

# 2021-22 Annual Report



## Erie + Catholic SCHOOL SYSTEM

Saint James • Our Lady of Peace • Saint George  
Saint Jude • Blessed Sacrament • Saint Luke



# Message from the President

Friends of Erie Catholic School System,

First and foremost, I want to thank you all for your support. We would not be able to accomplish what we do without the unwavering generosity of our donors. It is an ideal time of year to reflect and express gratitude for the blessings God has bestowed upon us.

As we wrap up year six as the Erie Catholic School System, we are grateful that it's been an exemplary year. Enrollment remains solid and our school communities are immersed in living the mission of Erie Catholic each and every day.

Thank you to our parishes for their role in advocating Catholic education and their collaboration in maintaining our school buildings and grounds. Erie Catholic School System is appreciative of their support of our ongoing safety and security enhancements. I'm also grateful to our parents and staff for their continued commitment to Catholic education. I am humbled by the faith and dedication to service I see in our school communities and I thank you for being part of that comradery. I ask for your continued prayers for our students and staff.

Blessings,



President, Erie Catholic School System

## Mission

The Erie Catholic School System, in collaboration with the Diocese of Erie and in partnership with family and community, maximizes every child's academic and spiritual potential through engaging learning experiences and the gospel values of Jesus Christ, in a welcoming and safe environment.

## Vision

Based on the principles of the Catholic Faith, Erie Catholic will be the system of choice by instilling in our students a strong moral character, skills for academic success and a zeal for service to others.

## Philosophy

The Erie Catholic School System is a system of six Preschool through Grade 8 Catholic schools, continuing the tradition of providing high-quality, faith-based education to Erie-area families. Erie Catholic schools nurture and shape children in the Catholic faith under the leadership of the Bishop of the Diocese of Erie and in partnership with families and community. Our students grow spiritually and intellectually amid a welcoming culture of respect, inclusiveness and shared values rooted in the teachings of Christ.

Across Erie Catholic's six campuses, educators implement consistent curriculum above or at state standards, with an emphasis on increased expectations and measurable outcomes. Our schools customize learning to suit individual student needs, using proven instructional practices that are student-centered, inquiry-based, and hands-on.

As a faith-based community, Erie Catholic encourages its students to model the teachings of the gospel in their words and in their actions with an awareness of Catholic social teaching and a particular emphasis on service to others.

Erie Catholic provides leadership, expertise, resources, and accountability that strengthen all schools while enabling each to retain its unique community and traditions.

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## Q&A WITH MR. JEFF TILL MIDDLE SCHOOL SCIENCE TEACHER ST. JUDE SCHOOL

### How many years have you been teaching and what subjects do you teach?

I am currently in my ninth year of teaching. I teach fifth, sixth, seventh, and eighth grade science, as well as eighth grade religion.

### What made you decide to be a teacher?

I decided to become a teacher because of my tenth-grade history teacher, Mr. Davis. Mr. Davis wasn't just a great teacher who made his subject come alive, he truly cared about his students. Mr. Davis was always there for everyone, no matter what that person needed. I realized during his class that I wanted to be a teacher like him, someone who is there for his students, just like he was for me and so many others.

### What is your favorite part of teaching?

My favorite part of teaching is the little moments, when I get to really know the students. As a teacher it's always fun to teach a new concept or to do an interesting experiment, but for me that's always second to the interactions with the students. I like getting to share a laugh with my students, talk about movies, books, or their favorite sports team, because it builds a stronger, longer lasting connection, and that's so valuable in getting the students invested in learning.

### What motivates you to teach at a Catholic school?

From my college experience at Gannon University to my own Catholic upbringing, my faith has always been an important part of my life. Seeing the importance of Catholic values in the school has always been something I truly appreciate and enjoy.

### What has encouraged you to stay?

I've stayed at St. Jude School because of my students and my colleagues. I am incredibly blessed to work with such excellent teachers, particularly my middle school teammates. Our principal is an incredible leader for our building and provides us with the flexibility and support to make great things happen every day. But of course, our students are the greatest part of our building. They come from so many unique backgrounds and yet, they always come together like a family, which is such an amazing thing to see.

### How has being a teacher strengthened your own faith?

Teaching has strengthened my faith by allowing me to share my faith with my students and model what it means to live out my faith. In a reciprocal way this has also helped me to have a deeper appreciation for the importance of faith in my own life. The moments when the students, teachers, and staff come together as a community and really demonstrate Catholic values and teachings always make me grateful I'm a part of the school community.

