

ARCHDIOCESE OF CHICAGO



# FAITH TO SUCCEED

**Progress Report for Catholic Schools**

2022/23

# ARCHDIOCESE OF CHICAGO OFFICE OF CATHOLIC SCHOOLS

## WHO WE ARE

For more than 175 years, Catholic schools have been a critical and dynamic ministry of the Archdiocese of Chicago. Generations of families have relied on our Catholic schools for academic and spiritual development, resulting in an alumni community that numbers in the millions. Today, our committed teachers continue to deliver on the promise of Catholic education by preparing all students to live faithful and successful lives.

## WHAT WE DO

The Office of Catholic Schools provides our 152 elementary and three high schools with support in the areas of academics, student support, Catholic identity, leadership development and programming, marketing and communications, scholarships, school operations and compliance. We work closely with partners in Catholic education, vendors and every ministry within the archdiocese to ensure the comprehensive development of every school.

## WHAT WE BELIEVE

The work of the Office of Catholic Schools is guided by five root beliefs:

- Great leaders make great schools
- We are stronger together
- Supportive environments encourage growth
- Challenges are opportunities
- We are the joyful hands of Christ

## OUR LEADERSHIP TEAM

**Greg Richmond**, Superintendent of Catholic Schools

**Therese Craig**, Deputy Superintendent for Academics

**Katie O'Dea**, Senior Director of Communications and Marketing

**Karen Rebhan-Csuk**, Deputy Superintendent for School Support

**Matthew Walter**, Chief Operating Officer

## LEADERSHIP MESSAGES

Dear Sisters and Brothers in Christ,

For more than 175 years, Catholic schools in the Archdiocese of Chicago have provided students a high-quality, faith-based education that prepares them to lead, not just within our Church but in the broader, global community. We are proud of our history of supporting, to the best of our abilities, families in need who want to enroll their children in the school that best fits their needs. We will continue to walk with these families, regardless of their faith tradition, trusting in the support of our families and our generous donors. We take pride in the excellent Catholic schools in our archdiocese, and in our solid record of giving students, particularly those living in poverty, a chance to succeed in the future.

Sincerely yours in Christ,



Archbishop of Chicago



Dear Friends of Catholic Schools,

The mission of Catholic schools remains as compelling as ever. The recent changes in legislation related to scholarships, while threatening, will not deter us from our purpose: to ensure that our schools provide welcoming, faith-based communities that allow students to develop critical skills and prepare them for academic success. For these reasons, we believe that Catholic schools are special and unique. As the adults who work in these schools, we are blessed to have the opportunity and obligation to continue this legacy. We also remain grateful for the broader community of families, alumni, donors, partners and friends who assist with delivering on the promise of our mission.

Peace,



Greg Richmond  
Superintendent of Schools



# OUR REACH

The schools in the Archdiocese of Chicago make up a community where students of all backgrounds and interests are united by faith. Our dedicated teachers provide students with a rigorous academic experience in a nurturing environment that empowers them to reach their full potential. This is the Archdiocese of Chicago Catholic Schools:

**45,321** Number of elementary students receiving a Catholic education throughout the Archdiocese of Chicago

**3,610** Number of elementary school teachers educating and forming the next generation of Catholics

**311** Number of zip codes represented by our students

**152** Number of archdiocesan elementary schools

**50** Number of Blue Ribbon Awards granted by the U.S. Department of Education to our schools over the last 10 years



**42** Percentage of our students who identify as students of color

**12** Average student to teacher ratio in our schools is 12:1

**2** Our schools serve both Cook and Lake counties

**1** One goal, to achieve student success fueled by faith

# YOUR SUPPORT

We believe that a Catholic education is an investment in the future. We are extremely grateful for the support of our donors who partner with us to make the experience of a Catholic education possible for thousands of families.



**Donors supporting our cause:** nearly **1,000**

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**Scholarships granted:** more than **6,500**

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**Average scholarship award:** nearly **\$3,300**

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**Average family income:** under **\$38,000**

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**Students with significant need applying for aid:** more than **11,000**

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**Students remaining on scholarship waitlist:** nearly **3,000**

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The financial assistance we are able to grant due to the generosity of our donors makes a tremendous impact. Increased donor support would not only give more deserving children access to a Catholic education, it would also improve the financial strength of our schools most reliant on scholarships.

