

# ANNUAL REPORT 2020 - 2021



"The most effective way to overcome the temptation to give in to harmful lifestyles is by investing in education. Education will also help to overcome a widespread mentality of injustice and violence, as well as ethnic divisions. The greatest need is for a model of education which teaches the young to think critically and encourages growth in moral values."

Pope Francis  
Evangelii Gaudium

# LETTER FROM THE SUPERINTENDENT

The 2020-2021 school year was truly unprecedented in every imaginable way, and as I reflect upon the past year, I am humbled by all that we have accomplished together. Faced with the unknown, we remained steadfast in our goal to establish a positive, safe and supportive learning environment as our families, students and teachers navigated the disruptions caused by the pandemic.



It is my pleasure to share with you our 2020-2021 annual report. This report highlights a year of student and school achievements and all that makes the Diocese of Des Moines Catholic Schools incredible learning environments and communities of faith. I hope you will take the time to review these accomplishments and celebrate how far we've come in the wake of a global pandemic.

I am so very proud of the effort put forth by our administrators, faculty, staff, volunteers, and school families to ensure our students receive a quality education rooted in Catholic faith. Our 16 schools are not only possible but are successful because of this collective commitment to Catholic education.

Now more than ever, we are grateful for your continued support. I look forward to our work ahead as we continue to provide a place where students grow in faith and wisdom and emerge as responsible citizens dedicated to the practice of life-long discipleship.

In Christ,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Donna Bishop". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Donna Bishop, ED.S  
Superintendent of Catholic Schools



# OUR MISSION

Located throughout the Diocese of Des Moines, our 16 schools challenge students to aim higher academically, spiritually and personally. At Diocese of Des Moines Catholic Schools, we believe Catholic education should be rooted in faith, focused on excellence and supported by a caring community while also providing the best value to our families. Our schools deliver more for each and every student because we believe you should expect more from your child's education.

Catholic schools in the Diocese of Des Moines are collaborative communities of spiritual formation and academic excellence, where students grow in faith and wisdom and emerge as responsible citizens dedicated to the practice of life-long discipleship.

# OUR SCHOOLS

CHRIST THE KING  
CATHOLIC SCHOOL  
2 YO, PS3, PK4, K-8  
Des Moines

DOWLING CATHOLIC  
HIGH SCHOOL  
9-12  
West Des Moines

HOLY FAMILY  
CATHOLIC SCHOOL  
PK4, K-8  
Des Moines

HOLY TRINITY  
CATHOLIC SCHOOL  
PS3, PK4, TK, K-8  
Des Moines

SACRED HEART  
CATHOLIC SCHOOL  
PS3, PK4, TK, K-8  
West Des Moines

SAINT ALBERT  
CATHOLIC SCHOOL  
Birth-2, PS3, PK4, K-12  
Council Bluffs

SHELBY COUNTY  
CATHOLIC SCHOOL  
PK4, K-6  
Harlan

ST. ANTHONY  
CATHOLIC SCHOOL  
PS3, PK4, K-8  
Des Moines

ST. AUGUSTIN  
CATHOLIC SCHOOL  
PK4, TK, K-8  
Des Moines

ST. FRANCIS OF ASSISI  
CATHOLIC SCHOOL  
PS3, PK4, K-8  
Des Moines

ST. JOSEPH  
CATHOLIC SCHOOL  
PK4, K-8  
Des Moines

ST. LUKE THE EVANGELIST  
CATHOLIC SCHOOL  
K-8  
Ankeny

ST. MALACHY  
CATHOLIC SCHOOL  
PS3, PK4, K-8  
Creston

ST. PATRICK  
CATHOLIC SCHOOL  
PK4, K-8  
Perry

ST. THERESA  
CATHOLIC SCHOOL  
PK4, K-8  
Des Moines

ST. PIUS X  
CATHOLIC SCHOOL  
PK4, K-8  
Urbandale



# OUR TEAM



**MOST REV. WILLIAM M. JOENSEN, PhD**  
Bishop, Diocese of Des Moines



**DONNA BISHOP, EdS**  
Superintendent of Schools,  
Diocese of Des Moines



**DENISE MULCAHY, MSE**  
Director of Teaching and  
Learning



**ANNE FRANKLIN, PhD**  
Director of Professional  
Development



**NICOLE CASTILLO WALLER, BA**  
Bilingual Community Outreach  
Coordinator



**NICOLE EVANS, BS, MHA, CCSL**  
Director of Marketing and  
Enrollment Management



# SCHOOL YEAR HIGHLIGHTS



Five Saint Albert students earned recognition from the Hawkeye Ten Conference for academic achievement and character. Three Dowling Catholic students were named Finalists with the National Merit Scholarship Program. In addition, students Anna Schewe (Saint Albert) and Lele Nigg (Dowling Catholic) were selected as candidates for the 2021 U.S. Presidential Scholars Program.

