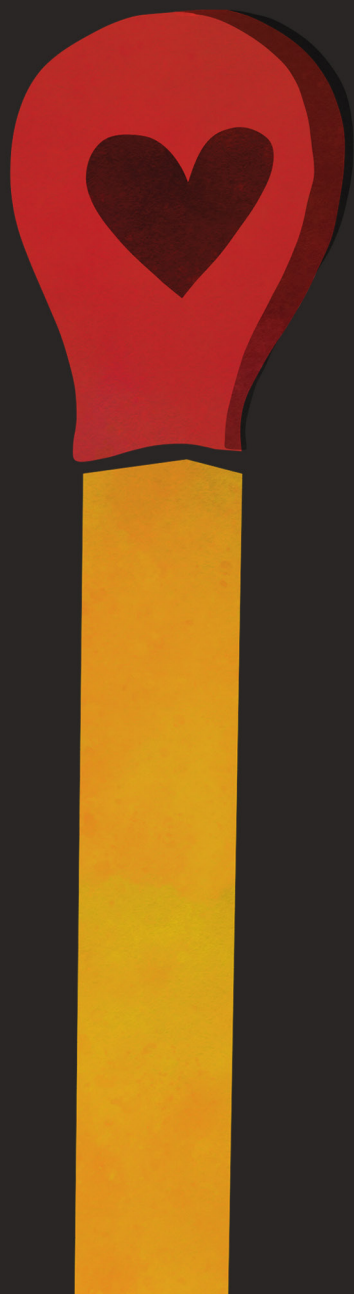


25 YEARS AGO,
A **FLAME** WAS LIT
AND A **MOVEMENT**
WAS BORN.



fire

FOUNDATION

2021 ANNUAL APPEAL

2020 ANNUAL REPORT



INCLUSION IS A PARTY WHERE ALL ARE INVITED.

Join our celebration as we reflect back on FIRE's beginning, recalling memories and milestones along the way, and stepping forward in faith as we plan for FIRE's future. Some of you have been with us since day one. Many of you have joined us along the way. Whether you're an old friend or a new supporter, we're glad you're part of the FIRE family! Together, let's renew our commitment to supporting Catholic schools as they open their doors and hearts to student with special needs.

Dear friends,

As we look back and reflect on FIRE's founding in 1996, we do so with an abundance of gratitude. We're thankful for our visionary, courageous and faith-filled founders. We're in awe of the diocesan, parish and school leaders who have opened their hearts and minds to embrace FIRE's special mission. We're grateful to all the caring, creative and talented educators who reinvent and re-imagine their teaching strategies so that all learners have a chance to grow. We're inspired by the example set by our children as they accept and embrace their peers for who and what they are, with loving hearts.

Perhaps most notably, we're grateful for YOU. Thank you for believing in the potential of all learners and for embracing the notion that all children who are baptized in our faith, including those who learn differently than their typical peers, deserve the opportunity to experience the blessings of a Catholic faith alongside their siblings, friends and neighbors. When you invest your time, talent and treasure in FIRE's mission, YOU are one of many sparks that keep the flame of inclusion burning brightly.

In the beginning, FIRE's founders stepped forward with a bold invitation to try something new. Their belief and persistence, fueled by the grace of the Holy Spirit, gave way to a brand new way of living our Catholic faith and bringing the Gospel to life. In 1998, for the first time ever, three young boys with significant disabilities were welcomed as students at their parish schools. Moved by the words of Jesus, "let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of heaven belongs to such as these (Matthew 14:19)," more parish and school communities caught on to FIRE's

mission of inclusion. Back in 1996, no one knew that thousands of lives would be impacted by FIRE's special mission.

Nor did anyone realize that inclusion would soon become the new normal for many parish and school cultures.

As we celebrate our 25th year, we welcome new opportunities to ignite inclusive Catholic education. Pope Francis calls us to "build an educational relationship with each student, who must feel welcomed and loved for what he or she is, with all of their limitations or potential." Therefore, all Catholic schools must do everything possible to embrace their calling to serve all learners.

