

**2025-26 Grant Application**

**Grant Timeline**

December 2, 2024 Applications Open

January 31, 2025 Applications Due

February 20 and 21, 2025 In-person Grant Interviews

March 7, 2025 Notification of 2025-26 Grant Awards

**Instructions**

Prior to completing this application, schools should consult with Kyle Van Frank, Executive Director of the FIRE Foundation of Denver [(kyle@firefoundationdenver.org)](mailto:kyle@firefoundationdenver.org), or Dr. Jill Hall, Granting Committee Chair [(grants@firefoundationdenver.org)](mailto:grants@firefoundationdenver.org) to discuss the school’s needs and how they align with FIRE Denver’s mission. Please submit the application and all required documentation to Dr. Jill Hall at grants@firefoundationdenver.org by January 31, 2025 by 5pm. Include the completed application as well as a letter from the principal/pastor. All applications must be signed. After your application is submitted, you will be contacted to schedule your interview time.

If you have any questions, please contact Kyle Van Frank (kyle@firefoundationdenver.org).

**Grant Eligibility Criteria**

**The following criteria must be satisfied *prior to application* for a school to be eligible for a grant:**

* The School is a Catholic school within the boundaries of the Archdiocese of Denver.
* The School is accepting student(s) with moderate to severe disabilities who would not be able to attendwithout additional educational support.
* The School has appropriate educational support for the student(s), has a degreed Special Education teacher on staff or a plan to train, credential and/or license personnel in that position, or is applying for grant funding of such training/credential/license or positions.
* The School can demonstrate the commitment of its Principal and Pastor to inclusive education.
* The School will designate Friends of FIRE liaisons who will be a point of contact for communication with the school community about events, fundraisers, and general information about FIRE Denver and its mission.
* The School will distribute information to the school and parish community about FIRE Denver Awareness Day in December 2025.
* The School will provide the opportunity for a representative of FIRE Denver to speak annually to its parishioners and/or school community.
* If the School is a current partner school, having received FIRE Denver grants in the previous school year, they must show increased expertise and openness to serve additional students with moderate to severe special education needs.
* Designated staff from all partner schools will be expected to attend training specific to inclusive educational practices. Based on your school’s needs and grant requests, some partner schools will have designated personnel attend training regarding the role of paraprofessionals. Please see Appendix for details.

**Areas Funded**

* Professional Development related to Inclusive Education
* Learning Materials, Technology and Equipment
* Assistance for faculty/staff salaries such as Para-Educators, Special Education Teachers, Inclusion Coordinators, etc.

**Application Review Process**

A Grant Application must satisfy the Grant Eligibility Criteria for the application to be considered.  Eligible Applicants will be invited to discuss their application in person with the Granting Committee and representatives from the FIRE Denver Board of Directors ***February 20 or 21, 2025 .*** This meeting is **mandatory**. Each grant meeting will last approximately 20 minutes and will focus on questions from the Granting Committee about the Grant Application. Appointments will be scheduled with preference given in the order applications were received.  Grant awards will be determined based on compliance with Eligibility Criteria, need for assistance and the availability of FIRE Denver funds.  All grant monies awarded must be used as specified in the grant award letter or returned to FIRE Denver.

Grantees will receive a letter of notification regarding their grant by March 14, 2025.

Please note that all grant recipients are required to submit a mid-year and end-of-year report documenting use of grant funds. Any changes in the way grant funds are used that deviate from descriptions outlined in the grant award letter must be immediately reported to the Executive Director of FIRE Denver *prior*  to the funds being spent (kyle@firefoundationdenver.org). Mid-year report forms will be sent to grant recipients via e-mail by December 1, 2024 and are due via email to [grants@firefoundationdenver.org](mailto:grants@firefoundationdenver.org) by December 31, 2024. End-of-year report forms will be sent to recipients via e-mail by May 1, 2025 and are due via e-mail to [grants@firefoundationdenver.org](mailto:grants@firefoundationdenver.org) by June 1, 2025.

