THE FRANCES XAVIER WARDE SCHOOL

SUMMER 2025

CHARISM

MAGAZINE



FROM EXCELLENCE TO EVERYWHERE

Prepared to Learn. Empowered to Lead. Launched to Thrive.

The Frances Xavier Warde School is an independent, Catholic elementary school in downtown Chicago that provides an academically excellent, values-oriented education to students of all ethnic, religious, cultural, and socioeconomic backgrounds in a child-centered urban environment.

The FXW Charisms

At FXW, we are guided by our four Charisms. A charism is any good gift that flows from God's love to humans. We partner with our families to nurture faith development for our Catholic students and engage all of our students to learn about and respect other faith traditions. FXW focuses on educating the whole child, including social-emotional development, a comprehensive arts program, and a rigorous curriculum aimed at developing critical thinkers who are prepared to live as global citizens in the world. As a keystone of our diverse community, we provide need-based scholarships to children throughout the Chicago area.

Our Charisms serve as a roadmap for shaping and teaching our children. We create an individualized educational experience that recognizes each child as unique. Our Charisms are the gifts that FXW gives to its families and to its students.

DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION
A Community that is purposefully diverse and intentionally inclusive

FAITH
A Community of faith that welcomes and embraces all faith traditions

ACADEMICS
A Community that is preparing thinkers and leaders in an academically enriched environment

SERVICE
A Community that is motivated by faith to serve others

FXW Leadership Team

Michael Kennedy, *Head of School*
Erin Horne, *Director of Education*
Kimberlee Wazny, *CFO/COO*
Terri Jackson, *Director of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion*
Mary Perrotti, *Director of Advancement*
Sue Smeaton, *Director of Admissions and Financial Aid*
Robyn Sotak, *Director of Auxiliary Programs*

OSP Campus Leadership

Courtney Britton, *Principal*
Heidi Meyer, *Assistant Principal*
Emma Fleming, *Student Success Team Coordinator*

HNC Campus Leadership

Lauren Fitchett, *Principal*
Meagan Dimit, *Learning and Logistics Coordinator*

Cross Campus Leadership

Tiara Damper, *Director of Student Services*
Norma Guzmán, *Director of Climate and Culture*

Board of Trustees 2025–26

The Frances Xavier Warde School is governed by our Board of Trustees. As an independent school, we maintain our Catholic identity with oversight from The Association of Christian Faithful to ensure our commitment to spirituality.

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Letter from the Head of School

Dear FXW Community,

As I reflect on the past school year, I am deeply inspired by the many ways our students, faculty, staff, and families have lived out our Mission and Charisms. From the youngest learners exploring their first classroom experiences to our graduates stepping confidently into the next chapter of their lives, this has been a year of growth, discovery, and connection. Together, we embraced opportunities that enriched our minds and strengthened our bonds—whether through our evolving math program that challenges students to think critically and persevere, the beloved tradition of HNC Exploratory Day where Chicago becomes our classroom, or the expansion of programs like Wit & Wisdom, JEDI, and our affinity groups that help ensure every member of our community feels valued and seen.

This year's graduating Class of 2025 will attend an impressive range of high schools across Chicago and beyond, including some of the city's most competitive selective enrollment, independent, and parochial institutions. The breadth of our students' placements—reflecting strong academic preparation, leadership skills, and character—reminds us that an FXW education equips them to thrive anywhere they go next. We are proud to see their achievements recognized by schools that value both their intellect and their integrity.

I am also deeply grateful for the engagement of our parent community, particularly during this spring's Parent Listening Sessions. Your insights, questions, and shared hopes for FXW help shape our path forward. The thoughtful feedback from these conversations will guide our planning and ensure that our programs, traditions, and community spirit continue to grow in meaningful ways.

This coming year, our Charism focus is on faith, and it is fitting to draw inspiration from Mother Catherine McAuley, foundress of the Sisters of Mercy and mentor to Mother Frances Xavier Warde, who said, "We should be shining lamps, giving light to all around us." This image of light speaks to our mission at FXW—illuminating the path for our students through learning, service, and a shared life of faith. When each of us brings our unique gifts and perspectives to the work of this community, our collective light grows stronger, guiding one another toward what is possible.

> "We should be shining lamps, giving light to all around us."
>
> **–Mother McAuley**

At FXW, we take our first steps together, knowing the road ahead is brighter when we walk side by side. One community, many hands, endless possibilities—this is how we unlock potential, inspire change, and shape the future for our students, our school, and the world beyond.

With gratitude,

Michael Kennedy
Head of School
The Frances Xavier Warde School





Oh, The Places FXW Students Go!

At FXW, our home is Chicago.
But the world is our classroom

From Preschool through Grade 8, FXW creates opportunities for our students to take educational trips that include a visit to a neighborhood fire station, an archictectural boat tour of the Chicago River, as well as an overnight stay "Dozin' with the Dinos" at the Field Museum by our Grade 5 students.

With faculty as chaperones, Grade 4 students travel to Springfield, Illinois, our state capitol, while Grade 8 students visit our nation's capitol in Washington, D.C. Not to be left out, Grade 6 students visit Milwaukee and the Grade 7 class takes a trip to the "Gateway City" of St. Louis. Students look forward to these annual capstone trips throughout their tenure at FXW! Additionally, the last two years FXW has partnered with Collegio San Carlo (CSC), a preschool through Grade 12, in Milan, Italy, to create an international exchange program.

Not only do we let our students know they CAN go anywhere, we make sure that they do. ■













Congratulations to the Class of 2025!





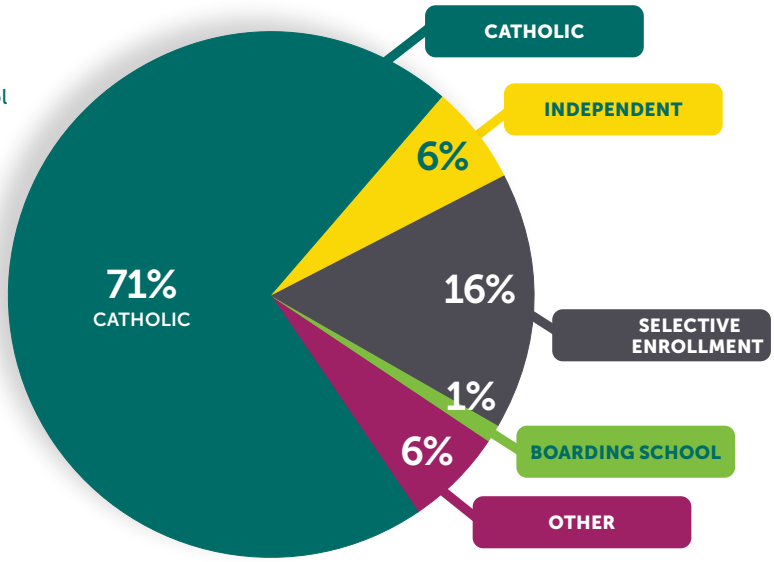






2025 At A Glance

Every step of the way, FXW prepares its students for the high school of their choice. All students work with a dedicated advocate who guides them to look at a wide array of options for schools; is well-versed in each student's individual academic performance as well as test preparation, transcripts and documentation requirements, scholarship opportunities and financial aid. The result is exceptional placement for our graduating class at some of the finest schools throughout the Chicago area. ■



Class of 2025 High School Acceptances

CATHOLIC

- 53 Saint Ignatius College Prep
- 24 DePaul College Prep
- 4 De La Salle Institute
- 1 Loyola Academy
- 1 Mount Carmel
- 1 St. Laurence
- 1 Trinity High School

INDEPENDENT

- 5 Latin School of Chicago
- 1 Lycée Francais de Chicago
- 1 University of Chicago Laboratory Schools
- 1 Wolcott College Prep

BOARDING SCHOOL

- 1 Episcopal High School
- 2 Culver Academies

SELECTIVE ENROLLMENT

- 10 Lane Tech College Prep High School
- 9 Whitney M. Young Magnet High School
- 7 Jones College Prep
- 7 Walter Payton College Prep
- 1 George Westinghouse College Prep

OTHER

- 1 Bennett Day School
- 1 British International School of Chicago
- 1 Downers Grove North
- 1 Golder College Prep
- 1 Kenwood High School Honors
- 1 Lincoln Park High School Visual Arts
- 1 New Trier Township High School
- 1 Nolensville High School

Wit & Wisdom

Literacy through Knowledge Building

Teaching a child to learn to read seems simple enough. Parents and teachers read to their children, provide them with age-appropriate books during early childhood, and just like that, you have a reader.

