

# CSCOE Bash

2026

## LEGACY OF GREATNESS AWARD HONOREE

*Lisa M. Anderson*

Spend a few minutes walking through a Catholic school with Lisa Anderson and you quickly understand what inspires her — the joy of students, the faith-filled culture of the classroom, and the dedication of teachers and principals who see their work as a calling.

That love for Catholic schools grew deeply during Lisa's years at the Healey Education Foundation, where she spent nearly a decade supporting Catholic education. She was regularly in schools — visiting classrooms, meeting teachers and principals, and witnessing firsthand the difference Catholic schools make in the lives of children and families. The joy she saw in students, the strong Catholic identity in classrooms, and the passion of educators left a lasting impression.

These experiences came at a pivotal moment, as the Catholic Schools Center of Excellence (CSCOE) was being formed amid declining enrollment locally and nationally. Lisa immediately recognized the promise of CSCOE, an organization dedicated to strengthening and sustaining Catholic schools for generations to come.

From the very beginning, she became one of its most committed champions, and she extends her support with her time as a CSCOE board member.

Perhaps most importantly, Lisa's greatest impact has been in personally engaging with school leaders across Minnesota — offering guidance and support as they navigate challenges and helping many schools not only sustain themselves, but truly thrive.

When CSCOE introduced the Believe and Read initiative — helping every child to learn to read well — Lisa was the first to say yes. Today, the program is transforming literacy in 67 Catholic schools across Minnesota.

She also helped say yes to another critical effort. Together with her late mother, Mary Joy, Lisa supported the launch of Peace of Mind, which supports the mental health and well-being of Catholic school students across the state.

*Catholic schools form the whole child — academically, spiritually, and personally. What inspires me about CSCOE is its ability to bring forward new ideas and innovations that truly make a difference for schools — opportunities that might not otherwise be possible — so more children across Minnesota can experience the life-changing impact of a Catholic education.*

*Lisa M. Anderson*



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Lisa often reflects that she believes God speaks to her through children — a belief that continues to guide her commitment to Catholic education and the mission of CSCOE.

Her philanthropic spirit was shaped by the example of her parents and continues alongside her two siblings, who share that same commitment to giving and service.

A Nebraska native who now proudly calls Minnesota home, Lisa has become one of the most passionate champions of Catholic education in our state. Through her leadership, generosity, and deep commitment to faith-filled learning, she has helped strengthen Catholic schools across Minnesota and advance the mission of CSCOE.

This year, we are honored to recognize her with the Legacy of Greatness Award at the 2026 CSCOE Bash, on May 9 at the beautiful new Lee & Penny Anderson Arena at the University of St. Thomas. It is a fitting setting and a place that holds special meaning for Lisa as a proud Tommie and longtime supporter of St. Thomas — reflecting her deep commitment to faith-based education and the institutions that help it flourish.

Each year, the CSCOE Bash brings together leaders, supporters, and friends who believe deeply in the power of Catholic education. Their generosity fuels programs serving all 151 preschool–8th grade Catholic schools in Minnesota — strengthening leadership, supporting teachers, increasing enrollment, and helping schools thrive.

Hosted by Frank Vascellaro of CBS News Minnesota, this year's Bash promises to be a joyful evening celebrating the community that makes this work possible.

Most importantly, it will give us the opportunity to recognize Lisa — a leader whose generosity, vision, and love for Catholic schools continue to shape the lives of students, families, and communities across Minnesota.

We hope you will join us on May 9 as we celebrate Lisa and the extraordinary impact she continues to have on Catholic schools across Minnesota — and the on thousands of students whose lives are brighter because of her generosity and vision.