



Staff photos by Vinny Tennis

Second-grade students sing a song following a check presentation at Ss. Peter and Paul School in West Goshen on Wednesday. Bridge Educational Foundation announced EITC scholarships totaling \$89,500 for families in Chester County.

## Scholarships announced for private school students

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WEST GOSHEN — Bridge Education Foundation announced scholarships of \$89,500 to local families at a ceremony Wednesday filled with state representatives and senators at Ss. Peter and Paul School.

The scholarships are provided through the Educational Improvement Tax Credit (EITC) and help local families who choose to have their children attend private schools, the foundation said.

The event featured multiple speakers including officials from the foundation and businesses who contribute money for the EITC, as well as state Sen. Dominic Pileggi, state Sen. Andy Dinniman, state Sen. John Rafferty, state Rep. Dan Truitt, state Rep. Becky Corbin, and state Rep. Duane Milne.

The ceremony on Wednesday also featured a show from the second-graders at the school, who performed a 1950s-themed song for attendees, complete with poodle skirts and leather jackets.

The scholarships were donated by CSX Transportation, Enterprise Holdings, RBC Capital Markets, United-Healthcare Community Plan and Waste Management, the foundation said.

"This is one of my favorite parts of my job," said Jim Tricolli of RBC Capital Markets, Bridge Educational Foundation Board member.

The scholarship donations announced are part of the K-12 EITC Programs. The foundation said that the K-12 EITC tuition program provides



Natalie Nutt, executive director of Bridge Educational Foundation, makes a speech at a check presentation at Ss. Peter and Paul School.

companies with a 75 percent tax credit — 90 percent for a two-year commitment — for funds donated to approved, nonprofit scholarship or educational improvement organizations. Businesses may donate up to \$750,000 per year through the program.

During the ceremony on Wednesday, representatives from companies as well as the state government spoke about the program and why they supported it.

Pileggi, R-9th of Chester, said the EITC program was an example of bipartisan success in Harrisburg.

"Every year, the Educational Improvement Tax Credit gives thousands of children academic opportunities they simply would not have otherwise," said Pileggi. "The EITC has changed, and continues to change, lives across Pennsylvania. I'm proud to be a strong supporter of this program."

Dinniman, D-19th of West White-land, said he believed that most in the state legislature believed that the EITC program was beneficial to the Com-

monwealth, and vowed to work with his fellow officials to be sure the program continues to be funded.

"Almost all of us think that this is a good program," Dinniman said. "It allows everyone a chance to go to a school of their choice."

Nearly all of the state legislators stressed that it was important for the state's budget to keep the EITC program intact. They asked the adults at the ceremony to stay informed of the program and support it.

"We want to keep that program in place," said Rafferty, R-44th of Collegewille.

Truitt, who attends Ss. Peter and Paul Parish, said he had earned his education at Catholic schools as both a child and a college student, and wanted others to be able to afford the same opportunity.

"I'm a very firm believer for every family to choose where they want to send their kids," said Truitt.

Corbin, R-155th of East Brandywine, and Milne, R-167th of Willistown, also spoke Wednesday. They both encouraged students to study hard, and continue to "take advantage" of their education.

The \$89,500 in scholarships will benefit children attending the following schools, the foundation said: Ss. Simon and Jude School, Woodynde School, Pope John Paul II Regional Catholic Elementary School, Avon Grove Nazarene Academy, Assumption Blessed Virgin Mary School, Bethany Christian School, Bishop Shanahan High School, The Christian Academy, St. Basil the Great Catholic School and St. Elizabeth Parish School.