

Archdiocese welcomes new principals and presidents

The Archdiocese of Baltimore welcomes 14 new or interim principals and presidents for the coming school year.

Madelyn Ball

The Catholic High School of Baltimore

Towson-native Madelyn Ball is coming to The Catholic High School of Baltimore as principal after 38 years of education in the Washington area. She spent the last 20 at Montgomery County's Our Lady of Good Counsel. She was a Spanish teacher and transitioned into assistant principal roles that addressed discipline and staff development.

"The opportunity to come here, I do believe, was a gift from God," Ball said. "We have everything we need to be the premiere high school in Baltimore with a just a few tweaks."

Ball believes in the long-range benefits of single-sex education.

She received a degree in Spanish from The University of Maryland, Baltimore County and a graduate degree in education administration from American University.

"I'm very excited about this," Ball said. "Catholic High School has the mission to empower women and that is just so critical in today's society."

Father Joseph Benicewicz

Archbishop Curley High School, Baltimore

Conventual Franciscan Father Joseph Benicewicz knows what a "Curley man" is because he is one.

The new president graduated from Archbishop Curley in 1978.

“My number one agenda right now is getting to know this community, the faculty, students and alumni and getting to know where the school is right now,” Father Benicewicz said.

He grew up as a parishioner of Sacred Heart of Mary in Graceland Park and attended its school and then went to Curley.

He spent 18 years at another Franciscan school, St. Francis High School in Athol Springs, N.Y., as a math teacher, principal and president. He has also been treasurer for the St. Anthony of Padua Province of the friars.

Father Benicewicz said Curley is in an “excellent position” after years of growth.

“We as a faculty can have such an impact on young people in all aspects of life,” Father Benicewicz said. “We reach not just their minds and their hearts, but their souls.”

Maggie Dates

St. Pius X School, Rodgers Forge

As St. Pius X School in Rodgers Forge gears up to become the first school in the archdiocese to offer a Montessori program, Maggie Dates will serve as the new principal.

The new program will be for children ages 3-6 in the 2011-12 school year. It is also partnering with Baltimore’s Loyola University Maryland to recruit, train and certify teachers in the Montessori approach, which allows students to learn at their own pace while emphasizing all aspects of human development.

“It’s generated a sense of excitement,” Dates said. “We also want to continue to strengthen the other areas of our educational program.”

Dates, a parishioner of Baynesville’s Immaculate Heart of Mary and the former principal of St. Clare in Essex, noted that 365 students are enrolled, with 45 transfers from closed Catholic schools.

Dates holds a certification in administration and supervision from Loyola University

Maryland. She has a bachelor's degree in sociology and a master's in education and school counseling from Lynchburg College in Virginia. She holds a certification in independent schools from The Johns Hopkins University in Baltimore.

Dates also served as a middle school guidance counselor at Notre Dame Preparatory School in Towson and assistant principal of Cardinal Shehan School in Baltimore.

School Sister of Notre Dame Kathleen Feeley
Institute of Notre Dame, Baltimore

Résumés are rarely as impressive as School Sister of Notre Dame Kathleen Feeley's.

The interim president of the Institute of Notre Dame just returned from six years in Ghana, where she was president of the Catholic University of Ghana and a teacher of young religious in congregations.

Sister Kathleen, 81, was the president of the College of Notre Dame of Maryland for 21 years and is a member of the Maryland Women's Hall of Fame. She's also been on the board of directors for National Bank, Baltimore Gas and Electric, Mercy Medical Center and IND.

In a letter to school families, she wrote: "I have been given a great opportunity to lead an institution that is so significant to every School Sister of Notre Dame - an institution that has embodied, since 1847, the SSND educational charism."

M. Kathleen Filippelli
Holy Angels Catholic School, Baltimore

M. Kathleen Filippelli has a big job ahead of her as the founding principal of Holy Angels Catholic School - the archdiocese's newest school, set to open Sept. 7 on the campus of Seton Keough High School in Baltimore. The longtime veteran of Catholic education is undaunted.

"I have a highly qualified and dedicated faculty in place," she said. "We want to work with the children who are forming Holy Angels Catholic School to build a strong culture of peace, excellence in academics and a school environment of service that allows us to be people for others."

