



FIRE BY THE NUMBERS

67 STUDENTS with significant special needs received direct support so they could attend a Catholic school

400+ STUDENTS benefited from the availability of special education support

4,500+ STUDENTS' lives were enriched by inclusive education

26 PARA-EDUCATORS supported students' learning experiences

11 SCHOOLS received grants to defray the cost of offering special education services

265,000 DOLLARS were granted to schools for special education staff and resources

DEAR FRIENDS: What a wonderful year it has been for the FIRE Foundation! Thanks to the generous support you have provided as donors and volunteers, our partner schools welcomed a record number of children with special needs. Your gifts continue to ensure ALL of God's children, regardless of ability, are able to grow in knowledge, faith and friendship in inclusive Catholic communities.

On behalf of FIRE's Board of Directors, our schools' outstanding educators and the families and children who benefit from FIRE grants, thank you for the gifts of time, talent and treasure that you share so graciously. You make amazing things happen in the lives of children! Please know our team works hard to stretch every dollar we receive so all students have the resources they need to succeed.

Since last year's report, the Foundation has embarked on several new initiatives designed to strengthen and expand our mission.

>> With assistance from Trozzolo Communications, the Foundation engaged in a rebranding process. Nearly 20 years ago, our founders created a brilliant acronym—FIRE (Foundation for Inclusive Religious Education). In an effort to leverage what's familiar (FIRE) and to underscore our role as fund raisers and advocates for inclusive education, we have rebranded as The FIRE Founda-

tion and added a tagline: Igniting Inclusive Catholic Education. We're excited about our new "look" and confident our brand will carry us forward for many years to come.

>> With assistance from Concera Media, the Foundation launched a refreshed website at firefoundation.org. New content is continually being added to this vital communications link. We invite you to pay us a visit! You can make secure online donations, watch the newest FIRE video, get information on inclusive education, register for upcoming events and more.

>> We're forging new friendships! FIRE is the grateful recipient of a three-year, \$300,000 grant from Loretto Charities, a foundation committed to building stronger families and encouraging spiritual growth. We're blessed to partner with the Hunt family. This gift enabled FIRE to augment 2014-15 grant awards.

>> With grant support from the Diocese Life & Justice Office, the FIRE Foundation is partnering with the Diocese School Office to present a professional development day—Responding to the Needs of All Learners—in May 2015 for all Diocesan educators. It is our hope that attendees will learn valuable teaching strategies and become inspired to expand inclusive education efforts.

>> A committee of Board members is exploring opportunities to share the FIRE Foundation model of inclusive Catholic education with parents and educators across the country. During the past year, FIRE fielded more than 30 inquiries from New York to California to Florida and Arizona (and many points in between!)

These accomplishments wouldn't be possible without your support. We are blessed so abundantly and we're grateful beyond measure. With your continued prayers and support, and of course with God's blessings, the flame of FIRE will continue to burn brightly for years to come.

In Peace and Gratitude,



Peggy VanDyke
Board President



M. Lynn Hire
Executive Director



Our Mission

Our mission is to provide children with special needs the opportunity for an inclusive Catholic education in their home parish schools.

Our Story

The FIRE Foundation (aka: Foundation for Inclusive Religious Education) was founded in 1996 by a group of parents who shared a common dream—for their children with special needs to at-

