



ARCHDIOCESE OF ST. LOUIS

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Principal Named for New South City Catholic Academy

ST. LOUIS – South City Catholic Academy, the first partnership school under Archdiocese of St. Louis administration, has hired Mrs. Laura Hirschman as principal in preparation for the 2017-2018 school year. Though the position officially begins July 1, Mrs. Hirschman will assist archdiocesan leadership in the teacher hiring process already underway for the Academy's first year of operation.

The opening of South City Catholic Academy was officially announced on January 29 at the beginning of Catholic Schools Week. South City Catholic Academy is the combination of Our Lady of Sorrows and St. Joan of Arc schools and will be located at what is currently the St. Joan of Arc School.

"I find Mrs. Hirschman to be an energetic, student-centered, and collaborative educator and I am confident that South City Catholic Academy will grow and succeed under her leadership," wrote Maureen DePriest, Associate Superintendent for Elementary School Administration, in a letter to school parents and families.

Mrs. Hirschman was a founding team member of Premier Charter School (St. Louis Charter School) and has spent her 17 year career in various roles at the school. She began as a third grade teacher, then was principal of K-2, followed by principal of K-5. She has overseen student enrichment programs, including the school's before and after care program, gifted education program, food and nutrition services, and federal programs. Her interests are in teaching methodology, curriculum work, and program development.

"Just as learning happens in unique ways, so does faith formation," wrote Mrs. Hirschman in a letter to the new school community. "I look forward to helping each child celebrate the uniqueness they possess and how they can contribute to their world around them in meaningful ways."

Mrs. Hirschman grew up in Queen of All Saints Parish and graduated from Oakville Senior High. She earned a Bachelor of Arts in Communication and a master's in teaching from Truman State University in Kirksville. She also has a master's degree in elementary administration. She resides in Imperial with her husband, Chad, and their daughter. They are active members of St. Joseph Catholic Church in Imperial where Mrs. Hirschman is also a member of the parish school board.

South City Catholic Academy is the first partnership-model school directly overseen by the archdiocese. The new model allows parish schools to combine resources and enables greater collaboration with the archdiocesan Catholic Education Office which will provide the necessary leadership, support, and direction to maintain quality Catholic education well into the future.

The Archdiocese of St. Louis oversees the largest school system in the state of Missouri with nearly 40,000 elementary and high school students enrolled in more than 130 schools across the 11 counties of the archdiocese. The Archdiocese of St. Louis ranks ninth among all Catholic dioceses nationwide in number of students enrolled in Catholic schools.

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