If only it were that simple. Learning to read is actually quite complex. As part of our ongoing curriculum development, we endeavored to find ways to teach the intricate processes that turn a willing child into an avid and dedicated reader.

In order to became a strong reader, children need to build neuropathways as it requires the collective activities of many areas of the brain. In order to read, the brain must be trained to read by connecting the visual system with the spoken language system. The tool we selected to help with this—*Wit & Wisdom*—is based on a knowledge building principle, which means students are learning about science and social science concepts as they are learning how to read. The Wit & Wisdom curriculum is built on the foundational understanding that for students to become truly literate, they must develop a deep body of knowledge and literacy skills and strategies, which cannot be done in isolation.

Research by cognitive scientists and literacy experts shows that students can learn more deeply and quickly when they have a foundation of knowledge in place. Students read, write about what they have read, and learn grammar. They then articulate the meaning of each text in both formal and informal discussions with their peers. Through a diverse selection of text, multimedia and visual art, students learn about topics such as immigration, geography, social justice and more. As their knowledge and vocabulary grow, they become capable of reading complex texts and developing ideas. When children have a broad base of knowledge, vocabulary and ideas, they have the tools to write about those ideas. ■



WHAT IS WIT & WISDOM?

Reading a set of texts on a topic

...builds knowledge

...builds vocabulary

With more knowledge and vocabulary **students read more complex texts.**

As students read more complex texts, they have ideas to write about and the knowledge and vocabulary to write about those ideas.

Students become better writers. And they can grapple with increasingly complex texts.

Wit & Wisdom is a comprehensive curriculum that uses an integrated approach to learning. It is built on a knowledge building concept, meaning that students are studying Social Studies and Science concepts through the ELA class. There is also art embedded into each of the units of study that the students are taught how to explore, each with an explicit connection to the topic of study.

Through each carefully designed module of study, the students activate and develop content and vocabulary knowledge while also learning critical literacy skills (language structures, verbal reasoning and literacy knowledge).

How has the rollout been supported through professional development?

(Over the 24–25 school year)

- 2.5 Professional Development Days of training
- 3 days of on-site teacher coaching and 3 days of on-site leadership coaching provided by the Great Minds (publisher of Wit & Wisdom) implementation success lead
- Weekly team meetings facilitated by OSP principal Courtney Britton and learning specialist Katie Mooney to prepare for lessons, discuss instructional practices, and analyze student work samples
- Yearlong teacher coaching provided by Katie Mooney



An Evolving Math Program for All Learners

Grades 6–8 Math Progression and Research

Through on-going innovations to meet the evolving needs of our students in a changing society, The Frances Xavier Warde School seeks to provide a rigorous, well-rounded experience that prepares students for high school, college, and beyond. We build skills like perseverance, grit, and resilience through curricular opportunities, which is evident in the ways we have enhanced our middle school math program over the last five years.

In 2020–2021, FXW made the transition to have all Grade 8 students enroll in Algebra 1- a course typically offered freshman year of high school. By the start of the 2023-2024 school year, Grade 6 and Grade 7 students shifted to an accelerated math program. During that same year, to further challenge our most eager students, we began a partnership with Northwestern's Center for Talent Development Program who offered an optional yearlong before school geometry class for Grade 7 and 8 students.

Since implementing accelerated programming, data showed promising results. The math MAP scores of FXW students in Grade 6 rose dramatically.

During the 2022–2023 school year, 35 percent of Grade 6 students tested above the 80th percentile in math. By the 2024-2025 school year, that number had risen to 61 percent. For Grade 7, the number rose from 52 percent to 67 percent.

Grade 6 Math Scores

	% of students below the 60th percentile	% of students below the 60st–80th percentile	% of students above the 80th percentile
2022–2023	23%	42%	35%
2023–2024	10%	30%	60%
2024–2025	18%	21%	61%

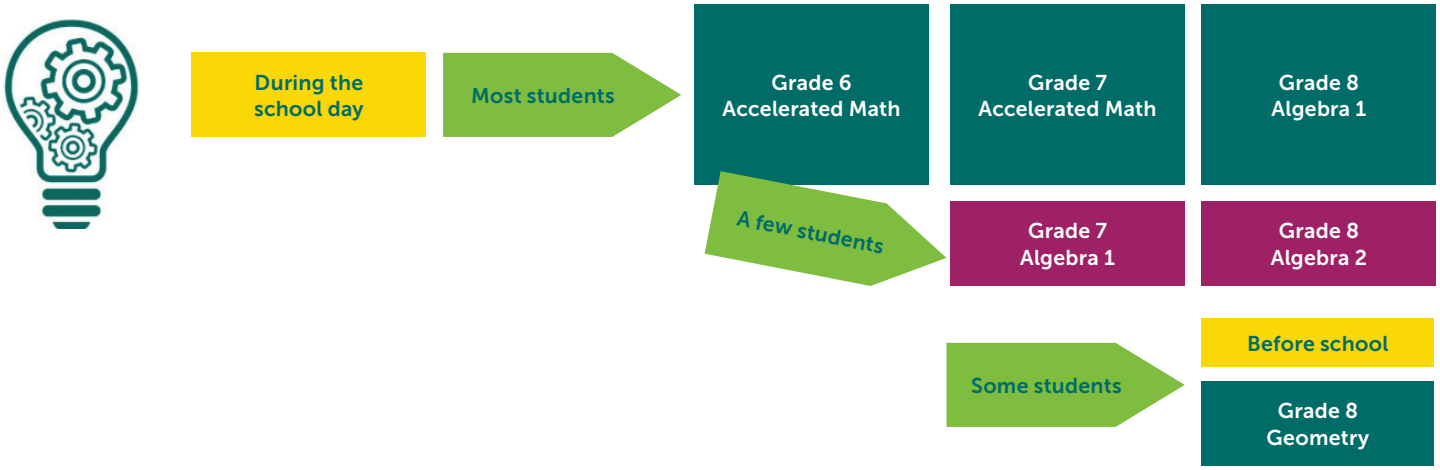
Grade 7 Math Scores

	% of students below the 60th percentile	% of students below the 60st–80th percentile	% of students above the 80th percentile
2022–2023	18%	30%	52%
2023–2024	10%	21%	69%
2024–2025	13%	20%	67%

Note: Our accelerated program was adopted in the 2023–2024 academic year.

FXW's Current Accelerated Pathway & Proposed Option

This year we are proud to introduce a new pathway that includes three high school math course offerings for students. The implementation of these math enhancements we put in place six years ago is not an end. It's another beginning. At FXW, we will continue to look for ways to provide challenges for our students as we build them into the next generation of thinkers and leaders. We look forward to continuing to watch our students "go anywhere".



Meet Our Math Coach



Our commitment to developing students who enjoy and excel in math has been greatly enhanced by a similar commitment to our already superb math teachers. Six years ago, we created the position of Math Instructional Coach to support our new math curriculum. In this role, **Amy Buchheit** serves as on-site professional development for our staff and keeps teachers informed and well versed in the latest best practices in mathematics education. She models lessons, co-teaches, provides grounding in the new curriculums' goals, and offers one on one, and group-based professional development opportunities for the staff.

The growth of our middle school math program would not be possible without a commitment to instilling a strong math foundation and providing our students the tools to explore and grow through our math instruction at our OSP Campus from Preschool-Grade 3.

"In the early grades, teachers not only work to develop a solid math foundation and conceptual understanding, but they are very intentional about the math mindsets they are building as well," Buchheit explains. "The way math instruction is structured, students develop a growth mindset, autonomy to work through problems, flexibility to try different approaches, problem solving skills, and an appreciation for collaboration. I believe these soft skills and mindsets that are instilled in the early grades play a key role in the success we see in the upper grades. Students are willing to persevere in challenges and take risks, without being held back by math anxiety or fear of failure."