COVID-19 didn't stop our student enrichment opportunities. Holy Trinity hosted a Virtual Talent Show, students in grades 5-7 at Sacred Heart performed *The Mystery of Custodia*, a completely virtual musical, St. Joseph band students held their first concert in more than a year, and St. Malachy students discovered archery.



Grant funding from the Catholic Tuition Organization helped the diocese launch a marketing initiative to promote awareness of Catholic education and increase enrollment. The campaign generated more than 2 million impressions among the target audiences, 5,000 unique clicks for more information, over 9,000 unique visitors to the website.

St. Theresa teachers Jane Ann Becicka and Ronda McCarthy became STEM Innovator® certified teachers. STEM Innovator® certified teachers engage students in solving authentic, community-driven, real-world problems by working in teams and collaborating with community partners.



Students across the diocese celebrated and shared their faith. Students at St. Patrick live-streamed two All-School Rosary prayers, St. Malachy hosted a living Rosary, and St. Anthony hosted a Lenten family activity night.

# 2020-2021 SCHOOL YEAR BY THE NUMBERS

6194

PK-8 Students

\*as of September 2020



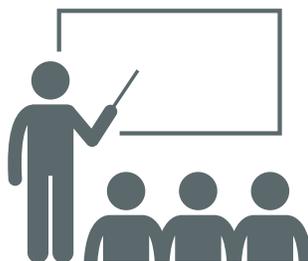
138



New Students (K-8)

30%

School Diversity



13:1

Classroom Ratio



\$3.2M+

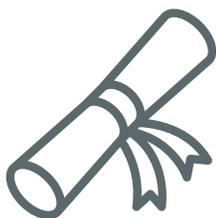
Provided in Tuition Assistance

700+

School Masses

23%

of Faculty hold  
Advanced Degrees



5

Blue Ribbon  
Schools





# A FAITH-FILLED ENVIRONMENT



*"We chose to send our children to St. Joseph's because of the community. Many parishioners are involved at some level with the students of the school whether it be attending weekly school masses, helping out in the school, or sponsoring the students receiving the Holy Sacraments. The teachers, staff, and Father Pins truly want to see the students develop both academically and spiritually."*

- St. Joseph Catholic School Parents

# FAITH HIGHLIGHTS

At Diocese of Des Moines Catholic Schools, faith is incorporated into the daily curriculum to provide a foundation for success. Faith formation promotes a relationship with Christ and teaches students how to live the Gospel through love and service to others.



Students in grades PK-12 participated in more than 700 school Masses, and over 400 students received the Holy Sacraments of Reconciliation and First Communion.



100 percent of students participated in service-learning across the Diocese of Des Moines. Collectively, students performed more than 120,000 hours of volunteerism.



Parish Pastors from across the diocese visited classrooms to share faith teachings and more than 500,000 hours of faith instruction was provided to all students.

*"We send our children to Christ the King School because we like that our values and model of discipline are shared by the teachers and staff. It warms our hearts to see our kids participate in school mass and when they come home with a story about how the school came together in prayer. Parents send their children to Christ the King for a different experience, and they become invested in their student's education and faith life."*

- Christ the King Catholic School Parents



# EXCELLENCE IN EDUCATION



*"Shelby County Catholic was the FIRST school in the area to have laptops for every student. STEM is not just available to every student, it is part of the curriculum. Not after school and not at additional cost. Kids are working with coding and programming. They are educated for what's yet to come."*

- Shelby County Catholic School Parents

# EXCELLENCE HIGHLIGHTS

The challenges faced during the last school year have changed education in the Diocese of Des Moines for the better. Our schools are more agile, collaborative, compassionate, and inspired. Our faculty and staff continue to find new ways to support the overall wellbeing of our students and sustain academic progress. As a result, Diocese of Des Moines students demonstrated continued academic growth despite the barriers presented by COVID-19.



