

Growing DISCIPLES



CATHOLIC SCHOOLS
DIOCESE of DES MOINES



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MEETING THE NEEDS OF ALL LEARNERS AT ST. PATRICK

When American Catholic schools were founded over a century ago, the goal was to serve the children of immigrants and marginalized members of society by providing a faith-centered education that respects every student's unique gifts and cultures. The dynamic growth of Catholic schools was directly related to the surge of immigrants in the late 1800s and early 1900s. The same is true today, as much of the recent enrollment growth realized in Catholic schools has been through a growing Latino immigrant population.

"Catholic schools cultivate healthy interaction among the increasingly diverse populations of our society," (USCCB, 2005, p. 4) and remain a viable source of academic excellence and cultural understanding. This commitment to serving growing immigrant communities with compassion and support has contributed to the outstanding educational and social outcomes attained by students of diverse backgrounds who attend Catholic schools. For example, Latino students in Catholic schools tend to outperform their Caucasian counterparts in public schools on national tests and academic benchmarks (Jeynes, 2007). Moreover, Latino students in Catholic schools are more likely to graduate high school and college.



St. Patrick Catholic School, Perry

And many of the immigrant students served by Catholic schools are English Learners, students who speak a language other than English at home. This group of students is the fastest and largest growing population in U.S. schools, representing one in four students. St. Patrick Catholic School in Perry, Iowa, has seen this growth in linguistically and culturally diverse students first-hand. This past school year, forty-three percent of their student population were English Learners.

Click [here](#) to learn more about how St. Patrick Catholic School is meeting the needs of its English Learners with the help of the University of Notre Dame.

MEET OUR NEW ADMINISTRATORS

Christ the King Catholic School

Christ the King Catholic School is pleased to announce that Sara Rooney will be its new school administrator for the 2022-2023 school year. Rooney brings fourteen years of experience in education to the role, having served as a K-12 ESL Teacher, classroom teacher, ESL Coordinator, Curriculum and Assessment Coordinator, Instructional Coach, and School Administrator. Before her time in education, Rooney spent nearly a decade in community outreach programming to support the needs of the marginalized in our community. She comes to the diocese from St. Cecilia Catholic School in Ames where she has served as the school's administrator since 2018.

St. Francis of Assisi Catholic School

St. Francis of Assisi Catholic School in West Des Moines announced new leadership for the 2022-2023 school year. Diane Jones will serve as administrator on a one-year interim basis and Stephen Frederick will serve as assistant administrator.

Diane Jones comes from St. Mary School in Storm Lake, Iowa, where she served as principal and technology director. She also served as principal, assistant principal, media director, and special education teacher at Storm Lake Community School District. With certifications in elementary education, behavioral disorders, learning disabilities and remedial reading.

Stephen Frederick comes to the Diocese of Des Moines from Pennsylvania, where he taught math and computer applications at Lionville Middle School.

He led the computer, chess, ski, and science fair clubs. He's been a baseball coach since 2008 and was also an assistant football coach.

St. Luke the Evangelist

St. Luke the Evangelist Catholic School and Parish is pleased to announce that Sara Hazel will be its new assistant administrator and technology coordinator for the 2022-2023 school year. Hazel brings 18 years of experience in education to the role, having served as a middle school social studies teacher, middle school language arts teacher, religion teacher, technology teacher, and STEM coordinator. Hazel is well-known in the diocese and has taught at St. Francis of Assisi and Christ the King Catholic Schools.

St. Pius X Catholic School

St. Pius X Catholic School announced that Alex Baranosky will be its new school administrator and Jordan Blackburn will be its assistant administrator for the 2022-2023 school year.

Baranosky brings more than a decade of experience in education as a classroom teacher at Dowling Catholic High School and assistant administrator at St. Pius X Catholic School. Over the last four years as the assistant administrator for St. Pius, Baranosky has enriched academic and faith programs through collaboration with teachers and parents. Adept in communications and marketing, Baranosky has also led enrollment efforts resulting in a 10 percent enrollment growth and increased student diversity.