Amy is beginning her 12th year at FXW. She has bachelor's degrees in sociology and elementary education from the University of Notre Dame, as well as a master's in leadership and administration and an Instructional Coaching Certification from Loyola University Chicago. ■

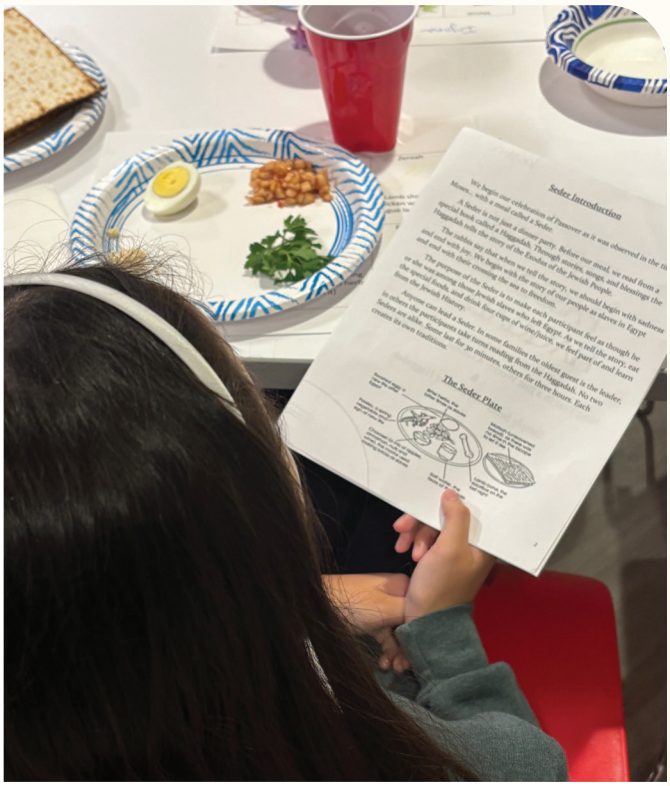


Always Seeking New Pathways of Understanding

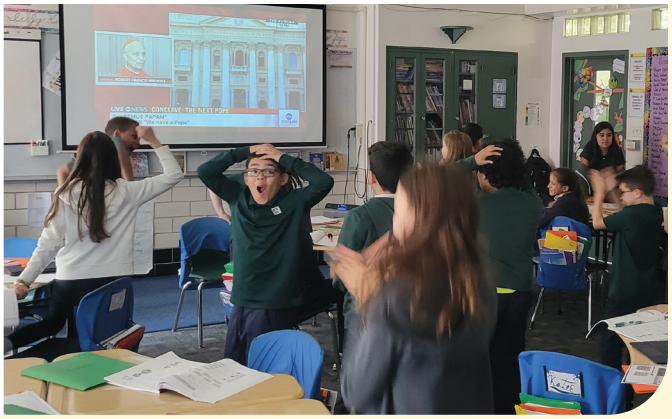
Innovative Religion Programming

As an independent Catholic, faith-based School, FXW forges an innovative pathway for teaching religion. We are a community of faith that welcomes and embraces all faith traditions. Therefore, our programming is based on teaching students to seek to understand the faith-based perspective of all humans. Our inclusive, values-based, interfaith/multi-faith religion program is designed so students learn about Catholic values while simultaneously gaining an understanding of how these principles provide mirrors and windows into the teachings of religions and values in their communities and beyond. Examples of celebrations are shared below, including (clockwise starting top left) Diwali, Grade 6 Seder, the election of Chicago-born Robert Prevost as Pope Leo XIV, and the Lunar New Year. ■









Each assessment period, a grade level focuses on three key values. These values provide the overarching principles for how students learn about Catholicism and the basic teachings of other religions. The world religions are selected based on our current student population as well as the world's most common religions.

	Assessment Period 1	Assessment Period 2	Assessment Period 3
GRADE 4	**Compassion, Harmony, Humility** Catholicism | Taoism	**Conscience, Gratitude, Hope** Catholicism | Protestantism	**Truth, Wisdom, Empathy** Catholicism | Hinduism
GRADE 5	**Perseverance, Loyalty, Knowledge** Catholicism | Evangelical Christians	**Justice, Faith, Service** Catholicism | Islam	**Nonviolence, Reverence, Simplicity** Catholicism | Jainism
GRADE 6	**Respect, Tradition, Honesty** Catholicism | Orthodox Christianity	**Ethics, Peace, Community** Catholicism | Judaism	**Sustainability, Wisdom, Karma** Catholicism | Buddhism
GRADE 7	**Nature, Ancestry, Heritage** Catholicism | Shintoism	**Conscience, Renewal, Responsibility** Catholicism | Protestantism	**Open-mindedness, Peace, Equality** Catholicism | Ba'hai
GRADE 8	**Equality, Inclusivity, Life** Catholicism | Sikhism	**Sincerity, Steadfastness, Social Responsibility** Catholicism | Protestantism	**Faith, Responsibility, Moral Code of Conduct** Catholicism | Jehovah's Witnesses

Always Seeking New Pathways of Understanding

FXW's Diversity and Inclusion Charism states that we strive to be a community that is purposefully diverse and intentionally inclusive. We animate this Charism in many ways within our various learning spaces and through our engagement with one another. It speaks to the culture and climate that we are building and maintaining together. During the 2024–2025, we brought this Charism to life through the reintroduction of one program and the birth of another.



JEDI

A new student leadership group was introduced and formed during the 2024-2025 school year. JEDI (Justice, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion) consists of 30 students across Grades 6-8 who come together monthly to take part in student SEED (Seeking Educational Equity and Diversity) where they learn about multiple identities and the role they play in cultivating and maintaining a culture of belonging. This group of students serves as a think tank and a way to ensure that students' voices are heard and considered when changing and implementing policies, programs, and procedures.

Together, they developed the following Mission Statement: JEDI is committed to fostering a school environment where every student feels valued, respected, and included. Through education, collaboration, and action, we aim to celebrate our differences, promote equity, and cultivate a community where all are heard and considered. We strive to be leaders who stand up for justice, embrace empathy, and work together to ensure that every member of our school has the opportunity to thrive and succeed.

In addition, JEDI members created a set of Belief Statements that include:

We believe that diversity is our strength.

We believe in the power of inclusion.

We believe in standing up for justice.

We believe in the importance of education and awareness.

We believe in collaboration and teamwork.

We believe in the value of listening.

We believe that leadership means action.

We believe in creating spaces for everyone to thrive.

We believe that change starts with us.

We believe that growth is continuous.

These student leaders are working hard not only to fulfill their Mission and live by these Belief Statements, but they are also doing everything in their power to build and leave a legacy at FXW. This year alone, they collaborated with school leadership to review and revise the anonymous incident reporting process. What a phenomenal contribution they accomplished in JEDI's founding year.

Affinity Groups

Affinity groups were reintroduced to the FXW community during the 2024-2025 school year. Students at OSP and HNC, parents/caregivers, and staff signed up to meet with other members of the FXW community with whom they share a common identity or experience (e.g. race/ethnicity, religion). Affinity groups offer immense benefits and serve our Mission and Charisms by offering support, fostering positive self-identity, and building community.

One of the highlights of the year for students in our Students of Color affinity group was attending the annual Young Men of Color Symposium and Young Women of Color Symposium where they were able to connect with hundreds of students of color from Chicagoland area independent schools. Together, they attended workshops, networked, and received inspirational messages from keynote speakers. All affinity groups are facilitated by FXW faculty and staff members. ■



Listening and Learning

At The Frances Xavier Warde School, we seek to cultivate a culture of continuous feedback to be able to evaluate our school from multiple perspectives. We do so with the goal of continuously improving to make FXW an even better place for our students and our families. One of the most effective ways to ensure we are moving in the right direction is through understanding the parent/guardian perspective. As such, we've partnered with ParentPulse, a company that specializes in collecting feedback for schools.

In the past, our practice had been to share one comprehensive survey. Beginning with the 2024-2025 school year, we wanted to capture the thoughts, feelings, and experiences of our community members in shorter surveys – and at multiple points over the year. This has helped us to understand how policies, programs, and procedures are being received and how we can best adapt in a timelier mann

In the final survey of the year, we were very pleased to share our families highlighted the following strengths:

Areas of Strength

90% Ample opportunities for parent engagement

90% The teachers at the school genuinely love their students

88% Students have opportunities to serve others in their school community:

88% The school values diversity

Areas of Growth

Based on feedback, we found a need for improvements in athletics, co-curricular programming, and our approach to discipline.

