

July 9, 2018

To: General Members of the Council of Administration and  
Members of the Leadership Advisory Committee

From: The Layperson members of the Executive Council

*As laypersons of the Executive Committee we have chosen to send this letter to you without involving members of the Clergy who also serve with us on the Executive Committee. We respect their vows of obedience and do not want to compromise their position with our Bishop.*

*The enclosed letter was developed to inform the all members of the Council of Administration and the Leadership Advisory Committee (a special committee established 18 months ago with the purpose of helping to restore trust, confidence, and support of Maian Central) with the background of recent developments brought about by the leadership of the Diocese regarding recent changes with the Superintendent position. Unfortunately, this letter was censored from the meeting announcement that you received last week. As has become routine, the authority of the Executive Committee has been circumvented. The Diocese has repeatedly bypassed the bylaws and constitution governing Marian and ignored any of the recommendations and requests of discovery from the Executive Committee concerning actions taken against Mr. Baldwin.*

*It is the Diocesan leadership's responsibility, as stewards of the Church's resources, to support the needs of the parishes and Catholic Schools by providing truthful and transparent answers to critical questions outlined in the letter that you should have received with your invitation. This entire scenario with Marian Central is indicative of much larger issue of leadership which effects many of our deanery schools as well. You have a right to know the answers to these questions so that you provide answers to your parish community, parents, alumni and benefactors of Marian Central..*

*Sincerely,*

*Laypersons of The Executive Committee,  
Ray Jones, Sacred Heart Marengo  
Brian Kelly, The Church of Holy Apostles, McHenry  
John Mercurio, St. Marys McHenry  
Michael Mocogni, St. Patricks, McHenry  
Scott Sheppard, St. Margaret Mary, Algonquin*

You are invited to attend a meeting scheduled on July ----, 7 pm at Marian Central to discuss the circumstances leading to the termination of Mr. Steve Baldwin, Marian's former Superintendent.

First and foremost, we believe Mr. Baldwin's termination is a great loss to the entire Marian Central community. Mr. Baldwin's best talent is in the area of Development - not just fundraising but in showing compassion toward others. Mr. Baldwin worked hard to help our leadership restore the image of the school. He accomplished this through reengaging former supporters of Marian who lost faith in the leadership from constant changes in Superintendents, worked hard to help find solutions in supporting families who struggled financially in making tuition payments, and reached new constituents to donate funds and promote the value of receiving a Marian diploma.

As the year progressed, Mr. Baldwin's more aggressive approach in problem solving began to clash with certain administrators within the Diocese. By mid-April, members of the Executive Committee were made aware of the growing tension between Mr. Baldwin and the Diocesan leadership. Mr. Baldwin shared with us the 6-point memo that was presented to him by the Chancellor, Ms. Lynch and Superintendent of Catholic Schools, Mr. Kagan during a meeting held at the Rockford office. This memo addressed various administrative issues and concluded, without consent, a substantial reduction in Mr. Baldwin's salary. Upon hearing of this meeting, several calls and emails were sent to Mr. Kagan and Ms. Lynch requesting an explanation of this memo and merit of actions taken against Mr. Baldwin. No response was received. Therefore, we addressed this matter with the utmost urgency and conducted our own investigation on the administrative matters outlined in the memo. The conclusion of our investigation of the material evidence presented to us at that time found Mr. Baldwin to be free of any wrong doing. We drafted a lengthy summary of our investigation including raising additional questions surrounding the merit of the actions taken against Mr. Baldwin. Additional phone calls and emails were placed to Mr. Kagan requesting a response and/or a meeting to discuss this matter. The only response was an acknowledgement of receipt of our document.

As members of the Executive Council we worked hard to resolve this tension and we can assure you that everything possible was done over a 2 ½ month period to engage constructive dialogue with the appropriate leadership within the Diocese. We believe that if open channels of communication between the Diocese and the Executive Council occurred along with proper coaching of Mr. Baldwin's management style, Mr. Baldwin would still be serving the Marian community as our Superintendent.

Since Mr. Baldwin's termination, we have met with the Mr. Vito DeFrisco, Marian's new Superintendent. Mr. DeFrisco is a well-educated and experienced school administrator and during our meeting presented himself in a very professional and graceful manner. At this point in time, Mr. DeFrisco is best suited for this role since he has the trust and confidence of his superiors in the Diocese, and believe that if the Diocese will not listen to the leadership of Marian maybe they will listen to Mr. DeFrisco.

One thing is for certain Mr. DeFrisco has a very difficult job ahead of him, and without the support of the Marian community he will surely fail. However, such support is not for anyone to command and would only be given if there was hope and trust in the decision makers of the Diocese. We do believe that such trust can be restored, and will be appealing to Bishop Malloy to have Ms. Lynch and Mr. Kagan meet with you, the leadership of Marian, and answer many of the following questions:

- a) Why was Baldwin terminated?
- b) Why did Ms. Lynch and Mr. Kagan not respond to our investigation and summary document and/or ignore our requests to meet and discuss this issue?
- c) Why has the subsidiarity of the School been subverted? Is there a change in direction from Bishop Malloy regarding the by-laws and constitution of the school?
- d) What is Bishop's intention and direction in managing the school? Is there any purpose or constructive role for the Council of Administration going forward?
- e) How does the Diocese plan to resolve this leadership crisis?
- f) How can these situations be avoided in the future?
- g) What is the Diocese's plan to reverse declining enrollment, address development and fund raising?
- h) Would Bishop Malloy be willing to visit with the leadership of the School and celebrate a special mass for the Marian community?

One critical fact remains, this entire situation could have been avoided if the Diocesan leadership respected the subsidiarity of the school, responded in a timely manner to the internal investigation by the Executive Committee and made a sincere effort to ask Marian's leadership their view of the facts presented.

There is a lot of healing that needs to be done, and for this we all need to pray. Pray for our Bishop, the Church, the Marian community and most of all for Steve Baldwin and his family.

We hope that you can attend the special meeting scheduled for July \_\_\_\_\_.