



MEDIA RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE



Helen Englebert to Retire December 2020

Neenah, WI (October 16, 2020) - St. Mary Catholic Schools announced today that Helen C. Englebert, the school system's president, will retire effective December 31, 2020, after serving six years in the position. Prior to joining SMCS, Mrs. Englebert held various senior management positions with local Fox Cities businesses and with the Moraine Park Technical College system.

"Helen's commitment, achievements, and contributions are cherished by the St. Mary Catholic Schools community. She has helped to cultivate the ground that will nurture generations of Zephyrs, putting our system on the right track to fulfill our mission of preparing and inspiring students to lead meaningful lives, rooted in the teachings of Christ in our Catholic tradition," said Steve Pable, St. Mary Catholic Schools Board of Trustees Chair.

During Mrs. Englebert's tenure, she provided dedicated and forward-looking leadership, focused on growing and enhancing the quality of the SMCS education program and curriculum. Over the past six years, Helen's numerous initiatives and achievements include:

Pupil Services and Programming: SMCS added professional staff in the areas of student counselling and special needs learning and reading support. This includes the system's substantial investment in an enhanced K-8 literacy program, and the creation of the Aquinas Program for gifted and talented students in grades 3-5. She implemented the acclaimed STEM program known as "Project Lead the Way" (PLTW), now fully incorporated in grades K-12. Mrs. Englebert was also instrumental in expanding the educational offerings for business and world languages, as well as adding professional staff with advanced qualifications and experience to the system's teaching ranks.

Fine Arts Curriculum: Recognizing the essential role of the fine arts in developing the whole person, Helen oversaw expansion of the band and choral instructional roles. The professional staff now includes a full time Director of Fine Arts, a dedicated drama teacher, and a marching band supported by the more recently formed Zephyrs Fine Arts Boosters.

New Facilities: The system under Helen's leadership built a new 250-student middle school with leading edge 21st Century accommodations to replace the former 60-year-old middle school building. St. Mary Catholic High School features totally renovated student commons area, resource center, and chapel, a state-of-the-art fitness center addition, and the recently completed athletic sports complex for soccer, football, and track. At the three elementary schools, preschool and 4K classrooms have all been refurbished with early childhood furniture and learning activity equipment.

Security and Safety: Through approved government grants, capital campaigns, and the generosity of alumni, all five SMCS schools installed the State of Wisconsin recommended safety and security equipment, and implemented the training required to protect students, teachers, and administration.

Student Transportation Services: Four new 7-passenger vans and two 2020 77-student passenger buses provide safe student transportation for academic and co-curricular competition and service opportunities throughout Wisconsin.

Financial Viability and Affordability: Due to administration's enhanced focus on development efforts, participation in the State of Wisconsin School Choice Program, and focusing on adhering to balanced operating budgets, the SMCS system now operates with no debt.

St. Mary Catholic Schools Foundation: With the help of local professionals, alumni, and parents, a new SMCS Foundation was established. Its purpose is to attract funding and major gifts to supplement financial operating needs, support tuition assistance for deserving families, and build an endowment to ensure long-term sustainability.

"Helen's leadership over the past six years has elevated the St. Mary Catholic Schools system to a strong position of respectability and stability throughout the Fox Cities marketplace," said Phil Kerwin, current SMCS board trustee.

In appreciation, Mrs. Englebert remarked, "As I approach the end of my time at SMCS, I reflect upon the tremendous opportunity that I have been blessed with to serve as president of this exceptional school system. I cannot fully express the gratitude and respect I have for all who make our schools thrive – their commitment, their passion, and the unique gifts everyone brings to the schools is truly remarkable!"

On July 1, 2020, Dr. Timothy Schigur joined the St. Mary Catholic Schools system as superintendent, with the intention of taking over the leadership reins upon Mrs. Englebert's planned retirement. His 25 years of seasoned experience and leadership roles at both public and parochial Wisconsin schools provide an orderly and visionary transition as St. Mary Catholic Schools adapts to a changing educational landscape. The SMC Board of Trustees and administration will continue to focus on the system's objectives of providing the very best in Catholic education, attracting and retaining students and premiere teachers to a Christ-centered community, delivering academic excellence with college tracking and goal-setting for students, enhancing alumni and donor relations, and growing Zephyrs pride in the system.

St. Mary Catholic Schools ([SMCS](#)) includes St. Mary Catholic High School and St. Mary Catholic Middle School in the Village of Fox Crossing, Wisconsin, and St. Mary Catholic Elementary Schools (St. Margaret Mary and St. Gabriel in Neenah, and St. Mary in Menasha). SMCS is supported through the generosity of Neenah-Menasha parishes – St. Gabriel the Archangel, St. John the Baptist, St. Margaret Mary, St. Mary, and St. Patrick. SMCS is dedicated to preparing and inspiring students to lead meaningful lives, rooted in the teachings of Christ in our Catholic tradition for students in grades Pre3-12.

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