

# INNOVATION & IMPACT

Empowering Students for Success



**2024**  
ANNUAL  
REPORT

# THE CISE MISSION

## Catholic Inner-city Schools Education

CISE works to rewrite futures of urban children by providing access to a faith-based Catholic education at inner-city elementary schools and Catholic high schools. Strong values are taught in a safe, nurturing and welcoming environment.

## TRANSFORMING LIVES TOGETHER

CISE supports ten Catholic elementary schools in some of Cincinnati's most underserved communities and helps provide students a secure environment where they can learn, grow, thrive and succeed. Our schools serve students of all beliefs and backgrounds with a single mission: to educate children out of poverty and into their best lives. It's a mission that changes courses, transforms lives, unlocks possibilities and rewrites futures – one deserving child at a time.

## CISE-SUPPORTED ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS \*

Corryville Catholic  
Holy Family  
Romero at Annunciation  
Romero at Resurrection

St. Boniface  
St. Cecilia  
St. Francis de Sales

St. Francis Seraph  
St. Lawrence  
St. William

\*Xavier Jesuit Academy - Open Fall 2024



Dear friends,

Our goal at CISE is to ensure our schools address the needs of every student whose family has chosen a private, urban, faith-based education. We recognize that each student comes with unique strengths and challenges and we are committed to providing the funding, resources and expertise needed to support their educational journey and empower them for success.



We continue to drive innovation and impact by engaging high-quality partners as we fulfill our mission. The partnership with the Center for the Science of Reading at Mount St. Joseph University led to exceptional results. At Holy Family, our 3<sup>rd</sup> graders passed the state-required Third Grade Reading Guarantee at more than twice the state average in 2023. Prompted by that success, this year two more CISE-supported schools have adopted this groundbreaking approach in their schools.

Last summer, we launched an innovative feasibility study into Career and Technical Education (CTE) opportunities for CISE students. Our timing was perfect as leaders in government, industry and higher education are seeking secondary education's help to address the skilled employment gap. Under the leadership of Dr. Mari Thomas, we have united state and local leaders, industry champions and educators to tackle this issue in the Greater Cincinnati area. By exposing our students to these opportunities, we are paving the way for many CISE graduates to lead meaningful professional lives.

We understand that our schools are only as strong as our educators, therefore, developing and retaining talent remains a high priority. CISE has secured funds to supplement teacher and principal compensation, making significant gains in retaining high-quality staff despite a national teacher shortage. This report features two of our outstanding teachers, who represent over 100 dedicated champions serving CISE students daily. Please keep them in your prayers.

Finally, the number of CISE elementary school graduates attending local Catholic high schools continues to rapidly grow, thanks to generous donors providing four-year scholarships. This fall, we expect over 500 CISE scholars to be enrolled across 14 area Catholic high schools.

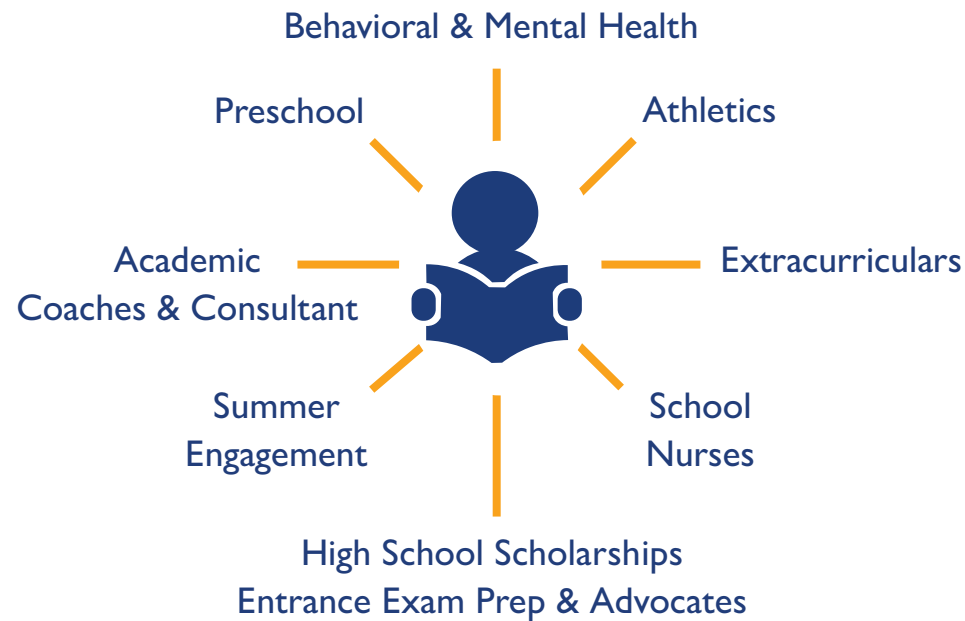
Thank you for your continued support of our mission!  
With gratitude,