On behalf of FIRE's Board of Directors, Founders and Staff, we invite you to engage and reconnect with our FIRE family as we celebrate all the light that inclusion brings into the lives of students, families, educators and everyone. We can't help but wonder where the next quarter century will take us!

Gratefully,

Mark S. Ungashick

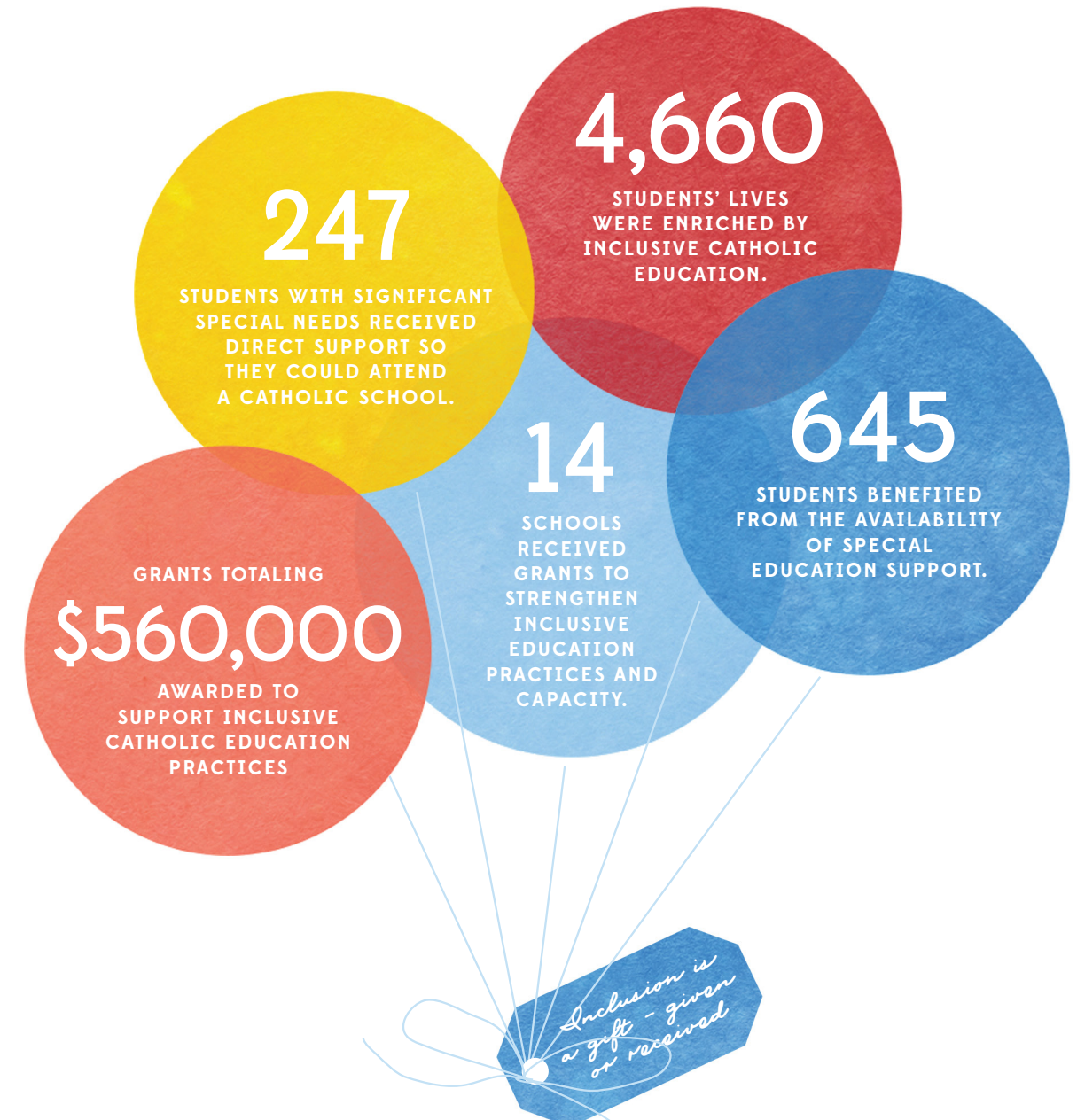
Mark Ungashick
BOARD PRESIDENT

M. Lynn Hire

M. Lynn Hire
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

By the Numbers

2019-2020 FISCAL YEAR



HOLY CROSS	NATIVITY OF MARY	OUR LADY OF HOPE
OUR LADY OF THE PRESENTATION		
ST. CHARLES BORROMEO ACADEMY		ST. ELIZABETH
ST. MICHAEL THE ARCHANGEL HIGH SCHOOL		
ST. PATRICK	ST. PETER	ST. PIUS X HIGH SCHOOL
ST. REGIS ACADEMY		ST. THERESE
ST. THOMAS MORE		VISITATION

Partner Schools

“I became an educator because I hope to share with my students what I have learned throughout the years ...that differences are welcomed, that God reveals himself in mysterious ways through people we might least expect, and most of all, that they are loved beyond belief by their Creator just the way they are”

JULIA HAMMOND,
sibling and educator



“Every student I interacted with as a Head Peer Mentor brought a unique perspective to the world and taught me valuable life lessons along the way.”

RYAN RIEGER,
peer mentor at Archbishop O'Hara High School

Stories of INCLUSION



“Thank you FIRE for bringing me to my true home as an advocate for inclusive education. I am a better person knowing students who have been impacted by inclusive education.”

DR. ELIZABETH BAKER,
former Nativity of Mary principal
and current Principal for student affairs
at St. Theresa's Academy.

“Inclusion is not only an action but a way of life... When (our son) Brett was born with Down Syndrome the dream of our kids attending Catholic School together was immediately in doubt...but Michele and I believed there was a way and she found others with that same dream...little did we know 25 years later that FIRE would be on such amazing footing!”

