



DIOCESE OF LINCOLN

OFFICE OF THE BISHOP

June 26, 2023

To the Clergy, Religious, and Lay Faithful of the Diocese of Lincoln,

Several weeks ago, historic school choice legislation (LB753, the Opportunity Scholarships Act) was signed into law by Governor Jim Pillen. This legislation was championed by State Senator Lou Ann Linehan, supported by a super-majority of Senators from across Nebraska, and advocated for by the Nebraska Catholic Conference. It will be life-changing for countless students in need of greater educational opportunities. Efforts to form a statewide scholarship granting organization (SGO) are underway!

The Opportunity Scholarships Act provides increased scholarship opportunities through a state income tax credit. Taxpayers can claim this tax credit by making financial contributions to an SGO which are authorized by LB753. State income tax credits can be claimed starting on January 1, 2024, with scholarships being distributed for the 2024-25 school year.

The three Bishops of Nebraska are in full support of a statewide SGO, Opportunity Scholarships Nebraska, that is in its early stages of formation. The Nebraska Catholic Conference is helping lead this effort, and Opportunity Scholarships Nebraska is being developed using research and best practices from scholarship tax credit programs across the country. Opportunity Scholarships Nebraska will know our schools, be familiar with the needs of our families, ensure that scholarships are delivered efficiently and effectively to students in need, and be a committed advocate for future school choice efforts. In addition to serving children seeking a Catholic education, Opportunity Scholarships Nebraska will also serve kids seeking an education at the many other non-public schools in our state.

As there are further developments, we will keep you up-to-date and help get you connected with Opportunity Scholarships Nebraska. Because of this historic school choice legislation, together we have an important opportunity to make sure children can choose a school that is best for them, regardless of their zip code or income.

To learn more about LB753, please see the attached one-pager from the Nebraska Catholic Conference.

Sincerely yours in Christ,

The Most Reverend James D. Conley
Bishop of Lincoln