Philip R. McHugh  
President & Executive Director

# OUR INNOVATIVE APPROACH

CISE is dedicated to providing a well-rounded education that addresses both the academic and non-academic needs of our students. Through partnerships that offer comprehensive support services and enriching extracurricular activities, CISE creates an environment where students can thrive and reach their full potential. This innovative approach ensures that each student receives a holistic education, preparing them for success in all aspects of life.

This impact spans every educational stage, from enhancing Pre-K programs to assisting 8<sup>th</sup> graders with high school admissions, entrance exams, financial aid and academic support. CISE-supported grade school scholars benefit from on-site mental and behavioral health programs, summer programs and numerous athletic and academic enrichment opportunities. Additionally, each school has a dedicated school nurse to ensure the well-being of students in need of care. CISE is committed to making a lasting, positive impact on the lives of our students and their communities.



## VALUES FOR LIFE

CISE schools focus on forming the whole student by teaching skills for success in learning as well as throughout their lives. Faith-based values, leadership, teamwork, self-control, discipline and resilience skills are taught and modeled daily.



# INNOVATION IN EDUCATION

Our dedication to innovative education has led to remarkable progress this past year. Read about two examples of how CISE is creating impactful educational pathways that support and empower every student.

## CAREER & TECHNICAL EDUCATION



Over the past year, Dr. Mari Thomas led a study to explore what CISE-supported high school graduates need after graduation and how local schools and businesses can better support these needs with Career and Technical Education (CTE) and research-based recommendations. The study revealed not all CISE-supported students opt for a 4-year college experience, with 46% of the Class of 2023 enrolling in post-secondary education. Nearly half chose 2-year programs, such as associate degrees or professional licenses, reflecting a broader shift in graduation plans both locally and nationally. National Student Clearinghouse data underscored these trends, highlighting the growing importance of CTE programming for CISE graduates.

To further understand the capacity and interest in CTE programming, Dr. Thomas collaborated with elementary and high school leadership, examining existing CTE initiatives and exploring new opportunities. This led to various programs like Career Expos, Project Lead the Way curriculum and work-based learning experiences such as Scrubs Camp. Dr. Thomas also established the Catholic Business Advisory Council to create strategies to help students prepare for both college and careers. The first year of the feasibility study demonstrated the need and potential benefits of early and intentional CTE programming. Dr. Thomas will continue to collaborate with schools to implement and expand CTE initiatives ensuring our graduates will be well-prepared for their future paths.

# EMPOWERING STUDENTS FOR SUCCESS

## SCIENCE OF READING

Recently, Ohio Governor Mike DeWine discussed the importance of teaching reading using the science of reading method, emphasizing its transformative impact on the state's educational landscape following the passage of House Bill 33. CISE has been ahead of the curve on this topic, continuously collaborating with leaders from CISE-supported schools, to ensure every child receives the support needed to not only succeed, but to thrive.

In early 2020, educators at Holy Family School faced significant challenges in improving reading outcomes, with only one third of K-3 students reaching key benchmarks. Recognizing the need for a comprehensive approach, Holy Family partnered with Mount St. Joseph University's Center for Reading Science to implement reading instruction based on the science of reading principles. This collaboration led to remarkable progress, the first cohort of students to receive the full four years of instruction has progressed from 22% of students meeting key literacy benchmarks to 67%. The progress achieved through this partnership is truly exciting.

Following the success at Holy Family, Corryville Catholic and St. Lawrence School have both embraced a partnership with The Center for Reading Science and are observing significant improvements in their students' early literacy skills. The initiative has not only boosted academic achievement but also enhanced students' self-confidence. Reading Specialist Michelle Frey shared a powerful testament to the impact she has seen, recalling a second grader who said, "Learning to read has changed my life." This sentiment underscores the transformative power of collaboration, innovation and a relentless focus on literacy excellence.





## Emma Bruggeman

Math, Religion

“Teaching at the CISE school I once attended is a dream come true and incredibly rewarding.”