Filippelli, former principal of the now-closed Father Charles Hall Elementary School for 15 years, said more than 100 students have already enrolled in Holy Angels and more are registering every day.

A Reisterstown native, Filippelli previously served as a teacher and assistant principal of Rosa Parks Catholic Middle School in Baltimore and Our Lady of the Holy Souls School in Philadelphia. She earned a bachelor's degree in elementary education from Chestnut Hill College in Philadelphia and a master's degree in education administration from Loyola University in Maryland.

Filippelli attends Mass at St. Peter Claver in West Baltimore and Sacred Heart in Glyndon.

Karen Hanrahan

Seton Keough High School, Baltimore

Karen Hanrahan has been around the country creating enthusiasm for schools in development capacities.

She has now found a home as president of all-girls Seton Keough High School in Baltimore, which is welcoming the addition of Holy Angels Catholic School, a new archdiocese elementary school housed in Seton Keough's building.

"People will judge us on how on how we make it work," said Hanrahan, 62. "We're two separate day-to-day institutions, but we'll be in the same building and we will be a community. I'm looking forward to it."

Hanrahan said none of Seton Keough's issues are impossible to fix.

She will address financial matters, meet with students and parents and foster a collaborative atmosphere. She received her undergraduate degree from Capitol University in Ohio and her master's degree in public administration from National University with an emphasis in public policy.

She will not be anchored to her office.

"I will be in the hallways every day and I will be at games and activities," Hanrahan

promised. “Students will know me. I love the interaction with kids.”

Madeleine Hobik

St. Margaret School, Bel Air

Madeleine Hobik brings a wealth of experience to her role as principal of St. Margaret School in Bel Air. She most recently served as principal of the now-closed St. Rose of Lima School in Brooklyn Park for 13 years. During five of those years, she served concurrently as that parish’s director of religious education. Prior to that, she taught at St. John School in Hydes for a decade and at schools in Illinois and Missouri.

“I am more than excited to be here,” said Hobik, a Chicago native who recently joined St. Margaret parish. “The school has a very strong Catholic identity, the facilities are well maintained and the people are wonderful.”

Hobik will be working on a curriculum mapping program at the 780-student school and plans to increase marketing efforts. St. Margaret celebrates its 100th anniversary this school year.

Margaret Lyburn

St. Thomas More Academy, Buckeystown

Margaret Lyburn spent 32 years in the Frederick County public school system, but the principal of St. Thomas More Academy is a product of Catholic schools.

She attended St. Bernardine, St. Joseph Monastery, Archbishop Keough High School and Loyola University Maryland.

Lyburn, 55, is a parishioner of Holy Family Catholic Community in Middletown.

After spending the last six years as principal of Linganore High School, she is enthusiastic about working at St. Thomas More, now recognized as a Catholic school by the archdiocese.

The last few months have seen enrollment spike from the high 80s to 121 students. A new pre-kindergarten for 3-year-olds has already been filled.

The mother of two said the school's aim is to assist in the faith formation of children while providing "a world-class education." She will assist in the staff professional development of energized staff members.

"There's new life growing here," Lyburn said. "This is a very exciting time at St. Thomas More Academy."

Rebecca Malone

St. Francis of Assisi School, Baltimore

As a parishioner of St. Francis of Assisi in Baltimore, Rebecca Malone couldn't pass up the opportunity to lead her faith community's 250-student school.

"It's wonderful," said the principal, who has worked in her parish's Catechesis of the Good Shepherd - a Montessori-based religious education program for children. "I want to continue maintaining the strong ties between the school and the parish."

The New York native has a bachelor's degree in comparative religion/English from Harvard University and a master's degree in English education from Teachers College Columbia University. She has completed graduate work in theology in Canada and the Philippines, where she was a Rotary Exchange Scholar.

Malone taught at schools in New York, Toronto and Maryland before becoming the middle school head of Roland Park Country School in Baltimore. She also taught in a Baltimore public school and served as a long-term substitute teacher at The John Carroll School in Bel Air.

"My main goal is to build on the strengths of the school - particularly our early childhood education program," she said.

Emily Mehler

School of the Incarnation, Gambrills

As the interim principal at School of the Incarnation, Emily Mehler knows it is tough following Barbara Edmondson, who was appointed interim superintendent in July.

