

RESOLUTION: RESPONDING TO THE CRISIS IN PUBLIC EDUCATION

WHEREAS the United Church of Christ has stated that "the Church is called to the renewal of a long standing commitment to secure for each child of God that education which will fully develop his or her capacities, and which will enable that person to serve as a responsible person in the common life;"* and

WHEREAS the Connecticut Conference has demonstrated its commitment to the public school by initiating in 1974 a ministry in public education and in 1977 adopting a resolution calling for adequate and equitable financing for public education; and

WHEREAS the public's commitment to public education has been eroding both at state and local levels as issues of taxation take priority over the need to provide a suitable education; and

WHEREAS there is wide public concern about the current quality of public education and the ability of the education system to respond to the complex problems facing the schools; and

WHEREAS there are critical issues confronting public education in the climate of the 80's, such as

the acute problems and unusual burdens confronting public schools
implications of Tuition Tax Credits for parents who choose to send their children to private or parochial schools
the dramatic increase in private schools
all needs which must be faced seriously by supporters of public education.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Connecticut Conference recognize the crisis in public education and reaffirm its commitment to a ministry in this crucial area by these actions;

1. Respond to legislative issues related to financing, goals for education, and those factors that make for effective schools.
2. Provide resource and information to churches on current issues.
3. Encourage and support churches in their efforts to respond to local education needs.
4. Cooperate with the Christian Conference of Connecticut and other church and community coalitions addressing education issues and needs.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that member churches be urged to learn about the quality of education in their own local school districts, monitor their town's commitment to education and its utilization of state equalization funds;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Conference and its member churches study carefully the impact of tuition tax credit proposals on the quality and choice of educational opportunities available to disadvantaged children and youth.

*"The Church and the Public Schools", a position paper of the United Church Board for Homeland Ministries.