- **Athletics:** Quantitative and qualitative data revealed an opportunity to provide stronger communication and management of teams, particularly in basketball, to ensure a positive experience for all participants.
- **Co-curriculars:** Parents and guardians are requesting enhanced transparency regarding cost increases and more enrichment offerings.
- **Discipline:** Parents and guardians shared that they seek a more consistent and clear approach to discipline that effectively addresses student behavior while fostering a supportive environment.

Overall, we learned parents seek a more balanced focus on academics, extracurricular activities, and effective discipline practices.

In Response

- We invited families to participate in small group conversations with our Head of School and Board members to address concerns and to shed light on the many factors that go into the tuition-setting process.
- The Athletics Department made phone calls and hosted meetings with families to hear concerns in a spirit of continuous improvement.
- Director of Climate and Culture Dr. Norma Guzmán and Lead Social Worker Alyssa Brescia offered a webinar on FXW's response to discipline.

FXW is actively taking parent feedback into account and is committed to enhancing communication strategies to foster a more transparent and collaborative environment. Efforts are being made to streamline information sharing, ensuring that important updates regarding tuition, programming, and school policies are communicated clearly and promptly. Additionally, the Leadership Team is focusing on creating open channels for dialogue, allowing parents to voice their concerns and suggestions, which will help guide future improvements. This proactive approach reflects the School's dedication to growth and responsiveness to the needs of the community..

Our goal remains clear: to cultivate a culture of continuous feedback and improvement—one where all voices are heard, respected, valued, and considered. We are committed to listening, learning, unlearning, and growing together. ■

Chicago Is Our Classroom

At FXW, we are blessed to have campuses located in the heart of the gorgeous city of Chicago and fortunate they are in close proximity to all the education, culture, and fun it has to offer.



Taking advantage of that closeness, many years ago FXW developed HNC Exploratory Day. This remarkable school day for students in Grades 4-8 was created to provide an opportunity to explore our wonderful city in a new way. It's a beloved and longstanding staple of FXW's curriculum in which our faculty and staff spend months conceiving and preparing about two dozen incredible and differing experiences.

This could mean visiting a museum with a new purpose, touring Wrigley Field, kayaking the Chicago River or participating in the creation of street art. It might take students rock climbing, drinking tea at the Drake Hotel, walking through Chinatown or exploring a mystifying escape room!

With the list of experiences in front of them, every student fills out a form and ranks their top choices. The result is every student is able to go on an experience of their preference. However, creating new experiences for students includes who is part of their group. The teachers in their groups may be ones the students don't very well (yet), or with a group of peers with whom they haven't spent much time with (yet).

Regardless of who students spend their Exploratory Day with, they leave the experience with broadened perspectives and one step closer to becoming the thoughtful leaders we believe they're destined to be. ■





HNC EXPLORATORY DAY













Serving and Learning Go Hand in Hand

The Frances Xavier Warde School's Living the Legacy (LTL) program is as old as the school itself.

Since our founding in 1989, LTL has been an integral part of the FXW curriculum with a devotion to service learning. Students from all grades partner with a different organization and throughout their time at FXW, they learn, serve and interact with populations in need such as the elderly, unhoused, veterans and individuals with special needs.



Living the Legacy Coordinator Beth Amatangelo works with FXW's 30-plus partner organizations to ensure students work on projects that are meaningful and relevant. They work on grade level service projects and all-school service learning such as a Thanksgiving Food Drive, Ramadan Essentials Drive, collecting messages of hope for the Red Cross, as well as monthly community service events on the weekends. Students aren't doing the work alone. Families are also invited to participate in service projects and, together, they log thousands of service hours each year.

While many of our partnerships go back decades, we are continually seeking to create new projects that reflect the changing needs of our world. New projects developed during the 2024–2025 school year included:

- Partnering with Red Cross during spirit week to provide victims of the California wildfires hundreds of messages of hope and an optional schoolwide $1 collection.
- Grade 3 partnering with veterans organization Honor Flight Chicago
- Grade 1 singing and coloring with clients of Little Brothers—Friends of the Elderly and St. Mary's Home
- A staff service event at Misericordia bakery during the holidays

One of our most longstanding and cherished relationships is with Blessings in a Backpack, which works to provide food on the weekends for school-aged children across America. During the school year, the LTL commitment included our Preschool and Kindergarten students packing weekend bags of food for 100 percent of the students attending Maternity BVM. Recognizing the stigma frequently associated with food insecurity, Beth Amatangelo arranged for all children to grab a bag of food each Friday to take home for the weekend.

And during the summer of 2025, for the first time, LTL facilitated providing weekend food for 100 percent of the Blessings students who attend summer school. A goal for no child to go unfed is a lofty one but it is has been pursued relentlessly under Beth's leadership.

Recently, Beth was given the opportunity to share the story of FXW's partnership with the Blessings in a Backpack Chicago Advisory Board. She shared stories of our partnership and goals of the program, which includes the development of social connections, building community, personal growth and gaining perspective through service. She shared about LTL's years of serving others and how being in the community can provide a sense of fulfillment and purpose.

"Blessings in a Backpack deeply values the longstanding partnership with the FXW community," said Dan Summins, Managing Director of the Chicago chapter of Blessings in a Backpack. "Not only are the children of Maternity BVM getting the benefit of weekend nutrition, the students at FXW get to experience the benefits of giving back to their community. Thank you to Beth Amatangelo and the entire FXW team for making Blessings happen." ■











FXW partners with Chicago-area organizations to offer service opportunities throughout the year. From our youngest Preschoolers to our Grade 8 students, everyone participates! Some of our community partners and recommended organizations include:

- Alliance for the Great Lakes
- The American Red Cross of Chicago & Northern Illinois
- Ann and Robert H. Lurie Children's Hospital
- Big Shoulders Fund (Maternity BVM, St. Malachy, St. Agnes of Bohemia and Academy of St. Benedict the African)
- Blessings in a Backpack
- Catholic Charities
- Catholic Extensions
- Chicago Park District
- Comer Crops Farm
- Cradles to Crayons
- Digs with Dignity
- Fourth Presbyterian Church—Meals Ministry
- Franciscan House of Mary and Joseph
- Gary Comer Youth Center
- Greater Chicago Food Depository
- Green Star Movement
- The Honeycomb Project
- Honor Flight Chicago
- Humble Design
- Immigrant and Refugee Ministry
- Jesse Brown VA Medical Center
- Lincoln Park Community Services
- Little Brothers-Friends of the Elderly
- Little Sisters of the Poor St. Mary's Home
- Mercy Home for Boys and Girls
- Misericordia Home
- Mission of Our Lady of the Angels
- The Night Ministry
- Nourishing Hope
- Operation Gratitude
- PAWS Chicago
- Pilsen Food Pantry
- Refugee Community Connection
- Refugee One
- Share Our Spare
- St. Chrys' Closet
- St. Eulalia Catholic Church—The Quinn Center

Fun for the Whole Family: Creating Celebrations Throughout the Year

At any given time throughout the year, the dozens of parent volunteers who make up the Parent Advisory Committee (PAC) of The Frances Xavier Warde School are seemingly either planning an event or hosting one. If the Fall Book Fair doesn't need tending to then it's time to start thinking about the Uniform Swap. If the Spring Book Fair isn't front of mind, preparing for another season of Grade Level Parent Socials is right around the corner. Our parents take tremendous pride in creating joyful experiences for the entire community.

2024–25 PAC Co-Chairs

Mindy Medley Kedvesh and Jen Borchard

2024-25 PAC Special Event Chairs

Book Fair: Lindsay Kenzinger, Alison Dobleman and Colleen Ambrosino

Book Swap: Jill Dixon

Grade Level Parent Socials: Alison Buckley, Kori Burland and Claire O'Neill

Mardi Gras: Natalie Oliver and Marla Richards

Mother's Day Luncheon: Michaelene Martin and Ellen Sondag

Teacher & Staff Appreciation Week: Jen Price

Uniform Swap: Jill Dixon and Marisa Doherty

Amid all our wonderful events, each season—fall, winter, spring and, yes, summer—has one that stands out. Let's take a look inside each one of them, shall we?