100 percent of our schools were open for traditional in-person instruction with enhanced cleaning and safety protocols to protect students, faculty and staff from COVID-19. This compared to only 59.8 percent\* of public schools nationwide open for in-person instruction. Additionally, all sixteen schools offered a high-quality remote learning option.



St. Francis of Assisi Catholic School was recognized as a National Blue Ribbon School for the second time in five years. Since 1982, only eight Iowa schools have been awarded two or more Blue Ribbon awards\*. Blue Ribbon Schools demonstrate academic excellence and progress at closing the academic achievement gap among students. Five of our schools hold Blue Ribbon designation.



St. Luke the Evangelist Catholic School in Ankeny was recognized as an Honor Plus School by the Iowa Department of Education for its efforts to enact Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports in an effort to foster a safe, positive learning environment.

*"My husband and I would like to thank you and the St. Augustin staff for helping to ensure kids can have a 'normal as possible' school experience. As we've shared before, we both believe it's so important to keep kids in school to ensure they have the best education, socialization, and routine possible."*

- St. Augustin Catholic School Parents

**\*SOURCES:**

U.S. Department of Education, Institute of Education Sciences, National Center for Education Statistics, National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), Monthly School Survey 2021.

U.S. Department of Education. (2021). National Blue Ribbon Designee Database. Retrieved, September 3, 2021 from <https://portal.nationalblueribbonsschools.ed.gov/schools/history>.

# EXCELLENCE HIGHLIGHTS

The Diocese of Des Moines Catholic Schools applies a standards-based evaluated tool, FASTBridge, to assess students in grades K-5, identify student goals for learning, and provide individualized student support to ensure these goals are met.

FASTBridge earlyReading is an assessment of essential early reading skills such as concepts of print, phonemic awareness, phonics, and fluency.

- *In school year 2020-2021, 19.42 percent of Diocese of Des Moines students in grades K-1 made aggressive growth\* in early literacy skills as measured by the FASTBridge earlyReading assessment.*

FASTBridge CBMreading is a research-based assessment that measures a student's proficiency in print concepts, phonological awareness, phonics and word recognition, and fluency.

- *In school year 2020-2021, 31.2 percent of Diocese of Des Moines students in grades 2-5 made aggressive growth in their reading fluency as measured by the FASTBridge CBM-Reading assessment.*

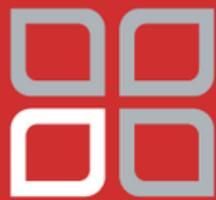
FASTBridge aReading is a computer-administered adaptive screener that measures broad reading ability, predicts overall reading achievement, and targets concepts of print, phonological awareness, phonics, vocabulary, and comprehension.

- *In school year 2020-2021, 23.03 percent of Diocese of Des Moines students in grades 2-5 made aggressive growth in comprehension/vocabulary as measured by the FASTBridge aReading assessment.*

FASTBridge aMath is a computer-administered adaptive screener that measures broad mathematics skills, identifies students in need of additional instruction, and predicts performance on state accountability measures.

- *In school year 2020-2021, 28.61 percent of Diocese of Des Moines students in grades 2-5 made aggressive growth in math comprehension as measured by the FASTBridge aMath assessment.*

\*NOTE: "Aggressive Growth" is defined as a score increase from fall to spring greater than 75 percent or more of their peers nationally.



# A CARING COMMUNITY



*"At St. Pius, the teachers go above and beyond each day for all students. Every student is welcomed with open arms and encouraged to do their best. The teachers are continually learning new ways to teach about different subjects. The excellent teachers at St. Pius X are the reason we chose and continue to send our kids to school there."*

- St. Pius X Catholic School Parents

# COMMUNITY HIGHLIGHTS

If you walk the halls of our Catholic schools, you'll discover not just a great learning environment, but also an opportunity to form lifelong friendships with students and families who have the same values, aspirations and desires to advance the common good. We partner with our parishes and parents to create a welcoming community that helps students feel more secure, allowing them to focus on their education.