**Annual funding gap:** **\$16 million**

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**Scholarship support covers:** **36% of family need**

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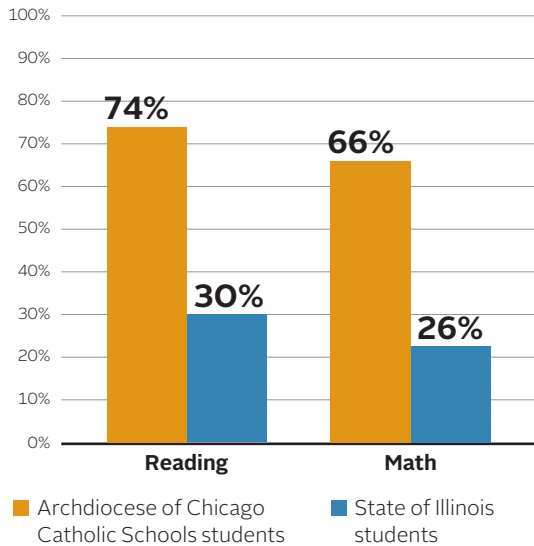
**Average tuition covers:** **70% of the true cost to educate a child**

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# ACADEMIC GROWTH

We are dedicated to ensuring that all students are meeting their academic potential, no matter where they begin. We measure our progress in this area by conducting i-Ready Diagnostic Assessments three times throughout the school year. Teachers utilize the assessments to determine how to best personalize each student's learning and monitor progress.

## Comparison to statewide measures



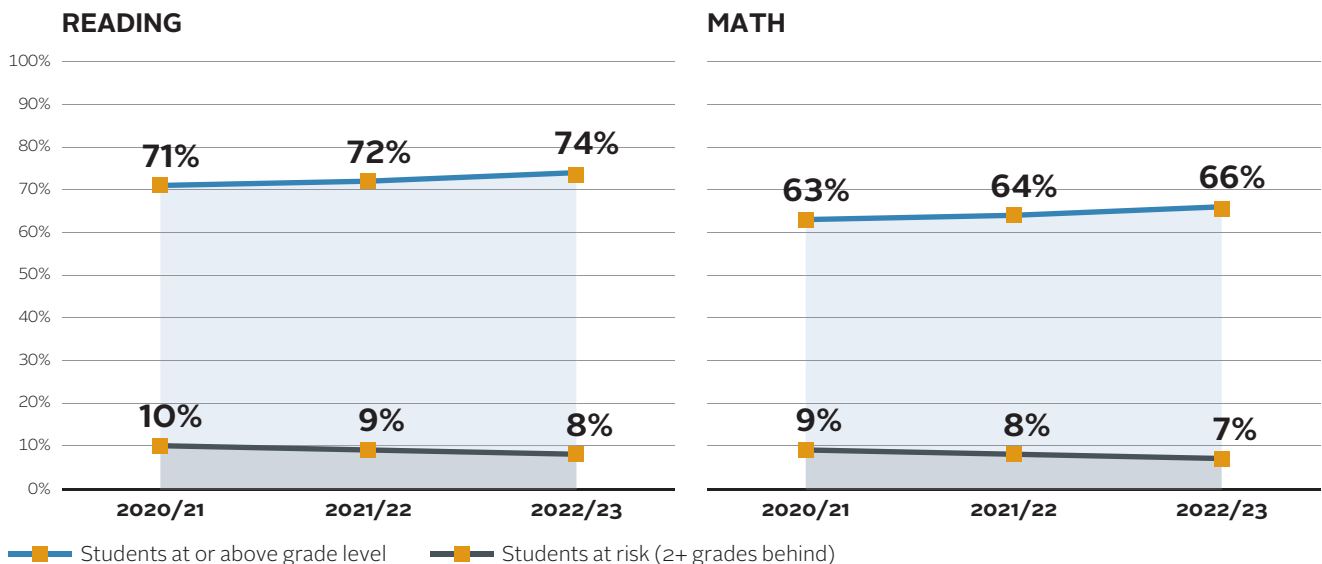
Although our students significantly outperform statewide reading and math proficiency levels, our goals are set much higher to ensure all students are growing academically. 74% of our students are on/above grade level for reading and 66% for math. According to the Illinois Assessment of Readiness (IAR), only 30% of Illinois students are meeting proficiency standards for reading and 26% for math.

## GOAL = GROWTH

Our academic systemwide goal targets student growth. We achieved a **3-point gain in reading** and a **4-point gain in math** during the 2022/23 school year.

## Increasing student proficiency over time

Not only have we achieved gains in the percentage of students reaching proficiency in both reading and math, we have also seen the percentage of students falling seriously behind decrease each of the last three years.