Fall: Grandparents & Special Friends' Celebration

Each of our campuses sets aside time right before Thanksgiving Break so students can invite their special friends and family members into their world of wonder. At the Old St. Patrick's Church Campus, guests of our Preschool-Grade 3 students come for a morning visit where they can show share their teachers, friends, and classrooms with their loved ones. At our Holy Name Cathedral Campus, family and special friends of our Grade 4-8 students go on classroom visits while taking a side trip to play Bingo in the HNC auditorium.

Grandparents & Special Friends' Celebration is one of FXW's most cherished traditions. It doesn't matter what grade you're in, bringing your favorite people to your favorite place never gets old!

Winter: Mardi Gras

The question isn't what DOES Mardi Gras have but what DOESN'T it have? There's a DJ, a face painter, balloon artists, even a live band! And it's topped off at the end of the night by a Mardi Gras parade that begins in the OSP Campus gym with students displaying their Mardi Gras floats and ends with parents and childrens a like reluctantly leaving after an amazing evening.

Spring: Mother's Day Celebration

This wonderful event celebrates the mothers and mother figures of our community for a special day of food, community and storytelling. For the last two years, in order to satisfy overwhelming demand and because it's a goregous location, the event has been held in the goregous space at 625 W. Adams, a stone's throw from our OSP Campus.

At our 2025 Mother's Day Celebration, Grade 3 students serenaded the 250 guests with a beautiful rendition of "Hail, Mary: Gentle Woman." Each celebration has an invited speaker who is the mother of a Grade 8 student. Last year, Charlie Mathison lovingly introduced his Mom, Tracy, who shared their family's story of discovering FXW and how it has become such an important part of their lives.

Summer: Summer Pool Party at Proesel Park

You might think PAC would take the summer off, but that's not how they roll. Even with summer in full swing and familes at camp, traveling or just enjoying time off, our community still loves toget together. The Summer Pool Party takes place at Proesel Park Family Aquatic Center just north of Chicago in Lincolnwood. After Proesel closes for the day, FXW opens it up! The pools, diving boards, slides and yummy food and drinks combined with seeing FXW friends again makes this a magical summer night! ■

PARENT ADVISORY COMMITTEE (PAC)















A World of Pure Imagination



Pictured: Chris Zweidinger, Sarah McNamara, Michael Kennedy, Alison Buckley, Mike Buckley, Mercedes Carnethon and Aston Coleman

From our dazzling emcees—Lou Canellis, Dawn Hasbrouck and Emily Wahls—to our wonderful faculty and staff, our incredible community of current and alum parents, and especially our 2025 Gala Chair Couples—Alison and Mike Buckley, Mercedes Carnethon and Aston Coleman, and Sarah McNamara and Chris Zweidinger—FXW's Pure Imagination Gala 2025, held Saturday, Feb. 8 at The Geraghty, was a night to remember. The presence, generosity, and spirit of the 703 guests made it truly scrumdiddlyumptious!

The net proceeds from the $940,677 raised are used to support annual expenses that impact every facet of student life. Each gift helps sustain and grow the programs that make FXW a place where curiosity, creativity, and community thrive.

As in past years, the evening featured our beloved Live and Silent Auctions, with packages from luxury getaways to unique experiences. Favorites like Sign-Up Parties and Teacher Treats once again brought families and teachers together in joyful ways, while the gallery-style display of Young Artist Projects highlighted the creativity of our students. The evening was elevated by an inspirational video, created by FXW alum Jennifer O'Connor '06, an Emmy-nominated TV producer, which opened the paddle raise.

Our Gala would not have been possible without the tireless work of so many parent volunteers. We are grateful to this remarkable group who balance busy lives yet devote countless hours to our School. Their dedication as "joyful warriors" is truly the heartbeat of this celebration. And to our chairs, donors, faculty, staff, and every guest who joined us—you made this night of Pure Imagination an unforgettable tribute to the spirit of FXW.

Auction Committee
Carolyn Dammrich, *Chair*
T.J. Dammrich, *Chair*
Aaron Price, *Chair*
Jen Price, *Chair*
Chelsi Burgos-Young '07
Alissa Coronna
Nneka Dunham
Victoria Hernandez
Jen Stephenson
Evelyn Unseld

Decor
Amie Rule, *Chair*
Alison Dobleman

Preschool Books
Emma Coate, *Chair*
Alison Dobleman, *Chair*
Amanda Jacobs
Kathryn Landuyt
Ryan Taylor
Stephanie Vojas Taylor

Reservations & Seating
Rana Abraham, *Chair*
Yvonne Tsao, *Chair*

Sign Up Parties
Becky Hahn, *Chair*
Ashley Galston McCarty
Anisha Martin
Tina Pawlak, *Chair*
Cara Rehal, *Chair*

Teacher Treats
Nikki Bowman, *Chair*

Sponsorships & Underwriting
Ashley Ehimwenman
Lauren Mitchell
Carolyn Sabzali

Volunteers & Hospitality
Katie Daday
Ashley Ehimwenman
Catina Latham
Bridget McLemore
Daniela Pozzi-Pavan
Sheena Rubin

Young Artists
Ashley Corotis, Chair
Alison Dobleman, Chair
Efrén Adkins
Colleen Ambrosino
Aliscia Brown
Lilian Ngobi-Pryor
Diana Saleiro
Maria Thanoukos
Kristin Wenc

Marketing
Kristen Szabla-Hong

Imagineer Table Sponsors

Whimsical Wonder Sponsors
Sharyl & Michael Mackey
Anonymous

Enchanted Elixir Sponsors
The Ansari & Ansari-Haque Families
The Dobleman Family
Kelli & Timothy Kincaid and
Martha & Michael Stolfe
Eileen & Terry McCann

Magic Maker Sponsors
The Ehimwenman Family
Ideal Concepts Group
Nicole & George Karkalis and
Tina & Jeff Pawlak

Keepers of Wonder Patrons

The Chocolate Factory Atelier
Kehoe Designs

Golden Plate Sponsor
limelight

Teachers of Inspiration Patron—HNC
The Carnethon-Coleman Family
The McLemore Family
Friends of FXW

Teachers of Inspiration Patron—OSP
Christine & Bill Barry

Sweet Enchantment Patron
The Buckley Family

Artisan Patrons
Amanda & Christopher Jacobs
(Preschool)
Sarah McNamara & Chris Zweidinger
(Kindergarten)
Christine & Bill Barry (Grade 1)
The Buckley Family (Grade 2)
Jayne Ingles (Grade 3)
Julia & Sung Lee and Deitzah &
Andrew Raby (Grade 6)
Myriah Brown-Rivera & Arnaldo Rivera
(Grade 7)

Starlit Morsels Patrons
Becky Carroll & Jon Friend

Whirl of Whimsy Patron
Magnolia Pediatric Dentistry and
Orthodontics

Everlasting Beat Patron
Sarah McNamara & Chris Zweidinger

Pure Bubbles Patron
The Burland Family

Scrumdelicious Pizza Patrons
Connie's Pizza









A Night of Hope and Opportunity: The Bright Futures Dinner 2025

Inspired by the founders of The Frances Xavier Warde School (FXW), Maggie Daley, Fr. Jack Wall and founding principal, Mary Ellen Caron, Children at the Crossroads Foundation (CATC) helps to ensure that every child can access FXW's transformative education. Guided by CATC Board Chair Lally Daley Hotchkiss '98 and supported by a passionate board and community of former parents, alumni and friends, CATC embodies a relentless commitment to breaking down financial barriers, allowing children to thrive within FXW's nurturing environment regardless of economic circumstances.

Beginning in 2025, CATC's annual scholarship dinner was reimagined and renamed as the Bright Futures Dinner. For 35 years, net proceeds from the evening have supported financial assistance scholarships for FXW families, whose children learn, grow, and thrive in a community that reflects the world around them.

The money raised directly funds scholarships, underscoring our collective promise to foster a future where every child has the opportunity for personal and academic success. CATC has changed the lives of more than 1,000 children cultivating generations of students with a foundation of academic excellence and the understanding and empathy needed in our world today.