**FIRE Foundation of Denver 2025-2026 Grant Application**

School:

Address:

Principal:

Pastor:

Application Contact:

Title:

Phone:

E-mail:

Total Enrollment:

**Total Amount of Request for Funds from FIRE Denver for the 2025-2026 school year:\_$\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

1. Please give a detailed breakdown of your grant request and specify into which of FIRE Denver’s funding areas each request falls. Please include specific programs and dollar amounts when applicable. Our funding areas are:

* **Professional Development related to Inclusive Education**

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* **Learning Materials, Technology and Equipment**

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* **Assistance for salaries of staff (Please denote title, number of hours, and amount requested)**

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1. State the diagnosis and grade level of each student with moderate to severe needs *who would not be able to attend* your school in the 2025-26 school year without additional educational support, funded in part by FIRE Denver. State the status of each student by fully completing information in each row. Also please note whether the student has an Individualized Catholic Learning Plan (ICLP)/Individualized Education Plan (IEP)/504 Plan stating clearly defined goals. Please do ***not*** include student names. To add students, simply push *tab* at the end of the fourth column to add a new line.

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Please mark if student is newly enrolled for 2025-2026 School Year** | **Grade** | **Service Plan (yes/no)** | **Diagnosis and designation mild/moderate/severe** | **Type of support required (e.g., teacher training, para-educator, 1-1 support for certain subjects, peer support, equipment, etc.)** |
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3. Please provide the following information regarding your school’s current infrastructure.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Grant Amount Requested | Total Enrollment | # of Students Unable to Attend without FIRE Denver  Support\* | Total # of Students Who are on an Education Plan | # of SPED Teachers  *Please only list teachers working in that role.* | Current # of Paras | Ideal # of Paras | School Budget | What percentage of your total budget is allocated for inclusive education? |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |

*\*When calculating the number of students unable to attend without FIRE Denver support, please consider the following:*

* *Student would not be able to attend your school without support from FIRE Denver.*
* *Student would not be able to be successful in the regular classroom without support from a para-educator.*
* *Student would not be able to be successful without support from a special educator.*

*a See part II of the Appendix for examples of an inclusive education budget*

3.a. Funds received from other sources to provide Special Education services:  (Please state amounts received from specific grants, school fundraisers, parish grants/fundraisers separate from budget, school district, federal/state funds or other funds received)

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3.b. Qualifications of Special Education Teacher or other support staff responsible for students’ learning plans (or documentation of appropriate educational support), if applicable:

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3.c. The number of staff members who have special education degrees or endorsements:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

3.d. If you have a special educator on staff, give the number of students he or she currently serves:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

4. Describe components of your school’s plan for providing quality inclusive education and implementing students’ service plans (e.g. professional development, universal design for learning, class within a class, co-teaching, pull out, push in, etc.). Explain how your school’s plan reflects the FIRE Denver mission: *to provide children with special needs the opportunity for an inclusive Catholic education.*

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5. Beyond what you are requesting from FIRE Denver for 2025-26, are there other resources you plan to employ to make it possible to welcome students with special needs. (e.g. other professional development opportunities, staff training, other developmental or therapeutic specialists, dedicated spaces in your school such as resource or sensory rooms, technology). How will these resources enhance the quality of education provided?

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6. What professional development topics would most benefit your education team? Are these needs reflected in your grant request or will they be addressed in another way?

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7. What community resources and/or partnerships do you currently utilize or plan to utilize to aid students’ progress and success?  Please describe how the partnership is structured. (E.g. your local school district, parish volunteers, high school or college volunteers, seminarians, student teachers, state resources, etc.) *Please also see a list of ideas for resources that may be available in your community for your students - located in the Appendix.*

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8*.* Describe your interactions with the OCS regarding your school’s efforts toward inclusion. (Kristen Lanier, Director of Student Support Services at the Office of Catholic Schools [Kristen.Lanier@archden.org](mailto:Kristen.Lanier@archden.org).)

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9. Describe the methods currently used or that you plan to use for educating your parish and school community about inclusive education. Please provide specific examples.

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10.       Are you willing to occasionally host visitors (donors, representatives of other schools interested in inclusive education, board members) for short visits to observe inclusive education practices? Please note, adequate notice would be provided and full consideration of school activities would be extended.

Y / N : \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

11. Please attach a letter from the school principal and co-signed by the parish pastor\* indicating the following:

* Support of inclusive Catholic education and commitment to educating the school community on its benefits;
* Willingness to create and sustain a culture of belonging where students with disabilities are welcomed and supported;
* How special consideration for enrollment is extended to parish families;
* The school has a degreed Special Education teacher on staff, or has a plan to ensure that appropriate educational support exists for the identified student(s).