### How do you maximize student learning in the classroom?

In my classroom I maximize learning by offering a variety of learning opportunities that cater to the developmental needs of my students. Focusing on opportunities for the students that allow them to learn through discussion with their peers as well as through hands-on experiences that take the content to a deeper level brings the learning to them and creates lasting connections.

### Describe the most successful moments in your teaching career.

I think my most successful moments aren't really mine at all, but rather they're moments where I get to share in the success of my students. Whether it's in the classroom as part of a lab, at a performance of a play that they've been working on for months, or when they score the winning shot at a basketball game, it always brings out this immense feeling of pride to see all the wonderful things the students are capable of. Those are the best moments, and they highlight something so wonderful about teaching.

### What are your hobbies & interests outside of the classroom?

When I'm outside of the classroom I enjoy a variety of activities and hobbies, including camping and hiking. I love to spend time outside enjoying nature. When I'm not outside I enjoy reading, attending sporting events, musical performances, and watching movies.

### Who or what inspires you?

The people who inspire me the most are my parents. They're the two kindest, most selfless, hardworking people that I've ever known. They are the beginning of my Catholic upbringing as well as my first teachers. I've always taken their wisdom to heart and I know that what I've learned from them has made me a better person and a better teacher.



## STAND OUT SCIENTISTS

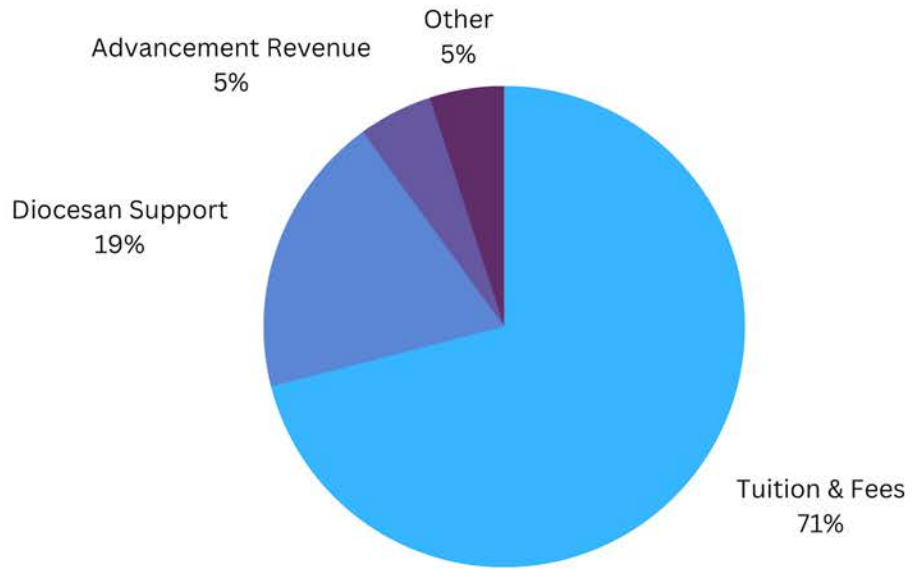


The six Erie Catholic schools have advanced science laboratories for middle school classes. Projects include chemistry, biology, physics and geology. All middle school students are required to complete a science project with the opportunity to compete in the Pennsylvania Junior Academy of Science competition (PJAS). This past year, under the direction of teacher Jeff Till, three students advanced from the regional to the state competition at Penn State University in State College. Kudos to a job well done!

