



Igniting Inclusive Catholic Education

Heart of FIRE Scholarship For Graduating Eighth Graders

Each year, the FIRE Foundation honors students who have demonstrated a *Heart of FIRE* through their support of peers with special needs as friends and classmates.

With a 25-year history of advocacy and support, it's clear to FIRE's stakeholders that inclusive education positively impacts not only the lives of young men and women with special needs, but the lives of their peers as well. Many past students are now studying to become special educators or therapists. Some are pursuing careers in business or other fields and aspire to create more inclusive employment opportunities. Inclusive education is changing our world in a positive way! As you enter high school, then college and your career, YOU can influence others to follow your example.

The FIRE Board of Directors is pleased to award the *Heart of FIRE* Scholarship to one or more graduating eighth grade student(s) at FIRE partner schools. As you continue your education at an area Catholic high school, the Board wishes to recognize your commitment to inclusive education with a scholarship. It is our hope that recipients of the scholarship will someday return to their parishes and communities and continue to share their *Hearts of FIRE* as they keep our mission burning bright.

Scholarship Guidelines and Directions

1. Award recipients will be determined by a FIRE Board Committee. Prior to review by committee members, essays are redacted (all names are concealed) to ensure objectivity.
2. Graduating eighth grade applicants will submit scholarship entries to the FIRE Foundation by **Wednesday, March 30, 2022**. Email submissions to info@firefoundation.org with name, current school, phone number and address and the name of the Greater Kansas City area Catholic high school you are planning to attend. Please attach your entry documents in Word or PDF format. **(No Google docs please.)**
3. Scholarship Entries
 - ✓ Submit a typed **essay** (not to exceed 500 words) describing the impact that inclusive education has made on your life and how you think your experiences and the people you have met are likely to influence your future (your values, your faith, your career choice, etc.)
 - ✓ Share a story (or two!) about your friendship and/or experiences helping a student with special learning needs. Try to include interesting or unique details.
 - ✓ Include a response to this question: *Why should all Catholic schools welcome, include and support students with intellectual and developmental disabilities?*
 - ✓ The review committee will consider your experiences as an inclusion advocate first and foremost. The committee will also evaluate your sincerity, creativity and polish of your essay.
 - ✓ A recommendation completed by a teacher, administrator, coach or other adult who knows you well (no immediate family) must be submitted for entry to be considered. *(See page 2 for additional details.)* Your submission will not be considered without a recommendation.
4. Scholarship winners will be notified on a date selected by your school administration. Principals will be notified of award recipient(s) by April 22, 2022.
5. Winning entry(ies) will receive an award of up to \$1,000 for tuition/fees at the student's chosen Catholic high school.
6. FIRE reserves the right to post and publish entries on the Foundation's publications, website and social media.



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RECOMMENDATION for Heart of FIRE Scholarship for Graduating Eighth Graders

Each year, the FIRE Foundation honors students who have demonstrated a *Heart of FIRE* through their support of students with special needs as friends and classmates. The FIRE Foundation Board is seeking input from an adult who knows each applicant and has observed the student’s commitment to being inclusive at school, in their parish and community.

- ✓ **DEADLINE.** Recommendations are due on **Wednesday, March 30, 2022.**
- ✓ **SUBMISSION.** You may use this form and mail recommendations to FIRE, 20 W. 9th Street, Kansas City, MO 64105 or you may email recommendations to info@firefoundation.org. If you’re emailing, you can complete/scan/attach this form OR simply provide the requested information in the text of your email.
- ✓ **RECOMMENDATIONS ARE REQUIRED.** Please follow through and complete your recommendation on or before the deadline so your student’s entry will be considered for a high school scholarship award.
- ✓ **RECOMMENDATIONS ARE INFLUENTIAL.** Please share details or stories that illustrate the applicant’s commitment to inclusion as a student and a friend. Complete all three sections.
- ✓ **MULTIPLE RECOMMENDATIONS.** It is acceptable for one individual to submit recommendations for more than one student.

Section I

Name of student you are recommending _____

Your name _____

Your relationship to this student _____
(teacher, principal, neighbor, coach, family friend, etc.)

Years you have known him/her _____ School he/she currently attends _____

Your email _____ Your phone # _____

Section II

Please tell us how this student demonstrates his/her support of peers with special needs as friends and classmates. Share specific examples or stories that illustrate his/her Heart of FIRE. Tell us about the student’s commitment, creativity, enthusiasm, etc. We ask that you limit your response to 350 words or less, if possible.

Section III

Please check the box that reflects this applicant’s level of commitment to supporting students with special needs.

Attribute	Sometimes	Frequently	Almost Always	Inclusion Champion
Shows appreciation for students’ unique gifts or interests				
Tries to understand students’ challenges				
Leads by example				
Displays patience, kindness and respect				
Pursues authentic friendships / social connections				
Provides academic support as a peer mentor or tutor				
Finds creative and resourceful ways to connect with students				