The 2025 Bright Futures Dinner, held at The Langham Chicago on May 16, honored Rose Ann Anschuetz with the Heart of the Crossroads Award as a tribute to her enduring commitment, vision, and passion for The Frances Xavier Warde School. Rose and her husband Ned's son, John, born in 1989 when FXW first opened its doors with two preschool classes at Presidential Towers, would go on to graduate as part of FXW's Class of 2004. Alongside Ned, Rose Ann would pour her heart into service—holding leadership roles on both the FXW and Children at the Crossroads Foundation boards.

"FXW is part of my heart and part of my soul and part of our family," she said. "FXW is a living, breathing force in the city of Chicago that recognizes—and it's important particularly now—diversity, equality and inclusion. We are better together and I feel so proud that I was able to be a part of that. The school represents the fruits of our labor."

We were also incredibly proud and fortunate this year to have Michelle Ruiz '01 sharing her FXW success story as our annual Alumni Speaker. Michelle has made an impact in the world of visual arts management as the founder of Elle Art Consulting, where she curates permanent art collections for corporate, hospitality, and residential clients, while managing ambitious projects in collaboration with contemporary artists. She is the founder of Luminara Art Circle, a program designed to engage affinity groups and art supporters through exclusive studio visits, artist talks, and museum walkthroughs. Curating meaningful intersections between art enthusiasts and artists who are shaping the contemporary art world today.

With her many accomplishments, Michelle is the living and breathing embodiment of the Missions of FXW and CATC, and our Bright Future guests were thrilled to hear her story! ■





Pictured above: Lally Daley Hotchkiss '98, Michelle Ruiz '01 and Brigid Cashman
Pictured right: Rose Ann Anschuetz and John Anschuetz '04

CHILDREN AT THE CROSSROADS FOUNDATION















New Leadership, Lasting Impact: FXW Athletics on the Rise

The start of the 2024–2025 school year was marked by new leadership within our athletics program, and the end of the year illustrated how that leadership is already making a difference.

Almadelia Barajas (Director of Athletics) and Omni Smith (Assistant Director of Athletics) stepped in to guide FXW athletics, and their steady encouragement and enthusiasm helped the program continue to soar. During their first year at the helm, nearly 80 percent of students in Grades 4–8 participated in at least one of our offered sports!

Helping pave the way to another memorable year was the addition of a spring girls volleyball season. With 13 teams and 119 athletes registered for the fall volleyball season, Alma and Omni decided to see if there might be interest in a spring season as well. Through their efforts, 103 athletes were able to have a spring season that included many of the fall players return but also created an opportunity for many newcomers to give volleyball a try for the first time.

The longstanding mission of our athletic department is for our athletes to focus on participation, fundamentals and a basic skill development that fosters a positive atmosphere in which they can thrive on the field and off. These values have been instilled in thousands of our athletes, which is one reason it gives us so much pride when one of our alums comes back to campus to teach these values to a new generation.

Last spring, former Loyola-Chicago basketball star and FXW alum Lucas Williamson '13, who is currently playing for the NBA's Memphis Grizzlies' G League team, led a 2-day basketball clinic designed to build skills, boost confidence, and teach athletes how to compete the right way. Alongside Omni Smith and FXW basketball coach and teacher Nick Bennett, Lucas hosted three dozen rising eighth graders to help them break down the basics and challenge the players to grow as athletes and people.

Lucas coming back to our gym sends a wonderful message to everyone in our community: once a Jaguar, always a Jaguar. ■



Almadelia Barajas
Director of Athletics

"My journey into athletics began at the age of 8, when I first started playing organized sports. From that moment on, athletics became a central part of my life. I competed throughout my youth and into college, where my playing career ultimately ended due to injury. Though my time as an athlete came to a close, my passion for sports never left—it simply evolved into a calling to lead and support others through athletic programming. As a fierce advocate for girls and women in sports, I'm driven to create opportunities for young girls that I wish I had growing up. Representation, access, and equity in athletics matter—especially for our future female athletes."

Favorite Athlete: Cristiano Ronaldo

Inspirational Quote: "To achieve something you've never had before, you must do something you've never done before."

Why Athletics Matte to Me: Athletics builds character, community, and confidence. It teaches resilience, leadership, and the value of teamwork—lessons that extend far beyond the court or field.



Omni Smith
Assistant Director of Athletics

"My journey into athletics began when I was seven years old. I had a passion for all sports, and some people considered me a bit unusual because of it. One moment I'd be watching Michael Jordan dominate the basketball court, and the next, I'd be studying Rafael Nadal's intensity on the tennis court. I grew up playing basketball, and that dedication eventually earned me a scholarship to Kent State University. It was at Kent State where I truly found myself—not just as an athlete, but as a person. Being surrounded by people from different backgrounds and cultures opened my eyes. I discovered how much I loved learning about others and how sports, across all cultures, bring people joy in unique and powerful ways."

Favorite Athlete: Lebron James

Inspirational Quote: "I love to love. Are we perfect? No. Imperfections helps with life's journey."

Why Athletics Matter to Me: Athletics helps create everlasting relationships. It brings families together, creates great conversations. It's a self-esteem builder.

2024–25 Athletic Highlights

Girls Fall Volleyball

The Grade 8 varsity nearly completed an undefeated season before coming up just short in the Queen of Angels Volleyball League. They dropped a hard-fought match in three sets to Sacred Heart Red in the title game for their only loss of the season.



Cross Country

FXW was proud to host the IESA Sectional with seventh graders Declan Kennedy and Kalea Lau advancing to represent FXW at the IESA State Meet. Both performed exceptionally against the best runners in the state. FXW also had strong performances at the CYO Meet with the best Catholic schools in Chicago. Sophie O'Neill (Grade 5), Charlotte Zahumensky (Grade 6), Adam Zahumensky (Grade 6), Aidan Raby (Grade 6), Audrina Vance (Grade 7), Caelinn O'Shea (Grade 8) and Liam Goodman (Grade 8) all had top 10 finishes, with Liam taking first place in the boys' varsity race.



Basketball

The Grade 8 varsity girls and boys basketball teams each made it to their CCYL title games. The varsity girls battled top-seeded St. Benedict Maroon to the finish before finally falling in the final minutes. Earlier in the season, the girls varsity captured the LMAIS "Cooler by the Lake" tournament with three wins, including a victory over Cook in the championship.



In their CCYL title game, the Grade 8 varsity boys miraculously erased a 12-point deficit in the final 2:07 to force overtime but eventually dropped a 70-67 decision to AACA. The varsity boys also reached the IESA regional final before dropping a 38-34 heartbreaker to top-seeded La Grange Highlands in the title game.



The Grade 8 boys JV team swept through the CCYL regular season with a perfect 14-0 record and then dominated in the playoffs with victories over AACA and St. Nicholas before completing their undefeated campaign with a 38-27 win over St. Ben's Gold in the title game.

Track & Field

FXW held an assembly to recognize and honor the six athletes who participated in the Cass 3A IESA State Track & Field Championship Meet held in Peoria. For the second straight year, our girls 4x200M relay team (Elsa Bove, Ivie Ehimwenman, Maya Goliak, and Desiree Smith) won a state title and set a state record for their age group! Additionally, Desiree finished in 2nd place in the 200M race, Ivie came in 7th place in the long jump, and Tyson Rozier and Declan Kennedy also qualified for the State Meet.



Girls Spring Volleyball

The Grade 8 White team went 11-0 to complete an undefeated season and capture the St. Viator league title.



Class of 2021 Senior Send-Off!

As the FXW Class of 2021 prepared to embark on the next chapter of their lives, we brought them back to one of the first.



On June 11, we were delighted to welcome home the Class of 2021 and their families to FXW's Old St. Patrick's Campus (OSP) for an evening filled with laughter and plenty of reminiscing. As they stepped through the familiar OSP front doors—many for the first time since their Grade 3 Clap Out—they were greeted by familiar faces, including Alumni Coordinator Brigid Cashman, Director of Education Erin Horne, and Head of School Michael Kennedy.

The night was alive with energy and joy as the Class of 2021 wandered through the halls where their FXW journey first began. They peeked into their preschool classrooms, rediscovered the magic of the Imagination Station, and even climbed on the playground equipment as though no time had passed at all.