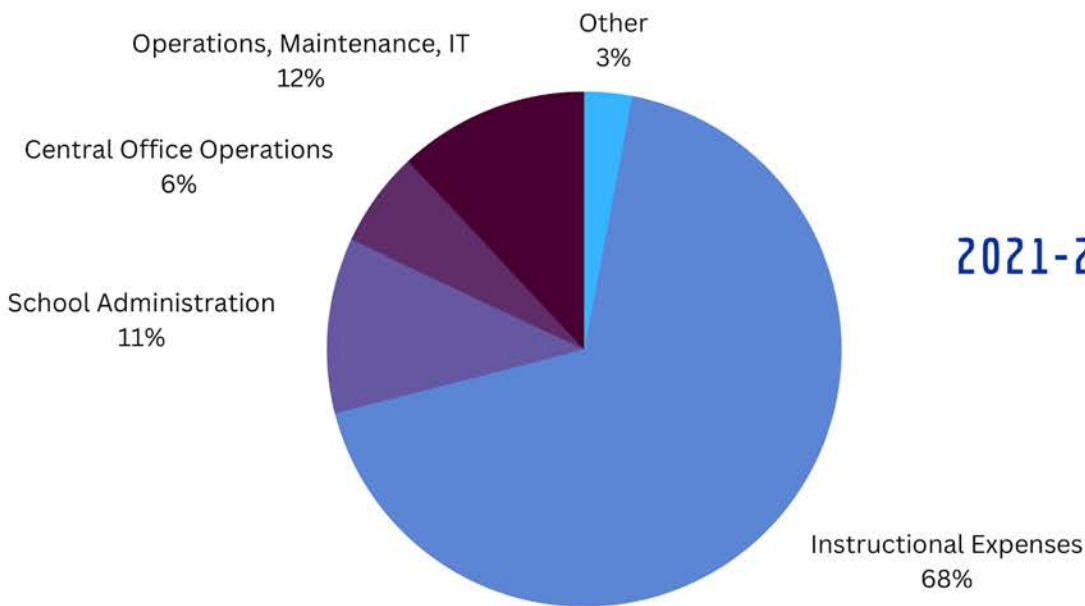


# ERIE CATHOLIC FINANCIALS

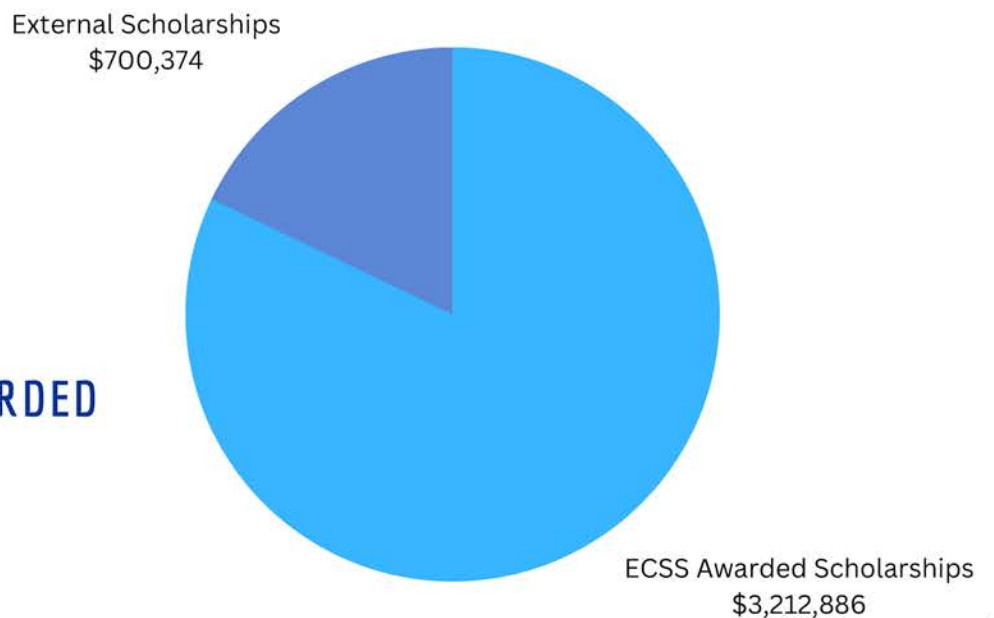
## 2021-22 REVENUE



## 2021-22 EXPENSES



## 2021-22 SCHOLARSHIPS AWARDED



# SAFETY & SECURITY

The Erie Catholic School System (ECSS) has taken a rigorous approach to maintaining the highest standards for safety and security. A system-wide review was launched to enhance current measures in a continuous process to improve the protection of our students and staff.

The most recent review has allowed ECSS to focus on new initiatives beginning in Fall 2022 and to plan for future safety implementations in 2023.

Improvements include safety materials for all classrooms, updated procedures and plans to be distributed to all teachers and staff, and the installation of nearly 100 additional video cameras to cover more school areas – including many hallways, with additional emphasis on entrances and exits.