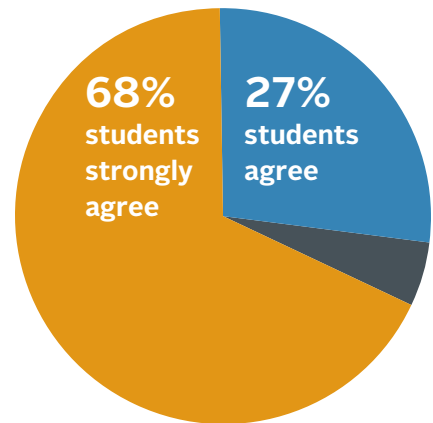


# CATHOLIC IDENTITY

We believe our faith-based approach to education not only contributes to greater academic outcomes but also provides the next generation with the skillset and moral compass to achieve a fulfilling, successful tomorrow. We measure our progress in Catholic identity initiatives through a supplemental survey to the annual 5Essentials Survey. One of the questions asks students if they believe God is present in their lives, which serves as our systemwide goal for measuring success in Catholic identity for our schools.

During the 2022/23 school year we achieved **a four point increase** in the percentage of students who strongly believe that God is present in their lives.

## God is present in my life...



“We truly feel like part of our [school] community. It's been a very positive experience, from an education perspective, but more importantly, from a community faith, values and character perspective. I feel closer to the Catholic faith than I have in years.”

— Current parent

# SCHOOL CULTURE

We believe that supportive environments encourage growth. We measure our progress in this area by conducting the 5Essentials Survey annually. This survey includes teachers, students and parents and was developed by the University of Chicago. Their research has shown that schools strong on at least three of the five essentials are 10 times more likely to improve student learning than schools weak on three or more.

During the 2022/23 school year we achieved **a seven point increase** in the percentage of schools meeting this measure, making progress toward our 3-year systemwide goal.

## What our parents are saying...

95% are likely to recommend their school

96% agree that their children are safe at school

94% agree that teachers have their children's best interest in mind

94% agree that teachers do their best to help children learn

## What our students are saying...

92% agree that “the teacher wants us to become better thinkers, not just memorize things”

94% agree that “I feel safe with my teachers at this school”

96% agree that “the teacher expects everyone to work hard”

96% agree that “the teacher expects me to do my best all the time”

# SUCCESS STORIES FROM ACROSS THE ARCHDIOCESE

Our students, teachers, schools and donors celebrated amazing achievements during the 2022/23 school year.

## GOLDEN APPLE WINNER

Rachel Werderitz of St. Andrew School won the Golden Apple Award for Excellence in Teaching. She has been an inspiring educator for 16 years and is known for her dedication to her students and her commitment to making a difference in their lives.



## GREEN AWARD

Immaculate Conception-St. Joseph School received first place recognition from the Illinois Green School Project. The Green Dolphins Club was formed in conjunction with the ICSJ Parent Association's Green Committee. Their award was based on their work building green habits and developing a zero-waste lunch.



## DUAL LANGUAGE SPELLING BEE

St. Procopius Dual Language School students took home the top prize in the first-ever Catholic School Spanish Spelling Bee hosted by ACE – Alliance for Catholic Education.



## CHRIST THE KING BLUE RIBBON 2022

Christ the King School was the recipient of the 2022 National Blue Ribbon School award. The prestigious award affirms the hard work of students, educators, families, and communities in creating safe and welcoming schools where students master challenging and engaging content.



## BRENNAN SCHOLARSHIP

The Dorothy C. and Edward A. Brennan Scholarship was established by the couple's eight children and will be awarded to Catholic school students from families with three or more children. The commitment of \$50,000 a year for five years to the Archdiocese of Chicago Caritas Scholarship Program will support approximately 25 children, with an average scholarship of \$2,000 per year.

## SCIENCE OLYMPIAD

The Our Lady of Mount Carmel Academy Chicago Science Olympiad team had an excellent year. The varsity team finished in first place overall at the Oakton College Regional Tournament which earned them a bid to the State of Illinois Science Olympiad Tournament.



# THE GIFT THAT LASTS A LIFETIME



In the 2022/23 school year our scholarship programs provided thousands of children and their families the financial assistance needed to enroll and stay in our Catholic schools. Your continued support of these programs enables us to fulfill our mission of providing an excellent faith-based academic experience to any family who wishes to pursue a Catholic education in the archdiocese while continuing efforts to revitalize our Church.