*\*Parish pastor signature not required for high school applications or those schools not associated with a parish*.

The foregoing information is accurate, and I agree to promptly notify the FIRE Denver Board of any changes with respect to the information contained herein.  I will immediately contact the FIRE Denver Executive Director regarding changes to programming funded with grant money.  I have attached the requested supporting documents.  On behalf of the above referenced school, I agree and understand that this Application must satisfy the Grant Eligibility Criteria in order to be considered.

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***Principal Date***

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***Pastor Date***

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***Special Educator or Participating Staff Member Date***

**DATES OF NOTE**

February 6, 2025 - Hearts on FIRE Fundraiser (see firefoundationdenver.org/events for further information)

February 13-14, 2025 - Inclusion in Action Conference, Kansas City

February 28, 2025 - Inclusion Solutions PD, OCS

February 28, 2025 - Learning Resource Network PD, FIRE Denver

June 2025 - Mandatory PD with Paula Kluth on Universal Design for Learning, FIRE Denver

July 2025 - PD with Nicole Eredics on Curriculum Modification, FIRE Denver

August 2025 - PD for all Paraeducators, OCS - mandatory for Partner Schools

August 23 - BonFIRE Gala, Denver Center for Performing Arts

September 2025 - Mandatory PD with Michael Boyle, FIRE Denver

October 2025 - Mandatory PD with Paula Kluth on managing behavior concerns, FIRE Denver

January 2026 - Mandatory PD with Paula Kluth on teacher-created materials for inclusion

**APPENDIX**

1. Future Planning
2. Examples of Inclusive Education Budget Items
3. Examples of Resources Available in Our Communities
4. Professional Development Providers
5. Examples of SpEd and Para Job Descriptions
6. **FUTURE PLANNING**

**Please note the following dates and expectations that will be part of accepting a grant, if awarded, from the FIRE Foundation of Denver:**

Nicole Eredics, Board Certified Inclusion Specialist and Educator, will once again provide virtual sessions in July 2025. These sessions will be on different topics than she has provided in the past, and attendees will have access to the past professional development sessions from Nicole. Nicole combines best practices in inclusive education with proven, real-world strategies, tips, and resources to help you facilitate inclusion right away.

If applying for funding for a paraprofessional, please know there will be **mandatory** training provided by the Office of Catholic schools in August, 2025 for funded paraprofessionals and their classroom teachers.

There will be **mandatory** leadership training in September, 2025 for new partner schools and current partner schools with new leaders (principal, assistant principal, and lead SPED teacher must attend, with optional Pastor participation) that will be provided with renowned researcher and educator, Michael J. Boyle, Ph.D., Executive Director of the Herrmann Center for Innovative Catholic Education at St. Louis University. Dr. Boyle will also provide new partner schools with monthly follow-up zoom meetings to address specific coaching at the school level throughout the school year.

Additionally, FIRE Denver is funding **mandatory** professional development from Paula Kluth, award winning inclusion guru and author who works with teachers to provide inclusive opportunities for students with disabilities and to create more responsive and engaging schooling experiences for all learners. Paula will provide three separate sessions: in June 2025, Paula will present on Universal Design Daily; in October 2025, she will present on The Problem with Problem Behaviors; and in the Spring of 2026, Paula will provide PD around Text Maps to Memory Caps, an interactive workshop focused on using teacher-created materials to meet the needs of all learners in inclusive schools. FIRE Denver will require that at least two participants attend each PD offered by Paula Kluth in order to be able to bring back the information to their school for implementation.

1. **EXAMPLES OF INCLUSIVE EDUCATION BUDGET ITEMS:**

* Materials and/or items purchased specifically for use by students with moderate to severe special education needs to help them interact with the curriculum or their peers inclusively (e.g., calculators, educational programs or apps, special seating/desks, PE/playground equipment, vehicles to help students move around the school more efficiently, sound field systems, resource room equipment, etc.)
* Professional development for staff pertaining specifically to student special education needs. (e.g. training in a particular area that *may* benefit students with special needs, even if it is beneficial for other students as well, trainings offered by FIRE Denver or the Office of Catholic Schools, PD )
* Services outside the school to support students with special education needs (e.g. PT/OT/Speech therapies, specialized nursing services, coordinators or case managers, etc.) paid for by the school.
* Special Educator/Inclusion Coordinator/Other similar positions funded by school.
* Paraeducator salary and/or training.