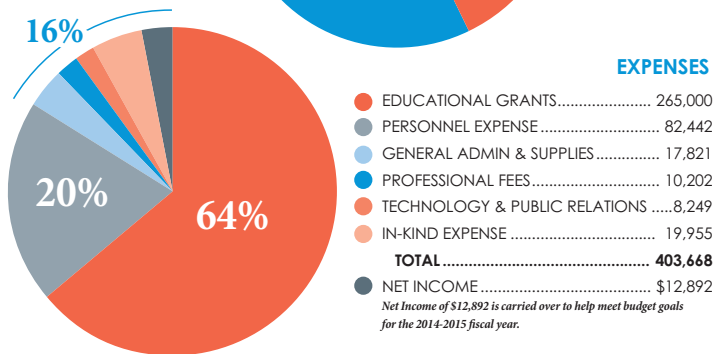
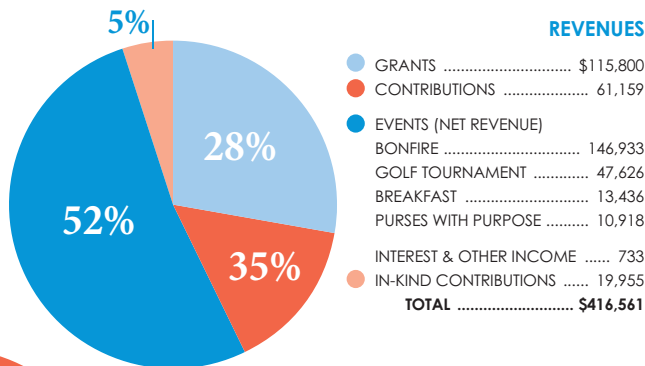
tend their parish schools with siblings and friends. Since that time, through the efforts of parents, dedicated board of directors, exceptional educators and community members who embrace inclusive Catholic education, nearly \$2.5 million dollars have been raised and countless lives have been impacted in a powerful and positive way. FIRE offers financial grants for qualifying schools within the Catholic Diocese of Kansas City-St. Joseph. These grants assist with the cost of special education teachers,

para-professionals and resources, enabling schools to educate children with special needs alongside their peers. The FIRE Foundation raises money and raises awareness and advocates for inclusion of ALL God's children in Catholic schools. We believe that inclusion enhances the education of all children, regardless of ability, by teaching acceptance, compassion and the value of every child of God. Children grow up knowing and appreciating each other's unique gifts.



Financials

This report reflects donations received between July 1, 2013 and June 30, 2014



Keep Our FIRE Burning Brightly

Opportunities to Support and Strengthen Inclusive Catholic Education

VOLUNTEER. We're always looking for folks to serve on event committees and to help out in a variety of ways. What a great way to have some fun and meet people who are passionate about meeting kids' special needs. Call Julie at 816.756.1858 ext. 252.

JOIN. Become a Friend of FIRE! You'll serve on a team of parents from your parish community. Friends of FIRE meets six times a year to share ideas, help raise money and to expand awareness about FIRE's impact.

CLICK. It's quick, easy and safe to donate on line at firefoundation.org. You can make a one-time donation or set up monthly gift giving. Just click on the Donate button in the upper left corner of the screen and follow the prompts.

MAIL. Yes, we accept (and welcome) checks. Whether it's \$5, \$50 or \$500, we love receiving money in the mail to support our mission.

ATTEND. Our FUNdraising events are open to everyone. Join us at the *Play with FIRE* golf tournament, *Purses with Purpose* or *FIRE Ball* gala.

DESIGNATE. Every fall, the United Way launches its giving campaign through area employers. You can write in Foundation for Inclusive Religious Education, and your pledge will benefit FIRE.

TELL. If every one of our friends and supporters told just one person about FIRE and invited that person to participate in an event or fundraising campaign, we would double our support.

DONATE. If that junker in your driveway has lost its get-up-and-go, consider donating it to FIRE. Simply call 1.800.237.5714 and we'll get the wheels in motion for your car donation (and tax deduction).

INCLUDE. Please remember FIRE in your estate planning. We are happy to work with you to discuss gifts of stock, annuities as well as wills and trusts and other options.

TAKE (us to the cleaners)! Hangers Cleaners, that is. They donate 10% of your total bill to FIRE when you sign up by calling 816.941.2262. With just 150 participants spending an average of \$500 per year, FIRE can earn \$7,500+.

All of us must care for life, cherish life, with tenderness, warmth...to give life is to open (our) heart, and to care for life is to (give oneself) in tenderness and warmth for others, to have concern in my heart for others. Caring for life from the beginning to the end. What a simple thing, what a beautiful thing. So, go forth and don't be discouraged. Care for life. It's worth it. - Pope Francis