Of course, while the campus still feels the same, the Class of 2021 has grown in extraordinary ways. They are now preparing to take on new adventures, and we could not be prouder of who they have become. Their achievements, their friendships, and their futures remind us of the very best of FXW—and we cannot wait to see all the wonderful things they will bring into the world.

And now, Class of 2022, it's almost your turn! We can't wait to welcome you back in June 2026 for your own Senior Send-Off. Until then, know that your FXW family will be here, cheering you on every step of the way. ■













Class of 2021 College Choices

Emme Alexander	Boston College
Jordan Ari Woodson	Xavier University of Louisiana
Gino Ariola	Indiana University
Max Boeke	Indiana University
Amira Boone	LSU
Camille Brooks	Howard University
Malia Chen	Cornell University
Rory Church	Georgetown University
Dylan Clark	Loyola University Chicago
Carter Chambers	Oberlin College
Carly Crudup	Xavier University
Kris D' Cunha	University of Illinois
Maeve Daley	Providence College
Tyler Dixon	Long Island University (Brooklyn)
Connor Egan	Georgetown
Valeria Fernandez	Tecnológico de Monterrey
Kate Frey	University of Wisconsin
Will Friedewald	Loyola University Chicago
Rimona Ghosh	Harvard University
Alec Gunderson	University of Illinois
Daniel Harley	University of Arizona
Cecelia Harper	UCLA
Mason Harpur	Mississippi State
Otto Herbeck	University of Missouri
Xoaquin Hernandez	Study abroad in Spain through Verto Education
Eleanore Hickman	Connecticut College
Hudson Hogan	Howard University
Anderson Hughes	University of Notre Dame
Jaine Jelinek	University of Wisconsin
Marty Junkins	Denison University
Caden Knoeck	Indiana University
Grace Kramer	Marquette University
Dylan Lambert	Suffolk University
Jocelyn Lara	University of Illinois
Selah McCray	Northwestern University
Daley McDermott	Vanderbilt
Keira McNay	SMU
Evan Meints	Ohio state
Oonagh Moriarty	Oregon
Gia Panfil	Fordham University
Aydin Provost	Illinois Wesleyan
Tiffany Rehkemper	Indiana University
Sofia Sandoval	University of Illinois
Milan Shah	Macalester College
Isabella Soriano	Georgetown University
Eva Talarico	TCU
Joe Toney	Indiana University
Abdon Valenciana	University of Chicago
Greer Waller	University of Notre Dame
Jack Walsh	USC
Ben Wilhelm	Georgetown University
Andrew Williams	University of Arizona
Alex Wright	Morehouse College

The 35th Founding Anniversary of The Frances Xavier Warde School



A special event was held on September 12, 2024 when The Children at the Crossroads Foundation hosted a party at the incomparable Maxwells Trading to celebrate the 35th anniversary of the founding of The Frances Xavier Warde School.

Alumni, current parents, faculty and staff, and Board members gathered to raise money for CATC and honor the legacy and ongoing impact of FXW.

The evening was such a joy and a success that we're making it an annual event! On October 16, 2025, the CATC Annual All-School Reunion will be again held at Maxwells Trading, 1516 W. Carroll Ave. in Chicago. Please join us for a wonderful night of food, fun and old friends! ■

Back row (left to right): Jonathan Kaminski '10, Michaela Ryan '15, Monica Nia Jones '10, Rachael Ryan '15, Jonathan Davis '08, Jessica Smart '98, Regina Marchese Duffy '00, Michael Daley '00. Front row: Giovanna Kaminski '08, FXW Alumni Coordinator Brigid Cashman, Lally Daley Hotchkiss '98, Christine Daley '00.









Calling all FXW Alumni!

As we continue to build our alumni network, we would love to hear from you for a future edition of our Charism! Please visit fxw.org/alums or contact Alumni Coordinator Brigid Cashman at fxwalumni@fxw.org to provide us with your current contact information and share important life updates.

1999



Chloe Colnon graduated from the University of Illinois with a degree in psychology. After a successful 13-year career in commercial real estate, she founded a corporate gifting company, Bestowal Gifts. Last year, she founded Method Moving which offers concierge relocation services for families that are moving. In addition to a 4-year-old daughter, she has a 6-year-old son who attended FXW for one year before the family moved to Lake Forest.

2001

Kyle Gordon is expecting his first child, a son, in August 2025 and plans to enroll him at FXW as soon as he's old enough.

2002

Adriana Moreno graduated from Spring Hill College with a degree in Theology. After college, she served two years with the Jesuit Volunteer Corps in Santiago, Chile. She is currently the Database and Research Manager at Saint Xavier University and recently completed her master's in business administration with a focus on business analytics.

2004

Nicollette Khuans graduated from the University of Illinois with a bachelor's in political science, and a law degree from Loyola-Chicago. In January 2025, she was elevated to partner at Taft Stettinius & Hollister LLP, where her practice focuses on commercial litigation.

2006



Caroline (Szujewski) Neal graduated from USC with a bachelor's in neuroscience and earned her PhD in neurobiology from the University of Chicago where she studied the neurobiological basis of opioid overdose susceptibility. She recently joined a neuroscience startup where she creates algorithms to better diagnose and treat neurological disorders.

2007

Annie (Kielian) Woolf graduated from Loyola-Chicago with a bachelor's in elementary education. After teaching first grade at St. Pius V. School in Pilsen for nine years, she left her wonderful school family to become a stay-at-home mom to her 1-year-old daughter, Eleanor, and a baby boy due in August 2025.



2008

Zoe Antoniou and her husband Cris Kaps are proud parents of Theo, Cora and the latest addition to their family, a daughter, Meli, who was born this summer.



2010

Eric McMiller II graduated from the U.S. Military Academy at West Point in 2020 with a bachelor's in information technology and cyber security. This past May, he earned his master's in cyber security from Illinois Teach and is working at Johnson & Johnson in their cyber security division. Eric and his wife, Mia, were married on May 2, 2025 and currently reside in Plover, Wisc.



2011

Wade Wagner graduated from George Washington University with a degree in business administration and is currently head of producation at the advertising agency Vitro Robertson in San Diego. Wade proposed to his girlfriend in Banff this past January and they are planning a September 2026 wedding.



Kayleen (Smeaton) Reinke and her husband, Anthony, welcomed their third child, Emmett Christopher, on July 17. Emmett joins big sister Quinn (age 4) and big brother Hudson (2). The Reinke family lives in Wrightstown, Wisconsin. Following her maternity leave, Kayleen will return to teaching sixth grade this fall.





2013

Nia McFall graduated from New York University with a bachelor's in social & cultural analysis and is entering her second year at NYU School of Law. She plans to work at a corporate law firm in New York focusing on antitrust litigation upon graduation.

Skyla Billen earned degrees in psychology and Spanish from the University of Illinois and is currently a Senior Marketing Specialist at R1 RCM.

Nicole DeGrasse-Mitchell graduated from the Art Center College of Design with honors, receiving a degree in film, and is planning to attend graduate school in the fall of 2026. She and her sister started the Sandy Film Festival, which celebrates the power of film and artistic expression, and sees film as a solution to mental health.



From top: Skyla Billen, Nicole DeGrasse-Mitchell, Nia McFall

Jessica (Tyree) Tuman married Anthony Tuman at The Four Seasons Hotel Chicago on May 10. FXW was well represented with Jessica's brothers Matt and Joe as groomsmen, and Isabella Flerlage and Gillian Smeaton as bridesmaids.



2015

Joseph Carollo played junior hockey for four years then began attending UNLV where he is entering his senior year and playing college hockey. He plans to play hockey in Europe following graduation.





Katie Moynihan graduated Summa Cum Laude from Tufts University with a bachelor's in American studies. After interning at the Illinois Prison Project, she worked as a field organizer for the Harris-Walz campaign. She is currently a Client Support & Development Specialist at Expanded Mental Health Services of Chicago working to provide accessible bilingual mental healthcare to residents of Chicago's Northwest Side.



2017

Claire Eilers recently graduated from Williams College where she studied marine science. After doing undergraduate field research in the Caribbean, California, Connecticut, and Louisiana, among other places, Claire is beginning a Ph.D. program in marine science in Savannah, Ga. through the University of Georgia.