***For all of the above items, please subtract any grant monies utilized for these items, including FIRE Denver grants or other grants. Only the amounts the school is responsible for should be included in the Inclusive Education Budget amount. The items above should pertain specifically to the students identified in #2 on the application.***

1. **EXAMPLES OF RESOURCES AVAILABLE IN OUR COMMUNITIES:**

This is not an exhaustive list, but merely added here to give schools an idea of other avenues for services or professional development opportunities

**PEAK Parent Center**

[**https://www.peakparent.org/**](https://www.peakparent.org/)

**HCBS Case Management**

[**https://hcpf.colorado.gov/my-hcbs-case-management#Benefit**](https://hcpf.colorado.gov/my-hcbs-case-management#Benefit)

**Solace Home Health Care**

[**https://solacepediatrichealthcare.com/**](https://solacepediatrichealthcare.com/)

**Developmental Pathways**

[**https://www.dpcolo.org/**](https://www.dpcolo.org/)

**Family Voices of Colorado**

[**https://www.familyvoicesco.org/**](https://www.familyvoicesco.org/)

**Front Range Pediatric Therapies**

[**https://frontrangepediatrictherapies.co/**](https://frontrangepediatrictherapies.co/)

**Square Peg Therapies**

[**https://squarepegfits.com/**](https://squarepegfits.com/)

**Special Needs Connection**

[**https://a-special-needs-connection-and.business.site/**](https://a-special-needs-connection-and.business.site/)

**A Rise Above**

[**http://www.ariseabovecolorado.com/index.html**](http://www.ariseabovecolorado.com/index.html)

**Rocky Mountain Human Services**

[**https://www.rmhumanservices.org/**](https://www.rmhumanservices.org/)

**Rocky Mountain Down Syndrome Association**

[**https://www.rmdsa.org/**](https://www.rmdsa.org/)

**Anna and John J. Sie Center For Down Syndrome at Children’s Hospital**

[**https://www.childrenscolorado.org/doctors-and-departments/departments/down-syndrome/**](https://www.childrenscolorado.org/doctors-and-departments/departments/down-syndrome/)

**Thrive Tutoring Services**

[**https://www.thrivetutoringdenver.com/**](https://www.thrivetutoringdenver.com/)

1. **PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT PROVIDERS:**

**The Learning Network**

[**https://learningresearchnetwork.org/fire-professional-learning/**](https://learningresearchnetwork.org/fire-professional-learning/)

**Inclusion in Action Conference (with virtual opportunities)**

[**https://firefoundation.org/events/inclusion-in-action-conference/**](https://firefoundation.org/events/inclusion-in-action-conference/)

**Program for Inclusive Education/Alliance for Catholic Education**

[**https://ace.nd.edu/programs/inclusion**](https://ace.nd.edu/programs/inclusion)

**Nicole Eredics, M.Ed., Creating Inclusive Classrooms for All**

[**https://www.nicoleeredics.com/book-459334.html**](https://www.nicoleeredics.com/book-459334.html)

**Dr. Paula Kluth, Inclusion Rules (with free vinette training videos)**

[**https://inclusionrules.com/video/**](https://inclusionrules.com/video/)

1. **EXAMPLES OF SPED AND PARA JOB DESCRIPTIONS:**

**Special Educator/Inclusion Coordinator Example 1:**

*Special Educator Job Description (0.5 position)*

The Special Education Teacher provides:

* Case management and in-classroom support
* Scaffolding and designing modified lessons and materials aligned to grade-level content areas
* On-­going student assessment and evaluation including identifying goals and progress monitoring
* Collaborating with the student support team, lead classroom teachers, and paraprofessionals to support students
* Addressing teacher and parent concerns for students

Essential Duties and Responsibilities:

* Develops and updates Individualized Catholic Learning Plans for the purpose of meeting the individual needs of exceptional students
* Teaches students for the purpose of ensuring successful progress towards student's goals and objectives in the least restrictive learning environment
* Consults and collaborates with parents and staff for the purpose of ensuring appropriate delivery of services
* Knowledge and skill to provide instruction in the areas of literacy and math
* Utilizes multisensory approaches to keep students on task, motivated, and included in a general education setting
* Creates a schedule for the purpose of providing efficient and effective services for students
* Building a strong relationship and rapport with students, parents, and classroom teachers
* Willingness to learn, attend trainings, and grow in the critical role of Special Educator in an inclusive Catholic school
* In accordance with Catholic Social Teaching, deeply holding the belief in the dignity of the human person and the Church’s obligation to provide an inclusive educational environment for all students