Emma has completed three years of teaching at Holy Family, where she teaches math and religion to middle school students. She finds great fulfillment in witnessing her students’ growth throughout the school year. She upholds high expectations that bolster student success and align with the mission of CISE. Emma’s enthusiasm as a teacher is evident in her commitment to sharing her love of teaching and learning with every student. Emma attended Holy Family and is a graduate of Seton High School.

## Diane Schoster

Art, Social Studies, Religion

“I love what I do, and I do what I love.”

Diane has devoted 25 years to teaching at Holy Family, where she inspires students through art, social studies and 6<sup>th</sup> grade religion. Her dedication extends to creating enriching experiences such as the Culture Fair and school musicals to help students develop the confidence they need to continue on their educational journeys. Diane is also the organizer of impactful student field trips to Washington, DC. Her commitment to student growth and educational enrichment has earned her recognition and numerous awards.

Talented educators are pivotal in accomplishing the CISE mission.

CISE is dedicated to recruiting, retaining and supporting highly skilled teachers.

## ADVOCATING FOR OUR STUDENTS



In each Catholic high school our students attend, CISE provides funding to support students' non-academic needs. An advocate is available to help our students manage the demands of high school and ensure they have everything they need, which allows them to focus on being good students.

Jill Malik is the advocate at St. Xavier High School, where she's been supporting students for eleven years. Her work is particularly impactful for CISE students, who may require additional support to manage the challenges of high school. She provides everything from computer chargers to spirit wear, to prom tickets or fees to pay for activities and trips.

“My job is very rewarding, especially when I can help students participate in activities that align with their passions.”

On school Mass days, the St. X boys show up as Jill rolls out her clothing rack filled with dress clothing items the students are required to wear for Mass. Shirts, ties, pants, jackets, belts and even shoes are available. She tells the boys they may borrow and return the clothing, but if they need it or love it they can keep the items.

Jill's work exemplifies the impact of non-academic support in fostering the well-being and success of our students.

## 14 CATHOLIC HIGH SCHOOLS

- Badin
- DePaul Cristo Rey
- Elder
- La Salle
- McNicholas
- Mercy McAuley
- Moeller
- Mount Notre Dame
- Purcell Marian
- Roger Bacon
- Seton
- Summit Country Day
- St. Ursula Academy
- St. Xavier

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### 76% GRADUATION RATE

CISE scholars benefit from our strong partnerships with 14 Catholic high schools.

Over 450 students received a high-quality, faith-based education at local Catholic high schools this past year.

This partnership has proven effective with a 76% graduation rate for CISE students who attended Catholic high schools.

## ELDER & SETON CISE SCHOLARS CLASS OF 2024



In the upcoming school year, more than **500** students will attend Catholic high schools with CISE scholarships and support.

CISE will provide nearly **\$1.4 million** in tuition scholarships and student support funds, thanks to our generous donors.

# IMPACTING FUTURES



**JIMMY** *St. William | Elder Class of 2028*

**“Attending Elder High School has been my dream since kindergarten.”**

Jimmy has attended St. William since kindergarten and is eager to begin high school at Elder in the fall. Originally from Guatemala, he deeply cherishes his family and cultural roots. Jimmy appreciates how St. William has provided a diverse and supportive community and taught him about God. He aspires to work hard, make the honor roll and excel academically at Elder. He also hopes to play soccer. Jimmy shares, “Thank you for the scholarship. My family and I really appreciate it! God bless you for everything.”



**RAE’NIYAH** *Corryville | MND Class of 2026*

**“CISE gives us a lot, so we’re working hard in exchange.”**

Rae’Niyah, known as Rumor to her friends, is a sophomore at Mount Notre Dame High School. Her friends describe her as a loyal person who loves to help and encourage others. With a passion for all things art, she enjoys being a part of the Show Choir and is very proud to have won a best performer award. She also participates in the MND Culture Club and hopes to one day visit Japan or Spain with the student exchange program. Rae’Niyah dreams of becoming a doctor or a teacher, utilizing her dedication to serving and helping others.



**ERIN** *Prince of Peace | Purcell Marian Graduate*

**“Catholic schools have had a profound impact on shaping my values and aspirations.”**

Erin attended Prince of Peace elementary school and graduated from Purcell Marian with a CISE high school scholarship. She shares that her formative Catholic education would not have been possible without support from CISE. She went on to receive a degree from the University of Toledo. Now working as a Government IT Manager, Erin is breaking barriers as the first woman of color in a leadership role at her company. Erin recently enrolled her son in Catholic preschool, continuing the legacy of a strong, Catholic education.

