



# St. Ferdinand School

Easter, 2023

Dear St. Ferdinand Parish Family and Alumni,

**Easter Blessings to you from the of St. Ferdinand School Community as we enter the final days of this most holy of seasons in our Catholic Faith!**

In this post-pandemic society, a quality Catholic education amidst our often-tumultuous, ever-changing, increasingly secular society is so important right now with regards to the formation of the next generation of Catholic citizens who will bring about productive change to the world. One's positive sense of self; ethics; kindness; traditions and truths of the Catholic Faith; strong academics; and confidence – developed in partnership with school, home, and church – prepares students for success in high school and beyond.



**Coming up on its 95<sup>th</sup> Anniversary in existence, what is St. Ferdinand School like these days?**

Our rigorous, standards-based, Pre K – 8 curricula, taught by our outstanding and caring faculty – most of whom hold Master's degrees - has enabled students to thrive in our welcoming, joyous, respectful, educational, modern, Catholic-faith-based environment within class sizes about 40% smaller than at Chicago Public Schools.



An emphasis on technology and expectation of tech competence are demanded in the 21<sup>st</sup> century world. At St. Ferdinand School, iPads and Chromebooks are integrated into lessons starting in preschool, complementing the traditional curricula, making for a rich classroom experience. In addition, students spend time in the newly-installed STEM (Science-Technology-Engineering-Mathematics) Lab, where problem-solving skills are honed through inventing, circuit wiring, coding, and building.

Of course, the fundamentals still make up the bulk of St. Ferdinand School students' education. Reading programs grounded in high-quality literature and writing programs that reflect research, expository, persuasive, and narrative forms make up the Language Arts curriculum. Math lessons focused on concepts ranging from fact memorization, algebraic problem-solving, and supported logical reasoning are taught alongside science inquiry, social studies history, religion fundamentals, and social-emotional regulation skills. Spanish and even Polish (at the preschool level!) languages, music theory, creative art, physical education, and technological basics round out the students' engaged learning days. All in, St. Ferdinand School creates well-rounded students who are prepared for success in high school and beyond – socially, academically, and religiously.

Also, we've continued to grow our enrollment each year during these post-pandemic times, when other Catholic schools have, unfortunately, dropped in numbers and have had to close their doors.

At a recent all-class Alumni Reunion during a St. Ferdinand Parish Fish Fry Friday, alumni remarked how bright, modern, and updated the school building was. Many remarked it made them so happy to see their alma mater in such a good, thriving condition.

In short – through a partnership of students, parents, teachers, administration, alumni, generous parishioners and a continuous success story almost a century in the making - St. Ferdinand School continues to be a thriving, joyous, stable place of strong, updated academic and religious learning - - - won't you help to make sure this legacy continues?

**Will you consider helping a St. Ferdinand School student in financial need?**

Yet, the need for support and generosity from friends such as you to supplement the cost of a quality, Catholic, St. Ferdinand School education has never been greater.

Our parents are hardworking and mindful of the many advantages of a St. Ferdinand School education.

Yet, many of our families live paycheck to paycheck. Some of our families are still feeling the effect of having been affected financially by the pandemic: jobs eliminated, hours cut.

Roughly 60% of our students receive some type of financial aid. The sources – through the state, the Archdiocese of Chicago, Big Shoulders, or other philanthropic organizations - help many, but not all, of those who apply and desire to become a part of the St. Ferdinand School family afford the tuition. Each year, discounting tuition based on individual circumstances of a family is what is needed out of necessity to keep children enrolled in St. Ferdinand School; the act of “discounting” for school families requires the school to supplement the eliminated but budgeted money through other means.

**We want to ensure that this excellence is obtainable for many students – both now and in the future.**

Would you please consider a donation to the St. Ferdinand School Annual Scholarship Fund Drive? Your gift can both help to make a real difference in students' lives, as well as to ensure that every student continues to excel here. Any amount will make a difference in the life of its recipient!

*If donating, please make checks payable to St. Ferdinand School and place in the collection basket with “School Fund Drive” in the Memo line and on the outside of the envelope; there is also a School Scholarship envelope for Apr 23. Or, please mail in your donation to: 3131 N. Mason, Chicago, 60634.*

Please know I thank God every night for the gift of being a part of St. Ferdinand School and Parish, and I am so proud and blessed to be working with and leading this amazing school community. I wish you a happy, healthy spring – and extend an invitation for a personalized tour of the joyous environment and academic excellence experienced everyday at St. Ferdinand School .

In God's grace,



Mrs. Erin Boyle Folino, M.A., M.Ed., Principal

