

May 24, 2023

Dear Members of the St. Agnes Community,

With the utmost gratitude and respect for our church and school community, I write to share with you the news that I have decided to step down from the position of principal and assume an advisory role for the 2023-24 school year.

St. Agnes and its amazing students have been at the center of my life since I began as a Kindergarten teacher in 2009. When I was asked to co-lead the school with Father John in 2011, I was certain of St. Agnes' potential to transform into an excellent pre- and primary school, one that truly met a community need for exceptional educational childcare and early elementary learning with robust offerings. To achieve this transformation, we needed to balance the budget, upgrade our facility, hire exceptional educators, and chart a steady course for the intellectual and spiritual growth of the youngest learners in our community.

By the end of my first year, the school had regained its financial footing, and enrollment started to grow. By the end of my second year, the school had established programs and policies that would allow us to focus on achieving modern and best practices in early elementary education across the board, especially in curriculum design and assessment, technology integration, and the social-emotional growth and well-being of children.

Since those early years, we have worked hard, and we have flourished. Our school building has become a safe, efficient, and inspiring place in which to learn and grow. Our faculty has become a unified team with a shared ethos. Our parish has become involved, invested, and integral to our success. And, as a result, our families entrust us with their children year after year.

I wish to extend heartfelt appreciation to Father John, my colleagues, and our parents, past and present. Your involvement has enriched the school community and culture in innumerable ways. I look forward to remaining involved as a parent of two St. Agnes schoolchildren and thank you the opportunity to be a part of this remarkable school.

Sincerely,

Catherine Bemis, Principal

May 24, 2023

Dear Parishioners, Parents and Friends,

I write to inform you that Catherine Bemis will be leaving her position as principal of St. Agnes School at the end of the academic year. Catherine has been a superb school leader, and she will be greatly missed.

When Catherine accepted the position over a decade ago, the school's future was uncertain. I watched closely as she determined the priorities and gave equal attention to the budget, the faculty, and creating a nurturing environment for young children. With an amiable and can-do approach, she earned the respect of her colleagues almost immediately, and she has since become the beloved leader of St. Agnes School.

Among Catherine's talents is her ability to collaborate with others, and she involved many people in the successful implementation of two, three-year strategic plans, a primary goal of which was to strengthen our community by hiring talented teachers; enrolling and retaining over 100 students each year; engaging parents; and inspiring volunteers. She also oversaw extensive renovations and improvements to the building; established a strong relationship with the public school district; directed the Universal Pre-K program; developed the SPARK summer camp; and overhauled the school's curriculum and methods of assessment. While Catherine is quick to note others' contributions and achievements, we know that it has been under her leadership that the school has been successful over the past ten years.

On that note, I announce that Kathryn Turner will assume the role of principal over the summer. Katie has been with the school for seven years in a variety of roles, most recently as the family support coordinator and director of summer programs. A parishioner and member of the administrative leadership team for three years, we are very pleased that she has accepted the position. I trust that you will welcome her as our next principal when you meet her or see her next and join me in wishing Catherine the very best.

In the God who gives us strength,

Father John Yonkovic

May 24, 2023

Dear St. Agnes Parents, Parishioners and Friends,

It is with great enthusiasm that I have accepted the offer to become the next principal of St. Agnes School. I am honored to assume leadership of this vibrant school where I have served in several capacities over the past seven years. I trust that my knowledge of and commitment to our mission and our families will help to ensure a smooth transition and a strong future for the school.

St. Agnes is unlike any other school. It is small but impactful. It is deeply rooted in faith and expands to embrace all. It values the individual and instills responsibility to others. It sets high academic standards and offers encouragement and help. At its core are faculty and parents who come together in a shared endeavor to create an exceptional educational experience for students at a crucial time in their development. My husband, Chase, and I are grateful that our daughter Olivia '20 attended St. Agnes School.

As a member of the school's administrative leadership team, I have worked closely with Catherine Bemis, Father John, and Religion Director Kristen Clark, as well as with my colleagues at the school and at the Diocese. I have enjoyed teaching art and science, developing our SPARK (STEM, Play, Art & Recreation for Kids) programs, and serving as director of St. Agnes' 9-week summer camp. My role as the school's family support coordinator has allowed me to establish policies that best serve students and their families, as well as programs that equip and connect our community to numerous and vital resources. It is in a spirit of cooperation and commitment to the values of this community that I intend to approach leadership of the school.

I would be remiss not to mention my appreciation for Catherine Bemis. I will welcome her advice and wisdom in the coming year, and I look forward to connecting with all members of the St. Agnes School community this summer and fall.

Respectfully,

Kathryn Turner