JEFF HUGHES, parent and founder

Hats off to FIRE's 2020 Accomplishments!

Revenue continued to grow, making it possible for FIRE to **grant over \$515,000** to 14 partner schools in support of inclusive Catholic education. This amount represents a 4% increase in support over last year.

FIRE continued to build awareness of the **Foundation's Endowment Fund** initiative by sharing information with prospective investors and by hosting information events. The Endowment was created to ensure that FIRE is able to support inclusive education for generations to come and to secure FIRE's long-term capacity to invest in inclusive Catholic education. The Foundation is approaching its phase one goal of building a \$500,000 corpus. **The five-year goal is to increase the fund to \$1,000,000.**

FIRE launched a pilot program in two schools (Nativity of Mary and Our Lady of Hope) to provide **Speech-Language Therapy** services to students. For the first time, students at these schools were able to receive school-based therapy services. Evaluations from educators and families were highly favorable.

FIRE Foundation continued to work with individuals and groups across the country, sharing our model of inclusion support and advocacy. In addition to our first affiliate partner - FIRE Foundation of Northeast Iowa in the Archdiocese of Dubuque - FIRE is now guiding the development and growth of the following affiliates:

- FIRE FOUNDATION OF NEW HAMPSHIRE**
- FIRE FOUNDATION OF CENTRAL ILLINOIS**
- FIRE FOUNDATION OF DALLAS**
- FIRE FOUNDATION OF GREATER CHICAGO**
- FIRE FOUNDATION OF NW INDIANA**

FIRE Foundation developed proactive operational and fundraising strategies in response to the global Covid-19 pandemic that surfaced in March. Our team successfully re-imagined events, adapted communications, and utilized digital meeting platforms, making it possible to continue engaging stakeholders and generating income to support program objectives.



When we lead with love and faith,
inclusion is a piece of cake!

