



PRESS RELEASE

Expanding Opportunities for Students with
Developmental Disabilities in Area Catholic Schools

*Schools Receive Grants from CCSE to Support Inclusive
Education Programming*

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: October 3, 2018

Area Catholic Schools Receive Grant Funding to Support Inclusive Education Programming for Students with Developmental Disabilities

(Kensington, Maryland) – Catholic Coalition for Special Education (CCSE) congratulates this year’s recipient schools of its “*Believe in Me!*” grants. On Sunday, September 23, 2018, CCSE awarded nearly \$90,000 total to seven schools in Maryland.

These grants to Catholic schools may be used by the schools to hire special education staff, purchase materials necessary to provide appropriate accommodations and modifications to the curriculum and for professional development. CCSE has touched over 6,000 students, teachers and families and awarded over 65 grants to 30 Catholic schools in eight Maryland counties totaling over \$1,000,000 since its inception in 2004.

“Attitudes have changed since 2004. There is momentum; there is a movement to educate children with and without disabilities together, rather than in separate classrooms or schools. Indeed, the inclusion movement is a national phenomenon and CCSE is thrilled to contribute to the local and national dialogue of creating inclusion in Catholic schools,” said Francesca Pellegrino, Founder and President of CCSE.

The 2018 recipients are:

Academy of the Holy Cross, Kensington (Montgomery County): This grant will continue to help fund the Moreau Options Program teacher salaries for the 2018-2019 school year. The program, launched four years ago with CCSE’s support and embraced by the community, continues to expand. In May of this year, the program graduated its first two young women who entered college this fall.

Bishop McNamara High School, Forestville (Prince George’s County): Bishop McNamara will use its grant to initiate the St. Andre Program designed to promote the education and socialization of individuals with intellectual and/or developmental disabilities. Specifically, the program will serve one to two students in the 2018-2019 school year.

Holy Redeemer School, Kensington (Montgomery County): Holy Redeemer’s grant will be used to aid and subsidize para-educators to provide in-classroom supports for one or more students with Down syndrome for the 2018-2019 school year.

St. Bartholomew School, Bethesda (Montgomery County): St. Bartholomew is a new CCSE grantee school. It is using its grant to hire additional resource team members and to schedule immediate professional development for current teachers to best prepare for an incoming student with Down syndrome for the 2018-2019 school year.

St. Louis School, Clarksville (Howard County): This grant will continue funding for the Louis IX Program to serve children with developmental disabilities in the third and fifth grades for the 2018-2019 school year.

St. Mary of the Mills School, Laurel (Prince George’s County): The grant for St. Mary’s will go towards the funding of one paraprofessional for its resource team for the 2018-2019 school year.

St. Philip the Apostle School, Camp Springs (Prince George’s County): St. Philip the Apostle School will use this grant to facilitate the inclusion of students with developmental or intellectual disabilities for the 2018-19 school year and for teacher training.

“To address the increasing demand for teacher and principal training and coaching, CCSE also has recently designed a comprehensive professional development program to offer Catholic school administrators and educators, the knowledge and skills they seek to ensure students with disabilities are served well in Catholic schools,” said Pellegrino.

“Our new ‘Believe in Me’ Professional Development Program is an expansion of the support services we have long been providing schools and is a natural starting point for many schools as they plan out how best to serve students with disabilities. In many cases, the technical assistance CCSE provides is a precursor to a CCSE grant,” said Pellegrino.

CCSE supports Catholic schools located in Washington, D.C. or Maryland by providing seed grants to expand or create sustainable programs enrolling two or more students with disabilities. Funding may be used to hire and train special educators, purchase equipment and materials, or provide appropriate accommodations and modifications to the curriculum.

CCSE also provides scholarships to Catholic school teachers pursuing advanced degrees in special education and offers workshops and other training /coaching support to Catholic schools to help them meet the needs of students with disabilities at the classroom and administrative levels.

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 and training to help Catholic schools in Washington, D.C. and Maryland achieve this goal.

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