

# LEGACY FOR OUR MISSION:

*For Our Children and the Future*

## PROJECT EXCEED HELPS STUDENTS, TEACHERS REACH NEW HEIGHTS

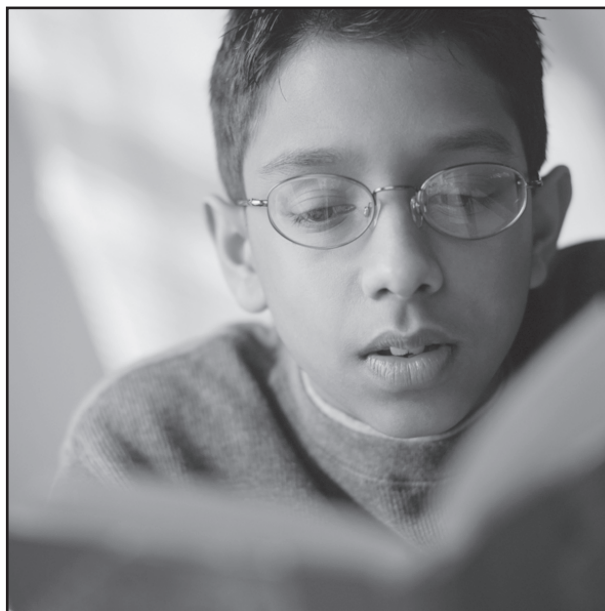
**E**VERY STUDENT HAS VALUE. That belief is one building block behind Project EXCEED and Catholic education in the Archdiocese of Indianapolis.

The conviction is visible in places such Holy Spirit School in Indianapolis, where master teacher Heather Hacker has monitored Project EXCEED's pilot Teacher Advancement Program (TAP) over the past three years. Project EXCEED and the introduction of TAP methods are building new standards for Catholic school students, who are demonstrating steady improvement in the Indiana Statewide Test of Educational Progress (ISTEP).

"These tools are helping us affirm the things we should be doing in the classroom as well as the things we can let go of," Hacker said. "I would love to see more schools get involved in the TAP program. It's incredible to see it helping us improve the way we teach and help students learn."

TAP is an outgrowth of an archdiocesan partnership with the Milken Family Foundation, which supports education programs and medical causes. As the flagship program of Project EXCEED, TAP is helping the archdiocese explore the future of Catholic education by evaluating the impact of instruction on student achievement. TAP also assists educators in the discovery of professional development opportunities and monitoring of student progress and school achievement.

Ron Costello, associate executive director of Catholic education and school improvement, directs the Project EXCEED



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program. Costello says educators and administrators in the Office of Catholic Education believe early improvement in state testing is just one of the positive trends behind rising achievement in Catholic schools.

The Office of Catholic Education has established a roadmap to help navigate Project EXCEED's future path. This includes progress in school improvement, general planning

processes, accreditation programs and expectations for overall school improvement. Support from the *Legacy for Our Mission* campaign—combined with initial support from Lilly Endowment Inc. and the Milken Family Foundation—will enable strong implementation of the plan to expand the positive influence of Project EXCEED.

For Hacker and other teachers at Holy Spirit, the efforts are already yielding results. The TAP initiative is helping them ascertain a more complete view of student assessment. Teachers now have a scientific way to evaluate students as individuals and determine where they're headed.

That approach to assessment struck Hacker recently as she observed a sixth-grade student who had fallen behind. With his teacher's help, the student has grown so enthusiastic about catching up to grade level that he will probably close that gap within the next few years.

"Now this student is so excited about learning that he's tracking and monitoring his own progress," Hacker said. "He's even asking his teacher when he can take the next test so he can score higher."

*Legacy for Our Mission, the archdiocese's capital campaign, is guided by the principles of Christian stewardship and addresses the needs of archdiocesan ministries such as Catholic schools. By contributing to the Legacy for Our Mission campaign through your local parish, a portion of your gift will be allocated to implement and expand Project EXCEED in Catholic schools.*