**Special Educator/Inclusion Coordinator Example 2:**

## *INCLUSIVE EDUCATION DIRECTOR (SPECIAL EDUCATION) - 2025-26*

### Job Summary

Our School believes in an inclusive educational environment to support all students including those with exceptional needs. The Inclusive Education Director assumes responsibility for the planning, implementation and management of special education programs and services. The Inclusive Education Director works closely with all school personnel to continue the development of a continuum of services based on a full-inclusion model for serving student needs. The position is responsible for ensuring the delivery of services to students with special needs; assists in the policy development for procedures relating to students with special needs; ensures school compliance with the Individualized Catholic Learning Plan. An ideal candidate will have a strong passion for collaborating with general education teachers, administrators, and staff to develop instructional models which serve all students.

*Requirements / Qualifications*

Our School is seeking an Inclusive Education Director to join our team of educators for the 2024-25 school year. Join our innovative and student-centered environment!

Minimum Education and Experience:

- Bachelor’s Degree, Master's Degree

- California Teaching Credential, Administrative Services Credential

- Leadership experience in Special Education

Other Requirements:

* Letter of Introduction (In your cover letter, please describe how your educational philosophy and experience are a good fit with Our School and this position.)
* Letter(s) of Recommendation
* Resume

**Para Professional Example 1:**

*Classroom Paraprofessional Job Description (1.0 Position)*

The Classroom Paraprofessional provides:

* In-classroom support for all students in an inclusive classroom
* Compassionate, patient, resilient assistance for students with moderate to intensive special needs
* Collaborating with lead classroom teachers to support students identified as special needs

Essential Duties and Responsibilities:

* Utilizes multisensory approaches to keep students on task, motivated, and included in a general education setting
* Supports students and teachers for the purpose of ensuring successful progress towards student's goals and objectives in the least restrictive learning environment
* Consults and collaborates with the special education department for the purpose of ensuring appropriate delivery of services
* Follows a schedule for the purpose of providing efficient and effective services for students
* Building a strong relationship and rapport with students, parents, and classroom teachers
* Willingness to learn, attend trainings, and grow in the critical role of paraprofessional in an inclusive Catholic school
* In accordance with Catholic Social Teaching, deeply holding the belief in the dignity of the human person and the Church’s obligation to provide an inclusive educational environment for all students

**Para Professional Example 2:**

## *Para Professional Job Brief*

We are looking for a Paraprofessional to join our team and support teachers in the management and organization of a classroom. They will provide positive guidance for students, attending to their physical needs as well as academics and emotional wellbeing. They will also provide much-needed support during instruction time. If you enjoy interacting with students and supporting teachers and educators, we’d like to meet with you. Feel free to share your past experience along with your application.

Paraprofessional responsibilities include providing staff support in an educational or childcare environment. Paraprofessionals will work with children individually or in small groups by providing basic instruction on reading, writing, math, and other education related activities as assigned by teachers’ directions.

Ultimately, you will lead and supervise various developmentally appropriate events depending on the directed teacher’s instructions. You should show flexibility, patience, and a genuine caring attitude towards students.

Responsibilities

* Prepare the classroom to promote a healthy and safe learning environment
* Ensure classroom safety guidelines are met at all times
* Utilize various techniques to be successful with managing students
* Engage with children to enhance and encourage learning
* Assist the teacher in modifying materials to meet the specific needs of a child
* Provide basic caregiving duties, support, and encouragement in all aspects of development
* Assist with other personal or physical care assistance
* Take necessary precautions to protect students
* Monitor the classroom and minimize distractions and disruptions
* Perform other duties as assigned

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## Requirements and skills

* Proven work experience as a Paraprofessional or similar role
* Must complete and pass a criminal background check
* Passionate, dedicated, and committed to teaching children
* Experience in helping teachers in a classroom environment desired
* Dependable and punctual
* Good understanding of the educational system
* Strong interpersonal and social attributes
* Have patience with children, including those with special needs
* Ability to stand, move around, and squat for long hours at a time
* Secondary school diploma or equivalent is required; Bachelor’s degree is preferred