Twenty-Five Ways to be More Inclusive

- 1 Invite a classmate to sit with you at lunch.
- 2 Invite a classmate to play at recess.
- 3 Invite a classmate to the football game on Friday night.
- 4 Reach out and help a classmate with an assignment.
- 5 Ask a classmate for help with an assignment.
- 6 Call or text a classmate after school.
- 7 Give a classmate "Space and Grace."
- 8 Sit next to a classmate and offer a smile without expecting conversation.
- 9 Put a note with a smiley face (or fun emoji) on your classmate's desk.
- 10 Ask a classmate how HE or SHE would like to start the project.
- 11 Ask a classmate his / her opinion on a topic or assignment.
- 12 Say hello and the hold the door for someone you don't know.
- 13 Start a conversation with a student who seems lonely.
- 14 If a friend doesn't use her/his voice to communicate, find different ways to interact.
- 15 Invite a classmate to your birthday party.
- 16 Remember that everyone needs and deserves genuine and caring friendship.
- 17 Remember to be inclusive wherever you go.
- 18 Laugh loudly (or softly) TOGETHER.
- 19 Choose a classmate to play on your team.
- 20 Speak up when you witness bullying behaviors.
- 21 Focus on what your friend CAN DO, not what he / she cannot do.
- 22 Celebrate and enjoy your friend's special gifts and/or talents.
- 23 Look for opportunities to compliment a classmate.
- 24 Introduce a classmate to your friends.
- 25 Offer to help if a classmate is struggling with a task.

2020 ANNUAL REPORT

This report reflects income and expenses July 1, 2019 – June 30, 2020. The financial results for this fiscal year reflect our commitment to strategically increase FIRE's support for inclusive education in our partner schools. Support to those schools grew 5% over the prior fiscal year.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

2019-2020

Mark Ungashick, PRESIDENT	Lindsey Anderson
Mary Madden, VICE PRESIDENT	Carol Caron
Debbie Whittaker, TREASURER	Katheigh Degen
John Joyce, SECRETARY	Erin Duba
	Pat Fanning
	Buffy Gunter
	Marie Kissick
	Michele Markey
	Adriana Martinez
	Erin Neuburger
	Dr. Dan Peter, EX OFFICIO
	Mark Rieger
	Jenny Stasi
	Mary Stuckey
	Sean Switzer
	John Tyner
	Peggy Van Dyke
	Gretchen Vosburgh