# MULTIGENERATIONAL DONORS

Liz Niehaus first discovered CISE in 2019 while attending Mass at St. Francis de Sales Church. Soon after, she joined the CISE Board of Trustees, bringing her dedication to Catholic education to the organization. She quickly immersed herself in various roles within CISE, sharing her time, talent and treasure. Liz served on the Steering Committee, was a campaign solicitor and co-chaired the 2023 Annual Campaign. Liz and her husband Jim have generously supported CISE’s annual campaign, mental health programs and high school scholarships over the years. Before moving to Hilton Head, Liz and Jim generously endowed a CISE high school scholarship, ensuring that a student can attend St. Ursula Academy indefinitely.



**“My husband and I believe in the benefits of a Catholic education.”**

Liz and Jim’s commitment to CISE extends to their children, Claire and David, and their spouses. Claire and her husband Patrick, donors since 2022, value CISE’s support of Catholic education and the community. David, who serves on the CISE development committee, contributes with his wife Monica. They believe in the positive impact of providing a Catholic education for children in our inner-city communities. The Niehaus family’s dedication to CISE exemplifies their shared values and commitment to community support.

## 3 WAYS TO SUPPORT OUR MISSION

CISE consists of three separate legal entities. All work together to support the CISE mission.

### CISE

Provides tuition assistance, scholarships and vital support services to students and schools.

### CISE Foundation

Restricted funds that provide annual distributions to CISE.

### CISE-SGO

Scholarship Granting Organization that provides scholarships to students. Donors may receive Ohio income tax credit for their donation to CISE-SGO.

## MEET THE ROSARY LADIES



**“It’s not a volunteer job, it’s truly a gift.”**

Louise Stakelin, Tricia Headley and Susie Castellini share a profound passion both for children and their faith. It all began in 2019 when Tricia and Louise had the idea of teaching children in inner-city schools the significance of the rosary by guiding them in creating their own rosaries. Susie enthusiastically embraced the concept and quickly found the materials and mastered the art of rosary-making. Louise contributed her expertise in teaching to the project.

Together, the three embarked on a mission, bringing their rosary program to CISE-supported schools where they could engage directly with the elementary school children. This school year, the dedicated trio, affectionately known as the “Rosary Ladies,” visited all ten CISE-supported grade schools - a milestone! Over the years, they have had the opportunity to teach hundreds of children about the profound meaning of this Holy practice.

Susie reflects on the impact of their work, stating, “It’s not a volunteer job, it’s truly a gift.” Their commitment and passion continue to inspire and enrich the spiritual lives of the students they touch. We are grateful for this important ministry.



## CISE BOARD OF TRUSTEES

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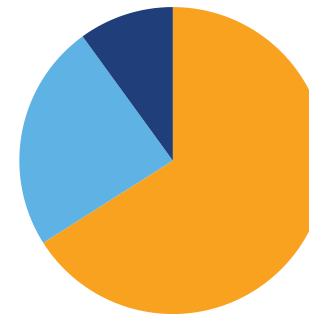
Jack Bunker  
Robert Hodge, Posthumously  
Susan Tew

Harry Fath  
Nick Ragland

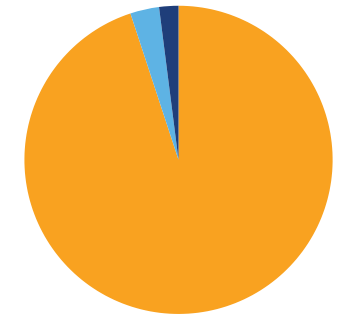
## CISE FINANCIALS

**94%** of every donation goes to support students & schools

### REVENUE



### EXPENSE



Contributions (unrestricted)	66%	Scholarships & Programs	94%
Contributions (restricted)	24%	Administrative	4%
Interest & Investments	10%	Fundraising	2%

From audited financial statements for fiscal year ending June 30, 2023.  
Visit [CISEKids.org](http://CISEKids.org) for full financial statements.





Gold  
Transparency  
2024  
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## INNOVATION & IMPACT

100 E. Eighth Street Cincinnati, Ohio 45202  
CISEKids.org 513.263.3471