ADMINISTRATORS CONT.

St. Pius X Catholic School (cont.)

Jordan Blackburn brings nearly a decade of experience in education to the role, having served as a classroom teacher in both public and Catholic schools, a childcare coordinator, and a Catholic Youth Camp counselor. In addition, she has served as a middle school mathematics teacher for the last four years at St. Augustin Catholic School.

St. Theresa Catholic School

St. Theresa Catholic Parish and School announced that Gretchen Watznauer will be its new school administrator for the 2022-2023 school year. Watznauer brings more than 25 years of experience in education, having served as an assistant administrator at St. Francis of Assisi, a classroom teacher for Des Moines Public Schools and Waukee Community Schools, and a program coordinator with the Iowa Department of Education. In addition, Watznauer brings a wealth of experience in youth mentorship, leading retreats, and service-learning as the current Youth Director at Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary Parish in Granger, where she has helped form young parishioners in their faith for the past three years.

Click [here](#) to learn more about all our school administrators.

EDUCATORS TO BE HONORED AT BISHOP'S CELEBRATION

The Diocese of Des Moines announced it will honor six educators, administrators and volunteers for their exceptional service to Catholic education during the inaugural Bishop's Celebration of Catholic Schools on August 27, 2022 in Indianola, Iowa. This event unites the entire Diocese of Des Moines community in celebration of the life-changing impact our faith-centered education has provided for more than 120 years.

Three honorees from the Des Moines metro and three honorees from the rural and Council Bluffs community were selected for this award out of nearly 70 nominations. Honorees were selected based on their demonstrated impact on the Diocese of Des Moines Catholic Schools and their commitment to faith, academic excellence, and fostering a vibrant school community. Click [here](#) to see this year's honorees.

Don't miss out on the celebration! Click [here](#) to purchase your tickets today.




BISHOP'S CELEBRATION
OF CATHOLIC SCHOOLS



RICH DIVERSITY SUPPORTS POSITIVE STUDENT OUTCOMES

Holy Family Catholic School is just that — a family. With a mission to nurture families and provide for students' quality education rooted in the Gospel of Jesus and the traditions and practices of the Catholic Church, Holy Family is helping its students reach their highest potential.

This mission, coupled with a deep commitment to multiculturalism, has helped the school draw students across the diocese. And while some of the school's students are second, third, or even fourth-generation legacy families, nearly 3/4 of the student body

are first-generation Americans. Holy Family celebrates all heritages and prepares its students to thrive in a pluralistic society.

"Holy Family is a great school that cares for every student. It offers a diverse school community that provides an outstanding education, faith formation, and respect to all students and their families," shared a Holy Family parent.

The school boasts a student body with a rich diversity not seen in most Iowa schools. In fact, 97 percent of students represent diverse racial and cultural backgrounds with 15 different languages spoken. Thirty-eight percent of students qualify for English Language instruction. Yet despite potential language barriers, students at Holy Family thrive.

MANY CULTURES, ONE HOLY FAMILY (CONT.)

As the only year-round school in the Diocese of Des Moines, Holy Family maximizes student learning with 15 additional school days and breaks throughout the year are timed to help reduce learning loss.

In school year 2020-2021, students demonstrated high proficiency in core subjects despite the challenges of COVID-19. Eighty-one percent of Holy Family students demonstrated proficiency in science, 74 percent demonstrated proficiency in mathematics, and 82 percent demonstrated proficiency in language arts based on the Iowa Statewide Assessment of Student Progress (ISASP).

These outcomes are significant considering the impact of COVID-19 on student learning and the fact that this was the first time students took this particular assessment.



