

July 12, 2018

Dear Marian Central Council of Administration Members,

Thank you for your continued support of Marian Central Catholic High School. It is important for you to know that I greatly appreciate your belief that I am “best suited” to be the Interim Superintendent as stated in the email of July 9. I am totally committed to Marian’s mission and will provide direction and stability to the faculty and the staff while developing strong partnerships with our families. One key component to the success of Catholic schools is having a strong partnership with the families and the community it serves.

I am very much aware that in order for me to be successful, I will need the support of the community and I feel comfortable knowing that I have your support. Having your trust and confidence as well as the support of the Diocese is truly a blessing.

Marian has a long and rich history of providing students with an excellent education in the Catholic tradition. Over the years, the school has experienced strong leadership and effective leadership that supported solid academic programs, developed excellent facilities, and fostered life-long faith formation to the students it served. I am confident that will continue.

Change in leadership can be difficult and as unfortunate as it may be, many times these changes are necessary. Some have asked why there have been changes in leadership at Marian. In accord with both Federal and State Employment law, I cannot provide any details that center around the employment status of any individual employee. What I can do is tell you that as your interim superintendent, I will honor Diocesan protocols, policies, and procedures along with the prescribed rules and regulations of the Illinois State Board of Education and provide sound financial stewardship of Marian and diocesan resources.

The Executive Committee reported in a July 9 correspondence that they worked hard on behalf of the Council. It was also reported that they contacted the Diocese requesting the details regarding the change in Marian’s leadership and that no response was received. To clarify the facts, Bishop David Malloy personally contacted the President of the Council, Father Max Striedl in a phone call on June 3 in this regard. He discussed with Father Striedl two letters from the Executive Committee regarding the former Superintendent, and asked him, as president, if he had any further observations to add on behalf of the Council, as this information was taken into consideration. Mr. Michael Kagan, the Diocesan Superintendent of Schools, responded to Father Striedl’s correspondence dated May 29 asking for a response. Of some concern regarding the Executive Council’s July 9 email is that priests of the Executive Committee were excluded from the correspondence. As a Diocesan Council of Administration, it is improper to exclude any portion of the board. It is my understanding that the Executive Committee is representative of the entire Council.

I think we can all agree, we want Marian Central to continue to be successful. This is truly a turning point in Marian’s history. As the Interim Superintendent, I want to establish clear lines of communication with the entire Marian community. In an effort to establish effective communication, let me share with you what I have identified as some of my goals for the 2018 – 2019 school year.

1. Bishop Malloy and I would like to thank you for your work on presenting proposed amendments to update the By-Laws and Constitution of the Council of Administration of Marian Central. As the Council of Administration has requested, its Constitution and By-Laws will be reviewed by the Diocesan Education Office, Father Grady, the Dean, whom Bishop Malloy has asked to assist in this process, and

me as the Interim Superintendent. As part of the *Faith Forward: Building Our Blueprint for Catholic Schools* strategic plan for all our schools, a new high school governance model has been in place at another Diocesan high school for two years now, and has been very successful. This is the appropriate time to introduce this new model at Marian Central, as we continue to fulfill the strategic plan.

2. I will be working with Mrs. Novy and the faculty on the academic school improvement effort, ***Understanding by Design (UbD)***. This will allow us to craft curriculum and learning experiences to meet specific purposes.
3. Continue to review current school safety procedures with Mrs. Loy and identify any areas that need to be improved.
4. Help reduce/eliminate concerns that may surface as a result of the leadership changes that have occurred these past few years.
5. Attend faculty and staff meetings to determine if we are meeting our Catholic mission as a Central Diocesan high school.

Most of these goals have been established as a result of the strategic plan, *Faith Forward: Building Our Blueprint for Catholic Schools*, which has provided direction for our schools by building a foundation for the future. I am very excited about this opportunity to strengthen our Diocesan schools.

As you stated in your email dated July 9, I have a “very difficult job” ahead of me and it is important to resolve a number of issues before consideration is given to forming a search committee to hire a superintendent.

At the direction of Bishop Malloy, a search committee will not be formed at this time. I will remain the Interim Superintendent for at least the 2018- 2019 school year.

With the pending creation and implementation of the restructured governance model at Marian Central, Bishop Malloy is placing the current Council into abeyance until these changes can be made. This means there shall be no meetings, communication from, or actions by the Council at this time – which means there will be no July 18 meeting of the Council of Administration for Marian Central Catholic High School.

Additionally, to follow and accomplish the policies and procedures established by the Diocese and the Catholic Education Office, the Diocesan auditors will conduct a complete review of Marian’s financial records in August. Marian, along with all Diocesan agencies, must comply with all Internal Revenue and government agencies (including employment law).

Once again, thank you for your continued support of Marian Central and know that I, along with the Rockford Diocese, am totally committed to Marian Central Catholic Diocesan High School and the communities it serves.

“Leadership is a choice, not a position.” – Stephen Covey

Sincerely in Christ,



Vito C. DeFrisco
Interim Superintendent