The Diocese of Des Moines Catholic Schools serve students and families from all faith backgrounds, ethnicities, races, and cultures. One hundred and two students in Pre-Kindergarten through fifth grade experienced core subjects like reading, science, math, and social studies in English and Spanish as part of our Two-Way Language Immersion education track at St. Anthony School.



Our schools served 6,194 students and 4,526 families from 80 diocesan parishes. Plus, we welcomed 138 new students into our school communities. St. Luke the Evangelist Catholic School grew by more than 35 percent last year - unprecedented growth for any private school.



Eleven schools used Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports (PBIS) to develop a social-emotional framework for their schools that includes clear, explicit routines and expectations. Schools that successfully implement a PBIS framework see a reduction in major disciplinary infractions, increased prosocial behavior, and improved academic achievement among students.

*"The diversity of Holy Family has helped my kids learn so many valuable things about other cultures. We will be forever grateful for this educational experience."*

- Holy Family Parents

# THE BEST VALUE IN EDUCATION



*"Choosing St. Patrick is by far the best investment we have made in our children's future. The small class sizes ensure individual attention and lifelong friendships with classmates. St. Patrick is not only a school, it is a family, and you feel that as soon as you walk in the door."*

- St. Patrick Catholic School Parents

# VALUE HIGHLIGHTS

An education at a Diocese of Des Moines Catholic School is an investment in a child's future. Students at our schools consistently demonstrate high-achievement academically, socially and spiritually. Additionally, we make every effort to ensure our schools are accessible to all families who desire a Catholic education for their child and no family is turned away for inability to pay full tuition. Tuition assistance is available through the Catholic Tuition Organization and local parish scholarships.



More than 85 percent of eighth-grade graduates will continue their education at a Diocese of Des Moines Catholic High School.



One hundred percent of Diocese of Des Moines Catholic high school students graduated, 365 students in total. In addition, nearly  $\frac{3}{4}$  of these graduates were awarded college scholarships totaling more than \$11.7 million.



Thirty-six percent of Diocese of Des Moines families received assistance from the Catholic Tuition Organization totaling \$3,275,119. This generous support made a Catholic education possible for more than 2,024 students across the diocese. 100 percent of students benefitted from parish-supported tuition grant as the cost of tuition covers only  $\frac{1}{2}$  of the cost to educate a child at our schools.

*"Affordable, accessible and the best foundation for your child's education."*

- Holy Trinity Parent

# FINANCIAL DATA

We greatly appreciate and understand the financial sacrifice families make to provide their children with an education at a Diocese of Des Moines Catholic School. However, tuition only covers a portion of the cost to educate a student. The remaining amount is supported by parish subsidy, private donations, grants and tuition assistance resources.

## COST TO EDUCATE VS. COST OF TUITION

	AVERAGE COST TO EDUCATE A STUDENT AT OUR SCHOOLS	AVERAGE COST OF TUITION BEFORE TUITION ASSISTANCE
K-8 SCHOOLS	\$7,287/student	\$3,924/year
9-12 SCHOOLS	\$11,486/student	\$8,496/year

This tuition investment goes towards high-caliber educators, enhanced learning experiences (such as STEM and Spanish immersion), the latest technology as well as moral and emotional education for each student.