The archdiocese, partnered with the Empower Illinois and Big Shoulders Fund scholarship-granting organizations, to award scholarships to children whose families demonstrate financial need each year. This critical financial assistance enabled many families, to keep their children in Catholic schools.

In addition, our Catholic schools directly provided \$22 million in financial aid to students in need. Despite this tremendous support, the available scholarship funds do not cover the costs for all children to receive high-quality, faith-based learning at an archdiocesan school.

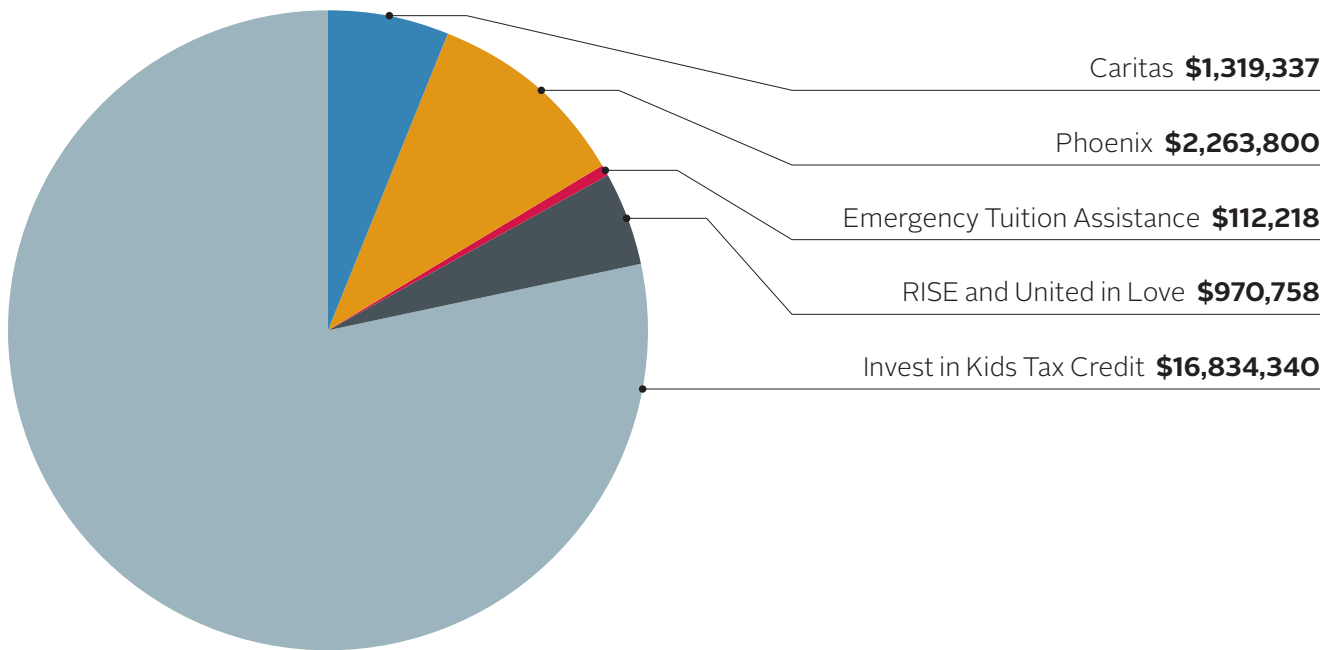
“It is difficult to find the words to express the depth of gratitude we have for the kindness and beneficence of those who’ve made this award possible. Please know that your goodness, charitableness and sacrifice is not taken for granted, but is deeply appreciated as a precious gift of God.”

— Pope John XXIII parent

“Muchas gracias por ayudarme en el estudio de mis niños Dios los bendiga a todos los que asen esto posible muchas pero muchas gracias 🙏🙏”

— Kimberly Dominguez, St. Bede parent (Caritas 22/23)

## All scholarship funds by category



Over **\$21.5 million** in scholarships distributed in the 2022/23 school year.

The average tax credit scholarship in 2022/23 was **\$4,925**, covering **98%** of the average Catholic school tuition of **\$5,000**.

**85%** of scholarship funds are issued to students of color.





## ARCHDIOCESE OF CHICAGO SCHOLARSHIPS

### Phoenix Scholarship Program

The Catholic Education Scholarship Trust (CEST) was created in 2013 through the *To Teach Who Christ Is* archdiocesan capital campaign. Phoenix scholarships are provided by Archdiocese of Chicago on behalf of CEST. These renewable, need-based scholarships are awarded to qualified K–8 students attending eligible schools. Since the first scholarships were distributed in 2016, more than \$10 million dollars in scholarships have been awarded.

