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Making a Difference in Lives of Children

Five Catholics Schools in Baltimore, Washington Archdioceses

Awarded \$87,500 in Grants to Expand Programming for Students with Special Needs

*"Whoever receives
one child such as
this in my name
receives me"*

(Matthew 18:5)

Kensington, Md --- The Catholic Coalition for Special Education (CCSE), which has awarded more than half-a-million dollars to 22 area Catholic schools to expand programming for students with special needs since 2005, has given out \$87,500 in grants to five Catholic schools in Baltimore and Montgomery and St. Mary's counties as part of its 2012 *Believe in Me! Grant-Making Program*.

The grants, ranging from \$10,000 to \$25,000, will enable these Catholic primary and high schools to pay for staff and establish programs for students with intellectual disabilities. Founded in 2005, CCSE's mission is to ensure students with intellectual disabilities have the same opportunity to receive a Catholic education as their typically developing brothers and sisters.

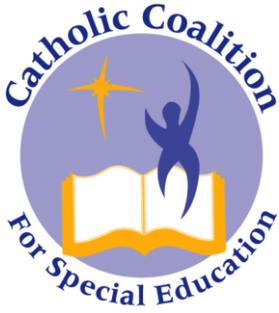
The grant recipients and awards for the 2012-2013 school year are:

- **St. Andrew the Apostle**, Silver Spring, received \$20,000 to improve and expand the current special education services to students with disabilities and to help fund the salary of a part-time special education teacher.
- **St. Margaret's School**, Bel Air, received \$15,000 to support new special education services for students with documented developmental disabilities and to help fund the salary of a para-professional to support students with developmental disabilities.
- **St. Michael's School**, Ridge, received \$17,500 to expand the current resource program to serve students with low incidence disabilities and to help fund two full-time para- educator positions.
- **The Heights School**, Potomac, received \$10,000 to continue to support special education services and help fund the salary of a teacher supporting students with intellectual disabilities, including Down syndrome.
- **The Seton Keough High School**, Baltimore, received \$25,000 to support the creation of the new Options Program for students with intellectual disabilities, including

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Down syndrome, and to help fund the salary of a para-professional to support students in the Options Program.

While CCSE has distributed more than \$530,000 in grants to Catholic schools and teachers in the Archdioceses of Washington and Baltimore for programming for students with special needs, the demand for this programming continues to grow. Since 2005, local Catholic schools have requested more than \$2 million in assistance, according to CCSE Grant Committee chair Fernand Lavallee, and CCSE is working hard to meet this demand. “Every year CCSE has raised significantly more contributions at its annual spring benefit to fund its grant program, and then increased the amount of grants awarded,” Lavallee said. “The 2012 spring benefit raised \$200,000, the highest amount ever.”

The Catholic Coalition for Special Education offers a host of programs, ranging from providing grants to schools and educators seeking to expand their inclusive programming to children with disabilities, to providing professional development workshops as well as support to families. It is believed to be the only organization on the East Coast and one of just a handful in the U.S. that supports special education services in Catholic schools enabling catholic schools to expand their services to include this frequently underserved population.

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The mission of the Catholic Coalition for Special Education is to ensure that children with special needs are able to attend, and receive an appropriate education in their local Catholic elementary schools and high schools. In the words of Pope Benedict XVI “no child should be denied his or her right to an education in faith, which in turn nurtures the soul of a nation.” CCSE provides grants and technical assistance to help Catholic schools in Washington, D.C. and Maryland achieve this goal.

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