schools. The OSTC and EITC programs empower parents by ensuring the majority of the funds directly benefit those who need it most - the students and their families.

Though the General Assembly and the Governor have approved incremental increases to the EITC Program since its establishment in 2001, there have been no additional investments made to the OSTC Program since it was established in 2012.

It is estimated that nearly 53,000 scholarship applications were denied last year due to a lack of program funds. With an additional investment of \$100 million into the OSTC Program, more than 41,650 additional students could receive scholarships next year and have access to an educational environment that meets their needs.

We are asking that you make the OSTC Program a priority in the 2019-20 budget by committing to adding \$100 million to the Program.

Sincerely,

Terry Griffin, Curriculum Coordinator  
Allegheny East Conference

Joseph T. Doyle Jr., Treasurer  
Archbishop Carroll Fund for Catholic  
Education

Jodi Beers, Executive Director  
Armstrong County Community Foundation

Bill O'Brien, Executive Director  
Business Leadership Organized for Catholic  
Schools (BLOCS)

Lorrie Ogden, Finance Director  
Child Development, Inc.

Evie McNiff, Founding Board Chair  
Children's Scholarship Fund of Philadelphia

Heather Frattone, Executive Director  
Children's Scholarship Fund of Philadelphia

Suzette Baird, Associate Director of  
Development  
Church Farm School

Amy Glasl, Superintendent  
Clarion Limestone Area School District

Joel Schwartz, CEO  
Colonial Penn

Charles Mitchell, President & CEO  
Commonwealth Foundation

John Mark Niehls, Head of School  
Coventry Christian Schools

Miles Wilson, President & CEO  
Education Works

Dr. Malachi Muhammad  
Educational Opportunities for Families

Ashley DeMauro Mullins, Northeast  
Legislative Director  
Excel in Education

Stephen DeMaura, Executive Director  
Excellent Schools PA

Kathy Miller, Executive Director  
Foundation for Easton Schools

Dia Becker, Director of Corporate and  
Foundation Relations  
Gesu School

Rose Martin, Executive Director  
Hope Partnership for Education

Jim Sovocool, Head of School  
Logan Hope School

Dr. Barbara Kehr, Head of Schools  
Montessori Academy of Chambersburg

Kathleen McGirr, Director of Finance  
Mount Saint Joseph Academy

Edward Yongo, CEO  
Pathways

Sean McAleer, Director of Education  
Pennsylvania Catholic Conference

Mark Gleason, Executive Director  
Philadelphia School Partnership

Louis Scaglione, President & Music Director  
Philadelphia Youth Orchestra

Quiet Creek Herb Farm

Otto Banks, Executive Director  
REACH Alliance

Rebecca Bonner, Executive Director  
Greater Philadelphia Association for  
Recovery Education

Dr. Brian Toth, Superintendent  
St. Mary's Area School District

Students First

Ryanne Jennigs, Executive Director  
The Cooperage Project

Kirk Hallett, Director  
The Joshua Group

Garrett Trout, CEO  
TrueNorth Wellness Services

John Amenda, CEO  
Young Scholars