Scholarship funds:	<b>\$2,263,800</b>
Scholarships awarded:	<b>1,618</b>
Average award:	<b>\$1,399</b>

### Caritas Scholarship Program

Created in 2013 in conjunction with the *To Teach Who Christ Is* archdiocesan capital campaign, the Caritas Scholarship Program provides for immediate scholarship needs that could not be fulfilled through the CEST endowment. The renewable Caritas Scholarship provides need-based tuition assistance to families enrolling their eligible K–8 child in an archdiocesan school. Since 2013, more than \$22 million dollars in scholarship support had been distributed.

Scholarship funds:	<b>\$1,319,337</b>
Scholarships awarded:	<b>877</b>
Average award:	<b>\$1,504</b>

### Emergency Tuition Assistance Fund

The archdiocese established the Emergency Tuition Assistance Fund to assist families with tuition when unforeseen situations arise during the school year, such as a death in the family, a job loss, extraordinary medical expenses, bankruptcy or home foreclosure. All students in good standing are eligible.

Annual assistance:	<b>\$112,218</b>
Annual awards:	<b>82</b>
Average tuition assistance:	<b>\$1,369</b>

The median income of a Caritas/Phoenix recipient family in 2022/23 was **\$36,575.**

“I applied for a tax credit scholarship after losing my husband to COVID-19 two and a half years ago. Losing his income was a big loss to our household... I want my children to have a Catholic education where they will learn how be respectful, grow in their faith and receive a great education. Without the tax credit scholarship, I and other parents with lower incomes could not continue to send our children to Catholic school.”

—Christine Yells, parent of two tax credit scholarship recipients attending St. Patrick School in Wadsworth

## SCHOLARSHIPS OFFERED THROUGH OUR PARTNERS

### Invest in Kids Tax Credit Scholarship Program

Launched in 2018, the Tax Credit Scholarship Program is part of the Illinois Invest in Kids Act that promotes educational choices for the economically disadvantaged. To ensure as many students as possible have access to these scholarships, the Archdiocese of Chicago partnered with two state-approved scholarship-granting organizations – Empower Illinois and Big Shoulders Fund.\* The Tax Credit Scholarship is based on a median family income of \$35,127 with an average scholarship of \$4,925.



Scholarship funds:	<b>\$13,447,825</b>
Scholarships awarded:	<b>2,641</b>



Scholarship funds:	<b>\$3,386,515</b>
Scholarships awarded:	<b>777</b>

### Two additional Empower Illinois scholarships

Empower Illinois also offers two other scholarships to our students that are separate from the Invest in Kids Tax Credit Scholarship Program.

#### RISE

This scholarship provides an option for qualified students currently attending public school to attend Catholic schools.

Scholarship funds:	<b>\$606,206</b>
Scholarships awarded:	<b>282</b>

#### United in Love

The United in Love scholarship provides aid to students not receiving a tax credit scholarship.

Scholarship funds:	<b>\$364,552</b>
Scholarships awarded:	<b>251</b>

\*Amounts reported include scholarships awarded to students attending schools operated by the Archdiocese of Chicago. Both organizations provide additional Tax Credit Scholarships to other schools.

AN EVENING CELEBRATING  
CATHOLIC SCHOOL EXCELLENCE

# SAINTS SCHOLARS

Our inaugural *Saints & Scholars* event on May 4 at Old St. Mary's School was an evening filled with engaging classroom presentations, stunning school performances, and special celebration of our Catholic school community. Congratulations again to our 2023 awardees: Principals Christine Boyd and Maria Brown, and alum Thomas Dowling.

## Special thanks to our participating schools:

- Old St. Mary's School (Host)
- St. Patrick School, Wadsworth
- St. Bartholomew School
- Immaculate Conception School
- Alphonsus Academy & Center for the Arts
- St. Josaphat School
- Our Lady of Mount Carmel Academy Chicago
- St. Gabriel School
- St. Albert the Great School
- St. John de la Salle Catholic Academy



# FORE THE KIDS

Archdiocese of Chicago  
Catholic Schools Golf Outing

On June 26, the Archdiocese of Chicago Stewardship and Development team and the Office of Catholic Schools hosted the annual *Fore the Kids* golf outing at Chicago Highlands Club. Thank you to our generous sponsors and thank you to the golfers who came out to help raise money for our emergency tuition assistance fund.



ARCHDIOCESE OF CHICAGO



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