Maeve Healy graduated from Washington University in St. Louis in 2024 with a bachelor's in international development and French language and literature. She also earned her master's in international affairs from Washington University this past spring. She will be starting as a teaching assistant this fall in Paris through a program at the French Embassy in the United States.



Rori Hill recently graduated Summa Cum Laude from DePaul University with a bachelors in their English literature honors program.

Abbey Taute recently graduated from the University of Missouri with a bachelor's in health sciences. A four-year member of the Missouri swim team, she competed at the SEC Championships each year and earned a spot in the program's all-time top ten, ranking eighth in the 500-yard freestyle.



Kathleen Walsh recently graduated from the University of Notre Dame with a bachelor's in mathematics. She will be working on her master's at Notre Dame this summer and next. Currently, Kathleen is a Teaching Fellow for the Alliance of Catholic Education (ACE) and is additionally teaching middle school math at St. Justin Martyr Catholic School in Anaheim, Calif. She resides in Santa Ana, Calif.

2018

Grace Horne recently joined Amy Kartheiser Design as an Interior Design Assistant. She's thrilled to be learning and contributing with this incredibly talented team while finishing up her degree in advertising and design this fall.

Luke McMiller is a student at Denison University majoring in data analytics.



2019

Lily Hirt is a member of the University of Notre Dame men's rowing team and helped the Fighting Irish win a bronze medal at the Southern Intercollegiate Rowing Association (SIRA) Regatta in Oak Ridge, Tenn. this past April.



Andrew Meints is studying mechanical engineering at The Ohio State University with plans to pursue a masters focused on robotics following graduation. He is working as a process engineer intern at the Intel Corporation.

2020

Marin Waller recently finished her freshman year at Indiana University where she is studying sport marketing and management and did work on the first annual Indiana University Sport Business Conference. She is working this summer as a ticket sales intern for the Chicago Sky.



2021

Rimona Ghosh will begin attending Harvard University in fall 2025 to study human developmental and regenerative biology and work towards her goal of becoming a physician scientist. While attending Payton College Prep, she pursued molecular biology research, and participated in varsity policy debate, blood cancer fundraising, and HOSA Future Health Professionals.

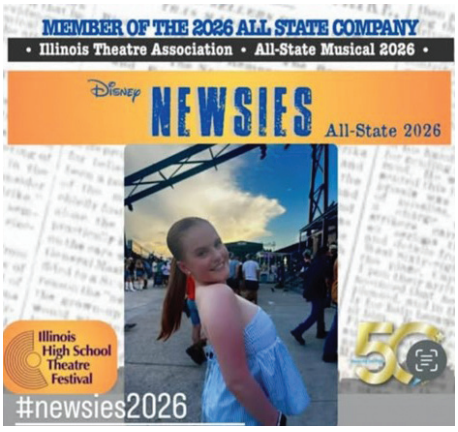
2022 and 2023

Julien Daniv '22, **Jack Hiltz '23**, **Oscar Molloy '23** and **Sean Miller '23** competed together in the Babe Ruth 16U World Series in Branson, Missouri this summer with the Sheridan McGuane 16u Generals baseball team. The team had a great run and made it to the winner's bracket after playing the European championship team, the Pacific Northwest regional team, Mexico and New Zealand, before ultimately getting knocked out by Aruba.



2023

Mary Grace Junkins has been invited to join the Illinois High School All-State Production of the Illinois Theatre Association and will be performing in their 2026 production of the musical "Newsies".



Aidan Murphy was part of the Saint Ignatius Men's Rowing J4+ boat that captured the gold medal at the SRAA National Championship in Camden, N.J. in May 2025.



FXW Names Library Reading Room in Honor of Beloved Educator Donna Murphy



"We cannot think of a more fitting memorial to her... to be among the children she loved so much, reading, laughing, learning."

–Tim Murphy, Donna's nephew

A Tribute to a Life of Faith, Service, and Lifelong Learning

When Tim Murphy contacted The Frances Xavier Warde School about fulfilling the bequest wishes of his beloved aunt, many at FXW who knew and loved Donna were not at all surprised. Donna Murphy's life was one of quiet power, grounded in a deep love for children, a passion for education, and an unwavering commitment to justice and faith. As conversations unfolded about how best to honor her remarkable legacy, her family quickly realized that naming the library reading room in her honor would be a fitting tribute. After all, Donna loved reading—and more importantly, she loved sharing that joy with generations of students.

A Life of Steady Grace and Bold Conviction

Donna Marie Murphy passed away peacefully on September 17, 2024, at the age of 88, leaving behind a legacy that radiates through the halls of FXW and far beyond. From her early days in Pennsylvania to her time as a devoted Catholic Extension volunteer in Oklahoma and ultimately a beloved educator in Chicago, Donna lived with an abiding sense of purpose.

Her journey to FXW in 1992 was more than a career move; it was a spiritual homecoming. FXW's Mission aligned with everything Donna valued—faith, diversity, inclusion, and a dedication to nurturing the whole child. For 25 years, she poured her heart into teaching Kindergarten through Grade 3 students and working as a learning specialist, drawing out the best in every student with patience, humor, and compassion while earning the deep respect of her colleagues.

"Murph, as we fondly called her, was an extraordinary mentor to me over the years, said Erin Horne, FXW's Director of Education. "Her dedication to students was evident in everything she did—from the immaculate printed notecards she created to support their learning, to the gentle, thoughtful way she guided each child toward discovering their own love for learning. Murph taught me to see the potential in every student. She was a lifelong learner herself, always pursuing additional certifications to deepen her teaching practice. What I admired most was how she viewed education as a calling—an expression of her faith and a way of answering God's will."

A Love of Children, Books, and Belief in Possibility

Tim shared at Donna's memorial that she was a "reading instructor of great skill and renown," someone who understood the transformative power of words. Whether helping a child decode a sentence or discovering the meaning of a story, she saw literacy as a path to empowerment.

"After my parents," Tim reflected, "she was the first adult to take me seriously as a grown-up person ... or more accurately, as she would remind me often, as a potentially grown-up person, depending on how I behaved." Donna's wisdom came with wit, and her kindness was laced with a steady expectation for growth. That same mix of encouragement and honesty was something every student under her care came to know and cherish.

Living Out Her Values with Courage

Donna didn't just teach values, she lived them. As a lifelong advocate for racial equity, she chose to live in integrated communities on Chicago's South Side and remained steadfast in her belief that community and justice go hand in hand. Her legacy of principled living even shaped the next generation; Tim, now Chair of the Board of the National Urban League, credits her with instilling in him the audacity to believe in a more equitable world.

A Gift That Honors a Life of Purpose

Donna's generosity extended beyond her life. Through her estate, she made a transformational bequest to FXW. This extraordinary gift will support the School's Mission and ensure her passion for literacy endures through the generations.

In recognition of this legacy, FXW is proud to announce the naming of the Donna M. Murphy Reading Room in the library at the Old St. Patrick's Campus (OSP). The space will serve as a living memorial to Donna's love of learning and her belief in the boundless potential of every child. It is a place where stories will be shared, imaginations nurtured, and spirits lifted—just as Donna would have wanted.

Donna's Enduring Message

Donna's favorite quote, printed on her memorial card, remains a guiding light:

"Nothing worth doing can be completed in our lifetime; therefore, we must be saved by hope. Nothing we do, no matter how virtuous, can be accomplished alone; therefore, we are saved by love."

These words are etched into the memory of all who knew her—and now, into the very space where future learners will discover their own voices.

May Donna rest in peace and may her legacy continue to inspire the FXW community for generations to come. ■



Including FXW in your will is a meaningful way to shape future generations.

To learn more about how your planned gift can make a lasting difference, please reach out to Mary Perrotti, Director of Advancement, at perrottim@fxw.org or 630.247.5212



Save the Dates

October 16, 2025

CATC Annual All-School Reunion
Maxwells Trading
1516 W. Carroll Ave.,Chicago, IL

February 28, 2026

FXW Gala
The Geraghty
2520 S. Hoyne Ave., Chicago, IL

May 8, 2026

CATC Bright Futures Dinner
The Langham Chicago
330 N. Wabash Ave., Chicago, IL

June 9, 2026

Class of 2022 Senior Send-Off
Old St. Patrick's Campus
120 S. Desplaines St., Chicago, IL

For more information email advancement@fxw.org.