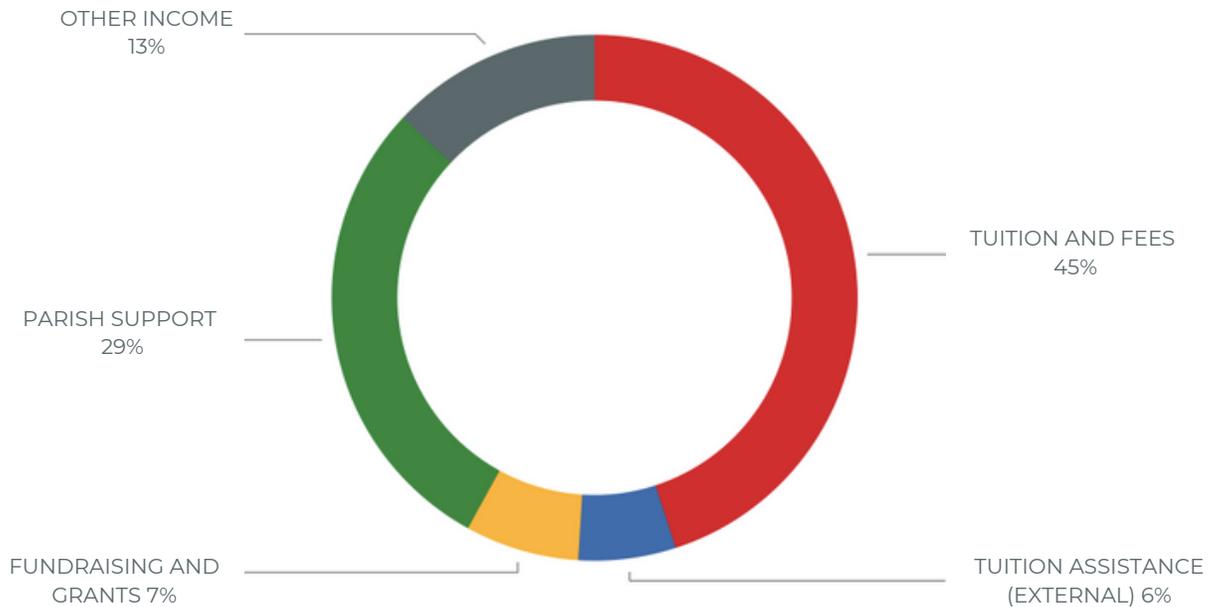
## TUITION ASSISTANCE

All of our schools offer tuition solutions and assistance programs — no family is turned away if they cannot pay full tuition. In 2020-2021, 36 percent of students received tuition assistance from the Catholic Tuition Organization totaling over \$3.2 million. The average award was \$1,339 per student. Additionally, our schools provided need-based scholarships and assistance totaling over \$2.7 million.

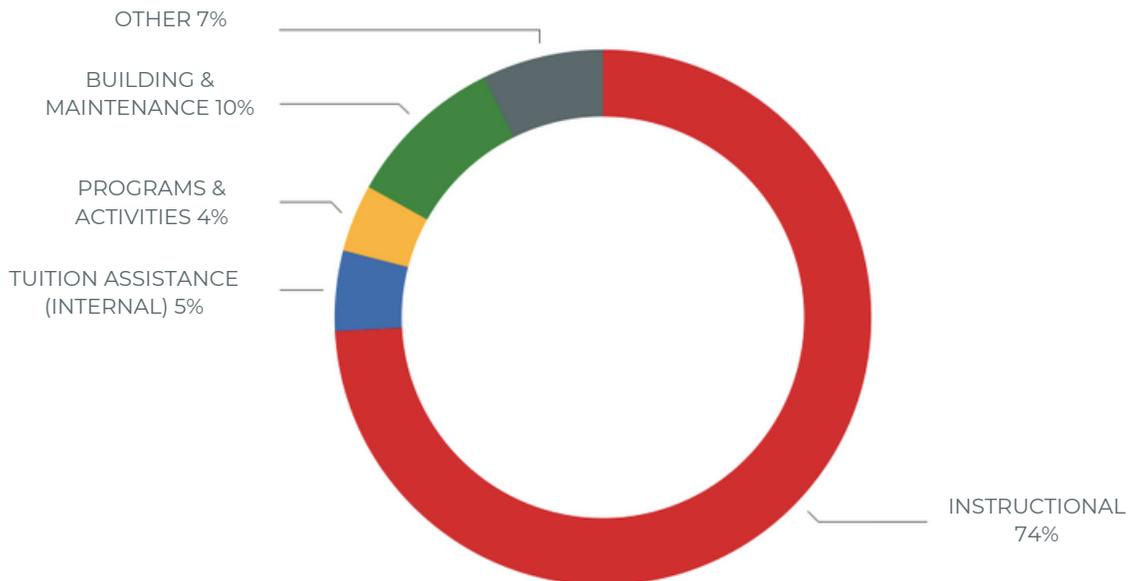


# FINANCIAL DATA

## INCOME BY SOURCE (as a percent of total income\*):



## EXPENSES BY SOURCE (as a percent of total expenses\*):



\*NOTE: Percentage of income and expenses are an approximation based on aggregated self-reported financial data for each of our sixteen schools. Individual school percentages may vary.





601 Grand Avenue . Des Moines, IA 50309 . 515.243.7653