## ENHANCEMENTS AT A GLANCE

56

Bolo Stick Door Barricades

11

Teacher Training Sessions

Safety Supply Buckets

107

Added Security Cameras

94

20

New Directional & Site Signs

7

Improved Security Plans



# UNMASKED & MOVING FORWARD

As we phase out of the Covid-19 pandemic, it's time to move forward and look ahead to the future. An integral component of the success of our school communities is a focus on the well-being and mental health of our students and staff. Judy Kosik, Guidance Counselor at St. George School, works with her Golden Retrievers, Mariah and Maggie, who are trained therapy dogs. Mariah and Maggie accompany Mrs. Kosik to school several days per week to provide students and staff with a reprieve from the classroom. Mariah and Maggie, partnered with Mrs. Kosik, are a great resource and provide emotional support in a variety of ways. Educationally, students are given the opportunity to read to Mariah and Maggie or work through testing anxiety by sitting with a pup during an exam. Emotionally, the dogs provide support on a higher level to students going through a difficult time, from daily stressors to grieving the loss of a loved one. Mariah is unique in that she is one of 250 dogs in the country certified as a crisis dog. She has been through an extensive four-day training that qualifies her to work through crises around the country, including hurricanes, fires and other tragic events. She has been deployed several times to help those in need of her services. We are fortunate to have Mariah, Maggie, Mrs. Kosik and all of our school guidance counselors!



## ERIE CATHOLIC ATHLETICS PROGRAM



Mike Doyle, Athletics Director

Mr. Michael Doyle has recently joined the Erie Catholic School System and is serving as Athletics Director for all six schools. Mike is a graduate of John Carroll University with over 15 years of experience in aquatics management and coaching Erie youth. Mike is eager to grow Erie Catholic School System athletics and expand the program into the future. This year lacrosse has been added to the list of spring sports offerings for Erie Catholic students in grades 5-8. Welcome Mike, to Erie Catholic!



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*Gifts listed in the Annual Report were received during our fiscal year July 1, 2021 - June 30, 2022. While every effort was made to ensure accuracy, we apologize for any errors. Please contact Erie Catholic School System if an error is noted.*

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Karen Stazer-Wesler

**Joseph Tracy**  
Kathleen Anysz



**Bold** denotes person being memorialized by name below  
**Bold and green** denotes person being honored by name below

# Ways to Give

There are many ways to contribute to the Erie Catholic School System, directly benefiting Erie Catholic students.

## Online Giving

Donate anytime through the Erie Catholic School System website at [eriecatholic.org](http://eriecatholic.org), and click on the "Donate" page. Choose to make a one-time or recurring gift to the school of choice, or to the Erie Catholic School System, supporting all our schools.

## Give by Mail

Prefer to give by check? Make checks payable to the Erie Catholic School System and mail to: Erie Catholic School System, Attn. Advancement 1531 East Grandview Blvd., Suite 100 Erie, PA, 16510

## Employee Match

Many companies and businesses offer a matching gift program to employees who make charitable donations throughout the year. Please check with your Human Resource office to see if your employer offers this program.

## EITC/OSTC Programs

Qualifying candidates can choose to have their PA tax dollars go directly to students at the Erie Catholic School of their choice. Individuals and businesses can apply for the Educational Improvement Tax Credit (EITC) or Opportunity Scholarship Tax Credit programs. These tax incentives can provide from 90 to 100 percent of your PA tax dollars to help students in need of scholarships. Email Tami Faram, Director of Strategic Advancement at [tfaram@eriecatholic.org](mailto:tfaram@eriecatholic.org) to receive the current tax joinder for submission to the PA program.

## Estate and Planned Giving

Interested in preserving your legacy by making a lasting gift to Erie Catholic School System? Bequests and charitable gifts of annuity have an enduring impact on our schools through generations of students, and further solidify our mission. Please consider including the Erie Catholic School System in your financial plans.

## Gifts in Memory/Gifts in Honor Of

Giving a gift in memory or honor of a family member, friend, colleague or Erie Catholic teacher is a wonderful way to pay tribute.

## Gifts in Kind

Alternatives to monetary gifts such as technology and books are always appreciated. Send an email to [tfaram@eriecatholic.org](mailto:tfaram@eriecatholic.org), for information on how to make your donation.

Give now to support the Erie Catholic School System!



For questions regarding donations or gifts, contact the Erie Catholic School System Advancement office at 814-806-2423 or email [advancement@eriecatholic.org](mailto:advancement@eriecatholic.org). Donations to the Erie Catholic School System are tax deductible.