FINANCIAL REPORT

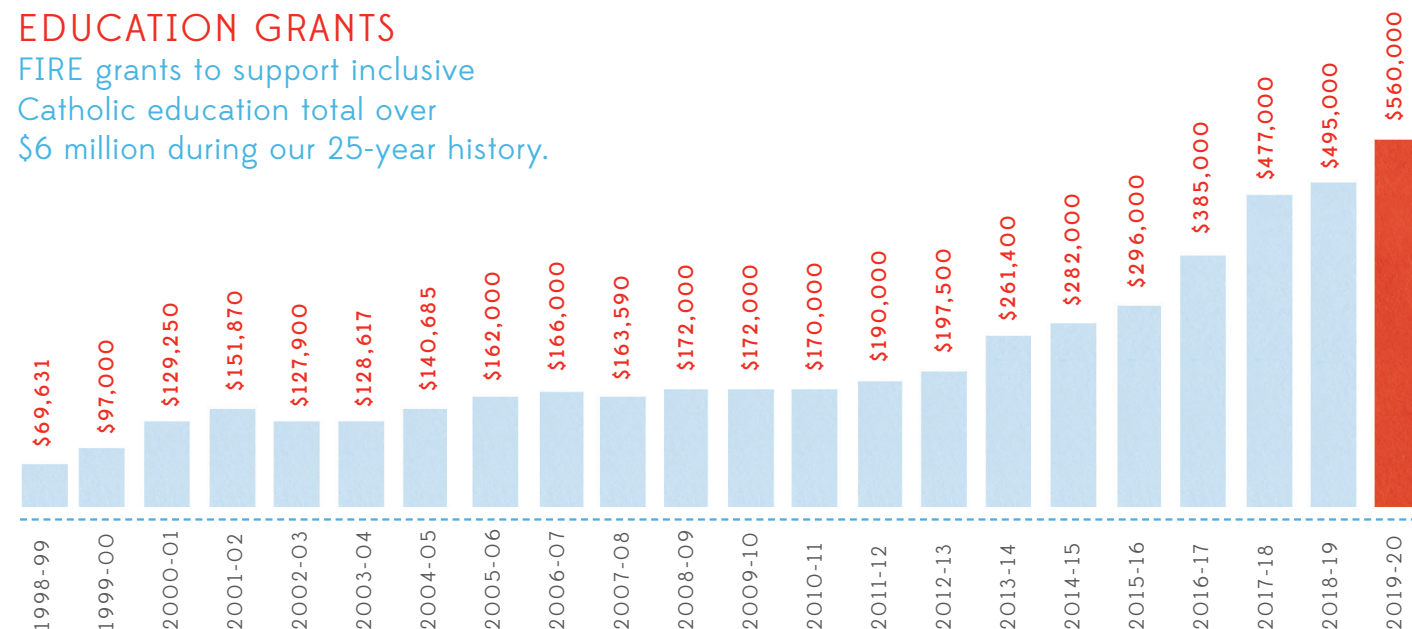
FISCAL YEAR 2019-2020

INCOME	
Contributions	\$ 100,745
Grants	\$ 238,256
Events	
FIRE Ball	\$ 361,396
Golf Tournament*	\$
Purses with Purpose	\$ 61,992
Conference*	\$
Interest and Other Income	\$ 4,273
Affiliate Income	\$ 13,500
In-Kind Contribution (phone/rent)	\$ 18,000
TOTAL	\$ 798,161
EXPENSES	
Program (School Grants, Initiatives)	\$609,288
Fundraising Expenses	\$ 37,922
General and Administrative	\$ 89,082
In-Kind Expense	\$ 18,000
NET INCOME	\$ 43,869
TOTAL	\$ 798,161

* Because of the pandemic, the Golf Tournament was postponed until July 2020. The conference is held biennially on odd-numbered years.

EDUCATION GRANTS

FIRE grants to support inclusive Catholic education total over \$6 million during our 25-year history.



INCLUSION MEANS THE MORE THE MERRIER – WE NEED YOU TO JOIN THE PARTY!

FIRE was ignited by friends, neighbors and faith communities – ordinary people who joined together to support an extraordinary dream. People just like you! As we celebrate our 25th year, we're inviting members of our FIRE family to rise to this special occasion by making a \$25 donation. (or more if you are able!)

\$25 for 25 Challenge

IF EVERYONE WHO RECEIVES THIS MAILING PITCHES IN WITH A \$25 GIFT, WE CAN RAISE \$100,000 TO SUPPORT INCLUSIVE CATHOLIC EDUCATION! That's right - \$100 grand! Just imagine all the learning support that students will receive. All the breakthroughs, the aaah-ha moments, the big ideas and the feel-good learning vibes. Your donation to FIRE can make a difference and set learning aglow in classrooms all over Kansas City.

Extra zeros add fuel to the FIRE!

YOU CAN MAKE FIRE'S LIGHT BURN EVEN BRIGHTER WITH A DONATION OF \$250 OR \$2500 OR MORE. Or how about a \$25 monthly donation for 25 months? When we all unite, our gifts – large or small – add up to big opportunities for students who benefit from FIRE's mission.

Double your donation.

WE'VE GOT A LOT TO CELEBRATE SO WE'RE DOUBLING DOWN WITH A SPECIAL INCENTIVE! Thanks to the generosity of a wonderful family who believes in FIRE's mission and the children who benefit from our efforts, your donation will be matched! Every donation up to will be matched up to \$25,000!



We're Igniting Support for Inclusive Catholic Education All Year Long - Join us!

Learn more about these 2021 opportunities to celebrate inclusion and support FIRE's mission at firefoundation.org.

March 3&4

INCLUSION IN ACTION IN CATHOLIC SCHOOLS,

a virtual conference for educators, school leaders, parents and inclusion advocates.

April 30

PLAY WITH FIRE GOLF TOURNAMENT

at Swope Memorial Golf Course.

June 17

PURSES WITH PURPOSE

Girls' Night Out and Auction

July

FIRESTARTERS

Keep your eyes open for the rollout of FIREstarters, a social media fundraising and awareness event.

October 23

FIRE BALL 2021,

a 25th Anniversary Celebration at the Loews Hotel

Celebrating
25
YEARS
OF
INCLUSION