"Our students demonstrate consistent growth because our teachers are committed to seeing their students reach their highest potential," said Marty Flaherty, Holy Family administrator. "Our students are successful because of the broad community support Holy Family receives from those who give their time, talent, and treasure to sustain our efforts. This synchronicity of effort results in a school that provides a 21st century, faith-filled education for our community of learners."

For more than 40 years, Holy Family Catholic School has provided an education marked in excellence and rooted in the teachings of Christ. Supported by five parishes in the Diocese of Des Moines, Holy Family and its supporters are committed to providing an exceptional learning environment that celebrates the diversity of its students. For more information on Holy Family, visit hfcsdm.org.

DIOCESAN SCHOOLS AWARDED \$700,000 IN GRANT FUNDING

The Diocese of Des Moines Catholic Schools Office (CSO) supports all diocesan schools in reaching their academic goals and maintaining a culture of excellence. To this end, the CSO believes seeking out additional funding sources for continuous improvement at our Catholic schools is paramount to our mission. We are pleased to share that during the 2021-2022 school year, our schools were awarded \$700,000+ in grant funding. Below are some of these grant program highlights.

STEM Scale-Up Program

This past spring, Christ the King, St. Anthony, Sacred Heart, St. Theresa, and Holy Trinity were awarded more than \$43,000 in STEM programming, education and materials through the Governor's STEM Scale-Up program. These programs range from building robots and coding programs to conducting agricultural field experiences and learning about STEM careers. STEM Scale-Up programs are best practices that appeal to diverse youth, improve academic performance, integrate STEM concepts, develop school-business-community partnerships, and are sustained beyond STEM Council financial support. These new STEM initiatives will launch during the 2022-2023 school year. For more information on the Governor's STEM Council and Scale-Up grant program visit iowastem.org.

Catholic Foundation of Southwest Iowa

During a June 22 grant ceremony, more than \$32,000 was awarded to schools across the diocese including St. Joseph, Holy Trinity, St. Malachy, St. Anthony, St. Patrick and the Catholic Schools Office. Funds will support a variety of initiatives in the next school year including technology upgrades, enhanced building security, science equipment, teacher recruitment, and enrollment management. For a number of years, the CFSWIA has provided grant awards to dozens of parishes, schools, and other not-for-profit organizations that align with Catholic values. To learn more about the CFSWIA visit catholicfoundationiowa.org.

Iowa Childcare Stabilization Grant

Iowa was allocated \$200 million from the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) to provide stabilization subgrants to current licensed child care centers and registered child development home providers. Diocesan schools including Christ the King, Holy Family, Sacred Heart, St. Augustin, St. Anthony, St. Joseph, St. Pius X, St. Francis of Assisi and Shelby County Catholic Schools were awarded Childcare Stabilization Grants from the state of Iowa. The grant awards totaled over \$500,000 and will support enhanced early childhood programming, class expansion, building enhancements and staff retention.

Prairie Meadows

A Prairie Meadows Community Betterment Grant in the amount of \$97,398.00 was awarded to the Diocese of Des Moines Catholic Schools. As a nonprofit organization, Prairie Meadows fulfills its mission by giving back to organizations that support arts and culture, education, economic development, and human services. For more information, visit prairiemeadows.com/about-us.

DIOCESE OF DES MOINES CATHOLIC SCHOOLS

The Diocese of Des Moines Catholic Schools includes 16 schools in 23 counties in central and southwest Iowa. Catholic schools in the Des Moines Diocese build Christ-centered, collaborative, inclusive partnerships with parents, students, and parishes to provide innovative academic excellence and inspirational faith formation. To learn more about the Diocese of Des Moines Catholic Schools, visit dmdiocese.org/catholic-schools or email ExpectMore@dmdiocese.org.

Growing Disciples is a quarterly publication of the Diocese of Des Moines Catholic Schools Office. Content may not be reproduced without the expressed written consent from the Diocese of Des Moines. To submit a story idea, email ExpectMore@dmdiocese.org.



Shelby County Catholic School, Harlan