



CATHOLIC DIOCESE OF PITTSBURGH NEWS

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New Leadership at Oakland Catholic High School and Saint Joseph High School

Bishop David Zubik has appointed leaders for two Catholic high schools in the Diocese of Pittsburgh, re-titling two current administrators at St. Joseph High School in Natrona Heights as principal and president, while promoting a staff member at Oakland Catholic High School to the position of principal.

Both schools now use the “principal-president” governance model, where the principal manages the day-to-day academic affairs of the school, including curriculum development, faculty development and evaluation, and student affairs and the president’s focus is on development and fund raising, marketing, enrollment and financial management. Oakland Catholic has utilized this model for many years, while Bishop Zubik has just given the board of St. Joseph High School permission to adopt it. All changes are effective July 15, and all were recommended by their school boards and by the board of Catholic Schools of the Diocese of Pittsburgh, Inc., which oversees the mission of diocesan high schools.

At Oakland Catholic, Nicole Powell, an assistant principal since 2016 and acting principal since August 2021, has been promoted to principal. Mrs. Powell is charged with fostering the school’s mission and identity, Bishop Zubik wrote in his appointment letter.

“You recognize the importance of your role in forming young women in the faith and guiding them to excel in service and leadership,” he wrote.

Mrs. Powell called the appointment at the all-girls school, “truly a calling to be the academic leader of an institution where we empower thousands of young women to lead lives of faith, courage and commitment. I have high expectations for the future of Oakland Catholic as we work together as a community to live out the mission and philosophy every day.”

Kelly McDonnell, who chairs the Oakland Catholic board of directors, said that Mrs. Powell “lives the mission and leads by example.” Mary Claire Kasunic, Oakland’s President, emphasized the importance of the appointment to the Oakland Catholic community and the future of the school, given Mrs. Powell’s “expertise, leadership, and passion about all-girls Catholic education.”

At St. Joseph High School, the new titles confirm a division of work that Beverly Kaniecki and Kimberly Minick have shared for a decade. Mrs. Kaniecki will be the president and Mrs. Minick the principal.

James Gilboy, chair of the St. Joseph High School Board of Directors, noted, “Our leadership team of Beverly Kaniecki and Kimberly Minick have worked as an effective team over the past 12 years and this change of titles

is really business as usual for our school.” He expressed great confidence in their continued leadership and in a “strong future of Catholic Education in the Alle-Kiski Valley.”

Mrs. Kaniecki has been the principal of St. Joseph since 1991, and her accomplishments include leading three capital campaigns that together raised \$5 million for the school. She called herself “honored and privileged to continue to serve the St. Joseph High School Community.”

Bishop Zubik called Mrs. Kaniecki “an inspirational role model.” His letter of appointment said, “Through your own personal conviction and practice of the faith, you have nurtured a culture of Gospel values at St. Joseph, through which your students have come to know and love Christ, and in fact, many have discerned vocations.”

Mrs. Minick has been the assistant principal at St. Joseph since 2011, following 22 years as a teacher and principal of the former Mount Alvernia High School in Millvale. She called her experience as a Catholic school administrator “a rewarding vocation” that allowed her “to bring my faith and professional experiences together.”

“You are a well-respected and beloved administrator who understands the importance of your role in forming young men and women in the faith and guiding them to excel in service and leadership,” Bishop Zubik wrote in his letter of appointment.