The 58-year-old mother of three has had a big year. In addition to being named

interim principal, she recently became a grandmother.

She received her undergraduate degree in elementary education at the University of Maryland and is taking graduate courses at Bowie State University.

Mehler spent years teaching in the Archdiocese of Washington before becoming an assistant principal at Incarnation under Edmondson.

Mehler loves the school community there.

“Just knowing you’re doing God’s work is fulfilling in and of itself,” Mehler said. “What I hope to accomplish is to continue the journey that Dr. Edmonson has laid out for us and continue the excellence in all aspects, including spiritually and academically.”

Gordon Oliver

St. John’s Catholic Prep, Frederick

Gordon Oliver has a desire to be amongst the people.

“I do believe it’s important for every administrator to connect so we’re not viewed as aloof,” said St. John’s Catholic Prep’s president.

Oliver was recently head of institutional advancement at Highland School in Warrenton, Va.

The England native has lived in Vancouver, Canada, and the Washington area. He attended Bethesda-Chevy Chase High School, where he was a standout runner. After receiving an English degree from Georgetown University, Oliver received a theological studies graduate degree from Notre Dame School of Christendom College.

He will continue the school’s capital campaign push for a new campus in Buckeystown and wants to help maintain the strength of the academic programs.

“The people and the students are great here,” Oliver said. “They’ve really got a team approach.”

Sister Rita Michelle Proctor
Cardinal Shehan School, Baltimore

Becoming principal of Cardinal Shehan School is a bit of a homecoming for Sister Rita Michelle Proctor. The Oblate Sister of Providence served as assistant principal there for eight years and interim principal for a year. She is also a former campus minister and theology teacher at St Frances Academy, Baltimore, principal of Father Charles Hall Elementary School in Baltimore and a teacher at Father Charles Hall Middle School in Baltimore.

The Washington, D.C. native most recently served as principal of the now-closed Mother Mary Lange School in Baltimore.

“We have a large influx of new students,” said Sister Rita Michelle, noting that 90 of the 340 students enrolled at Cardinal Shehan are transfers from Mother Mary Lange.

“I want to continue to build the unity of the school in light of the closing of Catholic schools,” she said. “The need for a Catholic presence in the city is extremely strong and I hope the Church will always have an open ear and tender heart for it.”

The principal holds a bachelor’s degree in physical education and a master’s in administration and counseling from Towson University. She completed graduate work in theology at Xavier University, New Orleans.

Paula Redman
Visitation Academy, Frederick

The former Cardinal Shehan principal is “tremendously excited” about the opportunity to be principal at all-girls Visitation Academy.

Redman attended an all-girls school as a young person and taught at Notre Dame Preparatory School for 11 years.

She received her degree in elementary education from St. Francis University in Pennsylvania and her master’s degree in curriculum instruction from Loyola University. She said Visitation has the benefit of mixing both a suburban and urban

setting in Frederick. The Frederick County public schools have partnered with the school in the past, which is a major benefit.

She wants to further foster greater relationships in Frederick.

“I want to help bring the community into the school,” she said.

Pamela Walters

St. Clement Mary Hofbauer School, Rosedale

With one third of its 320-student population representing newcomers, St. Clement Mary Hofbauer School in Rosedale will have many introductions.

Pamela Walters, incoming principal, is also new to the community.

“My number one goal is to continue the atmosphere of hospitality,” said Walters, a parishioner of Our Lady of the Chesapeake in Lake Shore.

Students are coming from several closed Catholic schools that were part of the archdiocese’s consolidation plan. Many will be taking advantage of a new bus service to be launched this school year.

Walters, the former principal of the now-closed Sacred Heart of Mary School in Graceland Park, brings experience as the former director of Sacred Heart of Mary’s PRIDE program (Pupils Receiving Inclusive Diversified Education). That program, which helps students with learning disabilities, will be introduced at St. Clement in an expanded “PRIDE Plus” format, which will serve as its professional development school.

Walters holds a bachelor’s degree in elementary and special education from the College of Notre Dame of Maryland in Baltimore. The Long Island native graduated from Notre Dame’s Operation Teach program, earning a master’s degree in educational administration and supervision.